

SILVER  
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GAMES

**#1**

**June 2004**

LEGENDS WALK!



**CLAY AND BLOOD**

A

*Water and Clay*

Sources from ancient Sumer and Babylon

*Sun and Blood*

Aztec and Maya Sources

*Alternate Settings*

Other ways to play Legends Walk

# CONTENTS

## NEW KEY POWERS 3

## MESOPOTAMIA 5

### Greater Gods

An 7, Enki 8, Enlil 9, Inanna 9, Marduk 10, Nanna 11, Utu 12, Tiamat 13

### Lesser Gods

Ishkur 14, Ereshkigal 14, Nergal 15, Ninurta 16

### Heroes

Gilgamesh 17, Enkidu 18

### Monsters

Anzu 18, Arallu demons 19, Azag 19, Shedû/Lamassu 20

## MESOAMERICA 21

### Gods

Coatlicue 22, Ek Chuah 23, Huitzilopochtli 24, Mictlantecuhtli 25, Quetzalcoatl 25, Tezcatlipoca 26, Tlaloc 28, Xipe Totec 29, Xiuhtecuhtli 29, Xochipilli/Xochiquetzal 30

### Monsters

Tlaltecuhltli 31

## ALTERNATE SETTINGS 33

Welcome to the first supplement for *Legends Walk*!

We've concentrated on giving you extra crunch for your games. For the most part that means extra power programmes: from Mesopotamia, the ancient civilisations of Sumer and Babylon in the area of modern Iraq; and Mesoamerica, the more recent but no less strange cultures of the Aztec and Maya in central America.

There are also some ideas for different eras and flavours of setting you could use with the game.

If you have ideas for things you'd like to see in future supplements, do let us know through the website at [www.legendswalk.co.uk](http://www.legendswalk.co.uk).

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# NEW KEY POWERS

In the Source programmes, those powers listed here are marked with \*\* to distinguish them from the \* that refers to the Key Powers section in the main rulebook.

## All-Knowing

This Switch can be used once per scene. The character meditates for a Full action, drawing on universal knowledge, and can ask the GM one question which must be answered “yes”, “no” or “maybe” (the latter is used for occasions when it’s impossible to give a definitive reply within the terms of the question).

The GM can opt to make more detailed information available, perhaps in return for a Destiny Point - but obviously they need to make sure the plot isn’t short-circuited, so the availability of this option will be variable.

The GM might wish to make this available for the Odin programme in the rulebook - perhaps associated with a raven.

## Alter Properties

This is a powerful Add, giving very wide scope for rewriting reality. It can alter the properties of an object or being - making metal railings brittle, making fire burn without heat, rendering explosives inert, making a weak person strong or a fierce animal docile, or even conferring new abilities. It doesn’t change the target’s shape or transform it into a different substance. (The railings, for instance, would still be iron - just weird iron.) The balance to this power is that its effects only last a short while before ordinary reality reasserts itself.

The roll is Add + Presence, BD 2, modified for range, number of targets, etc as usual. The base level works on a Small (2) target, and extra Size levels give Disadvantages. The first success gives 1 Intensity for 1 round; extra successes can be spent for extra intensity or extra rounds. (In many cases you won’t need to apply both.) A single level of intensity will add or subtract a property from a neutral position, though multiple levels may be needed to quantify the change if there’s resistance to overcome. To turn a property into its opposite takes 2 intensity levels. For instance, the GM could rule that a road surface is known for being hard

and unyielding, so a character would need 2 intensity to make it a nice cushion for a fall.

General restrictions:

- This power can only be opposed by Meta Resistance (or specific resistance powers).
- An imbued object or creature gets an automatic level of Meta Resistance, and the Gate Modifiers of its Source programme.
- You can’t use it on yourself.
- You can only make one property change at a time, and the GM has final decision on what constitutes a property.
- You can confer attribute levels into the Meta range, skill levels, and the equivalents of some passive powers (like Immunity), but you can’t give someone active powers like *Control Fire*. This is a bit tricky, but it’s basically about drawing a line between properties of the target’s being and godlike powers they can wield.
- To affect the functioning of a technological item, you must first make an “understanding technology” roll at appropriate difficulty.

At Add level 1 you can only affect inanimate objects. At level 2 you can affect physical properties of living creatures. At level 3 you can affect mental properties, like giving someone the skill of a particular profession.

## Control Disease

This is an Add like the other “Control” powers.

**To cause a disease or ailment** decide what effect you wish to produce. The basic roll is for a minor inconvenience, cast at close quarters. Extra distance levels of range or effect levels (see table below) bring Disadvantages. The effect is opposed by Physical Resistance and lasts [remaining successes] duration levels. Medical help can only tackle the symptoms, not effect a cure. Once the duration expires the subject starts recovering normally - the time this takes depends on what the effect was. The GM should determine the effects, like Disadvantages for physical activity or in social situations. Suggested combat penalties are given.

- 0 inconvenient or embarrassing conditions such as itching, wind or an unsightly boil
- 1 mildly painful and/or distracting conditions like cramp, an ulcer or a cold (-2 Initiative)
- 2 debilitating and/or painful conditions (-2 Initiative, Dis to all activity)
- 3 incapacitating conditions posing a real threat to the character's health, meriting bed rest and medical attention (-5 Initiative, 2 Dis to all activity)
- 4 life-threatening conditions - medical attention required (no action possible)

The power can be used on several targets at once using the Multiple Opponents Disadvantages, as long as all of them are the same kind of creature and all are afflicted with the same condition. To make the disease contagious so that it will pass from the subject to others gives an extra Disadvantage on the power roll, but anyone who catches it this way gets a normal version which can be treated medically.

**To cure a disease** with the power make a roll with the same Disadvantages from the table above. One success brings temporary relief; more brings a cure.

## Creation

This Add gives you the power to create items out of thin air. Level 1 allows inanimate objects, level 2 allows simple living things like plants and insects, and level 3 allows higher animals including humans (who start with a childlike mentality). Remember the archaic basis of the powers - the Source has no knowledge of microbiology, for instance, so you can't throw a flu virus at someone.

It takes a Full action and the basic roll is Add + Ingenuity, BD 2 modified by the size of the item. The base is Small (2), and further size levels bring Disadvantages. The default is to make it in your hand or at arm's reach - to make it further away brings distance level Disadvantages. The GM might also give a Dis for unusual complexity.

The creations have the properties of a normal thing of their type but are ephemeral, lasting a scene and then dissipating. However, the character can make one permanent by embedding some of their own life force when they create it, which costs a physical Injury.

# MESOPOTAMIA

*Note: the section on Iraq in the main rulebook was written before that country was invaded by the USA, UK and others. In the timeline presented there the Iraq War never happened - but in your own games you might be experimenting with variant settings where it does, such as one closely tied to present-day reality. In either case, remember to have a degree of sensitivity about the human costs of those events, as you would for any war or disaster. Let us hope the cradle of civilisation can know peace and prosperity again.*

These are the gods of the ancient Sumerian and Akkadian people of Mesopotamia - roughly the area covered by modern-day Iraq. They lived around and between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, draining from what is now eastern Turkey down into the Persian Gulf (Mesopotamia means "between the rivers"). Records of Sumer were only discovered by archaeologists in the mid-1800s, and part of the strange character of the mythology is due to missing or damaged records.

This area was perhaps the first in the world where humans made the transition to settled agriculture. The rivers deposited vast amounts of fertile silt in the extensive marshes, but large-scale farming meant overcoming floods, hot sun and low rainfall by developing irrigation and drainage systems, and organising that required government. Around 3500 BCE the Sumerians developed some of the world's first cities, with most of the population living behind their walls, and a system of writing. In 2330 BCE Sargon united the city-states of Sumer in the south and Akkad in the north. There followed cycles of rule by Assyria, Babylon, invading Hittites from present-day Turkey, and fractured city-states. At its greatest extent the empire ruled the Middle East from Egypt to the Persian Gulf. This chapter of history closed when the Persians took Babylon in 539 BCE.

What we can piece together about their mythology shows that the different peoples borrowed from each other, often elevating their own local god. The character of the myths shows their preoccupation with the land and its working. The dealings of the gods are about the conflict between fresh and salt water, floods and storms, and the fertility of animals and, indeed, people. They're about the establishment of a physical and social order, with humans gaining a measure of control over their environment by borrowing the authority of the forces of nature. The exploits of Sumerian

heroes form the world's oldest known literature, dating from around 2100 BCE. The conflict between cities (a relatively new way of life) and wilderness is a recurring theme. Part human, part animal figures are common, suggesting that the relationship between people and nature was an important issue.

## Belief

The gods were seen as human-like, but immortal, possessed of great powers, and invisible to human eyes. Each was in charge of one or more aspects of the world, from the Sun to the pick-axe. Each city recognised one god as its ruler and protector (though there might be many temples to other gods as well). A large staff served them: priests, soothsayers, magicians, musicians and even temple courtesans. Sacrifices of food, drink and incense were offered daily.

The documents suggest that the people had strong moral beliefs we would recognise today, valuing principles like justice, compassion, wisdom, honesty and courage. Immoral acts were transgressions against the divine order, and people were punished by the gods for their wrongdoings. Their only recourse was to lament loudly enough to persuade a local god to intervene on their behalf.

## Creation

For the Babylonians creation began with Apsu, an abyss filled with fresh water on which floated the plateau of the earth, and Tiamat, primeval chaos, the sea which surrounded the earth. From them (via two other pairs of gods who do little of interest) descended the other gods, the Igigi who lived in the sky and the Anunnaki who lived on the earth and in the underworld. The new gods made such a noise that Apsu planned to destroy them, but the god Ea found out and killed him. This angered Tiamat, who gathered an army of rebel gods and monsters to fight the gods. None had the courage to face her until Marduk (tutelary god of Babylon) came forward. The other gods gave him supreme authority and lent him their powers. He killed Tiamat and cut the body into pieces to form the world. Her followers were thrown into the underworld. Marduk ordered the universe and gave dominion of the sky, earth and waters to Anu, Ellil and Ea respectively.



# THE GREATER GODS

There was a definite hierarchy among the gods. Of the first order were An, Enlil, Enki, and the earth-mother Ninhursag (not given a programme as so little is known about her). "The Seven Who Decreed Fate" included these along with Nanna, Utu and Inanna. There were also hundreds of lesser gods - a few important ones are listed here.

## An

(Babylonian Anu; "above" or "heaven".) In the beginning he carried off heaven while his son Enlil carried off earth. His wife was Ki/Ninhursag. He was the god of the sky, and the supreme god, though he passed his power and responsibility to Enlil and remained in the uppermost heavens, rarely concerning himself with earthly affairs. He was found seated on his throne or walking in the portion of the sky reserved for him.

What he commanded became reality (he could be seen as the original source of the *me*). The other gods came to him with their complaints, and he summoned all important cases to appear before him. An combined power, justice and sovereignty; the symbols of royalty appeared before his throne and he was a god of monarchs more than the common people. The stars were his soldiers, created to destroy the wicked.

### Aegis

- Sky (Adv while airborne; Dis underground)

### Required Powers

- Boost: Presence (M3)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Wisdom (+1)
- Boost: Endurance (+1)
- Skill: Leadership
- Switch: Air Walking (you can walk - or run, but that's undignified - in empty air as if it was a solid surface; going up or down is like using stairs or a shallow slope; if you lose consciousness you fall gently to the ground)
- Switch: Immovable (acts as Immunity, ie force used to pull, push, throw, blow or slam is reduced by 10 - turned on or off at will as a Free action, usually off as it plays havoc with cars, buses, lifts, etc)

- Switch: Immune to Airlessness (you no longer need to breathe and can survive in a vacuum)
- Switch: Immunity to Alteration\* (10 "armour" against attempts to transform your body - especially for effects requiring Meta Resistance)
- Switch: Immunity to Cold\*
- Switch: Internal Nourishment (you no longer need to eat, drink or excrete)
- Switch: Sense Cosmic Importance (with an Awareness roll you can feel the weight of destiny attached to a person, thing or event - gauge its importance to future events, using successes as a guide to the clarity of impression - this might include measuring Destiny Points)
- Add: Alter Properties\*\* (3)
- Add: Call the Star-Soldiers (3) (summons warriors to fight for a brief period - they appear as athletic men with faintly glowing white eyes and ancient gear and weapons, usually swords and spears - summoning is Add + Presence, BD 2, physical Hurt if successful as some of your life force is needed to give them substance - first success brings one warrior for one round, further successes can be spent for an extra warrior, maximum of 7 at once, or an extra duration level - the warriors are Horde creatures with Fighting Skill 2, Talented Agility, Presence and Awareness but no Pool Points, and Immunity to Light and Night Vision - Initiative 7, attack 5/2, damage thresholds 2/4/-, "down" or expiry of duration causes them to fade away - the warriors do not speak unless directly addressed by the summoner - they are disciplined, try to protect innocent bystanders and will obey the summoner instantly)
- Add: Control Weather\* (Wind) (1)

### Disadvantages

- Aloofness - petty human affairs do not concern you, only those of large-scale importance (GM might call for an Awareness or Wisdom roll for empathy if the player wants to get involved in something mundane)
- Ground Repulsion (optional, tied to Air Walking - your feet are always a hand's-breadth above the ground - you can spend a Presence Point to overcome this for a scene)
- White Eyes (your eyes are featureless white orbs)

# Enki

(Sumerian Enki, “Lord of the Earth”; Babylonian Ea, possibly “House of the Water”). The god of water and wisdom, learned in crafts and magic, with great creative powers. His mother was Nammu, the primeval sea; his father was An. His domain was the Apsu (the freshwater ocean on which the earth floated) - in other words the springs, rivers and lakes (in the Babylonian myths he killed the god Apsu with the aid of a sleep spell to gain it). As access to fresh water and regulation of floods were the keys to agriculture in the area it's easy to see Enki's importance. He seems to be the most active of the gods, playing an important part in many stories. He was represented as a goat with a fish's tail, a fish-man hybrid or a man with waves springing from his shoulders.

In the Sumerian myths Enki ordered the world, receiving the *me* from Enlil and using his wisdom to assign everything its role. He blessed cities with prosperity, filled rivers, turned hills into fields and established crafts, appointing a god to supervise each domain. When the gods complained about having to dig irrigation ditches he directed Nammu and Ninhursag to create humans from clay to take on the menial tasks. The humans multiplied till their noise annoyed Enlil. He made three attempts to reduce the population - through plague, drought and famine. Each time Enki secretly told the humans how to save themselves. In the end Enlil ordered a great flood to wipe them out altogether, but Enki told a wise man called Atra-hasis or Utnapishti to build a great boat and gather pairs of every kind of living creature inside, thus saving earthly life. A Babylonian legend says that he appeared from the sea, instructed primitive people in handicrafts, farming, letters, laws, architecture and magic, and then returned.

When Inanna became trapped in the underworld, it was Enki who rescued her by sending two sexless beings (exempt from the laws of the underworld) to negotiate for her release and give her the Food and Water of Life. In another story Inanna complained that she had been given too little power by his decrees, which he refuted. In one version she got him drunk and he granted her 94 more *me* - she just managed to get back to her city of Erech before he could get them back.

## Aegis

- Water (Adv in, on or beside a body of water; Dis in dry conditions, eg desert, hot summer day, burning building)

## Required Powers

- Add: Control Water (2)\* (includes summoning jets of water to attack a foe, Weak Blunt Blast, automatically causes Motion Force based on the Add level)

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Wisdom (M2)
- Boost: Ingenuity (M2)
- Switch: Master of Crafts (acts as a cluster of Skills, giving an Advantage for any craftwork such as forging, sculpting or carving)
- Switch: Master of Lore (acts as a cluster of Skills, giving an Advantage for any archaic knowledge)
- Switch: Underwater Survival (lets you breathe, and resist the pressure of the depths)
- Add: Alter Properties\*\* (2)
- Add: Creation\*\* (1)
- Add: Magic\* (1)

## Disadvantages

- Patron of Humanity (if significant numbers of people are in danger, you have to make a Presence roll, BD 2 if you want to resist doing something about it)
- Scales (taken once, patches of scales like those of a fish appear on your body; taken twice, you're completely covered by scales)
- Water Signs (taken once, your body oozes water under emotional stress; taken twice, it does it all the time)



# Enlil

(Babylonian Ellil; “lord of the wind”). The son of An and Ki, he was the god of the air, who in the early days separated earth from heaven. He took on most of An’s powers and became king and father of the gods. He was responsible for the dawn, the growth of plants, the prosperity of cities and the invention of agricultural tools. Enlil’s weapons were hurricanes and floods. He symbolised the forces of nature. Earthly kings acted under his authority. His strength and endurance brought the titles “Wild Ox” and “Great Mountain”.

Enlil assembled the me in his temple, then gave them to Enki to guard and impart to the world. In Babylonian myth he held the Tablet of Destinies. It was stolen by the storm-bird Anzu, who sought ultimate power, but recovered by Ninurta.

Accused of raping the goddess Ninlil, Enlil was banished to the netherworld as punishment, but she followed him there and gave birth to the moon god Nanna. She also produced three other children who remained in the realm of the dead so that she, Enlil and Nanna could return.

Enlil was not always well-disposed toward humans. Irritated by their noise, he tried to reduce the population by plague, drought, famine, and finally a great flood, but each time they were saved by the advice of Enki.

## Aegis

- Air (Adv in high or open spaces outdoors; Dis in enclosed indoor spaces or underground)

## Required Powers

- Boost: Presence (M2)

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (M2)
- Boost: Endurance (M2)
- Skill: Leadership
- Add: Control Weather\* (wind, rain, flood) (2)

## Tablet of Destinies

- Add: Alter Properties\*\* (1)
- Switch: Blessing\*
- Switch: Curse\*

## Disadvantages

- Air Signs (taken once, breezes spring up around you when under emotional stress; taken twice, it happens all the time)
- Impatient (may need a Wisdom roll to tolerate challenges or obstacles)
- Short Temper (may need a Wisdom roll to tolerate provocation)

# Inanna

(Sumerian Inanna, probably “Lady of Heaven”; Babylonian Ishtar.) The most important goddess, with dominion over love and war. She was the daughter of the moon god Nanna, or of An. Inanna personified the planet Venus, the morning and evening star, and ruled over those times. She was headstrong, power-hungry, ruthless and seductive. In one aspect she stirred up quarrels, and was said to enjoy battle as if it were a game or dance. In another she promoted sexual love and fertility, and took many lovers herself (including, apparently, various animals) - but they often fared badly afterwards, and she could be cruel, though she was capable of treating her favourites kindly.

Inanna was often shown with a bow and quiver, sometimes with bright rays radiating from her back. Her symbol was the reed-bundle in Sumer and the eight-pointed star in Babylon, and she was associated with the lion. Prostitution formed part of her cult. The kings of the city-states took part in an annual ritual marriage to Inanna.

Inanna went to the underworld to try to seize power from her sister Ereshkigal. When the gatekeeper didn’t open up quickly enough she threatened to smash the gates and release the dead to outnumber the living. At each of the seven gates she had to remove one article of jewellery or clothing. When she finally arrived, Ereshkigal turned her into a corpse and hung her on a hook. On Earth, fertility and sexual desire ceased. Eventually Inanna’s maid persuaded Enki to organise a rescue. He created two beings who were sexless and therefore not subject to the laws of the underworld. They empathised with Ereshkigal’s suffering (it’s not clear what bothers her), and when offered a boon claimed Inanna’s corpse, which they revived with the Bread and Water of Life. (The Babylonian version is a bit different: Ishtar goes to the underworld to recover Tammuz; Ea sends a single eunuch with powerful magic words to bind Ereshkigal.) However, by underworld law she could only leave if someone

took her place, and a group of demons went back with her to fetch someone. When she saw her husband Dumuzi or Tammuz, a vegetation god, sitting on his throne in finery rather than mourning, he got nominated. His sister offered to spend half the year in the underworld so he could spend half the year in the world of life, giving rise to the changing seasons.

Inanna complained to Enki that she had been given too few *me*, but he disagreed and pointed out all the powers she did have, concluding, "You have the power to destroy what cannot be destroyed, and to set up what cannot be set up." In one version of this story she got him drunk and persuaded him to give her many more *me*, then fled to her own city before he could take them back.

She asked the hero Gilgamesh to be her lover, but he refused, pointing out that she had had many lovers before and they had fared badly. Furious, she persuaded An to send the great Bull of Heaven to attack Gilgamesh's kingdom.

### Aegis

- Passion (Adv around people experiencing strong emotions, like at a rock concert; Dis where there's little emotion, eg a science lab, monastery or library)

### Required Powers

- Add: Control Emotions\* (Love, Lust, Anger) (3)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Agility (+1)
- Boost: Presence (M1)
- Skill: Archery
- Skill: Intimidation
- Skill: Socialising
- Switch: Attractive Appearance
- Switch: Extra Aegis (an hour of the equivalent of positive Aegis at dusk and dawn)
- Switch: Fury (Presence Points spent on physical actions can give 2 extra dice rather than the usual 1)

### Disadvantages

- Ambition (you look for opportunities to gain more power or status, and may have to roll Wisdom to avoid pursuing them)

- Dangerous Love (a romantic episode with you gives your partner the Quirk *Unlucky* for a day)
- Short Temper (may have to make a Wisdom roll to resist provocation)
- Unstable (prone to vicious mood swings - Dis to resist mental influence)

## Marduk

("Calf of the sun".) Originally an agricultural god representing the fertilising action of the waters, carrying a spade or pick-axe, he became the tutelary god of the city of Babylon and took over the roles of other deities in its mythology. Marduk was the eldest son of Ea (Enki). He was powerful and proud, with a piercing stare. He had four eyes and four ears, and fire came out of his mouth when he spoke. He was skilled in magic.

His grandfather Anu made the four winds as toys for the young Marduk to play with, but they stirred up Tiamat. When she attacked the gods in revenge for the slaying of Apsu only Marduk was willing to confront her - on condition that he was invested with supreme authority by the other gods, including the right to set the fates of men. He gathered weapons and rode out in a storm chariot pulled by tireless, poison-toothed steeds. He caught Tiamat in a net, and loosed winds that held her mouth open so he could shoot in an arrow, splitting her heart. He defeated her followers and recovered the Tablet of Destinies. Then he used the various parts of Tiamat's body to make the sky, rivers, mountains, and so on; regulated the passage of time; made humans to work for the gods; and generally ordered the universe single-handedly.

From then on Marduk ruled the gods, a firm lawgiver and judge whose wrath could not be resisted. When evil spirits and some of the gods conspired to eclipse the moon god Sin (Nanna) only Marduk was able to save him.

### Aegis

- Rulership (Adv when there's a body of people to lead, Dis when on your own with no people nearby)

### Required Powers

- Switch: Immune to Fear\*

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Wisdom (+1)
- Boost: Ingenuity (+1)
- Boost: Presence (M1)
- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Intimidation
- Skill: Leadership
- Switch: Distance Vision
- Switch: Sensitive Hearing
- Switch: Weapons Master (acts as one level of skill for fighting with any and all archaic weapons or similar improvised weapons)
- Switch: Winds (roll Presence, BD 2 - successes indicate intensity of wind, which is directed in a narrow arc and applied as Motion Force - can also be directed for less forceful uses - duration as a maintenance effect)
- Add: Magic\* (1)

## Tablet of Destinies

- Add: Alter Properties\*\* (1)
- Switch: Blessing\*
- Switch: Curse\*

## Disadvantages

- Extra Eyes/Ears (two separate Dis, tied to *Distance Vision* and *Sensitive Hearing* respectively, giving an extra pair of the appropriate organs)
- Fiery Speech (flames come out your mouth when you speak - taken once, it only happens when emotional; taken twice, it happens all the time - the flames' low intensity and range make them unsuitable as weapons, but they can light cigarettes and spoil furniture)
- Overbearing (you naturally attempt to lead in any situation, and find it hard to deal with dissent - may require a Wisdom roll to use common sense to take a back seat)
- Too Brave (you'll take on any challenge, even if common sense would suggest otherwise - may need a Wisdom roll to take a less direct approach)

## Nanna

(Sumerian Nanna, Babylonian Sin.) The god of the Moon, first son of Enlil and father of Utu (the Sun), Ishtar (the planet Venus) and Nusku, god of fire. His epithets included "Shining Boat of Heaven", "he whose ascent is radiant" and "he whose deep heart no god can penetrate". He was revered as an ancient and wise god, lord of destiny and a judge of heaven and earth.

Nanna appeared as an old man with a long, deep blue beard, usually wearing a turban, and his symbol was the crescent. He travelled the night sky in a boat each night, and rested in the underworld each month, there decreeing the fate of the dead. By illuminating the night he became the enemy of evildoers who used it to cover their deeds. The regular transformations of the Moon's phases lent him a certain mystery. He was responsible for measuring time. The other gods consulted him for his wisdom.

Nanna was born while his parents were exiled in the underworld, and they were only able to leave it because his mother had three more children who took their places. At one point he made a boat journey from his city of Ur to Nippur, stopping at five cities on the way, to bring gifts to Enlil and plead for Ur to be prosperous and safe from flooding. On one occasion evil spirits persuaded Shamash, Ishtar and Adad to eclipse Sin, and he was only saved by Marduk's intervention.

## Aegis

- Night (Adv during the night, neutral at dawn and twilight, Dis during the day)

## Required Powers

- Boost: Wisdom (M3)

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Pilot Boat
- Switch: Destiny of Days (an area effect, making an hour or, with a Disadvantage, a day good or bad for a specific nominated activity like swimming or fighting demons - works as a *Blessing* or *Curse* - roll Presence, BD 2, with the effect covering [successes] distance levels - affects everyone in the effect bubble, static once created and cannot be cancelled partway through)
- Switch: Light (can produce a glow similar to that of a campfire, or an explosive light attack from the user's Presence at BD 2)

- Switch: Mysterious (2 Advantages for concealing thoughts and actions from others - this works automatically against incoming powers)
- Switch: Night Vision
- Switch: Time Sense (you know what time it is, can detect the use of time-based powers, and can get an idea of something's age - often automatic, but may need an Awareness roll)
- Add: Time Distort\* (2)

#### Flying boat

- Add: Flight\* (1)

#### Disadvantages

- Blue Hair (all your head, facial and body hair is a deep blue)
- Glowing (your body has a faint glow which makes it hard to pass as normal and gives a Disadvantage to hiding and stealth - taken once it manifests under stress, taken twice it's on all the time)
- Signs of Age (eg grey hair, wrinkled skin)
- Unreadable (tied to *Mysterious* - Disadvantage for interaction where you want to communicate your thoughts and emotions)

## Utu

(Sumerian Utu, Babylonian Shamash.) The god of the Sun and justice, son of Nanna, "Judge of the Heavens and the Earth". Each morning a great door guarded by scorpion-men in the Mountain of the East opened to let his chariot cross the sky. Each evening he entered a door in the Mountain of the West, and during the night travelled back through the underworld ready to emerge the next morning. He saw all that happened during the day, sitting in judgment and driving away shadows with his light. He was also the god of divination, and oracles called on him.

He was often shown seated on a throne, with luminous rays springing from his shoulders, and holding a saw knife. He was characterised as vigorous and brave. His main appearance is in the story of Gilgamesh.

#### Aegis

- Day (Adv during the day, neutral at dawn and twilight, Dis during the night)

#### Required Powers

- Switch: Discernment (2 Advantages for perceiving the truth in mundane situations, eg in spoken or written accounts)

#### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Wisdom (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Drive Chariot
- Skill: Law
- Switch: Distance Vision
- Switch: Light (can produce a glow similar to that of a campfire, or an explosive light attack from the user's Presence at BD 2)
- Switch: See Righteousness (with an Awareness roll, BD 2, you can detect the proportions of "good" and "evil" in a person's soul, and their general nature, eg a serial killer would show up as "murder", but most people would just have lots of little nameless blotches - these are judged from a fairly absolute perspective, eg not taking into account extenuating circumstances)
- Switch: Sun Immunity\* (the usual 10 point "armour" against light attacks, 5 points against heat)
- Add: See Future\* (2)

#### Flying chariot

- Add: Flight\* (1)

#### Disadvantages

- Glowing (your body has a faint glow which makes it hard to pass as normal and gives a Disadvantage to hiding and stealth - taken once it manifests under stress, taken twice it's on all the time)
- Judge's Curse (tied to *See Righteousness* - that power is on at a basic level all the time, and you can't avoid seeing people's basic characters - this can give a Disadvantage when you need to display friendliness, trust, etc)
- Lawful (you try to follow the letter of the law - if you deliberately embark on unlawful actions you're at a Disadvantage from hesitation and doubt)

# Tiamat

The personification of the saltwater ocean and the original chaos of the universe. She was conceived as a kind of dragon, with a horrible and terrifying appearance. Angered by the slaying of Apsu, she gave birth to monsters to fight the younger gods, including enormous serpents, terrible dragons with glittering scales, tempest-monsters, savage dogs, scorpion-men, hurricanes, fish-men and rams. Only Marduk dared to face Tiamat: he loosed winds that held her mouth open so he could shoot in an arrow to kill her. Then he cut up her body to make the world. Despite her monstrous features she was not "evil" as such but representative of the old way of things that had to be conquered to make the gods' new order.

## Aegis

- Sea (Adv in, on or beside salt water; Dis in a dry place like a desert or far inland)

## Required Powers

- Add: Warp Creatures (3) (you can change animals or people into monsters, usually by altering their size or giving them features of other animals - these creatures are generally loyal to you, though some might be unruly or have their own agenda - roll with Ingenuity, BD 2, with each success giving a Switch or a Boost, though physical attributes can only be Boosted to M1 and mental ones only by +1 - the changes are permanent unless reversed somehow - the creatures have sensible Disadvantages based on their final shapes - this can be used with Disadvantages for number of targets)

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (M1)
- Boost: Endurance (M1)
- Boost: Ingenuity (M1)
- Boost: Presence (M1)
- Skill: Intimidation
- Switch: Armour\* (scales)
- Switch: Claws\* (damage +1, sharp)
- Switch: Size Large\* (2)
- Switch: Underwater Survival (lets you breathe and resist the pressure of the depths)
- Switch: Universal Energy\*
- Add: Fast Heal (2)

## Disadvantages

- Scaly Skin (tied to Armour - marks you as a Meta and gives a Dis for some social rolls)
- Scary (people are uncomfortable around you - Dis for friendly socialising)
- Unusual Size (tied to Large)
- Vulnerable to Air (Dis to resist wind-type powers)

## THE LESSER GODS

### Ishkur

As Enlil took on the role of ruler, control of the weather and especially the storm was delegated to another god. The Sumerians called him Ishkur, the Akkadians and Babylonians Adad, the Hurrians Teshub. He was shown holding a bundle of lightning flashes in one hand and an axe or club in the other. His sacred animal was the bull, and he stood on one or rode in a bull-drawn chariot.

Titled “Lord of Abundance”, he caused the river flooding that brought fertility, but if he withheld rain drought and famine followed. At Enlil’s command he sent drought and flood to reduce the human population. He had some powers of foresight.

#### Aegis

- Storm (Adv in extreme weather conditions; Dis where there’s no weather, eg underground, ocean depths, deep inside a large building)

#### Required Powers

- Add: Weather Control\* (all) (3)

#### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Switch: Mighty Voice (can be heard over tumult or from a distance - can give Adv to command or intimidate)
- Add: See Future\* (1)

#### Disadvantages

- Weather Signs I (strong emotions manifest as minor weather conditions nearby)
- Weather Signs II (under stress your eyes crackle with lightning and thunder rumbles around you)

### Ereshkigal

The Sumerian and Babylonian queen of the underworld, which had its own set of *me*. She was the sister of Inanna, and Nergal was her husband. We don’t know a lot about her directly. She appears in two main stories. In the first Inanna visited the underworld to try to seize power there. Ereshkigal “fastened on Inanna the eye of death” and struck her, turning her into a corpse which was hung from a hook on the wall. Enki sent two sexless beings to flatter Ereshkigal and gain Inanna’s release. The second is the story of how Nergal overcame her and she offered to make him her consort. When angered her face turned grey and her lips grew black. She was unable to leave the underworld, and used her messenger and vizier Namtar “the fate cutter” to correspond with the other gods and carry out her wishes in the world.

#### Aegis

- Dead Land (special - Adv in the Dead Zone; neutral in places linked to death; Dis everywhere else)

#### Required Powers

- Switch: Breach the Wall of Death\*

#### Optional Powers

- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Switch: Armour\* (deathlike physiology makes you harder to hurt)
- Switch: Command the Dead (any death-based creature must listen to your words - you can use this to alter their behaviour using Leadership + Presence, BD 2, possibly opposing another Meta’s influence - or roll Presence, BD 2 as a simple warding to keep them out of a 10ft area for [successes] duration levels, appropriate Dis for larger areas)
- Switch: Death Touch (unarmed attack roll if necessary to touch the target, then roll Presence, BD 2 for damage - this is a life energy draining attack, and can only be opposed by Physical Meta Resistance - victims grow pale and withered)
- Switch: Immunity to Earthly Me\* (the laws of the underworld give 10pts “armour” against powers based on control of the *me* - see descriptions, includes Mesopotamian *Alter Properties* and *Tablet of Destinies* - this can also be extended to a touched person or thing using a Presence roll, BD 2 and lasting [successes] rounds, but a living creature will

take a Hurt from being brought closer to death)

- Switch: Immunity to Toxins and Disease\* (usual 10pts vs disease, 6pts vs poisons)
- Switch: Internal Nourishment (you no longer need to eat, drink or excrete)
- Switch: Knowledge of the Dead (learn things that a dead person knew when they were alive - roll Awareness, BD 2, number of successes indicates the number of facts and/or depth of knowledge gained - requires some sympathetic link to the deceased, their body being the best but a treasured possession, loved one, favourite place or scene of death being usable with a Disadvantage)
- Switch: Underworld Sense (an extra sense, working like radar or sonar, allowing you to perceive shapes and motion in total darkness)

#### Disadvantages

- Dead Dreams (whenever you sleep your mind is transported to the Dead Zone - this will force you to construct some sort of life there, building relationships with other denizens)
- Eater of Dust (tied to *Internal Nourishment* - not only don't you need to eat, drink, etc - you can't keep food or drink down if you try)
- Pallor (your skin is an unhealthy-looking pale grey colour, with blue-black lips)

## Nergal

God of disease, battle, the desert and the destructive power of the sun; a son of Enlil, and bearer of the title "lord who prowls by night"; also known as Erra. The queen of the underworld, Ereshkigal, demanded his presence to explain why he didn't stand in the presence of her messenger. The gods agreed that he should go, and provided fourteen sickness demons as an escort. The demons took control of the seven gates of the netherworld, and Nergal dragged Ereshkigal from her throne by the hair. She only stopped him killing her by offering to make him her consort, after which they ruled together. (In a later version Nergal visited due to a fascination with death. He was tempted by Ereshkigal and they made love for seven days. Nergal escaped, but Ereshkigal begged the gods to return him. Eventually they were reunited.)

An and Earth created the Sebitti, seven warrior gods or demons with fearsome and lethal destinies, and put them at Nergal's command to aid in killing noisy, over-populous people and animals. They appeared in the sky as the Pleiades.

#### Aegis

- Blight (Adv where people are ill or injured; Dis where people are in excellent health)

#### Required Powers

- Add: Control Disease\*\* (3)

#### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (pick one of Sword or Knife)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Intimidation
- Switch: Heat Wave (an area attack using heat to sap vitality - roll Presence, BD 2 and treat it as an explosion)
- Switch: Sun Immunity\* (the usual 10 point "armour" against light attacks, 5 points against heat)
- Switch: Underworld Sense (an extra sense, working like radar or sonar, allowing you to perceive shapes and motion in total darkness)
- Add: Call the Sebitti (3) (summons warrior demons to fight for a brief period - they appear as powerful, red-eyed men with ancient gear and weapons, usually swords and spears - summoning is Add + Presence, BD 2, physical Hurt if successful as some of your life force is needed to give them substance - first success brings one warrior for one round, further successes can be spent for an extra warrior, maximum of 7 at once, or an extra duration level - the warriors are Horde creatures with Fighting Skill 2, Talented in all physical Attributes and Presence but no Pool Points, *Immunity to Disease* and *Immunity to Fear* - Initiative 6, attack 5/3, damage thresholds 2/4/-, "down" or expiry of duration causes them to fade away - the warriors do not speak unless directly addressed by the summoner - they are battle-hungry, disliking tasks other than fighting, and if they run out of enemies may attack friends or bystanders unless controlled with Leadership or banished with a power roll)

## Disadvantages

- Fascination with Death (easily distracted by death and its trappings)
- Shadow Companions (extra humanoid shadows with no natural cause tend to appear in your vicinity - if you're emotional their numbers may increase and/or they're accompanied by a rustling sound - a Full action of concentration and a Presence Point can banish them for a scene)
- Signs of Disease (you appear to be ill - relatively mild if taken once, serious if taken twice - doesn't actually harm you, but will affect others' reaction to you)

## Ninurta

Also called Ningirsu; the son of Enlil. His name means "lord of the earth", and he's also called "lord of the ploughland". He was the god of war and hunting, the champion of the gods. He was also connected with irrigation and herds - "the god of fields and canals, who brings fertility". Ninurta's weapon was a mace called Sharur, with the power to move and communicate on its own, acting as a messenger allowing him to get advice from other gods. He also used a bow and a spear.

He was involved in a battle with the forces of nature, either because the mountain rocks and plants rose in rebellion against the plains or because his warlike nature provoked them to attack him. They were led by the Azag, a fierce warrior stone which crushed animals and people and attacked with landslides. Ninurta defeated it by weakening it with a rainstorm so he could thrust in his spear. After the battle he used the rocks he'd conquered to channel watercourses or gave them ignoble qualities like crumbling easily or serving in menial tasks. He blessed the stones that had aided him, assigning them noble uses and making them into the precious gems. In another story the Anzu or Zu storm-bird (which was either a big monster or a half-man, half-bird) stole the Tablet of Destinies from the gods and Ninurta recovered it.

## Aegis

- Battle

## Required Powers

- Switch: Weapons Master (acts as one level of skill for fighting with any and all archaic weapons or similar improvised weapons)

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Agility (M1)
- Boost: Strength (M1)
- Boost: Endurance (M1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Construction
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Intimidation
- Switch: Conqueror of Stones (used with Presence, BD 2 with two possible effects, working only on unrefined minerals - a limited version of *Altered Properties*\*\* - or a form of *Warding*, reducing incoming damage from minerals, base for self or distance level Disadvantages for an area, first success gives intensity 1 for 1 round, further successes add intensity or duration levels, each level of intensity gives 2 points "armour")
- Add: Control Weather\* (wind and rain) (1)

## Mace - Sharur ("Smasher of Thousands")

- Skill: Fighting (Self) (for the weapon, not the user - tied to *Intelligence* and *Flight*)
- Switch: Intelligence (the power of speech, Talented Wisdom and Average Ingenuity, Presence and Awareness)
- Add: Flight\* (2) (on the weapon itself, not the user - though you could hold on - tied to *Intelligence* for directing flight)

## Disadvantages

- Irritating Companion (tied to *Intelligence* on a weapon - it still serves and protects you in time of need, but has one or more personality quirks which sometimes make it hard to live with - practical consequences could include disrupting social situations or having to be coaxed to help)
- Lust for Battle (may require a Wisdom roll to avoid rushing into a fight)
- Stone Resentment (unrefined minerals act to cause you harm, within normal natural laws - eg a falling slab targets you, a rock shifts underfoot - possible Dis in certain situations, eg sneaking across gravel)
- Stream in the Mountains (when you become emotional, unrefined minerals nearby trickle with water)



# HEROES

## Gilgamesh

He was the hero of the first known epic poem, dating from around 1600BC though the story was much older, and based on a historical king.

Gilgamesh was a priest-king of the city of Uruk or Erech, son of the hero Lugalbanda and the goddess Ninsun, two-thirds god and one-third man. He was of great stature, and a powerful warrior. He was also an insatiable womaniser, which led the people to beg the gods for a rival to occupy Gilgamesh's energies so he would leave the women alone. So he created the wild man Enkidu, who lived with the wild beasts and protected them. The hunters complained that he was sabotaging their traps and pits. Gilgamesh sent a prostitute to seduce Enkidu. Once he'd slept with her the animals turned away from him, but she introduced him to the benefits of civilisation in Uruk. On hearing of Gilgamesh's improprieties Enkidu challenged him, and their wrestling match shook the city - but the two became great friends as a result.

They had a number of adventures including killing the monster Huwawa, who had been set to guard the forest by Enlil. Gilgamesh refused the advances of Inanna/Ishtar, citing the misfortune of her previous lovers. In a rage she sent the Bull of Heaven, whose mere snorts opened chasms that swallowed hundreds of men, but the two killed it. Enkidu ripped off one of its legs and flung it at Inanna, and Gilgamesh had its horns set above his bed as a trophy. The gods decreed that they must be punished for their affronts, and sent an illness which killed Enkidu.

Gilgamesh was overcome by grief and the fear of death. He embarked on a quest for the secret of immortality, seeking his ancestor Ut-napishti and his wife who had survived the great flood, the only humans ever to be granted immortality. Passing a number of obstacles including a poisonous sea he found Ut-napishti, who told him the story of the flood and set a test. If Gilgamesh wanted to conquer death, let him first try to go without sleep for six days and seven nights. Gilgamesh failed, and Ut-napishti explained that immortality simply wasn't available to humans. Taking pity, he told Gilgamesh of a plant growing at the bottom of the apsu which would at least restore his youth. Gilgamesh got the plant, but on the way home a snake stole it, shedding its skin, while he was

bathing. He finally resigned himself to mortality and spent his remaining years making his city beautiful.

### Required Powers

- Boost: Strength (M1)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Endurance (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Athletics
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Fighting (Sword)
- Skill: Leadership
- Switch: Size Large\* (1)

### Disadvantages

- Lust (roll Wisdom to avoid pursuing attractive members of your preferred sex - though Gilgamesh would be unlikely to imbue anyone other than a straight man)
- Mortality (Dis to resist death-based powers)
- Too Brave (you tend to take on chances to prove your prowess recklessly - roll Wisdom to play it safe or spend lots of time planning)
- Unusual Size (tied to Large)

## Enkidu

See under Gilgamesh. Even after he lost his innocence and his special relationship with animals, Enkidu knew their ways and was familiar with the paths of desert and forest.

### Required Powers

- Boost: Strength (MI)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Endurance (+I)
- Boost: Awareness (+I)
- Skill: Athletics
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Natural History
- Skill: Stealth
- Skill: Survival
- Switch: Animal Connection (one Advantage for dealing with any animal, and they will not harm you of their own volition)

### Disadvantages

- Friend of Beasts (if you harm animals or allow them to come to harm, take a mental Hurt from guilt)
- Uncouth (Disadvantage in situations demanding politeness and etiquette or presenting a cultured appearance)
- Vulnerable to Disease (Dis to resist ordinary illnesses and disease-related powers)

## MONSTERS

### Anzu

This great storm-bird (also known as Zu and Imdugud) was formed by a union of floodwater and the earth of the mountains, and in the mountains it made its nest. It was a strange mixture: it had the wings and talons of an eagle and the face and paws of a lion, with a beak like a saw. Its hide was like eleven coats of mail. It was also represented in art as a half-man, half-bird figure.

Enlil enlisted Anzu as a servant, to guard his bath chamber, but the creature grew to covet the power in the Tablet of Destinies and stole it while Enlil was bathing, fleeing to the mountains. Several gods were asked to go and kill him and retrieve the Tablet, but they were afraid of the ultimate power it gave him: "He has only to command, and whoever he curses turns to clay!" Eventually Ninurta took on the task. It did not go well at first: Anzu used the Tablet to stop the arrows hitting him. But Ninurta sent his mace Sharur to get advice from Ea, and this enabled him to win.

*Instead of imbuing a human, the Anzu could imbue a bird. It would automatically have Flight (1) but would have to buy one or two levels of Switch: Size to get it up to human size. It would then have all Attributes at Average except for Talented Agility and Awareness and Poor Wisdom.*

### Required Powers

- Add: Flight\* (wings) (2)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+I)
- Boost: Presence (+I)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Geophysics
- Skill: Intimidation
- Skill: Subterfuge
- Switch: Armour\*
- Switch: Claws and Beak\* (+I damage, sharp)
- Switch: Distance Vision
- Switch: Size Large\* (2)
- Add: Control Weather\* (1)

### Disadvantages

- Animal Visage (a strange mixture - your head resembles that of a lion, with the eyes and beak of an eagle - marks you as a Meta, Dis in some social situations)
- Lust for Power (faced with an opportunity to gain power, you must roll either Wisdom for common sense or Presence for self-discipline to resist)
- Unusual Size (tied to Large)
- Wings (tied to Flight - marks you as a Meta, Dis in some social situations)

## Arallu demons

These were the evil genii or *utukku* which came from the underworld, also known as *galla* demons (named after officials like police). They spread disease, inspired criminal acts, stirred disunion and threatened flocks. They were relentless hunters, could not be appeased and had no respect for the gods - the only way for mortals to get rid of them was by incantations.

Their appearance varied, but was always terrifying - for instance a human with a horned lion's head and clawed feet. They did not have human needs for things like food and drink, nor human emotions; they did not take wives nor beget children. They often lived in holes in the ground, caves or ruins.

### Required Powers

- Switch: Implacable (5 points of "armour" against emotional control and persuasion)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Agility (+1)
- Boost: Endurance (M1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Intimidation
- Skill: Stealth
- Skill: Survival
- Switch: Claws\* (possibly others like Horns or Teeth)
- Switch: Internal Nourishment (you no longer need to eat, drink or excrete)

- Switch: Night Vision
- Add: Control Disease\*\* (1)
- Add: Control Emotion\* (jealousy, anger, greed) (1)

### Disadvantages

- Alien (the suppression of human drives and feelings gives a Dis for attempts to engage with things emotionally, eg most socialising, enjoying art, romance - little satisfies you except hunting and destroying)
- Unearthly Appearance (manifesting animal-like features - can be taken multiple times - marks you as a Meta and gives a Dis in many social situations)
- Vulnerable to Incantation (someone empowered by Ea, or a genuine follower of such a person, can chant and call for an opposed Presence roll - if they win you must leave them and that location for [net successes] duration levels - the Implacable Switch is ineffective against this)

## Azag

The Azag was a stone, a fierce warrior that led a rebellion by the mountain rocks and plants against the plains. It crushed forests, animals and people, and attacked with landslides and walls of rock. The warrior god Ninurta defeated it, with difficulty, and put an end to the revolt.

*As well as imbuing a human, the Azag could imbue a rock, stone statue or similar. In that case it starts off with Stone Form appropriate to its size at no cost, and must buy Switch: Consciousness, which in this case gives Poor Wisdom and Ingenuity, Talented Presence and Average Awareness. It starts with Average Strength, Poor Agility and Talented Endurance. It does not count as an item, so power costs are not reduced. On a "death" damage result the stone will shatter into pieces.*

### Required Powers

- Add: Stone Form (3) (your flesh becomes dense and rock-like - you become larger, but not to the extent of a Size level - each level of this power gives 2 points of armour against blows; 1 point of "armour" against things that depend on human physiology, like drugs or gases); 1 extra Base Damage on unarmed attacks; and 1 level of heaviness, which could be an Advantage or Disadvantage or act as a Size level depending on situation

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (M2)
- Boost: Endurance (M3)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Add: Control Earth\* (2)

### Disadvantages

- Massive (tied to Stone Form - you can no longer walk across flimsy surfaces and have a Disadvantage for stealth)
- Rock Fingers (chunky digits with reduced sensation give a Disadvantage for fine motor control)
- Rock Monster (tied to Stone Form, heavy disguise might let you pass as normal at low levels but in general you're obviously not - marks you as a Meta, Dis in some social situations)
- Slow Thinking (Dis for quick, lateral or imaginative thought)
- Stone Signs (when you become emotional, unrefined minerals nearby shake and tremble)

weapons, projectiles, fire, magic, robots, animals, but not "people in general", working a bit like an invisible force field - roll Presence, BD (2 - area's radius distance levels beyond 10ft) - first success gets 1 effect level for 1 round, further successes add effect or duration levels, effect levels give 2pts "armour" against objects or forces and a success target for Presence rolls by creatures seeking to pass - no effect on passage out of the area - an area can have multiple active Wards, but only one per harm type)

### Disadvantages

- Eagle's Head (tied to Distance Vision - marks you as a Meta, Dis to many social rolls)
- Sacred Charge (you are bound to protect one specific individual - if they suffer harm you take mental damage at the same level, or half that if you could not have prevented it)
- Servant of the Gods (Dis to resist any form of persuasion by someone imbued by a god of any pantheon)
- Wings (tied to Flight - marks you as a Meta, Dis to many social rolls)

## Shedu/Lamassu

These are the male and female (respectively) good genii or *utukku*. They defend individuals against evil powers, carry their homage to the gods and draw down divine favour. They are usually shown as winged bulls with human heads, often installed at the gateways of palaces as guardians, or as winged humans with the heads of eagles.

### Required Powers

- Add: Flight\* (wings) (2)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Endurance (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Switch: Blessing\*
- Switch: Distance Vision
- Switch: Warding (protects one defined area, like a building, cave, or hollow, against one specific type of harm, eg hand-to-hand

# MESOAMERICA

There were strong similarities in the cultures of the people who lived in the areas that are now central, southern and eastern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador and parts of Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Their economy was based on growing maize (sweetcorn). They set up networks of long-distance trade across the region, and events in one part eventually affected the whole area. They had hieroglyphic writing, mathematics and a calendar, social hierarchies, large cities, stepped pyramids, ball games - and human sacrifice.

The region knew several major civilisations at different times. The Olmecs were on the central and southern coast of the Gulf of Mexico between about 1500 BCE and 500 BCE, though these dates are uncertain. We don't know a lot about them, but they certainly influenced later cultures. The Maya were spread across Guatemala and the Yucatán Peninsula by 1500 BCE, and developed a powerful civilisation over the following centuries. The Zapotecs were active in the southern highlands of Mexico between 500 BCE and 800 CE. Between the first and eighth centuries CE Teotihuacán (just north of present Mexico City) was the most powerful city-state in central Mesoamerica. Between the tenth and 12th centuries CE the Toltecs established a powerful military state from their city Tula (a little north of Mexico City). Around 900-1250 CE many old cities across the region were virtually abandoned - possibly due to a worsening climate, invasions or migrations from the north, and friction between cities and cultures - in favour of new, powerful ones.

The Aztecs were a group of tribes from northwest Mexico, originally serving other tribes as mercenaries. The last to arrive, the Méxica, took the lead and gave their name to the modern nation. From 1250 CE they rose to power in their great city Tenochtitlán (the site of present-day Mexico City) and began conquering the surrounding region. They often took on aspects of the religions of other cultures, past and present. Aztec society was made up of slaves (who could buy their freedom), commoners (who owned a plot of land for their lifetime), and nobles (including priests, and warriors who earned the rank). In 1519 a group of 500 Spanish soldiers led by Hernán Cortés landed on the Gulf Coast. Playing on resentment of Aztec rule and the prophesied return of the god Quetzalcóatl they created a mass rebellion and

overthrew the Empire, paving the way for European conquest of the entire region.

What we call mythology was, of course, their religion, and it permeated every aspect of life. They believed the present world was just the latest in a succession. Everything happened in cycles - days, years and even worlds. They thought of the world in dualities - life and death, fertility and barrenness, day and night. The most honourable death for a man was in battle, and for a woman in childbirth. Death in human sacrifice was also considered honourable.

The Maya thought blood was needed to keep the cycles of nature going and show submission to the gods. The practice was really institutionalised by the Toltecs, and later the Aztecs took it to its zenith. They held that human sacrifice was necessary to hold the universe together and strengthen the sun for its nightly battle against the forces of darkness so it could rise the following morning. It was also used for political and social control. The heart and blood of victims were likened to a blossoming flower, and "flower wars" with rival cities took place to secure captives for sacrifice. It is said that for the rededication of the Great Temple in 1487 between 20,000 and 80,000 people were sacrificed. From our modern viewpoint the Aztecs were fanatics, observing incredibly strict social behaviour (including a great distaste for sex), cutting and piercing their bodies, and even volunteering to be sacrificed (though most of the time people would buy a slave to be offered on their behalf). When the Spanish arrived they were sickened by the bloody scale of sacrifice they found.

Almost all of the deities in this section are listed under their Aztec names, mainly because that's a relatively recent culture whose details were recorded by the Spanish, so more is known about them in that form.

## Pronunciation hints

This region produced some pretty scary names! Here are some hints for dealing with them.

- accents, eg. “á”, show which syllable is stressed
- “a” is long, as in “father”
- “e” is pronounced like “prey” and always sounded, eg Coatlicue is “ko-at-lee-kway”
- “i” is like “ee”
- “o” is like “open”
- “u” is like “oo” in “zoo”
- “h” is pronounced “hw”
- “j” is like “h” in “hat”
- “ch” is like “charge”
- “qua” and “quo” are pronounced “kw”; “que” and “qui” are pronounced “k”
- “x” is pronounced “sh”
- “z” is pronounced like “s” in “sad”

Examples : Xochiquetzal is “sho-chee-ketz-all”, Chalchihuitlicue is “chall-chee-wit-lee-kway”.

## Sources

My main source was David M Jones and Brian L Molyneux; ‘The Mythology of the Americas’; Lorenz Books; 2001.

As usual, Manfred Lurker’s ‘Dictionary of Gods, Goddesses, Devils and Demons’ and Arthur Cotterell’s ‘A Dictionary of World Mythology’ provided titbits.

## GODS

### Coatlicue

Goddess of the earth as both creator and destroyer, the womb and the grave. Her name means “serpent skirt” or “serpent lady”. She was the wife of Mixcóatl, god of hunting. She ruled the rainy season and was linked with agriculture and sustenance. Her 400 children wanted to kill her because of the shame of an unexplained (magical) pregnancy, but Huitzilopochtli emerged fully armed from her womb to kill them. Her daughter Coyolxauhqui (“golden bells” after her cheek ornaments) had actually been trying to warn Coatlicue, and Huitzilopochtli rewarded her by throwing her head into the sky to become the moon, while her brothers were turned into the stars.

In the Mayan pantheon there’s overlap with Ix Chebel Yax, mother of the gods and patron of domestic arts; and with Ix Chel, goddess of water, the moon, healing and childbirth, shown as a female warrior surrounded by symbols of death, an angry old woman emptying vials of storms, or a clawed goddess with a serpent on her head and bones on her skirt.

The most famous statue of Coatlicue shows her as a square-built nightmare figure, with two snake heads in profile making a single wide-mouthed reptilian face with beady eyes and huge fangs. Her arms end in fanged serpent heads, and her feet are taloned. Her skirt is made of interwoven snakes, symbolising fertility. Her necklace is of alternating hands and hearts with a skull pendant in the middle, symbolising the need for human sacrifice to maintain the Sun. Down her back hang 13 leather cords or tresses of hair, representing the levels of heaven and the months of the year. Another statue shows her as an ordinary woman with a skull face, wearing the snake skirt.

### Aegis

- Earth (Adv in contact with natural soil or rock, Dis out of contact with solid ground, eg at sea or parachuting)

### Required Powers

- Boost: Ingenuity (+1)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Endurance (M1)
- Boost: Presence (M1)
- Skill: Home-making
- Skill: Intimidation
- Skill: Medicine
- Switch: Claws and Fangs\*
- Switch: Raven's Fare (at the end of each round of battle during which someone gets Injured within your sight, you can recover one Presence Point or heal one Hurt)
- Switch: Serpent Hands (you can take a Free action to transform your forearms and hands into snake heads - these attack using your Unarmed skill, doing Strength+1 damage with sharp fangs - they can stretch up to 10ft, possibly giving extra attack opportunities, +2 initiative within a Phase against an incoming opponent, etc)
- Switch: Universal Energy\*
- Add: Control Weather\* (1) (water-related only)
- Add: Fast Heal\* (2)

### Disadvantages

- Fascinated by Death (you are easily distracted by symbols and places related to death, bones, corpses and the like - roll Wisdom to get on with the business at hand)
- Reptilian Face (your head is that of a snake/human hybrid, bringing a Disadvantage in many social situations)
- Snake Skirt (after a few hours any item of clothing you wear takes on the appearance of interwoven snakes - they look alive, but don't do anything)

## Ek Chuah

This deity is the only one listed here under a Mayan name. Ek Chuah means "black war leader", or possibly "black star" or "black scorpion". In one aspect he was a god of war and those who died in battle, but he also had a benevolent side as god of travellers, merchants and prosperity. He was portrayed as a merchant, with a bundle on his back and holding a staff. He was painted black, with black rings around his eyes, a large, drooping lower lip and a scorpion's tail. Ek Chuah was patron of

cacao, the plant from which chocolate is made and an important Mayan trade item, the beans also being used as currency.

An associated Mayan god was Xamen Ek, god of the North Star. He was the patron and guide of merchants, who offered incense to him at roadside altars. He was shown with a distinctive snub nose and black markings on his head. The Aztec counterpart was Yacatecutli, "he with the pointed nose", patron of merchants and god of their "guild", carrying their symbols - a bamboo staff and a fan. He's also seen carrying a crossroads with footprints.

### Aegis

- Travel (Adv when in centres of travel like town squares, railway stations, docksides and airports; Dis in centres of preventing travel, notably prisons, or when imprisoned yourself)

### Required Powers

- Switch: Direction Sense (you always have a general sense of which way is north, up, etc, and if a navigation-type roll is required you get 2 Advantages)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Ingenuity (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Business
- Skill: Fighting (Staff)
- Skill: Socialising
- Switch: Eloquence\*
- Switch: Languages (can understand and converse in any language - you don't know how the language works, you just have the ability to use it)
- Switch: Master of Currency (you can always dip into a pocket, bag, or whatever and produce a small amount of local currency, enough for basic living expenses, small domestic items and the like - usable once per scene - you can detect physical money nearby with an Awareness roll and have an Advantage for any action involving it except trading, eg stopping someone picking your pocket)
- Switch: Scorpion Tail (the stinger on this has Base Damage Strength+1, Sharp, and injects poison with Speed Instant, Potency 4 - alternatively you can use it to swipe using your normal Strength for a Blunt attack, or with an

Adv to unbalance - in each case, use Unarmed Skill)

### Disadvantages

- Face Markings (black rings mostly surround your eyes, extending on to your face)
- Fierce (have to roll Wisdom to stop fighting an opponent before they're defeated)
- Outsize Lip/Nose (you have a long, turned-up nose or a large, drooping lower lip - it gives a Disadvantage in many social situations)
- Scorpion Tail (tied to Switch above)

## Huitzilopochtli

His name means "(blue) hummingbird of the south", and he was the god of the sun and war (hummingbirds were thought to be the reincarnated souls of warriors). He was exclusively an Aztec god, the patron of the tribe that created the empire. The goddess Coatlicue found a feathery ball as she was sweeping her house and tucked it into her bosom - later it could not be found and she had become pregnant. Her 400 other children planned to kill her for this disgrace, but Huitzilopochtli was born, fully armed, just in time - he slew them all and threw them into the heavens as stars.

He had blue-painted arms and legs, or completely blue skin, and hummingbird feathers on his left leg (either natural or a decoration). He's sometimes said to wear armour and a helmet made of hummingbird feathers. His weapons were a spear thrower in the shape of the turquoise serpent representing earthly and heavenly fires, or perhaps the serpent itself; a round shield; and arrows tipped with feathers. As the sun his journey across the sky was accompanied by the souls of warriors fallen in battle till noon, then by the souls of women who'd died in childbirth till nightfall. During the night he illuminated the underworld. His *nahual* (animal alter ego) was the eagle or hummingbird.

He guided the Méxica tribe from the northwest deserts into the interior: they were led by four priests, who carried an idol through which he spoke to them. On an island they saw an eagle landing on a cactus, clutching a serpent in its claw - the sign to build their great city Tenochtitlán (modern Mexico City stands on the same site). The Méxica held ritual wars to provide captives for sacrifice to their god. The victim's heart was cut out and their skin and limbs removed. The flesh may have been eaten by the nobility. They also

offered flowers, incense and food to the idol. His priests ranked with Tlaloc's at the head of the clergy.

### Aegis

- Sun (Adv in direct sunlight, Dis in partial or total darkness)

### Required Powers

- Skill: Fighting (Spear)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Agility (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (Archery)
- Skill: Fighting (Shield)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Leadership
- Switch: Distance Vision
- Switch: Shapeshift\* (hummingbird, eagle - choose one each time)
- Switch: Sun Immunity (the usual 10 point "armour" against light attacks, eg. dazzling, and 5 points against heat)
- Switch: Turquoise Serpent (you can pull a spear-like shaft of shifting turquoise energy out of the air, which can be used hand-to-hand, lasting up to a scene, or thrown, exploding on impact - creation takes a Free action and a roll of Presence, BD 2, successes giving a damage rating which is split as evenly as possible into base damage/impact and then heat effects, applied directly or as two separate explosions)

### Feather armour (one article made of feathers)

- Switch: Armour\*

### Disadvantages

- Blood Dependency (after a battle you cannot begin to heal or recover your Presence Pool until at least a thimbleful of another human's blood has touched your body)
- Blue Skin
- Feathers (blue feathers grow on one or more patches of your body)
- Impulsive (roll Wisdom, BD 2 to refrain from rushing to attack an apparent enemy)



## Mictlantecuhtli

The Aztec god of death, he ruled the underworld of Mictlán. He was a popular god: his kingdom was a quiet and restful place for those who died of natural causes. Other groups, like warriors who died in battle or women who died in childbirth, had their own underworlds. Mictlantecuhtli was shown covered in bones or as a skeleton, with large, star-like eyes for seeing in the dark, and sometimes wearing bark-paper clothes. He is accompanied by owls (symbolising war and death), bats and spiders. His Maya counterpart Ah Puch, also called Yum Cimil, was very similar - though sometimes shown as a bloated figure and accompanied by a dog. To populate the world of the Fifth Sun Quetzalcóatl came to Mictlán for the bones of the people of the Fourth Sun, and Mictlantecuhtli delayed him by setting difficult tasks to perform.

### Aegis

- Death (Adv in cemetery or mortuary; Dis in places connected with new life, eg maternity ward or plant nursery)

### Required Powers

- Switch: Breach the Wall of Death\*

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Endurance (+1)
- Boost: Wisdom (+1)
- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Stealth
- Switch: Animal Connection (you have two Advantages for dealing with particular animal types, and they will not harm you of their own volition - owls, bats, spiders, dogs)
- Switch: Armour\* (bony exoskeleton - must take linked Dis)
- Switch: Immunity to Fear\*
- Switch: Internal Nourishment (you no longer need to eat, drink or excrete)
- Switch: Knowledge of the Dead (learn things that a dead person knew when they were alive - roll Awareness, BD 2, number of successes indicates the number of facts and/or depth of knowledge gained - requires some sympathetic link to the deceased, their body being the best but a treasured possession, loved one, favourite place or scene of death being usable with a Disadvantage)
- Switch: Night Vision (you can see normally in minimal light, though not in total darkness)

- Switch: Sense Death's Presence (you can detect how much death there is in a person - someone who's young and healthy is "bright", someone old or with a terminal disease would be "dark" - you can also tell if someone's likely to be killed by some means in the near future, usually a few hours - may require an Awareness roll)
- Switch: Spirit Sight (can perceive spirit entities, astral travellers, etc. - not physical beings rendered invisible)

### Disadvantages

- Gaunt (your flesh has withered, giving a semi-skeletal appearance and possible social Disadvantages, but without any other ill effects)
- Glowing Eyes (not noticeable in daylight, but in the dark your eyes appear as small points of pale white light)
- Sensitive (you find it hard to tolerate bright lights and loud noises - take a mental Hurt for each that applies, which will only "heal" once free of their influence - ongoing background conditions only apply once per scene)
- Skeletal (linked to Armour - much of your body is covered with a bony exoskeleton - pretty hard to ignore, Dis for some social situations)

## Quetzalcóatl

One of the most ancient and widespread gods - his name means "feathered serpent", symbolising a union of the powers of earth and heaven. His brothers were Tezcatlipoca, Huitzilopochtli and Xipe Totec. He was a god of learning, science, arts, crafts, agriculture and (under the name Ehécatl) the winds. He brought knowledge and prosperity to humanity, giving them corn, weaving, astronomy, books and the calendar, and was the patron of priests. Quetzalcóatl was god of the morning and evening star (the planet Venus), and so a symbol of death and resurrection. But he was also a man, a legendary priest-king of the earlier Toltecs, whose story is bound up with that of the god. He was peaceful and virtuous, sacrificing only animals. He is shown as a relatively ordinary person, and symbolised by a serpent's head with a ruff or mane of feathers.

Quetzalcóatl was also a creator god. Having overthrown Tezcatlipoca, he ruled the world of the Second Sun until it was destroyed by winds and



He had many forms and manifestations, overlapping with various other deities, but some aspects were uniquely his own. He represented the stars, the night sky, winter and the north - his titles included "night wind". He was shown with black stripes across his face, and glittering eyes. His *nahual* (spirit companion/alter ego) was the *ocelotl*, the jaguar-beast that swallowed the Sun every night. Tezcatlipoca was an invisible and unpredictable lord of darkness, shadows and mystery. He stirred up discord and presided over battles. He sent fame and wealth to the virtuous, and sickness and poverty to wrongdoers; he was the protector of slaves. In his magical mirror he could see all the deeds and thoughts of mortals. He was a god of conflict, revered by warriors. As Itztlacoliuhqui he was the god of ice and cold, sin and misery. He was the patron of the nobility - another manifestation presided over banquets - but also the patron of sorcerers, thieves and other miscreants.

### Aegis

- Darkness (Adv in low or no light - candlelight or moonlight are OK; Dis in bright light, like direct sun or a floodlit stadium; basically, think about how many shadowy corners there are)

### Required Powers

- Add: Control Darkness (2) (used with Presence to create areas of intense darkness or with Ingenuity to make moving shadow illusions - the first success produces the darkness of night over an area of distance level 1 for 1 round, further successes are spent to raise intensity, area or duration level - the next level of intensity is the absolute blackness of underground, and any levels beyond that act as mental damage on those within it)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Agility (+1)
- Boost: Ingenuity (M1)
- Boost: Awareness (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (Spear)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Skill: Stealth
- Skill: Subterfuge
- Switch: Freezing Touch (an attack delivered by touch, inflicting [Presence+1] base cold damage - can add up to 5 attack successes for accurate placement)
- Switch: Immunity to Cold\*

- Switch: Night Vision (you can see normally in minimal light, though not in total darkness)
- Switch: Shapeshift\* (Jaguar)
- Add: Invisibility (1) (acts as a Switch, costed as an Add - undetectable by sight, but doesn't block other senses - roll with Ingenuity, BD 2, to activate, successes indicate duration levels)

### Obsidian mirror

- Switch: Clairvoyance (see distant people, places or objects and what's going on around them - roll Presence, BD 1-3 depending on the strength of connection between user and target, eg whether you know them well or have a sympathetic link like a lock of hair or part of an object - successes are a guide to the amount of information gained - Dis for each major obstacle between user and target, eg ocean, deep underground - only gives a visual image, and only of the present time - only usable once per scene on a given target)
- Switch: See Thoughts (you see a moving image representing the surface thoughts of a target, who must be within sight - roll Awareness, BD 2, successes indicate rounds of duration - note that someone aware of this can foil it with mundane techniques like meditation or visualisation)

### Disadvantages

- Face Markings (only a Dis for characters with light skin - one or more black stripes across your face from left to right)
- Lamé (one of your feet doesn't work properly - Disadvantage to actions using it, like running or jumping)
- Mixed Allegiances (only a Dis for a heroic character - if a villain or criminal specifically asks you for help when they're in real danger, you must try to help them - also, you have a Dis to resist suggestions of employing amoral or illegal methods)
- Troublemaker (you're attracted to conflict, and might need to roll Presence to try to stop a conflict or resist an opportunity to start one)

# Tláloc

The god of rain, bringer of both life and destruction, Tláloc was an ancient god and his name means “something on the surface of the earth” or “he who makes things sprout”. His Maya counterpart was Chac (who was also associated with the young god of agriculture and forests, called Ah Mun or Yum Kaax). Tláloc had ruled the world of the Third Sun which was destroyed by a rain of fire, the inhabitants being turned into birds. He controlled rain, hail, ice, snow, clouds, floods, drought, thunder and lightning, and was also associated with mountains.

His appearance was distinctive: he had ringed, goggling eyes and prominent fangs, and his skin was often green. He sometimes had a curled shape across his mouth (this may be related to Chac’s long, hooked nose, or the forked tongue of his counterpart among the Zapotec people) or a mouth in the shape of a corn cob for his importance to agriculture. He was frequently shown with serpents. His sister and/or consort, Chalchiuhtlicue, ruled over flowing waters.

Tláloc kept four great clay jars, one for each of the four directions - from one came life-giving rains, and from the others came drought, frost and disease. He ruled an earthly paradise, Tlalocán, for those who’d died by drowning, lightning or contagious diseases. As Chac, he taught humanity how to grow crops. In the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán he and Huitzilopochtli shared chief importance. The worship of Tláloc ranged from keeping corn ears and stalks in the house to frequent human sacrifice, including children, whose tears were a symbol of rain.

## Aegis

- Rain (Adv in damp places like swamps, swimming pools and beaches; Dis in dry places like deserts and burning buildings)

## Required Powers

- Add: Weather Control\* (all) (2)

## Optional Powers

- Boost: Ingenuity (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Switch: Animal Connection (you have two Advantages for dealing with particular animal types, and they will not harm you of their own volition - snakes, amphibians)
- Switch: Tláloc Death Sense (a special amalgam of death powers that only works for people

killed by weather conditions or disease - roll Awareness, BD 2 to get a vision of how they died or learn something they knew, with successes indicating depth and clarity of knowledge)

- Add: Control Water\* (1)

**Clay jars** - can be applied to any kind of container, but only one of these powers per object - each power will work no more than once per round

- Switch: Waters of Fertility (this jar produces water which will either cause plants to spring up to their full growth or give an animal, including humans, increased vigour - for the latter roll Ingenuity, BD 2, with successes spent first to remove physical Hurts and then to give an Advantage for active physical tasks for a round)
- Switch: Heat Wave (an area attack using heat to sap vitality - roll Presence, BD 2 and treat it as an explosion confined to a 90-degree arc)
- Switch: Frosty Blast (releases cold energy which can freeze objects or damage people, working as an explosion confined to a 90-degree arc with damage determined by Presence, BD 2)
- Switch: Disease (a blast of fetid air, again as an explosion based on Presence, BD 2 confined to a 90-degree arc - final damage becomes suitably described disease symptoms, taking effect over a round or so - these will only heal after suitable medical attention, and while they persist the same level of “damage” will be passed on to anyone in sustained close contact who fails an Endurance roll at BD 2)

## Disadvantages

- Fangs (your upper teeth are long and protruding, either as a whole row or just the two canines - they can be used for a bite attack at Base Damage 1 if you really want, but mostly they just frighten people)
- Frog Eyes (your eyes are unnaturally large, round and bulging - Disadvantage to any action that depends on a pleasant appearance)
- Green Skin (a sort of dark olive colour, all over - another potential social Disadvantage)
- Water Signs (taken once, your body oozes water under emotional stress; taken twice, it does it all the time)

## Xipe Totec

He was the god of springtime, seeds and planting, brother of Huitzilopochtli, Quetzalcóatl and Tezcatlipoca. His name means “flayed one”. He demanded many sacrifices for continued good crops - war captives were skinned, and priests wore the skins (symbolising the new vegetation that covered the earth) for a dance. He was linked with the plant world’s cycle of life and death. He was the lord of penitential torture - sacrifice as a way to spiritual liberation - and sent illnesses to mankind. He was also the patron of workers in metals and gemstones.

### Aegis

- Fertility (Adv where plants or animals are abundant; Dis where nothing grows, eg sterile labs, deserts, heavily polluted areas)

### Required Powers

- Add: Control Plants\* (2)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Endurance (+1)
- Boost: Ingenuity (M1)
- Skill: Craft Metal
- Skill: Natural History
- Switch: Armour\* (resistance to pain)
- Switch: Raven’s Fare (at the end of each round of battle during which someone gets Injured within your sight, you can recover one Presence Point or heal one Hurt)
- Switch: Skinshifting (while touching someone you can grow, over about a minute, a second skin that mimics their appearance - it will accommodate minor differences of size and build, but not major ones - after about 24 hours the skin “dies” and sloughs off - a truly macabre GM might have this power working with the actual skin of the target, which you can remove expertly, but that’s not the right style for most superhero games)
- Add: Control Disease\*\* (1)

### Disadvantages

- Blood Dependency (after a battle you cannot begin to heal or recover your Presence Pool until at least a thimbleful of another human’s blood has touched your body)
- Plant Signs (nearby vegetation responds to your moods - if happy, plants can add days’ or weeks’ growth in just a few minutes and

flowers burst into bloom - if sad or angry they can droop and wither, or thorn bushes could spring up - remember that in most places there are dormant seeds around)

- Skinless (your skin has turned transparent, exposing the muscles etc beneath - causes no health problems but gives mental damage 4 to anyone seeing you for the first time and brings a Disadvantage in many social situations - yes, it can be used offensively, which is why it’s only a single Dis)

## Xiuhtecuhtli

He was the god of fire, and one of the most ancient gods. His name means “lord of the turquoise” (a colour connected with fire and the sun) - also called Huehuetēotl, “Old One”. He was usually shown as a wrinkled, toothless old man, seated and bearing a great brazier on his head (statuettes were used to burn incense), sometimes with a red or yellow face. His fire was the pillar that connected all the worlds, from the underworld of Mictlan, through the earthly realm Tlalticpac and all its home fires, to Topan, the dwelling of the gods in the sky.

Xiuhtecuhtli was honoured in a special ceremony once every 52 years, at the beginning of the new calendar cycle. All household and temple fires were extinguished. A captive was sacrificed by cutting out his heart, then a fire was kindled in his chest cavity and runners took the new flame through the land. This was a time of great tension - if the new fire failed to light, darkness would engulf the earth and monsters would come from the sky to devour the people.

### Aegis

- Fire (Adv in hot places like foundries and deserts; Dis in cold places like tundra and meat lockers)

### Required Powers

- Add: Control Fire\* (3)

### Optional Powers

- Boost: Wisdom (+1)
- Skill: History
- Switch: Immunity to Fire\*
- Switch: Time Sense (you know what time it is, can detect the use of time-based powers, and

can get an idea of something's age - often automatic, but might need an Awareness roll)

- Add: Axis of Fire (Switch costed as an Add - you can make a connection between a fire where you are and one at a remote location - with an Awareness roll you can see and hear what's happening as if you were at the location of the remote fire, successes are a guide to the amount of information gained - with a Presence roll you can actually pull yourself through, if both fires are sufficiently big to allow you to "fit", and bring one passenger per extra success - rolls are BD 1-3 depending on the strength of connection between user and target location, eg whether you know them well or have a sympathetic link like a lock of hair from someone there or part of an object - Dis for each major obstacle between user and target, eg ocean, deep underground)
- Add: Master of the Gate\* (1)

#### Disadvantages

- Needs Fire (you cannot begin to heal or recover Presence Points until you are within arm's reach of a fire of hearth size or larger)
- Red/Yellow Face (pick a colour - it marks you as a Meta, which can affect social interactions)
- Signs of Age (you appear to be an older person, though there are no health effects)

## Xochipilli/Xochiquetzal

This brother and sister pair have been merged together because their natures are so similar.

**Xochipilli.** The youthful god of flowers, pleasure, entertainments of all kinds, playful mischief, fertility, souls and summer - his name means "flower prince". He was sometimes shown with a red face or a butterfly-shaped face marking. The alcoholic drink pulque was consumed in quantity at his festivals. His two brothers represented health and medicine, and games and sports: together they represent general good health, pleasure and well-being.

**Xochiquetzal.** Goddess of flowering and the fruitful earth, sister of Xochipilli, her name means "precious flower". She personified youth, love, beauty, domesticity, flowers and female sexual power. She was patron of courtesans, silversmiths, sculptors, painters and weavers. She was the first wife of Tláloc, but Tezcatlipoca abducted her. She

was linked with the underworld and honoured with flowers at festivals of the dead.

#### Aegis

- Youth (Adv surrounded by the dynamic, bright, colourful and attractive; Disadvantage in static, decaying, drab or sterile surroundings)

#### Required Powers

- Switch: Attractive Appearance

#### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (+1)
- Boost: Endurance (M1)
- Boost: Ingenuity (+1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Art (deals with physical objects designed to appeal to the senses)
- Skill: Athletics
- Skill: Home-making
- Skill: Medicine
- Skill: Socialising
- Switch: Fertility (either cause plants to spring up to their full growth or give an animal, including humans, increased vigour - roll Ingenuity, BD 2 - for animals, successes are spent first to remove physical Hurts and then to give an Advantage for active physical tasks for a round)
- Switch: Immunity to Negative Emotions\* (10pts "armour" against attempts to induce sadness or anger)
- Switch: Master of Games (2 Advantages for any game or sport - a large bonus because it has limited application)
- Switch: Pleasure (affects the target's pleasure centres, can be used in several ways, take appropriate Dis for multiple targets - for a pleasant buzz to make someone more friendly and sociable roll Ingenuity, BD 2 opposed by mental Resistance, success gives an Advantage for everyone's social-type rolls involving the target, lasts a scene but cancelled if target Injured - for a restorative balm roll Ingenuity, BD 2 to remove one mental Hurts per success - to overload someone with pleasure roll Ingenuity, BD 2 plus Presence as Base "Damage", opposed by mental Resistance, successes act as Initiative penalties for 1 full round or 5 min if Resistance fumbles, but target also gets an Advantage to Resist pain and injury)



### Disadvantages

- Frivolous (you have to roll Presence, BD 2 to resist an opportunity to have fun - you find long, dull tasks difficult to complete and will often take shortcuts to get them over with)
- Red Face (or butterfly marking if you prefer - either permanently marks you as a Meta)
- Signs of Youth (you appear to be a young person, probably late teens/early twenties, and it can be difficult to convince people of your skills and experience)

## MONSTERS

### Tlaltecuhтли

The Earth Monster (the name means “earth lord”), having both male and female aspects but usually referred to as female. She was a huge, fat, toad-like creature with a wide, fanged mouth, clawed feet (or sometimes had aspects of a crocodile), and other gnashing mouths at her elbows, knees and other joints. She swallowed the sun each evening and regurgitated it each morning, and was said to consume the hearts of sacrificial victims. In the creation of the world of the Fifth Sun Quetzalcóatl and Tezcatlipoca found her astride the great ocean, calling for flesh. They tore her apart to make the world safe and form the earth and sky, though Tezcatlipoca lost a foot in the struggle. To console her spirit the gods decreed that all plants must arise from her hair and skin, while her eyes and mouth became springs and caves. To continue to support life she had to be satisfied through human sacrifice.

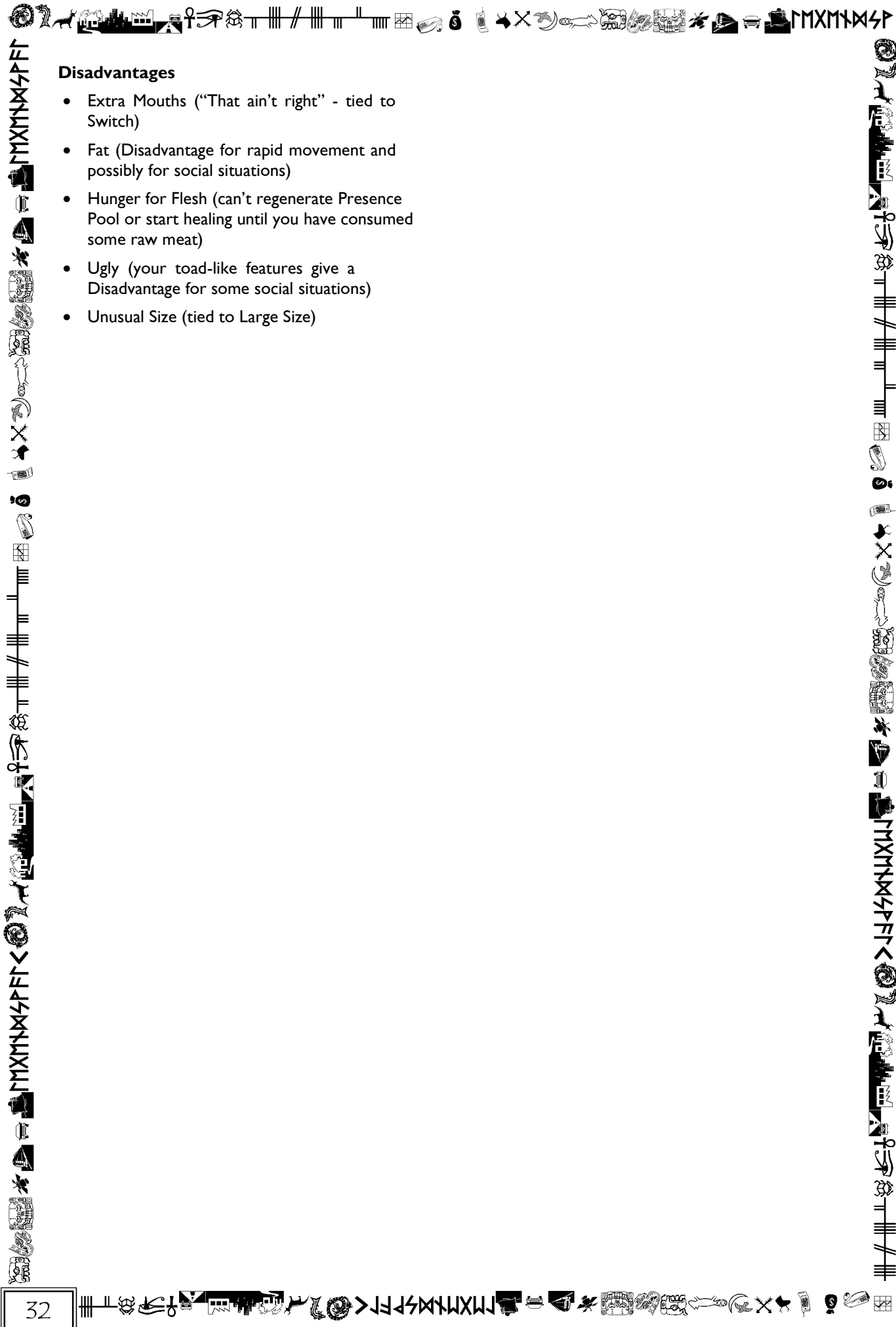
#### Required Powers

- Switch: Size Large (3)\*

#### Optional Powers

- Boost: Strength (M1)
- Boost: Endurance (M1)
- Boost: Presence (+1)
- Skill: Fighting (Unarmed)
- Switch: Armour\* (thick skin and fat)
- Switch: Devourer (you can swallow almost anything with no ill effects - assume 5 points “armour” against hazardous substances - if necessary you can just about keep yourself alive by consuming small items of various kinds, but only meat will truly assuage your hunger)
- Switch: Fangs and Claws (unarmed Base Damage is Sharp and +1)
- Switch: Extra Mouths (these appear on your elbows and knees, and can bite or eat like your normal mouth, though with 1 less base damage - allows multiple attacks with offset Disadvantages from mouths that can reasonably be brought to bear)
- Switch: Immunity to Plant Substances\* (no plant-based object will harm you, including wooden weapons and vegetable toxins)





## Disadvantages

- Extra Mouths (“That ain’t right” - tied to Switch)
- Fat (Disadvantage for rapid movement and possibly for social situations)
- Hunger for Flesh (can’t regenerate Presence Pool or start healing until you have consumed some raw meat)
- Ugly (your toad-like features give a Disadvantage for some social situations)
- Unusual Size (tied to Large Size)



# ALTERNATE SETTINGS

The setting outlined in the *Legends Walk!* rulebook is a near future in a world significantly altered by the presence of metahumans. It also suggests playing in a present-day setting that has changed very little from the world we know, as seen in many superhero comics. But perhaps you fancy something a bit different. Here are some suggestions.

For all of these the GM can fine-tune the power level. If you want to make it high-powered, which should give Metas a big effect on the setting, stick with the normal points. For subtler superhumans who are less able to overpower facets of the setting, reduce points. The lower end should be like those on p138 and p153 of the rulebook, based around 4 points and a possible Disadvantage for an extra 2.

## Dark Age Legends

A medieval setting, which could be historically accurate or not, as you wish. It's feudal Britain or Europe, so the nobles and Church are very much in charge. If people are seen to have supernatural powers stemming from pagan gods they'll have a hard time getting a positive reaction. One could bring up some interesting moral questions by making the PCs a small group who are closely controlled by the Church and state, given a measure of acceptability and sent to hunt down other Metas - some of whom are genuine monsters, and some who are just trying to get by.

## Victorian Legends

Explorers have opened the tombs of vanished cultures, and ancient powers have roused to make their presence felt in the world again. The ripples have spread, waking other pantheons too, and now all the civilised world knows of these "archaeo-heroes" and "archaeo-villains", also known as "paragons".

It's a time of great change and conflict in the world. Characters are less likely to be free agents than in a modern setting: social conditioning and exerted pressure will tend to steer them toward some cause, like service in the armed forces. Consider what would happen if Metas were thrown into some of the following.

- The colonial powers vie with each other and the native populations for control of territory and trade. Britain controls India, and with France occupies Peking. Japan is forced out of isolation and begins to modernise along western lines.
- It's a time of invention and engineering: railways, photography, the telegraph and telephone...
- Western Europe sees wars, rewriting of the map and revolutions by the people.
- It's the peak of the American West, with frontier towns, outlaws and lawmen. It's also a time of many immigrant workers from China (who face serious discrimination) and Ireland. Then there's the Civil War, and the many slaves from Africa.

## Pulp Legends

It's the 1920s and 30s, a brief period of optimism between the World Wars. It's a time when technology gives extra options, but leaves plenty of challenges for the individual. For instance, world travel is possible but there are plenty of exotic places that still keep their mysteries. There are reservoirs of information, but characters have to work for it rather than getting it delivered at the press of a button. Communication can be rapid, but only between certain points.

This probably works best with lower-powered characters. It might be the original adventures of the heroes whose survivors go on to become *The First Century* (see LW rulebook p138).

## Secret Legends

This could be set earlier in the timeline of the default setting, or it might be a parallel world of its own. It focuses on the period when Metas are just emerging, stretching it out to make dark, gritty stories where the characters are misunderstood, demonised by the media and hunted by various agencies (official and otherwise). They might even be discounted as rumours or paranormal crank stories by the public. They've banded together because the world's against them and their powers aren't enough to even the odds.

At the same time they know there are others like them who will use their abilities for wealth and power, no matter who gets hurt. No-one else can see the threat well enough to deal with it. Perhaps these people are already in positions of power, guiding efforts to weed out possible competitors.

## Supernatural warriors

There are very few beings with powers, and the world is generally unaware of them. But there have always been stories of monsters, and there has always been some truth to the legends. The PCs are a small band of individuals with special abilities, perhaps working for some organisation, who try to keep the world safe for people who would regard them as freaks.

This involves chucking out pretty much all of the LW setting, and almost certainly reducing power points to Scion level or just above. You could run it as pulp adventure, with lots of action, or mysterious and atmospheric, keeping the nature of powers slightly unclear and using them less often.

## Superworld

Fast forward to a future where the promise or threat of Scions (depending on your viewpoint) has come true. A big chunk of the population now has modest superpowers. (Alter the proportion to suit.) A few are still full-powered supers. Those with no powers are second-class citizens, and those with useless powers or just weird alterations are objects of ridicule.

The setting should be slightly pulpy sci-fi with some archaic flourishes. It's a fusion of ordinary technological progress, Meta-enhanced inventions which are still hard to mass-produce, and magic. Humanity has spread through the solar system and is making expeditions to nearby stars. Mine your favourite sci-fi movies and TV series for ordinary items of technology, slice off bits that are too advanced and add a splash of weirdness to what's left.

## Legends Ooze!

This would add on to another setting and grow to become the focus of the story. The PCs discover that there are other, older gods unknown to conventional history. This might involve the lost civilisations of Atlantis and Mu; evidence of intelligent species that ruled the world before humans; strange archaeological projects and fanatical cultists. Perhaps these older gods imbue Metas as normal, but with strange and repulsive abilities, or perhaps they actually exist physically in some form, somewhere (or both). Preventing them from taking back control of the Earth would be A Good Thing.