

THE DODEKATHEON

THE GREEK GODS

Second oldest of the divine tribes, the Dodektheon comprises the Olympian Gods of Greco-Roman legend. Their origins are murky, since the ancient Greeks already knew their Gods when they migrated to the Mediterranean Sea around 4,000 years ago, but they were still changing and growing 2,500 years ago, and their forms only became set around 1,500 years ago. Where the Pesedjet emphasizes social and cultural stability over and against individual rights, the Dodektheon has sought to impose patterns of individuality within the community on humanity.

Arete—personal excellence in service to humanity—is the motivating urge of this tribe of Gods and its Scions. It is important for most people to know their place, but it is equally important for some to rise above their stations and create new patterns for human life. In modern times, the Dodektheon's Scions seek to manifest and awaken great spirits in society—as artists, warriors, spiritual seekers, judges, leaders and poets.

Extraordinary individuals can strengthen the fabric of reality so that Titans can gain no purchase on it or rip through illusion's curtains. Sometimes, the Scions of the Olympians challenge mortals, and sometimes, they are the mortals challenged by the Gods. Both routes lead to greatness—an exaltation of human endeavor that blocks the Titans from destroying the World.

The Greek pantheon's greatest weakness is hubris—belief that the individual is capable of winning out against Fate. Every God in the Dodektheon believes that his most recent favored Scion is capable of surviving the titanspawn onslaught and changing the World. Investing time and training in Scion after Scion, the whole pantheon puts tremendous trust in its heroes, while acknowledging that all too many have only fallen into ruin and darkness. The next Scion, of course, will prove a worthy vessel for the trust and favor of the Gods...

APHRODITE

AKA: VENUS, TURAN

Description: As beautiful and capricious as the sea that birthed her, Aphrodite is impossibly gorgeous no matter what disguise she puts on. Men and women fall in love with her in an epic way the moment they lay eyes on her. Aphrodite herself falls in love with equal fervor—only to come crashing out of love in an epic way a few months or occasionally years later.

To modern eyes, Aphrodite has assumed roles ranging from fashion model to arm candy to the super wealthy. She has been the executive of a fashion magazine, the hostess of a TV game show, a cheerleader for a championship football team and a soulful lounge singer.

Fickle, demanding, fascinated by intelligence yet never really seeing its use, Aphrodite keeps her attendant fans waiting on her, hand and foot, so that her every whim is supplied. Her indiscretions are always overlooked, laughed off or excused. Her paramours rarely get off so easily. When she vanishes suddenly, her former victims are usually left penniless and suicidal. In fact, finding her is merely a matter of tracking the string of failed relationships and ruined lovers she leaves behind.

Her Scions tend to follow one of two paths: Either they are genuinely loving and communicative with their partners, while providing inspiration and guidance to all their friends in matters of love and relationships; or they tend to leave a string of broken hearts and ruined people behind them. Usually incredibly beautiful themselves, they still have difficulty wielding that beauty in the presence of their mother.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Arete

Abilities: Animal Ken, Art, Empathy, Integrity, Larceny, Presence

Rivals: Hephæstus; Amaterasu, Bastet, Erzulie, Freya, Sif, Tlazoltéotl

APOLLO

AKA: APLU

Description: Lord of music, the sun, art and beauty, Apollo is the healer and the sender of plague. He can cure with a touch or smite with his golden bow. Blond, blue-eyed, with muscled olive-tan skin, his smile sends quivers through half of both male and female populations, yet his love affairs seem fated to be short lived and touched by tragedy. Apollo's tendency to speak truths others are unwilling to face is guaranteed to win respect from half the room and make the other half want to start swinging.

In modern times, Apollo has been a New Age massage therapist and a Piccadilly Circus pick-up boy, a brilliant neurosurgeon, a cruel film reviewer and a ponderous academic. Whatever his role, he is invariably a well-known and respected (if controversial) figure.

His Scions tend to take after him. Classically handsome or beautiful, muscular and active, they tend to follow careers in the arts, music or health professions. Many are entangled in the machinations of Fate, owing to their father's long-standing interest in and control of prophecy.

Associated Powers: Epic Appearance, Epic Charisma, Arete, Health, Prophecy, Sun

Abilities: Art, Athletics, Medicine, Marksmanship, Presence, Science

Rivals: Hades; Baldur, Raiden, Shango, Thoth, Xipe Totec

ARES

AKA: MARS, MARIS

Description: God of war, Ares has a profound ability to incite murderous rage in almost anyone around him. His screams are enough to terrify hardened Army Rangers—one general who's seen him in action thinks atomic weapons are less dangerous. Dark and hirsute, Ares does not conform to anyone's idea of a perfect warrior—until he raises his weapon. What that weapon is from day to day hardly matters. All that counts is that he has one.

In modern times, Ares has been a weapons manufacturer, a black-budget accountant, a Special Forces commander, a psychotic deserter, a militia leader in the mountains, a survivalist and a renegade Soviet officer. Hardened veterans go pale when reminded of him, and women tend to cry or spit at the sound of his name. Most of his methods rely on going to strange places, meeting lots of interesting people, and killing them.

His children are rarely as fierce as he. Ares is not above motivating his Scions with negative reinforcement, but he knows that his children are called to a different kind of war than he was. They need skills of cool calculation and battle-tested reason more than the rage of war. Therefore, he tests them constantly for he knows he might need them someday.

Associated Powers: Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Arete, War

Abilities: Brawl, Command, Marksmanship, Melee, Presence, Thrown

Rivals: Artemis, Athena, Hephaestus; Hachiman, Horus, Ogoun, Thor, Tlazoltéotl

ARTEMIS

AKA: ARTUME, CYNTHIA, DIANA, LOCHEIA

Description: Sister to Apollo and Goddess of the moon, Artemis eschews the company of men, preferring the companionship (and touch) of women. Dark-haired and white-skinned, Artemis always has a predatory gleam in her eye, whether she's chasing deer or skirts. Like her brother, her hands can heal, while a shot from her silver bow brings comatose sleep for as long as she wishes. Vain and proud, she rarely lets anyone gaze upon her without changing their lives forever. Fierce and sensual, she resolves to change as many lives as she can.

In modern life, Artemis has played a rock guitarist in black leather, a senator in a power suit, an erotic dancer in feather fans, a dominatrix and a doctor. It has not, in fact, proved beyond her ability to assume all five of these roles in a single disguised lifetime. More than any other Goddess, Artemis has the power to change her form and shape more or less at will, while remaining true to herself.

The adopted Scions of Artemis are no less changeable. Assuming one role in youth, they tend to become something else in their rebellious teenage years, only to shake off that chrysalis in favor of a new form in young adulthood, and still other roles in maturity and declining years. Artemis herself likes her children to pass through various stages and life patterns, and she finds ways to encourage change among her more settled offspring.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Perception, Arete, Health, Moon

Abilities: Animal Ken, Awareness, Empathy, Fortitude, Marksmanship, Survival

Rivals: Hera; Freyr, Isis, Legba, Susano-o, Tezcatlipoca

ATHENA

AKA: APHAEA, MINERVA, MENRVA

Description: Honey-haired and well-rounded—voluptuous, some would say—Athena is the best at everything, perpetually wise except when her ambitions reduce her to foolish actions. As Goddess of wisdom, Athena has the power to mediate disputes, to resolve them by force or to create new techniques that render the argument irrelevant. She has no patience for those who rely on aggression alone to solve their problems. Athena tends to be proud, however, and she can be misled into risky contests by challenging the depth and breadth of her skills. She does not lose gracefully.

In modern times, Athena has been a devoted middle school teacher, a waspish librarian, a first-rate artist and a popular motivational speaker. Those who see her often use terms such terms as “old soul,” “many-layered” and “quick-witted.” Her sharp-tongued intelligence scares off many potential partners, but though chaste, she has proven a devoted patron to many a Scion who’s impressed her with their cleverness and quick wits, regardless of those Scions parentage.

Her adopted Scions are similarly well endowed with graces of art and artistry. Skilled at languages and fine crafts, they tend to become famous artists and performers—unless their mother pulls them away to other tasks and projects, such as saving the World.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Wits, Animal (Owl), Arete, Health, Justice, War

Abilities: Academics, Command, Craft, Melee, Investigation, Science

Rivals: Ares, Hephaestus; Bastet, Huitzilopochtli, Kalfu, Legba, Thor, Tsuki-yomi

DIONYSUS

AKA: BACCHUS, FUFLUNS, LYAEUS

Description: The wildest and craziest of a wild pantheon, Dionysus is a Scion of Zeus who was elevated to godhood about 3,000 years ago. God of wine and celebration, he is the perfect party boy, whether you want to stage a sedate wine tasting, a drunken orgy or a drug-fueled rock concert in the back of beyond. Invite him, and a party will usually show up in his wake. Darkhaired and slender while still being soft, Dionysus is capable of persuading even the most straight-laced prude to loosen his tie and party down.

Dionysus has dabbled in being a rock impresario, a club owner, a wine merchant, a food critic, a *grand cordon* chef, a drug dealer, a microbrewery manager and a restaurant owner. He also likes to take on short-term roles as the handsome stranger with the really good pot or the really good bottle of wine at the concert.

It’s telling about Dionysus’s abilities as a father that he much prefers to create Scions during casual encounters than as part of some long-term disguise. His Scions are similar. Wherever they go, they tend to establish a party around themselves. If they stay too long in one place, it congregates around them, attracting the missing elements of that celebration. This happens partly because the Scion is fun to be around, but also because Fate finds it useful to create such events around the Scion. The more potent the Scion is, the larger and more raucous the soirée.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Stamina, Arete, Chaos, Fertility, Mystery

Abilities: Art, Empathy, Integrity, Fortitude, Occult, Presence

Rivals: Hades; Damballa, Hachiman, Hel, Horus, Xipe Totec

HADES

AKA: AITA, DISPATER, ORCUS, PLUTO

Description: Gray all over and heavy-set, Hades is the dour God of death and the Underworld. Joy claims him every six months when Persephone comes to his realm. Although she is a springtime Goddess, Hades found her to be as devious as he, and discovered love rarely granted to Gods of doom and gloom. But Persephone's mother ripped his fair bride from him and contrived to keep her away from Hades for half of every year. The result is a tormented and angry soul who occasionally beds mortals to assuage his sense of being lost in the currents of eternity.

In modern times, Hades plays roles within a narrow band: the miserly commodities broker, the tight-fisted rich old uncle, the suspicious Treasury Department official, the aggressive IRS agent and the Mafia don looking for his missing tribute. Hades is always looking for the return of his missing wealth, whether it be lost souls trying to find their way to the Underworld or more material wealth mined from the ground without his permission. He seeks mortal partners who remind him of his queen. Of late, he is angry about his planet being demoted.

Hades Scions often come off almost as manic depressive. Their moods shift on a dime from doom and gloom to hopeful and humorous (though it's often the black humor of the gallows). These Scions commonly act as Hades' agents in the World, reclaiming his lost property (be that wealth or souls) and forwarding the Unseen One's agendas.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Arete, Darkness, Death, Earth

Abilities: Academics, Command, Occult, Presence, Stealth, Thrown

Rivals: Dionysus; Baron Samedi, Frigg, Izanami, Osiris, Quetzalcoatl

HEPHAESTUS

AKA: VULCAN, SETHLANS

Description: Lord of the forge and all manufactured things, Hephaestus is a mountain of a man, bearded and barrel chested. He is capable of creating automatons sophisticated enough to imitate human beings, weapons capable of bringing down Titans and Gods, palaces to surpass the greatest of those of the World's kings, and tools that can refashion the universe. His software can rewrite civilizations or engineer the collapse of one. All things that depend on mechanical or artificial design are within his purview, and he can effect startling changes in all of them. His two great disadvantages are his crippled legs, which prevent him from moving easily from place to place. He's also become reliant on his workroom of tools and equipment, which were crafted from his own power and strength as a God. Without them, he is rarely as capable of moving mountains as some would like him to be.

In modern times, Hephaestus is the absent-minded professor or the engineer who loses his glasses. People who recall meeting him are always astounded at the combination of theoretical comprehension and practical applications that meet in his head. So few builders understand the metaphysical underpinnings of their works, while few theoreticians grasp how their mental gymnastics can be used in the real world. Hephaestus understands both, usually with great trepidation at what his knowledge could unleash upon the World.

His Scions tend to be similarly distracted, yet are excellent at assembling odds and ends into formidable tools. Most tend to inherit either his theoretical brilliance or his mechanical aptitude, but not both.

The smith-lord prizes and favors those few who do most avidly and insistently.

Associated Powers: Epic Intelligence, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Arete, Earth, Fire

Abilities: Art, Control, Craft, Investigation, Melee, Science

Rivals: Aphrodite, Ares, Athena; Anubis, Damballa, Heimdall, Raiden, Xipe Totec

HERA

AKA: JUNO, UNI

Description: Wife of Zeus, Hera is the Goddess of marriage. Famed as perpetually loyal and faithful to her husband despite his infidelities, Hera engages in her current philandering ways for the sake of the Gods' continued survival. Her rationalizations make the other Gods uneasy, but they bite their tongues. Darkhaired with gray streaking her temples and possessing a matronly figure, Hera is regal in a way that few Greek Gods are. Busy men pause to open doors for her, and she keeps them waiting while finishing a few parting thoughts. No one dares interrupt her.

In modern life, Hera prefers roles that grant her access to the good life. She is the chairman's wife, or the mayor's. She is the president of the exclusive women's college in New England or the matron of a political family that has ruled the highest echelons of the nation. She is rarely without her pearls, her peacocks and her dogs. Make her angry, and she'll ruin your day—possibly your epoch.

Her Scions have a complex position in divine society. No one can deny that they are strong and potentially great assets in the war against the Titans. As the bastard children of the queen of the Gods, however, few know how many Birthrights to grant them. Is Zeus planning on destroying them, despite their usefulness? Can they ever be Gods? Will they overthrow their mother and stepfather?

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Animal (Peacock), Arete, Health, Magic

Abilities: Academics, Command, Fortitude, Investigation, Politics, Presence

Rivals: Aphrodite, Athena, Zeus; Amaterasu, Erzulie, Isis, Sif, Tlazoltéotl

HERMES

AKA: MERCURY, TURMS

Description: Lithe, tanned, dark-haired Hermes is the swift-footed messenger of the Gods. He has gone everywhere and done everything. A master trickster and illusionist, he tricked Apollo out of his cows and paid him back with music made with a harp of cow-guts. He stole his magic from Hera, wealth from Pluto, and his traveler's wits from Artemis. The other Gods are not always fond of him, but they can't deny he has a certain playful usefulness. Hermes more often plays tricks on Titans and titanspawn than on his fellow Gods, and that makes him useful.

In modern life, Hermes has been an upstart head of a computer start-up, a three-card monte con man, a bicycle messenger, an M&A lawyer and the man who sold the Eiffel Tower—twice. The herald of the Gods also makes a good diplomat and trouble-shooter, both for Gods and mortals, and he enjoys making deals that leave everyone but the Titans happy. As a God of merchants and travelers—concepts unfamiliar or even alien to the Titans—Hermes loves the mortal World and travels in it far more often than the other Gods do. He serves as the principal agent of the Dodekathion in delivering Birthrights and is often a Scion's first contact with the divine hierarchy.

Hermes' Scions are often impressed into similar roles. In a world where communications are frequently intercepted, mouth to ear becomes the safest form of information dissemination. Therefore, the children of Hermes risk life and limb to become couriers and spies for their aunts and uncles among the Gods. Not accidentally do the Scions of Hermes also run life insurance services for the God-born. They are well aware of the risks of being a Scion in the first place.

Associated Powers: Epic Dexterity, Epic Intelligence, Epic Wits, Arete, Magic, Psychopomp

Abilities: Athletics, Awareness, Larceny, Occult, Stealth, Survival

Rivals: Apollo, Poseidon; Huitzilopochtli, Izanagi, Kalfu, Legba, Odin, Tlaloc, Thoth

POSEIDON

AKA: NEPTUNE, NETHUNS, RODON

Description: Legends say Poseidon was the happiest of Zeus's siblings. He married well, had a horde of children, ruled a vast dominion, received offerings from dozens of cities, had hundreds of temples and shrines, and married a young woman from land in every port for the better part of four millennia. It was a divinely good life. In the modern age, Poseidon is a passionate but difficult man. White-bearded, half-bald, grizzled and wrinkled, he appears as a startlingly spry and well preserved man in his 70s.

Even in mortal guises, his skin has an almost blue tinge to it. Over the years, the sea God has taken the role of a shipping agent, an underwater archaeologist and a naval officer. He still gambles at the horse races. Most of all, however, Poseidon is an environmentalist. He rages at what humans are doing to his ocean, and he has plans to make them *stop*. Triton, Poseidon's son and favorite Scion, does most of the work of contacting his father's progeny these days.

These Scions are a tsunami building across the World, transforming nations and civilizations, wreaking havoc on a World that forgot Poseidon and forgot to take care of the ocean. The Scions of the Horse Lord will make everyone remember.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Animal (Horse), Arete, Earth, Water

Abilities: Animal Ken, Control, Fortitude, Integrity, Melee, Thrown

Rivals: Zeus; Damballa, Frigg, Geb, Quetzalcoátl, Susano-o, Tyr

ZEUS

AKA: JOVE, JUPITER, TINIA

Description: Zeus, Sky Father, King of Heaven, Titan-Slayer, Many-Splendored, Crowned in Lightnings. He has many titles, all expressing his strength and power. Legends say Zeus was stronger than all the other Gods of the Dodekatheton combined; some Gods believe he might be stronger than any other two *pantheons* combined. This very strength could, in fact, be his undoing, for Fate has decreed that a son of his own siring will overthrow him in time. The other Gods caution him to be careful in spreading his divine seed, yet Zeus cannot help himself. His very potency and the heroic nature of his children and the great deeds they do in the World push him to father yet more Scions and bring more soldiers to the side of the Gods in the battle with the Titans and the titanspawn. That his very eagerness could result in the ruin of the World weighs little on his mind. Some suggest he might actually be addicted to the sexual rush or even to the act of procreation.

To modern audiences, Zeus has played many roles: irreplaceable senator, undefeatable mayor, obscure European prince, sharp-eyed president (elected or not, political or corporate, it matters not). He is always in charge, always on top and always in control. When he's wrong, the results are bad; when he's right, the results are good. Either way, the results are always epic in scope and scale.

His Scions are a diverse and unruly bunch. Dionysus, Ares, Hephaestus, Apollo, Artemis and Hermes are all his children. So were Heracles, King Minos of Crete and Helen of Troy. That his children are capable of spreading order and justice is undeniable. That they are capable of great destruction and ruin is equally undeniable. Yet it is difficult to explain that to Zeus without giving offense.

Associated Powers: Epic Charisma, Epic Manipulation, Epic Strength, Arete, Justice, Sky

Abilities: Awareness, Command, Integrity, Presence, Politics, Thrown

Rivals: Apollo, Hades; Amaterasu, Atum-Re, Horus, Huitzilopochtli, Odin, Shango

Character Creation

So, you dig **Scion**, and you're ready to invest your creativity in unique legendary heroes who suit your tastes a little better than the pregenerated ones we've provided. Well, you're in luck, because that's what this chapter is all about: building a hero.

STEP ONE: CALLING

It's in the nature of the Scions of the Gods to be drawn into lifestyles and careers that hint at the purviews of their divine parents. The power of the ichor that flows through their veins urges them into those lifestyles, and their natural talents tend to keep them there.

When designing a Scion, the first step is to come up with your character's Calling, a brief statement of the character's concept. Remember, a character's Calling is typically influenced by his divine parent's own predilections. A Scion of Athena might be a "Shrewd Corporate Lawyer," a "Brilliant Small-Unit Tactician," a "Slick Defense Contractor" or even a "World-Renowned Chess Champion." He's less likely to be a "Crass Rodeo Clown." He lacks the natural inclination to pursue such a Calling, and it's a waste of the talents at which he naturally excels.

Next, choose the character's divine parent and note the pantheon to which she belongs. These choices are often intrinsically tied to a character's Calling. As noted in Chapter One, each deity has a group of six Abilities that her Scions enjoy as Favored Abilities. These Abilities are intrinsically tied to that being, so they pass through the ichor to the Scion. Additionally, each pantheon has a unique Purview that is accessible only to the Gods and Scions of that pantheon. (See pp. 149-153 for more information on these pantheon-specific Purviews and their Boons.)

Finally, you need to decide on your character's Nature, which is a personality archetype that helps define your Scion. A Scion's Nature provides a starting point for the player to portray that character's interaction with others in the game. (See pp. 112-117 of the Traits chapter for detailed descriptions of all 22 Natures and their mechanical effects.)

Example: Conrad decides he wants to play a character from the Japanese pantheon, the Amatsukami. A big fan of samurai films such as Yojimbo, Zatoichi and Seven Samurai, Conrad would like to portray a Scion of Hachiman, the samurai patron. After clearing his choice with the Storyteller, Conrad begins to construct his character. Conrad chooses "Modern Samurai" as his character's Calling, seeing his character as a rising star in the Japanese action movie biz. He notes Hachiman as the Scion's divine parent and the Amatsukami as the pantheon from which he descends. Looking at Hachiman's write-up, Conrad notes the Favored Abilities for the deity: Athletics, Command, Investigation, Marksmanship, Melee and Science. This just leaves the character's Nature to be decided. Looking at the choices available, Conrad goes with Gallant, figuring that in the case of Hachiman's progeny, the apple would not fall from the tree.

STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

Now it's time to jump into the actual mechanical aspects of character creation. Don't panic, though. It's all pretty straightforward. The first aspects you need to nail down are your character's nine Attributes. These traits define the Scion's innate capabilities and natural aptitudes, from how strong he is to how smart and all points in between. The first thing you need to do is to prioritize your character's three Attribute categories: Physical, Social and Mental.

Decide at which category your Scion most excels (primary), at which he is somewhat better than average (secondary) and at which he is just at the norm (tertiary). Is he a strapping athlete, a charming dilettante or maybe a brilliant thinker?

- Physical Attributes define your character's physical potential—how much he can lift, how fast he can move and how tough he is. If you're building a Scion who kicks ass and chews gum, but happens to be all out of gum, this should be the character's primary category.
- Social Attributes define the character's social aptitude—how charming, persuasive and attractive he is. If you're building a Scion who's a lover or a cunning manipulator, not a fighter, this category should be primary.

- Mental Attributes define a character's intellectual capacity—how perceptive, smart and mentally agile he is. If you're designing a clever trickster or a brilliant scholar, this should probably be that Scion's primary category.

Each Attribute tops out at five dots, and a character begins with one dot in each Attribute before adding any. A character receives eight dots to divide among his primary Attributes, six to divide among his secondary and four to divide among his tertiary. (For a better idea of what each dot in an Attribute means, see pp. 103-105 of the Traits chapter.)

If you lack the dots necessary to raise an Attribute to the level you believe your concept requires, you can always spend bonus points to raise it later in the process. In addition, Attributes may be raised through experience points after play begins.

Example: Conrad sees his character as every bit the real-life martial-arts hero the character portrays in his films. Therefore, he decides to make the Scion's Physical Attributes primary. Conrad also figures that the character is a successful film star not just thanks to his physical prowess, but because of his rugged good looks and natural charm. Therefore, he decides to make the character's Social Attributes secondary. That leaves Mental Attributes as tertiary. The Scion might be a star, but because the character doesn't know his way around a contract, it's the filmmakers and his agent who are raking in the majority of the money. Conrad fills in Strength 3, Dexterity 5 and Stamina 3 on his character sheet, using his eight dots (plus the one dot each Attribute possesses). The character is reasonably tough and well built, but his speed and hand eye coordination are nearly superhuman—terrific for an action-movie star. Moving to his character's secondary category, Conrad decides the character is handsome and charming, but straightforward in his dealings. He divides six dots into Charisma 4, Manipulation 2 and Appearance 3. (Remember each Attribute has one dot at the start.) That leaves the tertiary Attributes. Conrad sees the Scion as possessing good reflexes but no more book smarts or insight than the average Joe. He gives his character Perception 2, Intelligence 2 and Wits 3, putting half of his four dots into Wits and dividing the other two equally between the other Attributes (again, don't forget that each has one dot to start).

STEP THREE: ABILITIES

Abilities are traits a Scion learns through hard work and study, unlike the raw natural aptitudes of Attributes. Like Attributes, Abilities are rated from one to five dots. When performing actions in **Scion**, an Ability is usually added to an Attribute to determine the number of dice rolled. All Abilities begin at 0. Each Scion character receives 30 dots to be divided as the player wishes among the 24 different Abilities. Note that no Ability may be raised above three dots at character generation without the expenditure of bonus points. As noted in Chapter One, each God passes on six particularly relevant Abilities to her offspring in the form of Favored Abilities. These Favored Abilities are cheaper to purchase with both bonus points and experience points.

SPECIALTIES

A handful of Abilities are so broad that they require specialization to further define what portion of the broader Ability a character has mastered. The Art Ability, for instance, includes such varied pursuits as sculpture, painting, music and writing. Most artists are not equally skilled in all such pursuits—they focus instead on one or only a few. For such Abilities, which are noted in Chapter Three, the player must choose a particular specialty to which his rating applies. His dots apply *only* to the area covered by his specialty. If an artist character chooses painting as his specialty, his dots in Art (Painting) apply only to his attempts to paint a picture. If he tries to sculpt a monument, he cannot apply his Art dots to that effort unless he also has a *separate* rating in Art (Sculpture).

Example: Conrad tries to divide his dots in such a way that the Scion's focus clearly falls under combat, but that facet of the character isn't the only one he possesses. He purchases Animal Ken 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Control (Automobiles) 2, Fortitude 3, Integrity 2, Larceny 3, Melee 3, Presence 1, Stealth 3, Survival 1 and Thrown 1. Looking at the spread of Abilities, Conrad mentally notes that he'd like to come back and tweak some of these stats later with bonus points.

STEP FOUR: ADVANTAGES

Advantages aren't ranked or prioritized, merely given special values. Like most traits, they may be increased with bonus points.

BIRTHRIGHTS

Birthrights are gifts given to Scions by their patron Gods, typically upon a Scion's Visitation. A Scion character receives five dots to divide among four separate types of Birthright: Creature, Followers, Guide and Relic. No Birthright may be rated higher than three dots before spending bonus points. More information on these Birthrights appears in the Chapter Five, pp. 156-169.

EPIC ATTRIBUTES, KNACKS AND BOONS

Epic Attributes are innate traits that manifest almost immediately after a Scion's Visitation, as the latent ichor in his blood wreaks sudden, dramatic changes on his physiology. Knacks are quirks of the Epic Attributes that manifest in different Scions with differing frequency. A Scion receives one Knack free with every dot purchased in an Epic Attribute. (Additional Knacks may be purchased with bonus or experience points.) More info on Epic Attributes and Knacks appears in Chapter Four. Boons are supernatural powers granted to Scions by their divine parents. Most come from the Purviews for which those Gods are best known, but none are off limits. Boons differ from Epic Attributes and Knacks in that they aren't innate. In fact, to use a Boon, a heroic Scion must possess a Birthright relic that allows access to the Purview from which that Boon comes. A complete explanation of Boons appears in Chapter Five, pp. 139-156. A Scion receives 10 dots to divide between Epic Attributes and Boons. Each dot in an Epic Attribute costs one of those 10 dots at character creation. Each Boon costs the same number of dots as its rating (i.e., taking a three-dot Boon at character creation uses up three of those 10 dots). No score in a Scion's Epic Attribute may equal or surpass his Legend score. Similarly, no Scion may possess a Boon rated equal to or greater than his Legend.

VIRTUES

Virtues are beliefs of great import to the cultures from which the various pantheons emerged. Each pantheon has a set of four Virtues that define proper behavior. The sets are as follows:

Aesir: Courage, Endurance, Expression, Loyalty

Amatsukami: Duty, Endurance, Intellect, Valor

Atzlánti: Conviction, Courage, Duty, Loyalty

Dodekatheon: Expression, Intellect, Valor, Vengeance

Loa: Harmony, Order, Piety, Vengeance

Pesedjet: Conviction, Harmony, Order, Piety

Similar to Attributes, each Virtue begins with one dot. Each Scion then has five dots to divide between the four Virtues of his divine parent's pantheon. (A Storyteller might allow a Scion to choose a different Virtue combination, but don't count on it.) A Virtue can't be raised above 4 at character creation without the expenditure of bonus points. More information on Virtues can be found in Chapter Three (pp. 117-122).

Example: Conrad purchases two Birthright relics for his character using his available five dots of Birthright: a jade tomoe necklace (a two-dot relic offering access to the War and Guardian Purviews) and the Fudo Masamune, a tanto made by famed swordsmith Masamune Okazaki and dedicated to the fire deity Fudo Myo. (This blade is a three-dot relic offering access to the Fire Purview and giving +2 Defense.) Knowing that Hachiman was renowned for his lightning reflexes and prowess in battle, Conrad decides to devote two dots to Epic Wits and one to Epic Dexterity. He also takes two dots of Epic Charisma. That makes the character eligible for two Epic Wits Knacks, two Epic Charisma Knacks and a single Epic Dexterity Knack. He chooses to go with Opening Gambit, Rabbit Reflexes, Blessing of Importance, Charmer and Untouchable Opponent. Conrad then decides to spend his remaining dots on Boons, namely Battle Cry (War ••), Fire Immunity (Fire •), Vigil Brand (Guardian •) and The Wakeful Spirit (Tsukumo-Gami •). The Amatsukami's Virtues are Duty, Endurance, Intellect, Valor. Therefore, Conrad sets his Scion's four Virtues at Duty 2, Endurance 2, Intellect 2, Valor 3.

STEP FIVE: FINISHING TOUCHES

On this step, you determine your character's final traits and finish rounding him out.

WILLPOWER

Willpower represents a character's strength of purpose and determination. As a trait, it is used for a variety of purposes. A Scion's Willpower may override an instinctive response borne of one's Virtues, create an automatic success on an important roll, allow that Scion to resist a mental assault, power certain Boons and spells or activate a Virtue. (More information on Willpower and its uses can be found on pp. 111-112 of Chapter Three.) A character's starting Willpower equals the sum of his two highest Virtues, though Willpower may be raised with bonus points.

LEGEND

Legend is the measure of a Scion or other supernatural being's spiritual puissance. Most mortals have no Legend rating (or a rating of 1 at most). Scions start the game with Legend 2 [**3 bei uns**], and that trait may be raised with bonus points.

LEGEND POINTS

Legend also generates points, which may be spent for automatic successes, to reroll a failed action and to power certain Boons and spells. A Scion's pool of Legend points is equal to the square of his Legend dots.

HEALTH LEVELS

Despite the great body of evidence to the contrary, Scions are ultimately only human. They possess the same seven health levels that other mere mortals possess: one -0 health level, two -1 health levels, two -2 health levels, one -4 health level and a single Incapacitated health level. For more information on health levels, see Chapter Seven, p. 195.

BONUS POINTS

Finally, the Scion gets a pool of 15 [**21 bei uns**] bonus points that may be spent to improve various traits. The expenditure for trait increases is outlined on the "Bonus Points" table on page 101.

Example: Entering the final stretch of creating his hero, Conrad adds the character's two highest Virtues together, garnering the Scion a starting Willpower of 5. Realizing that he bumped two of his Scion's Epic Attributes to 2 and bought a two-dot War Boon and that the character can't have that without a higher Legend than the starting score of 2, Conrad spends 7 of the character's 15 bonus points to raise it to Legend 3. That gives him a pool of sixteen Legend points. Conrad decides to spend six of his remaining bonus points to raise the Scion's Athletics to 5, Brawl to 4 and Melee to 5. (Raising Athletics and Melee costs only one point apiece because they are Favored Abilities.) He spends the last two points to bring his Willpower up to 6. And that's it for the mechanical side of character creation. All that's left now is to turn that bunch of numbers into more than the sum of its numbers, a real character.

THE SPARK OF LIFE

And that's it for the mechanical side of character creation. All that's left now is to turn that bunch of numbers into a real character. The most important things about a character can't be defined by his traits. These things make a character take on a life of his own in play. It's important when making up a character to consider who that character is, where he comes from, what he looks like and what his hopes and aspirations are. Knowing the answer to these and similar questions will make all the difference when you bring him to life in a **Scion** game. Shades of characterization may often be gleaned from the scores you put in a Scion's various traits, by reading between the lines.

*Example: Conrad names his **Scion** character Jiro Hata and decides that he's a minor Japanese action star on the verge of making it big. Thinking about the character and checking out his Appearance and his Physical Attributes, Conrad figures Jiro's a ruggedly handsome Japanese man in his early 20s with the build of a martial artist. He's not a big guy, but his body is toned and well defined, and he possesses a winning smile. Conrad sees Jiro as charming, but guileless, naïve and not too shrewd (backed up by his above-average Charisma and his merely average Manipulation, Perception and Intelligence). Therefore,*

his studio and his agent tend to take advantage of the Scion, pocketing most of the money from his budding movie career. Conrad then ponders Jiro's life a bit. He's already decided that the noble Hachiman is Jiro Hata's father, but that leaves a lot of character history to explore. Conrad figures the Scion was born in Kamakura to a single mother. His father was a constant presence in his life, however, appearing whenever his heavenly duties permitted and making sure the family had enough money to get by (though little more). While he grew up on the mean streets of Kamakura, Jiro was his father's son, so he fought to defend those who were victimized by the ubiquitous thugs and gang members that effectively ruled the poorer sections of the city. His attempts to better his neighborhood brought him to the attention of an aging martial arts master, who elected to teach the young man his unique brand of kenjutsu. His real-life exploits against the criminal underworld drew the attention of first the media and then venerable Jinrikisha Productions. Once a major Japanese movie studio, Jinrikisha had faced hard times in the late '90s and early 21st century and now viewed the charismatic and dynamic Jiro Hata as an action star who might reinvigorate the studio. (Jinrikisha's ties to the yakuza, which wanted Jiro taken out of the hero game, only offered extra incentive to the indebted studio execs.) Drawn in by the promise of action, celebrity and respect, Jiro had found his Calling, which resonated with the blood of his divine parent. Conrad decides that the Scion's life of fame and fortune was short-lived, however. After making a number of successful films with its new star, Jinrikisha was in danger of recouping the money it needed to break with the yakuza—not what the organization had in mind when Jiro was hired on. So the criminals decided to eliminate Hata in an "accident" on the set of his latest feature, a plan that backfired thanks to a timely Visitation by Hachiman. Armed with divine might and righteous fury, Jiro Hata took down the yakuza thugs and, unfortunately, Jinrikisha Productions with it. Now, Jiro works in bit parts and as a stuntman while trying to regain his status as a film icon. Maybe he'd have better luck in Hollywood... And that's that. One **Scion** character fleshed out and ready for play.

CHARACTER CREATION PROCESS SUMMARY

• STEP ONE: CALLING

Choose calling, pantheon, God and Nature.

• STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

Note that all Attributes start with one dot before you add any.

Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (8/6/4)

• STEP THREE: ABILITIES

Note Favored Abilities (6)

Choose Abilities (30—at least 6 must go into Favored Abilities; none may be higher than 3 before spending bonus points).

• STEP FOUR: ADVANTAGES

Choose Birthrights (5—none may be higher than 3 before spending bonus points), Boons and Epic Attributes (10), and Virtues (5—none may be higher than 4 before spending bonus points).

• STEP FIVE: FINISHING TOUCHES

Record Legend (3), Willpower (total of two highest Virtues), Legend points (square of Legend dots).

• BONUS POINTS

Bonus points (21) may be spent at any time during character creation.

BONUS POINTS

Trait Cost

Attribute	4
Ability	2 (1 for Favored Ability of divine parent)
Birthright	1 (2 if the Birthright is being raised above 3)
Virtue	3
Willpower	2
Legend	7
Epic Attribute	5 (4 if associated with divine parent)
Knack	3
Boons	5 (4 if associated with divine parent)
Additional Spell	5 (4 if Magic is associated with divine parent)