

SCION™

HERO

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THE WORLD OF SCION

Escaping from Polyphemus's cave. Freeing the valkyrie Brunhild from her fiery prison. Serving as a loa's steed. Slaying the ahuitzotl. Scribing the *Papyrus of Ani*. Darkening the river with Orochi's blood.

These are just a few of the epic deeds performed by the Gods and their descendents in the epic folklore of humankind. Each tale is a memorable event, showing the precarious relationship between Gods, mortals and those who find themselves somewhat between the two. In the parlance of the game you are about to experience, these are the Scions.

The savage Titans have escaped their eternal prison to wage war with the Gods once more, and those battles in the Overworld have spilled over into our World. Armed with Birthright weapons and possessed of mighty Boons granted by their divine parents, the Scions, the offspring of both God and man, stand as humanity's only defense against the dread Titans' spawn.

Will you rise to the heights of power through your heroism? Will you become more than just a pawn in a divine game? What great events will mark your divine ascent?

PLAYING THE GAME

Welcome to Scion, a modern game of Divine Conflict and Epic Heroism.

To play *Of Shadows Yet to Come*, all you will need is this booklet, some pencils, and some 10-sided dice.

This demo adventure can be used by a maximum number of seven people, six players and one Storyteller. The players will be assuming the role of one of the six signature characters to be featured in the Scion books. The Storyteller running the game will need to be familiar with all of the rules presented in this booklet as well as the events of the adventure itself. Everyone should read the first section of this booklet, which will explain the basic system and rules. The remaining sections of this demo, except for the character sheets, are for the Storyteller and contain details on the events the players will participate in during *Of Shadows Yet to Come*.

OF
SHADOWS
YET
TO
COME

ROLLING DICE

Scion uses a system in which 10-sided dice are used to inject a degree of chance and uncertainty into play. In the system you form a *dice pool* from the dots referenced on your characters sheet.

For Example: The Storyteller might ask you to roll (Perception + Awareness) to spot a hidden assassin. The character sheet has Perception 2 and Awareness 3, so you would roll five 10-sided dice.

Each die you roll that comes up 7 or greater is called a *success*. For Scions 10s usually count as two successes. For Storyteller characters, 10s only count as one success.

Rolls also have a *difficulty*, which determines the number of successes you need to succeed on an action. The normal difficulty level is 1 unless otherwise stated. If you roll fewer successes than the difficulty than you have failed the roll and did not succeed.

If you roll no successes *and* at least one dice shows “1”, then you have *botched* the roll. A botch is a catastrophic failure: the gun backfires, your sword flies from your hand, you casually mention to Aphrodite that she has gained weight. While a botch generally results in a situation that can harm or seriously endanger a character, it is not always the worst possible result. A botch should make the game more interesting. For example, a botched jump between two buildings might result in a successful jump, right into a rooftop yakuza interrogation.

DICE POOLS

Your basic dice pool in Scion will be (Attribute + Ability). This will be influenced by penalties and bonuses depending on the circumstances of the roll. These will either be part of an in-game mechanic: *wound penalties* from damage, *accuracy* on a weapon; or a situation modifier: such as adding two dice to a hiding roll for diving into a dumpster, or a -3 penalty to a Social roll because your character hasn't bathed in a month. Bonuses and penalties should not exceed +/- 3.

There will also be some circumstances where your character won't have any dots in the rolled Ability. In cases where a character has no dots in the Ability, he rolls a number of dice equal to the relevant Attribute, and the difficulty of the roll is increased by +2.

STUNTS

Stunts in Scion allow a player to describe his character's epic achievements in a dramatic way, *gaining dice* for providing a colorful description. These *bonus dice* range from one to three dice and should be awarded based on some general standards.

- *One-die* stunts broaden the definition of what is possible by just a little bit. The cooler you look, the better you are. The most basic stunt adds a bit of color to the game, filling out the scene for everyone at the table in a fun way.

DETERMINING DICE POOL

Step 1—Determine Base Die Pool: Assign an appropriate Attribute and Ability relevant to the action to be taken. If there is no clear (Attribute + Ability), ask the Storyteller to choose for you.

Step 2—Add Non-Magical Bonus Dice: (including dice from *stunting*.)

Step 3—Subtract Non-Magical Penalties: (including wound penalties.) This may reduce the dice pool to zero or even a negative value.

Step 4—Add Magical Bonuses: From any magical sources, such as Arete (See the Description for Donnie Rhodes).

Step 5—Subtract Magical Penalties: From any magical sources. This might reduce the dice pool to zero or even a negative value.

Step 6—Determine Minimum Pool: If, after all the preceding bonuses and penalties, such a character's dice pool is less than her Legend rating, she rolls a number of dice equal to her Legend instead. This minimum pool cannot be greater than a character's original, unmodified dice pool. Characters with Charisma 1, Presence 0 and Legend 3 are not as personable as characters with Charisma 2 and Presence 1.

Step 7—Roll Dice and Apply Bonus Successes: Add to your rolled dice of 7 or higher any successes from Willpower expenditure, Epic Attributes or other sources.

If, after following these steps in order you have zero dice, you cannot take a given action.

- *Two-die* stunts not only have an engaging and fun description, but they should also interact with the setting in a relevant way.

- *Three-die* stunts are indefinable. Use this guideline: If everyone at the table sits up and says, “Wow,” that’s a three-die stunt.

As a general rule, players should have the freedom to manipulate or utilize the environment as a part of their stunts. While many Storytellers have the urge to make players roll for the more acrobatic stunts they describe, doing so only serves to slow down the game. As a rule

of thumb, if an action has no mechanical benefit, then it doesn’t require a roll. Running up the wall to flip over someone is something that might normally require a roll, but it is standard fare in a kung-fu fight.

Stunting has these additional benefits: After being awarded stunt dice, a player may choose to either regain a number of Legend points equal to the stunt dice gained; or, on a two- to three- die stunt, regain a point of Willpower, up to his maximum temporary Willpower; or, on a two- to three- die stunt *that also resonates with one of the characters’ Virtues*, he may choose to regain one channel of that Virtue.

CHARACTER SHEETS

Of *Shadows Yet to Come* is an introductory adventure to the World of Scion for both players and Storytellers. Players should read through each of the pre-generated character sheets provided and choose the character that they believe they will have the most enjoyment playing. The Storyteller should also familiarize himself with each character so that he is prepared for any questions a player might have. As an added bonus, the characters used in this introduction are being featured in a continuing story that plays out in the Scion rulebooks.

CALLING, NATURE, GOD, AND PANTHEON

The Character’s Calling is a short description of the character’s concept. This gives the player a stereotype from which she can imagine the character’s goals and personality.

Next is the Nature, which is a personality archetype that helps define the Scion.

Last are the character’s divine parent and the Pantheon to which that parent belongs.

ATTRIBUTES AND ABILITIES

Attributes are divided into three categories (Physical, Social and Mental) and describe the traits inherent to your character, such as Strength or Intelligence. *Abilities* describe things your character has learned or skills he has practiced.

BIRTHRIGHTS

Birthrights are gifts given to Scions by their patron Gods. There are four separate types of Birthright: Creature, Followers, Guide and Relic. Each character will have short description for each of his Birthrights and how he can use them. Relics are important, providing a character access to *Purviews* through which he can use his *Boons*.

EPIC ATTRIBUTES AND KNACKS

Epic Attributes are innate traits that manifest almost immediately after a Scion’s Visitation, as the latent ichor in his blood wreaks sudden, dramatic changes on his physiology. Knacks are quirks of the Epic Attributes that manifest in different Scions with differing frequency. Epic Attributes represent a character’s supernatural ability gained through harnessing his own divine ichor.

The first two dots of an Epic Attribute give a free single success per dot on any roll involving that Attribute. The third dot of an Epic Attribute, on the other hand, provides two free successes, for a total of four free successes at level three. Additional powers for each Epic Attribute as well as Knacks will be listed on the character sheet when applicable.

BOONS

These differ from Epic Attributes and Knacks in that they aren’t innate. In fact, to use a Boon, a heroic Scion must possess a Birthright Relic that allows access to the Purview from which that Boon comes. Groups of Boons that affect the same fundamental force or concept, such as fire, death, or fertility, are said to be part of the same Purview. Each of the character sheets will contain a small section labeled **Birthrights**, which will give information on the powers of each relic including information on which Boons it offers.

WILLPOWER

This measures a character’s determination, self-assurance and emotional resilience. A character with a high Willpower is focused and highly disciplined, able to exert tremendous self-control. She can resist outside influences and temptations, and she can push her mind and body to accomplish extraordinary things. Willpower is rated from 1-10 and has both a permanent and a temporary rating.

In addition to using a character’s temporary Willpower to fuel certain divine gifts, the player may



also spend one point of temporary Willpower per action to receive one of the following benefits.

- One automatic success: Added to the total generated by the player's dice roll and to perform the action. Further, the dice roll cannot result in a botch. The player must declare that he is spending the Willpower point before making his roll.
- Activate a Virtue: When appropriate, to gain a number of bonus dice equal to the Virtue's rating. See the "Virtues" section later in this chapter for more details.
- Act in opposition to a Virtue: In order for the character to take an action that violates one of her four Virtues without requiring a Virtue roll.
- Resist mind-influencing powers: spend the Willpower to automatically resist.

Characters regain their Willpower when they act in a way that restores their self-confidence and determination. Remember, the Storyteller is the final arbiter on when and how many points a character can regain, but here are some guidelines:

- When a character takes an action in accordance with his Nature, having significant effect on the story, the character receives a Willpower point.
- When a character performs an exceptional action or behaves in a heroic manner that befits his role as a Scion, he receives a Willpower point.

- Rather than receiving Legend points for performing a two-die or three-die stunt, the player can choose for the character to receive a Willpower point instead.

- At the end of every story (not chapter), each character's temporary Willpower is completely restored.

VIRTUES

Each pantheon has a set of four Virtues that define proper behavior, as follows:

Aesir: Courage, Endurance, Expression, Loyalty

Amatsukami: Duty, Endurance, Intellect, Valor

Atzlánti: Conviction, Courage, Duty, Loyalty

Dodekathemon: Expression, Intellect, Valor, Vengeance

Loa: Harmony, Order, Piety, Vengeance

Pesedjet: Conviction, Harmony, Order, Piety

Virtues represent the core values of a Scion, those deep-seated beliefs that propel her to perform deeds worthy of Legend. It is the strength of a Scion's Virtues that drive her to take action, and when she channels her Willpower in service of her beliefs, she gains an increase in power and effectiveness.

Once per story per dot his character possesses in a particular Virtue, a player may spend a Willpower point to add a number of bonus dice equal to the Virtue rating to the character's dice pool for actions that relate to that specific Virtue.

There is a limitation on Virtues. When a Scion wishes to act against one of his Virtues, the player may spend a point of Willpower to allow the character to do so. If he has no Willpower points to spend, or simply doesn't want to spend Willpower, he must roll a number of dice equal to the character's Virtue rating instead. If the Virtue roll generates even one success, the Scion cannot resist behaving as his Virtue demands.

If the resulting Virtue roll generates more successes than the character has points of *temporary* Willpower, the Scion suffers a Virtue Extremity. Under this effect, the character takes the demands of his Virtue to potentially tragic lengths. See the individual descriptions below for details:

Conviction—This represents a person's selfless devotion to a cause, as well as her willingness to take any measures necessary to further her cause.

Virtue Extremity: *Fanatic Zeal*. When overcome by the strength of his Conviction, the Scion goes to extreme lengths in defense or support of his cause, regardless of the danger to himself or the suffering he inflicts on other people. This lasts for a number of hours equal to the Scion's Virtue rating.

Courage—This measures a Scion's drive to test her mettle against the deadliest opponents she can find. Further, the Scion holds other warriors to her own high standards.

Virtue Extremity: *Berserker Fury*. The Scion flies into a murderous rage, hurling himself at his foes without regard to his own safety. If there are no foes left to fight, the Scion will attack any other living thing he can reach, seeking to expiate his cowardice in violence and bloodshed. *Berserker Fury* lasts for the duration of the scene.

Duty—The Virtue of service to one's community, respecting authority, and upholding the laws that govern a decent society, putting aside personal ambition. Civilization is part of a divine order that flows from the Gods themselves.

Virtue Extremity: *Morbid Self-Sacrifice*. The Scion is so mortified at having contemplated violating the divine order that she goes to extreme lengths of personal self-sacrifice to atone for her selfishness. This lasts for one full day.

Endurance—One of the hallmarks of the epic hero is to with stand any blow, be it from Fate or foe. He who endures hardships beyond mortal limits in order to overcome the challenges arrayed against him embodies the spirit of this Virtue.

Virtue Extremity: *Self-Destruction*. The Scion is horrified at his own weakness and attempts to purge it through acts of extreme self-punishment, pursuing his goals without regard to his health, safety or survival. This lasts for one full day.

Expression—Great things are expected of those gifted with great power, and Scions have many gifts that can enrich mortal civilization. Expression is the Virtue of artistic excellence, which venerates the musician, the painter, the skald and the storyteller.

Virtue Extremity: *Visceral Shock*. In the Scion's extreme reaction to stifling his art (or another's), he pours his guilt and self-recrimination into his efforts. He bends his energies to creating art that scars and horrifies his audience. *Visceral Shock* lasts for a number of days equal to the Scion's Virtue rating.

Harmony—The belief in a cosmic design engineered by the Gods that governs the forces of creation. Even the Gods themselves form but a part of their grander design, fulfilling their roles just as mortals do as part of the cycle of existence.

Virtue Extremity: *Tyranny of Balance*. The Scion goes to extreme measures to restore the balance of outcomes in a given situation, even going so far as to inflict harm or suffering on herself or her compatriots. This lasts for the duration of the scene.

Intellect—The Virtue of the mind, it exalts the power of reason as the link that joins the mortal to the divine.

Virtue Extremity: *Obsessive Analysis*. The Scion's attempt to blind himself to reason forces him to atone by overanalyzing everything. He becomes powerless to make important decisions, imagining every contingency and every conceivable outcome from every given course of action. *Obsessive Analysis* lasts for one full day.

Loyalty—The abstract ties of citizenship, culture or even religion are nothing compared to the bonds of love, family and friendship. Loyalty is a bond stronger than iron; even the Gods themselves test it at their peril.

Virtue Extremity: *Blind Devotion*. The Scion will go to extreme lengths to support her friend or kinsman, even if said person is proven to be in the wrong. *Blind Devotion* lasts for a number of days equal to the Scion's Virtue rating.

Order—The rule of law is a gift from the Gods that forms the foundation of mortal civilization. As the bulwark against the threat of anarchy and chaos, laws must be upheld and enforced, even when their applications seem harsh or unjust.

Virtue Extremity: *Summary Judgment*. The Scion takes the law into his own hands, passing sentence—and executing judgment—on those he perceives to be criminals. *Summary Judgment* lasts for the duration of a single scene.

Piety—Scions who espouse this Virtue exalt and respect their Gods, their ancestors and the traditions of the past, taking strength from the wisdom of the ancients.

Virtue Extremity: *Self-Righteousness*. The Scion withholds her support or aid from those she deems insufficiently pious, even going so far as allowing others to suffer or die as a result. *Self-Righteousness* lasts for the duration of a scene.

Valor—The Scion believes in using his martial skill to defend the helpless, to fight with honor and to offer up his life if necessary in service to a worthy cause.

Virtue Extremity: *Valorous Sacrifice*. The Scion seeks an honorable death in battle. He attacks his foes with