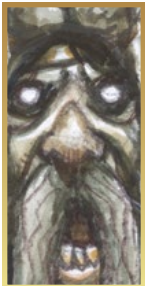


Toll for the Trolls



Each city has a secret underclass. You'll notice some members of this occult fellowship panhandling for change, hitch-hiking at the verge of an interstate highway, or wrapped in blanket-cocoons in the lighted doorways of consumer society. Most of these people, though, you *won't* see unless they want to be seen. It's not to their benefit to be too visible, after all, because visibility makes them targets. As far as most people are concerned, these folks are *un-people*: the homeless, the insane,

the scary dude or muttering lady wheeling a cart of cast-offs on her way to who-knows-where. And yet, off the grid of everyday citizenship, enlightenment and Awakening may be found.

The Bridge Troll Cabal is one of many "street families" based in Seattle, Washington - a city whose paradoxes of wealth and ruin nurture an unusually large homeless population. Although their name suggests a group based in the Fremont neighborhood, camped out by the big concrete troll-statue underneath the Aurora Bridge, these particular "bridge trolls" got their name from a squat beneath an I-5 underpass, tucked into a nook near the downtown exits. That nook, however, is a blind - one of several false encampments that the Bridge Trolls use to stay out of sight. And that's because one of the "trolls" has a powerful enemy... one who'll cause untold misery to the entire group if and when he ever finds them.

The Bridge Troll Cabal is an introductory group of low-level "gutter mages" and an array of related characters. Meant to familiarize new players with **Mage: The Ascension 20th Anniversary Edition**, this group can be used as player-characters, supporting characters, inspirations for your original creations, or perhaps even enemies in a saga of your own design. Despite their Seattle origins, these characters could be dropped into any urban setting. Their home-city isn't important in the grand scheme of things. Wherever people gather into cities, there'll be folks who "fall through the cracks."

That doesn't make them any less enlightened. It simply means they're human.

The Dirty Side of the Street

For a lot of obvious reasons, the full scope of homeless survival-tactics and street-level existence go beyond the scope of this **Mage** quickstart booklet. For more details, check out websites about homelessness and runaway kids; books like *Raised by Wolves*, by Jim Goldberg, *Rachel and Her Children*, by Jonathan Kozol, and *All God's Children*, by Rene Denfield; and the World of Darkness sourcebooks **Destiny's Price** and **The Orphan's Survival Guide**.

The Cabal

People fall between the cracks of mainstream society for lots of reasons. Some run away from abusive situations, while others collapse from addiction or other diseases. Many suffer some calamity that robs them of the resources (financial, emotional, social or otherwise) that they need to retain homes and jobs. A few drop out voluntarily, fed up with the apparently mindless grind. And then, there are folks whose Awakening blows their old lives straight to hell. Faced with sublime insights and frightening powers, they escape into the shadows until they can sort things out again. Many of them never rejoin mainstream society.

The Bridge Trolls wound up on the streets for different reasons. Each of them, however, realized that the “real world” most people accept is actually a trembling lie. Some of them – Khan and Synder in particular – had mystic training that allowed them to master their gifts to some extent. Others, like Jinx and Sabra, broke through into awareness without the cushioning presence of community or mentors. Chopper’s sort of in the middle, a self-taught metaphysical genius whose talents don’t seem “magical” to her. Led to one another through fate or chance, these five mages have adopted one another as “family”... the best family, in several cases, they’ve ever known.

The core of the Bridge Troll Cabal consists of:

- **Khan, the leader** – eldest, biggest, and most experienced of the Trolls.
- **Synder, the charisma bomb** – the group’s face... and, when need be, its fist as well.
- **Jinx, the crazy punk** – spirit-sighted mistress of good luck and bad fortune.
- **Sabra, the silent shaman** – wounded empath and intuitive beast-friend.
- **Chopper, the mad scientist** – genius tech-head with a gift for impossible machines.
- **Soot, the spirit-crow** – Synder’s “familiar,” or spirit-counterpart.
- **Chubby, Badge and Fenris** – the canine “honor guard” that protects the group at large.

From time to time, the Trolls pick up “strays”: other desperate souls, usually teenagers, who need a bit of guidance and someone to watch their backs. Each “troll” began as someone else’s “stray,” after all, and all five of them remember what it’s like to need a friend. Founders Khan and Synder both consider one another “strays,” and both of them are right. The various members of their “Cabal” (the name is a half-serious joke on Synder’s part) started off as strays who stuck around for a while. Many other kids have cycled through the group as well – sometimes dying or falling into addiction, most leaving after conflicts with someone else in the group.

Squats, Gigs and Scams

After an initial period of desperation, the Bridge Trolls have acquired a number of squats around town: illegal “homes” in abandoned buildings and hidden corners of Seattle’s downtown area. Thanks to Chopper and Khan, those squats have been beefed up with mundane traps, magickal wards, and weird machines cobbled together from tossed-out technology. The group moves between locations, crashing in the many abandoned buildings that fill Seattle’s overpriced neighborhoods. Each squat gets a “makeover”: sigils, tripwires, the occasional allied spirit (recruited by Jinx), and various animals that Sabra befriends. Unusually clean by the standards of the “average” street-level squat (Khan runs a pretty tight ship), these shelters still feature piles of oddly-ridded contraptions and technological junk that Chopper uses to keep herself occupied. Several of these machines work surprisingly well, especially considering that the squats don’t have electricity, Internet connections, or other connections to the city’s power-grid.

For the most part, the Bridge Trolls score food and money through a combination of panhandling (that is, begging), scamming (ripping off people who supposedly deserve it) and *busking*: performing on the streets for change. Because Seattle requires a performer to secure a busking permit before she hits the streets, the Trolls prefer a form of guerilla theatre where they show up, set up, layout a collection box for donations, juggle or hoop for a few minutes, grab the cash, and get the hell outta Dodge before cops or rival buskers show up to shake them down. Synder and Jinx own a handful of scrounged or improvised “spin-toys”: hula hoops, balls, weighted sticks, and *poi*: chains and cords weighted on one end and then spun around in fascinating patterns. Every so often, they manage to score enough cash or favors to get some white gas or kerosene, light their gear on fire, and then use a combination of skill and magick to avoid ugly accidents. When that’s possible, the Trolls spread the word through networks of contacts, snatch up a promising location, and stage illegal fire-shows around the Fremont, Queen Anne and University districts. These “guerilla gigs” have given the Trolls a whispered fame throughout the Seattle art community, and supply enough food, cash, and playmates to keep them happy for a week or two.

Even so, Khan likes to keep a low profile – and for good reasons. His old mentor, Big Ron Berrigan, has some nasty habits, and would like to “make an impression” on Khan and his tribe. It’d probably be wise to move on out of town, but Khan and Synder are pretty stubborn. They *like* their hometown, thank you very much, and moving on would rob them of the precious networks of friends, contacts, and other resources that keep the Bridge Trolls going. Besides, Synder and Jinx have a relationship going with the Spirit of Seattle itself, and feel a responsibility to the city’s homeless kids. Big Rob uses the underground as his personal hunting ground, and he and his “pack” of slumming assholes need to be taken down, hard. Better, then, to trap the stalker than to leave their home behind. And so, Khan and his pack of Trolls keep an essentially low profile, gather their resources, deepen their paranormal skills, and lay plans to make Big Ron disappear for good.

Khan Salvatore

Life is war. That's the message Darryl Salvatore absorbed while growing up in gang-torn Los Angeles. A child during the crack wars of the 1990s, "D" saw neighbors gunned down and friends carted off to jail long before they reached legal age. His mixed-race ancestry - part Latino, part-Italian, part-Turkish and part-Apache - dropped him into the margins of an already marginalized society. Running with the gangs in his teens, D found himself staring at two options: prison or the military. He opted to join the Army right after his 18th birthday, and reinvented himself by adopting the name *Khan* ("Ruler") in place of his old gang moniker.

As a darkish young man of "uncertain" heritage, Khan quickly wound up on the wrong end of post-9/11 Islamaphobia. Despite his Italian surname, folks kept assuming he was Muslim, and consequently making his life difficult. Khan's initial enlistment ended after a raucous tour in Iraq. During that tour, the isolated Khan had bonded with a fellow outsider named Duncan Fallon - a reputed Satanist, thanks to the demon tattooed across his back. Duncan encouraged that misunderstanding, but revealed to Khan that his true spiritual path was *Pagan*, not Satanic. By the time Khan left the service with a skin-of-his-teeth honorable discharge, the angry young man had acquired a Pagan warrior-ethic and a case of PTSD.

Yet despite his attitude and damage, Khan displayed keen intelligence and a bust-ass work-ethic. Ronald Berrigan, a Syndicate talent-scout, spotted Khan's aptitudes and quickly recruited him into "the business" - not as a leg-breaker but as a manager within an IT branch. Within a few months, Khan had absorbed an understanding of Enlightened business-culture and the principles of computer systems. If it hadn't been for Berrigan's innate corruption, Khan might have stayed with that firm for life. Instead, he poked his nose into company secrets, didn't like the smell, and got out just before Berrigan could bring the hammer down on him.

Between his mentors Fallen and Berrigan, Khan Awakened to the complex interplay of cosmic forces and hidden conspiracies. And so, when he lost himself in the underworld of Seattle's street-culture, the former gangbanger

brought metaphysical skill and formidable knowledge with him. Clicking with a cute street-performer named Synder, Khan began nurturing his better nature. Now he brings his hard-won skills to the homeless population, helping kids survive a world that's far more ruthless than it appears to be.

Image: A stocky dude whose constant scowl breaks into an occasional grin, Khan stands just over six feet tall, with roughly 240 pounds of bulk and muscle. At 28, he's older than most Seattle street "kids," and thus holds a position of obvious authority. Khan's mingled heritage is obvious from his hooked nose and dark skin, but the details remain elusive. Because he speaks fluent Spanish, some Arabic and a bit of Farsi, people aren't sure how to categorize him outside his clearly badass nature. His deep voice sounds like it's used to shouting; these days, though, he prefers to speak softly and carry two big fists. Synder has tempered his angry edge, and he can be a real softie once you get past that survivor's façade. If the two of them start arguing, though, everyone in the vicinity knows it... and stays very far away!

Roleplaying Tips: Your life has been a fight, and so you're often ready to throw down. The psychological carnage of Iraq, and the alienation even among your "comrades," has left you distrusting almost everyone. Deep beneath your gruff armor, there's a hard-bitten Papa Bear who's seen enough pain and damage to last several lifetimes. If and when you choose to protect someone, that person is safe from almost everyone except themselves. Your own safety, however, depends upon keeping a low profile. Ronald Berrigan still has folks looking for you, and if they find you, everything and everyone you value will be destroyed.



Focus: At Synder's urging, Khan has adopted the tools of flow-arts: hoops, poi and so forth. His preferred instruments, though, involve complex mathematical formulas and diagrams (which - in the form of graffiti - secure the Bridge Troll nest), martial arts, weapons, the intense concentration of a warrior and leader, and the social domination he has practiced since his childhood. Khan can employ potent Mind and Spirit Arts with a silent glare, and he prefers this tactic over violence these days, if only because violence creates unnecessary complications. Even so, he believes that life really is a war; survival depends

upon having the right weapons, and knowing when and how to use them well.

Avatar: Khan's Avatar appears in dreams as a guiding mentor. Typically, that mentor speaks in Duncan's voice and wears Duncan's features. Every so often, he appears as Berrigan instead. In recent years, that mentor has been Khan himself - an older, stronger, wiser Khan whose magnificence embodies that name. And sometimes, just sometimes, he dreams of a tiger-self that speaks in riddles as it chases him through ruined wilderness and the shadows of his own youth.



Name: Khan Salvatore
Player:
Chronicle:

Nature: Guardian
Demeanor: Machine
Essence: Questing

Affiliation: None/Ex Syndicate
Sect: Bridge Trolls
Concept:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●●
Stamina ●●●●●

Social

Charisma ●●●●●
Manipulation ●●●●●
Appearance ●●●●●

Mental

Perception ●●●●●
Intelligence ●●●●●
Wits ●●●●●

Abilities

Talents

Alertness ●●●●●
Art ○○○○○
Athletics ●●●●●
Awareness ●●●●●
Brawl Dirty Fighting ●●●●●
Empathy ●●●●●
Expression ●●●●●
Intimidation ●●●●●
Leadership ●●●●●
Streetwise Survivor ●●●●●
Subterfuge ○○○○○

Skills

Crafts Carpentry ●●●●●
Drive ●●●●●
Etiquette ○○○○○
Firearms ●●●●●
Martial Arts Tae Kwon Do ●●●●●
Meditation ●●●●●
Melee ●●●●●
Research ○○○○○
Stealth ●●●●●
Survival ●●●●●
Technology ●●●●●

Knowledges

Academics ●●●●●
Computer ●●●●●
Cosmology ○○○○○
Enigmas ●●●●●
Esoterica Yoga ●●●●●
Investigation ○○○○○
Law Cop Talk ●●●●●
Medicine ○○○○○
Occult ●●●●●
Politics ○○○○○
Science ○○○○○

Spheres

Correspondence ○○○○○
Entropy ○○○○○
Forces ●●●●●

Life ●●●●●
Matter ●●●●●
Mind ●●●●●

Prime ●●●●●
Spirit ●●●●●
Time ○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

Allies ●●●●●
Arcane ●●●●●
Contacts ●●●●●
Sanctum ●●●●●
Spies ●●●●●
Avatar ●●●●●

Arete

● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

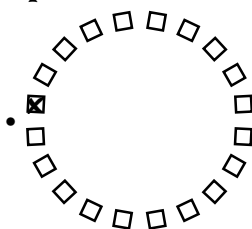
Health

Bruised -0
Hurt -1
Injured -1
Wounded -2
Mauled -2
Crippled -5
Incapacitated

Other Traits

Pharmacopia ○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Quintessence



Paradox

Experience

Synder

For some folks, the biggest prisons exist in their heads. And for Cynthia Maria Tate, that prison took the form of extreme dyslexia and dyscalculia, resulting in chronic insecurity despite her many accomplishments. Remarkably physical, Cynthia blasted through gymnastics, swimming, track and field, and several disciplines of dance and martial arts – the latter in spite of her brain’s stubborn refusal to process katas correctly. When she wasn’t in class or practice, though, Cynthia favored manga, *World of Warcraft*, and the Harry Potter and *Lord of the Rings* films. (Her dyslexia prevented her from reading the books.) Inside, she saw a hero – smart, courageous, gracefully badass. Everyone else, though, saw her differently. Between her athletic prowess, blond hair, model-grade looks, and dyslexic mental blocks, Cynthia got tagged as a cute but stupid jock... a judgment she absorbed but never could accept.

And so, she drank. A lot.

It’s not uncommon in the jock crowd; hell, it tends to be weekly ritual. And yet, the struggle to reconcile the young Amazon in her head and the blonde ditz everybody saw in front of them drove Cynthia to self-punishing extremes of athletic accomplishment and extreme intoxication. Rejected from the fantasy realm for being a “fake geek girl,” and treated like a prize by people she’d begun to loathe, Cynthia drank herself literally to death one night.

But did not stay dead for long.

Hovering over her dying body, surrounded by her so-called “friends,” Cynthia heard a soft voice ask her “Would you like to try that again?”

“Try what?” she responded, without a voice.

“Living.”

“Yeah.”

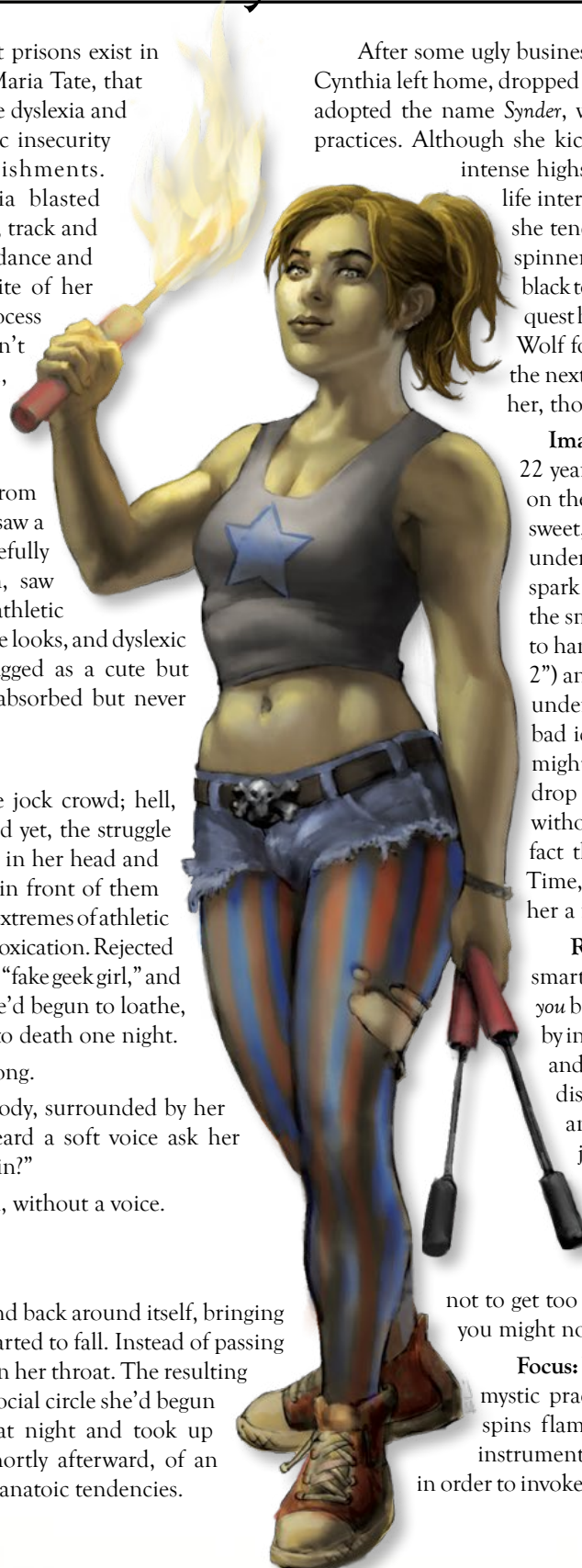
And so, time seemed to wind back around itself, bringing her to the moment when she started to fall. Instead of passing out, she shoved her fingers down her throat. The resulting mess got her kicked out of the social circle she’d begun to hate... but she survived that night and took up a different path... the Path, shortly afterward, of an initiated Ecstatic mage with Thanatoic tendencies.

After some ugly business she won’t discuss with anyone, Cynthia left home, dropped out of her occult fellowships, and adopted the name *Synder*, which plays off her fire-spinning practices. Although she kicked the booze, her addiction to intense highs and lows continues to keep her life interesting. Sweet but temperamental, she tends to go through friends like fire-spinners go through white fuel and wet black towels. At the moment, her ongoing quest has her playing the proactive Mama Wolf for the Bridge Troll Cabal. Where the next turn of life’s roulette wheel takes her, though, is anybody’s guess.

Image: A lean-muscled young woman 22 years old, Synder seems out of place on the streets. She looks too clean, too sweet, too pretty, too *together* to be living under a bridge. And yet, there’s a manic spark behind her eyes, and feral hints to the smile she flashes just as she’s about to hand out a beatdown. Her height (5’ 2”) and looks (stunning) lead people to underestimate her, and that’s a really bad idea... for while her partner Khan might be the heavyweight, Synder can drop the average street-rat in a fight without bothering with magick. The fact that she understands the Arts of Time, Fate, Spirit and Life itself make her a nasty person to oppose.

Roleplaying Tips: You actually *are* smart – far more intelligent than even *you* believe yourself to be – but hobbled by insecurity, self-destructive impulses, and a wicked case of sensory processing disorders. Magick, martial training, and the flow-arts (fire-spinning, juggling, hooping) help you sort through the craziness in your head. Whipsaw back and forth between friendly nurturing and screaming rage, but be careful not to get too close to the edge. Next time out, you might not get a chance to come back.

Focus: Like her other disciplines, Synder’s mystic practice is based in physicality. She spins flame, staves, hoops, poi, and other instruments into dazzling complex patterns in order to invoke a sense of deep focus. Synder also



juggles knives, balls, and other goodies; meditates quietly several times a day, usually by concentrating on circular designs; and uses intense exercise as a channel for the altered state of mind she seeks. Ever since her “reboot,” she never drinks or uses other recreational chemicals. Despite her rough surroundings – or perhaps because of them – Synder trusts that “it’s all good if you believe it is.” To her, life is a miracle that can end at any moment... and thus, it’s worth cherishing. Even on the worst days, it seems to beat the alternative!

In addition to her innate talents, Synder has a familiar: a crow named Soot, whose guidance helps Synder learn things no mere human should be able to know. Soot scouts out secrets

– usually about interesting new talents or threats – and brings them home to the Cabal. That corvid associate, of course, is no simple crow. Soot’s actually a small embodiment of Seattle itself, wrapped up in the feathered form of the city’s most famous birds.

Avatar: To date, Synder has never seen the face behind the voice that gave her a second chance. She still hears it, though – a soft, vaguely feminine voice that sometimes speaks in fire but most often comes to her during dreams and meditations. Once, however, she thought she’d caught a glimpse of the face behind that voice. The bolt of pure adrenalized terror that woke her up that night has left her hoping that she never sees that face again.



Name: Snyder
 Player:
 Chronicle:

Nature: Romantic
 Demeanor: Caregiver
 Essence: Questing

Affiliation: None
 Sect: Bridge Trolls
 Concept: Charisma Bomb

Attributes

Physical

Strength _____ ●●●●○
 Dexterity *Graceful* _____ ●●●●○
 Stamina *Tough* _____ ●●●●○

Social

Charisma _____ ●●●●○
 Manipulation _____ ●●●●○
 Appearance *Fierce* _____ ●●●●○

Mental

Perception _____ ●●●●○
 Intelligence _____ ●●●●○
 Wits _____ ●●●●○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness _____ ●○○○○
 Art *Dance* _____ ●●○○○
 Athletics *Flow Arts* _____ ●●●●○
 Awareness _____ ●●●●○
 Brawl _____ ●●●●○
 Empathy _____ ●●○○○
 Expression _____ ○○○○○
 Intimidation _____ ●●○○○
 Leadership _____ ●○○○○
 Streetwise _____ ●●●●○
 Subterfuge _____ ○○○○○

Skills

Crafts _____ ●●○○○
 Drive _____ ●○○○○
 Etiquette _____ ●●○○○
 Firearms _____ ○○○○○
 Martial Arts _____ ●●●●○
 Meditation _____ ●●○○○
 Melee _____ ●●○○○
 Research _____ ○○○○○
 Stealth _____ ●○○○○
 Survival _____ ●●○○○
 Technology _____ ●○○○○

Knowledges

Academics _____ ●○○○○
 Computer _____ ○○○○○
 Cosmology _____ ○○○○○
 Enigmas _____ ●●○○○
 Esoterica *Yoga* _____ ●●●●○
 Investigation _____ ○○○○○
 Law _____ ●○○○○
 Medicine _____ ●○○○○
 Occult _____ ●●●●○
 Politics _____ ○○○○○
 Science _____ ○○○○○

Spheres

Correspondence _____ ○○○○○
 Entropy _____ ●○○○○
 Forces _____ ●●○○○

Life _____ ●●●●○
 Matter _____ ●○○○○
 Mind _____ ●●○○○

Prime _____ ●○○○○
 Spirit _____ ●○○○○
 Time _____ ●●○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

Allies _____ ●●●●○
 Avatar _____ ●●●●○
 Contacts _____ ●●○○○
 Familiar _____ ●●○○○
 Sanctum _____ ●●○○○
 Spies _____ ●○○○○

Arete

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
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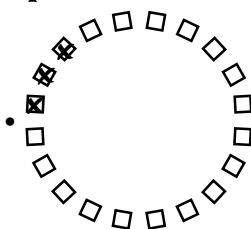
Health

Bruised -0
 Hurt -1
 Injured -1
 Wounded -2
 Mauled -2
 Crippled -5
 Incapacitated

Other Traits

Acrobatics _____ ●●○○○
 Area Knowledge: Seattle _____ ●●○○○
 Belief Systems _____ ●●○○○
 Pharmacopeia _____ ●○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○

Quintessence



Paradox

Experience

Chopper

We live in a throwaway society, and Seattleites throw away more tech than the residents of any other city except maybe Tokyo. Yolanda Bender Smith had a knack for taking junk and making it work in new and unexpected ways, and that knack translated into job-offers around town even before she graduated from that crummy Central District high school. Disgusted with the willful stupidity of her classmates (and often bullied for “acting too white”), Yolanda quit school at 16, took one of those jobs, and sued – successfully – for emancipation from her parents. Sadly, it’s one thing to be smart enough to make tech dance to your tune, and quite another to have the life-experience to keep a job, an apartment, a reliable bank balance, and friends. Within roughly a year, she’d been fired, evicted, and dropped into Seattle’s vast homeless population. That experience broke her natural talent into full-blown Awakening. Since then, she’s been a Dumpster-diving genius, crafting workable and sometimes miraculous tech out of other people’s junk.

Taking up the street-name Chopper (from her propensity for “chopping” technology into new and interesting shapes), Yolanda caught Khan’s eye shortly after he bolted from his own tech gig. When Khan and Synder formed the Bridge Trolls, Chopper became their first “little sister.” She’s still got a bit of a crush on Khan, but sublimates those feelings by working up impossible machines based on theories that toss conventional physics off the nearest overpass. Those machines now provide comforts and resources that the group would never have without her.

A speed-reading self-taught prodigy (with some coaching from Khan, and metaphysical lessons from Synder), Chopper would make a natural candidate for the Society of Ether or Virtual Adepts if she ever realized that those groups exist. She’d probably make a resourceful Technocrat, too, if she could learn to follow directions. Right now, though, she’s coasting on her own brilliance and the endless trove of books (tech and otherwise) that she snatches from Dumpsters, bookstores and yard-sales. Librarians at the Seattle Public Library recognize her on sight, and she’s officially banned from their premises for stealing one too many books. Despite that exile from the library’s stock, one librarian named Dami tips Chopper off when the library’s dumping damaged

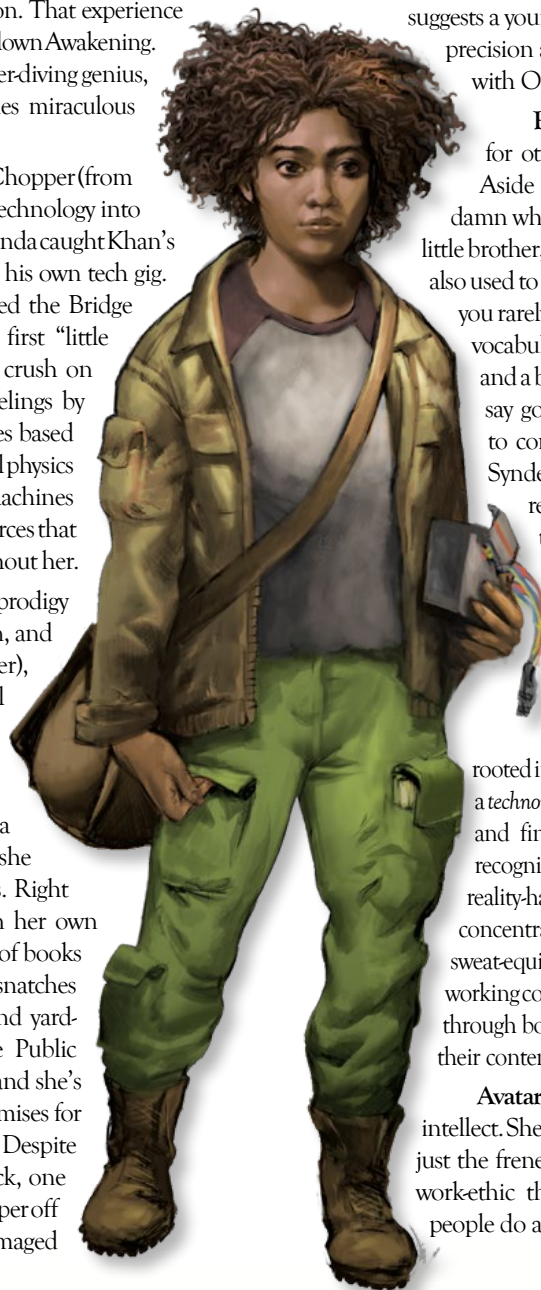
or overstocked books. And so, though Khan and Synder keep reminding Chopper that they’re running out of room, the girl still burns through all the reading material she can get her hands on. Like her scavenged technology, books and magazines seem to be eternally useful and constantly within reach.

Image: Tall and rangy, Chopper looks and acts older than her 18 years. She favors men’s shirts and jackets for the deep pockets they contain. Combat boots protect her feet when she’s digging through Dumpsters and trash. The pockets of her ragged cargo pants bulge with tools, books, and little bits of tech. Jinx calls her “McGyver,” and Chopper’s standard response (“*Whiteboy WISHES he was me*”) is a running joke between the girls. Her messy half-fro suggests a young black Einstein, and she speaks with the rapid precision and slightly flat inflection of a borderline Aspie with OCD from hell.

Roleplaying Tips: You’re used to being too smart for other folks to understand, let alone actually *like*. Aside from Khan and Synder, you truly don’t give a damn what anyone thinks of you. (Okay, Sabra’s like your little brother, but Jinx isn’t even worth your contempt.) You’re also used to being shoved into other people’s idiotic boxes, so you rarely strive to be anything but brisk and erudite. Your vocabulary is vast, thanks to compulsive reading habits and a background in esoteric sciences. Most of what you say goes over everyone else’s head; only Khan seems to comprehend your technical knowledge, and only Synder (who is, you know, far smarter than anyone else realizes) can wrap her head around your parapsychical theories. As the smartest one in any given room, you simply do what you do and leave the rest of the world choking on your dust.

Focus: Chopper doesn’t view herself as any kind of “mage.” She’s using science, plain and simple – a science more esoteric than conventionally accepted principles, of course, but rooted in sound theory nonetheless! And so, she’s essentially a *technomancer*, someone who “divines through technology” and finds a deeper level of truth that few people ever recognize. As a practice, Chopper employs weird science and reality-hacking, channeled through machines, gadgets, tools, concentrated brilliance (essentially meditation), and lots of sweat-equity poured into the junk she digs up and restores to working condition. Her ravenous reading habits focus her skills through books as well, with her restless mind sorting through their contents to make radical new connections.

Avatar: Chopper’s inner genius is just that: her own intellect. She doesn’t perceive strange spirits or alternate selves, just the frenetic pace of endless connections and a fanatical work-ethic that illuminates pathways between what other people do and what she’s capable of achieving.



Name: Chopper
Player:
Chronicle:

Nature: Mad Scientist
Demeanor: Loner
Essence: Dynamic

Affiliation: None
Sect: Bridge Trolls
Concept: Scrap-Tech Genius

Attributes

Physical

Strength _____ ●●○○○
 Dexterity _____ ●●●○○
 Stamina _____ ●●○○○

Social

Charisma _____ ●●○○○
 Manipulation _____ ●●○○○
 Appearance _____ ●●○○○

Mental

Perception *Patterns* _____ ●●○○○
 Intelligence *Genius* _____ ●●●●●
 Wits _____ ●●○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness _____ ●○○○○
 Art _____ ○○○○○
 Athletics _____ ●○○○○
 Awareness _____ ●●●○○
 Brawl _____ ●○○○○
 Empathy _____ ○○○○○
 Expression _____ ○○○○○
 Intimidation _____ ●○○○○
 Leadership _____ ○○○○○
 Streetwise _____ ●●○○○
 Subterfuge _____ ●○○○○

Skills

Crafts *Metalwork* _____ ●●●○○
 Drive _____ ●○○○○
 Etiquette _____ ○○○○○
 Firearms _____ ○○○○○
 Martial Arts _____ ○○○○○
 Meditation _____ ●●○○○
 Melee _____ ●○○○○
 Research *Obscure Data* _____ ●●●○○
 Stealth _____ ●●○○○
 Survival _____ ○○○○○
 Technology *Jury-Rig* _____ ●●●○○

Knowledges

Academics _____ ●●●○○
 Computer _____ ●●●○○
 Cosmology _____ ○○○○○
 Enigmas _____ ●●○○○
 Esoterica *Wierd Science* _____ ●●●○○
 Investigation _____ ○○○○○
 Law _____ ○○○○○
 Medicine _____ ○○○○○
 Occult _____ ●○○○○
 Politics _____ ○○○○○
 Science _____ ●●●○○

Spheres

Correspondence _____ ●○○○○
 Entropy _____ ○○○○○
 Forces _____ ●●●○○

Life _____ ○○○○○
 Matter _____ ●●●○○
 Mind _____ ●○○○○

Prime _____ ●●●○○
 Spirit _____ ●○○○○
 Time _____ ○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

Avatar _____ ●●○○○
 Contacts _____ ●●●○○
 Sanctum _____ ●●○○○
 Library _____ ●●○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○

Arete

● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

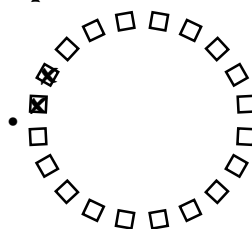
Health

Bruised -0
 Hurt -1
 Injured -1
 Wounded -2
 Mauled -2
 Crippled -5
 Incapacitated

Other Traits

Area Knowledge: Seattle _____ ●●●○○
 Crafts: Electronics _____ ●●○○○
 Crafts: High Tech _____ ●●○○○
 Science: Engineering _____ ●●○○○
 Science: Physics _____ ●●●○○
 Security _____ ●●○○○
 _____ ○○○○○

Quintessence



Paradox

Experience

Jinx

Nina Harris was a punk – not in the rock sense, but in the “don’t give a rat’s ass” sense. Kicked out the house for getting caught having sex with her boyfriend *and* her girlfriend in her alcoholic mother’s bed, she hit the streets of Seattle looking for shelter and a chance to run on her own. Nina took on the name *Jinx* (her mother’s nickname for the reckless girl), and beat the living hell out of the first chicken hawk to swoop down and try and try his luck with her. That didn’t go over so well with the pimp’s friends, however, and Jinx finished her first night on the streets by sleeping under a bridge and praying she’d wake up alive.

Jinx doesn’t pray like most folks do. Having rejected her dead father’s attempts at Catholicism, she’d checked out neopaganism – partly from rebellion, and partly because she thought she heard spirits talking to her. She wasn’t wrong about that second part. The Spirit of Seattle itself (or at least one of its many aspects) whispered to her underneath that bridge. By that point, Jinx had already claimed a half-serious devotion to a goddess-figure, too: Risk, the Lady of Luck and Fate. Jinx found herself praying to Risk that night... and Risk answered in some unexpected ways.

The next day, Jinx met and befriended three other street-mystics: Synder, Chopper and Khan. Later that same day, while skateboarding through fast traffic, Jinx almost got nailed by a speeding car. Hitting a random pothole, the driver swerved and smashed into a lamppost. Jinx herself flipped her board and wound up dazed on a sidewalk that she swore was talking to her. In her memory, Jinx had been lifted clear of the traffic and the crash by a burning black-skinned angel. “That’s Talon,” said the sidewalk as the angel nodded; “She’ll be taking care of you from now on, in the name of Risk.”

And so now, “in the name of Risk,” Jinx works with Synder, Khan, and their friends in a campaign of street survival. Although they’re far too small to make a real difference in the bigger affairs of Seattle’s city life, the Bridge Trolls watch the fringes of that city’s street community, picking off its worst predators while nurturing folks that everyone else would prefer to forget.

Image: A tough-eyed mix of German and Choctaw heritage, Jinx is 16 years old with rough-chopped chin-length hair dyed (badly) in blue and purple streaks. Smearly dark mascara and an array of fierce facial piercings accentuate her face. Overlarge ragged death-metal T-shirts conceal her solid athletic build. A former gymnast, Jinx keeps in shape with rigorous exercise, skateboarding, and an especially risky form of parkour. Hoodies, torn leggings, and a beat-up Utilikilt compliment her battered Doc Martins and a thrift-shop biker jacket decorated with whatever Jinx can stab through or draw on its shell. Lean and pixie-grinned, she’s about 5’ 7” but comes across as shorter than she really is. Fingerless gloves cover her punch-roughened knuckles. Jinx looks like trouble, smells like a street-kid, and manages to make that all look good.

Roleplaying Tips: You’ve devoted to Risk, and so taking chances is a sacred act. You’re not bad at heart, really, but you can be a pain in the ass. To your street-family, however, you’re blood-loyal and generous. Authority is a joke, pain is a flavor, and if you live to reach age 18, nobody will be more surprised than you.

Focus: As far as Jinx is concerned, we live in a world of gods and monsters, taking whatever we can grab through whatever means we can afford. She sees the world as a living thing, invested with spirits that most people never understand. To get by in that world a person needs to have allies, take risks, and learn whatever she can learn about the forces that seem forbidden to anyone without the balls to deal with them on their own terms. As a practice, Jinx uses a form of gutter-magick witchcraft. Her instruments are coins, dice, graffiti sigils, prayers to Risk, wild chances, painful ordeals, and sacrifices of blood (typically her own) that’s shed by doing stupid things and living through the experience.

Avatar: Jinx’s potent Avatar, Talon, appears to her as a feminine angel with red-black skin, black-feathered wings, and a haze of fire. As far as Jinx is concerned, Talon is as real, as physical, as alive as anyone else she knows. Thus far, no one else has seen Talon appear. Synder, though, seems to be able to smell the hot-iron smell of that spirit, and hear Talon’s smooth yet hungry voice.



Name: Jinx
Player:
Chronicle:

Nature: Seeker
Demeanor: Rebel
Essence: Dynamic

Affiliation: None
Sect: Bridge Trolls
Concept: Wiseass Street Punk

Attributes

Physical

Strength _____ ●●○○○
Dexterity _____ ●●●○○
Stamina _____ ●●●○○

Social

Charisma _____ ●●●○○
Manipulation _____ ●●●○○
Appearance _____ ●●●○○

Mental

Perception _____ ●●○○○
Intelligence _____ ●●○○○
Wits _____ ●●○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness _____ ●●○○○
Art _____ ○○○○○
Athletics _____ ●○○○○
Awareness _____ ●●○○○
Brawl _____ ●●●○○
Empathy _____ ○○○○○
Expression _____ ○○○○○
Intimidation _____ ●●○○○
Leadership _____ ○○○○○
Streetwise _____ ●●○○○
Subterfuge _____ ○○○○○

Skills

Crafts _____ ○○○○○
Drive _____ ●○○○○
Etiquette _____ ●○○○○
Firearms _____ ○○○○○
Martial Arts _____ ○○○○○
Meditation _____ ○○○○○
Melee _____ ●○○○○
Research _____ ○○○○○
Stealth _____ ●○○○○
Survival _____ ○○○○○
Technology _____ ○○○○○

Knowledges

Academics _____ ●●○○○
Computer _____ ●●○○○
Cosmology _____ ○○○○○
Enigmas _____ ○○○○○
Esoterica Chaos Magick _____ ●○○○○
Investigation _____ ○○○○○
Law _____ ●○○○○
Medicine _____ ○○○○○
Occult _____ ●○○○○
Politics _____ ○○○○○
Science _____ ○○○○○

Spheres

Correspondence _____ ○○○○○
Entropy _____ ●●○○○
Forces _____ ●○○○○

Life _____ ●●○○○
Matter _____ ○○○○○
Mind _____ ○○○○○

Prime _____ ○○○○○
Spirit _____ ●○○○○
Time _____ ○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

Allies _____ ●●○○○
Avatar _____ ●●●●●
Mentor _____ ●○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

Arete

● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
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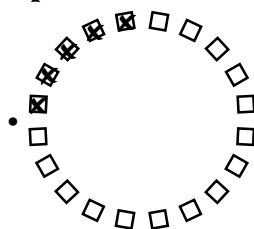
Health

Bruised -0
Hurt -1
Injured -1
Wounded -2
Mauled -2
Crippled -5
Incapacitated

Other Traits

Acrobatics _____ ●●○○○
Area Knowledge: Seattle _____ ●○○○○
Pharmacopeia _____ ●○○○○
Seduction _____ ●●○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

Quintessence



Paradox

Experience

Sabra

It's too dangerous to be a girl. And so, Stephanie Bergamo chose to be a boy instead. Hacking her hair close to her scalp, she assumed the male name "Skip," much to her parents' disgust and her classmates' amusement. After a series of brutalizations known only to Sabra, Synder, and the perpetrators of those crimes, Skip left home, took on the name *Sabra*, and spent the better part of a year deepening the trauma by doing whatever it took to survive. As a result, Sabra almost never speaks, and watches the world through a haunted thousand-yard stare. Sometime during that nightmarish period, Sabra Awakened. Thanks to the damage, though, his mystic talents remain limited to empathy, uncanny perceptions of space and time, and a gift for dealing with animals. Such kinship has been a consistent fixture of Sabra's life; since his Awakening, however, that combination of talent and experience has blossomed into a preternatural (some have called it "freakish") affinity for beasts.

Sabra's always had a close connection to animals. Under every name, s/he's gotten along well with even the most unfriendly beasts. One of the many torments visited upon Stephanie during her awful years at home involved the beating of the family dog, Shelby, whenever Stephanie's dad was in a bad mood. And so now, as Sabra, the silent mage keeps three dogs as part of the Bridge Troll family, and flies into a rage if anyone dares to harm a dog in his presence. Those three dogs – Chubby (who's actually quite skinny), Badge and Fenris – eat before Sabra will feed himself. For obvious reasons, then, Sabra is bone-thin. Synder and Khan try to get him to eat more, but he quietly insists that the dogs get whatever food they need.

When necessary, Sabra communicates with his family through empathy (in game terms, Mind 2 magick). Most often, though, he prefers eloquent gestures and glares. His connection to animals requires no sounds at all, and can be unnervingly beautiful to watch. Although he does not affect the feral behavior that someone might expect from a "dog boy" (a nickname that certain folks dare to use in his presence... *once*), Sabra's bond recalls primal communion, not the clumsy "training" that other folks employ.

No Bridge Troll ever refers to Sabra as anything other than a boy. They all know he's biologically female, but respect the identity he has chosen. If anyone's stupid enough to claim otherwise, a nasty glare is only the beginning of the grief they'll catch from the rest of the group. And although many people think Sabra is mentally challenged, he's actually quite intelligent and eerily perceptive. His silence comes not from a lack of thought but from a refusal to share what's on his mind.

Image: Painfully thin and pale, Sabra wears oversized shirts, jackets and pants to conceal his feminine curves. Even as a boy, he's rather pretty – a fact he hides by slouching, scowling, and smearing dirt across his face. Not quite 16, he's been living as a boy since around puberty, and has gotten rather good at teen-male body language. His voice is high, however, which is another reason he rarely speaks. Sabra always has at least one dog close by, and makes friends with everything from rats to pigeons – a useful skill when he's panhandling to feed his pack.

Roleplaying Tips: It isn't safe to be who you once were, especially not on the streets. Sure, Synder and Jinx manage it, but they're tougher than you'll ever be. Not that boys are safe, either. There's no such *thing* as safety, really, and the only reason you're not raw meat walking is because you've got a pack to back you up. Honestly, animals – even the sick ones, even the mean ones – are better than most people. It's your responsibility, then, to be better than the average person. There's already too much pain in the world, after all, so why add more?



Focus: Though he'd never apply the word to himself, Sabra's an urban shaman: wounded, intuitive, guided by a bond with the living world and the spirits just out of sight. To him, that world is intrinsically divine, poisoned by human beings but ultimately greater than they are. He uses meditation, eye-contact, physical touch, self-sacrifice (cutting, silence and starvation) and ordeals (likewise) to focus his Arts, and he views those magicks as extensions of his spiritual connection to the living natural world.

Paradoxically, Sabra knows virtually nothing about living in the wilderness. He's been a city-kid all his life, and although he longs to join the wild world beyond the urban sprawl, he doesn't have the slightest idea what to do if he had the chance

to do so. Deep inside, that adds to his quiet shame; Sabra feels like he should run free in the wild, but is secretly terrified of what might happen if he tried.

Avatar: Sabra views his inner guiding self as a shadow that whispers to him in the masculine voice he strives to imitate with his real vocal chords. That shadow is Sabra himself, but stronger and more confident than his physical self. He also "feels" animals communicating with him in their natural "language," and has been able to understand them since early childhood. More often than not, it's this "animal sense" that Sabra connects with when performing what folks would call "magick." He doesn't believe that he's a "mage" himself, but that talent sure comes in handy...



Name: Sabra
 Player:
 Chronicle:

Nature: Survivor
 Demeanor: Kid
 Essence: Primordial

Affiliation: None
 Sect: Bridge Trolls
 Concept: Wounded Urban Shaman

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●○○○
 Dexterity ●●○○○
 Stamina Tenacious ●●●●○

Social

Charisma ●○○○○
 Manipulation ●●●○○
 Appearance ●●○○○

Mental

Perception Feral ●●●●○
 Intelligence ●●○○○
 Wits Wary ●●●●○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness ●●●○○
 Art Painting ●●○○○
 Athletics ●○○○○
 Awareness ●●●○○
 Brawl ●●○○○
 Empathy ●●●○○
 Expression ●○○○○
 Intimidation ●○○○○
 Leadership ○○○○○
 Streetwise ●●●○○
 Subterfuge ●●○○○

Skills

Crafts ○○○○○
 Drive ○○○○○
 Etiquette ○○○○○
 Firearms ○○○○○
 Martial Arts ○○○○○
 Meditation ●○○○○
 Melee ●○○○○
 Research ○○○○○
 Stealth ●●●○○
 Survival Urban ●●●○○
 Technology ●○○○○

Knowledges

Academics ●●○○○
 Computer ○○○○○
 Cosmology ●○○○○
 Enigmas ●●○○○
 Esoterica Totemism ●●○○○
 Investigation ○○○○○
 Law ○○○○○
 Medicine ●○○○○
 Occult ●●○○○
 Politics ○○○○○
 Science ○○○○○

Spheres

Correspondence ○○○○○
 Entropy ○○○○○
 Forces ○○○○○

Life ●●○○○
 Matter ○○○○○
 Mind ●●○○○

Prime ●○○○○
 Spirit ●○○○○
 Time ○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

Allies ●●●○○
 Arcane ●●○○○
 Avatar ●○○○○
 Sanctum ●●○○○
 ○○○○○
 ○○○○○

Arete

● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
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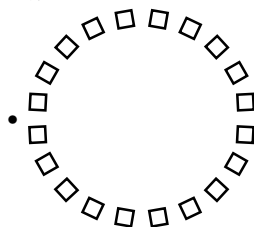
Health

Bruised -0
 Hurt -1
 Injured -1
 Wounded -2
 Mauled -2
 Crippled -5
 Incapacitated

Other Traits

Animal Kinship ●●●●●
 Seduction ●○○○○
 Art: Acting ●○○○○
 ○○○○○
 ○○○○○
 ○○○○○
 ○○○○○

Quintessence



Paradox

Experience