

CATS IN THE GRAY CITY

PROLOGUE

Beginning to the left of the MC, each player chooses and answers one of the questions below, either by circling options or scribbling in the margins. As each question is answered, the other players should ask for details or suggest ideas, but leave some things to wonder about. Continue until all the questions have been answered.

THE CAT SOVEREIGN

1. Who rules the court of the cats? Give them a title, a name, and a distinguishing characteristic:

King, Queen, Lord, Lady, Minister, Chancellor, Cardinal, Baron/ess, Count/ess, Prince/ss

Titus, Featherbeard, Rainbow, Glass, Nutmeg, Squeek, Windrunner, Foxglove, Coal, Ivy, Cheese, Frankie, Thistle, Glory, Zeus, Belinda, Coco, Snow

A long winding tail, gleaming red eyes, a giant's stature, long wispy hair, a beautiful face, large winglike ears, a hairless body, a lion's mane, a jewelled collar, extra toes, a glass eye, no tail, long sharp fangs

2. No reign is untroubled. Choose two:

- Their rule is just
- Their health is strong
- Their authority is not contested

3. How did the sovereign win their throne?

Choose one and say how it happened:

a bloody coup, a rite of birth, a glorious battle, a popular election, a sinister conspiracy, a heroic quest, a divine decree

THE CONCRETE WILDS

4. The city is endless, but there are borders that cats fear to cross; say why:

- The spirits have forbidden it
- The territory is ruled by another sovereign
- The streets are overrun with feral beasts
- The Catchers hunt there

5. In the city, bounty and famine walk hand in hand. Choose two:

- There is enough food
- The weather is not harsh
- There is little sickness

6. In the space below, draw a map of the City. Include the kingdom's borders, the home of the sovereign and three of the following, giving each a name:

a dangerous body of water, a wildlife refuge, a hermit, a contested territory, forbidden ground, an abandoned house, a spirit's refuge, a sympathetic human, an outlaw's hideout, a zoo, a pack of wild dogs, an old ghost, a gathering place, a meat market, a mercenary beast, a bat-filled tower, an eagle's nest, a camp of vagabonds

A GROWING MENACE

7. Something new and dangerous lurks in the City's shadows. What stories are told of it? Choose two:

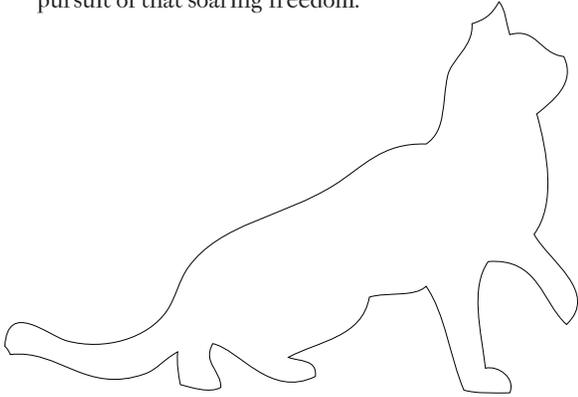
it takes many shapes, it is the size of a bear, it can be in two places at once, it is a thing made by humans, it flies on black wings, it moves in silence, it has spies among the court, it's voice is mesmerizing, it breathes smoke and fire, it hunts the wicked

A COMMON ORIGIN

8. Shared history holds our main characters together. Who are they? Choose one: the remnants of an ancient clan, a band of outlaws, the trusted knights of the sovereign, refugees from the beyond the borders, emissaries from a foreign land,

THE ACROCAT

You're a paragon of athleticism and grace. You move like an acrobat across the city's skyline, ever in pursuit of that soaring freedom.



CHOOSE A NAME

Sylvan, Copper, Lulu, Prancer, Howl, Wind, Daywisp, Opera, Kite, Haku, Pix, Socks, Vera, Limbo, Sammy, Cloud, Frost, Sparrow, Dreamer

DRAW YOURSELF

Your body is long and muscular. You have sleek or windblown fur and a serious or distant face.

CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your muse. Your talents only work when you have your muse's faith and encouragement, so do your best to impress them.

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- **Aerialist:** When you make it your goal to get on top of something, you always succeed, even if it's absurdly high or dangerous. This does not help you get down.
- **Keen eyes:** Your eyes can see farther than other cats. When you survey your surroundings from a high place, ask the MC to draw you a map, including who's around, and anything that's strange or out of place.
- **Elfenstep:** You're light as a feather, and never off-balance. You can skim across fresh snow without leaving tracks, or run easily across power lines.
- **Great leap:** Whenever you make a move to take a daring leap, toss two bonus coins.

KEYS

- * **Moonstruck:** When you undertake danger for the sake of your muse, add three coins to your pool.
- **Explorer:** when you tread where no cat has gone before, add five coins to your pool.
- **Virtuoso:** when you attempt what another has declared impossible, add three coins to your pool.
- **Evasive:** when you avoid dealing with a problem that will haunt you later, add three coins to your pool.
- **Improviser:** when you have time to prepare, but choose not to, add one coin to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY GRACE PREVAILS

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I FEEL THE WIND IN MY WHISKERS

Assign coins here to tune into your surroundings. Hold any coins you assign. You may discard them to ask questions, one-for-one:



- What should I be wary of?
- What's out of place here?
- What's the fastest/safest escape?
- How can I best defend myself?

I STAY GROUNDED

Assign a coin here to keep your head.

Otherwise, mark a WIRED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're overwhelmed by adrenaline. You're oblivious to risk and every move you make puts you in harm's way.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe.

Otherwise, mark an INJURED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're dying. Put your life in human hands, or retire from this plane.



COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.



CONDITIONS

- [] **Hungry:** you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.
- [] **Wet:** you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.
- [] **Sick:** you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

THE BRUISER

You're big. You're tough. You're mean. You've won some fights and you've lost some fights and you wear your scars with pride.

CHOOSE A NAME

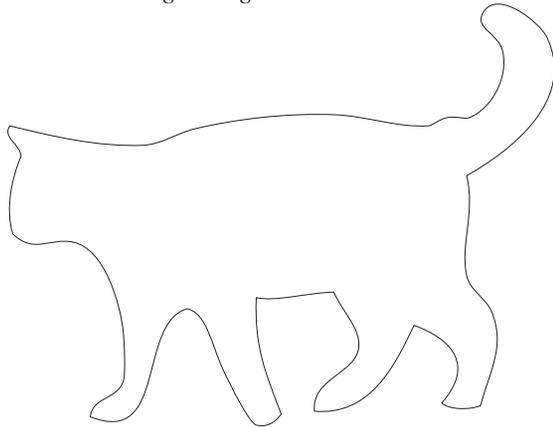
Bruiser, Moxie, Raz, Monster, Redbeard, Bigfoot, Bastion, Beefcake, Athena, Tiger, Torque, Romeo

CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your rival. You don't always get along, but admire each other as peers. Whenever you or your rival makes a move but doesn't succeed in their goal, the other may discard two coins to step in and get it done, taking all the credit.

DRAW YOURSELF

Make yourself look bulky and intense, with one distinguishing scar.



COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- Dangerous demeanor: when you make it your goal to impress or intimidate someone, you may toss a bonus coin for each of your scars.
- Pin down: when you best someone in a fight, they may not run from you, and must submit.
- Big as Hell: at the start of the game, and when you have time to rest, reset your coin pool to 12 instead of 9.
- Tough: when you mark your last INJURED box, you may crawl off to some dark place to recover, rather than placing your life in human hands. Ask the MC where you wake up.
- Brawler: when you make a move to fight off or subdue other cats or feral beasts, you choose two fighting goals.

KEYS

- * *Ceasefire*: When you put your life in your rival's hands, add three coins to your pool.
- Grudgeholder: when you make a move against an enemy, add three coins to your pool.
- Monster: when you bare claw and fang against a human, add three coins to your pool.
- Alpha: when you squash infighting within the group, add three coins to your pool.
- Scrapper: when you mark your third INJURED box, add three coins to your pool.
- Skunkbuster: when you bare claw and fang against feral beasts, add three coins to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY STRENGTH PREVAILS

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I'M THE ALPHA

Assign a die here to show them who's boss. Until you next make a move, anyone else to do so must get your permission or declare themselves your enemy. If you grant permission to another player's cat, they gain a coin.

I KEEP MY COOL

Assign a coin here to stay civilized.

Otherwise, mark a FERAL box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you release your inner beast. You can't cooperate or entertain council. You'll attack anything that gets in your way and will die before putting your life in human hands.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe.

Otherwise, mark a HARM box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're dying. Put your life in human hands, or expire. Each time you come back from the edge, add a scar to your drawing.

CONDITIONS

[] Hungry: you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.

[] Wet: you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.

[] Sick: you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

THE DANDY

You're gorgeous, stylish, show-quality, a true specimen. You're charm and beauty make you an object of envy and desire in the court.

CHOOSE A NAME

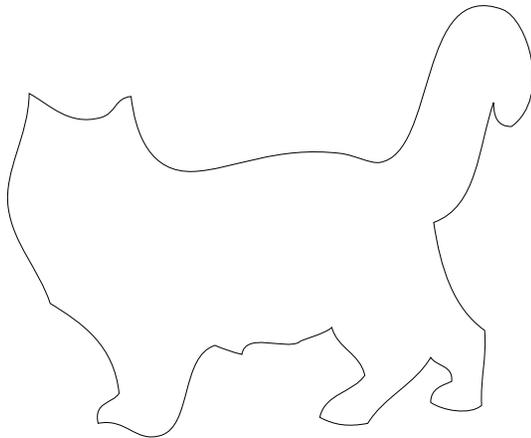
Reis, Queen Mary, Sebastian, Iridium, Plum, Gabriel, Mercury, Prism, Locks, Lily, Bambi, Glen, Hopscotch, Munley, Flame

CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your admirer. Wanting to impress you, they toss a bonus coin when they make a move at your suggestion.

DRAW YOURSELF

Give yourself large, shapely eyes, and beautiful markings.



COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- Rare breed: no human will ever take you for a stray. Most will let you into their house if you beg, taking you for a lost pet.
- Enthralling gaze: when you give someone your full attention, you may discard a coin to get theirs in return. They won't break attention until you do.
- Silver tongue: whenever someone makes a demand or sets a condition in exchange for a favor, they'll always take your promise in place of the real thing.
- Expressive: even without a shared language, you can make your basic needs and wishes understood to anyone, of any species.

KEYS

- Cuddler: when you put your life in human hands, add three coins to your pool.
- Connoisseur: when you eat finely prepared food, add three coins to your pool.
- Collector: when you get something pretty or valuable for yourself, add three coins to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY CHARM PREVAILS

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I READ THE ROOM

Assign a coin here to gain insight into your situation. Keep track of the coin you assign here. You may discard it at any time to ask a question:



- What do they hope or fear I'll do?
- Who's really in charge here?
- How could I get them to...?
- What would they do if I...?

I MAINTAIN MY POISE

Assign a coin here to stay clean and poised.

Otherwise, mark a HARRIED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're dirty and broken down. You lose the use of your talents, and you find yourself desperate to impress your admirer.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe.

Otherwise, mark an INJURED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're dying. Put your life in human hands, or retire from this plane.

CONDITIONS

[] Hungry: you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.

[] Wet: you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.

[] Sick: you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

THE GREMLIN

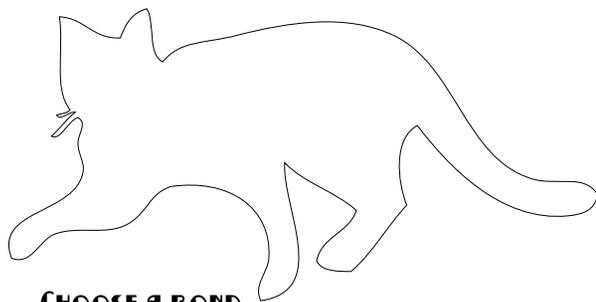
You're freaky smart. You know how stuff works, and how to make it stop working. Oh, and you have a radio in your head, so that's something.

CHOOSE A NAME

Rocket, Radar, Radio, Pounce, Looper, Skipper, Mischief, Red, Wirewhisk, Boomer, Skid, Crackle

DRAW YOURSELF

You're cute, but a little weird-looking. Your fur is singed or rubbed bare in places.



CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your conspirator. They have the other piece of your radio set. It's up to them to keep track of it. The two of you are notorious scoundrels, with a long history of shared mischief.

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- * Copy that: you have a two way radio set. One half's in your brain. Your conspirator has the other half. You can use it communicate over long distances, or quietly in the presence of others.
- o Baffling panoply: you carry an arsenal of little objects with you, somehow. When you need something specific, you may discard a coin to have just the thing or know where to find it.
- o Monkeypaw: you can work most simple human devices. Once per scene, you can ask the MC, "How's this thing work?"
- o Signal booster: you may discard a coin to patch your radio into any other radio, speaker, microphone, or brain around you. When you do, mark a HAYWIRE box.

KEYS

- * Ten-four: when you use your radio to enact a plan with your conspirator, add three coins to your pool.
- o Battery-powered: when you chew through electrical cords, mark an INJURED box and gain five coins.
- o Too curious: when your curiosity leads you into danger, gain two coins.
- o Absent-minded: when you forget something important at a critical juncture, add three coins to your pool.
- o Sneak-thief: when you take something that doesn't belong to you, add three coins to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY SMARTS PREVAIL

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I STAY FOCUSED

Assign a coin here to avoid distraction. If you do, add a bonus coin to yours and your conspirator's next move. Otherwise, ask the MC where curiosity leads. Follow it.

THINGS DON'T GO HAYWIRE

Assign a coin here to keep your mischievous sprites at bay. Otherwise, mark a HAYWIRE box: [] [] [] [] []
When you mark the last box, everything goes haywire. Nothing works right around you. Your radio gives you nothing but static. When you make a move, you may *not stay focused*.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe. Otherwise, mark an INJURED box: [] [] [] [] []
When you mark the last box, you're dying. Put your life in human hands, or retire from this plane.

CONDITIONS

- [] Hungry: you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.
- [] Wet: you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.
- [] Sick: you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.

THE MAGUS

You're a wild, wizened warlock of a cat. You're a weaver of spells, a forger of pacts, a vessel for a thousand years of memory. You're also pretty into canned tuna.

CHOOSE A NAME

Cleopatra, Geist, Serpico, Viscious, Loki, Leviathan, Lookfar, Draco, Fortuna, Maev, Arrietty, Monte, Magus, Lucky



DRAW YOURSELF

Make yourself look shaggy, dirty or oily. Draw a strange symbol on your coat and long, distinctive whiskers.

CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your protégé. Draw your symbol on their fur. You've been charged with their protection and education, so keep them out of trouble! When your protégé follows your advice, they add one coin to their pool.

{

COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.

}

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- * Void summons: you may discard one of your hidden coins to call on dark spirits. They will perform one task for you: frighten someone; extinguish a light; deliver a message; hold someone in place; conceal something.
- o Void discipline: when you call on spirits of darkness, you may instead choose one of the follow effects: steal someone's voice; reveal something hidden; bar or force open a door; command a smaller animal.
- o Reaper seal: So long as you have at least one coin hidden away, your bargains are sealed by the grim powers; neither you nor any other may break them.
- o 99 lives: your memories go way, way back; at any time, discard a hidden coin to ask the MC for a useful memory.
- o Onyx eyes: So long as you have at least one coin hidden away, you can always tell when someone is watching you.

KEYS

- o Sage teacher: when you lead your protégé to success, add three coins to your pool.
- o Curmudgeon: when your distrust of others does you harm, add three coins to your pool
- o Grim contract: when you make a pact with a spirit, add four coins to your pool.
- o Mess maker: when you trash a human home, add three coins to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY CRAFT PREVAILS

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I SEAL AWAY MY POWER

Assign as many coins as you like here, and hide them away. Once during the game, you may erase the strange symbol you bear to return all your hidden coins to your pool.

{

HIDDEN COINS

}

I RESIST THE DARKNESS

Assign a die here to deny the call of the void. Otherwise, mark a GRIM box: [] [] [] [] [] []
When you've marked the last box, the grim powers are restless. Whenever you make a move, ask the MC to choose an effect from your Void summons and use it in against you in some inconvenient way.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe. Otherwise, mark an INJURED box: [] [] [] [] [] []
When you mark the last box, you're dying. Make a dark pact, or recede into the land of spirits.

CONDITIONS

- [] Hungry: you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.
- [] Wet: you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.
- [] Sick: you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

THE SHADOW

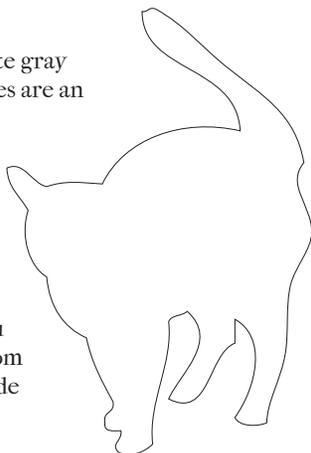
You're swift and quiet, careful and shy. You pass through hidden places, and commune equally with the seen and unseen. You feel the pull of the secret world everywhere, and hope not to fade away.

CHOOSE A NAME

Shadow, Grim, Luna, Po, Moonkitty, Whispersilk, Carbon, Sweetsleep, Cloud, Quicksilver

DRAW YOURSELF

You are pitch black, slate gray or stark white. Your eyes are an odd and vibrant color.



CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your tether. That cat always knows where you are and sees you when others don't. You fear straying too far from your tether, lest you fade away completely.

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- **Black as night:** while you stand still and don't make a move, you may mark a FADING box to go perfectly unnoticed.
- **Into the dark:** when you make it your goal to escape, you may go seen or unseen for free.
- **Shadow step:** while you've marked at least one FADING box you may discard a coin to pass through a wall or solid object.
- **Haunt:** while you're a wisp, you may discard a coin to possess another cat or feral beast. If you make a move while possessing them, discard a coin to keep hold of them.
- **Ghost talker:** when you seek the aid of friendly spirits, flip a coin, then discard it. If it's heads, they help you, but choose one; if it's tails, they still help, but all three:
 - They demand a favor in return
 - Their help is not what you expected
 - Mark a FADING box.

KEYS

- * **Bad luck:** when you get your tether into trouble, add three coins to your pool.
- **Eavesdropper:** when you listen in on a private conversation, add three coins to your pool.
- **Imposter:** when you pass yourself off as something you're not, add three coins to your pool.
- **Scaredy-cat:** when you run or hide, leaving your friends in danger, add three coins to your pool.
- **Infiltrator:** when you trespass where you're not welcome, add three coins to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY WITS PREVAIL

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I'M SEEN / UNSEEN

Assign a coin here to say who does or doesn't notice you. Otherwise, ask the MC.

I DON'T FADE AWAY

Assign a coin here to stay firmly real.

Otherwise, mark a FADING box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you've become a wisp. No one but your tether can see, touch or otherwise sense you. Whenever you make a move, assign a coin here or lose yourself in the spirit lands.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe.

Otherwise, mark an INJURED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're dying. Put your life in human hands, or recede into the land of spirits.

CONDITIONS

[] **Hungry:** you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.

[] **Wet:** you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.

[] **Sick:** you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.

THE WILDCAT

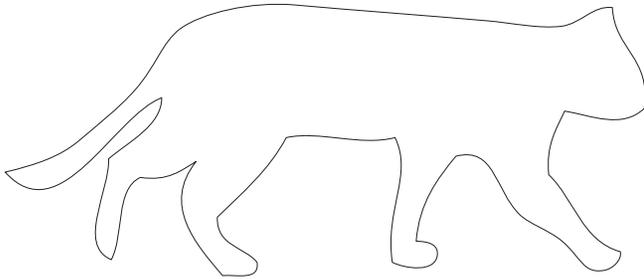
You're not actually a cat, though you're sometimes mistaken for one. You're something a older, more primal. For now, you're loose in the City, but the Catchers are after you, eager to put you back in your cage.

CHOOSE A NAME

Lynx, Jaguar, Wildcat, Bobcat, Ocelot, Caracal, Tiger, Leo, Panther, Sabertooth, Snowcat, Impala

DRAW YOURSELF

Give yourself spots or stripes, with long ears, and sharp claws and teeth.



CHOOSE A BOND

Name another cat as your liberator. They're the one who sprung you from your cage. You owe them a great debt and take any chance to repay them.

TALENTS AND KEYS

Talents are special abilities, unique to each character. Keys are triggers that let you get more coins for your pool. You start with one talent and two keys from your lists.

TALENTS

- Predator: when you make it your goal to track someone down, add two bonus coins to your roll.
- Wildspeak: You've spent time around other animals species and have learned many languages.
- Safehaven: You have a secret den somewhere in the city. Add it to the map, and choose two: it's stocked with food, it's well hidden, it's big enough to share, humans don't go near it
- Longclaw: when you make a fighting move and cause injury, cause an extra injury.

KEYS

- Hunted: when you evade human pursuers, gain three coins.
- Territorial: when you stand your ground and chase someone away from your territory, add three coins to your pool.
- Uncontainable: when you escape confinement, add three coins to your pool.
- Rebellious: when you refuse someone the respect due to them, add three coins to your pool.
- Hunter: when you feast on rare game, add three coins to your pool.

MAKING A MOVE

To make a move, say what you do and state your goal. Toss any number of coins from your pool, plus bonus coins if you have the advantage or time to prepare. Discard the tails and assign the rest below:

MY INSTINCT PREVAILS

Assign a coin here to succeed in your goal. Ask the MC what happens or assign a second coin here to describe it yourself. Otherwise, ask the MC for a worse outcome.

I KEEP A WARY EYE

Assign a die here to stay vigilant. If you do, until you next make a move, nothing can surprise you. Whatever comes, you saw it coming and have had time to prepare.

I STAY UNDER THE RADAR

Assign a die here to evade your pursuers.

Otherwise, mark a HUNTED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, the Catchers have caught up with you. Anytime you make a move, assign a coin here or find yourself in their grasp.

I GET OUT UNSCATHED

If you're in harm's way, assign a coin here to keep safe.

Otherwise, mark an INJURED box: [] [] [] [] []

When you mark the last box, you're dying. Put your life in human hands, or recede into the land of spirits.

CONDITIONS

[] Hungry: you need to eat. Until you do, each time you make a move, first discard a coin.

[] Wet: you're grounded to the real. You can't see or interact with spirits or the secret world.

[] Sick: you need medicine. Until you get it, you can't recover coins from resting.

COINS

Start with nine coins. You may add any number of coins to your roll when you make a move, discarding them afterward. When you have time to rest, reset your pool to nine coins.

THE MASTER OF CATS

As the MC, you don't roll dice—your moves are more like prompts for improvisation. Use them to keep the other players in the drivers seat, making decisions. After each move, ask someone, “what do you do?”

IN PREPARATION...

- * Think about the answers from the prologue and put the pieces together
- * Hold the Menace loosely in your head: think about what might be true, but don't decide. Listen for what the cats think about it
- * Think about the Sovereign. What are their plans? What do they think of our protagonists? Who do they trust?
- * Create some supporting characters. Make some of them real and some of them spirits. Give them each something they want, and think of ways they could help the players or get in their way.

TO START PLAYING...

Start things in progress. Ask or tell the cats:
-Who's chasing you?
-Where were you headed when you got lost?
-What do you need and who has it?
-What tribute have you brought the queen?
-Who's in trouble?

DURING THE GAME...

IT'S YOUR JOB TO...

- * Fill the city with danger and subtle magic
- * Put the cats at the center of it
- * Speak for the supporting characters
- * Tell the cats when to make moves
- * Use your moves
- * Ask what they do

YOU MAY NOT...

- * Say what the cats do or why
- * Take their coins
- * Mark boxes on their sheet (other than conditions)

THE MC'S MOVES

Use your moves to keep the cats in the drivers seat, making decisions. If you're making a soft move, give them a chance to change the outcome. If it's a hard move, just make it happen. Either way, afterward, always ask them, “what do you do?”

BASIC MC MOVES

- * Separate them
- * Pin them down
- * Threaten them with hunger, disease or harsh weather
- * Introduce a supporting character
- * Introduce a new locale, add it to the map
- * Foreshadow future dangers
- * Offer an opportunity, maybe with a cost or a warning
- * Use a danger move
- * Act for a supporting character
- * Give them time to rest, but not as often as they want

WHEN THEY ASK FOR A WORSE OUTCOME...

- * Give them what they want, but...
 - It doesn't go how they planned
 - They put someone else in danger
 - They get wet, sick, or hungry
 - They attract unwanted attention
 - Make a hard move against them
- * Withold what they want, but...
 - They create an opportunity for someone else
 - They learn something new about the situation

DANGERS

Dangers are sources of trouble and sometimes hidden rewards. Not every element listed is necessarily a danger. Sometimes a bird could be a friendly supporting character, rather than a feral beast, for instance.

THE CAT COURT

Motives: maintain or disrupt hierarchy, expand, learn or protect secrets, punish outlaws, endure
Moves: summon to the sovereign's presence, offer favors for favors, promise rewards, force them to take sides, award or seize territory, exile, demand service, collect taxes, declare war
Elements: the sovereign, rival cats, foreign kingdoms, hangers-on, dissidents, outlaws

FERAL BEASTS

Motives: eat, kill, conceal their presence, defend their territory, repay grudges, act without reason
Moves: attack from shadows, chase, pin down, knock out, drag away, follow at a distance,
Elements: birds, coyotes, foxes, feral cats, racoons, squirrels, wild dogs, bats, dens, nests, dark tunnels

THE HUMAN WORLD

Motives: domesticate, acquire, sterilize, understand, pursue affection, build, act with mercy, control, help
Moves: open a door or a window, tempt with food, pick up, carry away, call Catchers, mistreat capriciously, contain or capture, offer help, treat injuries or sickness
Elements: children, busybodies, pets, vagrants, mean people, houses, tiny apartments, food just out of reach, delicious smells, vermin

THE MENACE

Motives: disrupt, acquire, control, overthrow, consume, eradicate,
Moves: hint at it's presence, reveal a small piece of it, show evidence of it's activity, bring it looming into view, close in around them, threaten what they care about
Elements: crime scenes, eyes in the dark, alien smells and sounds, hushed whispers, nameless fear, sudden darkness, blind scuffles, distant shrieks

THE SECRET WORLD

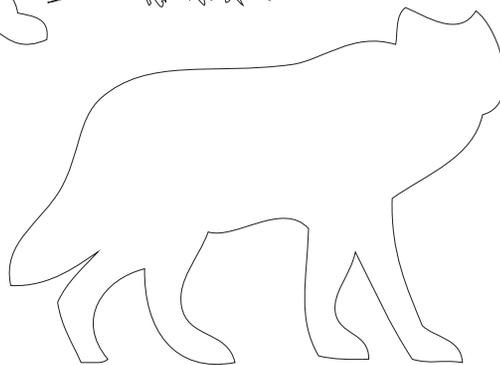
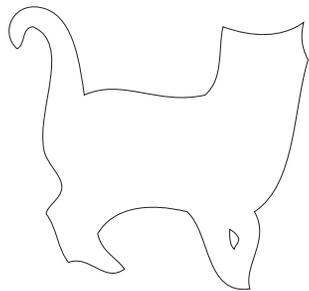
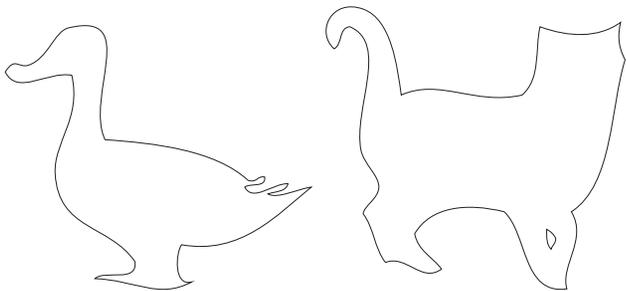
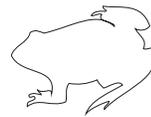
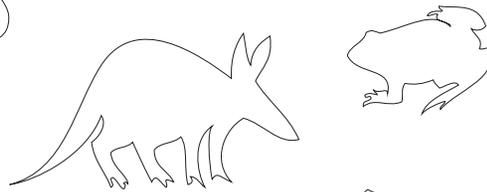
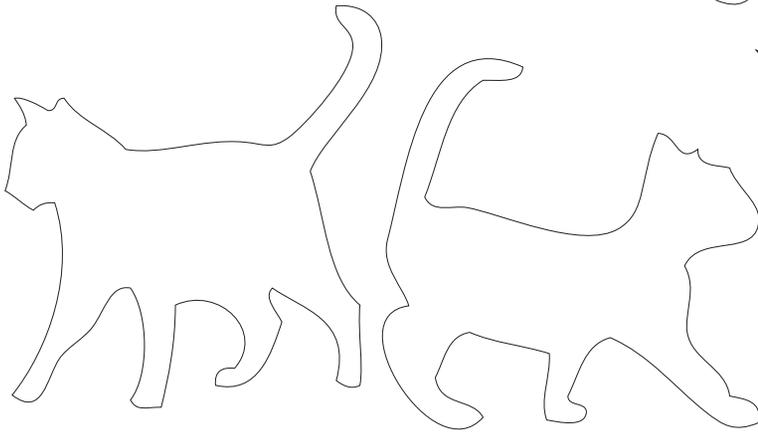
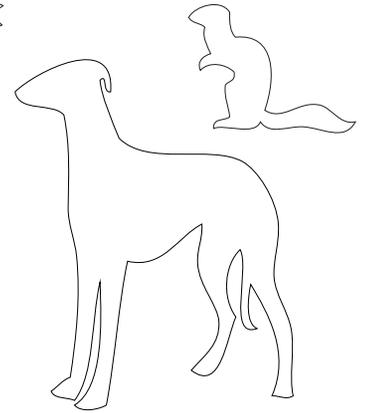
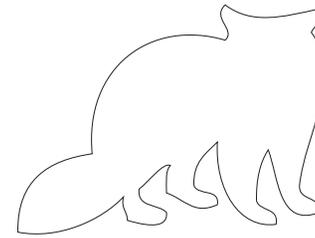
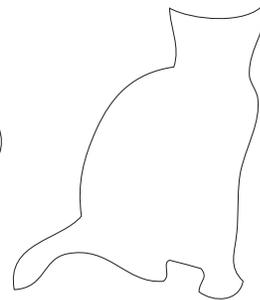
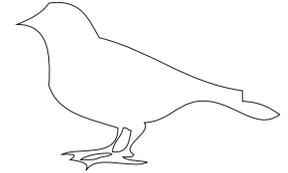
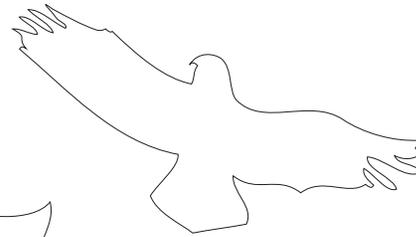
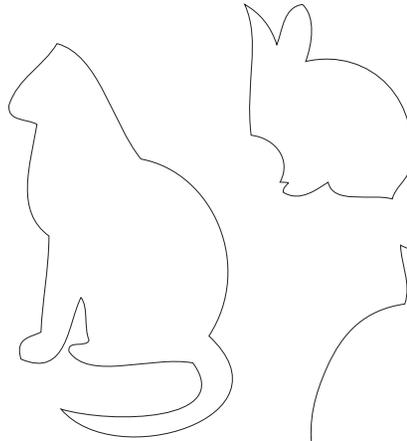
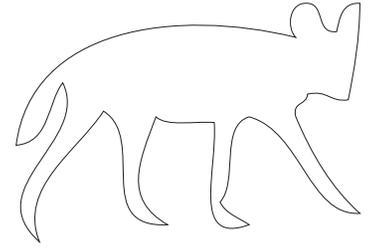
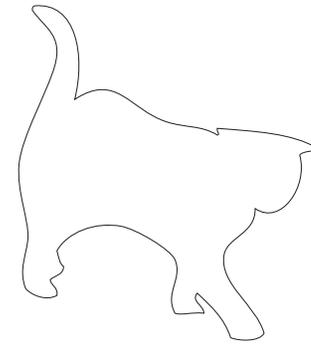
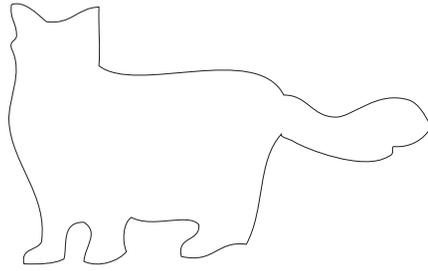
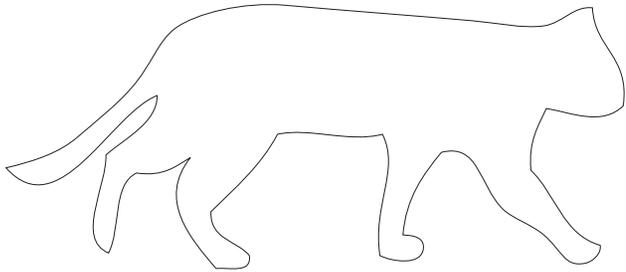
Motives: defy understanding, fulfill inscrutable purposes, protect old ways, honor promises
Moves: offer blessings, beg for favors, tell fortunes, bar a passage, get them lost, draw them deeper in, tempt with magic power
Elements: ghosts, spirits, ancient magic, secret passageways, human wizards, faeries, dreams, mystic medicine

THE CITY ITSELF

Motives: endure, act without reason, grow skyward, replace old with new, draw towards a center
Moves: change the landscape, get them lost, send cars streaking toward them, hit them with wind and rain
Elements: cars, tall buildings, streets, loud noises, foul smells, bright lights,

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Draw the cat sovereign and other supporting characters here. Give everyone a name and one or two traits. You can also draw lines between different characters, giving them labels to make a web of relationships.



NAMES Daisy, Southpaw, Jayjay, Kalispel, Sly, Scooter, Belle, Zealot, Nanaki, Curry, Ginger, Hoplite, Skinner, Bangerang, Click, Ranger, Kink, Fleet, Booker, Rose, Irena, Pudding, Opal, Bravo, Sammy, Greensand, Rio, Commodore, Kingston, Kirk, Spalding, Senator, Fishy, Lupe, Snead, Bouquet, Clipper, Rainbow, Glass, Nutmeg, Squeek, Windrunner, Foxglove, Coal, Ivy, Cheese

TRAITS cowardly, loyal, dishonest, hunts with skill, knows secrets, lives with humans, loves shiny things, bloodthirsty, merciful, desperate, fastidiously clean, greedy, sycophantic, strikingly beautiful, heavy with young, disfigured, can be bought, outlawed, influential, holds mystic power, holds vast territory, swift, unreadable, longwinded

PRINCIPLES TO PLAY BY

Some of these are intuitive, but can still hard to follow if you're not intentional.

SPEAK FOR YOUR CAT, SAY WHAT THEY DO

When you want something to happen, describe it happening. When you want your character to do something, describe them doing it.

ASK QUESTIONS LIKE CRAZY

If you don't understand or want to know more about something, ask. The more overlap there is in how you imagine things, the more real the story will feel.

LISTEN AND RESPOND TO EACH OTHER

Don't talk over one another. Be polite and responsive as you would in any conversation.

TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER

Think about the experience of other players. Take notice when someone drifts out of the conversation, and pull them back in.

PLAY TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS.

Don't decide in advance. Let yourself be surprised.

HOLD YOUR CAT LOOSELY

You're the only person who can decide to take your cat out of the game or get them badly hurt. Take chances, risk bad outcomes. Your job is to explore what's fun and interesting, not necessarily to seek the best outcomes in each moment.

THE ANATOMY OF A MOVE

The MC can tell a cat's player to make a move whenever there's something interesting at stake and it's not clear how things will turn out. When you make a move, you'll have to answer a few questions:

WHAT'S THE GOAL?

What do you hope will happen? As you formulate your goal, think past the immediate action you want to take, and get at what kind of outcome you're hoping for. You may need to negotiate about what scale of goal is appropriate to your situation. If you're fighting another character, choose a goal from the list.

AM I IN HARM'S WAY?

Sometimes, making a move is physically dangerous. For example, if you might fall, or if a car's coming toward you, or you're fighting someone, you're in harm's way. When you're in harm's way, you'll need to assign an extra coin to avoid injury.

DO I HAVE THE ADVANTAGE?

Sometimes, the fictional situation will give you an advantage toward accomplishing your goal. Maybe you have the high ground, know someone's secret weakness, or hold some kind of leverage. Whatever the case may be, you get to toss a free coin if you have the advantage, and another if you've had time to prepare.

HOW MANY COINS?

The last step of making a move is to choose any number of coins from your pool and toss them (along with any free coins from advantage or preparation.) You'll discard the tails and assign the rest between 3-4 of the options on your sheet.

FIGHTING MOVES

When a cat makes a move to fight against another cat or similar animal, choose one of the following as a goal:

- Put them where you want them
- Cause them injury
- Make an escape
- Cause them fear, dismay or embarrassment

When a supporting character takes an injury, add it to their drawing. Most cats will flee or submit after the first injury, and most can only sustain two or three. Larger animals might fight longer, or have a higher capacity for injury. All but the most feral or desperate will run or submit before taking a critical wound.

REST AND RECOVERY

When there's time to rest, cats reset their pool to nine coins, and may erase up to three boxes under their move options.

WOULD A CAT REALLY DO THAT?

My basic advice here is "don't worry about it." This game is less concerned with what a cat *would* do than what they *might* do. Is it interesting? does it contribute to the story? Do that thing. Sometimes you might have to negotiate about what's interesting. That's also fine and normal, and you should it whenever you need to.

