



RADIANT

By

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the unwitting assistance of D.
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Apologies and thanks to
Jonathan, Harper, HeroQuest,
Exalted, Elizabeth, Josh,
Kelly, and the rest of the Sol
Invictus crowd.

Read Exalted before you play.
This document is a compact
playset for it; you can play it
without, but all the setting
and resources that you can
ever want are hidden scattered
between those pages.

Names

Aditya, Arthur, Balram,
Chinggis, Himiko, Jingu,
Kubilai, Lakshman, Zuko

Amrita, Devaki, Megha,
Santosh, Vivek, Yamuna

Achilles, Atalanta, Hektor,
Penthesilea, Phaeton

Albali, Anunitum, Ekkhysis,
Kaitain, Markab, Nair,
Pakhan, Tarazad

Ganymede, Ghatotkacha,
Hero, Io, Kanyakumari,
hKartikkeya, Leander,
Rukmini, Shoorpankha

Anansi, Circe, Dalilah,
Hermes, Horus, Howl, Isis,
Julnar, Medea, Pythagoras,
Toth, Zaynab

Audax, Enurta, Harsu,
Rahbani, Sargon, Shamsi-
adad, Tanit,
Zenobia



Rules Summary

Rolling Dice

When you try to do something difficult, roll Attribute + Ability d6s. A 5 is one point, 6 is two. You can get extra dice from Description and Birthright by performing a Stunt; see your table. Descriptions must be dynamic; they don't repeat in the short term. You can describe the following without Birthrights:

- ❖ *Briefly defying the laws of physics*
- ❖ *Interacting with the scenery or allies*
- ❖ *Introducing elements to the scene that make sense*
- ❖ *Manipulating characters based on your knowledge*
- ❖ *Taking advantage of a tactical weakness*
- ❖ *Taking extra effort*
- ❖ *Using elements of a plan*

Finally, you can do extraordinary things, so long as the table agrees that it's obviously so cool and in-character that it can't be disallowed.

Birthrights allow you to extend your palette of description; furthermore the use of Birthrights is repeatable.

You get the best die and Willpower bonuses you qualify for, not the summation of them. +W means *regain a Willpower point*.

Against a competitive opponent, subtract the opponent's points. The opponent can choose any Ability to resist that he has in the same Caste as the attack Ability, and uses the complementary Attribute—Might complements Finesse in every category.

Against a passive victim, subtract his Essence.

If someone rolls against you, you can spend a Willpower to automatically reduce his successes to 0.

Against a static obstacle, subtract a fixed number of points: **Easy—0 : Challenging—3 : Hard—5**

For any roll, you can spend 1 Willpower to get 1 point. What's left are your successes.

Simple Tasks

To **impress someone**, roll Social passively. As you describe your dramatic action, onlookers respond by...

- ❖ *deferring to you*
- ❖ *doing something you say*
- ❖ *giving or promising you something*
- ❖ *speaking on your behalf*

...until your successes are spent.

To **show someone up**, roll Social competitively. Show off how cool you are. As you describe your interaction, they respond by...

- ✦ *committing a social gaffe*
 - ✦ *conceding a thing they value*
 - ✦ *losing a social role to you*
 - ✦ *misreacting revealingly to something*
- ...until your successes are spent.

To **read a tense situation**, roll Mental passively as you observe events unfold. For each success, you may ask one of these:

- ✦ *what should I be on the lookout for?*
- ✦ *where's my best escape route?*
- ✦ *which is my most vulnerable enemy?*
- ✦ *who is my biggest threat?*

To **read a dissembling person**, roll Mental competitively over the course of a conversation with your target. As you interact, you may ask one of these:

- ✦ *are you telling the truth?*
- ✦ *how are you really feeling?*
- ✦ *what do you want to do?*
- ✦ *what do you wish I would do?*

To **make a plan** about an impending confrontation, roll Mental for a task. For each success, you dictate one of these circumstances:

- ✦ *an escape strategy*
- ✦ *a trap*
- ✦ *one person who will or won't be there*
- ✦ *where the confrontation happens*

To **consult your radiant spirit's insight**, roll Essence for a task. If you get an easy success, ask two questions of the ST, and he will give you one answer that's interesting and true, and one that is either false or irrelevant. For a challenging success, ask just one question for just one good answer. For a hard success, get two good answers to two questions.

To **rule a thing of power or a little god**, roll Essence competitively. For each success, you can force it to:

- ✦ *bow in obedience*
- ✦ *cooperate with you*
- ✦ *express its power*
- ✦ *reveal its worth*
- ✦ *terrify someone*

...but if it succeeds it will act as it sees fit.



Looks

Outfits: ascetic,

body paint, anachronistic, battle, beggar, fetish-bondage, harem, hunting, incognito, oracular, peasant, ragged, regal, riding, scrounge, travel

Faces: aristocratic, arrogant, bandaged, beautiful, broad, brutish, chiseled, cold, cruel, dashing, fierce, foreign, hairy, lined, lively, masked, perfect, scared, scarred, strange, strong, tattooed, unearthly, wise, wooden, young

Buids: athletic, beautiful, broken, crippled, diseased, emaciated, fetishized, hidden, intimidating, lean, tattooed, young, unnatural, wiry

Body language: calculated, clumsy, concealed, expansive, expectant, forceful, graceful, limping, nervous, ostentatious, regal, restless, sexy, still, stylized, undulating

Eyes: alluring, bleeding, blinded, calm, dead, direct, distant, calculating, compassionate, eloquent, flinty, glazed, hard, hawk, hungry, inhuman, kind, knowing, mirrored, piercing, playful, ruined, slow, terrified, veiled, wandering, wise

Hands: beringed, callused, crabbed, dirty, dry, elegant, gloved, groomed, hennaed, inky, long-nailed, quick, soft, strong, sure, wrinkled





Peoples

Choose one of each:

Skin: alabaster, chocolate, dusky, ebony, golden, olive, markings, mixed, monstrous

Eyes: dark, downcast, golden, hidden, honest, inky, sky-colored, serpentine, verdant

Hands: callused, hennaed, jewelled, strong, tattooed

Heritage: humans all, with immortal blood, bestial ancestors, changelings, nephilim, perversions

Foods: many wild herbs, local spices, spice roads * flat bread, leavened bread, noodles, rice * beans, fish, game, mutton, poultry, seafood * light raw food, crisp stir-fried food, hearty roasted food, rich stewed food

Choose up to two:

Fibers: airy gauze, brocaded silk, embroidery & mirrorwork, fresh linen, modest cotton, lush furs, native batik, painted satin, tooled leathers, warm wools

Dress: paint & jewels, drapery, furs, laced clothes, leathers, rags, robes, scanty clothes, tailored clothes

Animals: cattle, elephants, fleece, ghosts, hunting beasts, hunting birds, pack animals, riding beasts, sacred cats, tamed monsters, wild predators

Extended Conflicts

When it starts, choose the Focus. This is the Ability used for attacks. Take turns in order of Essence. You have two opportunities, one for mobility and one for action. Your action can be used for mobility instead.

Mobility

Each turn you can either change the Focus, change the setting, or maneuver within the setting. Changes are competitive rolls using the new and current Focus respectively. If lots of people want to resist, only use the highest resisting pool. Only one change of each can occur in a round. To change the Focus, you need more successes than the last Focus change.

Maneuvering is unresisted except by plans or Birth-rights.

Action

Each turn you can attack, snare, or do a simple task. To attack, roll competitively against your target. Your target gets his Essence in bonus dice for free. For each success you have, the target loses 1 Health point. An opponent with no Health Points collapses unconscious.

To snare, roll competitively against your target. If you get 1 success, he loses 1 Focus dot. If you get 3, he loses 2. If you get 5, he loses 3, 2 from the Focus and 1 from another. If you snare and the target's Focus is 0, take Essence instead. An opponent with 0 Essence sinks into a coma.

Constrain simple tasks with common sense. You can't plan for an upcoming confrontation you're in.

Recovery

At the end of a scene you awaken from unconsciousness, with 1 Health Point. It takes as many days as your Essence to awake from coma, with your Essence fully restored. Every morning you regain all Willpower. Every evening you regain 1 line of Health Points.

To restore {Essence} Willpower, break bread with friends or enemies. To restore a snared Ability, spend a scene practicing it with a friend. To restore a dot of snared Essence, make a substantial offering to your patron. The rites necessary for this performance may take up to a day.

In three days of downtime, all hurts of the Chosen are healed. However, taking a period of downtime gives your enemies time to marshal their forces.



Character Creation

You get 5 Health Points per Essence dot. Unless you're a Solar, get Essence 2.

Solars

Solars are called to be heroes. **Abilities:** Pick a Caste. Put 5 dots in one Caste Ability and 4 in the other two. Three Abilities at 3 and four at 2.

Attributes: 5 in one, 3 in two, 2 in three, 1 in the rest.

Birthrights: choose 10 Charms and 5 other things: Spirit Allies, Relics of the Ancient World, Extraordinary Possessions, or Monstrous Companions.

Essence 3.

Sidereals

Sidereals are fated to make tough choices. **Abilities:** Pick a Caste. From Martial Arts and your Caste Abilities, 5 in one, 4 in one, 3 in one. 3 in two others and 2 in four.

Attributes: as Solars.

Birthrights: choose 8 Charms, 3 Spirit Allies or Relics, and 2 Possessions or Companions. Choose 1 Shadowy Cabal.

Lunars

Lunars are driven to survive. **Abilities:** 4 in one, 3 in two, 2 in four, 1 in five. You defend with the opponent's attack Ability.

Attributes: Pick a Caste. 5 in 1, 4 in the other in-Caste, 3 in 3, 1 in the rest.

Birthrights: choose 8 Charms, 3 Monstrous Companions or Extraordinary Possessions, and 2 Allies or Relics.

Dragon-Blooded

Dragon-Blooded are born this way. **Abilities:** Pick a Caste. 5 in one Caste Ability, 4 in the other. 3 in two Abilities, 2 in three.

Attributes: As Solars.

Birthrights: 5 Charms, 5 Relics or Possessions, and 2 Allies or Companions. Choose 1 Friend in High Places.

Enlightenment

At the end of a session where you learn something, the ST may award each character with an Ability dot, an Attribute dot, or a Birthright. Everyone gets the same kind of reward, and each player can allocate his award as he chooses. He may even gift his award to



Charms

Solar Charms are about: excellence, light, glory, law-giving, self-sufficiency. They are flashy, extreme, and personal. Solar Charms can obviate the need for tools, supplies, and assistance. They can also bestow blessings on others. A Solar in his element is peerless, incomparable.

Sidereal Charms are about: ceremony, prophecy, bureaucracy, kung fu, destiny, chiminage. They are ritualized, situational, Byzantine. Sidereal Charms can entreat spirits, build self-enforcing prophecies, or act as heavenly witness for holy acts. A Sidereal in her element is in control of everything.

Lunar Charms are about: shapechanging, mystery, blood, misdirection, transformation. They are savage, fierce, and direct. Lunar Charms can emulate other living things or disrupt their life functions. A Lunar in his element is viscerally terrifying, the top of his food chain.

Dragonblooded Charms are about: elements, social position, specialization. They manipulate, generate, emulate, or symbolize the inanimate world. They are specific and concrete. A Dragonblood in her element is cosmically right, genuflected to by earth, sea, and fire.





Lands

ScAPE: black forest, desert scrub, grassy hills, green woods, mountain peaks, rocks and crags, seashores

Settlement: littered with ruins, one great city, scattered with hamlets, some castles, nomadic encampment

Travel: caravans, dirt roads, riding monsters, stone roads, trackless, wild horses

Architecture: clay buildings, plaster buildings, reed buildings, stone buildings, wood buildings

Climate: bitter, crying sky, enclouded, misty, monsoon, overcast, parched, smoke, summer sun, wind & storms



Manses

History: conquered, edificial, expanded, fortified, guarded, makeshift, martial, monastic, palatial, standardized

People: bustling with activity, buzzing with talk, crowded, lonely, tensely silent

Walls: bare, mirrored, mosaiced, painted, papered, pillared, stuccoed, tapestried, windowed, writings

Staff: absent, brooding, helpful, inquisitive, loquacious, stern, ubiquitous, uncooperative

Air: chilly, creepy, dirty, dusty, efficient, foreign, hushed, noisy, ramshackle

another player's character, in which case the recipient chooses exactly how it is spent.

If something really big happens, everyone gets an Essence dot. This probably won't happen very often.

Definitions

Attributes

- ❖ *The Physical Attributes are Strength and Dexterity.*
- ❖ *The Social Attributes are Charisma and Manipulation.*
- ❖ *The Mental Attributes are Intelligence and Wits.*

In each case the former governs ♠ might and the latter ♡ finesse.

Abilities

Archery: This skill governs conflict at a remove. Any action taken indirectly or at a distance can fall into the province of Archery.

Concealment: This skill governs going undetected. Any action that relies on secrecy can fall into the province of Concealment.

Conversation: This skill governs communication. Any action that relies on the transmission of information can fall into the province of Conversation. ♠

Craft: This skill governs creation. Any action that makes something new falls into the province of Craft. ♠

Crime: This skill governs doing what is not allowed. Any action that is explicitly or implicitly forbidden can fall into the province of Crime. ♠

Diplomacy: This skill governs appeasement and compromise. Any action that appears to give ground can fall into the province of Diplomacy.

Evasion: This skill governs avoidance. Any action concerned with negating another party's action or the consequences of one's own action can fall into the province of Evasion.

Lore: This skill governs knowledge. Any action that relies on you knowing something your opponent doesn't can fall into the province of Lore.

Martial Arts: This skill governs formalized motion. Any action composed entirely of ritual behavior can fall into the province of Martial Arts. ♠

Medicine: This skill governs taking care of things. Any action that involves finding and fixing a problem can fall into the province of Medicine.



Puissance: This skill governs unarmed might.

Any action that discards external aids in favor of innate power can fall into the province of Puissance. ◊

Splendor: This skill governs charisma. Any action that reshapes the world through the imposition of a personal ideal can fall into the province of Splendor.

Submission: This skill governs endurance. Any action in which you suffer can fall into the province of Submission.

Swordplay: This skill governs fencing. Any action concerned with probing for weakness or locating and shoring up one's own weakness can fall into the province of Swordplay.

Travel: This skill governs control of the battleground. Any action that defines or redefines the terms of the conflict can fall into the province of Travel.

Vision: This skill governs seeing what others do not. Any action that is driven by intuitive surety can fall into the province of Vision. ◊

Conversation, Craft, Crime, Puissance, and Vision are ◊ Solar-only. Non-Solars defend with no Ability. **Martial Arts** is ♀ Sidereal-only. Non-Sidereals defend with Essence instead of an Ability.

To the Storyteller

Build a world of crumbling glory. Never describe a thing unblemished, except as struggle keeps it so. Never describe a man irredeemable, except as he refuses redemption. Never describe a thing irrecoverable, except as it is utterly destroyed as the characters watch.

Name your NPCs, always, and speak in their moods and gestures and voices. Act them.

Act when it is appropriate; press your advantage when you have it, and seize opportunities when the players give them. Do these things: separate, capture, corner. Push a confrontation, announce trouble offscreen, warn of trouble that comes. Hurt, steal, overcharge. Have consequences catch up with them, press a decision, offer opportunities with or without sacrifice.

Don't strike arbitrarily. Let your NPCs act in stages, let them develop their plans. Take your time. *Escalate appropriately.* Only lock the characters down if they give you a golden opportunity or allow your maneuvers to come together without interference.



Hell

Life in the hell-lands is terrible, but lovely in its way, for the Yozis still have a warm place in their broken hearts for architecture and dance.

Scapes: blood-red poppies, broken coral, bubbling marsh, burnt earth, lava rocks, violet moor, withered stumps

Architecture: brass towers, bone shelters, crystal tombs, iron walls, land ships, silver forest, smoked-glass fortress

Weather: choking air, churning clouds, curdled rivers, sizzling rains, unceasing snow

Humans: chained, pocked, scarred, wounded

Demons: cowering oddities, deadly insects, hosts of the Chosen, pestilent livestock, retinues of the Unquestionable, swarming plagues, twisted wildlife, wandering sword-demon orchestras, ingenious staff-fiend artists, captivating cup-creature performances, untiring ring-devil slaves

The retinues of infernal holdings are all cultish; they wear colors. They also have particular looks:

Livery: fetishized, slave, parasitic, symbiotic

Arms: anachronistic, brass, living, masochistic, oiled

Finery: ancient, body-mod, diaphanous





Retinues

A Retinue is a Birthright unavailable at character creation. A retinue may be of your kin & kind, servants, retainers, courtiers, cultists, members of a populace, or a mixture of those.

Kin & kind have a motley of looks from your homeland, and from any livery, arms, fineries, or colors you choose from the lists below.

Members of a populace have the look; in addition, servants have livery. Retainers have arms, and livery at your option. Courtiers have finery, and livery at your option. Cultists have colors, and finery at your option.

Livery: bearing banners, festive, foreign dress, practical sombre, strange, traditional wear, personal crests

Arms: ceremonial, discreet, heirloom, innovative, personal, poor, practical, primitive

Finery: costly, fashionable, foreign, imported, regimented, tattered, traditional

Colors: infamous, gang, occult-symbolic, protest, ritual, secret, transgressive, unwholesome

If your retinue is big enough, it has officers. Detail each officer's domain of expertise and something interesting about them.

Birthrights Charms

A Charm is an extraordinary feat you can perform, stemming from supernatural mastery of your skills. Many of the Charms in *Exalted* are appropriate Charms for *Radiant*, but not all—for a Charm in this game to work, it needs to have a specific descriptive effect. That is to say, it cannot work invisibly. Charms add their descriptive effects to your list of stunt options, and enhance the die bonus you receive from them.

Charms enhance your actions. They are not firmly tied to specific Abilities, but they may be loosely associated: I believe you can find a way to use *Thrashing Carp Serenade* with Medicine, but likewise I believe it would be a challenge to engineer that situation.

You can use a Charm unresisted to create a self-involved effect, such as leaping to your feet with *Effortlessly Rising Flame* or summoning a weapon with *Glorious Solar Sabre*. Affecting other characters, such as if you should attempt to amputate a liver with *Convulsive Displacement* or seduce an innocent with *Hot-Eyed Snake Whispering*, permits their passive or competitive resistance. It will usually be evident when a Charm usage is self-involved; the ST will determine whether an aggressive Charm use is resisted passively or competitively.

Charms that affect the environment should be applied against a static obstacle. For instance, *Harvest of the Hunter* could create a crop of arrows sufficient to supply an entire squadron, if it is invoked with sufficient élan.

Feel free to use the Charms in *Exalted* or devise your own as the spirit moves you.

Relics & Possessions

Regard Relics of the Ancient World and Extraordinary Possessions as mystical objects that can be used like Charms; for instance *Reborn Glacial Rain* might be a dagger that freezes wounds with its icy bite, and reforms itself from the waters whenever it is destroyed.

Allies, Companions, Cabals, & Friends

Regard these as free-willed entities that are often present and sometimes absent, loyal to and willing to come to the aid of the character; their assistance can be used like a Charm. They may exact a price for larger favors.



