



sebastian hickey presents  
**CHRONICLES OF SKIN**  
A GAME OF CIVIL WAR

A storytelling game  
for three or more players

# CHRONICLES OF SKIN

The last chief is dead. The kingdom is on the brink of collapse.

Once brothers, the *Iho* and *Croen* tribes turn their knives in the dark, poisoned by greed and fear. It is a time of rivalry and hatred.

It is the eve of civil war.

## ABOUT THIS GAME

CHRONICLES OF SKIN is a storytelling game for three or more players. Each player contributes to the depiction of a bitter civil war, collaborating to render the peoples on both sides as victims in a grand and unfair struggle. Through a series of atrocities, players build a picture of the war as told by the victors, and record it with drawings, called GLYPHS, on a hieroglyphic mural called the SKIN.

## THE CITY OF SERIPHIN

Most of the game takes place in the area surrounding the *City of Seriphin*, a fictional medieval fortress-city populated by two fictional peoples—or cultures—called the *Croen* and the *Iho*. Collaboratively, you and your friends will build up a picture of these places and cultures during play.

## YOU WILL NEED...

- ☐ Three or more co-operative, attentive friends.
- ☐ One deck of standard playing cards.
- ☐ For a three player game, you will need 15 tokens (beads, coins, matches, etc.) and for each extra player you will need an additional 15 tokens.

*For example, in a five player game there are three players plus two extra, so you will need  $15 + (2 \times 15) = 45$  tokens.*

- ☐ One copy of the Chronicle sheet at the back of this book.
- ☐ 30-90 minutes (depending on the number of players).

# GENERATING EMBLEMS

First, players generate an emblem for each of the two warring cultures. Standard playing cards are used to determine each emblem's components—which are scribbled onto the Chronicle sheet—and then each component is interpreted.

To begin, separate the deck of cards into the four suits (♣, ♦, ♥ and ♠). Give the Chronicle sheet to the **most enthusiastic artist** among the players—but don't worry if no one is good at drawing! It's mostly copying.

*Lots of the fun comes from building an illustrative story of your game by copying icons. But don't feel constrained to the icons presented in this book. The best SKINS will be filled with your own freestyle elements. Be creative!*

Shuffle each of the four suit decks. The emblem for the *Croen* is now generated in four phases...



### 1. TOTEM

One player takes a random card from the clubs (♣) deck. Using the number on the card, the player checks the result on the chart above. This is the **totem** for the *Croen*. The artist draws this totem in the *Croen* emblem space of the Chronicle sheet.

Now, interpreting that totem, the player who took the card should invent a TRAIT (a noun or adjective) to

describe the *Croen* culture. The artist then writes this TRAIT in the space marked by the ♣ symbol below the *Croen* emblem.

*A trait should be short and evocative. For example, if you got the serpent totem, you might choose any of the following for the TRAIT: "cunning," "poisonous," "quick," "sensual," "wild," "snake charmers," "cultists" or "scaled people." Let the image inspire you!*

For example, let's say Eoin, Jason, Roger and Daniel are playing a game of CHRONICLES OF SKIN. The cards are sorted into the four suits and Jason is elected the artist.



♣ SEAFARERS  
 ♦ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♥ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♠ \_\_\_\_\_

Eoin takes the first card, a 7♣, indicating the fish totem. Jason draws this totem onto the *Croen* emblem and Eoin interprets it to mean "seafarers." Jason writes "seafarers" below the *Croen* emblem in the space marked by the ♣ symbol.

2	↑	3	☞	4	👑
5	♖	6	⚔	7	👁
8	🎸	9	🕸	10	💍
J	🛡	Q	🪄	K	🗡
A	♣	ARTIFACT			

**2. ARTIFACT**

The next clockwise player around the table takes a card from the diamonds (♦) deck to determine the **artifact**. The artist draws this on the *Croen* emblem and the player who took the card interprets as before—choosing a TRAIT and writing it beside the ♦ symbol below the emblem.

Continuing the example, Jason takes the second card,

a 2♦, indicating the arrow artifact. Jason draws this artifact onto the *Croen* emblem and then interprets it to mean "strategic." Jason writes "strategic" below the *Croen* emblem in the space marked by the ♦ symbol.



♣ SEAFARERS  
 ♦ Strategic  
 ♥ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♠ \_\_\_\_\_

2	⚓	3	🍲	4	📀
5	🌙	6	💧	7	👁
8	🌱	9	🔥	10	🍃
J	🏔	Q	★	K	☀
A	🌊	SIGN			

**3. SIGN**

The next clockwise player around the table takes a card from the hearts (♥) deck to determine the **sign**, and, in the same fashion as the others, the sign is interpreted and recorded below the emblem.

Continuing the example, Roger takes the third card, an

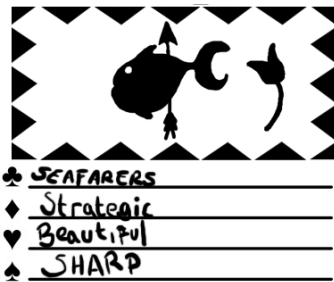
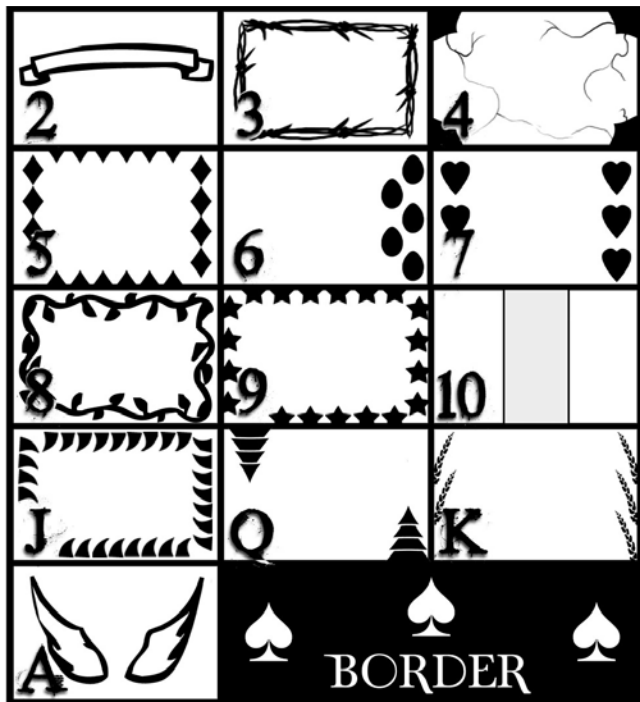


♣ SEAFARERS  
 ♦ Strategic  
 ♥ Beautiful  
 ♠ \_\_\_\_\_

8♥, indicating the flower sign. Jason draws this sign onto the *Croen* emblem and then Roger interprets it to mean "beautiful." Jason writes "beautiful" below the *Croen* emblem in the space marked by the ♥ symbol.

**4. BORDER**

Finally, the next clockwise player draws a card from the spades (♠) deck to determine the **border** (see overleaf), and, in the same fashion as the others, the border is interpreted and recorded below the emblem.



Continuing the example, Daniel takes the fourth card, a 5♦, indicating the diamond border. Jason draws this border onto the *Croen* emblem and then Daniel interprets it to mean “sharp.” Jason writes “sharp” in the space marked by the ♠ symbol.

**N.B.** In a three player game, the spades (♠) deck is not used—don't generate a border if you're playing with three players and remove all spades from the deck for the remainder of the game.

Once you've added the last TRAIT, you have completed the *Croen* emblem. This process of picking symbols and their subsequent interpretation must now be repeated for the *Iho* people: The next clockwise player draws a random card from the clubs deck for the *Iho* totem, etc.



Continuing the example, the players end up with a dragon, crown, flame and thorns on the *Iho* emblem. These are interpreted as “mystic,” “commanding,” “passionate,” and “vengeful” and these TRAITs are written in the relevant spaces below the *Iho* emblem.

## VOTES

Put a pile of tokens in the middle of the table. These are called VOTES. They are used at the end of the game to determine which of the two cultures win the civil war, but they are also used during play to protect or attack the characters of the story. There's more on that later. For now, know that they are a kind of currency used to affect the story of the war. **Give each player two VOTES.**

## HOW TO PLAY

Play takes place over a number of scenes equal to the number of players. During a scene, the players introduce characters from one side of the war and expose them to conflict. The characters are sometimes saved from slaughter, often by introducing resonating themes, and the conflict is recorded on the Chronicle sheet in the area marked as the “SKIN.” So, through the game, a history is recorded like a pictogram. After all the scenes are complete, the players use their VOTES to decide which of the two cultures are the eventual victors and an epilogue is generated by all the participants.

## SCENES

A scene is a piece of storytelling in which players narrate how characters from one side of the war are affected by a violent ambush. Players will introduce characters, describe the actions of these characters, and try to help them survive a threat to their culture. In every scene, there is a SCRIBE and an ENEMY. The oldest player goes first, and that player is called the SCRIBE for this scene. The player to his right is called the ENEMY for this scene. Shuffle all of the cards together.

## PHASE 1: SCRIBE

First, all players take one card from the deck (keep it hidden) except for the ENEMY player who takes a number of cards equal to one less than the number of players.

For example, Eoin, Jason, Roger and Daniel are playing CHRONICLES OF SKIN. Eoin is the oldest, so he becomes the SCRIBE. Daniel, to his right, becomes the ENEMY for this scene. Eoin, Jason and Roger take one card each and Daniel takes three cards.

## CHOOSE THE SCENE

Next, the SCRIBE chooses whether the scene will be a *Croen* scene or an *Iho* scene. This choice determines which

of the two cultures will be the object of an atrocity. Now the SCRIBE looks at his card and, while keeping the card hidden, he interprets the appropriate culture's TRAIT according to the card's suit.

Continuing the example, Eoin announces that the first scene will be a *Croen* scene. Eoin's card is the 8♣. Looking at the *Croen* emblem, he sees that ♣ is matched with the "seafarers" TRAIT.

Using that TRAIT as inspiration, the SCRIBE must (1) invent a location, (2) introduce a principal character in routine and (3) interpret the principal character's GLYPH OF PURPOSE. Finally, (4) the SCRIBE must add to the SKIN.

### 1. LOCATION

The **location** for the first scene must be *outside* the *City of Seriphin*. Apart from that limitation, the SCRIBE is free to invent any kind of location. It could be a village in the hills, a carriage on the road or even a laboratory inside the belly of ancient, sleeping dragon. The SCRIBE should colour this location with details about how it looks, how it feels, and how it sounds.

Continuing the example, Eoin has the 8♣, indicating "seafarers." For the location, he invents a grand trading ship out on the open sea. "It is made from dark wood, though it gleams brightly from all the polish and brass fixtures. The sails are slack and the sea is calm."

### 2. PRINCIPAL CHARACTER

As soon as that's complete, the SCRIBE should introduce a **principal character** (PC) according to the card he has in his hand. The value of the card indicates the status of the PC, so low numbers (2-7) represent peasants, middle numbers (5-10) represent the burghers and the middle classes, and the high numbers (9-A) represent the upper elements of society. The suit colours the PC just as it coloured the location.

*Throughout this text, we call the characters attached to players "principal characters" or PCs. This is to differentiate them from other characters in the story.*

Continuing the example, now Eoin must introduce a PC. The value (8) indicates someone of the middle class, so he chooses to introduce "Evan, the first mate." He describes how "an old, white whiskered sailor in a torn, black uniform comes out on deck and scratches at the *Croen* emblem on his chest."

Now that there is a principal character (PC) in the scene, the SCRIBE must introduce **routine**. Routine is any situation in which the PC is at ease *with other people*, doing something. There must be something going on. It could be an old lady knitting among friends, a legion forced marching, two bandits counting coins over a corpse or a general giving a speech to an audience of thousands. Get the PC to do something with another character.

Continuing the example, Eoin has just introduced "Evan, the first mate." He now describes the routine, saying "Evan calls out for the navigator as he strides up to the foredeck. There, the two men look over the map and consult the compass."

### 3. GLYPH OF PURPOSE

Every PC has a GLYPH OF PURPOSE. To find out the purpose of your PC, check the value against the chart overleaf.

When you introduce your PC, secretly invent your PC's purpose using the GLYPH OF PURPOSE as inspiration. During the scene, try to expose that purpose through the PC's words and actions. Never announce your PC's purpose overtly, or show anyone else your card. This becomes important later on.



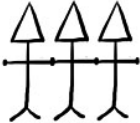



Continuing the example, checking the value of the card (8), Eoin finds that Evan's GLYPH OF PURPOSE is "Family." Eoin decides that Evan is searching the seas for the wreckage of another ship—a ship captained by his brother. He does not tell the other players overtly, but instead insinuates his PC's goal by his actions. Eoin has the first mate call out whether or not "there's any sign of the wreckage?" and, later during play, when asked why he refuses to abandon the search, he drops the line "thicker than water".

### 4. THE SKIN

Now the SCRIBE gets to draw the first image on the SKIN—the large, blank area of the Chronicle sheet. Using the location from the scene as inspiration, the SCRIBE draws a small icon in the upper left area of the SKIN. Don't get too detailed. The simpler the better.

Continuing the example, Eoin draws a small icon of a boat to indicate the location of the first scene.



CARD	GLYPH OF PURPOSE	EXAMPLE	CARD	GLYPH OF PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
2 OR K	 DEFIANCE	OPPOSE A BULLY, BREAK THE LAW, TEMPT FATE	5, 8 OR A	 FAMILY	GET SOMEONE OUT OF TROUBLE, LOOK AFTER SOMEONE, PROTECT THEM
3 OR Q	 UNITY	ALLY THE PEOPLE, SOLVE A DISAGREEMENT, AVOID A CON- FRONTATION	6 OR 10	 REVENGE	DEFEAT AN ENEMY, PROTECT YOUR HONOUR, SET A TRAP
4 OR 9	 POWER	LOOK FOR RECOGNITION, DRIVE FOR LEADER- SHIP, GAIN A PROFIT	7 OR J	 ROMANCE	SEDUCE A LOVER, ACCOMPLISH SOME GREATER THING FOR LOVE

### OTHER PCS

Once the SCRIBE has finished, each player (apart from the ENEMY—see below), in no particular order and with no particular urgency, may introduce a PC into the scene. The introducing player checks his card, interprets the TRAIT (using the card's suit), social status (using the card's value) and GLYPH OF PURPOSE (using the card's value), and converts an existing minor character into a PC or adds a completely new PC to the scene. It could be an overt or implied character from the ongoing narrative, or it could be someone completely new.

The player must now try to reveal the PC's GLYPH OF PURPOSE through his words and actions. At any time, any of the other players (apart from the ENEMY) who has not already introduced a PC may introduce a PC in the same way.

Continuing the example, Jason has a 7♠, indicating a character of middle status, and decides to take control of the navigator of the ship, whom he calls "Jinn." According to the *Croen* emblem, ♠ means "sharp," so Jason colours Jinn with a description of his unusual attire: "Jinn is a man pierced with metal, from the smooth bars in his nose and lips, to the curved hooks in his neck and navel, to the interlocking rings along the ridges of his arms and shins." Jinn's GLYPH OF PURPOSE is romance, so Jason decides that Jinn has fallen in love with a whore at the last port of call. His objective is to harry the journey and return there to elope.

### PHASE 2: THE ENEMY

The ENEMY does not have a PC. Instead, that player describes the words and actions of any character or entity that is not yet attached to another player. This is not limited to thinking or speaking things. Thus, the ENEMY could control the actions of the servants, the animals and the children playing in the background, but he could also control the weather, the sounds of war or the salty taste that comes off the wind. Although the ENEMY has a responsibility to contribute to the ambiance of the scene, it is only a partial responsibility. Other players are encouraged to make suggestions.

As the ENEMY, when there is a lull in the fiction, your job is to spice it up. You have three tools: **detail**, **antagonise** and **attack**.

#### 1. ENEMY: DETAIL

At any moment, you may add a detail to the scene. This can be the speech of a character, an exploration of the senses, a change in the ambiance, whatever you like. Adding detail helps to enrich the scene, making it memorable. It also serves to remind the other players that you are there, acting as the ENEMY, ready to strike.

Continuing the example, Daniel is the ENEMY, so he may add detail at any time. "A strange smell blows off the wind, like the smell of an animal. For a moment, the

sails fill and then slacken. Soon, everything goes back to silence.” At this point, Roger asks “would be it okay if there was the sound of snoring? I imagine that one of the sailors is asleep.” Daniel replies, “sure, that’s a great idea. There is snoring coming from below deck.” Here, Daniel has taken a suggestion and added it to the scene as detail.

**2. ENEMY: ANTAGONISE**

You are also encouraged to antagonise. As you begin to understand the purposes of the characters in the scene, try to insert a new character as an obstacle to the resolution of those purposes. When you antagonise (add a new character), you are offering competition to a purpose. This may motivate a player toward or against that purpose, which, when it comes time to attack, can serve your strategy.

Continuing the example, Eoin’s PC, Evan, has revealed some of his purpose to Jinn, telling him “we have to continue. I can’t just abandon him...” Daniel guesses that Evan’s GLYPH OF PURPOSE has something to do with a rescue, so he decides to introduce a new character to antagonise him. “A voice cracks behind you like a whip. ‘Abandon? What’s this about abandoning, Mr. Evan?’ The captain looms over you like a mountain. ‘Navigator, turn us about... Mr. Evan, keep your personal errands off my ship.’”

**3. ENEMY: ATTACK**












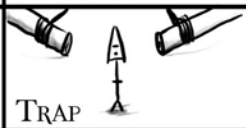

Once all the other players have attached themselves to a PC (or have opted not to for this scene), the ENEMY may, at any time, attack. As the ENEMY, choose one of the cards you were dealt and use its value to determine the GLYPH OF WAR. This is the method of the attack.

The attack represents the initiation of a potentially devastating atrocity. It is *always* initiated by the opposing culture. Choose one PC as the victim of this atrocity. To colour the attack, you can interpret the suit using the TRAIT from the attacking culture. Now describe the attack, making sure to illustrate the scale of the atrocity. Try to describe how people are being destroyed and how their struggles are in vain. You must also describe the destruction of the selected PC. How does he die?

*You might like to choose your GLYPH OF WAR right at the start of a scene (and keep it secret) instead of waiting until the moment of the attack. Knowing your GLYPH OF WAR early on empowers you as a storyteller—advanced knowledge of the upcoming attack allows you to foreshadow with prophetic detail.*

The attack is now resolved using the third phase.

Continuing the example, Daniel has three cards, the 2♠, Q♥ and 6♣. He elects to use the Q♥ for his attack. Daniel’s GLYPH OF WAR is “Stealth” and he chooses to colour it according to the *Iho’s* ♥ TRAIT “passionate.” Daniel nominates Eoin as the object of his attack. “While you, the captain and the navigator argue over the maps, you do not see the assassins in the water. They have been clinging on to the side of the ship ever since you left the port this morning. Now, hearing the crew at rest, they climb quietly up the ropes and slit the throats of the sleeping sailors, dripping blood on the decks. One by one, the crew are murdered until, finally, the assassins scamper silently behind you. A hand grabs your mouth and tilts back your jaw. Your murderer cuts your neck twice before you slump to your knees. You are dead.”

CARD	GLYPH OF WAR	CARD	GLYPH OF WAR
2	 AMBUSH	9	 PLAGUE
3	 ARMY	10	 POISON
4	 BETRAYAL	J	 RIOT
5	 CAPTURE	Q	 SNEAK
6	 DESTRUCTION	K	 TORTURE
7	 FIRE	A	 TRAP
8	 MONSTER		

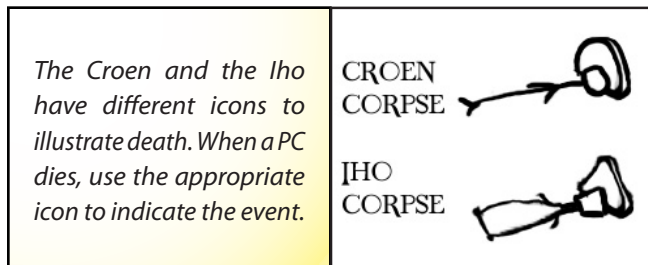
**PHASE 3: ATTACK**

The ENEMY announces his chosen GLYPH OF WAR. The attacked player has three choices: he can **capitulate**, he can **evade** or he can **battle** (go to phase four).

### 1. ATTACK: CAPITULATE

If the player capitulates, the narrative remains unchanged and the ENEMY must give one of his VOTES to the capitulating player. That player discards his card and may no longer contribute to this scene. Now the SCRIBE records the GLYPH OF WAR onto the SKIN and, according to one of the icons below, notes down the death of the character beside it. Play continues (return to phase two).

Continuing the example, if Eoin capitulates, he discards his card and Daniel gives him one of his VOTES. Eoin would then add one *Croen* corpse to the SKIN, beside the GLYPH OF WAR.



### 2. ATTACK: EVADE

If the player evades, the player may change the outcome of the narrative. In other words, the PC is subject to the attack but manages to survive. Nothing can be changed except for the outcome for the PC, so any non-PC outcomes (deaths) still stand. Additionally, the player must give one of his VOTES to the ENEMY. The attack is now resolved and play continues (return to phase two).

Continuing the example, if Eoin evades, he gives one of his VOTES to Daniel and may alter the outcome of the attack. In this case, Eoin might say, "as I feel the hand cover my mouth, I drop to the ground and roll to one side, drawing a long, toothed knife. Roaring out an alarm I stab my assassin in the jugular and slash out his neck. Blood rains down as shouts echo from the officer's quarters."

## PHASE 4: BATTLE

The battle is resolved in three stages: purpose, support and resolution.

### 1. BATTLE: PURPOSE

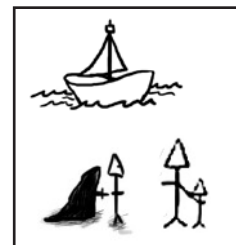
First, the player must ask the other players (including the ENEMY) to guess his GLYPH OF PURPOSE. Each player guesses in turn, starting with the ENEMY.

- ☐ If none of the players guess correctly, the battle does not happen. Instead, the attack is resolved as a capitulation or an evasion (the ENEMY's choice).
- ☐ ...Otherwise, for each player that guesses **correctly** the battling player **loses** one VOTE.
- ☐ ...And, for each player that guesses **incorrectly**, the battling player **gains** two VOTES.

Continuing the example, if Eoin battles, he must ask the other players to guess his GLYPH OF PURPOSE. Jason guesses Unity, Roger guesses Defiance and Daniel guesses Family. Eoin loses one VOTE because Daniel guessed right but gains four new VOTES because both Jason and Roger guessed incorrectly (for a net total of three new VOTES). If Daniel had guessed wrong too, Eoin would not have received any new VOTES and Daniel would choose whether Evan capitulated or evaded.

Assuming that one player guesses the PC's GLYPH OF PURPOSE, the battle can continue. First, the initiating player must describe how his GLYPH OF PURPOSE allows the PC to survive the attack. Now the SCRIBE records the ENEMY's GLYPH OF WAR and the battling player's GLYPH OF PURPOSE onto the SKIN, side by side, one after the other.

Continuing the example, Eoin's character, Evan, is battling with "family" as his GLYPH OF PURPOSE. First, Eoin must use that GLYPH OF PURPOSE to evade the attack. Eoin announces, "just as the hand covers my mouth and pulls back my jaw, I realise I am about to be murdered. Suddenly, my mind rushes with the memories of my brother. As the first slice cuts my neck, I throw my body backwards, knocking my assassin to the deck. Filled with a determination to find my brother, I grab the map and leap to the rigging." Now the SCRIBE draws the GLYPH OF WAR on the SKIN. Beside that, he draws Evan's GLYPH OF PURPOSE.



### 2. BATTLE: SUPPORT

If there are any other PCs alive in scene, their players may either opt to betray or to support. If a player opts to betray, he receives one new VOTE, discards his card and must announce how his PC neglects the battle. If a player opts to support, he gives his card to the battling player and has the potential to earn two new VOTES.

Continuing the example, Jason decides to support Eoin in the battle and Roger opts to betray. Jason gives his 7♠ to Eoin. Roger discards his card, takes one new VOTE and announces that “the captain (Roger’s PC in this scene) crosses his arms like a statue in busy market, watching silently and untouched as the battle rages around him.”

### 3. BATTLE: RESOLUTION

The ENEMY adds the values of his cards (picture cards, J-A, count as 10 each) and compares them to the values of the battling player’s. The highest total wins (in a tie, the battling player wins). If the ENEMY wins, he receives two new VOTES per card in the battling player’s hand. If the battling player wins, he and each of his supporters (if any) receive two new VOTES each.

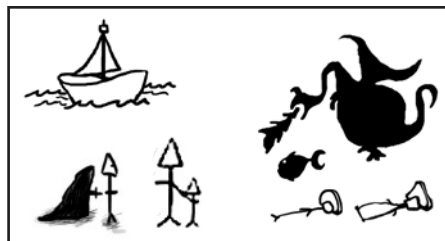
Now, the narrative needs to be addressed. If the ENEMY wins, he must describe the effect of the atrocity in all its hateful detail. However, he may not kill any of the PCs. If the battling player wins, he must describe how his PC helps to overcome the atrocity. Additionally, each supporting player must do the same.

Continuing the example, Daniel adds up the values on his three cards (2♠, Q♥ and 6♣) to a total of 18. Eoin adds up the values on his two cards (8♣ and 7♠) to a total of 15. Daniel wins and must describe the effect of the atrocity (but he may not kill any of the PCs). “Overwhelmed, the first mate and the navigator leap from the ship in flight. Soon, all the bodies are piled up on deck, dismembered, and posted to the hull like terrible gargoyles. The following week, the boat floats silently into the nearby port, stinking with flies and maggots. No one understands what happened to the captain and its crew, but they will forever fear the *Iho* people.” Daniel receives four new VOTES.

### RECORDING THE BATTLE

On the SKIN, beside the battling player’s GLYPH OF PURPOSE, draw the totem for the winning culture. Underneath, very small, draw the totem for the losing side. Additionally, for each ten points of total card value from the battle, draw one dead enemy beside these two icons. The number of “corpses” on the SKIN at the end of the game indicate which side takes the *City of Seriphin*.

Continuing the example, Jason draws a large dragon on the skin and a small fish beside it. He also draws one *Croen* and one *Iho* corpse.



## PHASE 5: ENDING A SCENE

Play continues until either the ENEMY has no VOTES, all the PCs have been attacked or a battle is fought. At this point, the scene is over. If the ENEMY attacked all players but no battle was fought, the ENEMY gains two VOTES for each player attacked.

Afterwards, all cards are returned to the deck and shuffled, the roles of SCRIBE and ENEMY shift one place clockwise around the table, and a new scene begins.

## NEW SCENES

For the second and subsequent scenes, the SCRIBE should invent a location close to (or within) the *City of Seriphin*, so as to mark the journey of the war to the core of the kingdom. Here, people begin to fight against their old friends and relatives. This is the bloody heart of the civil war.

Additionally, if a PC battled in the previous scene (and recorded a GLYPH OF PURPOSE on the SKIN) that PC should be present in the next scene of the same type (*Croen* or *Iho*). The PC can be introduced (by any player) with the usual method but is no longer limited by the status indicator of the card’s value and, instead of using the card’s GLYPH OF PURPOSE, the player may opt to use the PC’s GLYPH OF PURPOSE from the last scene. Furthermore, there is nothing to say that PCs from other scenes cannot turn up again, even if they never battled—but bear in mind that a character reintroduced in this way must adhere to the strictures of the card (status, purpose and colour).

Continuing the example, in the next *Croen* scene, Eoin’s character “Evan” should be present. Daniel really likes the character, so he chooses to introduce him. Instead of using the GLYPH OF PURPOSE on the card, Daniel opts to maintain the theme of Family by using Evan’s GLYPH OF PURPOSE from the last scene. Additionally, because Roger wants to see what happened with the captain, he

would like to re-introduce the character into this scene. But Roger has a very low card (a 2♠), which means that the captain’s status will have to have changed if he wants to introduce him. Roger decides that the captain is now a disgraced and wounded beggar...

## COMPLETING A GLYPH OF PURPOSE?


If the same PC is used to record the same GLYPH OF PURPOSE twice on the SKIN (by initiating two battles), there are two things to consider. First of all, the second battle occurs without guessing the GLYPH OF PURPOSE. Second, no matter the result of the battle, the PC somehow achieves his purpose. After the battle, the controlling player describes a short scene to illustrate the purpose's completion and a new scene begins.


The same PC, therefore, may never record the same GLYPH OF PURPOSE more than twice. If this PC is introduced into a subsequent scene, it must be done as if the PC was a completely new character (limited by the card's suit and value) with an entirely new GLYPH OF PURPOSE.

### HEROES BECOMING VILLAINS?

Sometimes, when switching from one culture scene to the other, there is a temptation to use one of the characters in a previous scene as the antagonist in a new scene. That's totally fine, as long as that character is not killed during the narrative. In other words, re-introduce previous heroes as villains all you like but make sure they don't get murdered during the attack.





## SCENE SUMMARY

When you see the  symbol, you should add something to the SKIN.

- ▣ 1. All players draw one card except for the ENEMY who draws (no. of players - 1) cards.
  - SCRIBE chooses whether to run a *Croen* or an *Iho* scene.
  -  SCRIBE invents a location using his card's suit.
  - SCRIBE introduces a PC in routine, interpreting his card's value as status.
  - SCRIBE secretly interprets his GLYPH OF PURPOSE and tries to reveal it through play.
  
- ▣ 2. The ENEMY tries to detail and antagonise.

Other players may introduce a PC as above.

The ENEMY may attack after all players have a PC or have opted not to introduce a PC.

- ▣ 3. The attacked player may capitulate, evade or battle.
  -  If he capitulates, the player takes one VOTE from the ENEMY and discards his card.
  -  If he evades, the player gives one VOTE to the ENEMY.
  
- ▣ 4. The battling player asks players to guess his GLYPH OF PURPOSE.
  - For each incorrect guess, he receives two VOTES.
  - For each correct guess, the guesser receives one VOTE.
  - If no guesses are correct, he gains no VOTES and enemy chooses capitulate or evade.
  -  Otherwise, other players may betray (and gain one VOTE) or support (and donate their card to the battling player).
  -  The highest total of cards (ENEMY vs. player) wins.
  - If ENEMY wins, he gains two VOTES per player card.
  - If player wins, each player on the winning side (including supporters) gains two VOTES.
  
- ▣ 5. The scene ends and the SCRIBE and the ENEMY roles shift clockwise around the table.

If the ENEMY attacked all the players but no battle was fought, the ENEMY gets two VOTES per attack.

Once each player has played as the SCRIBE, the game ends.

## ENDING THE GAME

Once each player has acted as the SCRIBE once, the game is over. To find out which of the two cultures takes the *City of Seriphin*, add up all of the corpses on both sides. The culture with the fewest corpses is the winner.

In a tie, compare the number of battles won on either side—highest wins. If there's still a tie, compare the

number of PC corpses (from player capitulation)—lowest wins. Still a tie? Flip a card for each culture—highest wins.

Now that you know who took the *City of Seriphin*, it is time to determine how that was done, what it meant to history and which of the cultures wrote this history. Each player takes his VOTES and, secretly, places them inside either his right hand (to opt for *Croen*) or his left hand (to opt for *Iho*). In turn, each player reveals his VOTES and the totals for each side are counted. The highest total wins and that side is called the victor. In a tie, the player with the most VOTES chooses which side is the victor.

The victor then gets to interpret the history. There are two possible situations: The victor either took or lost the *City of Seriphin*.

### 1. VICTOR TOOK SERIPHIN

If the victor took *Seriphin*, the losing players (those who did not support the victor) describe how their culture failed to hold the *City of Seriphin*. Following that, the victorious players (those who supported the victor) describe how their culture won the war. Every player should contribute something to this epilogue.

### 2. VICTOR LOST SERIPHIN

If the victor lost the *City of Seriphin*, the losing players describe how they ravaged the city. It should be monstrous and debase. Following that, the victorious players describe how their culture used this atrocity to eventually win the war. Every player should contribute something to this epilogue.

In the result of a unanimous decision (all players voting for one culture or the other), the player(s) with the least votes act as the losing players. If all players have the same number of votes, randomly determine one player to tell the story of the losers.

## FINISHING THE SKIN

Finally, the artist draws the icon for the *City of Seriphin* and, above it, draws the totem of the culture that took it (as large as he likes).

If that culture is also the victor, the artist should indicate it as a happy



event by adding details like sunshine, worshippers, and celebration.

If that culture was not the victor, the artist should indicate it as an atrocity by adding details like corpses, cages and heads on spikes. When you're done, take a photo and upload it onto your favourite RPG forum! Or send it to COBWEB GAMES where we'll be giving out prizes!

## GAME CHEF

This game was devised and built in seven days using the *Game Chef 2010* ingredients *skin*, *edge* (as in divide) and *city*.

## SMALL PRINT

**Design & Art** by Sebastian Hickey

**Edited** by Aaron Huss

**Inspired** by *Hammer Falls* (John Gregory, UNPUBLISHED) and *Hell 4 Leather* (Joe Prince, BOX NINJA)

**Special thanks** to Aaron Huss, editor of *ROLEPLAYERS CHRONICLE*, for his feedback and enthusiasm.

Be sure to check out the rambling *AUDIO DESIGN COMMENTARY* and if you have any comments, play examples or a funky *SKIN*, email [INFO@COBWEBGAMES.COM](mailto:INFO@COBWEBGAMES.COM).

**Sebastian Hickey**

19th September 2010

Copyright ©2010 Sebastian Hickey and Cobweb Games. Permission granted to copy and distribute for personal use.

# CHRONICLE SHEET

CROEN

IHO

GLYPH OF WAR	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
J	
Q	
K	
A	

Copyright ©2010 Sebastian Hickey and Cobweb Games.

♣ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♦ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♥ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♠ \_\_\_\_\_

♣ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♦ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♥ \_\_\_\_\_  
 ♠ \_\_\_\_\_

2 OR K		3 OR Q		4 OR 9		5, 8 OR A		6 OR 10		7 OR J	
--------------	--	--------------	--	--------------	--	-----------------	--	---------------	--	--------------	--

CROEN  
CORPSE

IHO  
CORPSE

THE SKIN