

**ASH: A Saviour's Heart**  
**Outlaws**

ASHrpg V2.00



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## What is ASH: Outlaws?

Outlaws is a role-playing game set in the fantastical world of the ocean-bound Sorsillish. Gather your friends and create role-specific officers aboard your very own Vessel.

Perhaps you'll play as morally-grey sell-swords, social-activist freedom fighters, or thrill-seeking treasure hunters. You decide.

## Why ASH: Outlaws?

Outlaws is designed to promote Fluidity and Creativity.

Fluidity is a measure of the ease and speed necessary to resolve aspects of the game.

- ASH achieves fluidity by ensuring character creation is completed within 20 minutes and does not require any charts or calculations.
- Most conflicts are resolved within 5 minutes.
- Best of 1 Rock-Paper-Scissors "RPS" is used to resolve conflicts, no dice are necessary for this game.

Creativity is a responsibility and power shared by every person that gathers to play Outlaws.

- All players can enhance the shared imaginative space, the "fiction", by directing the narration if they succeed at a conflict.
- Add well-phrased details when narrating, because those details will help you in future conflicts!
- Creativity is privileged over survival. Be wary to not lose

your ability to influence the fiction!

## What will I need to play ASH: Outlaws?

- 1.) People: Gather 2-6 people (electronically with audio/video is *possible*).
- 2.) Printed Sheets: You will need a character sheet for each player (and one extra) and one summary sheet for the group.

## What does playing ASH: Outlaws feel like?

Playing Outlaws is synonymous with exploring a detailed setting through the eyes of any character you can imagine! Co-operate with or struggle against your friends as an ocean-bound outlaw in a unique fantastical world.

ASH is played with 2-6 people. Collectively these players are called a Heart. They will all role-play a character within the fiction, and their characters should always be the focus, the heart, of the story.

One person will be the Sessioneer while all others will be Player Characters "PCs". The Sessioneer **serves** the PCs both before and during the session.

## The Sessioneer

There must be one Sessioneer for every session. Different players can serve as the Sessioneer for different sessions. Any number of sessions can be played.

The Sessioneer is responsible for (1) creating starting environments and conflicts for the PCs. Environments must always consider all non-player's characters "NPCs". The Sessioneer will also create session nodes—significant environments that the PCs will *likely* encounter during the Session. (2) Once the session begins the Sessioneer is also responsible for performing the actions and reactions of the environment with the utmost fidelity.

The most successful sessions require a Sessioneer that is fluent with the environment that the PCs will be interacting with. The Sessioneer does not need to know every minutiae of the Sorsillish nation—they *do* need to know what the players want to spend their time doing, and know which NPCs will be involved with such activities.

The Sessioneer has no goals; they simply exist to represent the actions and reactions of the environment! The environment, however, should be dynamic and engaging—populated with NPCs striving for their own goals.

## The Player Character

“The candle that burns twice as bright,  
burns half as long”  
[Bladerunner]

“We must be willing to let go of the life  
we planned so as to have the life that is  
waiting for us.”  
[Joseph Campbell]

All Player Characters “PCs” are individuals that have accepted The Call, a supernatural offer, which has provided them with the ability to influence their environment in a supernatural fashion.

The price for this gift is a truncated life-span. Every PC is fated to expire in six game-sessions. These six sessions may span minutes or decades in the game-world—allow the fiction to decide that. Be prepared with an exciting new character that will offer you, the player, a new perspective on the world your previous character was able to share with you. Each new PC is bound to their predecessors through relations and artifacts, stories and quests. An ASH campaign is an inter-“generational” epic buoyed by spiritual successors that have accepted The Call.

### **How do I begin?**

- 1.) Read the entirety of this document.
- 2.) Gather your friends and play!

## **Part One: The Foundation**

The Agenda, Acceptability Standards, Sessioneer Style, and Premise are, collectively, the Foundation for your role-playing sessions.

The Foundation is the ultimate law when role-playing Outlaws, do not transgress this mutual contract between you and every other person playing Outlaws with you.

Facilitate enjoyable sessions by finalizing the Foundation before meeting with the Heart to play your first session. These decisions are important, and disagreements about the Foundation can quickly ruin any Heart.

### **1.1 Agenda**

Why do you want to role-play? All players must ask themselves this question and be aware of their fellow players' response. Some players have an Agenda to win while others want to be part of a good story.

Decide whether your characters will all be working from the same Vessel, or if multiple Vessels best suits your role-playing desires. (bring one extra character sheet for each character and Vessel).

Different players' Agendas may be complementary or they may be severely conflicting. An enjoyable session is the result of players understanding and respecting the Agendas of their fellow players.

Despite however much you may like your friends as friends, you may need to

branch outwards to discover players with an Agenda that pairs well with yours!

**Reader's Note:** Refer to GNS, in Designer's Notes.

### **1.2 Acceptability Standards**

Set your boundaries.

What content and themes do you (as an *individual*) not feel comfortable engaging with through role-playing? Tell your fellow players what your boundaries are. This game is not about jabbing at emotional scars. **Respect your fellow players.**

### 1.3 Sessioneer Style

There are two extremes on the Sessioneer Style continuum: emergent and structured. These styles may also, respectively, be referred to as the sandbox and railroad approach. The emergent style prioritizes spontaneity over control while the structured style does the exact opposite. Neither style is inherently better than the other.

#### Structured Style

The structured style encourages the Heart to interact with the setting in an organized fashion. This style shifts the majority of the burdens and freedoms of creativity toward the Sessioneer. This allows the Sessioneer to better prepare for a few specific NPCs and situations—which often results in more satisfying dramatic and practical challenges for the PCs. Because the Sessioneer is better equipped to direct the fiction, some players that are uncomfortable with being communicative or creative may feel more comfortable role-playing. This style provides a more cohesive direction for the entire Heart.

Too much emphasis on the structure style can breed dissatisfaction in the players because they may feel as though their actions are inconsequential. This is a valid concern and should be avoided. Certain mechanics in Outlaws implicitly alleviate this problem but the entire Heart should strive to avoid “over-railroading” the players.

#### Emergent Style

The emergent style encourages PCs to explore the setting however they’d like without being obstructed by arbitrarily enforced Sessioneer “walls” within the fiction. This style spreads the burdens and freedoms of creativity across the entire Heart. This freedom encourages the players to enhance the fiction with their ideas and perspectives. Comedic or dramatic tangents are likely to occur, and that can help encourage a natural flow in the fiction.

Too much emphasis on the emergent style can lead to a disjointed and confusing session. Players may not feel comfortable with all the creative responsibility that they bear, so they may remain silent and the fiction will spiral to a stop. This style requires communicative players that are eager to creatively enhance the fiction. Always keep in mind that

Every player will desire a different Sessioneer Style, and that’s fine. It is important to notice that Outlaws is designed to privilege the emergent style over the structured style—but remember a balance between both is important. The Sessioneer is serving the Heart by being the mouth-piece of the setting, respect him or her by not disputing their judgment of the environment’s reaction to the PCs.

## 1.4 Premise

Before contacting your friends to agree on a premise it is important that (at least) you are aware of the setting you will be role-playing in. Refer to **Part Two: The World of Aole** to begin familiarizing yourself with the setting of Outlaws.

All PCs will role-play as officers aboard an ocean-faring Vessel. This does not, however, mean that the PCs will be spending all of their time aboard their Vessel. Be prepared to spend time aboard other Vessels, flotilla-cities, or terra firma as often as desired.

All Vessels must be at odds with the Sorseerian Maidens *and* the Saviour of Minlarah. You are Outlaws. Whether you're outlaws for a good reason or a gross misunderstanding is irrelevant, but you must always be wary of the law's strong arm.

### Determining a Premise

The Heart must agree on the answers to the following questions before meeting for the session.

- 1.) What does your Vessel stand for?
- 2.) What sorts of missions does this Vessel accept?
- 3.) Why are you at Outlaws?

Most Vessels are Sorsillish ships but some may be domesticated ocean-beasts such as giant turtles or whales.

Some Vessels are

- i.) strong-arms for hire. They bear no political or social affiliation and are highly sought after when competent problem solvers are needed to quell a riot in the city streets, hunt down pirates, or protect a powerful Maiden. They rely on the wealth of the powerful organizations that contract them out. This Vessel is outlawed because of its mercenary work, they are considered Marauders.
- ii.) social activists. They work to liberate Tersune slaves and the Sairsillian lower classes from Sorseerian oppression—irrespective of the cost. Their missions begin when they hear rumours of Sorseerians abusing their power, they then investigate and attempt to remedy the situation. This Vessel is outlawed because of... well, all the laws they break in their pursuit of justice.
- iii.) treasure hunters. They ignore the world around them unless it's offering them information on a new treasure trove to find and plunder. They are rarely near city-flotillas or large gatherings of vessels, they are often alone on the Shanea ocean. This Vessel is outlawed because nothing gets between them and their treasure—and they've felled many Sorseerian vessels while retrieving their booty.

## **Part Two: The World of Aole**

Aole as “ah-oh-elle”

Aole is the world,  
The Atherlans are the Tersune controlled  
Isles (too far out of reach),  
The Sorsillish Isles are the ones that the  
Sorsillish routinely visit,  
The Minlarah is the Mainland  
Shanea is the southern Ocean.



## **Part Two: Character Creation**

Complete **Part One: The Foundation** before the Heart meets for session one.

Begin **Part Three: Character Creation** once the Heart has met for session one.

Everyone should be present and collaborating with one another once they have met for any session.

### **Step One: Features**

#### **1.1 Concept, Name, and Player**

Begin imagining who your character is and what is important to him or her.

Use any of the following prompts to help you. Your character's... family, childhood and past, role models and dreams, experiences and career history, friends and colleagues, enemies, physical traits, habits and personality quirks, religious and political affiliations/perspectives, hobbies and interests.

Write your character's name. Write your name.

#### **1.2 Role (Vessel)**

Every Vessel is owned by a Captain that does not travel with the Vessel. The Captain is responsible for providing the Vessel with its latest mission. The Captain communicates with the Vessel via messengers or contacts. Messengers may be hired Vessels, other Vessels that the Captain owns, or swift domesticated animals. Contacts may be found on the city-flotilla or Sorsillish Isles.

The Heart chooses the name of their Vessel and Captain. Do so now.

The Captain entrusts his ship to 5 officers that hold specific Roles and possess specific authorities and responsibilities.

Each PC must select a different Role.

**Reader's Note:** You may divide the PCs between 2 Vessels, allowing two players to RP the same Role. The dual Vessel approach to Outlaws can promote a more adversarial session.

All 5 Roles are listed below.

Faceman- The Faceman is the Vessel's representative. They will perform external negotiations of bartering for resources, accepting jobs, and trying to keep the Vessel out of (or get into...) trouble.

Martialist- The Martialist is the Vessel's weapons' master. They are responsible for military maneuvers while aboard the Vessel.

Navigator- The Navigator is the Vessel's pilot. They run the Vessel and are responsible for charting the ship's course and ensuring it does not enter dangerous environmental or political territories.

Alchemist- The Alchemist is the Vessel's doctor and cook. He or she will feed the crew and stitch them after battles.

Steward- The Steward is the Vessel's administrator. They resolve disputes between crew-mates and keep stock of all rations (food, weapons, tools, money...).

### 1.3 Seek

Every PC passionately seeks to protect a cause that they consider to be infinitely important. That cause, and the character's drive to protect it, is their Seek. A cause may be an ideal such as honour or courage, or a specific location such as a Vessel or a city-flotilla. The cause may be saving a person, a family member or romantic interest, from emotional or physical trauma. Sometimes a cause is best served by destroying or eliminating a threat from the world...

A Seek cannot be an external obligation. A PC must be internally driven to protect their cause.

A PC cannot select another PC or their own Vessel as the cause they seek to protect.

Write a short phrase that summarizes your PC's Seek.

*Ex:*

1.) Seeks to re-earn her House's tainted honour.

*This PC would... act responsibly in public, silence those that are attempting to defame her House, straighten-out other members from her House, complete dangerous quests to prove her House's worth...*

2.) Seeks to protect her sister's small business.

*This PC would... ensure no Sorseerians or organized criminals attempt to blackmail or buy out her sister's business, hunt down petty thieves if they stole from her sister's store, need to find medicine*

*for her sister if her sister were to get ill...*

3.) Seeks to free Tersune slaves from a specific House's control.

*This PC would... have to gather information on where the slaves are kept and how to release them, take political action to hamper the slave-master's power, establish and protect a safe haven for freed slaves...*

### 1.4 Code

Every PC lives their life according to an internally enforced Code. The Code may be a moral choice based on a philosophical position or a personal experience. It may also be an unintentional bias against a certain race, class, socio-economic group, or gender.

A PC's Code can be phrased as a personal motto, their golden rule. Consider this: no one (who even half-knew a character) would be surprised to see that character's Code carved as their tombstone epitaph.

Write a short phrase that summarizes your PC's Code.

*Ex:*

1.) Obeys formal commands.

2.) Believes Sorseerians are untrustworthy.

3.) Acts greedily.

## **Step Two: Pool**

### **2.1 Pool**

Pool is measured in motes which are represented as circles on a character's Pool Sheet. Pool can be thought of as a character's health/fatigue *as well as* their mana/willpower. A character's Pool represents more than their physical health.

Every PC can have a maximum of 15 motes in their Pool.

### **2.1 Pool Fatigue and Refreshment**

Due to your acceptance of the Call you can intentionally expend your motes while attempting an action within your chosen Domain. [Domains are covered in Step Four.]

All PCs begin with 15 motes in their Pool.

#### Pool Fatigue

Remove/Add motes to your Pool in any sequence that you prefer.

One of two things will occur when your character's Pool reaches 0.

(1) If your PC has an Integrity score of 1, then your character will be unable to influence the fiction for the remainder of the scene.

(2) If your PC has an Integrity score of 0, then your character will Expire.

#### Pool Refreshment

There are 3 ways to refresh your Pool.

(1) You can complete your Captain's

Orders for the session. (2) Any time a story arc. (3) You can accept a compulsion on your Identities. [Compelling Identities is covered in Step Three]

<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Motes Refreshed</b>
Complete the Captain's Orders	All
Complete an arc	(1/3)(Pool)
Accept an Identity Compulsion	2(Identity Rank)

### **2.2 Integrity, Atrophy, and Expiration**

#### Integrity

Your PC begins with a full integrity of 1. If your character ever directly contradicts or grossly neglects their Seek or Code then they will lose their Integrity.

A PC can refresh their Integrity if they take a monumental risk or accept a great sacrifice in the interest of their Seek or Code.

Remember: It is more difficult to regain Integrity than it is to lose it.

#### Atrophy

Accepting the Call has shortened your character's life-span. You are dying, how will you spend your last days?

All PCs must Expire before their seventh session.

If a PC survives 5 sessions then their player should create a new character to switch to sometime during the sixth session. Always consider the current direction of the fiction when creation a

new PC. Use any back-story, Identity, Vessel, or in-fiction event as inspiration for your new PC.

The Atrophy value increases by 1 at the beginning of every session.

*Ex:*

1.) PC at session one has an Atrophy of 1

2.) PC at session 5 has an Atrophy of 5

**Optional Rule:** If the Heart agrees, they can play without the Atrophy rule. This will allow PCs to exist in-world for as long as a player desires—or their wits allow. Remember though, this style of play will limit your ability to experience the world of Aole, and even your own characters, from fresh perspectives!

### Expiration

Character Expiration can only occur under one of two situations. (1) The PC reaches a Pool of 0 when their Integrity is 0, or (2) when the player chooses an appropriate time to Expire their PC during session 6.

A player can no longer control a PC that has Expired. An Expired PC does not *have* to die; the character may be suffering from severe psychological or emotional trauma or any other explanation that would justify their decreased importance in the fiction.

Give your PC the Expiration they deserve, a soliloquy, narrated montage, or vicious last stand are all appropriate Expirations.

Expired characters may still influence the fiction (at a metaphorical distance) as

an NPC, but they can never be controlled as a PC again.

*Ex:*

1.) A PC may be marooned on an abandoned island. The character's player may narrate a montage of the PC's last days.

2.) A PC with a Code of honesty may lie in a heated debate with a romantic interest. He has now lost his Integrity. The character then goes on to lose his entire Pool trying to win the debate. With 0 Integrity and 0 Pool his player is forced to expire the character. The player narrates the character's last speech about the foolishness of lying to a woman, and then finishes his (now shortened, due to the Call) life as an NPC.

3. A PC has an Integrity of 0 and can't escape a band of enraged Tersune. She turns to face her death as her player narrates the character's last stand.

### **Step Three: Identities**

Identities are fundamental aspects of your character; they also serve as your character's primary means for interacting with the Fiction.

All Identities are ranked on a 3-point scale of Novice, Professional, or Masterful.

Some Identities may be temporarily unavailable to a character due to the fiction but they should **never** be permanently abolished without the player's consent or extreme negligence on the player's part. Use extreme chance or coincidence to reunite a character with their Identity if necessary.

**Reader's Note:** *Sessioneers:* every player's Identities are chosen because the player considers them important; respect this by stretching credibility to keep Identities active in the Fiction.

#### **3.1 Identities: Types**

Identities define your character. They may be a(n) resource, relationship, experience, or style that is important to your character. These categories are non-binding, use them as a guide to help you craft personalized Identities. Don't feel restricted by the listed "types".

Do not state the character's skill with Identities, the Identity's rank will determine the character's competence with an Identity.

A Resource Identity is an item or non-sentient creature.

*Trusted Compass, Silent and Sturdy Hiking Boots, Pet Parrot: The Ever-*

*Squawking Polly, Jingles the Cheeky Monkey*

A Relationship Identity is an active relationship with a specific living sentient creature. Create all Relationship Identities as an Identity NPC

*Sister of W, Ex-lover X, Student of Y, Z's Bodyguard*

An Experience Identity may be a professional or personal experience that is either public or private knowledge.

*Senior Carpenter for House X, Retired Military General, Current Diving Champion, Had a Romantic Affair with Y*

A Stylistic Identity is a habit or personality quirk.

*Devout Believer in Church of X, Impulsive Buyer, Night-hawk, "Back in the good 'ol days..."*

#### **3.2 Identities: Compelling**

Any player can suggest a Compulsion on any Identity of any character.

Compelling an Identity complicates a character's situation because of their association with a specific Identity.

The suggestion requires the Sessioneer's permission before it can take effect. Any player can choose to accept or resist any Compulsion on their character. Notice that a player can suggest a Compulsion for their *own* character.

### Accepting Compulsions

If a player accepts the Compulsion then their character is rewarded with refreshed motes and the suggested Compulsion affects the fiction. The character refreshes X motes, where  $X=2(\text{Compelled Identity's Rank})$

*Ex 1:*

*Scenario: The PCs have just narrowly escaped the authorities after participating in a riot. The Sessioneer is the current narrator.*

*Player 1: I suggest that Player 2's Identity Novice "Current Diving Champion" meant he was recognized by many strangers during the riot. Some of those strangers have been captured and interrogated, they've confessed to seeing Player 2 involved in the riot. The authorities are now out to arrest him. Can this take effect Sessioneer?*  
*Sessioneer: Yes, great idea! Do you accept or resist Player 2?*  
*Player 2: (estimates that he can sweet talk his way out of this mess) I accept this Compulsion and refresh 2 motes.*  
*Sessioneer: (narrator includes this new detail in the fiction and...)*

### Resisting Compulsions

If a player resists the Compulsion then their character must pay motes and the suggested Compulsion does not (in any way!) affect the fiction. The character must pay Y motes, where  $Y=(\text{Compelled Identity's Rank})$ .

*Ex 2:*

*Scenario: The PCs' Vessel has recently returned to a city-flotilla after a long voyage. The PCs have split up to return to their loved ones.*

*Player 1: I suggest Player 2's Identity Professional "Had an Affair with Y" causes him strife when he returns home because his woman has found hidden love letters between the two. Sessioneer?*  
*Sessioneer: Make it one love letter from "the other woman" to Player 2's character. Do you accept or resist Player 2?*

*Player 2: (really doesn't want to get into the impending conflict.) I resist that Compulsion and expend 4 motes.*

Rank	Rank Level	Motes expended to Resist	Motes refreshed for accepting
Novice	1	1	2
Professional	2	2	4
Masterful	3	3	6

### Restrictions on Compulsions

Every suggested Compulsion must be made in good faith (don't intentionally try to antagonize a fellow player!)

An Identity cannot be Compelled if the appropriate character would not have reasonably had access to the target Identity.

*Ex 3:*

*Scenario: The PC's are in a bloody battle.*

*Player 1: I suggest Player 2's Professional Identity "Impulsive Buyer" causes him to buy an over-priced meal*

*when he returns to the city-flotilla.*

*Sessioneer?*

*Sessioneer: That Compulsion isn't appropriate for the current scenario, it doesn't take effect.*

*Ex 4:*

*Scenario: The players have been summoned to their Captain's residence. They are all familiar with the layout of the palace.*

*Player 1: I suggest my player's "Trusted Compass" Identity is Compelled so that she gets lost trying to meet with the Captain. She arrives late and the Captain is angry with her. Sessioneer?*

*Sessioneer: A compass wouldn't be much use indoors, especially when it has been well-established that all characters know how to navigate their Captain's residence. That Compulsion doesn't take effect.*

### **3.3 Identities: At Creation**

Your PC begins with 5 Identities. They will not acquire more Identities throughout the sessions.

Your answer to the Question will provide your character with their first 3 Identities. Your response to an Encounter will provide your character with their fourth Identity. You are free to craft any fifth, and final, Identity.

After all 5 Identities are chosen (at Novice rank) each PC can spend 4 bonus points across any number of their Identities.

#### Question

Answer this question: 1) What is your character's position in society?

From your answer to this Question you must identify 3 interesting Identities. One of these Identities is your Role Identity and must be listed as the first Identity on your Character Sheet. Your Role Identity is your character's best qualification for their selected Role.

*Ex 1 (A Faceman)*

*My character is a survivor of the Regicide that is searching for a family heirloom that will prove her status as a Sorseerian. Her House was always one of the weakest, yet she managed to single-handedly keep her House alive—until the Regicide occurred.*

*She's been forced to deal some very shady characters in her pursuit of her family's heirloom, and has since developed a survivor's mind-set.*

*Identity 1.) Sorseerian Politician*

*Identity 2.) Regicide Survivor*

*Identity 3.) Survivor's Mind-set*

*Ex 2(A Navigator)*

*My character is a compulsive liar that has lived a very dreary life as the deck scrubber for the anything-but-impressive Vessel "The Slimy Serpent". Despite The Slimy Serpent's short-comings, my character has learned a lot about navigating and piloting small Vessels. He hopes to one day Captain his own Vessel.*

*Identity 1.) The Vicarious Navigator*

*Identity 2.) Compulsive Liar*

*Identity 3.) Desire for Independance*

## Encounter

An Encounter has occurred between your character and any other PC(s). An Encounter describes a time in both characters' lives when the action(s) of one affected the life of the other or both were greatly influenced by the same event, location, or person.

Encounters do not necessitate that both characters were ever in the physical presence of one another!

Whether an Encounter was memorable or not is negligible; however, what is important is that the Encounter somehow influenced your character's position in or perspective on life.

Perhaps they learned something about the world or about themselves or they may have lost or gained something of value. Regardless, all PCs must have 1 Encounter Identity.

It is important that both players discuss the Encounter together. Each character will likely be affected by the Encounter differently.

*Ex 5:*

*Both of Character W's parents died trying to exact revenge on Character X. Character X lost his left ear in that battle.*

*Character W: Identity 4.) Orphaned  
Character X: Identity 4.) Missing Left Ear*

*\*Ex 6:*

*Character Y and Character Z were, decades ago, both arrested for*

*smuggling Tersune slaves. They shared a prison cell for many months.*

*Character Y: Identity 4.) Tersune Slaver  
Character Z: Identity 4.) Claustrophobic*

**\*Reader's Note:** It is important that details have been added to the fiction. It's perfectly fine if each player wants to take a different Identity from the same event.



## Step Four: Domains

As a result of accepting the Call every PC has been granted power over one of three Domains.

The 3 Domains are Druid, Elementalist, and Auromancer.

The Druid Domain governs the material forms of all organic things (dead or alive).

The Elementalist Domain governs all inanimate matter and thermal energy: Solids, Fluids, and Heat.

The Auromancer Domain governs the non-material aspects of thinking entities.

Having power over a Domain allows a character to intentionally expend their motes to perform better at tasks related to a particular Domain.

Characters cannot use Domains to perform high-potency supernatural feats.

Characters can use Domains to perform low-potency supernatural feats or perform mundane feats in an other-wise impossible situation.

**Reader's Note:** With enough creativity any player should be able to use their single Domain to better their character's situation.

### Ex 1:

*A character is out at sea when a violent storm breaks. He has lost his flotation device and doesn't know where the shore is. The character is Novice swimmer, but only a Masterful swimmer could survive under such conditions.*

*Druid: The character could make up for their natural swimming deficiency by*

*slightly increasing their lung capacity or endurance to survive until the storm passes. Or the character could perform the other-wise impossible feat of swimming under Masterful conditions with only a Novice skill to reach land.*

*Elementalist: The character could calm the water around him to make floating easier. Such an effect would be too potent if the character were able to maintain this effect while swimming ashore—so he'd have to stay where he is. The character could also affect the winds to make it easier for him to swim ashore.*

*Auromancer: The character could recall the direction of the small flotation device and swim to retrieve that and then wait out the storm. Or the character could determine the nearest shore-line based on the constellations and swim there.*

### Ex 2:

*A character is trying to seduce an attractive man at a tavern. Too bad he has his attention on a slightly more attractive well-dressed woman right now. The character knows that the other woman is staying in a room upstairs. The character's only appropriate Identity is at Novice level. She would need a Professional level to pull this off.*

*Druid: With a brush of her hand she could cause the other woman to begin a very unattractive fit of sneezes or get an allergic reaction to the seat of her wooden chair—causing her to profusely apologize and go outside to get some fresh air. The character could also augment slight details of her appearance and even the odds with the other woman.*

*Elementalist: The character could slightly increase the temperature of the hearth-fire behind the woman, causing her to perspire profusely and risk ruining her expensive dress if she doesn't go outside for fresh air. The character could weaken the integrity of the woman's wine glass stem so that it shatters the next time it's touched, pouring wine all over the other woman (inspiring her to go upstairs and change).*

*Auromancer: The character could identify the other woman's House from the signet ring she's wearing. With this information the character could forge and deliver a letter requiring the other woman to leave in a hurry. The character could walk past the table (near the man) and learn something helpful about his tastes in women. This new information will allow her to out-seduce the other woman.*

### **Step Five: Aesthetic**

Write a concise summary of your character. Ensure you account for the character's Identities!

Describe the character's visual appearance and habits. This will likely include their age, gender, physical appearance, common dress/equipment, and general demeanor.

### **Step Six: Vessel**

You should have an extra character sheet. Use that character sheet for your Vessel.

- 1.) It's "name" is it's name. It's "player" is it's Captain.
- 2.) Complete "Role (Vessel)" with a short phrase describing the Vessel's position in society.

*Ex:*

*Lawless pirates, Escaped slaves,  
Professional Assassins*

- 3.) Complete Seek/Code as if the Vessel were a character in its own right.
- 4.) List the Vessel's 5 Identities as the Role Identities of its officers. (create NPCs if there aren't enough PCs.)
- 5.) The Vessel does not have a Domain, Integrity, or Atrophy.
- 6.) Write an appropriate Aesthetic for the Vessel.

## Part Three: Resolution

Your character is going to be confronted with challenges in the fiction. These challenges fall into two categories: Tasks and Conflicts.

Use the rules for Task Resolution if the challenge is not actively opposing your character.

*Ex 1: Climbing a ladder, writing a poem, shooting a stationary target...*

Use the rules for Conflict Resolution if the challenge is sentient and actively opposing your character.

*Ex 2: Bartering with a merchant, sneaking away from a guard that is chasing you, killing an opponent in a duel....*

Success Levels "SL" determine the degree of a character's success at resolving a particular challenge.

Motes can be intentionally expended for either tasks or conflicts if the character is attempting an action within the purview of their Domain.

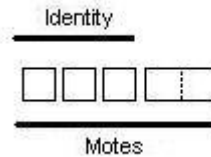
### 3.1 Resolution: Tasks

Any challenge that requires some degree of specialized training is considered a Task.

All tasks exist on a 4-point difficulty scale of Novice, Professional, Masterful, and Supernatural.

Each box represents a SL. The first 3 SL must be purchased with a (single) Identity. Each rank of that Identity transfers 1 SL.

The last two boxes jointly represent a Supernatural difficulty, 2 motes must be spent to activate this single SL. All Supernatural tasks will always cost at least 2 motes.



The Sessioneer determines a Task Difficulty, they must account for context details when doing so. Ask: "Under these conditions, what degree of training/experience would any character require to successfully complete this task?"

A player succeeds if they can match the Task's difficulty.

*Ex 1:*

*A character has been stranded on an island. The island isn't barren, but doesn't teem with life either. He needs to find enough food to keep his energy high for a week. He has nothing but his clothes and a simple knife.*

*Task Difficulty: Novice. This requires the knowledge and skill to properly choose fruit, hunt, and lay traps. Anyone with any degree of experience should be able to perform these tasks well enough for a week.*

*Ex 2:*

*Character X is searching a small library for a one-of-a-kind tome, she has 4 hours to find it. The library is well-*

organized, but it conforms to a peculiar kind of logic.

*Task Difficulty: Professional. A Professional librarian should be able to adapt to a different ordering system, once that's complete finding the book will be too easy.*

Ex 3:

*A character is masquerading as a cook for a very powerful Maiden. He has been singled out and tasked with preparing the Maiden's dinner exactly how she likes it.*

*Task Difficulty: Supernatural. The character barely knows how to start a fire. How will she cook a gourmet meal for a finicky Maiden? Even a Master cook can't create a meal without any specifications.*

### 3.2 Resolution: Conflicts

#### Narrative Control

There will always be one narrator for the fiction. This narrator may be a player narrating from their character's point-of-view "POV" or the Sessioneer narrating from a NPC's POV.

The narrator does not bear the entire responsibility of creating an engaging Fiction. If the narrator is not the Sessioneer, then the Sessioneer must be alert and prepared to provide suggestions to support the narrator's interactions with the environment as well as arbitrate disputes over The Foundation or setting coherency.

Any character that is not a narrator may initiate a conflict with the current

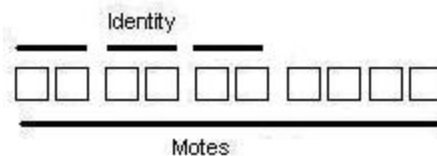
narrator's character. Whoever initiates the conflict is considered the Contender.

The Contender must spend 1m to initiate a conflict. A series of conflicts between two parties is considered a Battle. Parties can change over the course of a Battle as allies fall or switch allegiances. Battles are restricted to the scene they begin in. Each new conflict in a Battle requires the Contender to spend 1m more than the previous Contender.

#### Conflict SL

All conflicts exist on a 10-point scale.

Each box represents a SL. Each rank in a single Identity confers 2 SL. Any number of motes can be Gambled at a 1-for-1 ratio to reach the SL maximum of 10 in a conflict. All Gambled motes are lost if, and only if, their respective player loses the conflict.



Whoever has less SL assumes a Success Level Deficit "SLD" equal to the difference between the SL. The SLD is taken as mote fatigue if that character loses the conflict.

#### Context Bonus

The skill to win conflicts comes from being creative and choosing conflicts wisely. A more creative player will find more uses for their Identities and make better use of Context Bonuses.

Context Bonuses exist on a 4-point scale of Negligible, Favourable, Significant, and Godsend.

Players that give more details, and pay attention to the details given by other narrators, will be able to use these details to creatively suggest situational advantages for their character.

The sum of these advantages is considered and then determined as one of the four Context Bonuses.

If you earn more Context Bonuses than your opponent then you have earned that many-re-tries on the conflict-determining Rock-Paper-Scissors in Step Three.

Context Bonus	RPS Gained	Description
Negligible	1	May or may not have made a difference, but sure! Why not?
Favourable	2	It will help. Not much, but enough...
Significant	3	Of course this will help.
Godsend	4	Almost like you planned it.

### Determining the Victor

Both opponents are now set. They know how who has the SLD and who has extra RPS to count on.

Both opponents perform a Best of 1 Rock-Paper-Scissors “RPS” to determine the victor of the conflict. The loser of an RPS can spend as many RPS re-tries as were earned for this conflict.

RPS re-tries do not carry-over to other conflicts.

### Conflict: The Procedure

Conflict occurs in this order:

- 1.) The Contender states (in any order) the
  - i.) Identity that they will use to interrupt the current narrator’s character’s action
  - ii.) in-fiction results if their character wins the conflict
  - iii.) number of motes (if applicable), if any, that they will Gamble.
  - iv.) details from previous narrations that will grant them a Context Bonus, and the degree of that Context Bonus.

2.) The Narrator’s character states their reaction to the Contender and must cover the exact same points as the Contender.

3.) The Contender and Narrator tally their total SL. Whoever has less SL assumes a Success Level Deficit “SLD” and will take the difference in SL as mote fatigue *if they lose the conflict*.

4.) The Contender and Narrator agree on the degree of each character’s Context Bonus. They then determine who has a stronger Context Bonus and how many re-tries (if any) that player receives.

5.) Both players RPS (using re-tries if necessary) the victor of the conflict—the new Narrator.

*Conflict Ex:*

*This is a mock-conflict between the Sessioneer (currently narrating an NPC Slaver's POV) and Player Character 1, or PC 1.*

*Sessioneer: It is a mid-summer's day and the sun has nearly finished setting. The NPC slaver, despite his girth, stalks PC 1 as PC 1 makes his way back to the inn. Just as they enter a heavily shadowed alley with lots of splintered wood and sturdy wooden crates the Slaver strikes and knocks out PC 1.*

*Player 1: Hey! No way! My character fights back. I pay 1 mote. My PC has the Novice Identity "Street Kid", so he knows when he's being followed and is ready to run when the slaver tries to attack him. That's 2 SL for the Identity. I have the Druid Domain, so I will Gamble 4 motes and make my character's body more nimble. That's 6 SL.*

*I hop up a tall stack of crates and climb my way to the roof of the adjacent building. My character is small, but the slaver is large—too large to climb as quickly as me. That's a Godsend Context Bonus.*

*Sessioneer: The Slaver has the Professional Identity "Infamous Slaver from X", granting him 4 SL. He tries to quickly snag your character before he gets too high up the crates. He can't Gamble motes (most NPCs can't). That's SL 4.*

*Your character stumbles over some of the scattered wood as he tries to escape, giving the Slaver a Significant Context Bonus.*

*Player 1: Agreed. So that's 4 SL, against my 6 SL. The Slaver has an SLD of 2. I agree with him having a CB of Significant. You?*

*Sessioneer: Ya, your character would have an easy time escaping as soon as he gets on a crate. That's Godsend. You get one re-try for the RPS.*

*(Both RPS, Sessioneer wins)*

*Player 1: Let's re-try.*

*(Both RPS a second time, Player 1 wins)*

*Player 1: My character doesn't lose his Gambled motes and the Slaver takes 2 points of mote fatigue from barreling into the crates in a wild flurry to catch my PC. My PC deftly reaches the building top and...*

**Or**

*( both RPS a second time, Sessioneer wins)*

*Sessioneer: PC 1 loses his 4 Gambled motes from the trauma of being struck down by the large Slaver. The PC is bound and the Slaver patiently waits for night-fall until moving back to his...*

### **3.3 Resolution: Vessels**

Your Vessel utilizes crewmates like your character uses motes. They represent the capacity of a Vessel to influence their environment.

Each crewmate (or x number of actual NPCs) is represented by a single mote on your Vessel's character sheet.

All Vessels begin with 9 crewmates.

Your Vessel will communicate and engage in battle with other Vessels or creatures. Your PC's Role Identities will be very helpful in these situations.

You will be using modified Use Conflict Resolution rules and replace fatiguing personal motes with fatiguing crewmates.

Faceman- Negotiating with another Vessel.

Martialist- Damaging another Vessel.

Alchemist- Ensuring your crew is able-bodied enough to withstand an opponent's attack.

Steward- Maintaining a well-organized Vessel with many loyal crewmates. If a Steward's Role Identity is Pro, add 3 crewmates. If it is Mas, add 3 more (total of 15).

Crewmate fatigue does not mean a crew member has died. They may be exhausted, injured, or emotionally traumatized.



## **Part Seven: Printables**

### **7.1 Character Sheet**

**Name:**

**Player:**

**Role (Vessel):**

**Seek:**

**Code:**

**Identities:**

1.)

2.)

3.)

4.)

5.)

**Domain:**

**Pool:**

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

**Integrity:** □

**Atrophy:** □□ □□ □□

**Aesthetic:**

## 7.2 Summary Sheet

### Character Creation

**Steps:** Concept, Role, 5 Identities, Domain.

#### **Roles**

Faceman- Negotiator  
 Martialist- Fighter  
 Alchemist- Cook/Doctor  
 Navigator- Pilot/Course-setter  
 Steward- Vessel/crew maintenance

#### **Pool**

If your Pool reaches 0 and...  
 (1) you have 1 Integrity, your character cannot influence the rest of the scene.  
 (2) you have 0 Integrity, your character must expire.

#### **Mote Refreshment**

Action Taken	Motes Refreshed
Complete the Captain's Orders	All
Complete an arc	(1/3)(Pool)
Accept an Identity Compulsion	2(Identity Rank)

#### **Identity Compulsions**

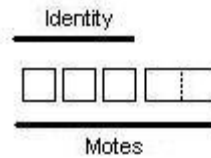
Accept: Gain 2(Identity Rank) motes.  
 Resist: Expend (Identity Rank) motes.

#### **Domains**

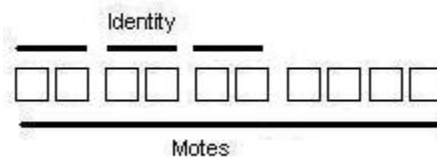
-Druid: material forms of organics  
 -Elementalist: inorganic energy and matter  
 -Auromancer: in-material forms of thinking entities.

### Resolution

#### **Tasks:**



#### **Conflict:**



#### **Context Bonus**

Context Bonus	RPS Gained	Description
Negligible	1	May or may not have made a difference, but sure! Why not?
Favourable	2	It will help. Not much, but enough...
Significant	3	Of course this will help.
Godsend	4	Almost like you planned it.

## Glossary

Arc-story arc, longer than scene

Seek

POV

RPS