

# Fireflies in the Night

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Douglas Bramlett (the\_seraph or writermonk)

*Fan Favorites* - Shared Narrative Control + Behavior Based Refresh + Relationship Mechanics

*Needs More Love* - All Decked Out

*Wish List* - Hot Blooded Action + Minimal Prep

*Forbidden Blender* - Superheroes without the Costumes + Crime Drama without the Police

Possibly including: Character Creation is its own Game and Character Concept as Character Sheet

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What you need to play this game:

A copy of the rules attached below

Character sheets attached below

Decks of standard playing cards (jokers removed): one for each player, one for the GM.

Several twelve-sided dice. At least six, or two for each player.

Pencils

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Influences:

*New Universal* comic series

'Tiny Ugly World' by Alice Donut

'Alive' by Pearl Jam

'The Boxer' redone by Me First and the Gimme Gimmes

*Heroes* t.v. show

*Hellas* RPG

*Aeternal Legends* RPG

*Dogs in the Vineyard* RPG

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*Fireflies in the Night* is a game about ordinary people who've been given a shot at greatness. But there is a price for this power - it drastically shortens the users lifespan. Furthermore, that they have this power at all is a matter of dubious legal distinction. They have a chance to fix things around them, but the choice to do so is one of degrees.

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Timothy Scarbrough - helped out with playtesting

Desi Conrad - helped out with brainstorming

Jon 'Superkroot' Grasty - original artwork pg 2

## *Times are Changing*

All you could imagine when you were growing up was to be a hero, or to be famous but now, you are all grown up and have done nothing interesting. You curse yourself and your luck but nothing seems to change it. The wishes are still in place, in the back of your mind, but you try to ignore them, to let them go because you know it will never happen the way you want it too.

What if I told you that I could make it happen, if I could give you all your hearts desire? For a small price of course, but that can be discussed. What ever you want, I can get you started on the road to take you there and all you have to do is one little thing for me . . .

You've always wanted something like this to happen to you, now you can, but what is the cost, and is it worth it?



## The World

Some years ago, the world as we knew it changed. There are a variety of names for it - the Apex, the Event Horizon, the White Event, the Singularity. It doesn't matter what name people give it, the result is the same. One day, things changed and superheroes became real. But real life isn't some four-color comic book and those with super-powers were still subject to human flaws, human foibles, human emotions.

Quickly, things changed. New laws were written, old conflicts erupted. But, in time, things were back to a state that was more or less normal. The vast majority of those with super-

powers were snatched up by various governments “as a precaution” or “for public safety.” Tests were run, projects were initiated, things were learned, and secrets were leaked.

First off, those who were blessed (or cursed, as some would say) with these amazing powers and abilities were doomed to drastically short lives. Their bodies simply could not continually generate the power needed to fuel themselves. Secondly, it was possible to induce the transformation from human to super-human though it the costs involved were exceedingly high. Third, the governments of the world could not and would not allow super-humans to run loose on their streets. Super-humans became the next atomic bombs; super-soldiers who could turn the tide of battle, conduct espionage, work as tight knit special forces units to take down nations.

The short-lived but bright burning superhumans earned a name in the popular media: **fireflies**. This was perhaps because of several disputes between newly emerged super-humans that turned the nighttime skies of many cities into incandescent displays of dominance and power.

Eventually, of course, these facts reached the general public. Super-soldiers were in turn feared by some for what they could, pitied by others who knew the pain it must cost, and praised by a few for the sacrifices they made for their country. But, there are soldiers... and then there are those who fight.

Criminal groups and clandestine organizations worked on the secret of how to enlighten someone to superhuman status. But, invariably, the various methods and formulas were flawed. Those enlightened lived, at best, a matter of years. Some poor few lived only a matter of hours. The individuals changed by the various criminal organizations were often outsiders, poor schmucks pulled off the street and offered a chance at greatness. One last shot, as it were; these weren't made men or hardened criminals. After all, the superhero enlightenment was essentially a death sentence. Desperate people in desperate situations needing desperate measures.

These common folk, changed illegally, were as good as dead. The powers they would potentially gain would burn through their bodies, and unregulated possession of superpowers was a capital offense. So, after gaining their new abilities, most of them hid. They did what they felt they had to do, knowing there was a price attached. Unfortunately, having superpowers makes it very hard to hide.

As criminal organizations started to make inroads into deciphering how to Enlighten individuals, police agencies could no longer keep up. Most municipalities treat emergent Fireflies as a natural disaster of sorts. They work to get the public clear and help to clean up afterwards. If things get too out of hand, the government might be called in, but usually by the time they can respond the incident is over.

## Systems

In *Fireflies in the Night*, decks of cards represent not only a manipulation of chance (represented by the die rolls), but also elements of the game world.

**Hearts** - Hearts represent relationships and emotion. They can be either positive or negative: love, hate, honor, respect, ambition, loyalty, fear, jealousy, and so forth. Hearts signify how strong the emotion is, or how strong the bonds between people are.

**Diamonds** - Diamonds represent mental focus as well as monetary and physical matters. Whether it's enough cash to pay the rent this month, a city bus, a new pair of shoes, or a battered and stolen laptop, these cards signify how powerful or desirous these things are and how strongly they affect the mind.

**Clubs** - Clubs stand for the capacity for violence and the ability to withstand it. They can signify anything from a weapon like a sap or a handgun or protective gear like an armored vest or bulletproof window.

**Spades** - Spades stand for the supernatural world and its manifestations. They are combined with one of the previous suits to represent everything from mind-control, physically altering the environment, injuring opponents with blasts of energy, to stopping bullets in mid-air with just a thought.

The **Rank** of the cards (Ace through King) corresponds to a numerical value from 1 to 13.

There are a variety of systems that will come into play, but the above signifiers are central to most of them.

## Playing Hands and Setting the Scene

Once everyone has their Characters, each player draws five cards from their own decks. Then, using the Suits involved, the GM sets a scene by choosing three to five of their cards to set a base situation. Going around the table, each Player can then add a card forward to involve their own Character and add to the base difficulty represented by the Ranks of the cards involved.

### Example of Play

Gary, Jake, Rachel, and Timothy get together to play *Firefly*. Each of the three players has created a character and has their sheet with them. Everyone draws five cards.

Gary, the GM, draws the 4 of Clubs, the 9 of Spades, the 8 of Diamonds, the Ace of Clubs, and the 4 of Hearts. He thinks for a moment and then begins:

*"There's a chance to make some cash, or so your buddy Fast Eddie has been saying. It shouldn't be too rough as there's almost no one guarding a shipment of new electronics. The guards that are there are more interested in making a decent buck than they are being loyal to the company that pays them."*

While he says this, he pushes forward the 8 of Diamonds, the A and 4 of Clubs, and the 4 of Hearts. This sets the base difficulty for Mental actions at 8, Physical at 5, and Social at 4. Gary makes a note of this on his sheet. The highest difficulty also becomes the total XP awarded for the scene.

Once the GM sets the scene, the Players can respond by playing cards from their initial 5 card hand. For each card that a Player adds, they not only raise the base difficulty for the scene, but they also increase the chance that their character will get XP.

Jake looks at his own hand: the 3 of Diamonds, the 7 of Spades, the 6 of Clubs, the 10 of Hearts, and the 8 of Diamonds. Looking at his character sheet, he notes that his character isn't the brightest of men, but that he is fairly physical. He lays down the 6 of Clubs in front of him and adds a bit of detail.

*"Even though the guards aren't very loyal, they are irritable and drunk, increasing the chance that they'll respond violently and try to cover up any accidents later on."*

He puts the 6 of Clubs to the side of his sheet, and the GM makes a note that the Physical difficulty for the scene has now gone up to an 11. If the group manages to overcome the guards and get away with the goods, Jake will be able to add an additional 6 XP to his sheet.

Timothy looks at his hand: the 6, 9, and 10 of Hearts, and the 2 and 5 of Spades. He thinks for a moment and then adds more detail.

*"The guards aren't loyal to their employer. Or to each other. All of them are nervous and suspicious. They trust no one, not even each other. Why? Because they know that one of them is a Firefly, planted by their employer to make sure that things run smoothly."*

He puts the 10 of Hearts and both of his Spades to one side of his sheet. The base difficulty for social goes up to 14. There's also another Firefly out there. Firefly difficulties are now set at 7. If Timothy's PC survives the scene, he'll earn 17 bonus XP.

After adding cards to help set the scene, everyone draws back up to five cards in their hand. These cards will become fuel for the Character's Firefly powers.

## Tasks

In game, the characters will have to *complete* or *confront* various tasks. These are resolved by rolling dice modified by the Character's Attributes. Difficulties are set during each scene for Mental, Social, and Physical tasks. Success is achieved by rolling above the difficulty number. Modifiers derived from the Lifepaths and other results modify each dice roll total positively or negatively.

When *Completing* a task, the PCs are not opposed. The task is something that has to be done, but the only thing standing in the way is the Character's own limitations, time, and energy. Completion Tasks may be instantaneous, like spotting another criminal, or extended, like figuring out the combination to a safe. Completing tasks use a single d12 and one of the Character's Primary Attributes (Physical, Social, Mental). If a Character's Attribute is already higher than the scene's Difficulty, they do not have to roll but instead can describe an element to be added to the scene.

Jake's character Marcus is on the run after a botched robbery. He knows that the guards saw him, but they haven't found him yet. He says that he's looking around for a place to hide. The GM decides that while there are plenty of places to hide, choosing one will be a Mental task. Jake groans. Marcus's Mental Attribute is a 3 and the Mental difficulty for the scene is a 10.

He picks up his d12 and rolls. The die comes up an 8 and with his Mental of 3 added in his total is a 11. It's a success! He spots a place to hide. Since Jake had to roll, the GM describes Jake finding an abandoned car to duck behind.

Tyler, an off-duty beat cop looking to score some cash so that he can get out of town, is also trying to hide. His Mental Attribute, however, is a 10. He doesn't need to roll, but instead describes how he finds a darkened alleyway to duck into and take time to draw his gun.

When Confronting a task, the PCs are opposed in some way. Confronting Tasks usually rely upon a Secondary Attribute added to a d12. Each participant compares their final result and the one with the higher total succeeds, adding an element to the scene. Each participant must also overcome the difficulties already set at the beginning of the scene.

Marcus and Tyler are hiding after the botched robbery job. The other Firefly that was guarding the goods is looking for them. He floats through the air, electricity crackling from his fingers, and his eyes glowing as he looks into the darkness.

The GM tells each of the players that their hiding places are being Confronted. They can each try to use a Secondary Attribute to stay hidden, or since their opponent is using Firefly abilities to find them, they can counter with their own Enlightened powers. The Firefly Opponent, however, has a Threat Rating of 12, higher than most of the scene's Difficulties.

The GM rolls 2d12 and gets a 9. Added to the TR, that's a total of 21.

Tyler relies heavily upon his Gear. He describes pulling his worn jacket closer about himself, trusting it to hide him in the shadows as it has many times before. Since his Gear of 27 is enough to succeed without rolling, he describes sticking to the shadows, the dark worn lines of his coat easily blurring with the dark alley's walls.

Marcus, too, decides to rely upon his Gear. He's hiding behind an abandoned car. He rolls 2d12-2 and gets a 0. Added to his Gear of 20, that's not enough to beat the Confrontation. The GM describes how the light pours out of the Firefly Guard's eyes and washes over the abandoned car, illuminating Marcus and casting a dark shadow across the street.

## Firefly

The Player Characters in Firefly have all been Enlightened. That is to say, they've all been granted amazing abilities. Super-powers. Some can alter the weather and blast lightning from their hands. Others can control metal, forming it into intricate devices or animating it to attack in their stead. Still others can manipulate people like puppets, controlling thoughts and influencing emotions.

To represent this, each Player has a deck of cards. Seven of these cards are already on their character sheet representing their Attributes. Up to five more might be beside their character sheet representing elements of the scene and possible bonus XP. The remaining 40 cards fuel their Firefly powers.

As the scene begins, each of the Players should draw a hand of 5 cards. These cards can be played to create effects using the Suit of the card. Hearts represent emotions, Clubs represent physical violence and action, Diamonds represent mental-prowess and perception, and finally

Spades represent a strengthening of the character's Enlightenment.

For each supernatural action that the Character manifests during a scene, the Player reveals one or more cards from their hand. Pairs of cards may be played if the Suit or Rank is the same, or if one of the pair is a Spade. A Suited pair (i.e., a pair of Hearts, Clubs, or Diamonds) are added together. A Suited pair (i.e. a pair of 5s or a pair of Kings) represent a Firefly manifestation that affects different elements. A Spade of any Rank can be played with any card to form a pair. Anytime a Spade is played it remains on the Character Sheet and combines with the current cards there.

A Character can have as many Firefly manifestations active as they have cards in their Firefly circle.

Spotted by the Firefly Guard, Marcus decides that now is the time for action.

In his hand, Jack, Marcus's player, holds the 2 and 10 of Diamonds, the 2 of Hearts, the Queen of Clubs, and the King of Spades. He decides he's going to start strong and lays down the Queen of Clubs and the King of Spades. He adds the King of Spades to his sheet on top of the Jack of Spades that's already there and describes what happens and he puts the Queen on the side of his sheet beside his Gear card. The Queen of Clubs would represent a powerful physical item and the King is an ultimate manifestation of Firefly Enlightenment.

Marcus, his eyes and hands glowing brightly, slams his fists into the body of the abandoned car he hides behind. Parts of the car rapidly rust and break down while the remainder shift and pull together around Marcus forming a powerful suit of armor. He roars out a challenge, his voice magnified by the armor through the car's horn.

Tyler's player currently holds the Four, Nine, and Queen of Diamonds, the Queen of Hearts, and the Five of Spades. He's already got a second Spade (the Six of Spades) down on his sheet from earlier in the night. He quickly comes up with a pair of Firefly effects. First, he lays down the two Queens and the Five of Spades in one pile, and the four and nine into another. His first effect he describes as a flickering halo of light, a series of shifting images around his head. Images of his life, his parents, his friends, sunny days from his youth - all things that will bolster his courage prevent fear from taking over. The other manifestation from the pair of diamonds will be a series of mental projections concerning his opponent's strengths and weaknesses which he hopes will give him a bonus to overcome the Firefly guard in the next turn.

When a Player goes through a hand of five cards in this way, they are temporarily depleted for the round. They can draw a new hand of cards but when they do so:

- They draw 5 cards +1 card for every Firefly spade on their sheet as the Firefly Enlightenment burns brighter and brighter.
- For every Firefly spade on their sheet, they lose a point of Health as their bodies are burned from within.

## **Conflict Results - Social, Mental, and Physical**

Every time a character fails a Completion task, they can choose to either lose a point from Life, Awareness, or Speed to represent the strain and stress. When a character loses a Confrontation, they lose a number of points equal to the difference between their total and the

victor's total but the victor chooses the appropriate place from the points to be deducted from. NPCs do not have Life, Awareness, or Speed, but instead simply have a Threat Rating from which points can be deducted.

## Experience

For every 13 XP a character earns, they can increase one of the modifiers on their Attributes by +1.

## Character Creation

*Sometimes you need a hero... or you must become one.*

1. Pick a simple concept: factory worker, desk jockey, mechanic, local musician, pizza delivery driver, etc.
2. Players roll on the 2d12 for each of the seven lifepaths and record the results. Attribute changes can be noted on the character sheet.
3. Players are dealt 5 cards and place them onto the character sheet to represent base trait ratings.
4. Record derived stats.

Fireflies have seven abilities, typically rated between 1 and 25. though occasionally reaching higher.

There are three Primary abilities: *Physical*, *Mental*, and *Social*.

*Physical* deals with actions - lifting, running, hiding, climbing, and so forth.

*Mental* deals with problem-solving - puzzles, memories, knowledges, and the like.

*Social* deals with other people - convincing others, intimidating others, or empathizing with others.

There are three Secondary abilities: *Resolve*, *Allies*, and *Gear*.

*Resolve* involves resisting everything from pain to manipulation to fatigue.

*Allies* are contacts that can help including family, friends, co-workers and the like.

*Gear* are personal belongings that carry some weight of meaning to the character and their life.

There is one final ability that joins connects to all of these: *Firefly*.

*Firefly* deals with the character's supernatural powers. Players pick one element that describes their Firefly powers in general, be it electricity, magnetism, an intellect that is adept at building



gadgets, creating holograms, or swaying emotions. Whatever it is, however, a Firefly's powers are never subtle. They may have finely tuned effects, but when a Firefly uses them, it should always be noticeable. Anything from glowing eyes and hands, flames bursting forth from thin air, or the crackling hum of electricity.

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To determine the character's starting abilities, players roll on the Lifepath charts below, recording the numbers in the small circles to the side of the appropriate Attribute. The events that drive their characters can be noted on the side or back of the sheet. These numbers will be Modifiers that add or subtract from dice rolls during the game.

Then, each Player is dealt a hand of five cards face down. Players assign the five cards to any of their abilities; however, no more than two cards may be added to any ability. By assigning cards to abilities, each ability gets a numerical rating from 1 to 13 corresponding to the card's Rank.

But, there are permutations to that, and each suit has prior influences that can boost the rating or the ratings around it. Diamonds placed in Gear, Clubs placed in Resolve, Hearts placed in Allies, or Spades placed in Firefly count for twice their standard number value. Cards placed into Primary Abilities, however, also affect their neighboring Secondary Abilities. Social builds into Allies and Gear, Physical builds into Gear and Resolve, and Mental builds into Resolve and Allies.

Then there are derived attributes: *Life*, *Awareness*, and *Speed*

*Life* is both a measure of how much damage your character can take as well as how quickly powers burn away the character's life. Life is derived by adding Firefly + Physical.

*Awareness* is a measure of a character's senses and how astute they are piecing together what's around them. Awareness is derived by adding Firefly + Mental.

*Speed* is how quickly a character reacts to events around them. Speed is derived by adding Firefly + Social.

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Newly emerged Fireflies are intimately connected to the world, but most importantly to the city's and neighborhoods they grew up in. The following random charts are meant to help with establishing those connections, hinting at plot seeds, and fostering some creative ideas. As you follow the paths, ask yourself why these things happened, how your character feels about them, and what your character thinks he can do to set things right.

### Family

Are your parents alive or dead? Imprisoned or free?

2d12

2-3	Orphaned; grew up on the streets; +1 to Physical
4-5	Parents absent or dead, raised by relatives; +1 to Allies

6-8	Mother in prison; -1 to Allies
9-11	Father in prison; -1 to Allies
12-14	Both parents alive; +1 to Resolve
15-17	Both parents dead as a result of accident, illness, or violence; -1 to Mental
18-20	Father dead, mother remarried; -1 to Social
21-22	Mother dead, father remarried; +1 to Allies
23-24	Orphaned; shuffled through foster care; +1 to Social

### Home Life

What is your family like? How do they fit in to the community at large?

2d12

2-3	Family is well-loved by the local community and has ties to the public; +1 to Allies
4-5	Your family has an ongoing feud with a neighbor that has soured the public to both families; -1 to Social
6-8	Your family has various criminal ties but hides them under a ruse of civic service; +1 to Gear
9-11	A family member gambled away all of your life savings; nothing remains; -1 to Gear
12-14	Family is split due to an internal disagreement; -1 to Mental
15-17	You have a family member who is wanted by the authorities and on the run; -1 to Allies
18-20	Your family is destitute, penniless, and powerless; -1 to Social
21-22	Your family is feared due to some perceived advantage they hold over others in your community; +1 to Social
23-24	Your entire family is despised due to a sin or crime you committed; +1 to Physical or Social, Player's choice

### Belongings

What possessions do you have that tie you to this world? What do you desire most?

**2d12**

2	You own a battered car. It's ugly but it runs. +1 to Gear
3-5	You've familiar with various local fences and second-hand stores. +1 to Gear
6-8	You still have a key to your parent's garage; +1 to Allies
9-11	You owe a small fortune to a local gangster, a fortune you have no way to pay back; -1 to Gear
12-15	You live paycheck to paycheck even though you'd like to save up for something nice; -1 to Physical
16-18	Your family owes a considerable amount in debt; -1 to Allies
19-20	You own a battered but up-to-date laptop computer; +1 to Mental
21-23	You have a small trinket from your childhood that you cherish; +1 to Resolve
24	You once owned a nice vehicle, but it was taken from you; -1 to Resolve

**Liability**

Things aren't always easy.

**2d12**

2	You've got a bad knee from an old school injury; -1 to Physical
3-5	You were a weakling in school and spent a lot of time reading; +1 to Mental
6-8	You're missing one eye or have poor hearing; -1 to Physical
9-11	Despite your upbringing, you've got a strong sense of duty and loyalty; +1 to Resolve
12-14	You're perfectly fine. A near perfect specimen. And immensely recognizable; +1 to Social
15-17	You've got a memorable face that puts people at ease; +1 to Social
18-20	Your eyesight is bad enough to require glasses; -1 to Mental
21-23	You owe money to some criminals who say they're going to break your legs next month; -1 to Resolve

24	You've got a bad back from a lifetime of hard work, but are stronger for it; +1 to Physical
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### **Faith and Greed**

Things that strengthen you during these times of trouble

2d12

2	You have someone you think of as a younger sibling that you care about; +1 to Resolve
3-5	You occasionally turn to alcohol or drugs to forget the past and the pain; -1 to Social
6-8	You like to go on walks at night, even though it's dangerous in your neighborhood; +1 to Allies
9-11	You have a strong sense of duty and keep working even though things are rough; +1 to Resolve
12-15	You try to lose yourself in your work, keeping your head and trying to stay out of trouble; +1 to Gear
16-18	You believe in something outside of yourself, be it religion or philosophy or just fate; -1 to Gear
19-20	You keep looking for the next big thing, hoping to make it big and get out of this town; -1 to Social
21-22	You're eager to learn, you read voraciously, watch news broadcasts, and surf the net as often as you can; +1 to Mental
23-24	When drugs and alcohol refuse to cut it, you live for the thrill of adrenaline - fast cars, gambling, danger!; +1 to Physical

### **Courage and Pride**

Things that have pushed you to the edge and sometimes past it

2d12

2-3	Your mother is dying because of some disease and there's no more money for a doctor; -1 to Allies
4-5	Your boss is a bit of a jerk and refuses to listen to you anymore even when you are clearly right; -1 to Mental
6-8	Your car just broke down and you're not sure how you'll pay to get it fixed or get to work while it's in the shop; -1 to Gear
9-11	It can't rain all the time, even though it seems that way; +1 to Resolve
12-15	The world just seems to be out to get you with one bad break after another; -1 to Gear

16-18	You got a notice that your water is being shut off again; -1 to Social
19-20	Your building superintendent keeps making passes at you and won't take no for an answer; +1 to Allies
21-22	Your coworkers all hang out together and seem to enjoy themselves, but you never get invited; -1 to Resolve
23-24	All of your friends have moved away and most nights you feel incredibly lonely; -1 to Social

### Who you Owe

Your powers had to come from somewhere and there's always a price to be paid.

2d12

2-3	A powerful drug cartel pumped you full of chemicals so that you would infiltrate or take down a rival gang; +1 to Social
4-5	You used to run with a gang and thought you were out, but they forced you to do this one last thing or they were going to kill your family; +1 to Resolve
6-8	A gun smuggler injected you with something so that you could carry a supply of arms over the border; +1 to Gear
9-11	You wanted this, secretly perhaps, because you thought that your life was going nowhere fast; -1 to Resolve
12-14	You're not sure what happened. You remember leaving work, walking home because the bus was late. Then you woke up, it was three days later, and you were a firefly. You're not sure what happened, but you're afraid you may have hurt people. +1 to Firefly
15-17	You want to make others pay for what you've suffered, so what if you have to get Enlightened and then rob a bank first. Eventually, you'll get to settle some old scores; -1 to Resolve
18-20	A bunch of your old friends who were always in trouble got you to drink something red and glowing. They claim to not know what it was or that it would do this. You don't believe them. +1 to Allies
21-22	You volunteered to be Enlightened so that you could be paid; your daughter needs medicine and your job stopped offering insurance; +1 to Mental
23-24	A local gang gassed you with some green smoke so that you could bust their leader out of jail; +1 to Physical

It is important to jot down your Lifepath results. Each time you resolve one of these issues or draw them into game play, you may shuffle your deck and draw a new hand of five cards.

### Example of Character Creation

Jake is joining a Fireflies game. His basic idea is a factory worker. He takes a character sheet and jots down a character name and his concept and then starts rolling d12s.

His results yield:

1. 16 - Both parents dead, -1 to Mental
2. 16 - Family member on the run, -1 to Allies
3. 10 - Owes a small fortune to a gangster, -1 to Gear
4. 14 - Recognizable and in perfect health, +1 to Social
5. 19 - Looking for the next big thing, -1 to Social
6. 15 - One bad break after another, -1 to Gear
7. 18 - Old friends Enlightened you, +1 to Allies

So, Jake so far winds up with -1 Mental and -2 Gear. His factory worker has some friends, but also a family member on the run. He's in good health, but uneasy in his life. He also owes a lot of money and things never seem to go his way.

He then gets dealt five cards: 2 of Hearts, 9 of Diamonds, 4 of Spades, J of Diamonds, 10 of Spades. He decides to place the 2 into Allies (where it doubles), the 9 into Social (where it influences both Allies and Gear), the J into Physical (where it influences both Gear and Resolve), the 4 into Mental (where it influences both Allies and Resolve), and the 10 into Firefly (where it doubles).

This brings his final stats to: Physical 11, Mental 4 (-1), Social 9; Allies 13, Gear 20 (-2), Resolve 15, and Firefly 20. His Life is 31, Awareness 23, and Speed 29.

He decides that his character, Marcus, isn't very bright, but he's got friends. Despite everything he owes, he's got a lot of stuff. It's just that a lot of it is probably worthless. Also, the Firefly Enlightenment is burning strongly in him.

He decides that given his Gear, his Physical, and his Resolve that his Firefly Enlightenment manifested in the ability to manipulate matter around him. He can break down metal into rust, cause mechanical things to stop working, and magnetically pull metal together around him to provide a shield or to strike out at opponents. Now that he's been enlightened, maybe he can figure out where his friends got the concoction that changed him, make enough to pay off his debts, or finally get out of this one-horse town and see something of the world.

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Timothy creates Tyler, a local cop on the take. He rolls

1. 12 - Both parents alive, +1 to Resolve
2. 22 - Family is feared, +1 to Social
3. 14 - Lives paycheck to paycheck, -1 to Physical
4. 17 - Has a memorable face, +1 to Social
5. 15 - Tries to lose himself in work, +1 to Resolve
6. 11 - It can't rain all the time, although it seems that way, +1 to Resolve
7. 19 - Old friends Enlightened you, +1 to Allies

Timothy draws a 3 of spades, a 5 of diamonds, a 7 of diamonds, a 10 of clubs, and a 10 of hearts. He puts the 10 of Clubs in Physical which influences both Resolve and Gear, the 10 of Diamonds in Mental, where it influences both both Resolve and Allies, the 7 of Diamonds in Social, where it influences both Allies and Gear, the 5 of Diamonds in Gear, where it doubles, and the 3 of Spades in Firefly, where it doubles.

This brings his totals to Physical 10 (-1), Mental 10, Social 9 (+2), 20 for Resolve (+3), 27 for Gear, 17 for Allies, and 6 for Firefly. He has derived characteristics of 15 for Life, 16 for Awareness and 13 for Speed.

Based on this, Tyler is a pretty average man with some connections due to his occupation as a cop. He is, however, hard working and well prepared. The Firefly Enlightenment does

not burn very brightly in him, but he does have the ability to project objects and people as holograms within close range. Now that he has been Enlightened, he wants to escape from the town and his job while he still has time.

## Generating NPCs

When the GM needs to generate quick NPCs, he can simply draw two cards and add them together for the NPC's Threat Rating. The Threat Rating of an NPC adds with the Base Difficulty of the scene when opposing the PCs. The two cards will also give some random insight into the NPC based on the Suits and Ranks.

Gary needs a pair of NPCs, so he draws four cards: the 8 of Diamonds, the 4 of Clubs, the 7 of Hearts, and the King of Clubs. He combines the first two (8 of D, 4 of C) and has an average thug, predisposed towards violence and coveting wealth. The thug has a Threat Rating of 12. The other NPC is clearly much tougher (7 of H, K of C), possibly one of the local gang bosses, more than willing to get into a fight and capable of inspiring fear in those around him. The gang boss has a Threat Rating of 20.

## Suggested Power Levels

	Hearts	Clubs	Diamonds	Spades
Ace, Two, Three	Minor emotions.	Bruising, beating.	Surface thoughts, petty cash.	Minor powers, self or touch
Four, Five, Six, Seven	Quick passions.	Cuts, broken bones.	Strong memories, a few months pay.	Close range, across a small room
Eight, Nine, Ten	Passionate emotions	Major injuries, debilitating wounds	Increased reactions and mental acuity, a year's pay	Medium range, across a sports field.
Jack, Queen, King	Deep seated emotions, loyalties	Life-threatening injuries, crippling wounds.	Hidden knowledge, reveal secrets, ten years pay	Line of sight, known target.

# Glossary

**Enlightenment** - The name for the various processes through which a human becomes superhuman

**Firefly** - The common name for a superhuman. So named for the tendency of their powers to be accompanied by a bright, physical display of light.

**Threat Rating** - A measure of how tough an opponent is. Determined by adding the Rank of two randomly drawn cards.

**Attribute** - The numbers and statistics that rate a character's ability. A low number is generally weak. The higher the number, the stronger the attribute.

**Primary** - Abilities used to describe the character itself. Primary attributes generally range from 1 to 13, but can go higher.

**Physical** - How physically fit, strong, tough, quick a character is.

**Mental** - How intelligent, smart, or psychologically resilient a character is.

**Social** - How attractive, charismatic, or socially appealing a character is.

**Secondary** - Abilities used to describe a character's relationship with the world around them. Secondary attributes generally range from 2 to 25, but can go higher.

**Resolve** - A character's ability to withstand pain, torture, or ignore distractions.

**Allies** - A character's ability to maintain connections to others or to forge new connections.

**Gear** - A character's belongings; items and places that carry some significance to the character.

**Derived** - Abilities that determine a character's internal interactions with the outside world. Generally, these abilities range from 2 to 25, but can go higher.

**Life** - A measure of the character's ability to endure physical harm. Also, a measure of the character's overall health.

**Awareness** - A measure of the character's ability to understand and comprehend the world around him and what his senses tell him. Also, a measure of the character's ability to be tricked or confused.

**Speed** - A measure of the character's ability to interact with others. Also, an overall measure of the character's physical appearance and appeal.

**Firefly** - Ability that rates a character's superhuman ability. Starting characters have a rating from 1 to 26, but this number will almost always increase during play.

**Scene** - The setting for a series of actions in the game. Difficulties are set by a hand of cards revealed by the GM, but each player can contribute cards to add details (see Elements) and increase the Base Difficulty.

**Task** - An action undertaken by a character during the game.

**Element** - Various components in a scene related to a task.

**Completion** - A task that is unopposed by other characters or NPCs.

**Confrontation** - A task that is opposed by other characters or NPC



