

Authorial Agency

You are a co-Author of the Saga, rather than just the player of one character; you do create and portray a single character, but they exist as your means to experience the Saga, not affect it.

As an Author, you have one 'stat':

- **Authorial Agency**, rated 1-20.
- Start with 10 points.

This is a measure of your presence in, and influence over, the Saga. Its value can change, and at zero, your character leaves the Saga.

Saga Structure

As an Author, you can contribute to the overall Saga narration, adding or removing characters, events, or other elements.

The only restrictions are that you must have **Saga Control** and all events are in keeping with the Saga's setting.

There are three ways for you to gain Saga Control:

- **Focus.**
- **Conflict.**
- **Foreshadowing.**

Sub-Agencies

For Conflict (adversarial events), Authorial Agency is split into two sub-'stats':

- **Proactive Agency**, rated 0-10.
- **Reactive Agency**, rated 0-10.

Proactive Agency helps to quickly *win* Conflicts, but costs Focus.

Reactive Agency helps to slowly build to a *win*, and costs nothing.

Narrative Justification

The Focus cost for you to take Saga Control, the requirements to *win* Conflict, and the difficulty of Foreshadowing, are all affected by **narrative justification**.

That is, the Monad uses the existence of previous Saga events to judge how plausible and likely proposed new events are.

The more plausible and likely an event is, the lower/easier things are for you, and of course, the opposite is true.

Previous events include your character and their Synopsis, so, while they are not given 'stats' directly, their existence, actions, and equipment are important.

Character Design

To design your character:

- Write a Character Synopsis.
- Distribute 10 points between:
 - **Proactive Agency.**
 - **Reactive Agency.**

Focus

You start with **5 Focus Points**.

To take Saga Control, the Monad decides how many Focus points are needed factoring in the plausibility and likelihood of your desired Saga Change.

Prologue

The Saga begins with a **Prologue**:

- No rules, except the Monad has absolute control.
- For setting up future Saga elements: mysteries, machinations, and MacGuffins!
- Not for rewarding yourself.



Conflict

Conflict is a gaming mechanic used to resolve adversarial situations in the Saga.

However, despite being a gaming mechanic, role-play and narration are still very much front and centre in Conflict.

It costs 1 Focus to enter Conflict. You can win this back – and more – if you do well enough.

Conflict is played out in turns, with your cards played as either **Decision** or **Action** Cards.

The goal of Conflict is to build stacks of cards – **TENsion stacks** – until their value is at least **ten**, at which point they are *completed*.

Completing TENsion stacks allows you to apply **Circumstances**: modifiers to Decision Card values.

To win in Conflict, you need to form a certain number of completed TENsion stacks, this number is called **Peak TENsion**.

Each Conflict turn:

- You play one Decision Card.
- If its value is the highest out of every Author's, you gain Saga Control for the turn and keep the card to build TENsion.
 - All others are discarded, unless...
- For 1 Focus, you may **seize** any discarded Decision Card by playing an **Action Card**, but only if:
 - Your Action Card's value is equal or less than your **Proactive Agency**.
 - The values of your Action Card and the Decision Card **total exactly ten**.
- If your discarded **Decision Card** is not seized, you may **save** it, but only if its value is equal or less than your **Reactive Agency** – costs zero Focus.

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a long-term aspect of Agêratos, and so the Monad may decide to not use it if you are playing a quick single session.

If they do choose to use Foreshadowing, read on:

In Foreshadowing, you attempt to predict future Saga events and if accurate, you are rewarded.

You may make two types of **Predictions**: **Direct** and **Indirect**.

Each type requires Focus Points, albeit in slightly different ways.

Once active, they slowly diminish as the Saga progresses. For you to receive your rewards, the predicted event must occur within this time frame.

This is not governed by game world or real world time, but rather as the Saga progresses and is measured via **Narrative Beats**.

These Narrative Beats occur due to Focus expenditure and Conflict.

As for the Predictions themselves:

Direct Predictions are public, with other Authors able to join you in the risk and reward; via collaboration, you try to enact the predicted event in time.

Indirect Predictions are hidden from other Authors, and you cannot reveal to them its true nature, except for a cryptic hint.

Neither can you enact the predicted event yourself. Instead you must subtly guide another Author to do so for you, and if you succeed, both of you are rewarded.



NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Focus Cost Guidelines

Natural flow: 0 points

- The plausible and likely.
- Changes that align with the current or established events of the Saga.

Subtle Nudges: 1 point

- The plausible, yet unusual.
- Lays 'stepping stones' as the groundwork for future events, or subtly redirects the Saga.

Substantial Nudges: 2 points

- The plausible, yet unexpected.
- Clearly redirects the Saga.
- Character capabilities which could feasibly come from a hobby, side business, or similar.

Subtle Changes: 3 points

- The implausible, and yet not surprising.
- Changes, that while unexpected at the time, were perhaps obvious in hindsight.
- Characters gaining specialised capabilities outside those originally stated.

Substantial Changes: 4 points

- The implausible and highly unlikely.
- Alters the Saga significantly.
- Characters gaining unlikely capabilities.

Monumental Changes: 5≥ points

- Redefines the Saga's setting or theme.
- Characters gaining skills that contradict the original Character Synopsis.

5 points: Adjust Authorial Agency

- Adjust Authorial Agency by 1 point

Foreshadowing

Narrative Beats

- 1 step for every Focus Point or Peak TENSION that forms a Saga Change.

Direct Predictions (Public)

- Loaded immediately: 1 Focus/Load.

Direct Rewards: Current Load + 1/Author

- 1 Focus and card/current Load.
- Saga Change equal to current Load.

Indirect Predictions (Hidden)

- Keep secret: Prediction and maximum Load.
- Publicly state: cryptic hint.
- Loaded over time: 1 Load/Beat.

Indirect Rewards: Maximum Load

- Event owner: 1 point of Authorial Agency.
- Event owner: 2 cards.
- Prediction owner: 1 point of Authorial Agency, 1 Focus and 1 card/maximum Load.

Tiebreaks

Lead Tiebreak

1. Highest Focus Points.
2. Highest Authorial Agency.
3. Highest number of cards in your Hand.
4. Draw a card; highest wins.

Foil Tiebreak

1. Lowest Focus Points.
2. Lowest Authorial Agency.
3. Lowest number of cards in your Hand.
4. Draw a card; highest wins.

When to use

- Conflict narration ties: Lead.
- Decision Cards: Lead
- Direct Predictions: Foil.
- Peak TENSION: Group: Lead then Foil.
- Regaining Focus: Lead
- Zero Focus Points: Foil.

Action Cards: Use rules for Climax.

As if you had drawn...

1. Central Pot; if only 1 point, take and move on.
2. Highest Focus; if tie, use Lead Tiebreak.



Conflict

1. Exposition

Conflict Pot

- Players pay 1 Focus to enter Conflict.

Peak TENSION

- The Monad sets type and amount.

Scene Circumstances

- The Monad sets pre-existing Circumstances.

2. Rising Action

1. Reveal Decision Cards

- Choose a card and place facedown, when everyone is ready, reveal them.

2. Compare Decision Cards

- Highest wins; tied cards are kept or go to a Lead Tiebreak.
- Kept cards start a new TENSION stack or added to an existing one.

3. Play Action Cards

- Action Card value $\leq$ Proactive Agency.
- Action plus Decision Card must equal 10.
- Costs 1 Focus.
- Can be Blocked; ties use Lead Tiebreak.

4. Save discarded Decision Cards

- Discarded Decision Card $\leq$ Reactive Agency.
- Forms a NEW TENSION stack.

5. Build TENSION

- A TENSION stack ≥ 10 is completed:
 - Take 1 Focus from Conflict Pot.
 - Apply a Circumstance.

6. Apply Circumstances

- 1 point modifier to any Author in Conflict.
- Circumstances reduced to zero are removed.

3. Peak

If one Author has reached Peak TENSION, move onto 4. Falling Action; in a tie, engage in Climax.

Climax

- Put Hand to one side.
- Draw 1 new card facedown.
- Draw up to 4 more cards for 1 Focus each.
- Reveal cards: highest wins Climax.
- Tied? Repeat Climax or narrate into the Saga.

4. Falling Action

- Narrate how Conflict is brought to an end.
- No subsequent events or rewards.

5. Conflict Resolution

Gaming Loss (failed to reach Safe TENSION)

- Lose 1 point of Authorial Agency.
- Lose 1 Focus to the Central Pot.

Gaming Rewards (reached Peak TENSION)

- Gain 1 point of Authorial Agency.
- Gain 1 Focus from the Central Pot.
- Gain remaining Focus in Conflict Pot.
- Subsequent Saga event equal to Peak TENSION.

Peak TENSION: Personal and Timed

- As above.

Peak TENSION: Group

- Split rewards: Lead – Foil – repeat.

Peak TENSION: Creative

- No Safe TENSION: automatic gaming losses.

Peak TENSION Types

Personal

Individuals race to Peak TENSION.

Group

Authors group TENSION stacks.

Timed

Highest TENSION after a set turn limit.

Creative

Reward scales with TENSION but so does risk.

Safe TENSION

Equal to half of Peak TENSION.

Circumstances

- Do not affect if Action Cards can seize discarded Decision Cards.
- Do not affect if Decision Cards can be saved through Reactive Agency.
- Do not alter Decision Card values within TENSION stacks.
- Can give no more than Negative or Positive 5.



PROTAGONIST OVERLAY

Focus Cost Guidelines

Possible adjustment based on Vicissitudes

- Negative Vicissitude 4-5: +2 Focus.
- Negative Vicissitude 1-3: +1 Focus.
- Positive Vicissitude 1-3: -1 Focus.
- Positive Vicissitude 4-5: -2 Focus.

5 points: Acquire 1 Catalyst Point

- Increase Catalyst Points by 1 point.

2 points per Asset/Experience Value

- Permanently adjust Asset values.
- Temporarily adjust Experience values.

Conflict

2. Rising Action

Changes only apply to this stage.

Vicissitudes are applied using either:

Active Voice

- Modify Decision Card values as per Circumstances in the Narrative Framework.

Passive Voice

- Applied before Reactive Agency.
 - Discarded Decision Card $\leq$ Passive Vicissitudes.
 - Can be added to ANY TENSION stack.

Tiebreaks

Catalyst Points adjust Focus value.

Lead Tiebreak

- Highest Focus points + Catalyst Points.

Foil Tiebreak

- Lowest Focus points - Catalyst Points.

Ace Cards

Playing an Ace card in any situation gives you 1 Catalyst Point.

Catalyst Points

2 Catalyst Points: Draw a card

- Outside of Conflict only.

Discover Assets

- During Conflict Resolution.
- Either as a Focus enact Saga Change or as a gaming device.
 - Focus enacted Saga Change
 - Substitute Catalyst Points for Focus.
 - Gaming device
 - 1 Catalyst Point for Negative Asset 2.
 - 2 Catalyst Point for Negative Asset 1.
 - 3 Catalyst Points for Asset 0.
 - 4 Catalyst Points for Positive Asset 1.
 - 5 Catalyst Points for Positive Asset 2.

Expand Circumstances

- Only when applying a Circumstance.
- First affected Entity is free.
- Each extra Entity costs 1 Catalyst Point.

Expand Circumstances

- Only when applying a Circumstance.
- 1 Catalyst Point increases Circumstance value by 1 point.
- Circumstances for each Entity must be increased separately.

Develop Experiences

- Only with Monad approval.
- 2 Catalyst Points per Experience increase.
 - Negative Experiences move toward zero.
 - Positive Experiences move away from zero.
- Reduce costs by taking Negative Experiences: each point taken reduces overall cost.

Foreshadowing

Rewards

- Instead of cards, you receive Catalyst Points.
- 1 Catalyst Point for each card you would draw.



BIBLIOMANCY OVERLAY

Bonus Words

Bonus Words come:

- Either side of your pointed to Chosen Word.
- After the top left Chosen Word.
- After the bottom left Chosen Word.
- Before the top right Chosen Word.
- Before the bottom right Chosen Word.

They can only be:

1. **Nouns:** The names of things.
2. **Adjectives:** Describe or qualify nouns.
3. **Verbs:** Denote actions taking place.
4. **Adverbs:** Describe or modify verbs.

Each Conflict turn, when you reveal your Chosen Word, you can choose to reveal a Bonus Word – each can only be used once.

Applying Bonus Words

Applying a Bonus Word gives a positive modifier to a Decision Card dependant on its resonance with current Conflict events:

Direct Resonance: +3

Thematic Resonance: +2

Category Resonance: +1

Foreshadowing

Replace Draw a Card with the ability to reuse Chosen Words in Conflict.

No more than 5 reuses.

Chosen Words

Open book to random page and point at word – your first Chosen Word.

Your other four Chosen Words are:

1. Top left, i.e., the first word of the first line.
2. Top right, i.e., last word of the first line.
3. Bottom left, i.e., first word of the last line.
4. Bottom right, i.e., last word of the last line.

These five Chosen Words are your Hand.

Each Chosen Word's length is the equivalent to a card value – can be over 10.

During Conflict:

1. Use each word only once except if length is equal or less than Reactive Agency.
2. At length $10 \geq$, gives you Focus Points as if you had drawn a court card
3. A length of 1, counts as an Ace.
4. Used as Decision Card, the value is modified by Circumstances or Vicissitudes.
5. Used as Action Card:
 - 5.1. Must be equal to or less than Proactive Agency.
 - 5.2. Combined value must be at least 10.
 - 5.3. Gives half a TENSION Point.
6. When Hand reaches zero, pick five more Chosen Words from a new page.

TENSION

Each turn you gain Saga Control, you score half a TENSION point.

1 TENSION point is the equivalent of a completed TENSION stack.

Climax

Open book to random page and point to word – its length is used in Climax.

Spend Focus to repeat process – max of 4 Focus.

Tiebreaks

If you make it to the Draw a Card factor, take your book, open a page, and point to a word.

Its length is your card value.



DICE OVERLAY

Conflict

Begin with a Hand of 5D10 – reduce by 1D10 every roll – at 0D10 refresh to 5D10.

1. Once – and only once – per dice, re-roll any whose rolled value is equal or less than Reactive Agency.
2. When Hand equals 5, a roll of 10, gives Focus Points as if you had drawn a court card.
3. A rolled value of 1, counts as an Ace.
4. Modified by Circumstances, or Vicissitudes if using the Protagonist Overlay.
5. Used as Action Card:
 - 5.1. Must be equal to or less than Proactive Agency.
 - 5.2. Combined value must be at least 10.
 - 5.3. Gives half a TENSion Point.

TENSion

Each turn you gain Saga Control, you score half a TENSion point.

1 TENSion point is the equivalent of a completed TENSion stack.

Climax

Roll current Hand but do NOT reduce Hand
Spend Focus to repeat process – max of 4 Focus.

Foreshadowing

Draw a Card replenishes Hand.

Excess over Hand 5 is rolled – 10s give 2 Focus as if drawing a court card.

Tiebreaks

If you make it to the Draw a Card factor, roll current Hand – do NOT reduce Hand

MANTLE / WILD CARD OVERLAYS

Look into Its I's (Wild Card)

- When the Mantle acts, draw two cards:
 - **Court Cards:** Put to one side and redraw.
- When you have two pip cards:
 - **Total Value:** Gives Intent and Intensity.
 - +1 Intensity for every court card.
 - **Suits:** Gives Integrants.
- Neither option and no court cards: no action.
- Pairs of court cards gives extra Integrants.

Intent and Intensity (W.C.)

Value	Intent	Intensity
2-3	Hinder	3
4-6	Hinder	2
7-9	Hinder	1
10-12	Neither	0
13-15	Help	1
16-18	Help	2
19-20	Help	3

Integrants (Wild Card)

Suit	Concept	Saga Element
Heart	Creation	Characters
Club	Disruption	Items
Diamond	Harmony	Insights
Spade	Destruction	Scenes

Conflict (Mantle)

- Begin with a Hand of 5D10 – reduce by 1D10 every roll – at 0D10 refresh to 5D10.

Decision cards

- Use the highest value.
- Court cards give Focus only when Hand is 5.

Action cards

- Pay 1 Focus.
- Court cards give Focus only when Hand is 5.
- Of the drawn cards, only those equal to or less than Proactive Agency may be used.
- One of these Action cards may then be chosen: if it plus any discarded Decision Card – from any Author – equals 10, seize that card.

Focus Costs (Wild Card)

Whenever Focus costs are decided, draw a card:

- **Heart:** +1 Focus cost.
- **Club or Diamond:** no adjustment.
- **Spade:** -1 Focus cost.

Focus enacted Saga Change also check:

- Card's Value - Adjusted Focus cost
- If less than zero, the Mantle initiates Conflict.

Conflict (Wild Card)

- **Action Cards:** When the Mantle draws an Ace.
- **TENsion Stacks:** Always add to existing stack.
- **Agencies:** Begin at 5 each.
 - Draw on Intent and Intensity table.
 - Hinder increases Agency by Intensity.
 - Help reduces Agency by Intensity.

Narrative Beats (Wild Card)

On each Narrative Beat draw a court card, with the suit giving Mantle's action:

- **Jack:** Focus enacted Saga Change.
- **Queen:** Foreshadowing – Direct only
- **King:** Conflict.





Narrative Framework Saga

Authorial Agency

Notes

Focus Cost Guidelines

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The plausible and likely.

Changes that align with the current or established events of the Saga.

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The plausible, yet unusual.

Lays 'stepping stones' as the groundwork for future events, or subtly redirects the Saga.

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The plausible, yet unexpected.

Clearly redirects the Saga.

Character capabilities which could feasibly come from a hobby, side business, or similar.

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The implausible, and yet not surprising.

Changes, that while unexpected at the time, were perhaps obvious in hindsight.

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Alters the Saga significantly.

Characters gaining unlikely capabilities.

Monumental Changes: 5≥ Points

Redefines the Saga's setting or theme.

Characters gaining skills that contradict their original Character Synopsis.

5 Points: Adjust Authorial Agency

Adjust Authorial Agency by 1 point.

Narrative Steps

1/Focus or Peak TENSION that forms a Saga Change.

1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5





Narrative Framework

Player _____

Authorial Agency _____

Saga _____

Synopsis _____

Character _____

Proactive Agency

Reactive Agency

012345678910

012345678910

Notes



Protagonist Overlay

Player_____

Authorial Agency

Saga_____

Synopsis

Character

Proactive Agency

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Reactive Agency

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Experiences

[illegible]

Assets

[illegible]

Catalyst Points

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----





Mantle Overlay

Authorial Agency

Saga _____

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1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	1

Hand

Court cards only give Focus Points when Hand value is 5.

