

Additional Rules

Contacts

Under this rule, the PCs have one or more unnamed contacts marked on their character sheets for later use. A player can define a contact for his character at any point during the game, giving the PC access to a friendly NPC.

For example, when a character needs an inscription translated from the Chun language, an invitation to the Caliph's birthday celebration, or the services of a master in Craft (gemcutting), the player tells the DM that he wants to define one of his character's contacts for the purpose. Then the DM describes how the contact came about, from the character's point of view: "You buy your zither strings from Yezeed ibn Hatim al Huzuz, who is the husband of a Kahin, Bahija. She remembers you as one of the musicians who performed at their wedding feast, and is happy to do you a favor."

In game terms, Bahija has a friendly attitude toward the PC that continues unless the character does something to change the relationship. She is willing to translate the Chun inscription, and may perform a similar service on other occasions as time goes on. The player notes on the character sheet that one of his character's contacts has been defined as Bahija al Huzuz, a Kahin who can read and write the Chun language.

NPCs and Contacts

While all defined contacts are friendly NPCs, that doesn't mean that all friendly NPCs are defined contacts. The contacts rule supplements, not replaces, other social interactions with non-combatant NPCs. It gives the player a chance to insert a minor character into the ongoing drama.

Defined contacts are among the campaign's most stable characters. Unless the characters are completely obtuse or have remarkable misfortune, the minor characters they define as contacts aren't going anywhere. They're generally available wherever they happen to live, and they usually have the time and inclination to help their friend the PC. Major NPC characters – those defined entirely by the DM – are off limit as contacts. A player can't just say, "I want to define the Calipha as a contact."

A contact won't risk life or livelihood on the PC's say-so, but a contact makes some sacrifices for a friend. For example, a contact will burn the midnight oil translating an ancient text or sneak the key to the servants' gate out of the palace (as long as it's back by morning).

There's an inverse relationship between the contact's importance in the ongoing campaign and the amount of help she can provide. In other words, if you choose a qadi as your contact, sometimes he's too busy to see you at a moment's notice, but he's very helpful when you get an audience. Mahmud the rug merchant, on the other hand, practically lives in his stall at the Grand Bazaar – making him available day or night – but the ways in which he can aid you are more limited.

Types of Contacts

Contacts come in three varieties: information contacts, influence contacts, and skill contacts.

Information Contacts

Information contacts are useful for what they know. They're the ones who hear all the rumors – and they can discern which ones are true. Some just have an uncanny sense of what's going on in their neighborhood or town, such as the grumpy caravanserai owner, the talkative fruit merchant, and the watch captain who has seen it all. Other information contacts have more focused interests, such as the mamluk sergeant who knows all about troop movements, the fence who is privy to every major theft in the city, or the scribe assigned to write down every utterance of the mosque's imams.

An information contact is generally a commoner or an expert with one-third the class levels of his PC friend. It's okay to give such a character a few levels in another class such as vizier, sa'luk, or corsair if it's reasonable for someone in the contact's position to have this experience. Most information contacts spend their skill points on interaction skills such as Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive.

Influence Contacts

Influence contacts are useful because of who they know or who they are associated with. While a player can't define the Calipha as his character's contact, she can define one of her palace serving girls as a contact. The serving girl doesn't have a broad store of information, and she doesn't have any skills the PCs might need. But she might be able to put in a good word with the Calipha, and she can certainly make introductions between the PC and the rest of the Calipha's household staff. The purpose of an influence contact is to enable and smooth talks with more important, but less friendly, NPCs.

An influence contact has one-quarter the class levels of his PC friend, almost always in an NPC class.

Skill Contacts

Skill contacts are useful for what they do. Some skills – especially categories of Craft, Profession, and Knowledge – are

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rarely possessed by PCs. Skill contacts have those skills in abundance, so they're useful when characters need a smith to repair a scimitar, an honest broker to appraise a giant pearl, or a learned scholar who can identify the symbol engraved on an ancient bottle stopper. A special category of the skill contact is the linguist, who can tell you what "buri-yariq" means in Goblin.

A skill contact is generally an expert with half as many levels as his PC friend. He has maximum ranks in the skill he is best at, and his highest ability score is the key ability for the skill in question. A skill contact always has the Skill Focus feat related to his field of specialty.

Obtaining Contacts

First level characters begin with one undefined contact and they automatically gain contacts as they rise in level; see Table: Contacts, below. When a PC obtains a new potential contact, he doesn't need to define it in any way until it's needed.

A multiclass character gains contacts according to his class level in each of his classes, regardless of what his character level is, except for the initial contact at first level. For example, a 3rd-level rawun/2nd-level desert rider gains a new contact when he reaches 6th level if he takes 4th level in rawun, but not if he takes 3rd level in desert rider.

Table: Contacts

Level	A ¹	B ²	C ³	D ⁴
1st	--	--	--	--
2nd	2nd	--	--	--
3rd	--	2nd	--	--
4th	3rd	--	2nd	--
5th	--	--	--	2nd
6th	4th	3rd	--	--
7th	--	--	--	--
8th	5th	--	3rd	--
9th	--	4th	--	--
10th	6th	--	--	3rd
11th	--	--	--	--
12th	7th	5th	4th	--
13th	--	--	--	--
14th	8th	--	--	--
15th	--	6th	--	4th
16th	9th	--	5th	--
17th	--	--	--	--
18th	10th	7th	--	--
19th	--	--	--	--
20th	11th	--	6th	5th

¹ Use column A for rawun or barber levels.

² Use column B for faris, sa'luk, ordered priest, vizier, or hakima levels.

³ Use column C for fighter, corsair, kahin, saher, fakir, holy slayer, sha'ir, or mamluk officer levels.

⁴ Use column D for dervish, desert rider, matrud, province mage, mystic, mageweaver, or weaverider levels.

Station

All characters in the Land of Fate have their own station in life, their place in the great fabric of time which is unrolled day by day. From the meanest beggar to the most gaudy khan, they have their roles play, and their position in relation to one another. This relative position is called Station. It is a measure of social stature, and determines how others perceive a character in the Land of Fate.

Station is hereditary. To most enlightened people of Zakhara, a character's Station is readily apparent, unless the individual seeks to disguise or enhance it somehow.

In game mechanics, Station is represented by a rating that starts at +0 and increases or decreases depending on the character's family standing, class, race, level, and accomplishments. Most individuals remain close to their initial Station; a man born to a baker's family tends to become a baker, and a woman born to caliph's *harim* remains within those circles for most of her life. However, adventurers and those who walk with Fate will see their Station rise and fall over time, according to their actions and abilities.

Character Class and Station

A character's Station is modified by her class, as shown in the following tables. Multiclass characters use the highest modifier if both modifiers are positive or zero; if one or both is negative, then the lowest modifier is used.

Initial Class	Station Modifier
Matrud	-2
Corsair	-1
Mystic	-1
Sa'luk	+0
Dervish	+0
Fakir	+0
Fighter	+1
Desert Rider	+1
Kahin	+1
Province Mage	+2
Saher	+2
Vizier	+3
Faris	+3
Rawun	+3
Ordered Priest	+4

NPC Classes	Station Modifier
Commoner	+0
Expert	+0
Warrior	+0
Adept	+1
Aristocrat	+2

Prestige Classes	Station Modifier
Barber	-1
Holy Slayer	+0
Weaverider	+0
Hakima	+1
Mamluk Officer	+1
Mageweaver	+1
Sha'ir	+1

Race and Station

In general, race has a lower effect on someone's Station than how she chooses to her life. However, a few races receive initial negative adjustments on their Station due to enduring racial biases in society.

Race	Station Modifier
Sandstorm halfling	-1
Half-orc	-1
Kheri	-1
Sewer goblin	-1
Other races	+0

Other Adjustments

Individuals who are entrusted with positions of responsibility within society see an immediate increase in their Status. Conversely, those who have proven to be unable to abide by the Laws of the Loregiver are nearly universally shunned by all civilized people of Zakhara.

Any character who takes a background feat (hometown, tribal, racial, or patron deity) receive a +1 adjustment to her Station; Zakharan society favors those characters who have connections to their roots.

Other Adjustments	Station Adjustment
Convicted criminal	-8
Accused criminal	-4
Unenlightened	-4
Foreigner	-1
Any Background Feat	+1
Leadership Feat	+1
Civic position (most)	+1
Financial success	+1

Qadi (judge)	+2
Imam of a temple	+2
Owner of a mansion	+2
Court position	+4
Sheikh or Caliph	+6
Ruler of a nation	+8

Level Advancement and Station

As a character progresses in level, her Station automatically increases as shown in the following table.

Character Level	Station Modifier
1st	+0
2nd	+1
3rd	+1
4th	+2
5th	+2
6th	+3
7th	+3
8th	+4
9th	+4
10th	+5
11th	+5
12th	+6
13th	+6
14th	+7
15th	+7
16th	+8
17th	+8
18th	+9
19th	+9
20th	+10

OPTIONAL: Family Standing

A character's Station is very much affected by the family she comes from, but whom among us can choose her family? We have only that Fate which is given to us, and our family even moreso.

When a character is created, the player may roll 1d20 and consult the Family Standing table, below. The character's initial station is modified by the amount listed, and the character gains the listed skill as a class skill, if she did not already possess it.

If a player doesn't wish to roll randomly and trust her character's background to the whims of Fate, then she automatically receives the Unremarkable family standing. The character's family can be from any background; it simply doesn't have any effect on game statistics.

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Table: Family Standing

d20	Family Standing Skill	Station
1	Impoverished Knowledge (local)	-4
2	Savage Survival	-2
3	Slave Profession (any)	-2
4	Mamluk Khopesh familiarity ¹	-1
5-6	Agrarian Handle Animal	+0
7-8	Maritime Swim	+0
9-13	Nomadic Survival	+0
--	Unremarkable None	+0
14-15	Craftsman Craft (any one)	+1
16-17	Mercantile Appraise	+1
18	Academic Knowledge (history)	+1
19	Religious Knowledge (religion)	+2
20	Courtly Knowledge (nobility)	+3

¹ The character considers the khopesh sword to be a martial weapon, not exotic.

Use of Station

Station determines a kind of social pecking order. Its greatest use is in simple role-playing situations. Characters of lower station are expected to greet those of higher station first, and to treat them with deference. To do otherwise is a great insult; certainly no favors will be won while ignoring the protocol of station. A poor merchant of Station +2 defers to a successful corsair of Station +5, even though most merchants are of higher station than the corsair, and would not be under the same requirements.

Station also comes into play when making an opposed Diplomacy checks; a character can substitute her Station score for her Charisma bonus, assuming the Station score is higher. For example, a Rawun with 6 ranks Diplomacy, +2 Charisma bonus, and +7 Station would make an opposed Diplomacy check with a +13 modifier.

Characters with Station scores of +5 or higher gain a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks to influence NPC reactions. This synergy bonus increases by +1 for every additional 5 points of Station: +3 synergy bonus at Station +10, +4 synergy bonus at Station +15, +5 synergy bonus at Station +20, and +6 synergy bonus at Station +25.

As noted earlier, station is essentially a role-playing tool. It is of little use in combat, against monsters, or against bandits and others who attack first and talk later – they have no interest in etiquette. The same is true of genies. To most of them, a mortal is mortal, although many noble genies do show a higher regard for mortals of significant station. Station also means little to intelligent creatures who do not interact with normal society, such as a ghul. Furthermore, station is not the only

factor that defines a person; to most Zakharans, station is ultimately less important than ability, and ability is ultimately less important than honor.

Temporarily Improving Your Station

A character can temporarily boost her station by spending money. This money has to be spent in big, ostentatious parades, grand parties, hiring porters and criers, showering the masses with coins and gifts. Every 100 g.p. spent in such a manner grants a +1 bonus to station, to a maximum of +5. This temporary increase in station lasts for one week. If you can't get in to see the caliph with your normal station score, this might be the next thing to try.

Masking One's Station

Station is as much a part of men and women as their skin, their hair, and their souls. It is revealed by their choice in clothing, their gestures, their walk, their accent, and their word-choice. A hundred small and subtle things declare a person's station to the world, and all Zakharans seem to have an innate ability to sense them.

In game play, however, this doesn't mean that characters cannot mask their station and pretend to be better (or worse) than they truly are. In the legends of Zakhara there are tales of beggars who work their way into the palaces of great caliphs by pretending to be foreign princes, and stories of kings who disguise themselves as commoners to find out what their subjects truly think of them.

Concealing one's station consists of using the Disguise skill, with a negative modifier equal to the difference in station scores between your true station and that which you are attempting to pass as.

Table: Typical Station Scores for NPCs

Profession	Station Score
Beggar	-2
Poor merchant	+2
Modest merchant	+5
Wealthy merchant	+10
Common tribesman	+2
Tribal sheikh	+12
Village elder	+6
City bureaucrat	+7
Military officer	+8
Village priest	+6
Caliph of a city	+16
Imam of mosque	+14
Member of court	+13
The Grand Caliph	+23

The Evil Eye

Pride and success can be dangerous in the Land of Fate, especially for a character who boasts aloud. When Zakharans receive a complement, they often protest and belittle their skills, lest a jealous genie overhear and bedevil them with the evil eye.

The evil eye is the ability to bring misfortune upon another - from an annoyance to a tragedy - with no more than a glance. Nearly all genies are thought to have this power. They need not stand before a character to use it, but can spy upon him or her from afar.

In game terms, the evil eye is not magical per se, though magic can sometimes invoke or prevent it. Rather the evil eye is a common, ordinary part of life in a world where genies run rampant and elemental spirits continually seek to cause trouble.

If a character is praised and fails to respond with humility and modesty, they must make a Will saving throw against a DC of 15. A character who fails has made a genie jealous, and becomes afflicted with the evil eye.

Neither Fate nor fortune can be said to smile upon characters afflicted with the evil eye. They become hapless and unlucky. All saving throws suffer a -2 penalty as do all skill checks. The character's effective station drops by 2. Strangers can sense that something is wrong with the sufferers, but rather than sympathy, they feel distrust. Local governments view anyone afflicted with the evil eye as shifty; a sufferer's business may be audited for fraud. Local clergymen view sufferers as potentially dangerous, and may search their belongings or even refuse to offer hospitality.

A character afflicted with the evil eye can only be cured by a *remove curse*, *break enchantment*, or *atonement* spell, or by the rawun class ability to remove the effects of the evil eye. The *avert evil eye* spell (see below) can protect a character from this plight (even a pompous braggart), but the spell is of no help after the fact.

Spells Related to the Evil Eye

Attract Evil Eye

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 1, Universal Province 1
 Components: V, S, M
 Casting Time: 1 standard action
 Range: Touch
 Target: One creature touched
 Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates
 Spell Resistance: Yes

The target is afflicted with the evil eye, regardless of her own modesty and humility. Characters protected by an *avert evil eye* spell are immune to the effects of *attract evil eye*.

Material component: A single black bead made of glass.

Avert Evil Eye

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 1, Universal Province 1
 Components: V, S
 Casting Time: 1 standard action
 Range: Touch
 Target: A single blue bead made of glass.
 Duration: 1 day/level
 Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
 Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This spell is cast upon a glass bead. Thereafter, whoever wears the bead prominently on her outer layer of clothing will be protected from being afflicted with the evil eye, including the rawun's ability to call the evil eye and the *attract evil eye* spell. Alternately, the bead may be powdered and added to a drink; whoever consumes the entire drink will be protected for the duration of the spell.

The *avert evil eye* spell offers no relief for those already suffering from the evil eye; this is only a preventative measure, not a cure.

Call Upon Fate

There is no Fate but the Fate which we are given.

--Zakharan Proverb

In Zakhara, Fate is the force which guides and shapes the lives of everyone, and all Zakharans know Her power. Is She a god? The god of gods? Powerful ruler of the genies? Or simply a pervasive force beyond true comprehension?

The answers are for the viziers and priests to debate; for others, it matters not who Fate is, but what She does. She is the weaver of Time, supplying threads of the future and mixing them with threads of the past. She graciously provides the basis for all victories, and she is the justification for all defeats. She does not excuse individuals who do not do their best, however; their failure is in their own hands as well as the hand of Fate. Win or lose, She is always there, the supreme mediator and guardian of the future.

Dehydration, blinding storms, sandslides that bury people alive - these are but a few of the perils faced by characters in Fate's

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burning land. She is not without mercy, however. Individuals who find themselves in dire and deadly straits can call upon Faith for aid. She may smile upon those who call Her, but She may also turn Her hand against them. Most Zakharans try to avoid placing themselves in need of such divine intervention.

How to Call Upon Fate

To call upon Fate, you must be in a position where success or even survival is doubtful. For example, a character without a weapon, surrounded by a pride of hungry panthers, would be in a sufficiently desperate situation. So would someone trapped in a back alley by an angry contingent of the sultan's guard. So, too, would a character trapped in a well, into which a flame mage is about to cast a fireball; or a character falling from a flying carpet a hundred feet above the ground.

A character can call upon Fate once per game session. Calling upon Fate requires a Wisdom check against a DC of 10; ordered priests receive a +4 bonus on this check. On a roll of 1, Fate's hand turns against the caller, who is instantly afflicted with the evil eye. On a successful Wisdom check, the character can apply one of the following effects:

Add to a Roll: You can call upon Fate to improve the results of a d20 roll by adding the result of a 1d6 roll to the result. You can declare that you are calling upon Fate after the d20 roll is made, but only before the DM reveals the result of that roll. You can't call upon Fate to alter the result off a d20 roll when you are taking 10 or taking 20.

Depending on your character level, you might be able to roll more than one d6 when calling upon Fate. If so, choose the highest d6 roll and disregard the other rolls.

Character Level	Fate Dice Rolled
1st - 7th	1d6
8th - 14th	2d6
15th - 20th	3d6

Boost Defense: You can call upon Fate when fighting defensively. This gives you double the normal benefits for fighting defensively for the entire round (+4 dodge bonus to AC; +6 if you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble).

Emulate Feat: You can call upon Fate to gain the benefit of a feat that you don't have. You must meet the prerequisites of the feat. You gain the benefit until the beginning of your next turn.

Instant Healing: You can call upon Fate to instantly be healed of one point of damage per character level. This will also stabilize any character who is dying.

Resist Damage: You can call upon Fate to gain damage resistance equal to your character level, or resistance to any

one energy type equal to your character level. This lasts for one minute or until you take damage from any source, including damage which is blocked by this damage or energy resistance.

Resist Magic: You can call upon Fate to gain spell resistance equal to your character level. This lasts for one round, or until you successfully resist a spell.

The Art of Weapon Prowess

Many characters in Zakhara are skilled in putting on impressive displays of weapon prowess without fighting at all - swords whooshing in a blur, daggers flashing, arrows splitting melons in two. This is normally resolved as an Intimidate check, if facing opponents in combat. Otherwise, this is a Perform (acting) check if the purpose is simply to entertain. The following feats allow a character to perfect her skills at weapon prowess, even to the point where opponents can be stunned by her display.

NEW FEATS

Weapon Prowess [General]

Choose one type of weapon for which you have already selected the Weapon Focus feat. You can demoralize an opponent in combat by demonstrating your martial prowess with that weapon.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon.

Benefit: You can make an Intimidate check to demoralize your opponent as a move-equivalent action whenever you wield your chosen weapon.

Special: You gain a +1 circumstance bonus on your Intimidate checks for each of the following feats you possess that applies to the selected weapon: Combat Expertise, Greater Weapon Focus, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Greater Weapon Specialization, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Defense, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Specialization, and Whirlwind Attack. These same bonuses may also be added to Perform (acting) checks when entertaining with displays of weapon prowess as well.

You can gain Display Weapon Prowess multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

A fighter may select Display Weapon Prowess as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Normal: Intimidating an opponent in combat is a standard action.

Improved Weapon Prowess [General]

Choose one type of weapon for which you have already selected the Display Weapon Prowess feat. You can daze an opponent in combat by demonstrating your martial prowess with that weapon.

Prerequisites: Display Weapon Prowess with selected weapon, Greater Weapon Focus with selected weapon.

Benefit: If you succeed in an Intimidate check to demoralize your opponent, that opponent is dazed (and shaken) for one round.

Special: You can gain Improved Weapon Prowess multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

A fighter may select Improved Weapon Prowess as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Normal: A demoralized opponent is shaken for one round.

Greater Weapon Prowess [General]

Choose one type of weapon for which you have already selected the Improved Weapon Prowess feat. You can stun an opponent in combat by demonstrating your martial prowess with that weapon.

Prerequisites: Improved Weapon Prowess with selected weapon, Greater Weapon Focus with selected weapon, fighter level 12th.

Benefit: If you succeed in an Intimidate check to demoralize your opponent, that opponent is stunned (and shaken) for one round.

Special: You can gain Greater Weapon Prowess multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

A fighter may select Greater Weapon Prowess as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Normal: A demoralized opponent is shaken for one round.