

A FEW LAST THOUGHTS...

TWEAKING IT!

If you're a stalwart gamer, you'll attempt to figure out everything you can to tweak your character, to maximize all of its potential to become the biggest bad-ass you can.

GO FOR IT! We've designed the game so that there are dozens of different ways to tweak a single character. We won't list them here, but you'll rejoice when you've found yet another way.

ROLE-PLAYING

You can improve your role-playing by using the techniques we've outlined below.

CHOOSE A ROLE. There are several actual roles you can act out. You can act the hero, the sidekick, the sage, the intellectual, the criminal, the good friend, the wicked stepmother, etc. etc. *ad nauseum*. In the Official Story, for example, Thascius Gildo's role is "ambitious asshole." Maximillian Rufus' role is "struggling hero." Furia Tarquinia's role is "ambitious backstabber." Optimus Verus's role is "arrogant savior." When you choose a role to play, try to stick with it for a while to see if it will work. You need not tell anyone what you chose; just look for opportunities to *show* them what you chose.

CHOOSE A GOAL. Without a goal, your character will be wandering around in circles, tossed about with every new idea and basically rudderless. In fact, you should choose a long term goal and make several short term goals to help you (eventually) reach that long term goal.

CHOOSE A FATAL FLAW. No character should be "perfect." You'll regret it if you have a perfect character because the character will not be memorable or unique. Instead, choose a flaw that can be the undoing for your character, but one which your character, through much suffering or effort, can overcome. This will make your character interesting to both you and the others in the story (and to the Storyteller, who will have that much more material to work with

for an effective, great story).

CHOOSE A Demeanor. You can be bright and cheery, talkative, quiet and reserved, always suspicious, or a true intellectual questioning how everything works, an angry controlling personality, aloof and uncaring, or overly emotional about a certain subject.

YOUR STORY

There are several different strategies you can use to build your story. You'll want to employ at least one of these strategies at any given time unless you're willing for the Storyteller to "take over" the story as s/he did in the beginning of the story. But you'll be able to greatly influence the story by implementing one or more of these story building strategies.

PLOT CREATION. Spend some time thinking up plots your character can take steps to bring to fruition that speed towards their goals. Include other players in your plots, and take down or promote non-player Personalities in your plots. Plots need not always be about money, but can be about social standing, reputation, property, slaves' rights, legionnaire rights, senate races, bringing down a corrupt government official and taking the credit for it, and more. Don't just let the Storyteller decide on which plots to entangle you in, but spin a couple webs of your own to see what you can catch, especially considering you need to take charge to grow your powerbases!

HELP OTHERS WITH THEIR PLOTS. Odds are you won't know other players' plots at the outset, but because of role-playing and seeing their actions, you might discover them. Even if you don't let them know you've discovered one of their plots, you can help them or hinder them, depending on your own goals. This creates much story that the Storyteller will have to incorporate into his/her own main story you're part of.

PROBLEM CAUSATION & RESOLVE. If you want to be particularly devious, you can create problems for non-player Person-

alities (or secretly, for other players), and then gladly partake (perhaps even be the hero) in solving them. This can be dangerous, however, because if you're ever found out as purposely creating the problem... Also, there's a risk of the problem getting out of hand and larger than you're able to control so that it actually becomes a problem for you, too.

MANIC EPISODES. While we discourage many of these episodes, one or two thrown in to the game might actually create some good, hilarious game sessions. Your character can be overly histrionic about something that happened or s/he fears is about to happen; or, perhaps you'll purposely choose a cursed weapon so that you'll have to role-play the curse. Might not be the best for your character or party at the time, but it will certainly spice things up a little. And, if you role-play the curse/malady well, perhaps you'll get a blessing from the Storyteller once they're tired of it all...

MAKE ENEMIES. In the game, making friends, especially influential friends, of non-player Personalities, can be quite difficult. But it's easy to make enemies, and your conflicts with them, whether physical, political, or magical, can be great story stuff.

HARBOR SECRETS. Keep secrets from the other players that you let known to the Storyteller in private discussions away from the game (or in private chats with the Storyteller during the game). Also, keep a couple secrets from the Storyteller too, as long as you don't need his/her help when you reveal that secret. Part of the fun of the game is attempting to out-manuever the Storyteller's non-player personalities; how much more rewarding it would be to out-manuever the Storyteller, too!

MISDIRECTION. To keep other players (and perhaps even the Storyteller) always guessing at the plots you've decided to keep secret, throw out some red herrings for them to follow. This could be as simple as appearing to be overly interested in something (like making them believe a certain Senator must be re-elected, even though you couldn't care less). But, be careful not to be confused by your own misdirection!