THE BURNING WHEEL

PROCEDURE GUIDE

✝

TESTS

Player Defines Intent and Task
- Intent: What do you want to do?
- Task: How do you want to do it?
- *If the task is within the PC's abilities and there is nothing at stake, the GM Says Yes.*

GM Defines the Test
- The GM decides what kind of test this is: standard, linked, graduated, or versus.
- If this is a standard or linked test, the GM sets a base obstacle from 1-10. See p. 15. The obstacle of some tests is an opponent's ability.
- A graduated test always has an obstacle of 1.
- The GM decides length of test. See p. 34-35.
- GM sets the consequences for failing the test.
- *The consequences must complicate the situation and drive the story forward.*
- GM chooses an ability that fits the task.
- If the PC has that stat or skill, they start with a dice pool equal to its exponent.
- Double the exponent by spending 1 deeds.
- A maximum of 1 fate, 3 persona and 2 deeds artha may be spent per player per test, not counting artha spent on Aristeia.

Apply Beginner's Luck if Necessary
- When a root stat must be used in place of a skill the PC lacks, double the base obstacle.
- For versus tests, the base obstacle is the number of successes rolled by the opponent.

Check for Tools
- If the test requires tools the PC lacks, double the base obstacle. This may be combined with Beginner's Luck.
- If the PC has used these tools before, roll the Die of Fate to see if they have been used up after the test is resolved.

GM Modifies the Base Obstacle
- +1 Ob per disadvantage (no limit).
- +1 Ob if the PC has 1-2 superficial wounds. The player may spend 1 fate to ignore this modifier, then mark 1 fate towards a Health epiphany.
- +1 Ob if this test follows a failed linked test.
- +2 Ob if this is a social skill test against a named personal enemy.
- +1-3 Ob from a relevant infamous reputation.

Add Bonus Dice
- +1-2D from *one* situational or trait advantage.
- +1D for working carefully. The GM adds a time-related consequence in case of failure.
- +1D per PC helping with a related ability, +2D per PC with a helping ability of 5+. Stats may not help skills. Relevant Circles may help Circles, Resources may help Resources.
- +1D per FoRK skill, +2D per FoRK at 7+.

- +1D if this test follows a successful linked test that exceeded its obstacle.
- +1D per point of persona artha spent.

Subtract Wound Dice
- Do not apply these wound penalties when testing Circles, Faith, Health, or Resources.
- -1D per light wound. 3 superficial wounds count as a light wound.
- -2D per midi wound.
- -3D per severe wound.
- -4D per traumatic wound.
- Ignore a single -1D wound penalty by spending a persona point; then mark 1 persona towards a Health epiphany.
- *Aristeia:* Ignore all wound penalties until a simple goal is achieved OR shift an ability one shade lighter for the remainder of the scene by spending 5 fate, 3 persona, and 1 deeds artha.

Player Rolls the Dice
- Black shade dice count as successes on a 4+, grey shade dice on a 3+, white shade dice on a 2+. All other results are traitors.
- Open-end all 6s by spending 1 fate point. If the roll is naturally open-ended, reroll 1 traitor.
- Magical skills, Astrology, Faith, and Steel are naturally open-ended.
- Astrology is open-ended on 1s as well as 6s, unless it is used in a linked test.
- Reroll all traitors by spending 1 deeds artha.
- Reroll all traitors once per session by using a related call-on trait.
- For standard or linked tests, the successes must equal or exceed the obstacle to pass.
- For versus tests, successes must exceed the obstacle to pass.
- For graduated tests, the number of successes simply determines the degree of success.

Determine the Results
- If the test succeeds, the intent is fulfilled, *exactly as described by the player.*
- The player may increase the quality and speed of the task by allocating excess successes to it.
- There is a tie on a versus test, the defender wins. *If there is no defender, call-on traits break the tie.* Otherwise, it remains a tie until the conflict is resolved using a different ability.
- If the test is failed, the consequences occur, *exactly as described by the GM.*
- PCs who helped on the test share in any of the consequences of failure.
- Cancel the time-related penalty applied from working carefully by spending 1 persona.
- Cheat certain death on a failed test by spending 1 persona and accepting some other costly consequence, if the GM allows it.
- Test the PC's Health to survive a mortal wound by spending 1 persona.

Player Marks Artha
- Tally up all fate, persona, and deeds artha spent on this test, including any spent on Aristeia. Mark these next to the ability tested.

- If this test was related to one of the PC's Beliefs or Instincts, mark the artha there too.
- *Epiphany.* Shift an ability 1 shade lighter if at least 20 fate, 10 persona, and 3 deeds artha are marked next to it.

Player Marks Test Difficulty
- Compare the number of dice rolled (ignoring dice added from artha) to the final obstacle.

	1-3 Dice	4-6 Dice	7+ Dice
Ob greater than dice	CHALLENGING		
Ob equal to dice	DIFFICULT	DIFFICULT	DIFFICULT
Ob 1 less than dice	ROUTINE	DIFFICULT	DIFFICULT
Ob 2 less than dice	ROUTINE	ROUTINE	DIFFICULT
Ob 3+ less than dice	ROUTINE	ROUTINE	ROUTINE

- Mark the type of test (challenging, difficult, or routine) by the ability being tested, ignoring whether it succeeded or failed.
- Perception, Resources, and Faith tests are only marked towards advancement if they succeed.
- PCs who helped on the test mark tests by comparing the helping ability's exponent to the Ob.
- On a Beginner's Luck test, *if the test would have been routine before doubling*, then mark it as a test towards opening that skill. If not, mark it as a difficult or challenging stat test.
- All graduated tests count as routine tests.
- If one ability is tested many times in a single conflict, only mark the highest Ob test, unless marking another test would allow that ability to advance. See below.
- Mark a test when a PC logs the required hours of practice in a stat or skill. See p. 47-48.

Player Checks for Advancement
- If a stat or skill has the number and type of tests required by the related table below, raise its exponent by one. Then erase all of its tests.

		Skill Tests				Stat Tests	
		R	D	C		D	C
	1	1	(1 or 1)		1	1	1
	2	2	(1 or 1)		2	1	1
	3	3	(2 or 1)		3	2	1
Skill Exponent	4	4	(2 or 1)		4	2	1
	5	-	3	1	5	3	1
	6	-	3	2	6	3	2
	7	-	4	2	7	4	2
	8	-	4	3	8	4	3
	9	-	5	3	9	5	3

- If an unopened skill has a number of tests marked equal to its aptitude (10 minus root stat) open it at half the root rounded down.
- Circles, Resources, Health, Steel, Faith, Greed, Grief, and Hate all advance like skills.
- Reflexes advances as Perception, Agility, and Speed advance. Mortal Wound advances as Power and Forte advance.

Resources

Player Defines Intent and Task
* State what the PC wants to buy.
* Explain how the PC is looking for it.
* *If the item is within the PC's means and there is nothing at stake, the GM Says Yes.*
* Base dice equals the PC's Resources exponent. If this is taxed, use the taxed Resources exponent instead.

GM Sets the Base Obstacle
* See p. 366-367 for Ob examples. See p. 372 if making a lifestyle test, once per cycle.
* Reduce the base obstacle by 1 if the PC succeeds at a haggling vs. haggling test.
* Alternatively, PCs may bid on a base Ob.
* Buying a 1D affiliation is Ob 3, a 2D affiliation is Ob 5, and a 3D affiliation is Ob 7.

GM Modifies the Base Obstacle
* +1 Ob if this test follows a failed linked test based on a relevant wise or skill.
* +1-3 Ob for being far away from the source of the PC's resources.
* +1-2 Ob if buying the item in bulk.
* +1 Ob to buy an affiliation with low nobility.
* +2 Ob to buy an affiliation with high nobility.
* +3 Ob to buy an elite or secretive affiliation.

Add Bonus Dice
* +1D if this test follows a linked test based on a relevant wise or skill that exceeded its obstacle.
* +1D per die of cash spent by PC.
* +1-10D per die invested from a single fund.
* +XD from loaned cash or funds.
* +2D for trying to buy a 1D advancement in your own affiliation.
* Resources may help Resources.
* Artha may be spent as normal.
* FoRKs are prohibited during Resources tests.
* Wounds do not subtract dice.

Determine the Results
* Roll total dice against the final obstacle.
* All cash dice used are lost.
* On a pass, the PCs obtains what they sought.
* On a fail, the PC's resources are taxed: -1D for routine tests, -2D for difficult tests, and by the margin of failure for challenging tests.
* All helpers on a failed test are taxed as well.
* If funds we used, taxed dice are removed from the fund first, and are lost permanently.
* If taxed Resources are reduced to 0, deplete your actual Resources exponent by 1D.
* The GM may give the Gift of Kindness and grant the item even on a failure. If so, the player may decline and only be taxed 1D.

Mark Test Difficulty
* Resources advances like a skill.
* Only successful tests count for advancement.
* Keep actual and taxed exponents separate. When Resources advances, increase the taxed exponent as well.

* At the GM's discretion, Resources may be advanced through gaining titles and rank.

Making Money
* To produce cash, make a Resources test with an Ob of double the cash dice desired.
* To create a fund, make a Resources test with an Ob of double the fund's dice plus 1.
* To replenish taxed dice, test a job skill plus FoRKs against an Ob of 1 plus taxed dice. Meeting the Ob restores 1D. Excess successes restores 1D or reduces time by 10% per success. This test takes a resource cycle to complete and earns the job skill a test.

Circles

Player Defines Intent and Task
* Describe an NPC in the PC's lifepath settings.
* Explain how the PC is looking for the NPC.
* *If nothing is at stake, the GM Says Yes.*
* The GM states the consequences of failure.
* Base dice equals the PC's Circles exponent.
* The base obstacle for a Circles test is 1.

GM Modifies the Base Obstacle
* +1 Ob if this test follows a failed linked test based on a relevant wise.
* +2 Ob if the NPC has an uncommon occupation, or has a different lifepath.
* +3 Ob if the NPC has a rare occupation.
* +1 Ob for a lower rank, station, or class.
* +2 Ob for a higher rank, station, or class.
* +3 Ob for the highest station in the setting.
* +1-2 Ob for unusual knowledge/disposition.
* +3 Ob for rare knowledge/disposition.
* +1-2 Ob for an unusual time and place.
* +3 Ob if you want the NPC right here, right now, in the middle of trouble.

Player Adds Bonus Dice
* +1D if the player has named the NPC.
* +1D if this test follows a linked test based on a relevant wise that exceeded its obstacle.
* +1-3D if the PC has an applicable affiliation.
* +1-3D if the PC has an applicable reputation.
* +1-3D based on the NPC's reputation.
* Similar Circles may help Circles.
* Artha may be spent as normal.
* FoRKs are prohibited during Circles tests.
* Wounds do not subtract dice.

Determine the Results
* Roll the total dice against the final obstacle.
* On a success, the PC finds the NPC in a favorable disposition to them. If the success exceeds the obstacle, the player may name the NPC.
* The PC has a relationship aptitude to the named NPC equal to 10 -Circles, -positive reputations, +negative reputations. If the PC contacts the NPC a number of times equal to the aptitude, add them to the PC's relationships.
* If this test was to join an organization, test Resources now to buy an affiliation with it.
* On a failure, the consequences happen. Helping characters share in the consequences.

* On a failure, the GM may decide that that PC has found an enemy, who the player names.
* If a failed Circles test threatens to subtract a reputation die, you may add that die to a relevant infamous reputation, if justifiable.
* Circles advances as a skill.

Steel

Determine Hesitation
* The GM calls for steel tests when a PC confronts surprise, pain, fear, or wonderment.
* Test Steel every time a PC take a wound, but otherwise a single type of effect may only cause a Steel test once per scene.
* The base obstacle for a Steel test is the PC's hesitation, equal to 10 minus Will.
* Base dice equal the PC's Steel exponent.

The GM Modifies Hesitation
* See p. 363 for hesitation Ob modifiers.

Add Bonus Dice
* +1D when surrounded by friends or allies.
* +2D when startled by something mundane.
* Artha may be spent as normal.
* FoRKs are forbidden, and usually so is help.
* Wounds subtract dice.

Determine the Results
* Roll total dice against the final obstacle.
* Steel tests are open-ended.
* On a pass, the PC does not hesitate.
* On a fail, the PC must swoon, stand and drool, run screaming, or fall prone and beg for mercy for a number of actions equal to the margin of failure.

Mark Test Difficulty
* Steel advances as a skill.
* The GM may allow the player to mark a Steel test without rolling if certain intense situations arise during play. See p. 364-365 for examples.

Skill Training

Determine Available Tests
* The instructor must be trained in the skill the PC wishes to learn, and that skill's exponent must be equal to or greater than the PC's.
* Instruction and practice are the only ways to learn training skills, such as armor training.
* Compare the exponent for the skill the PC wishes to learn against an obstacle equal to or less than the instructor's exponent. These Obs indicate the range of test difficulties available.

Instructor Makes an Instruction Test
* The instructor sets an obstacle for their instruction test based on the type of test they are providing: Ob 1 for routine tests, Ob 2 for difficult, Ob 3 for challenging.
* Add +1 Ob if teaching School of Thought and Artist skills, +2 Ob for Medicinal and Military, and +3 Ob for Sorcerous and Special skills.
* The instructor then tests their instruction skill.
* Artha, help, FoRKs and wounds all apply.

Time Passes

- Instruction tests last for days equal to 10 minus the instructors will, plus 10 minus the student's will, plus the obstacle of the test on offer.
- There is no leisure time during instruction.
- On a fail, the time counts as practice. Also, the PC either suffers +1 Ob to their next test in the skill being taught, or the instructor suffers +1 Ob to further instruct them. GM's call.

Mark Test Difficulty

- If the instructor passes their instruction test, mark down the skill test the PC earned. The instructor also earns an instruction test.

END OF SESSION

1: Nominate

- All participants nominate the GM or players for the awards below. GM has final say in to giving these awards to players, but the GM must accept if players nominate an NPC.
- 1 Fate per Belief used to drive the plot of the game forward.
- 1 Fate per Instinct used to make the PC's life more difficult.
- 1 Fate per trait used to make the PC's life harder, or which unexpectedly alters the direction of the story.
- 1 Fate for in-character, game-stopping humor.
- 1 Fate for the right skill at the right time.
- 1 Persona for accomplishing a goal Belief.
- 1 Persona for extraordinary, immersive roleplaying. This award is rare.

2: Vote for Mold Breaker

- A majority vote of all participants awards 1 persona to a player who roleplayed an inner conflict between their character's actions and their Beliefs. This award is rare.

3: The GM Awards Deeds

- Awarding Deeds artha is solely at GM discretion. No player nominations are allowed.
- 1 Deeds for sacrificing something to accomplish a goal greater than your own personal agenda.
- 1 Deeds for helping another character accomplish a goal that contradicts your own Beliefs.

4: End of Scenario Artha Awards

- At the end of a scenario, adventure, or campaign, the following awards are granted by a majority vote of all participants.
- 1 Persona for being the player that everyone relied on to get the mundane things done.
- 1 Persona for being the most valuable player in this scenario, who really pushed it to its conclusion.

5: Vote for New Traits

- At the end of an adventure or campaign (every 6-12 sessions), everyone may nominate traits to add or remove from the characters.
- Beliefs and Instincts are intended to change into traits over time. The more artha that has been invested in a Belief or Instinct, the more powerful the trait.
- Vote on each trait nominated. The player who owns the character being voted on may not vote. The trait is added or removed if the votes are unanimous.

6: Vote for New Reputations

- At the end of a scenario, everyone may nominate characters for new reputations, or to increase an established reputation by +1D. This works the same way as the trait vote.

7: Change Beliefs and Instincts

- Beliefs and Instincts can be changed at any time (with GM approval) but it's a good idea to re-evaluate at the end of a session.
- If a goal Belief has been accomplished, replace it with a new belief.