

# CITY of MIST

ORDINARY PEOPLE · LEGENDARY POWERS



STARTER SET

# CITY OF MIST

## YOU ARE THE PLAYERS!

Each of you will take up the role of a lead character – a modern-day individual with legendary powers, searching for the truth in a City shrouded in mystery...

Together, you make up the crew of “All-Seeing Eye Investigations”.

This booklet will teach you the basics of the game as you play your first City of Mist investigation. The MC will refer you to it during play.

Are you ready to hit the streets?



**DETECTIVE ENKIDU**

A cop hiding a wild thing within



**TALOC**

A crook who is the Aztec rain god



**LILY CHOW**

A runaway with a magical big brother



**JOB**

A priest who can hurt but never die



**BAKU**

A monster hunter becoming a monster



# WELCOME TO THE CITY

This booklet will guide you and your group as you learn how to play *City of Mist*. Just follow the evidence and solve the case!

One of you will take on the role of **the MC** (Master of Ceremonies), the host and the narrator of the game. As the MC, you should read both this booklet and the MC booklet to get acquainted with the game before running it.

To play this game you will need everything in the set:

- The players' booklet
- The MC booklet
- The five character folios

You will also need at least two six-sided dice.

You may wish to print out a summary of the “Player Moves” and some tracking cards for each player, available at the end of this booklet (pages 38-39) and at [cityofmist.co/download](http://cityofmist.co/download).

## CREDITS

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### PRONOUN USE

Where the third person is required, this book refers to characters as ‘she’, players as ‘he’, and the MC as ‘she’ as well. This is an arbitrary division for the sake of readability and balance in the use of pronouns; characters, players, and MCs may be of any or no gender.

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### HOMAGE TO D. VINCENT BAKER AND APOCALYPSE WORLD

The rules of this game are partially based on the “Powered by the Apocalypse” game engine, presented in 2010 by D. Vincent Baker in his revolutionary game *Apocalypse World*. Vincent changed role-playing games forever by introducing a new way to play that emphasized a flowing conversation and a great story. Many great games that use this engine have since been published. We thank Vincent for his contribution to the world of role-playing games which also allowed the creation of *City of Mist*.

### CONTENT WARNING

This game contains mild language as well as strong themes of violence, crime, and immorality. It does NOT contain representation of sexual acts. Parental guidance is advised.

## EXHIBIT No. #1 VOICEOVER MONOLOGUE

Choose someone in your group to read out loud this introduction to the City, in a gruff and raspy 'hard-boiled detective' voice:

Welcome to the City of legends made flesh.

In this corrupt and haunted metropolis, anyone can become a living gateway to an ancient myth or legend. In the shadows of shiny skyscrapers and derelict residential blocks, ordinary folk wield supernatural powers bestowed by the stories that live inside them, but those same stories threaten to tear their lives apart.

**The Mist**, a mystical veil known only to a select few, prevents the unwitting City residents from ever acknowledging the miracles they witness daily. It hides the legendary and distorts it, making it look plain and mundane. And so, distracted by their everyday hopes and fears, the people on the streets remain oblivious to the clash of mythical forces that drive and control the very life of the City.

You too were an ordinary person, until the seed of the legendary awoke within you. Now you are a **Rift** between the worlds, seeking answers to questions about your powers, but the truth always seems to elude you.

Awakened or not, you still want what every human being wants: love, money, power, peace of mind. Together with your ragtag crew of gifted individuals, you work to reveal the powers operating in the dark smoky alleys of the City, just as those very powers seek you out for what you are. You will hit the streets

in search of the strange cases, loose ends, and unsolved mysteries that will lead you to the truth, inevitably clashing with other legends in mortal form, the modern-day incarnations of stories from beyond the Mist.

Be warned – the truth is as dangerous as the forces that hide it. Only when you find yourself sacrificing that which is dearest to you will you truly learn the answer to the ultimate question: 'who am I?'.  
But will it be worth it?

In short:

- **Rifts** are ordinary people with the power of legends.
- **The Mist** is the force that hides their existence and powers.

This is the premise of *City of Mist*. Move on to the next exhibit.



## FURTHER INVESTIGATION: MYTHOI AND MIST

A Mythos is a story that is trying to manifest itself in the City. It can be an existing myth or legend, like the Mythoi of the included characters: Enkidu, Tlaloc, Iron Hans, Job or Baku. It can also be an abstract concept, like anger itself or the spirit of well-being.

The Mist prevents the Mythoi from directly influencing the City. This allows the City to exist as it is; otherwise, it would become a chaotic canvas where stories mix, clash, and rip each other to shreds.

To influence the City, Mythoi must manifest through Rifts, portals through the Mist. Some kind of awareness or an awakening of the soul is needed to become a Rift, so the most common form of a Rift is a human resident of the City. However, even animals, places and objects can be infused with enough awareness to serve as Rifts. They are called Familiars, Enclaves, and Relics, respectively.

Nevertheless, the Mythoi are not an alien force trying to invade the City – they are its heart and the blood that runs through it. Everything in the City only exists because the Mythoi live inside it and animate it, despite the Mist. It's possible that without the Mythoi the City would simply cease to be.

## FURTHER INVESTIGATION: THE CITY

The City is a burgeoning metropolis, home to millions of people. Everything you have learned to expect of a modern city can be found here: economy and business, culture and recreation, society and art, education and technology, law and crime.

You can place the *City of Mist* anywhere in the world or leave it as its own context. You can give it a name, real or fictional; fashion it based on an existing city or make it up entirely from scratch. You can have a map of the City or just reference different locations as you go. It's all good, because the City is only the backdrop for your story. What really matters is who's in the story and what's going to happen to them on the streets when the cameras of the mind's eye start rolling.

Residents of the City simply call it 'the City', and refer to anything outside of it as 'out of town' ("Oh, Johnny? Johnny's out of town. But he'll be back...", "This stuff is weird, definitely came from out of town."). Their world view is so centered on the City that they don't really bother thinking about what's outside. Is that because of the Mist or is it just everyday absent-mindedness? You'll be the judge of that.



## EXHIBIT No. #3 YOUR CHARACTER FOLIOS

Open your character folios and read through their different parts:

### A A SUMMARY OF THE RULES OF THE GAME

### B YOUR CHARACTER'S NAME OR ALIAS

### C YOUR CHARACTER'S THEMES

Each of the four cards on your folio is a **theme**. It represents a major aspect of your character, her abilities, or her life.

Your themes are divided between **MYTHOS** (legendary, in purple) and **LOGOS** (ordinary, in red).

Characters with more Mythos themes are closer to their legend than to their ordinary life; characters with more Logos themes are closer to their ordinary life than to their legend.

Read your four theme titles to everyone at the table.

### D YOUR CHARACTER'S MOTIVATIONS (MYSTERIES AND IDENTITIES)

Like a real person, your character has different and sometimes conflicting motivations, reasons to do what she does.

Each of your Mythos themes has a **Mystery**, a question that the Mythos inside your character wants her to explore.

Each of your Logos themes has an **Identity**, a statement that represents a conviction, a belief, or an emotion that defines your character.

Read your Mysteries and Identities now, to the group or to yourself.

### E MAKING HARD CHOICES (FADE AND CRACK)

Like a real person, your character can face dilemmas when she is forced to choose between her Mysteries and her Identities. Her choices can bring about dramatic changes in her themes: one major aspect in her life is lost while another is gained.

Whenever you have the chance to get answers to one of your Mysteries and you choose not to follow it, mark **Fade** under that Mystery. If you mark all three Fade boxes, replace that Mythos theme with a new Logos theme.

Whenever you take action you feel goes against one of your Identities, mark **Crack** under that Identity. If you mark all three Crack boxes, replace that Logos theme with a new Mythos theme (see page 25).

Be aware of the balance of Mythos and Logos in your character. Going all the way in either direction will have fateful consequences.

### F YOUR POWER TAGS

Each theme has three **power tags**. Power tags are short descriptions of something useful to your character: a quality, an ability, an item, a resource, or even a catchphrase.

Whenever you take an important action, you invoke power tags that can help you achieve your goal. Each power tag you invoke gives you a point of **POWER** that improves both your chances of success and the effect of your action. You can invoke power tags over and over again and mix power tags from different themes.

Sometimes your Power tags will be burnt, becoming temporarily unavailable. Mark the flame (🔥) symbol next to a burnt tag. You cannot invoke this power tag until you choose to recover it when your character gets a chance to rest up.



## G POWER TAG COMBOS

To help you become familiar with your character, your sheet includes four ready-to-use actions that she would typically take. Each combo combines a move with some of your power tags. You will learn how to use these later. However, be aware that you are not limited to these combos and you can always create your own power tag combinations when taking actions.

This is all you need to know to play the game at a basic level. You can keep **Exhibit #4** and **Exhibit #5** for later (perhaps at the end of the session or before the next session).

Note: Use dry-erase markers when you mark anything on your character folios.



You're ready to start playing *City of Mist*! Dim the lights, grab some snacks, and let the MC take over. **You can set this booklet aside for now.** During the case you will be referred to the next exhibits.



## HOW TO PLAY

When you take action as your character:

- DESCRIBE YOUR ACTION**
- CHOOSE A MOVE** that matches the action you are taking.

<b>CHANGE THE GAME</b> To give an advantage or remove disadvantage	<b>FACE DANGER</b> Avoid harm or resist a malign influence
<b>CONVINCE</b> to get someone to do something they wouldn't normally do	<b>GO TOE TO TOE</b> Fight someone for control over something

- CHOOSE TAGS** relevant to your action:
 

EACH POWER TAG	+1 POWER	EACH WEAKNESS TAG	-1 POWER	+1 ATTENTION
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- APPLY STATUSES**

HIGHEST HELPFUL STATUS	ADD TIER TO POWER	HIGHEST IMPEDING STATUS	SUBTRACT FROM
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- ROLL+POWER** Roll two City of Mist (or six-sided) dice:
 

6 OR LESS > MISS THE MC MAKES A MOVE	7 TO 9 > HIT SUCCESS, WITH COMPLICATION
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Look at the move description for the exact outcome.

**IMPROVEMENT** When you mark three Att reset its Attention to zero and choose one improvement for it.

**CHOOSE A NEW POWER TAG** OR  **UNLOCK THE THEME**

### TAG COMBOS

<b>STUDY A CRIME SCENE</b> Investigate: police work + search for evidence POWER 2	<b>GO BERSERK ON SOMEONE</b> Go Toe to Toe or Hit With All You've Got: unleash the beast within + thorny tentacles POWER 2	<b>THREATEN TO ARREST SOMEONE</b> Convince: police work + you're in my neighborhood POWER 3
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THIS CHARACTER IS A PART OF THE CITY OF MIST RPG. "ALL-SEEING EYE INVESTIGATOR"

<p><b>Expression</b></p> <h1>WILD</h1> <p>ATTENTION FADE</p> <p>Mystery: "WHEN SHOULD I FOLLOW MY INSTINCTS?"</p> <p>In the dark recesses of her soul, Detective Enkidu harbors a feral creature, the heroic beastman Enkidu of ancient Mesopotamia. Can she trust its animalistic wisdom?</p> <p><b>POWER TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unleash the beast within</li> <li>Thorny tentacles</li> <li>Feral athletics</li> </ul> <p><b>NEW POWER TAG OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single combat champion</li> <li>Pheromone control</li> <li>Instinct over reason</li> </ul> <p><b>WEAKNESS TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncouth brute</li> </ul> <p><b>THEME IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contain the Surge</li> </ul> <p>When you make the move Stop Holding Back with this theme's powers, if you roll 6 or less, treat it as 7-9 instead.</p>	<p><b>Training</b></p> <h1>HARD-BOILED DETECTIVE</h1> <p>ATTENTION CRACK</p> <p>Identity: "I NEVER LEAVE A CASE UNSOLVED."</p> <p>The detective has seen her fair share of rainy crime scenes surrounded by yellow tape. She knows the job, and she knows she shouldn't get involved, but she always does.</p> <p><b>POWER TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police work</li> <li>Search for evidence</li> <li>Drive with lights and sirens</li> </ul> <p><b>NEW POWER TAG OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veteran's hunch</li> <li>Excessive use of force</li> <li>Promoted to Sergeant</li> </ul> <p><b>WEAKNESS TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't get too personal</li> </ul> <p><b>THEME IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad Training</li> </ul> <p>Once per session, you can create a theme story tag that reflects a useful method of detail covered by your training.</p>	<p><b>Possessions</b></p> <h1>STANDARD ISSUE GEAR</h1> <p>ATTENTION CRACK</p> <p>Identity: "I TRUST MY GUN BETTER THAN I TRUST ANYONE HERE."</p> <p>A badge and a gun are all a cop needs, according to Detective Enkidu. People may betray you, but well-maintained gear can always be trusted.</p> <p><b>POWER TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police badge</li> <li>Access to police armory</li> <li>Standard issue pistol</li> </ul> <p><b>NEW POWER TAG OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher stopping power rounds</li> <li>Concealed holster</li> <li>Squad car</li> </ul> <p><b>WEAKNESS TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gear screams "police"</li> </ul> <p><b>THEME IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quartermaster</li> </ul> <p>Use a power tag from this theme describing an item. You do not need to Change the Game to do so.</p>	<p><b>Turf</b></p> <h1>PRECINCT 23</h1> <p>ATTENTION CRACK</p> <p>Identity: "MESS WITH SQUATZ, WITH ME."</p> <p>For the last decade, Precinct 23 has been watching over the neighborhood that happens on neighborhood is...</p> <p><b>POWER TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streets of Miller's</li> <li>Local small-time</li> <li>You're in my jurisdiction</li> </ul> <p><b>NEW POWER TAG OPTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorruptible</li> <li>Push someone</li> <li>Call for backup</li> </ul> <p><b>WEAKNESS TAGS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corruption everywhere</li> </ul> <p><b>THEME IMPROVEMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(No) Loyalty Knows</li> </ul> <p>When in your turf, you can object from an NPC ally or object from a status meant for you. If you do, mark Crack on the...</p>
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## CONVINCE

When you use your abilities to **talk, threaten, or seduce someone into doing something**, roll+Power. On a hit, choose a relevant status with tier=Power. Your target can choose either to take the status or:

- on a 7-9, to give in a little, but protect their own agenda.
- on a 10+, to change their agenda to include yours, at least for the time being.

### USE THIS MOVE WHEN YOU:

- Persuade someone to help you
- Hold someone at gunpoint
- Bribe an official
- Flirt to get what you want
- Blackmail someone

To get someone to share information, use **Investigate** instead.

To deceive someone, use **Sneak Around** instead.

### WHEN YOU SCORE A HIT IN THIS MOVE:

Tell the MC or the player who controls the target what you want them to do. Then take a tracking card and write the status they will get if they don't do as you say (if you hold them at gunpoint and they move, you give them *gunshot-wound-3*; if you ask for help and they turn you down, they will feel *guilty-2*; etc.). The tier of the status equals your Power.

The MC or the player who controls the target must choose between going against your wish and taking the status, or doing as you wish. On a 7-9, they can choose to do as you wish but still protect their interests.

## FACE DANGER

When you use your abilities to **avoid an incoming hit, endure harm, resist a malign influence, or hold it together**, the MC (or player) will name a status with its tag and tier. Roll+Power. On a 10+, you fend off the effect and take no status at all. On a 7-9, you take the status, but with -1 tier. On a miss, you take the full status.

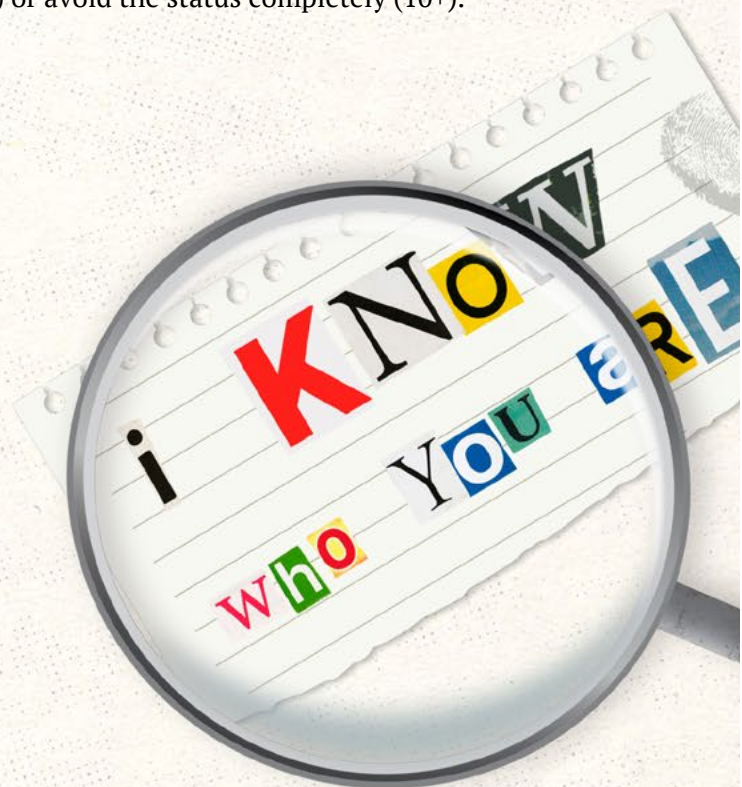
This move activates automatically when you are about to receive a status, even if you don't have the spotlight right now.

### USE THIS MOVE WHEN YOU:

- Take, dodge, or block a hit
- Withstand harsh conditions
- Endure the effects of a toxin or disease
- Resist psychological or magical effects

### WHEN YOU SCORE A HIT IN THIS MOVE:

You either take the status with one tier lower (7-9) or avoid the status completely (10+).





## EXHIBIT No. #8 PLAYING THROUGH A CONFLICT

The MC booklet will refer you here when your crew first engages in a fight or an ongoing conflict. Read this:

Serious threats to your characters' lives or to their investigation are called **Dangers**. These could be anything from street thugs, environmental hazards, or other Rifts with Mythos powers and their magical minions.

To overcome a Danger you must give it a status high enough to neutralize it as a threat and end the conflict. You could try to harm it, befriend it, distract it, bribe it, banish it, incriminate it, and so on.

To give a status to a Danger you make the move **Hit With All You've Got**, or, if the Danger is fighting back, **Go Toe to Toe**.

During the conflict the MC will describe how the Danger threatens you and your crew. The Danger can harm you when...

- you make a move and score a miss.
- you attack or affect it and *don't* choose to protect yourself from a counterattack.
- you ignore a threat from the Danger long enough for it to materialize.

The MC can also reveal special abilities belonging to the Danger, called **custom moves**. For example, some Dangers can attack you just before you move to attack them or defend from your attacks better and reduce the tier of the status you inflict.

Finally, when a Danger has a status that doesn't lead directly to her defeat, such as **prone-2** or **alert-3**, it may affect your moves. The MC will tell you when this applies.

Are you ready to clash with your first Danger?

# GLOSSARY (In order of appearance)

## SETTING TERMS

**The City:** The modern-day metropolis where the game takes place.

**The Mist:** The mystical force that hides the magical powers of Rifts from Sleepers and pushes Rifts to forget their Mythoi and become Sleepers.

**Rifts:** Residents of the City who have awakened to their Mythos, wield legendary powers, and can see others' Mythos powers.

**Sleepers:** Residents of the City who are unaware of their Mythos and cannot see through the Mist.

**Mythos:** The legend or story alive within a Rift.

**Logos:** A Rift's ordinary life and everyday persona.

## GAME TERMS

**Player Character (PC):** The character you portray as a player.

**The Crew:** The team of Rifts played by the players.

**Master of Ceremonies (MC):** The host and narrator of the game.

**Theme:** A set of game elements (power tags, weakness tags, and Mystery/Identity) that together represent one aspect of a player character. A theme can relate to either Mythos or Logos.

**Mysteries and Identities:** Your character's motivations; questions your character wants to answer and statements that define her. Ignoring these allows you to mark **Fade** or **Crack**, which may lead to dramatic changes in your character.

**Tag:** A short description of a quality, resource, (dis)advantage, or object in the game. Tags are marked in *yellow highlight*.

**Power:** The sum of positive and negative tags and statuses affecting an action; the final number you add to your dice roll result when making a move.

**Power Tag:** A tag that adds one point of Power to your action (if it is useful for that action).

**Weakness Tag:** A tag that subtracts one point of Power from your action (if it is impeding that action), but earns you a point of Attention.

**Attention:** A point representing the development of a theme. When a theme has three points of Attention, it receives a new power tag or a theme improvement and its Attention is reset to zero.

**Crew Theme:** A theme shared by the entire crew, representing shared resources, limitations, and goals.

**Core Move:** One of eight specific types of action you can take in the game as your character. The outcome of the action is determined by its score: the action's Power + the result of two City of Mist or six-sided dice. A final score of 10+ is a great success, 7-9 is a mild success, and 6 or less is a miss.

**MC Move:** A complication or consequence the MC presents. When a player misses a move, the MC can make a *hard* MC move, with greater consequences.

**Story Tag:** A temporary tag created by a player or by the MC that can be used as a power tag or a weakness tag depending on the situation.

**Status:** A condition described by a tag and a tier. The tier is added to or subtracted from the Power of actions affected by this status. Statuses are marked in *green highlight*.

**Juice:** Points that can be used to give advantage or disadvantage. Each point of Juice can create or remove a tag or one tier in a status. Juice is usually generated with the Core Move **Change the Game**.

**Clues:** Points that can be traded for a clue from the MC. For each point you spend, ask a question; the MC must give you a solid lead or a straight answer. Clues are usually generated with the Core Move **Investigate**.

**Dangers:** Non-player adversaries or threats.

**Burning a Tag:** Making a tag unusable until it is recovered during downtime. This can be done voluntarily to gain an instant success, known as **burning for a hit**.

**Stop.Holding.Back.:** A special player move which allows you to use your powers at their limit and beyond, at the cost of making a sacrifice.

# SAMPLE PLAYTHROUGH

**Simone** and **Gary** play **Det. Enkidu** and **Tlaloc**, respectively. They are already deep into an investigation, after having been conned into obtaining illegal goods for a shady individual.

**MC:** So, it looks like you have enough information on this fella, Lars Erickson, to assume he is behind the attempt to trick you into stealing that crate. What do you do?

**Simone:** I think we will head to the Blue Oyster restaurant, where we know he's been hanging out. It's time to confront him.

**Gary:** Right. I look forward to figuring out *what* exactly this guy is.

**MC:** Super. You two take Detective Enkidu's squad car and drive down to the light industry district where the Blue Oyster is situated. It's a drab and rainy afternoon. You drive by factories, warehouses, and red-brick office buildings with soot-covered windows. You eventually spot the big sign of the Blue Oyster tucked in a back alley between two factories. It's noisy outside and steam rolls in front of you on the road as you turn into the alleyway. The restaurant is on the second floor of a converted warehouse. You take the elevator, which opens up to a small waiting area with a large open double door. There's a hostess standing there next to a podium where her clipboard is resting. She spots you as soon as you emerge from the elevator. Wafts of seafood and oyster sauce welcome you to the Blue Oyster. Jazz music is heard from within.

**Simone:** Det. Enkidu is the typical cop, so she's overprotective of Tlaloc who is known to get into all kinds of trouble. She'll say: "Now, watch your step here. We don't know who this guy is, or what's his story. Let me do the talking."

**Gary:** Tlaloc just shrugs. I'm gonna hang around while Enkidu does her thing and try to swipe the hostess's clipboard to get a look at it. I'm looking for the name Lars Erickson.

**MC:** Great, that would be an **Investigate** move as you're ultimately after information. Which tags are you going to include?

**Gary:** I have *shadow and observe* and *sticky fingers*. That's two power tags, so a Power of 2.

**MC:** Roll away: two six-sided dice as always and add your Power.

**Gary:** I rolled a 5 and 3, plus 2. That's a 10, so it's in the category of 10+.

**MC:** Great! The **Investigate** move gives you two Clues which you can spend as you wish. For each clue, ask me any question you want and I will give you a clue about it. You rolled 10+ so there are no complications this time.

**Gary:** Awesome. So Tlaloc is circling around the waiting area, chewing on gum, and looking inconspicuous. As soon as Enkidu walks up to the hostess he tries to get her clipboard and take a look, and then put it back. So for

# CITY OF MIST

## YOU ARE THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES!

You are the showrunner of the game. You'll be walking the players through scenes of investigation, mystery, drama, and action set in the gritty and magic-infused streets of City of Mist.

You will also be portraying all the non-player characters in the story: cops, crooks, villains, and other citizens of the City.

This booklet will teach you the basics of playing as the MC, building up your skills gradually as you go. It will walk you through your crew's first investigative case, Shark Tank, contained inside.

Ready to start? Smoke, camera roll, aaand... ACTION!



# CITY of MIST

PEOPLE · LEGENDARY POWERS



**THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES**

# YOU, THE MC!

So you've taken the mantle of Master of Ceremonies, or MC, for your group's *City of Mist* game! You will be hosting the game and walking the players through scenes of your first case, *Shark Tank*, and possibly many others to come.

This booklet will teach you how to be the MC and provide you with all the resources you need. To speed things up during the game, it's advised you read through this booklet as well as the players' booklet before your group's first session.

## MC SKILLS

Throughout this booklet you will find text boxes explaining different skills useful for the Master of Ceremonies. However, these skills are not critical for playing the game. You can ignore them the first time you run this game and try to master more and more of them as you continue to run cases.

## CREDITS

City of Mist created by Amit Moshe

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### PRONOUN USE

Where the third person is required, this book refers to characters as 'she', players as 'he', and the MC as 'she' as well. This is an arbitrary division for the sake of readability and balance in the use of pronouns; characters, players, and MCs may be of any or no gender.

### HOMAGE TO D. VINCENT BAKER AND APOCALYPSE WORLD

The rules of this game are partially based on the "Powered by the Apocalypse" game engine, presented in 2010 by D. Vincent Baker in his revolutionary game *Apocalypse World*. Vincent changed role-playing games forever by introducing a new way to play that emphasized a flowing conversation and a great story. Many great games that use this engine have since been published. We thank Vincent for his contribution to the world of role-playing games which also allowed the creation of *City of Mist*.

### CONTENT WARNING

This game contains mild language as well as strong themes of violence, crime, and immorality. It does NOT contain representation of sexual acts. Parental guidance is advised.

# THE ROLE OF THE MC

## **IF YOU'VE NEVER PLAYED AS THE MC BEFORE**

As the MC, you run the show at your *City of Mist* game table.

**You are the host.** You manage the conversation around the table by moving the **spotlight** between players and to yourself. Only a player who has the spotlight can take actions and affect the scene.

**You are the narrator.** You describe the scenes in your groups' shared story and introduce challenges and complications that the player characters (PCs) have to overcome. You also portray the non-player characters (NPCs) present at those scenes, such as supporting cast, witnesses, people on the street, victims, villains, and other parties of interest.

**You are the referee.** Whenever there is a doubt regarding the rules, such as which *move* to use or which *power tag* is applicable, you make the final decision.

To do all of the above,

- You go by **the rules** of the game.
- You go by the information given in **the case**.
- You go by what is **fair** (especially when it comes to the distribution of spotlight between the players).
- You **improvise** based on your imagination, cinematic flair, and common sense.

## **PLAYING THROUGH SCENES**

Your *City of Mist* game session begins when you, the MC, **set the first scene**. You describe the time and the place and decide with the players where their characters are at the beginning of the scene.

During a scene, **you give one of the players the spotlight and ask him "What do you do?"** or you ask the entire group, giving the **spotlight** to whoever wants to take action first.

**The player who has the spotlight describes an action**, using the rules and rolling dice to determine its outcome. Sometimes the rules determine that you or the players get to choose what happened. Whenever the rules state an outcome, you **translate it into the story**, describing what exactly happened in the scene as a result.

**After each player's action**, you narrate how the scene responds to the outcome, present new challenges, and give the spotlight to the next player, and so on.

**When a sequence of events concludes and the players look to you to drive the story forward**, you narrate new developments or ask them "What do you do next?"

**When the scene exhausts itself**, you wrap it up and describe the next scene according to what the players decide to do and according to the case.

## OVERCOMING DANGERS (STATUS SPECTRUMS)

Dangers take statuses as PCs do, and PCs can use moves to inflict various statuses on Dangers, from punching a villain to outrunning the police (see *Playing Through a Conflict* in the players' booklet, page 21).

Unlike PCs statuses that always max out at 6, Dangers have different maximums for different type of statuses: physical, social, magical, etc. Each type of status the Danger can be affected by is called a **spectrum** and its maximum indicates how much of that type of status the Danger can take before it is overcome. A spectrum and its maximum are highlighted in red, e.g., *threaten:5*.

When a Danger takes a status with a tier equal to its spectrum maximum, that spectrum is **maxed out**.

Normally, when a Danger's spectrum maxes out, it is overcome or resolved. For example, when a hired thug with a *hurt or subdue:3* takes *broken-bones-3*, she stays down; when a ghost with *banish:2* takes *banished-2*, it vanishes.

A status on a Danger's spectrum doesn't affect the PCs. For example, if a Danger with *subdue:3* has *restrained-2*, a PC can't add this status to his Power as a helpful status.

Statuses that don't fit into any of the Danger's listed spectrums can instead do one of the following, at your discretion:

- **Affect the Danger's moves**, increasing or reducing their effectiveness by a number equal to the tier of the status (e.g., *prone-2* can reduce the effectiveness of a Danger shooting from *riddled-with-bullets-4* to *fleshwound-2*).
- **Affect the PC's moves against the Danger**, acting as positive or negative statuses to the PC's actions, depending on the circumstances (e.g., giving a Danger *alert-3* can affect the PC's ability to sneak behind the Danger, reducing the PC's Power by 3).
- **Contribute to her defeat** like a normal spectrum (the MC sets a maximum for this new spectrum). This allows the players to come up with their own way to overcome a Danger.

### UNDERWORLD ENFORCER ★

#### HURT OR SUBDUE 3 / THREATEN 4

- **Olympian:** When an Underworld Enforcer takes a status of physical harm, subdual, or suggestion, reduce its tier by 1 if its nature is legendary or by 2 if it is mundane.
- **Tight Lips:** When you **Investigate** an Underworld Enforcer by asking about her employers, she first gets *my-lips-are-sealed-5*.
- Bully (*threatened-2*), grapple and lock (*restrained-3*), beat up (*broken-arm-3*), or shower someone with bullets (*gunshot-wound-3*)
- Eliminate a vulnerable target (*shot-in-the-gut-4*)
- Threaten a debtor to pay up, or else
- Close in on someone, cracking knuckles

**Danger Name and Rating**

**Status Spectrum Maximums**

This Danger is overcome when it takes a tier-3 status that represents hurt or subdual, or when it takes a tier-4 threat status.

**Custom moves** trigger whenever the condition is met.

**Hard Danger moves** usually invoke the rules.

**Soft Danger moves** are suggestions for complications.



# SHARK TANK YOUR FIRST CASE

## WHAT IS A CASE?

A *City of Mist* case is a scenario that you can play through with your group. Each case starts after a crime or a wrong has been committed, drawing the crew's attention. The crew must then investigate to uncover the truth and discover which modern-day legends are behind it all. Just like in any good movie, the truth may motivate the player characters to take other actions, such as attempt to stop the villains.

A *City of Mist* case is built (mostly) out of locations (marked by a blue underline). In each location, the PCs can interact with NPCs, discover new clues, have meaningful dialog, and get into chases and fights. Whenever the PCs arrive at a location, a scene takes place.

The order of the scenes is not predetermined, nor is it decided only by you, the MC. When the PCs discover clues in one scene, they might choose to move to another location based on any new leads they've found and how they understand them. They can go back to locations they previously visited and continue to investigate or see if anything changed. You as the MC will try to give them a feeling of a **sandbox game**, a game where they can go around and take actions freely as if it were the real world.

Scenes and locations are divided into Depths according to how close they are to the truth. The greater the Depth, the closer a scene is to the final truth of the case.

The scenes are laid out on a story map called the **Iceberg** according to their Depth. A case begins with a hook scene in Depth 0 and the crew investigate their way down the Iceberg to the final truth at the greatest Depth.

## BACKGROUND FOR SHARK TANK

In *Shark Tank*, your crew, "All-Seeing Eye Investigations", is called to help with a crisis in the blue-collar neighborhood of **Miller's Square**. The good people of Miller's Square have been bullied and steamrolled by the Italian mafia, but the truth runs deeper than that.

This local crime family feeds its goons a substance called **Ambrosia** (the food of the Greek gods) which makes them inhumanly strong, tough, and persuasive. Their *consigliere*, **Honey Lip**, uses this divine charisma to lure people into taking loans and become involved with his mob. To release Miller's Square from the grip of this supernatural mob, the crew must uncover this operation and hit it at its heart.

Depth 4      Depth 3      Depth 2      Depth 1      Depth 0



Questioning Ramos or Clara won't be easy. Ramos is *concussed-2* and too much excitement could destabilize his condition, while Clara is *barricaded-2* behind her door and *terrified-2*. They both *don't trust the cops*.

**The locals love Julio**, the tall, romantic owner who always shines with love and smiles at anyone who stops to enjoy the flowers. They will also say **he's a hothead**, too furious to think of what's best for him and his family, which landed him in the hospital. No one saw who beat him up.

**Only Julio or Clara know his attackers were Falzoni thugs**, the kind who hang at Rusty's Bar.

**Julio can describe the smooth-talking leader of the thugs**, the loan shark who offered him money, but he doesn't know his name (Honey Lip). He remembers him as being almost hypnotic, but, seeing the Devil in him, Julio gathered all his strength to push back, which is when the fight started.

**Julio is convinced the thugs have the Devil in them**. Despite his rage and his ability to hold his own in a fist fight, his blows didn't seem to scratch them.

Clara reported the incident to the police, but has not heard from them since.

**Searching by the storefront** would turn up something from Rusty's Bar: a matchbook, a beer bottle from a brand sold there, or a napkin with the logo, a phone number, and a lipstick kiss.

## LAZER HOT PIZZA

The only hopping place in the neighborhood, LaZER HoT Pizza constantly attracts many of the locals with steaming scents of mozzarella and fresh tomato sauce. Running around from kitchen to counter and back is a young curly-haired man in a bright red apron. A young kid in a similar apron is proudly operating the register and shouting orders over the speaker.

**LaZER HoT Pizza** is a relatively new enterprise run by the young and industrious **Michael Bryant**. Michael's ambition and lack of experience played right into Honey Lip's trap and he borrowed a hefty sum. Just recently he missed a payment, begging the enforcers for more time, which they granted (with increased interest, of course). It's just a matter of time before he becomes their next target.

- On their last meeting, Michael has been *influenced-3* into keeping his lips sealed by Honey Lip's godlike charisma. The effect has still not worn off.
- If the crew tries to talk to him, reveal the status but do not reveal its source or nature without further investigation (the same status may be achieved with a mundane persuasion trick).
- If anyone scores a miss (or as a complication on a 7-9), Michael may flee or even call Honey Lip at the number he has (Rusty's Bar) and let him know about the snoops in hope of gaining his favor and some extra time.





## ENFORCERS SHAKEDOWN

Suddenly, you hear loud voices coming from a nearby alley. You spot a handful of burly thugs in buttoned shirts and dress slacks corner someone. “Honey Lip says it’s time for you to pay up. You got the money?” As their victim cowls with fear, one of the thugs breaks out a brass knuckle buster.

Sooner or later, the crew will run into the Falzoni enforcers in action. It might happen in one of the following ways:

- The crew can walk right into the enforcers’ shakedown as the thugs try to squeeze more money out of the NPCs at [LaZeR HoT Pizza](#) or [Century Laundromat](#), at Julio Ramos’ hospital bed, or at the home of Linda Saddle (Sam Saddle’s wife).
- The enforcers hear about the crew snooping around and come find them at a local business, their office, or even their homes, with the intention of shutting them up for good, either by threats or by action.
- The crew unexpectedly crosses paths with the enforcers on the streets of Miller’s Square, and the enforcers decide to teach them a lesson for snooping around.

**Choose the number of enforcers at the scene;** it can range from two to the number of PCs currently present. Treat each enforcer as a separate Danger. If this is the crew’s first fight, stop the story and move over to the players’ booklet, starting at **Exhibit #8: Playing Through a Conflict** on page 21 (see also **MC Skill: Running a Fight Scene** on the next page).

**The enforcers behave like gods who own the streets,** as they’ve faced no resistance so far (except for George Kim, for whom they have a solution in Delia). An interaction with them can escalate into a fight very quickly. However, there are other ways to get around the enforcers,

## DEPTH 4: WHAT GODS FEAST ON

In the final depth, the truth is revealed about how Honey Lip and his thugs gained their inhuman abilities and were able to take over Miller's Square with barely any opposition.

Emphasize to the players that the Falzoni mafia dinner is the crew's only chance of uncovering the Ambrosia supply chain.

Depending on the way things wrapped up in the previous Depth, the Falzoni may be aware that the crew knows about the event. They won't cancel it, though, since that would show weakness to their employer, Anatoli Vidales (Hades). Instead, the Falzoni have a little insurance policy described in the custom move **Corruption Runs Deep** below.

### HELP IS ON THE WAY

If the crew managed to convince George Kim to leave the Liquor Store and help the cause, he would be there with White Paw to assist (see page 23). If the crew somehow managed to convince Delia to redeem herself by protecting Miller's Square, she can be represented as a temporary crew theme as well:

**Power Tags:** *submerge a room, underwater superiority, ferocious bite*

**Weakness Tags:** *bloodthirsty*

**Special Improvement: Fateful Moment:** You can burn the *ferocious bite* tag for a hit (normally, crew theme tags cannot be burnt for a hit).

### NEW RULES

The showdown at the Ambrosia feast may involve fighting swathes of Underworld Enforcers. If you have not learned about collectives yet, move over to the players' booklet, starting at **Exhibit #11: Collectives** on page 24.

