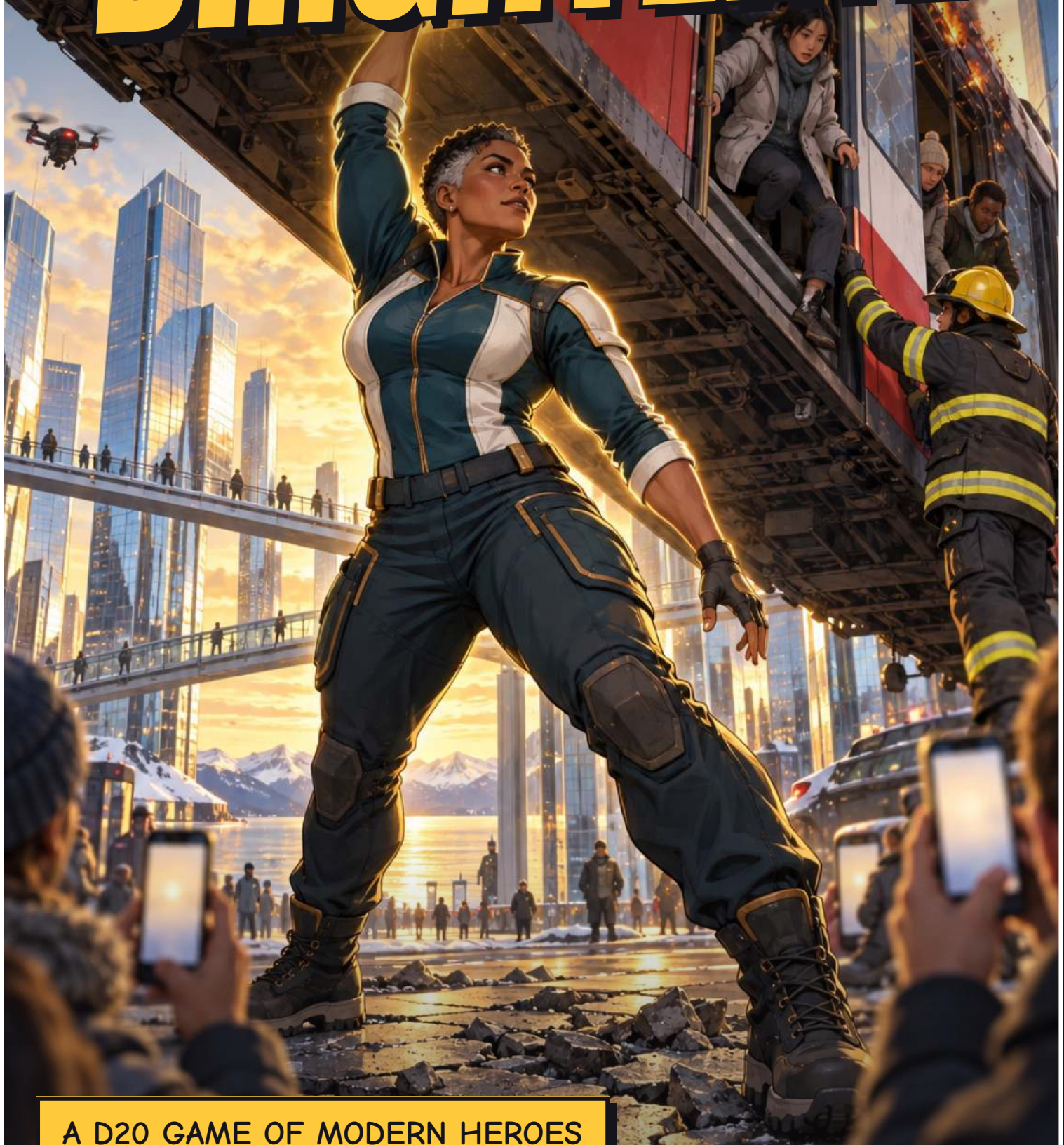




ROLLQUEST

BRIGHTLINE



A D20 GAME OF MODERN HEROES

SYSTEM REFERENCE FOR GAME MASTERS AND PLAYERS

BRIGHTLINE

Written for RollQuest. The rules match the game systems as they ship in RollQuest; the tables are generated from the systems' own data.

Illustrations were generated with an AI image model and reviewed by RollQuest.

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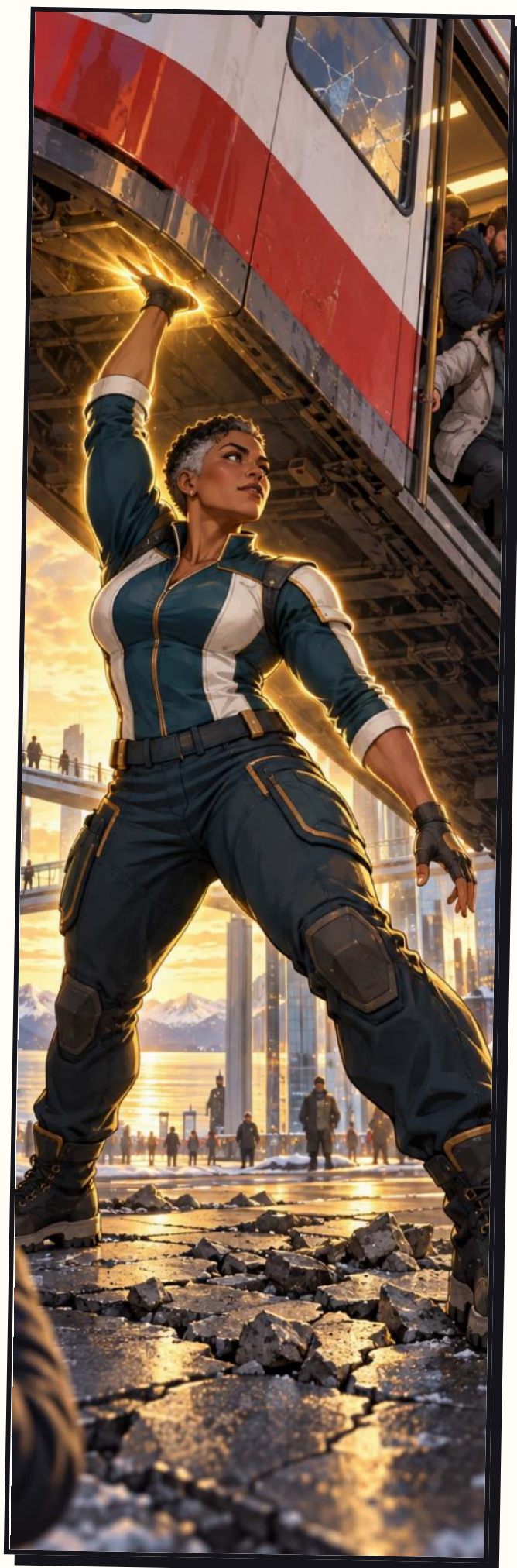
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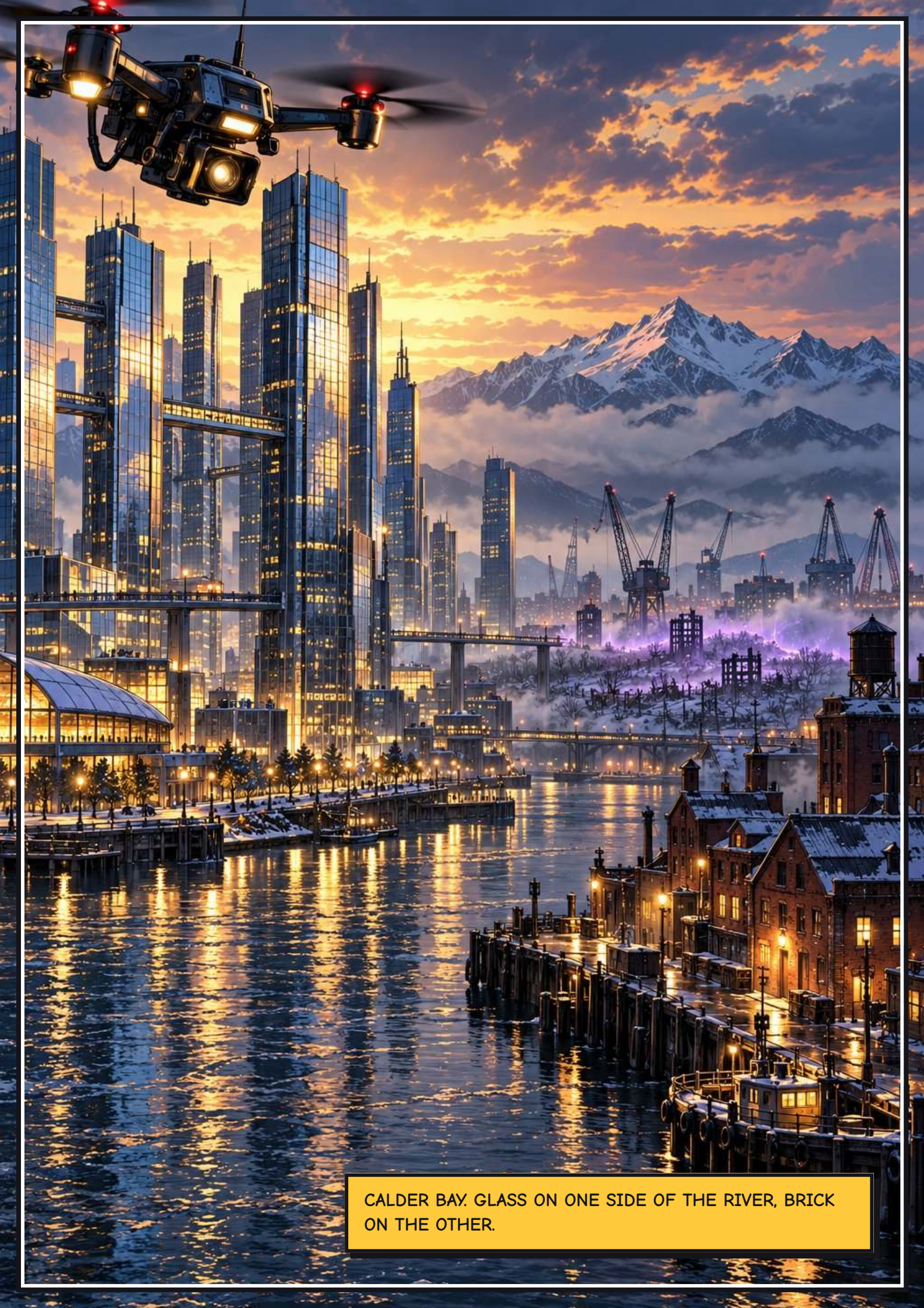
INTRODUCTION

BRIGHTLINE

THE SKY BURNED WHITE FOR NINE MINUTES. TWENTY YEARS LATER, THE CAMERA IS ALWAYS ON.

Brightline is RollQuest's own modern superhero game. On the night of 14 October 2006 the whole sky burned white, everywhere at once, and by morning one person in ten thousand had woken up Lit: stronger, faster, burning, flying, or something stranger. Now it is 2026, and the Lit are licensed, sponsored, livestreamed, feared and needed. You play heroes in Calder Bay, the coastal city where the Flare burned gold: Charter-carrying team members in the mirrored towers of the Glasswork, Off-Line vigilantes in the brick streets of Lowmarket, people with impossible gifts trying to do good while the whole city watches and argues about it. You roll a d20, add a rank, and count your Steps. When a hit lands, you do not lose hit points: you grit your teeth and resist, and every failure pushes you a little further from the fight. Heroes are built from points within a Scale, powers are built rank by rank, and when a Game Master (GM) brings your past or your secrets into the story, you earn the Shine that lets you rise above a bad roll. It is bright, hopeful, and complicated: let the heroes win, then make the win cost something in public.





CALDER BAY. GLASS ON ONE SIDE OF THE RIVER, BRICK ON THE OTHER.

THE WORLD

THE NIGHT THE SKY BURNED

At 21:14 Greenwich time on 14 October 2006, the whole sky burned white for nine minutes, everywhere at once. The night side of the planet saw it too. People in mines and submarines swore they felt it through rock and steel.

No instrument recorded anything. Satellites logged no flare. Seismographs stayed flat. Every camera that was pointed at the sky that night shows an ordinary dark. The only evidence that the Flare happened at all is that everybody remembers it, and what it left behind.

By morning, about one person in ten thousand had woken **Lit**: roughly 800,000 people worldwide. Some woke stronger, or faster, or able to set a kettle boiling by looking at it. Some woke able to fly and did not find out for a week. A few woke as something that was no longer quite a person. The Lit had nothing in common beforehand: no shared age, place, illness, bloodline or belief. A retired bus driver in Calder Bay woke able to stop a train. Her neighbour's six-year-old woke able to hear what the train was thinking.

"I WAS TAKING THE BINS OUT. THE SKY WENT WHITE, LIKE SOMEONE HAD OPENED A FRIDGE DOOR THE SIZE OF THE WORLD. I STOOD THERE FOR NINE MINUTES HOLDING A BIN BAG. IN THE MORNING I PUT MY HAND ON THE KITCHEN TABLE AND IT WENT THROUGH."
(OVERHEARD ON A LOWMARKET NIGHT BUS, 2026)

WHY IT HAPPENED

Nobody knows. Twenty years of hearings, papers, podcasts and street-corner sermons have produced four big theories, each with its followers and none with any proof.

- **The Solar School:** a stellar event that our instruments were never built to see.

- **The Broadcast:** a signal, sent from somewhere, that some of us were built to receive.
- **The Waking:** something old and very large turned over in its sleep.
- **The Test:** someone is watching to see what we do with it.

Ask a Calder Bay cab driver which one is true and you will get an answer, a reason, and a fare you did not agree to.

TWENTY YEARS LATER

It is 2026. The Lit are a fact of life: in the news, in the courts, on cereal boxes and in the background of every wedding video. Children born after the Flare have never known a world without them. Older people still flinch when a stranger's eyes glow.

THE BRIGHTLINE ACCORDS

In 2011, most of the world's countries signed the **Brightline Accords**, a treaty that draws a literal bright line between two kinds of Lit.

- **Licensed** heroes carry a **Charter**. A Charter brings insurance, oversight by the Accord Bureau, a public **rating** that rises and falls with every rescue and every scandal, and the legal right to use powers in public.
- **Unlicensed** Lit are **Off-Line**. Some are vigilantes who will not sign. Some are criminals. Most simply want to be left alone. For all of them, using a power in public is a crime.

The Accords were written to keep people safe, and mostly they do. They were also written by committee, in a hurry, by people who were frightened. Every hero who has worked under them for a year can name three clauses that make no sense and one that has hurt somebody.

MONEY FOLLOWS THE LIT

- Corporations sponsor whole teams, with brand deals, uniforms designed by marketing departments, and merchandise in every airport.

- Rescues are livestreamed by bystanders, by drones and by the heroes themselves. A good rescue is watched a million times before the ambulance arrives.
- A hero's approval rating can matter as much as their arrest record. Some heroes would rather be loved than right. Some would rather be right than employed.

CALDER BAY

Calder Bay is a coastal city of four million people on a cold northern bay: grey water, fog off the tidal flats, ferries and container ships, and a skyline of mirrored towers that catch the low sun. It has one of the densest populations of Lit in the world, because the Flare burned brightest over it. People who were there that night say the sky over the harbour was not white but gold.

Every year on 14 October the city keeps **Flare Night**, a public holiday. There are fireworks over the bay, gold lanterns in every window, street parties, protests, and a lot of overtime: every hero in the city is on call, and every year something goes wrong.

THE GLASSWORK

The downtown core: mirrored towers, sky bridges between them, plazas with fountains and enormous screens. Every sponsored team in the city has its headquarters here.

- **The Spire**, Halberd Dynamics' tower, has a landing pad on its roof for its heroes and its drones.
- **Vivid's loft studio** fills a converted cathedral at the edge of the district, its rose window lit day and night.
- **Line 4** of the subway runs under the Glasswork, the busiest line in the city.
- The streets are clean, the cameras are everywhere, and a fight here is on the evening news before it ends. Heroes who work the Glasswork learn to smile while they punch.

LOWMARKET

The old market district: brick terraces, fire escapes, night kitchens, corner stores, laundromats, and a tram line that still runs on rails laid a century ago.

- This is where street-level heroes work, the ones without a sponsor, who are known by name at the laundromat and owe the noodle stall money.
- **The Lowmarket Free Clinic** runs out of an old bathhouse here.
- Most of the city's Off-Line Lit live in Lowmarket, quietly, until someone makes them stop being quiet.

- Developers want Lowmarket. Lowmarket does not want developers. Buildings keep catching fire.

BAYSIDE YARDS

The docks: container stacks, cranes, rail spurs, warehouses, and the long tidal flats where the bay goes out a mile at low water.

- Powered smuggling is the Yards' trade. Lifters move crates without cranes. Shapers walk cargo through customs wearing a stranger's face.
- Nobody here calls the Bureau. Problems in the Yards are settled in the Yards.
- The night shift runs under floodlights, and the fog rolls in off the flats most nights after ten.

THE SCORCH

Forty city blocks on the north shore where reality still flickers from Flare night.

- **Lights:** streetlights come on at noon and stay dark at midnight.
- **Clocks:** they disagree by hours, and some of them run backwards.
- **Doors:** some open onto rooms that are not in the building, or not in the city.

The Accord Bureau has quarantined the Scorch since 2007 behind a ring of fences, sensors and patrols. Afterimages walk out of it. People still sneak in: for scavenged Flare-touched objects that sell for a fortune, for dares, and for missing relatives who might still be in there.

ELSEWHERE IN THE CITY

- **The bay** itself: ferries, a lighthouse on a rock, fishing boats, and the spot somewhere out on the water where the Flare burned gold. Divers say the water there is warm in winter.
- **The north shore suburbs** along the Scorch fence, where house prices fell to nothing in 2007 and the people who stayed are tough, strange and proud.
- **The Accord Bureau's field office**, the largest in the country and the most overworked, a concrete block with a glass atrium where Charter hearings are livestreamed.

FACTIONS AND POWERS

THE ACCORD BUREAU

Licensing, ratings and enforcement under the Accords. Its agents are mostly decent, tired people with a rulebook written by committee and too many cases to work. They hand out Charters, investigate complaints, run the Scorch quarantine, and arrest Off-Line Lit who use their powers in public. Its leadership is not decent. Something is being kept from everyone, and some of the people at the top have been deciding for a long time who gets told what.

HALBERD DYNAMICS

A defence contractor that builds power-dampening cuffs, armoured suits and drone swarms, and rents security drones to anyone who pays. It sponsors a team, **the Halberd Line**, whose public face is spotless and whose contracts are not. Halberd's tower dominates the Glasswork skyline. Its former employees have a habit of turning up in powered suits the company says it never built.

VIVID

An influencer collective of young licensed heroes: bright costumes, constant streaming, merchandise, and real courage underneath the branding. Their ratings are the highest in the city. Their rescues are getting suspiciously convenient: always near a camera, always at golden hour, always with a hero arriving just in time.

THE LOWMARKET FREE CLINIC

Off-Line mutual aid: healers without licences, a food bank, legal help and a network of safe houses. Every hero in Lowmarket owes it a favour, and most of them have slept on its cots at least once. The Bureau would love an excuse to shut it down, and the Clinic is careful never to give it one.

SECOND DAWN

A movement, then a cult, then something worse. Second Dawn believes another Flare is coming, that it will lift the worthy and burn the rest, and that the faithful should help it along. Its prophet, Halcyon, is soft-spoken and luminous. Its acolytes wear robes over their street clothes and carry flare guns. Its plans involve the bay.

THE NULL SOCIETY

Anti-Lit activists, some peaceful and some not. They carry power-dampening technology bought on the grey market, and the uncomfortable argument that nobody voted

for the Flare. Most members march, petition and write letters. A militant edge, led by a former hero called Grievance, does more than that.

AFTERIMAGES

Not a faction, though they act like one. Afterimages are creatures that walk out of the Scorch, echoes of whatever the Flare was. They wear half-remembered shapes: a dog made of streetlight, a crowd of one person, a choir with no singers, a girl who vanished on Flare night and speaks in radio voices. They are drawn to the Lit. Some are dangerous. Some are frightened. Some, lately, have started to talk.

EVERYDAY LIFE

For most of Calder Bay's four million people, the Lit are weather. You check the hero feed in the morning the way you check for rain. A Charter hero on the tram is a bit of a thrill; an Off-Line one in your building is a rumour you do not repeat. Your kids have a favourite Vivid member and a lunchbox to prove it. Your landlord has a clause about powers in the lease.

People here are used to the strange. They step round the scorch marks on the pavement, buy coffee from a barista who can make it boil in the cup, and film everything. When a fight starts, half the street runs away and the other half holds up a phone. By the evening, the clip has been watched, cut, captioned, argued over and turned into a joke.

Underneath runs the unease. The Lit are a tiny minority with enormous power, and everybody knows it. Insurance premiums near hero headquarters are ruinous. There are Lit-only gyms and Lit-free cafes. Every scandal, every collapsed building, every hero caught lying gives the Null Society another hundred members.

"MA'AM, I'M GOING TO NEED YOU TO STEP BACK FROM THE BUS. NO, MA'AM, I CAN'T HOLD IT UP AND SIGN THAT AT THE SAME TIME. YES, I'LL BE IN THE PHOTO. JUST, PLEASE, STEP BACK FROM THE BUS." (BODY-CAMERA TRANSCRIPT, CHARTER HERO, GLASSWORK PLAZA)

TONE AND THEMES

Brightline is bright, hopeful heroics: people with powers choosing to help, and winning more often than not. Heroes catch falling trams, hold up collapsing floors, talk jumpers down and punch villains through walls. Good people get saved. That is the floor the game stands on.

Built on top of it are modern complications:

- **The livestream that never stops.** Every rescue is also a clip, and every clip is a story somebody else gets to tell.
- **Licensing politics.** Who gets a Charter, who loses one, and what the Bureau does to the people it says no to.
- **Corporate ethics.** Who is paying for the rescue, and what they want in return.
- **Power and fear.** The Lit are few and mighty, and the people around them are many and frightened. Both sides have a point.

The game scales by **Scale**: street-level heroes in Lowmarket at Scale 6, a Calder Bay team at Scale 10, and world-saving heroes at Scale 14. Making a character explains Scale in full.

THE HEROES

You play Lit (or, sometimes, people who were not Lit and built their way into the game anyway: trained fighters, inventors, and the stubborn). You might be a licensed member of a sponsored team, with a Charter, a rating and a marketing department; a street-level hero the whole of Lowmarket knows by first name; an Off-Line vigilante the Bureau would arrest on sight; or a reluctant newcomer whose power woke up last spring for no reason at all.

What makes you a hero is not your power. Plenty of Lit use theirs to rob merchandise stores or move contraband. You are the ones who run towards the fire, and you are the ones who have to live with the cameras, the hearings, the sponsors and the people who loved you before you were famous.

Heroes matter in Calder Bay because the city is changing. The Afterimages are walking out of the Scorch more often. Powers are growing in people who did not train for it. Second Dawn is building something on the water. And somewhere in the Bureau, someone knows more than they are saying. Whatever happens next, the city will look to the people in the bright costumes first, and it will be watching.



THE SPIRE ROOF. EVERYONE IS FILMING.

HOW TO PLAY

A game of Brightline is a conversation between the GM and the players. The GM describes Calder Bay, plays everyone in it who is not a hero, and sets the challenges. You describe what your hero does. When what you try could go either way, and failing would be interesting, the dice decide.

WHAT YOU NEED

- **A d20 for each player.** One twenty-sided die is the only die Brightline uses.
- **A character sheet** for your hero: abilities, defences, skills, powers, Edges, Twists and Shine.
- **Something to count Shine with:** tokens, coins or a pencil mark.
- **A battle map** for fights, marked in 5-foot squares, and a token for each hero, villain and bystander. Fights work without one, but Calder Bay's rooftops and container stacks are more fun when you can see them.

THE CORE ROLL: A CHECK

When your hero tries something difficult, you make a **check**:

1. The GM sets the **Difficulty**: the number you have to reach.
2. You roll a d20 and add the rank that fits what you are doing.
3. If your total meets or beats the Difficulty, you succeed. If it is lower, you fail.

Check: d20 + rank, against the Difficulty. Meet it or beat it to succeed.

The GM sets the Difficulty before you roll and tells you what it is, unless there is a reason to keep it secret. When nobody has said otherwise, a check is against 15.

DIFFICULTY	HOW HARD
10	Easy
15	A real effort
20	Hard
25	Heroic
30	Near impossible

WHICH RANK YOU ADD

- **An ability** for a raw test of what you are: Might to lift a car off someone, Grit to keep going through smoke, Heart to stand your ground in front of a hostile crowd.
- **A skill** when training helps: Athletics to climb a fire escape, Tech to override a lock, Persuasion to talk a jumper down. A skill's rank already includes its ability (see Making a character), so you add only the skill.
- **A defence** when you are resisting something: Durability against a hit, Nerve against fear or mind control, Vigor against poison, Evade to slip a net.
- **An attack** uses a skill too: Brawling up close, Marksmanship at range. Its Difficulty is set by the target's defence, not by the GM.
- **Some powers** add their own rank to an ability: Mind Read and Nullify roll the power's rank plus Sense.

If you are **Impaired**, take 2 off every ability check, skill check and attack roll you make; if you are **Disabled**, take 5 off instead (Disabled replaces Impaired, it does not add to it). The two conditions' own wording says "every check", but RollQuest takes the penalty off those three kinds of roll only: not off resistance checks, defence rolls or Initiative. This book plays it the way RollQuest does.

IN ROLLQUEST

On your sheet, set the **Difficulty** field to the number the GM calls, then press the ability or skill to roll it. The result names your Steps, such as **Success (2 Steps)**. Once your **Impaired** or **Disabled** field is set to 1 (see Rules of play), the sheet takes the penalty off your ability checks, skill checks and attack rolls through its **Check Penalty**. The sheet has no roll modes for Brightline: no Advantage or Fortune button, and every check is one d20. Attack rolls and the sheet's defence rolls have no Difficulty, so they show a total and no Steps.

STEPS

A check does not only pass or fail: it passes or fails by a number of **Steps**, one for every 5 points.

YOUR TOTAL AGAINST THE DIFFICULTY	RESULT	STEPS
Beat it by 10 or more	Success (3 Steps)	3
Beat it by 5 to 9	Success (2 Steps)	2
Meet it, or beat it by up to 4	Success (1 Step)	1
Miss it by 1 to 4	Failure (1 Step)	1
Miss it by 5 to 9	Failure (2 Steps)	2
Miss it by 10 to 14	Failure (3 Steps)	3
Miss it by 15 or more	Failure (4 Steps)	4

The Steps tell everyone how well or how badly it went.

- **Success (1 Step):** you did it. Just.
- **Success (2 Steps):** you did it cleanly, and the GM adds something extra: you did it faster, quieter, or you learned something.
- **Success (3 Steps):** you did it spectacularly. The crowd is cheering and the clip is already trending.
- **Failure (1 Step):** you nearly did it. The GM may let you succeed at a cost, or tell you what went wrong so you can try another way.
- **Failure (2 Steps):** it did not work.
- **Failure (3 Steps):** it went badly, and something got worse.
- **Failure (4 Steps):** it went as badly as it could.

Some rules read Steps directly. A **resistance check** reads its failure Steps as a ladder of harm (see Rules of play).

Mind Read gives surface thoughts at 1 Step, memories at 2 and buried secrets at 3. **Flurry** raises a hit's rank when the attack beats the defence by 5 or more, which is an attack of 2 Steps or more.

EXAMPLE

Gantry tries to haul a jammed shutter open with Athletics 11 against Difficulty 15. He rolls 13: $13 + 11 = 24$, which beats 15 by 9. That is a **Success (2 Steps)**: the shutter comes up, and the GM adds that it comes up quietly enough that the smugglers inside do not hear it.

ATTACKS, IN BRIEF

An attack is a check against a number set by the target's defence:

- **Up close** (melee), you roll **Brawling** and need **10 + the target's Guard**.
- **At range**, you roll **Marksmanship** and need **10 + the target's Evade**.
- Some powers make no attack roll at all: an **Area** burst or a **Perception** power just lands, and each target resists it.

A **natural 20** on the d20 of an attack roll always hits, whatever the total, and is a **crit**: the hit's rank goes up by 5. A **natural 1** on the d20 of an attack roll always misses, whatever the total.

RESISTING, IN BRIEF

Nobody in Brightline has hit points. When a hit lands, the target makes a **resistance check**: $d20 + \text{Durability}$ (or Nerve, against a hit to the mind) against **15 + the hit's rank**. Succeed and the hit glances off. Fail and the target takes conditions by how many Steps it failed by: **Dinged**, then **Rattled**, then **Reeling**, then **Down**. Each Dinged takes 1 off every later check to resist a hit, and they stack, so the damage builds up. Rules of play has the whole ladder.

SHINE AND TWISTS

Shine is a hero's luck, nerve and star quality in one number.

- **You start every session with 1 Shine.** (The Lucky Edge adds more.)
- **You earn Shine through your Twists.** A Twist is a complication you bring with you: a person, a secret, a weakness, an obligation. You take one or two when you make your hero. When the GM brings one of your Twists into play and it makes things harder for you, you earn 1 Shine.
- **You spend Shine** in these ways:
 - **Reroll a failed check.** Roll the d20 again. On the new roll, any face from 1 to 10 counts as 10 more (so the new d20 always counts as 11 to 20). You keep the new result, and you cannot spend Shine to reroll the same check twice. Ability checks, skill checks and resistance checks are all checks. This book lets you reroll a missed attack roll the same way. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.
 - **Shake off Rattled or Reeling.** The condition ends at once.
 - **Add a detail to the scene.** A fire escape just where you need it, an old friend on the night shift, a spare key under the mat. The GM can refuse a detail that breaks the scene, and you keep the Shine.
 - **Ask the GM for a nudge.** The GM tells you something useful: a clue you missed, a weak point, the villain's next move.
 - **Power some Edges:** Inspiring and Born Leader cost a Shine each time you use them.

IN ROLLQUEST

After a failed ability or skill check on your sheet, **Spend Shine to reroll** appears under the result. Press it and the sheet rolls the check again, counts a 1 to 10 on the new die as 10 more (the die still shows the face that landed), and takes 1 off your **Shine** by itself; the new result carries the check's name with **(Shine)**. A rerolled result offers no second reroll, and with no Shine left the button is greyed out: **No Shine left**. The button does not appear on attack rolls, on the sheet's defence rolls, or on the prompt to resist a hit. To spend Shine on one of those, take 1 off **Shine** by hand, roll a fresh d20 (the **Roll a d20** macro will do), count 1 to 10 as 11 to 20, and the GM applies the new result by hand. Spending Shine any other way, you also take 1 off by hand.

FOR THE GM

Bring in a Twist when it hurts most and pays best. A Twist that only inconveniences a hero for a moment is not worth a Shine; a sister filming the fight for the Null Society, a sponsor's lawyer on the phone in the middle of a rescue, or a secret identity half guessed by a journalist is. Hand the Shine over as you bring the Twist in, so the player can use it straight away to deal with the trouble you just made.

HELP AND CIRCUMSTANCES

There are no roll modes in Brightline. Instead:

- **Helping.** An ally who helps your check or attack adds 2 to it; the Teamwork Edge makes it 2 plus its rank.
- **Fixed bonuses.** Some Edges and conditions name their own: Sure Aim gives an aimed attack 5, Strike First gives a first attack 2, Cover Fire takes 2 off attacks on a protected ally, and Prone gives melee attacks against you 5 and takes 5 off ranged ones.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce these. Helping takes the helper's action, and only for something they could plausibly help with (steadying a ladder, distracting a guard, spotting for a shot). For any other circumstance, add to a check or take from it: 2 for a real edge or a real problem, 5 for a big one. When the situation is bigger than that, change the Difficulty instead.

OPPOSED CHECKS AND CONTESTS

Against someone's trait. Several powers give the number to beat themselves. Hunting someone hidden by Concealment is Notice against 10 + its rank. Seeing through Morph is a Read check against 10 + 5 times its rank. Nullify is the power's rank + Sense against 10 + the target power's rank, and Mind Read is its rank + Sense against 10 + the target's Nerve. Other rules say only "against" a trait: a Feint is Deception against the target's Read, a Trip is Brawling or Tumbling against the target's Agility. This book reads those the same way: the Difficulty is **10 + that trait**, and the person you are acting against does not roll. This is a table ruling: RollQuest

does not enforce it.

Contests. When two people are both actively trying to beat each other (a foot race across the Glasswork, two hackers fighting over a drone, a tug of war over a hostage's rope), both roll the check that fits. The higher total wins. On a tie, whoever is trying to keep things as they are wins: the runner who is ahead stays ahead, the hacker who holds the drone keeps it. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.

WHO ROLLS WHEN

- **You roll for your hero, always.** Every check, every attack, and every resistance check when your hero is hit. The GM tells you the Difficulty; you roll.
- **The GM rolls for everyone else:** villains, Mooks, bystanders, Afterimages. The GM can roll once for a whole group of identical Mooks.
- **Some rolls are secret.** When you should not know whether you succeeded (did you spot the tail? is the witness lying?), the GM can roll your check in secret and tell you what your hero notices.
- **Nobody rolls** when the outcome is not in doubt, or when failure would just stop the story. A hero with Might 12 does not roll to lift a motorbike. A hero who needs to find the villain's hideout to continue the story finds it; the check decides how much it costs.

IN ROLLQUEST

Two ready-made macros come with Brightline games: **Roll a d20** (shortcut `d20`) rolls a plain d20 and pops it up for everyone, and **Secret check** (shortcut `secret`) asks for a bonus and rolls d20 + it where only you and the GM can see.

A WORKED EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Dana plays Gantry, a Bayside Yards crane operator who woke Lit with power over metal (his full build is in Making a character). Theo plays Signal, a licensed team leader built from the Leader archetype. It is a foggy night in Bayside Yards. A barge loaded with containers has caught fire beside the quay, and the crane that could lift the burning containers clear has lost power.

Gantry's Tech is 10 and his Notice 11; Signal's Persuasion (the Leader archetype's) is 18.

The GM sets the scene: the barge, the smoke, a crowd of dock workers and protesters at the gate filming everything. "And Dana: at the front of the crowd, holding up her phone, is your sister Effie, in a Null Society jacket." Gantry's Twist is a *Null Society sibling*, so the GM hands Dana 1 Shine for bringing it in. Gantry now has 2.

Dana: "Gantry climbs into the cab of crane nine and tries to wake it up." The GM calls it a Tech check against Difficulty 20: the crane's control board is fried. Dana rolls a 6: $6 + 10 = 16$, four short. That is **Failure (1 Step)**. Dana does not want Effie's stream to show her brother failing, so she spends Shine to reroll. The new d20 shows 9, which counts as 19: $19 + 10 = 29$, beating 20 by 9. **Success (2 Steps)**. The crane wakes, and with the extra Step the GM adds that the yard's floodlights come on too. Gantry is down to 1 Shine.

Theo: "Signal gets on the gate and tells the crowd to move back fifty metres, now." The GM sets Persuasion against Difficulty 20; this crowd does not trust heroes. Theo rolls 7: $7 + 18 = 25$. **Success (2 Steps)**. The crowd moves back, and someone shouts that a dock worker is still on the barge.

The GM asks for a Notice check from Gantry, Difficulty 15, to see what is coming out of the fog. Dana rolls 2: $2 + 11 = 13$. **Failure (1 Step)**. Close, but not close enough. The GM does not make the story stop: Gantry sees it, but late. A second barge, unlit, is drifting straight at the quay, and on its deck stands a man made of wet stone, cracking his knuckles. "Everybody roll Initiative."

WHO	CHECK	D20 + RANK	AGAINST	RESULT
Gantry	Tech, to wake a dead crane	$6 + 10 = 16$	Difficulty 20	Failure (1 Step)
Gantry	Spend Shine to reroll	9 counts as 19; $19 + 10 = 29$	Difficulty 20	Success (2 Steps)
Signal (the Leader)	Persuasion, to calm the crowd	$7 + 18 = 25$	Difficulty 20	Success (2 Steps)
Gantry	Notice, to spot the barge	$2 + 11 = 13$	Difficulty 15	Failure (1 Step)

The fight that follows is worked through in full at the end of Rules of play.



NEW CHARTER, FIRST DAY.

MAKING A CHARACTER

Every Brightline hero is built from points. You get a budget of **build points** set by the game's **Scale**, and you spend them on everything: abilities, defences, skills, powers and Edges. Nothing is free and nothing is random. You can start from one of ten ready-made archetypes, or build from nothing.

SCALE: HOW BIG YOUR GAME IS

Before anyone makes a hero, the GM picks the game's **Scale**: one number for the whole table that says how big the heroes are. Street-level heroes in Lowmarket play at

Scale 6. A Calder Bay team plays at Scale 10, the default. Heroes who save the world, or face what sits at the heart of the Scorch, play at Scale 14.

Scale does two jobs.

1. **It sets your budget:** 15 build points for every point of Scale. A Scale 10 hero has 150 build points.
2. **It caps your traits in pairs**, so that no hero can be the best at everything (see How points, ranks and Scale caps fit together, below).

SCALE	BUILD POINTS	PAIRED CAP	HIGHEST SKILL	KIND OF GAME
6	90	12	16	Street level: Lowmarket heroes and Off-Line vigilantes
7	105	14	17	
8	120	16	18	
9	135	18	19	City heroes: a Calder Bay team, the default
10	150	20	20	
11	165	22	21	
12	180	24	22	
13	195	26	23	World and cosmic: a Halberd Line rival, the Scorch's heart
14	210	28	24	

IN ROLLQUEST

Scale is the **Scale** field on each hero's sheet, and it starts at 10. For a game at another Scale, change it on every hero's sheet: **Build points** and **Points left** follow it.

THE STEPS

Make your hero in this order.

1. **Name your hero.** Who you are, and what Calder Bay calls you.

2. **Choose an archetype, or skip it.** Start from a complete hero, or from nothing.
3. **Spend build points** on abilities, defences and skills.
4. **Build your powers** with the power builder.
5. **Choose Edges.**
6. **Take one or two Twists.**
7. **Check the caps and finish:** Shine, Initiative and your attacks.

Steps 3 to 5 share one budget, so you will go back and forth between them. That is expected: the order is for learning, not a rule.

IN ROLLQUEST

The character builder walks you through **Name Your Hero**, **Choose an Archetype** (which you may skip) and **Spend Build Points**. On the build-points screen, the points you have left are shown live, and the step refuses a spend that breaks a cap. Powers are built on the sheet itself: open a power's row and press **Build** to set its **Rank** and choose its **Boosts** and **Limits**. What your powers and Edges cost together is filled in for you as **Spent on powers and Edges**, and **Points left** shows what remains of the budget.

STEP 1: NAME YOUR HERO

Every hero needs a name, on the street or on a Charter. Before you choose one, answer a few questions.

- **Where were you on Flare night?** Everyone remembers. What were you doing at 21:14 on 14 October 2006, and what did the sky look like from there? (If you were born after it, what do your family say about it?)
- **What woke up in you?** Describe your power in a sentence, the way a witness would.
- **Charter or Off-Line?** Are you licensed, with a rating, insurance and a Bureau handler, or do you work outside the Accords?
- **Who knows?** Your family, your employer, your neighbours, the Bureau, the internet?
- **Why do you help?** Plenty of Lit do not.

Then pick a hero name (the one on the merchandise, or the one the Lowmarket kids shout) and a real name.

STEP 2: CHOOSE AN ARCHETYPE, OR START FROM NOTHING

Ten **archetypes**, from the Brick to the Leader, are complete Scale 10 heroes: abilities, defences, skills, powers and Edges, all within the budget and every cap. You can take one exactly as it is and be ready to play in two minutes, or use it as a starting point and tune it: move a few points from one skill to another, swap an Edge, raise one power by lowering another. They are listed in full under Archetypes, below.

If you would rather build from nothing, skip this step and start Step 3 with every rank at 0 and the whole budget to spend.

IN ROLLQUEST

Pick an archetype under **Choose an Archetype** and its powers and Edges arrive on your sheet already built; the next step, **Spend Build Points**, offers the archetype's ranks as a suggested build to keep or change (**Use the suggested build**). The archetypes are made for Scale 10: in a game at another Scale, treat them as a starting point and rebuild them to the new budget and caps.

STEP 3: SPEND BUILD POINTS

ABILITIES

Every hero has eight abilities. Each is a rank from -5 to 20, and each costs **2 build points a rank**. A rank of 0 is an ordinary person; 2 is a trained one, such as a firefighter's Grit or a sharpshooter's Aim; 5 or more is beyond anyone who was not Lit. A rank below 0 gives you 2 points back for each rank below.

ABILITY	WHAT IT COVERS
Might	Raw strength: lifting, shoving, hitting hard.
Grit	Stamina and toughness: shrugging off hits, poison and exhaustion.
Agility	Balance, speed and reflexes: getting out of the way first.
Aim	Hand and eye together: throwing, shooting, fine work.
Combat	Fighting up close: landing blows and turning them aside.
Mind	Reasoning, memory and learning.
Sense	Awareness, intuition and willpower.
Heart	Presence and conviction: persuading, leading, standing firm in public.

DEFENCES

Five defences protect you. Four of them start at an ability and can be raised by buying ranks at **1 build point a rank**. The fifth, **Durability**, starts at Grit and can never be bought directly: only powers (such as Protection or Grow) and Edges (Tough as Nails) raise it.

DEFENCE	STARTS AT	RAISED BY	WHAT IT DOES
Evade	Agility	1 point a rank	Ranged attacks: 10 + Evade; resists Snare
Guard	Combat	1 point a rank	Melee attacks: 10 + Guard
Vigor	Grit	1 point a rank	resists Affliction, Transform and Weaken
Durability	Grit	powers and Edges only	resists Kinetic and Energy hits
Nerve	Sense	1 point a rank	resists Mental hits, Drain and Illusion

- **Evade** is getting out of the way. A ranged attack has to reach 10 + your Evade.
- **Guard** is blocking and parrying. A melee attack has to reach 10 + your Guard.
- **Durability** is soaking it up. When a hit lands, you roll Durability to resist it.
- **Vigor** is your body's resistance to anything working on it from the inside: poisons, numbing touches, transformations.
- **Nerve** is your mind's resistance to fear, control, illusion and hits to the mind.

Some powers and Edges add to a defence: Slippery and Shrink add to Evade, Brawler's Guard and Shrink to Guard, while Grow takes 2 off Evade. Those changes count for everything, the caps included.

SKILLS

There are sixteen skills. Each one rests on an ability, and its rank is that ability plus the ranks you buy. Skill ranks cost **1 build point for every 2 ranks**, so a half point is possible; the total you spend on skills can end in a half.

SKILL	ABILITY	SKILL	ABILITY
Tumbling	Agility	Notice	Sense
Athletics	Might	Persuasion	Heart
Brawling	Combat	Marksmanship	Aim
Deception	Heart	Sleight of Hand	Agility
Know-How	Mind	Stealth	Agility
Read	Sense	Tech	Mind
Intimidation	Heart	Patch-Up	Mind
Sleuthing	Mind	Driving	Agility

A hero with no ranks in a skill can still use it, with the ability alone. For a specialist job (rewiring a reactor, treating a wound properly, knowing what a Second Dawn symbol means), the GM may rule that a hero with no ranks cannot try at all; the Know-It-All Edge lets you try any Know-How check anyway.

WHAT THINGS COST

WHAT YOU BUY	COST	RANGE
Abilities (all eight)	2 points a rank	-5 to 20
Defence ranks (Evade, Guard, Vigor and Nerve)	1 point a rank	0 to 20
Skill ranks (all 16 skills)	1 point for every 2 ranks	0 to 40
Durability	never bought: only powers and Edges raise it	no ranks of its own
Powers	what the power builder says they cost	each power has its own ranks

WHAT YOU BUY	COST	RANGE
Edges	1 point a rank	each Edge has its own ranks

STEP 4: BUILD YOUR POWERS

Powers come from the same budget. How to build them is explained in full under The power builder, below. How much of your budget goes on powers is up to you: the Martial Artist archetype has only a handful of small powers and leans on its abilities, skills and Edges instead.

STEP 5: CHOOSE EDGES

Edges are talents, tricks, contacts and resources: a fighting style, a fast draw, a Charter, a hideout, a benefactor. Each costs **1 build point a rank**. Most have a single rank; some go up to 2, 3 or 5. The full list is under Edges, below.

STEP 6: TAKE ONE OR TWO TWISTS

A **Twist** is a complication you bring with you: a person, a secret, a weakness or an obligation. Take one or two, in your own words. You can pick from the list under Twists, below, or invent your own with the GM. Twists cost nothing; they earn you Shine whenever the GM brings them into play (see How to play).

A good Twist is specific and can turn up at the worst moment. "A family" is not a Twist. "My dad drives a Line 4 train and does not know I am Lit" is.

STEP 7: CHECK THE CAPS AND FINISH

- Check every cap (see the next section). If anything is over, move points until it is not.
- Write down your **Initiative**: your Agility, plus anything your powers and Edges add (Quickness adds twice its rank, Quick Off the Mark 4 a rank).
- Write down your **attacks**: Strike (Brawling against Guard, rank equal to your Might), Hurl (Marksmanship against Evade, rank equal to your Might), and every power that makes an attack, with its attack bonus and rank.
- You start every session with **1 Shine**, plus 1 for each rank of the Lucky Edge.
- Spend any points you have left.

HOW POINTS, RANKS AND SCALE CAPS FIT TOGETHER

Building a hero is a matter of three things working against each other: one budget, many prices, and a handful of caps.

One budget. Everything comes out of the same pool of build points, 15 for every point of Scale. There is no separate pool for powers. A point spent on Might is a point not spent on Flight.

Many prices. A rank costs different amounts depending on what it is in. An ability rank costs 2 points, but it raises everything built on it: a rank of Agility raises Evade, Initiative and four skills at once. A defence rank costs 1 and raises one defence. A skill rank costs half a point and raises one skill. A power rank costs whatever its Effect, Boosts and Limits make it cost. So the cheapest way to get a high number is usually the narrowest one, and the most expensive is the broadest.

A handful of caps. Scale caps traits in pairs.

WHAT IS CAPPED	AT MOST	CHECKED BY
Every skill (ability + ranks)	Scale + 10	the build step
Evade + Durability	Scale x 2	the build step
Guard + Durability	Scale x 2	the build step
Vigor + Nerve	Scale x 2	the build step
A power's attack bonus + its rank	Scale x 2	the GM

Each pair is a trade-off.

- **Evade + Durability, and Guard + Durability.** A hero who is hard to hit must be easier to hurt, and a hero who can take anything must be easier to hit. A Brick with Durability 14 at Scale 10 can have Evade and Guard of only 6. A Speedster with Evade 14 can have Durability of only 6.
- **Vigor + Nerve.** A body that shrugs off every poison has a mind that is easier to crack, and the other way round.
- **Every skill at most Scale + 10.** At Scale 10, no skill's total, its ability included, goes above 20.
- **A power's attack bonus plus its rank at most twice Scale.** An accurate attack hits softer, and a devastating one is harder to land. At Scale 10, Marksmanship 10 with Blast 10 is at the cap; so is Marksmanship 14 with Blast 6. The build step does not check it for you; the GM does.

Three more things follow from the caps.

- **Bonuses count.** Durability from Protection, Evade from Slippery, Guard and Evade from Shrink, Grow's Durability and its penalty to Evade: all of them count towards the caps. A power you switch on and off (such as Enhance or Grow) should fit the caps while it is switched on.
- **A cap is a ceiling, not a target.** Many heroes sit at the cap on some pairs and below it on others. Doorstep, below, is well under the cap on her skills and her Strike.
- **Powers without an attack roll.** An Area or Perception power makes no attack roll, so it has no attack bonus to add, and the caps say nothing more about it.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce these. This book applies the attack cap to Strike and Hurl as well, whose rank is your Might (Brawling 8 with Might 12 is at the Scale 10 cap). It counts anything that always adds to the roll or the rank, such as Sure-Shot's 2 or Close Quarters, and not bonuses that come from the moment (help, Sure Aim, Strike First, a crit). And it keeps an Area or Perception power's rank at or below Scale, which puts it in line with an attack at the cap.

Ranks themselves have limits too. Abilities run from -5 to 20, bought defence ranks from 0 to 20, skill ranks from 0 to 40, and each power and Edge has its own range (Wall-Crawl stops at 2, Insubstantial at 4, Blast goes to 20).

FOR THE GM

The caps keep heroes in balance with each other and with the villains, and they are firm: a hero who wants more of one thing gives up some of the other. Help players find the trade that tells a good story (a Brick with Durability 2 and Guard 18 is a glass cannon who never gets hit) rather than the one that squeezes out the most numbers.

THE POWER BUILDER

Every power is one **Effect** at a **rank**, with any number of **Boosts** (which make it do more and cost more) and **Limits** (which make it do less and cost less). Two heroes can have the same Effect and play nothing alike: one Blast is a bolt of gold light, another a sonic shout with Area and Tiring, a third a gadget gauntlet with Gadget and Sure-Shot.

EFFECTS

There are forty Effects. Each has a cost per rank, a range of ranks, and three tags: the **action** it takes to use, its **range** and its **duration**.

POWER	COST A RANK	RANKS	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
Blast	2	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Instant
Affliction	1	1 to 20	Standard	Close	Instant
Snare	1	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Instant
Protection	1	1 to 20	None	Personal	Permanent
Flight	2	1 to 20	Free	Personal	Sustained
Barrier	2	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Sustained
Burrow	1	1 to 20	Free	Personal	Sustained
Clone	3	1 to 10	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Comprehend	2	1 to 4	Standard	Personal	Permanent
Concealment	2	1 to 5	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Create	2	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Sustained
Dampen	2	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Sustained
Drain	1	1 to 20	Standard	Close	Instant
Elongate	1	1 to 20	Free	Personal	Sustained

POWER	COST A RANK	RANKS	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
Enhance	1	1 to 20	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Feature	1	1 to 20	Standard	Personal	Permanent
Grow	2	1 to 10	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Healing	2	1 to 20	Standard	Close	Instant
Illusion	2	1 to 20	Standard	Perception	Instant
Immunity	1	1 to 20	Standard	Personal	Permanent
Insubstantial	5	1 to 4	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Leap	1	1 to 20	Free	Personal	Sustained
Mind Link	1	1 to 5	Standard	Personal	Permanent
Mind Read	2	1 to 20	Standard	Perception	Sustained
Morph	5	1 to 4	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Move Object	2	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Instant
Nullify	1	1 to 20	Standard	Ranged	Instant
Quickness	1	1 to 10	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Regenerate	1	1 to 20	Standard	Personal	Permanent
Remote Sight	2	1 to 10	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Senses	1	1 to 20	Standard	Personal	Permanent
Shrink	2	1 to 8	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Speed	1	1 to 20	Free	Personal	Sustained
Summon	2	1 to 10	Standard	Close	Sustained
Swim	1	1 to 20	Free	Personal	Sustained
Teleport	2	1 to 20	Move	Personal	Sustained
Transform	2	1 to 20	Standard	Close	Instant
Variable	7	1 to 5	Standard	Personal	Sustained
Wall-Crawl	1	1 to 2	Free	Personal	Sustained
Weaken	1	1 to 20	Standard	Close	Instant

- **Action.** *Standard:* it takes your action. *Move:* it takes your move. *Free:* using it or switching it on takes no action at all. *None:* it is always working and never needs switching on.
- **Range.** *Personal:* it works on you. *Close:* you have to touch the target, or be next to it. *Ranged:* across a street, as far as you can see clearly. *Perception:* anything you can see, with no attack roll.
- **Duration.** *Instant:* it happens and is over, though the conditions it leaves can last. *Sustained:* it stays on until you switch it off. *Permanent:* always on, though you can switch it off unless it has the Always On Limit.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this. The Steadfast Boost says a power with it "does not end if you are Rattled or Reeling; only Down switches it off". This book reads that as the rule for every Sustained power without Steadfast: it switches off when you become Rattled, Reeling or Down. Permanent powers stay on. Switching a power off, or suppressing a Permanent one, takes no action.

Describe your power in your own words. The Effect is the rule; the description is the look. A Blast can be fire, light, sound, stone, bees or Flare-gold static. A Protection can be steel skin, a force field or sheer density. The GM may rule that the description matters (fire does not help underwater), and that is where Limits come in.

WHAT A POWER COSTS

Work the cost out in this order.

1. **Start with the Effect's cost a rank.** Blast costs 2 a rank, Snare 1, Insubstantial 5.
2. **Add every Boost that costs a rank, and take off every Limit that costs a rank.** Each is worth 1 a rank. The result is the power's **cost per rank**.
3. **If the cost per rank is 1 or more,** multiply it by the rank.
4. **If the cost per rank has fallen below 1,** one point buys several ranks instead: at 0 a rank, 1 point buys 2 ranks; at -1, 1 point buys 3 ranks; at -2, 1 point buys 4 ranks, and so on. Divide the rank by that number and round up. (A power never costs more than 1 point a rank this way.)
5. **Add every flat Boost and take off every flat Limit.** Each is worth 1 point however high the rank.
6. **A power always costs at least 1 point.**

BUILD	PER RANK	RANK COST	FLAT	TOTAL
Blast 8	2 a rank	16	0	16
Blast 8 with Area	3 a rank	24	0	24
Blast 8 with Precise	2 a rank	16	+1	17
Blast 8 with Gadget	1 a rank	8	0	8
Snare 8 with Limited	1 point per 2 ranks	4	0	4
Snare 7 with Limited	1 point per 2 ranks	4	0	4
Snare 8 with Limited and Gadget	1 point per 3 ranks	3	0	3
Protection 4 with Noticeable	1 a rank	4	-1	3
Feature 1 with Catch	1 a rank	1	-1	1

In the examples: Area adds 1 a rank, so Blast 8 goes from 16 to 24. Precise is flat, so it adds 1 point however high the rank. Snare costs 1 a rank and Limited takes 1 off, so it falls to 0 a rank and buys 2 ranks a point: rank 8 costs 4, and rank 7 costs 4 as well, because 7 divided by 2 rounds up. With Gadget as well it falls to -1 a rank and buys 3 ranks a point: rank 8 costs 3. Feature 1 with Catch would come to 0, so it costs the minimum of 1.

ALTERNATE SUITES

Some heroes have one power that can do several things, but only one at a time: a pair of gauntlets that fire, net or lift; a mystic who works one working at a time. Put those powers in an **Alternate suite**: a named group of powers, only one of which is active at a time.

A suite costs **its dearest power, plus 1 point for each other power in it**.

Blast 8 costs 16 and Snare 8 costs 8. Taken as Alternates in one suite they cost the dearest (16) plus 1 for the other: 17 points, not 24.

- Only one power in a suite is active at a time. Switching to a power turns the others off. You can switch which one is active once on your turn, as a free action. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.
- Every power in a suite keeps its own rank, Boosts, Limits and caps.
- A power that should work alongside the others (Protection, for instance, or Flight while you blast) does not belong in the suite.

IN ROLLQUEST

In the **Build** window, name an **Alternate suite** to put a power in it; every power with the same suite name shares one cost. Turning on one power in a suite turns the others in it off.

BOOSTS

BOOST	COST	TAKEN ON	WHAT IT DOES
Ranged	+1 a rank	Affliction, Drain, Transform and Weaken	Reaches across the street: the attack uses Marksmanship against 10 + Evade. Cannot be taken with Perception or Touch.
Perception	+1 a rank	Blast, Affliction, Snare, Drain, Move Object, Transform and Weaken	If you can see it, it is hit. No attack roll; the target goes straight to resisting. Cannot be taken with Touch.
Area	+1 a rank	the 8 attack powers	A burst that catches up to six targets at once. No attack roll; each target resists.
Subtle	+1 flat	every power	Nobody can tell you are doing it without a hard Notice check.
Precise	+1 flat	every power	Fine control: you can use it at any lower rank, or thread it through a crowd without harming anyone.
Sure-Shot	+1 flat	the 8 attack powers	Easy to land: +2 to the attack roll.
Flurry	+1 a rank	the 8 attack powers	Fire a rapid burst. Beat the target's defence by 5 or more and the hit's rank goes up by 2.
Piercing	+1 a rank	the 8 attack powers	Gets through armour: a hit is resisted as if the target had no Protection.
Shared	+1 a rank	the 32 other powers	Give the power to someone else for the scene, with a touch.
Phase-Touch	+1 flat	the 32 other powers	Works on the insubstantial: ghosts, mist, Afterimages that have half left.
Spreading	+1 a rank	Affliction, Snare, Drain, Illusion, Transform and Weaken	Passes on: anyone who touches the target has to resist it too.
Stacking	+1 a rank	Affliction, Snare, Drain, Illusion, Transform and Weaken	Each hit adds to the last: the target resists the total of every rank that has landed this scene.
Long Reach	+1 flat	Affliction, Drain, Transform and Weaken	A close power that reaches a few paces further than your arm.
Seeking	+1 flat	the 8 attack powers	Missed? It turns round and tries again on your next turn.
Around Corners	+1 flat	the 8 attack powers	It can start from anywhere near you, not only from your hands.
Inborn	+1 flat	every power	Part of you: it cannot be Nullified or Dampened.
Lingering	+1 a rank	every power	Lasts longer: a sustained power stays on without you, an instant one for a round more.
Bank Shot	+1 flat	the 8 attack powers	Bounce it off a wall to hit someone in cover.
Aftershock	+1 a rank	the 8 attack powers	Hits again: the target has to resist it once more at the start of your next turn.
Discerning	+1 a rank	the 8 attack powers	An area power that misses the people you choose.

BOOST	COST	TAKEN ON	WHAT IT DOES
Fork	+1 flat	the 8 attack powers	Split the rank between two targets as you choose.
Snap	+1 flat	the 32 other powers	Switch it on as a free action rather than a move.
Undoable	+1 flat	Affliction, Snare, Drain, Illusion, Transform and Weaken	You can take it back at will: release a Transform, wake an Entranced.
Steadfast	+1 flat	every power	It does not end if you are Rattled or Reeling; only Down switches it off.
Lasting Wounds	+1 flat	the 8 attack powers	The conditions it leaves cannot be healed by powers, only by time.

LIMITS

LIMIT	COST	TAKEN ON	WHAT IT DOES
Touch	-1 a rank	Blast, Snare and Move Object	Works only up close: the attack uses Brawling against 10 + Guard.
Tiring	-1 a rank	every power	Each use leaves you Rattled until the end of your next turn.
Unreliable	-1 a rank	every power	Roll a d20 before each use: on 10 or less nothing happens.
Limited	-1 a rank	every power	Works only in one situation you name: in water, at night, against machines.
Noticeable	-1 flat	every power	A glow, a hum, a smell of ozone: everyone knows it is working.
Activation	-1 flat	every power	You spend a move switching it on before it works.
Focus	-1 a rank	every power	You must hold still and concentrate: no move while it is on.
Exposing	-1 a rank	every power	Using it leaves you Vulnerable until your next turn.
Fading	-1 a rank	the 32 other powers	Each use takes a rank off it until you rest.
Backlash	-1 flat	every power	If it is Nullified or fails, you take a hit at its rank.
Hold-Based	-1 a rank	Affliction, Drain, Transform and Weaken	Works only on someone you already have Grabbed.
Wild	-1 flat	the 8 attack powers	Hard to aim: -2 to the attack roll.
Catch	-1 flat	every power	A small cost the GM brings in now and then: it glows, it smells of burning, it scares dogs.
Short Range	-1 flat	the 8 attack powers	A ranged power that reaches only across a room.
Gadget	-1 a rank	every power	It is a device: it can be taken off you, broken or stolen.
Easy to Shake	-1 flat	Affliction, Snare, Drain, Illusion, Transform and Weaken	The target gets a second check to throw it off at the end of each of its turns.

LIMIT	COST	TAKEN ON	WHAT IT DOES
Line of Sight	-1 a rank	the 8 attack powers	Works only on someone who can see you (or hear you, or smell you: choose one).
Price	-1 a rank	every power	Fail with it and it hits you too: you resist it at its rank.
Runaway	-1 a rank	every power	Once it is on, the GM decides what it does next.
Always On	-1 flat	the 32 other powers	You cannot switch it off, ever, even when you sleep.

A Limit has to limit. If a Limit would never come up in your games (Limited: only in Calder Bay, in a game that never leaves Calder Bay), the GM should refuse it. A good Limit is one the GM will bring into play now and then, the way a Twist is.

ATTACK POWERS AND AFFLICTIONS

Eight Effects attack: they make an attack roll (or land without one) and force a resistance check. Blast and Move Object are **hits**: they are resisted on the Durability ladder, against 15 + rank. The others are **afflictions**: they are resisted against 10 + rank, on a ladder of their own.

POWER	ATTACK ROLL	AGAINST	RESISTED WITH	DIFFICULTY	HIT TYPE
Blast	Marksmanship	10 + Evade	Durability	15 + rank	Energy
Affliction	Brawling	10 + Guard	Vigor	10 + rank	Kinetic
Snare	Marksmanship	10 + Evade	Evade	10 + rank	Kinetic
Drain	Brawling	10 + Guard	Nerve	10 + rank	Mental
Illusion	none	nobody: it just lands	Nerve	10 + rank	Mental
Move Object	Marksmanship	10 + Evade	Durability	15 + rank	Kinetic
Transform	Brawling	10 + Guard	Vigor	10 + rank	Kinetic
Weaken	Brawling	10 + Guard	Vigor	10 + rank	Kinetic

POWER	RESISTED WITH	FAIL BY 1 STEP	BY 2 STEPS	BY 3 STEPS OR MORE
Affliction	Vigor	Hindered	Immobile	Paralysed
Snare	Evade	Hindered and Vulnerable	Immobile and Defenceless	Immobile and Defenceless
Drain	Nerve	Impaired	Disabled	Entranced
Illusion	Nerve	Dazzled	Entranced	Compelled
Transform	Vigor	Impaired	Disabled	Paralysed
Weaken	Vigor	Impaired	Disabled	Down

EVERY POWER

- **Blast** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Instant). A bolt of force, fire, light or whatever your power is made of. Roll Marksmanship against 10 + the target's Evade; a hit has a rank equal to the Blast's, and the target resists it with Durability against 15 + that rank.
- **Affliction** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Close, Instant). A touch that numbs, a toxin, a hold on the nerves. Roll Brawling against 10 + the target's Guard; on a hit the target resists with Vigor against 10 + the rank. Fail by 1 Step: Hindered. By 2: Immobile. By 3: Paralysed. A Mook that fails is Paralysed at once.

- **Snare** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Instant). Webbing, ice, glue, a net of light. Roll Marksmanship against 10 + the target's Evade; on a hit the target tries to slip it with Evade against 10 + the rank. Fail by 1 Step: Hindered and Vulnerable. By 2 or more: Immobile and Defenceless.
- **Protection** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; None, Personal, Permanent). Steel skin, a force field, sheer density. Adds its rank to your Durability.
- **Flight** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Free, Personal, Sustained). You fly. Rank 1 keeps pace with a runner; every rank after that roughly doubles your top speed, so rank 10 crosses Calder Bay in a minute.
- **Barrier** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Sustained). Throw up a wall of force, ice, light or stone. Rank 1 fills a doorway, rank 5 a street, rank 10 a city block. The wall has Durability equal to its rank, and anything trying to break through rolls against it.
- **Burrow** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Free, Personal, Sustained). Dig through earth and rubble at a walking pace at rank 1, faster as it rises. At rank 5 you go through concrete; at rank 10 through bedrock, leaving a tunnel or not, as you choose.
- **Clone** (3 points a rank, ranks 1 to 10; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Split into copies of yourself: one per rank. Each is a Mook with your traits at your rank minus 5, and they vanish when the scene ends or when they go Down.
- **Comprehend** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 4; Standard, Personal, Permanent). Understand what should not be understood: one kind of thing per rank (every language, machines, animals, the Scorch's static). You can answer back in the same way.
- **Concealment** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 5; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Go unseen. Rank 1 hides you from one sense, rank 2 from sight, rank 4 from every sense but one, rank 5 from everything. Anyone hunting you needs a Notice check against 10 + your rank.
- **Create** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Sustained). Make solid things out of your power: a ramp, a cage, a cudgel, a bridge. The thing is as large as a person per rank and has Durability equal to the rank, and it lasts while you keep it.
- **Dampen** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Sustained). A field that smothers powers nearby. Anyone inside rolls Nerve against 10 + your rank when they use a power; on a failure it does not work this turn. The Null Society would kill for it.
- **Drain** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Close, Instant). Siphon the will out of someone with a touch. Roll Brawling against 10 + their Guard; on a hit they resist with Nerve against 10 + the rank. Fail by 1 Step: Impaired. By 2: Disabled. By 3: Entranced, staring at nothing.
- **Elongate** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Free, Personal, Sustained). Stretch your body. Every rank doubles your reach: rank 4 picks a phone off a third-floor sill, rank 10 wraps an arm round a tram.
- **Enhance** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Push one ability, defence or skill past your natural best: name it when you take the power, and add the rank to it while the power is on. Write the boosted number on your sheet.
- **Feature** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Personal, Permanent). A small, useful oddity per rank: perfect memory, a built-in light, gills, a voice that carries a block. Not an attack and not a defence; just a thing you can do.
- **Grow** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 10; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Become bigger: rank 4 is twice your height, rank 8 four times, rank 10 a building. You add the rank to your Durability and to anything you lift or throw, but at that size you are an easy target: -2 Evade.
- **Healing** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Close, Instant). Lay on hands. Once per scene per patient, clear one Dinged per rank, or end Rattled or Reeling. At rank 5 you can bring someone back from Down.
- **Illusion** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Perception, Instant). Make people see what is not there. Anyone who can see the illusion resists with Nerve against 10 + the rank. Fail by 1 Step: Dazzled. By 2: Entranced by it. By 3: Compelled to act as if it were real.
- **Immunity** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Personal, Permanent). One thing cannot hurt you. A rank covers a narrow danger (cold, smoke, a single poison); 5 ranks a broad one (fire, disease, mind control); 10 ranks one kind of hit (kinetic, energy or mental) entirely.

- **Insubstantial** (5 points a rank, ranks 1 to 4; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Lose your solidity. Rank 1 is liquid, rank 2 mist, rank 3 light, rank 4 a ghost that walls and bullets pass through. Kinetic hits cannot touch you at ranks 3 and 4.
- **Leap** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Free, Personal, Sustained). Jump. Rank 1 clears a car, rank 5 a street, rank 10 the Glasswork's shortest tower.
- **Mind Link** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 5; Standard, Personal, Permanent). A private line to people you trust: one person at rank 1, a team at rank 3, anyone you have touched at rank 5. You can share words, pictures and pain.
- **Mind Read** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Perception, Sustained). Hear what someone is thinking. Roll your rank + Sense against 10 + their Nerve; beat it by 1 Step for surface thoughts, 2 for memories, 3 for what they are hiding even from themselves.
- **Morph** (5 points a rank, ranks 1 to 4; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Look like someone else. Rank 1 is one other face, rank 2 any person of your build, rank 3 anyone at all, rank 4 anything of your size. A Read check against $10 + 5 \times \text{rank}$ sees through it.
- **Move Object** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Instant). Lift and throw things with your mind. A hit with a car you just picked up uses Marksmanship against $10 + \text{Evade}$, and the target resists with Durability against $15 + \text{the rank}$.
- **Nullify** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Ranged, Instant). Switch someone else's power off. Roll your rank + Sense against $10 + \text{the power's rank}$; succeed and it stops until they spend their next turn bringing it back.
- **Quickness** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 10; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Do everyday things very fast: read a book in a minute at rank 5, rebuild an engine in one at rank 10. You also add twice the rank to your Initiative.
- **Regenerate** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Personal, Permanent). Heal on your own. Every rank shortens the time a Dinged takes to fade: rank 5 clears one a round, rank 10 every one at the end of each of your turns. At rank 20 you get up from Down.
- **Remote Sight** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 10; Standard, Personal, Sustained). See somewhere you are not. Rank 1 reaches the next room, rank 5 across the city, rank 10 anywhere you have been. Your body is Defenceless while you look.
- **Senses** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Personal, Permanent). Sharper or stranger senses, one per rank: night vision, a bloodhound's nose, hearing through walls, seeing the Scorch's static on people it has touched.
- **Shrink** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 8; Standard, Personal, Sustained). Become smaller: rank 4 is the size of a cat, rank 8 an insect. You add the rank to Evade and Guard, and to your Stealth, but you hit with the strength of something your size.
- **Speed** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Free, Personal, Sustained). Run fast. Rank 1 outruns a sprinter, rank 5 a car on the freeway, rank 10 a jet. You can run across water above rank 6.
- **Summon** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 10; Standard, Close, Sustained). Call help: an animal, a construct, an Afterimage that likes you. It is a Mook with traits at the rank, it does what you ask, and it leaves when the scene ends or when it goes Down.
- **Swim** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Free, Personal, Sustained). Move through water as easily as air, and hold your breath for a minute per rank. At rank 10 you outswim a speedboat.
- **Teleport** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Move, Personal, Sustained). Be somewhere else. Rank 1 is across the room, rank 5 across the city, rank 10 anywhere you have been. You need to see or know the place.
- **Transform** (2 points a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Close, Instant). Change what something is. Roll Brawling against $10 + \text{Guard}$; a person resists with Vigor against $10 + \text{the rank}$. Fail by 1 Step: Impaired. By 2: Disabled. By 3: turned to glass, or wood, or salt, and Paralysed until you change them back.
- **Variable** (7 points a rank, ranks 1 to 5; Standard, Personal, Sustained). A power that can become other powers: 5 points of Effects, Boosts and Limits per rank, rearranged with a minute's concentration. Write the current set on a note.
- **Wall-Crawl** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 2; Free, Personal, Sustained). Walk on walls and ceilings. At rank 2 at full speed, and nothing short of a crowbar can pull you off.
- **Weaken** (1 point a rank, ranks 1 to 20; Standard, Close, Instant). Sap the strength out of someone. Roll Brawling against $10 + \text{Guard}$; on a hit they resist with Vigor against $10 + \text{the rank}$. Fail by 1 Step: Impaired. By 2: Disabled. By 3: they fold up and go Down.

EDGES

Every Edge costs **1 build point a rank**.

EDGE	RANKS	WHAT IT DOES
Tough as Nails	1 to 5	You roll with hits. Add the rank to your Durability.
Slippery	1 to 5	Hard to pin down. Add the rank to your Evade.
Brawler's Guard	1 to 5	You see a punch coming. Add the rank to your Guard.
Quick Off the Mark	1 to 5	First to move. Add 4 per rank to your Initiative.
Sure Aim	1	Spend your move aiming and your next attack gains 5.
Heavy Hitter	1 to 5	Trade accuracy for force: take up to the rank off an attack roll and add it to the hit's rank.
Close Quarters	1 to 5	Add the rank to your Brawling attacks; write the total next to Strike.
Cover Fire	1	Spend your turn shooting near someone: anyone attacking an ally you name loses 2 until your next turn.
Disarm	1	Knock what someone is holding out of their hands with a Brawling check instead of a hit.
Feint	1	Roll Deception against the target's Read: win and they are Vulnerable to your next attack.
Takedown	1 to 2	Put a Mook Down and you may attack another next to it at once (rank 2: any Mook you can reach).
Trip	1	Knock someone Prone with Brawling or Tumbling against their Agility.
Grab Hold	1	Grab with one hand, keep the other free, and you lose nothing while holding on.
Fast Draw	1	Draw, switch or stow anything as a free action.
Strike First	1	In the first round of a fight, your first attack gains 2.
Second Wind	1	Once a scene, clear one Dinged as a free action.
All-Out	1	Take up to 5 off your Evade and Guard until your next turn and add it to an attack roll.
Interpose	1	Once a round, take a hit meant for someone next to you.
Teamwork	1 to 5	Helping an ally's check or attack adds 2 plus the rank, not 2.
Hard to Kill	1	When you go Down you are never finished off by accident, and you get up at the end of the scene.
Danger Sense	1	You are never caught by surprise: in an ambush you act in the first round like everyone else.
Iron Will	1	Once a scene, reroll a failed Nerve check.
Lucky	1 to 3	Start each session with 1 extra Shine per rank. Add it when you reset Shine.
Inspiring	1 to 5	Spend a Shine and a turn rallying: allies who can hear you gain the rank on their next check.
Born Leader	1	Spend a Shine to let an ally shake off Rattled or Entranced.
Camera Ready	1 to 3	The livestream loves you. Add 2 per rank to Persuasion in public and to any check about your rating.
Silver Tongue	1	Talk fast: Persuasion or Deception on a crowd takes one action, not a scene.
Streetwise	1	You know who sells what in Lowmarket and the Yards, and who is lying about it.
Polyglot	1 to 5	Speak and read one more language per rank, fluently.
Know-It-All	1	Make any Know-How check untrained, and know at least one useful thing about anything.
Inventor	1	Build a one-off gadget that copies a power for a scene. A Tech check against 10 + its cost.

EDGE	RANKS	WHAT IT DOES
Tracker	1	Follow a trail with Notice, through a city as easily as a forest.
Animal Friend	1	Animals trust you, and you can Read and Persuade them.
Night Owl	1	You go a night without sleep without losing a thing, and darkness costs you nothing on checks.
Benefactor	1 to 5	Someone with money is on your side: a sponsor, a family, a fixer. Each rank is a favour a session.
Charter	1	You are licensed under the Accords: you may use powers in public, and the Bureau answers your calls.
Off-Line Network	1	The Free Clinic and its friends will hide you, patch you up and ask no questions.
Well Connected	1	Spend a minute on the phone and someone who knows something calls back.
Hideout	1 to 3	A place of your own: a loft, a sewer lab, a lighthouse. More rooms and secrets with each rank.
Equipment	1 to 5	Ordinary gear beyond the basics: a bike, a drone, body armour, lock picks. 5 points of it per rank, and the GM says yes to anything a store would sell.

TWISTS

Take one or two at creation, in your own words. These twenty are a place to start.

1. A secret identity someone is close to uncovering.
2. A family member who does not know, or knows and disapproves.
3. A sponsor contract with a morality clause.
4. A public rating one scandal away from the floor.
5. An old friend who went Off-Line, and went bad.
6. A power that hurts to use, or that someone else can feel.
7. A debt to the Lowmarket Free Clinic.
8. A Bureau handler who is a little too interested.
9. A rival hero who is better at the cameras.
10. A promise made on Flare night.
11. A weakness the wrong person knows about: cold, iron, noise, a song.

12. A dependant: a child, a parent, a city block.
13. A past with Second Dawn.
14. A Null Society sibling.
15. A face on a wanted poster, two cities ago.
16. An Afterimage that follows them, harmlessly, so far.
17. A code they will not break, even when breaking it would save the day.
18. An enemy they let go, once.
19. A day job that keeps calling at the worst moment.
20. A power that is growing faster than they can control it.

ARCHETYPES

The ten archetypes are complete Scale 10 heroes. Each spends exactly 150 build points and fits every cap. In the power lists, a name in square brackets is an Alternate suite (Blast 10 [Arc] and Snare 10 [Arc] share one cost), and a word in round brackets is a Boost or Limit (Drain 10 (Ranged)).

ARCHETYPE	CONCEPT	SIGNATURE POWERS
Brick	Stronger than anything that should be, and built to stand in front of everyone else.	Protection 6, Leap 6, Immunity 5
Speedster	Faster than the livestream can keep up with.	Speed 10, Quickness 5, Leap 4
Blaster	Lightning in a person-shaped jar.	Blast 10 [Arc], Snare 10 [Arc], Flight 4
Mentalist	The quiet one, who hears what everyone else is thinking.	Illusion 8 [Mind], Drain 10 (Ranged) [Mind], Mind Read 8 [Mind]

ARCHETYPE	CONCEPT	SIGNATURE POWERS
Gadgeteer	No power at all, and a garage full of answers.	Blast 7 (Gadget) [Gauntlets], Snare 7 (Gadget) [Gauntlets], Move Object 6 (Gadget) [Gauntlets]
Martial Artist	Trained, not Lit, and better than most who are.	Weaken 4, Leap 3, Senses 2
Shapeshifter	Whoever the room needs you to be.	Morph 3, Elongate 6, Insubstantial 1
Mystic	Reads the Scorch's static like scripture.	Blast 10 [Arcana], Illusion 8 [Arcana], Teleport 6 [Arcana]
Flyer	The sky over Calder Bay is yours.	Flight 10, Protection 4, Senses 2
Leader	The one the team looks at when it all goes wrong.	Affliction 6 (Ranged), Protection 4, Mind Link 3

BRICK

Stronger than anything that should be, and built to stand in front of everyone else.

Lowmarket's favourite wall. You hit like a dropped car, shrug off what floors other heroes, and you are always first through the door and last out. Strike with Might 12; Protection takes your Durability to 14. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 12, Grit 8, Agility 2, Aim 0, Combat 6, Mind 2, Sense 3, Heart 4.

- **Defences:** Evade 6, Guard 6, Vigor 10, Durability 14, Nerve 10. Initiative +2.
- **Skills:** Tumbling 8, Athletics 20, Brawling 8, Intimidation 12, Notice 9, Persuasion 10, Tech 6, Driving 6.
- **Attacks:** Strike +8 against Guard, rank 12; Hurl +0 against Evade, rank 12.
- **Powers:** Protection 6 (6 points); Leap 6 (6 points); Immunity 5 (5 points); Regenerate 5 (5 points); Burrow 4 (4 points); Senses 2 (2 points).
- **Edges** (13 points): Interpose 1, Heavy Hitter 3, Takedown 2, Hard to Kill 1, Second Wind 1, Iron Will 1, Streetwise 1, Benefactor 2, Danger Sense 1.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
74	13	22	41	150	150

SPEEDSTER

Faster than the livestream can keep up with.

You are across the Glasswork before the tram doors close, and the crowd has been carried out of the fire before anyone saw you arrive. Speed 10, Quickness 5 and a flurry of blows. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 3, Grit 4, Agility 8, Aim 3, Combat 7, Mind 2, Sense 4, Heart 3.

- **Defences:** Evade 14, Guard 14, Vigor 8, Durability 6, Nerve 12. Initiative +26.
- **Skills:** Tumbling 16, Athletics 9, Brawling 17, Notice 10, Sleight of Hand 14, Stealth 14, Driving 14.
- **Attacks:** Strike +17 against Guard, rank 3; Hurl +3 against Evade, rank 3.
- **Powers:** Speed 10 (10 points); Quickness 5 (5 points); Leap 4 (4 points); Senses 2 (2 points); Feature 2 (2 points).
- **Edges** (10 points): Tough as Nails 2, Quick Off the Mark 2, Fast Draw 1, Strike First 1, Takedown 2, Trip 1, Second Wind 1.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
68	25	24	33	150	150

BLASTER

Lightning in a person-shaped jar.

Woke Lit with the Flare still crackling in your hands. You throw bolts across Bayside Yards, net a getaway van in arcs of light, and fly above the rooftops when you have to. Blast 10, with Snare as an Alternate. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 1, Grit 4, Agility 5, Aim 6, Combat 2, Mind 5, Sense 5, Heart 3.
- **Defences:** Evade 12, Guard 8, Vigor 8, Durability 8, Nerve 12. Initiative +5.
- **Skills:** Tumbling 9, Know-How 9, Notice 11, Persuasion 7, Marksmanship 10, Tech 9.

- **Attacks:** Strike +2 against Guard, rank 1; Hurl +10 against Evade, rank 1; Blast +10 against Evade, rank 10; Snare +10 against Evade, rank 10.
- **Powers:** Blast 10 [Arc] (20 points); Snare 10 [Arc] (10 points); Flight 4 (8 points); Protection 4 (4 points); Immunity 5 (5 points); Senses 3 (3 points); Comprehend 2 (4 points); Feature 2 (2 points).
- **Edges** (4 points): Sure Aim 1, Cover Fire 1, Danger Sense 1, Camera Ready 1.

The Arc suite costs its dearest power (Blast, 20 points) plus 1 for the other: 21 points, not the 30 its powers would cost separately.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
62	24	13	51	150	150

MENTALIST

The quiet one, who hears what everyone else is thinking.

You never asked to know what the Bureau director dreams about. You read minds, put pictures in them, and drain the fight out of anyone who gets too close, and your will is a shield in itself. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 0, Grit 3, Agility 3, Aim 2, Combat 2, Mind 6, Sense 7, Heart 5.
- **Defences:** Evade 11, Guard 10, Vigor 7, Durability 9, Nerve 13. Initiative +3.
- **Skills:** Deception 11, Know-How 10, Read 15, Sleuthing 10, Notice 11, Persuasion 11.

- **Attacks:** Strike +2 against Guard, rank 0; Hurl +2 against Evade, rank 0; Illusion: no attack roll, rank 8; Drain +2 against Evade, rank 10.
- **Powers:** Illusion 8 [Mind] (16 points); Drain 10, Ranged [Mind] (20 points); Mind Read 8 [Mind] (16 points); Mind Link 3 (3 points); Protection 6 (6 points); Comprehend 2 (4 points); Remote Sight 3 (6 points); Senses 2 (2 points); Immunity 4 (4 points).
- **Edges** (5 points): Iron Will 1, Inspiring 2, Danger Sense 1, Well Connected 1.

The Mind suite costs its dearest power (Drain, 20 points) plus 1 for each of the other 2: 22 points, not the 52 its powers would cost separately.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
56	26	16	52	150	150

GADGETEER

No power at all, and a garage full of answers.

You were not Lit. You built your way onto the team anyway: gauntlets that fire, net and lift, a rocket pack, plating and a drone that sees for you. Everything is a Gadget: it can be taken away, and it is cheaper for it. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 1, Grit 3, Agility 4, Aim 5, Combat 3, Mind 8, Sense 4, Heart 2.
- **Defences:** Evade 11, Guard 11, Vigor 8, Durability 9, Nerve 12. Initiative +4.

- **Skills:** Know-How 14, Sleuthing 12, Notice 8, Marksmanship 13, Tech 18, Driving 10.
- **Attacks:** Strike +3 against Guard, rank 1; Hurl +13 against Evade, rank 1; Blast +13 against Evade, rank 7; Snare +13 against Evade, rank 7; Move Object +13 against Evade, rank 6.

- **Powers:** Blast 7, Gadget [Gauntlets] (7 points); Snare 7, Gadget [Gauntlets] (4 points); Move Object 6, Gadget [Gauntlets] (6 points); Flight 4, Gadget (4 points); Protection 6, Gadget (3 points); Remote Sight 3, Gadget (3 points); Senses 4, Gadget (2 points); Comprehend 2, Gadget (2 points); Variable 1, Gadget (6 points); Feature 4 (4 points).

- **Edges** (10 points): Inventor 1, Equipment 3, Hideout 2, Know-It-All 1, Fast Draw 1, Benefactor 2.

The Gauntlets suite costs its dearest power (Blast, 7 points) plus 1 for each of the other 2: 9 points, not the 17 its powers would cost separately.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
60	28	19	43	150	150

MARTIAL ARTIST

Trained, not Lit, and better than most who are.

Lowmarket dojo, Off-Line clinic, rooftop at dawn. You hit exactly where it stops someone, you are never where the punch lands, and a touch to the right nerve takes the strength out of a brute twice your size. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 4, Grit 5, Agility 7, Aim 2, Combat 9, Mind 4, Sense 5, Heart 4.
- **Defences:** Evade 13, Guard 13, Vigor 9, Durability 7, Nerve 11. Initiative +15.

- **Skills:** Tumbling 15, Athletics 10, Brawling 16, Read 9, Intimidation 7, Notice 11, Stealth 13.
- **Attacks:** Strike +16 against Guard, rank 4; Hurl +2 against Evade, rank 4; Weaken +16 against Guard, rank 4.
- **Powers:** Weaken 4 (4 points); Leap 3 (3 points); Senses 2 (2 points); Wall-Crawl 1 (1 point); Regenerate 3 (3 points).
- **Edges** (17 points): Tough as Nails 2, Takedown 2, Trip 1, Disarm 1, Feint 1, Grab Hold 1, Strike First 1, Second Wind 1, Danger Sense 1, Quick Off the Mark 2, Interpose 1, Hard to Kill 1, Iron Will 1, Teamwork 1.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
80	20	20	30	150	150

SHAPESHIFTER

Whoever the room needs you to be.

You woke Lit and nobody recognised you, including the mirror. You wear other faces, stretch, shrink to slip through a grate, and pour yourself under a door when you must. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 5, Grit 6, Agility 5, Aim 2, Combat 5, Mind 3, Sense 4, Heart 4.

- **Defences:** Evade 14, Guard 14, Vigor 9, Durability 6, Nerve 11. Initiative +5.
- **Skills:** Tumbling 11, Brawling 10, Deception 12, Read 8, Notice 7, Persuasion 8, Stealth 13.
- **Attacks:** Strike +10 against Guard, rank 5; Hurl +2 against Evade, rank 5.
- **Powers:** Morph 3 (15 points); Elongate 6 (6 points); Insubstantial 1 (5 points); Shrink 4 (8 points); Regenerate 3 (3 points); Senses 2 (2 points).
- **Edges** (4 points): Silver Tongue 1, Streetwise 1, Danger Sense 1, Off-Line Network 1.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
68	20	19	43	150	150

MYSTIC

Reads the Scorch's static like scripture.

The Flare was not a solar event, you are sure of it: it was a door. You work its leftovers into bolts, illusions, mending and steps across the city, one working at a time. Take the

suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 0, Grit 3, Agility 3, Aim 5, Combat 2, Mind 6, Sense 7, Heart 5.
- **Defences:** Evade 12, Guard 10, Vigor 7, Durability 8, Nerve 13. Initiative +3.
- **Skills:** Know-How 14, Read 13, Notice 11, Persuasion 9, Marksmanship 10, Patch-Up 11.
- **Attacks:** Strike +2 against Guard, rank 0; Hurl +10 against Evade, rank 0; Blast +10 against Evade, rank 10; Illusion: no attack roll, rank 8.

- **Powers:** Blast 10 [Arcana](20 points); Illusion 8 [Arcana](16 points); Teleport 6 [Arcana](12 points); Healing 5 [Arcana](10 points); Protection 5 (5 points); Senses 3 (3 points); Comprehend 2 (4 points); Remote Sight 2 (4 points); Immunity 3 (3 points).
- **Edges** (3 points): Lucky 1, Iron Will 1, Know-It-All 1.

The Arcana suite costs its dearest power (Blast, 20 points) plus 1 for each of the other 3: 23 points, not the 58 its powers would cost separately.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
62	27	16	45	150	150

FLYER

The sky over Calder Bay is yours.

You were on the Glasswork's roof on Flare night and you never really came down. You fly faster than anything the Bureau owns, dive on trouble first, and throw what you catch. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 5, Grit 4, Agility 7, Aim 4, Combat 5, Mind 2, Sense 5, Heart 3.

- **Defences:** Evade 12, Guard 12, Vigor 8, Durability 8, Nerve 12. Initiative +7.
- **Skills:** Tumbling 11, Athletics 9, Brawling 13, Notice 13, Marksmanship 12, Driving 9.
- **Attacks:** Strike +13 against Guard, rank 5; Hurl +12 against Evade, rank 5; Move Object +12 against Evade, rank 6.
- **Powers:** Flight 10 (20 points); Protection 4 (4 points); Senses 2 (2 points); Move Object 6 (12 points).
- **Edges** (4 points): Slippery 2, Strike First 1, Danger Sense 1.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
70	21	17	42	150	150

LEADER

The one the team looks at when it all goes wrong.

Your power is modest: a flash that leaves people reeling, a link between your team's minds. Your real gift is that people follow you, and the cameras love you for it. Take the suggested build as it is, or start from it and tune: it spends all 150 build points of a Scale 10 hero.

- **Abilities:** Might 2, Grit 4, Agility 4, Aim 4, Combat 4, Mind 4, Sense 5, Heart 8.

- **Defences:** Evade 12, Guard 12, Vigor 8, Durability 8, Nerve 12. Initiative +4.
- **Skills:** Brawling 8, Know-How 8, Read 11, Intimidation 12, Notice 9, Persuasion 18, Marksmanship 10.
- **Attacks:** Strike +8 against Guard, rank 2; Hurl +10 against Evade, rank 2; Affliction +10 against Evade, rank 6.
- **Powers:** Affliction 6, Ranged (12 points); Protection 4 (4 points); Mind Link 3 (3 points).
- **Edges** (15 points): Born Leader 1, Inspiring 3, Teamwork 3, Charter 1, Camera Ready 2, Well Connected 1, Benefactor 2, Interpose 1, Iron Will 1.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
70	27	19	34	150	150

A WORKED HERO: GANTRY, SCALE 10

Dana is building a hero for a Scale 10 game: 150 build points. She skips the archetypes and builds from nothing.

Step 1: Name. Dov Petrakis was in the cab of crane nine in Bayside Yards at 21:14 on Flare night. The whole steel frame rang like a bell, and he climbed down able to feel every bolt in the Yards. He went for a Charter in 2012, mostly so the Bureau would stop arresting him for unloading ships by hand. The dockers call him Gantry. He is gruff, careful, and terrible on camera.

Step 3: Abilities. Dana wants a hero who throws metal with precision, takes punishment and notices things, and who is hopeless with a microphone. She takes Aim 8 for accuracy, Grit 7 for staying power, Sense 6, and Heart -1, which gives her 2 points back.

ABILITY	RANK	POINTS
Might	5	10
Grit	7	14
Agility	5	10
Aim	8	16
Combat	5	10
Mind	4	8
Sense	6	12
Heart	-1	-2
Total	39	78

Defences. Gantry's power is going to wrap him in scrap plating (Protection 6), so his Durability will be Grit 7 + 6 = 13. At Scale 10, Evade + Durability may be at most 20, so his Evade can be at most 7: Agility 5 plus 2 bought ranks. The same goes for Guard: Combat 5 plus 2. Vigor + Nerve may be at most 20 as well; Dana splits it Vigor 9 (Grit 7 + 2) and Nerve 11 (Sense 6 + 5).

DEFENCE	ABILITY	RANKS BOUGHT	FROM POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	POINTS
Evade	Agility 5	2	none	7	2
Guard	Combat 5	2	none	7	2
Vigor	Grit 7	2	none	9	2
Durability	Grit 7	cannot buy	Protection +6	13	0
Nerve	Sense 6	5	none	11	5
Total					11

Skills. Gantry is a crane operator and a mechanic, so Driving and Tech are high. His Marksmanship is only 10 (Aim 8 + 2 ranks) on purpose: his main attack will be Move

Object at rank 10, and Marksmanship 10 + rank 10 = 20 is exactly the attack cap. Each skill costs half a point a rank, so the 44 ranks cost 22 points.

SKILL	ABILITY	RANKS	TOTAL	POINTS
Athletics	Might 5	6	11	3
Brawling	Combat 5	3	8	1.5
Know-How	Mind 4	5	9	2.5
Intimidation	Heart -1	7	6	3.5
Notice	Sense 6	5	11	2.5
Marksmanship	Aim 8	2	10	1
Tech	Mind 4	6	10	3
Patch-Up	Mind 4	2	6	1

SKILL	ABILITY	RANKS	TOTAL	POINTS
Driving	Agility 5	8	13	4
Total		44		22

Step 4: Powers. Gantry's power is metal, and only metal, so most of his powers take the **Limited** Limit (works only on metal, or only with metal), which takes 1 a rank off their cost.

- **Move Object 10** (throwing containers, girders and car doors): 2 a rank, minus 1 for Limited, is 1 a rank; $1 \times 10 = 10$. **Precise** (he can place a beam to the inch, or throw past a hostage) adds 1 flat: **11**.
- **Snare 8** (cables and chains that lash round people): 1 a rank, plus 1 for **Area** (up to six targets, no attack roll), minus 1 for Limited, is 1 a rank: **8**.
- **Barrier 6** (a wall of welded containers): 2 a rank minus 1 for Limited is 1 a rank: **6**.

- These three are one power used three ways, so Dana puts them in an Alternate suite called **Scrapyard**. Separately they would cost $11 + 8 + 6 = 25$. As a suite they cost the dearest, 11, plus 1 for each of the other two: **13**.
- **Protection 6** (scrap plating he pulls round himself): 1 a rank, so 6, minus 1 for **Noticeable** (it clangs) and 1 for **Activation** (it takes a move to pull on): **4**.
- **Flight 8**, Limited (only while riding a sheet of metal he is holding up): 2 a rank minus 1 is 1 a rank: **8**.
- **Senses 3** (feeling metal through walls, sensing current in a wire, hearing a structure about to fail): **3**.
- **Immunity 1** (electric shocks, a narrow danger): **1**.

Step 5: Edges. Charter (he is licensed), Sure Aim, Streetwise, Interpose, Teamwork 2, Hideout (the cab of crane nine), Second Wind, Benefactor (the dockers' union) and Danger Sense: 10 points.

POWER OR EDGE	RANK	BOOSTS AND LIMITS	COST RULE	COST
Move Object (Scrapyard)	10	Precise, Limited	1 a rank, +1 flat	11
Snare (Scrapyard)	8	Area, Limited	1 a rank	8
Barrier (Scrapyard)	6	Limited	1 a rank	6
Protection	6	Noticeable, Activation	1 a rank, -2 flat	4
Flight	8	Limited	1 a rank	8
Senses	3	none	1 a rank	3
Immunity	1	none	1 a rank	1
Charter	1	none	1 a rank	1
Sure Aim	1	none	1 a rank	1
Streetwise	1	none	1 a rank	1
Interpose	1	none	1 a rank	1
Teamwork	2	none	1 a rank	2
Hideout	1	none	1 a rank	1
Second Wind	1	none	1 a rank	1
Benefactor	1	none	1 a rank	1
Danger Sense	1	none	1 a rank	1

The Scrapyard suite costs its dearest power (Move Object, 11 points) plus 1 for each of the other 2: 13 points, not the 25 its powers would cost separately. Together, powers and Edges cost 39 points.

Step 6: Twists. Dana takes a *Null Society sibling* (his sister Effie, who films him for the Society's channel) and writes her own: *the Yards' smugglers think Gantry informed on*

them, and he did.

Step 7: Check and finish. Every point is spent:

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
78	11	22	39	150	150

And every cap holds. Snare makes no attack roll (it has Area), and its rank of 8 is below Scale.

CAP	THIS HERO	AT MOST
Highest skill	Driving 13	20 (Scale + 10)
Evade + Durability	7 + 13 = 20	20 (Scale x 2)
Guard + Durability	7 + 13 = 20	20 (Scale x 2)
Vigor + Nerve	9 + 11 = 20	20 (Scale x 2)
Strike: attack + rank	8 + 5 = 13	20 (Scale x 2)
Hurl: attack + rank	10 + 5 = 15	20 (Scale x 2)
Move Object: attack + rank	10 + 10 = 20	20 (Scale x 2)

Gantry's finished sheet:

- **Scale:** 10 (150 build points, all spent).
- **Abilities:** Might 5, Grit 7, Agility 5, Aim 8, Combat 5, Mind 4, Sense 6, Heart -1.
- **Defences:** Evade 7, Guard 7, Vigor 9, Durability 13, Nerve 11. Initiative +5.
- **Skills:** Athletics 11, Brawling 8, Know-How 9, Intimidation 6, Notice 11, Marksmanship 10, Tech 10, Patch-Up 6, Driving 13.
- **Attacks:** Strike +8 against Guard, rank 5; Hurl +10 against Evade, rank 5; Move Object +10 against Evade, rank 10; Snare: no attack roll, rank 8.
- **Powers and Edges:** Move Object 10 (Precise, Limited) [Scrapyard], Snare 8 (Area, Limited) [Scrapyard], Barrier 6 (Limited) [Scrapyard], Protection 6 (Noticeable, Activation), Flight 8 (Limited), Senses 3, Immunity 1, Charter 1, Sure Aim 1, Streetwise 1, Interpose 1, Teamwork 2, Hideout 1, Second Wind 1, Benefactor 1, Danger Sense 1.
- **Shine:** 1 at the start of each session.

A WORKED HERO: DOORSTEP, SCALE 6

Sam is joining a street-level game at Scale 6: 90 build points, a paired cap of 12, no skill above 16, and no attack bonus plus rank above 12.

Step 1: Name. Yara Mendel was born the spring after the Flare. She rides deliveries for the Lowmarket night kitchens, and last year she found out that if she knocks on a door she can see, she can be on the other side of it. She is Off-Line: no Charter, no rating, and a Bureau file she has never seen. Lowmarket calls her Doorstep.

Step 3: Abilities. Quick and canny rather than strong: Agility 4, Combat 3, Mind 3, Sense 3, Heart 3, and 2 in Might and Grit. Aim 1: she does not throw things, she delivers them.

ABILITY	RANK	POINTS
Might	2	4
Grit	2	4
Agility	4	8
Aim	1	2
Combat	3	6
Mind	3	6
Sense	3	6
Heart	3	6
Total	21	42

Defences. Her courier jacket has plates sewn into it (Protection 2, a Gadget), so her Durability is Grit 2 + 2 = 4. At Scale 6 that lets her Evade and Guard reach 8 each (8 + 4 = 12): Agility 4 + 4 ranks, Combat 3 + 5 ranks. Vigor + Nerve may be at most 12: Vigor 4 (Grit 2 + 2) and Nerve 8 (Sense 3 + 5).

DEFENCE	ABILITY	RANKS BOUGHT	FROM POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	POINTS
Evade	Agility 4	4	none	8	4
Guard	Combat 3	5	none	8	5
Vigor	Grit 2	2	none	4	2
Durability	Grit 2	cannot buy	Protection +2	4	0
Nerve	Sense 3	5	none	8	5
Total					16

Skills. Tumbling, Stealth and Driving (her moped) are her trade; none comes close to the cap of 16. The 36 ranks cost 18 points.

SKILL	ABILITY	RANKS	TOTAL	POINTS
Tumbling	Agility 4	6	10	3
Athletics	Might 2	3	5	1.5
Brawling	Combat 3	4	7	2
Notice	Sense 3	6	9	3
Persuasion	Heart 3	3	6	1.5
Sleight of Hand	Agility 4	3	7	1.5
Stealth	Agility 4	6	10	3
Driving	Agility 4	5	9	2.5
Total		36		18

Step 4: Powers. Doorstep's powers are small and specific, so Sam leans on Limits, and on the rule that a power below 1 point a rank buys several ranks a point.

- **Teleport 5** (across the city), **Limited** (only to a door she can see or has delivered to), **Noticeable** (a thump of air and a smell of hot tarmac): 2 a rank minus 1 is 1 a rank, so 5, minus 1 flat: **4**.
- **Weaken 5**, **Limited** (only on a turn she arrived by Teleport: she steps out of the door and puts a thumb on the right nerve): 1 a rank minus 1 is 0 a rank, so 1 point buys 2 ranks; 5 divided by 2 is 2.5, rounded up: **3**. Its attack is Brawling 7 + rank 5 = 12, exactly the cap.

- **Senses 3**, **Limited** (only for finding her way: the shortest route, which door is which, whether anyone is home): 0 a rank, 3 divided by 2 rounded up: **2**.
- **Protection 2** with **Gadget** (the jacket, which can be taken off her): 0 a rank: **1**.
- **Feature 1** (a perfect memory for every address and face she has delivered to) with **Catch** (now and then, someone she delivered to recognises her too, costume or no costume): 1 point minus 1 flat would be 0, so it costs the minimum: **1**.

Step 5: Edges. Off-Line Network, Streetwise and Danger Sense: 3 points.

POWER OR EDGE	RANK	BOOSTS AND LIMITS	COST RULE	COST
Teleport	5	Limited, Noticeable	1 a rank, -1 flat	4
Weaken	5	Limited	1 point per 2 ranks	3
Senses	3	Limited	1 point per 2 ranks	2
Protection	2	Gadget	1 point per 2 ranks	1
Feature	1	Catch	1 a rank, -1 flat	1

POWER OR EDGE	RANK	BOOSTS AND LIMITS	COST RULE	COST
Off-Line Network	1	none	1 a rank	1
Streetwise	1	none	1 a rank	1
Danger Sense	1	none	1 a rank	1

Together, powers and Edges cost 14 points.

Step 6: Twists. A *dependant* (her grandmother, who runs the night kitchen and will not stop feeding Off-Line Lit) and, in Sam's words, *the Bureau has her*

moped's registration.

Step 7: Check and finish.

ABILITIES	DEFENCES	SKILLS	POWERS AND EDGES	TOTAL	BUDGET
42	16	18	14	90	90

CAP	THIS HERO	AT MOST
Highest skill	Tumbling 10	16 (Scale + 10)
Evade + Durability	8 + 4 = 12	12 (Scale x 2)
Guard + Durability	8 + 4 = 12	12 (Scale x 2)
Vigor + Nerve	4 + 8 = 12	12 (Scale x 2)
Strike: attack + rank	7 + 2 = 9	12 (Scale x 2)
Hurl: attack + rank	1 + 2 = 3	12 (Scale x 2)
Weaken: attack + rank	7 + 5 = 12	12 (Scale x 2)

Doorstep's finished sheet:

- **Scale:** 6 (90 build points, all spent).
- **Abilities:** Might 2, Grit 2, Agility 4, Aim 1, Combat 3, Mind 3, Sense 3, Heart 3.
- **Defences:** Evade 8, Guard 8, Vigor 4, Durability 4, Nerve 8. Initiative +4.
- **Skills:** Tumbling 10, Athletics 5, Brawling 7, Notice 9, Persuasion 6, Sleight of Hand 7, Stealth 10, Driving 9.
- **Attacks:** Strike +7 against Guard, rank 2; Hurl +1 against Evade, rank 2; Weaken +7 against Guard, rank 5.
- **Powers and Edges:** Teleport 5 (Limited, Noticeable), Weaken 5 (Limited), Senses 3 (Limited), Protection 2 (Gadget), Feature 1 (Catch), Off-Line Network 1, Streetwise 1, Danger Sense 1.
- **Shine:** 1 at the start of each session.

FOR THE GM

Doorstep shows how far Limits stretch a small budget: five powers for 11 points. That is fine, as long as each Limit really bites. If Doorstep's Teleport never fails her for want of a door she can see, the Limit is not doing its job: put a locked roof hatch or a doorless warehouse in her way now and then.



GLASSWORK STATION, LINE 4. RUSH HOUR.

RULES OF PLAY

SCENES, ROUNDS AND TURNS

Brightline counts time in three sizes.

- **A scene** is one situation from start to finish: a fight on a rooftop, a chase through Lowmarket, a Charter hearing, a stake-out. Many rules last "a scene" or happen "once a scene". The GM says when a scene ends.
- **A round** is about six seconds of action, in which everyone in a fight gets one turn.
- **A turn** is your share of a round.

Outside fights, nobody counts rounds: the GM moves the story along and calls for checks when they matter.

INITIATIVE

When a fight starts, everyone in it rolls **Initiative: d20 + your Initiative** (your Agility, plus anything your powers and Edges add). Turns go from the highest total to the lowest, and keep that order for the rest of the fight.

Ambushes. The Danger Sense Edge sets the rule: when one side catches the other by surprise, the surprised side does not act in the first round, and a hero with Danger Sense is never caught by surprise and acts in the first round like everyone else.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this. Roll once for each group of identical Mooks, and they all act on that number. On a tie, heroes go before villains, and tied heroes choose their own order.

IN ROLLQUEST

Initiative is on your sheet as **Initiative**: press it to roll d20 + your Initiative.

YOUR TURN

The Rattled condition gives the shape of a turn: a Rattled hero gets "one action, a move or something else, not both", so everyone else gets **one move and one action**.

Reeling is Rattled and Hindered at once. **Down** leaves you nothing at all.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce turns. In this book you take your move and your action in either order. A move is moving across the battle map, standing up from Prone, pulling on a piece of gear, or switching on a power that needs a move. An action is anything else that takes effort: an attack, a Standard power, a skill check, helping an ally, grabbing someone, rallying a crowd; you can give up your action to take a second move. Free actions take no time: a sentence or two of talk, dropping something, switching a Free power on or off, switching any power off, and changing which power in an Alternate suite is active (once a turn). The GM can rule that a long speech or a pile of free actions is too much for one turn.

MOVING

On a battle map, each square is 5 feet (1.5 metres) across.

- **Hindered** moves at half speed. **Immobile** means you cannot leave your square, though you can still act in it.
- **Prone**: you are on the ground, and Hindered until you spend a move getting up.

Movement powers. Flight, Speed, Leap, Swim, Burrow and Wall-Crawl change how you move, and each power's own text says how far: Flight at rank 1 keeps pace with a runner and every rank after that roughly doubles its top speed, while Speed at rank 1 outruns a sprinter. Teleport takes your move: at rank 1 it puts you anywhere across the room, at

rank 5 anywhere across the city, and at rank 10 anywhere you have been.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce movement. In this book a move on foot takes you up to **6 squares** (30 feet), counting diagonals as one square, so Hindered leaves you 3. Climbing, swimming and crawling without a power to help take half your move, and the GM can call for an Athletics check when it is hard (a wet fire escape, a rope in the wind). Falling from a height is a Kinetic hit when you land, resisted with Durability like any other, at a rank the GM sets by the height. Rank 1 of Flight or Speed doubles your move to 12 squares, and each rank above that roughly doubles it again, so from rank 3 or so you can reach anywhere on most battle maps in one move.

ATTACKING

To attack, choose a target and make an **attack roll**:

- **Close** (melee): roll **Brawling** against **10 + the target's Guard**. You have to be next to the target, or a few paces further with Long Reach.
- **Ranged**: roll **Marksmanship** against **10 + the target's Evade**. You can hit anything you can see clearly, unless the power has Short Range, which reaches only across a room.

- **Perception**: no attack roll. If you can see the target, it is hit, and goes straight to resisting.
- **Area**: no attack roll. Choose up to six targets close together within the power's range; each of them resists.

On a battle map, this book counts Long Reach as 3 squares and Short Range as about 6. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.

If the attack roll meets or beats the number, it **hits**, and the target makes a resistance check (see Resisting hits, below). Every hit has a **rank**: a Strike's or a Hurl's rank is your Might, and a power's rank is the power's rank.

Natural 20s and natural 1s. A natural 20 on the d20 of an attack roll always hits, whatever the total, and is a **crit**: its rank goes up by 5. A natural 1 always misses, whatever the total. An attack with no roll (Area, Perception) cannot crit.

Flurry. An attack with the Flurry Boost that beats the target's defence by 5 or more (2 Steps or more) has its rank raised by 2.

IN ROLLQUEST

Aim an attack power at a token and RollQuest judges the attack itself: it reads the target's Evade or Guard by the attack's range, applies the natural 20 and the natural 1, and on a crit adds 5 to the number the target resists against. On a hit it asks you to **Roll** the hit's rank (a fixed number) and sends the target its prompt to resist. It does not add Sure-Shot, Wild, Sure Aim or Flurry for you: the GM rules on those.

ACTION	ATTACK ROLL	AGAINST	HIT RANK	HIT TYPE
Strike	Brawling	10 + Guard	Might	Kinetic
Hurl	Marksmanship	10 + Evade	Might	Kinetic

COVER

Calder Bay is full of things to hide behind: parked cars, pillars, container corners, market stalls. The Bank Shot Boost bounces an attack off a wall to hit someone in cover.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce cover. In this book, **partial cover** (crouched behind a car bonnet, half behind a pillar) takes 2 off attacks against you, and **heavy cover** (only your head and arm showing round a container) takes 5 off. **Full cover** (completely behind a wall) means you cannot be the target of an attack roll or a Perception power, except by Bank Shot; an Area burst reaches you if it can reach the space you are in.

OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO IN A FIGHT

- **Grab.** Being **Grabbed** leaves you Hindered and Vulnerable, and you cannot move away until you break free with an Athletics or Tumbling check against the hold. The Grab Hold Edge lets you grab one-handed, and Hold-Based powers work only on someone you have Grabbed.
- **Trip, Disarm and Feint** are Edges: with them, you can knock someone Prone, take what is in their hands, or leave them Vulnerable to your next attack.
- **Help.** An ally's next check or attack gains 2 (2 plus the rank with Teamwork).
- **Aim.** With the Sure Aim Edge, spend your move aiming and your next attack gains 5.
- **Go all out.** With All-Out, take up to 5 off your Evade and Guard until your next turn and add the same to an attack roll. With Heavy Hitter, take up to its rank off an attack roll and add it to the hit's rank.
- **Throw something.** Hurl uses Marksmanship against 10 + Evade, and its rank is your Might: a bench, a car door, a villain's own henchman.
- **Protect someone.** With Interpose, once a round, you take a hit meant for someone next to you.
- **Do something heroic.** Holding up a falling floor, catching a tram, getting a crowd out of a burning market: these are checks, usually several in a row, and they usually matter more than the fight around them.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce these. To grab, make a Brawling attack against 10 + the target's Guard; on a hit, the target is Grabbed. To break free, the grabbed person spends their action on an Athletics or Tumbling check against 10 + the grabber's Athletics (or 10 + the rank of the power holding them). Helping takes the helper's action.

RESISTING HITS

Nobody in Brightline has hit points. When a hit lands, the target makes a **resistance check**:

1. **The hit has a rank:** the power's rank, or your Might for Strike and Hurl, plus 5 on a crit.
2. **The target rolls d20 + Durability**, less 1 for every Dinged they already carry, **against 15 + the hit's rank**. Against a Mental hit, the target rolls Nerve instead of Durability, still less 1 for every Dinged.
3. **Success** of any number of Steps means the hit glances off. **Failure** puts the target on the ladder below, by how many Steps they failed by.

HIT TYPE	RESISTED WITH	DIFFICULTY	ON A CRIT	EACH DINGED
Kinetic	Durability	15 + the hit's rank	+5 to the rank	takes 1 off the check
Energy	Durability	15 + the hit's rank	+5 to the rank	takes 1 off the check
Mental	Nerve	15 + the hit's rank	+5 to the rank	takes 1 off the check

YOUR RESISTANCE CHECK	YOU TAKE
Succeed (any number of Steps)	Nothing: the hit glances off
Fail by 1 Step	Dinged
Fail by 2 Steps	Dinged and Rattled
Fail by 3 Steps	Dinged and Reeling
Fail by 4 Steps or more	Down
A Mook fails by any number of Steps	Down

- **Dinged stacks.** Each Dinged takes 1 off every later check to resist a hit (Durability, or Nerve against a hit to the mind), until you recover. A hero carrying three Dinged resists at 3 less.
- **Reeling** is one bad hit from Down: the condition says so itself.
- **Down** is out of the fight (see Conditions, below).
- **Mooks** go Down the first time they fail a resistance check, by any number of Steps. Against an affliction, a Mook that fails takes the last rung of the affliction's ladder at once (a Mook that fails against Affliction is Paralysed).

- **Piercing** hits are resisted as if the target had no Protection: take Protection's rank off the target's Durability for that check.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce these. If you are already Rattled and the ladder makes you Rattled again, you become Reeling instead: Reeling replaces Rattled. While you are Reeling, failing to resist a hit by 2 Steps or more puts you Down; failing by 1 Step only adds a Dinged.

IN ROLLQUEST

When a power or attack aimed through RollQuest hits your token, a prompt appears in the bottom-right corner, such as **Durability resistance, DC 26**. Its **Roll** button throws d20 plus your defence, less your Dinged against a hit (not against an affliction); for a creature nobody owns, the GM's screen throws it at once. The rung then lands on the token by itself: its conditions, the **Dinged** badge (and your sheet's **Dinged** field), and Down on any failure for a token marked **Mook**. The table ruling above is for the GM to apply by hand. The prompt has no **Spend Shine to reroll**, and its **Advantage** and **Disadvantage** buttons are not part of Brightline. A villain's attacks are printed text the GM rolls: when one hits you, roll **Durability** on your sheet against the number the GM calls. That roll takes your Dinged off for you; the sheet's **Nerve** roll does not, so against a hit to the mind take them off yourself.

OBJECTS

A wall from Barrier or a thing made with Create has Durability equal to its rank, and Barrier's own text says anything trying to break through rolls against it.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this. An object that is hit resists like anything else, with d20 + its Durability against 15 + the hit's rank, and is broken, holed or knocked flat when it fails. Someone forcing a way through by strength alone rolls Might or Athletics against 10 + its Durability. Give ordinary objects a Durability by comparison with a wall of the same toughness: a door 2 or so, a brick wall 5, a bank vault 10.

AFFLICTIONS

Six attack powers do not hurt: they numb, net, drain, fool, transform or sap. These **afflictions** are resisted against **10 + the power's rank**, with the defence each one names, and each has its own ladder. Dinged does not count against an affliction: it only weakens you against hits.

POWER	RESISTED WITH	FAIL BY 1 STEP	BY 2 STEPS	BY 3 STEPS OR MORE
Affliction	Vigor	Hindered	Immobile	Paralysed
Snare	Evade	Hindered and Vulnerable	Immobile and Defenceless	Immobile and Defenceless
Drain	Nerve	Impaired	Disabled	Entranced
Illusion	Nerve	Dazzled	Entranced	Compelled
Transform	Vigor	Impaired	Disabled	Paralysed
Weaken	Vigor	Impaired	Disabled	Down

Failing by more Steps than an affliction's ladder has rungs lands its last rung.

How afflictions end. The packs say how some of them end:

- **Its maker lets go.** With the Undoable Boost, the power's user can take it back at will: release a Transform, wake someone Entranced.

- **Someone else ends it.** Any harm, or a shake from an ally, breaks Entranced, and a hero with Born Leader can spend a Shine to let you shake off Entranced (or Rattled). Healing at rank 5 or more brings someone back from Down.
- **Easy to Shake.** With this Limit on the power, the target gets a further check to throw it off at the end of each of its turns.
- **Transform at its worst** leaves a person turned to glass, wood or salt, and Paralysed until its maker changes them back.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this. An affliction's conditions last until the end of the scene unless something above ends them first; a Transform's worst rung lasts until its maker changes the person back, scene or no scene. If you can still act, you can spend your action on a new resistance check against the same Difficulty; a success clears every condition that power gave you. The check from Easy to Shake costs nothing, and works even when the affliction stops you acting.

CONDITIONS

CONDITION	WHAT IT DOES
Dinged	A hit got through. Each Dinged takes 1 off your check to resist the next hit, and they stack. Count them in the Dinged field on your sheet.
Rattled	Your ears are ringing. On your turn you get one action, a move or something else, not both.
Reeling	Rattled and Hindered at once: one action a turn, at half speed. One more bad hit puts you Down.
Down	Out of the fight: knocked cold, pinned under a girder, or simply done. You take no actions and you are Defenceless until someone gets you up or the scene ends.
Hindered	Something drags at you. You move at half your speed.
Immobile	You cannot move from where you stand, though you can still act in place.
Vulnerable	Caught off balance. Your Evade and Guard are halved, rounding up. Mark Vulnerable on your sheet while it lasts.
Defenceless	You cannot defend yourself at all. Your Evade and Guard count as 0. Mark Defenceless on your sheet while it lasts.
Impaired	Off your game. Take 2 off every check you make, attacks included. Mark Impaired on your sheet while it lasts.
Disabled	Badly off your game. Take 5 off every check you make, attacks included; it replaces Impaired. Mark Disabled on your sheet while it lasts.
Dazzled	Afterimages swim across your eyes. Anything beyond arm's reach is hidden from you until it clears.
Entranced	Transfixed by something only you can see. You take no actions. Any harm, or a shake from an ally, breaks it.
Compelled	A will not your own picks one action for you each turn. You choose anything else you do.
Controlled	Someone else chooses everything you do on your turn.
Prone	You are on the ground. Melee attacks against you gain 5 and ranged attacks lose 5, and you are Hindered until you spend a move getting up.
Grabbed	Someone has hold of you. You are Hindered and Vulnerable, and you cannot move away until you break free with an Athletics or Tumbling check against their hold.
Paralysed	Locked in place. You cannot move or act, though you can still think and perceive. You are Defenceless.

- **Impaired and Disabled** take 2 or 5 off ability checks, skill checks and attack rolls; Disabled replaces Impaired. Their own wording says "every check", but RollQuest's sheet does not take them off resistance checks, defence rolls or Initiative, and this book plays it the same way.

- **Vulnerable and Defenceless** change Evade and Guard, and so the number attacks need: a Vulnerable hero with Evade 7 has Evade 4 (7 halved, rounding up), so a ranged attack needs only 14. Defenceless makes both 0. Down and Paralysed make you Defenceless too.
- **Several conditions** can apply at once; each does what it says. Hindered from two sources is still half speed.

IN ROLLQUEST

Conditions go on your token. Those that change your numbers also have a field on your sheet: set **Vulnerable, Defenceless, Impaired** or **Disabled** to 1 while your token has it, and your defences and checks change to match. Set **Defenceless** for Down and Paralysed too. **New Session** sets all four fields back to 0.

POWERS IN PLAY

- **Using a power** takes the action its Effect lists: Standard, Move, Free or None.
- **Sustained powers** stay on until you switch them off. Steadfast keeps a power on through Rattled and Reeling; only Down switches it off. Lingering keeps a sustained power on even without you.
- **Permanent powers** are always on.
- **Alternate suites:** only one power in a suite is active at a time.
- **Nullify and Dampen** switch other people's powers off. Nullify is your rank + Sense against 10 + the target power's rank; on a success the power stops until its owner spends their next turn bringing it back. Inside a Dampen field, anyone using a power rolls Nerve against 10 + the Dampen rank, and on a failure the power does not work that turn. Inborn powers cannot be Nullified or Dampened.
- **Mind Read** is your rank + Sense against 10 + the target's Nerve; the Steps of success say how deep you reach.
- **Gadgets** can be taken off you, broken or stolen.
- **Clones and summoned helpers** are Mooks: they go Down on their first failed resistance check, and vanish at the end of the scene.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce these. A Sustained power without Steadfast switches off when you become Rattled, Reeling or Down (see Making a character), and switching it back on takes its action again. You change which power in a suite is active once a turn, as a free action. A Disarm, or a Grab followed by an action, takes a hand-held gadget; a worn one (a suit, a jacket) takes a scene of trouble to remove.

SHINE IN A FIGHT

Shine works in a fight exactly as it does anywhere else (see How to play): reroll a failed check, with a 1 to 10 on the new d20 counting as 11 to 20; shake off Rattled or Reeling; add a detail to the scene; or ask the GM for a nudge. A failed resistance check is the classic time to spend it: the reroll often turns a Rattled into nothing at all. In RollQuest the prompt to resist has no reroll button, so spend it by hand (see How to play).

RECOVERY

BUTTON	WHAT IT DOES
New Session	A new episode begins. Shine returns to 1, and every Dinged and status mark clears.
Catch Your Breath	A minute out of the fight. One Dinged fades.

- **Dinged** clears one at a time: one when you Catch Your Breath for a minute out of the fight, one with the Second Wind Edge (once a scene, as a free action), one or more with Healing, and on its own with Regenerate. A New Session clears every Dinged.
- **Rattled and Reeling** end when you spend a Shine, and Healing ends either. A hero with Born Leader can spend a Shine to let an ally shake off Rattled. Tiring leaves you Rattled only until the end of your next turn.
- **Down** lasts until someone gets you up, or until the scene ends. Healing at rank 5 or more gets you up.
- **Status marks** (Vulnerable, Defenceless, Impaired, Disabled) all clear at a New Session.
- **A New Session** also sets your Shine back to 1 (plus your Lucky ranks).

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce these. Otherwise, Rattled and Reeling last until the end of the scene. Without Healing, an ally next to someone who is Down can spend their action on a Patch-Up check to get them up, against a Difficulty the GM sets (15 if nobody is shooting at them); they are no longer Down, but their Dinged stay until they recover them. Status marks clear when what caused them ends.

IN ROLLQUEST

New Session and **Catch Your Breath** are buttons on the sheet. New Session sets Shine to 1 and clears every Dinged and status mark; Catch Your Breath takes one Dinged off. If you have the Lucky Edge, add its ranks to Shine by hand after New Session.

NOBODY DIES BY ACCIDENT

Down is out of the fight, not dead. Brightline is a game about people who save lives, and nobody in it dies because of a bad roll: not the heroes, not the villains, not the

Mooks. Killing a helpless person is a deliberate act, and in Calder Bay it is murder, on camera, with all that follows. When a story calls for a death, the GM and the table decide it together. The Hard to Kill Edge makes it explicit for a hero: you are never finished off by accident, and you get up at the end of the scene.

A WORKED FIGHT

This fight follows the example of play at the end of How to play. Gantry (built in full in Making a character) is on the quay in Bayside Yards. A second barge has rammed the quay out of the fog, and on its deck is Gravelmouth, the Yards' bruiser, with two Bayside Yards Heavies. Gantry spent a Shine on the crane, so he starts the fight with 1. His scrap plating is not on yet.

- Gantry: Initiative +5, Marksmanship 10, Move Object rank 10, Evade 7, Guard 7, Durability 13 with Protection on, Shine 1.
- Gravelmouth (Scale 10): Evade 4, Guard 8, Durability 12, Initiative +1; Rockslide Punch +8, rank 12; Throw Something Big +6, rank 11.
- Two Bayside Yards Heavies (Mooks): Evade 4, Guard 6, Durability 4, Initiative +2; Crowbar +6, rank 6.

WHO	ROLL	D20 + BONUS	AGAINST	RESULT	EFFECT
Gantry	Initiative	14 + 5 = 19	acts in order		
Gravelmouth	Initiative	11 + 1 = 12	acts in order		
Yards Heavies (one roll)	Initiative	9 + 2 = 11	acts in order		
Gantry	Move Object attack	9 + 10 = 19	10 + Evade 4 = 14	Success (2 Steps)	hit
Gravelmouth	resists rank 10	8 + 12 = 20	15 + 10 = 25	Failure (2 Steps)	Dinged and Rattled
Gravelmouth	Throw Something Big	15 + 6 = 21	10 + Evade 7 = 17	Success (1 Step)	hit
Gantry	resists rank 11	7 + 13 = 20	15 + 11 = 26	Failure (2 Steps)	Dinged and Rattled
Gantry	Spend Shine to reroll	3 counts as 13; 13 + 13 = 26	15 + 11 = 26	Success (1 Step)	no effect
Heavy A	Crowbar	12 + 6 = 18	10 + Guard 7 = 17	Success (1 Step)	hit
Gantry	resists rank 6	6 + 13 = 19	15 + 6 = 21	Failure (1 Step)	Dinged
Heavy B	Crowbar	5 + 6 = 11	10 + Guard 7 = 17	Failure (2 Steps)	miss
Gantry	Move Object attack	4 + 10 = 14	10 + Evade 4 = 14	Success (1 Step)	hit
Heavy A	resists rank 10	17 + 4 = 21	15 + 10 = 25	Failure (1 Step)	Down (a Mook)
Gravelmouth	Rockslide Punch	11 + 8 = 19	10 + Guard 7 = 17	Success (1 Step)	hit
Gantry	resists rank 12	13 + 13 - 1 Dinged = 25	15 + 12 = 27	Failure (1 Step)	Dinged

WHO	ROLL	D20 + BONUS	AGAINST	RESULT	EFFECT
Heavy B	Crowbar	2 + 6 = 8	10 + Guard 7 = 17	Failure (2 Steps)	miss
Gantry	Move Object attack	18 + 10 = 28	10 + Evade 4 = 14	Success (3 Steps)	hit
Gravelmouth	resists rank 10	3 + 12 - 1 Dinged = 14	15 + 10 = 25	Failure (3 Steps)	Dinged and Reeling

Initiative. Gantry rolls $14 + 5 = 19$; the GM rolls $11 + 1 = 12$ for Gravelmouth and one roll, $9 + 2 = 11$, for both Heavies.

Gantry goes first.

Round 1, Gantry. Dana spends Gantry's move pulling his plating on: Protection has the Activation Limit, so switching it on takes a move. His Durability is now 13 instead of 7. For his action, he rips a door off a container with Move Object and hurls it at Gravelmouth. The attack is Marksmanship: $9 + 10 = 19$ against $10 +$ Gravelmouth's Evade $4 = 14$. A hit, of rank 10.

Gravelmouth resists. The GM rolls Durability against $15 + 10 = 25$: $8 + 12 = 20$. That misses by 5: **Failure (2 Steps)**, so Gravelmouth takes **Dinged and Rattled**. The GM marks 1 Dinged on him. Rattled means he gets one action a turn, a move or something else, not both.

Round 1, Gravelmouth. Rattled, he cannot both close the distance and punch, so he tears a mooring bollard out of the deck and throws it: Throw Something Big, $15 + 6 = 21$ against $10 +$ Gantry's Evade $7 = 17$. A hit, of rank 11.

Gantry resists. Dana rolls Durability against $15 + 11 = 26$: $7 + 13 = 20$. That misses by 6: **Failure (2 Steps)**, which would leave Gantry Dinged and Rattled. Dana spends Gantry's last Shine to reroll. The new d20 shows 3, which counts as 13: $13 + 13 = 26$, exactly the Difficulty. **Success (1 Step)**: the bollard rings off his plating and he does not even stagger. His Shine is now 0.

Round 1, the Heavies. Heavy A runs up beside Gantry (its move) and swings its crowbar (its action): $12 + 6 = 18$ against $10 +$ Gantry's Guard $7 = 17$. A hit, of rank 6. Gantry resists against $15 + 6 = 21$ and rolls $6 + 13 = 19$, missing by 2: **Failure (1 Step)**, so he is **Dinged**. That is the first step down the Durability ladder: from now on, Gantry rolls Durability at 1 less. Heavy B runs up on his other side and swings: $5 + 6 = 11$ against 17, a miss.

Round 2, Gantry. Gantry steps to the quay's edge, right beside the barge (his move), and hits Heavy A with a fork-lift pallet: $4 + 10 = 14$ against $10 + 4 = 14$. Meeting the number is enough: a hit, rank 10. The Heavy resists against 25 and rolls $17 + 4 = 21$, missing by 4. Only **Failure (1 Step)**, but a Mook goes Down on any failure: the Heavy is pinned under the pallet.

Round 2, Gravelmouth. Gantry is now next to the barge, so Gravelmouth, still Rattled (it lasts the scene, by this book's table ruling), spends his one action on a Rockslide Punch: $11 + 8 = 19$ against 17. A hit, of rank 12. Gantry resists against $15 + 12 = 27$, and this time his Dinged counts: $13 + 13 - 1 = 25$. That misses by 2: **Failure (1 Step)**, and a second **Dinged**. Gantry now resists at 2 less. Heavy B swings again and rolls $2 + 6 = 8$: a miss.

Round 3, Gantry. Dana goes big: Gantry lifts a whole empty container off the stack and brings it down on the barge's deck. $18 + 10 = 28$ against 14, beating it by 14:

Success (3 Steps). Move Object has no Flurry, so the extra Steps make a better story but not a bigger hit: rank 10.

Gravelmouth resists. Against 25, at 1 less for his Dinged: $3 + 12 - 1 = 14$. That misses by 11: **Failure (3 Steps)**, so he takes **Dinged and Reeling**: 2 Dinged now, and by this book's table ruling Reeling replaces his Rattled (in RollQuest, the GM takes Rattled off his token by hand). One more bad hit will put him Down, and he knows it.

The GM plays him smart. On his turn, Reeling, he has one action at half speed, and he uses it to drop off the far side of the barge into the bay. Heavy B, alone, drops its crowbar and puts its hands up. When the fight is over, Gantry Catches His Breath for a minute and clears one of his two Dinged; the other stays with him until he gets another minute's rest, or until the next session.

BEYOND FIGHTS

Most of a session is not fighting. The same tools cover everything else.

- **Rescues** are a series of checks against the clock. Decide what has to happen (stop the tram, get the passengers off, keep the bridge from collapsing), set a Difficulty for each, and decide what failing costs. Steps of success buy time; Steps of failure spend it.

- **Chases** are contests: the runner and the pursuer roll each round (Athletics, Driving, a movement power's rank plus Agility, whatever fits) and the GM tracks who is gaining. Three wins in a row ends it. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.
- **Investigations** are Sleuthing, Notice, Read and Know-How checks, and a lot of talking to people. Do not let a single failed check stop the story: a failure finds the clue at a cost, or finds a different clue.
- **Social scenes** use Persuasion, Deception, Intimidation and Read. A crowd, a Bureau panel or a sponsor's board is not one mind: success might win some of them and not others.

ADVANCEMENT

Brightline has no experience points, and its packs give no rule for growing a hero. What follows is this book's way of doing it.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this. Heroes grow when the game grows: at the end of a story arc, the GM can raise the game's **Scale** by 1 for everyone. Each point of Scale adds 15 build points to every hero's budget and raises every cap by 1 (the skill cap) or 2 (the paired caps and the attack cap). Spend the new points as you like, within the new caps. Between Scale changes, you can move points around with the GM's agreement when the story justifies it: a hero who spent a story arc training with the Free Clinic's healers can move a few points from Intimidation into Patch-Up.

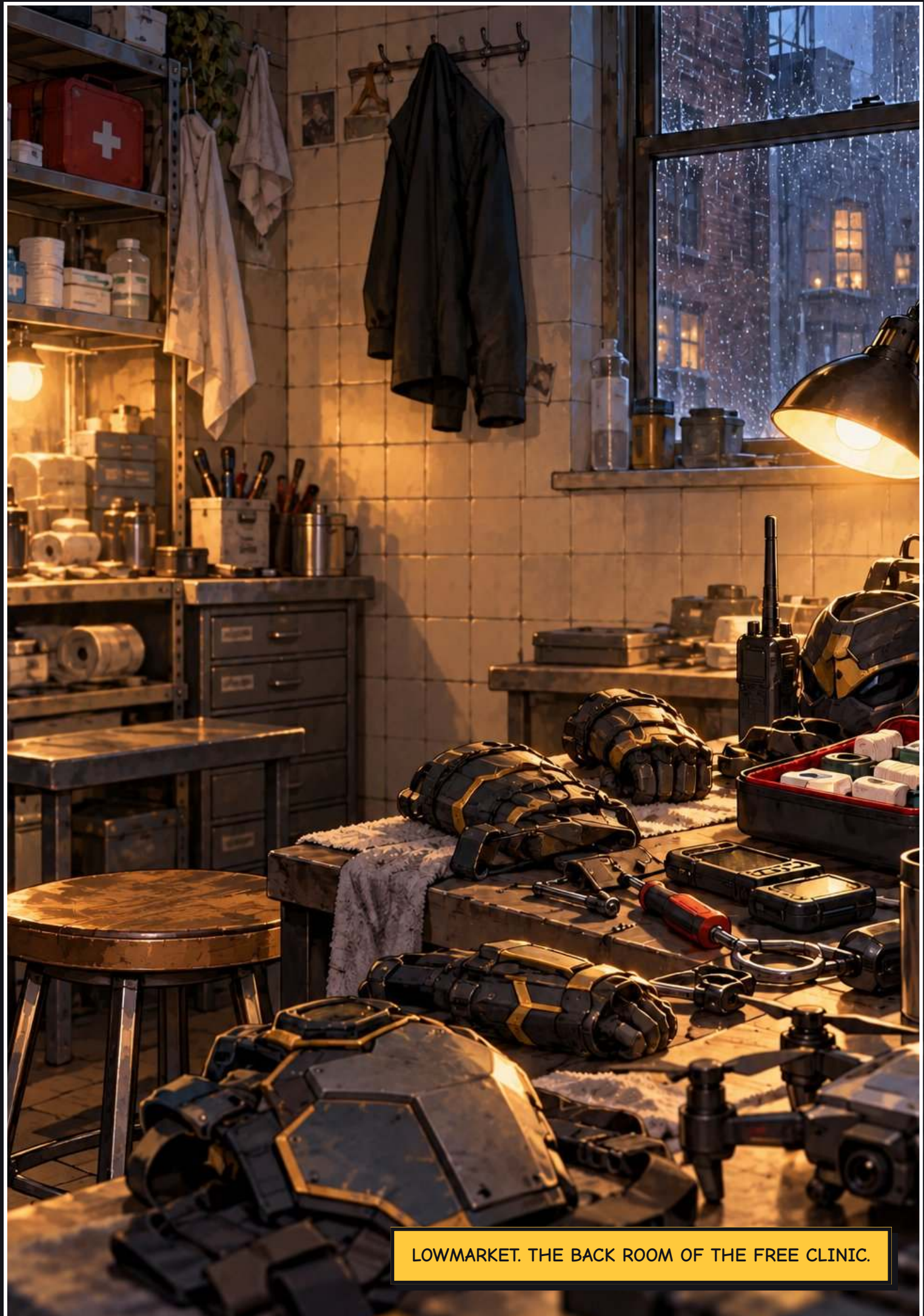
How often is up to your table. Every three to five sessions keeps the game moving; a campaign that starts at Scale 8 in Lowmarket and ends at Scale 12 against the Hollow King is a good long story.

IN ROLLQUEST

To raise the Scale, change the **Scale** field on every hero's sheet: **Build points** grows by 15 for each point, and the new points show in **Points left**.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this either. The long mystery gives you a second way to advance heroes: powers are growing in Calder Bay, quietly, in people who have not trained for it. Once or twice in a campaign, raise one hero's power by a rank with no points spent, as a story beat: it frightens them, the Bureau notices, and somebody in Second Dawn starts taking an interest. Then fold the extra rank into the next Scale increase.



LOWMARKET. THE BACK ROOM OF THE FREE CLINIC.

EQUIPMENT

Brightline heroes are defined by what they can do, not what they carry. There is no shopping list of weapons and no weight to count. A hero's gear is one of three things: the everyday basics everyone has, ordinary equipment bought with the Equipment Edge, or gadgets built as powers.

THE BASICS

Every hero has, for free, what an ordinary person in Calder Bay has: clothes (and a costume, if they wear one), a phone, keys, a wallet, a travel card, a bag, a torch on the phone, a first-aid kit in the kitchen drawer, and whatever their day job needs. None of it changes any number. If a hero would reasonably have it, they have it.

ORDINARY EQUIPMENT: THE EQUIPMENT EDGE

Gear beyond the basics, the kind of thing a store would sell, comes from the **Equipment** Edge. Each rank gives you **5 points of equipment**, and the GM says yes to anything a store would sell.

The Edge does not say what a piece of equipment is worth. This book prices it with the power builder.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. RollQuest does not enforce this. To put a number on a piece of equipment, build it as a power and count what it would cost: that is what it costs in equipment points. Equipment never takes the Gadget Limit, because all equipment can be taken off you, broken or stolen anyway. Equipment cannot give a hero more than the caps allow: body armour adds to Durability, and Evade + Durability and Guard + Durability still have to fit under twice Scale. Equipment points not spent at once can be held back and decided in play: when you need a grapple line and have a point unspent, you had one in your bag all along.

GEAR	BUILT AS	EQUIPMENT POINTS
Body armour (vest and plates)	Protection 2	2
Lock picks, or a good multitool	Feature 1	1
A fast motorbike	Speed 1	1
A camera drone with a phone link	Remote Sight 1	2
Night-vision goggles	Senses 1	1
Breathing mask (smoke, gas)	Immunity 1	1
A grapple line	Feature 1	1
Scuba kit	Swim 1	1

EXAMPLE

Doorstep (built in Making a character) wants better wheels and a way to see in the dark. Sam takes two ranks out of her Sleight of Hand (1 build point) and buys Equipment 1, which gives her 5 equipment points: a fast motorbike (Speed 1, 1 point), night-vision goggles (Senses 1, 1 point), a grapple line (Feature 1, 1 point), and 2 points held back for later. She leaves body armour alone: her Evade and Guard already sit at the Scale 6 cap with her Durability, so any more Durability would mean lowering them.

GADGETS: POWERS IN A BOX

A **gadget** is a power with the **Gadget** Limit: it is a device, so it can be taken off you, broken or stolen, and it costs 1 less a rank for that. Gauntlets that fire bolts, a rocket pack, an armoured suit, a drone that sees for you: all are powers with Gadget. The Gadgeteer archetype builds all but one of its powers this way, and anyone can take a gadget or two.

Gadgets are paid for with build points, like any power, and follow every power rule: ranks, Boosts, other Limits, Alternate suites and caps. A gadget below 1 point a rank buys several ranks a point.

GADGET	BUILT AS	PER RANK	BUILD POINTS
Halberd stun gauntlet	Affliction 6 (Gadget)	1 point per 2 ranks	3
Rocket pack	Flight 4 (Gadget)	1 a rank	4
Dampener cuffs	Dampen 6 (Gadget)	1 a rank	6
Armoured suit	Protection 8 (Gadget)	1 point per 2 ranks	4
Wrist net launcher	Snare 6 (Gadget)	1 point per 2 ranks	3
Sonic emitter	Blast 6 (Gadget, Area)	2 a rank	12

When someone tries to take a gadget off you, the GM decides what it takes: a Disarm or a Grab for something in your hand, a scene of trouble for a suit you are wearing. A broken gadget is mended between scenes with a Tech check, or between sessions without one. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.

ONE-OFF GADGETS: THE INVENTOR EDGE

With the **Inventor** Edge, you can build a one-off gadget that copies a power for a scene. Work out what the power would cost with the power builder (as a gadget, with the

Gadget Limit if you like), then make a Tech check against 10 + that cost. On a success, you have the gadget for the rest of the scene. The GM decides how long the building takes and what parts you need: a few minutes in a garage, an hour in the field with a drone and a roll of tape.

MONEY

Calder Bay runs on **Cash**, in dollars and cents.

CURRENCY	UNIT	SYMBOL	WORTH
Cash	Cent	c	the smallest unit
Cash	Dollar	\$	100 cents

Brightline does not count heroes' money closely. Your day job, your sponsor or your savings pay for rent, food, travel and the basics; anything bigger needs a reason in the story. Three Edges stand in for resources:

- **Benefactor:** someone with money is on your side, a sponsor, a family, a fixer. Each rank is a favour a session: bail, a jet, a hospital bed, a lawyer at three in the morning.

- **Hideout:** a place of your own, with more rooms and secrets at each rank: a loft, a sewer lab, a lighthouse, the cab of a crane.
- **Well Connected:** spend a minute on the phone and someone who knows something calls back.

A Charter hero's sponsor pays well, and asks for things in return: appearances, endorsements, and a costume with the logo where the cameras can see it. An Off-Line hero is usually broke.

IN ROLLQUEST

Each hero's sheet has a **Cash** purse in dollars and cents, for tables that want to count it.

CARRYING THINGS

Brightline has no encumbrance. Carry what makes sense. A hero with Might 12 or a high rank of Grow can lift and carry what a forklift can; an ordinary person carries a bag. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it. When it matters whether something is too heavy, the GM calls for a Might or Athletics check, or rules that it simply is or is not, and Move Object lifts whatever its rank allows without touching it.



GOLD NIGHT. THE SECOND DAWN BARGE.

ADVERSARIES

C alder Bay's rogues come from everywhere: a prophet who wants to light the next Flare, a former hero with a fist full of stolen dampeners, a smuggler who moves the bay, a girl-shaped Afterimage looking for her family, a Bureau official who has known the truth for twenty years. This chapter gives the GM every shipped villain and Mook, explains how to read them, and shows how to build more.

HOW TO READ A STAT BLOCK

Villains are not built like heroes. A stat block carries only what a fight needs:

- **Type:** villain or Mook, its Scale, and who it works for. Some add a note, such as an Afterimage's immunity to kinetic hits.
- **Evade and Guard**, with the number an attack has to reach in brackets: 10 + Evade for ranged attacks, 10 + Guard for melee.
- **Durability, Vigor and Nerve**, which the villain rolls when it resists: Durability against hits, Nerve against hits to the mind and mind powers, Vigor against body powers. Evade, rolled as a check, slips nets.
- **Initiative**, added to the d20 when a fight starts.
- **Mook**, when it goes Down on its first failed resistance check.
- **Cannot be:** conditions it is immune to.

- **Actions**, written out in full. "+11 against 10 + Guard" is an attack roll of d20 + 11 against the target's Guard plus 10; "a hit has rank 9" means the target resists against 15 + 9. "Resists with Nerve against 10 + 12" is an affliction the target resists directly, with no attack roll.

Villains take Dinged, Rattled, Reeling and Down exactly as heroes do, and a Dinged takes 1 off their checks to resist hits.

Checks the block does not cover. When a villain needs a check that is not on its block (Gravelmouth trying to climb a crane, Rhee trying to lie to a hearing), give it a bonus equal to its Scale for something it is good at, and half its Scale (rounded down) for anything else. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.

IN ROLLQUEST

Brightline's villains and Mooks come with the system as ready-made creatures: open **Enemies**, then **+ Add**, and choose **From the library** in the **Add New Enemy** window. Each arrives with its defences on the token; a Mook's token carries the **Mook** badge, and goes Down on its first failed resistance check by itself. When a hero's attack hits one, RollQuest throws its resistance check on your screen at once. Its actions are printed text for you to read: RollQuest does not roll a villain's attack, so roll it yourself (the **Roll a d20** macro will do) and call the number the hero resists against.

THE ROGUES' GALLERY

NAME	SCALE	ROLE	FACTION	MAIN THREATS
The Hollow King	14	Villain	Afterimage	Unmake +14, rank 14; The Scorch Spreads: 10 + 12
Halcyon	13	Villain	Second Dawn	Dawnfire: 15 + 13; Word of the Second Dawn: 10 + 12
The Choir	12	Villain	Afterimage	The Song: 10 + 12; Many Hands +9, rank 8
The Static Saint	12	Villain	Afterimage	Crackle +12, rank 10

NAME	SCALE	ROLE	FACTION	MAIN THREATS
Breakwater	11	Villain	Halberd Dynamics (rogue)	Hydraulic Slam +9, rank 12; Shoulder Cannon +8, rank 10
Lantern	11	Villain	Second Dawn	Gilding Touch: 10 + 11; Flare Lamp +11, rank 10
Gravelmouth	10	Villain	Bayside Yards	Rockslide Punch +8, rank 12; Throw Something Big +6, rank 11
Grievance	10	Villain	The Null Society	Null Fist +11, rank 9; Dampening Field: 10 + 10
Tidebreaker	10	Villain	Bayside Yards	Riptide: 10 + 10; Breaker +10, rank 10
Cinderjack	9	Villain	Lowmarket	Firebrand +10, rank 9
Hightail Jane	9	Villain	Off-Line	Flurry +11, rank 6
Mirrorball	9	Villain	Formerly Vivid	Glitter Storm: 10 + 9; Prism Shot +10, rank 8
Wraithwire	9	Villain	Off-Line	Drone Swarm: 15 + 7; Lockdown: 10 + 9
Deputy Director Rhee	8	Villain	The Accord Bureau	Sidearm +6, rank 4
Ghostlight	8	Villain	Afterimage	Bite of Light +10, rank 8
Halberd Security Drone	6	Mook	Halberd Dynamics	Stun Prod +6, rank 5
Null Society Enforcer	6	Mook	The Null Society	Shock Baton +6, rank 5; Dampener: 10 + 5
Bayside Yards Heavy	5	Mook	Bayside Yards	Crowbar +6, rank 6
Scorch Flicker	5	Mook	Afterimage	Flicker Bite +6, rank 4
Second Dawn Acolyte	5	Mook	Second Dawn	Flare Gun +5, rank 5

VILLAINS

HALCYON

FILE

The prophet of Second Dawn: soft-spoken, luminous, absolutely certain that the next Flare will burn away everyone unworthy of it, and that she has been chosen to light it.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 13. Second Dawn.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	10 (20)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	8 (18)
DURABILITY	12
VIGOR	9
NERVE	13
INITIATIVE	+6
CANNOT BE	Dazzled

DAWNFIRE. Area: up to 6 targets in a block, no attack roll. Each resists with Durability against 15 + 13 (energy).

WORD OF THE SECOND DAWN. Perception, one target resists with Nerve against 10 + 12. Fail by 1 Step: Dazzled. 2: Entranced. 3: Compelled to serve.

BURN BRIGHT. Once a scene, she clears every Dinged and condition on herself and her allies within sight.

GRIEVANCE

FILE

Once a licensed hero, now the Null Society's militant edge. His armour is studded with stolen dampeners, and he wants every Lit in the city to know what it is to be powerless.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 10. The Null Society.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	8 (18)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	9 (19)
DURABILITY	11
VIGOR	10
NERVE	10
INITIATIVE	+4

NULL FIST. Close attack, +11 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 9, kinetic, and the target's powers cut out until the end of its next turn on a failure.

DAMPENING FIELD. Every Lit within a street resists with Nerve against 10 + 10 when they use a power; on a failure it does not work this turn.

THE STATIC SAINT

FILE

An Afterimage that walked out of the Scorch wearing the face of a girl who vanished on Flare night. It speaks in radio voices and it is looking for its family.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 12. Afterimage. Insubstantial to kinetic hits.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	11 (21)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	7 (17)
DURABILITY	10
VIGOR	12
NERVE	12
INITIATIVE	+8
CANNOT BE	Grabbed and Immobile

CRACKLE. Ranged attack, +12 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 10, energy.

FLICKER. Moves anywhere it can see as a free action, once a round. Kinetic hits pass through it unless they have Phase-Touch.

BREAKWATER

FILE

The Halberd Line's former front-liner, sealed in a powered suit the company says it never built. He is taking back what Halberd took from him, one warehouse at a time.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 11. Halberd Dynamics (rogue).
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	10 (20)
DURABILITY	12
VIGOR	12
NERVE	6
INITIATIVE	+2

HYDRAULIC SLAM. Close attack, +9 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 12, kinetic.

SHOULDER CANNON. Ranged attack, +8 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 10, kinetic.

MIRRORBALL

FILE

Vivid's brightest star until her rating crashed. Now she stages her own disasters for the stream and makes everyone see what she wants them to see.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 9. Formerly Vivid.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	10 (20)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
DURABILITY	7
VIGOR	6
NERVE	11
INITIATIVE	+7

GLITTER STORM. Perception, area: everyone in a room resists with Nerve against 10 + 9. Fail by 1 Step: Dazzled. 2: Entranced. 3: Compelled.

PRISM SHOT. Ranged attack, +10 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 8, energy.

TIDEBREAKER

FILE

Runs the powered smuggling in Bayside Yards. Moves the bay itself when the Bureau gets close: a wall of water, a whirlpool round a patrol boat.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 10. Bayside Yards.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	8 (18)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	9 (19)
DURABILITY	11
VIGOR	10
NERVE	9
INITIATIVE	+5

RIPTIDE. Ranged attack, +10 against 10 + Evade. The target resists with Evade against 10 + 10. Fail by 1 Step: Hindered and Vulnerable. 2: Immobile and Defenceless.

BREAKER. Close attack, +10 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 10, kinetic.

CINDERJACK

FILE

A Lowmarket arsonist who burns the buildings developers want and says he is saving the neighbourhood. Some of Lowmarket agrees with him.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 9. Lowmarket.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	9 (19)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	8 (18)
DURABILITY	8
VIGOR	8
NERVE	7
INITIATIVE	+6
CANNOT BE	Dazzled

FIREBRAND. Ranged attack, +10 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 9, energy.

SMOKE OUT. Fills a block with smoke: anyone in it is Dazzled until they leave it.

GHOSTLIGHT

FILE

A dog made of streetlight that hunts the Lit across the Glasswork at night. Friendly, until it is not.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 8. Afterimage.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	10 (20)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
DURABILITY	6
VIGOR	8
NERVE	8
INITIATIVE	+10
CANNOT BE	Grabbed

BITE OF LIGHT. Close attack, +10 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 8, energy.

POUNCE. Moves and attacks as one action; the target is knocked Prone on a hit.

THE CHOIR

FILE

A crowd of one person: forty identical commuters who move together and sing a song with no singers. The song is getting louder.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 12. Afterimage.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	7 (17)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	7 (17)
DURABILITY	12
VIGOR	12
NERVE	12
INITIATIVE	+3
CANNOT BE	Entranced, Compelled and Controlled

THE SONG. Perception, everyone within a block resists with Nerve against 10 + 12. Fail by 1 Step: Impaired. 2: Entranced. 3: Controlled.

MANY HANDS. Close attack, +9 against 10 + Guard, every target next to it. A hit has rank 8, kinetic.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR RHEE

FILE

The Bureau's second in command in Calder Bay, who has known about the Flare's return since 2006 and decided who gets told. Not Lit. Never alone.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 8. The Accord Bureau. A schemer, not a fighter: the danger is what she knows.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
DURABILITY	6
VIGOR	6
NERVE	10
INITIATIVE	+4

CLEARANCE. Calls in a Bureau response team: four Bureau Responders arrive in two rounds.

SIDEARM. Ranged attack, +6 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 4, kinetic.

GRAVELMOUTH

FILE

A Lit bruiser made of wet stone and bad temper, Tidebreaker's muscle. Eats concrete. Talks too much.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 10. Bayside Yards.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	4 (14)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	8 (18)
DURABILITY	12
VIGOR	13
NERVE	5
INITIATIVE	+1

ROCKSLIDE PUNCH. Close attack, +8 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 12, kinetic.

THROW SOMETHING BIG. Ranged attack, +6 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 11, kinetic.

HIGHTAIL JANE

FILE

The fastest thief in the city, and she wants you to know it. Robs sponsored-team merchandise stores for the livestream views.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 9. Off-Line.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	12 (22)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	9 (19)
DURABILITY	6
VIGOR	6
NERVE	8
INITIATIVE	+14

FLURRY. Close attack, +11 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 6, kinetic; beat the defence by 5 and the rank goes up by 2.

GONE. Moves anywhere in sight as a free action. Nothing short of Quickness keeps up.

WRAITHWIRE

FILE

A hacker who rides a swarm of stolen Halberd drones like a cloud of hornets, selling Bureau files to whoever pays.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 9. Off-Line.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	9 (19)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	5 (15)
DURABILITY	7
VIGOR	6
NERVE	10
INITIATIVE	+9

DRONE SWARM. Area: up to 6 targets in a room, no attack roll. Each resists with Durability against 15 + 7 (kinetic).

LOCKDOWN. Shuts every door, camera and phone in a building; a Tech check against 10 + 9 opens one.

LANTERN

FILE

Halcyon's lieutenant, who carries a sliver of Flare light in a glass jar and burns what it touches into gold-coloured glass.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 11. Second Dawn.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	10 (20)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	8 (18)
DURABILITY	9
VIGOR	9
NERVE	12
INITIATIVE	+7

GILDING TOUCH. Close attack, +11 against 10 + Guard. The target resists with Vigor against 10 + 11. Fail by 1 Step: Impaired. 2: Disabled. 3: turned to gold glass and Paralysed.

FLARE LAMP. Ranged attack, +11 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 10, energy.

THE HOLLOW KING

FILE

Whatever sits at the heart of the Scorch. It wears a crown of streetlights and a coat of other people's memories, and it is waking up.



TYPE	Villain, Scale 14. Afterimage.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	9 (19)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	10 (20)
DURABILITY	16
VIGOR	14
NERVE	14
INITIATIVE	+6
CANNOT BE	Entranced, Compelled, Controlled and Dazzled

UNMAKE. Ranged attack, +14 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 14, energy.

THE SCORCH SPREADS. Once a scene, reality flickers for a block around it: every hero rolls Nerve against 10 + 12 or is Dazzled, and doors open onto the wrong rooms.

HALBERD SECURITY DRONE

FILE

A knee-high armoured drone with a stun prod and a camera. Halberd rents them to anyone who pays.



TYPE	Mook, Scale 6. Halberd Dynamics.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	7 (17)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	3 (13)
DURABILITY	4
VIGOR	4
NERVE	0
INITIATIVE	+6
MOOK	Yes: Down on any failed resistance check
CANNOT BE	Entranced, Compelled and Dazzled

STUN PROD. Close attack, +6 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 5, energy.

MOOKS

Mooks are the nameless: hired heavies, believers with flare guns, rented drones, small Afterimages that come out of the Scorch in swarms. Any Mook goes Down the first time it fails a resistance check, by any number of Steps. Use them in groups, roll their Initiative once for the group, and let the heroes show off against them: an Area power or the Takedown Edge can clear a whole crowd of them in a round.

SECOND DAWN ACOLYTE

FILE

A believer with a flare gun, a robe over street clothes and nothing left to lose.



TYPE	Mook, Scale 5. Second Dawn.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	5 (15)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	5 (15)
DURABILITY	3
VIGOR	4
NERVE	6
INITIATIVE	+3
MOOK	Yes: Down on any failed resistance check

FLARE GUN. Ranged attack, +5 against 10 + Evade. A hit has rank 5, energy.

NULL SOCIETY ENFORCER

FILE

Body armour, a baton and a dampener clipped to the belt that makes the nearest Lit's power sputter.



TYPE	Mook, Scale 6. The Null Society.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	5 (15)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
DURABILITY	5
VIGOR	5
NERVE	6
INITIATIVE	+3
MOOK	Yes: Down on any failed resistance check

SHOCK BATON. Close attack, +6 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 5, kinetic.

DAMPENER. One Lit next to it resists with Nerve against 10 + 5 to use a power this turn.

BAYSIDE YARDS HEAVY

FILE

A dock worker on Tidebreaker's payroll with a crowbar, a lifter's strength and a long memory for faces.



TYPE	Mook, Scale 5. Bayside Yards.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	4 (14)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	6 (16)
DURABILITY	4
VIGOR	6
NERVE	3
INITIATIVE	+2
MOOK	Yes: Down on any failed resistance check

CROWBAR. Close attack, +6 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 6, kinetic.

SCORCH FLICKER

FILE

A small Afterimage that comes out of the Scorch in swarms: a moth made of a lamp, a cat made of a window.



TYPE	Mook, Scale 5. Afterimage.
EVADE (RANGED ATTACKS NEED)	7 (17)
GUARD (MELEE ATTACKS NEED)	4 (14)
DURABILITY	3
VIGOR	5
NERVE	5
INITIATIVE	+8
MOOK	Yes: Down on any failed resistance check
CANNOT BE	Grabbed

FLICKER BITE. Close attack, +6 against 10 + Guard. A hit has rank 4, energy.

Bureau-issue stun baton in place of the Shock Baton (the same attack) and no Dampener, unless Rhee has signed the dampeners out of the evidence store. Which, of course, she has. This is a table ruling: RollQuest does not enforce it.

BUILDING YOUR OWN

Every villain starts with what it wants. Gravelmouth wants to be paid and to hit things. The Static Saint wants its family. Grievance wants every Lit to know what it is to be powerless. Write that down first; the numbers come second.

1. **Pick a Scale.** Compare it with the heroes' Scale (see Threat, below).
2. **Set its defences** near the hero caps for that Scale: Evade + Durability and Guard + Durability about twice Scale, and Vigor + Nerve about twice Scale. Lean them the way the villain fights: a bruiser has high Durability and Guard and a poor Evade; a speedster the other way round.
3. **Give it one or two attacks.** An attack's bonus plus its rank should sit about twice Scale: "+11 against 10 + Guard, rank 9" is a Scale 10 attack. An Area or Perception attack makes no roll; give it a rank about equal to Scale, resisted against 15 + rank for a hit or 10 + rank for an affliction, with a ladder of three conditions.
4. **Give it one trick:** a once-a-scene move that changes the fight. Halcyon clears every condition on her side, Rhee calls in reinforcements, the Hollow King makes reality flicker. A villain with a trick is a story; a villain without one is a sack of numbers.
5. **Choose immunities** that fit what it is. Machines cannot be Entranced. Afterimages often cannot be Grabbed.
6. **Set Initiative:** about its Agility, high for the quick, low for the heavy.

Mooks are simpler. Give a Mook a Scale of 5 or 6, defences between 3 and 7, one attack at about +5 or +6 with a rank between 4 and 6, and mark it as a Mook.

The shipped villains are built this way, and sit at or near the hero caps for their Scale. Three go over the attack cap: Cinderjack by 1, and Ghostlight and the Bayside Yards Heavy by 2. RollQuest checks caps only in a hero's build step, so for villains they are a guide, not a rule.

Bureau Responders. Deputy Director Rhee's Clearance calls in four Bureau Responders, and there is no stat block for them. Use the Null Society Enforcer's numbers, with a

NAME	SCALE	EVADE OR GUARD + DURABILITY	VIGOR + NERVE	BEST ATTACK + RANK	SCALE X 2
Halcyon	13	22 / 20	22	no attack roll	26
Grievance	10	19 / 20	20	20	20
The Static Saint	12	21 / 17	24	22	24
Breakwater	11	18 / 22	18	21	22
Mirrorball	9	17 / 13	17	18	18
Tidebreaker	10	19 / 20	19	20	20
Cinderjack	9	17 / 16	15	19	18
Ghostlight	8	16 / 12	16	18	16
The Choir	12	19 / 19	24	17	24
Deputy Director Rhee	8	12 / 12	16	10	16
Gravelmouth	10	16 / 20	18	20	20
Hightail Jane	9	18 / 15	14	17	18
Wraithwire	9	16 / 12	16	no attack roll	18
Lantern	11	19 / 17	21	21	22
The Hollow King	14	25 / 26	28	28	28
Halberd Security Drone	6	11 / 7	4	11	12
Second Dawn Acolyte	5	8 / 8	10	10	10
Null Society Enforcer	6	10 / 11	11	11	12
Bayside Yards Heavy	5	8 / 10	9	12	10
Scorch Flicker	5	10 / 7	10	10	10

AFTERIMAGES

Afterimages are not people, and they should not fight like people.

- **They wear half-remembered shapes.** A dog made of streetlight, a crowd of one person, a choir with no singers. Describe them by what they echo, and let the heroes guess.
- **They are drawn to the Lit.** An Afterimage in a fight goes for whoever has the brightest power, not whoever hit it last.
- **They bend the rules a little.** The Static Saint is insubstantial to kinetic hits unless they have Phase-Touch. Many cannot be Grabbed, Entranced or Dazzled.
- **They do not always want to fight.** Some are frightened. Some are looking for something. Lately, some have started to talk. A hero who spends a turn listening may learn more than one who spends it hitting.

THREAT

Use the heroes' Scale as the measure.

- **A fair fight** for a team of four heroes is one villain of the heroes' Scale or up to 2 above it, with four to eight Mooks.
- **A hard fight** is two villains, or one villain 3 or 4 Scale above the heroes.
- **A Scale 14 villain against Scale 10 heroes** is a campaign finale. The heroes should need a plan, a lot of Shine, and probably the help of people who do not like them.
- **Mooks** pad a fight out and give heroes something to protect bystanders from. Two per hero is plenty.

To see how a fight will go, compare numbers. The first table gives the chance that an attack hits, by the attacker's bonus minus the defence, counting a natural 20 as a hit and a natural 1 as a miss; the second gives the chance of each outcome when a hit is resisted, by the resister's Durability (less

Dinged) minus the hit's rank.

BONUS MINUS DEFENCE	CHANCE TO HIT	BONUS MINUS DEFENCE	CHANCE TO HIT
-10	5%	+1	60%
-9	10%	+2	65%
-8	15%	+3	70%
-7	20%	+4	75%
-6	25%	+5	80%
-5	30%	+6	85%
-4	35%	+7	90%
-3	40%	+8	95%
-2	45%	+9	95%
-1	50%	+10	95%
+0	55%		

RESISTANCE MINUS RANK	NO EFFECT	DINGED	DINGED AND RATTLED	DINGED AND REELING	DOWN
-5	5%	20%	25%	25%	25%
-4	10%	20%	25%	25%	20%
-3	15%	20%	25%	25%	15%
-2	20%	20%	25%	25%	10%
-1	25%	20%	25%	25%	5%
+0	30%	20%	25%	25%	0%
+1	35%	20%	25%	20%	0%
+2	40%	20%	25%	15%	0%
+3	45%	20%	25%	10%	0%
+4	50%	20%	25%	5%	0%
+5	55%	20%	25%	0%	0%
+6	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%
+7	65%	20%	15%	0%	0%
+8	70%	20%	10%	0%	0%
+9	75%	20%	5%	0%	0%
+10	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%

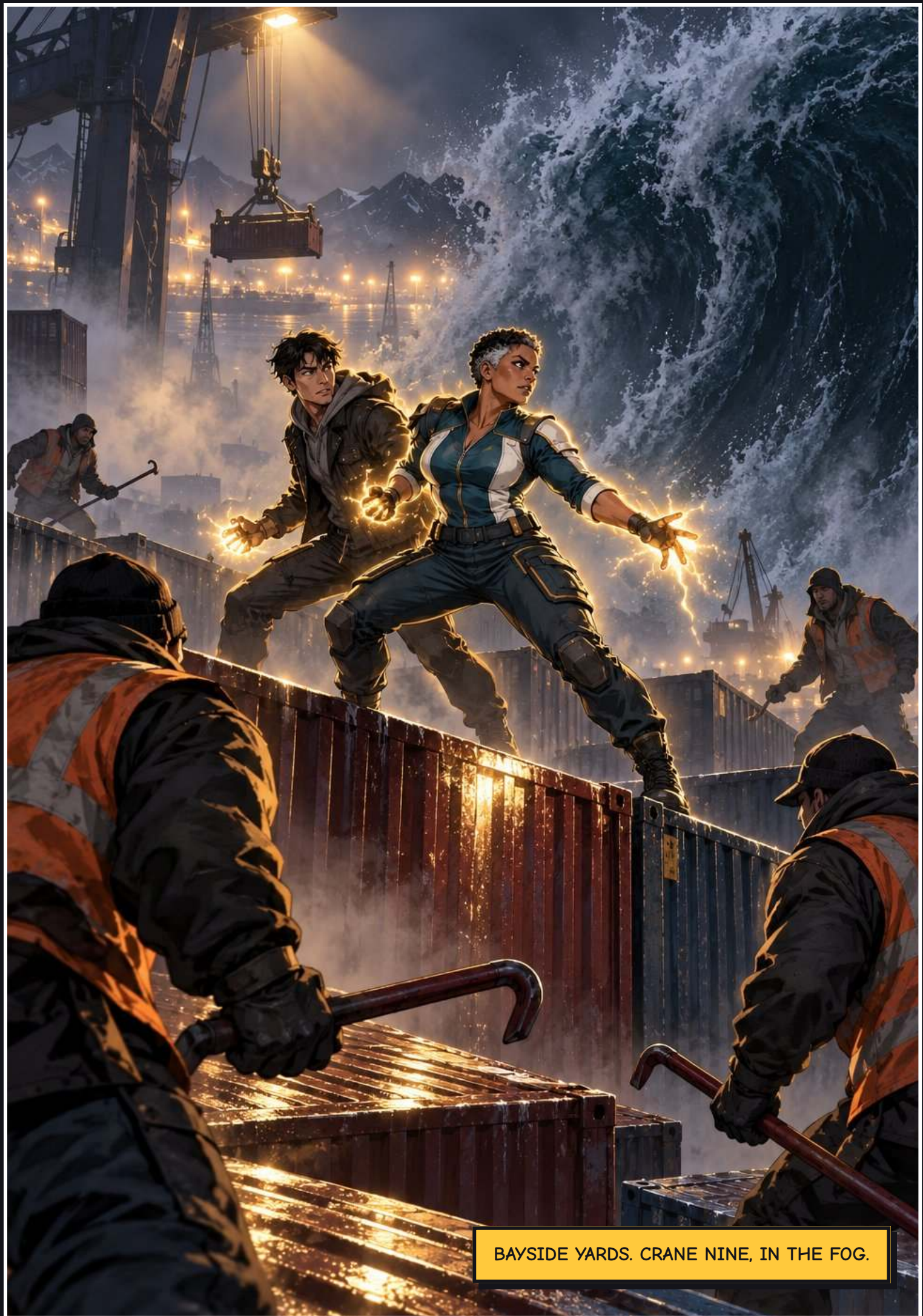
EXAMPLE

Grievance's Null Fist is +11 against 10 + Guard, rank 9. Against the Speedster archetype (Guard 14, Durability 6), the fist needs 24, so 11 must come up from 13 or higher: 40%. If it lands, the Speedster resists at 6 against rank 9, a difference of -3: only a 15% chance of shrugging it off, and a 15% chance of going straight Down. Against the Brick (Guard 6, Durability 14) the fist hits 80% of the time, but the Brick resists at +5: 55% of the time nothing happens, and he never goes Down from a single hit.

ENDING FIGHTS

Fights in Brightline end when someone gives up, not when everyone is Down.

- **Villains flee** when they are Reeling and losing. Gravelmouth goes over the side. Hightail Jane is simply Gone. A villain who gets away comes back with a grudge.
- **Villains surrender** when the cameras are on and the odds are clear. A surrendering villain on a livestream is a better ending than a beaten one.
- **Villains escalate** when they are desperate: the Choir's song gets louder, Halcyon burns brighter, the Hollow King spreads the Scorch. Use the trick.
- **Mooks scatter** when their villain falls. Nobody is paid enough for this.



BAYSIDE YARDS. CRANE NINE, IN THE FOG.

RUNNING THE GAME

This chapter is for you, the GM. You describe Calder Bay, play everyone in it who is not a hero, set the Difficulties, bring in the Twists, and decide what the cameras see. The rules chapters tell you how; this one is about why, and when.

FIVE PRINCIPLES

- **The camera is always on.** Every fight has an audience, and every choice is clipped and shared before it is finished. Ask, in every big scene, who is filming and what the clip will show.
- **Every rescue is also a story someone tells about it.** The heroes save the tram; by the evening news, the story is about the hero who swore on camera, or the sponsor's logo on the rubble, or the Off-Line hero nobody can identify. Ask who is telling the story and what they want it to mean.
- **Let heroes win, then make the win cost something public.** A rating, a sponsor, a friendship, a licence, a secret. Brightline is a hopeful game: the heroes should save people, beat villains and make the city better. The complications come after, and they come in public.
- **Bring in a Twist when it hurts most and pays best.** The hero earns Shine for it, and the story earns a scene.
- **The Lit are people first.** Villains want things. Mooks have rent to pay. Afterimages are frightened too. Nobody in Calder Bay is only their power.

SESSION STRUCTURE

Brightline plays well in episodes: one problem a session, with threads that run through a season.

1. **New Session.** Everyone's Shine goes back to 1 (plus Lucky), and every Dinged and status mark clears. Recap the last session as a news bulletin or a scroll of the hero feed: what the city thinks happened.
2. **Cold open.** Start in the middle of something: a fire, a fall, a robbery on a livestream. Give the heroes a chance to be heroes in the first ten minutes.

3. **The problem.** The cold open leads to the session's real trouble: a villain's plan, a mystery, a political mess.
4. **The Twist.** Halfway through, something makes it personal. This is a good time for a hero's Twist.
5. **The confrontation.** A fight, a rescue, a hearing, a chase: the scene the session builds to.
6. **The fallout.** The clip goes out. Ratings move. Somebody calls. End on a hook for next time.

IN ROLLQUEST

At the start of each session, every player presses **New Session** on their sheet. During a long session, a pause to regroup is **Catch Your Breath**: one Dinged off.

SETTING DIFFICULTIES

Call the Difficulty before the roll and say it out loud, unless the roll is secret. Use the ladder: 10 easy, 15 a real effort, 20 hard, 25 heroic, 30 near impossible. Most checks a hero makes should be 15 or 20; save 25 and 30 for the moments people will remember.

Read the Steps generously. One Step of success is enough; two or three earn something extra, so give it: a clue, a shortcut, a bystander saved, a better clip. One Step of failure is a near miss: offer success at a cost, or tell the player exactly what went wrong so they can try something else. Only three or four Steps of failure should make things truly worse.

Do not call for checks that cannot fail interestingly. If the story needs the heroes to find the warehouse, they find it; roll to see whether they get there before the smugglers move the crates.

SHINE AND TWISTS

Shine is the game's engine. Every hero starts a session with 1. More Shine comes from you, through Twists.

- **Bring in each hero's Twist about once a session.** Rotate them, so every player gets their moment and their Shine.
- **Hand the Shine over as the Twist arrives,** not afterwards. The hero needs it now, to deal with what you just did.
- **A Twist must make things harder.** The sister turning up to film is not a Twist until her stream is about to show the hero's face.
- **Let players offer their own Twists.** "Could my day job call right now?" is a player asking for Shine. If it makes the scene better, say yes.
- **Shine is meant to be spent.** If players are hoarding it, the game is too easy; raise a Difficulty or two. If they never have any, bring in more Twists.

CHOOSING A SCALE

- **Scale 6** is street level: Lowmarket vigilantes, smugglers in the Yards, a stolen dampener, a corrupt landlord. Heroes are vulnerable, and Mooks matter.
- **Scale 10**, the default, is a city team: villains with real power, rescues on the evening news, sponsors and hearings.
- **Scale 14** is world-shaking: the Scorch's heart, the Flare's return, things that decide the fate of the city and more.

Pick the Scale for the stories you want, and raise it as the campaign grows (see Rules of play).

RUNNING FIGHTS

- **Fights should be short:** three to five rounds. Mooks go Down fast, and villains flee or surrender when Reeling.
- **Give every fight a second goal.** Get the civilians out. Keep the crane from falling. Stop the stream before it shows the hero's face. A fight where all anyone does is hit the villain is a missed chance.
- **Use the map.** Calder Bay's places (see Art direction) are full of things to throw, hide behind, climb and fall off. Reward heroes who use them.

- **Use the bystanders.** A crowd in danger turns a fight into a rescue. A crowd filming turns it into a performance.
- **Watch the Durability ladder.** A hero carrying three Dinged is in trouble even with no other condition; a villain Reeling is one bad hit from Down. Narrate both.

THE CAMERA AND THE RATING

Brightline has no rules for a hero's public rating, on purpose: it is a story, not a number. But you should track it in your notes, roughly, and let it show.

- **After every public scene,** decide what the clip shows. A rescue that went well is a good clip. A rescue that went well but where the hero swore at a Bureau agent is a better one.
- **Let ratings move:** a sponsor's call, a fan at the noodle stall, a hate campaign, a Bureau review, an endorsement deal, a child in the hero's costume.
- **Use the Camera Ready Edge,** which adds 2 a rank to Persuasion in public and to any check about the hero's rating, when a hero has to win the crowd or survive a scandal.
- **Off-Line heroes** have no rating, but they have a face, and the cameras want it.

THE LONG MYSTERY

What follows is for the GM only.

The Flare is coming back. Twenty years on, its echoes are getting louder.

- **Powers are growing.** Quietly, a rank here and there, in heroes who have not trained for it.
- **Afterimages are more frequent** and more coherent. Some of them have started to talk, and the things they say agree with each other.
- **The Scorch is spreading.** Its edge has moved two blocks since spring. The Bureau has moved the fence at night and not told anyone.
- **The Bureau has known since 2006.** Someone inside it, Deputy Director Rhee among them, has had an answer from the start, and has been deciding who gets told.

Reveal it slowly, through scenario seeds, villains and Twists. The table should feel the ground shifting long before anyone names it. A good order:

1. **Small signs.** A hero's power gains a rank overnight. An Afterimage says a hero's name. Clocks near the Scorch fence start to agree with each other, and they are all wrong by the same amount.
2. **Pressure.** The Scorch's edge moves. Second Dawn fills a stadium. The Bureau tightens the Accords, and the Null Society gains a thousand members in a week.

3. **The leak.** A file, a whistle-blower, an Afterimage that remembers 2006: proof that the Bureau knew.
4. **Gold Night.** Second Dawn's barge, the spot on the bay where the Flare burned gold, and whatever wakes at the heart of the Scorch.

Never say exactly what the Flare was. Each of the four theories should stay possible until your table decides which one it believes.

FACTIONS AT A GLANCE

FACTION	WANTS	DOES NEXT	FACE
The Accord Bureau	Control, and the secret kept	Moves the Scorch fence at night; audits a hero	Deputy Director Rhee
Halberd Dynamics	Contracts, and its suits back	Rents drones to whoever pays; buries a test	The Halberd Line
Vivid	Ratings, and to stay on top	Stages a rescue too perfect to be true	Its brightest stars
The Free Clinic	Its people safe	Hides an Off-Line Lit the Bureau wants	Its healers
Second Dawn	The next Flare, lit by hand	Builds on a barge over the gold spot	Halcyon and Lantern
The Null Society	A world without powers	Uses dampeners on heroes mid-rescue	Grievance
Afterimages	Something they cannot say	Walk out of the Scorch, drawn to the Lit	The Static Saint, the Choir

PLOT HOOKS

1. **Staged.** A Vivid rescue goes viral: a burning tram, a hero catching it one-handed. One of the heroes realizes that the tram was set on fire on purpose, and that the arsonist was on the payroll.
2. **Line 4.** An Afterimage is loose in the Line 4 subway under the Glasswork. It looks like a commuter, it repeats one sentence, and every train it boards loses ten minutes. (See the starter scenario below.)
3. **Charter Hearing.** A licensed hero saved forty people by breaking three laws and the Scorch quarantine. The Bureau hearing is livestreamed. The heroes can testify, protest, dig up the evidence the Bureau is hiding, or break the hero out.
4. **Null Hours.** Someone is using Null Society dampeners on licensed heroes mid-rescue. The Society swears it is not them. (One answer: Halberd, field-testing a product.)
5. **Gold Night.** Second Dawn has found the exact spot on the bay where the Flare burned gold, and is building something on a barge above it.
6. **The Saint's Family.** The Static Saint walks out of the Scorch wearing the face of a girl who vanished on Flare night. Her mother is now a city councillor running on an anti-Lit ticket, and the Saint is walking towards her house.
7. **Merch Run.** Hightail Jane robs Vivid's flagship store live on her own stream. Among the stolen stock is a box that is not merchandise: a Halberd prototype, and Halberd wants it back before anyone opens it.
8. **Cinder Season.** Cinderjack burns a Lowmarket building a developer wanted. Inside were the Free Clinic's patient records. Somebody paid him to burn that building in particular.
9. **The List.** Wraithwire is auctioning a Bureau file listing every Off-Line Lit in Lowmarket, with addresses. The heroes can steal it back, publish it, or burn it, and every choice has people who will never forgive them.
10. **Sealed.** Breakwater raids a Halberd warehouse. Inside is another powered suit, sealed, with someone still
 - alive in it.
11. **The Song Gets Louder.** The Choir appears in the Glasswork plaza on Flare Night, in front of a hundred

- thousand people and every camera in the city.

12. **Deep Water.** Tidebreaker sinks a Bureau patrol boat. The agents on board survive; the crate they were

- bringing out of the Scorch did not, and now something is loose in the bay.

STARTER SCENARIO: TEN MINUTES LATE

A one-session scenario for three to five heroes at Scale 10 (the archetypes are ideal). It uses the Line 4 platform under the Glasswork (see Art direction: Glasswork Station).

THE SITUATION

For a week, every Line 4 train has lost ten minutes between Glasswork Central and Harbour Street. Commuters swear that a man in a grey coat boards each one, sits by the doors, and says the same sentence: "I'm going to be late for her." Nobody sees him get off.

He is an Afterimage: the echo of a man who was on a Line 4 train at 21:14 on Flare night, on his way to meet his wife. He never arrived. His wife, Mrs Adaeze Nwosu, now in her seventies, still rides Line 4 every evening and gets off at Harbour Street at 21:14.

Today the delay is an hour, a train is stuck in the tunnel with three hundred passengers aboard, and the Bureau wants it quiet before the evening news.

SCENE 1: THE PLATFORM

The heroes arrive at Glasswork Station to a packed platform, a stalled train's lights in the tunnel mouth, and Bureau Agent Tomas Varga, who is out of his depth and knows it. A livestreamer with a selfie stick is already broadcasting.

- Clearing the platform: Persuasion against 15, or 20 if the heroes ask people to leave without explaining why.
- The station clocks disagree by up to an hour (Notice against 15 spots it; 2 Steps notices they are drifting further apart).
- The station's camera footage (Tech or Sleuthing against 20) shows the grey-coated man on seven trains this week, and never leaving any of them.
- Bring in a Twist here: a sponsor wants a hero to wear the logo on camera; a family member is on the stuck train.

SCENE 2: THE TUNNEL

The stalled train is two hundred metres down the tunnel, with its lights flickering. Three hundred passengers need to get out, along a narrow walkway, past a live rail.

- Treat it as a rescue: get the doors open (Might or Tech against 20), calm the carriages (Persuasion against 15), lead people along the walkway (Athletics or a power against 15, one check per carriage). Each Step of failure costs time, and something gets worse: the lights go out, someone falls towards the rail, the stream catches a hero's face.
- Halfway through, the walls ripple, and **Scorch Flickers** come out of the dark: two for each hero, drawn to the heroes' powers. They are Mooks; the fight is quick, and the real danger is the passengers around it.

SCENE 3: THE LATE MAN

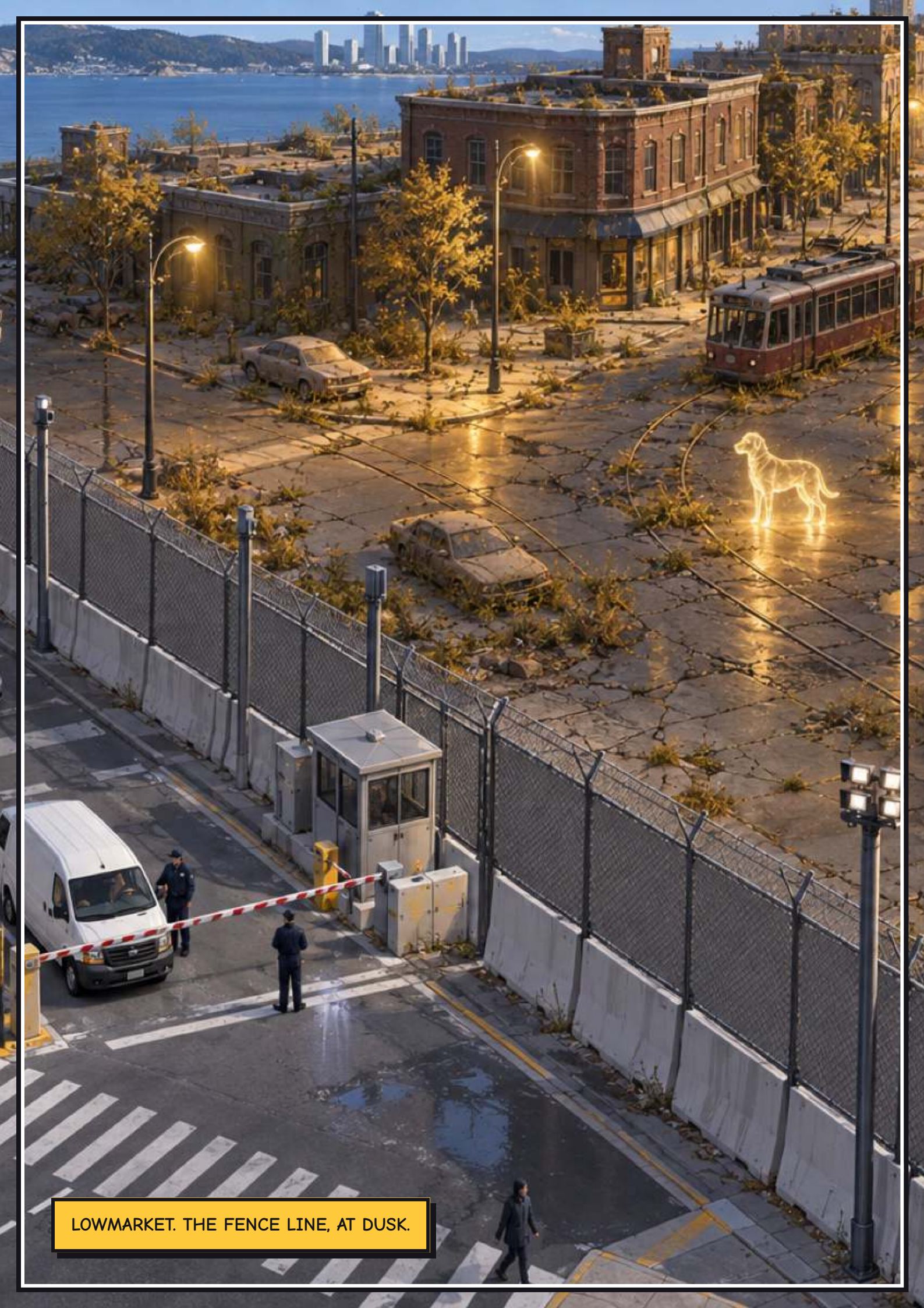
In the last carriage, by the doors, sits the man in the grey coat. He looks up and says, "I'm going to be late for her."

- **Fighting him** makes it worse. Every round of violence, time slips: everyone in the carriage loses track and is Dazzled. If the heroes insist, use Ghostlight's numbers for him, with one action in place of its two: **Lost Time** (Perception: everyone in the carriage resists with Nerve against 10 + 8; fail by 1 Step: Dazzled, 2: Entranced, 3: Compelled to sit down and wait).
- **Talking to him** works. Read against 15 tells the heroes he is not hostile, only lost. Persuasion against 20, or any power that lets a hero understand him (Comprehend, Mind Read, Mind Link), learns his story: the train, his wife, the sky going white.
- **The answer** is Mrs Nwosu. If the heroes find her (Sleuthing against 15, or the footage from Scene 1) and bring her, or bring him to Harbour Street at 21:14, he finally arrives. The Afterimage fades, the clocks agree again, and the trains run on time.

SCENE 4: FALLOUT

- The livestreamer's clip of a hero holding an old woman's hand while a ghost says goodbye is watched four million times by midnight.
- Agent Varga's report says the Afterimage was "contained". Deputy Director Rhee calls the heroes personally to thank them, and asks a lot of questions about what the man said.

- Just before he faded, the man said one more thing, to whichever hero was closest: "It's coming back. She told me. The girl in the static." (The Static Saint is next; see plot hook 6.)



LOWMARKET. THE FENCE LINE, AT DUSK.

ART DIRECTION

This appendix is a brief for the people who draw Brightline: battle maps, tokens, portraits and scenes. It sets out the look of Calder Bay, eight places worth a battle map with their layouts, and the rules for colour, light, materials, weather and characters.

THE LOOK IN ONE PARAGRAPH

Calder Bay is a real-feeling modern northern city seen in cold light: wet asphalt, grey water, mirrored glass, old brick, steel and concrete, under low cloud and drifting fog. Against that cool, desaturated world, light is warm and specific: a streetlight's cream pool, a kitchen window, a floodlight on a crane, a ring light in a studio. The Flare's colour is gold, and gold belongs to the heroes and to the Flare itself. The Scorch and the Afterimages are the only cold, unnatural colour in the city: a pale lilac static. A Brightline battle map looks like a still from a news drone hovering over the scene: top-down, crisp, slightly high-contrast, with the heroes the brightest things in it.

MAP CONVENTIONS

- **Grid:** 5-foot (1.5 m) squares. The sizes below are in squares.
- **Viewpoint:** straight down, as from a hovering drone. Roofs of buildings the heroes are not inside are drawn as roofs: tar, gravel, vents, water tanks, so that rooftop fights work on the same map.
- **Elevation:** mark raised areas with a clear edge shadow, and note the height in squares where it matters (a container stack 2 high, a gallery 2 up). One storey is about 2 squares.
- **Cover:** draw things that give cover with a solid top-down shape and a cast shadow so players can read them: cars, pillars, stalls, containers, crates. Low objects (benches, bonnets) read as partial cover; tall ones (pillars, container ends) as heavy or full (the cover values are a table ruling in Rules of play).

- **Light:** paint light sources as pools on the ground, with their source visible (a lamp head, a floodlight, a window). The pools are where the action is; the dark between them is where things hide.

EIGHT PLACES

1. THE SPIRE ROOF

What it is. The roof of Halberd Dynamics' tower, the tallest in the Glasswork: a landing pad for the Halberd Line's heroes and the company's drones, forty storeys above the plaza. Heroes end up here chasing a thief who came down by rope, stopping a raid on a courier landing, or meeting someone who does not want to be seen at street level.

Layout: 24 x 24 squares.

- **Landing pad:** a circle 10 squares across, in the centre and east of the roof, painted with a cream ring and slate chevrons. No cover.
- **Lift and stair housing:** a 4 x 6 block on the west side, with one door on its south face to the stairs. Full cover. Its roof is 2 squares up, reached by a ladder on the north face.
- **Air-handling units:** four boxes, each 2 x 3, along the north edge. Waist-high: partial cover. Each has a fan grille on top.
- **Antenna mast:** a 2 x 2 lattice base in the north-east corner, climbable to 12 squares, with blinking aircraft lights.
- **Glass parapet:** a chest-high glass wall round the whole edge, 1 square deep. It gives no cover from shots (it is transparent) but stops someone being shoved off, until it breaks.

- **Window-cleaning cradle:** a 1 x 6 platform hanging over the south edge on a rail, which can be raised and lowered down the tower's face.
- **Sky bridge:** a glass tube 2 squares wide leaving the west edge towards the neighbouring tower, with sliding doors at the roof end.
- **Fuel point:** a pump and hose on the pad's south side.
- **Entrances:** the stair door, the sky bridge, the sky itself.

Hazards. The edge (a forty-storey fall); gusts (on the edge, the GM can call an Athletics check to stay standing); rotor wash from anything landing, which leaves everyone within 3 squares of the pad Hindered; the fuel point, which burns if an Energy hit strikes it.

Light. By day, hard white light and glare off every glass surface; shadows short and sharp. By night, four floodlights at the pad's corners make one bright cream disc in the dark, the mast blinks, and the whole map is underlit by the city's glow from below.

Signature props. Drone charging racks with six Halberd drones docked, a wind sock, maintenance crates, a rooftop camera turret, the Halberd logo stencilled on the pad.

Variants. Day, with glare. Night. Storm, with rain lashing sideways and lightning striking the mast. Flare Night, with gold fireworks bursting overhead and lighting the roof in flashes.

Encounters.

- Breakwater comes for a Halberd courier as its tilt-rotor lands, and the courier's case holds something the company built and denies.
- Wraithwire hijacks the docked drones: six Halberd Security Drones, all at once, on a roof with a forty-storey edge.
- A Halberd Line rival challenges a hero to a rooftop "sparring match" on a livestream, and means it.

2. GLASSWORK STATION, LINE 4

What it is. The busiest subway platform in the city, under the Glasswork's towers: an island platform between two tracks, with tunnels at each end. Heroes end up here when something stops the trains, when a thief runs for the tunnels, or when an Afterimage starts riding Line 4.

Layout: 40 x 14 squares.

- **Island platform:** 6 squares wide and 34 long, through the middle of the map.

- **Stairs:** 4 squares wide, rising from the centre of the platform to the ticket hall (off the map); a pair of escalators, each 2 squares wide, at the west end. One escalator is stopped.
- **Tracks:** 3 squares wide on each side of the platform, 1 square below platform level. On the far side of each track runs the live rail.
- **Tunnels:** both ends of both tracks run into dark tunnel mouths, 4 squares wide.
- **Pillars:** two rows of 1 x 1 pillars, every 6 squares down the platform's edges. Partial cover; full cover against one attacker standing directly opposite.
- **Kiosk:** a 2 x 3 coffee and newspaper kiosk at the east end. Benches (1 x 3) between the pillars.
- **A stalled train** on the north track: 30 squares long and 2 wide, doors every 4 squares, its interior a corridor of seats and poles (partial cover).
- **Maintenance walkway:** 1 square wide along each tunnel wall, 1 square above the track.
- **Entrances:** the stairs, the escalators, the two tunnels.

Hazards. The live rail (touching it is an Energy hit); a train arriving (a Kinetic hit for anyone on the track, and a wall of noise); the platform edge (Prone and on the track).

Light. A line of cream strip lights down the middle of the platform ceiling, departure screens in cream on slate, tunnels black. A train in a tunnel mouth throws two hard cones of headlight. When the power fails, only vermilion emergency lights remain, one every 6 squares.

Signature props. Departure boards whose clocks disagree, a Vivid poster thirty feet long, a Halberd security drone dock, a fire-hose cabinet, a dropped coffee, a man in a grey coat on a bench.

Variants. Rush hour, with a bystander on nearly every square of the platform. Late night, empty, with one strip light flickering. Power cut. A train arriving, which moves along the track 10 squares a round.

Encounters.

- The starter scenario, Ten Minutes Late (see Running the game).
- Scorch Flickers pour out of the east tunnel, drawn to a hero's power, among the rush-hour crowd.
- Hightail Jane runs for the tunnels with a bag of stolen merchandise, and a train is due in two rounds.

3. LOWMARKET: TANNERS ROW

What it is. A street in the old market district: brick terraces with shops below and flats above, fire escapes, a tram line down the middle, market stalls on the pavement. This is where street-level heroes live and work, and where every fight has a hundred witnesses who know the hero's mother.

Layout: 36 x 24 squares.

- **The street** runs east to west across the middle: 8 squares wide, with two lanes and a tram track down the centre.
- **Pavements:** 3 squares wide on each side.
- **North side:** a three-storey brick terrace. At street level, from west to east: a laundromat (6 x 8 inside, with a long front window), a noodle bar and night kitchen (6 x 8, its kitchen at the back with gas burners), a pawn shop (4 x 8), and a corner store (6 x 6) on the north-east corner.
- **Fire escapes:** zig-zag iron stairs up the north terrace's front, with landings (1 x 2) at 2, 4 and 6 squares up. The roofs are 8 squares up, with water tanks, washing lines and a pigeon loft.
- **South side:** a row of eight market stalls (1 x 2 each) along the pavement; a closed-down cinema with a marquee awning 2 squares deep (climbable); a 2-square-wide alley running south off the map.
- **Parked cars:** four, 2 x 4 each, along the kerbs. Heavy cover, and throwable.
- **Street furniture:** a bus shelter (glass), a fire hydrant, a manhole in the middle of the road, an overhead tram wire.
- **Entrances:** both ends of the street, the alley, every shop door, every fire escape, every roof.

Hazards. Gas in the night kitchen; fire; the overhead tram wire (an Energy hit for a flyer who meets it); the crowd.

Light. Cream streetlights every 8 squares on each side; shop signs in gold and vermilion neon; steam from the kitchen lit from inside. At night, pools of light with real dark between them; the alley is black.

Signature props. Hand-painted shop signs, a noodle stall's red lanterns, laundry bags, crates of fruit, a stack of Off-Line flyers, a mural of the gold Flare sky on the cinema's side wall, a tram stopped at the east end.

Variants. Market day, with every stall busy and the street full. Night, half the stalls shuttered. Rain, with neon reflected in every puddle. Fire: smoke fills the squares

around a burning building, and anyone inside the smoke is Dazzled.

Encounters.

- Cinderjack sets the old cinema alight, with someone sleeping in the projection room.
- Null Society Enforcers come for an Off-Line Lit who works in the laundromat, and half the street comes out to stop them.
- A chase: Hightail Jane, or a Second Dawn Acolyte with a flare gun, runs the length of the street and up the fire escapes.

4. THE LOWMARKET FREE CLINIC

What it is. An old public bathhouse, now Off-Line mutual aid: a clinic, a food bank, a legal desk and a safe house. Heroes come here to be patched up without questions, to hide someone, or to protect it when the Bureau finally finds an excuse.

Layout: 30 x 22 squares (interior).

- **Entrance hall (south):** 8 x 6, with the old ticket booth turned reception, and double doors to the street.
- **Pool hall (centre):** 18 x 12. The drained swimming pool, 12 x 6, is 2 squares deep, with tiled steps at the shallow end; it is full of cots. A gallery 2 squares wide runs round three sides, 2 squares up, with stairs at each end.
- **Skylight:** a long glass roof over the pool.
- **Changing cubicles (west):** a corridor 2 squares wide, lined with 1 x 1 cubicles now used as consulting rooms. Full cover, and plenty of it.
- **Kitchen and food bank (east):** 6 x 8, shelves of tins, a serving hatch.
- **Boiler room (north-east):** 6 x 6, with pipes and an old boiler, a back door to the alley, and a floor hatch down to the safe house.
- **Entrances:** the front doors, the alley door, the skylight, the hatch.

Hazards. Patients who cannot move; the pool's 2-square drop; scalding steam from the boiler if a pipe is hit (an Energy hit for anyone in the next square); the skylight (glass, and a fall into the pool).

Light. By day, grey-cream light down through the skylight onto the cots; warm lamps beside the beds; fairy lights strung along the gallery rail. By night, low lamplight, and the old tiles glow faintly green-grey.

Signature props. Mismatched cots and donated arm-chairs, IV stands, a lost-property box, hand-lettered signs, a wall of photographs of everyone the Clinic has helped, and a mural of the gold Flare sky painted across the deep end.

Variants. A quiet afternoon. A raid, with Bureau vans outside and dampeners at the door. Night, with something standing in the drained pool that was not there before.

Encounters.

- Deputy Director Rhee's Bureau Responders raid the Clinic with a warrant and a list of names, and the cameras are outside.
- A Second Dawn recruiter is quietly talking patients into leaving with him.
- The Static Saint walks in through the wall and stands beside one patient's bed, saying a name.

5. BAYSIDE YARDS: THE STACKS AND CRANE NINE

What it is. The container port at night: stacks of steel boxes in long canyons, a rail-mounted gantry crane over the quay, floodlight towers, fog. Heroes come here after smugglers, stolen Flare-touched cargo, or a Bayside Yards villain who thinks nobody will call the Bureau.

Layout: 40 x 30 squares.

- **Quay (north):** a concrete edge 2 squares wide with bollards every 6 squares; beyond it, the deep water of the bay. A barge is moored along it.
- **Crane nine:** a gantry crane on rails parallel to the quay, its four legs 2 x 2 each, spanning 10 squares. The cab is 8 squares up, reached by ladders inside two legs; the boom reaches out over the water.
- **Container stacks:** the middle of the map is a grid of stacks. Each container is 2 x 8 squares; stacks are 1, 2 or 3 containers high (2, 4 or 6 squares). The aisles between them are 2 squares wide. A straddle carrier (2 x 4) is parked in one aisle.
- **Reefer row (east):** refrigerated containers in a line, with humming units and thick power cables.
- **Rail spur (south):** two tracks with flatcars (2 x 10) waiting.
- **Floodlight towers:** two, 1 x 1, with lights 10 squares up.
- **Site office:** a 4 x 6 portable cabin by the gate in the south-west corner. A chain-link fence runs along the south edge.
- **Tidal flats (west):** at low tide, the western strip of the map is mud: everyone on it is Hindered.
- **Entrances:** the gate, the quay, the rail spur, the tops of the stacks.

Hazards. Falling from a stack or the crane; the bay (cold, deep water); reefer power cables (an Energy hit); oil drums, some full (fire); a container swinging from the crane.

Light. At night, the floodlights make hard cream pools on the open ground and leave the aisles between stacks in deep shadow. After ten, fog rolls in: past 6 squares, everyone is in partial cover; in thick fog, heavy cover. By day, flat grey light and long reflections in puddles.

Signature props. Containers in faded, desaturated colours (rust, slate-blue, dull green-grey), lashing bars, forklifts, pallets, oil drums, coils of mooring rope, a tea urn in the site office, the crane's cab with its own small light high above.

Variants. The day shift, with workers and machines everywhere. Night, with floodlights and fog. Storm, with rain and the crane swaying. Low tide, with the flats exposed and something half-buried in the mud.

Encounters.

- The worked fight in Rules of play: Gravelmouth and two Heavies on a rammed barge.
- Tidebreaker moves a crate of Flare-touched objects off a ship, and pulls a wall of water over the quay when the heroes arrive.
- Halberd Security Drones guard one container that is not on any manifest.

6. THE SCORCH FENCE: CHECKPOINT NORTH-7

What it is. One gate in the quarantine ring round the Scorch, on the north shore: a Bureau checkpoint, a double fence, and on the far side, a street that is wrong. Heroes come here when Afterimages walk out, when someone sneaks in after a missing relative, or when the edge of the Scorch moves.

Layout: 36 x 24 squares.

- **The fence** runs north to south down the middle of the map: two chain-link fences with razor wire, 2 squares apart, with sensor posts every 4 squares.
- **The checkpoint:** a gate 2 squares wide through both fences, a Bureau booth (2 x 3), barrier arms, a floodlight on a pole, and a parked Bureau van (2 x 4).

- **Outside (west):** an ordinary north-shore street, half-abandoned. Boarded-up houses (4 x 6 footprints) with small front gardens, a bus shelter, a corner shop with its shutter down.
- **Inside (east):** the same street, continued, and wrong. The streetlights are lit in daylight. A clock tower on the corner shows a different time on each of its four faces. Squares of perfect lawn grow up through the road. One front door stands on its own in a garden, with no house behind it.
- **Static zones:** three patches, each 3 x 3 squares, where the air flickers pale lilac. Anyone who ends a turn in one makes a Nerve check against a Difficulty the GM sets, or is Dazzled.
- **The lone door:** stepping through it puts you somewhere else: elsewhere on the map, elsewhere in the city, or somewhere the GM has not decided yet.
- **Entrances:** the gate, any gap a hero makes in the fence, the lone door.

Hazards. Razor wire (Hindered while crossing); the static zones; the lone door; Bureau sensors that bring a patrol in two rounds.

Light. By day, flat grey overcast on the west side and burning streetlights on the east. By night, the west side is dark except for the checkpoint floodlight and the fence's sensor lights; the east side is lit by impossible sources, windows glowing in empty houses and the lilac shimmer of the static zones.

Signature props. Bureau warning signs (slate and cream, with vermilion borders), a scavenger's abandoned backpack, a child's bicycle from 2006 with its tyres still pumped, a newspaper dated 15 October 2006 lying crisp and new in the road.

Variants. Day. Night. Flicker: on the east side, the layout changes a little at the start of each round (a house is a different colour, the lone door has moved, a static zone has crept closer to the fence).

Encounters.

- A swarm of Scorch Flickers comes through the fence while Ghostlight paces the street beyond it.
- Scavengers with a Flare-touched object try to get out past a Bureau patrol, and the heroes have to choose a side.
- The Static Saint stands at the fence, looking through it, asking for its family by name.

7. VIVID'S CATHEDRAL STUDIO

What it is. A converted cathedral at the edge of the Glasswork, now the loft studio of Vivid, the city's most popular hero collective: stage, cameras, merch store and dormitory under one vaulted roof. Heroes come here for a live show, a sponsor's party, an interview, or to find out how the perfect rescues are being made.

Layout: 30 x 40 squares (portrait).

- **The nave:** 12 squares wide and 28 long, north to south, with the old pews moved into tiered bleachers along both sides (partial cover; audience seating).
- **Aisles:** 3 squares wide outside two rows of pillars (1 x 1, every 4 squares; partial cover).
- **The crossing (north):** under the dome, a stage 8 x 8 with ring lights, camera rigs on dollies, a camera crane and an LED wall behind.
- **Transepts:** to the east, a green-screen studio (8 x 8); to the west, wardrobe and a merch store (8 x 8).
- **Choir loft:** over the south entrance, 12 x 4, 4 squares up, with stairs at each side; the great rose window above it.
- **Bell tower:** 4 x 4 in the south-west corner, with a ladder up to an old bell.
- **Crypt:** stairs beside the stage lead down to the editing suite (a separate 12 x 12 map if needed).
- **Entrances:** the great south doors, a side door in each transept, the stairs to the crypt, the rose window (from outside, at height).

Hazards. Cables taped across the floor (running across them in a hurry can leave you Prone); the camera crane's swinging arm; the rose window, which shatters into a rain of coloured glass; a confetti cannon pointed the wrong way.

Light. By day, the rose window throws pools of coloured light (gold, cream and lilac panes) down the nave. On the stage, hot white studio light at all hours. At night, the LED wall glows, ring lights make bright circles, and the audience is a sea of phone screens.

Signature props. Camera dollies, merch racks, a branded hero mannequin, a pile of foam "rubble" ready for staged rescues, a wall of screens showing the live chat, Vivid's logo projected on the old altar.

Variants. A live show, with a full audience. After hours, with

the cameras off and a few lights on. A rescue being staged, with the props out and the crew sworn to silence.

Encounters.

- **Mirrorball** crashes Vivid's live show to take back the audience she lost, and makes everyone see what she wants.
- **Wraithwire** hijacks the broadcast and starts reading Bureau files to a million viewers.
- The heroes find the staging props for the burning-tram rescue (see Staged, in Running the game) while Vivid's security finds the heroes.

8. GOLD NIGHT: THE SECOND DAWN BARGE

What it is. A work barge anchored over the spot on the bay where the Flare burned gold, with a scaffold tower in the middle and, at its top, something built of mirrors and gold glass. This is the finale of a campaign, or of the long mystery's first season.

Layout: 48 x 24 squares, the barge in the middle of open water.

- **The barge:** a flat deck 40 x 12, 2 squares above the water.
- **Deckhouse (stern, west):** 6 x 6, two storeys (its roof 4 squares up), with the wheelhouse on top.
- **Deck crane (bow, east):** a 2 x 2 base with a boom that swings across the deck.
- **The scaffold:** an 8 x 8 tower in the middle of the deck, with three levels, each 3 squares above the last, joined by ladders.
- **The Lens:** at the top of the scaffold, a ring of gold glass and mirrors 4 squares across, humming, with light gathering at its centre.

- **Cargo:** crates of mirrors and gold glass (fragile cover), coils of cable, two generators (2 x 2).
- **The tug:** 6 x 14, alongside the barge's south side, lashed to it.
- **Water:** all around. Bureau patrol boats (2 x 6) can arrive from any edge.
- **Entrances:** the water, the tug, the air.

Hazards. Falling into the bay (cold, deep, and warm in one place, which is worse); the generators (an Energy hit); the crane's boom; the Lens, which the GM decides the cost of touching.

Light. At first, cream work lights and Second Dawn's gold lanterns along the rails, with the city's skyline across the water. As the ritual grows, the Lens throws gold light further across the map each round, until the whole barge is lit gold and the water below glows gold too. Lilac flickers at the deck's edges where Afterimages are pulled in. On Flare Night, fireworks burst over the city behind.

Signature props. Second Dawn's lanterns and robes, hymn sheets in waterproof sleeves, a laptop wired to the Lens, a hand-painted banner reading "The worthy will rise", a jar of Flare light on a crate.

Variants. Before the ritual: a building site, with acolytes working. Gold Night: the ritual running. After: the barge listing and sinking, the Lens cracked, the water boiling gold.

Encounters.

- Halcyon and Lantern hold the Lens while Second Dawn Acolytes hold the deck.
- Tidebreaker, hired to protect the barge, turns the bay against anyone who approaches.
- Whatever sits at the heart of the Scorch answers the Lens: the Hollow King walks across the water.

PALETTE

COLOUR	HEX	WHAT IT IS FOR
Harbour Slate	#34404C	Ground: wet asphalt, tar roofs, the bay at night, shadows
Fog Concrete	#9AA5AD	Structure: concrete, steel, mirrored glass in overcast light, containers
Lowmarket Brick	#8C4B36	Structure, old city: brick, rust, warehouse doors, market awnings
Flare Gold	#F0B23E	Accent: the Flare, heroes' signature light, Second Dawn, lanterns
Lamp Cream	#FFEFCF	Light: streetlights, floodlights, strip lights, screens, the Charter line
Static Lilac	#B49AF0	Danger, strange: the Scorch, Afterimages, reality flickering

COLOUR

HEX

WHAT IT IS FOR

Hazard Vermilion

#E2492F

Danger, physical: fire, alarms, warning paint, emergency lights, dampeners

- Keep the slate, concrete and brick at low saturation, and let them take up most of every map.
- Gold and lilac are precious: use them only where the story is (a hero, the Flare, the Scorch).
- Lamp Cream is the colour of ordinary light. Most of a map's light should be cream, not white and not yellow.
- Vermilion is for danger the eye should catch at once: fire, alarms, the glow of a Null Society dampener.

MATERIALS AND TEXTURES

- **Wet asphalt and concrete** with puddles that reflect the light sources. Calder Bay is almost always a little wet.
- **Mirrored glass** in the Glasswork: draw it as flat panels reflecting a slightly lighter sky and a distorted slice of the neighbouring building.
- **Old brick** in Lowmarket: running bond, darkened at the base by rain, with painted signs fading on gable ends.
- **Corrugated steel** on containers and warehouses, faded and patched, with stencilled numbers.
- **Ceramic tile** in the Clinic and the subway: small square tiles, chipped, grout lines catching dirt.
- **Brushed steel and matte composite** on Halberd's tower and drones: clean, expensive, slightly cold.
- **Gold glass** for anything Flare-touched: translucent, faintly glowing, with light trapped inside.
- **Static**, in the Scorch: not a texture so much as a disturbance, a fine lilac shimmer, slightly offset copies of edges, as if the picture had been printed twice.

LIGHTING

- **Warm lights in a cold world.** The ambient light is cool grey-blue; every light source is warm cream or gold. That contrast is the Brightline look.
- **Light pools are play areas.** Put the action where the light is. Players should be able to see at a glance where a hero standing in the light can be seen from the dark.
- **Screens are light sources.** Phones held up in a crowd, departure boards, an LED wall: they glow cream and cast small pools.
- **Gold means the Flare or a hero.** A hero's power can glow gold on the map; nothing else ordinary should.

- **Lilac means wrong.** The Scorch's light comes from no source, falls in the wrong direction, and does not cast shadows properly.
- **Emergency light is vermilion.** When the power fails, the map should look like a different place.

WEATHER AND ATMOSPHERE

- **Fog** off the tidal flats, most nights after ten in the Yards and on the north shore. Paint it as a soft veil that eats light pools at their edges.
- **Drizzle** more often than rain: a sheen on everything, haloes round lamps.
- **Low northern sun:** in daytime scenes, long shadows and glare off glass, even at noon in winter.
- **Wind at height:** on roofs and cranes, show it in flags, washing lines and loose plastic.
- **Snow** in deep winter: slush in the gutters, clean snow on roofs, footprints that tell a story.
- **Flare Night**, 14 October: gold lanterns in every window, fireworks overhead, crowds in the streets, and every hero on call.

TOKENS AND CHARACTERS

Every token is a top-down view of a figure inside a coloured ring. The ring tells the table who is who at a glance; the figure tells them what kind of person it is.

KIND	RING	SILHOUETTE	CLOTHING AND GEAR
Hero	Flare Gold	Upright, readable, one clear shape that says the power	Practical modern kit: jackets, work gear, sports fabric, team kit with sponsor panels; one gold element
Charter hero	Flare Gold, with a short Lamp Cream bar across the top	As a hero	The Charter shoulder badge: a single horizontal bright line
Commoner	Fog Concrete	Ordinary bodies, everyday poses: holding phones, carrying bags	Coats, uniforms, hoods, hi-vis vests, aprons
Mook	Harbour Slate, a little thinner	Repeated, near-identical shapes	Matching gear: armour and batons, robes over street clothes, drone shells
Villain	Hazard Vermilion	Distinct and bigger in presence than a Mook, a shape you remember	A signature look tied to its faction
Afterimage	Static Lilac	Half-remembered: an animal, a person, a crowd, slightly doubled at the edges	Light where there should be fabric, no faces or too many

- **Heroes** look like people who chose to wear something for a job. A crane operator in scrap plating and a hi-vis vest; a courier in a padded jacket with plates sewn in; a sponsored team member in a fitted suit with a sponsor's panel on one shoulder. Masks are common but not universal. Show the power: gold light at the hands, a blur behind a speedster, metal floating near a mover.
- **Commoners** should outnumber everyone, and most of them are holding a phone up. Dock workers in hi-vis, commuters in long coats, kitchen staff in aprons, Bureau agents in slate jackets with cream lettering.
- **Factions** each have one strong visual: the Null Society in matte grey armour with small vermillion dampener lights; Second Dawn in pale robes over street clothes, gold sashes, flare guns; Halberd in gunmetal and composite, with cold white sensor lenses; Vivid in bright, clean, camera-friendly colour; the Bureau in slate and cream.
- **Afterimages** are drawn with light as their material: a dog made of a streetlight's glow, forty identical commuters overlapping, a girl whose outline repeats a little to one side. Keep them translucent on the map, so the ground shows through.
- **Size:** most figures fill one square. Grown heroes and the biggest villains (Gravelmouth, Breakwater in his suit) fill 2 x 2. The Choir is one token per square it fills. Mooks are drawn a little smaller inside their square than heroes, so heroes read as more present.

WHAT TO AVOID

- **Printed-comic tricks:** halftone dots, panel borders, speech balloons, sound-effect lettering, ink outlines thicker than the art around them. Brightline is drawn as if photographed from a drone, not printed on newsprint.
- **The classic costume formula:** capes, a symbol on the chest, briefs over tights, and the primary-colour triad. Heroes here dress in modern kit, and their one strong colour is gold.
- **Animal and symbol mascots** that recall famous characters: no single animal or emblem as a whole costume theme.
- **Gothic and retro skylines:** gargoyles, spires, zeppelins, art deco megacities. Calder Bay is a modern northern port.
- **Neon-drenched night cities** with rain and pink and blue signs everywhere. Calder Bay's neon is a few shop signs in gold and vermillion; its light is mostly cream.
- **Grim, ruined palettes.** Even the Scorch is uncanny, not post-apocalyptic. Brightline is hopeful: the city is lived in, cared for and mostly fine.
- **Real brands and lookalikes,** on billboards, uniforms or vehicles. Halberd, Vivid and the Bureau have their own marks; invent everything else.
- **Fantasy furniture:** no torches in sconces, no treasure chests, no stone dungeons. The Clinic's basement is a basement, with a boiler.

QUICK REFERENCE

CHECKS

d20 + rank, against the Difficulty. Meet it or beat it to succeed. Impaired takes 2 off ability checks, skill checks and attacks; Disabled takes 5 instead.

DIFFICULTY	HOW HARD
10	Easy
15	A real effort
20	Hard
25	Heroic
30	Near impossible

YOUR TOTAL AGAINST THE DIFFICULTY	RESULT	STEPS
Beat it by 10 or more	Success (3 Steps)	3
Beat it by 5 to 9	Success (2 Steps)	2
Meet it, or beat it by up to 4	Success (1 Step)	1
Miss it by 1 to 4	Failure (1 Step)	1
Miss it by 5 to 9	Failure (2 Steps)	2
Miss it by 10 to 14	Failure (3 Steps)	3
Miss it by 15 or more	Failure (4 Steps)	4

ATTACKS

- **Close:** Brawling against 10 + Guard. **Ranged:** Marksmanship against 10 + Evade.
- **Area** (up to six targets) and **Perception:** no attack roll; every target resists.
- **Natural 20 on an attack:** it hits, and it is a crit: its rank goes up by 5. **Natural 1 on an attack:** it misses.
- **Strike and Hurl:** rank equal to your Might.
- **Help:** your ally gains 2 (2 plus rank with Teamwork).

RESISTING A HIT

Roll **d20 + Durability, less 1 for each Dinged, against 15 + the hit's rank** (Nerve instead of Durability against a Mental hit). Mooks go Down on any failure.

YOUR RESISTANCE CHECK	YOU TAKE
Succeed (any number of Steps)	Nothing: the hit glances off
Fail by 1 Step	Dinged
Fail by 2 Steps	Dinged and Rattled
Fail by 3 Steps	Dinged and Reeling
Fail by 4 Steps or more	Down
A Mook fails by any number of Steps	Down

- **Afflictions:** resist against **10 + rank** with the defence the power names, on the power's own ladder. Dinged does not count.

YOUR TURN

- **Rattled:** one action, a move or something else. **Reeling:** Rattled and Hindered. **Down:** nothing.
- **Initiative:** d20 + Initiative, highest first.

SHINE

- **Start each session with 1** (plus Lucky). **Earn 1** each time the GM brings in one of your Twists and it makes things harder.
- **Spend 1 to:** reroll a failed check (on the new d20, 1 to 10 counts as 11 to 20; once per check); shake off Rattled or Reeling; add a detail to the scene; ask the GM for a nudge.

CONDITIONS

CONDITION	WHAT IT DOES
Dinged	A hit got through. Each Dinged takes 1 off your check to resist the next hit, and they stack. Count them in the Dinged field on your sheet.
Rattled	Your ears are ringing. On your turn you get one action, a move or something else, not both.
Reeling	Rattled and Hindered at once: one action a turn, at half speed. One more bad hit puts you Down.
Down	Out of the fight: knocked cold, pinned under a girder, or simply done. You take no actions and you are Defenceless until someone gets you up or the scene ends.
Hindered	Something drags at you. You move at half your speed.
Immobile	You cannot move from where you stand, though you can still act in place.
Vulnerable	Caught off balance. Your Evade and Guard are halved, rounding up. Mark Vulnerable on your sheet while it lasts.
Defenceless	You cannot defend yourself at all. Your Evade and Guard count as 0. Mark Defenceless on your sheet while it lasts.
Impaired	Off your game. Take 2 off every check you make, attacks included. Mark Impaired on your sheet while it lasts.
Disabled	Badly off your game. Take 5 off every check you make, attacks included; it replaces Impaired. Mark Disabled on your sheet while it lasts.
Dazzled	Afterimages swim across your eyes. Anything beyond arm's reach is hidden from you until it clears.
Entranced	Transfixed by something only you can see. You take no actions. Any harm, or a shake from an ally, breaks it.
Compelled	A will not your own picks one action for you each turn. You choose anything else you do.
Controlled	Someone else chooses everything you do on your turn.
Prone	You are on the ground. Melee attacks against you gain 5 and ranged attacks lose 5, and you are Hindered until you spend a move getting up.
Grabbed	Someone has hold of you. You are Hindered and Vulnerable, and you cannot move away until you break free with an Athletics or Tumbling check against their hold.
Paralysed	Locked in place. You cannot move or act, though you can still think and perceive. You are Defenceless.

RECOVERY

BUTTON	WHAT IT DOES
New Session	A new episode begins. Shine returns to 1, and every Dinged and status mark clears.
Catch Your Breath	A minute out of the fight. One Dinged fades.

- **Rattled and Reeling** end when you spend a Shine, or with Healing.
- **Down** lasts until someone gets you up (Healing at rank 5 or more) or the scene ends.

FOR THE GM

Table ruling. None of these is enforced by RollQuest; they are this book's rulings for what the packs leave open.

- **Your turn:** one move and one action, in either order; trade the action for a second move. A move on foot is 6 squares (3 when Hindered).
- **Cover:** partial takes 2 off attacks against you, heavy 5; full cover means no attack roll can target you.
- **Help** takes the helper's action.
- **Rattled twice** makes you Reeling. **Reeling** and failing a resistance check by 2 Steps or more puts you Down.
- **Rattled and Reeling** otherwise last until the scene ends.
- **Afflictions** last until the scene ends; spend your action on a new check to throw one off.
- **Down:** an ally next to you can spend their action on a Patch-Up check to get you up.

BUILDING A HERO

Build points: 15 x Scale. Scale 6 street level, 10 a city team, 14 world-saving.

WHAT YOU BUY	COST	RANGE
Abilities (all eight)	2 points a rank	-5 to 20
Defence ranks (Evade, Guard, Vigor and Nerve)	1 point a rank	0 to 20
Skill ranks (all 16 skills)	1 point for every 2 ranks	0 to 40
Durability	never bought: only powers and Edges raise it	no ranks of its own
Powers	what the power builder says they cost	each power has its own ranks
Edges	1 point a rank	each Edge has its own ranks

WHAT IS CAPPED	AT MOST	CHECKED BY
Every skill (ability + ranks)	Scale + 10	the build step
Evade + Durability	Scale x 2	the build step
Guard + Durability	Scale x 2	the build step
Vigor + Nerve	Scale x 2	the build step
A power's attack bonus + its rank	Scale x 2	the GM

Power cost: cost a rank, plus 1 a rank for each per-rank Boost, minus 1 a rank for each per-rank Limit; times the rank (below 1 a rank: 1 point buys 2 ranks at 0, 3 ranks at -1, and so on, rounded up); then plus or minus 1 for each flat Boost or Limit; at least 1 point. **Alternate suite:** the dearest power, plus 1 for each other.