there are names here

more powerful
than our own

a worldbuilding tool
by caro asercion

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a sister game to i'm sorry did you say street magic

the following tables are filled with **true names** for you to invoke while worldbuilding —
aspects of a person or place that you may pull upon for inspiration. you may draw upon them
literally, but they may also be metaphorical or evocative, as symbolic abstractions of your
subject rather than literal physical descriptions.

proposed method of play
you will need:
- three hard copy printouts of the table sheets. each one should be unique.
- three six-sided dice

when you need to invoke a character, an object, or a location, set up your printouts of the
sheets: you should have six grids of 6x6 **true name** aspects. roll 3d6 onto these sheets. the
first die represents the grid you you are pulling from, and the other two represent the row
and column of that grid: find the cell that corresponds to that grid. this is the primary aspect
of this person or place's **true name**.

examine where the three dice have landed, and the **true name** aspects that they are sitting
on top of: pick one or two of these to be satellite aspects of the person or place's **true name**. if
a die rolls off the sheets or lands in the gutters in between cells, roll it again, or pick and
choose an aspect that you like, or make something up completely!

optional variants:
- change the number of sheets you are invoking **true names** from. instead of using
  three sheets, only use one; roll 2d6, but flip a coin to determine whether you are
  pulling from the upper grid or the lower grid. or use four sheets, and roll 2d6 + 1d8.
- instead of rolling from three City Classic sheets, replace one (or more than one) with
  one of the other sheets to give your world a more genre-driven tone. or fill the
  included blank sheet up with your own **true name** aspects and incorporate that into
  your setting.

CITY CLASSIC 01

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	weeds in the sidewalk cracks	sunset-stained skyline	a thin layer of grime	the abandoned railroad tracks	shelves of aged whiskey	distant foghorns
2	forgotten wharf	crows perched on the roof	flocks of well-intentioned tourists	festival music	children playing in the streets	upturned collars
3	ivy crawling up the bricks	cigarette smoke	umbrellas pointed skyward	cobblestone pavement	steam rising from sidewalk grates	smoke overhead
4	a solitary, winding canal	chalk graffiti	the scent of freshly-caught fish	stillness and solitude	dew on the flowers	the weight of history
5	muddled thoughts	mirror-glass windows	anonymous subway turnstiles	steeple towers against the grey clouds	a hole in the wall	strings of bunting and colorful pennants
6	a newspaper discarded underfoot	tea at the local cafe	ancient bridge in disrepair	the tolling of a bell	mornings on the pier	raucous jazz

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	shouts of the dockyard	unstill reflections	symphony of the commute	elders feeding birds	moonless evening	last call at the bar
2	end of the bus line	fountain that freezes over	firebrand intellectuals, incendiary thought	autumn wind	haze and neon lights	hot bread, fresh from the oven
3	funicular railway	a single streetlamp flickering	empty windowpane	overpriced restaurants	ships in the harbor	threats masked as flattery
4	an undisclosed promise	burnt coffee	rainbow pennants on every corner	scooter kids	that thieving cat	wrought-iron fence
5	a glass of wine, slightly chilled	chimney steam billowing like clouds	ruffian guffaws	jackhammer arguments	overnight fog	patch of untouched grass
6	community garden space	smattering of rain	niche boutiques, craft stores	the roaring subway	wooden bench stripped of paint	the sound of sirens

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CITY CLASSIC 02

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	band-aid cuts and scrapes	bakery bustle	hard-hitting journalism	empty warehouses under renovation	summer swelter	ankle-high rubber gumboots
2	ducks in the pond	skateboard courier	suits and their briefcases	thumbing through smart phones	perpetual scaffolding	stolen glances
3	vibrant colors, bold and clashing	fast food with fast friends	terracotta rooftops	glass whisper of windchimes	mural-painted walls	half-price bookstore bargains
4	rusted dumpster	motes of dust in sunlit windowpanes	bodega delight	warm glow of strung lanterns	pigeons on the telephone wires	orchestral concert hall
5	patio deck chairs	fruitful chatter at the produce stand	saxophone solo	breath of fresh air	quicksilver hospitality	rush hour traffic
6	what could have been	the sharpest bargain in town	flowerpots on the fire escapes	late nights, early romances	counterpoint electric hum	wet asphalt underfoot

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	corduroy and cardigans	amphitheater in a public grove	tiger ferocity	echo of a new age	glimmering string lights	grocery store domesticity
2	overcrowded shopping center	smooth curves—no angles to speak of	swilling cocktails	blinding-frozen winter sunlight	poker chips on the table	scattered patches of dirt
3	bicycle tire	fresh spices	strolling alongside the riverbank	abstract stone sculpture	rooftop sorties amidst rows of garden boxes	auto shop chatter between repairs
4	love under the halogen lamps	students swarming the street	crowded theatre-houses	no sound except the turn of pages	dog park collisions	idle food truck conversation
5	ascending staircases by the dozens	ringing of the trolley bell	birdsong in the brickwork	parking lot joy	chainlink fence hiding a shortcut	chime as the hour hand strikes
6	concrete mixers	the brightest	classical music on the record player	dark coats and headphones plugged in	tang of metal on your tongue	billboard displays

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CITY CLASSIC 03

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	tight grip on your satchel	disinterested commuters	jukebox brawl	a language you don't understand but long to know	towering crane	pool halls in the late afternoon
2	corporate, brand name coffee chains	hot off the presses	clotheslined laundry, left to dry	celebration in the street	row of flagpoles spans the green	blackboard history, whiteboard efficacy
3	flash of the photographer's camera	rust	empty bottle	rollerblades on concrete	jogging the streets, jogging memories	clocking out with extra overtime
4	roar of airplanes overhead	friday evening at the discothèque	standing on the precipice of fate and future	tiny faces in apartment windows	bowling alleys	photocopy architecture
5	metallic silver, spike-studded earrings	beat-up sneakers	rolling lucky dice	shadow in the back alley	soft spring's light	whistling a familiar tune
6	proud artists hawking their wares	cars trapped in gridlock purgatory	whine of the teakettle	flyers for an underground concert	wireframe building grid	paper cranes suspended indoors

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	clogged sink	spraypaint and skateboards	clinical hand soap	silicon startup	railway terminal, tickets at the ready	farmers' market free samples
2	thick-rimmed glasses	chess in the park	the wind singing its lilting, musical song	tallest point in a house of worship	monument of memory	cathode ray televisions in the display window
3	a well-deserved nap	lightning in a bottle	shave and a haircut	path lined with shady trees	worn stone steps	the best pizza in a ten-block radius
4	succulent on showcase	snow turned to sludge, dusty-grey	motorcycle turn signals	last slice of grandma's pie	skipping stones on the bridge over the river	overflowing bookshelves
5	called bluff on a called shot	street performer in startling colors	a boundless sense of possibility	broken-in sofa, smelling of home	holding hands discreetly	suspenders and a nice bowtie
6	smoothie punchcard in the back of your wallet	thrift shop discount	unspoken grief that cuts to the bone	hi-fi stereo	day-before-deadline tax returns	what you don't know

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