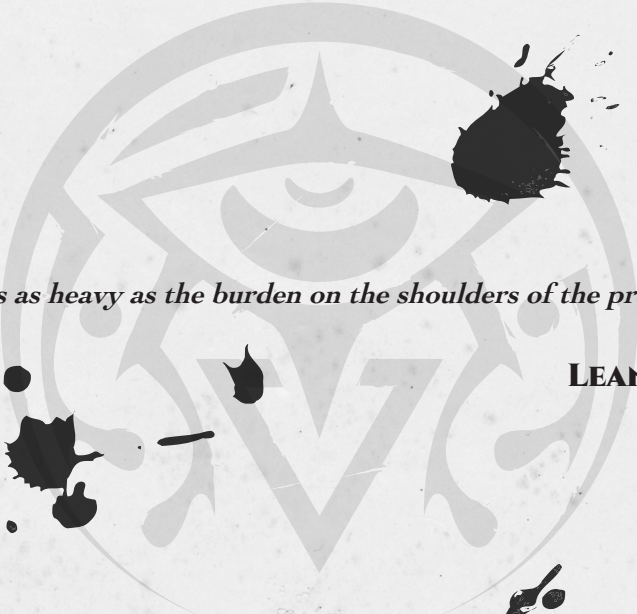


— A W A K E N —



- QUICKSTART GUIDE WITH ADVENTURE INCLUDED -
DARK FANTASY ROLEPLAYING GAME



"No burden is as heavy as the burden on the shoulders of the predestined."

LEANDER OF KAYLA

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What you hold in your hands is the Quickstart Guide for playing the pen-and-paper roleplaying game **Awaken**. In this Guide, you will find simplified rules, pre-generated characters, a short adventure, and a backstory of the world—everything you need to narrate and play **Awaken**.

WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

In a roleplaying game, players assume the roles of characters in a story. One of the players acts as a narrator, whose task is to prepare the story, its background, and the setting of the game. The players act through the story, describe the actions of their characters, and act through the scenes in the story, complying with the rules of the game. The narrator, on the other side, describes the setting, its inhabitants, and the outcomes of the players' actions, determined by the rules or by intuitive logic.

DICE ROLLING

Sometimes the outcome of an action can't be decided solely on existing facts and intuition. That's when the dice kick in. In these cases, a player or players roll dice and assess the outcome together with the narrator, using the rules and statistics of the character.

Dice rolls are most useful for adding drama, uncertainty, and suspense to the outcome of the actions.

PLAYING AWAKEN

This booklet contains a summary of the rules, guidelines on playing the game, some background of the setting, a short introductory story, and a set of pre-generated characters.

Along with this guide, you'll need a couple players to share the story with and a narrator to guide you through the game.

If you aren't an experienced roleplayer, don't worry; you can always pause the action to consult the guidelines in this book.

Players, to familiarize yourselves with the basics, read this booklet up to the **Liborian Incident** chapter.

Narrator, get well acquainted with the story beforehand so you can present it in the best way and all the players enjoy the game.

You should also have some pencils and erasers, copies of this booklet or at least the character sheets, and some dice—ideally, five black dice and five white dice.

This booklet gives all you need to play this story with the pre-generated characters we give in the **Pre-Generated Characters** chapter.

The full rulebook has more rules, options, and features. We left these out from this booklet to make it simpler and more streamlined.

The most important rule in both the full book and this booklet is **relax and have fun!** Everything else will follow.

THE WORLD

In **Awaken**, players assume the roles of powerful beings named **Vasalli**. These beings are born as ordinary humans, like any other, and they're brought into the world the same as everyone else.

But at some point in life, they change. Sometimes it begins slowly—some start to show more potential than others and slowly evolve. Other times, the change comes violently and rapidly, brought by an unfortunate event or shock.

After the change, called the **Awakening**, the Vasalli exhibit extraordinary capabilities and powers, which have earned them social prestige.

HISTORY

Awaken takes place on the Continent, whose vast territories are united under the **Alliance of the Great Cities**. Before the formation of the Alliance, the history of the Continent was long and full of wars and hostility.

In the beginning, the nomadic, indigenous tribes of the Continent founded various habitats, which slowly expanded into cities and their according territories. Many lords, kings, and princes ruled over their domains, championing expansive policies that caused frequent conflicts. Throughout many rebellions, wars, and secessions, the five greatest sovereign domains emerged: **City-State of Jarillo**, **Kayla Principality**, **Sovereign Region of Sirin**, **Duchy of Bit'wa**, and **Free State Liboria**.

Though the Continent held more regions and sovereign domains throughout, these five were the largest and strongest territories, centers of power, trade, and military might.

In the long era preceding the Alliance, these regions warred constantly for borders, resources, and trade routes—until the **Vasalli** emerged.

RISE OF THE CHURCH

Until the **Vasalli** phenomenon, many religions were fading into obscurity. Faith was becoming only a matter of perspective and personal choice. Most domains upheld one or two prevailing religions as formalities, but the religious leaders weren't part of the Continent's politics.

When rumors of people with exceptional skills and powers began to spread, the **Church of Azimoth**—then a weaker religious faction—was surprisingly fast to react. The clerics of the Church discovered connections between the rumors and the very core of their faith: their god Azimoth and the myth of creation. Reading over the Holy Scriptures, they noticed the Vasalli resembled the alleged Second Ones, mythologized as a race created to serve their god.

Hastily, they organized and went searching for the people who seemed to be the incarnation of the mythological servants of God. The Church, in their grandiosity, gave them the name Vasalli. It signified their duty to serve God and to act as mediators between Him and the ordinary people. They drafted the Vasalli into the Church ranks. Many accepted, confused with their newfound powers and hoping to understand their meaning.

Soon enough, the Church gained in ranks, empowered by its newest members wielding the Gifts. The Church insisted that the Vasalli were direct proof of Azimoth's existence, inspiring common folk to turn toward religion. The Church also attracted prominent leaders, but mostly to cultivate a potential alliance with the up-and-coming Vasalli.

PRIMORDIAL ERA

IN THE BEGINNING, WHEN SEAS WERE KISSING THE SKIES, AND WHEN LIGHT AND DARKNESS EXISTED AS ONE, TWO WEARY BEINGS FROM FAR AWAY VISITED OUR WORLD.

THEY HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR A RESTING PLACE. AFTER SOME TIME THEY FOUND IT IN A NEW WORLD, WHICH WAS TO THEIR LIKING. TOGETHER WITH THEIR RACE OF SERVANTS CALLED THE FIRST ONES, THEY SPLIT THE SEAS FROM THE SKIES AND DIVIDED LIGHT FROM DARKNESS. IN THE MIDDLE OF THOSE ELEMENTS, THEY FIRST CREATED THE SOIL, AND THEN PUT THE SEEDS OF LIFE IN IT.

THROUGH THE EONS, THE SEEDS OF LIFE THRIVED IN OUR WORLD, GIVING BIRTH TO BIRDS IN THE SKIES, FISH IN THE WATERS, AND—FINALLY—TO MANKIND ON THE EARTH.

THE TWO TRAVELERS, AZIMOTH AND ZIMITRA, WATCHED WITH GREAT INTEREST THE LIFE FORCE STREAMING THROUGH THE WORLD.

BUT ALAS, THE FIRST ONES BEGAN TO SLOWLY FADE AND WITHER. LIFE ON THE NEW WORLD WAS GROWING AND THEIR LIFESPAN WAS NEARLY AS LONG AS THEIR MASTERS’.

AS THE LAST OF THE FIRST WERE LAID PEACEFULLY INTO THE GROUND, A TERRIBLE SADNESS AND EMPTINESS FILLED AZIMOTH’S HEART. CARING AS HE IS, HE WISHED FOR THE NEW CHILDREN TO REMEMBER HIM AND HIS BLESSINGS. CHOOSING THE BEST AND THE WISEST IN THE WHOLE WORLD, HE BLESSED THEM—HE GAVE THEM SOME OF HIS OWN BLOOD TO RUN THROUGH THEIR VEINS.

THAT’S HOW THE SECOND ONES WERE CREATED.

ZIMITRA ALSO WANTED NEW SERVANTS. UNLIKE AZIMOTH, HE INSISTED THAT THEY SHOULD BE MINDLESS WORKERS WITH NO FREE WILL. THIS CLASH OF IDEALS CAUSED A GREAT STRIFE BETWEEN THEM. SOON IT ESCALATED INTO OPEN WAR, CALLED THE WAR OF DAWN.

THAT TERRIBLE WAR SHOOK THE WORLD TO ITS VERY CORE, FOR IT WAS HORRENDOUS AS IT WAS SHORT. THE MOUNTAINS AND SEAS BOILED. DARKNESS RULED OVER THE EARTH AS GIANT SHADOWS FOUGHT IN THE DARKENED SKIES.

EVENTUALLY, AZIMOTH PREVAILED. HE BANISHED ZIMITRA, COWED AND WOUNDED, INTO THE WORLD’S CORE TO SPEND HIS DAYS CAGED THERE, UNABLE TO RETURN.

THE TIME THAT FOLLOWED WAS THE TIME OF RECUPERATION. DECIMATED BY THE WAR, HUMANITY TRIED TO SURVIVE THE CHAOTIC AFTERMATH. LED BY THE SECOND ONES, MANKIND GRASPED THE NATURE OF THOSE SHADOWS FIGHTING OVER THEM, UNDERSTOOD AZIMOTH FOR WHAT HE WAS, AND FINALLY BEGAN TO CELEBRATE HIM AS THEIR GOD.

NEW GENERATIONS ROSE AND FELL. THE SECOND ONES MIXED WITH COMMON PEOPLE SUCH THAT, EVENTUALLY, ALL THEIR POWERS DISAPPEARED. WITH THE FADING OF THE SECOND ONES, AZIMOTH ONCE AGAIN FELT LONELY, EMPTY, AND—ABOVE ALL—TIRED. FOR THE LAST TIME HE ADDRESSED MANKIND AND DECLARED HIS INTENTIONS TO SLEEP. HE PROMISED HE WOULD RETURN IN THE TIME OF THEIR DIREST NEED, AND THEN RETREATED INTO HIS RESTING PLACE IN THE GREAT PYRAMID IN JARILLO.

THE WORLD HELD ITS BREATH AFTER THE GOD WENT TO SLEEP. FOR THE FIRST TIME WE UNDERSTOOD AZIMOTH’S LONELINESS, AS WE FELT THE SAME WAY WITHOUT HIM.

THIS TIME, THE DARKNESS THE WORLD WAS PLUNGED INTO WAS OF A DIFFERENT NATURE...

ANYELL DRAINA “OF CREATION AND DIVISION”



A noble Vasall with her bodyguards

THE ALLIANCE

As the Church of Azimoth gained in power throughout the Continent, monarchs and the leaders of various domains and regions realized that times had changed. Seeing this, they had enough sense to cease their conflicts and investigate what the Church was up to.

The bishops of the Church understood that conflicts only delayed their growth. Through pleading and persuasion, they convinced the domain leaders to sign treaties that allowed for peaceful distribution of the territories and undisturbed passage amongst the cities.

The political leaders realized, if they were to gain the favor of the Vasalli, they would have to allow the Church to expand, so they decided to form a loose alliance that would benefit both the Church and State.

While some domains were reluctant, in the end most territories joined the Alliance, seeing its benefits.

Along the way, the autonomous domains and regions pulled into Alliance, gaining the status and common name as the **Great Cities of the Alliance**.

The Great Cities had their own struggles dividing the territories, but after long periods of debate they formed the core of the Alliance.

Today, the Alliance spans most of the Continent, surrounded by seas and mountain ranges. In the North, the Alliance borders the strange lands called the **Uncharted Territories**. These territories, separated by a massive mountain range called the **Great Divide**, are frozen lands, home to various nomadic tribes and peculiar kingdoms. Rumors say that those kingdoms lie further north, where the lands aren't covered in ice, but flourish in a mild climate.

In the South, the Alliance is surrounded by seas. Many sailors spin tales about the lands further to the south, where the sun scorches people alive.

EMERGENCE OF THE ORDERS

The Alliance was an unstable creation, from the lords shifting their allegiances to the unscrupulous politicians plotting for their own benefit. Everyone wanted to get close to the Vasalli, who were slowly establishing themselves in the world.

Feeling they'd been oft used for manipulative power plays, the Vasalli decided to form the first Great Order, named the Circle. Its roots were in the Church of Azimoth and its division which supported them, but the Circle soon separated as an independent body concerned with Vasalli benefits alone.

Quickly gaining power throughout the Alliance, the Circle was partially responsible for the establishment of the **Great Tribunal** and the **City Tribunals**—bodies comprised of prominent politicians, Church members, nobility and Vasalli—which would decide on the politics of the Alliance and Great Cities.

The Church of Azimoth and the **Circle** spread like wildfire throughout the Continent. However, some of the more-active members of Alliance society felt that too much power was being shifted into the hands of the Circle and the Church, so they decided to form a new Order to oppose them—one that would gather freethinkers, philosophers, and everybody who questioned the Circle's and Church's beliefs.

The young Order, famed for their acceptance of the Vasalli and ordinary folk alike, but who differed in opinions with the prevalent religious zealots, was soon named **Zorya**, or "dawn," symbolizing the promise of a new dawn for all freethinkers.

Giving a place to all who opposed the piousness of the Circle, Zorya soon grew in strength and became a threat.

After the initial strife and antagonism, Zorya decided to leave the underground and begin their all-out opposition of the Circle. The following period of conflict gave birth to two new Orders: **Siebog** and **Morana**.

Those new Orders, with their peculiar philosophies and politics, were safe havens for Vasalli defects fed up with the Circle-Zorya clash.

Meanwhile, constant shifts in the politics of the Alliance threatened to demolish the fragile union. It was corroded from the inside by conflicts amongst the Orders on one side, and conflicts between new politicians and members of the old nobility on the other.

One of the most threatening conflicts came with the discovery of the Colossi. These majestic beings were first created in the **Jarillo** during one of the rare peaceful periods in the history of the Orders.

The world held its breath and waited for the consequences of the discovery. Noticing the destructive power of the Colossi, members of the Alliance reached a peaceful solution by appointing the Colossi as defenders and builders.

COLOSSI

These enormous creatures are transformed Vasalli who willingly submitted themselves to the painful changes of the months-long **Rites of Colossi**. The end results were tremendous humanoids of various appearances.

They don't communicate, but they obey the instructions of their Handlers, Vasalli expert in controlling the minds of the Colossi.

They are mainly used as warriors and toilers for the construction of magnificent buildings.

THE ORDERS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHIES



THE CIRCLE is the oldest known Order, formed after the Vasalli appeared throughout the world. Born under the mantle of the Church, the core of this Order was formed by religious Vasalli who devoted their life to their God, Azimoth.

Though the Circle is officially separate from the Church, some branches still have connections and consider themselves the "Champions of Azimoth," devoting their life to pious studying of Azimoth's Holy Scriptures or defending his cause with zeal and militancy.

However, not every person in this Order is a religious fanatic. There are many cases of Circle members who joined because of the possible benefits. No matter one's personal philosophy, the members of this Order tend to be thoroughly devoted to their life goals, no matter what they are.



ZORYA formed in a period of widespread unrest, during which many realized the Circle clergy was gaining power through the numerous Vasalli joining the Order.

The founders of Zorya refused to accept a widespread belief system. Today, the circle is a second option for those who do not trust the Circle, but remain in touch with various forms of spirituality.

They quickly gained followers from detractors of the Church, opposing the idea that the Vasalli should serve the causes of the clergy.

After the rapid growth in their ranks, especially after various members of the nobility joined, the Circle simply had to accept Zorya's ascension.

Zorya is constantly challenging both the Circle and the clergy, but they aren't very violent.

Often considered mystics, members of Zorya are philosophers and thinkers who question the essence and substantiality of life, searching for alternate explanations of the Vasalli's existence.



ORDER OF SIEBOG formed during the feud between Zorya and the Circle, under the leadership of a Vasall named Siebog. Siebog believed that the Vasalli were the destined leaders of the people, simply because they were superior.

This Order is almost exclusively made of Vasalli, although they have common folk amongst them who believe that the Vasalli should lead mankind.

Many see members of this Order as hedonists, enjoying their gifts as much as possible. They tend to be loud, flamboyant, and egotistical. Nevertheless, they are well liked for their candor and good spirits. They don't remind people of the harsh rules of the Circle or Zorya, rather they celebrate relaxation and giving in to their needs and nature. Members of this Order believe they are above the common folk, both socially and spiritually. They often proclaim themselves higher beings, looking down on the rest, sometimes treating them like sheep or material to be manipulated.



MORANA evolved from a mysterious organization created by Morana, an outcast of the Circle. Led by the idea that the Vasalli should be allowed to use their gifts for personal gain, Morana left her Order and started a mercenary team made exclusively of Vasalli. Later, joined by other Vasalli and sometimes even ordinary folk, the Moranas officially renounced their mercenary ways and focused on trade.

The Order coordinated and established many trade routes, securing them the favor of the Alliance and the Great Cities, as well as a place in the Tribunals.

Today, it is a kind of public secret that Moranas front as traders only to mask their unchanged ways as shady businessmen and mercenaries. Though they border the definition of a criminal organization, their services are sometimes needed even by the officials of the Alliance.



SONS OF SIRIN are the youngest Order, coming to life after the terrible fallout of Sirin's destruction in the Great War. Convinced that other Orders and cities were responsible, the Vasalli from Sirin cut the ties with them to eventually form the Sons of Sirin. After Sirin was rebuilt, the Orders officially recognized the Sons as one of the Orders allowed a place in Sirin's Tribunal.

Their fierce politics and attitude earned them followers in other Great Cities and other Tribunals.

Dedicated to preserving the peace in their own cities, the Sons of Sirin is a proud Order that refuses to submit to the clergy, the Alliance, or nobility. Almost every Vasall born near Sirin joins the Sons out of sense of duty, pride, and honor.

THREATS TO THE ALLIANCE

Although the Alliance of the Great Cities takes up most of the Continent, they aren't alone. Threats to the Alliance and its denizens lurk both outside and inside its territory.

INCURSIONS FROM THE NORTH

The most visible and tangible threat to the Alliance are the tribes inhabiting the cold and icy North of the Continent, as well as the exotic **Kingdom of Drumar**. While the Alliance was being formed, some territories were left out of the union simply because they lacked known resources and strategic importance. These territories include the vast frozen steppes and mountains beyond the **Great Divide**, a majestic mountain range bordering the Alliance on the North. These places are mostly unexplored and are colloquially called the Uncharted Territories by the citizens of the Alliance.

Nevertheless, those territories are home to various nomadic tribes—tribes which are stubbornly independent and proud of surviving by plundering the border cities and villages.

Every once in a while, a traveler speaks of exotic lands further North, where other people can be found, and where kingdoms and monarchies rise and fall.

The Alliance has firsthand experience with armies of one such kingdom, which had united the nomadic tribes and waged war against the cities of the North. The armies of the Alliance were surprised again when they realized that the Vasalli and even other Colossi dwelled amongst the people north of the Divide.

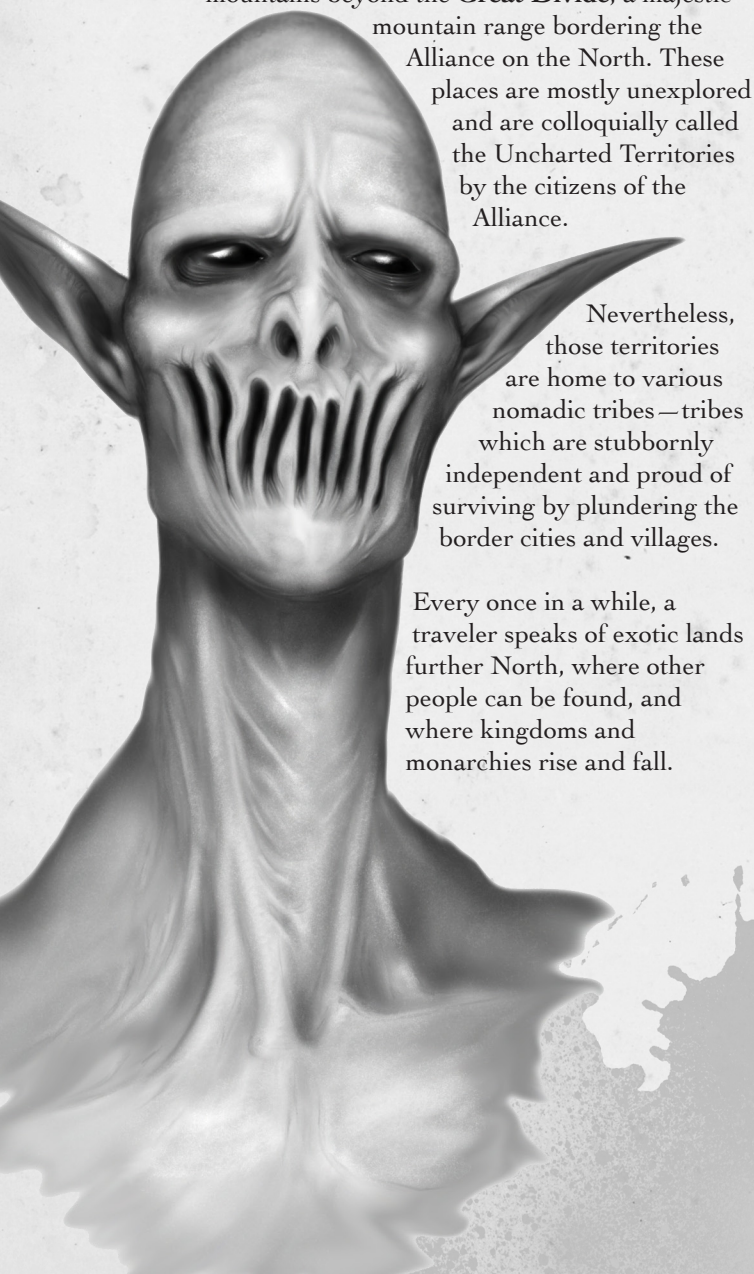
Although the raids and war parties from the North are rare lately, the Alliance is wary of the people from the North, and rumors circulate that this is only the calm before the storm.

VARGANS

These creatures of the dark underground are feared for good reason: their brutal attacks on the villages and cities of the Alliance have taken their fair toll in human lives. These nocturnal creatures are over two meters high, grey or white skinned, with long ears and black eyes. They are extremely ferocious and resilient, so no sane human or Vasall would choose to fight alone against one. They are known to defeat and kill whole groups of capable warriors while leaving the site of combat unscathed.

The Vargans live underground in networks of tunnels, which hold many secrets yet unknown to humanity.

The Alliance has suffered much from Vargan troubles, leading to an open war. The Alliance eventually won, but with heavy casualties—including the utter destruction of the city of Sirin and vast damage to Jarillo.



The Church of Azimoth and its followers are confident that the Vargans are a race created by **Azimoth's** adversary **Zimitra**, trapped in his underground prison. According to the Church's beliefs, Zimitra created Vargans to do his bidding and punish the people above, until he frees himself and wages one final war against Azimoth and his followers.

The scholars of nature still work to fathom the origin of Vargans. They insist that the beasts are somehow related to Resin, a wondrous substance humanity has begun to exploit. Their research has led them to believe that the Vargans aren't connected to animals or vegetation, but rather are at least partially of **fungal origin**.

INNER THREATS

Not all threats to the Alliance come from outside enemies. Because the Alliance is relatively new, unstable, and made of autonomous regions, not everyone likes the pact that allows one body to control the domains.

The first and foremost opponents of the Alliance are the **old nobles** and **separatists** from the Great Cities, who chafe at the idea of a union and oppose the directives of the **Great Tribunal** every step of the way.

Various cults and smaller Orders also exist, but their ideas and actions are suppressed by the Alliance. These organizations would rather see the Great Cities as autonomous regions, removing the Orders' strong network of support.

There are rumors of a secret society called **Rosaria**,

THE RESIN

In more recent times, science progressed rapidly through the whole world. With the discovery of a substance colloquially called Resin, many tinkerers and chemists turned to explore the wondrous capabilities of this new material.

This bioluminescent substance is widely used for illumination, medical purposes, tinkering, engineering, and craft. Sometimes it is even used as a narcotic, since its base acts as a relaxant or stimulant depending on how it's processed or consumed.

CHARACTERS

In *Awaken*, each player controls a **player character** (PC or **character**), while the narrator spins the story and controls other fictional characters (**non-player character** or **NPCs**).

Your character is your alter ego, your persona in the game, and one of the main protagonists in the world of *Awaken*

Like all heroes, your character is usually a complex personality with several distinctive features, characteristics of your alter-ego: your attributes, skills, virtues, and **Gifts**. This chapter deals with the features of your character, but your character isn't the simple sum of those features.

Quite the opposite: your character may develop a strong personality in spite of some features, not conforming to his strengths or weaknesses. Use your imagination!





ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are innate abilities, representing your character's potential and capabilities.

They are divided into three categories:

Sociality, Intellect, and Physicality.

SOCIALITY

This attribute unifies all the social abilities, aspects, and traits, including one's attitude toward society. How good-looking is your character? How charming? Can he swindle people with his words? Does she radiate charisma?

Good-looking people, great manipulators, charismatic con artists, and politicians all have a high Sociality. A high Sociality helps in first impressions, persuasion, bluffing, manipulation, and all other social aspects of life, including public performances and etiquette.

INTELLECT

This attribute sums up mental abilities and potential, including one's ability to memorize, think clearly, and stay sharp.

Intellect reflects an ability to observe one's surroundings, both analytically and intuitively. It shows one's mastery of knowledge, memory, and facts, as well as intellectual flexibility and the ability to think outside the box. It can also show one's level of education, formal or informal.

Academics and professors have high Intellect, but it isn't reserved for them. Strategists and analysts, as well as chemists and engineers all benefit from high Intellect.

PHYSICALITY

This attribute describes one's overall physical condition. Raw strength, speed, dexterity, and resiliency all fall under this category.

It governs one's pure power, physical impact, and lifting strength, as well as nimbleness, speed, and quickness. A high Physicality attribute reflects the ability to adapt and survive tremendous punishment before being knocked out.

Physicality also represents one's general bodily fitness and endurance. High Physicality is important for athletes, fighters, and acrobats, as well as for burglars, thieves, and marksmen.

ATTRIBUTE RANKS

Every attribute is ranked from 1 to 5, which determines how well your character acts using that attribute. Don't imagine attributes as one-dimensional numbers. They can be more complex than that. Try to see each as a whole collection of features.

High Intellect could mean you can memorize almost everything you see, but you had terrible education — but it could mean the opposite!

High Sociality could mean you are the most beautiful creature someone will ever see, but it doesn't necessarily mean you aren't shy.

Finally, high Physicality could mean you are incredibly healthy and resilient, but not stronger than average.

SKILLS

Skills are abilities developed over a lifespan. Some of them have an intuitive element, but that doesn't mean they can't be trained or that everyone is born with them. Details on advancing skills are found in the full rules.

Skills are wide categories, just like attributes. Some of them are pretty straightforward, but we'll describe each in depth so you can better understand what they encompass.

The skills are loosely categorized with respect to the attributes. When rolling, players roll a number of dice equal to their attribute rank to their skill rank. For more details, see **Using the Dice**.

(see pg. 19 for the game mechanics)

SPECIALIZATIONS

Every skill has specializations, more focused aspects of the skill. For instance, a character with Survival can specialize in tracking, or a character with Expression can specialize in bluffing.

Specializations can grant bonus dice for rolls of its parent skill when the specialization applies; this is explained in detail in the full rules.



SOCIAL SKILLS

EXPRESSION

Everything connected to expression, whether verbal or non-verbal, including body language and posture. It can also describe your etiquette and phrasing or your ability to persuade.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Persuasion, Bluffing, Manipulation, Etiquette etc.

EMPATHY

Capacity to recognize emotions, motivations, and hidden opinions. You can use it to discover how someone feels or whether someone is hiding something.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Cold Reading, Body Language, Carousing etc.

ORATOR

The art of public speaking, teaching, getting attention, and motivation.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Speeches, Lectures, Motivational Speeches, Demagogy etc.

PERFORMANCE

General knowledge and practice in the arts, and everything related to its public performance.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Singing, Dancing, Acting etc.

TRADE

Capability for good bartering, finance, and business. It can be valuable when you're faced with a sly trader or when you want to get the best price.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Barter, Appraising, Hagglng, Finance etc.

INTELLECT SKILLS

ACADEMICS

Level of schooling and academic knowledge. It covers the basic facts of a wide range of disciplines.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Astronomy, Religion, Geography, History etc.

CRAFT

Knowledge of crafting techniques, craftsmanship, skilled manual work, or even various arts. Useful when building something with your own hands.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Blacksmithing, Masonry, Sculpting, Painting etc.

MEDICINE

Knowledge of bodily functions and treatment of illnesses. It reflects an understanding of health and recovery, as well as medical methods from bandaging to setting bones. Learned either through schooling or experience.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Anatomy, Diagnosing, Apothecary etc.

KNOWLEDGE

General understanding of the world. It represents your empirical knowledge of your surroundings as well as various broad subjects and facts.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Mythology, Old Tales, Hearsay, Nobility etc.

PERCEPTION

Ability to understand and respond to changes in surroundings, whether analytically or intuitively. It encompasses your senses, both how quickly you can use them and how acute they are.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Sight, Hearing, Scrutinizing, Focusing etc.

PHYSICALITY SKILLS

AGILITY

Dexterity, nimbleness, and reflexes. It describes your athletic condition, coordination, and your overall mastery of movement.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Tumbling, Jumping, Balancing, Running etc.

FRAY

The ability to wield weapons and fight bare-handed. It represents your mastery of combat, reflecting your training or intuitive knowledge of where to strike. Whenever you attack with a melee weapon or no weapon, you roll Fray.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Swords, Daggers, Brawl, Evasion etc.

STEALTH

The ability to move unseen, to pick pockets, steal, or perform other stealthful or underhanded acts. It's crucial for those dealing in immoral or less-than-legal activities.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Sneaking, Lock picking, Pick pocketing etc.

RANGE

The mastery of long-ranged and throwing weapons. Those trained in this skill have excellent hand-to-eye coordination and much knowledge of ranged weapons. Whenever you attack with a ranged weapon, you roll Range.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Bows, crossbows, throwing etc.

SURVIVAL

Knowledge of nature, traveling, wilds, tracking, hunting, and orienteering. It is important for hunters and everyone dealing with nature, because it also covers knowledge of animals and plants.

SAMPLE SPECIALIZATIONS:

Orientation, Tracking, Travel, Hunting etc.





A Colossus Handler

SKILL RANKING

A skill rank of 0 is unranked, meaning the character has no training in it. A character with an unranked skill can still use it, rolling only the relevant attribute (see pg. 20 for the game mechanics)

SKILL RANKINGS

0 RANKS

You've never had any training in the skill, or you rarely use the skill in life.

1 RANK

You know the basics of the skill, and you use it every once in a while, at least as a hobby if not actively.

2 RANKS

You have some experience under your belt. Although you started using this skill recently, you've advanced pretty quickly and use it on a weekly basis.

3 RANKS

The skill is ever-present in your life, and you use it almost on a daily basis, maybe because of your profession or because you enjoy it.

4 RANKS

You are a real professional and very competent in most aspects covered by the skill, as you train on a daily basis.

5 RANKS

Your prowess in the skill has earned you the envy of people who know you. Thinking you as the master of the skill, they often seek you for help or instruction.

VIRTUES

Like humans, Vasalli are volatile creatures. However, everybody has virtues of the soul and it's a personal choice to use them. They represent one's blind luck, perseverance, or stability of mind. They are guides for roleplaying, but can be rolled to determine the outcomes of certain situations, and they are pools of points that can be spent.

LUCK

Some people just have enormous luck. It can seem like they walk through life while everything good happens to them and everything bad simply passes by. Others are just darn unlucky. Everything turns bad for them, and they must depend on their sheer skills, hoping they won't fumble something.

Rolling: Luck is rolled when the narrator wants to leave an outcome to chance. For example, Luck could be rolled when a character plays games of chance or falls down a cliff and may hit either rocks or water.

Spending: On any skill roll, one Luck point can be spent to achieve an automatic success.

Luck points are regained at the pace of one per good night's sleep.

WILL

Will is the essential willpower of the character, his inner strength and drive. It represents discipline and self-control when confronted with the unfortunate odds and situations.

It's not unheard of for someone to succeed on a task solely with sheer will or dedication.

Rolling: Will is rolled when a character must withstand threats to mental stability and sanity. A great loss, terrible violence, supernatural visions or events: these all test Will.

Spending: With self-discipline and pure willpower, a character can modify the outcome of a skill roll. Spending one Will point adds one success to a roll.

Will points are regained only when the player rolls an exceptional success (5+ successes on the roll).

COURAGE

Courage is one's general bravery. It can be used heavily as a guideline for roleplaying. The world of **Awaken** is filled with strange happenings and dark situations, but in the end everyone has to face their own fears.

Rolling:

Unlike the other virtues, Courage can only be rolled. When your character is confronted by their fears or with a terrible situation, rolling Courage is applicable. The outcome of the roll decides whether the character freezes in fear, flees in terror, or keeps calm and rational.

USING VIRTUES

Using the virtues either as guidelines for your character or as tools for tilting the things in your favor is a great way to elevate your game experience.

Virtue points can be rolled or spent. For a virtue roll, you roll dice equal to the current points in the applicable virtue pool. Usually, one success is enough to succeed.

Before making a virtue roll, you can also spend virtue points to ensure a good outcome in the situation at hand. Reducing your virtue pool makes virtue rolls harder, though, and getting virtue points back can be hard, so be careful how you spend them. Sometimes the virtues are the last bastion of Vasalli stability, and if they crumble the results can be devastating.

ENDURANCE

Endurance represents one's life force and general physical state. As characters take damage in fights or get injured by their surroundings, they lose Endurance and get closer to death. Fights in **Awaken** are lethal, so be wary of Endurance.

Every point of **lethal damage** decreases your Endurance by one, while every point of **nonlethal damage** lessens it by a half point; effectively, two nonlethal damage is as dangerous as one lethal damage.

GIFTS

The true power of the Vasalli lies in the exquisite array of special powers they are blessed with. Those powers are called **Gifts**. Although there are several theories about their origins, the most widespread is that they are given by the Azimoth, thus their name.

The Gifts are divided into 4 Gift Trees;

M I N D
B O D Y
I L L U S I O N
R E A L I T Y

The Gifts are various, and they represent the most powerful abilities of the Vasalli arsenal, making them feared opponents.

C O R R U P T I O N

Though the Vasalli Gifts offer them great power, the other side of the coin is corruption. While people are afraid of Vasalli for their Gifts, some Vasalli fear them because of the toll the Gifts take.

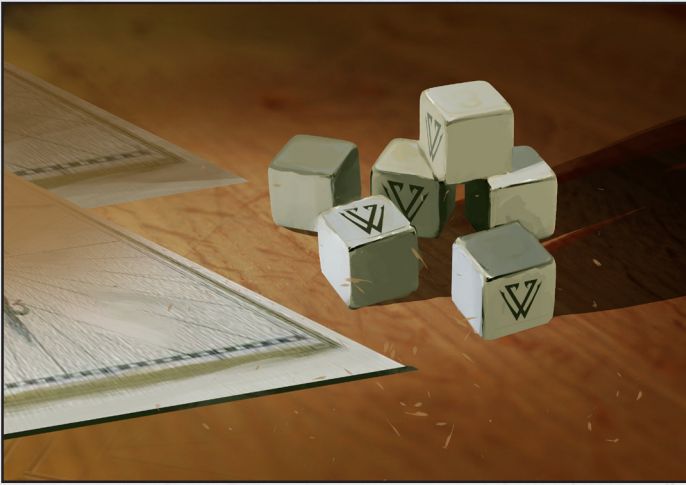
Corruption is the most dangerous aspect of the Vasalli and their abilities. It is the taint in their body and blood—a constant threat and a curse, hanging over their head and casting shadows on their actions.

When the Vasalli fail to harness their Gifts, the power courses through their body, corroding everything in its path and corrupting the body and mind.

Some Vasalli fear that great corruption will influence their minds in a very dangerous way. It gnaws on rationality and darkens their minds, exposing them to various derangements.

Older Vasalli know it well—that's why they think twice before using their Gifts. However, resisting such powerful Gifts is not an easy task. Many Vasalli are already encircled in corruption's grip, and their tolerance to its acidic touch has lessened. "Absolute power corrupts absolutely" is a motto that can be applied to everyone, but for the Vasalli it is a particular menace that leads to self-destruction.

PLAYING THE GAME



USING THE DICE

As we stated before, dice are used to determine the outcomes of actions. **Awaken** uses six-sided dice, common in every hobby shop. We recommend you get at least 10 dice. Although players can share them, it doesn't hurt to have more.

When players roll the dice to determine an outcome, it's called simply a **roll**. There are various rolls named after features, such as **skill rolls**, **Gift rolls**, and **virtue rolls**.

Each feature has a **rank**, a numerical rating that indicates the number of dice rolled during a check using that feature, also called the **roll pool**.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Die rolls of 5 and 6 are **successes**. If a dice roll contains at least one success, it succeeds, and the character enacts his intent. Otherwise, the **roll fails**.

EXCEPTIONAL SUCCESS AND DRAMATIC FAILURE

Rolling five or more successes in one dice roll is an **exceptional success**. In this case, the narrator describes the most favorable outcome of the character's action, and the character regains one Will up to his maximum.

Rolling no successes and at least one 1 in one dice roll is a **dramatic failure**. In this case, the narrator describes the worst possible outcome of the character's action without killing him.

Use exceptional successes and **dramatic failures** to add drama to the story, not just to reward or punish the players.

CONTESTED ROLL

If a character's action is opposed, the player must perform a contested roll.

On a contested roll, both parties involved in the action roll the same attribute and skill. For instance, if the acting wants to trip an NPC, he rolls **Physicality + Agility**, while the resisting character rolls his own **Physicality + Agility**.

The character who rolls more successes on a contested roll succeeds. In the case of a tie, the defender—that is, the character opposing the roll—always succeeds.

Although conflicts are often best resolved through roleplaying and creativity, situations that are difficult to resolve this way are good opportunities to use a contested roll.

ROLLING FOR TASKS

Tasks are actions that characters can perform using their skills, and usually somewhat complicated. A task could be picking a lock, orientating oneself in the woods, climbing a wall, or outrunning a pack of wild dogs. Still, don't think that everything your character does is a task: opening a door or pulling a rope aren't tasks, since they are quite simple.

Rolling a task has the following steps:



The Great Tribunal in Kayla before the meeting

1. ANNOUNCE INTENT

The player announces his character's intention. The narrator decides whether the action requires a roll or not. If there is little or no possibility of failure, with no real consequences, the action should not be rolled. If failure is possible with real consequence, the action may require a roll.

Some examples of actions requiring a roll are climbing a steep wall, jumping over a wide chasm, memorizing a complex equation, juggling, eavesdropping, sneaking, or throwing something precisely and far.

Example:

The cat burglar Vanessa has silently landed on the roof, and finds herself in front of a locked trapdoor. Her player Kate decides that Vanessa wants to pick its lock.

2. DEFINE THE ROLL POOL

The narrator defines the roll pool. Depending on the nature of the action or task, the acting player usually combines the ranks of the relevant attribute and skill, which determines how many dice the player rolls.

If a character doesn't have any ranks in the applicable skill, he rolls a number of dice equal to only the applicable attribute.

Example:

The narrator decides that picking a lock uses a roll pool of Vanessa's Physicality attribute and Stealth skill.

3. DESCRIBE THE ACTION AND ROLL THE DICE

After describing the action as best able, preferably in first person, the player rolls the pool. If the player describes the action well, the narrator can award dice according to the Picture Rule.

(See next page for the Picture Rule)

Example:

Vanessa's Physicality is 5 and her Stealth is 2, so the roll pool has 5 dice. Kate says, "I approach the trapdoor cautiously, looking around to see if something's amiss. I take out my tools slowly from the hidden compartment in my belt, and gently insert them into the lock. Slowly turning and picking, I expect to hear the 'click' from the lock."

(For the creative and vivid description as this, the narrator awards Kate two bonus dice.) Kate rolls 7 dice and gets 2 successes, enough to open the lock.

4. DESCRIBE THE OUTCOME

If the player rolled enough successes to pass the task, the narrator describes the outcome. Tasks generally require one success, but the narrator can set higher requirements.

Example:

Narrator: "You succeeded in your task. You feel a soft 'click' under your fingers, suggesting that the lock has been picked. Slowly, you open the trapdoor, and you see a spiral staircase going down into the darkness."

THE PICTURE RULE

We urge the players and narrator to cooperate in creating and developing the story, igniting creativity and passion for everyone's enjoyment. With that in mind, there is one rule both sides should keep in mind while determining roll pools: the **Picture Rule**.

Before rolling any dice pool, if a player actively describes the action in a vivid, creative, and picturesque way (hence the name), the narrator can reward her with 1 to 3 bonus dice for her proactive participation. For particularly creative descriptions, the narrator can skip the roll and reward the player with an **automatic success**.

BONUS-DICE EXAMPLES

1 DIE

A succinct, vivid description.

2 DICE

A succinct, vivid description that captures the mood of the game and situation.

3 DICE

A succinct, vivid, creative description that captures the mood and which delights and excites the other players.

AUTOMATIC SUCCESS

An exceptionally succinct, vivid, creative description that captures the mood and delights and excites the other players so much that everyone agrees it deserves to automatically succeed.

Example of the Picture Rule:

Narrator: After many hours of pitch-black unconsciousness, you feel the sun upon your cheeks and hear the faint tweets of the birds. You wake up and open your eyes, realizing that you are in a forest, stripped with your clothes and possessions.

Player: Do I recognize the location?

Narrator: Sorry, no. This is one of the many forests in the area, not exceptional by any means. All you can see are trees and bushes.

Player: Can I use my Survival skill to grasp my sense of direction?

Narrator: Of course, you can try.

Player: I take a good look around and carefully examine the trees to see if there is any moss.

Narrator: Yes, there is some moss on the trees. As you approach the nearest trees, you see it clearly.

Player: Great! Moss grows facing north, so I know which direction is north. Can I try to find my approximate location using the position of the sun and the moss?

Narrator: Clever thinking. You're quick on your feet! Roll an Intellect and Survival roll, with two extra dice for your creativity and for following the Picture Rule.

Player: Thanks! (Player rolls 4 successes)

Narrator: Looking at the position of the sun, you notice a mountain to the north. Thanks to your good Survival roll, you realize it is The Great Divide and that you're five to ten kilometers north of the Great City of Bit'wa.



OTHER ROLLS

Besides task rolls, there are a few other types of rolls. We'll cover them here.

VIRTUE ROLLS

Earlier, we gave situations where virtue rolls are needed: when a touch of luck is needed, when cold blood and composure might be crucial when facing danger, or when fear creeps on the back of your neck. On a virtue roll, the number of dice rolled equals the number of points in your **virtue pool**.

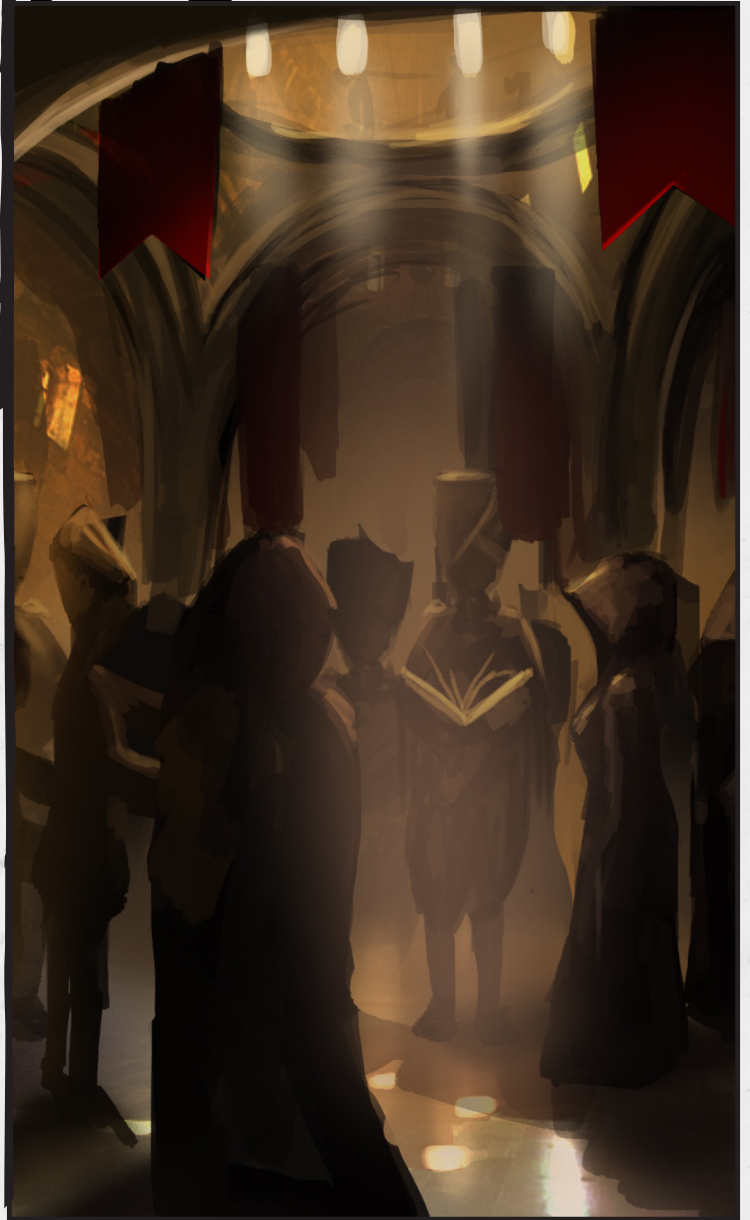
GIFT ROLLS

When a Vasall uses a Gift, it requires a **Gift roll**. For this, the player rolls dice equal to the rank of his corresponding **Gift Tree**.

There are two kinds of Gifts: **reflexive Gifts** and **affective Gifts**. Reflexive Gifts are those a Vasall uses on himself, while affective Gifts are those he exerts on someone else.

If the Gift is reflexive, the player succeed by rolling one success. If a Gift is affective, a contested roll is needed.

There is one more type of roll, explained in the next section: **the combat roll**.



Order meeting

COMBAT

Although **Awaken** focuses on roleplaying and the art of narration, the time will undoubtedly come when the characters will end up in a situation that calls for arms and violent conflicts.

As history shows, combat is sometimes unavoidable, so it must have a place in the game.

Combat in **Awaken** reflects the drama and chaos of violent encounters. Quick and lethal, combat is a dangerous feat where characters risk their lives in a clash of skills, wits, and brute force in a messy, down-and-dirty way, trying to survive. Everybody acts at the same time, and there are many things that can go wrong.

The combat system tries to maintain the fluidity and pacing of the story even during vicious fights, allowing for extraordinary stunts and creative deeds, especially when the Vasalli use their Gifts.

THE COMBAT ROUND

Combat progresses in **rounds**, with each player acting at the same time. Because combat is very lethal, it may even last only one round.

Each round has four phases:

1. Declaration Phase
2. Maneuver Phase
3. Engagement Phase
4. Resolution Phase

DECLARATION PHASE

The players declare what they want their characters to do during the two following phases, the Maneuver Phase and Engagement Phase. These actions can vary from taking cover to running, jumping on an opponent to attack, or using Gifts.

Remember to reward players who follow the Picture Rule by describing their actions with great detail and creativity while fitting the theme and mood of the story.

Instant actions can be performed prior to attacking: instant Gifts and incidental actions like speaking to other characters. Other actions are more complicated and demand more time, sacrificing the chance of attack.

If a player wants to do multiple actions—and can, of course—she must state so in this phase. She must also state whether she wishes to spend Luck or Will points, if she believes that succeeding using only skills is unlikely.

When declaring an attack, players can declare an unarmed attack, melee attack, or ranged attack.

A character can attack targets equal to his rank in the skill used to attack. For example, a character with 3 ranks in Fray can attack up to 3 targets in the same round using a close combat attack.

Example:

During the Declaration Phase, Samantha describes her actions: "I'm a careful fighter, but I understand the psychic benefits of intimidation, so I jump with apparent fearlessness, screaming and flailing with my weapon trying to intimidate the poacher before engaging him directly."

Because everyone acts at the same or almost the same time, the order of declaring actions isn't particularly important. However, it's helpful to organize the order for simplicity's sake. Any simple system works—whether it's alphabetical, from left to right, or something else—but it should vary from turn to turn to keep it dynamic and interesting.

MANEUVER PHASE

In this phase, perform any actions that aren't direct attacks: Gifts, movement, and Combat Maneuvers.

When a character acts in a way that affects an opponent but isn't an attack—for example, using the Mindcarver Gift or using a Combat Maneuver to trip an opponent—make the contested rolls in this phase.

For actions that do not allow for an attack in the same round—generally at the discretion of the narrator, although some Gifts in the full rules explicitly state this—start in this phase and end in the Engagement Phase.

Example:

During the Declaration Phase, Sarah declares that her character Ioanna will try and intimidate a poacher, before attacking him. During the Maneuver Phase, she rolls Sociality + Expression to intimidate the opponent. (She could have also rolled Physicality + Expression, depending on the approach and narrator's choice.) She succeeds in the intimidation roll, and the narrator awards her (because of the Picture Rule) with 2 bonus dice for her attack roll during the Engagement Phase.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE

All attacking or defending players now make combat rolls.

Combat rolls have the following steps:

- Add dice to the combat pool according to the attack type declared in the Declaration Phase. (Described in detail below.) To count up the Combat Pool, add the ranks in the applicable attribute, skill, and equipment.
- Add the bonus dice (from the Picture Rule) or subtract the penalties.
- **Divide the dice between attack and defense in the way they want and which closely describes a manner of the attack.**
- Roll the attack and defense dice.

The narrator rolls the combat pools the same way as the players, but for the opponents battling the characters.



MELEE AND UNARMED ATTACKS

The combat pool for melee and unarmed attacks is Physicality + Fray + Agility, adding any bonus dice given by weapons and armor. There must be at least as many dice left in defense as is the number of dice given by armor, if there is any.

Example:

Gregori has Physicality 3, Fray 2, Agility 2. He carries a sword giving him 2 dice and wears leather armor giving him 2 dice. His total combat pool for a melee attack is 11. Because his Armor is 2, Gregori's player must reserve at least 2 dice for defense, but can otherwise distribute the dice any way he pleases.

The character could attack **furiously and fearlessly**, with the player reserving 9 dice for attack, leaving only 2 for defense as required.

The character could also attack carefully and defensively, striking only if he sees the opportunity, with the player putting 9 dice in defense and only 2 in attack.

The character could also go completely on the defensive, letting other, more skilled fighters to do their work. The player would accumulate 11 dice in defense.

Most commonly, the player divides the combat pool as evenly as possible, slightly inclining toward attack or defense, depending on the capabilities of the character or the **style of play**.

RANGED ATTACKS

The combat pool for ranged attacks is Physicality + Ranged, adding any bonus dice given by weapons and armor, subtracting dice equal to the number of friendly targets making melee or unarmed attacks against your target this round.

Otherwise, ranged attacks are just like melee and unarmed attacks.

Example:

During the Engagement Phase, Sarah rolls a combat pool of 7, plus 2 bonus dice from the Picture Rule from the Maneuver Phase. She divides the combat pool into 4 attack dice and 5 defense dice. She rolls and gets 2 successes on attack and only 1 success on defense.

The narrator rolls for the poacher and gets 1 success on attack and 0 successes on defense.

COMBAT POOL

Combat Pool is comprised of various Attribute, Skill and Equipment factors and ranks. All the ranks and bonuses added together is the final number of dice cast during the attack/defense.

RESOLUTION PHASE

In this phase, the players and narrator compare successes to calculate the damage, and then the narrator describes the result.

CALCULATING DAMAGE

The players participating in combat counts the attack and defense dice they rolled, as does the narrator.

Each success on the defense dice negates one success on the attack dice. After subtracting the defense dice, the remaining attack dice equals the damage dealt

Example:

An attacking player rolls 4 successes in attack and 2 successes in defense.

The narrator, playing an opponent, rolls 2 successes in attack and 2 successes in defense. The 2 successes in defense reduce the attacker's successes in attack by 2, leaving 2 successes. So, the PC deals 2 damage to the opponent, while the opponent deals no damage to the PC because the player rolled 2 successes in defense, canceling the opponent's 2 successes in attack.

If multiple characters attack one target, add their attack successes together against the defense roll of the target.

A PC attacks two opponents and gets 5 successes in attack and 2 in defense. The first opponent gets 2 in attack and 1 in defense, while the second gets 2 in attack and 0 in defense. The opponents' attack successes combine to 4, pitted against character's defense of 2.

The PC divides her 5 successes amongst the opponents: 3 successes against the first and 2 against the second. Subtracting defense from attack, the PC does 2 damage ($3-1=2$) to the first opponent and 2 damage ($2-0=2$) to the second. However, the PC—distracted by attacking two opponents at once—receives 2 damage ($4-2=2$) from her opponents.

While attacking multiple opponents, if a PC deals sufficient damage to kill one, apply the remaining damage to one of the other opponents. This makes the fight more fluid, dynamic, and cinematic.

The narrator can decide whether or not to hide dice rolls and NPC stats, but keeping them secret can strengthen the feeling of suspense as the fight progresses.

Example:

When Ioanna attacked the poacher, she got 2 attack successes and 1 defense success, which were pitted against the narrator's results for poacher: 1 attack success and 0 defense successes. Ioanna does 1 damage ($2-1$) to the poacher, while the poacher didn't hit Ioanna; she had 1 success in defense, and he didn't have any successes in attack.

The narrator then describes the situation: "You charged toward the poacher flailing your sword wildly and screaming from the top of your lungs. This obviously scares him, making him lower his sword enough for you to draw blood, wounding him across the shoulder."

When assessing the situation, multiple opponents and their successful attacks, the narrator has free hands to decide which of the multiple attackers actually succeeded in damaging the player, if everyone succeeded in dishing out a small amount of damage, or everyone missed and one smashed the Player with full strength; it's all the matter of perspective and situation.

Given that the narrator has this power over the course of the story and situations, he should use it in moderation, and always in favor of the characters and the story.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

Here are some examples of common maneuvers in combat, declared during the Declaration Phase. These examples are derived from the Picture Rule—created to avoid the unnecessary charts, complications, and constant searching through the book for “that one rule.” Narrators can be flexible with every stated value, so don’t feel too limited by these numbers.

Of course, we can’t list every possible maneuver and stunt, but these examples can give insight into their possibilities. They’ll help you understand how maneuvers function and how to use them in various situations.

CLOSE COMBAT MANEUVERS

SNEAK ATTACK

If a character attempts to attack an unaware target, his attack successes are compared only to defense successes rolled from a combat pool of the target’s Armor and Physicality. For example, a character could use the Concealer Gift to render herself totally invisible. If she then attacks an unsuspecting target with an Armor of 1 and a Physicality of 2, the defender can only roll a combat pool of 3 in defense.

Additionally, the target can’t attack in that same round.

TUMBLE

Jumping over tables, rolling under obstacles, and creatively using the environment can be rewarded with bonus dice according to Picture Rule. Most often, tumbling is rolled with Physicality + Agility. If you successfully tumble as a part of attack, the narrator can award you bonus dice, at least as many as the successes of the tumble roll, up to 3. Of course, if you use the Picture Rule, this can boost your possibility of success.

DOUBLE WEAPON ATTACKS

If you use two weapons to attack, you gain one additional die in your combat pool.

TRIP

To trip an opponent, make a contested roll of Physicality + Fray versus Physicality + Agility.

Success – The tripped character falls on the floor and cannot stand until the next round. Then, to stand up he must sacrifice his attack. A character who attacks while tripped does not add Agility dice to his combat pool.

Failure – You lose your attack and can defend only with dice equaling your Armor + Physicality. If you dramatically fail, you fall to the floor.

HOLD

To hold and immobilize an opponent, make an unarmed combat roll, ignoring any successes in defense. If you roll at least 1 success on the attack and suffer no damage, you grapple the opponent.

Success – Until the next round, the opponent can’t do anything except make a contested roll to free himself of Physicality + Agility versus your Physicality + Agility. While held, he can only roll defense dice equaling his Armor + Physicality.

Failure – You lose your attack and can only roll defense dice equaling your Armor + Physicality.

Dramatic Failure – You fall to the floor (see Trip).

DISARM

To disarm someone, make a contested roll of Physicality + Fray versus Physicality + Fray.

Success – The target is disarmed.

Failure – You lose your attack and can defend only with the dice equaling your Armor + Physicality.

Dramatic Failure – You are disarmed.



The art of the Gifts

RANGED MANEUVERS

AIM

Standing still and concentrating exclusively on your aim, you receive 2 bonus attack dice to your combat roll.

COVER

Hiding behind cover, you receive bonus defense dice to your combat roll, according to the quality of the cover.

Partial Cover (kneeling behind a low wall)	One die
Good Cover (waist-high stone)	Two dice
Supreme Cover (chest-high cover)	Three dice

COMPLICATIONS

BLIND FIGHTING

A blinded character takes many penalties in combat.

Melee and unarmed attacks hit only with more than 5 successes. If one does hit, damage is calculated normally, subtracting defense successes from attack successes. Special Gifts such as Superior Sense or Phase might mitigate this—depending on the nature of the blindness, at the narrator's discretion—lowering the number of required successes to 3.

Ranged attacks automatically fail.

A blinded character can only roll defense dice equaling Armor + Physicality.

STUNNED/DAZED

A stunned character loses all actions for that turn, and can only roll defense dice equaling his Armor + Physicality; they cannot attack. If a character has already taken actions on the turn they are stunned on, they lose all actions on their turn during the next round.

PRONE

A prone character can stand up as a maneuver by succeeding on a Physicality + Agility roll. Otherwise, he can spend his entire Maneuver and Engagement Phase to stand up.

A prone character who attacks does not add Agility to his combat pool, and only rolls defense dice equaling his Armor + Physicality.

ENDURANCE

Endurance is one's remaining vitality and energy. Although Vasalli are harder to kill than typical humans, they're still vulnerable to threatening situations, same as ordinary folk.

The main differences between the Vasalli and common folk regarding their endurance are that the Vasalli are tougher, can shrug off more damage than ordinary humans, and have faster metabolisms.

The Endurance Chart on the character sheet tracks a character's Endurance and condition. As a character is damaged, his life force declines until he finally becomes incapacitated and dies.

Every character has four Endurance levels, each marked with a physical state, and one level marked with the Dying state. As you receive damage, fill in the boxes from left to right, stepping down as your physical state becomes worse.

PHYSICAL STATE

Note: In this booklet, these states have no rules consequences, except for except dying/death. However, they do in the full rules.

SUPERB CONDITION

Supreme physical condition, better even than the average Vasalli. He hasn't even been scratched, or is barely scratched and can still endure more.

NORMAL

As healthy as any other average Vasalli. He might be somewhat bruised, but can still function better than the best of ordinary humans.

WOUNDED

As healthy as an ordinary human, but in worse shape than the normal Vasalli. If he can't find a way out of the fight, he might become seriously wounded.

DYING/DEATH

Almost dead, needing help as soon as possible. Depending on his Physicality, he can go into negative Endurance, but only to the negative number equal to his Physicality. (For instance, if the character has a Physicality of 3, he won't die unless he reaches -4). No matter the Physicality, every character dies at -5.

TYPE OF DAMAGE

When a character fails to defend against an attack, she'll often receive some damage, reducing Endurance. Each success on an attacker's attack roll surpassing the defender's defense roll deals one damage.

Weapons can deal two types of damage: **nonlethal** and **lethal**.



A massacre between a group of Colossi and Vargans

NON-LETHAL DAMAGE

Nonlethal (NL) damage is delivered by unarmed punches and blunt trauma to the body. It is not immediately fatal, although accumulating nonlethal damage can maim. It's dangerous, and it can turn into the lethal damage quickly enough.

Every 2 nonlethal damage equals 1 lethal damage.

Attacks dealing nonlethal damage are done with bare hands, improvised non-bladed weapons, and light blunt weapons such as staves and sticks.

LETHAL DAMAGE

Lethal (L) damage is meant to cause wounds and immediate danger. It is dealt by weapons of war such as blades, arrows, and heavy bashing weapons, as well as by elementary dangers such as fire and some special Gifts.

Lethal damage can quickly finish someone off or leave him maimed and near death, so be careful in all-out combat.

APPLYING DAMAGE

Mark any damage you take on the Endurance Chart on your character sheet.

There are two kinds of boxes on every line, as shown in the example:

The upper box denotes lethal damage, while the lower boxes denote nonlethal damage

RECOVERY

The Vasalli regain 1 **Endurance** with a good night's sleep.

When cared for and bandaged using the Medicine skill, they instantly regain 1 Endurance and regenerate 3 more Endurance after their next restful sleep, thanks to power in their veins.

COMBAT ROUND SUMMARY

1. Declaration Phase

The players declare their actions for the Maneuver Phase and Engagement Phase. Apply the Picture Rule for detailed, creative descriptions.

2. Maneuver Phase

The players perform maneuvers, instant and reflexive Gifts, and incidental actions like talking. These actions may yield bonus dice in the Engagement Phase from the Picture Rule.

3. Engagement Phase

The players and narrator divide dice between attack and defense, roll together, and then count their successes.

4. Resolution Phase

The narrator assesses the situation and narrates the result with the help of the players.

MOVEMENT AND DISTANCE

Distance in **Awaken** is pretty simple. It grouped into **close distance** and **long distance**.

Close distance is from reaching distance to about 10 feet (3 meters). Melee combat happens in this range.

Long distance is up to 33 feet (10 meters), which can be traversed as the part of an attack action. There are no rules for how much a specific character can move.

Awaken isn't a mathematical game, but an intuitive one. With no distinct danger or hard terrain, a character should be able to draw a weapon (Maneuver Phase), run toward an opponent (Maneuver Phase), and attack (Engagement Phase) in the same round.

Characters can travel any reasonable distance in one round, as long as they aren't hindered; this is ultimately the narrator's call.

Normal



Example of marking damage: Larger boxes signify lethal damage, and smaller boxes signify nonlethal damage. Two nonlethal damage equals one lethal damage.

COMBAT EXAMPLE

Ok now, you find yourselves in a dark alley. The rain pours from the sky as if nature decided to drown every living being on the world. The only light you see comes from the distant Resin lamps on the far main street. The dark figure you followed is nowhere to be seen; you feel he escaped your pursuit. As you look around, though, you suddenly feel a gaze upon you. When you turn toward the street you came from, you see two robed figures that look like the one you were chasing.

"We thought you were smarter than this," said one, mockery dripping from his words. "Oh how the mighty have fallen," said the other with the same arrogance.

As they draw their weapons, you see them tensing under their robes. You sense the battle is upon you. What do you do?

DECLARATION PHASE

Mark: My character Kairan is suffering from the wounds he received in the past struggle, so I'd like to activate my Regeneration Gift and attack the nearest opponent, but I'll do it from the safe distance with my longbow.

Lily: I'll draw my dagger and use Telekinesis to attack one of them with the dagger. Vestes is a master of Reality Gifts.

Luke: My character Gartan will attack the closer one with his axe. But tell me, is there something in the alley I could climb on to?

Narrator: Well, you see a stone block next to one of the walls. You assume it's a bench.

Luke: Ok, I'll run toward it, try to hop on it, and jump on an opponent from it to gain momentum, hitting with my axe as hard as I can.

Narrator: Great maneuver. Let's see what happens next.

MANEUVER PHASE

Narrator: Mark, give me a simple Body roll to activate the Regeneration Gift.

Mark: OK. I'll use the second level of Regeneration. (rolls) I succeeded!

Narrator: Nice, you activated Regeneration and you

feel something changing in your body. In front of your eyes, your wounds cover with scabs and you swear you can feel the tissue growing rapidly. You can erase 2 lethal damage from your Endurance.

Mark: Encouraged by this, I nock an arrow on my bowstring calmly and confidently.

Narrator: Lilly, you draw the dagger, but in this situation your Telekinesis is considered an attack, so it happens in the next phase.

Lilly: OK, I understand.

Narrator: But you feel the power coursing through you as you prepare to blast the dagger across the alley into the opponent. Luke, give me a Physicality and Agility roll, just to make sure you don't slip on the wet surface. (Combat Maneuver roll for jumping in the Maneuver Phase)

Luke: OK, here it goes! (rolls) Yes! 2 successes!

Narrator: Perfect, you start running toward the stone bench, squeezing the grip of your trusted axe.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE

Narrator: Ok now, Gartan (Luke's character), you ran and jumped through the air, trying to land a blow with your axe. When you roll your melee attack, add two because you described the attack picturesquely and received 2 successes on your agility roll. (If a maneuver is a part of an attack, the Picture Rule allows for bonus dice equaling the number of successes on the maneuver, up to 3.)

Luke: Great!

Narrator: Lilly, when you roll your ranged attack, roll with your Reality Gift score instead of Physicality score, and subtract one die because Luke is in the direct melee.

(Ranged attacks take a penalty equaling the number of friendly targets in melee with the target.)

Lilly: Ok.

Narrator: And Mark, you used your Regeneration Gift, but it's instant and allows you the attack. Roll for a ranged attack, but with the penalty of one like Lilly, because Luke's in the way.

Mark: Roll away!

(Everybody rolls)

Narrator: Ok, let's count the successes!

Mark: I have a combat pool of 7, and I rolled 5 dice for attack and 2 dice for defense. I got 3 successes on the attack roll, and 1 on defense. I'm attacking the guy on the left.

Luke: Yes! I have 4 successes in attack and 2 in defense! I'm attacking the right guy, the one closer to the stone slab.

Lilly: Not too good. Only 2 in attack and 1 in defense. I'll attack the guy on the left, same as Mark.

RESOLUTION PHASE

Narrator: Ok guys, I rolled their dice. The first opponent got 2 in attack and 0 in defense. The second got 1 success in attack and 1 in defense. So here's what happens: As Luke's character Gartan soars through the air, Kairan shoots an arrow while Vestes launches her dagger using her Gift.

The two opponents prepare to meet Gartan's axe, leaving their sides open. The axe clangs loudly as it slides down the first opponent's blade and slashes through his left shoulder, separating his arm in a clean cut.

The axe continues its motion and stops with another clang on the blade of the second attacker.

(Luke's 4 in attack did 4 points of damage because the opponent had 0 in defense. His 2 successes in defense canceled his opponents' 2 in attack. This leaves Luke with 0 defense.)

Luke: Whoa, great!

Narrator: As the first opponent falls to his knees in agony, the second attacker finds room to stab you with the tip of his sword—your guard was open because your axe was off balance after the first opponent redirected it with his sword. You take 1 damage.

(Luke's character deflected the first opponent, but he didn't have any remaining defense successes to cancel the attack of the second opponent. The opponent had 1 success in attack, dealing 1 damage to Luke's character.)

Luke: Too bad...

Narrator: But just as the tip of the sword slides into your right shoulder, Kairan's arrow and Vestes' dagger reach their destination, finding their way into the heart and neck of your opponent.

(Lilly and Mark had 2 and 3 successes in attack, respectively. The second opponent had 1 success in defense, so he takes 4 points of damage since he could only block 1 damage.)

Lilly and Mark: Who-hoo, yeah!

Narrator: The arrow slits his vocal cords, and the attacker falls into the puddle of water with nothing more than a splashing sound.

name: Lumil (male)

player:

order: Circle

background: Zealot

Attributes

SOCIALITY

INTELLECTUAL

PHYSICALITY

Skills

Expression 3

Manipulation

Empathy 3

Body Language

Orator 2Performance Trade Academics 2

History

Craft Medicine Knowledge Perception 2Agility 2Fray Stealth Range Survival

Combat

Unarmed

Phy 3 Agility
Armor Fray

Melee

Phy 3 Agility
Armor Fray

Weapon

Range

Phy 1 Range
Armor Weapon

Normal

1 4 2

Wounded

1 3 21 2 2

Heavily wounded

1 1 21 0 2

Dying / Death

-1-2-3-4

Endurance

1 LUCK2345

Virtues

2

COURAGE

WILL

345

Gifts

MIND: 4 (Mindcarver, Servant)

ILLUSION: 1 (Vivid Dream)

MINDCARVER

Roll: If the target is a Vasall, this is a **contested Mind roll**.

If the target isn't a Vasall, one success is required.

Effect: Read the current thoughts and attitudes of the target.**Area:** Target must be in line of sight and closer than 50 feet (15 meters).**Fail:** No effect. The target cannot be targeted by Mindcarver again until the next day.**Dramatic Fail:** Mindcarver can't be used again until the next day.

SERVANT

Roll: If the target is a Vasall, this is a **contested Mind roll**. If the target isn't a Vasall, one success is required.**Effect:** The user can order the target to perform a short action such as "stop," "turn around," "open the door," or "drop the weapon."**Area:** Target must be in line of sight and closer than 50 feet (15 meters).**Fail:** No effect.

The target cannot be targeted by Servant again until the next day.

Dramatic Fail: Servant can't be used again until the next day.

VIVID DREAM

Roll: If the target is a Vasall, this is a **contested Mind roll**. If the target isn't a Vasall, one success is required.**Effect:** The user creates a small, immovable illusion for a short duration, visible only to the target.**Area:** Target must be in line of sight and closer than 50 feet (15 meters).**Duration:** A couple seconds.**Failure:** No effect. The target cannot be targeted by Vivid Dream again until the next day.**Dramatic Failure:** Vivid Dream can't be used again until the next day.**Corruption:** If any Gift is failed three times in one day, Lumil starts experiencing horrible hallucinations that he can't discern from reality. The effect fades after a good night's sleep.

Biography

You grew up amongst members of the clergy, surrounded by faith and strict regulations. Your parents—members of a noble family once distinguished but now low-ranking and poor—decided to send you to the monastery to receive proper schooling. From an early age, you showed great potential to be a preacher of the Church; you carefully selected your words and you had the innate ability to attract the attention of other people.

During your teenage years, you suffered from a terrible disease, and the fever left your health eroded. While you were bedridden, the burning sensation in your head brought serious pains and hallucinations. The monastery officials had already begun preparing for your burial when you suddenly started recovering. But after the fever you discovered that the voices you heard during the hallucinations weren't just a product of your feverish mind. You could actually hear other people's thoughts! At first, you thought that the fever destroyed your mind as well, but when your eyes turned amber, everyone understood that you'd gone through a particularly tough Awakening.

To deepen your connection to the Church, you joined the ranks of Circle, devoting yourself to spread its philosophy as one of their spokesmen.

Although your body can't endure much strain and you're weak for Vasalli standards, brilliant wits and a way with people open many doors. As a natural conversationalist, you often get your way.

Items

Longsword +2 (L)

Shortbow +1 (L)

Chainmail +2

name: Demetrius (male)

player:

order: Siebog

background: Mercenary

Attributes

SOCIALITY

INTELLECTUAL

PHYSICALITY

Skills

- Expression
- Bluff
- Empathy
- Orator
- Performance
- Singing
- Trade

- Academics
- Craft
- Medicine
- Knowledge
- Perception

- Agility
- Tumbling
- Fray
- Stealth
- Range
- Survival

Combat

Unarmed

Phy Agility

Armor Fray

Melee

Phy Agility

Armor Fray

Weapon

Range

Phy Range

Armor Weapon

Normal	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="7"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="6"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="5"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="4"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>
Wounded	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="3"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="2"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>		
Heavily wounded	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/> <input type="text" value="0"/> <input type="text" value="2"/>		
Dying / Death	<input type="text" value="-1"/>	<input type="text" value="-2"/>	<input type="text" value="-3"/>	<input type="text" value="-4"/>

Endurance

LUCK

-
-
-
-
-

Virtues

COURAGE

WILL

-
-
-
-
-

Gifts

BODY: 4

(Regeneration, Superior Constitution)

REGENERATION

Roll: User rolls **Body**. Requires one success.**Effect:** The user's body rapidly heals, closing wounds and regenerating. Heal 2 lethal damage.**Duration:** Instant, but the user may use this Gift once per hour.**Fail:** No effect. Regeneration can't be used again for the next 4 hours.**Dramatic Fail:** Regeneration can't be used again until the next day.

SUPERIOR CONSTITUTION

Roll: User rolls **Body**. Requires one success.**Effect:** The user's body toughens, letting him exert inhuman strength toward his goal. His Physicality increases by 2.**Duration:** One action, if not in combat, or the duration of combat.**Fail:** No effect.

Superior Constitution can't be used again for the next 4 hours.

Dramatic Fail: Superior Constitution can't be used again until the next day.

Corruption: If any Gift is failed three times in one day, Demetrius' body becomes feeble. He begins to shake uncontrollably, lowering his Physicality ability and Agility skill by 2 ranks each. The effect fades after a good night's sleep.

Items

Longsword +2 (L)

Shortbow +1 (L)

Chainmail +2

Hidden Dagger +1 (L) – Demetrius always carries a dagger hidden in his boot.

Biography

You were born in the house of a powerful Liborian noble—not as part of the family, but as a child of the maid. You never knew your father, though you harbored some suspicions about your mother's connections to the many sailors often passing through Liboria. From an early age, you were raised as a servant, working in the household and serving the noble children. You weren't allowed proper schooling, but the noble's daughter Violet was kind to you. Most of your free hours you spent learning to read with Violet—and singing with her; you both fantasized that you'd grow up to be famous singing duo.

But alas, every dream comes to an end. Your mother died from an unknown disease, and while on her deathbed she told you a secret: You were the bastard offspring of the nobleman for whom you worked. You kept this discovery secret, but the rage burned in you. During one afternoon with Violet, you couldn't keep it inside, and you blurted out that she was your half sister. She didn't take the news very well. Violet confronted her father about it, who came to you and started to beat you, accusing you of lies and hoaxes. You exploded with rage, broke both of his arms easily, and ran away. Later, you'd discover that the rage was the thing that triggered your Awakening.

You spent some time with mercenaries, who introduced you to members of the Siebog Order. They invited you to join them, and you accepted, hoping to finally find a place for yourself. After entering the Order, you left the mercenary group and started doing small jobs to help your Order's cause, even though you never accepted their philosophy of hedonism and supremacy.

name: Corstina (female)

player:

order: Zorya

background: Military

Attributes

SOCIALITY

INTELLECTUAL

PHYSICALITY

Skills

Expression ☐Empathy ☐Orator ☐Performance ☐Trade ☐

1

Academics ☐

Navigation

Craft ☐Medicine ☐Knowledge ☐Perception ☐

Sight

3

Agility ☐Fray ☐

Dagger

Stealth ☐Range ☐Survival ☐

3

Combat

Unarmed

Phy ☐ Agility ☐
Armor ☐ Fray ☐

Melee

Phy ☐ Agility ☐
Armor ☐ Fray ☐

Weapon

Range

Phy ☐ Range ☐
Armor ☐ Weapon ☐

Normal

1 6 2

1 5 2

1 4 2

Wounded

1 3 2

1 2 2

Heavily wounded

1 1 2

1 0 2

Dying / Death

-1

-2

-3

-4

Endurance

LUCK

1

2

3

4

5

Virtues

WILL

1

2

3

4

5

COURAGE

Gifts

ILLUSION: 2 (Sense Degeneration)

BODY: 2 (Superior Sense)

SENSE DEGENERATION

Roll: If the target is a Vasall, this is a **contested roll** between **Illusion** and the target's **Body**. If the target isn't a Vasall, one success is required.**Effect:** The target's senses become weakened, impairing vision, dulling hearing, and distorting other senses. Every roll takes a penalty of -2 dice.**Duration:** 10 minutes**Fail:** No effect. The target cannot be targeted by Sense Degeneration again until the next day.**Dramatic Fail:** Sense Degeneration can't be used again until the next day.

SUPERIOR SENSE

Roll: User rolls **Body**. One success is required.**Effect:** The user's senses become so powerful that she can hear a conversation over a distance of 100 feet (about 30 meters) and see small details.**Duration:** 5 minutes**Fail:** No effect. Superior Sense cannot be used again for the next 4 hours.**Dramatic Fail:** Superior Sense can't be used again until the next day.**Corruption:** If any Gift is failed three times in one day, Corstina's perception goes wild. Light and sounds hurt her eyes and ears and paranoia takes over. The effect fades after a good night's sleep.

Items

Dagger +1 (L) – During the Academy years, your favorite weapons were daggers, and you learned to use them efficiently.

5 Throwing Daggers +1 (L)

Leather Vest +1

Biography

You are a reticent and silent Vasall, whose modest and distant behavior is sometimes mistaken for indifference.

You were born as the only child, and your mother died while giving birth. Your father was a Vasall too, and a well-known naval officer.

He was often absent, so from early childhood you had to learn to live alone. Following your father's steps, you enrolled into the Naval Academy, hoping to learn more about the world and duties of the Navy.

But during your years in the Academy, you were often confronted by people who looked down on women. Even worse, your father at disappeared at sea, triggering your decision to drop out and continue on your own.

During the lonely years, you had some help from your father's friends, but you mostly had to rely on yourself. One night, fleeing from attackers following you in dark alleys, you had your Awakening—abruptly and instantly.

You became intensely aware of your surroundings as well as intensely interested in exploring the human senses.

You joined the Zorya Order under the tutelage of your father's old friend Iskander, who still advises you from time to time.

In the ranks of Zorya, you found a true place for yourself. You were allowed to study books and scrolls bearing great knowledge, but you had time for training too. Although you are sometimes awkward with people, they respect you for both your mind and your physical prowess.

name: Bornaus (male)

player:

order: Morana

background: Scoundrel

Attributes

SOCIALITY

INTELLECTUAL

PHYSICALITY

Skills

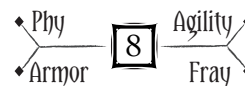
- Expression ☐
- Empathy ☒
- Orator ☐
- Performance ☐
- Trade ☒

- Academics ☐
- Craft ☐
- Medicine ☐
- Knowledge ☒
- Perception ☒
- Hearing ☐

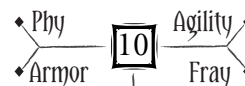
- Agility ☒
- Fray ☒
- Stealth ☒
- Sneaking, Lockpick ☐
- Range ☐
- Survival ☐

Combat

Unarmed

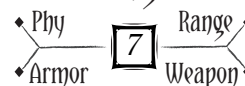


Melee



Weapon

Range



Normal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wounded	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Heavily wounded	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Dying / Death	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Endurance

LUCK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virtues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WILL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
COURAGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Gifts

ILLUSION: 2 (Concealer)
 REALITY: 2 (Telekinesis)

CONCEALER

Roll: User rolls **Illusion**. One success is required. The user must enter a dark area or shadow to use Concealer.

Effect: The user becomes effectively invisible to normal people or Vasalli with lower ranks in Illusion. Vasalli with higher ranks see the user without the user knowing.

Duration: 10 minutes

Fail: No effect. Concealer can't be used again for the next 4 hours.

Dramatic Fail: Concealer can't be used again until the next day.

TELEKINESIS

Roll: User rolls **Reality**. One success is required.

Effect: The user can control items up to 11 pounds (3 kilograms) within 30 feet (10 meters) by using telekinesis.

Duration: One minute or until the item is released.

Fail: No effect. Telekinesis can't be used again for the next 4 hours.

Dramatic Fail: Telekinesis can't be used again until the next day.

Corruption: If any Gift is failed three times in one day, Bornaus starts experiencing horrible hallucinations that he can't discern from reality. The effect fades after a good night's sleep.

Items

- Rapier +2 (L)
 Small Crossbow +1 (L)
 Leather Vest +2 (Armor)

Biography

You are a child of the streets. Always were, probably always will be. You never knew your parents. You were found covered in blankets outside the inn near the main harbor. The innkeeper was a nasty person, always forcing you into heavy manual labor, so you soon ran away. During your childhood years, you relied on your wits and skills, roaming as a street urchin. Every now and then you would work on the docks for a couple of coins, but it wasn't enough. Eventually, had an idea: form a gang to steal from the warehouses. Finding your partners in crime, your operation soon became successful, but you were smart—not stealing too much, never enough to be actively pursued. But after a while, someone noticed—the Order that regulated such “enterprises”—the Order of Morana. After one such operation, you were approached by two of their officials, who demanded you stop such deeds or suffer the consequences.

Fascinated by their authoritative tone and attitude, you decided to find a way into the Moranas. It wasn't as easy as you'd hoped. Their officials were tough to find, and you were politely ignored every time you approached their members. It was frustrating and disappointing. But salvation came in your Awakening. During your late puberty, you found that, day after day, your eyes would change. You felt surges of energy in your body. You started exhibiting strange powers—you could blend with your surroundings and exert power over small objects—and that was exhilarating.

When you approached the Moranas again to request an audience, they finally saw you for what you are, and they were glad to offer you membership amongst their ranks.

You learned a lot in the Order—how to improve your stealth, and how to lead a lucrative trading business that could serve as a cover for shady dealings.

THE LIBORIAN INCIDENT

The Liborian Incident is a short introductory story for *Awaken*, intended to introduce players to the game and give them a rough idea of how the world and game work.

Only the narrator should read this chapter.

The players can choose the pre-generated characters they want to play, or the narrator can randomly distribute them.

We invite you to study your characters, get to know them, and try to roleplay them as best as you can.

SUMMARY

The PCs are situated on the largest and central island of the **Free State of Liboria**, one of the **Great Cities of the Alliance**. Liboria is a proud city, home to skilled merchants and traders, as well as hardened sailors and fishermen.

The PCs are faced with oncoming danger in the form of a Colossus, who seems to be preparing to attack the city.

During the ensuing chaos, the PCs realize that the Colossus is somehow connected to a mysterious figure standing atop one of the wall towers.

Following the trail of the mysterious person, they piece together a dark scheme that endangers them, their city, and eventually the Alliance itself.

Physical challenges, moral choices, and dubious alliances, they all stand in the PCs' way. Can they stop the Colossus' attack before he devastates the city, or will they fall prey to the dark mind behind the scheme?

In **Scene One**, the PCs are enjoying a seemingly ordinary evening, when suddenly unrest spreads amongst the citizens. Some of them start fleeing toward their homes, while others start gathering in the main square. The whispers spread like wildfire amongst them: A Colossus is at the walls!

The characters realize that a Colossus, a towering being of sheer strength, is walking through the sea passage between the mainland and isles on which Liboria is located.

In the action of the city guards and the Navy, the characters note a mysterious figure standing at the top of a tower, looking toward the horizon. After the figure retreats, the Colossus stops attacking.

In **Scene Two**, the characters are confronted with the mystery: who was the mysterious figure, and what has he to do with the Colossus attack? The Navy rallies their ships around the Colossus, preparing for the next attack. In the meantime, the characters investigate the mystery behind the appearance of the Colossus. They come across the person who knows more about the attack, and a loose alliance is made.

In **Scene Three**, the story develops further. Information about the shady cult, known as the Cult of the Rat, could be crucial in solving the mystery, and the PCs' investigation leads them into the lair of the cult. They are confronted by the leader, and it seems they fall prey to a trap.

In **Scene Four**, the protagonists escape the captivity and meet with their ally. They realize that the attack will begin again soon, and they confront the leader of the Cult at the climax.

SCENE ONE: THE SLEEPING GIANT

In which the characters find themselves confronted by the upcoming danger.



Read the following aloud to players to help them understand the scene and the mood:

The streets of the proud city of Liboria are swarming with people. It's a warm spring evening, and everyone is returning to their homes after a hard day's work, or just taking a stroll and enjoying the weather. The last rays of the setting sun transform the hard, grey stone into the golden mirrors, glittering while the dying light reflects from the salt grains on the walls. The seagull cries, murmur of the sea waves, and talking people intertwine in harmony, creating a pleasant atmosphere that

reminds you why you enjoy your life in Liboria. You are enjoying the warm evening, sitting around a stone table in the small but flourishing garden on the upper part of the promenade, deciding what to do to further improve the mood.

Let the players briefly introduce and describe their characters, explaining their mood, thoughts, and behavior. Encourage roleplaying and relaxed conversation between the PCs. They could play a game of cards, take a stroll, or enjoy the view from the walls overlooking the sea—whatever they feel like doing.

Some of the PCs (**Lumil** and **Corstina**) are well known in the city, so you may have some NPCs greet them and engage in the casual chat.

QUAKE FROM THE SEA

After the Players had the opportunity to describe their Characters and immerse in the relaxed setting, ask them for the Intellectual + Perception Roll. If someone succeeds, read the following passage aloud to them:

As you enjoy the last warmth of the sun, you suddenly feel anxious. You can't really pinpoint why, but your body is shivering in strange anticipation. After a couple seconds, you realize the reason for this strange feeling: the cries of the seagulls were getting loud, but they suddenly stopped, with the waves of the sea getting louder instead. You're sure it's not yet time for high tide.

As you look around, you see that some people are confused as you are. The city guards start walking toward the city walls at the brisk pace, obviously trying not to alarm the more oblivious citizens.

The players may wish to investigate the situation and walk up to the walls themselves, or they may wait and see how the situation develops.

If they choose to wait, they can roll **Sociality + Perception** or **Intellect + Perception**. A success could yield information of the "incoming Colossus" people are whispering about increasingly. If they fail, just describe the overall anxiety and that people are slowly starting to panic.

After the players hear of the Colossus, they may wish to climb the stairs to the top of the wall. If they do so, or if they climbed up before, read the next passage:

As you walk up to the top of the wall, you look toward the horizon and see a stunning scene: The towering figure of a Colossus walking, through the passage between Liboria and the mainland, toward the city. He's not in the immediate vicinity, but he's close enough that you can see waves rolling around his body while he walks, and seawater splashing up his grey torso.

While you look toward the horizon, hypnotized by his steady rhythm, one of the city guards sees you. He approaches you swiftly and, with an authoritative voice, orders you to leave the wall.

(You can roleplay the city guard if the players choose to refuse his order.)

The city guards approach aggressively, ordering every curious citizen to leave the top of the wall. If they realize they are dealing with Vasalli while approaching the PCs, they switch from an aggressive approach to a more polite one, but they still insist on them leaving the premises "for their own safety."

In the meantime, the sun fell below the horizon and the people on the square are showing the signs of unrest and fear, while some of them have already started panicking.

The City Guards stationed on the square are trying to calm the people down, but when the order "Cannons at ready!" is heard, the chaos starts. Everybody starts running toward their homes, while the others just stand frozen in fear.

Some of the PCs may wish to calm down the scared masses. In that case, allow them to roll **Sociality + Oratory** to calm some of the people down. The degree of success depends on the number of successes on the roll.

Liboria is an island city-state, which spans over one large island and hundreds of smaller ones. It's home to various merchant companies, the Navy and its academies, shipyards, and trade ports.

Liboria was one of the Great Cities crucial in forming the Alliance. They were independent and self-sufficient, so their decision to join the Alliance was a great incentive for other cities to do the same, showing that even independent cities could benefit from the Alliance. Liboria has always been considered a very important pillar of the Alliance.

SHADOW ON THE WALL

In the midst of chaos and panic, something strange catches the eye of the PCs:

The sun has set behind you, but the Resin lamps remain unopened and the day starts to fade. In the dim light of the evening, you notice a strange and tall robed figure in the gazebo next to the unguarded high part of the wall. The high point where he's standing is about 300 feet away from you, and it gives him a clear view of the horizon. He's holding his hands in front of himself toward the incoming Colossus.

Corstina can try to activate her Superior Sense Gift and try to see the figure better. In that case, describe the figure covered with a dark cloak. His face isn't clearly visible, but his lips are, and they are moving in a way that seems like chanting.

-If the PCs want to pursue the person, he stops the chanting and slowly turns toward them as he somehow felt their gaze. He turns and jumps, quickly and deftly, over the railing of the gazebo and starts running away.

-If they stand, watch, and do nothing, after a couple of minutes the figure stops chanting and starts massaging his temples. He then turns to walk away from the PCs.

During the potential chase, the fleeing figure weaves through crowds of people, blocking vision and complicating the pursuit. Describe the chase as it progresses across the steps, next to the gazebo, and between the trees of the park. After a while, the group loses the track of the fugitive.

After the chase ends, the PCs hear that the Colossus stopped advancing toward the city and now just stands close by, completely still. Ships and boats are prepared, and they sail toward the Colossus to investigate the situation. Even after being surrounded, the Colossus shows no signs of movement or understanding his situation, as if in a trance. The city guards and the Navy decide not to confront him yet with their cannons, afraid of the consequences of awakening the sleeping giant.

SCENE TWO: PECULIAR ALLIANCE

Where the characters investigate the strange events, and find a source of information.

INVESTIGATING THE SQUARE

As the PC return to or pass by the main square, read this passage: :

As you glance toward the main square, you see the curious and frightened people gathering under the walls. Next to the stairs climbing up the city walls, a line of city guards stands, obstructing the passage to stop curious individuals from climbing the wall. There are fewer people here than before; you presume they went home to find shelter from the possible attack.

The people are arguing about what happened, but when they notice you they quiet their voices. You suppose it's because of your Vasalli heritage.

If the PCs wish to investigate the recent events, they can talk with the gathering people or the city guards. If you wish to instigate this investigation, introduce a NPC named Godfrey Leventis.

COLOSSI AND LIBORIA

Liboria is the City which rarely utilizes the help of giant Colossi. There were rare occasions when Orders in Liboria used Colossi, usually to help building the great ships.

Because of the city's narrow passages and tight architecture, the Colossi wouldn't be of real help without demolishing something.

Currently, they have no Colossi, but they are very proud of the giant statue of the Colossus, known as the Liborian Colossus built at the entrance of the main harbor.



GODFREY: An old, wizened, white-haired sailor, covered with scars and tattoos, but full of a cheerful nature. He has seen many things in life, including some Colossi. He is acquainted with at least one of the PCs, and they know he is a big gossip.

Godfrey approaches the PCs and hails them. He begins to talk with them about the events. He saw the PCs climb the wall and wishes to know what they saw on the horizon. He then continues talking about the Colossi he's encountered before, but his tale is clearly an exaggeration since he talks about his confrontation with a Wild Colossi, a rare occurrence in this region.

The old sailor (or some other introduced NPC) expresses his worries about the appearance of the seemingly uncontrolled Colossus right in the midst of preparations for moving the Great Tribunal.

If asked, he didn't see the mysterious figure standing in the gazebo, but he did see the PCs storming toward it, as did other onlookers.

Then, Godfrey asks the PCs to talk with the city guards about what's going to happen next and what they are going to do with the Colossus. When he confronted them with his questions, he says, they just ignored him and repeatedly requested that he return to his business and let them handle.

WILD COLOSSI

Rarely, a Vasall can transform into a Wild Colossus without willing it—without cause, all together. This transformation happens very fast, sometimes even in a couple of days, and results in a beastly and extremely aggressive Colossus with a tormented mind.

If the PCs talk to the city guards, the guards seem alarmed and slightly confused. They ask the PCs to continue their usual business until they realize they are dealing with Vasalli. They'll then politely try to end the discussion, but if the PCs are persistent, eventually they point them toward the Captain of the Guard.

CAPTAIN: A stout, middle-aged man with a military posture and a hoarse voice. The PCs have seen him before, ordering the guards in a brusque tone, removing any possibility of negotiation or reluctance. Everybody calls him Captain, and there aren't many people who know his true name.

The Captain is one of rare people here who seems unimpressed that the PCs are Vasalli. If they are gruff with him or look down upon him, he stops them abruptly and threatens them with charges of obstructing official business. He puts it that way, but the PCs clearly see he is a no-nonsense guy.

If the PCs approach him nicely and politely, he seems more accessible, albeit still very official.

When they look into his eyes more carefully, they look normal at first. But then, depending how the sun reflects in them, they may appear to change colors.

When the PCs start talking to him, the Captain crosses his arms, revealing bloodmarks on his arms that give away he's a Vasall himself.

The Captain explains that they're not really sure of their plan, but the cannons are ready in case the Colossus decides to continue toward the city and shows signs of aggression, and the Navy has him surrounded, ready for anything.

If the PCs tell the Captain about the mysterious figure, he either says they "will investigate it" in an uninterested manner, or he outright dismisses it as a laughable idea, depending on how the PCs talk of the figure.

After some time, the Captain seems impatient to shoo the PCs off the wall, and asks them to leave, promising the Guard will take "the right actions if they become necessary."

As the PCs descend the steps from the wall post, they notice a weary, blond-haired person, looking at them intently from the crowd.

When he realizes the PCs took notice of him, he nods his head away from the people, a signal to follow him, while moving in the same direction.

INFORMATION FROM BELOW

When the PCs start walking toward the blond man, he puts his hands in his pockets and quickens his pace away from the square. He stays a reasonable distance from the PCs, but he looks over his shoulder every now and then to make sure they are following him.

As you follow the stranger, he leads you through the alleys and streets, away from the main square, every now and then looking across a shoulder to make sure you are following him. He examines every alley before he enters it. After you follow him for couple of minutes, he slips out of sight behind the corner of an alley smaller and darker than the others.

The PCs may become suspicious, suspecting an ambush or something worse. Let them prepare if they want, but don't force it.

When the PCs enter the alley, describe the deserted street with cobblestones on the ground and a couple derelict houses along the road. The stranger is nowhere to be seen.

After a couple seconds, someone knocks on a window beside the PCs, from the inside of the house.

In the window is the blonde man, pointing his finger toward the doors of the house and signaling them to enter.

MOVING OF THE GREAT TRIBUNAL

The Great Tribunal is the central political body of the Alliance, comprising the representatives of the Great Cities, Orders, nobility, and prominent citizens. Every ten years, another Great City becomes the seat of the Great Tribunal.

Currently, the seat of the Great Tribunal is Kayla, but in about month the seat will be relocated to Liboria. Preparations are easy to see all over the place.

When the PCs enter the house, the stench of old fish overwhelms them. The house is small, with only one room, poorly illuminated. The stranger waits, sitting by the table. He shows them empty chairs, invites them to sit, and introduces himself as **Nico**.

NICO: *This man in his mid-thirties is unknown to the PCs. He has blonde hair, clipped short, and intense green eyes of unnatural hue, which mark him as a Vasall. After taking a second look, the PCs can see the bloodmarks showing from under the sleeves of his ragged vest. If the PCs look closely, they can see signs of corruption on him: some healed scars on his face and exposed skin. He has a resonant voice, which makes him sound younger than he is. He has vulpine demeanor, and looks at the PCs like he knows much more than they think.*

Nico welcomes the PCs to his "little sanctuary." If they mention the stench, Nico smiles and explains that "it's helpful cover."

Nico explains that he noticed the figure in the gazebo too and tells the PCs he's pretty sure who the figure is.

He asks them if they have heard of the Cult of the Rat. The PCs can roll Intellect + Knowledge to see if they have.

Then, Nico begins the story of the Cult of the Rat, including their involvement in the underground market, smuggling, and other illegal activities.

He points out that everything changed in the Cult when a new leader arose, who decided to reach out to other criminal networks and activities, including those dealing in assassination and worse.

According to Nico, the new leader, called Corwin, is the person who was standing in the gazebo.

The rumor is that Corwin is an ex-Handler, a professional experienced in mentally subduing and controlling Colossi to manage them more easily.

"With that in mind, no wonder he climbed the ladder so quickly," Nico says.

Nico believes the Cult of the Rat is trying to sow chaos in Liboria and attack it with the Colossus, preventing the Great Tribunal from moving into the city. If the city became the seat, the security, city guards, and investigators would double in numbers, all to secure the city.

"But," Nico says in a low voice, "I'm not entirely sure that they just want to stop there. Since this is not a Wild Colossus, this could be seen as an Alliance city sending a Colossus against Liboria, which could fatally destabilize the Alliance."

If asked how he knows so much about the Cult and why he told them all that, Nico smiles a crooked but painful smile before explaining that he once was a member of the Cult.

"I'm not proud of it. In fact, I'm deeply ashamed, but I was a member while I was younger. Somewhere during Corwin's rise to the top, I was caught by the city guards while I was stealing something, and they threw me into dungeon. I never said a word of the Cult's business, and I endured the jail time. But after I was released, a minor Cult operation was busted by the guards, and Corwin was certain I'd squeaked to lessen my penalty.

I hid. He tortured my best friend Stamos to death to try to find me. Stamos didn't say a word, but he paid a dear price. His life for my life. Corwin's death for his death."

Nico tells the PCs the location of the entrance to the underground tunnels, which once served as sewage tunnels and now are Cult headquarters. He draws a simple map, explaining how to reach the cult quarters.

"I wish I could go with you, but I think it will be easier for you if I don't. That way they can't connect you with me, and they probably won't attack you on sight."

Nico finally asks the PCs to help him in revenge. If they are reluctant, he offers them money he skimmed and stashed during his cult days—or any other favor they ask for, since he pays his dues.

He adds that the salvation of Liboria probably lies in their hands, since the officials wouldn't believe the story.

Give the PCs a sense of urgency and prompt them to move swiftly. Corwin is probably tired of handling the Colossus, and he's recuperating. For all the PCs know, the next time he handles the Colossus could be fatal to the city. Nico believes that the Colossus is in some sort of trance, awaiting further commands.

With his pledge of alliance between them, Nico sends off the PCs.

The Cult of the Rat is one of many cults spread across the Alliance, in various Great Cities and smaller towns.

Cults are usually harmless, centered on their religion or trying to achieve the status of an Order, but this specific cult is dabbling in illegal activities.

Some of these activities include smuggling, thievery, burglary, dealing in narcotics.

Lately they've turned toward worse and more dangerous activities in hopes of growing stronger and more influential.

NICO'S BACKGROUND

Although Nico looks likeable, he is actually very dangerous.

His whole backstory is a blatant lie, created to lure the PCs into helping him take down Corwin.

The truth is, Nico is not only a former member of the Cult, but he was their leader and a strong Handler himself. He was cast out of the Cult because he underestimated Corwin, who initiated a coup backed up by evidence of Nico skimming off money.

Ever since he was cast out, left for dead in the sewers, he has sought vengeance against Corwin, and he sees a great opportunity in the PCs.

If the PCs want to use Mind Gifts to see if he's telling the truth, allow them. However, he's the master of those Gifts, so it's very hard to breach his defense. You can find his stats in the final scene.

If you feel confident enough, you can let the PCs see the truth, but know that it will change the course of the story, although the group could still try to confront Corwin.

SCENE THREE: INTO THE DEEP

Where the characters search for the Cult of the Rat and confront them on their territory

THE SEWERS

Instigated by Nico's warning, the PCs will probably want to move to the sewers as fast as they can. After they leave Nico's sanctuary, they find themselves on dark and empty streets. The guards have ordered everyone to go home. Only the moonlight and occasional Resin lamp illuminate the area; the city government has darkened the city in hopes of concealing itself from the Colossus if he awakens.

The walk through the gloomy streets is silent and tense, shrouded in anxious atmosphere. The PCs have never seen the streets of Liboria this empty and dark, and it chills their hearts to think about what might have happened in the last attack.

The PCs eventually reach the sewer entrance. They enter and descend into the tunnels that span under the city.

Lumil has a folding medallion with Resin, which he may wish to use in the dark tunnels, as there is no other source of light.

The PCs will probably want to move as stealthily as they can, rolling **Physicality + Stealth**.

The tunnels are dirty, smelly, and damp. Most of the passages are closed off with steel bars, leaving only one direction to move in. At the end of one tunnel is the entrance to the Cult's quarters. The entrance is illuminated with simple torches, as are the rest of the quarters.

The entrance is guarded by a lone cultist sitting on the wooden box, holding his tired head in his hands.



If the PCs wait a while or don't make a quick decision, they soon hear snoring from the entrance—their chance to pass by unnoticed.

The PCs roll Physicality + Stealth to avoid awakening the guard.

If they fail, their stealthy approach becomes impossible; the guard starts yelling, warning others of the intrusion.

The quarters are not as filled with cultists as the PCs would think. Many of them are doing some more of their "business" while Liboria is enshrouded in darkness. There are only 5 cultists in the headquarters including their leader, Corwin.

You can set the scene and place the cultists however you wish, depending on the level of threat you want to expose your players to. Because the PCs are Vasalli, subduing the cultists shouldn't be much of a problem. Corwin, on the other hand, is a much more dangerous opponent.

If the PCs choose the stealthy approach and it doesn't fail, they walk through the rooms without any obstacles or problems. Eventually, they find a room with an open door, in which Corwin meditates kneeling on the carpet.

CORWIN: The leader of the Cult of the Rat is a rogue Handler who has turned to crime. This giant of a man is kneeling on the floor and meditating. His face is almost completely hidden by long, shaggy hair and a wild, tangled beard, covering a face so scarred with old wounds it's impossible to tell where one begins and another ends.

Sadly, there is no reasoning with Corwin. He attacks the PCs as soon as he's aware of them.

If the PCs indeed find Corwin alone, feel free to "dose" the threat level by including other cultists in the fight, either at the same time or later. Don't hold back with Corwin's abilities; he's a strong opponent who uses every chance possible to get rid of danger.

CULTISTS' STATS

ATTRIBUTES:

Social 1, Intellectual 2, Physical 2

SKILLS:

Agility 1, Fray 1, Stealth 2

COMBAT:

Unarmed 5 (-/NL)

Melee 7 (Sword/L)

Ranged 4 (Short bow/L)

Endurance: 3

VIRTUES:

Luck 1, Will 1, Courage 2

POSSESSIONS:

Sword, Short bow, Leather vest

Cultists are fierce and loyal to Corwin, they will fight to death if necessary.

When either Corwin or some PCs are near the lowest levels of Endurance, Corwin takes out something round and throws it on the ground. The grey mist and vapor enshrouds the room, and the PCs see Corwin putting something on his face as he escapes.

The group starts to feel wobbly as if they were not in control of their bodies. They fall on the ground, losing consciousness

SCENE FOUR: THE ESCAPE

In which the characters must escape captivity and reach Corwin before he succeeds in his plans.

The first thing you truly feel is the terrible headache, which awakens you from your slumber. At first, your only sense beginning to return is your smell, as you detect the scent of the seawater. Slowly, after the buzz from your head clears, you can hear the waves and see the stones in front of you, covered in green moss and seaweed.

You realize you're hanged upside down in something that reminds you of a well. A thick rope is tied around your legs, and it's attached to the steel bars at the top.

The PCs are tied, including hands, upside down in a hole, and they have to escape. They don't know how long they have been unconscious, but they see it is day outside, meaning they have been out for at least a night. All their weapons are gone, except possibly one. Now is a perfect time for Demetrius to use his hidden dagger if he has it. If he doesn't, Note the presence of a sharp stone piece at the bottom of the well. Bornaus' Telekinetic Gift could be helpful here.

They are about 7 feet (2 meters) away from the bottom, so they should roll **Physicality + Agility** if they fall clumsily. Failing on this roll should do 1 **nonlethal damage**, while **dramatic failure** should do at least 1 **lethal damage**.

When the PCs free themselves and take a look around, they discover a small circular passage that looks like a drain.

This passage is only about 3 feet (1 meter) wide, so they will have to crouch or crawl to pass through it.

The passage is long, and it takes them about five minutes to pass through. If sufficient time passes before they try to go through it, the tide starts rising, forcing them to swim or even dive through the passage. A successful **Physicality + Agility/Survival** roll should be enough to manage the task.

The tunnel exits under the cliffs, which are too slippery to climb, so the PCs must swim against the tide. After a tiresome swim, they reach the beach just in time to see Nico paddling down the coast in a small boat, waving to them.

If the PCs try to orient themselves, they discover they are on one of the smaller islands surrounding the main island of Liboria. After Nico reaches them, he invites them in his boat. He shows them their weapons, explaining that he found them thrown on the beach, and asks if they belong to the group.

He starts paddling and swiftly explains that he managed to find a cultist this morning dumb enough to walk alone near his sanctuary. Capturing the cultist, Nico interrogated him about the events in the quarters. The cultist confessed that he only heard about the capture of the PCs, but he didn't know where they left them, so Nico went to look for them.

As Nico paddles, the PCs see the Colossus still motionless in front of the city walls, standing quietly, surrounded by ships that look insignificant in comparison.

Following the PCs' glares, Nico smiles bitterly and comments, "We have to hurry or the scenery will change drastically."

They leave the boat in one of the smaller harbors close to the main square. Nico starts running toward the square, urging the PCs to do the same.

The PCs were rendered unconscious by a special concoction made by Corwin. Afterwards, the Cult tied them and left them in a hole, counting on the next high tide to drown them.

But Corwin forgot that the concoction was made to incapacitate ordinary men. The PCs are Vasalli, so they woke up too soon.

Since the night has passed and they were effectively asleep, they can each restore one Endurance point.

CORWIN'S STATS

ATTRIBUTES:

Social 3, Intellectual 3, Physical 2

SKILLS:

Expression 4, Empathy 3, Orator 2,
Knowledge 4, Perception 4, Agility 4, Fray 2,
Stealth 1

COMBAT:

Unarmed 9 (-/NL)
Melee 11 (Sword/L)
Endurance: 5

GIFTS:

Mind 4 (Servant, Mindcarver)
Illusion 3 (Sense Degeneration)

SUPERIOR GIFT:

Handling (Colossus only)

VIRTUES:

Luck 1, Will 3, Courage 3

POSSESSIONS:

Sword, Leather vest, Sleep Vapor container
(Renders multiple targets unconscious)

As the PCs near the walls, they notice Corwin in the distance spreading his hands toward the Colossus, as well as five obvious cultists along the steps, securing the path to the gazebo.

The cultists fight to death trying to defend Corwin. Nico joins the fight against the cultists, isolating one so the PCs have one less to deal with.

If you want, you can give the PCs an opportunity to hear or see that the cultists are surprised by Nico's appearance.

They can somehow comment his arrival, but in a way hinting he was more than a simple member.

After the PCs and Nico defeat the cultists, they all confront Corwin, who stops controlling the Colossus to deal with the intrusion.

He looks extremely angry and shouts, "**You again! I won't spare you this time.**" It's unclear if this is directed toward Nico or the PCs.

The atmosphere tenses in the city and on the sea. Rain starts clattering on the gazebo's wooden roof as a torrent falls on the city. The sea rises, and the waves crash over the stones and walls.

During the fight against Corwin, Nico steps aside and reaches toward the Colossus with the triumphant smile on his lips. The Colossus, now under Nico's control, continues toward the city.

After the PCs defeat Corwin, they may be confused by the recent turn of events, feel betrayed, and set their vengeance upon Nico.

If they don't attack him immediately, Nico turns toward them and raises his hand, "Stop! Just listen!" You are free to paraphrase his words, but essentially he explains this:

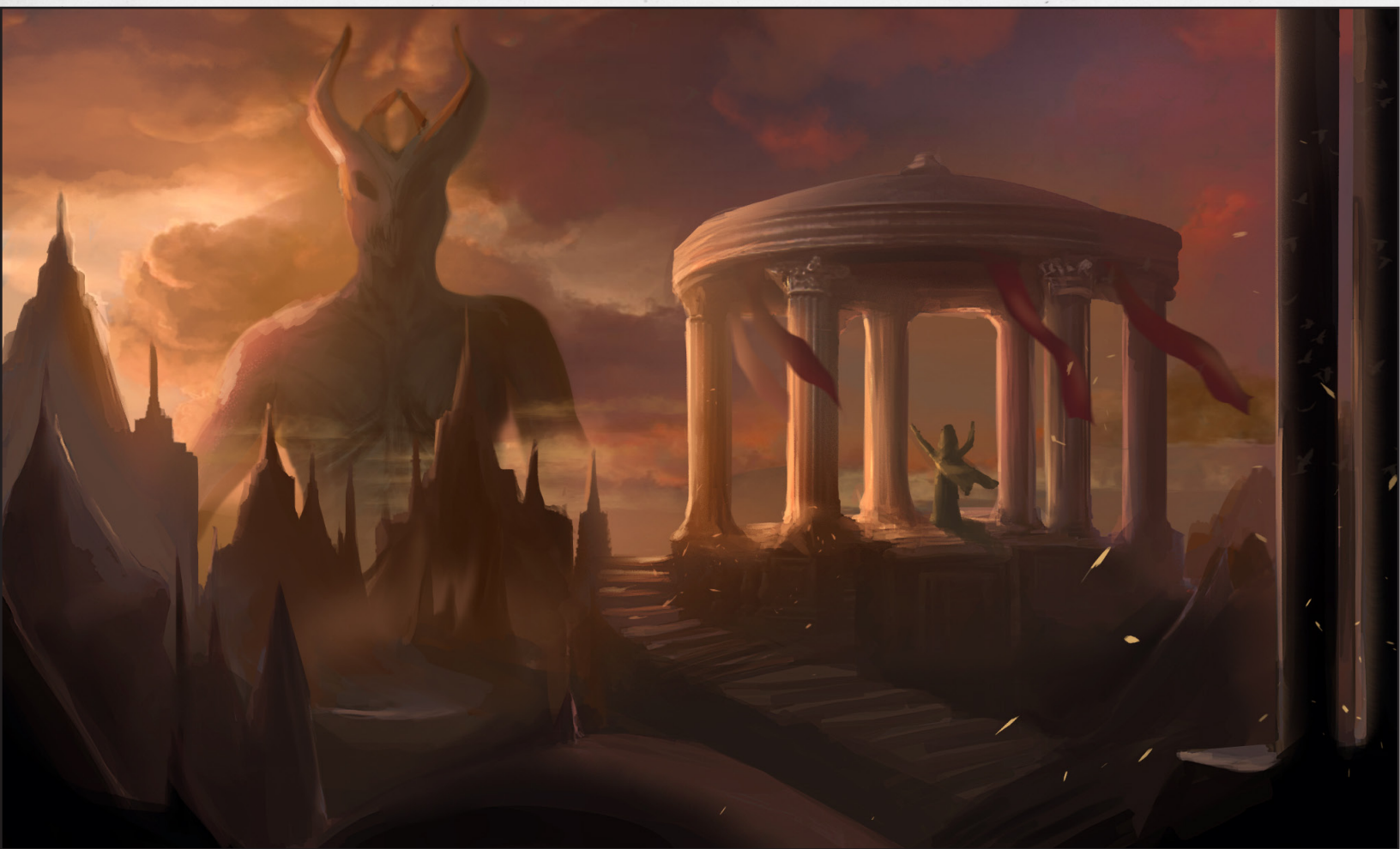
SCENE FIVE:

THE SHOWDOWN

In which the characters confront Corwin and learn of Nico's secrets.

As the PCs run the streets, they see city guards run toward the main wall with fear on their faces. The crowd screams in terror as a loud crash spreads across the sea. Soon there's another crash and the PCs realize in horror that the Colossus has started attacking ships.

Cannon blasts spread from the top of the wall, and people start running in all directions.



“Ok, I admit, maybe I played you, but listen: Corwin was a dangerous person indeed. I knew him from the old days, when we were both Handlers, and I never expected him to turn against me. But this plan of his, it really is good! Liboria was always a proud and free City, and no Alliance should order us around!

If you let me do this, I promise I won’t attack any inhabited areas, only the wall. Afterwards, I will stop the attack and let the defenders of the city subdue the Colossus. That will surely keep the Great Tribunal away and even instigate the separation of Liboria from the Alliance.”

The PCs can see that he truly believes in his words, talking with fire in his eyes.

“Trust me, Liboria needs this! And if the city must bleed just a little, only to continue living free afterward, then it shall bleed!”

The PC now must choose between letting Nico continue handling and stopping him.

If they let him continue, Nico bids the Colossus to attack the wall and the PCs witness hundreds of soldiers dying in the process.

But, as he promised, Nico stops controlling the Colossus once it breaches a portion of the wall. As the PCs turn toward him, he’s disappeared.

If the PCs choose to fight Nico, he fights to death, madness gleaming in his eyes.

Once the PCs defeat Nico, there are a couple ways you can finish the story. One option is finishing it abruptly, with Nico’s dying breath and an eternal curse for the PCs on his lips.

Another may be the city guards running toward the PCs, explaining everything to the Captain, leading to rewards and acclaim throughout the city.

If they had let Nico continue his plan, he can also offer the PCs entrance into Cult of the Rat to join him in fighting the Alliance.

THE AFTERWORD

The narrator's job isn't easy. The players could deviate from the story. They may wish to take a different approach and explore other options. Prepare yourself and be ready to improvise for a while, but steer them gently toward the main storyline and the conclusion. Remember, it's all about the fun.

If you wish, you can add depth to the story by improvising, creating your own subplots and NPCs. You can devise entirely new stories born in your imagination and enjoy the game together with other players.

NICO'S STATS

ATTRIBUTES:

Social 2, Intellectual 2, Physical 3

SKILLS:

Expression 3, Orator 1, Knowledge 2, Perception 4, Agility 3, Fray 3, Stealth 2

COMBAT:

Unarmed 9 (-NL)
Melee 11 (Rapier/L)
Endurance: 4

GIFTS:

Mind 5 (Servant, Mindcarver)

SUPERIOR GIFT:

Handling (Colossus only)

VIRTUES:

Luck 2, Will 2, Courage 3

POSSESSIONS:

Rapier, 4 Throwing Daggers



APPENDIX

- **Alliance** – A political and trade affiliation of the Great Cities, spanning over the most of the known world.
- **Attribute** – Innate abilities of a character, ranked from 1 to 5. Attributes are divided into three categories: Sociality, Intellect, and Physicality.
- **Awakening** – The process by which ordinary humans turn to Vasalli, gaining powers and abilities as they go through physical changes.
- **Azimoth** – According to the legends, the god that created life. The Church of Azimoth believes he's in a deep slumber, waiting for the right moment to return.
- **Character Sheet** – The record of a player character, containing crucial information.
- **Character** – A player's alter ego, a character in the story. Also known as a player character (PC).
- **Colossus** – A gigantic being who evolved from a Vasall through the Rites of Colossi. Unable to speak but obedient, it is a powerful protector and builder.
- **Combat Maneuvers** – Various stunts used to gain an upper hand against an opponent. Examples are grappling, tripping, tumbling, and sneaking behind the opponent.
- **Corruption** – A dangerous taint of body and mind that affects Vasalli who overindulge in their Gifts or simply fail to harness their powers.
- **Cults** – An umbrella term covering various lesser Orders or smaller religious groups.
- **Damage** – Harm inflicted on characters, which can be lethal (wounds, broken bones, etc.) or nonlethal (bruises, contusions, etc.).
- **Endurance** – A character's life force and general physical state.
- **Failure** – A roll with no 5s or 6s. A roll is a dramatic failure if it contains no 5s or 6s and contains at least one 1.
- **Features** – The characteristics and aspects of a character.
- **First Ones** – According to the legend, the First Ones—or the Firsts—were the race Azimoth brought with him from the stars to help and serve him.
- **Gifts** – The supernatural powers that the Vasalli exhibit. They are called Gifts because, according to the clergy of the Church of Azimoth, they are a gift from Azimoth.
- **Great Cities** – The honorary title reserved for cities of great importance to the Alliance, coinciding with the cities and sovereign territories that helped form the Alliance. Every Great City controls its territories, which often border the territory of another Great City.

Within those territories, other smaller cities and villages fall under the jurisdiction of the Great Cities.

- **Handlers** – Specially trained Vasalli excelling in mind control, entrusted with controlling the Colossi.
- **Holy Scriptures** – Holy books of the Church of Azimoth, containing various myths and legends, as well as the famous Rites of Colossi.
- **Kingdom of Drumar** – An exotic kingdom rumored to be far to the North in the Uncharted Territories.
- **Narrator** – A person who organizes the game, narrates the story, and takes the mantle of the NPCs in the story.
- **Non-Player Character (NPC)** – A character controlled by the narrator.
- **Orders** – Organizations assembled from the Vasalli and their supporters. Although not strictly political, they are influential and participate in the politics of the Alliance. The ideals and philosophies they are motivated by vary from Order to Order. Considering their influence and power, they are the faces of the Alliance people can understand.
- **Phases of Combat** – Combat unfolds over rounds, each having four phases.
- **Declaration** – The players announces their intent.
- **Maneuver** – Characters actions that aren't direct attacks (combat maneuvers, reflexive Gifts, movement, and so on).
- **Engagement** – Characters engage in combat directly, attacking one or more opponents. Players and the narrator roll dice simultaneously.
- **Resolution** – Players and narrator compare combat successes, and the narrator assesses the situation.
- **Picture Rule** – If a player describes an action or method well, he can gain various bonuses on a dice roll, or even an automatic success. A core rule.
- **Pool** – Dice rolled to attempt a task. Calculated the pool by adding the ranks of the features relevant to the task, usually the relevant attribute and skill, but combat pools can have more features. The combat pool has 3 categories: Unarmed, Fray, and Ranged.
- **Rank** – Numeric indicator (0–5) of a feature, describing aptitude or development in a given field.
- **Roll** – A common term for throwing dice to attempt to achieve something. The most common roll is a task roll. Other rolls include the contested roll, Gift roll, and combat roll.
- **Rosaria** – A mysterious organization opposed to the current politics of the Alliance. Some rumors say it is single most dangerous threat to the Alliance; others say it is a common criminal organization, a terrorist party, or just a fabrication of paranoid minds.

•**Roleplaying Game (RPG)** – A game in which 3–5 players assume the roles of fictional characters in a story presented by a narrator.

•**Second Ones** – According to the Holy Scriptures, the Second Ones were a race created by Azimoth after the death of the First Ones, by mixing his powerful blood with the blood of the most developed race in the world. They had duties of being a mediator between the rest of the people and Azimoth. The most spread belief is that the present-day people originated from the mix of the common humankind and the Second Ones.

•**Skill** – A feature of the character, denoting abilities and knowledge learned throughout life and studies.

•**Specialization** – Specialized knowledge in a skill.

•**Success** – When rolling dice, a success is a 5 or 6. When a task roll has one or more successes, the roll is a success. Other rolls have different criteria for success.

•**Success, Exceptional** – Five or more successes on a dice roll. It signifies a phenomenal result.

•**Success, Automatic** – When a character succeeds on an action without rolling dice. This occurs when a task is not difficult, or it can be awarded to a player who fulfills the Picture Rule very well.

•**Task** – An action appointed to a player by the narrator or by the player. Usually, it signifies an action toward a desirable outcome.

•**The Resin** – A colloquial term for the resinous substance of wondrous properties, which can be used in various fields of science. Resin glows in the dark, so it's commonly used for illumination. Some people claim it originates from the Vargans.

•**Tribunals** – Legislative bodies that often govern the politics of the Great Cities, assembled from the City's various influential individuals. It is the main political body making decisions on Alliance matters. Every 10 years, the Great Tribunal moves its seat to a new City, as to avoid centralization of power.

•**Uncharted Territories** – All territories not held by the Alliance. The term is mostly used for the territories located north of the Alliance. According to some, other civilizations can be found in the North and Uncharted Territories.

•**Vargans** – Monstrous humanoids living underground. The Church of Azimoth believes they are servants of Zimitra. They started attacking after the discovery of the Resin, and some people suspect they are connected to the substance.

•**Vasalli** – Humans who developed supernatural abilities and resilience through the Awakening. They are powerful paragons of the society.

•**Virtues** – Intangible features of characters: Luck, Will, and Courage.

•**War of Dawn** – A mythological event during which the gods Azimoth and Zimitra fought.

•**Zimitra** – A god and Azimoth's opponent. Allegedly, Azimoth threw him into the core of the world, where he had to wait and recuperate. According to myth, he will rise once again to fight Azimoth and bring the world to its end.



STEP INTO THE EVERCHANGING WORLD OF AWAKEN!

The Alliance of the Great Cities is teetering on the brink of collapse. The world is on the edge and it's slipping away into chaos, permanent political struggles, accompanied by creeping terror from underground; a Vargan race set on the vengeance against humankind. The last guardians called Colossi are slowly fading away or turning against their masters.

Amid all the turmoil, Vasalli stand tall. The leaders of the people, chosen for their special Gifts, are trying to maintain the delicate balance and fight against the incoming threats.

But there are many horrors even Vasalli can't perceive, including the ones that come from their ranks, as the Awakening of the Vasalli brings its own dark side. Awake as a Vasall in **AWAKEN**, join the world of battles against the darkness, political struggles and discover the price of retaining humanity in the ruthless world!



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