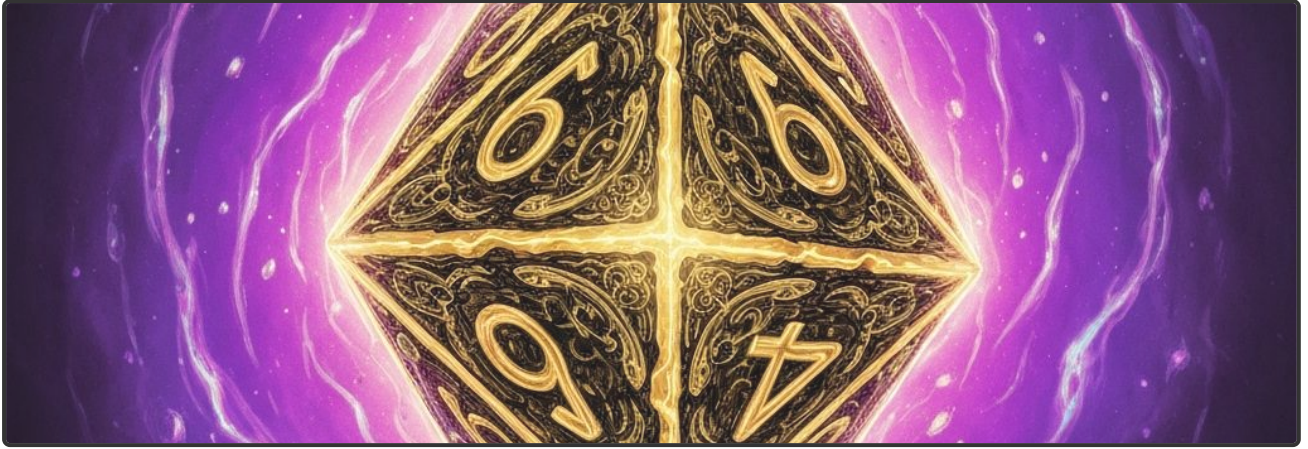




CORE MECHANICS: THE DROP SYSTEM

⚡ The Four Essences

Every character possesses four **Essences**—core attributes that define their capabilities. Three are rated from **-5 to +5**; one scales differently:

⚡ **Forma (Physical)**

Your body's integrity and power. Used for Athletics, Brawl, Craft, Stealth. Damage reduces Forma. At -5, you're incapacitated.

💡 **Anima (Mental)**

Your mind's coherence. Used for Lore, Insight, Survival. Stress, fear, and mental attacks reduce Anima. At -5, you break.

👥 **Umbra (Social)**

Your presence and influence. Used for Persuasion, Conviction, Deception. Social defeats reduce Umbra. At -5, you're exiled.

✨ Reverie (Imagination)

Your creative potential. Ranges from **0** to **10+**. Spent to upgrade dice or establish minimums. Restored through rest and wonder.

Rolling the Dice: The Drop Pool

When you attempt an action with uncertain outcome, you roll a **Drop Pool** of d6 dice equal to your relevant **Essence** (modified by skills). Your goal: meet or exceed a **Target Number** (the Veil).

The Veil: Target Numbers

Difficulty is measured in **Veils**—barriers to success. The base formula:

$$\text{Target Number} = \text{Your Essence} \times \text{Difficulty Multiplier}$$

Difficulty	Multiplier	Example (Forma +3)
Trivial	× 1	3 (auto-success)
Easy	× 2	6
Moderate	× 3	9
Challenging (Standard)	× 4	12
Daunting	× 5	15
Epic	× 6	18
Impossible	× 7+	21+

 Tip

GM Shortcut: Challenging difficulty ($\times 4$) is your baseline. Adjust up or down based on circumstances. Don't calculate every time—eyeball it!

The Three Maneuvers: Risk & Reward

1. Sacrifice (The Tithe)

Before rolling, discard any number of dice from your pool. Each discarded die **lowers the Target Number** by 4.

 Narrative Interpretation:

You take extra time, use perfect technique, expend resources, or apply meticulous care. Sacrifice represents *certainty* over risk—trading potential for reliability.

Limit: Cannot reduce TN below your Essence $\times 2$ (minimum challenge).

 Example:

Vesper (Forma +5) needs to climb a sheer cliff (TN 20, Epic difficulty). She Sacrifices 3 dice, lowering TN by 12 to 8. Rolling her remaining 2d6, she gets a 4 and a 6—total 10, success! She climbs slowly but surely.

2. Reach (The Debt)

Borrow dice from your future. Add extra dice to your current roll, but subtract them from your *next* roll using the same Essence (debt accumulates if you Reach again).

✓ Add +1d6 now, lose -1d6 later (can Reach multiple times)

✓ Debt carries over to subsequent rolls if needed

⚠ **Critical Risk:** Any 1 rolled on a Reached die inflicts a **Wound** (Forma), **Fracture** (Anima), or **Scar** (Umbra)

⚠ **Negative Essence Penalty:**

If your Essence is **negative** (-1 to -5), you may only Reach for **1 die total** per check, each Reach **costs 1 Wound/Fracture/Scar upfront**, and you cannot Reach on your next check.

👤 **Example:**

Corvus (Anima +2) attempts to decode a cipher (TN 12). He Reaches for 2 extra dice, rolling 4d6 total. Result: 3, 5, 6, 1. Total 15—success! But the 1 on a Reached die inflicts a **Fracture** (mental strain). His next Anima check uses only 0 dice ($2 - 2 \text{ debt} = 0$), forcing him to Reach again or auto-fail.

⚡ 3. Push (The Echo)

After rolling, reroll any number of non-1 dice. You may Push dice equal to your **original Essence** (minimum 1).

✓ Cannot reroll 1s (they're locked failures)

✓ Cannot Push after Reaching on the same roll

⚠ **Debt:** After Pushing, you cannot Reach on your next Essence check

👤 **Example:**

Kael (Forma +4) attacks with a sword (TN 16). Roll: 2, 3, 4, 6 = 15 (failure). He Pushes 3 dice (rerolling the 2, 3, 4), getting 5, 5, 1. New total: $5 + 5 + 1 + 6 = 17$ —success! But his next Forma check cannot use Reach.

⚠ **Warning**

Tactical Depth: Sacrifice guarantees success but reduces future flexibility. Reach gives immediate power but creates debt spirals. Push is safe but prevents you from Reaching. Choose wisely!

Reverie: The Architect's Gift

✧ Imagination Infusion

Spend **Reverie** points to manipulate reality itself. Two options:

✧ Upend (Die Escalation)

Spend 1+ Reverie to upgrade a die's size: **d6 → d8 → d10 → d12 → d16 → d20 → d24 → d30 → d36 → d50 → d100**

Cost: 1 Reverie per step (10 Reverie to reach d100). Describe how imagination reshapes reality.

🛡 Fortify (Minimum Results)

Spend Reverie to establish a die's minimum result: **1 point = minimum 2, 2 points = minimum 3, ... 10 points = minimum 11**

Limit: Natural 1s always fail (reality's backlash).

⚠ Restriction:

Cannot combine Reverie with Reach or Push. Imagination requires focus—no desperate tactics allowed.

Exploding Dice: Echo Surge

When you roll a natural 6 on any die, it **explodes**—roll it again and add the result. This happens **only once per die** (no infinite loops).

 Tip

Balance Note: Exploding 6s give negative-Essence characters a fighting chance. A lucky 6+6=12 can turn the tide!



Quick Reference: Resolution Flow

1. GM sets Difficulty (Veil) based on task
2. Player decides: Sacrifice dice? (Lower TN by 4/die)
3. Player decides: Reach for extra dice? (Risk Wounds on 1s)
4. Player decides: Spend Reverie? (Upend or Fortify)
5. Roll remaining dice, check for explosions (6s)
6. Player decides: Push to reroll non-1s?
7. Compare total to TN: Meet/exceed = success!
8. Apply consequences: Reach debt, Push restrictions

"Every die is a promise to the future. Drop wisely—for fate remembers what you borrow."

— The Count's First Rule