BACK

1. **Alignment Icon (+, -, =, ?):**
Used for deciding on unknown (?) alignments.
2. **Weather Icon:**
Used by the Storyteller for random weather events in any game.
3. **Number (1-10):**
Used in place of a d10.
4. **Category Icon:**
The center watermark has the same category as the front for easy sorting.
5. **Land Type Icon:**
Used by the Storyteller for random land elements in any game.

BIRTHMARK

You have a distinguishing feature.

1. Weapon
2. Animal
3. Leaf or Flower
4. Geometric Shape
5. Bone or Skull
6. Dragon
7. Large red stain
8. Letter or Symbol
9. Spider or Web
10. Heart

4. Snow Flurries
5.
6. Grassland

ANATOMY OF A CARD

FRONT

1. **Title:**
The main purpose of the card. Usable on it's own, if desired.
2. **Alignment Icon (+, -, =, ?):**
Indicates how the card is likely to have affected the character.
3. **Category Icon:**
One of eight (Benefit, Change, Drive, Life, Mystery, Trouble, Mystical, Technical).
4. **Flavor Text:**
A description explaining how the card might affect the character.
5. **Weather Type:**
Explains the weather icon on the back.
6. **Land Type:**
Explains the land icon on the back.
7. **Suggestion Chart (optional):**
This provides ten ideas for more specific details.

HOW TO USE
BETTER BACKSTORIES

1. **BETTER BACKSTORIES** is a genre-neutral system for generating life histories for any kind of fictional character. It can be used for short stories, poems, songs, or role-playing characters. The cards can also be used to provide random weather, land forms, and personalities to spice up any story.

2. After shuffling the cards, play a few face-up on a flat surface. You're welcome to use as many cards as you like. Here are some recommendations:

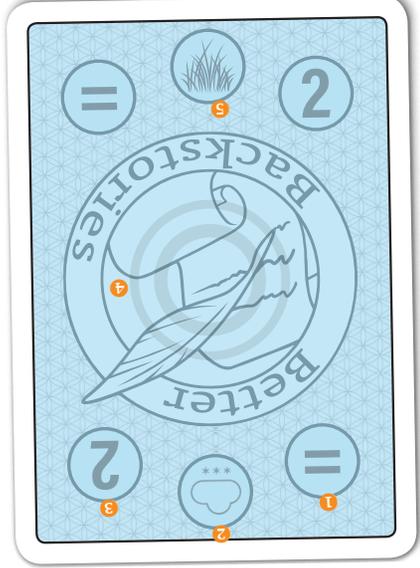|	
1 card:	Random townsfolk
3 cards:	Recurring character
5 cards:	Beginning hero
8+ cards:	Experienced hero

3. The cards can be used all together or in smaller groups. For example, if there is no advanced technology in your story, take out the Technical cards. Feel free to customize your deck by removing cards you don't want to encounter.

4. The cards are meant to be used for inspiration and brainstorming.
   - You can use the Title alone to decide how it relates to your character's backstory.
   - Flavor Text provides some additional insight into the possibilities of the card.
   - Suggestion Charts provide even more options. You can choose one you like, roll a 10-sided dice, or play another card face down and use the number on the back.

5. For gamers, it is recommended you use the cards with your game master so they can help you incorporate your backstory into their plot lines.

6. Alignments indicate how this card most likely affected the character. It may be positive (+), negative (-), neutral (=), or random (?). For random alignments, you can pick one, or play another card face down and use the alignment on the back. Alignments are only suggestions, so you can ignore them if you like.

7. All cards played are optional and can be discarded and replaced.

8. While you're writing or game mastering, keep the cards nearby to generate quirks and attitudes for new characters.
   - You decide for the hero to meet an old merchant on the road. Playing one face-up card reveals he is in debt to a sea captain (Patron), and one face-down card indicates he is dismissive of the characters (- Alignment).

9. Also use the cards for random weather patterns, land features or plot points. Here are a few examples:
   - The party exits a cave system, and a face-down card suggests it is snowing.
   - The hero comes over a hill, and a face-down card suggests a lake in the distance.
   - The writer is stuck, so they play a face-up card and find a 'Legacy' that must be fulfilled.
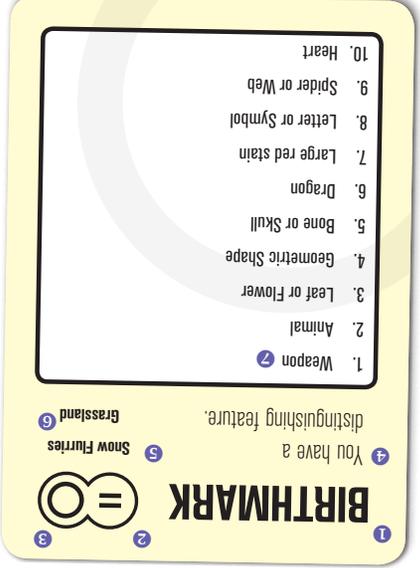

BETTER BACKSTORIES
was designed by James 'Jay' Stilipec, Tim Mazurek, and Blazbaros. It was borne out of a love of developing detailed life histories for role-playing characters. Without the help of Kickstarter and 1357 backers, it never would have come to life. Thank you for your support, your trust, and most of all, your money.