

# LEGACIES<sup>TM</sup>

the  
Sublime

the  
World of Darkness



MAGE<sup>TM</sup>  
THE AWAKENING



*Time is a cycle.*

*Beginning.*

*Middle.*

*End.*

*All part of the cycle.*

*Genesis mandates conclusion;  
a start necessitates a closure.*

*The time is nigh for the conclusion.*

*This is the end.*

*— Durandal, prophet of the Cult of the Doomsday Clock*

This book includes:

- 13 new legacies for players to choose from
- Extensive advice for players and Storytellers on creating their own legacies
- Two all new "technostic" legacies, for mages who mix magic and technology



ISBN 1-58846-425-3 WW40100 \$26.99 US



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**MAGE**  
THE AWAKENING



# **PARTY IN THE PARK!**

**WITH DJ LUCY SULPHATE**

**23 JUNE, 8PM**

**FIREWORKS  
START AT 9**

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# The Hanged Woman

*Louisa-Jane. Oh, Louisa-Jane. What have you done to yourself, Louisa-Jane?*

There it is again, running through her head like a mantra. Lucy suppresses it, takes a deep breath and surveys the wreckage of her home. Every picture, every ornament, the TV, the stereo, all smashed, the white stone walls daubed with obscenities, the word *bitch* dominating the end of the lounge in huge, red spray-painted letters. Lucy leans against the doorframe, her stomach like a fist in an icepack.

Picking her way across the broken glass and the slashed, smashed, overturned furniture, she maneuvers into a position where she can see into the sound room. The mixing desk has been eviscerated. Its electrical guts are strewn across the room, the decks torn apart. Five boxes of twelve-inches overturned, their contents smashed into black shards. Lucy crouches down, picks up a few fragments of vinyl, reads the bits of white label still left, one, two, three, four. "Fuck," she says. Irreplaceable.

Lucy lets them clatter to the floor, runs her hand over the stubble on the top of her head. She feels a hangover coming on. It's 8:55 a.m.

• • •

You should have been there last night. Lucy Sulphate plays the Party in the Park! An hour-long support set in the open air, three thousand people dancing under the Swansea sky, three thousand pairs of hands raised to the air, three thousand bodies addicted to bass — a magic time.

Ten minutes into the set, Lucy looked up, and saw a lone figure among the dancers, an older man, not moving, not dancing, staring right at her, mouthing words lost in the thump-thump-thump of the bass, reaching out with the weight of his malice into the revelers (*children, they are hardly more than children!*) around him.

Lucy put a hand to her mouth, bit at her thumb. The key changed, every disc becoming an incantation. The sparks began to play across Lucy's scalp again. The droplets of sweat on her head evaporated, one by one,

in little cracks of ozone. *This is my home ground*, she thought. *You're not doing this again*. Something shifted in the world.

The old man stumbled, jostled from behind. He faltered. A shove in the back. An elbow in the face. Blood running from his nose, he began to lose confidence, tried to change tack, tried something blatant, flailed out, capsized. The energy in his hands sputtered, went out. Lucy, her tears popping into steam, pushed a bit more, added a note of dissonance into the mix. Someone kicked the old man's legs out from under him. He went down, and no one saw him go, no one felt him under their feet. Lucy did not allow the crowd to care. Lucy reached out her senses. She felt him die. She went cold inside.

• • •

The kitchen's trashed, too, but Lucy finds the plastic kettle in one piece. One of her mugs is intact, and — a miracle — whoever trashed the flat didn't bother with the contents of the fridge, contented themselves with ripping the cupboards off the walls. Milk, then, and water, a salvaged teabag, and, five minutes later, Lucy has a cup of tea. She cradles the warm mug in her hands, leans against the work surface and stares at the kettle's cord. It's got about six feet of flex on it. She finishes the tea, puts the mug down, investigates the cord, disconnects it from the kettle, snaps the cord in her hands a couple of times, shakes her head, puts it down.

Then she sees the object sitting on the threshold between the kitchen and the lounge. She steps over a heap of broken plates and cups, picks it up: it's just a Kirby grip.

• • •

They met at a club, of course. Sharon and Mal brought a friend, a girl. She had cheekbones like knives and hair as black as her eyes, straight, clipped back, shining like black porcelain. The girl stared at Lucy and smiled in an odd way. When Lucy danced, the girl joined her, danced close to her, hips brushing against hips. Later, they all headed back to Lucy's for chill-out drinks. As they walked along the esplanade, the girl stayed close beside Lucy, talked to her, reached out and held



Lucy's hand in cold, graceful fingers. Lucy let the girl hold it, wondering instead at the strange fluttering in her stomach.

The first time they kissed was a week later, and after they parted lips, Lucy said, "I'm not gay." The girl withdrew her hand from Lucy's cheek, smiled, raised an eyebrow. "Who are you telling?" she said. They had sex for the first time that night, urgent, terrifying, new. Each time they made love, the girl left before sunrise. Lucy wondered if the girl had powers of her own, suspected that the girl had cast some spell on her. Each time, each morning after, Lucy checked, in every way she knew: nothing.

They began to argue. Lucy challenged the girl, asked for a little trust, asked where she went for weeks on end, confronted her with the rumors. The girl told Lucy nothing, made her own demands.

A month later, at night, by a bench in the park, it ended. Ultimatums were made. "Please, don't," said Lucy. "If you love me, you won't ask me this."

"If you loved me," said the girl, "you wouldn't need to be asked." No compromise.

The girl claimed betrayal, disappointment. Lucy begged her not to finish it like this; the girl turned cold, colder than Swansea Bay in high November, screamed the word *bitch* into the sky. She got up, turned her back on Lucy, walked away.

• • •

It's a ground floor studio flat now, but, three hundred years ago, it was a forge. As is the way of things, certain features remain, now quaint selling points for interested buyers of heritage residencies, such as a number of wrought-iron hooks and loops that still stick out of the ceiling.

Lucy stands in the doorway, still holding the hairclip, looks up and notices one of those thick metal rings on the ceiling. She drops the clip, turns and heads out through the back door, which hangs half-divorced from its hinges. She retrieves the stepladder from the shed.

• • •

Just for one day, ignoring the advice of her friends, Lucy became Louisa-Jane again. A beautiful day. Louisa-Jane looked around at the front garden, unchanged since she was a girl, felt the flowers and the privet hedge and the old street welcoming her back. A sign. She smiled, rang the doorbell. The door opened. "Louisa-Jane. Oh, Louisa-Jane. What have you done to yourself, Louisa-Jane?" was Mrs. Simms' only greeting. Louisa-Jane reached forward to embrace her mother, felt her go rigid in her arms, politely wriggle away.

"Hello, Mum," Louisa-Jane said. Her mother ushered in, hurriedly, looking up and down the street before closing the door.

Sitting on her parents' upholstery, Louisa-Jane began to feel faintly ridiculous. The shaved head, the Union Jack T-shirt, the Japanese sunglasses, the fake fur coat — they might not be so out of place in Miss Money Penny's. Here, besieged by the floral curtains and the soft furnishings and the china teacups, here Lucy felt ridiculous, naked and overdressed at the same time.

Louisa-Jane's father said nothing at all beyond the first hello, recoiled from a kiss on the cheek, made no eye contact. Louisa-Jane sat on her parents' sofa with tea and cakes and exchanged the few pleasantries she could bear, tried to explain to Mr. and Mrs. Simms what it was she had achieved these last three years. Residencies in Cardiff and Bristol, a track on a Ministry of Sound CD, a couple of remixes with a respectable showing on the club charts, some modeling. (And the rest? The magic? The room in the silver tower? The angels and the devils and the faeries and the witches? The sparks in her hair? No. Louisa-Jane had learned that lesson in the hospital).

Mr. Simms kept his silence. Mrs. Simms, politely horrified, said, "Have you thought about what you're going to do about a career?" Louisa-Jane did not answer.

By the end of the visit, Mr. Simms had solidified, sat perfectly still, gazing at the street outside, did not acknowledge when Louisa-Jane said she'd go now, got up and picked up her coat. She was shown the door by her mother. Becoming Lucy again, she walked down the path without looking back, knowing that her mother was not watching her, was looking up and down the street for fear of seeing someone she knew.

• • •

Lucy clears away the smashed remains of her life enough to stabilize the ladder, returns to the kitchen, retrieves the flex from the kettle, ties one end into a noose as best she can. She climbs, ties the loose end of the cable to the ring on the ceiling, slips the noose around her neck, tightens it a bit, hesitates, nearly gets back down again. She kicks away the ladder.

Her hands go to the noose; her legs begin to tread air. Suddenly she thinks, *No, wait, hang on* —

• • •

Lucy's eyes snap open. She is naked, sweating, standing on the balls of her feet, breathing hard, breathing rhythmically in time with the crowd of naked, painted, shaven-headed people around her, breathing in time





with a battering bass, pounding drums. A chorus of pipes begins to screech over the rhythm, and, forgetting who she is, she dances, joins with the people around her as they sacrifice themselves to the beat, whirling, coiling, coupling through their eyes.

Fire blazes across the sky. Lucy regains herself, stops dancing, mouth an “o”.

Panicking, she turns, tries to force her way through the mesh of people, to find a way off the plain. Hands grab her, lift her up, bear her over waves of hands and mouths and eyes. She struggles. A hand slips, and she falls into the mass of people, head first. She drowns. She screams.

• • •

Lucy, clothed, breathless, opens her eyes. People still dance all around her, but this is different. A party. The music has the same beat, but now the anthem is electronic, the bass vast, warm, synthetic. The floor is circular, glass all around, high above a vast city of stars — London? LA? New York? Paris? — that stretches out below for miles.

The floor lurches, slightly; outside, fire rains from the sky. Lucy goes to the glass window, watches the city below, consumed in heavenly fire. The hall is untouched. The music surrounds this place, sustains it. Lucy looks for the unseen. The music surrounds this place: when the bass line meets the fire, there’s a cloud of steam, and then nothing.

Lucy turns to the center of the hall. She sees herself on the decks, maybe twenty years older, in the middle of it all, controlling it all. The sparks play across the older head more brightly than Lucy has ever seen.

The DJ of the apocalypse catches Lucy’s eye, scratches a disc, adds another track to the mix, and Lucy is drawn to the floor, can do nothing but dance. She forgets everything; she is no one, nowhere. There is only the beat. She closes her eyes.

• • •

Lucy opens her eyes to silence, to a suburban hallway not unlike her parents’. A woman, blonde-haired, sensibly dressed, has her back to Lucy. The woman crouches over a boy of six or seven, straightening his school uniform. A gentle-looking man in a suit pulls on an overcoat. The woman kisses the boy on the cheek, kisses the man; the man takes the boy’s hand. They go out the front door. Outside, it’s a beautiful day. The woman watches as the man helps the boy into a new Volvo and drives off. She closes the door, turns back into the house. Now Lucy can see her face: it’s Louisa-Jane, a little older, but the Louisa-Jane she had always



expected to become after she left college. She walks past Lucy, doesn't see her.

Lucy, unseen, follows her for hours: Louisa-Jane cleans the kitchen, makes herself some coffee, watches some daytime TV, calls a friend for a chat, sits in an armchair, her legs coiled up beneath her, doing a crossword in a magazine. After a while, Louisa-Jane curls up around a cushion and falls gently to sleep, a quiet smile playing across her lips.

Lucy sits on the arm of the chair, reaches over and strokes Louisa-Jane's hair. Eventually, she leans against the armchair back and falls asleep, too.

• • •

Lucy wakes up, still in Louisa-Jane's house. She's alone. She gets up, walks through the house. She finds Louisa-Jane sitting at the kitchen table, all serene and soft-focus. The other Lucy, the older Lucy, sits at her left. They've got coffee. There's a third cup on the table, between them. Louisa-Jane smiles, and motions Lucy to the table. Lucy takes a breath, sits down.

"That night," says Older Lucy, "You were a stunner. I was a stunner. Small magic, yeah. But so many people. That, darlin', was fabulous."

"Bollocks," says Lucy. She runs a hand over the back of her head. "I killed a man."

Louisa-Jane looks away. "He would have killed you, you know," says Older Lucy.

"That's beside the point," says Louisa-Jane, all perky and disapproving. "Murder is murder."

"She's right," says Lucy. "It was murder."

Older Lucy shrugs. "That's just your conscience talking. Sometimes you have to," she says. "Omelette. Eggs." She mimes cracking open an egg.

Lucy shakes her head. "It was an abuse," she says. "The people — they stopped being people. Because of me. They were just a weapon."

"Everything is a weapon," says Older Lucy. "It's just a matter of degree."

There's a pause. Lucy takes a sip from her own cup. It's really good coffee.

"Look," says Lucy. "I know what's going on here. I'm dead, right?"

"Dying," says Older Lucy.

"Yeah," says Lucy. "Thought so." She looks out of the window on to a suburban street. "Not what I was expecting."

"You're not there yet," says Older Lucy. She folds her arms on the table, leans on her elbows. "So. Why'd you do it?"

Lucy bites her lip. "I don't know," she says. "It felt ...appropriate. You know?"

Older Lucy puts her tongue in her cheek.

Lucy looks away. "Oh. Yeah. Right." She takes a swig of coffee. "So you know. So you tell me."

"All right," says Older Lucy. She counts off the reasons on her fingers. "One, you've already realized that playing dance music in clubs is not enough. It's old. You're 10 years too late. Two, you've begun to realize that writing and recording music is not enough, because — and this is the killer — you're quite good at it. But you're not brilliant. You're just OK. You sing a bit, you can play all right, but that little light of genius, it's not there. You're just good enough to know how good you're not. And that galls you."

She shifts in her chair, warms to her theme. "Three, you've had a bad relationship. You'll get over that one. Mostly. You'll need to change the locks, though." Lucy stares at the table. The older woman continues. "Four, you blame the magic for all of it. Because it was only after you got it that you started wanting to succeed in music. Without the magic, you wouldn't have tried at all. Without it, you'd have settled for Grade Nine piano, a two-one chemistry degree, a job, a house, a decent bloke, and by now, you'd have become Louisa-Jane here."

Louisa-Jane smiles.

"All right," says Lucy, "you've got me. So?"

"Consider," says Older Lucy. "For you, the real problem with the magic is that its success cannot be public. You, poppet, need to make a real, public difference. Because of Mum and Dad." The archmage points a finger at her younger self. "To top it all, now you're a killer."

Lucy scowls, scuffs her heels against her chair.

"You're just tired," says the older woman. "And still a bit drunk. You didn't really want to go through with it. You know that. You don't want to die."

Lucy looks into her coffee cup. "And if I keep going?"

"You need to find a bit of direction."

"So?"

"You know Wyn, right?"

"Bloke lives in a caravan out at Langland? Writes novels?"

The older Lucy nods. "Have a word with him. Tell him about this. Ask him about Pygmalian."

"Pygmalian?"

"Mm-hmm."

"And then what?" Lucy suddenly feels short of breath.



"Then he takes you on as a pupil, and you get your way out. One day, my love, you're going to shake the world to bits and put it back together again, your own way. It won't be the way you wanted to do it, but it doesn't matter. You're going to be one of the greats. You're going to build Jerusalem, darling. Because *you* are going to be *me*." For a split second, sparks play across the older Lucy's face.

"You're really bloody conceited, you know that?" says Lucy. "So what about her?" She casts a thumb at Louisa-Jane.

"Oh, I just made her up for effect," says Older Lucy. Lucy looks back across the table. Louisa-Jane is gone. The setting has changed. The table is on the plain, in the night, on a circle of flat barren earth, surrounded by the same blank-eyed, shaven-headed naked dancers, who wait, tensed, breathing in time to the rising beat of enormous drums.

Older Lucy rolls her eyes. Then she nods. "Get up," she says.

Lucy coughs, gets to her feet. Her breathing is becoming labored. "This isn't set, is it?" she says. "The future, I mean?"

"Quite possibly not."

"I'm not going to kill again," says Lucy.

Older Lucy leans forward, kisses Lucy on the top of her head. "I'm so sorry," she says.

"It's exactly what I said."

The older woman stands back. "Now. You want to live?"

Lucy licks her lips again, runs a hand over her head. "Yeah."

"Dance," says the older woman. The bass kicks in, and the crowd rushes into the circle like a wave. Nearly engulfed, Lucy struggles for air, loses sight of her older self. She dances, and keeps dancing for what seems to her like a day and a night, and she is not Lucy, not anything, just a blank-eyed body, writhing in thrall to the beat.


Her mind drains away. For a moment, she is back in the glass tower. The fire rains down. The skyscrapers burn, but do not fall. They become fire, shining, unconsumed. Sparks rise from them, back into the sky, like thistledown. Her brain is consumed in light. *The future is not fixed*, Louisa-Jane whispers in her ear.

...

Lucy comes to herself, to chaos. The blood in her head is going at 160 bpm, gabba style. Colors pop in her







field of vision like fireworks. Her mouth opens wide. Half-screaming, she gulps in air. Her vision clears. Lucy realizes she's hanging upside down. She flails her arms, starts to swing back and forth, begins to spin around. Nausea.

She manages to control her breathing, gets a grip, stops swinging.

She puts a hand to her neck. "Christ," she says. "I'm not dead." Her throat is sore; her voice is hoarse. Craning upwards, she sees that she's hanging by the flex, tied around her right ankle.

• • •

Eventually, she gets herself down. It's 9:15 a.m. Lucy discovers that no one got to her clothes or to the bathroom.

Lucy examines herself in the bathroom mirror. She has a red weal around her neck. And a purple lipstick mark on her head. She pushes the rising panic back down into her chest, resolves not to think too hard about it. Then she vomits into the toilet bowl.

She showers, dresses, gives her head a fresh shave, puts on some makeup. And then she wraps a silk scarf around her neck, and goes out to the car, looking for her way out.



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PRINTED IN CANADA.



# LEGACIES<sup>TM</sup>

## the SUBLINE

### *Table of Contents*

<i>Prologue</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Clavicularius</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Daksha</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Daoine</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>The Fallen Pillar</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>The House of Ariadne</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>The Pygmalion Society</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>The Scions of God</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>The Sodality of the Tor</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Stone Scribes</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Threnodists</i>	<i>107</i>
<i>Transhuman Engineers</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>The Cult of the Doomsday Clock</i>	<i>128</i>
<i>The Fangs of Mara</i>	<i>138</i>
<i>Appendix: Shaping the Soul</i>	<i>148</i>



# INTRODUCTION: REACHING FOR THE SUPERNAL

*The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword, are portions of eternity, too great for the eye of man.*  
— William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Mages know the world doesn't work the way most people think it does. A mage's soul has Awakened to another reality — a Supernal World of limitless power. Because mages' souls have touched this other, superior reality, mages can change the everyday world around them — the phony, Fallen World of common perception — by acts of will. Various tools, from magic wands to words and runes of power, can help a mage cast spells. Other mages find a hint of Supernal truth in myths, folklore, religious practices, occult traditions or even modern art and science. They use such ideas to guide and assist their magic. Such trappings have no power of their own, though. Fundamentally, mages need nothing more than their own wills and the power of their souls. They are willworkers — the Awakened.

Some mages learn to change their own souls in order to gain special powers. The Fallen World doesn't like magic. Unless a willworker takes special care to conceal her magic, reality sometimes snaps back in a supernatural disruption called a Paradox. Performing magic in front of ordinary people — the Sleepers — is especially dangerous. Mages can acquire a few supernatural powers that don't cause Paradoxes by reshaping their souls. These powers are called attainments. It's easier to craft your soul if you have the help of a mage who already did it, so willworkers copy the attainments devised by earlier mages. The soulcrafting methods for particular attainments become schools of magic. The Awakened call these magical schools or traditions Legacies, because each one is the legacy of a great mage of the past who found a new way to craft her own soul.

Some Legacies are very old. They pass on traditions and magic whose origins have vanished into legend. Other Legacies began recently, invented by willworkers who explore new ways of working magic or who pursue soul-altering quests and passions. Mages continue to invent new ways to craft their souls, though no one can say whether their new techniques and attainments will endure to deserve the name of "Legacy."

The **Legacies** series explores these societies of mages who craft their own souls. Legacies are extremely diverse. Some Legacies enjoy great respect from other willworkers. Other Legacies become so hated that membership is a death sentence if other Awakened learn about it. These magical societies can be large or small, secretive or self-promoting, tightly organized or utterly chaotic. Legacies come from every part of the world; some of them stay local, while others spread far and wide. In willworkers' search for the Supernal traces hidden in the Fallen World, mages create Legacies based on an endless variety of occult, mystical or religious notions.

## *The Sublime*

The 13 Legacies in this book all express a particular theme: the sublime. "The sublime" is a kind of grandeur that reaches beyond the merely human scale. The sublime induces awe, and maybe fear as well. The starry sky — the sort of sky people in cities never see — is sublime in its remote, inhuman splendor. So is a thunderstorm in the mountains. The "Hallelujah Chorus" is sublime. A soldier who



throws himself on a grenade to save his buddies brings the sublime into the moral sphere. But the atomic bomb is sublime, too, in a dreadful way. When Robert Oppenheimer, head of the Manhattan Project, saw the first mushroom cloud rise over New Mexico, he could only express the awe and terror he felt for his creation by quoting a Hindu scripture: "I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds." In the realm of the sublime, the divine and the demonic can merge.

Every mage had her life changed by one sublime moment when her soul Awoke and witnessed the Supernal World. Awakening is sometimes wonderful, sometimes horrible, always shattering. And then the new mage fell back to plain old Earth. The mages in these Legacies, however, don't accept the limits of human existence in the Fallen World. Even magic isn't enough. One way or another, they reach for something superhuman or otherworldly, diabolically terrifying or divinely glorious — or all of these at once. They want to change the world, or escape to a different one. They want to become gods, or think they already are. They break the bonds of time and death, or pursue strange and awesome secrets even their fellow mages can barely imagine.

When you use these Legacies in your game, therefore, try to create a mood of awe — both as the player of such a character or the Storyteller. Remember that these characters want to do, make or *become* something amazing, even by the standards of the Awakened. This transcendent goal shapes a Legacy member's motives and actions. Look for chances to astound other people — Sleepers or fellow mages — with feats of magic and revelations of a world that's wider and weirder than they thought. The mysteries are especially wondrous or frightful, and solving them brings stunning revelations. When members of these Legacies do good, their virtue and compassion make other mages feel unworthy before such holiness. When these Legacies members do evil, other mages shudder at the depths of their malice. Either way, when characters encounter the Sublime, they will remember how privileged they are to be Awakened and live in this greater world that most people never see.

Because that's an important part of what **Mage: The Awakening** is all about. It isn't **Mage: The Blowing Stuff Up** or **Mage: The Brilliant Strategic Use Of Powers**. The game certainly includes opportunities for clever use of magic or supernatural brawling, but **Mage** is about so much more. The

Awakened earn their self-given title by opening their eyes to possibilities most people can't imagine. The Awakened know how good or evil they could be, how *powerful* they could be. The Sublime embrace these possibilities.

## *New Shapes for the Soul*

**Legacies:** **The Sublime** offers 13 new Legacies for your **Mage: The Awakening** chronicles. Eleven of them are fully suitable for characters to join.

**Clavicularius** mages practice Goetia, the art of conjuring demons from one's own sinful urges and moral failings. Most willworkers condemn this sinister and dangerous art, but the proud and daring *Key-Bearers* wrestle with their own evil and force their inner demons to serve righteous ends . . . assuming they win the struggle.

The **Daksha** proclaim that they are the next step in human evolution, a *Coming Race* of Awakened supermen destined to populate a new-risen Atlantis and inherit the world. Their bizarre physical mutations show the Daksha have become something other than human — but what? And who, really, directs this messianic cult?

The **Daoine** strive to master the arts of blessing — and cursing. Like the faerie-lords from whom they take their name, the *Good Folk* wreak terrible vengeance for mortal crimes. Or bad manners. Or because they're paid. Nevertheless, the helpless and the forgotten may find the Daoine their only hope for justice in a World of Darkness.

The **Fallen Pillar** seeks spiritual ecstasy in physical denial and pain. The *Exultants* meet the world's temptations and torments with the same mad, joyous laugh. Few indeed are the mages who reject the Fallen World so completely as these joyous ascetics.

The **House of Ariadne** roams the city streets in search of secrets. These willworkers follow tangled threads of Fate through streets and alleys, tunnels and buildings. The *Metropolitans* say the city talks to them through signs and omens — and it tells them everything that happens within its bounds.

**Pygmaliens** believe that great art carries a breath of Supernal influence that nudges sleeping souls toward Awakening. Each Pygmalian is an artist — but not a *great* artist. The *Sculptors*, therefore, try to create the artists who can change the world, molding their own minds and those of people around them as they seek to inspire genius.



**Scions of God** believe they know a way to reclaim the Supernal World. Through hieratic costumes and sacred rites, the *Masquers* hope to transform themselves into angelic creatures that can ascend to the Supernal World after corporeal death. In the meantime, these Legacy members claim a divine authority to police and guide the spirit world.

The **Sodality of the Tor** centers on a single, sacred hill, Glastonbury Tor, though this ancient Legacy has spread around the world. The mystical, pagan rites of the *Spiral Walkers* call forth the soul's latent divinity from mage and mortal alike, so their Sleeping co-religionists can feel — if only for one moonlit dance — what it's like to see through Awakened eyes.

**Stone Scribes** devote their lives and magic to a task that seems odd and obscure: recording the mystical True Names of the dead and dying. The *Namers'* rune-engraved stone tablets preserve the essence of the dead against time: a useful relic for some magic, but not astounding. Through their tablets, however, the *Namers* pursue a strange and secret plan.

**Threnodists** believe they unite modern physics and ancient magic in a bizarre, hybrid science. The *Wailers* seem insane, with their talk of quantum demons, disintegrated egos, mystical math and parallel worlds. Still, their space-warping magic works — and they can prove everything they claim through rigorous, scientific experiment.

**Transhuman Engineers** also seek an intersection between magic and technology. They believe the ever-increasing pace of science and technology leads to a Singularity where humanity is transformed into unimaginable new forms. Most mages dismiss the Engineers as mere Awakened gadget-heads, but the *Prime Movers* believe they drive the world to a Supernal consummation.

Two more Legacies are “Left-Handed Path” schools of magic hated and feared by other mages. For the players' characters, these Legacies are enemies; any mages who join them find they are soul-corrupting traps. Nevertheless, evil and horror can achieve their own forms of otherworldly grandeur.

The **Cult of the Doomsday Clock**, a young Legacy born in a storm of Paradox, argues that only the absolute destruction of the Fallen World can free mages' souls to unite with the Supernal. The weird and dreadful *Ticktock Men* bend time and unravel reality as they seek the hour of the world's ending.

The **Fangs of Mara** learn to wield the powers of horrific entities from the Abyss beyond reality. These mages claim that the only way to defeat reality's most horrific foes is to study their powers and turn them against themselves. Since the *Nightmares* use their powers to spread soul-upheaving terror, however, most mages loathe them as much as the Abyssal horrors themselves.

Finally, **Shaping the Soul** gives advice and inspiration for players and Storytellers who want to devise their own Legacies. This Appendix expands and comments upon the information about Legacies already given in **Mage: The Awakening**.

## *Inspiration*

The Sublime is a mood, more than an idea. You either feel it or you don't. Therefore, there aren't really any books or movies you can consult to see how to bring the sublime into your game. What one person finds awe-inspiring, another person finds pretentious, ugly or absurd. Any suggestion about “sublime” in magic would be especially useless: many occult writers show a perverse anti-genius at treating transcendent, mystical concepts in a dull, pedantic or incoherent way. In any case, **Mage: The Awakening** takes an oblique approach to the mystical, occult or mythological ideas of the real world.

Instead, read a lot, watch a lot and listen a lot. Find out what makes you feel that sense of awe and wonder. Then ask yourself *why* a book, movie, work of art or historical incident gives you that feeling. If you can isolate that element and filter it through your own imagination, you can bring it to your character or your game.



# THE CLAVICULARIUS

*Master thy demons, boy, lest they master you.*

The Clavicularius, or the Keepers of the Keys, have a reputation as power-mad mages who delve into demonology and the darkest recesses of their own minds. They flirt with madness and the Left-Hand Path at every turn of their enlightenment. Perhaps most damning of all, they cannot claim that reputation as untrue, though it is myopic.

Mages who embrace this legacy certainly do engage in Goetia, and are highly interested in the deepest mysteries of the human mind, as it pertains to wickedness, vice and weakness. Many who seek to master their inner demons stumble from narrow, treacherous discipline and find themselves walking a Left-Hand Path.

Nevertheless, the Clavicularius Legacy offers great rewards for mages who have sufficient will and courage. Elder Solomonists become mages of great and terrible power, tall bastions of the kind of virtue that comes not from denying evil within, but from confronting it, defeating it and forging it into a weapon — something that the mages control, rather than being controlled.

Clavicularii consider themselves modern-day inheritors of King Solomon, the virtuous king who summoned demons to build a great temple and palace in which he ruled in wisdom. The Clavicularius mage follows the lessons Solomon left behind. The mage, having confronted her own vices, feels qualified to confront the sins of everyone else. As a result, some initiates of this Legacy seem fearsomely judgmental; others take a softer, more compassionate approach but, nevertheless, do not permit other people to compromise the initiates' morals.

A Clavicularius initiate often seeks to bring out the best in those around him. The concept of ordering an infant cut in half in order to flush out which woman is really its mother is archetypal of Clavicularian thought: force a moral crisis in order to expose deception. At any given time, a Clavicularius may work on a "pet project," putting a Sleeper through a crucible with the intention of strengthening her, by whatever means necessary. A corporate executive who finds she must deal with a business crisis and the debilitating illness of a child at home may be going through such a crucible. A Clavicularius rarely uses his magic for the overt good of a person he tests; most of the time, the Clavicularius alters the world around the one he seeks to strengthen, forcing his subject to find the strength to overcome her vices and weaknesses of character.

A Keeper of the Keys delves deeply into her own psyche, seeking out her greatest weaknesses; such a mage usually knows her personal Vice.

Indeed, not only are Clavicularii aware of their Vices, but the Solomonists make a point to carry out dialogues with their Vices, through their mastery of Goetic magics.

These mages make extensive use of the Keys of Solomon, a system of sigils, pentacles and seals meant to invoke, control or banish demons that correspond to the moral and psychological weaknesses of humans and mages. Sleeper occultists believe the Keys themselves have power. The Awakened understand the true meaning of these symbols. The sigils are not mystic in and of themselves; rather, they are a shorthand description for demons that personify different sins and desires, codified by Goetic mages of long ago. Mages can use these sigils, and the devils to which they refer, as "standard forms" when the mages want to wrestle or evoke their inner demons. The Legacy's most popular oblation is the Rite of Castigation, wherein a demon that embodies a mage's Vice or derangement is symbolically invoked under a Solomonian name, punished and banished, reaffirming the mage's power and will.

**Parent Path:** Mastigos or Silver Ladder

**Nickname:** Solomonists or Key-Bearers

**Orders:** Though every order knows the power and terrible responsibility that comes from the practices of this Legacy, the orders also know that this Legacy has produced many Accursed. Therefore, the orders watch known Solomonists carefully, for fear of the chaos that results when a Key-Bearer calls up what she cannot put down again.

That said, fully a quarter of the Key-Bearers were not originally Mastigos, but found their way into the Legacy's sanctums through their membership in the Silver Ladder. The remnants of the Vox Draconis remember how these arts once gave humanity power over demons, forcing humankind to face and overcome its own weaknesses and evil. Furthermore, this Legacy has ties to King Solomon, if only through myth and archetype. To the Silver Ladder, Solomon provides a model of the Awakened ruling over those who yet Sleep: stern yet wise, his power guided by justice.

Members of the Adamantine Arrow initiated into the Clavicularius defend the Awakened and Sleepers alike from the depredations of demons and the Scelesti. These mages follow the example set by Les Enfants de Sévérité, the famous cabal of demon-hunters who founded the Clavicularius. On the other hand, the Legacy's implications for psychotherapy



interest Solomonists of the Free Council, who usually deal in Goetic demons with a distinctly modern cast. Such Goeticists like to classify the various inner demons in terms of Jungian archetypes or Freudian complexes, and experiment with ways to bind and banish each kind of entity.

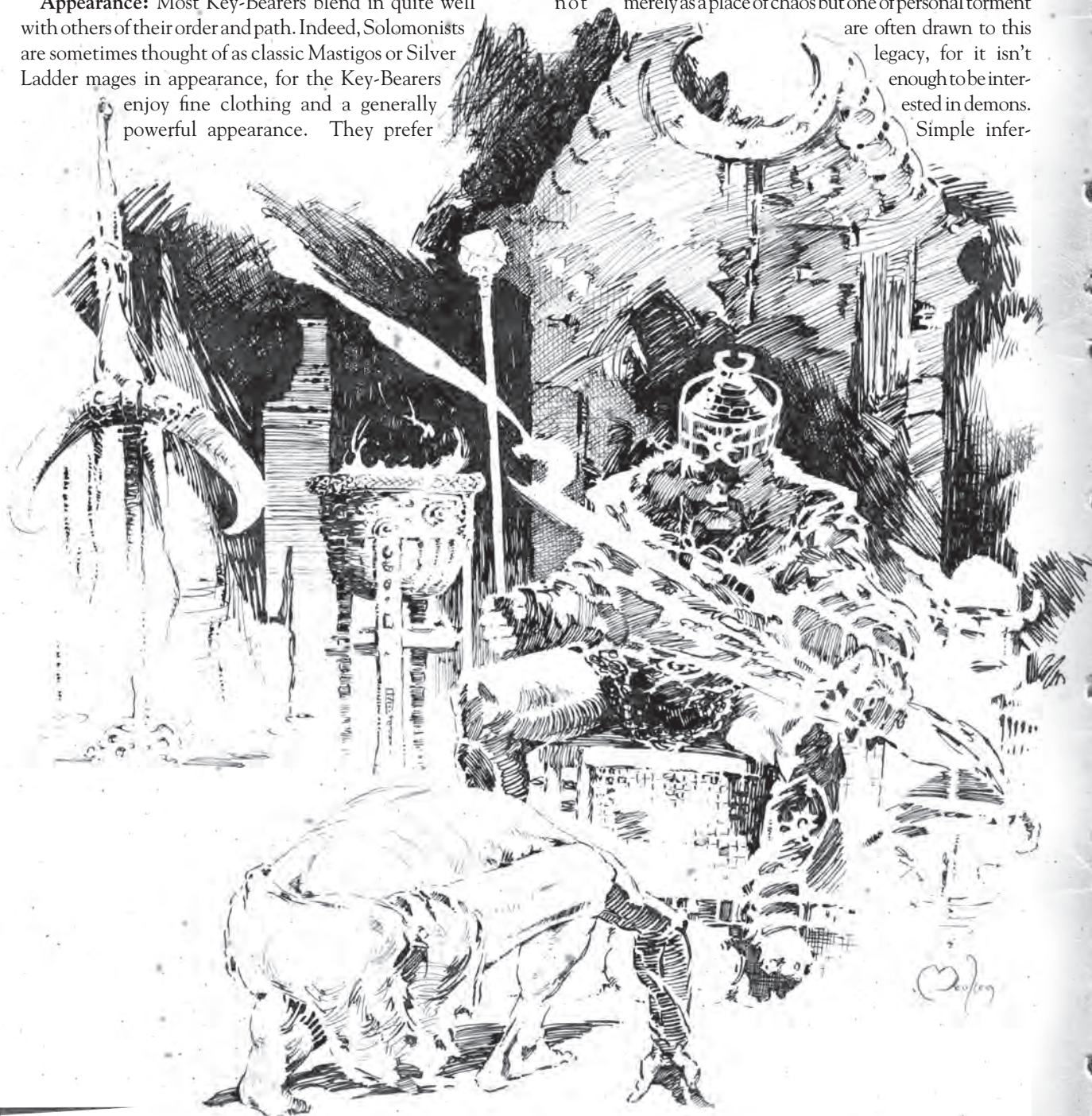
Those Guardians of the Veil initiated into the Clavicularius respect the heights of virtue to which this Legacy aspires. Most such mages are themselves usually seeking to overcome their own weaknesses and to understand the powers of fallen mages who may threaten the secrecy of the Awakened. Mysterium members who find their way among the Solomonists are usually drawn by the promise of secrets; these mages are amply rewarded for their dedication.

**Appearance:** Most Key-Bearers blend in quite well with others of their order and path. Indeed, Solomonists are sometimes thought of as classic Mastigos or Silver Ladder mages in appearance, for the Key-Bearers enjoy fine clothing and a generally powerful appearance. They prefer

expensive, tailored clothing, usually the height of political or business fashion. Among the Clavicularius, the idea of a "power tie" is often taken quite seriously.

Nearly every member of the Clavicularius bears some article of jewelry inscribed with one of the Keys of Solomon. Additionally, many of the Clavicularius prefer the use of regalia, usually a regal robe or mantle and some kind circlet or coronet, when performing extensive Goetic magic. Clavicularii like symbols of their own inherent kingship over their own fears.

**Background:** Mages with an interest in demonology and Goetia naturally find their way into Clavicularius company. More importantly, however, Mastigos envision Pandemonium not merely as a place of chaos but one of personal torment are often drawn to this legacy, for it isn't enough to be interested in demons. Simple infer-





nalism has no place among the Clavicularius—a Solomonist's demons are always personal, whether a source of power or a means of overcoming deep shame.

**Organization:** The Clavicularius are organized only by levels of attainment: one is considered a Seeker at the first attainment, a Keeper at the second and an Elder at the third. Most Clavicularius know several others, even if they don't live in the same area, and maintain regular contact, especially with their tutors. Intra-Legacy relations are strange to outsiders, for Solomonists seem absolutely frank about the kinds of things other mages seek to keep from others—failings, nightmares and other weaknesses.

However, the Clavicularius are not some kind of mutual sympathy society—they have nothing but scorn for the failings of their brethren, unless those failings are fought and overcome. Each victory is celebrated, but each failure is met with contempt and scornful advice on how to do better. Outsiders sometimes compare the Clavicularius to a group of extreme sports enthusiasts for their daring and *braggadocio*, constantly challenging each other to excel and rewarding those who do with prestige and admiration.

Because of this attitude, the Clavicularius don't turn away mages who are deeply flawed or psychologically unstable. A mage who enters the Legacy as someone ruled by rage or who bears terrible phobias finds that his fellow mages laud his victories greatly. The mage who suffered from crippling mental illness and defeated that terrible demon has more right to his pride than one who overcame simple fears and childhood anxieties.

**Suggested Oblations:** The Rite of Castigation. Meditation on past moments of weakness. Engaging in psychological therapy (either as the therapist or as a patient). Scribing the Keys of Solomon in a durable medium (such as stone, metal or enamel).

**Concepts:** Asylum inmate, demon hunter, Goeticist, high-society witch-finder, psychologist, seeker after dark lore, politician, district attorney.

## History

The Clavicularius credit King Solomon himself as the inventor of their attainments and spiritual founder of their Legacy. Indeed, the Keepers of the Keys often perform their initiations in Hebrew. Some linguists among the Solomonists question whether these Hebrew incantations are genuine hold-overs or latter-day additions meant to make the rites seem more "authentic." Most Key-Bearers say that honoring the legendary mage-king as their Legacy's exemplar matters more than niggling details of historical exactitude.

## Les Enfants de Sévérité

The first recorded gathering of Clavicularius mages who identified themselves as such was Les Enfants de Sévérité, or the Children of Severity. This cabal of Solomonists formed

in 17th-century France to investigate rumors of infernalism in the court of Louis XIV. Les Enfants consisted of one member from each of the four Atlantean orders.

Though the cabal found nothing more than titillating occultism and a bit of clumsy political poisoning among the Sleepers, Les Enfants did discover a trio of Scelesti who used "Black Masses" as a cover for their own goals. Les Enfants are upheld as role models for young Clavicularius mages: unrelentingly virtuous, magnificently terrifying and goetically adept.

To this day, most Solomonists trace their lineage of initiation back to one of the four mages of Les Enfants. Though many of the mages attracted to Les Enfants quickly left, finding their ways distasteful (and perhaps a bit too frightening), the four mages trained 11 more skilled Goeticists, who went on to initiate others into the Legacy.

## La Voisin and the Throned Devil Maxim

Les Enfants were drawn to the court of Louis XIV by the reputation of La Voisin, a woman who claimed she was a powerful sorceress. Madame de Montespan, a onetime mistress of the king, hired La Voisin to increase her political standing through black magic. Though La Voisin had no discernable powers, the court attracted the notice of people who did.

Since that time, all Clavicularius mages teach their pupils the Throned Devil Maxim: *Power Attracts Darkness; Darkness Attracts Power*. Infernal entities and mages are attracted to people who wield worldly power, and those who already have wealth, rank and authority are the people most likely to seek more power from demons.

As a result, Clavicularii who hunt demons as well as infernalists seek their prey among the rich, elite and powerful. The Clavicularii know that the poor and middle class rarely have dealings with the powers of Hell; and if those of these social strata do, they rarely remain in those strata of society for long.

## Recent Events

The next upswelling in membership came about because of trends in Sleeper society. Young mages who Awakened in the 1970s and 1980s spent their youth bombarded with demonic imagery in music, comic books, movies and other mass media. In fact, quite a few of these young mages found their way to Awakening while trying to perform "Satanic rituals" out of some paperback purchased at a mall bookstore or cobbled together from movies and album lyrics. Not surprisingly, many of these young mages showed a tremendous interest in demons and demonology.



More than a few mentors found this interest ill-amusing, but they found a way to discourage rash inquiries into the infernal: the mentors sent their students for a year or two of training under the Clavicularius. The mentors knew full well the effect that Solomonist discipline would have on thrill-seeking young mages.

Most of these apprentices learned the intended lesson. Foolhardy young mages are more than willing to brave the threats of Hell itself, but they are less prepared to look into the face of their own greatest failings, weaknesses and traumas (or, to be honest, undertake the hard work required by this strenuously disciplined Legacy). However, some of these mages did stay and today form an important cohort in the Legacy's membership.

## *Society and Culture*

Mages initiated into the Clavicularius must accept that they are flawed, broken, weak beings. Rather than taking this as an excuse for humility or despair, however, Solomonists consider weakness a challenge. The sacred work of a Key-Bearer is not only to repair this faulty foundation, but to build a mighty edifice of the strengthened and Awakened soul upon it.

The practices of Goetia are incredibly hubris-ridden. Most Goeticists quickly descend into paranoia and self-loathing, faced as they are by their own

failings on such a routine basis. A demon that embodies one's own innate cowardice is impossible to deceive with bluster, and the demon that gives form to the internal voice that whispers to a mage that he deserved the abuse he suffered from his parents cannot be ignored.

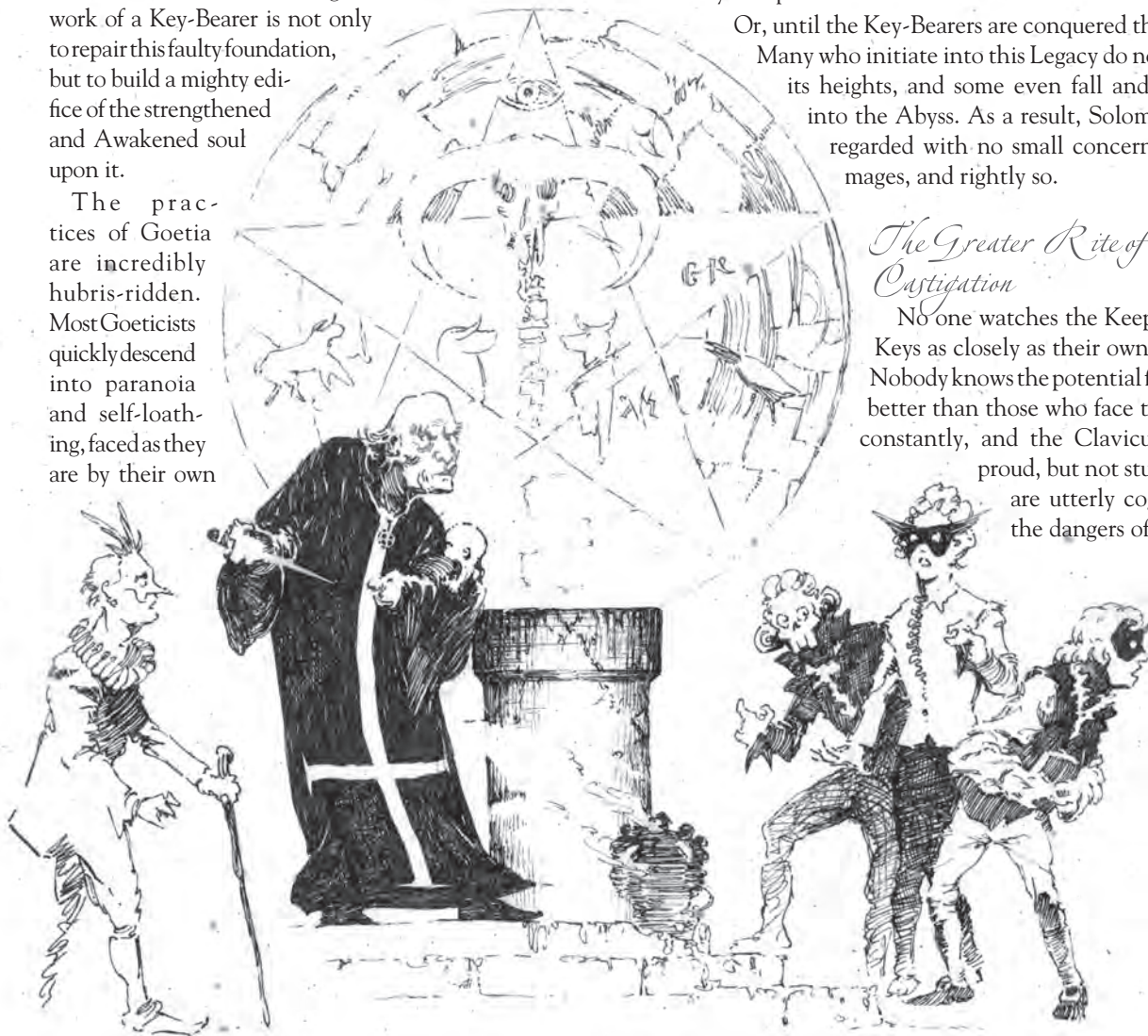
This is where the Clavicularius stand above other practitioners of Goetia. Key-Bearers are not content simply to face and acknowledge their failings. Instead, they try to hammer every weakness into a tool for their own use. A cowardly Goeticist claims that his fear is a valuable tool for ensuring survival; a Solomonist maintains that it is an opportunity to learn the true essence of valor, allowing her the chance to confront fear tangibly, over and again, until she masters it. That a bound and mastered demon of cowardice gives power over everyone else's latent timidity is a bonus.

People who encounter Clavicularius mages often find them arrogant and egotistical. The Key-Bearers say they are arrogant because they deserve to be. Who else confronts their own failings with such determination, throwing themselves against their weaknesses time and again, until they conquer them?

Or, until the Key-Bearers are conquered themselves. Many who initiate into this Legacy do not achieve its heights, and some even fall and plummet into the Abyss. As a result, Solomonists are regarded with no small concern by other mages, and rightly so.

## *The Greater Rite of Castigation*

No one watches the Keepers of the Keys as closely as their own brethren. Nobody knows the potential for disaster better than those who face that threat constantly, and the Clavicularius are proud, but not stupid. They are utterly cognizant of the dangers of Goetia.





As a result, the Clavicularius evolved a form of checks and balances that would astound most mages for its invasiveness. The Greater Rite of Castigation is based on the oblation practiced by all Solomonists. However, rather than simply a ritual for re-establishing a sense of self, the Greater Rite is a literal summoning of the demons of a mage's psyche for other Solomonists to interrogate and punish. The subject of this rite is necessarily present when the demon is summoned and imprisoned within a warding. At that point, however, the mage is banished from the room, to allow those gathered to interrogate his personal demon.

The Greater Rite of Castigation is always led by an initiate of the third attainment, but other Clavicularii usually attend. These rites are not performed with any particular frequency; any elder of the Clavicularius may propose a Greater Rite for any member of the Legacy.

As might be imagined, the Greater Rite is a harrowing experience for a young mage. If his internal demons are found to be too strong or powerful, he is subject to the admonitions of his seniors, who will gather to discuss the problem with him and help him find ways to strengthen himself.

Though initiates of the Legacy are not required to follow such admonitions, they have ample reason to do so: mages who fail to acknowledge the findings of the interrogators and follow their advice risks being branded *Scelesti* by their fellow Clavicularius. If there is one thing a Consilium takes seriously, it is a charge of *Nefandi* from mages of this Legacy.

Despite the emotional risks (or perhaps because of them), most Clavicularius mages do not wait until their actions arouse concern in their elders. Instead, they approach their elders themselves to request the Greater Rite of Castigation, seeking the wisdom of their brethren in order to better ascertain and repair their own weaknesses.

Younger Clavicularius sometimes develop something of a thrill-seeker's attitude to the Greater Rite. They take pride in ferreting out their own failings, so that they can take steps to rectify them. Some among the latest generation

of Solomonist mages have even taken to tattooing their bodies with the Solomonian sigil of the demon that most strongly embodies their Vice. Older Key-Bearers frown on such displays. They feel the tattoo smacks of defining one's self by one's weakness, rather than the conquering thereof, but such tattooing has not been forbidden.

### *The Astral Plane*

The Clavicularius know that Goetic demons exist because those weaknesses exist within the mage himself, but the Astral Plane also holds many other entities. The Solomonists spend much time in exploring the Astral Plane, particularly the domain of Temenos, which they regard as most closely analogous to the collective soul of humanity. Astral journeys form the cornerstone of the Legacy's practice. Indeed, all initiations within the Legacy happen upon the astral plane, within the Great Temple of Solomon.





The Great Temple of Solomon is not, of course, the actual temple of the legendary king. Rather, it is an astral construct created as a haven for Clavicularius gatherings. The four members of Les Enfants created the temple construct in the 17th century, as a place where the initiations of their apprentices might take place. It has stood since then, bolstered by Clavicularius masters.

The Temple itself is a sprawling edifice of gleaming white marble. Ten feet off the ground, along every wall, runs a foot-wide strip of gold etched with the various seals and pentacles of the Keys of Solomon. Many young Clavicularius learn the sigils' meanings here.

These halls are far from bustling, however. At most times, only a mage and his mentor are visiting. Occasionally, a pair might see another figure gliding along some far-off corridor, going about her business. Large gatherings of Goeticists rarely happen, for they are driven by their own sense of right and wrong, and attend to their own goals. Initiations of a new member form a notable exception: tutors put out the word about a new Key-Bearer, and their acquaintances in the Legacy visit the Temple to size up the new recruit.

### *The Regal Self*

A central tenet of the Clavicularius is that of "the Regal Self." During Solomonists' initiation into the order, they perceive themselves seated upon a throne, watching themselves pay fealty, and kneeling before a throne, kowtowing to themselves. This marks the first step toward forging the mage into a Clavicularius. The experience remains with a Key-Bearer throughout her life.

In this fashion, the Legacy hammers home its ideal: the base, unworthy parts of the self must submit to those numinous, virtuous essences of the self. Throughout the rest of the apprentices' training, Clavicularius mentors question their apprentices about their actions and ask, "Was that worthy of the person upon the throne or the person groveling before it?"

Clavicularii seek always to measure themselves by this standard. Any member who ceases to do so has begun to fall into the Abyss. To be sure, the tenets of humility that many magicians prize as necessary for enlightenment do tend to be rare among the Clavicularius, who see themselves as righteous sorcerer-kings. They are regal and benevolent in all things – or at least, they attempt to be.

### *Induction*

The Clavicularius do not share their Mysteries with just any one. Though they are often willing to teach the techniques of Goetia to mages they know and trust, not every Goeticist will be permitted to join the ranks of the Clavicularius. In fact, very few are welcome among the Keepers of the Keys without close examination and training.

A Goeticist who wants to learn the techniques of the

Clavicularius must demonstrate her facility in at least the basics of Goetic practice. More than that, she needs a reputation as someone who struggles to achieve virtue. (The tendency of mages to watch potential apprentices to determine their Wisdom certainly applies here.)

An apprentice who meets a mentor's strict standards will be welcomed into the fold. The first initiation into the rites of the Clavicularius is a harrowing experience that requires the ingestion of a powerful hallucinogen. The mentor shapes these hallucinations, using the Mind Arcanum to craft images of deeper and deeper terror and suffering. All the while, the apprentice answers questions designed to test her knowledge of Goetia, and trick her into revealing less-than-virtuous reasons for its pursuit.

The ordeal culminates in a journey to the Astral realms, to the Great Temple of Solomon in the Temenos. Once there, the apprentice finds herself at the foot of a great golden throne, sublime in its geometry and shape. A strange experience then occurs, unique to the experience of forging one's soul into the first attainment of this Legacy. The student is simultaneously seated upon the throne and forced to kneel at the base of the throne, bowing and swearing fealty to herself.

Each initiation further into the Mysteries of the Legacy begins with a Greater Rite of Castigation, allowing senior Key-Bearers to judge the member's self-mastery before initiation. The soulcrafting of the Clavicularius is directed towards a specific end — the utter mastery of the mage's weaknesses and sins.

### *Magic of the Clavicularius*

Standard Goetic magic is explained on pp. 323–326 of **Mage: The Awakening**. The Key-Bearers developed a variety of other rites and spells within their Legacy, which they teach only to initiates.

At Mind 4, Clavicularius mages learn to aid others in confronting their flaws of spirit, casting the "Goetic Struggle" upon another person. Some Key-Bearers use the techniques of religious castigation or psychotherapy to help a subject bulwark herself against her personified sin. Conversely, the mage can project her own defeated Goetic demon on to another person and tell it to work its temptation.

**Clavicularius Rote: Solomonian Authority**

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Intimidation + Mind

This rote, based on the spell "Goetic Struggle" (see p. 324, **Mage: The Awakening**) is considered an essential practice, and is named after a precept of the Clavicularius and some Silver Ladder mages: to rule another, one must rule oneself first.

**Clavicularius Rote: Eggregore of Sin**

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Occult + Spirit

This rote, based on the spell "Goetic Evocation," is not recklessly taught. Using the appropriate Keys of Solomon, the Clavicularius grants his deepest sins a spiritual form,



calling upon a manifestation of his inner demons through an intense summoning rite.

### *Temenos Sanctuary (Mind ●●●●●)*

This spell creates a sanctuary within the Temenos.

**Practice:** Making

**Action:** Extended

**Duration:** Prolonged (one scene)

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** None

This ability is treated as the “Spirit Manse” spell of the Spirit Arcanum (see p. 256 of **Mage: The Awakening**), save that this spell constructs a sanctum within the Temenos realm of the Inner Planes.

**Clavicularius Rote: Forging the Astral Temple**

**Dice Pool:** Composure + Occult + Mind

Many of the Clavicularius construct Astral sanctuaries where they can study their deepest internal darkness, and learn to use its strengths without falling victim to it. The Great Temple of Solomon is one such edifice, and all who reach the first attainment of the Legacy can enter this sanctum.

### *Evil Means, Good Ends*

The Clavicularius find several uses for their bound and defeated inner demons. One of the simplest is to destroy a wicked person through sin. For instance, a Key-Bearer might kill a drug dealer by possessing him with a demon that makes him crave his own product, leading to a fatal overdose. A cunning but crooked politician’s career could be wrecked by sending a lust-demon to lead him into “bimbo eruptions” (the demon can even become the bimbo, if the Clavicularius knows the Spirit Arcanum well enough).

Solomonists can also use Goetic demons to counter possession by other sorts of demons. The mage binds her inner demon through “Goetic Struggle,” then sends it (by Mind 4) into a possessed person’s mind with a command to fight the other demon. A brave Clavicularius (and there’s no other kind) can even project her own consciousness into the possessed person’s mind (via Mind 4 “Dream Traveler”) to join the fight.

Any use of Goetic demons can very easily become an act of Hubris. If a mage has “just cause,” however, and there’s really no less invasive way to stop an evildoer’s activities, the Storyteller can waive the degeneration roll — or at least grant a bonus die, since the character used her inner demons for a righteous cause.

## Story Hooks — Kings of Sin

• **Legacy of Solomon:** An ally or contact of one of the players’ characters has something of interest for them — an old, dusty book, written in Hebrew, scattered through with various seals and pentacles. It is a grimoire bearing a variety of Spirit,

Mind and Prime rites. Shortly thereafter, however, a small gathering of Clavicularii contact the mage, claiming that the book is the work of Impératrice, one of Les Enfants. They would like it back, and are willing to go to great lengths to get it. If the characters want to keep the book, they must each pass a Goetic ordeal set by the Key-Bearers.

• **Doppelganger:** A local mage begins causing havoc around him wherever he goes, and avoiding his colleagues. As it turns out, the mage discovered a treatise on Goetia and began experimenting with the material, eventually evoking one of his weaknesses as a Goetic demon. Unfortunately, the demon was a manifestation of the man’s own schizophrenia (a recent occurrence as a result of Wisdom loss), and has powerful Influence over the minds and sanity of those the demon comes into contact with. The demon has taken up residence at a local mental hospital, and has shaped the madness of patients there to cause them to believe the demon is God. A Clavicularius character will certainly be commanded to deal with the situation.

• **The Fallen King:** A Silver Ladder mage initiated into the Clavicularius experimented carelessly and fell victim to his own sins. He seeks to use his Goetic demons as weapons against everyone he perceives as his rivals. Because he suffers from the Vice of Envy, this includes nearly anyone around him — especially a powerful cabal of young mages.

## Attainments

The attainments of the Clavicularius serve one goal — to make the Solomonist aware of the flaws in his soul, allowing him to isolate them and wall himself off from them, turning them into something almost outside of himself. The Clavicularius are then capable of using these flaws of character as weapons against others.

Additionally, such self-knowledge creates a mage who can better imprison those impulses, using her experience at restraining her Vice to keep her other sins in check.

Finally, this Legacy aims to grant absolute mastery over the Goetic demon that reflects one of the mage’s soul-deep sins. She can use its wicked powers and Influences for the pursuit of virtue and righteous domination.

### *1st: Goetic Projection*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Mind 2, Empathy 3

The first attainment of the Clavicularius legacy shapes the Goeticist’s soul in such a way that his own weaknesses and sins — his Vice, derangements and Mental Flaws — stand out in stark relief to his mind’s eye. Because of this, the Clavicularius can sense those taints within others, and project them onto others.



By inflaming his sin and projecting it onto another, the Clavicularius creates an impetus to behave in a similar fashion in his target. This acts like the Mind 2 “Emotional Urging” spell, including the ability for the Awakened to sense they are being manipulated. However, if the target already possesses the Vice projected by the Clavicularius, she is immune to this attainment – a soul that already battles its own internal sin is immune to that same sin from an outside source.

Clavicularius mentors warn their initiates about using this attainment frivolously, for driving others to acts of sin can be an act of Hubris.

## *2nd: Goetic Bulwark*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Mind 3

This attainment is a perfecting of the techniques studied in the “Goetic Struggle” spell. The Goetic Bulwark functions like that spell. The psychic shield’s base duration is an entire day, however, and when the spell is performed, the Clavicularius may choose to protect himself not only from his Vice but from an additional Mental Flaw, Vice or derangement as well. The mage must decide which mental weakness or sin his Goetic Bulwark will protect against.

Any time the Clavicularius could have his behavior altered by a Mental Flaw or derangement, his player makes a contested roll of the character’s Gnosis + Mind opposed by his own Resolve + Composure. If the Gnosis + Mind roll wins, the Key-Bearer is not required to succumb to those sins, and gains a Willpower point. If the Resolve + Composure roll wins, the character cannot resist his weakness and does not gain a Willpower point for the indulgence.

A mage may be protected by only a single Goetic Bulwark at a time. Should the character re-use this ability and focus on another weakness, the first Bulwark fades.

## *3rd: The Binding Seal*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Mind 4, Spirit 4, Empathy 4

This attainment is quite powerful, and gives the Clavicularius their reputation for upstanding morals and spiritual steel. With this attainment, a Clavicularius can bind the Goetic demon manifestation of one of her own weaknesses into a seal etched with the appropriate Solomonian Key.

This is treated as the Spirit 4 “Create Fetish” spell, with one core difference: as long as the mage wears the object the demon is bound into, she is considered to be protected against that flaw by the Goetic Bulwark power. Additionally, the character does not need to roll against the influence of that weakness: the Vice, sin or Flaw cannot exert power over the mage while she has bound its demonic manifestation. The actual binding of this demon uses a dice pool of the mage’s Presence + Intimidation + Mind.

Use of this power does not prevent the use of Goetic Bulwark, for they are two different powers. The item that binds the mage’s personal demon is considered to be an *Intimate* item, on the Sympathetic Spells chart.

## *Sample Character*

### *Goat*

**Quote:** “Look, no offense, okay? I mean, given my druthers, you and me and maybe a couple of your friends would go give the bed a hell of a shake-up, but it wouldn’t be about you, you know? It’d be just sex between me and my devil, and we’d be using you.”

**Background:** Gilbert Deroux grew up in a small trailer park behind a truck stop along the highway just outside of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He was the son of a waitress at the truck stop and a trucker who stopped in there every two months or so for a week at a time before he was gone again. Gil hated the trailer park. However, the onset of adolescence changed him from a cherubic, little blue-eyed boy into a faun-like adolescent, all sleek muscle, mischievous smile and a mop of soft black curls.

You don’t grow up looking like that and not draw attention, and Gil drew plenty of it. He lost his virginity at 14, with one of the newly hired waitresses at the truck stop, and discovered a whole new world. In this world, they didn’t give a damn if he was some trucker’s bastard, and no one looked down on him. In fact, all the pretty girls (and not a few of the pretty boys) found his rough edges exciting, and his enthusiastic lovemaking quite appealing.

Were Gil a greedier or more desperate young man, he might have found himself hustling, but the fact was, he enjoyed sex far too much to settle for the kinds of people who need a rent boy. He was also not one to remain with a single person for long.

Gil was in his 20s and living in New Orleans, living the life of a playboy, when he Awakened. In a nightmare experience that might have been scripted by Antonino Rocco, Gil woke from his waking dream in the alley outside of a filthy sex club. A few days later, he encountered his first mentor, a Free Council mage who specialized in unconventional Tantric magics who claimed she’d been there when he Awakened.

Eventually, however, Gil — whose mentor named him “Goat,” for his wandering sexual proclivities — found himself embroiled in inter-cabal strife, and he was the cause of it. He quickly learned that the Awakened don’t necessarily share his ideals about free sex, and jealousy raged out of control. Unwilling to deal with it all, Goat simply fled and found himself in Rochester, New York. There, he met a Clavicularius mage named Marbrys and tried seducing him, only to discover that the mage — while quite attracted to Gil — refused to have anything to do with the Goat.

“Though you’re attractive enough, Goat, I’m not interested in being an outlet for your personal demons. You come into my bed when you aren’t being driven there by a desire to belong, to fit in, a desire to have something, and you’ll be welcome there. And not a moment before.”



This shocked Goat, and he reacted angrily, leaving in a huff. With some time, however, he was forced to admit that Marbrys was right. He returned a week later, asking the Clavicularius to explain what he'd meant — an explanation that began Goat's education as a Solomonist. They never did have sex.

In the time since, Goat has found a new purpose. He interacts with his demon quite extensively, driven to understand the hold that his urges have on him. He has become nearly entirely celibate as a result, though he does long for a close connection with someone else, a connection that will transcend his simple need for the rut. Simply put, he's a boy who wants to fall in love.

More practically, however, Goat has taken to haunting places where spirits of lust congregate, seeing the effects they have on others. Sometimes, he makes a point of befriending people he meets who are driven by these spirits and their own lust. This he considers his greatest temptation and his greatest redemption, refusing to sleep with them, forcing them to interact with him in some way other than the way two people driven for sex normally do. As friends.

**Description:** Goat is hot shit, and he knows it. He could have easily stepped out of a fashion magazine, with just enough of a "bad boy" aura to him to let him be picked out of a crowd of similar young men. His dark hair is cut close to his head, though it hangs just slightly in his blue eyes. He has a trimly cut goatee, and simple silver rings through his ears. He is well-muscled, but not dramatically so — it is plainly the result of careful shaping in a gym, not the results of physical labor. His clothing is always appropriate to his surroundings, and he always cuts a hell of a figure among other Mastigos; he looks damned good in a suit, and is willing to spend the money on tailored work (a lesser indulgence his Clavicularius seniors permit — for now).

Goat's nimbus causes all eyes to turn toward him, and his good looks stand out in sharp detail, though they become predatory to the viewer, as though he were some kind of hungry incubus. Whispers that sound both like threats and seductions just beyond the range of human hearing can be heard, and those around him suddenly break out into a nervous sweat.

**Storytelling Hints:** Goat is forced to rein in his urges quite a lot. Though a part of him misses those carefree days when he would jump into someone's bed for a frolic anytime he felt lonely or stressed, he knows now that his desire to do so had nothing to do with the person he was bedding, and everything to do with his own insecurities and weakness of character.

The Goetic demon of his Vice, however, is more than happy to try and get him to seek out that companionship, manipulating him into believing that he has stronger feelings for someone than he does. The demon enjoys the





realization that comes to Goat just after climax of his true feelings for someone, when the lust has drained away, and all that is left is an afterglow next to a stranger.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** A double-edged knife, with an intricate scrimshaw of Baphomet in the goat-horn hilt

**Real Name:** Gilbert Deroux

**Path:** Mastigos

**Order:** Free Council

**Legacy:** Clavicularius

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

**Mental Skills:** Academics 1, Investigation 2, Occult (Tantra, Voudoun) 2

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 2, Brawl (Grappling) 2, Drive 2, Firearms (Pistols) 2, Weaponry 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy 4, Expression 3, Intimidation (Veiled Threats) 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

**Merits:** Allies (Free Council) 3, Barfly, Contacts (Club Scene) 3, High Speech, Language: Creole French, Mentor 2, Status (Free Council) 2, Striking Looks 4

**Willpower:** 6

**Wisdom:** 6 (Narcissism)

**Virtue:** Hope

**Vice:** Lust

**Initiative:** 7

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 11

**Health:** 7

**Gnosis:** 4

**Arcana:** Life 2, Mind 4, Space 2, Spirit 4

**Rotes:** *Mind*— Aura Perception (•), First Impressions (••), Mental Shield (••), Goetic Struggle (•••), Dream Traveler (••••); *Space*— Apportation (••); *Spirit*— Egregore of Sin (••••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Goetic Projection

**Mana/per turn:** 13/4

**Armor:** 4 ("Misperception," Mind ••)



# The Daksha

Oh, no. No, no, no. I DON'T THINK YOU'RE A CHIMP AT ALL. YOU'RE AWAKENED.  
YOU'RE ONLY THREE-QUARTERS CHIMP.

Atlantis can be regained! The Watchtowers can rise again from the ocean, and the human race can evolve into a higher form! The Coming Race will live in the risen land under the benevolent, absolute rule of the Awakened!

Some mages dismiss this vision as a pipe dream. Some recoil in horror from its faintly totalitarian undertones. The Daksha, on the other hand, not only believe this is the truest, worthiest goal for the Awakened but also believe that it can be attained, and attained soon. These odd, obsessive mages believe they know how to transform the world — and they make sure everyone else knows it, too.

The Daksha believe that for the Quiescence (which they call *Kali Yuga*, the Age of Strife) to end, mages must repair the Cosmic Cycle. Atlantis will rise again — literally — when the human race achieves its next stage of evolution in the Advent's esoteric account of human history. The Daksha believe human evolution follows a cycle of seven stages. During the third stage of the current cycle, however, humanity's precursors fell from a state of grace. To continue the cycle properly and resume the evolutionary journey to Cosmic Oneness, humanity must reverse the wrong turnings of past ages.

Long before Atlantis, the Daksha say, a greater race than humanity lived on the continent of Lemuria. These superior precursors were perfect androgynes unfettered by our own flawed duality of gender. The hermaphroditic Lemurians also possessed a third eye in the back of their heads, with which they saw the Akashic Record of Supernal Truth.

The Daksha use a process called *Daksha-Yoga* to transform themselves into Lemurians. As each Daksha gains mastery of Daksha-Yoga, she develops a third eye on the back of her head before achieving perfect androgyny. The greatest Daksha become as physically perfect as human beings — three-eyed, hermaphroditic human beings — can be. These Daksha are the Advent, first of the Coming Race, the harbingers of the next stage in human evolution.

The *Dhyanis* — a cabal of eight archmages who achieved the fourth attainment of Daksha-Yoga — guide the Daksha from a hidden sanctum somewhere in India. These archmages taught Daksha-Yoga to the modern world. Each Dhyani, in

turn, communes with an Ancient Master, a Supernal being of undefined power who imparts the wisdom of the past for the development of the future. The Dhyanis say the Masters are magically aware former inhabitants of Atlantis. Most of the Daksha believe the Masters are Oracles.

Daksha-Yoga demands that the Legacy's adherents learn enough Atlantean lore to recreate the lost land's civilization. To this end, the Daksha study every trace of Atlantis they can find and work tirelessly to reclaim its lost magic. They contribute some of the Mysterium's most expert mystic archaeologists. Time is short:

Atlantis will soon rise, the Dhyanis say, and the Awakened need to prepare for their destiny as renewed masters of the world. And the Daksha make sure everyone else knows they are ready to take up their duty.

**Parent Path or Order:** Obrimos or Mysterium

**Nickname:** The Advent

**Orders:** From their beginning, the Daksha associated with the Mysterium. The vast majority of Daksha still come from that order, or join it. The Legacy's founders were all Obrimos, but Daksha tutors will train mages of other paths if they belong to the Mysterium. The order holds the Daksha in high regard, though it's widely known the Daksha make their own studies before they tell other Mysterium members about the best lore and artifacts they find. As long as the Mysterium gets to see the goods eventually, its leaders grant the Daksha their private collection. Still, the Daksha gain more from the Mysterium than the Mysterium gains from the Daksha.

A few Daksha who research the warfare of Atlantis join the Adamantine Arrow. These mages tend to be better at the theory of conflict than at actual fighting. The Silver Ladder attracts other Daksha who try to convince the order to follow their vision of a new world ruled by the Awakened. The Daksha, as masters of self-publicity, don't often see much use for the Guardians of the Veil, but some Advent





decide the best way to learn secrets is to become one of the keepers.

Very few Daksha see any reason to join the Free Council. The leaders of the Free Council are in no hurry to invite the Advent, Atlantean literalists all, into their order. Daksha are certainly not banned from the Free Council, but any Advent would need a very good personal reason to join, and some assurance that he would get some benefit from the association.

**Appearance:** The Daksha look like what they are: the practitioners of an ascetic lifestyle devoted to physical perfection. They wear plain, loose-fitting clothes and carry few possessions. Their bodies are slender, supple and toned. Most carry themselves with grace and poise.

Every Advent who achieves the first attainment of Daksha-Yoga grows a third eye in the back of her head; the eye is perfectly round and entirely black. Normally, a Daksha hides the eye under a headscarf, a turban or long hair.

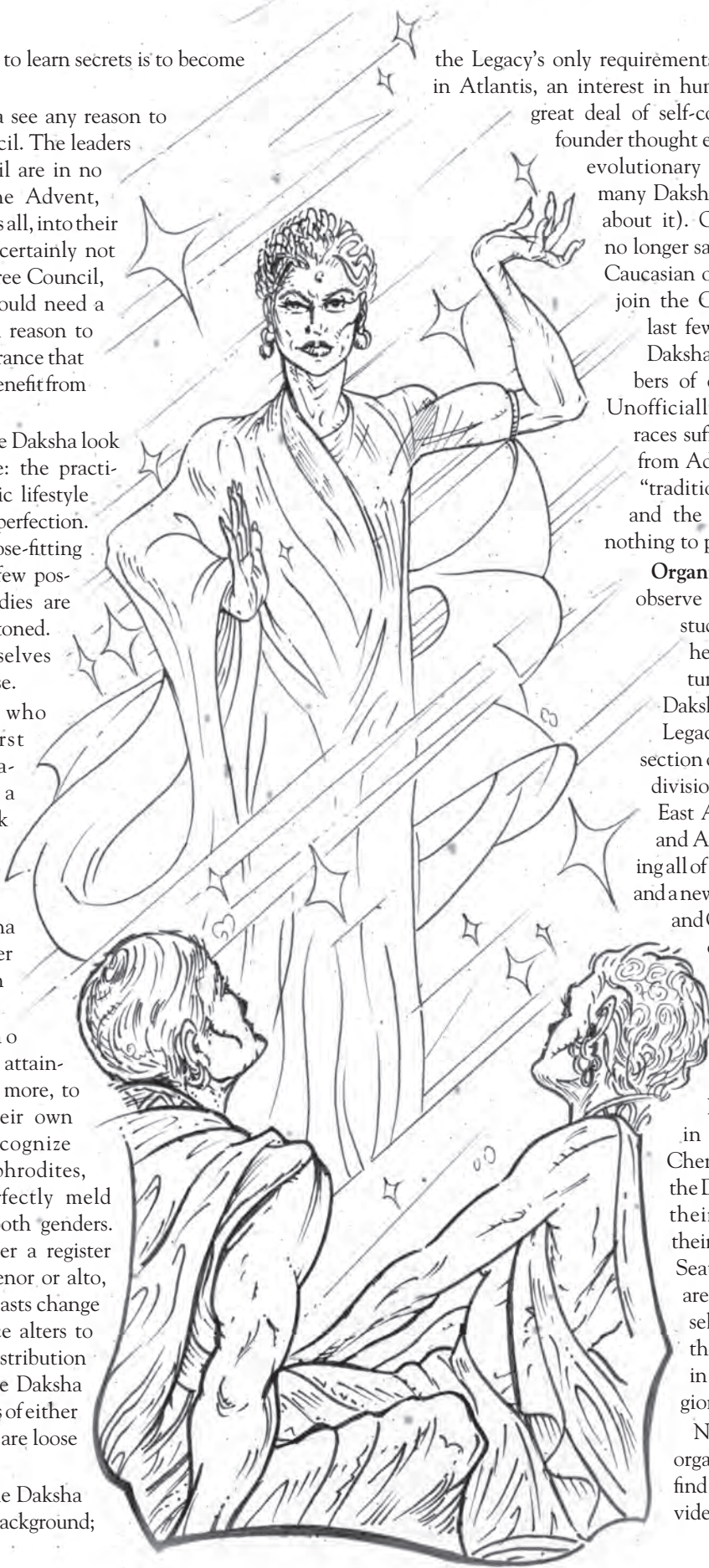
Daksha who achieve the second attainment change even more, to the point that their own friends barely recognize them. As hermaphrodites, these Daksha perfectly meld the attributes of both genders. Voices rise or lower a register to become a soft tenor or alto, hips, waists and breasts change in shape and stance alters to reflect an altered distribution of body mass. Some Daksha can pass as members of either sex, if their clothes are loose enough.

**Background:** The Daksha can come from any background;

the Legacy's only requirements are a fervent belief in Atlantis, an interest in human evolution and a great deal of self-control. The Legacy's founder thought ethnic origin reflected evolutionary potential (although many Daksha prefer not to think about it). Officially, the Legacy no longer says that only mages of Caucasian or Indian descent can join the Coming Race. In the last few decades, individual Daksha have trained members of other ethnic groups. Unofficially, Daksha of other races suffer abuse and disdain from Advent who hold more "traditional" (racist) views, and the Dhyanis have done nothing to prevent it.

**Organization:** The Daksha observe a strict hierarchy. A student always defers to her tutor. The tutor, in turn, defers to a cabal of Daksha responsible for the Legacy's activities in his section of the world. Regional divisions cover South and East Asia, the Middle East and Africa, Europe (including all of Russia), the Americas and a new division for Australia and Oceania. The regional cabals take their orders from the central Daksha cabal in Chennai (formerly called Madras), which oversees the Legacy's activities in India directly. The Chennai cabal answers to the Dhyanis, who transmit their instructions from their undisclosed sanctum. Seats in the ruling cabals are for life. The Dhyanis select the members of the Chennai cabal, who in turn appoint the regional cabals.

Notwithstanding this organization, the Daksha find themselves deeply divided. Factions within the





Advent often work against each other. Apart from regional competition, their main dispute comes from humanity's fate when the Kali Yuga ends and Atlantis rises. Some Daksha would just ignore the un-evolved humans when the New World begins, and leave them behind on the old lands. Other Daksha seek a means to evolve everyone to the Daksha's level. Most Advent expect a more Darwinian outcome, in which the un-evolved gradually die out. A few Advent don't want to wait. When Kali Yuga ends, these few intend to wipe the un-evolved from the face of the planet.

Each Dhyani adopts the name of an Atlantean deity, as given in the *Stanzas of Dzyan*, the central text of Daksha-Yoga. They are: Akhantaram, Daksha Takharam, Khetaram, Khiet-Shirani, Varuna, Prithivi, Yayuram and Agni Daksha. Khetaram suggests the possibility of evolving the rest of humanity. Agni Daksha supports an exterminationist agenda. So far, the other Dhyani have made no statement on the matter.

**Suggested Oblations:** Meditate for a day on the *Stanzas of Dzyan*, fast for a week, spend a night lying on a bed of nails, suspend your body from hooks in your skin, firewalk, perform a Tantric sex rite with another member of the Legacy

**Concepts:** *Lonely Planet* pilgrim, eugenics advocate, wannabe guru, faith healer, Tantric sex expert, trainee fakir, demagogue to the Awakened, self-help group leader, neo-Hindu extremist, esoteric Atlantologist

## History

Daksha history begins with Kurt Eisler, a young Obrimos mage from southern Germany and a politically prominent (if not highly skilled) member of the Mysterium. Eisler became fascinated with various esoteric groups that grew from Western interpretations of Hinduism. Eisler's enthusiasm eventually took him to India. When Eisler returned in 1891, he possessed a third eye on the back of his head, and was no longer only a "he." This new Eisler adopted the shadow name of Daksha Takharam, and claimed he had found the legendary realm of Shambhalla. There, he met with a spiritually advanced being called Kuut Humi. This entity vouchsafed to him a complete text of the ancient *Stanzas of Dzyan*. In the *Stanzas*, the young mage found a prophecy of the second rising of Atlantis. Kuut Humi told Eisler that he could shape the evolutionary destiny of the human race, and instructed the mage in the principles of Daksha-Yoga.

Daksha Takharam later explained that Daksha-Yoga was created by an Atlantean archmage named Daksha. This archmage transformed himself/herself into the synthesis of all previous stages of human evolution. Since human evolution is cyclical, Daksha also anticipated every subsequent evolutionary stage. Through a year and a day of Daksha's meditations, Eisler developed a third eye and became an androgyne.

Daksha Takharam gathered seven disciples, all German, British or American members of the Mysterium. The eight of them returned to India, where they founded an ashram in Madras. Under Daksha Takharam's direction, each disciple contacted another Atlantean Master. Within 10 years, these eight began to take on pupils of their own. Later, the Dhyanis sent their pupils into the West to recover Atlantean lore and artifacts, and to make new Awakened converts.

The Daksha grew slowly but steadily. Most recruits came from the Mysterium. At the end of World War I, the Daksha Dhyanis left Madras for parts unknown. They claimed that the Great War had caused a psychic storm of such intensity that they needed constant seclusion for meditations to quell the emanations. For all intents and purposes, they vanished. From then on, the Dhyanis communicated with their pupils through scrying windows, dreams and astral projections. Occasionally, a Dhyani would turn up unexpectedly in Madras, ostensibly to check up on his/her pupils; these visits became more infrequent over the years. The last time any Daksha met a Dhyani in person was in 1938. Still, the Legacy enjoyed considerable prestige through its claim to be led by actual archmasters.

During World War II, the Dhyanis supported the Nazis, who held somewhat similar theories about racial superiority and human evolution. The Dhyanis said that the Nazi eugenic experiment would improve human stock in preparation for the Coming Race. After the war, however, almost no Daksha would admit their Legacy had ever approved of the Nazis in any way. (But then, they had a lot of company among Sleepers. Plenty of intellectuals supported eugenics right up to the liberation of the death camps.) Daksha recruitment dropped off sharply after World War II and only recovered during the late '60s, as the New Age movement took off.

The Legacy's poor choice in friends wasn't the only blow to Daksha prestige. The reliability of the Dhyanis and the Masters is also increasingly in doubt, even among the Legacy's younger members.

In 1903, the Masters predicted that Atlantis would rise in 1946. The Dhyanis also relayed predictions that Atlantis would return in 1967, 1980 and 1999. No one's seen any lost continents reappear lately. Seemingly unconcerned, each time, the Dhyanis have simply issued another target date. (This time, they say Atlantis will rise on December 21, 2012).

A growing number of Daksha wonder if the Masters and the Dhyanis really know what they are doing. The Dhyanis still send messages from their place of seclusion, but no one has seen a Dhyani face-to-face for more than 60 years. If Daksha Takharam is still alive, he/she must be over 130 years old — possible for a master of Life magic, but not a sure thing, either. Where are Daksha Takharam and his/her disciples? Are they even still alive?



## *The Masters*

Are the Masters really Oracles? If not, who are they? The Dhyanis keep their silence when asked. Perhaps they don't know the truth themselves.

Each Dhyan has his/her own Master who communicates exclusively with him/her. If the all Dhyanis are honest, apparently the Masters are not of one mind (for example, on the question of how the evolution of humanity should progress, which is hardly insignificant). They're not all that reliable, either, having falsely predicted the rising of Atlantis four times so far. One would think that Oracles could do better. So, who are they? Some Daksha have suspicions they prefer not to voice, for fear of expulsion from the Legacy. Still, nothing stops them thinking (at the moment), and the Legacy includes many skilled investigators. Whether the Daksha's leaders will allow the truth to come out is another question.

Some members of the Mysterium rather unkindly suggest that the Masters may be demons or spirits attempting to control a group of mages for their own purposes. Maybe the recovery of Atlantean artifacts serves some infernal agenda. Maybe the "secret masters" want just one particular artifact recovered, after which point they'll cut the Daksha loose. Maybe the Masters are just doing it for laughs. But if the Dhyanis are archmages, wouldn't they see through a demon's deceptions?

If the Masters are not spirits or ascended Atlanteans, what else could they be? Ancient vampires using telepathic powers? Mad gods? Aliens? None of these really seem probable, but again, colleagues of the Daksha within the Mysterium sometimes make the suggestions.

The Exarchs are possible candidates. This theory, first suggested by a disenchanted Daksha some 20 years ago, suggests that the Legacy is all a plot to divide the Awakened and precipitate a war between them, with the Daksha as a catalyst. But, surely, the Exarchs are more subtle than to use a group of three-eyed hermaphrodites as their pawns?

Perhaps the Daksha's leaders are right, and the Masters really are Oracles. But that raises a more disturbing question: are the Oracles fallible?

Some Daksha nurse doubts that the Masters exist at all. Maybe the Dhyanis are deluded, they say, or just making the Masters up. If the Dhyanis were making the Masters up, though, wouldn't the archmages try to tell a more consistent story? Anyway, no one's seen a Dhyan face-to-face in decades. What if the problem isn't the Masters? What if the *Dhyanis* are no longer whoever they say they are?

## *Society and Culture*

The Daksha believe they know how to recover Atlantis. Their leaders hold the answers. Their founders commune with Oracles. The Daksha possess the key to bring back Atlantis and the rule of the Awakened. And, of course, the Daksha are one

step more evolved than everyone else. Their colleagues in the Mysterium think Advent mages are arrogant and condescending, but, at the same time, the Mysterium members respect the sheer volume of knowledge the Daksha have uncovered. Members of other orders who meet the Daksha often feel the same way, to a greater or lesser degree.

Despite the Advent hierarchical structure, individual Daksha are usually left free to pursue their own agendas. After the amount of training (and indoctrination) they've been through, their leaders trust that members will serve the Legacy's agenda in one way or another — and most do.

All Daksha must answer to their regional cabals, but, most of the time, they can choose their own activities. Every Daksha is expected to follow the pronouncements of the Dhyanis and the Masters — but the Dhyanis' words are vague and inconsistent enough that Daksha can usually concoct an interpretation that justifies whatever they want to do anyway.

The lack of real oversight by the Dhyanis often leads to disagreements among their followers. Rival factions of Daksha may wage little wars against each other as they compete for caches of Atlantean magic. Daksha whose quest for Atlantean lore bear fruit are more likely to gain status and the favor of their superiors.

## *Manners*

Daksha often find they must work with mages inferior to themselves — namely, everyone who isn't part of the Advent. Like many people who base their lives on spiritual certainties, Daksha often can't understand why anyone wouldn't want to be like them; refusal to join the Advent suggests ignorance at best, a failure of intelligence or morals at worst.

Most Daksha are sensible enough to know they have to work with other people. The Daksha may think those who are not willing to evolve are destined for the dustbin of history; but, just as an evangelical Christian who secretly believes his friends are destined for Hell, the Daksha are smart enough to know when not to preach. They practice a kind of selective blindness. For the sake of their relationships, they act as if their non-Daksha friends are Daksha, too. Maybe if the Daksha set a good example, their friends will see the light and join the Advent.

Of course, some mages aren't friends. The Daksha still try to meet insults and accusations with good manners. The doctrines of Daksha-Yoga say that outward serenity reflects inward grace. Daksha can be condescending, arrogant or hostile, but even when they're informing other mages of their inferiority, dismissing their colleagues' opinions or dispensing threats, the Daksha are always unfailingly *nice*. They keep strange, serene smiles on their faces and never raise their voices. Daksha never use obscenity, foul language or rude names. They say "please" and "thank you." As a result, they get away with acts that would bring censure



on less diplomatic mages. Quite often, people might hear what a Daksha says but fail to grasp its import, because how can someone so polite be planning to kill most of humanity? Including you?

Sometimes, opponents of the Advent underestimate them as shallow lotus-eaters, crackpots too blissed-out to pose a threat. On the other hand, mages can just as easily overestimate the Daksha's skills: they look like they know more and wield greater powers than they really do.

### *The Stanzas of Dzyan*

Most of the Daksha's doctrines come from a small book of blank verse called the *Stanzas of Dzyan*. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, claimed she channeled the text and published fragments in *The Secret Doctrine*, with a great deal of her own commentary. Sleeper scholars say Blavatsky cribbed her *Stanza* excerpts from the *Rig-Veda* and other Hindu scriptures, filtered through her own magpie occultism and imagination. That didn't stop hundreds of thousands of Sleepers from joining the Theosophical Society, the religion Blavatsky created to institutionalize her doctrine. The Mysterium studied *The Secret Doctrine* immediately after its publication. They assured other mages that Madame Blavatsky didn't have a clue about the Mysteries and there was never any such book as the *Stanzas of Dzyan*.

Fifteen years later, Daksha Takharam revealed his/her version of the *Stanzas*. The Daksha's book generally follows Blavatsky's mythology, but is more complete than her fragments and somewhat less opaque. Everything the Daksha believe about human prehistory is spelled out in High Speech. Each copy is traditionally written on a number of palm leaves in golden ink. Daksha tutors require their pupils to scribe their own copies of the *Stanzas* before they complete the first attainment of Daksha-Yoga.

### *Seven Root Races*

According to the *Stanzas of Dzyan*, the human race is locked into an evolutionary cycle. Humanity did not evolve from lower primates. Rather, the Cosmic One emanated creatures destined to evolve through seven Root Races before returning to the Cosmic One and beginning again. Furthermore, each Root Race has seven sub-races that evolve, one from the other, but which can co-exist and inter-breed for a time.

This cycle has happened before and will happen again. This time around, however, the cycle has gone wrong, with the sinking of Atlantis as just one consequence. In the Daksha's version of Theosophical history, the seven races have been, are and (if the cycle is repaired) will be the following:

**The First Root Race:** Astral beings made of pure energy. These "Children of the Fire Mist" condensed as their sub-races progressed, until they evolved into...

**The Second Root Race:** Huge amorphous beings, souls

without consciousness. In each subsequent sub-race, these beings shrank and developed limbs and bodily definition, to become...

**The Third Root Race:** The hermaphrodite, three-eyed, otherwise human inhabitants of Atlantis' precursor, Lemuria. At first, the Lemurians lived in a state of innocence and grace, guided by Supernal wisdom received through the third eye. The second sub-race of the Lemurians fell when, in an attempt to pre-empt evolution, they gained Arcane knowledge before they were destined to do so. An evolutionary cataclysm happened. The Lemurians split into genders ahead of their evolutionary schedule. Eventually, the Lemurians became...

**The Fourth Root Race:** This race began as the gigantic, blue-skinned Rmoahals who later became the Atlanteans, the fulcrum of the human evolutionary cycle. The Atlanteans built the Watchtowers and codified magic. They learned how to use Mana (or as they called it, "Vril") as a power source for advanced magical technologies and terrible weapons. They were still crippled, incomplete beings, however. Their own pride ended the Atlantean dream, forcing an exodus and sending the Watchtowers beyond the physical world. The exiles evolved into...

**The Fifth Root Race:** True humanity as we know it. In their commentaries on the *Stanzas*, the Dhyanis divide humanity into separate sub-races, some evolutionarily superior to others. Officially, the Aryans (that is, Caucasians and people of northern India) are the latest evolutionary stage. By Daksha reckoning, they are the sixth sub-race of the Fifth Root, and hence the only candidates for further evolution. In the developed West, most Daksha are uncomfortable with the racist aspect of their philosophy. However, a significant — and powerful — minority believe in the racism and use it to justify their attitude towards "lesser" humans.

The Daksha say that by using magic to recover androgyny and the third eye, they can steer the evolutionary cycle back to its original course. When the world holds enough re-evolved humans, Atlantis will rise from the ocean. The remnants of the lesser human races will be made obsolete. The new Atlanteans will evolve into the seventh sub-race, who will all be Awakened. Their third eyes will see into the Supernal World, and the breach in the cycle caused by the Atlanteans' arrogance will be repaired. Then the cycle can continue, with the appearance of...

**The Sixth Root Race:** Beings so attuned with the Supernal World that they will begin to fade from the material realm. Eventually, they will lose even the semblance of human form, becoming...

**The Seventh Root Race:** Entirely astral beings who will grow so in touch with the Supernal Realm that individual identity and thought will become unnecessary. When the last trace of human individuality has faded into Oneness and has been absorbed into the Supernal Realm, the cycle will begin again.



## Atlantean Artifacts

The Daksha seem to have great success in unearthing relics of Atlantis, including artifacts they say came from Lemuria. (Most mages don't believe Lemuria ever existed. The Daksha reply that most Sleepers don't believe Atlantis ever existed.) The Legacy's archeologists hunt such relics at an increasingly frantic rate—and find them. Daksha leaders say this is a sign that Atlantis is ready to rise. More cynical Mysterium mages suggested it's a sign that the Daksha have hired some reliable artisans: the craftsmen of Egypt, Southeast Asia and Central America are notoriously skilled forgers of antiquities. Most of the ancient objects the Daksha hand over to the Mysterium are only of cultural interest—potsherds and coins, fragmentary tablets and tableware, brooches, buttons, hairslides and combs. They may bear sigils in High Speech but have no magical properties.

Every so often, someone uncovers an object of true value: a document carved on stone or metal tablets, an Imbued item or even a true Artifact. Many Daksha will resort to anything to get their hands on such items. Most of these Atlantean items require an infusion of Mana to work. A newly discovered magical treasure might retain one or two points of Mana in its reservoir, but most have none and need to be charged.

The Daksha have found a few fragments of what they believe are Atlantean flying machines. They have yet to find their Holy Grail, a complete working Vimana—a flying machine armed with weapons the like of which the world has tried to forget for 5,000 years. Likewise, no one has found a Brahmas-tra, reputedly the ultimate weapon of the heroes of Atlantis. If anyone were to find either of these weapons, the various factions of the Daksha would begin a desperate race to seize them. What happens next depends on the faction who gets the item. Some Daksha would destroy an Atlantean super-weapon as a leftover from the pride that destroyed Atlantis and broke the cosmos. Some Daksha would hide the weapon and study it. Others would freely use it as part of their great plan to clear the Earth of un-evolved humanity, in line with prophecy from the *Stanzas of Dzyan*.

### Atlantean Fire Crystal (Imbued Item •••••)

Durability 3, Size 1, Structure 4

**Mana Capacity:** 11

During the last 10 years, the Daksha have found several Atlantean Fire Crystals. The Daksha believe the Atlanteans used these reddish, fist-sized crystals as a power source for other magical devices or perhaps even to supply light and heat for Atlantean homes.

When energized, the crystal duplicates the Prime 3 spell "Ley Lines." Some crystals are imbued with other magic powers; other crystals are found with stands or cases, inscribed in High Speech.

## Induction

In the Western world, most Daksha are fervent evangelists. While the prospect of becoming a three-eyed hermaphrodite might not appeal to most mages, the Advent offers several benefits.

The Daksha give the impression that they know awesome, mighty secrets. Never mind that they harp on every advantage they can, make copies of their scripture for every single member of the Legacy and loan them out to any mage who expresses an interest. It doesn't matter: a Daksha only has to hint that he/she could say much more if he/she wanted. The sheer detail and extravagance of Daksha mythology lends it verisimilitude. How can a Daksha be wrong, when he/she can rattle off the names of Atlantean cities and kings and describe daily life in Lemuria? And the Legacy *does* show great skill at finding Atlantean relics.

The Daksha future, too, holds an ominous glamour. *Join us*, they say. *Rule with us in a paradise where your power will be absolute. Hold the key to magics you cannot dream of! Become a superman, greater even than other mages!* The reality might be a little different—or non-existent—but, despite the dubious status of their leaders, the Daksha seem so sure of their destiny. Their sheer confidence can attract mages—especially the forceful Obrimos—in a World of Darkness where so little is certain.

Finally, there's the sex. The Daksha are beautiful. They'll tell you that they know how to do things with their bodies that humans simply can't. The Daksha are beyond male and female, gay and straight, and they are taught to use their bodies to their greatest potential. They say they can experience heights of ecstasy that the single-gendered literally can't imagine. This tactic pulled in a lot of converts back in the '60s, and still meets with a fair degree of success, especially in Western Europe. In the end, the promises of wild hermaphrodite sex can't be the only reason a convert joins (especially when the new apprentice learns he actually must remain celibate until he achieves true androgyny)—but the promise of great sex gets other mages listening, and that's a start.

When a Daksha finds a willing convert, the Daksha takes the prospective apprentice to the Advent's tutor, and asks the tutor to take the other mage as a pupil. While Daksha tutors rarely turn down a mage who meets the Legacy's requirements, Daksha-Yoga takes a long time to learn. The apprentice must adopt a strict vegan diet, take vows of chastity and poverty and follow the Legacy's meditative exercises for hours each day. When the recruit learns enough of the basic principles, she shaves her head and retreats to a cell. There, under the instruction of the tutor, she adopts a meditation position and enters a trance. The meditation lasts three days straight, with no food or water, while the recruit crafts her soul according to the guidelines in the *Stanzas of Dzyan*, with her tutor's help. Students often gather at a regional cabal's ashram and undergo their initiations at the same time.



During the early days of the Legacy, one Daksha initiate in four died of starvation without ever waking up. These days, Daksha tutors are more soft-hearted (and more reluctant to lose Willpower for nothing). Most tutors stop the rite if they think prospective apprentices will fail and die. If the initiate succeeds, he wakes from her trance with a third eye in the back of her head.

The second attainment requires long practice at breath and body control, and a similar ordeal. When the tutor thinks the apprentice is ready, the junior Daksha again shaves her head and retreats to a cell. The tutor puts her in a trance and watches over her as the pupil's body undergoes further changes. This time, the trance lasts a week. The Daksha becomes double-gendered. The vow of chastity lapses; otherwise, all the rules of Daksha-Yoga remain in force. The Daksha isn't halfway between both genders or sexless. He/she becomes wholly male and wholly female at the same time. His/her personality changes to reflect his/her new state. The Daksha is in perfect harmony. He/she feels fantastic, better than he/she ever did before. He/she quite reasonably thinks that other mages should want to feel like this, and starts spreading the word if he/she didn't before.

The third attainment requires a deeper trance than any before and a profound physiological shock. This might involve hanging suspended by hooks through the Daksha's skin, piercing his/her flesh with knives and skewers or some similar mortification of the flesh. Again, the tutor places the pupil into a trance; this time, the Daksha refines his/her body to such a level that he/she becomes truly superhuman.

All the while that the Daksha gather the experience and skill necessary to undergo each initiation, they are expected to practice the necessary disciplines of body and spirit needed to prepare for the next stage: meditation, yogic exercise and, during the later stages, Tantric practices and ordeals of pain.

### Initiation Mechanics

When a mage undergoes the Daksha initiation, her player must roll Stamina + Resolve. If the roll succeeds, the character becomes a Daksha with the suitable attainment. If the roll fails, the tutor steps in and stops the rite. The character can try again after more training, when the tutor thinks the character is ready, which could be a few weeks or a whole year.

The Storyteller can, if she wants, simply rule that the mage survives — and someone else who goes through the ordeal at the same time doesn't.

### *Bacchajudagaras*

The ruling cabal of the Daksha still controls the Legacy from Chennai, and India still boasts the greatest number





of Daksha. India has one-sixth of the world's population, mostly Hindu, and a cultural framework that legitimates magic, altered states of consciousness and the notion of a transcendent reality beyond the physical world: India produces a lot of mages.

Some of India's mages Awaken very young. The Daksha see these *bacchajudagaras* ("child-mages") as a crucial part of their order. Daksha proselytes do their utmost to bring as many child-mages as they can into the Advent. The children's parents, dazzled by promises of their children's glorious future, readily give their offspring to the Advent. If religious persuasion doesn't work, money usually sways poorer families. When all else fails, the Daksha fall back on kidnapping. The Daksha don't care about a child-mage's Path, an exception to their usual restriction to fellow Obrimos or Mysterium.

The Daksha keep their *bacchajudagaras* at the Chennai ashram, where tutors drill them in the disciplines of Daksha-Yoga all day, every day. The tutors constantly remind their charges that they're special, but allow them no rest, no holidays and no childhood. The *bacchajudagaras*' years of intense studies sometimes bring the more talented among them as far as the second attainment of Daksha-Yoga before they reach 20 years of age. They are all promising mages, but the Legacy also turns most of them into frustrated, damaged individuals who know nothing about ordinary, human life. Some *bacchajudagaras* envy Sleepers for their thoughtless lives; other *bacchajudagaras* hate Sleepers.

## Story Hooks — Kahani Daksha

- **A Sleeper archaeologist** unearths an enormously powerful Atlantean weapon, without knowing what it is. Two rival groups of Daksha find out about it and compete with each other to get there first. A Daksha character finds himself/herself caught in the middle of the two factions, who both want his/her help and the help of his/her cabal. What does he/she do?

- **Evidence of the true identity of the Masters** comes into the hands of a cabal of young mages. If one of the mages is a Daksha, how does he/she deal with this revelation? How will his/her superiors react? Do they disbelieve him/her? Or do they try to silence him/her?

- **A child Awakens** in an Indian community in a Western city (in London or Los Angeles, for example). A cabal of mages, sent by their order to help the child come to terms with his Awakening, find the boy gone — kidnapped by the Daksha, who wish to bring him up as one of their own. What do the characters do? Will they stop the boy being taken to India? What if one of the characters is a Daksha? Will he/she let the cabal thwart the kidnappers?

## Attainments

The harsh discipline of Daksha-Yoga demands complete commitment from its practitioners. Luxuries and comfort are forsworn. The rewards are great, however, and at least partly justify the pride that the Daksha feel in their attainments.

### 1st: *Tejara Akh*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Life 2, Space 1, Occult 3

A Daksha who masters the first principles of Daksha-Yoga finds that the pineal gland of her brain grows into a literal, fully functional third eye that sprouts from the back of her head. Through the rigors of training, she also begins to refine her body. Her skin becomes smoother, muscles become stronger and more supple, and body hair, but not head hair, begins to thin and fade away. The mage becomes able to access the benefits of the Life 2 spell "Body Control" at any time.

The third eye has the potential for great things. At this stage, however, the Daksha can merely use the third eye as an extra eye. When the eye is open and uncovered, she can see in every direction, front and back, with an effect similar to the Space 1 spell "Omnivision." When closed, the perfectly round eye is still fairly obvious. Many Daksha grow their hair long to cover the eye, or wear hats, scarves or turbans. All spells involving sight perception (such as all the versions of Mage Sight) work just as well out of the third eye as they do from the normal two.

### 2nd: *The Androgynous Condition*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Life 3

A Daksha awakens from the second initiatory trance as a hermaphrodite, gaining the primary sexual characteristics of both genders. A male Daksha becomes shorter and slimmer, with a higher voice and a more delicate neck and jaw line. His Adam's apple shrinks, and he gains small breasts. His genitalia move slightly, and he gains a vagina and womb underneath his testes. A female Daksha experiences analogous but opposite changes.

With some concentration, the Daksha can temporarily become either sex more completely, with an effect similar to the Life 3 spell, "Transform Self." This is sometimes useful in that all three forms the Daksha can take — male, female and hermaphrodite — look distinctly different. The gendered forms don't just look like the other forms in drag. A casual observer, particularly a Sleeper, might notice the resemblance between a Daksha's male form, female form and hermaphrodite form (perhaps thinking, "*Hey, she could be the sister of that guy I met this morning*") — but few people would immediately think the three forms are the same person.

(The Storyteller might call for a Wits + Composure roll for a character to notice the similarity between forms, but only an exceptional success would let someone suspect that two forms are the same person — and a Sleeper probably Disbelieves at once. If a *player* suspects that male and female characters are the



same gender-switching person, however, the Storyteller should not insist the character would not think such a thing.)

Daksha breed true. A Daksha can procreate with anyone — single-gendered, ordinary humans, other hermaphrodites or even with himself/herself. The children of any such union, no matter who the mother, will themselves be hermaphrodites. The offspring lack the third eye, though; they are at a transitional stage between human and the Coming Race. Hermaphrodite children born in Western hospitals are normally assigned genders as a matter of routine practice, with surgery to enforce the decision. Daksha parents have, through painful experience, learned to make sure they are present when their babies are born, to forestall the doctors.

The second attainment is really the point of no return. A Daksha's own family and friends won't recognize him/her after he/she has undergone this transformation.

#### Optional Arcanum: Time 2

A Daksha with Time 2 can now read the Akashic Record, a putative astral library of human history. The mage can, by training the third eye over a place or person, literally read an account of the place's or person's history. This effect works like the Time 2 spell "Postcognition." The information appears to the Daksha as if it's written in the air in High Speech.

#### 3rd: Homo Superior

##### Prerequisites: Gnosis 7, Life 4

Through breathing exercises and meditation, the Daksha gains complete control over his/her body, enabling him/her to be as strong, nimble or tough as he/she wants. This effect duplicates the Life 4 spell "Supreme Honing." At this stage in the Daksha's advancement, he/she becomes quite beautiful — eerily so. The character's features look too regular, his/her skin too perfectly unmarred to be human. A character does *not* gain the Striking Looks Merit from the change. His/her looks are striking, all right, but most people find them intimidating rather than enticing. Such

advanced Daksha also show an inhuman serenity that further sets them apart from mere *homo sapiens*.

#### Optional Arcanum: Time 3

If a Daksha at the third level of initiation has Time 3, he/she can also use his/her third eye to read the future in the Akashic Record, an effect identical to the Time 3 spell "Divination." Again, the Daksha's information appears to the character as if written in the air in High Speech, waiting for the Daksha to read it.

#### Magical Style Notes

Daksha avoid complication in their regular magic. Similar to most mages, the Daksha cast spells using short chants (usually in High Speech) and swift hand movements with their Path or order tools. The Daksha prefer versions of Path tools based on Indian traditions: for a rod, they use the short, spindle-shaped wand called a *dorje*, a weapon may be a *phurbu* (a dagger with a *dorje* hilt), a trident or a chisel-knife. A small hand-drum or handbell echoes the form of a cup, while the discus of Vishnu or a star of crossing *dorjes* serve as a disk. Extended spellcasting usually requires meditating over a burning stick of incense, with a sand-painting mandala to shape especially complex spells.

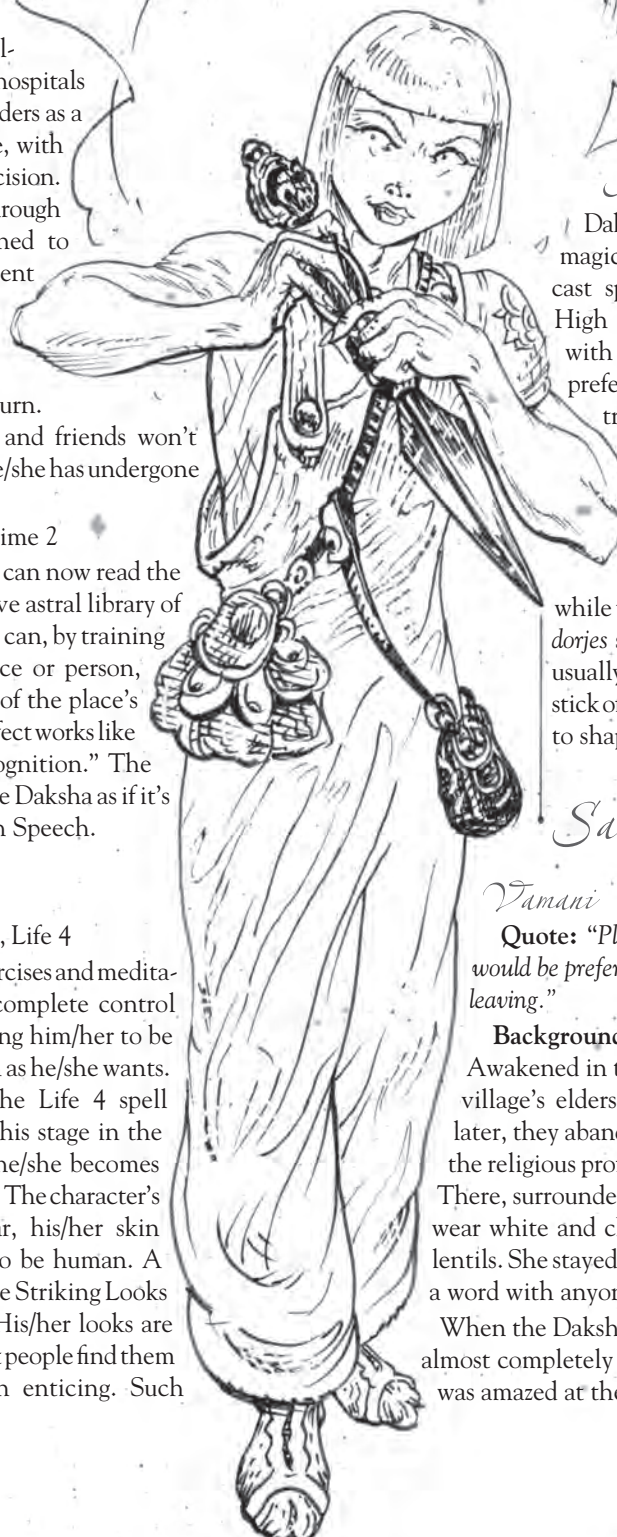
#### Sample Character

##### Vamani

**Quote:** "Please excuse me. I am rather thinking it would be preferable for you to be putting that down and leaving."

**Background:** After eight-year-old Sonam Devi Awakened in the midst of the Dussheera festival, her village's elders proclaimed her a prophet. A week later, they abandoned her in an ashram, in hopes that the religious professionals could cope with her powers. There, surrounded by the widows, Sonam was forced to wear white and chant six hours a day for a handful of lentils. She stayed there for a year, and exchanged barely a word with anyone.

When the Daksha Raam Prasad found her, Sonam had almost completely withdrawn into herself. Raam Prasad was amazed at the lonely, isolated girl's magical talent,





and took her to the Daksha ashram at Chennai to begin her training. Sonam, now Vamani, survived 10 years of loveless, incessant discipline and grew into an emotionally sterile young adult with no real understanding of human existence.

Vamani is now 19 years old. Two years ago, she/he accompanied Raam Prasad to Portland, Maine, as her/his tutor's amanuensis.

Raam Prasad died within a few months of arrival, leaving Vamani to continue her/his work and travel on her/his own. Vamani has distinguished herself/himself in several Consilii as a highly talented collector of information and artifacts. Vamani believes she/he has found the location of a Vimana. Unfortunately, it's buried under a city's art museum. Vamani is trying to find the resources to level the museum and dig the Vimana up.

**Description:** Vamani is short and slight of build. She/he is undeniably beautiful, in a distant sort of way, like a smiling statue from a Hindu temple. She/he has wheat-colored skin and a heart-shaped face with large almond eyes and gently curving lips. Her/his hair is black and shoulder length, worn loose so that it hides her/his third eye, and shines like polished obsidian. Her/his hands have long, graceful fingers. She/he never raises her/his voice, always keeping a low, musical, matter-of-face tone. Likewise, her/his face always retains a serene, half-smiling expression, even when consumed with fury. She/he dresses in simple, baggy clothes.

Vamani's nimbus manifests itself as a sound like sweet wordless singing surrounding her/him, rising to a crescendo, before stopping abruptly in mid-note as her/his magic fires.

**Storytelling Hints:** Vamani is intensely, bitterly angry: angry with the Daksha for denying her/him the human affection she/he needed to grow up, angry with her/his culture for failing her, angry with her/his family, angry with the Sleepers. Vamani will never show any of her/his anger. She/he possesses a self-control so complete that she/he remains outwardly serene and unfailingly polite, even when angry enough to kill and torture — which she/he has done before. Vamani looks upon other mages as lesser beings, evolutionary throwbacks. Sleepers are beneath her/his notice, except when she/he needs to use them, at which point she/he becomes beneficent and gracious, until the

Sleepers lose their utility. Vamani belongs to an exterminationist faction of the Daksha. She/he would happily kill every human on the planet, if she/he could. Killing Raam Prasad was easy. What do a few Sleepers matter?

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** A *phurbu*; a pouch holding a variety of herbs, spices and incense

**Real Name:** Sonam Devi

**Path:** Obrimos

**Order:** Mysterium

**Legacy:** Daksha

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

**Social Attributes:** Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 5

**Mental Skills:** Academics (History of Atlantis) 2, Crafts (Cookery) 1, Medicine 1, Occult 3, Politics 2

**Physical Skills:** Stealth 1, Survival (Fasting) 3, Weaponry (Knife) 1

**Social Skills:** Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 1, Subterfuge 1

**Merits:** Languages (Bengali, English, Punjabi, Urdu) 4, High Speech, Menfor 3, Meditative Mind, Status (Mysterium) 1

**Willpower:** 9

**Wisdom:** 4 (Narcissism, Suspicion)

**Virtue:** Temperance

**Vice:** Wrath

**Initiative:** 7

**Defense:** 2

**Speed:** 9

**Health:** 8

**Gnosis:** 5

**Arcana:** Forces 2, Life 3, Mind 1, Prime 2, Space 1, Time 2

**Roles:** *Mind* — One Mind, Two Thoughts (•); *Life* — Pulse of the Living World (•), Organic Resilience (••), Honing the Form (•••); *Prime* — Analyze Enchanted Item (•), Inscribe Grimoire (•), Activate Enchanted Item (••), Counterspell Prime (••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Teisara-Akh; 2nd— Androgynous Condition

**Mana/per turn:** 14/5

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
Knife	1 (L)	1	—	4

**Armor:** 3 ("Unseen Shield," Forces ••)

**Magic Shield:** 2 ("Counterspell Prime," Prime ••)





# THE DAOINE

Do you know what *really* happens to wicked stepmothers?

These days, people think of faerie stories as harmless children's tales, all Prince Charming and faerie godmothers

turning pumpkins into coaches. All too often, mages see the Acanthus as fitting into that same mold

— mercurial, but ultimately harmless and good-hearted. The Daoine remember the truths behind those stories, when princes weren't charmers but blood-soaked warriors and when wicked queens danced in red-hot iron boots until they died. Justice is the Daoine's calling; through their mastery of the Fate Arcanum, they offer vengeance to the wronged and justice to those the world seems to pass by. The Daoine are the *deus ex machina* at the end of the faerie tale, the twist of fate that ensures that the wicked stepsisters' eyes are plucked out by white doves and the woodsman's axe is freshly sharpened when he goes to check on the ruckus at grandma's house.

The Daoine (pronounced DEE-nee or THEE-na) are usually less frivolous and impulsive than their brethren on the Path of Thistle — or at least, the stereotype attached to their fellow Acanthus. The Daoine emulate the high courts of the Fae: the *sidhe* lords of the British Isles are their exemplars, and the Daoine comport themselves with the solemn, ethereal grace of Arcadia's lords. Most Daoine adhere to a strong code of etiquette, instilled in them by their tutors, and put great stock in proper behavior. A crass or boorish individual finds it much harder to secure a Daoine's aid than someone who is gracious, polite and respectful.

The exact code of hospitality varies from mage to mage. Some Daoine put great stock in old tales of mortal dealings with the Fair Folk. Other Daoine expect the formal decorum of Victorian gentry, Islamic hospitality or good old-fashioned American neighborliness.

Anyone who thinks the Daoine are nothing but Miss Manners with Supernal knowledge would make a

grave mistake. The Good Folk (so nicknamed because, like the faeries the Daoine imitate, to call them by

an unkind name may invite their wrath) bring justice. Not the common justice of putting a murderer behind bars or returning a stolen car, but the

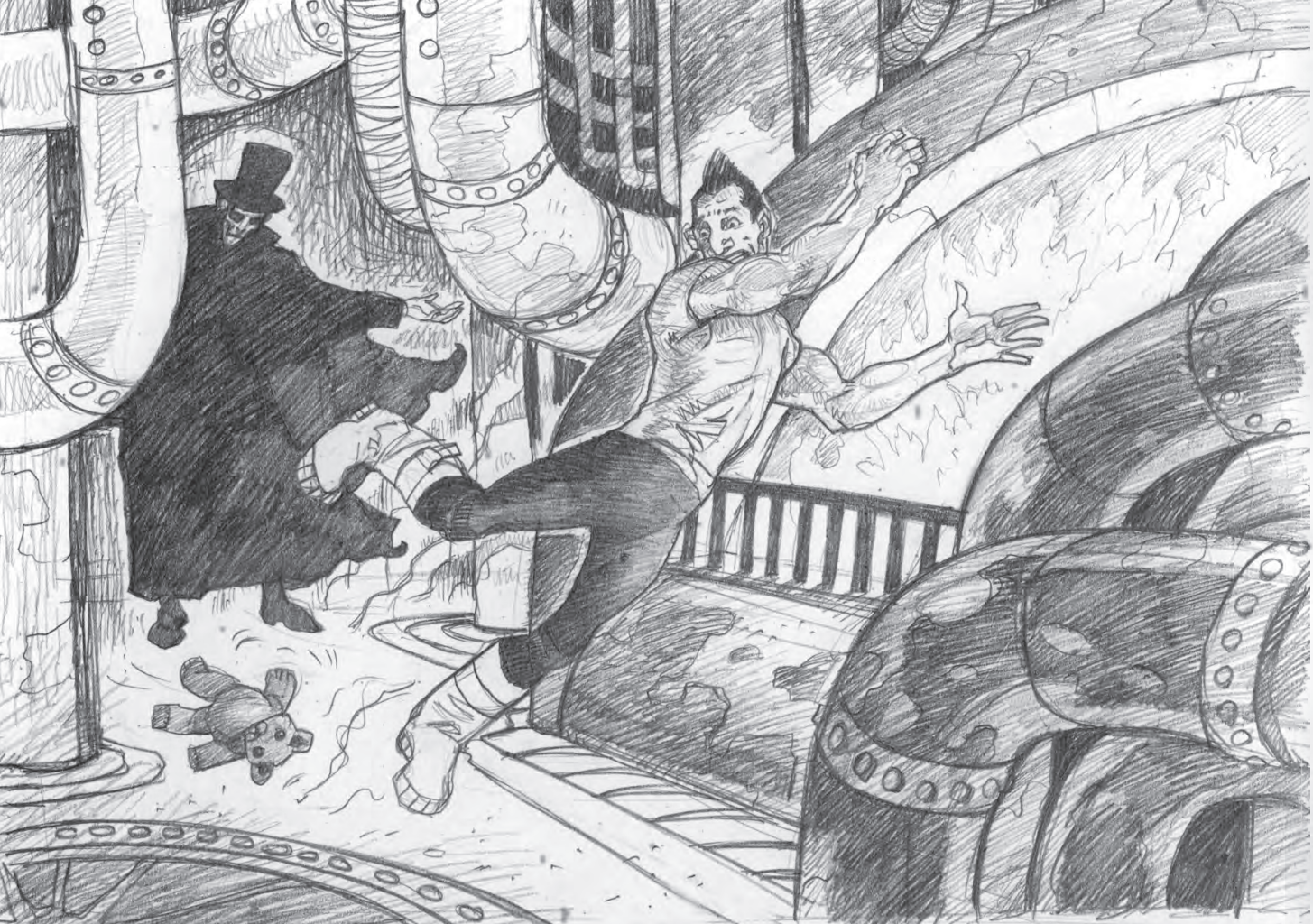
justice of the Fae, little remembered now outside of faerie tales and folklore.

Few mages command such a mastery of hexes and curses as the Daoine, and few are as willing — some might say *eager* — to employ them. Many Daoine take particular glee in drawing upon the old faerie tales for inspiration in their methods: abusive parents who lock their child in the basement find themselves trapped in a crashed car whose doors won't open and whose windows won't break, sinking into the water, or a murderer slips and falls in the same incinerator he used to dispose of the evidence.

Some Daoine serve the Awakened community as hexers-for-hire, agents of fate who redress grievances between mages — for the right price. Every action has an equal reaction, the Daoine reason, and, likewise, every accomplishment requires a sacrifice of some sort. Other members of this Legacy show more altruistic motives, punishing those who criminals the Sleeper authorities cannot or will not prosecute. Those individuals who exploit children, whether for labor, sex or merely the thrill of dominating another human being, are especially likely to draw a Daoine's ire: the Good Folk despise those who abuse the human race's most helpless members.

In many ways, the Daoine are relics of an older time, when justice was harsh and mercy rare. The Good Folk see their duty as the balancing hand of fate, ensuring that good and evil receive their just deserts. To this end, Daoine also use their mastery of Fate in beneficial ways. Some rewards are quickly arranged: a Daoine sees a man give a lady his seat on the bus; later that evening, the gentleman finds \$50 in the gutter. Other times, the Daoine put as much





careful thought and effort into rewarding the just as punishing the wicked. In keeping with the Daoine's belief in a karmic balance, many Daoine would like to bestow as many rewards as punishments. Sadly, in the World of Darkness, they are called upon for the latter much more often than the former.

**Parent Path:** Acanthus

**Nickname:** Good Folk

**Orders:** Most Daoine find themselves drawn to the Adamantine Arrow or the Guardians of the Veil, depending upon the individual's personality. Daoine of the Arrow are often the most forthright, using their curses to right wrongs and punish the wicked. They often serve in a support capacity, using their mastery of Fate magic to hinder their enemies both directly (causing attacks to go awry and defenses to fail) and indirectly (disrupting enemy supply lines and communications). Daoine in the ranks of the Guardians of the Veil focus less on punishing the wicked and more on punishing the transgressions of their fellow mages. The Daoine are often fanatical in their devotion to upholding the strictest possible secrecy, and have a not-wholly-undeserved reputation for overkill in dealing with mages who expose Sleepers to the Awakened world.

Silver Ladder Daoine most commonly fit the "vengeance-broker" stereotype, trading their mystical punishments for tass, magical artifacts or even filthy lucre. Relatively few Daoine join the Mysterium and the Free Council. Mysterium members are often too bound up in their search for knowledge to worry about how that knowledge might upset the balance of fate, while Free Council members lack the reverence for the old ways and traditions that the Daoine cling to.

**Appearance:** Not all Daoine are physically beautiful, but they often possess a magnetic presence and lordly mien that commands respect and reverence. They dress impeccably, usually in the most expensive styles their budgets can afford. Daoine sometimes show a subtly ethereal or "fey" air about them, which sometimes manifests as oddly-colored eyes, unusually long, supple hands and fingers or slightly pointed, elfin ears. Some Daoine come by this appearance naturally, while others (usually younger Daoine) consider it fashionable to subtly alter their appearance with the Life Arcanum. Such features become especially pronounced when a Daoine shows her nimbus.

**Background:** Daoine share a strong belief in justice, as both an abstract concept and as a natural law (what goes around, comes around). Even before



Awakening, these men and women believed there was, or should be, a cosmic force ensuring that each person gets what he or she deserves in the end. Some Daoine are calmly philosophical about this concept, while others rail passionately about the wrongness of the world when confronted with perceived injustices. Even those Daoine who do not necessarily believe that a higher power metes out cosmic justice usually hold strong notions about how the world *should* be, even if it seldom seems to work that way. Awakened police officers, utopian dreamers and civil-rights crusaders are likely to pursue the Daoine Legacy.

Mages who ask a Daoine to right a personal wrong sometimes come to see the greater injustices in the world and take this Legacy's mantle themselves. These mages can become the most passionate and determined to complete their training; after all, no one is more zealous than a new convert.

Sometimes, for no readily discernible reason, a mage is simply chosen by destiny to become a Daoine, whether he wants to be one or not. Master Daoine are drawn to such students and may employ extreme tactics such as kidnapping or blackmail to coerce the students into beginning their training. Conversely, sometimes a Daoine finds himself compelled by Fate to tutor a mage who wants to join the Legacy — no matter how unlikely the recruit seems at first glance.

**Organization:** The Daoine usually operate alone, or with their tutors in the case of younger, less-experienced mages. Relationships between tutors and students are either extraordinarily long-lasting or quickly and bitterly ended, with very little in between. Some Daoine recognize the sacred bonds of respect and deference that link student to teacher: these Daoine typically maintain cordial relationships with their teachers long after the apprenticeships are ended. Unfortunately, the personalities attracted to the Daoine Legacy often dislike abasing themselves. These mages tolerate subservience just long enough to learn what they feel they need from their mentors, then burn their bridges with startling alacrity and depart. These Daoine seldom progress to their third attainment: Good Folk who betray a trust and a contract show they don't understand one of the Legacy's most important precepts.

Now and then, Daoine come together in cabals of three called Moirae, after the Fates of Greek mythology. Moirae sometimes come together out of happenstance, but most often one mage decides that a particular task is too great to handle alone. She puts out a subtle call through the webs of Fate that brings

a Moirae together. Daoine refer to this process as "drawing threes," and often use Tarot cards or similar divinatory tools to gain insight into the natures of their companions. Members of a Moirae often find they were already working on the same problem from different angles or in different locations.

Traditionally, each member of a Moirae fills a specific role and brings knowledge of a specific Arcanum to the group, though, in modern times, this tradition is optional. One member, referred to as Clotho (or sometimes *the* Clotho; Daoine differ on whether the roles are meant as names or titles), studies Life magic. The second, Lachesis, is expected to have skill with Time. Finally, the Atropos delves into the ends of all things and studies Death. When the youngest and oldest mages can take the roles of Clotho and Atropos, the Daoine consider it an extremely good omen. Despite the thematic links with the Greek Fates, men are not discouraged or prohibited from joining Moirae.

**Suggested Oblations:** Weaving at a loom, visiting faerie rings at the solstices or equinoxes, bringing vengeance without the use of magic on one who has wronged you, publicly calling down a curse on someone who deserves it, rewarding someone else's act of generosity without that person knowing your involvement

**Concepts:** Hex assassin, mystical vigilante, social reformer, Awakened prosecutor, vengeance-broker

## History

The customs and attainments of this Legacy date back thousands of years; nobody knows where and when they began. "Daoine" itself is a Gaelic word for the faerie-folk. However, some mages trace the Legacy's name to Athena, whom the Greeks called Goddess of Just Deserts and companion of the Fates. Other mages trace the Daoine to the *djinni* of Arab legend. Most modern Daoine, however, say their Legacy has no distinct origin. They were fated to exist; and they shall endure as long as Fate decrees.

The Daoine Legacy certainly existed in the British Isles as long as the Celtic people themselves. As British influence spread from the 17th to the 19th centuries, this tiny Legacy spread as well and encountered similar (and equally ancient) Legacies that shared their philosophy of justice and vengeance: the Greek Moirae of Athena, the Scandinavian Norns, disciples of Raven and Coyote in the New World and others. The Victorian belief in British superiority extended to



Awakened Britons. Even though the predominantly Scottish and Irish Daoine had their own historic experience of oppression, some hubris-ridden Daoine tried to absorb their "errant cousins" abroad. A few brief but intense wizards' wars all ended badly. By the close of the 19th century, the militant mages on all sides met colorful dooms at each others' hands.

The surviving Daoine let Fate itself decide their future. Their divinations told them to make peace. Other Legacies received similar advice. The European Legacies formalized their union at the ancient oracular cave of Delphi; they drew lots for the composite Legacy's name, and "Daoine" won. The Legacy now draws its images, jargon and practices equally from Greek, Norse and Celtic traditions. The new Daoine became the dominant Legacy of justice-dealers in the Western world.

Similar Legacies from non-European cultures remain independent. These smaller, parallel Legacies still hold grudges from the colonial era. In the new millennium, however, some quasi-Daoine show new interest in cooperation. Several times during the last few years, Daoine assembling a Moirae have been led to Indian, Middle Eastern or Native American mages. Who are the Daoine to argue with Fate?

### The Morganist Movement

Recently, some younger or neo-pagan Daoine have tried to increase the Legacy's status by linking the Daoine to the mythic past. This small movement claims that the Legacy was founded by Morgan la Fey, the legendary enchantress who ruled the isle of Avalon.

According to their "history" of the Legacy, the fall of Camelot was a plot conceived by Morgan and her first disciples to avenge a slight perpetrated by Arthur (or perhaps his father). Everything from Guinevere's tryst with

Lancelot to Mordred's betrayal of the king was elaborately engineered by the first Daoine. The so-called Morganists further claim that their founder's ultimate revenge was a great Unmaking of Fate that subtly eradicated any historical proof that Camelot ever existed as anything but a folk tale.

Skeptics point out that this "proof by disproof" is wonderfully convenient, but the proponents of this theory win over a fair number of younger Daoine. Even among the Awakened, a desire for a tangible connection to myth is part of human nature.

## Society and Culture

The Daoine are an insular bunch. Their unusual sense of propriety and etiquette makes other mages leery of socializing with the Daoine too closely. For the most part, the Daoine don't mind this at all. Few outside their own Legacy truly understand the importance of proper decorum, after all. Daoine tend to hold themselves aloof from the rest of mage society, paying lip service at best to the Consilii and operating as mavericks (they would say, "impartial observers"). This attitude may cause conflict with the Sentinels, who (perhaps rightly) see the Daoine as dangerous wildcards in mage society. Even Daoine who recognize the rule of a Consilium are often watched closely by its Sentinels, whether they deserve the scrutiny or not. Ironically, those Daoine who *become* Sentinels often become frighteningly good at their job.

The core philosophy that unites the Daoine is one of balance, of a karmic harmony that punishes vice and rewards virtue. In this, they share certain beliefs with the Obrimos, but where the Theurgists focus on doing good works, the Daoine emphasize punishment for those who do ill. The Daoine call this balance the Scales of Wyrld, but that analogy is a gross oversimplification. Every life, and every action that affects a single life, also affects countless others in ways both great and small. The Scales are not merely a balance of right versus wrong, but a vast spiderweb of interconnected strands, where pushing even slightly on one changes the balance of thousands or millions of others.

The sheer complexity of the Scales inevitably creates conflict between Daoine. Even masters of Fate magic cannot read an action's full impact on the Scales, and each Daoine's personal bias influences his view of the proper means to put things right. Moirae serve as a check on intra-Legacy conflict; when all three members reach the same judgment, they can be sure they have read the Scales right and their intervention will serve the greater balance.

## Induction

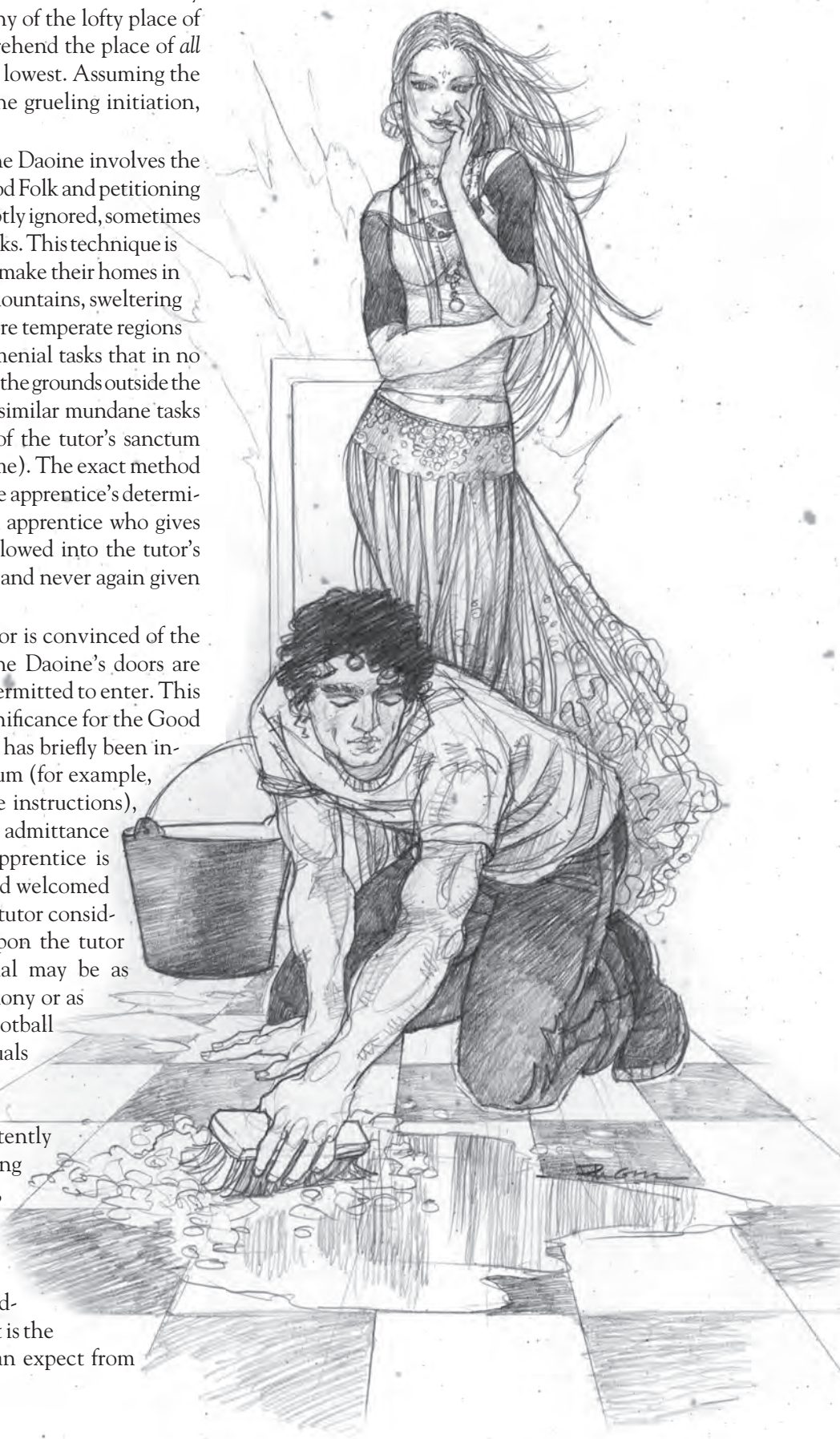
The path to becoming a Daoine is a long and arduous one, and few have the requisite mindset to complete it successfully. Daoine are notoriously harsh toward their students, driving them mercilessly with meaningless tasks, exhausting chores and constant belittlement. This is done not out of spite (at least, not most of the time), but rather to impress upon the



aspirant that his current place in the Scales is a lowly one, and if he is to prove worthy of the lofty place of a Daoine, he must fully comprehend the place of *all* things, from the highest to the lowest. Assuming the prospective Daoine survives the grueling initiation, things only get worse.

The typical induction into the Daoine involves the aspirant locating one of the Good Folk and petitioning for tutelage. The seeker is promptly ignored, sometimes for hours, sometimes days or weeks. This technique is most popular with Daoine who make their homes in harsh climates—bitterly cold mountains, sweltering deserts and so on. Daoine in more temperate regions favor setting the applicant to menial tasks that in no way involve magic: maintaining the grounds outside the sanctum, running errands and similar mundane tasks that keep the apprentice out of the tutor's sanctum (or wherever the tutor calls home). The exact method varies, but the point is to test the apprentice's determination to join the Daoine. An apprentice who gives up and departs before being allowed into the tutor's home is dismissed as unworthy and never again given the opportunity to join.

At some point, once the tutor is convinced of the apprentice's determination, the Daoine's doors are opened and the apprentice is permitted to enter. This is an occasion fraught with significance for the Good Folk — even if the apprentice has briefly been inside the mage's home or sanctum (for example, to deliver a package or receive instructions), this is considered to be her first admittance into her tutor's home. The apprentice is treated as an honored guest and welcomed with a ritual of hospitality the tutor considers appropriate. Depending upon the tutor and the apprentice, this ritual may be as formal as a Japanese tea ceremony or as informal as a few beers and a football game. Most Daoine choose rituals that will make their apprentices comfortable, but if the apprentices have been persistently annoying or disrespectful during the first portion of the training, the tutors may deliberately choose rituals of hospitality that will make the apprentices feel out of their element. Regardless of the nature of the ritual, it is the last kindness an apprentice can expect from her tutor for quite some time.





Once the apprentice has been formally accepted, her tutelage begins. She undergoes rigorous training in uses of the Fate Arcanum, in addition to studying the Arcana of Time and Space. At this point in the apprentice's initiation, she is not taught the famous hexes the Legacy is known for; her instruction focuses on the ability to read the Scales of Wyrd and understand the place of all things within it. Most tutors sequester their charges for the duration of this first portion of training, but some, especially traveling Daoine, take their apprentices "into the field" so that they might learn to see and understand the Scales in the real world. The menial chores do not abate during this period of the apprentice's instruction, though their purpose has changed from testing the apprentice's determination to ingrain in her the knowledge that her station is below her tutor's.

Once the apprentice has achieved the Legacy's first attainment, she embarks on the next stage of her teaching. She knows how to read the complex weaving of the Scales of Wyrd; now she learns how to sense transgressors against the Scales and how to punish them for upsetting the order of the cosmos. Once the apprentice has mastered the first attainment, she is considered a Daoine proper, albeit a low-ranking apprentice whose word may be gainsaid without question by any Daoine of higher rank. As the apprentice works toward mastery of the second attainment, her menial duties decrease in favor of more esoteric study. She often accompanies her tutor in the investigation of disruptions to the natural order, serving as an *aide-de-camp* or secondary investigator. If the apprentice's tutor trains multiple apprentices, this apprentice might be put in charge of one or more lower-ranked students.

Tutors suggest that apprentices should use their free time to look for chances to punish the wicked and reward the virtuous. Apprentices are encouraged to keep their interventions small and subtle until they learn to read the Scales of Wyrd, but an apprentice who successfully sets right a grievous wrong (such as breaking up a child-slavery ring or seeing that a serial killer meets the same fate as his victims) is sure to earn her tutor's esteem.

By the time a Daoine masters his second attainment, he has proven himself a skilled diviner of the great Scales of Wyrd and demonstrated his discretion in upholding the justice of Fate. Other Daoine no longer consider him a mere apprentice, though he still studies with his tutor. He is still expected to defer to Daoine of the third attainment, but he cannot simply

be shouted down as a lower-ranked apprentice might. His tutor does not set him to menial labor or dictate his life; the apprentice is a colleague now.

As a Daoine progresses toward the third attainment, she may learn the most vicious curses the Daoine have devised over the centuries. The Good Folk know ancient hexes both subtle and insidious — and powerful enough to make the worlds tremble. Before imparting the third attainment, however, a tutor may set insidious tests to learn the student's ability to temper her wrath to fit the severity of the transgression. Depending on the tutor, the apprentice fail the test if she overreacts, or she might anger her tutor and fail the test if she is too temperate. Most importantly, can she read the Scales of Wyrd subtly enough to anticipate what her tutor wants?

Once the apprentice has mastered the third attainment of the Daoine, he or she is truly a lord or lady among the Legacy's ranks. If the apprentice and her tutor remain on cordial terms, the apprentice may remain nearby to assist her former teacher in the instruction of new apprentices or merely to work closely with one whose wisdom she acknowledges, but most Daoine strike out on their own. Some content themselves with continuing their work minding the Scales of Wyrd, while others continue their quest for knowledge and seek the elusive, semi-mythical fourth attainment. Of the success or failure of the latter Daoine, no reliable records exist, but that does not stop some Daoine from continuing to pursue the fourth attainment. If any of the Good Folk have reached this legendary degree of mastery, they must be among the most powerful masters of Fate in the world.

## Story Hooks — Faerie Tales

• **The Baleful Eye:** The players' cabal has become the target of the Daoine's ire. The Good Folk seek to punish the characters, but for what? In the face of withering hexes and deadly curses, the characters must first determine *what* they've done to offend the Daoine, then determine *who* is targeting them and how to make amends.

• **Vengeance Dealers:** A powerful master from a nearby Consilium contacts the players' cabal under the impression that one or more of them are, in fact, Daoine. This mage promises rewards of great wealth, political clout and even rare Atlantean treasures if the cabal will call down their legendary vengeance on a rival. The potential for advancement is tremendous,



but is it worth the price if the real Daoine learn of the cabal's deception (or, for that matter, if their patron learns he's been duped)?

• **The Silver Hand:** While exploring an ancient ruin that may have once been a Daoine stronghold, the cabal finds a strange artifact: a perfectly sculpted replica of a human right hand, cast in silver. It radiates powerful Life and Matter magic, and ancient runes line the knuckles and arc across the surface of the palm. Unless one of the characters is missing a right hand and attempts to attach the item to the stump, they may not realize that this artifact is, in fact, the Silver Hand of Nuada, the legendary Celtic god-king. The Hand is a sacred relic of the Daoine, and they will do anything to recover it — but they aren't the only mages interested in the hand. A cabal of Scelesji has its own mysterious plans for the Silver Hand, and has dispatched agents to retrieve it.

## The Silver Hand of Nuada

This intricate sculpture appears to be the right hand of a good-sized man, crafted from a single block of silver. The level of detail is truly astounding — individual veins, lines and even pores can be made out. The sculpture ends in a smooth, flat plane about an inch back from the wrist. Normally, the Hand appears to be a simple, inert sculpture (though it resonates strongly with Life and Matter magic), but if the artifact is touched to the stump of a mage's right hand, the Hand mystically fuses itself to the flesh and becomes animated, functioning just like a normal hand. The mage has sensation in the Hand as normal. The Hand alters its size and shape to replicate the owner's natural hand, and, once attached, cannot be removed save by severing. The Hand, though flexible as normal flesh, is still made of pure silver and thus inflicts an extra die of damage when used to attack. The Silver Hand is pure enough to deal aggravated damage to werewolves.

The Silver Hand is a sacred relic of the Daoine. According to legend, it was forged by the smith-god Dian Cecht for his brother, Nuada, so that Nuada could regain the throne from the evil god Bres. The Silver Hand of Nuada is a six-dot Artifact. The Hand may have additional powers as well, if the Storyteller desires: possibilities include the ability to heal wounds with a touch (as the Life ... "Healing Heart"

spell), granting a +2 bonus on all Craft rolls made using the hand or a free Rote Specialty in Occult.

## Attainments

The mystic arts of the Daoine focus on perceiving the Scales of Wyrd that guide their actions, and punishing those who step outside their place. Daoine vengeance is seldom of the vulgar fireballs-and-thunderbolts variety (though the occasional transformation of an entire household into mice is not unheard of). The Good Folk like their vengeance both subtle and terrible. If a target can never be sure whether he is the victim of a Daoine and not just unlucky, they reason, their own mystique and aura of fear remains strong.

### 1st: *The Eye and the Fist*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Fate 2 (primary), Space 1, Occult 2

The most basic ability a Daoine must possess is the ability to sense the Scales of Wyrd and the myriad connections that make up that vast, tangled tapestry. Seeing is useless without action, though, and the Daoine learn to hound those who would upset the balance with potent curses of ill luck.

This attainment usually takes the form of an intense, scrutinizing glare or a vacant, far-off look in the eye, depending upon whether the mage is studying a specific target or casting his gaze wide to study the whole of the Scales. To the mage's sight, the world becomes a bright, shining web of interconnections and tangled threads, taut as piano wires and constantly shifting as though weighed on great, invisible scales. The constant shift and swell of these connections can be somewhat disorienting at first, but the Daoine learn to focus selectively on the objects of their interest, filtering out distractions to focus on what they wish to know.

This attainment is the most basic ability of the Good Folk, and is instrumental to their work as the guardians of the Scales of Wyrd. Thus, the basic divinatory power of this attainment is used almost constantly, whenever a Daoine suspects that the Scales have been disturbed or are at risk. Surprisingly, despite the Daoine's curse-happy reputation, most prefer to employ more subtle means of righting wrongs, especially if the transgressor is a Sleeper. When those methods fail, however, the Daoine do not hesitate to throw hexes.



This attainment allows the mage to use the Space 1 “Correspondence” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 232), allowing him to sense the sympathetic connections that make up the Scales of Wyrð at will. To activate this aspect of the attainment, the mage merely spends an instant action; no roll is required. The Daoine may also curse people using the Fate 2 “The Evil Eye” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 151), allowing him to inflict bad luck at will. Use the mage’s Fate dots as successes for the purpose of determining the effects of the attainment. The Daoine may not curse an individual more than once in any period between two moonrises with this attainment. The mage may, however, cast “The Evil Eye” as a spell without restriction, and he may curse a target with this attainment even if he has already cursed that individual with the spell since the last moonrise.

### *2nd: Slings and Arrows*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Fate 3

Sometimes, it’s not enough to make ill luck follow one who has committed an injustice. Sometimes, to properly carry the message that Something Bad Is Happening And You Should Change Your Ways, a Daoine must lay the curse of bad luck on a target’s possessions as well. This attainment is especially popular when the target of the Daoine’s wrath has an over-fondness for material objects.

The implementation of this attainment varies widely from Daoine to Daoine. Each seems to have his own preferred method of cursing, some based in the lore of faeries from their homeland, others apparently made up out of whole cloth. Popular methods include, but are not limited to, intoning dire portents of doom, spewing invective and vicious curses — and even mocking rhymes or satirical dances — their apparent absurdity underscoring the inherent power of the curse. Less theatrical Daoine might settle for walking three times widdershins around the object to be cursed, sprinkling it with saltwater or scratching a small mark on the object with the claw of a black cat.

As with the first attainment, Daoine rarely use their hexing powers on Sleepers. Despite the Daoine’s reputation, they are not stupid, and they realize that, in the modern world, few Sleepers associate a string of sudden misfortune with some form of karmic retribution, and even if they did, fewer still would realize why or what to do to correct the situation. Thus, this attainment is generally reserved for use on the Awakened, other supernatural creatures or very superstitious Sleepers who might deduce that their

misfortunes are due to powerful curses.

This attainment allows the character to use the Fate 3 “Monkey’s Paw” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 155, allowing him to put a curse of ill luck on an object). Use the Daoine’s Fate dots to determine successes. Unlike the first attainment, the mage may curse the same target multiple times, but, after the first, a Willpower point must be spent in order to affect the same object each time, if the mage uses this attainment on the same target within the same period between moonrises.

**Optional Arcanum:** Mind 3

If the mage has Mind 3, whenever one of the Daoine’s curses takes effect, the victim has a sudden, inexplicable understanding that the reason his luck has turned so viciously sour is that he has done something wrong and needs to put it right. If the Daoine knows how the target violated his place in the Scales, the target likewise knows what he has done wrong. If the Daoine is ignorant of the cause of the disruption, the victim only knows that *something* must be corrected, but not what. This ability functions like the Mind 3 “Telepathy” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 212) except that this is the only information that can be conveyed.

### *3rd: Doom of Promise*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Fate 4

When all forms of cajoling, intimidating and cursing fail to redress an imbalance in the Scales, the Daoine calls upon the ultimate power of Fate to bind the transgressor with his own words, to prevent further harm from coming to the Scales of Wyrð.

As with the second attainment, Daoine have many different rituals for enacting the third attainment. Some Daoine prefer the traditional “deals signed in blood,” while other Daoine prefer to seal the deals with handshakes that conveniently conceal ancient, secret mudras. Some Daoine prefer to use subtlety to trick their targets into swearing mystic oaths; other Daoine enjoy high ritual and ceremony — not to mention the rush of power that comes from forcing others to swear binding oaths.

The attainment, the Daoine’s most potent attainment, is considered to be a weapon of last resort. The Good Folk do not hesitate to use the Doom of Promise when necessary, but a Daoine is generally considered a failure if he must resort to forcing the issue, rather than achieving his goals through slow, subtle curses or less heavy-handed sorceries.



This attainment allows the Daoine to use the Fate 4 “Sanctify Oaths” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 157, allowing him to bind a recalcitrant target to a sacred oath). Use the Daoine’s Fate dots as successes on the spell. This attainment may only be used on a given target once during the span between the rising of the waxing and waning crescent moon (roughly two weeks, in other words).

### Optional Arcanum:

#### Mind 4

If the Daoine also has Mind 4, she can additionally place a mental compulsion on the target of this attainment that makes the target believe that following the terms of his oath is not only his own idea (rather than a supernaturally-enforced vow), but a perfectly natural and logical thing to do. This functions like the Mind 4 “Telepathic Control” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 216), but can only compel the target to believe that obeying his oath is what he wants to do. This effect lasts as long as the base effect of the attainment.

## Sample Character

### Billy Widdershins

**Quote:** “Oi! Feck off, yeh wanker! Yeh want a wee hexie, do yeh?”

**Background:** Billy Widdershins is something of an embarrassment to the Daoine. Far from the dignified, well-mannered mage the Daoine are normally expected to be, Billy is a wild, drug-addicted hooligan who Awakened during a particularly bad heroin trip during the late '90s. Finding himself in Arcadia, he claims to have been delayed in

finding the Watchtower by the lure of a satyr orgy along the Path of Thistle. The story may be true, or it might be one of Billy’s infamous “bits of bollocks,”

but the fact that he still tells it speaks volumes about Billy’s character.

Billy claims membership in no Consilium, claiming Consilii are nothing but fascist jackboot-fests. He prefers to travel on the whims of fate, letting his natural luck guide him to where he is needed — or, rather, where he needs to be to score the optimum amount of

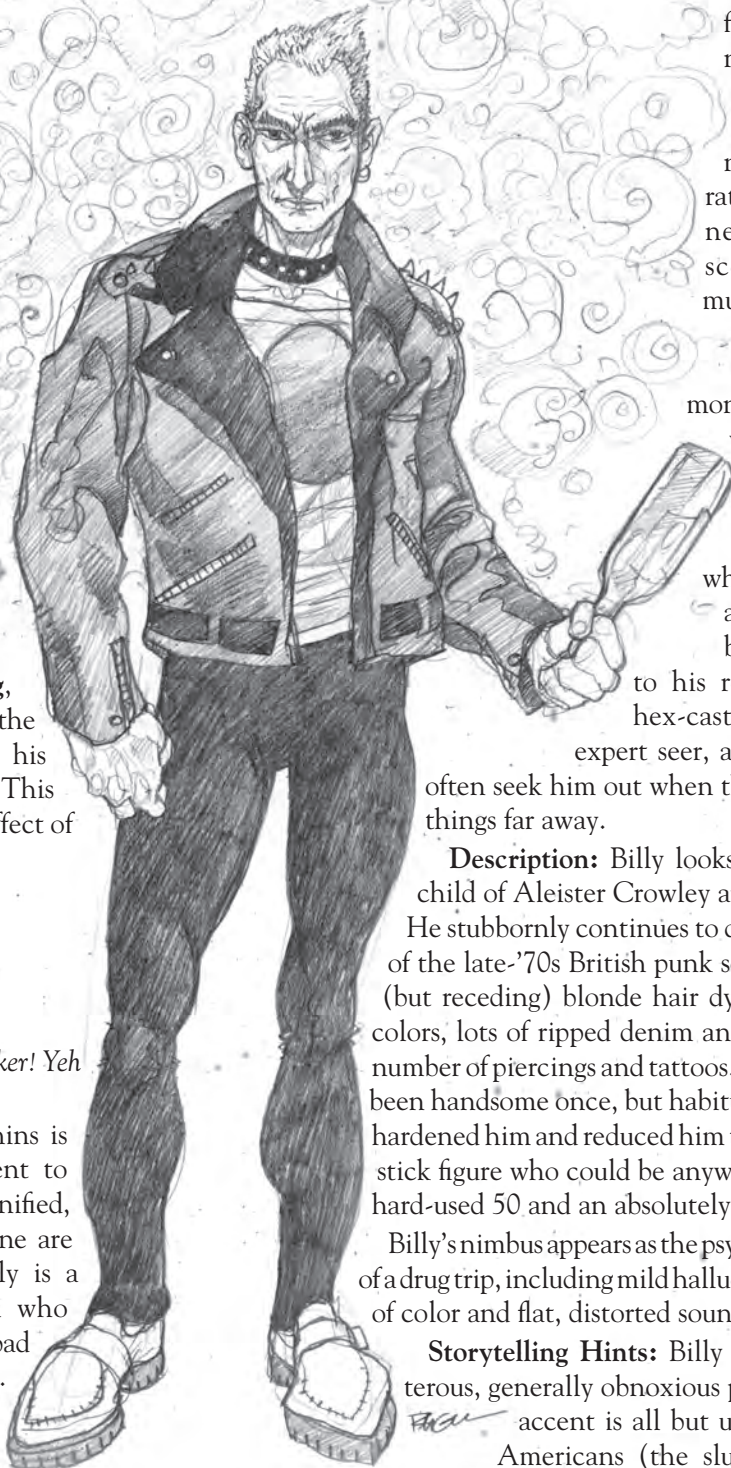
money, drugs and women. Billy is almost always in need of something, which makes him an easy man to buy. In addition

to his reputation as a hex-caster, Billy is an expert seer, and local mages often seek him out when they need to see things far away.

**Description:** Billy looks like the love-child of Aleister Crowley and Sid Vicious. He stubbornly continues to dress in the garb of the late-'70s British punk scene, with wild (but receding) blonde hair dyed a variety of colors, lots of ripped denim and leather and a number of piercings and tattoos. He might have been handsome once, but habitual drug use has hardened him and reduced him to an emaciated stick figure who could be anywhere between a hard-used 50 and an absolutely terrible 20.

Billy’s nimbus appears as the psychedelic effects of a drug trip, including mild hallucinations, swirls of color and flat, distorted sound.

**Storytelling Hints:** Billy is a loud, boisterous, generally obnoxious punk. His thick accent is all but unintelligible to Americans (the slurring from in-





toxication doesn't help either) and seems to wander randomly about England — one minute, he sounds like a Cockney lad from Whitechapel, the next he's a Manchester man and, after that, the proverbial pro from Dover. Billy knows the Daoine look down on him and probably regret ever training him, but he doesn't care. Billy sees himself as their counterpoint: the satyr to their *sidhe*, the Robin Goodfellow to their Oberon and Titania, and Billy would have it no other way.

**Dedicated Magical Tools:** Silver knife, scrying wheel (Space magic)

**Real Name:** William MacPherson

**Path:** Acanthus

**Order:** Free Council

**Legacy:** Daoine

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 1

**Mental Skills:** Investigation 4, Medicine (Drugs) 1, Occult (Curses) 3, Politics 1, Science 1

**Physical Skills:** Brawl 3, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Weaponry 1

**Social Skills:** Intimidation 2, Streetwise (Black Market) 2

**Merits:** Barfly 1, Contacts (Criminals, Occult Black Market, Merchant Sailors) 3, High Speech 1, Iron Stomach 2

**Willpower:** 3

**Wisdom:** 5 (Vocalization)

**Virtue:** Hope

**Vice:** Gluttony

**Initiative:** 4

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 10

**Health:** 7

**Gnosis:** 4

**Arcana:** Fate 3, Mind 1, Space 2, Time 1

**Rotes:** *Fate* — Interconnections (•), The Sybil's Sight (•), Exceptional Luck (••), Monkey's Paw (•••); *Mind* — One Mind, Two Thoughts (•); *Space* — Scrying (••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — The Eye and the Fist

**Mana/per turn:** 13/4

**Armor:** 3 ("Fortune's Protection," Fate ••)



# THE FALLEN PILLAR

Forget the flesh! Behold thyself, burn the body and free the spirit!

The body is no temple. The body is both an empty shell and a pair of shackles, not to be praised and adored. The mages of the Fallen Pillar believe that glorifying the physical form distracts the spirit. Unlike many of their brothers on the Path of Ecstasy, Fallen Pillar mages care little for their bodies. A mage of this Legacy knows she must free herself from the thousand appetites that flesh is heir to. She liberates herself from addictions and urges. She curbs her need for food and water. She learns that her body is temporary, and so she rakes it with long nails and cuts it with knives, showing the latticework of scars as evidence of enlightenment.

Mages of this Legacy attempt to live a truly ascetic lifestyle, denying all physical pleasures and mortifying the flesh. They mean to eradicate fear of life and death. With the body demeaned, with the flesh run ragged, they have no need to dread the vigors of life or the inevitability of death.

Fallen Pillars do not weep and sigh for the pleasures left behind. At first, its members may struggle grimly against the temptations of the physical world. Over time, however, they come to love their renunciations. Mages of the Fallen Pillar are taught to delight in denial. The soul laughs and leaps with joy as the body suffers. The Exultants embrace a gleeful madness, looking out over the Fallen World with wild eyes and feral smiles.

**Parent Path:** Thyrsus

**Nickname:** Exultants

**Orders:** The Exultants disturb many mages. The Exultants are too unpredictable, too willing to throw themselves and others into danger with little thought or preparation. To the mages of the Fallen Pillar, life is a mad dance, a whirling orgy of denial and martyrdom. The orders strive for greater stability. While none of the orders forbid Exultant members, the Adamantine Arrow is the only order that actively invites Fallen Pillar mages into its ranks. These ascetics can be vicious, if undisciplined, fighters. Upon the many battlefields of the secret world, the mages of the Fallen Pillar are frightening to behold: whirling storms of limbs and claws, shrieking and biting with casual disregard for their own lives. They gladly sacrifice their own bodies to save others.

Not all Exultants want to join an order, though. Younger Exultants are the likeliest: they probably joined an order before turning to the Fallen Pillar, and still feel attach-

ments to cabals and other mages. Many older Exultants reject the very idea of orders and treat them as one more distraction from true purity and fearlessness. Exultants who do join orders often care little for the rules, though they may care a great deal for the order's goals.

**Appearance:** A lifestyle of denial gives most Exultants a distinctive appearance. Most are incredibly thin, though they may couple their skinny bodies with ropy muscles. Many are sunburned. Few wear much clothing. Some Exultants let their hair and beards grow without ever cutting; others shave their heads, faces and bodies completely. Older, more powerful Fallen Pillars are frightening to behold. Their bodies are laced with scars and burns, and they are often so thin that they look nearly skeletal. Stranger

still is the manic, jubilant gleam in their eyes.

**Background:** The Exultants accept Thyrsus mages of any background, but the majority of mages in this Legacy are those who "hit bottom." Magic is a fickle and often overwhelming responsibility, and many mages cannot handle it. Some go mad. Others fall to addictions, ruin their relationships and destroy their families. Life as a mage is sink or swim, and many cannot stay afloat. For mages who sink, however, the Fallen Pillar stands ready to pull them out again. These ascetics seek those who are in the direst need of focus and control. The Exultants offer these wayward mages the chance to re-forge their souls in the kiln of bodily liberation.

**Organization:** The Fallen Pillars have no formalized organization. They think ranks, offices and bylaws are just more anchors weighing down the soul. The Exultants don't seek isolation — many gather in cabals or join orders — but the Legacy, as a whole, rejects institutional authority.

The Fallen Pillars do not cloister themselves, either. They are not solemn monks hiding from the world. Denial only matters if you place yourself before the things you desire. A drug addict is only free of his dependence when he can gaze upon temptation and not give in to his craving.

Just as importantly, the Exultants see themselves as models for other mages — and Sleepers, too. The Exultants don't preach their ways, however. Fallen Pillar mages believe their actions are example enough, showing how to achieve joy by rejecting the lures of the material world and





the demands of the flesh. This means going out and walking among humanity and acting as part of heterogeneous cabals. Loneliness neither brings joy nor strengthens the soul, and so Exultants universally reject isolation except as a temporary exercise in self-mastery.

**Suggested Oblations:** Branding, exposure to the elements, feats of physical sacrifice (starvation, thirst, holding one's breath, staying completely still for hours on end, hanging on hooks through the skin), making someone laugh, ritual bleeding or self-cutting, ritual dancing

**Concepts:** Cult leader, ex-addict, homeless person, nomad, tai chi practitioner, urban guru, wanderer, wild man

## *History*

The history of the Fallen Pillar does not matter. The Exultants care little for the past: you walk forward on the road, not backward. From time to time, however, it is worth looking back over your shoulder to see where you have been and how far you came. With that in mind, the mages of the Fallen Pillar tell some stories of the Legacy's history. One might call these stories more parables than history, though.

## *The Pillar Saint and Lucian the Bodiless*

This tale concerns the first mage of this Legacy, a nameless hermit whose world was shaken by a creature calling itself Lucian the Bodiless.

Once upon a time, this hermit — whom the Exultants call the Pillar Saint — lived a life of ascetic austerity. He did not eat, drink or sleep. His body was burned raw by the sun as he sat forever atop a tall pillar in the desert. He was very proud of himself and what he had accomplished. For 20 years he did not leave the top of the tall pole.

One day, when the sun was highest in the sky, a figure came to the hermit. This figure was not human, and its form was in fact nothing more than the outline of a body traced in a faint dusting of sand and tiny pebbles. This creature said its name was Lucian the Bodiless, and it asked the Pillar Saint what he was doing.

The Pillar Saint responded, "I am sitting atop this pillar. I have denied the Devil and all demons. I no longer submit to the physical world. I do not need food or water. Sleep is a distant dream."

Lucian asked him why. "To make my spirit pure," the Pillar Saint said. "I rely upon nothing in this world except my soul."

The bodiless figure laughed like a dust devil spinning on the ground. The Pillar Saint didn't understand why he was being mocked, so he asked Lucian why he laughed.

"Because you are a happy fool," Lucian said. With that, the figure clapped his nigh-invisible hands together, and a thunderclap split the hot desert air. The column beneath the Pillar Saint shattered into many pieces, and he toppled to the ground. Upon hitting the hard earth, his back broke,

just as the pillar had, shattering in many places.

"You were relying upon the pillar," Lucian said quietly, and then blew away on a warm wind. The Pillar Saint cackled, for now he was truly enlightened. He stood despite his cracked bones and wandered off, smiling. From then on, he called himself the Anchorite and decided that he would teach others how to destroy their pillars and fall jubilantly to the ground below.

## *Society and Culture*

While the Exultants reject any formalized organization, they still pass along a number of teachings essential to the Legacy.

## *The Three Liberations*

The crux of an Exultant's teachings — in fact the very focus of his life — is denial of the non-essential. These distractions are not little things such as loud noises or a favorite television program. The Fallen Pillar sees most human desires as soul-stifling luxuries.

Exultants seek to liberate themselves from these fetters of desire. However, they do not expect a mage to throw off the shackles of the material world overnight. Fallen Pillars recognize that humankind has become addicted — not just to things like drugs or drink — but to a bevy of physical "necessities." Emancipating oneself from these addictions is a long and certainly an arduous process. Mages of this Legacy traverse a series of steps they call the Three Liberations.

Some Exultants call this process "pruning the vine." When a plant grows too lushly, it must be cut back to a single vine or stalk, or it may die from its own excess. An act that looks like mutilation actually heals. Human desires grow more rankly than any vine or weed, with grave consequences for the health of the soul. They, too, need curbing.

Once an Exultant rids herself of one set of distractions, she should begin working on the next. She is only truly allowed to move to the next Liberation after she proves herself to an Exultant of greater experience. The senior Exultant decides what test proves the student's achievement. A tutor might ask his charge to live with him for a year to demonstrate her emancipation, or he might instead put her through a series of quick and rigorous challenges. Some Exultants use magic to read the minds and souls of their juniors, while other tutors ask for physical evidence.

### **Liberation From Want**

Most mages of this Legacy are at this stage. They seek to free themselves from the things they *want*. A mage's wants can include nearly anything: drugs, alcohol, sex, videogames, television, the Internet or co-dependent relationships. A mage at this stage seeks to unburden herself of such needless cravings.

Exultants at this level are not total ascetics. They neither harm their own bodies by cutting or branding the flesh nor do they submit to a regimen of starvation and thirst. They



endeavor only to a spartan austerity. Their homes and sanctums are likely empty of decoration. They sleep on cots or pallets. Clothing and hairstyles serve only practicality, not fashion. They drink only water and eat small meals, usually bland. They reject gadgetry and sever any physical relationships. At this phase, the Exultants begin the process of hollowing out themselves and their lives.

### Liberation From Need

Three primary needs dominate human life: food, water and shelter. At this stage, a Fallen Pillar distances himself as much as possible from this trifecta of human requirements.

First, he leaves his home. He may not dwell within a physical shelter for more than a few nights at a time, and, even then, he will only do so if conditions become so harsh that he would die otherwise. Most mages at this stage become nomads, sleeping on the ground or in alleys. Exultants reject comfort, and learn to feel at ease out in the open, in whatever environment they find themselves. It doesn't matter if it's

the asphalt jungle or a real jungle — the Exultant makes every step his home.

Fallen Pillars also reject hunger. They do not renounce food — only the most powerful mages can truly live without eating. Rather, the mages deny their *desires* for food. They must grow comfortable with hunger, even revel in it. When their bellies growl in the hollows below bared ribs, the mages must rejoice in their disavowals of need. They should push themselves to the brink of death before finally eating. And, when they do eat, they do not do so out of desperation, wolfing down handfuls of food. When they finally decide to eat, they eat little: a handful of nuts, a few leaves plucked from an herb garden, a few berries in the palm of the hand. The mages eat the bare minimum of what their bodies require.

Fallen Pillars at this level can use magic to push themselves further. They don't see this as a weakness. Magic is a tool to be used. Unlike material things, magic isn't a distraction, and so it is perfectly acceptable if an Exultant uses her magic to keep her body running beyond the point of starvation (Life 2 "Body Control" is especially useful; see p. 182 of **Mage: The Awakening**.) The attainments of this Legacy are also helpful in this regard.





Third comes the mages' refusal of thirst. As with hunger, the mages don't reject *water*, just the desire for it. The suffering of thirst — dry mouth, weakened body, dizziness — must be overcome. When the mages drink, they drink only water, and only as much as they need to survive. Again, magic and attainments can be used to push themselves to new extremes.

Exultants are expected to take on other characteristics at this time. While they are not required to begin branding or scarring themselves yet, mages of this Legacy are expected to cover themselves with tattoos. Inking one's flesh hurts. It draws blood. It separates the mage from everybody else and makes the body an artificial thing, an expression of the mind instead of a brute accident of nature. The design of the tattoos are up to each Exultant, but many choose patterns of thorny vines, magical symbols or *faux* injuries.

Mages of the Fallen Pillar also tend to wear very little clothing at this stage. Whatever they wear should be meager — it might mean stripping down to their undergarments or even wearing rags and sacks. Only in completely adverse conditions are these mages expected to wear anything more. Even then, it's not unusual to see an Exultant stepping lightly through a snowstorm wearing nothing but a T-shirt and a pair of ragged jeans. At no point do they wear shoes.

#### **Liberation From Fear**

Older Exultants become paragons of asceticism, though few mages ever reach this stage. By now, they've unchained themselves from all indulgences and necessities. They are likely tattooed, with their skin bitten by frost or reddened by the sun. They might be completely bald, having shorn every millimeter of hair from their entire bodies. Alternately, they might be so hairy that they look like wild men with unkempt manes (of both beard and hair) that could serve as nests for birds. How much further can they go?

This stage is all about separating oneself from fear. To reject fear, Fallen Pillars are not expected to avoid it, but to confront it directly. They must dance around their fears, laughing, making their fears smaller than themselves — so small, in fact, that the fears can be eaten like a berry or stepped on like a bug.

Some fears are base and simple (phobias of spiders, snakes, darkness), whereas others are infinitely more complex (fear of abandonment, betrayal, intolerance). Every fear must be challenged, defied and defeated. A phobia of spiders means the mage must not only cover herself in spiders, but she must stay close to them at all times, living with them, *becoming* them for a time if she has sufficient magical power. If the mage fears loneliness, then he must abandon himself. He must leave civilization for a time, and perhaps even leave his own body.

All mages — in fact, all *people* — are driven by two fears greater than all others. Everyone fears life and death.

All are afraid to live and feel without restraint, to experience the massive highs and lows of every emotion — joy

and sorrow, anger and tranquility. Mages of the Fallen Pillar must embrace these emotions, for they are pure. But the mages must also learn not to lose themselves within the emotions, or let them become another drug. Anger comes, but should also be allowed to leave. Joy is the same.

The fear of death presents its own challenges. All suffering points to this fear, because death is the great unknown. Mages at this stage do not try to escape the fear of death by learning Death magic. An Exultant snubs death by showing it that she does not care about it one way or another. She lets death know that she will meet it head on with glowing eyes and a blood-smeared grin. To do this, she hurts herself. Each Exultant chooses his own forms of pain. He may bite or claw himself. Perhaps he cuts himself with razors or burns brands into his flesh. Some Exultants go to further extremes and castrate themselves or remove other parts. To truly see beyond death, some Exultants decide to be blind. To learn how to communicate the secrets of fear, they may cut out their tongues.

Such bodily mortification is done with jubilation. Exultants sing hymns to the trees as they bleed from their injuries; Exultants run laughing down the city streets with skin still sizzling from fiery wounds. Many Exultants also become mad martyrs at this stage. Caring little for their physical life means they can leap into battle with complete abandon. They might jump in front of swords to save friends, or even go into an enemy's lair armed with mean magic and backpacks full of explosives.

The point of all this is to prove to themselves that the *soul* matters, not the physical form. The body is temporary; the soul is permanent. One's flesh is little more than a suit of clothing. Over time, all fabrics fray.

#### **Scouring**

Exultants are taught early on that it is not only acceptable to scour their Patterns for Mana, but it is *encouraged*. Mana is the energy of the spirit, forever food for the soul. The body, on the other hand, is weak and temporary. If one is in desperate need of food for the spirit, then it is fine for the body to suffer. Mages working on the Liberation from Fear regularly diminish their Attributes and Health to fuel their magical abilities: Pattern scouring becomes their first source of Mana for spells, rather than their last.

#### *Duality*

The only relationship that matters inside the Legacy is the one between tutor and apprentice. The tutor (also called "liberator") helps to shepherd the apprentice (also "slave") through the Liberations. While the mages of this Legacy aren't discouraged from association with other members, it is by no means required. However, no liberator should work with more than one slave. Every apprentice



is different. What works for one does not work for all, and every pupil deserves a tutor's undivided attention.

The bond between liberator and slave is meant to be permanent. Only death should sever the tie between them. The Fallen Pillar teaches that while the liberator frees the slave from the material world, the liberator himself is also liberated in the process. Many tutors and apprentices join cabals together. Even when they don't, they still maintain a close connection, and often meet one another in dreams or the Shadow Realm.

One of the less-noted responsibilities of the liberator is punishment. The Liberations are difficult, and slaves may "fall off the wagon" from time to time. This is expected, but not allowed to go unpunished. Chastisement is often harsh, and generally tailored toward the nature of the slave's transgression. If an apprentice fell back into an old drug addiction, then she and her tutor may go out together to destroy the dealer who sells the poison. If an apprentice cannot abide his starvation, he may be force-fed so much food that he becomes sick for days or even ruptures his stomach lining (which the liberator will heal — eventually). Many tutors keep punishment simple: pain. They cane their apprentices, cut them, brand them or do whatever it takes to cauterize the spiritual wounds.

### *The Anchoritic Masters*

Legends of the Fallen Pillar say that members who achieve the final Liberation are visited by one of the Anchoritic Sages. These reclusive Exultants invite the mage to join their ranks. If a mage accepts the invitation, she goes away with the Anchorite and is never seen again. If she rebuffs the Anchorite, she is purportedly destroyed.

No one can prove the Anchoritic Sages exist or that they don't. (Most teachers recognize the paradox in the stories: one way or another, no one who receives the Anchorites' invitation could ever tell anyone else about it.) Legacy legend certainly offers a number of tales about Sages who act without announcing themselves, and other Exultants only later guess what they must have been. These tales suggest that the Anchorites are truly liberated beings. They do not eat or sleep. Their bodies are skin-draped skeletons, and yet they are vibrant with the vigors of life. Many Anchorites are supposedly missing body parts, and yet have "phantom" limbs that replace the amputated pieces. Other stories suggest the Sages are accomplished body-jumpers, hopping between animal and human bodies daily, never staying in one "shell" too long.

One ironic tale, however, tells how an Exultant encountered a mage who claimed he was an Anchoritic Sage. The Anchorite did not match any of the earlier descriptions, and was in fact a normal-looking man in a business suit. He had a briefcase in one hand, a cell phone in the other and stood at a hot dog stand ordering his lunch. When the Exultant asked why the self-styled Sage had abandoned his training, he simply declared that he had "liberated himself from the

Liberations," and was, as such, "utterly enlightened." Then he laughed, and headed for the subway.

### *Acceptance of Bliss*

Mages of the Fallen Pillar are taught to take comfort and joy in their asceticism. The Legacy does not tell them to become morose monks or weeping flagellants. Jubilation, they're told, results from strengthening the spirit. Each scar comes with laughter. Starvation and thirst deserve howls of triumph. The fact that they call their actions "Liberations" instead of "Denials" is very telling. The Exultants see such deprivations as chances for new possibilities, not closings off of potential. The Exultants take pleasure in their lack of pleasure.

Curiously, the Legacy does not shun loving relationships. The Exultants deny themselves *physical* love, but not emotional or spiritual love. Many Legacy members fall in love. Few Exultants frown upon such behavior, provided the relationship does not become physical. In their eyes, denying love a physical expression strengthens the emotional bond between lovers, by removing the selfish desire for pleasure. Sexual love is an anchor. Without it, two (or more) people can be free.

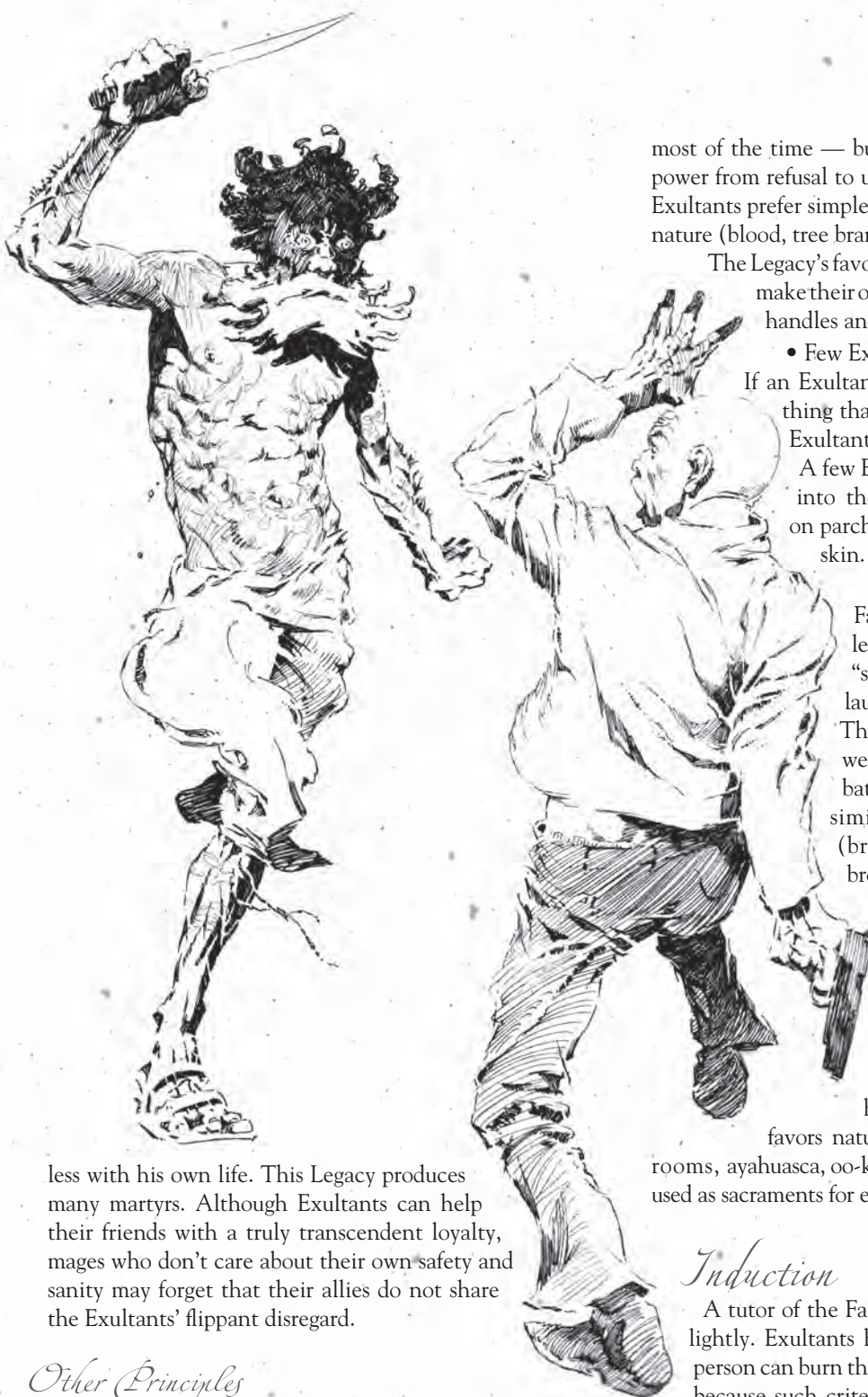
### *Interactions*

Mages of the Fallen Pillar inspire strong and opposite reactions from other mages. Exultants tend to be incredibly loyal, nearly to a fault, and commit themselves to every task with zealous delight. However, this self-abandoning passion so frightens some mages that they refuse to accept an Exultant as a cabal-mate or even acquaintance. Whispered stories tell of old, powerful Exultants who saw their cabals as "extensions" of their own bodies. As such, they had little problem casually throwing their cabal-mates into battles they couldn't win, lashing them with Paradox or forcing their weak minds to share their asceticism. Are these tales true? Perhaps. While many mages of the Fallen Pillar are wise and focused individuals, any mage can fall to hubris and decide that nothing matters except her own will.

The Exultants encourage members to join cabals. Exultants believe the soul suffers when it lacks company. Fallen Pillar tenets don't demand that members try to "convert" their cabal-mates to the Legacy's ways. Exultants do not judge what others do or ask that their allies "liberate" themselves from material entanglements.

That doesn't mean that only a cabal benefits from an Exultant's presence. The Liberations aren't easy: some mages free themselves with complete and total success every time, but most experience setbacks. In many ways, the cabal goes along for the ride and shares the successes and failures. The other mages witness the suffering and occasional madness of their Exultant cabal-mate. A time may come when the Exultant is too weak to perform whatever task the cabal needs done (though he'll surely try). As an Exultant grows in age and power, he may become reck-





less with his own life. This Legacy produces many martyrs. Although Exultants can help their friends with a truly transcendent loyalty, mages who don't care about their own safety and sanity may forget that their allies do not share the Exultants' flippant disregard.

### *Other Principles*

The Exultants follow various other precepts with greater or lesser zeal. These principles are not universal like the Liberations. A tutor may forgo some or all of these precepts, according to her own taste or what she thinks would best serve her pupil's enlightenment.

- Physical items are crutches an Exultant should throw away. Magical items are seen similarly. Most Exultants prefer to work without Artifacts, Enhanced items or Imbued items.

- This disavowal of material objects doesn't include magical tools. A mage may get along without magical tools

most of the time — but failing an exercise of the soul's power from refusal to use a tool is vanity, not liberation. Exultants prefer simple tools made from the body or from nature (blood, tree branches, strips of skin, animal pelts).

The Legacy's favorite tool is a knife. Many Exultants make their own knives with unadorned wooden handles and hand-sharpened shivs of metal.

- Few Exultants own libraries or sanctums. If an Exultant does have a library, it is something that can travel with the mage. Some Exultants carry backpacks full of notepads. A few Exultants carve Arcane knowledge into their bare flesh or scribe grimoires on parchment made from their own flayed skin.

- As a Legacy, the mages of the Fallen Pillar are not pacifists. Many learn martial arts or craft their own "styles" (which often include a lot of laughing, biting and leaping around). These mages rarely train with any weapons except knives, small wooden batons (such as escrima sticks) or similar improvised blunt weapons (broken chair legs, two-by-fours, broomsticks).

- The Fallen Pillar Legacy accepts the use of some drugs that lack obvious addictive properties and offer some benefit to the spirit. For instance, some tutors allow the sparing use of hallucinogenic drugs, as a way to break old habits of thought. The Legacy only favors natural hallucinogens (peyote, mushrooms, ayahuasca, oo-koo-he). These drugs are sometimes used as sacraments for extended spellcasting.

### *Induction*

A tutor of the Fallen Pillar does not accept a pupil lightly. Exultants have no criteria for what kind of person can burn their souls in the forge of this Legacy, because such criteria are artificial. Saying "he must be this or she must be that" means nothing, because a mage always appears who violates those characteristics and still makes a fine Exultant. The Fallen Pillar cares about what a mage *does*, not who he is. Actions, after all, speak louder than words.

Of course, a mage must be Thyrsus to learn the attainments. The Exultants gladly train mages of any persuasion and interest, though, helping them escape the cruel bonds of insanity and addiction. One can still live by the Fallen Pillar's joyful asceticism without actually belonging to the Legacy.



## *A Hand in the Darkness*

Fallen Pillar mages do not always come to this Legacy on their own. No, many times tutors without apprentices (or slaves who are now ready to become liberators) will seek out new initiates. These Exultants look for Awakened who have fallen. Mages can be frail. Magic is wild and fickle, and some minds can't always handle the overwhelming power of touching the Supernal. Many fall to drink or drugs. Some lodge themselves in co-dependent relationships or binge sexually. Others become addicted to the magic itself, Paradox and caution be damned. When one hits the very bottom of the pit and the darkness seems impenetrable, an Exultant may come along and offer a hand to pull the poor soul up out of his hole.

A prospective tutor only makes this offer once. If a mage doesn't wish to join, fine. He can always choose to come of his own volition later. (The Fallen Pillar prefers this in some ways, for the applicant shows true interest and devotion.)

Other potential Exultants come seeking tutors all on their own. The mages of the Fallen Pillar are sights to behold: frail, scarred — and triumphant. They show a strange grandeur that pulls mages to them. Any who come or are invited are welcome to begin the arduous journey toward total liberation. First, however, they must show true dedication.

## *Offers on the Altar*

Every initiation is different, unique to the tutor. The theme of each initiation, however, is universal. A mage must show that she is capable of sacrifice. The liberator sets the nature of this sacrifice. It may be physical, emotional, social or spiritual. The liberator's personality comes through when setting the sacrificial requirement. A tutor whose body is a roadmap of chaotic scars may ask that the sacrifice be physical, an offer of pain and blood. If the tutor was once a methamphetamine addict, he may ask for his apprentice to free himself from some kind of worldly pleasure — or, stranger still, ask that the apprentice first *addict* himself to a potent substance and then show that he can free himself from it. Tutors may also tailor initiations to the applicants' personalities. Other potential sacrifices include the following:

- Cut off all the fingers and thumb on one hand. Live for a month without them, at which point the applicant or another mage may draw down the Supernal to heal them.
- Live in solitary confinement for a week with only bread and water. The mage may leave confinement at any time before this by knocking on the door. Doing so voids her initiation.
- Burn all her social bridges. She must sever any relationship she has, whether it's with a boyfriend, her mother or her old cabal-mates.
- Scour himself for Mana, then use that Mana to fuel a spell that helps someone else.

• If she is addicted to something (drugs, sex, food, magic), she must demonstrably separate herself from that thing. This might mean killing her dealer or destroying his stash. This might mean using magic to damage her sexual organs or pleasure centers. This might mean destroying her magical tools. A mage raised in the so-called comforts of urban civilization might be left in the woods or the desert for a week. Alternately, a nature-loving survivalist might be thrown into the urban sprawl for the same period of time.

The slave complies and completes the sacrifice, or the slave is free to go. Mages can attempt their initiation three times. Thrice-failed means the doorway to liberation closes forever, from that Exultant at least. A candidate need not make his attempts one right after the other; in fact, he can take years between applications. Once the induction is complete, a mage may begin on the journey toward liberation.

## Story Hooks — Tales of Joyful Sacrifice

• An Exultant member of the cabal has vanished and no longer communicates with other mages. He was once an addict of life-threatening proportions: the rest of the cabal knows who his dealer was and where the Exultant *might* have gone. Not only is the Exultant occulted, however, but that area of town is notoriously dangerous. It's said that all number of horrific things keep watch over those neighborhoods, and they won't like it when a group of upstart sorcerers go mucking about and asking questions. Can the characters find the Exultant's tutor and beg for his aid? What happens when they find *him* missing, as well? Finally, if they manage to find their cabal-mate, can they help him to shake the addiction once more? What happens if they find that his addiction was magically forced upon him? By *whom*?

• A self-proclaimed Anchoritic Master comes to the city, claiming "total liberation." He an image of unbridled asceticism: skeletal frame draped with sallow skin, rotten teeth, a tangled beard and a body striped with thick scars. He joyously interrupts meetings of the Consilium, and wanders among the local cabals telling stories of his "time away." Unfortunately, this Master has unusual ideas. He believes that all should sacrifice *las* he has, whether they want to or not. His actions are dangerous and unpredictable. He cares little for moderating his magic, or who gets hurt as a result of his madness. And he truly is powerful. Can the characters "talk him down?" Can they find a way to stop him by force or by magic? Is he even what he claims to be? Or has *something* possessed him?

• The local Hierarch thinks that the Fallen Pillar is a way of danger, and that it should not be allowed in "his" city. He claims that such ascetic



zeal amounts to extremism and should be denied. Of course, one of the characters *is* an Exultant of the Fallen Pillar. Do they leave? Hide? Or defy the Consilium and take the consequences?

## Attainments

The attainments of the Fallen Pillar bring the Exultant further from the flesh and its cravings. The less she depends upon her own body, the more power she gains. These are the gifts of the ascetic, potent rewards for corporeal sacrifice.

Each of the three attainments roughly corresponds to the Three Liberations. A mage cannot gain an attainment until his tutor believes he has achieved the corresponding Liberation. However, Exultants often achieve all Three Liberations long before they can seek their third attainment.

### 1st: *The Enlightened Skin*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Life 2 (primary), Prime 1, Survival 1

The mage can use the Life 2 spell “Body Control” to maintain his ascetic devotion. With this attainment, he can go longer without eating, drinking and sleeping. In systems terms, this spell allows him to regulate her breathing, heartbeat, metabolism and reflexes (as noted on p. 182 of **Mage: The Awakening**). In this instance, however, the attainment does not allow the mage to speed the healing times of bashing wounds. Bruises and injuries are welcome visitors, and needn’t be pushed out the door so quickly.

In addition, the mage gains access to the Prime 1 effect “Supernal Vision” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 221), granting him potent Mage Sight. The Exultant believes that this enlightenment comes from the emancipation of the flesh from its desperate distractions.

### 2nd: *The Willing Victim*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Life 3, Subterfuge 2

A wise predator goes for the weakest member of the herd first. With this attainment, the Exultant makes himself weak of body and appearance in an effort to goad others to attack him before anyone else. His back bows, his ribs show, his skin takes on a jaundiced pallor. Foes lured into this trap find that the mage is not nearly as weak as he appears.

This is a combination of two Life 3 effects, “Degrading the Form” and “Honing the Form” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 186). The mage may, as an instant action requiring no roll, subtract a number of dots from one Physical Attribute to appear weak. In the same action, he redistributes those dots to a *different* Physical Attribute. An Exultant who uses this attainment may take points away from Stamina, thus assuming an appearance of

frailty or sickness. At the same time, he can bolster his Dexterity or Strength, so he can make stronger or quicker attacks. The end result is that the mage appears feeble (and with regard to one of his Physical Attributes, he is feeble), but is then able to redirect that energy into surprising an enemy with unexpected reserves of combat vigor. A character can only redistribute a number of dots equal to his Life Arcanum. Modifying Physical Attributes has a direct effect on their paired advantages (changing Stamina changes Health, changing Dexterity will change Initiative and possibly Defense and both Dexterity and Strength affect Speed).

This attainment is an expression of an Exultant’s potential martyrdom. An Exultant throws himself into battle with incomparable verve, despite any harm that such unbidden zealotry might bring him. The effects of this attainment last for a single scene.

### 3rd: *The Unshackled Soul*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Life 4 (primary), Mind 1

Fallen Pillar precepts teach that the soul is hindered by the presence of the body and the brain. Most mages are slaves to their biological urges and corruptible instincts. At this stage, an Exultant is no longer a servant of instinct, for she frees herself of such corporeal obligations. Most importantly, she liberates herself from fear.

A mage with this attainment gains a number of bonus dice equal to her Life Arcanum (maximum of +5). The mage gains these dice against any appropriate *instinctual* responses. For instance, she may gain the dice against Intimidation rolls made against her, if the other character tries threatening physical harm: The Exultant no longer pays attention to the body’s alarms.

Fear is a cloud, and this attainment dispels fear along with any forced reactions. Exultants at this level appear eerily calm in the face of grave danger, often acting joyful instead of anxious. The mage gains the bonus dice in the following situations: Resisting Intimidation attempts or Coercion, Resisting Poison or Disease and Resisting Seduction. (Sexual seduction requires a physical response.) The bonus is also given to any resistance rolls requiring Stamina.

The mage feels truly numb to her bodily instincts. She may also ignore all Wound penalties due to this disconnect. (The Storyteller may still demand occasional penalties, however. If the Exultant wants to run away, but one of her feet was mangled in an attack, she’ll take some level of penalty not from the pain but from the sheer awkwardness of sprinting on a stump.)

This attainment is always active.

**Optional Arcanum:** Prime 3

With Prime 3, the mage of the Fallen Pillar also needn’t worry about the safety and sanctity of her own soul, per the Prime 3 spell “Armor of the Soul” (see **Mage: The**



Awakening, p. 223), with one point of Potency per dot of the Prime Arcanum possessed (thus, at least 3). This defense only applies against magic or powers that would affect the character's soul and can be combined with the mage's "Magic Shield."

## Sample Character

*Pythia*

**Quote:** "What I have given up does not compare to what I have been given".

**Background:** It was a bad day when Elsie McKenna passed out and found herself at the Watchtower of the Stone Book. She tended to yet *another* gunshot wound until a doctor could arrive to relieve her, and then things started to get weird. The wound began bleeding again, overly so. It gurgled past the gauze and began spilling onto the floor and her shoes. Nobody cared. The blood ran in crooked rivulets across the floor and up the wall and began covering the ceiling, and a crash of dissonant thoughts came together in her head. A mad sensibility rose within her, and she wanted to laugh and cry and die. That's when she passed out and found herself at the end of her mystery play, etching her bloody name in a granite grimoire.

She could no longer stomach being a nurse, but she still devoted herself toward helping people. Elsie – now taking the name Pythia, a priestess of life – knew that there were secrets out there, secrets that could help her *heal* people, even bring them back to life.

She joined the Mysterium. It was a hard road. Suffering confronted her at every turn. Pain drove people mad – and it was driving *her* mad, too. She struggled to fix every injury, heal every wound, even when it went against her better judgment. Even when it meant dragging the Supernal down into places where the "normals" could see it.

Paradox and Hubris were two of her closest friends. It was only a few years after her Awakening that she found herself again waking – except this time, she was tied to a bed, pumped full of anti-psychotic drugs and locked away in an institution. How much time she spent there, she doesn't know. The drugs and her own madness kept her from touching her failing magic. That's when the little old man, dressed only in a tattered dishtowel. He laughed and told her that she would learn to laugh again, and then he took her away and offered her the chance to free herself from the madness, the pain and the anchors of her own flesh. He became her liberator. His name was Ouroboros.





Since that time, Pythia has dreamed potent dreams of the future. Ouroboros told her that she was a seer, and that her visions into the future and into the Shadow would only grow stronger as she went deeper down the rabbit hole of liberation. Though relatively young for a mage of her experience, she has lived an active life, as most Exultants do.

**Description:** Pythia is a willowy sylph with wide eyes and full lips. She has grown her chestnut hair long – so long, it touches the backs of her thighs when she stands. The girl wears little more than diaphanous robes or rags (if she wears anything at all). Her nails have grown long and are curling inward. She usually wears a bemused and perhaps self-important smile.

Her nimbus is a wild tangle of blood-soaked vines that creep forth from a crimson aura. Those nearby often feel dizzy, hungry and more than a little euphoric.

**Storytelling Hints:** Pythia believes herself to be quite wise. She recognizes that she has not reached the pinnacle of her magical acumen, but that doesn't stop her from believing that she will. The girl is arrogant, yet not coldly so. Pythia knows that she has sacrificed much, and she seeks only to continue on her path toward true liberation. One day, she aspires to become an Anchoritic Sage like the original Pillar Saint.

Despite all of this, Pythia is often capricious and amused by all things around her. She can be quick with a joke or a riddle. Sometimes, she makes her wordplay at the expense of others. If she takes on an apprentice, she will be a very demanding, though not cruel, liberator.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Handmade bloodletting knife that has never been cleaned

**Real Name:** Elsie McKenna

**Path:** Thyrsus

**Order:** Mysterium

**Legacy:** The Fallen Pillar

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Mental Skills:** Investigation 2, Medicine (Diagnose) 2, Occult 2, Science 2

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 1, Survival 2, Weaponry 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy (Vices) 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Persuasion (Logic) 3, Subterfuge 2

**Merits:** Dream 4, High Speech 1, Iron Stamina 1, Meditative Mind 1, Occultation 1

**Willpower:** 5

**Wisdom:** 6 (Vocalization)

**Virtue:** Temperance

**Vice:** Pride

**Initiative:** 6

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 9

**Health:** 7

**Gnosis:** 5

**Arcana:** Life 3, Prime 2, Spirit 2, Time 2

**Notes:** *Life*—Cleanse the Body (•), Organic Resilience (••), Degrading the Form (•••); *Prime*—Dispel Magic (•); *Spirit*—Second Sight (•), Peer Across the Gauntlet (••); *Time*—Augury (••)

**Legacy Attainments:** 1st—The Enlightened Skin; 2nd—The Willing Victim

**Mana/per turn:** 14/5

**Armor:** n/a

**Magic Shield:** 2 (Prime ••)





# THE HOUSE OF ARIADNE

*You frolic in the woods and forget the power coalescing in the cities.  
The city tells me you will fail in your ventures.*

Many mages prefer to search for Hallows away from the bustle and grime of a city's streets. These mages claim the Sleepers clog the mages' concentration: that cities are cesspools, and only natural sources of magic are pure.

The House of Ariadne says that such thinking should have died with Atlantis, or at least with the invention of indoor plumbing. The cities are the true fount of power. Why are many people drawn to the city? Money gathers in cities, yes, and political power, too—but could some subtler, greater lure attract people as well? Some mystical power in the sheer *numbers* of people? Atlantis is proof that even mages create more power when they gather together than the sum of their powers as individuals.

The mages of Ariadne's House love everything about the city: the late nights, the crush of people, even the crime, the trash, the gang warfare and the homeless. Every aspect of the city, the good and the bad, creates the chaos in which Acanthus mages thrive. In a great city, you can see a \$300 a ticket theater show one night and lose your fortune on the stock market the next morning. Fate's long fingers manipulate lives within the city, and the city calls for its inhabitants to create buildings and spaces that endure longer than a human life.

The sheer variety you can find in the city, from debutante clubs to bondage clubs, draws the Metropolitans. One seldom sees \$300 bottles of scotch drunk at a gentleman's club in the suburbs. A rural town doesn't create societies of homeless living underneath overpasses. Cities buzz with all kinds of people and lifestyles, and the noisier the buzz, the bigger the draw.

As a Metropolitan becomes more in tune with the energy of a city, she can follow a ley line wherever she likes. In time, she can learn to see a web of subtler lines, what the Legacy calls Ariadne's thread, spun throughout the city. The thread can follow a ley line or lead a mage on a meditative path through the city. All the threads together form the city's Knot.

These threads allow the city to communicate with the Metropolitans. Ariadne's thread can help a mage locate

physical things, such as lost items or people, or abstract things, such as a safe hiding place away from prying magical eyes, Hallows or areas that have borne witness to great happiness, fear or other strong emotions. The threads can even lead to symbolic locations that express the city's own thoughts or messages to the mage.

Once the Metropolitan can follow Ariadne's thread, the mage can learn what the city has to say about its history, its people and its magic.

The city does not forget its history, the births and deaths, the crimes and benedictions. All the city's secrets open to the view of a skilled and perceptive Metropolitan. The city becomes a tangled Knot only the Metropolitan can follow, walking the thread without getting lost.

The only trick is finding that thread.

**Parent Path:** Acanthus

**Nickname:** Metropolitans

**Orders:** The House of Ariadne does not favor any particular order. The Legacy doesn't discourage members from belonging to any orders, but most Metropolitans are too busy following the threads of Fate to worry much about the Pentagram and its politics. Many Metropolitans never join an order, or they abandon former allegiances once they join the House. Those who do belong to an order are seldom very dedicated members.

The Metropolitans do, of course, step on the orders' toes now and then. The Metropolitans claim the right to know *everything* that happens in the largest population centers in the world, and to interfere when they believe the city wants them to. Other mages sometimes disagree.

The Adamantine Arrow respects the House to a limited degree. The House of Ariadne was founded on strife, but few brave warriors appear in Legacy's history. The Metropolitans prefer stealth and subtlety to combat. Nevertheless, when mages of the Arrow stalk a foe through the city, they like to have a Metropolitan assist them. Sometimes, they get one; sometimes, the House tells them to take their fight elsewhere.

The Free Council actively supports the House of Ariadne. The idea that Sleepers create magic through cities fits right in with the Free Council's theory of magic never entirely leaving humanity. The Metropolitans agree that



the Sleepers can sense the resonance of strong magic, and they are part of the city's Supernal essence, but the Legacy does not believe that Sleepers can ever touch the magic they sense and help to create.

The Guardians of the Veil wish the House of Ariadne would join them and obey them. Both groups pull strings from covert positions to orchestrate what they like, their tools stealth and subterfuge. However, most of the mages in the House of Ariadne do not belong to the Guardians of the Veil, and, therefore, this Legacy operates outside the control of the order. Sometimes the Guardians and the House work together to solve a mystery; more often, the House probes matters the Guardians wish to remain hidden. In many cities, the Guardians strive to curb or subvert the House of Ariadne, while the House strives to dissuade the Guardians from such interference. The conflict occasionally erupts in exploding streets and burning buildings.

The Metropolitans' knack for following threads of power and history makes them popular with the Mysterium. The House of Ariadne has powers to find things — or people — that have been lost, sometimes for millennia. When Mysterium investigators pursue urban mysteries, they aren't shy about asking Metropolitans for help — and usually receive it. The

two groups rarely disagree; conflict arises only when the Mysterium wishes to keep something hidden, and the House of Ariadne wants it revealed. If the Mysterium hides some-

thing within a city, especially something magical, the House of Ariadne is likely to find it. The Legacy does not make a habit of thieving, however. The House's only precious possession is the city itself.

The Silver Ladder watches the House of Ariadne closely. Similar to the Guardians of the Veil, the Silver Ladder can see the Metropolitans as useful allies, or rogues who step out of line, pushing their cities on paths the Silver Ladder does not approve. They watch the House of Ariadne closely and interfere when they see need.

As the Seers of the Throne do with all mages save themselves, the Seers try to halt the Metropolitans' work. The Seers have no place in their world for crazy people who talk to cities — especially when the cities talk back.

**Appearance:** A roomful of Metropolitans shows a broad cross-section of urban styles. Some members dress as (and are) wealthy socialites, viewing the city from a 30th story balcony. Other mages prefer to get closer to the underbelly and appear as rag-tag, cart-pushing homeless people. Still other Metropolitans are completely street, flaunting heavy, artistic tattoos, gaudy jewelry and gang colors. You don't see Metropolitans wearing overalls, pastel blouses or T-shirts with slogans matching their spouses'. No one looking at the Metropolitans would assume anything but that they live in the city: not the suburbs, not the country, not the small towns or remote villages. The city, where people gather and live for reasons they don't understand — but the Metropolitans do.

**Background:** Few people who are not born city-dwellers choose this Legacy. A few suburbanites or country mages may find themselves drawn to the city and join the Legacy to understand the thread that dragged them there. Most Metropolitans, however, were born and raised in the city.

They grew up knowing the shortcuts, the best places to eat, the places not to go after dark.

Often, they feel the city's pulse before they Awaken.





Sometimes they have a knack for finding lost things or knowing who's doing what in the neighborhood. Sometimes they walk the streets at night, heading nowhere in particular, just following paths they can't quite see.

The Metropolitans call this half-sensed path Ariadne's thread, and say their new members follow it to their destiny. After joining the Legacy, mages learn how to see Ariadne's thread stretching over the streets, through alleys, up elevator shafts and through old, forgotten shops. This thin, golden line appears when the mage wishes to find something, or merely wishes to meditate, walking throughout the city.

**Organization:** Each city has one House; there are not multiple organizations in cities, even the larger ones. (Though the Legacy does not always follow the lines on a map in defining a city's limits.) Each House of Ariadne, in turn, is divided into two levels: the Trackers and the Weavers.

Most Metropolitans are Trackers. Even if mages have been Awakened for years, they still need time to learn how to see and follow Ariadne's thread. They practice by finding lost things and mapping the city's secrets. Even if the city is only 100 years old, and has held a House of Ariadne for most of those years, the city always has more secrets to tell — from a secret love affair when the city was a village of 25 families to a hot dog vendor who is slowly poisoning his regular patrons. As Trackers gain skill, they are assigned to find particular lost items or people.

Some Metropolitans have an easier time than others communing with the city. These mages rarely sleep, preferring to walk the streets and talk to the city. Sleepers often think these mages are crazy homeless people, since they do nothing but walk, murmuring to themselves. These mages want to learn all of the city's secrets and become honored lorekeepers among the House of Ariadne.

The Weavers are the most senior Metropolitans. They have at least their second attainment. Weavers supervise the other Metropolitans and manage the cities. Weavers plan the city's future based on its past, deciding whether the city will grow, decay or stay the same. No matter how much they love their city, they do understand when a city tells them it needs to change.

In the past, cities could die outright from war, plague, dynastic shifts or natural disasters. Nowadays, cities morph and change but seldom die outright. Sometimes they devour other towns or cities, or are devoured themselves. More subtly, cities can grow smaller towns within themselves, communities with their own customs and privileges. College campuses are often their own cities in the eyes of the House, as are the worst of the slums or the shantytowns beyond the railroad tracks.

Although Weavers can meddle with the city's fate, some Weavers simply sit back and wait for the city's future to play out, watching and chronicling. The Weavers also dedicate themselves to walking the Knot in the city, looking for Ariadne's Exit, as they call it, hoping to follow her thread to the Supernal Realm.

**Suggested Oblations:** A walk in the city to find something you never saw before, exploring the subway tunnels,

watching a sunrise or sunset from a penthouse apartment, visiting a museum or other tourist attraction, attending a party with a "list," serving food at a homeless shelter, sleeping on a park bench

**Concepts:** Upper-class socialite, homeless person, the crazy man preaching on the corner, attention-loving movie star, stock broker, runaway, gang member, prostitute, pickpocket, con artist

## History

When Theseus entered the labyrinth of King Minos to kill the Minotaur, the king's daughter Ariadne fell for the handsome hero. She went to the inventor and architect Daedalus, who gave her a ball of string that would unwind and show Theseus his way back out of the labyrinth. Ariadne professed her love to Theseus and made him promise to take her home and marry her if she helped him kill the Minotaur and escape.

Theseus abandoned Ariadne on the island of Naxos. He betrayed her because she betrayed her people. Here, the myth says the god Dionysus fell in love with Ariadne, married her and made her immortal. Mages know better: They know Ariadne Awakened instead. With the help of priests on the island — and, later, with the help of her own magic — she built a massive fortress on top of a Hallow. Underneath, she built a Demesne, her own multi-leveled labyrinth she called the Knot. She kept the ball of thread that saved Theseus and walked the Knot daily with the thread's help, and, later, without it.

People, island citizens and sailors alike, were drawn to her fortress, and she welcomed them all. Soon the fortress became its own city, and Ariadne's power grew. Her followers included a few Awakened, looking for guidance. The somber mage taught them how to follow the thread of power that runs through large gatherings of people. She taught them how she had built her fortress-town along intersecting ley lines, but how countless other threads ran through it. A city, she claimed, remembered what happened within it, the good and the bad, and used the threads to point to areas of interest. These cities would last the ages, strengthened by the magic woven into them and the people who flocked there and remembering everything that happened within its borders. If you can connect with the city, you can learn its history and read its soul.

The House's legends tell how Ariadne's disciples pursued Theseus, secretly forcing him from his Athenian throne and into exile — removing him from his precious city just as he had lured their mistress away from hers. They harried him until he died. Ariadne threw a massive celebration when she heard the news. Sleepers and Awakened reveled for three days straight. Ariadne, after planning the party, retreated to her Demesne when the festivities began and spent the entire three days moodily walking the Knot.

Ariadne never took another lover, despite what Sleeper myths say. She had no desire to love again, and buried herself in her magical study and the expansion of her fortress and town.



Her somber mood rubbed off on her students; even today, Metropolitans are considered unusually dour for Acanthus.

Several years later, Ariadne disappeared while walking the Knot. Her most fervent students claim she finally followed her thread to the Supernal Realm. Cynics say she got lost, died and no one could find her body.

As the years passed, Ariadne's students emigrated to the cities of the world. Some students actually built the cities, laying their first streets according to Ariadne's mystic geometry. They confirmed that the cities that lasted hundreds of years, defying war, plague and other catastrophes, followed natural ley lines as well as Ariadne's thread, whether the House of Ariadne had influenced their building or not.

All the mages looked for students in their cities, focusing on people who endlessly prowled the city as if following something or just watched the city from balconies and rooftops. These Sleepers, and later Awakened, seemed lost, but the House of Ariadne thought they knew the way better than most. They merely look for a path that most people — including other Awakened — cannot see.

### The Knot of Naxos

Ironically, Ariadne's own town faded a century later and became just another little island village.

Some Legacy members suspect a conflict with mages may have led to her nascent city's downfall. To this day, however, some of her students live in the village and walk the long-buried Knot, looking for clues, either magical or physical, to their founder's fate. Many pilgrims from Houses around the world visit every year.

### *Society and Culture*

Some Awakened view the House of Ariadne as madmen who cannot communicate with anyone or anything but their city. This is an extreme case. A few Metropolitans do nothing but wander the Knot of their city, but most Legacy members are functioning mages, serving their order and cabal as well as the House.

### *Secrets of the City*

Metropolitans spend most of their time investigating their own cities. Metropolitans track the city's history, learning everything from the location and use of the first building to the latest crappy apartment where a wannabe actor killed himself. Mystical information — ley lines, Hallows, Verges, places where magic was done and the haunts of ghosts and other supernatural creatures — hold a special interest for the House as mystical information does for most mages, but House members do not scorn even the most obscure or mundane details of urban life and history.

Houses vary in how they store this information. Butterfly Smith, a Weaver in Los Angeles, writes that city's history on spiral-bound notebooks that she carries in her shopping cart. Her magic protects her library from the elements, and her immediate proximity to it keeps it from prying eyes and stealing hands. At the other extreme, the Weavers of London built a grand library within the Underground. Eidechse, a tech-savvy Weaver in Hamburg, stores his House's histories on a server that is backed up daily. His most novice Metropolitan receives the job of securing the back-ups in a safe place. Hamburg's other Weavers express concern at giving such an important, if menial, job to a novice. But Eidechse claims that offering such trust teaches responsibility and dedication to the House. As of yet, Hamburg's House has suffered no security breach.

Other mages often go to the House of Ariadne for information. Sometimes these mages find what they seek, sometimes not. Though some Metropolitans keep immaculate records, others simply feel the act of writing down the city's lore is enough, and don't care whether they have a system to find the information later. Butterfly Smith knows who killed Nicole Brown Simpson, but she would be hardpressed to tell you which notebook holds the information. At other times, the city remembers such outrageous things that inquiring mages simply do not believe what the Metropolitans tell them. Many mages doubt the power of the Metropolitans, or refuse to believe that the city remembers its past and can speak with the Awakened.

The Metropolitans do not mind the disbelief too much. They know that cities do not lie, and mages are very likely to, so Metropolitans find it amusing when mages show such hypocrisy.

Metropolitans spend a lot of their time finding lost items or people. They do most of their searching for their House and the city itself. Members find artifacts (and sometimes *Artifacts*) and items for the Weavers to use in tending the city, or collect memorabilia of events a member thinks the city wants the House to know about.

A House may also serve as bloodhounds for other mages. The morals of each House change from city to city. In one city, the House helps the Consilium find mages who break the Lex Magica; in another, the Metropolitans serve as treasure-hunters-for-hire. A House may offer its services for the good of Awakened. More often, Metropolitans require payment. Other mages sometimes see the House as mercenary, but the Weavers simply ask such mages how often they serve other mages free.

### Made in the Image of Man

The culture of the city — its special points of pride or contempt, its modes of speaking and thinking and doing — can outlast even the buildings. In a city's subtle, deathless power to shape mortal lives, a city can be very much like a god.



In ancient times, every city had its own god. Athens had Athena or she it, Amun had Thebes, Babylon had Marduk. The people could go to the temple and see their city's god. Nowadays, people don't talk about the god of their city. The House of Ariadne doesn't, either: in their view, a city doesn't have a god, a city *is* a god.

In the Old World, a few spirit courts still haunt the Shadow Realm around the cities that once worshipped them and paid them tribute. The House of Ariadne does not ignore such faded gods, but regards them as long-term tenants rather than the essential spirits of their cities. The true City-God does not localize itself into anything so human as a spirit. The City-God does not rule the concrete, brick, glass and wiring or the traffic, the businesses and beggars. The City-God *is* them, *everything*, at once. Only from the Supernal World can anyone see the City-God in its entirety and speak to it face-to-face.

At least, that's what the House of Ariadne says. Are the Metropolitans correct? Does some mystical entity pervade the city?

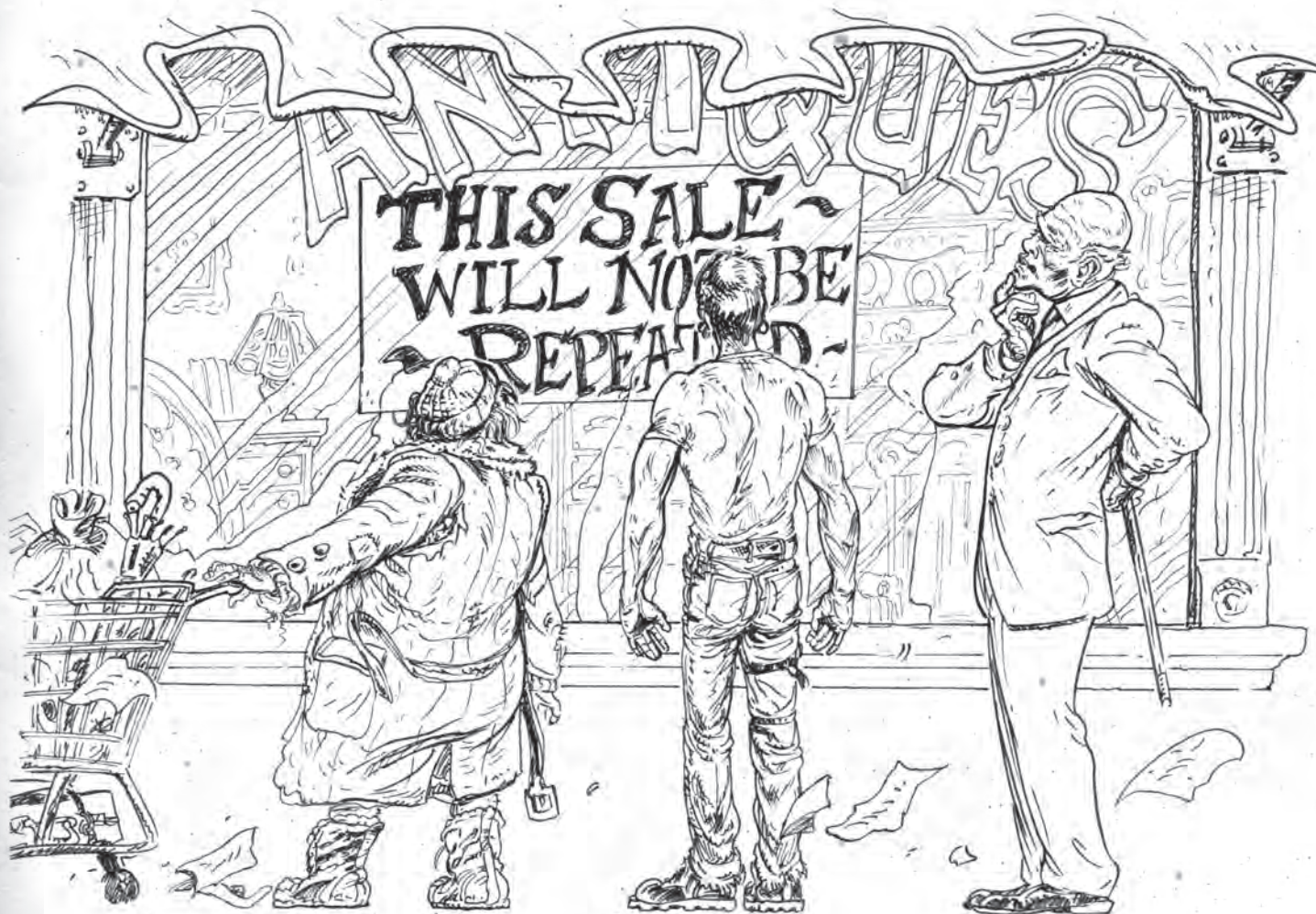
That's for the Storyteller to decide. "Talking to the city" can simply be the way the Metropolitans explain the results of very long, slow ritual divinations, as well as information gained through attain-

ments. Most mages lack the patience to spend entire days accumulating successes for "Postcognition" (Time 2) or to follow the slenderest sympathetic ties, in order to find objects, people and information that seems trivial. Years spent walking the city, following Ariadne's thread, may also grant a small "equipment bonus" to a divinatory spell, because the Metropolitan knows the city so well — but that, too, is up to the Storyteller.

Still, the House of Ariadne *could* be right. Perhaps so many destinies, resonances and interconnections of Fate actually do form a diffuse entity — a collective destiny that can seem to have a mind of its own. Such a diffuse entity would not be a soul or spirit, so the Death or Spirit Arcanum could not detect or affect the entity. Many mages doubt the existence of nonphysical intelligences beyond the reach of those Arcana, but the Metropolitans believe their methods provide indirect but definite proof of the City-God's reality.

### *Keepers of the City*

The Metropolitans do not merely spend their days communing with the city, treasure-hunting and collecting obscure historical trivia. They want to see where the city





is currently going and, more importantly, where it needs to go. As Acanthus mages, they study the paths of Fate in a city as a natural progression. Metropolitans were there for the fall of Rome and the reunification of Berlin. They use their magic (beyond their attainments, of course) to push the city in the direction they wish it to go — or where the city itself wants to go. The Metropolitans have a hard time explaining the difference to other mages, or seeing it themselves.

Since they, alone, can commune with the city, Metropolitans see themselves as the keepers of the cities, and it is their job to know when to prune, when to encourage growth and when to purge. They love the cities, but love them as a gardener loves a rosebush that grows too far into the path; sometimes, even a beautiful thing must be cut back for its own good. Metropolitans have influenced mobs, fires, even wars. They have eyes inside the government and the offices of CEOs, anyone — Sleeper or Awakened — who has a hand in the city's future. The House of Ariadne is there to guide a potential destiny, or cut it off entirely.

### *Mystical Conflicts*

Predictably, the House's attitude upsets other mages who do not see their homes going up in flames as a good and natural thing. In these cases, the orders may interfere with the House of Ariadne. Some mages send spies to discover what the Metropolitans plan for their cities, and work directly against them. The House of Ariadne is used to this, of course. In addition to manipulating the city, Metropolitans also plot to head off the efforts of other mages. There are Metropolitans whose sole jobs are to watch what the other local mages do to change the city, and derail their plans if necessary.

Often these movements have to be as covert as possible, since the various orders won't abandon their plans just because the House of Ariadne wants the orders to. Several cities have stalled in their evolution simply because the House of Ariadne and an order (most often the Silver Ladder or the Seers) have locked horns, and no one seems able to win a clear victory. In the short term, other mages usually win conflicts against the House of Ariadne; Metropolitans just aren't fighters. In the long term, the struggles become more even. The House always seems to know more about its enemy's doings than vice versa, and Metropolitans are better at hiding and accumulating tiny, long-term advantages.

### *Rituals*

The House of Ariadne holds three yearly celebrations to honor the Legacy and the city.

The first ceremony takes place on the city's birthday, which is not always the day of its establishment in the Sleepers' bureaucratic records. The city knows when it was no longer a grouping of farmhouses or nomad tents and when it became a city. The Metropolitans ask the city where they should

hold their celebration, and follow Ariadne's thread to that place. If it is a convention hall, they simply rent it; for an outside venue, they plan an outdoor party. In 1994, Dublin apparently instructed its Metropolitans to celebrate in the home of a descendant of a woman the city considered a hero 400 years before; persuading the woman to host a party for a bunch of strangers took a fair bit of blarney as well as magic. The celebration typically lasts an afternoon, and is open to the public, Sleepers and Awakened alike. The Metropolitans put a spin on the celebration, of course. In Boston, the city desires that Sleepers walk the thread of Ariadne once a year, so the House of Ariadne started the Boston Marathon, to weave the Sleepers through their city.

The second festival honors the House. This can happen on any date; some of the older Houses remember the day of Theseus' death and follow Ariadne's example of throwing a three-day bacchanalia in honor of the event. The newer cities, including most of the ones in North America, honor the date of the local House's inception. They, too, throw a three-day party, abandoning their duties to any other mages who may have hired them. No outsiders are invited to this celebration. The House prefers to gather at a Demesne constructed by senior members, allowing the mages to drop all caution and catering to the Lie. The head Weaver of the city's House spends the three days walking the Knot of the city in honor of Ariadne.

The third holiday is a somber ritual. The mages spend a week discerning where the city locates its heart; this changes as the city evolves. All of the Metropolitans then gather at the heart and meditate on the city's future, their dedication to the city and how they can better serve it. This does not differ terribly from the everyday meditations the mages may do, except they all do it at once, increasing the resonance and the connection with the city. Since this ritual likely takes place in front of Sleepers, the Metropolitans don disguises to look like a yoga group, exhausted tourists or even a political sit-in so that they do not attract too much unwanted attention. After the meditation is over — and this one has no time limit, the mages know from the city when it is time to sever the connection — they lock themselves away and discuss the plans for the coming year.

### *Induction*

Although the House of Ariadne offers to train nearly anyone who asks, Metropolitans turn away mages who cannot see Ariadne's thread after a training period. Those who can see it without Metropolitan training are welcomed immediately. Of course, only an Acanthus mage can actually join the Legacy.

A Metropolitan needs patience, above all else. It takes time to wander the Knots and divine the secrets the city tells. Once a recruit proves she can see Ariadne's thread, she is taken to a spot in the city and told to follow the path. The mentor follows, not commenting, seeing if the



protégé can follow the path. The candidate is not told to find anything in particular, just to walk and meditate. If she hesitates or asks questions within one hour, she is told to walk the streets for a month, looking for Ariadne's thread, before she returns for more training. A mage accompanies her, concealed, to make sure she trains. A mage who follows the thread for two hours without speaking is accepted with the warning that much patience is needed. If a candidate walks for three hours, intent on the thread, she is welcomed into the House of Ariadne.

If an applicant cannot find the thread, the watchful Metropolitans remove themselves from the test and let the mage wander until he gives up. If he does not give up, and eventually tracks down his departed mentor, the House gives the applicant one more chance; any mage can have a bad day.

After induction, a tutor trains the pupil in the art of tracking, including people, items and abstractions. Periodically, House mentors test the mage's power to sense the city, question him on things that happened in a particular spot last night, a year ago, 10 years ago and so on. These tests are always subtle, a casual request made by a mentor in sequence with other commands. Get enough answers right, and the character receives invitations to more private meetings of senior House members. Mages who get too many answers wrong end up as Trackers for the rest of their lives, or the House gradually shuts them out and stops teaching.

The trial to become an elite Weaver tests a mage's personal strength. He is commanded to walk Ariadne's thread, meditating on his own death. If he can follow the path to face the symbol of his own death, the other Weavers welcome him to their ranks.

The meditation to discern one's own death takes three days of uninterrupted contemplation. The Weavers do not tell their students this; the Weavers use the time as a way to weed out any liars who claim to have seen their death within a couple of hours. At this point, the Weavers sever the candidates' ties with the Legacy and refuse to train, or speak to, the mages again. Their only chances are to move to new cities, and hope the House of Ariadne there does not speak to those Weavers who threw them out of their previous cities.

The House of Ariadne bases its entire Legacy on the premise that cities do not lie. Thus, Metropolitans must convey the city's truth in whole, not changing any of it. On occasion, the Weavers check the reports of novice members to see if they are lying or embellishing the truth. Any mage found lying is sent from his tutor without trial or explanation. Upon induction, the Weavers tell a new Metropolitan these rules, how truth protects the foundation of their Legacy and how one lie can weaken it.

## The Strength of the City

Once attuned to a city, a Metropolitan feels more confident within its precincts. When she is within a familiar city, the Metropolitan receives a +1 "equip-

ment bonus" to her dice pool on any Social Attribute check she makes. On the other hand, a Metropolitan in a rural area suffers a -1 penalty to all Social Attribute checks, as her separation from the urban areas of home make her slightly panicked and disoriented.

## Disciplinary Issues

Despite what some Metropolitans would like to believe, they are neither infallible nor incorruptible. Legacy members have fabricated information or committed other offenses against their Houses. In cases in which punishment seems warranted, the Weavers use Time magic to find the likely consequences of different penalties. If the Weavers think a mage deserves a chance to reform, they choose the penalty most likely to teach the desired lesson, and least likely to breed bitter resentment.

Now and then, a House finds it must confine an erring member or an enemy. The Weavers ask the city itself where they could hold a magical criminal. Many cities have led a Metropolitan mage to a perfect space in which to create a small prison suitable for mages. The House of Ariadne does not usually want to serve as jailers for all Awakened: Metropolitans see the Silver Ladder filling that role, like it or not. The House takes care of its own, though, and deals with its own as well.

## Guides to the Urban Labyrinth

Not all geomancers — mages who follow the ley lines and Hallows — belong to the House of Ariadne. However, any mage who studies geomancy and the teachings of Ariadne can learn to talk to the cities to discover their secrets. Many mages who do not join the House of Ariadne at least honor Ariadne's research and discoveries. Older mages who join the Metropolitans are often geomancers who find their studies can go no further without the Legacy's guidance. As long as cities exist, Metropolitans will be there to talk to the cities and teach other mages how to see Ariadne's thread.

The ability to see and follow Ariadne's thread is not a distinct spell; rather, it's a divinatory technique for a variety of Fate, Space and Time effects, either as a single Arcanum or in conjunction. For instance, a mage who seeks the current mayor's favorite childhood toy could define the resonant connection between person and toy using "Interconnections" (Fate 1), then start at the mayor's home and seek the toy's location using Space 2, walking until she finds the toy or gives up. Following the golden thread is an extended action, so a mage can accumulate successes to follow very weak sympathetic connections.

Much of the time, though, Metropolitans just cast blindly and trust Ariadne's thread to lead them somewhere interesting — relying on Fate 2 "Extraordinary Luck" to reveal something useful for the Legacy to know.



## Story Hooks — Listening to the City's Secrets

- The Adamantine Arrow has come up blank in determining where a target disappeared. Order members ask the House of Ariadne for help in finding him. Their quarry has laid a trap, however, a sophisticated and deadly working of vulgar magic, designed to cause considerable damage to the city and widen the Abyss.

- The House of Ariadne decides to research the resonance that lies in city ruins, to see what a long-dead city can tell the Legacy. The Metropolitans ask the players' characters to accompany the House as guards while the Metropolitans meditate. The ruins are deep in the Brazilian jungle, but not abandoned. Several angry ghosts remain there, bound to the city, waiting to get their revenge on anyone they can.

- The House of Ariadne maintains that cities do not lie. But one city (the city where the chronicle takes place) delivers some information that seems highly unlikely, even to the faithful Metropolitans. Can a city give false information? And why would it? Cities do not possess enough self-consciousness to the point of having agendas. The seemingly absurd information bears some relation to a subject in which the characters are recognized experts. The Weavers ask the characters to investigate the truth of what the city said and, if untrue, why and how the city lied, or even if someone, somehow, could force the city to lie.

## Attainments

The House's geomancy requires mastery of divination, but instead of focusing on a small item like a crystal or a pack of cards, Metropolitans use the expanse of the city to divine the past, present and future. The mage who wishes to follow Ariadne's thread must study Time and Fate. Much of the Metropolitans' powers come from walking a self-made Knot in the city. The House of Ariadne never takes the direct route.

### 1st: Attune

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Time 2 (primary), Fate 1

After seeing Ariadne's thread, the first step a mage must take is attuning himself to the city. He must initially spend six hours walking through the city, following Ariadne's thread. After this, he may use this attunement to feel the city's history. This resembles the Time 2 spell "Postcognition." While the mage might not know names, he can tell if and when a man was murdered on this street corner, or if a couple made love in a park or if a mage committed a vulgar spell in a movie theater. A mage is not married to the city in which he Awakened. He can attune himself to any city he is in.

The symbolism of the city makes itself known to the

mage, as the city's resonance applies different meanings to different things. (For example, a park's "Tunnel of Love" may resonate happiness or sexual energy for most cities, but if a brutal murder happened there, the ride may resonate with fear, hatred and death.) This knowledge will come in handy in later attainments.

### 2nd: Discovery Meditation

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Time 3

The mage must focus his mind on what he is trying to find, whether it's an item or a person. As long as the target is in the city, the mage doesn't need to have a sympathetic connection to the target. Ariadne's thread will lead him to where it is, but the path will not be direct. The whole process is actually a specialized, somewhat oblique use of "Divination" — but instead of seeking a clue about what another person will do in the future, the mage asks what path is most likely to lead him to his goal.

Following the thread of Fate may take some time, and if the mage seeks a kidnapped colleague, the mage has no guarantee the person won't be dead when the mage finds her. The meditation will not work if the item or person leaves the material plane; the trail simply goes cold. If the target is kept behind considerable defenses, whether locked doors, vaults or magical protection, Ariadne's thread will not give the mage any abilities to bypass the security. The thread only leads the way to the object desired, but does not tell you the best, or safest, way to get there.

**Optional Arcanum:** Fate 3

If the mage also has Fate 3, she can seek answers to broader questions about the destiny of the city or significant groups within it. As with the Fate 1 spell "Sybil's Sight," the mage seeks deeper, metaphysical truths in the words of passersby, billboards, street names and other incidentals of urban life. However, the Discover Meditation can operate on a larger scale.

### 3rd: Geomantic Meditation

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Time 4

To use this attainment, the mage must fix a question in her mind and begin walking the streets. She will find an answer, if such an answer exists at all: as with the Time 4 spell "Prophecy," the mage obtains advice on the consequences of a planned course of action or a course of action to bring about any desired result. At the Storyteller's discretion, the mage may walk for one hour or one day, but she must keep walking until she gets her answer. Ariadne's thread will eventually lead the mage to a series of symbols that give her answer. Although the answer may not be apparent to any companion to the mage, she will understand its meaning and what the geomantic meditation is telling her. If the city does not know the answer to the question, or the question is too vague, the thread may lead the mage in circles or nowhere at all.

**Optional Arcanum:** Space 4

If the Metropolitan also has Space 4, her meditative walk



can lead her to the place best suited for her purpose. She can seek places with particular resonances, defensible locations for sanctums or sealed-off tunnels unknown to any other mage.

## Sample Character

### Floor 13

**Quote:** "You know there's no floor 13 in skyscrapers? Well, it's there, but you never see it. They call it unlucky."

**Background:** Long Ng, a young Chinese American, was orphaned when his parents died in a plane accident. He ran away from foster care and ended up on the street, with his grandfather's trench knife as his only inheritance. Long joined a gang at age 10 and was raised on the street by the Rising Tiger gang. Through great good fortune, he suffered nothing worse than one overdose and a few knife wounds. Long became the gang's leader at 21.

Long's luck ran out when he was thrown out of a 14th-floor window during a gang brawl in a condemned apartment building. On the way down, Long Awakened. He barely survived the fall, but managed to land on an abandoned couch. As the battle between the gangs raged on above him in the building, Long etched his name on the Watchtower of the Lunargent Thorn, scratching with his grandfather's knife. Upon Long's return, he ran up the 13 flights of stairs to slaughter his very surprised would-be murderers. There, covered in blood, he looked out the window over the city and saw a golden thread stretching into the distance.

Floor 13 abandoned his gang to go walking, hearing a call. He prowled the streets, looking for whatever sent the call. He caught a glint of the golden thread on one of his walks, and followed it to the home of Penelope, a motherly Metropolitan.

Penelope found herself the only mage Floor 13 would trust. The Weavers reluctantly allowed her to become his mentor, as long as she could control him.

Floor 13 follows Penelope with the fervor of a 12-year-old boy in love with his schoolteacher. She'd been tracking an item of rare resonance, and was trying to get to it before the Guardians of the Veil. Floor 13 became her bodyguard while he helped her search. Penelope, in turn, trains Floor 13 in geomancy and tries to develop his mind even as she appreciates the safety his brawn gives her.

**Description:** Always described by the members of the Rising Tiger as "lean and mean," Floor 13 is tall, wiry with tight muscles and heavily tattooed with black Chinese characters. Long prefers wearing black tank tops and black jeans, strapping his grandfather's knife to his belt. His straight, black hair hangs to his shoulders, and he makes no effort to pull it





back. When Floor 13 wants to blend in with the populace and avoid looking like a gang member, he wears a plain T-shirt, jeans and Chuck Taylor sneakers. He's kept this small mask in his new life to allow him to mix with Sleepers. However, his brown eyes are so focused that he often disturbs Sleepers — and Awakened, for that matter — with his gaze.

Floor 13's nimbus is a billowing green cloud; viewing him through this distorts his face and makes him look as if he's being blown by a strong wind or falling from a great height.

**Storytelling Hints:** For all his gang bravado, Floor 13 is a bully who needs reining in. Like all bullies, he defers to those who clearly have more power than he does, but he's a right bastard to anyone he views as weaker. Although he understands the Awakened world is quite different from his tiny gang world, under stress he still reverts to the old pecking order.

Like a faithful dog, Floor 13 will perform any task Penelope sets him, and whip anyone under him into line (sometimes literally). He will act first and think later, but, if he is with Penelope, he will look to her for guidance before acting. If someone he doesn't respect asks him for a favor, he'll likely agree and then not do it.

Floor 13 is a dangerous addition to the House of Ariadne, complain some of the Metropolitans, but Penelope stands by him. She works tirelessly to focus him, teach him to honor the cities and his abilities more than simply brute strength and learn to serve the House as he has served her. She's getting through to him, slowly — but some Legacy members think, not fast enough.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Knife

**Real Name:** Long Ng

**Path:** Acanthus

**Order:** Adamantine Arrow

**Legacy:** House of Ariadne

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 3

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

**Mental Skills:** Computer 1, Investigation 2, Science 1

**Physical Skills:** Brawl 3, Drive (Motorcycle) 2, Firearms 2, Larceny 3, Weaponry (Knife) 4

**Social Skills:** Intimidation (Interrogation) 3, Persuasion 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

**Merits:** Allies (Gang) 2, Enhanced Item 2, Kung Fu (Focused Attack 1, Iron Skin 2) 3, Mentor 3

**Willpower:** 4

**Wisdom:** 6

**Virtue:** Justice

**Vice:** Pride

**Initiative:** 5

**Defense:** 4

**Speed:** 13

**Health:** 8

**Gnosis:** 3

**Arcana:** Matter 2, Space 3, Time 3

**Rotes:** *Fate* — Interconnections (•), The Sybil's Sight (•), Exceptional Luck (••), Fortune's Protection (••), The Evil Eye (••); *Space* — Correspondence (•); *Time* — Perfect Timing (•), Flip of the Coin (••), Shield of Chronos (••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Attune

**Mana/per turn:** 12/3

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
Knife	1 (L)	1	Enchanted Equipment Bonus +2	6

**Armor:** 3 ("Fortune's Protection," Fate ••)

**Notes:** Floor 13 carries a knife with a +2 enchanted equipment bonus.



# THE PYGMALIAN SOCIETY

*Bring me my bow of burning gold!*

Pygmalion sculpts an image, the perfect Platonic form of woman. He prays. Through his act of will, the unliving image becomes the perfect living form. It's a romantic conceit. The Pygmalian Society takes this conceit as a manifesto for the transformation of the human race, an allegory for their great work: every Pygmalian strives to be at once artist, artwork and animating force.

Art is at the middle of everything. Although the Pygmalian Society's members' styles vary, they agree that art, true art, Real Art with a capital "A," becomes a link to the Supernal World that inspires and alters the human soul. Real Art creates an Awakening — a small, temporary Awakening, sure — but it's an Awakening. Art is magic. And Magic is Art.

The Pygmalsians believe that Art is one of the last things that still link the Sleepers to the Supernal realm. True Art — great Art — molds and shapes human history. Great Art inspires people. Great Art incites anger. Great Art provokes action.

Every Pygmalian is an artist. The Pygmalsians' magical attainments reflect this. They style themselves as the "Sculptors" of magical reality. They try to imbue every action, every spell they cast, with meaning.

As Pygmalsians progress, they become their own greatest Artworks. Pygmalsians adopt roles. They take on parts, deliberately altering their memories, senses and the way they see things in a search for inspiration — for themselves and others. The Sculptors remake themselves in their own image. They act in their own plays, become the protagonists of their own stories.

Through the creation of Art and themselves as Artworks, the Pygmalsians seek to effect change. An inspired human soul leads to action, and history takes a new course. These mages recognized from the very beginning that the power of Disbelief stops their magic from altering the world in any but the smallest way, so the Pygmalsians work to inspire and change the minds and souls of Sleepers with the power to do the same. Through the Pygmalsians' art, they inspire artists, who in turn have the potential to create something

great. The Pygmalsians are muses. They're propagandists. They're *agents provocateur*.

The true Sculptor is obsessed with the future, but lives in the here and now. A Pygmalian develops the ability to sense the interplay of time and fate in the lives of the people around him, experiencing an intense kind of synesthesia. He can smell pain, hear joy, taste anger.

The most talented Pygmalsians can see human destinies laid out before them in tastes and colors. These Pygmalsians

sense the weft and weave of destiny and possibility. Then they embroider with new potentials for inspiration. They want to create a path that the Awakened can travel more easily, at the end of which lies the Awakening of every man, woman and child on the planet.

The actual medium of the Pygmalsians' Art is open — any art, high or low, can change things. The Sculptors are obsessed with finding a Holy Grail of true inspiration that will bring about history-changing art. Charles Dickens wrote a few works of fiction and ignited Western society's conscience toward the urban poor. Renaissance painters invented perspective drawing, and a mathematics of space that redefined the world. The writers and translators of the Bible changed the course of human history many times over.

Art can be deadly, too. Leni Riefenstahl propagated the sinister glamour that made a nation complicit in the deaths of millions. China's official TV and newspapers have convinced the most populous nation in the world that the Tiananmen Square massacre never happened, that stories of the massacre are just an American plot. Advertising agencies use art to relieve people of their money and leave them in perpetual discontent.

Change happens around the Pygmalsians. They are not always the direct cause, but they're always there, nudging things along. People fall in love. Scientists find new insights into the nature of things. Revolutions begin, or end in blood and fire.

Whatever the Pygmalsians do, they accept no barriers to their Art. With no boundaries, it's inevitable that some Sculptors go bad. These fallen Pygmalsians don't confine their Art within moral limits. A Pygmalian might commit atrocities to effect the inspiration of a single individual. A Pygmalian's deeds can easily result in dozens of lives ruined or ended at a single stroke. Love ends more easily than it





begins. Even the most noble of revolutions can descend into tyranny. These ruthless mages give the Pygmalian Society the bad reputation it currently suffers among the Awakened.

True Pygmalsians are much more than the terrorists and instigators of chaos that other mages often believe the Sculptors to be. True Pygmalsians are artists, and more than that: they think they know the means by which the entire human race can one day Awaken.

**Parent Path:** Acanthus

**Nickname:** Sculptors

**Orders:** All five of the great mystical orders have Pygmalian members, but more than half of them of the Sculptors end up in the Free Council (if they join an order at all). The first Pygmalsians all belonged to the Free Council, and, although the Legacy is not intimately connected to the order, the line of tutor to pupil frequently ensures that new Pygmalsians join the Free Council in turn, or belonged to the order in the first place. The Free Council is certainly the order that is most amenable to radical social and intellectual change as a means to Awaken humanity. The less-regulated Free Council is also the order most likely to accept a Pygmalian despite the Legacy's checkered reputation.

The four Atlantean orders all have a few Pygmalsians. The Silver Ladder's stated aim for the Awakening of the human race attracts a fair number of Sculptors, but these mages often find themselves frustrated by the order's strict and convoluted hierarchy.

The Mysterium, with its emphasis on acquiring mystical knowledge, is fairly accommodating, since the Pygmalsians are often expert at interpreting the past, connecting it to the present and suggesting implications for the future. Mundane and magical archeology can give the facts about what people did, but an artist's insight into human emotions can suggest why.

Of the old orders, the Guardians of the Veil and the Adamantine Arrow attract the fewest Sculptors. The Guardians don't generally tolerate the meddling of Pygmalsians who try too hard to change human affairs; however, a few of the more subtle Sculptors do find a home among the Guardians. Meanwhile, the Arrows sometimes attract some of the more martially inclined Pygmalsians. These Sculptors are respected by other mages within the order, but rarely trusted, and it's often these Pygmalsians who fall into violence as a means of effecting change.

**Appearance:** Like Sleeper artists, Pygmalsians are as easy to recognize as they choose to be. Some follow clichés such as the Galois-smoking bohemian with his beret, straight from the Left Bank of Paris, or the intellectual sophisticate clad all in basic black. More Sculptors just look like ordinary, middle-class people. Their manner gives a truer guide. Whoever Sculptors might be, they speak and act passionately. Sometimes, they slide into melodrama that makes cooler-tempered people wince or shake their heads. Subtler mannerisms and an attention to details of the Sculptors' surroundings make Sleepers think the Sculptors *ought* to be artists, even if they wear exactly the same clothes as the people standing next to them.



**Background:** Every Pygmalion is an artist with a fair amount of talent and promise. This includes every possible expression of art: novelists, painters, poets, performance artists, musicians, architects, filmmakers, stand-up comedians and DJs are all represented among the Pygmaliens. They are not necessarily professional artists. Occasionally, an individual who is not usually considered an artist — a mathematician, a software developer or even a soldier or a politician — joins the Legacy. As long as someone considers what she does to be an art, and is passionate about it, the person is eligible to join.

Pygmaliens also know their art isn't enough. Their promise is unfulfilled, and they all want more. Most Pygmaliens are just talented enough to realize that they're not *quite* talented enough to change the world through their chosen media. They can never reach the supreme heights attained by a Shakespeare, a Rembrandt or a Dante. The Pygmaliens offer them an alternative through magic, the *Ars Mysteriorum* itself.

**Organization:** The Pygmalion Society has little or no formal organization. Pygmaliens have no central authority and recognize no precedence other than the respect due teachers from their pupils. Tutors and pupils seem to find each other without trying. Training can vary greatly in intensity and style. One tutor, for example, teaches two or three pupils at a time, holding regular and highly formal classes, where he imparts the mystical knowledge of the tradition in a theoretical, academic form and leaves his pupils to perfect the Legacy's attainments in their own time, as "homework." Another tutor disappears from her pupil's life for weeks on end, turning up apparently according to whim. She spends a few days alongside her pupil, accompanying the less experienced mage through the beginning of each new stage, before vanishing again, leaving the pupil to work out what to do with his new knowledge on his own. Still another tutor demands that he move into his pupil's home, taking over his unfortunate apprentice's entire life in order to make a real Sculptor out of her.

Whatever the method, all Pygmalion tutors allow their pupils freedom in their choice of Art form (no matter what their personal opinions of its validity as a medium might be). Although it's common for a tutor to take a pupil who works on the same kind of Art, it's not universal.

**Suggested Oblations:** Write a poem or short story by hand, let one person read it, then burn the manuscript. Paint a self-portrait and slash it to shreds. Meditate in the Louvre, Tate Britain, the Getty Center or any other famous gallery (without getting kicked out). Play an all-night DJ set. Spend an entire day posing as someone else, with radically different attitudes.

**Concepts:** Street theater activist, Beat poet, war photographer, local TV journalist, underground filmmaker, superstar DJ, indie band frontman, Chatterton wannabe.

## History

The Pygmalion Society has its origins in the Wars of the Roses, a series of schisms and mystical conflicts between a

number of mystical groups (particularly Rosicrucians) in 19th-century Paris. The conflict seems unthinkable today, but was widely reported in the Parisian press at the time, since several well-known people of the day were involved. The factions in the "Wars" were mostly composed of Sleepers. A few Awakened were also present, indulging their own schisms and conflicts under cover of the very public and, to them, trivial arguments of their unwitting Sleeper colleagues.

One of these mages was Patrice Cajean. Born penniless in Brittany in the late 1860s, Cajean Awakened as a teenager into a nightmare of swirling sounds and colors. By the end of the 1880s, Cajean, through a combination of charm, talent and Awakened magic, reinvented himself as a figure of urbanity and wit. He became a popular figure in the bohemian salons of *fin de siècle* Paris.

Through his powers, Cajean was no stranger to the formal mysticism of the Paris sects. He found himself drawn to one particular Rosicrucian splinter group. This group declared that Art was a great mystery, a great empire and a great miracle, and that Artists were hence the secret kings, priests and magicians of the world. Cajean wondered if there was something to this theory. Although he felt contempt for the importance this faction attached to its petty squabbles, Cajean investigated the possibility that Art was in fact a small form of magic, a link between human beings and the Supernal World (which Cajean, inspired by Neoplatonist philosophy, identified as the Divine Principle, or the Godhead). He posited that when God said, "let there be light," He created Art through pure inspiration, distilled into creation by an act of will.

Cajean investigated ways to harness this true, inspired creativity. He believed he could manipulate human history through Art, planting some ideas and stifling others to weaken the Lie. Just about everyone could appreciate some sort of Art; so Cajean believed he could Awaken everyone through this slender thread connecting their souls to the Supernal World. The project might take a century or more, but an Acanthus mage is not discouraged by time.

A few other mages thought Cajean had a good idea. Cajean pictured himself as a new Pygmalion, breathing life into the Fallen World's lifeless images of the True Forms, so he called his formal and highly ritualized cabal of like-minded mages the Pygmalion Society. His magical program for mass Awakening depended upon communication and control, on ascertaining the intricate web of connections between the soul and other souls, between the soul and the past, present and future. To the Legacy's existing skill at Fate and Time, the Legacy's founders added a deep study of Mind, in order to gain a precise knowledge of how the arts could manipulate thoughts and emotions. They had no real plan, though — just a deep faith in the transformative power of Art.

Cajean's first pupil, Marcus Naismith, was an Englishman. He brought the Pygmalion Society into the English-speaking world. Naismith's own take on the Legacy's magic was influenced by his great love of the philosophy and art of the visionary poet and engraver William Blake. English-speak-



ing Pygmalsians in particular have used Blakean language to describe their magic and rituals ever since.

A member of the Society last saw Patrice Cajean alive in March of 1916. Right up to the end of his life, Cajean felt the need to live among the ordinary people he longed to see reunited with the Godhead. He believed a Supernal inspiration brought the human race to the Great War: patriotic fervor and the need to prove the courage of nations led the entire world into a storm of death, plague and famine. Cajean knew the Great War would shatter the age of European colonial empires, with possibilities for great Good and terrifying Evil opening up through the rest of the century. The idealistic mage hoped to avert the horrors of the Great War and its aftermath, but could not stand to hide in a secure sanctum far from harm. He needed to share the danger and the struggle. Cajean failed; he died in the fighting at Verdun, wearing the face of a man 30 years his junior.

In the years after the Great War, the Pygmalian Society fragmented. Without Cajean's charisma to temper the remaining founders' personal quarrels, they drifted apart. Art was changing, too. New movements such as futurism, cubism, and Dada brought new ideas and new Pygmalsians who had little time for a structured organization. They preferred to use the Legacy in their own way. By World War II, "Pygmalsians" had ceased to be anything more than a catch-all term for those mages who crafted their souls in the tradition of Patrice Cajean, and the Pygmalsians have resisted formal organization ever since. Their methods and Art have changed, but they still hold true to Patrice Cajean's faith in the Supernal power of Art.

## *Society and Culture*

The first principles of the Pygmalian Society grew out of Western occult traditions. Although most Pygmalsians don't dress up their magic in the formal principles of Rosicrucian practice any more, the study of their attainments shows the influence of a very European style of mysticism, with a special nod to William Blake. They still use much of Patrice Cajean's language. Most Pygmalsians still refer to the Supernal as the "Godhead," for example; they call their goal of universal Awakening the "Reconciliation," or the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell."

As a corollary, most Pygmalsians practice European styles of creative Art. Awakened artists representing non-Western artistic forms (such as African woodcarving, for example, or Japanese verse) seldom find their way into the Pygmalian Society. If such artists-mages do get the opportunity to join, it's generally because they try to practice their art in a Western context; for example, a member of a group of Indian musicians performing in New York state art centers.

Apart from the relationship between tutors and their pupils, Pygmalsians aren't known for working together. They don't hold to any network, and they don't recognize any obligations to each other above and beyond that normally expected because of membership in a cabal or a mystical order.

As Artists, the Pygmalsians have more than their fair share of self-publicists in their number. They tend to become well known among the mystical orders, particularly among Consilii in Western Europe and in urbanized areas of the United States. Many more mages hear about Pygmalian mages than actually meet them. Unfortunately, the greatest self-publicists among the Pygmalsians are often those who went wrong. Many mages who know about Pygmalsians by reputation don't even realize that they're Artists, and imagine instead that they are a Legacy of terrorists or lunatics.

The wide variation among the methods and styles of the Pygmalsians often means that this assessment goes unchallenged. Most Sculptors don't care in the end what other mages think. The nature of the Sculptors' goal is such that they care more about the Sleepers, anyway.

A Pygmalian mage surrounds herself with Sleepers — talented, passionate people who achieve more than simple talk, never art-school poseurs. She does her absolute level best to become a conduit of inspiration for the extraordinary people around her. At best, a Sculptor tries to drive her companions to create something special, something fantastic. It's not the mage's own role to change things. No great invention or epoch-making artwork has ever been made by a mage: it's the way that the Fallen World works. The Pygmalsians recognize that this is the Sleepers' world, and the Sleepers have to change it.

The credit for great art never belongs to the Sculptor. All he does is attempt to contribute through magic and other arts to an environment where genius can flourish; creation can occur only through inspiration. Simply to give ideas to an artist is not enough. True genius can work with secondhand materials (you only need to look at the work of Shakespeare and Mozart to see that), but great artists transform their sources in unique, inspired ways. What the Sculptor tries to do is simply *be there* and guide his Artists to find the Godhead themselves. He's a lover, a companion, a patron, a friend, sometimes a rival or an enemy. Sometimes, loneliest of all, he's an unattainable figure in the distance that haunts his Artists' steps. Whatever role he takes, he's a muse and a catalyst for the real Artist and the real work.

The Pygmalian's goal is to create the conditions through which the Reconciliation can happen. Any incursion of magic, any minor half-Awakening is enough. It doesn't matter if there isn't a specific plan as such. If enough of these small victories are won, the mages of the Pygmalian Society are confident that, one day, the Marriage of Heaven and Hell will take place and everyone will Awaken.

## *The Tygers of Wrath Are Wiser Than the Horses of Instruction*

Art is a dangerous thing. The Pygmalian Society recognizes this, but, at the same time, the Legacy's lack of organization means that the group has no checks and balances. The freedom of its members to find any way at all to create art can become a trap of Hubris. While fallen Pygmalsians have been



few, a Sculptor gone wrong can have a terrible influence on the world around her.

These fallen Sculptors are Jonahs. Chaos surrounds them. When they're nearby, relationships collapse. Families tear apart. Cars crash. Crops fail. Diseases break out. Buildings explode. Riots erupt. Governments lose their grip. Wars start. People *die*.

The most notorious of these Sculptors was Enoch Christopher, a Welsh poet who joined the Pygmalian Society in 1936. Christopher, influenced by the futurists, composed puzzling non-linear works that, thanks to his mastery of Pygmalian magic, held his manifesto encoded within them: true inspiration requires conflict. Anger, grief and terror open artists to Supernal truth and goad them to the heights of self-expression. Christopher believed that if his Art was to have any chance of bringing about real transformation, the Art had to be unfettered by any limits of scale or morality.

This manifesto of change through violence has cropped up, quite independently, on a number of occasions. These Pygmalsians might not openly say so to begin with, but they share the assumption that human beings are just raw clay for the Sculptor's Art. Some Sculptors begin to directly manipulate lives. The more powerful among them tear up human memories and put them back together like a Burroughsian cut-up, using trauma to drive their victims to action.

Some Pygmalsians become equally cavalier with themselves. They alter their own minds, messing with everything from taste in clothes right through to sexual orientation, even temporarily rebuilding their own memories in order to *become* their grand Artwork and, through the inspiration they gain, alter the world. It's not healthy to become close to Pygmalsians who works like this. Everything goes wrong around them, as they engineer conflict in their own lives. They manipulate people around them to create lovers, enemies, tragedies, accidents and obstacles to overcome — often without even informing themselves that they're doing it. For instance, a Sculptor creates an alternate personality to fall in love, then the master personality kills the lover so the other self can experience true loss.

Enoch Christopher himself died in the late 1980s, a notorious harbinger of disaster. He had become possibly the best-known Pygmalian who had ever lived, almost single-handedly responsible for the Pygmalian Society's bad name. The original manuscript copy of Christopher's 1939 collection of "automatic poetry," *When I Came Back It Was Gone*, still exists and is a powerful, spontaneously generated Artifact in its own right. The revisions and alterations contained in this sheaf of yellowing paper hold frightening secrets and great power along with cold, brutal resonance.

## Induction

The Pygmalian Society sets few requirements for its members. Pygmalsians are Awakened and Artists. All have that desire, that *need*, to make a powerful difference to creation.

The Pygmalsians have no hard rules for choosing their pupils. Some Pygmalsians seek particular individuals; others wait for pupils to come to them. Time seems to play tricks on new Pygmalsians, and many even experience their first initiation before deciding to join the order, or even knowing that they're being initiated — which is just as well, since, given the Legacy's terrible reputation, very few mages would actually join without some kind of revelation as to what the Pygmalian Society really is.

## Induction Before Choice

Many Pygmalsians say they had their initiatory ordeal *before* they decided to join the Legacy, and their initiatory ordeal guided them to their tutors. That's only partly accurate: Acanthus mages take a free and easy view of Time, but even they don't engage in rampant causality violation.

Unconsciously, an Acanthus mage's soul can see the possible futures and the option of joining the Pygmalsians. The soul induces the initiatory coma; mind and soul have their dialogue and reach a conclusion. The soulcrafting is not complete, however. Unless the nascent Pygmalian has a Gnosis of 4 or higher, he still needs a tutor's help to "lock in" his soul's new shape.

In his induction, the mage enters a deep coma. Initiation plays out as a hyper-real dream in which the mage, placed in the surroundings of his mind's eye, is forced to undergo an ordeal of some kind. Ordeals vary, but they are always deadly serious, and sometimes just deadly: the new Pygmalian might have to endure what seems like a week-long ritual dance, survive a crucifixion or experience being tattooed all over his body. In the ordeal, the Pygmalian is guided or hindered (or both) by a visionary figure who will return in each of the Pygmalian's initiatory ordeals. Sometimes, this figure is a mirror image of the Pygmalian, a past self or a potential future self. Sometimes, the guide is a sexual complement of the Pygmalian, a perfect "other half" of the opposite gender to the initiate (or, if the initiate is gay, the same gender). Sometimes, the guide is an entirely different figure, perhaps one of the regular cast of the initiate's dreams elevated to the position of spokesperson. Sometimes, the guide is a mythical or literary figure: anything from a Grail-questing knight to a talking animal that leads the mage down a rabbit hole.

When the ordeal is over, the Pygmalian returns to consciousness and the real world. There is always some anomaly that suggests that the ordeal was not a dream. A Pygmalian who endures being tattooed wakes up with a small tattoo on her face. A Pygmalian who endures crucifixion in his vision wakes up with small scars on his hands, feet and sides. Another Pygmalian finds small objects or items of jewellery belonging to her mage's guide in her pockets. On the other hand, a Pygmalian who fails his initiation usually has no memory of what happened, and is likely to



be found very ill, or with broken bones or just covered from head-to-toe with bruises or superficial burns.

Although every Pygmalian tutor teaches his pupils in his own way, the substance of the teaching is fairly constant: pupils are taught the Pygmalian philosophy of Art. At the same time, Pygmalian pupils receive absolute freedom with what they do with the teaching, how they express their Art and whom they choose to guide in turn.

In each subsequent initiation, the Pygmalian undergoes another hallucinatory ordeal, and, each time, gains another sign that the ordeal was more than simply a dream. These dream-ordeals, however, are not spontaneous unless the Sculptor has cut her tie to her tutor and decided to craft her soul without further help. Soulcrafting for the second and third attainments involves a preparatory ritual. Each tutor and pupil design a unique ritual to induce the initiatory vision, but the ceremony uses paraphernalia drawn from Western magical traditions. Depending on the tutor, this could involve robes or nakedness, magic circles, wands, knives and the like.

Shortly before Cajean's death, he underwent a fourth ordeal. He told one of his pupils that he had learned the truth about where these visions came from and who the visionary figures really are. He died before he could lead anyone else to the fourth attainment. If any other Pygmalsians have reached the fourth ordeal by themselves, they've kept quiet about what they learned.

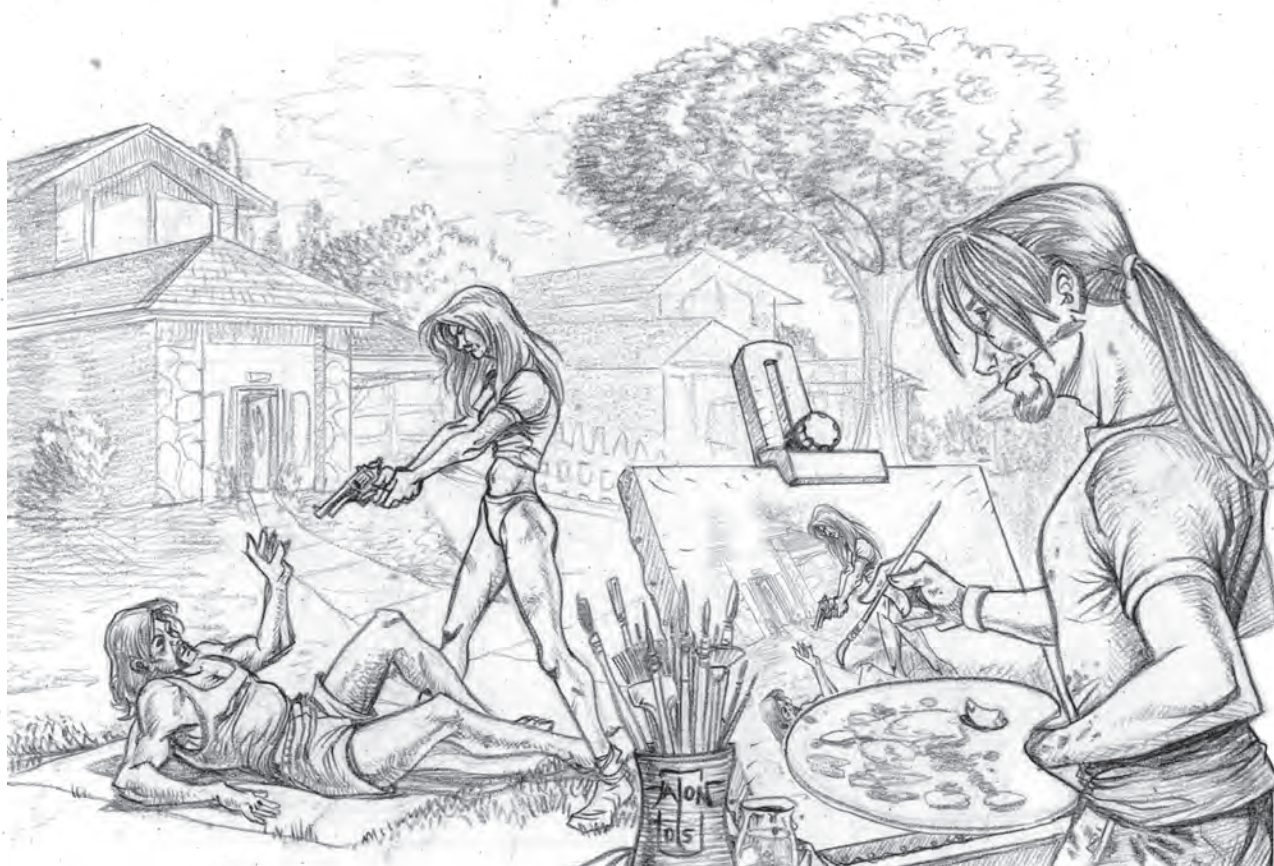
## Story Hooks —

### "I Will Not Reason and Compare: My Business Is to Create"

• **A Charismatic Musician:** Perhaps the front-man of a band, or a DJ or the writer of pop songs sung by others — comes to the notice of a cabal of mages, one of whom is a Sculptor who sees in the musician the potential for change. The Sculptor wants to get to know her. Maybe he falls in love. But he's not the only Pygmalian interested in her. A contest ensues, with the musician's future, and possibly the future of a city or country, at stake.

• **Things Fall Apart:** A Pygmalian known to a cabal of young mages (perhaps even the mentor to one of them) enlists them to perform some simple errands. Suddenly, things go very wrong. Trusts are broken; other mages become terribly upset with the characters, and each other, because of these "errands." Quarrels in the magical community escalate. Can the characters stop disaster — and maybe even a wizard's war — in time? Is the Pygmalian behind it? If he is, what can it mean? If he really has fallen, what are the cabal to do?

• **A Hit Novel:** A novel about a mystical conspiracy becomes a massive international phenomenon. The book is going to be filmed in Hollywood and has





spawned numerous imitations and a raft of spin-off merchandise. Despite the novel being atrociously written, the author's claim that it's based on "fact" lead many Sleepers to investigate further. Witch scares begin in Western countries. People go on pilgrimages to sites featured in the book. Its distortions and half-truths begin to threaten the inadvertent exposure of the Pentacle. Who is behind it? Was the book written by a Seer of the Throne as a means of compromising the Awakened? Or is there a Pygmalian somewhere in the background? Did her plans get out of hand, or was it deliberate?

## Attainments

Pygmaliens seek to make a tangible, material alteration to history through their Art. Many mages are surprised that the powers the Pygmaliens cultivate above all others are so indirect. The Pygmaliens work to master Time and Fate, like other Acanthus, but add to this a superior understanding of the mysteries of Mind. Through this Arcanum, they manipulate emotion, sense and memory for the purpose of guiding others to their own inspiration.

Pygmalian magic is subtle, hidden in passionate words or flamboyant gestures that are not obviously magical in and of themselves. Many Pygmaliens, particularly those who perform in some way, learn how to use their Art as a vehicle for their magic (especially for extended spellcasting). The most talented Pygmaliens learn to do this themselves, even before they join the Legacy.

### 1st: *World in a Grain of Sand*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Mind 2, Fate 1, Expression 3

The first thing the aspiring Pygmalian learns is how to direct emotions through the manipulation of human senses. Smells, sounds, tastes and colors — or their implanted memories — can alter someone's mood for good or ill, reminding a subject or a group of people of whatever emotion the mage wants them to experience. This attainment produces an effect more or less identical to the Mind 2 rote "Sculpt the Heart" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 208), but using a contested roll of Manipulation + Expression + Mind versus the subject's Composure + Gnosis.

The mage's own senses are affected too. By examining the sensory reflection of the emotions dredged up from his subjects' memories, the mage can perceive the weave of connections existing between the people he affects and the people around them. The links of emotion and Fate manifest as a kind of synesthesia, with emotional smells, tastes, sounds or colors becoming apparent to the mage as he examines the web of association around him. In game terms, this works as the Fate 1 spell "Interconnections" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 148). As a minor side effect, the mage permanently becomes a synesthete, with tastes, colors, smells and sounds mixed up in his perceptions. Many Pygmaliens

see this as a benefit, citing Shakespeare and Kandinsky as examples of inspiration through synesthesia.

The mage can bring about the memory of feeling through simple conversation, or through the medium of his Art (for example, by means of a musical performance, a stand-up gig or a gallery showing at which the mage is present). The effect does not always have to be direct. Calming words can, for example, be used to hide an infuriating subtext (in the manner of a "friends, Romans, countrymen" speech).

If they can, Pygmaliens use this power on groups of people rather than individuals, since the more people the Pygmaliens can affect, the more information they can glean about their interconnections.

Sometimes, a Pygmalian uses this power on herself. She might feel she needs to force herself to do something frightening or emotionally painful. She might want to make herself play a role with true sincerity, or she could simply want to feel something. Even though the mage uses this power on a willing subject (i.e., herself), she still makes a reflexive roll of Composure + Gnosis to resist; the mage might be willing, but, subconsciously, her soul perceives this as an intrusion and fights back. The mage can, however, reduce her resistance dice pool by spending Mana, thus suppressing her natural reactions with magical brute force: each point of Mana spent reduces the Composure + Gnosis pool by 1.

### 2nd: *Arrows of Desire*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Mind 3

The Pygmaliens develop their understanding of sensory and emotional manipulation further by learning how to imbue their actions or their performances with complex meaning. This works in a manner similar to the Mind 3 rote "Bricks of Babel" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 213), but using a roll of Intelligence + Expression + Mind. Pygmaliens who achieve this second attainment can communicate complex concepts and messages in a few brief, insignificant movements, or say one thing and communicate something completely different to the recipient. The mage can choose whether to communicate his message to an individual or to a group (use the modifiers for casting spells on more than one target; see **Mage: The Awakening** p. 118); the mage can also choose whether the recipients of the message actually realize that they've received a message from him, rather than simply having thoughts pop into their heads.

The second attainment can be used in conjunction with the first. After succeeding with an application of Arrows of Desire, the mage's player makes another roll to apply the first attainment to the message. If the roll is successful, the message has the added effect of affecting the recipient's emotions.

A skillful and lucky Pygmalian who uses the second attainment and the first in quick succession can move crowds of people to believe nearly anything. However, these attainments do not



work over radio, television or recorded media — the Sculptor must be “live and in person.”

#### **Optional Arcanum: Time 3**

Pygmalian realize that they often make mistakes, and that sometimes brushstrokes need to be erased or altered. Sometimes, a Pygmalian needs to know the immediate results of two or three choices. A Pygmalian mage who is also a Disciple of Time can fold herself into her own short-term memory, bodily pulling herself moments into the past in the same way as the Time 3 spell, “Shifting Sands” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 263).

A Pygmalian knowing this spell or ancillary attainment often repeats it, over and over, as he examines all the possible results of his decisions. This can be dangerous, since, similar to the “Shifting Sands” spell, anything that happens to the mage still happens, because the mage, in going back, actually displaces his earlier self from the timestream.

Sculptors who do this often may experience strange sensations at entirely random intervals, shuddery, cold sort of feelings, like sudden flashbacks of dying.

#### *3rd: Eternity in an Hour*

##### **Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Mind 4

Pygmalian who reach the third attainment find that, while the secret of inspiration is still, frustratingly, just out of their grasp, they can, at the very least, produce the conditions for revelation to happen. Through the manipulation of memory, a mage with this attainment can make a single subject experience an epiphany, a sudden understanding of some past event, or a false memory of some inspirational, life-changing experience. Depending on the event the mage chooses, this experience can be healing or traumatic. In game terms, this works like the Mind 4 spell “Breach the Vault of Memory” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 214) with the same contested roll of Gnosis + Mind versus the subject’s Resolve + Gnosis.

The revelation doesn’t last very long (usually no more than a scene — see the spell description in **Mage: The Awakening**, then apply the number of successes rolled to the Extended Spellcasting Duration chart for prolonged spells on p. 120 of that book), but the revelation’s indirect effects last. Even when the subject recognizes that her memories of love, divine revelation or childhood trauma were delusions, she still recalls what it felt like to remember these things. The memory of feeling is not feeling, but often is enough to drive a creative individual to cathartic action. A novelist given a taste of bitter love writes a powerful story of loss and desire. A painter is driven to a masterpiece by the memory of a unique face.

Pygmalian often bolster the effect, repeating it or prolonging it with the use of the first and second attainments. Pygmalian also use this power on themselves. Again, a Sculptor might want believe utterly in his adopted role or experience someone else’s trauma, or even to experience that madness said to be close to genius. Similar to the first attainment, a Pygmalian using this power on himself still has to make a reflexive resistance roll, this time Resolve +

Gnosis (per “Breach the Vault of Memory”). He can spend Mana to force the power on himself. Pygmalian using this power often have no idea what they’re doing when under their own influence. Some Pygmalian can even take on three entirely separate roles in a day, all the time unaware of the actions of their other selves.

#### **Optional Arcanum: Time 4**

An Adept of Time who achieves the power to impart Eternity in an Hour gains a small revelation of his own. By examining the skeins of fate and time connecting everything, the Pygmalian can discern what needs to happen in order for any individual to create history, or True Art — or stop it from happening. This works exactly like the Time 4 spell, “Prophecy” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 264).

The answer is never direct. It comes as a feeling, an emotion, supplemented by synesthetic sensory experiences (heard colors, tasted sounds). The mage, thinking over the options, suddenly knows what *feels* right, and takes the opportunity to act on that intuition.

## *Sample Character*

### *Lucy Sulphate*

**Quote:** “You’re coming out tonight, yeah?”

**Background:** When Louisa-Jane Simms was 19, it was unlikely anyone could have foreseen where she would be today. This unassuming English rose was a straight A student at secondary school and the holder of Grade Eight certificates in violin and piano. The conservative and hardworking girl pursued a chemistry degree at Bristol University. She kept her head down, achieved consistently good grades and lived up to her parents’ every expectation.

Aged 20, Louisa-Jane Awakened in terror and confusion, right in the middle of a Tuesday morning lecture. She kept screaming for three days. By the end of the second day, she’d been institutionalised for her own good, at the request of her parents. She stayed in the hospital, heavily sedated, for six months.

The emaciated, shaven-headed girl who came out was all but unrecognizable. Louisa-Jane changed in more than her appearance, too. Magic crackled at her fingertips, and a reckless need to live a louder and brighter life than she had experienced before led her first into the club scene — then into mortal danger — and, finally, into the company of a cabal of young mages from the Free Council. The cabal taught her some basic principles, introduced her to the orders and helped her to adopt a shadow name. That was seven years ago.

The newly named Lucy Sulphate dropped out of university. Instead of taking an active part in the politics of the Awakened, she threw herself into partying. Within a year, she was a fixture at every event she could find. At every big night out, there she was, drinking, dancing and popping pills. Blessed with supernatural popularity, musical training and a



talent for self-publicity she never knew she had, Lucy tried her hand as a DJ, and became pretty good. She moved to Swansea and took up a residency at Escape, a club boasting Britain's biggest dance floor. Her new career lost her the respect and love of her parents — their affections were

more conditional than even they had realized — but Lucy Sulphate, styling herself as an Amphetamine Alchemist, enjoyed herself too much to care.

Recently, Lucy's attempts to capture the magic she never had in her teenage years began to falter. Realizing that the days of the superstar DJ were over, Lucy produced a couple CDs worth of electronic-tinged singer-songwriter music, released on an indie label. Reviews and sales were OK, but only OK. A bad relationship, a failed attempt at a reunion with her parents and a rivalry with another mage that ended in death took their toll. Suddenly, Lucy seemed to herself to be a drowning woman, the partying and the music an inadequate life raft at which she clutched, unable to find another means of staying afloat, and slowly sinking. After a fraught, visionary initiation, Lucy found a new way to keep afloat, becoming a pupil of a Pygmalian wizard in Swansea. She still parties as if each night were her last, but, recently, has used her connections in the dance music industry to move into production. She has a couple of rising stars under her wing, and tours widely in her search for more talent.

**Description:** Lucy is six feet tall, slim and, in an unconventional way, exceptionally attractive — she was on the cover of *MixMag* on one occasion — with a graceful bearing, a ready smile and bright green eyes. She dresses as you'd expect a clubland hipster to dress, preferring bright colors, hipster jeans and skirts and T-shirts bearing bold, printed designs. Her favorite item of clothing is a Union Jack T-shirt, closely followed by a flamboyant, fake fur coat. She has a tattoo of a tribal rose design across her lower back. Recently, she's taken to wearing a silk scarf around her neck.

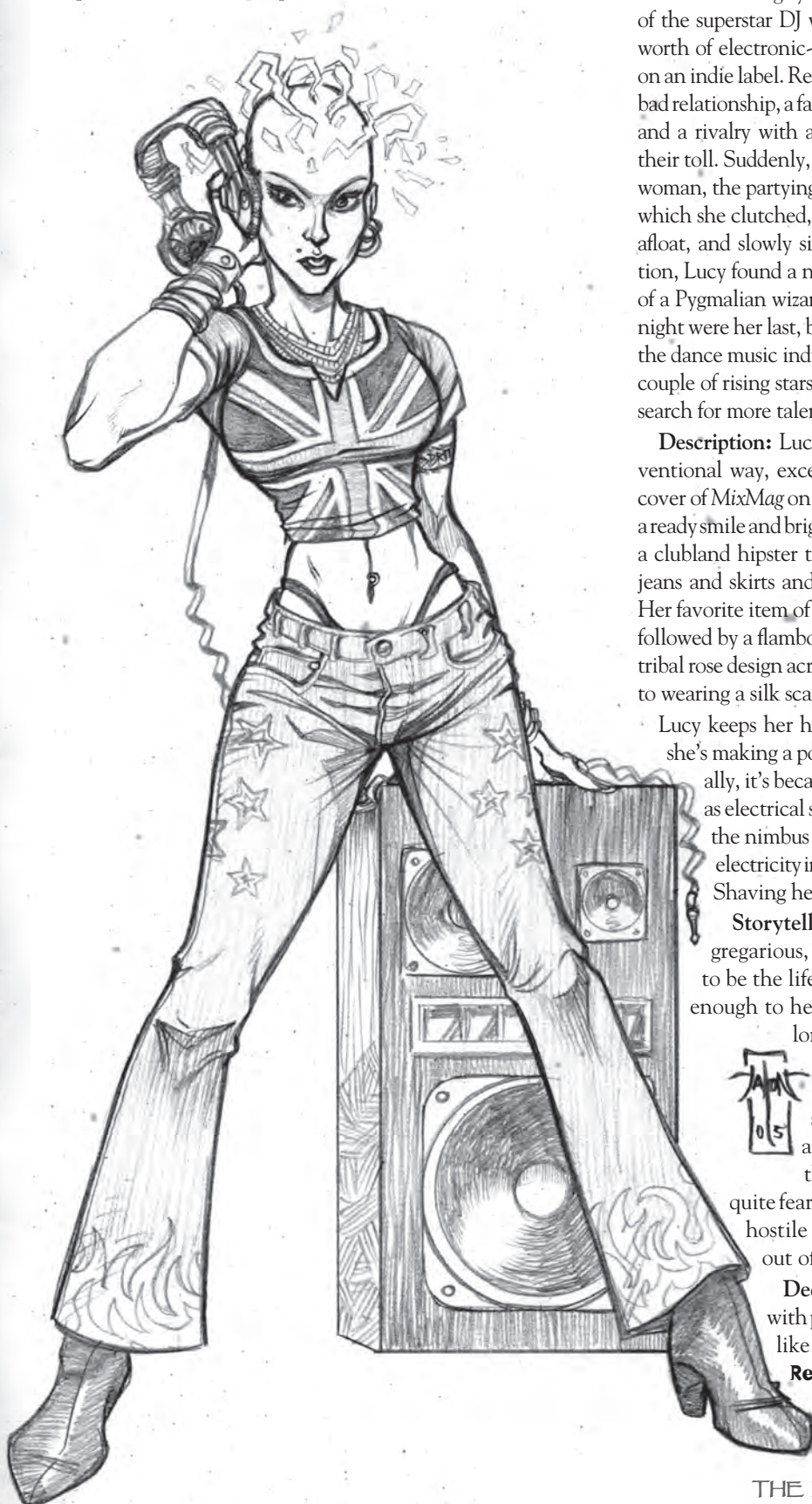
Lucy keeps her head shaved. If asked why, she says that she's making a point about "gender or something." Actually, it's because of her nimbus, which manifests itself as electrical sparks playing across her scalp. Although the nimbus is not strictly real, Lucy can still feel the electricity in her hair and finds it quite uncomfortable. Shaving her head makes it easier for her.

**Storytelling Hints:** Lucy is bright, funny and gregarious, swears like a sailor and is guaranteed to be the life and soul of any party. No one is close enough to her to know that she is in fact intensely lonely, insecure about the inadequacy of her talent and still wracked with guilt about the mage she killed. Her wild style and wild partying draw attention away from Lucy the woman, and toward the Lucy the cartoon character. She's quite fearless when faced with hostile crowds and hostile magical forces alike, but Lucy is totally out of her depth in matters of the heart.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Mobile phone, with picture and video messaging, brandished like a wand

**Real Name:** Louisa-Jane Simms

**Path:** Acanthus





**Order:** Free Council

**Legacy:** Pygmalion Society

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resistance 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

**Mental Skills:** Academics 1, Crafts (Sound Engineer) 2, Medicine (Street Drugs) 2, Computer 1, Science (Chemistry) 1

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 1, Drive 1, Larceny 1, Stealth 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Expression (DJ, Singer-Songwriter) 4, Persuasion 1, Socialize (Dancing) 2, Streetwise 2

**Merits:** Barfly, Contacts (Clubland) 1, Destiny 3 (Bane: The Heart), High Speech, Resources 2, Sanctum 1, Status (Free Council) 1, Striking Looks 2

**Willpower:** 5

**Wisdom:** 7

**Virtue:** Charity

**Vice:** Envy

**Initiative:** 6

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 9

**Health:** 7

**Gnosis:** 3

**Arcana:** Fate 2, Life 1, Mind 3, Prime 1, Time 1

**Rotes:** *Fate* — The Perfect Moment (••); *Mind* — Third Eye (•), First Impressions (••), Incognito Presence (••); *Life* — Cleanse the Body (•)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — World in a Grain of Sand

**Mana/per turn:** 12/3

**Armor:** 3 ("Misperception," Mind ••)



# THE SCIONS OF GOD

MY SOUL IS AN ANGEL BEARING MESSAGES FROM OTHER WORLDS, AND TO THOSE WORLDS SHALL I RETURN.

Cultures around the world have used masks and costumes to feign divinity, from tribal witch-doctors to the department store Santa. For the Scions of God, however, the fakery isn't fake. Their eerie and elaborate masks and costumes evoke a divine power that makes them more than human.

All mages know their souls have touched the Supernal World and yearn for that realm as their true home. The human ego, on the other hand, is a creature of the Astral Plane. But what of the Shadow Realm? Mages can visit the spirit plane through magic, but humans are not truly at home there. The Scions of God believe this omission helps lock humans into the Fallen World. Humans can ascend from the material plane more easily, the Scions of God say, if the humans exist in all four worlds at once: physical body, Supernal soul, Astral mind and ephemeral spirit. The Scions of God call this fourth entity the Holy Guardian Angel and try to make it the vehicle for both mind and soul.

The Legacy began during the Age of Exploration, when Europe's willworkers encountered African, Asian and Native American mages. The natives used masks to become vessels for gods and spirits: the Sleepers only in play-acting, the mages in truth. Even in the tribal dances and superstitious rites of the Sleepers, however, the explorers felt the breath of the Supernal World. They realized that some masks don't conceal the truth, they reveal it.

When the explorers returned home, a few mages tried using masks and costumes for their own ends. Their experiments gave some Silver Ladder mages new ideas about spirit-dealings and their own souls. The mage who first used masks to craft his own soul used the jargon of Kabbalism, so he called his divine persona his Holy Guardian Angel. His followers took the name of an order of angels, the Bene Elohim. The new Legacy eventually spread beyond Europe and absorbed elements from Hinduism, voodoo and other religions. As the Bene Elohim became more multicultural, members preferred to use its vulgate name, the Sons of God. During the 20th century, the Legacy

changed its name to the gender-neutral Scions of God. Not only did the Legacy include as many women as men, but some members that found their Holy Guardian Angels apparently had different genders from themselves.

The Legacy's goals and methods, however, have not changed much. Scions of God conduct rituals of worship in costumes that show how they see their Holy Guardian Angels — the transcendent selves the Scions want to be. Hieratic robes speak of priestly power, though Scions are priests of no Sleeper faith. A mask suggests a more than human essence: priest and god in the same person. Even when a Scion doesn't wear this costume, her nimbus manifests its appearance whenever she performs vulgar magic. In the Shadow Realm, a Scion always looks like her mask — but real and alive.

Scions of God want to purge themselves of human weakness and become incarnate angels, true spirits of the Supernal World. Some Scions hope that when they die, their fortified and tempered souls can Ascend to the Supernal World, to join the war against the Exarchs. Other Scions seek to become lords among spirits. While living, the Scions serve as gatekeepers between the worlds, expelling unruly spirits but encouraging spirits friendly to humanity. Other mages appreciate the Scions' power to locate and command spirits.

Like the other members of the Silver Ladder, the Scions want to give Creation a righteous order. For the Masquers, this includes greater contact between mortals and spirits. The Masquers hope that Sleepers who experience the supernatural may become Sleepwalkers, or even Awaken, and come to understand their Supernal birthright. Scions tell the spirits that they, too, are trapped in a Fallen World and denied contact with a greater reality. The Scions dream of building an army of spirits and mortals to storm across the Abyss and throw down the false gods. This may take a thousand years, but it shall be done.

**Parent Path:** The Scions of God accept mages of all Paths, so long as they belong to the Silver Ladder. Of all Paths, the mercurial Acanthus are least likely to join the Bene Elohim, but even these mages may appreciate the drama of the Scions' high ritual and their goal of godhood.





Thyrus mages start with a natural advantage for joining this Spirit-centered Legacy, but do not form a larger fraction of Masquers than other Paths: many Shamans interact with the spirit world easily enough that they see no need for the Scions' laborious training.

**Nickname:** Bene Elohim or Masquers

**Orders:** The Scions of God formed within the Silver Ladder; many Scions consider themselves shining exemplars of their order's ideals. In return, other members of the Silver Ladder respect the Scions' superb rapport with the Shadow Realm, even if their methods seem odd and flamboyant. Adamantine Arrow mages like to have a Masquer join them on forays into the Shadow Realm, while the Mysterium values the Scions' inside view of the spirit courts. Guardians of the Veil, however, often wince at the Masquers' willingness

to use Spirit magic in front of Sleepers. Free Council mages used to think the Bene Elohim were just kooks playing dress-up; in return, Scions thought Free Council mages lacked moral gravity and respect for tradition. However, new Sleeper ideas about transhumanism prompt the Council to give the Scions another look. A few Council mages try to update and adapt Scion methods. These Free Council mages hope to become immortal spirits, using virtual reality simulations and digital avatars instead of masks and robes — and perhaps someday they shall succeed.

**Appearance:** Scions of God wear elaborate "working costumes" when they assert their identities as divine spirits. A Scion's hieratic garb usually includes a sleeved cloak with embroidered bands around the hems, flaring collars (maybe more than one) and a large amulet as a clasp, a headdress of some sort and a sash around the waist. Some Scions stick to the scholar's gown of the medieval magician, a priest's cassock or the robe of an Egyptian priest. Other Scions wear a loose, comfortable shirt and trousers, or a blouse and skirt, but often they emblazon these garments with symbolic designs.

The mask, however, is the Legacy's defining accoutrement. More traditional Scions wear the stylized faces of lions, bulls, eagles, serpents or other animals with mythic associations — something Scion believe express the true faces of their souls. A Scion's mask may look quite different, though. Scion masks range from the beautiful human faces members would like to show the world to highly abstract masks with no human features at all.

Members of the Legacy who possess only their first attainment line their cloaks with sky-blue silk. Second-degree Scions use a white lining. Masquers who achieve the third attainment wear gold. Scions may embroider their ceremonial garb with other signs indicating mastery of particular Arcana or other achievements, but such symbols are traditional for mages in general (and the Silver Ladder in particular), and not mandatory for any Masquer.

**Background:** The sheer megalomania of the





Scions' goal attracts mages of great ambition (Pride is a common Vice) or great dissatisfaction with themselves. Some Scions brushed the spirit world before their Awakening and felt the need to understand that realm better.

The Scions' methods, however, demand great patience from prospective members: the initiation alone takes 40 days of fasting, prayer and purification rituals. A Masquer also needs at least a two-dot Sanctum to hold a special oratory. The Bene Elohim can differ in just about everything else, but none demand instant gratification.

**Organization:** The Bene Elohim don't need much administration or hierarchy beyond what the Silver Ladder already provides. The Legacy is sufficiently small that the personal authority of its senior members suffices to organize meetings and resolve disputes, without the need for any special titles or offices. Most Scions operate apart from other Masquers, and freely join cabals with other mages. A Scion visits her tutor whenever she needs advice or training, and tutors are as likely as other mentors to demand assistance from their students, but the Legacy doesn't insist they associate at other times.

The Scions do not grant titles for their first or second attainments. Mages who achieve the third attainment are called Archangels.

Tradition holds that once a year, each Archangel should host a Conventicle, an open-house gathering for any member who wants to attend. These parties do not give the Bene Elohim any more loyalty to each other than is usual for mages, but at least they know each other better than other mages guess. Rote swaps and other contracts between Masquers often take place at Conventicles, where other Scions can watch and make sure both mages deal honestly.

**Suggested Oblations:** A Scion of God gains Mana from celebrating a Mass in honor of her Holy Guardian Angel, either in her oratory or any sort of church or temple. The Bene Elohim may also gain Mana through exchanges of gifts with spirits (other than familiars), attending spirit courts and being treated as a spirit themselves or persuading spirit to accept the Masquers' authority without the need for magical compulsion.

**Concepts:** Clown, minister, costume shop proprietor, "amateur" ghostbuster, social science professor, *curandero*, Renaissance Faire entertainer, stage magician

## History

Mages have always studied the techniques of their neighbors. When Europe's great Age of Exploration began during the 15th century, anthropologically-minded mages in the Silver Ladder and Mysterium became particularly active in this respect.

Padre Matteo Lorca, known to the Sleepers as a Franciscan missionary to India, became the first European mage

to study mask-magic in depth. Late in the 17th century, Lorca used his knowledge of Indian exorcist masks to banish a cholera-demon that had already slain two other mages. Lorca's success inspired several other mages to investigate the magical and ceremonial uses of masks.

Lorca's own apprentice Rios Barjuan, a.k.a. Adriel, tried using masks to summon angels. He hoped that, just as an ordinary mask could make a Sleeper feel he was a vessel for a god or spirit, an enchanted mask could help a mage commune with an angel. Adriel did not seek one of the shining but limited "angels" found in the Shadow Realm: he sought to call one of the glorious, enigmatic spirits occasionally reported by awestruck mages — spirits who seemed to ignore all the rules of the Shadow Realm and have no known habitation, whose terrible power surely marked them as emissaries of the Supernal. Adriel failed and the putative True Angels remain legendary to this day. Barjuan did not consider his research wasted, though. Along the way, Adriel discovered how to combine masks with certain Kabbalist theories of the soul and initiatory rites to develop a new method of soulcrafting. He could not summon an angel, but perhaps he could become one.

Adriel became one of the Silver Ladder's top exorcists. The order's chronicles credit him with destroying a nest of spirits corrupted and enthralled by an Abyssal horror. He also reformed (or transformed) the war-devil Sergulath back into one of the lower sort of angels; this martial spirit now guards one of the Silver Ladder's largest sanctums in Europe. Adriel's power attracted disciples who eventually grew into a recognized Legacy, the Bene Elohim.

Adriel's Legacy remained small until the 19th century. A revival of interest in Kabbalism among Sleeper occultists led to, or was caused by, greater interest in this tradition by the Awakened — as usual, historically-minded mages argue over who influenced whom. The 19th century also saw mages in India, China and other lands copying the Bene Elohim soulcrafting, without the elements of Judeo-Christian mysticism. Since dialogue with these foreign mages helped refine the Legacy's methods, increasing numbers of Bene Elohim thought it was only good manners to downplay the use of Hebrew.

The Sons of God suddenly came into prominence during World War I. As the Great War ground on and became more bitter, some cabals of mages took sides — and tried to draw their own spiritual allies into the conflict. The Great War almost spilled into the Shadow Realm, with what consequences no one could guess. The masters of the Legacy forbade this spiritual escalation. Around the world, Bene Elohim forced peace between the spirits of different magical factions and separated militaristic mages from their spirit allies. The Masquers made powerful enemies during those years, but gained great respect from many mages in the Silver Ladder and the Guardians of the Veil.

The Bene Elohim, now Scions of God, remain one of the smaller Legacies associated with the Silver Ladder. The



Legacy's leaders have not issued any recent declarations to their colleagues in magic, or intervened in any Sleeper conflicts. The Scions of God seem content to act as individuals, each Scion mediating between Sleepers and spirits in her own way. The Scions have some common interests, but no common goal.

## *Society and Culture*

The Masquers believe in a Supreme Being — Yahweh, Brahman, the name doesn't matter — who fashioned all the worlds and the spirits within them. The Scions do not doubt the existence of Atlantis, but wonder how well modern mages really understand the mythic fount of magic. Like the Garden of Eden, they say, Atlantis serves as a myth for the ruin of a divine, primal order.

In the beginning, the Scions say, humans knew their own divinity as children of the Creator and experienced the Shadow Realm as freely as the material world. When the Exarchs broke reality, they also broke mortals' connection to the Shadow Realm. The Scions say their masked rituals and meditations draw the mind and soul closer together as a single, divine self, with the Holy Guardian Angel to bind them together. The masks and costumes create an Imago for this spiritual body; the prayers and rituals in the oratory help the soul charge that Imago with spiritual power. The soulcrafting process cements the union. Each attainment marks a stronger bond between mind, spirit and soul.

A closer union between mind, soul and spiritual self does more than create a mage better able to work in the spirit world. A close union re-creates an entity that can cross the Abyss and carry the soul home — an entity a lot more powerful than the Exarchs usually encounter. The united soul becomes an angel, or even a god (as the Fallen World knows gods, at least). What's more, every united soul draws the material, spiritual and Supernal worlds a little closer together. The Masquers say that healing the Abyss and restoring humanity to its Supernal birthright obviously must take precedence over the petty distractions of the Fallen World.

## *Laws of Angels*

The Bene Elohim list politics and administration among those distractions, and so the Masquers avoid the elaborate grades, hierarchies and bylaws found in many Awakened societies. The Scions restrict their bylaws to a few pages of guidelines about what contact between mortals and spirits causes harm and what the Scions should encourage. In brief, the Scions approve of spirits that help humans and bend their minds toward Supernal matters. The Scions don't like spirits that harm or exploit humans, or that encourage sordid, worldly appetites. Some demons and devils deserve pity, though a Scion still must defeat them: these spirits cannot help their fallen state. Abyssal spirits such as the acamoth, however, must be fought without mercy.

The Scions adopt a similar policy with regard to

non-Scion mages. The Scions say that right is right and wrong is wrong, and anyone who's honest with himself knows the difference. Mages who use their powers for bad purposes must be stopped. Mages who consciously choose evil, such as the Scelesti, must be stopped *hard*. Scions of high Wisdom avoid obnoxious priggery by placing people above abstract principles. After all, every Sleeper is an angelic soul not yet Awakened to its true nature. Sleepers' lives and enlightenment matter more than the letter of any law. Masquers sometimes annoy more pragmatic mages with the Scions' refusal to compromise their high-flown ideals, but Scions with high Wisdom often win respect for their moral clarity and altruistic courage.

Scions can fall to Hubris just like any other mage, though. Holiness becomes holier-than-thou arrogance and contempt for anyone who doesn't defer to the Scions' "angelic" moral purity. When other mages express doubts about the ethics of a Scion's actions, a Hubris-riddled Scion often claims to serve "a greater good beyond your sight." After all, when you know you're an angel on a mission from God, any decision you make *must* be correct.

Scions treat each other with great formality when they meet. After ritual phrases of greeting, the Scions list their attainments (if not obvious from their cloaks), Paths and tutors' names. Bene Elohim can loosen up with other mages they know well, but, when there's magic to be done, the Scions become utterly formal once more. Wielding divine power is serious business.

## *Oratories of The Angels*

The Scions still maintain the sanctum of their founder. Casa Adriel is a small villa outside Granada, in southern Spain. The most experienced Archangel willing to take the job becomes the villa's caretaker. Once a year, Scions meet at the villa to report on their activities, trade information and socialize in the Legacy's most prestigious Conventicle. No one below the second attainment attends. The villa includes a Verge, for the convenience of Scions who no longer live as corporeal beings and a "guest oratory" any Scion can use. The villa also holds a library of past Scions' memoirs. Naturally, Casa Adriel has powerful wards, especially against Spirit magic.

Some of the larger Silver Ladder sanctums (those shared by several cabals or dedicated to teaching, lore and administration) include "guest oratories" for the use of visiting Scions. Guest oratories are circular with five niches and altars, one for each Path. A guest oratory isn't as good as a Scion's own for spellcasting, but it's better than nothing. (Whenever operating in a sanctum could give a mage an equipment bonus for spellcasting, a guest oratory cannot provide more than a +1 bonus.)



## *Angels of Ascension*

The Bene Elohim keep few secrets. Their doctrines and descriptions of their rituals are freely available, at least to other members of the Silver Ladder. (Their rites are another matter: the Scions are no more ready than any other mages to give away rites they invented.) Indeed, many Scions welcome a chance to talk about something other mages might keep a dark secret.

Death is not always the end for Scions who reach the third attainment. Archangels often become spirits after their corporeal death: the Holy Guardian Angel sheds the material body, and carries the mage's intact ego into the Shadow Realm. A Scion's personality simplifies when he becomes a spirit, but Bene Elohim don't suffer the mad obsessions that afflict ghost-mages. The Legacy's deceased members remain actively involved with their living colleagues; some dead mages continue as mentors to junior Scions (though such mages cannot soulcraft and death still breaks the mystical bond between tutor and pupil). Deceased Archangels sometimes attend Conventicles. They often join spirit courts, or even run their own. When an Archangel doesn't become a spirit after death, the other Scions presume she immediately ascended to carry the fight to the Exarchs. The Bene Elohim point to their deceased-but-still-active membership as evidence that the Scions know the true path to Ascension.

## Deceased Archangels

Only Scions who achieve the Legacy's third attainment may continue after death as spirits. These Scions keep most aspects of their personalities, but their abilities change enough that a dead Scion becomes a Storyteller-character.

A deceased Archangel has no discernable soul for Death magic to affect. Maybe the mage's soul vanished to wherever souls normally go after death; the Scions say the soul completely fused with the mage's spiritual self and no longer exists as a separable, detectable entity. However, Spirit magic affects deceased Archangels, just as any other denizen of the Shadow Realm. The spirit-mage's rank equals half the mage's Gnosis, rounded down (so a deceased Archangel always has a rank of at least 3).

A spirit-mage's Attributes (Power, Finesse, Resistance) are the average of the mage's mortal Attributes: add the relevant Attributes, then divide by 3 and round to the nearest whole number. Spirits do not normally have Skills, but a spirit-mage's Skills can remain unchanged (one advantage they have over most spirits).

Willpower, Essence, Defense and other Traits are determined as for spirits or ghost-mages.

Arcana become Influences. A spirit-mage employs innate powers rather than casting spells. When a spirit-mage works magic, one Essence is spent and Power + Finesse is rolled to determine success.

Spiritual powers do not cause Paradox. All deceased Scions have the Numina of Materialize and Material Vision as spiritual versions of their attainments; these Scions command other spirits (the second attainment) by pitting their Power + Finesse against the target spirit's Resistance. The mage's rites can become more Numina, at the Storyteller's option.

Conceivably, other mages can transubstantiate into permanent spiritual form. To preserve the Scions' mystique, Storytellers should not allow this before a mage achieves a Gnosis of 7 or higher, and require archmastery of the Spirit Arcanum. The process is also irreversible and takes a character out of the game.

## *Light to the Shadow Realm*

The Scions of God believe their status as Supernal entities makes them stewards of the Shadow Realm as well as the human world. Stewardship means more than mastery. In the beginning, the Scions say, all spirits were good. The division of the worlds deformed the spirits, until some became demons of horror. Even the worst devil of the Shadow Realm, however, can be redeemed through Supernal intervention — namely, sufficiently powerful Spirit magic. Great Scions, such as their founder Adriel, have, indeed, turned hostile spirits into friends of humanity.

The Scions want more interaction between Sleepers and spirits, but this must take place in the right manner. Silver Ladder mages espouse competing visions of what "the right manner" means, so the Masquers do as well; but they agree that a proper relationship between mortals and spirits benefits both sides. The Sleepers don't always know about this, but the Scions look for Sleepers who might accept the truth (or something close to it). Sleepers willing to believe in a spirit world might be readier to believe in a Supernal World as well and want to regain their place in it.

Scions rarely approve of outright slavery for spirits. The Legacy's traditions say that slavery is wrong no matter who is the master and who is the slave. Masquers allow permanent bindings, however, if all parties take them willingly. Thus, Scions may grant spirit familiars to other mages (or even mortals) or tether spirits to locations as their guardians and caretakers. The spirits always give informed consent — but the Scions' second attainment can make a spirit agree to a permanent binding. As long as the commands did not involve the use of Intimidation, most Scions say they didn't force the spirits' wills: the Scions were just very persuasive, and the spirits responded to the Supernal righteousness of the Holy Guardian Angel. But that slippery slope easily leads to Hubris.

As the Scions of God gain power, they become frequent visitors to the spirit courts. Masquers often represent human interests to the spirits or serve as diplomats between spirit courts. As mortals (or former mortals), Scions have more flexible minds than the spirits, and the wiser spirit-lords

value this quality. Bene Elohim often acquire spirits as Allies, Contacts and Mentors, not just familiars. Even if a Scion joins a court, however, the Masquer never pledges unconditional fealty to a spirit. The Scion serves as an allied but independent contractor or advisor, who can cancel his pact if he accepts the penalties agreed upon beforehand. Supernal creatures must not abase themselves to lower entities.

### Fallen Angel

When Scions of God fall to Hubris, they can fall hard. The most infamous Masquer of the last century was Corat, an Archangel who went completely mad. After several years of censures for increasingly violent and coercive tactics in dealing with unruly spirits and mortals, she denounced her superiors in the Silver Ladder and dropped out of sight.

Three years later, a cabal in Jerusalem found Corat trying to open a Verge on Temple Mount, using human sacrifice to power her spell. She said she would create a "final settlement" for the city's disputing religious communities. Stopping her was almost as hard as covering up her mad plot afterwards. Corat died in the battle. Other Scions fear Corat's return, for she would make a most formidable demon.

### Induction

The Scions of God accept applicants without regard to their Path. Applicants must be members of the Silver Ladder in good standing, though, and with no major scandals in their past. A would-be Masquer begins by asking an existing member to act as his sponsor to the Legacy's master mages. Three senior Scions question the applicant and examine his past for crimes or dangerous entanglements with other groups, whether mortal or supernatural: the Bene Elohim do not want to grant their power to mages who might misuse the power in service to demons, the Exarchs or even fouler entities. Since an experienced Masquer collects many contacts in the spirit world, including spirits of knowledge and divination, the Legacy can perform quite a thorough background check. If the three examiners agree the applicant seems sincere and competent to follow the Legacy's training, the applicant's sponsor (or another Scion) can become the mage's tutor.

A mage does not become a Scion quickly. First, a would-be Scion must build her oratory; she furnishes it with an altar, lamp and censer. The aspirant decorates the oratory to look like her vision of her Path's Watchtower and remind her of her Holy Guardian Angel's image. For instance, an Obrimos aspirant who sees her spiritual self as an angelic seraph (Hebrew for "Fiery Serpent") would

drape her oratory with scarlet silk embroidered with golden lightning-bolts and serpents, while a Moros who sees his Holy Guardian Angel as an Egyptian death-god such as Seker might make his oratory look like an Egyptian tomb. A door and windows open on a patio where the mage can receive spirits. Nearby is a spartan chamber for reading, eating and sleeping. The aspiring Scion studies folklore, occult texts and religious art to inspire her imagination about the form of her Holy Guardian Angel. Through long meditation, the applicant queries her own soul about the form her spiritual self should take. The initiation cannot begin until both aspirant and tutor are sure they know the Holy Guardian Angel's appearance, and fashion the candidate's ceremonial mask and costume.

### Angelic Accoutrements

Despite the importance of a Scion's mask and costume, Bene Elohim rarely dedicate them as magic tools. They are simply too bulky, and too conspicuous for a mage who wants to act in public.

At the Storyteller's option, though, a Scion may receive an equipment bonus for spells cast while in full costume or within his oratory. Scions prefer to conjure spirits within their oratories for this very reason. Typically, the Scion casts the spell within her oratory, and the spirit appears on the porch outside. Wards crafted through long-extended spellcasting prevent an unruly spirit from intruding. Few oratories should grant more than a +1 equipment bonus. Only a master who consecrated his oratory through decades of magical working could gain a +2 bonus to spellcasting. A Scion's mask and costume may grant a further +1 equipment bonus. Scions also frequently imbue their regalia with various enchantments (most often some protective spell).

The initiation lasts 40 days. The aspirant spends hours each day in her oratory, praying to the Highest in the name of her Holy Guardian Angel and imagining herself in the form shown by her mask and costume. The would-be Scion fasts during the day and eats sparingly in the evening.

Most importantly, the aspirant uses Spirit 2 "Peer Across the Gauntlet" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 247) every waking moment, first in his oratory and then out in the world. He must gain the habit of seeing the Shadow Realm as much a part of his surroundings as the material world, if not more so. That's the view he'll have once he gains his first attainment, so a Scion had better be sure he wants it. The Shadow Realm is not always pleasant to see.

The aspirant spends the last day alone with her tutor. She begins her prayer and meditation at dawn. At noon, she kneels at her altar. The tutor infuses her with a point of Mana as a sacrament before linking their souls. In this visionary experience, the aspirant sees her Holy Guardian



Angel in the form she has decided, and steps within it. It is not a part of her; she is part of it. From then on, she is a Scion of God, an angel who walks the Fallen World. Afterward, her tutor presents the new Scion to her examiners, who confirm her in the Legacy.

Subsequent initiations to the second and third attainments also take place in a Scion's oratory and require many hours of meditation, prayer and rituals to purify the Masquer and assert his identity with his Holy Guardian Angel. The rites themselves have no special requirements. The third attainment is a big event with the Legacy, however, and other Archangels — living and dead — often wait to honor the Scion and welcome him to their company.

Many Scions believe that death and transition to a fully spiritual existence form their Legacy's fourth attainment. After a Scion's corporeal death and cremation, other members of the Legacy gather to deconsecrate and dismantle her oratory. A place that has seen so much traffic between worlds leaves a weak spot in the Gauntlet that hostile spirits might use to invade the material world. Destroying the oratory solves these potential problems.

Everything intimately connected to the dead Scion must be destroyed as well. Such relics could fetter a deceased Masquer to the world, turning him into an insane ghost-mage instead of becoming a spirit noble or Ascending to the Supernal World. Destroying relics also prevents enemy mages from gaining power over former Scions.

### Story Hooks — Missions from God

- A Scion character sees a powerful demon in Twilight, lodged in the home of a wealthy pillar of the community. Can the character get inside and exorcise it without revealing she's a mage? What's the demon doing there, anyway — and what's it doing to Mr. Pillar of the Community and his family? What if Mr. Pillar doesn't *want* the demon gone?

- Someone is pulling spirits through the Gauntlet and using them to commit murder. This must be stopped, and not just to protect the targeted Sleepers. The mystery spirit-summoner commits a crime against the enslaved and abused spirits as well, who are not normally killers. As the hand of divine justice, a Scion character bears the duty to set this right.





• The Egyptian god Anubis sends an emissary to a Scion character, saying that an artifact (maybe even an Artifact) very precious to him has been looted from an archeological dig and brought to the city. Unfortunately, Anubis can't pinpoint the artifact's location more exactly from the Egyptian part of the Shadow Realm. The god gives the Scion three days to find the artifact and see it back to Egypt or to a museum (Anubis sees museums as modern temples to the dead), or the Jackal God will unleash a horde of hellish spirits on the city. On the other hand, success could bring great favor to the Scion from a powerful spirit court.

## Attainments

The special attainments of the Bene Elohim help them interact more easily with the spirit world, as if they were spirits themselves.

### 1st: *Angelic Sight*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Space 1, Spirit 2 (primary), Occult 2

The first stage in becoming a spirit is learning to see the Shadow Realm all the time, unless the Masquer consciously chooses to ignore the local spirits. Angelic Sight resembles the Spirit 2 spell "Peer Across the Gauntlet," except this attainment is on all the time, and the character sees spirits as a reflexive action. Spirit enables a Scion to see across the Gauntlet. Space extends this perception to normal viewing range and around merely material barriers — though the Scion only sees the spiritual environment on the other side. For example, a Scion might see the vegetation-spirit in a walled garden or the spite-demon haunting an especially unhappy home. That doesn't mean the Scion sees the people in the home or can read bank statements in the owner's safe: such things do not impinge on the Shadow Realm.

Material barriers impose a -1 die penalty to perceptions rolls, and a wall with an Awakened spirit blocks Angelic Sight completely. (Instead, the Scion sees the wall's spirit jeering at her attempt to see through it.) The local Gauntlet strength can modify perceptions rolls, too. (See **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 282 for these modifiers.)

### 2nd: *Divine Command*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Spirit 3, Intimidation 2

As a Scion of God fuses his Supernal soul with his Holy Guardian Angel, he gains a divine authority over lesser spirits. He no longer needs spells to bend spirits to his will: he speaks, and they must obey — if they are not too powerful.

In many ways, this attainment is a generalized form of the Spirit 3 rote, "Crown of the Incarna" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 248). A Masquer, however, is not restricted

to Presence + Intimidation + Spirit for his dice pool. He can use whatever Attribute + Ability pairing best suits his circumstances and personal aptitudes, just as dealing with people. An imperious command suits most spirits, especially when exorcising a hostile spirit from someone's home. Now and then, though, a Scion may prefer a softer approach to play on a spirit's personality quirks (Manipulation + Subterfuge), flatter the spirit (Manipulation + Persuasion) or even seduce the spirit (Presence + Socialize) before applying the Scion's magical will. A spirit that doesn't realize it was compelled to serve is a spirit that's less likely to cause trouble later.

Similar to "Crown of the Incarna," a Divine Command lasts only one scene. For each success, the Scion can impose one short command (or one element of a more complicated command). Once a Masquer achieves Spirit 4, he can use the Advanced Prolongation table (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 119) for a longer period of service, at cost of a penalty to his dice pool for compelling the target spirit.

**Optional Arcanum:** Space 3

If a Scion has Space 3 and Spirit 4, she can command a spirit through a sufficiently strong sympathetic link such as a person the spirit influenced or an object used as a fetter. For instance, if a Masquer recognized that a demon recently influenced a person to commit some heinous act, the Scion could command the demon to appear through its link to its victim. The Storyteller decides the strength and duration of the sympathetic tie based on the extent and intimacy of the contact. For instance, a spirit's current fetter has an Intimate connection, as would a mortal who mortgaged his soul to a demon. An abandoned fetter or a single use of a spirit's power on a person creates a Known level of contact for a week, after which the connection degrades to Acquainted for the next month, before dropping to Encountered from then on. Repeated contact between a spirit and a mortal could strengthen the connection to Intimate, perhaps for a long time afterwards.

Some spirits may be called or influenced using special names or sigils. These are not sympathetic ties, however, so they do not convey the Divine Command. A Scion can use such names or sigils, but this becomes a spell, or an invocation of a power defined by the spirit itself, not an exercise of innate spiritual authority.

### 3rd: *Hand of the Elohim*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Spirit 4

As a Scion of God merges with his Holy Guardian Angel, body and soul, he can reach into Twilight or through the Gauntlet by a mere act of will. He can send a hand across the Gauntlet, similar to the Spirit 3 spell "Reaching" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 250), or step across completely, similar to the Spirit 4 spell "Road Master" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 254). He may affect any spirit in Twilight or near him in the Shadow Realm, with any of his physical



abilities because he exists in both worlds. Conversely, a Scion in the Shadow Realm could reach across the Gauntlet to affect people and objects in the physical world. Reaching into the other world does not require any sort of dice roll. Any particular action might, though, and can suffer a penalty for Gauntlet Strength. For example, if a Scion wanted to punch an elemental across a Strength 5 Gauntlet, the player would roll Strength + Brawling + Spirit – the spirit's Defense, at a further –3 penalty for the Gauntlet's Strength.

When a Scion uses Hand of the Elohim, whatever part of her that crosses into another zone of reality appears in the form the Scion imagines for her Holy Guardian Angel. For example, a Scion who imagines her spiritual self as a robed eagle-woman would manifest her hand with raptor's talons in the Shadow Realm — or in the material world, if she stood on the other side of the Gauntlet. While in Twilight, she could manifest her entire spiritual form to those in the Fallen World, as if she were a materialized spirit. Since she uses an attainment rather than a spell, such a manifestation does not provoke Paradox (though the Sleeper might still Disbelieve afterward). Indeed, such a manifestation (especially when augmented with "Celestial Fire" — see below) may shock a Sleeper into belief in magic, becoming a Sleepwalker. On a few occasions, sight of a Scion's angelic form actually sparked Awakenings.

#### **Optional Arcanum: Prime 4**

An Archangel who has Prime 4 can use Essence interchangeably with Mana, without the need for a spell or rote, as if he were a spirit himself.

Note that an Archangel with Prime 3 can feed a point of Mana to infuse his nimbus with "Celestial Fire," per the Prime 3 spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 224). Not only can the Scion add the Celestial Fire's damage to any attack he makes into Twilight or across the Gauntlet, people or spirits on the other side of the Gauntlet see his spiritual form blazing with the beautiful, terrible glory of divinity. This is a spell or rote, however, rather than an intrinsic part of the attainment.

## *Sample Character*

### *Phoenix*

**Quote:** "Sir, please don't take this the wrong way, but you need better emissions controls on your new factory. Some — people — in the city are becoming upset, and I don't know what they might do."

**Background:** Frances Pickford grew up shy and convinced she couldn't do anything right — except music. She played several musical instruments and sang well enough, some people said, to make a living at it. But she felt too nervous to play and sing for any audience except her church. Instead, she worked in the office of a grocery store chain's regional warehouse.

Frances' daily walk took her over a wooded ravine, a small patch of wilderness surrounded by the city. As she crossed the bridge one day, she practiced a new arrangement of St. Francis of Assisi's *Canticle to Brother Sun*, singing softly. Unexpectedly, she felt herself . . . watched . . . but there was nobody near except the oblivious, passing cars. That feeling of attention was enough to start her Mystery Play and Awakening, though. Her first guide to the magical world found Frances in the ravine a week later, exhausted from hours of singing to the spirits who would not let her go.

Frances' mentor was a Scion of God. He found that Frances had great natural talent, but was too shy to use it aggressively or associate much with other mages. Frances found her confidence much improved, however, when she could hide behind a mask, hieratic robes and a shadow name. She joined the Legacy as soon as possible. Although Frances has not been a mage for long, she has gained wider access to the local spirits than mages with decades' more experience.

Frances, or Phoenix as her fellow mages know her, still works at the warehouse but now she owns a condo perched on the edge of the ravine. Her living room and balcony serve as her oratory. Some days and nights, she sings softly in its wooded depths, calling her friends among the spirits and hearing their concerns and news about the rest of the city's Shadow counterpart. Sometimes she learns something that demands the intervention of an angel.

**Description:** Frances Pickford is a black woman in her early 30s. She has a coffee-and-cream complexion and wears her hair pulled back and gathered into a puffy ponytail. She wears blouses and skirts of gaudy floral prints that her mother insists on sewing for her and sensible shoes. Her magical costume features a red gown emblazoned with a phoenix, a purple silk cloak embroidered with a feather design in gold, a purple and gold mask of a bird's face and a feathered headdress with a high crest and a golden fillet bearing a sunburst.

Phoenix's nimbus appears as a phantom image of a bird's head around her own, with shimmering wings at her back.

**Storytelling Hints:** Phoenix remains a bit shy around her fellow humans (Sleepers or mages), and has to work at dealing with other people. Her affection for music and the spirit world can counter her social anxiety; so does her mask, and Phoenix regrets she can't use her magical visage in Sleeper society. All in all, Phoenix likes nature-spirits more than people. Despite her early scare, Phoenix now counts the spirits of the ravine as her friends: they're such an appreciative audience for her music. An oak-tree-spirit she calls Quercus looks more human, and more handsome, every time she seems him, and Phoenix wonders just how intimate relations with spirits can become. Phoenix has joined a local anti-pollution activist group and a park committee, despite her social anxiety, to make her city more hospitable for her spirit friends. She dislikes confrontation,





and always tries to negotiate a peaceful solution to any clash between mortals and spirits.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Copper mirror in a wooden frame

**Real Name:** Frances Pickford

**Path:** Thyrsus

**Order:** Silver Ladder

**Legacy:** Scions of God

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social Attributes:** Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Mental Skills:** Academics 2, Craft 1, Investigation 2, Occult (Nature

Spirits) 3

**Physical Skills:** Larceny 2, Stealth 2

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Expression (Keyboard, Song) 4, Persuasion 1

**Merits:** Allies (Nature Spirits) 4, High Speech, Resources 2, Sanctum (Personal) 2, Status (Order 1)

**Willpower:** 6

**Wisdom:** 6

**Virtue:** Charity

**Vice:** Sloth

**Initiative:** 5

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 10

**Health:** 8

**Gnosis:** 3

**Arcana:** Life 2, Space 1, Spirit 3

**Rotes:** Life — Sense Life (•), Heal Flora and Fauna (••); Space — Correspondence Finder (•); Spirit — Exorcist's Eye (•), Lesser Spirit

Summons (••), Spirit Road (•••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Angelic Sight

**Mana/per turn:** 12/3

**Armor:** 3 ("Ephemeral Shield," Spirit ••)



# THE SODALITY OF THE TOR

**Dance, dance the Spiral. Cast wild eyes above, and let feet pound the earth! We stand between heaven and the world, between Gods and Humans. Rise up, cast your voice into the night sky, raise your arms and draw down the Moon!**

According to legend, Thessalian witches could command the moon to descend from the vault of heaven and command the night to linger over their heads, preventing the onset of day. They rode over the waves of the sea like the reflection of the moon on the water and flew through the night sky, free of their mortal weight.

The Sodality of the Tor understands the Mystery behind these beliefs and legends. The classical world saw the moon as a symbol of ecstatic Divinity, the Mystery and magic that dwelt in the night. The moon was otherworldly, but inextricably tied to the mortal experience. "Drawing down" the moon means not literally to pull the moon from the sky, but to draw the essence of the moon into oneself, so its light can reveal the latent divinity within the soul. Thus revealed, the Goddess Within manifests in the flesh of her witch and priestess.

This concept is the Sodality of the Tor's most sacred Mystery, in which one of their number draws into herself a shard of the Eternal Divine. In this way, the Sodality understand those divine traits that reside within themselves, and foster them accordingly. Their rites shape a Sodality witch's soul, making it more and more like that presence she communes with during these rites as she walks her path.

The witches of the Sodality teach that the human soul can embrace godhood only when the soul sets aside the conscious mind. They believe the Supernal is not transcendent, grandly beyond the human understanding; rather, it is immanent, found within all things wild and natural. Thus, by casting aside the reservations and fears of the conscious mind, and allowing the unconscious and primal side of the

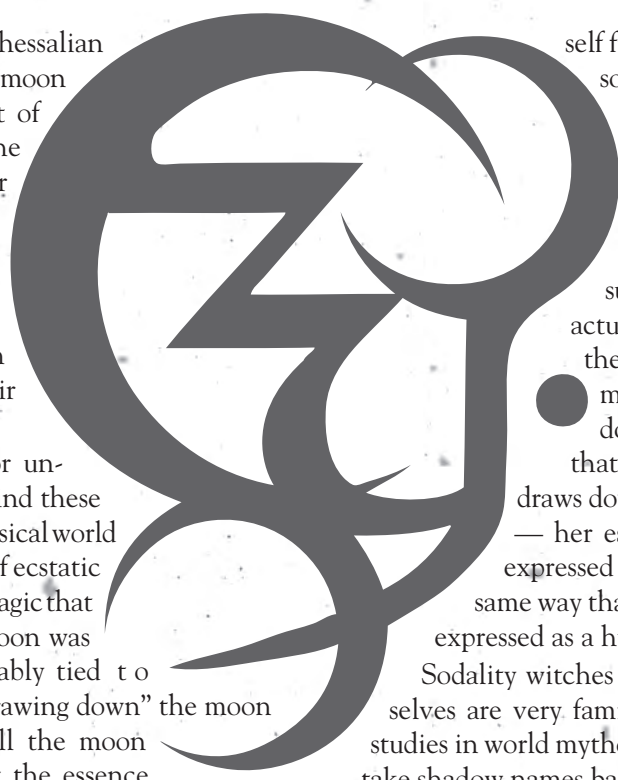
self free reign, the Awakened (and some gifted Sleepers) can touch the divine.

Mages outside of the Sodality sometimes believe its devotees give themselves over to possession. The truth is more subtle. A Sodality mage never actually loses consciousness during these rites, though her experience may be so overwhelming that she does not remember everything that happened. The witch who draws down Divinity is herself, but not — her essential self remains, but has expressed itself as a divine being, in the same way that her essential self is normally expressed as a human being.

Sodality witches usually find that their divine selves are very familiar to them from their own studies in world mythology, and these witches often take shadow names based on the god they see in the moon's mirror. When one of these witches speaks of "drawing down Artemis" or "aspecting the Morrigan," they mean letting the qualities attributed to those gods rise in their own personalities. They don't let a god in; they let a god out.

The Sodality's prime ceremony is the Rite of Drawing Down, held during full moons. Members of this Legacy may travel quite a distance to take part in this rite; traditionally, the elder who initiated a witch of the Sodality hosts these rituals, and all those she has trained will converge to take part in the ritual. However, the demands of Awakened life sometimes preclude this, and elders will usually welcome any member of the Sodality who is in the area.

Sleepwalkers sometimes attend these gatherings. Most of these people belong to a coven of the witchcult backed by the Sodality. Some members of the Legacy support or even lead covens of traditionalist witches, whose members lead lives that are not out-





wardly involved in occultism. Many members of the Sodality recruit members of such covens as Allies, Contacts and Sleepwalker Retainers.

Mages who know the Sodality only by reputation often believe the Legacy recruits only women, since classical and modern pagan thought treats its primary symbol as feminine. Other mages believe the men of the Sodality "draw down the Sun" in a fashion different from the Legacy's women.

Neither of these misconceptions is true. Though Western occult systems call the moon a feminine symbol, witches (a term applied to both men and women) of the Sodality know that the moon is properly a symbol of ecstatic Divinity, a symbol under which the gods of all Dionysian expressions of religion gather.

**Parent Path:** Thyrsus

**Nickname:** Spiral Walkers

**Orders:** The Guardians of the Veil and the Mysterium welcome Sodality witches most readily, for the Sodality values the keeping and discovering of secrets. In the British Isles, the Spiral Walkers enjoy special respect from the Guardians because of one special act of sacrifice: the Lammas Night Working of World War II, which prevented the Mysteries from falling into the most profane hands imaginable.

Other orders welcome members of the Sodality whose god-selves has some connection to the ideals of that order. Gods of crafts and skill, chaos- and trickster-gods often find the Free Council amenable. Spiral Walkers with martial god-selves might join the Adamantine Arrow, just as those Spiral Walkers whose god-selves are divine royalty may find the Silver Ladder to their liking.

**Appearance:** In everyday life, members of the Sodality of the Tor rarely look as though they belong to a cult that conducts ecstatic dances under the full moon. In fact, many Spiral Walkers take great pains to avoid looking "odd," preferring to wear simple, respectable clothing appropriate for their callings. Many do come to prefer the freedom of looser clothing, however. Fortunately, few corners of modern society now demand corsets, strangelingly tight collars or other restrictive clothing.

The most sacred symbols of the Sodality are the circle, the moon and the spiral. Many of these witches wear bracelets, rings and necklaces of semiprecious stones (particularly stones of organic origin, such as amber or jet) that include these symbols.

**Background:** Mages who join the Sodality come from all walks of life, though many of them already had ties to British witchcraft. Many in the Sodality belong to traditional witchcraft covens or even some of





the old witchcraft families of England. Others of the Sodality are involved with English anthropology or archaeology. If they weren't part of such groups before their Awakening, they may join them afterward.

**Organization:** The Sodality operates in groups called covens. A coven usually consist of one or two Sodality mages leading several more un-Awakened members (usually reflected by the Sleepwalker Retainers Merit). The mage serves as the High Priest or High Priestess who performs the sacred rites and teaches the Sodality's doctrine that magic expresses the inner divinity of human beings. However, magic is not Divinity itself: Sleepers can experience moments of godhood, too.

At the Legacy's core, the base interaction among members of the Sodality is between the teacher and apprentice. This one-on-one training is the social foundation for interaction among the members of this Legacy — members are known by their initiators, and most members of the Sodality can quote their "lineages" back to the 1800s and beyond.

Most Sodality members belong to five major "branches," based on the common initiators to whom members can be traced. These roughly correspond to geographical areas, but only as a matter of convenience rather than a strict rule: if a mage wants to join the Sodality, she probably chooses a tutor in her own area.

**Ebudae:** This branch, one of the Sodality's two oldest branches, began near the New Forest area in Britain. Made up of old witch families and their retainers, the Ebudae trace their lineage back to the 1400s by name, though they claim the Legacy has been around much longer. A matriarch of the Ebudae organized the Lammas Night Working. Additionally, most members of the Sodality in India and several other former British colonies come from this line.

**Gretna:** This branch takes its name from the village where the branch began. It is at least as old as the Ebudae line. The Gretna occupy northern Britain and counts many Scottish witches among its initiates. Gretna witches have long-running rivalries with the Ebudae, and each branch likes to claim that the other sprang from it. Similar to the Ebudae, the Gretna can trace their lineages of initiation back to the 1400s.

**Rochlaer:** The Rochlaer branch is confined primarily to Germany and the Netherlands. They are nearly as old as the Ebudae and Gretna, able to trace their initiation lineages back to the early 1500s. The Rochlaer have absorbed no small amount of Norse and Germanic customs into their ceremonies and ritual magic, including Norse *seidhr* (cauldron-scrying) and rune-cutting, and

German *hexencraft*. Many Rochlaer join the Mysterium, which appreciates their skill at divination.

**Orsanith:** The Orsanith branch is primarily American and, compare to the other branches of the Legacy. Orsanith was an American Thyrsus who met an Ebudae-initiated member of the Sodality during the Great War. The two of them hit it off, and Orsanith found himself fascinated by the Ebudae's theology. They became lovers first, and then she initiated him into the Legacy. Orsanith returned to America in the 1920s, and the Legacy has spread since then. Most American Sodality come from the Orsanith branch, though Appalachia and New England has a few isolated Ebudae, Gretna and Rochlaer lineages that date back to colonial times.

**Janiluth:** The Janiluth branch began in the 1940s, when a young witch of the Gretna line broke with her elders. She moved to Australia (some say she fled with some of the grimoires her initiator loaned her, and refused to return them) and established her own branch of the Legacy. Though Gretna initiates tend to be quite hostile to those of the Janiluth line, they are accepted (likely due to their welcome by the Ebudae, whom most other Sodality realize are simply doing so to spite the Gretna).

A cabal called the Avalonian Sisterhood tends the Glastonbury Tor on behalf of the Sodality as a whole. The Sisterhood traditionally includes at least one member of each branch. Other branches have appeared and disappeared over the centuries, as lines simply dwindle in number or crumble due to infighting.

**Suggested Oblations:** The spiral dance performed with several witches, ritual consumption of cakes and ale, passionate sex, ecstatic dance under the light of the moon

**Concepts:** Wiccan high priestess, British anthropologist, pagan theologian, author or teacher, musician or dancer, professional herbalist, tour guide of Neolithic sites, midwife

## Awakened Witches

No one Legacy or even Path can claim to encompass all (or even most) of the Awakened practitioners of witchcraft. The Sodality is simply one expression of witchcraft, as it originated in Britain.

Thus, a devotee of Hekate and Persephone may find herself Awakening as a Moros, or a staunchly feminist witch involved in women's power movements may Awaken as an Obri-mos. Likewise, an Acanthus mage may explore the faerie seership techniques of old Ireland,



and a witch who embraces demonology and the power of the scourge can easily find her way among the Mastigos.

The Sodality isn't even the sole expression of British traditional witchcraft among the Awakened, either — the Spiral Walkers are simply one of the best organized and most prolific Legacies.

## *History*

This Legacy is an old one, of that there can be no doubt. Members of the Sodality have in their possession a variety of grimoires, journals and other accounts that date back centuries, and at least two of the lines verifiably trace their origins back to the 1400s. That's just when the Legacy began recording its history, though — before then, witchcraft was simply passed down from one Awakened to another. Quite possibly, this Legacy may be found nearly anywhere in the world, if only as a solitary practice between a mentor and her apprentice.

As an organization, however, the Sodality is very much a British phenomenon. Despite spreading around the world in recent centuries, the Sodality retains a distinctly British flavor to many of its techniques, and is strongest where the British have settled. Sodality legend claims that the first witches who practiced their Legacy's techniques came to Britain in the long-ago days of the Roman Empire. Indeed, according to the folklorists of the Legacy, the Sodality's origins lie with the coming of Joseph of Arimathea and the planting of the Thorn of Glastonbury.

## *The Thorn of Glastonbury*

According to popular British legend, Joseph of Arimathea was a merchant who knew Christ. Joseph came to Britain after the Crucifixion, bearing the Holy Grail, said to be filled with the blood of Christ gathered while He hung on the cross. As Joseph lay down to rest on Glastonbury Tor, he pushed his staff, a piece of wood cut from a thorne tree, into the earth beside him. When he awoke, the staff had sprouted roots and branches. Taking this as a sign, he placed the Grail within the Chalice Well, which to this day has reddish-tinted waters.

The usually-pagan members of the Sodality add little to this story, save to mention that one of Joseph of Arimathea's associates, a middle-aged woman named Thana, also decided to remain at the Tor. Thana was a Roman witch who claimed to have inherited old Etruscan witchcraft, passed down among peasants long after the Etruscan culture had been assimilated into that of Rome.

The Sodality claims that Thana found many of the native Awakened here, and found that their ways were similar; so much so, she initiated them into the techniques that became the foundation for the Sodality of the Tor.

The Sodality teaches that its early days were spent in quiet growth, as the witches of the Tor sought out their sisters in the hidden vales and hills of the British Isles. Many witches chose not to embrace the Sodality's teachings, but some did, and the Sodality grew.

## *A Time of Hysteria*

According to the legends of the Sodality, the witch-craze times almost never touched the Spiral Walkers. Most Awakened are more than capable of escaping Sleeper notice, and, failing that, Awakened are more than capable of escaping imprisonment and torture. Most importantly, however, the witch-hunters targeted people with traits that the Sodality did not possess: all too often, solitary widows with a bit of land and no one to defend them.

In contrast, the families of the Sodality were large and sprawling by this era, with small witch families arrayed around initiated Spiral Walkers, ready to help them whenever there was need. As a result, the Sodality was forced to simply watch as many innocents were killed for their property. The people of these times saw tremendous change around them — political and social reform, plague and war — and they panicked, seeking a source of these changes that they could attack or control. So, they blamed “witches” for their fears, and tried to find those witches and kill them.

## *The First Witch War*

In the late 1400s, members of the Ebudae and Gretna lines began squabbling, each claiming that the other had performed some great wrong. The precise details of what happened vary with each teller — grimoires and artifacts certainly disappeared from both sides and accusations of theft flew fast and thick. The harsh feelings on both sides grew until there weren't simply words being exchanged, but curses.

By the start of the 1500s, war raged among the Sodality witches of Britain, and several of these conflicts drew in other Awakened. By the time the Awakened of Britain understood that this was more than a simple feud among some individual witches, the conflict was already out of control. Though the Consilii eventually stopped the conflict, many mages had already died.

Many Spiral Walkers refused to take sides and fled what they considered a fool's war. These witches emigrated



and formed the Rochlaer line in continental Europe. To this day, some Rochlaer regard the Ebudae and Gretna lines as hot-heads more concerned with their own pride than performing the Legacy's sacred duties.

Among the other Awakened, the Sodality's name became associated with bickering, selfish mages for quite a few decades after this witch war. The shame-faced Sodality slunk out of sight and kept a low profile for centuries.

### *The Lammas Night Working*

It wasn't until World War II that the Sodality emerged once again into the eyes of Britain's Consilii. This time, London was in the middle of the Blitz and it looked like Hitler would invade. Ebudae leaders sent out a call to the other lines, and the Sodality answered. Members of all of the European lines gathered on the cliffs overlooking the Channel between Britain and France, on the other side of which the Nazi forces gathered.

On Lammas Night, the covens gathered in force. Not only Sodality were present — many other Awakened witches arrived as well, with witch family members and Sleepwalker members of covens to lend their aid. A great Working was performed, an act of magic so taxing that several older witches died from exhaustion and Pattern Scourging as they wove a great spell to defend their beloved Albion from invasion. Shortly after the Working, Hitler changed his mind and invaded the Soviet Union instead. Britain's mages still don't know if the Lammas Night Working was responsible: Nazi leaders made plenty of crazy decisions all by themselves.

The Sodality's elders and a few other mages know the Working was really aimed at members of their own Legacy who'd fallen in with the Nazi party. Even Sleeper historians know about the Nazi leaders' occult obsessions. The Guardians of the Veil decided the Nazis' allies in the Spiral Walkers shouldn't have a chance to tell Hitler's henchmen any more about the *real* supernatural, and pressured the Legacy's leaders to deal with the situation. To this day, the British lines still watch the Rochlaer carefully, though the German Sodality claims it expunged all such elements from their lineage.

### *Society and Culture*

Some mages despise the Sodality as wild men and women who give themselves over to possession, while other mages respect the natural, primal wisdom the Sodality discover within. Many of the Obrimos are fascinated by the Sodality's ideas of inner divinity, though also frightened by that loss of control.

Many older or historically-minded mages consider the Sodality quarrelsome and prone to old, ridiculous rivalries and lineage-grudges more appropriate to Sleeper occultists than to the truly Awakened. Indeed, these mages question the "inner divinity" of the Spiral Walkers. Surely, if they were tapping into godhood, wouldn't they at least act a bit more wise and dignified in their dealings?

In reply, the Sodality reminds their fellow Awakened that the old pagan gods were always rivals, competing and back-stabbing one another. Why should the witches who embody these old gods act any differently?

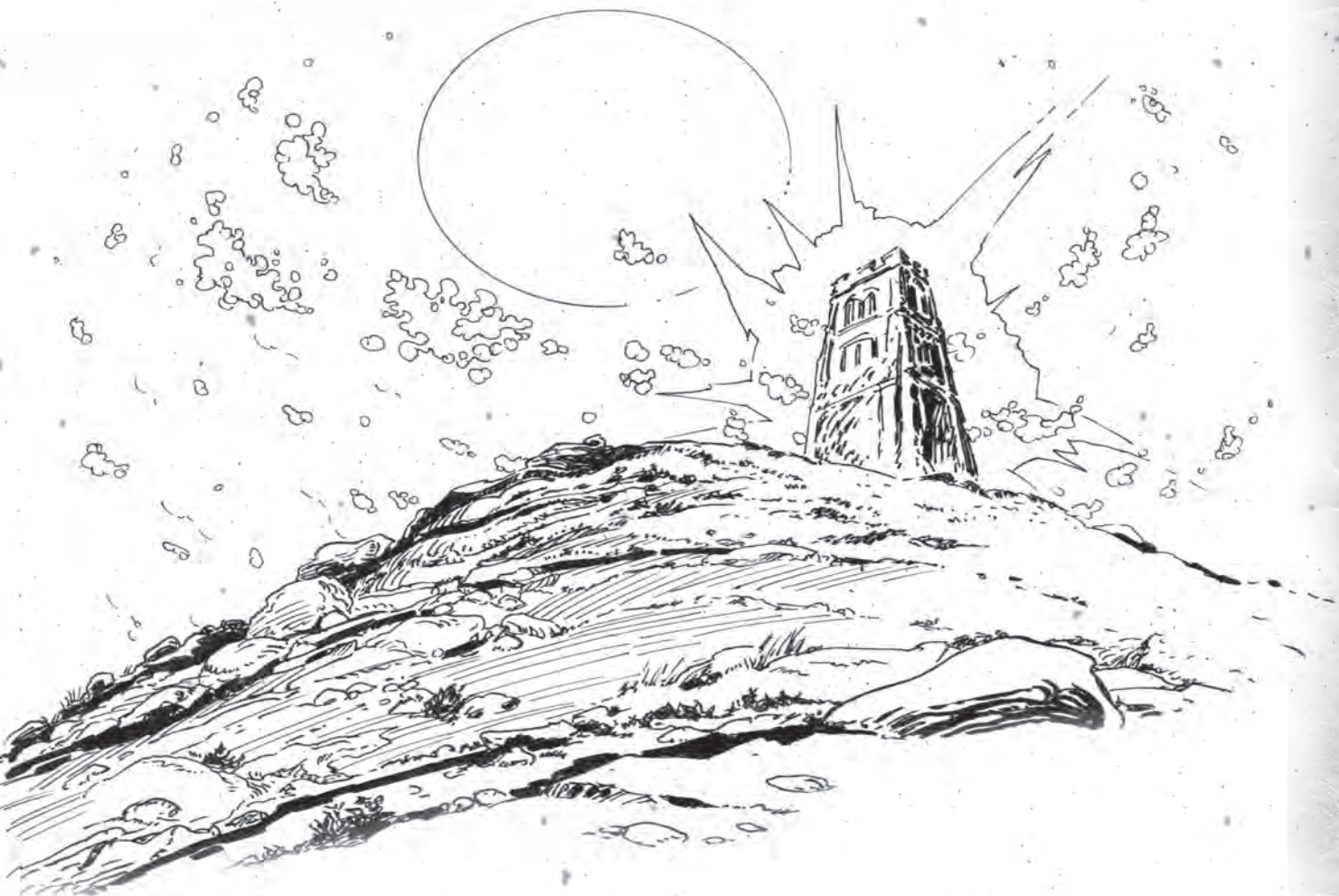
### **Dionysian versus Apollonian**

Anthropologists sometimes describe a religion as "Apollonian" or "Dionysian" based on the role it plays within its home culture.

Apollonian faiths are orthodox: getting doctrine right and performing ceremonies the proper way matters a great deal. These religions endorse status hierarchies and classical gender roles, with warrior gods and hearth goddesses, divinely sanctioned leaders and defiled or impure underclasses. Such faiths are often open to all (though some people may be "included out" as a servile underclass). Indeed, Apollonian faiths can become state religions when a culture reaches the point of civilization when such a concept becomes possible. They build magnificent temples to celebrate their gods and the social order.

In contrast, Dionysian faiths are supremely unorthodox and emphasize ecstatic experience over intellectual doctrine. These faiths encourage members to break the gender roles of their culture, embracing wild, strong women and men inappropriate to "polite society," whether they are frenzied berserkers or effeminate gender-bending devotees of a witch-goddess. Religious rites often take place in groves, on mountains or in other natural places. State religions often consider Dionysian faiths seditious; Dionysian faiths often take such prohibitions as a sign that their Mysteries are needed more than ever.

Witches of the Sodality of the Tor find meaningful expression in these wild, nighttime gods and goddesses, rather than stoic gods of orthodoxy, gender-roles and daytime pursuits.



However, there are no hard and fast rules for how any witch manifests the god-self.

Dionysian gods are wild, "nighttime" deities, such as huntress and warrior goddesses, gods of revelry, drunkenness and ecstasy and gods of the untamed wilds. These gods were also gods of death, from the leader of the Wild Hunt to the psychopomp that led souls to the afterlife to the queens of the Underworlds.

Examples of Dionysian gods include Hekate, Persephone, Pan, Artemis and (of course) Dionysius himself in Hellenic mythology, Herne in England's native mythology, the Morrigan and a variety of the other *sidhe* of Irish myth and the Hindu gods Soma and Kali.

### *The Tor*

Though the Sodality takes its practices and theology from a blend of classical and Celtic concepts, the Legacy's name comes from an English site: the Glastonbury Tor. Believed by some to be the location of the mythic Avalon of Arthurian legendry, the Tor is an impressive, steep hill, set with a sevenfold spiral path.

Sodality mages point out that, when viewed from above, the Glastonbury spiral path resembles patterns found elsewhere: for instance, the Cretan spiral found on many Mediterranean coins and believed to have some ties to the labyrinth of legend. The pattern also appears on a seventh-century BC Etruscan vase, a pillar in Pompeii and the "Mother Earth" symbol of the Arizona Hopi.

Furthermore, the spiral divides the hill into seven tiers — like the Mem of Hindu mythology (the seven-leveled mountain where dwell the gods) and the seven-tiered Babylonian ziggurat. Awakened loremasters say Glastonbury Tor falls squarely within traditions and symbolic forms spread around the world by the Atlantean diaspora.

The Tor itself holds a very potent Hallow; its tass accumulates in the Chalice Well. Of course, the Avalonian Sisterhood collects the Mana-charged water every night at midnight, so the token phials of water that most visitors to the Tor take away are simply vials of well water.

The Awakened of the Tor have approached the problem of how to prevent the gradual weakening of the Tor's Hallow in a unique way: rather than allow it to simply become a sight-seeing location, and risk



the irreverence that has vitiated other sites (notably Stonehenge), the Sodality encourage all visitors, regardless of their faith, to see the Tor as a sacred site.

Glastonbury proper holds a number of churches, seated next to New Age and occult shops. The tours offered all emphasize the overall sacredness of the site, rather than focusing on any one religion's idea. Meditation walks are led up the Tor itself, with requests that participants remain silent and thoughtful on the trip up the Tor, and all of the tour guides discuss the syncretic expressions of sacredness that the Tor has held through the centuries.

Numerous Sodality members live and work nearby. In fact, mages who want to join the Sodality are usually told to come here: if one mage meets another Awakened at the Glastonbury Tor, she is probably a Spiral Walker or a seeker after membership.

At the top of the Tor proper stands St. Michael's Tower. This impressive tower once served to magically contain the power of the Glastonbury Tor Hallow, but does so no longer. The tower was named for the Archangel known as a great dragonslayer. In Britain, lines of natural, earthly power are called "dragons" — so the tower itself served as a "dragonslayer," containing this energy.

In the early 1960s, the Sodality's elders decided that it simply wasn't practical to tap the Hallow in the Tor's most visible tourist attraction. The Sodality's elders dismantled the restraining magics of the tower so the Hallow's energy would circulate through the entire Tor. The Hallow's power became less secure from other mages — but a lot more secure from Sleeper intrusion. Since then, many people have reported seeing strange lights and bobbing balls of energy spiraling up the Tor at night. Many visitors also claim to have seen the interior of St. Michael's Tower illuminated by a strange white light with no discernable source.

### The Hills of the Sodality

The Sodality endeavors to find other hilltop Hallows around the world, and consecrates them to the Old Ways. Such hills are usually surmounted by a large standing stone or similar structure, and a pathway that spirals clockwise around the hill, echoing the seven gyres of the Tor.

A few such hills, such as Wren Hill on the Isle of Wight and Rose Hill in Oregon, carry Space enchantments that allow mages who walk a certain pathway (generally a seven-layered spiral) on nights of the full moon to finish their walks at the top of Glastonbury Tor.

### *The Witch Families*

In places where the Sodality has existed for multiple generations, there are bound to be witch families. Most such families are made up of Sleepwalkers, and they produce more than a few Proximi, as well. These families have no single defining trait, other than their blood relation to a witch of the Sodality and their share in the secrets of that witch.

Children growing up in these witch families see all manner of strange things that their parents urge them not to talk about. Because of this early and frequent exposure to frankly supernatural events, most of these children grow into Sleepwalkers. The witch families of the Sodality usually have excellent fortune and health, thanks to the magic of their family members.

Spiral Walkers do not perceive these families as servants or retainers. They are simply one's relations, all of whom share in a great secret. Just because a member of the family Awakens doesn't mean that the family member is somehow greater than she used to be — in fact, by the family's standards, she now simply has more responsibility.

Mages who join the Sodality are often encouraged to marry into the family of their tutors, or are flat-out adopted into the families (at least informally). A Sodality witch's tutor is often considered a parent, so that one's mentor's siblings become one's aunts and uncles, their parents become one's grandparents, and so on. The Sodality stands only on family titles — the Spiral Walkers need nothing else.

### *Induction*

The Sodality of the Tor does not, as an organization, select who receives initiation into their Legacy. Instead, individual Spiral Walkers simply decide to take on apprentices they consider worthy. Of course, applicant mages need some essential understandings, and some must be trained in the techniques of European witchcraft (as reflected in the Skill requirements in the first attainment).

No one else can gainsay a Spiral Walker's choice in pupils, for the Sodality prizes autonomy. In this fashion, the Spiral Walkers consider themselves a family: a grandmother does not tell her daughter whether or not to have a child. (At least, not in a well-adjusted family.) The best a grandmother can do is try to rectify any mistakes in upbringing that her daughter may make with her child.

The initiations of the Sodality are neither physically rigorous, such as those of the Perfected Adepts,

nor psychologically traumatic, such as those of the Clavicularius. However, the Sodality's initiations are certainly transformative, for, at their apex, they involve a literal meeting with the Awakened's god-self, a glimpse of the mage as a Supernal being.

### *The First Initiation*

The first initiation takes place within a spiral labyrinth. Preferably, this happens at the Glastonbury Tor proper, but this is not always feasible. Many Sodality witches with ample sanctum space build rose-hedge labyrinths or full stone ones somewhere in their area. Other Spiral Walkers simply construct labyrinths from bales of hay or stones laid out in a footpath. All that is necessary is the walking of that pattern.

The initiation always takes place at night, and occurs naked, after the applicant drinks a mildly hallucinogenic elixir prepared by steeping certain herbs in hot, spiced wine. The dedicant begins dancing the spiral when the moon rides high in the sky, as her tutor begins a chant in Atlantean, invoking the Supernal self of her new apprentice.

When the apprentice reaches the center of the spiral, she kneels before a steaming cauldron filled with more of the herb-infused wine. The apprentice gazes into the cauldron, catching sight of the moon's reflection in the brew, and then takes up the chalice that is her Path tool. She scoops some of the brew from the middle of the moon's reflection, symbolically capturing the moon itself in her cup, and then downs the mixture.

The hallucinations intensify then. The tutor watches carefully to make sure the student hasn't inadvertently poisoned herself with an overdose—but the experience must be allowed to take its toll. Most Sodality witches know the precise mixture of herbs to allow their apprentices to walk that razor's line between an ineffective brew and a poisonous concoction. The tutor shapes the pupil's soul as the pupil engages in a vision-quest for her divine self.

When the apprentice emerges from her inner journey, she has met her god-self, learned its secret name and communed with it. Then, the witch helps her apprentice to her feet and guides her through her first Drawing Down the Moon ritual, helping the apprentice make manifest what she has already encountered within.

Once the Supernal self manifests itself within the apprentice, the tutor bows low before this Divinity and introduces herself and asks for any advice the god-self may have in teaching the new witch. Mentors

always listen carefully to this advice, for the purpose of initiation into this Legacy is the manifestation of the Supernal self—and none know how to better achieve this than the inner god itself.

### *Subsequent Initiations*

The second and third initiations are called “elevations,” indicating that once the first initiation has occurred, subsequent ones simply build upon the first, rather than imparting something new.

The second initiation takes place within the center of the spiral, where the process is repeated. The mentor simply watches over the Drawing Down in this instance, and, once it occurs, speaks an invocation of that god-self, drawing it further out. Many Sodality witches show their first physical manifestations at this time, and are often sore afterwards. This ritual takes place entirely in the center of the spiral, over the cauldron.

Like the second, the third initiation begins in the center of the spiral. Again, the Drawing Down occurs, and the tutor invokes the god-self with an Atlantean invocations that unlock the third attainment. Then, the god-self, in complete control of the apprentice's body, walks the spiral in reverse, moving from the center of the spiral to the outer.

The spiral in these initiations symbolizes the inner journey toward Divinity. The first initiation has the apprentice walking into the spiral, seeking out the center of the Supernal self. The second initiation has the apprentice dwelling in the center of the spiral, and the third has the journey of the god-self to the outside of the spiral, representing the manifestation of the inner divinity into the outer world.

### **Story Hooks — Midnight Divinity**

• **A Spirit Gone Astray:** A Sodality witch comes to find a character skilled in Death or Spirit magics. A Sleepwalker of her coven, believing that the herbal mixture used in initiations can cause Awakening, has consumed the mixture in the labyrinth the witch has built in her Hallow. The guardian spirit of the Hallow reacted strangely to her presence there, and has somehow granted the Sleepwalker a spiritual journey into the Shadow Realm—her soul has left her body, and is unlikely to find its way back on her own. The witch wishes the aid of the character in retrieving the soul of her coven-mate.

• **Master of the Wild Hunt:** The characters hear about a strange spirit or demon of some kind that has frightened many hunters and



campers in a recent wilderness area. In truth, this turns out to be an antlered Sodality witch manifesting a god of the hunt in the area. He doesn't remember why he is doing it, however, for the manifestation only happens when he gives himself completely over to the inner god.

He believes his divine self is reacting to a threat or danger in the area that they aren't aware of — but what is it?

- **The Lammas Sickle:** A curved sickle used during the Lammas Night Working has turned up for auction. The artifact carries great power, and the witch who is selling it has broken ties with her initiators and line. However, witches of the Sodality don't want the sickle to fall into the hands of those outside the Legacy, and will take whatever steps necessary to recover it — possibly including the murder of those who purchase it.

## Attainments

Spiral Walkers do not use their attainments lightly. In fact, most Sodality members prefer to use them in ritual context, during the gatherings of their covens during the full moon. That said, the witches of the Sodality understand that these abilities come with the manifestation of Divinity, and so are their birthright.

Each Sodality attainment is performed by the process of “drawing down the Moon.” This is not the near-possession of some ecstatic practices, such as the process of “being ridden” by the loa, in *voudoun* practice. Rather, the Sodality witch attunes herself to her god-self, stripping away those aspects of the ego that prevent the expression and manifestation of her inner divinity. To many, drawing down the Moon feels like a presence outside of the self, but that is because the process strips away the mortal ego — it feels like surrendering oneself to something else, but it is simply the sublimation of the mortal self to allow the god-self to manifest.

In game terms, this does not cause the mage to be played as an NPC. The player, however, should make a point of playing her character differently, with a more archetypal bent. The player of the Sodality character should come up with some traits that help to define this manifestation — the eyes of those who draw down usually change color and a scent surrounds them suddenly. They may also change the way they speak and there may be other, minor physical changes, such as a slight difference in the voice or in the hue of the hair. These are not strange things that Sleepers recognize as supernatural, but are rather things that

those who know the character would recognize as signs of the drawing down.

### 1st: *The Spiral Dance*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Fate 2 (primary), Expression 3, Occult 2

This attainment is the most commonly used rite in the coven setting. The witch leads a sacred spiral dance around a fire or altar, attuning those who follow her in the dance to the flows of the universe around them. The mage rolls her Dexterity + Expression + Fate as an instant action to perform this effect, which mimics the Fate 2 spell “Granting the Sybil’s Sight” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 152).

The average Sleeper will not realize that he is seeing the flows of Fate and reality around him. He is likely to believe that he is simply dizzy, drugged or otherwise in an altered state of consciousness. Those who are willing to see the experience for what it is, however, can even be taught to read resonances and use this “Mage Sight” like an Awakened character — but only with the help of a mage willing to share her mystic perceptions. The Sodality’s rites prepare Sleeper celebrants so they are willing to believe in magic, at least for a while.

This attainment need not be used in a full ritual context, however. As long as the target of this ability is willing to follow the witch, she can use this ability on him. Some witches invite folk to follow them through a labyrinth or house of mirrors, lure others into a game such as Hide-and-Seek or even simply get the target to dance with them.

### 2nd: *Drawing Down the Moon*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Fate 3

With this attainment, the Sodality witch may make her soul’s god-self immanent in the world through her. When she Draws Down the Moon, this is treated as the Fate 2 “Exceptional Luck” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 151), but only with endeavors that her inner divinity might accept as intrinsic to itself. Thus, a huntress god-self might grant this benefit to attempts at tracking, or at firing a bow or other hunting weapons, while a love god-self might grant this benefit when undertaking a seduction. The witch may perform this attainment as an instant action, with a Presence + Expression + Fate roll to determine success.

**Optional Arcanum:** Life 3

If the Sodality witch also possesses Life 3, she may manifest strange physical alterations as well, as though

using the “Transform Self” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 187). Thus, a wild huntsman god-self may show through the mage as a set of antlers and the ability to follow trails by scent, while a seductive goddess-self may manifest pheromones of some kind or even a set of cat’s talons (as many goddesses of seduction and love are associated with cats). The mage may allocate some of her rolled successes from either of those rolls to gain these traits, one physical alteration per success.

### *3rd: Immanent Divinity*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis-7, Fate 4

With Immanent Divinity, the Supernal self manifests itself in the world. This is similar to Drawing Down the Moon, save that this attainment emulates the Fate 4 “Probably Cause” spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 157). Additionally, the benefits of Drawing Down the Moon may now be applied to not only actions directly appropriate to the god-self’s “theme,” but to any rolls that help accomplish those ends. The witch may perform this as an instant action, with a Presence + Expression + Fate roll to determine success.

**Optional Arcanum:** Time 4

If the Sodality witch also possesses Time 4, she may gaze into the immediate future, understanding the flows of the world around her before they are made manifest. This functions like the Time 4 spell “Present as Past” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 264), save that the base duration is prolonged, rather than transitory. She must allocate successes from the above roll towards this effect.

### *Sample Character*

#### *Enula*

**Quote:** “I know you think you’re doing the right thing. You aren’t, and it stops now. The only question is whether you quit on your own, or I make you. Before you make that decision, however, you should know: my way is much more painful.”

**Background:** The witch named Enula was born Dorothy Dalton-Hargreaves, just outside of the New Forest area in England. Unlike most of the children around her, however, she was born into one of the old English witch families, and Enula was a Sleepwalker all her life. Enula’s family kept the Old Ways. Indeed, when she became an adolescent, the duty of cleaning the household temple room, which she’d never been allowed in as a child, became her responsibility. Her first glimpse of the room, which smelled of old, sweet

incense, was in the small ritual between her mother and her to celebrate the onset of her menses.

Unfortunately, her secret was a hard one to keep, and, though her parents warned her of the things that might happen if someone discovered they were a family of witches, she didn’t believe them. It was the 1960s, the Witchcraft Act had been repealed a decade ago, and names like Gardner and Sanders were all in the newspapers. Why shouldn’t she talk about her witch legacy, which she was quite proud of?

Unfortunately, these kinds of things aren’t always understood. No one actually believed that she was from a witch family, as she claimed, thinking that she was just trying to soak up some of the glamour of the witches everyone was reading about in the newspapers. In fact, she became the butt of more than a few jokes at her girls’ school.

Dorothy was a patient child, capable of withstanding all manner of things, but taunting was not one of them. She began getting in one fight after another, her temper getting the best of her at every turn. Eventually, she was kicked out of school and when her parents were told the reason why — because she’d beaten up a girl who didn’t believe that she was from a witch family — they were horrified.

After a period of long discussion with the rest of the family, the Dalton-Hargreaves were forced to make a hard decision. Dorothy was told that she would never be initiated into the witch-cult proper, due to her inability to remain silent, even when sworn to do so. She would be sent away, to a boarding school outside of London, to finish her education, whereupon she would be given her inheritance and allowed to live life as she wanted — but never as a witch.

Dorothy was crushed. Reacting first with grief and then with anger, she exchanged harsh words with her family before they sent her to London. Once in school, she became quite the troublemaker, though she never mentioned her connections to witchcraft again. At 17, she began sneaking out and attending meetings with some of the witch groups that were forming in London’s young, avant-garde community. They explored all manner of occultism and the like, and Dorothy was thrilled to be appreciated for the various lores her family had taught her, though she still never mentioned being turned aside from her family, for the pain and shame was just too great.

By the time she was in her late 20s, she was head of her own coven of witches, with Ian, her husband (a clerk at the university library) acting as the high priest. She also had a daughter, Verona. She remained in contact



with her family, who treated her lovingly, but refused to discuss witch-things with her. They also refused to comment on her own pursuit of witchcraft outside of their auspices.

Then, on the verge of her 30th year — that time that astrologers note as the Saturn Return of one's life, a time of great changes — she Awakened while leading an *esbat* in the woods with her coven. She awoke on the doorstep of her parents' house in the New Forest, and they knew what had happened. They welcomed her home, took her in and nursed her back to health.

She doesn't know precisely what happened during her Awakening, though she has gathered that several of her coven-mates believed she'd either gone mad, been possessed or overdosed on some drug during the ritual. The coven dissolved shortly thereafter, and her husband filed for divorce and converted back to the Anglican faith of his boyhood. He also brought her witchcraft up in child custody hearings, and Verona was given to him and his parents to raise, to Dorothy's grief.

Dorothy was introduced to her Great-Aunt Delwyn, who taught Dorothy to harness both her rage and her magic in defense of the Mysteries and those who practice them. Now, having taken the shadow name of Enula, she truly regrets her foolishness as a child, and seeks to defend and protect those Mysteries to the best of her ability.

**Description:** Enula was always lovely, but her Awakening has seemingly brought something striking within her out. She is tall and regal in bearing, with salt-and-pepper hair piled atop her head. She prefers high collars and very proper shoes these days. She also wears a Victorian-style fog-cloak with a deep hood. She is usually accompanied by Mr. Fothgoxy, her crow familiar, who perches on her shoulder.

Her nimbus appears as a roiling fog that rises up around her, with a silver, otherworldly radiance crowning her head, like the moon shining down on her.



**Storytelling Hints:** You made a great many mistakes early in your life: telling your schoolmates about your family's secret, pursuing what you believed witchcraft to be and leading others down that path, marrying Ian. But you have been given a second chance, and you want to use it to make right the one thing that wasn't a mistake — your daughter, Verona. So, you watch her from afar, visiting her when you can, but being careful not to let your enemies know that you have a daughter. To this end, you often use the "Destroy the Threads" rote to dull the connections between yourself and Verona. You also place a "Spirit Guardian" over her when things become actively dangerous in your life.

You are fiercely vigilant in your protection of the Mysteries, and, unlike many in your order, you have no problem with all the baby witches and dabbler occultists out there: they conceal what the actual Mysteries are better than any oath of secrecy, you believe, so you encourage them. Should your daughter show any interest in such things, however, you will take her under your wing and teach her, however. You simply intend to bind her under a *geas* to prevent her from saying anything (as you have wished many times since you Awakened that someone had bound you in childhood).

Your god-self is that of a warrior mother-goddess, who is noble and sacrificing for the right things, but utterly savage and without mercy when her young are threatened, in the style of Boudicca.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Willow and nettle-brush broom, properly consecrated to serve as a staff, as well as a small curved knife-sickle

**Real Name:** Dorothy Dalton-Hargreaves

**Path:** Thyrsus

**Order:** Guardians of the Veil

**Legacy:** Sodality of the Tor

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

**Mental Skills:** Academics 2, Crafts 3, Investigation 4, Medicine (Herbalism) 3, Occult (Witchcraft) 5

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 2, Brawl (Claws) 3, Drive 1, Stealth 2, Survival 1, Weaponry (Knives) 4

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 2, Socialize 2, Streetwise 1

**Merits:** Allies (Witch Cults) 2, Contacts (Sleeper Occult Community) 3, Destiny (Bane: Her Daughter) 4, Familiar (Mr. Fothgoxy) 4, Fighting Finesse 2, Fighting Style: Two Weapons 2, Hallow 2, High Speech, Holistic Awareness 3, Languages (French, Greek, Latin, Spanish), Resources 2, Sanctum 3, Sleepwalker Retainer 4, Status: Consilium 2, Status: Order 4, Striking Looks 2, Weaponry Dodge 1

**Willpower:** 7

**Wisdom:** 8

**Virtue:** Faith

**Vice:** Wrath

**Initiative:** 7

**Defense:** 3

**Speed:** 10

**Health:** 8

**Gnosis:** 7

**Arcana:** Fate 4, Forces 3, Life 5, Mind 2, Prime 3, Space 3, Spirit 5, Time 3

**Rotes:** *Fate* — The Sybil's Sight (●●), Monkey's Paw (●●●), Sanctify Oath (●●●●); *Life* — Pulse of the Living World (●), Self-Healing (●●), Organic Resilience (●●), Healing Heart (●●●), Contagion (●●●●); *Prime* — Counterspell Prime (●●), Magic Shield (●●), Imbue Item (●●●); *Space* — Apportation (●●), Destroy the Threads (●●●); *Spirit* — Second Sight (●), Exorcism (●●●), Reaching (●●●), Spirit Guardian (●●●●)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — The Spiral Dance, 2nd — Drawing Down the Moon, 3rd — Immanent Divinity

**Mana/per turn:** 7

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
Knives (2)	1 (1)	1	n/a	8

**Armor:** 5 ("Organic Resilience," Life ●●●●)

**Magic Shield:** 3 (Prime ●●)





# THE STONE SCRIBES

AND WHAT'S YOUR NAME, LITTLE GIRL?

One of the most elementary lessons in a mage's study of the occult is that names have power. Mages take shadow names for this very reason, so that others cannot harm them with sympathetic magic — but what is a name, truly, and what defines the name of a thing? At what point does the name "Jane Smith" cease to define the witch who calls herself Branwen Boudicca? The Stone Scribes believe that a person's name changes and grows subtly throughout his existence. Only at death, the cessation of existence, is a person's *true* name fixed. The Stone Scribes call this the Final Name, and it is more than merely an identifying label that eases the working of sympathetic spells. A person's Final Name is an echo of that person's soul, a sublime expression of the sum total of the fate that guided the life of the name's owner. The Stone Scribes believe that only by knowing a person's Final Name can you truly know the person — it is the ultimate record of who that person was, stripped of all layers of deceit and subterfuge.

First and foremost, the Stone Scribes are record-keepers. The Scribes treat the collection of as many Final Names as possible as a sacred mission. Members of this Legacy lurk in hospitals, nursing homes and battlefields, places where many Final Names are set each day. The Scribes record these names using Arcane formulae and methods little-known to other mages, usually on the large stone tablets that earned the Legacy its name.

Unlike many in the Mysterium, the Stone Scribes do not merely acquire knowledge for its own sake. They collect, store and meticulously cross-reference as many Final Names as they can acquire, because their founder charged them with a sacred duty he said came from God Himself. By tracing the myriad threads of sympathetic connection back through multiple Final Names, the Namers believe they can reconstruct the Final Names of the long-deceased, up to and including the ancient lords of Atlantis. By learning those millennia-dead Names, the Scribes

claim they will be able to conjure up the shades of their distant ancestors and gain firsthand knowledge of the height of Atlantis — and direct tutelage in potent, forgotten Atlantean magic.

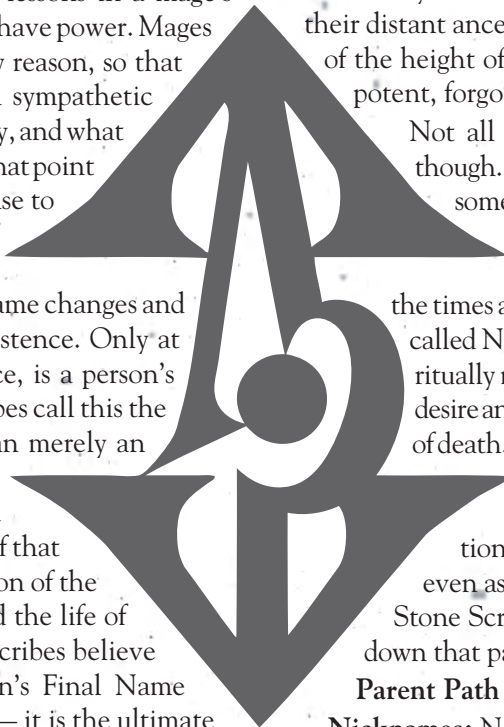
Not all Scribes are simple record-keepers, though. When a Namer falls to Hubris, she sometimes grows impatient waiting for death to come at its own pace, and decides to take her victims' names at the times and places of her choosing. These so-called Name Takers are assassins and killers, ritually murdering people whose names they desire and stealing their names at the moment of death. The Namers despise these apostates and accuse them of stealing souls along with Final Names, not to mention other left-handed practices — but even as the Scribes hate the Name Takers, Stone Scribes fear how easily they might slip down that path.

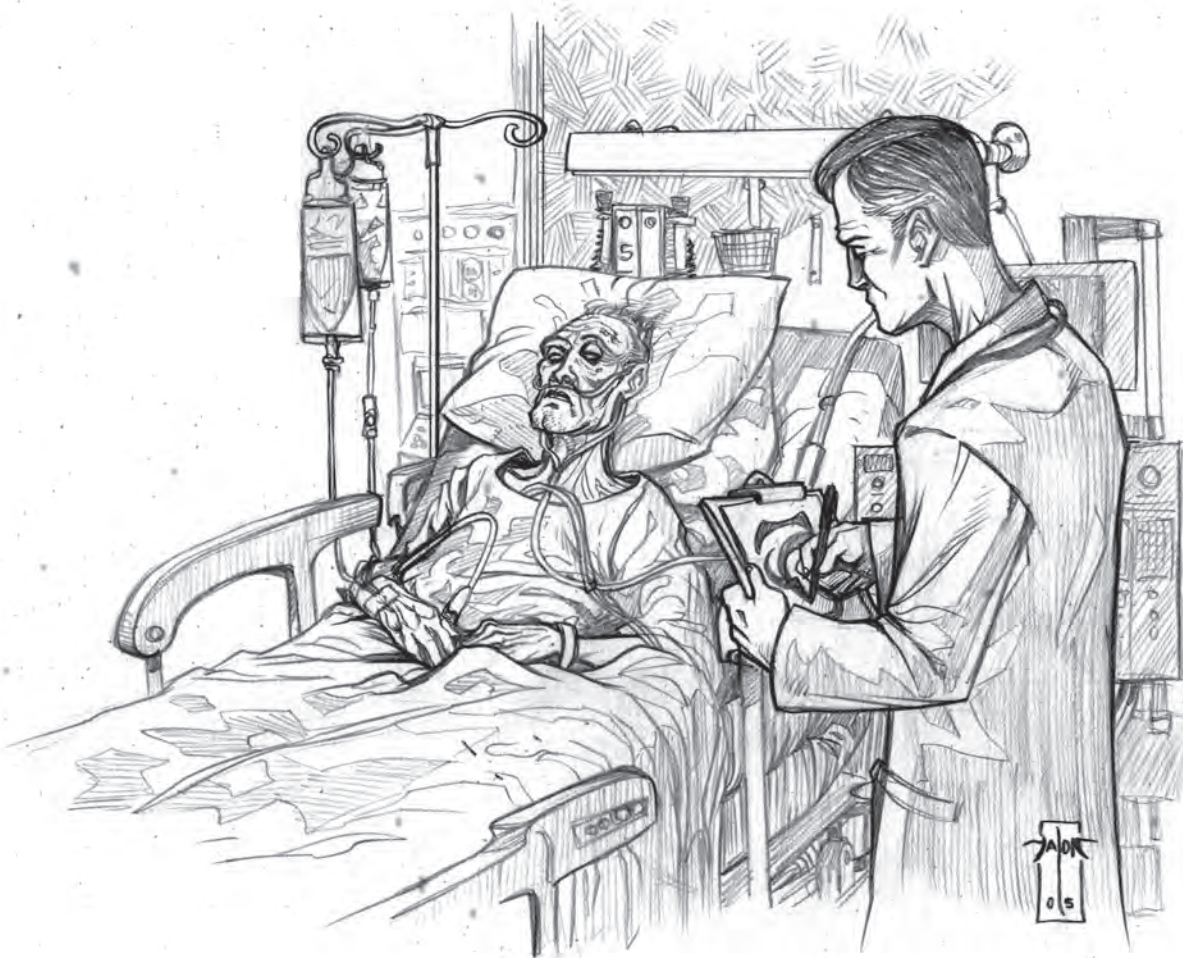
**Parent Path or Order:** Moros or Mysterium

**Nicknames:** Namers or Name Takers

**Orders:** Almost all Stone Scribes are members of the Mysterium. The Legacy began in that order, and the Mysterium shares the Scribes' fascination with preserving ancient knowledge (even if Mysterium members sometimes consider the Scribes too focused on one specific type of rather esoteric knowledge). Some Scribes gravitate to the Adamantine Arrow: they want to wipe out the Name-Taker cult or serve as "war journalists" who record the Final Names of fallen mages. Modern-minded Namers sometimes join the Free Council and scribe Final Names with power tools and precision stonecutters. Few Scribes join the Silver Ladder or the Guardians of the Veil, since the Legacy cares more about collecting and studying Final Names than temporal power or keeping the secrets of the Mysteries from the Sleepers. Most Name Takers are apostates, though troubling rumors hint that Guardians of the Veil call upon Name Takers to track the repercussions of breaches of secrecy through the sympathetic ties of a Sleeper's Final Name.

**Appearance:** Most Namers dress in a manner ap-





appropriate to their jobs (or whatever they use as a reason to come into contact with the dying), though they tend toward the conservative side of fashion. Nurses usually wear simple, solid-colored scrubs rather than bright, festively-patterned ones, battlefield journalists wear the fatigues of the unit they are embedded with and so on. The recording of Final Names is a solemn duty, and the Scribes dress soberly to show respect for their job.

**Background:** Many Stone Scribes were touched by the loss of death at some point in their lives. Some lost a parent, friend or loved one, while others had their own near-death experiences. Sometimes, this event led to the mage's Awakening. Other times, death was merely a powerful event that stayed with the mage for the rest of her life. Whatever the nature of the death, what affects the mage who seeks to become a Namer in Stone is often the senseless loss of the decedent's knowledge and life experiences. While Final Names do not hold personal histories of their owners, at least they are tangible relics of the deceased.

**Organization:** Almost all of the Stone Scribes belong to the Mysterium, and thus they simply fall into

the Mysterium's hierarchy. When groups of Scribes come together to form a Bibliotheca ("Library"), they assign rank based on seniority. The most experienced Namer (not necessarily the one with highest Gnosis or Arcana ratings), called the Philologus, directs all those underneath him. They in turn have authority over those with less experience than themselves. A Namer can only gainsay a superior if two-thirds of his own inferiors also oppose the superior. Apprentices are special cases in Bibliothecae: although apprentices are the lowest-ranked members, they are considered to speak with the voices of their tutors. In other words, if an apprentice says, "My tutor feels that this is a poor course of action," the rest of the Bibliotheca treat that statement as having come from the tutor's mouth. Apprentices seldom abuse this privilege more than once, and *wise* apprentices, never. In a similar vein, each tutor is considered the absolute authority when it comes to her own apprentices' training. Even the Philologus cannot countermand an instruction given from a tutor to his apprentice.

Depending upon the local presence of the Stone Scribes and the preferences of the individual mages,



a Bibliotheca might also be a cabal or the Scribes might belong to their own individual cabals and come together only to discuss matters related to the Legacy's business. If the Mysterium is strong in the region, the Bibliotheca is often an adjunct to the local Athenaeum, with the Philologus serving as a deputy Curator over the library of scrivened Final Names. If the Mysterium has little presence, the Bibliotheca might serve as sole custodian of the local Athenaeum, with the Philologus pulling double-duty as Curator.

**Suggested Oblations:** Practicing gematria, meditating while intoning sacred names of gods, angels and demons, carving a tombstone, taking grave rubbings, extending a family history back another generation or discovering a new relative on a family tree

**Concepts:** Cancer-ward doctor, nursing home attendant, combat journalist, historical biographer, Name-Taking killer, prison guard, gravedigger, police photographer

## History

During the Golden Age of Atlantis, the Stone Scribes say, there was no need for their Legacy. When people passed on, their souls ascended to the Supernal World and dwelled for a time in the realm of Stygia before returning to the lower world, their memories gone but the sum of their countless lives still bound up in the resonance of their Names. The forefathers of the Stone Scribes were not archivists but seers who could follow the winding paths of their own Names or the Names of others to gain forgotten wisdom from past lives. These Name Walkers were among the mages who first explored and studied the Astral Realms, reaching deep into the Temenos and the Dreamtime.

After the Fall, the cosmology of the world changed drastically. No longer did the souls of the departed return from Stygia; they either lingered as ghosts, or vanished beyond the ken of the Awakened. The onetime Name Walkers found themselves obsessed with this new concept of a permanent death, and that obsession drew them to the Watchtower of the Lead Coin. The new generations of Necromancers searched for a way to preserve Names lost to the vagaries of the Abyss. Their early attempts involved harvesting souls — which led to madness and horror, and to a bitter wizards' war amongst the sect.

Little is now known of the Soul War. The victors destroyed the names of the soul-takers, so that no later mage could call up their shades.

In the aftermath of the Soul War, a cabal of Moros mages whom legend calls the Unnamed Pentacle, studying Name Walker texts that were already ancient, learned once more how to follow the winding threads of resonance that surrounded all sentient beings to their sources. To preserve at least some remnant of the dying, the Unnamed Pentacle studied the Arcana of Death and Fate. Eventually, these mages discovered a spell to transcribe an individual's name at the moment of death, preserving an echo of the person's soul for future generations. Because these mages scribed the Final Names they collected into stone monoliths erected in the image of the Watchtowers, or on large stelae, they earned the appellation Stone Scribes.

The early Stone Scribes perfected their art in ancient Egypt. The Namers say their monoliths inspired the Egyptians to erect obelisks. The *cartouche*, an oval carved or drawn around an Egyptian's name, imitates the stelae on which the Scribes also recorded names. Like the Scribes, the Egyptians believed the name carried the essence of the self: as long as the name endured, so did the soul.

For millennia, the Stone Scribes were a tiny, loosely-affiliated society within the Mysterium. They became a Legacy in the 13th century. Arnobius, a Coptic monk and Namer in Stone, received what he referred to as a "sublime revelation from the Lord" while attending the funeral of his abbot. The Awakened monk spent months sequestered in the tombs of his abbey, meditating on ancient names of power and casting gematria while illuminated only by the wan flickering of corpse-candles. According to Namer tradition, God (or some other higher being) revealed to Arnobius the means to reconstruct the Name of one long-dead by following the sympathetic connections back from other Final Names.

Arnobius emerged from the catacombs a changed man: where once he had been of rotund stature and pleasant disposition, he emerged a gaunt specter of a man who wore an aura of quiet solemnity like a cloak. He left the monastery and began traveling across North Africa, Palestine, Syria and Europe, preaching his new Legacy to any Consilium that would have him. Wherever the Namers had established a Bibliotheca, Arnobius found ready converts. Within 20 years, almost the entire sect in Europe and the Near East was subsumed into the Legacy. The Stone Scribes as a sect of allied mages continued in other parts of the world, notably India and China, but in the past few centuries even those branches have joined the Legacy. Mysterium archeologists say that Stone Scribes practiced their art

in pre-Columbian Mexico and Peru, but these long-sundered, parallel lineages were lost in the European conquests and destruction of native kingdoms.

## Gematria

One of the magical practices the Stone Scribes often use, and in fact the practice which led to Arnobius' discovery of the means to reconstruct Final Names, is *gematria*. A form of Hebrew numerology, *gematria* involves finding links between names by comparing the numeric values of two or more words (in Hebrew, each letter is also a number; adding up the numbers finds the value of the word). Words with the same value have a supernatural connection to one another. Scribes use this to search for sympathetic links between a Final Name in their records and the dead who have no scribed name.

For Sleeper mystics, *gematria* is, at best, a meditative technique. The Awakened, however, can use it as one of many techniques for divination and sympathetic magic.

Arnobius continued to guide the Stone Scribes as "Philologus Primus" for decades, personally establishing most of the Legacy's traditions and practice. The Scribes stopped carving Final Names on obelisks, crypts and other large monuments in favor of stone tablets. Arnobius used his clout within the Coptic Church to have Namers appointed abbots of many monasteries known for their large libraries, and instituted a standardized method of cataloging libraries of Final Names. Namers in Stone also obtained positions of authority in many Roman Catholic monasteries.

The centuries since Arnobius' disappearance have seen a slow but steady decline of the Stone Scribes. Their connections in the Church faded as too few Philologi were willing to play politics and were ousted in favor of more popular (Sleeper) abbots, and the Bibliothecae had to scramble to find new homes. Universities became popular bases of operation for some Scribes, while others chose to hide in plain sight, setting up shop as stelographers (tombstone makers), carving Final Names into the headstones of their owners' graves.

## Society and Culture

Most mages think the Stone Scribes is a harmless clique of scholars devoted to a curious and obscure

magical practice. No mage would deny that names have power, of course, but even most Mysterium will-workers think there are better ways to learn about the past than writing names on rocks. The Stone Scribes allow this perception to continue — if other mages even thought the Namers had access, or were even close to *attaining* access to the secret knowledge of the Atlantean kings, the Legacy would come under siege. Scholars desperate for knowledge of magic's Golden Age would mob Bibliothecae seeking audiences with ancient ghosts, while mages fearful of the power the Scribes might gain from the dead would come with knives in the dark.

Outside the Mysterium, few mages even know that the Namers exist — not out of any deliberate attempt at secrecy on the part of the Stone Scribes, but simply because most Legacy members are content to perform their self-appointed duty without drawing attention to themselves. When members of the other orders *do* notice the Scribes, it is often thanks to the crimes of a rogue Name-Taker. Consequently, the Stone Scribes sometimes have a poor reputation outside the Mysterium.

The Scribes' culture is largely built around respect for the dead and the belief that all souls should leave a record of their passing. This respect often manifests as an intense curiosity about the lives of people whose Final Names they record. Some Namers interview friends or family members of the recently deceased to gain a more complete picture of their lives, while others go back further and study what life was like 50, 100 or even 1,000 years ago or more. Some Namers even go so far as to adopt such a lifestyle, either for a short time or permanently, but these anachronisms are considered eccentric even by other Scribes.

As befits a Legacy whose reason for existence is the recording of Final Names, labels and names form a major part of the Scribes' lives. Most Stone Scribes have at least four names themselves: their birth name, the shadow name they adopted upon Awakening, a name given to them by their tutor upon being accepted as a pupil and used among other Namers and, finally, a private name given by their tutors and only used between tutor and apprentice. A Stone Scribe who takes an apprentice has a *fifth* name, privately given to the Scribe by his apprentice. These tutor/apprentice secret names are rarely complimentary, but are usually given in the spirit of familial ribbing rather than outright spite.

The Namers' magic is built around the study of names, labels and descriptors of all sorts, all to trace



the proverbial branches back to the roots of Awakened society. Names may be transitory until death, but even the knowledge of a person's Momentary Name can prove useful. Namers employ a variety of magical practices involving names, but gematria is one of the most popular. Protective amulets inscribed with repeating patterns of names of power, and the Solomonic practices of summoning spirits using the manifold names of God are also common Scribe praxes.

casting pool. Occultation makes reading the subject's sympathetic ties difficult, while a great Destiny resists being bound and codified into a Final Name.

Living people possess "Final" Names as well, and a mage skilled with the Fate Arcanum can manipulate them. The Stone Scribes call these Momentary Names, because they change and grow with their owners' souls. Because these names are still connected to living, changing beings, Momentary Names scribed from living beings quickly lose connection with their owners and become useless. (This is reflected by the lesser durations of Final Name-affecting spells when cast on living beings.)

## What's in a Name?

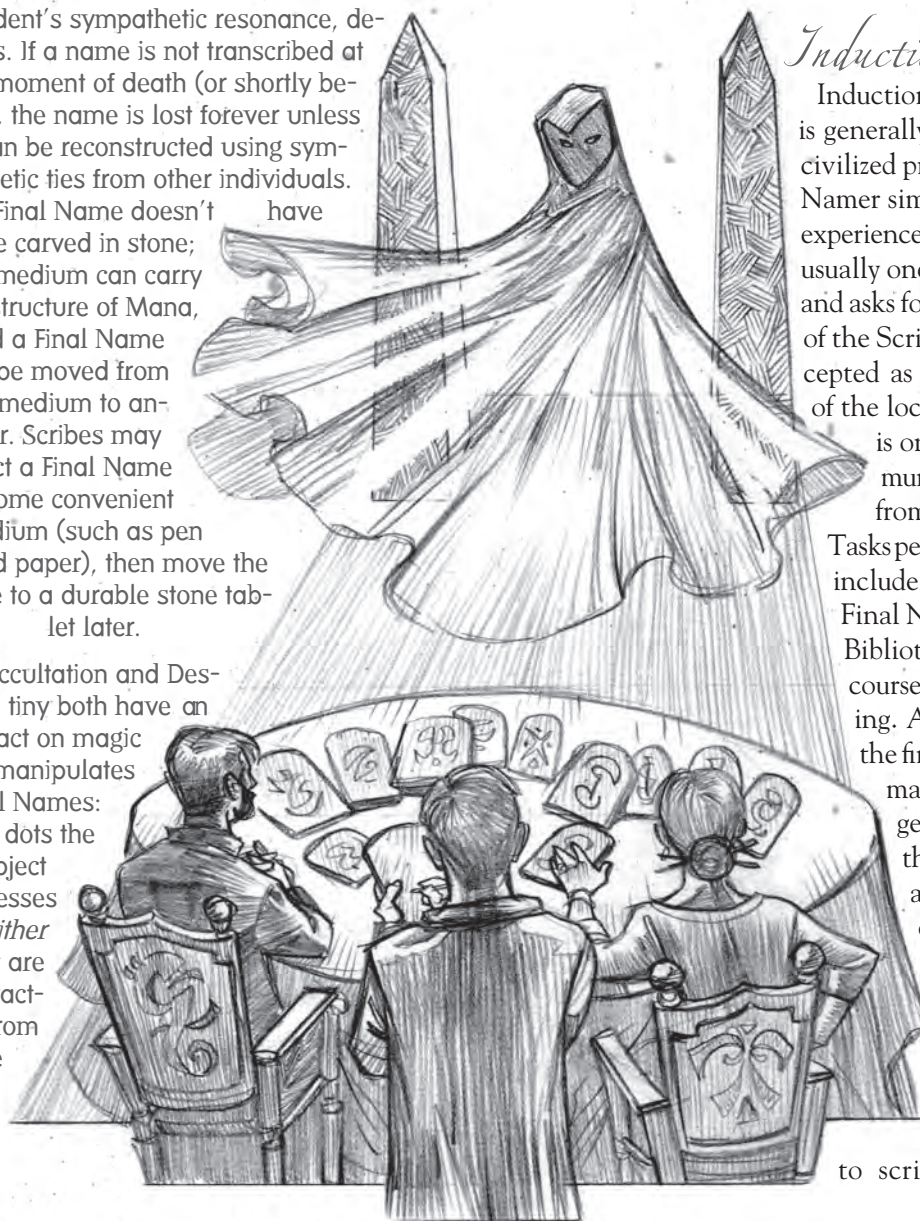
What, exactly, is a Final Name? It is a record in Mana of the sympathetic resonance an individual possessed at the moment of death, scribed after all mental function has ceased but before the soul, and with it the decedent's sympathetic resonance, departs. If a name is not transcribed at the moment of death (or shortly before), the name is lost forever unless it can be reconstructed using sympathetic ties from other individuals.

A Final Name doesn't have to be carved in stone; any medium can carry the structure of Mana, and a Final Name can be moved from one medium to another. Scribes may collect a Final Name in some convenient medium (such as pen and paper), then move the name to a durable stone tablet later.

Occultation and Destiny both have an impact on magic that manipulates Final Names: any dots the subject possesses in *either* Merit are subtracted from the

## Induction

Induction into the Stone Scribes is generally a straightforward and civilized process. The prospective Namer simply approaches a more experienced member of the Legacy, usually one she knows personally, and asks for instruction in the arts of the Scribes. Candidates are accepted as probationary members of the local Bibliotheca (if there is one) and typically set on mundane tasks for anywhere from one to three months. Tasks performed during this time include cataloging archives of Final Names, maintaining the Bibliotheca's sanctum and, of course, a great deal of studying. Apprentices striving for the first attainment study the magic of names, including gematria, the names of the Angels of the Hours and the planets and various forms of animistic spirit-naming. As the applicant approaches readiness for the first attainment, she learns the spells used to scribe Final Names and





preserve them forever. Later in her training, the candidate joins her tutor on his rounds and scribes several Final Names through the use of spells. The apprentice learns about the mystical importance of Final Names, and how they can fade with time if not set down in stone.

An apprentice also learns the history and legendry of the Legacy itself, from its founding as a sect of the Alae Draconis in Atlantis to its metamorphosis into the Stone Scribes after the Fall. She is expected to learn by heart the minutiae of Arnobius' life and the rise of the Stone Scribes as a Legacy, and its gradual decline. An apprentice must research the stories of as many as 10 notable Scribes.

Once a mage proves she can reliably scribe a Final Name, her tutor guides her in crafting her soul. Only then does a tutor impart the Legacy's techniques for finding the Final Names of the long dead, coaxing them back into full strength so that they may be recorded for future generations. Tutors do not impart the second attainment until a pupil shows her mastery of this technique.

The third stage of a Scribe's formal training is usually the most active in her life. She has finished the long hours studying history and occult theory, but is not yet expected to settle down and start a Bibliotheca. A Scribe's final period of tutelage usually finds her traveling and using the attainments of her Legacy to recover old, unrecorded Final Names. Some Scribes focus on recovering the Final Names of notable Sleepers, but the Legacy places special emphasis on the Final Names of ancient mages. At the last, journeyman Scribes learn to shape their own Momentary Names to match recorded Final Names, allowing the Scribes to sense the sympathetic ties of the mages of old — ties that sometimes lead to powerful mystic relics or storehouses of occult lore. Once a Scribe masters this magic, the journeyman is considered ready for the third attainment (Gnosis permitting). Only after gaining the third attainment does a Scribe learn the Legacy's long-term goal to reach the ghosts of Atlantis.

Upon achieving the third attainment in their Legacy, most Scribes settle down, establish a Bibliotheca and devote themselves to the continued recording of Final Names and training their own apprentices. Some Scribes seek to follow in Arnobius' footsteps and pursue the mythical fourth attainment and Ascension, while others forego the sedentary life and continue to travel and gather Final Names well into their elder years.

## Story Hooks — Letters on a Headstone

• **Stolen Names, Stolen Souls:** Some of the local Namers report seeing Sleepers wandering around the region in a daze, almost like zombies. Magical examination reveals that these Sleepers are not only missing their souls, but that their Momentary Names seem to have become static and unchanging, as though they were the Final Names of the dead. The Philologus suspects a Name Taker is involved, but the Name Takers' usual method is simply to murder their targets and scribe their Final Names. Why the sudden change in tactics, and what does it portend?

• **Grave Robbers:** The local Bibliotheca occasionally allows mages from outside the Legacy, particularly fellow Mysterium mages, to access the archives. Recently, the Bibliotheca has suffered a rash of thefts — nearly a dozen tablets have disappeared. Security, both mundane and magical, is tight around the archives, and docents accompany all researchers at all times. Further complications arise when friends and relatives of a Final Name's subject start turning up dead. Is this a bizarre coincidence, or someone's convoluted plan for revenge? Who stole the tablets, and how? Were the owners of the missing names connected somehow?

• **Requiem for a Lover:** The local Consilium's Provost recently passed away, and the Stone Scribes want to record his Final Name for inclusion in their archives. What the Stone Scribes don't know — in fact, what no one except the Provost's apprentice knows — is that the Provost was involved in a torrid affair with the Hierarch's husband. During life, the sympathetic connections generated by the affair were carefully concealed with magic, but the Provost's Final Name would reveal the connection to anyone who studied it. The apprentice, desperate to keep his teacher's reputation clear, is willing to do anything to keep the Namers from getting the Provost's name. But time is running out, as the unsuspecting Hierarch has already given her permission to the Philologus....



## *The Magic of Final Names*

Final Names are little-known expressions of the sum totals of people's natures and connections to other people. The following spells draw upon and manipulate the power of Final Names.

### *Study Final Name (Fate • + Death •)*

The mage can read a recorded Final Name and understand its nature. She drinks in the knowledge that this Final Name contains, the summation of all that its owner was.

**Practice:** Unveiling

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Transitory (one turn) or prolonged (one scene)

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** None

The mage must have access to the physical, stored form of a Final Name as created by the Fate 2 "Scribe Final Name" spell. By studying the Final Name, the mage gains insight into the owner of that Name. She automatically learns the owner's Virtue and Vice, and can gain a limited understanding of the subject's sympathetic ties of Fate. The more successes the character achieves, the more remote are the ties discovered. The caster identifies one connection per success rolled. A character can search for particular sorts of connections (relatives, lovers, objects and so on) or just fish at random.

**Successes**    **Connection**

**1 success**    The caster can identify people intimately involved with the person's life, such as family members, a long-time spouse or a mage's tutor in a legacy. This does not offer names, only the roles of the other people. Objects intimately connected to the person can be sensed as well (that they existed, and a vague description, not where they are now or even if they still exist). This includes any items enchanted by a mage. The caster also knows if the person ever broke a magical oath or *geas*.

**2 successes**    The caster identifies people known to the person, such as close friends, cabal-mates, people the subject worked with a lot or a murder victim's killer. The caster also receives glimpses of objects that played an important but not crucial role in the person's life, such as tools used daily in earning a living or a car owned and driven for years. The caster can also tell if the

person possessed Occultation or a Destiny; in the latter case, the caster obtains a vague and general notion of the Destiny.

**3 successes**    The spell reveals Acquainted people, such as lovers of brief duration, casual friends or teachers in magery. The caster also detects whether the person suffered supernatural mind control, possession or magical alterations of destiny. If the person had an actual Destiny, the caster knows its nature and the associated ban.

**4 successes**    The caster senses Encountered people and objects. These are usually too numerous to identify as individuals, but people or objects who possess special significance may stand out from the blur: a king or an archmage once met, a potent Artifact wielded and the like. The caster knows if a Sleeper subject ever had a spell cast upon her.

**5 successes**    A fog of thousands of people briefly met or who indirectly affected the person's life. Extraordinary but indirect influences are revealed, such as the truck driver who dumped the toxic waste that gave the person cancer or the mage who exorcised the person's house.

This spell's Duration is transitory if cast on the recorded Momentary Name of a still-living being, but prolonged if cast on a deceased person. If the mage has Fate 2, the Duration is prolonged when cast on the living and uses the Advanced Prolongation chart when used to study the Final Name of the dead.

**Mysterium Rote: Reading the Headstone**

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Occult + Fate

The Namers of the Mysterium use this rote to contemplate the knowledge held within Final Names.

### *Scribe Final Name (Fate •• + Death •)*

The mage captures a Final Name in a solid, physical form, allowing it to be both preserved and studied.

**Practice:** Ruling

**Action:** Instant and contested, target rolls Resolve reflexively

**Duration:** Prolonged (one scene) or lasting

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** 1 Mana

This spell allows the mage to understand a subject's Final Name, record it in Mana and scribe it in some sort of physical medium — paper, stone or even a computer file. Once stored, the Final Name no longer

decays and may be studied freely with the “Study Final Name” spell. This spell’s Duration is prolonged if cast on a living being or lasting if cast on the dead. If the caster has Fate 3, the Advanced Prolongation chart (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 119) may be used to determine the Duration when cast on a living target (remember, though, that spells cast on living beings cannot have an indefinite Duration). If, however, the owner of a recorded Momentary Name dies before the spell’s duration expires, the spell’s duration becomes lasting: the Momentary Name becomes the Final Name.

**Mysterium Rote: Epitaph**

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Fate

Stone Scribes take their charge very seriously, and never scribe a Final Name on anything less sturdy than stone tablets.

*Uncover Final Name (Fate ●●● + Death ●●)*

If a person dies without a Namer present to record his Final Name, that name is lost. But “lost” is not the same as “destroyed.” With the right knowledge of sympathetic connections, what was lost may be found again.

**Practice:** Perfecting

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Lasting

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** None

By casting this spell, a mage can reconstruct the Final Name of someone already dead. In order to properly reconstruct the Name, the mage must acquire Known or better sympathetic connections to at least 10 objects or individuals who had sympathetic connections to the deceased. Possessing the objects in question or the Final Names of the individuals is also adequate. For every connection less than ten, the mage suffers a –1 penalty to her casting pool. If she has no connections at all, she cannot cast the spell.

Successes rolled on the spellcasting pool determine the maximum “age” (that is, time since death) of the Final Name the mage can restore, using the Prolonged Duration chart. If the mage attempts to recreate the Final Name of someone who has been dead longer than the indicated Duration, the spell fails.

If the mage has Death ●●●, she may use the Advanced Prolongation chart to determine the maximum age of the Final Name. “Indefinite” Duration means that the mage can restore the Final Name of any

deceased individual, as long as the mage has the appropriate sympathetic resonances.

**Mysterium Rote: Rebuild the Shattered Tombstone**

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Fate

The Stone Scribes consider the loss of any true name a tragedy, and take steps to recover those lost to time.

*Assuming the Name (Fate ●●●● + Death ●●●)*

The mage can actually alter his own Final Name for a short time, replacing the name with one stored by the “Scribe Final Name” spell. This can be the perfect camouflage or the perfect information-gathering tool. If the mage has Fate 5, he may cast this spell on another person as well (unwilling targets resist reflexively with Resolve).

**Practice:** Patterning

**Action:** Extended (target number = Potency of Scribe Final Name spell)

**Duration:** Prolonged (one scene)

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** 1 Mana

Assuming another person’s Final Name confers the following benefits:

- Your Virtue and Vice appear to be those of the owner of the Final Name (these traits do not actually change, but they appear different to supernatural observation).
- Your aura appears fixed as the owner’s aura at the instant the original Scribe Final Name spell was cast.
- Your resonance appears to be that of the Final Name.
- You automatically gain any sympathetic connections the Final Name carries with it, at no penalty. (The penalty for not knowing a subject’s name applies, however — including a penalty if you don’t know the mundane name attached to the Final Name you assumed.)

Any supernatural effect intended to pierce the veil of this spell must achieve successes equal to the spell’s Potency. An exceptional success on a spell or power that reads auras reveals that your aura is completely static, which may signal something amiss, but does not necessarily pierce the deception. If the Duration of the “Scribe Final Name” spell that carries the assumed Final Name expires, this spell’s effects end immediately.



## *Final Names and Other Magic*

Once a mage records a Final Name, she or other mages can use it for other magic. The Stone Scribes' chief interest lies in using Final Names to gain information from the past: a Final Name provides a Known connection to its subject (the same applies to a Momentary Name, while it lasts). So, if a mage wanted to view the life of a long-dead person using Time 2 "Postcognition" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 260), she would have a Known connection for targeting the spell. A Final Name is just about the best link possible, short of possessing the person's actual cadaver, for summoning the dead from the Underworld.

A mage can also use the ties of Fate recorded in the Final Name to affect other people. In this case, however, each sympathetic tie is downgraded one step, compared to having the actual person on hand. Thus, a wife would be Intimately connected to a husband, but only Known to the husband's recorded Final Name. Extra successes reduce this penalty, but can never raise the "virtual sympathy" above Known (-4 penalty). Naturally, the mage cannot use this information without access to other Arcana: Not knowing a target's actual name also imposes the usual penalty, which cannot be countered by any number of successes at reading a Final Name.

**Example:** *Dahlia studies the Final Name of one Frank Jefferson and her player achieves one success on Dahlia's spellcasting roll. She learns that Jefferson has a daughter (Intimate connection). If Dahlia wanted to cast a spell on the daughter, Dahlia's connection goes from Known (one step down from Intimate) to Encountered (because Dahlia doesn't know the daughter's name).*

*Dahlia tries again and, with three successes, and finds that Jefferson had an employee he once fired. This starts as an Acquainted person. If Dahlia wanted to cast a spell on the employee, her connection goes from Acquainted to Encountered for working from a Final Name, but bumps up to Known for the two extra successes; but then drops back to Acquainted for not knowing the employee's name, for a net penalty of -6.*

## *Attainments*

The Namers' beliefs in the power of the Final Name is the guiding principle behind the Legacy's attainments. Initiates of the Stone Scribes first learn the basic ritual that allows them to scribe the Final Name of a person, preserving it for all time. Later, they learn to protect Final Names from natural decay

or manipulation by outside forces. Finally, a Scribe masters the greatest attainment of his Legacy, putting to use the names he has recorded by temporarily making them his own.

### *1st: Memoriam*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Fate 2 (primary), Death 1, Prime 1, Occult 2

The most basic power of the Stone Scribes allows them to fix Final Names in static form: the Scribes may use the names and store them indefinitely. Since the proper procedure is to harvest Final Names at the moments of death or destruction, the mage also gains the ability to perceive when death is near.

Taking a Final Name is the principle duty of any Stone Scribe, and, therefore, a great deal of ritual surrounds the practice. Traditionally, the Scribe carves the Final Name into a stone tablet at the moment of death, using Atlantean runes to cement the name's nature for all time. As long as the name is written on some sort of permanent medium, however, and the proper reverence is given, a variety of alternative techniques are permissible. Some Scribes etch Final Names into buildings or monuments, and a rare few tattoo the names on their own skin, then have their skin made into parchment after death. Namers in the Free Council experiment with scribing Final Names in digital media so they can be transmitted by phone or over the Internet.

This attainment enables the Stone Scribes to perform their sacred duty, so they employ Memoriam almost constantly. Whenever a Scribe has the opportunity (or engineers one), he is expected to record the Final Names of anyone who dies in his presence.

This attainment allows the mage to use the Fate •• "Scribe Final Name" spell (see above), allowing him to capture and record a Final Name. No roll is required; the mage's Fate dots are used as successes. Scribing a Final Name by hand takes one hour, but with the Matter 3 "Plasticity" spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 199), this may be reduced to an instant action. In addition, the mage may activate the Death 1 spell "Grim Sight" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 134) at will, simply by spending an instant action.

### *2nd: Unearth the Stone*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Fate 3

Final Names fade over time as the people who bore them are forgotten. When a Scribe cannot be present to record a Final Name at the moment of death, this

attainment allows her to recover the Final Name of a person long dead.

This attainment is commonly enacted through a complex ritual of gematria, casting the numbers of those close to the deceased in order to uncover fragments of the lost name.

Scribes use this attainment to advance their Legacy's mission, reaching backward through time toward Atlantis. Scholarly Namers also use this attainment to preserve Final Names for posterity, while more cynical, worldly Scribes have been known to use this attainment to dig up dirt on rivals by exploiting the sympathetic knowledge gleaned from the Final Name of a dead lover.

This attainment allows the Scribe to use the Fate •••, Death •• "Uncover Final Name" spell (see above), allowing her to divine a Final Name from the sympathetic connections of others. She uses an instant action (no roll is required; most Namers accompany this attainment with a ritual that lasts a minute or two) and treats her Fate dots as successes.

#### **Optional Arcanum: Death 3**

If the Namer also knows Death 3, she may use the Advanced Prolongation chart to determine how old a Final Name she can uncover. She uses her Death dots instead of dice penalties to determine the Duration; in the case of a lasting Duration, she may bolster any Final Name for which she has sufficient sympathetic knowledge (see p. XX).

### *3rd: Name-Taking*

#### **Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Fate 4

The ultimate power of the Stone Scribes allows a Namer to briefly assume any Final Name he himself has scribed. Although this attainment is only temporary, it is an extremely versatile power, both for stealth and for information-gathering.

This attainment is usually activated through an intricate ritual passed down for centuries from tutor to apprentice. Unorthodox Scribes sometimes devise their own variants, but traditionalists of the Legacy look askance at such members. In the standard ritual, the Namer strips naked and paints his entire body with Atlantean runes representing the Final Name he wishes to assume. He then kneels in the center of a sacred circle, chanting in Atlantean while pouring pure, clear water from a lead pitcher over his head, symbolically washing himself away and taking on the Final Name he desires. The entire ritual takes about five minutes.

Namers use this attainment when they absolutely must learn something that only the original owners of the Final Names could know, or when Namers need to completely mask their own presences (possibly framing the true owners of the Final Names) in performing deeds. Legacy tradition says this attainment should be used only out of grave need: the Stone Scribes treat cavalier or frivolous assumption of another person's Final Name as a sign of great Hubris.

This attainment allows the Scribe to employ the Fate •••• "Assuming the Name" spell (see above), allowing him to temporarily claim a Final Name as his own. The Namer spends an instant action at the culmination of the ritual and rolls Wits + Subterfuge + Fate. The Scribe's Fate dots are treated as extra successes that count toward Duration.

#### **Optional Arcanum: Death 4**

If the Namer has Death 4, he may imprint a false Final Name upon a ghost, revenant or vampire. In addition to the normal effects of the "Assuming the Name" spell, the mage may re-allocate (but not add or remove) one of a ghost's anchors or one of a revenant's Passions (see **World of Darkness**, p. 209, and **Mage: the Awakening**, p. XX). For example, if the Namer rolls two successes when using this attainment on a ghost whose anchors are a school, a baseball diamond and a girl, the Namer could change the school anchor to a dog and the girl anchor to an office building, but he could not add the office building and the dog as additional anchors, or remove the school and the girl without replacing them. If the Namer has Death 5, he may use the prolonged Duration chart when determining the Duration of the effect.

### *Polydegmon*

**Quote:** *We have many names here. There are many more yet unwritten.*

**Background:** Polydegmon was born Michael Melissinos, the son of Greek immigrants. His grandfather Dmitri, who lived with the family, was Michael's favorite teacher and muse as a child. The old man taught his grandson stories from Greek mythology, inspiring Michael to write his own stories of heroes, gods and monsters.

Dmitri Melissinos contracted stomach cancer when Michael was 16. Watching the disease slowly consume his grandfather cemented Michael's desire to become a doctor and work to cure cancer. Ironically, he received his letter of acceptance to Harvard's premed program the day of his grandfather's funeral.



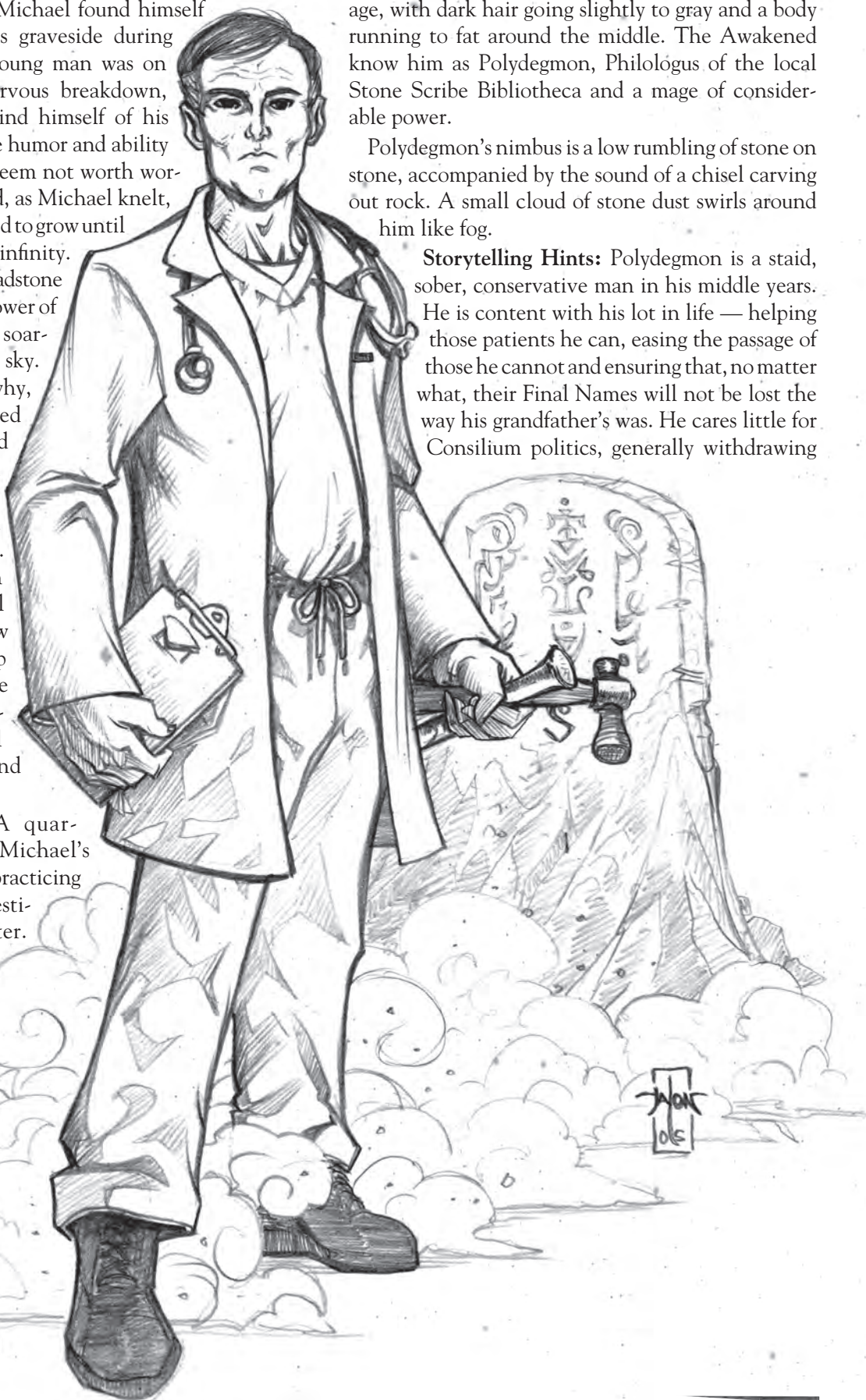
Several years later, during the pressure-cooker that is medical school, Michael found himself at his grandfather's graveside during finals week. The young man was on the verge of a nervous breakdown, and hoped to remind himself of his grandfather's gentle humor and ability to make anything seem not worth worrying about. Instead, as Michael knelt, the graveyard seemed to grow until it stretched off into infinity. His grandfather's headstone became a massive tower of granite and lead, soaring into the black sky. Without knowing why, Michael approached the tower and signed his name on its wall in his own blood, and Awakened on the Path of Doom. When an older man approached Michael and claimed to know how he could keep the memory of people such as his grandfather alive, Michael knew he had found his calling.

**Description:** A quarter century after Michael's Awakening, he is a practicing physician at a prestigious cancer center. Sleepers know him

as Dr. John Henderson, a caring, kindly man of middle age, with dark hair going slightly to gray and a body running to fat around the middle. The Awakened know him as Polydegmon, Philologus of the local Stone Scribe Bibliotheca and a mage of considerable power.

Polydegmon's nimbus is a low rumbling of stone on stone, accompanied by the sound of a chisel carving out rock. A small cloud of stone dust swirls around him like fog.

**Storytelling Hints:** Polydegmon is a staid, sober, conservative man in his middle years. He is content with his lot in life — helping those patients he can, easing the passage of those he cannot and ensuring that, no matter what, their Final Names will not be lost the way his grandfather's was. He cares little for Consilium politics, generally withdrawing



himself from the arena except when necessary. His word carries considerable weight, however, and he is well respected, especially by the Mysterium.

**Dedicated Magical Tools:** Lead coin (Path tool), hammer and chisel (Death magic)

**Real Name:** Michael Melissinos

**Path:** Moros

**Order:** Mysterium

**Legacy:** Stone Seers

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 4

**Mental Skills:** Academics 3, Computer 1, Medicine (Cancer Treatments) 4, Occult (Gematria) 2, Science 3

**Physical Skills:** Drive 1, Firearms 1, Larceny 1, Survival 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Expression (Writing) 2, Persuasion 3

**Merits:** Consilium Status 2, Contacts (Doctors, Medical Services), Library (Final Names, Gematria, Summoning), Order Status (Mysterium) 3

**Willpower:** 6

**Wisdom:** 7

**Virtue:** Hope

**Vice:** Sloth

**Initiative:** 6

**Defense:** 2

**Speed:** 9

**Health:** 8

**Gnosis:** 6

**Arcana:** Death 4, Fate 4, Matter 2, Mind 1

**Notes:** *Death* — Forensic Gaze (•), Grim Sight (•), Speak With the Dead (•), Entropic Guard (••), Touch of the Grave (••), Ghost Gate (•••), Twilight Shift (••••); *Fate* — Study Final Name (•); *Matter* — Discern Composition (•), Alter Accuracy (••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Memoriam, 2nd — Unearth the Stone

**Mana/per turn:** 15/6

**Armor:** 4 ("Entropic Guard," Death ••)





# THE THRENODISTS

Voices in my head, yes. I'm their imaginary friend. You, too.

The rational world of physics has long been haunted by the irrational specter of mysticism, from Isaac Newton's hermetic studies to Niels Bohr — one of the founders of quantum physics and co-author of the controversial Copenhagen Interpretation — who placed the Taoist yin-yang on his family coat of arms. Threnodists see themselves as the culmination of this parallel evolution.

The Threnodist Legacy occupies a remote and arcane corner of the by now well-known overlap between quantum theory and occult cosmology, a corner that includes territory currently falling within the purview of the rapidly burgeoning field of neuroscience. Threnodists consider the howling chaos of Pandemonium to be the fundamental substrate of existence, the ever-fecund *potentia* of the Void with its "foam" of quanta winking in and out of being. Consciousness, the Threnodists postulate, is an inherent quality of this chaos, and individual identity (as most humans and some other entities appear to exhibit) is an emergent property of consciousness. Awakening, by extension, must be an emergent property of individual identity.

**Parent Path:** Mastigos

**Nickname:** Wailers

**Orders:** Free Council (Many Threnodist petitions to join the Mysterium have been summarily refused.)

**Appearance:** Most Threnodist tutors present the image of the absent-minded professor — rumpled tweeds, unruly hair. Traditionally, younger initiates were stereotypical clean-cut lab nerds, but currently more outlandish styles can be seen, echoing the diffusion of quantum ideas throughout the intellectual and pseudo-intellectual subcultures. Many Threnodists have begun to adopt the styles of neo-hippies, avant-garde artists and musicians, with long hair, comfortable dungarees, sneakers and T-shirts with dazzling tie-dye or fractal designs predominating. Two qualities that seem to be endemic to Threnodists are disarray and clutter. Delving into the mind-boggling enigmas of the quantum world apparently takes a toll on more mundane grooming and organizational skills. The longer an inheritor of this Legacy pursues the mysteries, the more likely he is to develop an unkempt appearance and questionable personal hygiene. Threnodist sanctums often become mired in drifts of books, papers,

tapes, disks and eye-catching models of exotic subatomic structures. Just finding a clear workspace in their sacred laboratories can sometimes be a daunting task.

**Background:** Most Threnodists have a scientific education, and so usually come from upper- and middle-class families. Recent decades have seen an influx of more diverse intellectual types — researchers from other branches of science, avant-garde artists and musicians, hippies and neo-hippies and every stripe of wild-eyed radicals.

**Organization:** The original Threnodists followed a loosely academic model, with tutorial lineages specializing in well-demarcated categories of experimentation similar to the departments of a university, meeting regularly to exchange and review theories and data. Most Threnodists still follow this pattern, but, as new fields of inquiry arise and old fields subdivide and hyper-specialize, the academic pattern has degenerated into a constantly shifting array of affinity groups. Oddly enough, the Legacy has not fragmented entirely; its internal communications network actually seems to grow more tightly connected in this new environment of disorder.

**Suggested Oblations:** Scientific practices approached with a meditative and devotional mindset, thought experiments and working out mathematical proofs as meditation, occult practices stripped of their arcane mumbo-jumbo and redressed in clear, precise, modern, scientific gobbledygook, yoga plus biofeedback machines, chanting mantras of chemical names, visualization of subatomic interactions

**Concepts:** Theoretical scientists (especially physicists), neurologists and psychologists, fringe academic types, avant-garde and heavy metal musicians, chronic mental outpatients, acid casualties

## Birth Cry of a New Legacy

Upon the designated night, I invited the Prince to my home and led him to the chamber where he could observe the culmination of my experiment. For nearly an hour, I kept the receiver tuned as the voices described how a human may adjust the wave-like aspect of his being in such a wise as to interfere with, and controllably alter, the wave-like aspects of objects within his environment, achieving thereby a transformation of matter through sheer act of will. While I transcribed the statements emerging from the

speaker, the Prince did not react to the voices, but instead stared at me with a mounting expression of ill-concealed alarm. At length, he spoke with trembling hesitation, citing the work of Dr. Freud et al., and suggested with strained delicacy that the voices existed only in my imagination, that I was projecting my own fantasies upon the chaos of the radio static. At that moment, hearing him utter that notion, I experienced what I can only describe as an Awakening, as if from a dream of matter-bound existence.

— from the *Memoirs* of M. Auguste Etienne-Laurent, le Comte d'Erlette

## History

By the dawn of the 20th century, academic devotees of the physical sciences stood on the verge of reducing the greatest mysteries of creation to commonplace operations of a clockwork cosmos. In their relentless pursuit of what they perceived to be universal truth, they plunged into the deepest conundrum of all — the inner workings of the most elementary particles of matter — and thereby inadvertently stumbled across the border that separates the Lie from magical reality.

Quantum physics, founded in the scientific crucible of rigorous observation and strict adherence to mathematic principle,

seemed to demonstrate that the impossible was not only possible but happened everywhere all the time — merely on scales too tiny and in durations too brief for humans to notice. The basic building blocks of the world twinkled in and out of existence, no more substantial than the play of lights inside the eyelid. Solid reality was reduced to the breaking crest of a wave of probability. Information was seen to leap vast distances instantaneously, borne by mysterious mathematical entanglements. An array of alternate universes, each differentiated from its neighbor by a single iota, crowded in upon the stable material world. And, perhaps most detrimental to scientific objectivity, the slightest scrutiny suddenly acquired the amazing power to alter the factual content of observation.

This direct assault upon the detached objectivity of science reduced the academic world to what might aptly be described as pandemonium. Even Albert Einstein admitted the efficacy of quantum equations while confessing that he found their implications deeply unsettling. Interpretations of the new theory were propounded to resolve this philosophical crisis, but each seemed to involve greater metaphysical issues that provoked even more outrage. Many scientists refused to accept the broader implications of quantum theory, even though its predictive power produced such technological breakthroughs as television. Other physicists plunged headfirst into the madness — and, of those, a few found enlightenment.





## Virtual Entities

Being less than 100 years old, this Legacy can lay little claim to any mythic or legendary roots in Atlantis. That has not stopped the Threnodists from trying, however. Over the past two decades, an electronic facsimile of an “ancient manuscript” (dismissed as a fake by most arcane loremasters) has circulated among members of the Mysterium. Chinese, Tibetan and Sanskrit commentary surrounds what purports to be an “Agarthan” copy of an eons-old text written in a tiny delicate script averred by one commentator to be “a Floresian dialect of Lemurian.”

The text relates the adventures and conversations of one “Kwong Du,” the last of a race of diminutive hominids whose seafaring culture spanned the Indian and Pacific Oceans hundreds of thousands of years before the evolution of *homo sapiens*. This pre-Atlantean “Doubting Thomas” incurred disfavor by perpetually questioning everyone’s methods and approaches. Insisting that in magic, factual accuracy and clear logic are just as important as Supernal revelation, this puckish smartass is depicted as prehistorically inventing “scientific method” as means of critical inquiry into the mysteries of creation.

Awakened academia’s few responses to this “manuscript” are largely dismissive. Mysterium critics cite the absurdly high degree of similarity between the words and deeds of the character as recorded in this supposedly archaic source and another obscure character known variously as “Quāntus” or “Hypercrites,” whose bulging eyes and knowing leer appear in the background of Harvey Kurtzman periodicals, Jay Ward animations, Stan Freberg advertisements and a number of underground comics throughout the 1970s. (All appearances are now prized collector’s items; some Threnodists treat them like holy relics.) Even these detractors, however, laud the scholarship that went into the production of this virtual forgery.

## Actual Occasions

Apocryphal mythography aside, the verifiable roots of the Threnodic Legacy can be traced back to the 1920s, and one of the pioneers of quantum mathematics, the French aristocrat Prince Louis de Broglie. The Prince began as an ecclesiastical historian, but he turned his intellect toward the nascent technology of radio during World War I. Afterwards, de Broglie continued researching electromagnetism. His PhD thesis at the Sorbonne argued that ordinary gross matter possessed a wave-like aspect, in wavelengths tiny enough to account for the wave-particle duality exhibited in subatomic events. De Broglie’s professor had difficulty accepting the thesis, but when the great Einstein vouched for its mathematical proof, the Prince’s name was permanently inscribed in the textbooks of scientific history.

A name not found in the textbooks, however, is that of de Broglie’s assistant (some say “crony”) M. Auguste Etienne-Laurent, le Comte d’Erlette, a descendant of the infamous demonologist who penned *Cultes des Goules*. This Count,

heir to a considerable body of religious (and sacrilegious) lore, had been the Prince’s friend since their earliest days as church historians. The two remained associates up until the years in which quantum theory was first formulated. D’Erlette’s memoirs — never published but preserved as required reading by Threnodic purists — recount the adventures the two aristocrats shared in the world of ideas and indicate the causes of a personal rift that ultimately resulted in the dissolution of their friendship around the time de Broglie presented his Sorbonne thesis. The Prince eventually renounced all association with the Count, and even recanted the original interpretation of his mathematical breakthrough. For the rest of his long life, de Broglie, along with Einstein and others, supported the refutation of Heisenberg’s Copenhagen Interpretation in a rival interpretation dubbed “neo-realism.” This interpretation of quantum theory sustains the mechanistic, object-based worldview of classical physics but fails to adequately account for non-local phenomena. Private undocumented conversations reveal that de Broglie also felt a more deeply seated psychological revulsion to his erstwhile colleague.

During the Great War, d’Erlette claimed he heard voices in radio static. Many radio operators — including such pioneers as Tesla — noted this phenomenon, dubbed “ghost voices.” D’Erlette, however, believed that these voices addressed him personally. The Count continued to experiment with radio through the post-war years, fine-tuning his equipment to the point that he could carry on extensive dialogues with these voices. Citing d’Erlette’s transcriptions of his otherworldly dialogues, de Broglie pointed out that these voices, with their veiled hints of cosmic revelations and personal power, resemble nothing more or less than the promises offered by medieval demons.

Threnodists say the scientific community tacitly blacklisted M. le Comte d’Erlette, though there is no way of verifying this assertion. What can be verified is that he retired to his family estate to experiment in private. His only contacts were other gifted physicists on the verge of Awakening. Thus was Threnodism born. The Legacy’s name comes from a suggestion made by a Greek student. From *threnody*, a wailing dirge or lament, the name may refer to the “sound” of the probability waveforms underlying physical existence, the echoes of the Big Bang that form the background noise of radio astronomy or the howls of Pandemonium.

The first generation of Threnodists were as reclusive as their founder, shunned by the scientific community that spawned them and largely unaware of other mages. These Threnodists labored in isolation, filtering their discoveries into the academic establishment through intermediaries and fronts. These mages avoided accusations of crackpottery only because their Sleeper colleagues propounded, tested and verified theories that were almost as bizarre. In the mid-1950s, however, contingents from the Guardians of the Veil began visiting Threnodist symposia to explain in no uncertain terms the need for secrecy and discretion in matters magical. The Free Council intervened shortly

thereafter to help the Threnodists understand their heritage as Awakened beings.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, some Threnodists found that pure physics had lost its challenge for those able to break its laws at will. Since perception, awareness and consciousness played significant roles in nearly every interpretation of quantum theory, many Wailers turned their inquisitive wills upon the fields of psychology and neurology. Other Wailers saw in the growing New Age movement a chance to unite the scientific with the supernatural in a public way that could eventually lead to a greater Awakening for the human race as a whole. Still other Threnodists focused on the rapid expansion and increasing sophistication of computers and communications technology as media for the working of the will. Since this time, Threnodism has diversified dramatically while remaining an extremely small and obscure Legacy.

## The Names Threnodists Conjure With

**Max Planck** discovered in 1900 that energy is exchanged only in discrete units, individually termed a "**quantum** of action." **Albert Einstein** used Planck's quanta in a 1905 paper emphasizing the need to think of subatomic events as both particles and waves.

**Werner Heisenberg** and **Niels Bohr** wrote the "**Copenhagen Interpretation**," which put forth the radical notion that logical deterministic reality did not actually exist at the subatomic level but was created as a result of the act of observation. Heisenberg detailed this with his **uncertainty principle**, which demonstrated how the act of measuring a system inevitably disturbs that system. (Heisenberg's classic example tries to measure both the position and velocity of a subatomic particle: the more accurately you measure one quality, the more you disturb the other and make it unknowable.) Possible outcomes of measurements thus could only be expressed as a range of probability, depicted as an array of numbers called a **Heisenberg matrix**.

**Erwin Schrodinger** simplified Heisenberg's unwieldy matrices by describing the range of probability as superimposed waves whose shape can be calculated with a type of math known as "**wave mechanics**." Schrodinger proposed that all possible outcomes of an observation exist simultaneously in a potential state, and do not become actual or real until observed. (The famous "**Schrodinger's Cat**" thought-experiment concerns a cat in a sealed box, which lives or dies depending on a quantum event such as radioactive decay. Mathematically, the cat is both alive and dead until someone actually opens the box to observe it, "collapsing the wave form" of probabilities.) **Richard Feynman** used a pictorial representation of the range of events he referred to as a "sum over histories," now called a **Feynman**

**diagram**. Feynman's approach was turned inside out by **Hugh Everett III**'s suggestion that each act of observation actually splits reality into multiple universes, where every possible outcome occurs, each in its own separate world; his interpretation is known as the "**Many-Worlds Model**."

On the other hand, **David Bohm** described quantum reality as an "unbroken wholeness" wherein the **implicate order** of subatomic events "unfolds" through the act of observation into the **explicate order** of the everyday world. **John Stewart Bell**, with his "**Interconnectedness theorem**" described how this wholeness allows for influences to act faster than the speed of light through **phase entanglement**, where separate systems are correlated by observation and any change in one system instantaneously triggers a corresponding change in the other. Bohm, influenced by talks with Einstein, rejected the notion of superluminal influence and instead proposed that any quantum experiment must include a "**hidden variable**" in its equation to account for such violations of space and time. That phase entanglement occurs can no longer be doubted: instantaneous transfer of information between photons has been observed in the laboratory.

The "Bible" of quantum mechanics is *Die Mathematische Grundlagen der Quanten-mechanik* (or simply *Die Grundlagen*) by **John Von Neumann**, which addresses the infinite regress of observations-of-observations-of-observations — "**Von Neumann's Paradox**" — as well as the **non-Boolean logic** (George Boole codified the laws of conventional logic) by which the quantum world operates. Hungarian-born Von Neumann can also be credited with the idea of storing a program in a computer, strategic game theory used by governments and corporations around the world and pioneering work in robotics and atomic weaponry.

This "sum over history" of quantum theory is by no means complete, and by all means oversimplified. Players who wish to flesh out their Threnodist characters with greater detail and accuracy should check out the books *Quantum Reality* by Nick Herbert and *Taking the Quantum Leap* by Fred Alan Wolf, as well as "Physics, Consciousness and Parapsychology" by Curtis M. Brooks (*Pyramid*, Spring 1978, Volume 1, Number 4).

## Society and Culture

Most mages ignore Threnodists as harmless madmen, since most mages have difficulty figuring out what any given Threnodist is talking about. Some particularly vocal Threnodists, however, have been denounced as harmful madmen whose brains are infested with demons (which, according to Threnodist theory, they are.) The only order that has so



far accepted this Legacy within its ranks is the Free Council, although some of its leaders have had second thoughts about this decision. A few scientifically literate or broad-minded Mysterium mages privately sympathize with the Wailers, but, so far, the order's leaders block Threnodist attempts to join, and expel mages who embrace the Legacy.

### *Explicate Order*

Aside from the Free Council, the Mysterium has the most contact with this Legacy, though rarely of the order's own volition. The scholars find themselves besieged with requests to read and even borrow ancient or obscure texts — not to mention dangerously volatile substances, rare materials or unique and irreplaceable objects — that some Threnodist absolutely requires to complete years of research or make some earth-shattering scientific breakthrough. Many Threnodists seem to treat the Mysterium's libraries as some sort of back-up data storage facility; the order is always receiving bulky shipments and long, system-clogging e-mails filled with reports, theses, notes, articles and reams of raw experimental data. No one can accuse the Threnodists of being stingy with their information.

Threnodism has not eluded other accusations, though. While the Threnodists never challenged any order's leadership and maintain an apolitical stance, the Legacy's wild pronouncements and critical attitudes are seen as a threat by the Silver Ladder. The Guardians of the Veil express concern that this Legacy may reveal too many Supernal secrets to Sleeper scientists, but investigation fails to prove that quantum theory was directly influenced by its parallel magical philosophy. Rather, the *direct* influence seems to go the other way. A young Legacy by Awakened standards, the Threnodists have no history of corruption within their ranks. The Guardians, however, believe that a Threnodic Scelestus was crucially involved in the development of the atom bomb (though they won't release the name of their suspect). For several years, the Guardians have tried to enlist the Adamantine Arrow in organizing a good, old-fashioned inquisitorial witch-hunt to root out this unnamed mage's foul lineage.

### *Implicate Order*

The way Threnodism organizes itself reflects the interplay between unity and diversity that forms the Legacy's philosophical underpinnings. Unity comes from common adherence to quantum theory. Diversity comes from the broad applicability of quantum principles to studies and activities beyond physics. Some divide Threnodism into two camps, the "purists" and the "eclectics." The former is characterized by a specificity of approach and direction, and what others view as a preoccupation with physical phenomena in the material world. This can be attributed to their origins during the first half of the past century, a time when quantum theory was the exclusive province of the physical sciences. The "eclectics" are the vanguard of more recent developments in the diffusion of quantum

thought throughout the scientific world and beyond. Some Wailers like to joke that these two camps represent the "particle" and "wave" aspects of their Legacy.

The purists maintain close lines of communication and engage in great experiments that may take several generations to bear fruit. Such tutor-to-student lines follow a more rigid academic model, keeping strict accordance with scientific method even when investigating the vagaries of magical phenomena. Thorough documentation and accurate record keeping are hallmarks of these lineages, and so they are more likely to have contact with the Mysterium. Oddly enough, purist lineages are also the most naturally fractious, even though they are generally free of the academic-industrial sponsorship that fuels competition and hinders cooperation among Sleeper scientists. Other mages view the purists as succumbing to the academic tendency toward hair-splitting debates of nigh-rabbinical exactitude, with reputations and even souls used as stakes in competition between pet theories.

At the opposite extreme are the "eclectics," divergent lineages whose interests reflect the diffusion of quantum principles into other sciences beside physics. Chemists, biologists, ecologists, neurologists, psychologists and even disciples of the "soft" social sciences have found that equations originally devised to elucidate the subatomic world prove useful in their own respective fields. Despite the broad differences between these fields, inheritors of these eclectic lineages are sociable and gregarious, both with each other and with the purists. Meetings and interdisciplinary symposiums are frequent, and marked by a high degree of enthusiasm and a free exchange of theoretical speculation and experimental data. While Wailers may pursue a wide range of interests, all Wailers recognize that they share common ground in their particular scientific approach and acknowledge the shared magical ancestry that their Legacy derives from an overarching Supernal truth.

### *The Quantum Vacuum*

Threnodists stand apart from other Mastigos in that they do not take the apparent unity and coherence of their own ego-identities as an unquestioned assumption. Everything in the world, people included, consists of nested hierarchies of demonic intelligences, just as the human psyche is composed of nested hierarchies of thought, feeling, memory and myriad other brain functions. The ego thus seems to disintegrate under close inspection; "I" actually means an ever-changing "We." Most mages equate such ego-disintegration with madness and loss of will, so the very notion frightens them to their core. Threnodism, however, likens consciousness and its attendant sense of self-identity to a "Bose-Einstein condensate," a system that behaves in a more unified manner as its overall energy level increases.

(Although Albert Einstein found quantum mechanics personally dissatisfying as a scientific theory, his incisive critiques and "thought-experiments" designed to disprove

its wilder implications served to reinforce and refine it — increasing its energy level as a system, one might say. Many of the thought-experiments he devised were later performed in actuality and produced results that he contraindicated, proving the predictive power of the quantum equations. Despite Einstein's opposition, his role in the formation of quantum theory means that his name is irrevocably embedded in many key concepts.)

One specific example of such a condensate is the laser beam, wherein light particles that would normally scatter in all directions are focused into a single coherent ray and the heat energy thus delivered is highly amplified. Citing ancient occult traditions that equate consciousness with light, Threnodism draws parallels with the concentration of will, the focus and amplification of intention, that every mage must learn in order to fully utilize his powers. Just as any Mastigos must hone his will by focusing it through the Iron Gauntlet, so too must the student of Threnodism learn to channel the light of his awareness through the ruby lens of coherence and focus the laser beam of his will to act as control for the experiments he performs in the laboratory of the universe.

Another example of the condensate is a superconductor, a substance in which the alignment of its component atoms allows electricity to flow with minimal resistance. Threnodism compares this to the highly "suggestible" ephemera of the spirit world, which display superconductive properties with respect to conscious energies. Threnodists suggest that hyper-dimensional fractal systems of pure awareness, or spirits, may act as part of David Bohm's "hidden variable" in the physical world. The accomplished Threnodist understands consciousness as a non-local attribute of the universe, manifesting as anything from an animal or tree to the shades of the departed or the principles of cosmic order personified as angelic intelligence. Being a scientist, however, she scrutinizes their ephemeral substance in its finest particulate aspect and finds that it is essentially demonic in nature.

The quanta of Sleeper physics are described as "tendencies toward existence," waveforms that mathematically depict the probability of a quantum event occurring, for instance, the odds that an electron will strike a TV screen in one place or another. Quantum demons as defined by Threnodism are "the intention to exist," consciousness manifesting at such a rudimentary level that it is meaningless to speak of these demons in terms of a "mind" with distinct functions and contents. They are raw subjectivity reaching toward an object that is not there and, by pure act of will, becoming that object for itself. Quantum demons occupy a hyper-dimensional vacuum of which our physical world is only a single aspect; other aspects may be experienced as other realms, interacting with ours only indirectly through the wave function. Human minds, for instance, are emergent properties of nervous systems inhabiting three-dimensions-plus-time, with manifold inner dimensions of thought that Threnodists see as the superimposed waveforms of other dimensions in varying degrees.

Quantum demons can combine to form aggregate systems, minds every bit as complex as any human psyche — or in some cases even more so — and these are the demonic intelligences known to Sleeper legend and mage experience. As emergent properties of the void itself, they remain ontologically antecedent to higher-order phenomena such as time and space, and so exhibit such qualities as non-local faster-than-light information transfer (telepathy, the Arcanum of Mind) and even the breakdown of space-like separation itself (teleportation, the Arcanum of Space). The hyper-dimensional vacuum is thus experienced as a riotous Pandemonium of ever-emerging wills-to-exist, combining to form more and more complex and energetic unified systems, demon lords that compete for power and seek to impose their existence upon the physical world through the superimposed waveforms of human thought.

This incessant activity of primordial interactions is perceived as the "wailing" or "howling" that other Mastigos call the "Goetia." It is the same substrate from which all human (and other) thought emerges, the material of which all consciousness — according to Threnodism — is made. Goetia resounds in the private silences of the brain, where the firing of synapses between neurons can be heard as the conversation between demons in Pandemonium and in the outermost void of intergalactic space, where the shockwaves of creation yet echo. For the Threnodist, only a condensate of consciousness, energized by the scourge of critical inquiry and unified in the gauntlet of mathematic discipline, may listen to those strains and retain its identity.

## Magical Science

The Threnodists believe quantum mechanics reveals the scientific basis of magic. They are not quite right. Quantum mechanics supplies a *guiding theory* for the practice of magic; they have not proven that it works better than any other arcane theory.

Quantum mechanics itself is not magical. The Threnodist interpretation differs from Sleeper science on several crucial points, notably the role of consciousness. The frequent claim that quantum theory "proves" that reality is shaped by consciousness comes from misunderstanding the meaning of "observation." In everyday speech, "observation" implies a conscious act of perception. In science, observation just means something interacts with something else, in a way a scientist could use to gain information. A quantum event is "observed" when the entities involved interact with anything else — consciousness not required.

The Threnodists really are scientists, though. The process of science — gathering data, forming hypotheses and testing them by searching for new data — can apply to any objective phenomenon. The Arcana produce externally verifiable events; therefore, they can be studied through experiment.



Only time will tell whether Threnodist science will revolutionize magic and the world.

## Induction

Originally, only mages who Awakened as a result of their scientific studies were inducted into this Legacy. The academic prerequisites were so convolutedly arcane that these early purists seldom saw any possibility of synthesis between their own studies and the myriad esotericisms of willworking. For the first few decades of their existence, Threnodists saw themselves less as mages and more as members of the applied branch of the new theoretical physics. Tutors would not even accept pupils until they had submitted lengthy theses demonstrating their understanding of quantum mechanics.

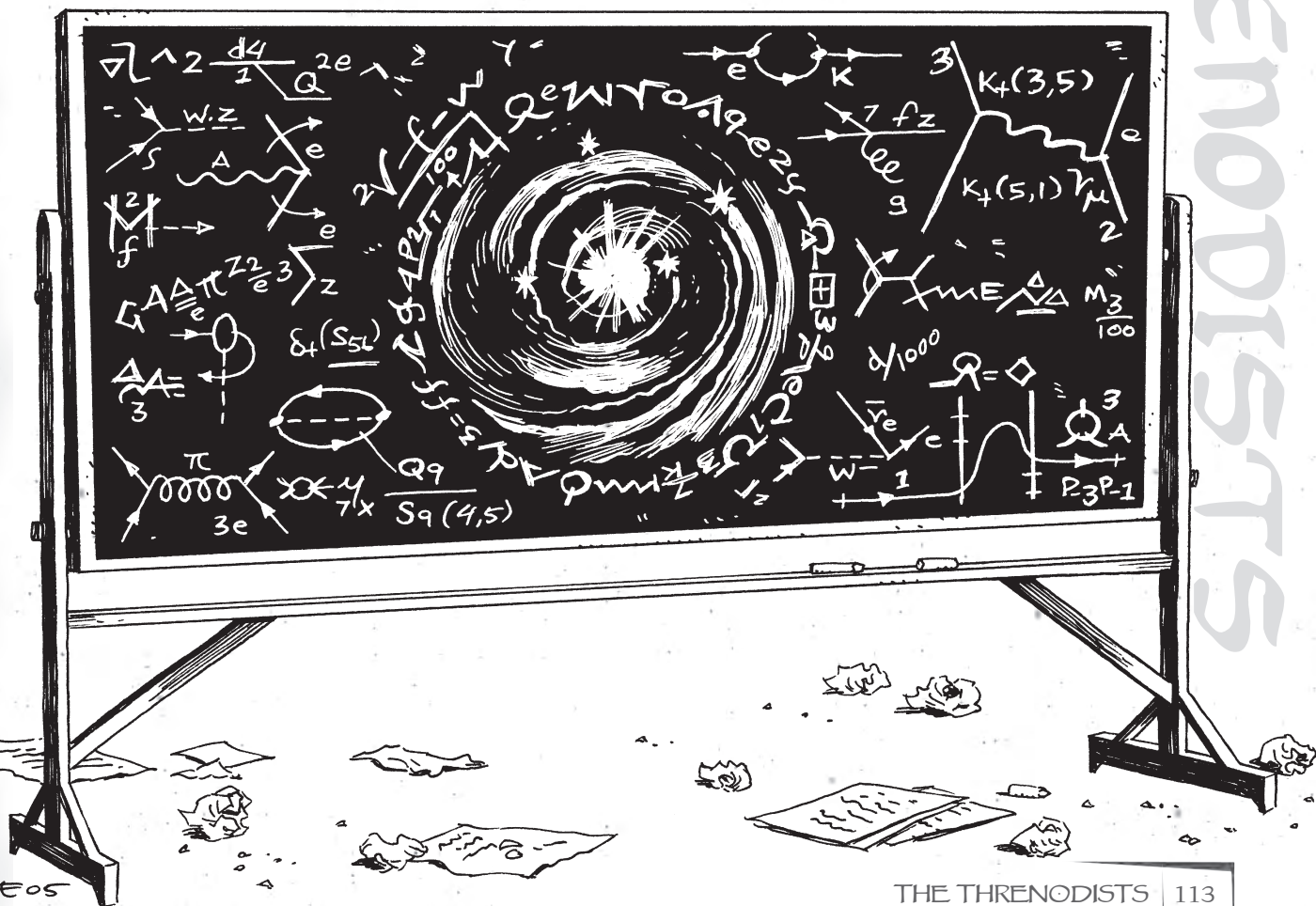
Purists consider a solid understanding of advanced mathematics, physics and critical inquiry to be a prerequisite for any student. Formerly, this sort of training was available only to those with the financial means to choose the quality of their education. Broader historical trends culminating in the information age have made it increasingly possible for a less-moneyed person who is sufficiently motivated or gifted to acquire the necessary skills.

Not all Threnodic tutors accept pupils solely on the basis of scientific training. Some Wailers recognize that, just as the principles of quantum theory have much deeper-existential

and experiential roots, true understanding of those principles need not be confined to an educated elite. Despite academic objections, many of the characteristic elements of quantum theory can be understood intuitively, without intensive mathematical and scientific preparation. (Even tutors who subscribe to this view insist on some degree of training, however; second and third attainments are seldom taught to pupils without at least three dots in Science.)

One result of this increase in prerequisite latitude has been a covert search for intellectual prodigies, whether mathematical savants who can leapfrog over the stupefying calculations needed to ground quantum miracles in the solid bedrock of probative science or those who possess a simple intuitive capacity to visualize (or otherwise imagine) vague, complex and intangible microcosmic interactions. Such individuals are rare, of course. Also, such prodigious gifts may propel a mage to the heights of magical accomplishment but do not necessarily impart the moral wisdom that constitutes the highest degrees of true enlightenment.

Concurrent with this newfound latitude is a new trend that disturbs and even horrifies outsiders to this Legacy. Just as quantum mechanics introduced an element of madness into the "sanity" of rational science, Threnodism now not only admits but actively welcomes pupils with clinical histories of mental illness. Of course, most practitioners of magic have traditionally been receptive to (and probably even originated) romantic notions of divine madness. Any willworker is likely to have a historical understanding of how childhood trauma was induced



to create a shaman, or how the “falling sickness” of epilepsy was taken as a sign of witchcraft. Even the most sophisticated, modern mage, however, can fall prey to the superstitions that still surround common cognitive dysfunctions. Many people equate neurological disease and psychological disorder with corruption, malice or some sort of spiritual deficiency. The documented existence of deranged but benevolent mages and rational Scelesti puts the lie to this view.

Threnodism points out that most criteria for sanity and spiritual wholeness rely upon an ideological framework of reason, order and almost mechanistic functionality. Quantum psychology, on the other hand, notes that consciousness retains an ability to cohere and to maintain an identity even in the absence of the aforementioned traits. Furthermore, some extreme forms of madness such as schizophrenia, multiple personality disorder and delusional paranoia actually appear to grant the sufferer keener insight into the quantum world, with the deep internal structure of the “deranged” psyche mirroring the greater external cosmology. Some Threnodists go on to say that this applies not only to Pandemonium, but to the entire Supernal World as well. Such pronouncements, of course, have done this Legacy no good in the eyes of mage society at large.

This said, the higher degrees of initiation still require the pupil to demonstrate a working knowledge of quantum theory and to apply its convoluted mathematical formulae to actual experience. Mathematical theory becomes the framework for interaction with quantum-demonic intelligences. Initiates who do not come from a scientific background might get this training in reverse order, learning scientific means of dealing with previous intrusions of the supernatural into their lives. Ultimately, however, attainments are not bestowed until some thesis — whether written or oral, theoretical or applied — is presented to a tutor, wherein the results of direct experience and experiment are synthesized with a formally codified system — which could be derived from sources as diverse as King Solomon’s *Goetia* and Von Neumann’s *Die Grundlagen*.

## Story Hooks — Entanglements

Stories that involve the Legacy of Threnodism do not require advanced degrees in physics and mathematics for the characters to participate, but still may challenge their accepted notions of reality and identity.

• **By Demons Driven:** A disturbed person known to the characters has begun a course of therapy with a Threnodic psychiatrist and starts displaying highly uncharacteristic behavior. Is it demonic possession? Manifestation of the patient’s alternate possible modes of being? Or just part of the healing process?

• **The Shunned House:** The characters are recruited to investigate the family estate of M. le Comte d’Erlette, which has evolved into a convoluted maze of bizarre space-time anomalies as his

experiments were left untended and unobserved after his disappearance.

• **The Interpenetration of Universes Has Begun:** A Threnodist experiment gone awry has collapsed the wave function that separates the parallel realities postulated by the Everett-Wheeler-Graham’s many-worlds model. The characters come face-to-face with un-Awakened alternate versions of themselves.

## Attainments

Being Mastigos, Threnodists naturally tend toward higher aptitudes in the Arcana of Mind and Space. This accords with their interpretation of quantum mechanics, wherein these two fields are held to be reflections of each other as the observer creates the observation. Most purists study Matter and Forces as well, as these were the original bases from which quantum theory emerged. Further elaborations led to theories concerning the nature of time that were hitherto only envisioned by experts in the Arcanum bearing that name.

With the increasing diversification of the eclectics, study of other Arcana has flourished. Use of the Life Arcanum in this respect has seen widespread activity, echoed by numerous pop texts on “quantum healing.” Heisenberg’s probability matrices and Schrodinger’s waveform equations are used to produce effects that can only be associated with the Fate Arcanum. Non-Boolean logic and fractal geometry has been applied to untangle the mysteries of Spirit. Prime has evoked exceptional interest, with the astronomical quantities involved in its calculation, but few Threnodists have attempted to deal with the dauntingly low amplitudes and frequencies that characterize Death.

During the heyday of the purists, Threnodic magic was heavily oriented toward bulky technological foci, which limited their more spectacular effects to laboratories equipped with lasers, particle accelerators, cloud chambers, crystal set radios, gigantic vacuum-tube computers and the like. In the ’60s and ’70s, transistor radios were popular among young eclectics who found the variability of the analog tuning system highly useful for manipulating the whole range of the electromagnetic spectrum. The revolution in digital technology has granted the modern Threnodist more mobility and discretion, focusing magic through cell phones, camcorders and laptops. One focus that has never gone out of style, however, is old-fashioned pencil and paper: With the Threnodists’ reliance upon mathematics, all Threnodists learn to focus their will through an idiosyncratic script that uses barbarous names as terms in long complex equations and blends Minkowski and Feynman diagrams with Goetic sigils. Another tradition is the spoken invocation of the names and theories enshrined in the history of quantum mechanics, so that a Threnodist making magic sounds as if she were delivering an oral thesis to a board of professors. For quick spellcasting, Threnodists





rely on little more equipment than their more traditional colleagues in magic, or none; the quantum demons respond less effectively to “virtual” tools than to rarified equipment in a Threnodist’s hands, but they do respond. For extended spellcasting, however, purist Wailers frequently retreat to laboratory-sanctums equipped with a full complement of scientific apparatus as well as a blackboard with lots of chalk.

### *1st: Superluminal Information Transference*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Mind 1, Space 2 (primary), Awareness 2

One of the fundamental problems classical physicists had with quantum mechanics was its apparent violation of Einsteinian relativity, which dictates that neither matter nor energy may exceed the velocity of light, a fixed universal constant. Information, being neither matter nor energy, can break this cosmic speed limit with impunity, using the wave function as a sort of “carrier signal” instead of light.

A mage can gain visual information about that place, as described by the Space 2 spell “Scrying,” by attuning her own waveform with that of a distant location. The information thus acquired need not be limited to the visible portion of the electromagnetic spectrum. The mage may also employ the Mind 1 spell “Third Eye” to increase

her own perceptual frequencies, enabling her to receive information from the more subtle ranges of the spectrum of magical energy. Furthermore, inclusion of the Mind Arcanum allows for observation of unquantifiable neural states that would otherwise remain unobserved, effectively disclosing David Bohm’s “hidden variable.”

Any Threnodist understands that it is impossible to observe an event without affecting its outcome — as Heisenberg demonstrated with his uncertainty principle. By using this attainment, however, the mage can minimize her degree of involvement to an infinitesimal (or quantal) amount, nearly approaching the state of complete detachment that classical physics once postulated for all observers. This will not, however, spare her any backlash if her social ineptitude reveals her as a habitual eavesdropper or voyeur.

### *2nd: Correlated Entanglement*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Space 3

For some people, the most striking implication of the Copenhagen Interpretation is the idea that consciousness creates reality, a notion that is not unfamiliar to the Awakened. Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle indicates that even the most passive observation causes changes in that which is observed. When two separate objects are compared in the

mind of the observer, their respective waveforms become inextricably entangled so that anything that affects one will have some correlated effect upon the other.

Threnodists use this property to create or strengthen a sympathetic magical link between two things, as detailed in the Space 3 spell “New Threads.” Every person they ever met, every road they have ever taken, every place visited and even every object touched could conceivably be employed to trace the “six degrees of separation” to any earthly target they seek. More than one purist has been accused of placing a “scrying-marker spell” on an attractive colleague.

### *3rd: Non-Locality*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Space 4

According to Bell’s Interconnectedness theorem — and the experimental data that supports it — reality is non-local. Distance, direction and size are not immutable absolutes, but simply coordinate aspects of the wave function. This mathematical property of the wave equation has led some physicists to dub these coordinate functions as mere “space-like separation.” Another mathematical property of the wave equation is that any waveform can be transformed into any other type of waveform by compounding it with itself enough times. Some Threnodists become so adept at altering their own vibrations in such geometrically precise ways that they actually rewrite the coordinate functions of their own bodies. From their own point of view, they re-adjust the coordinates of the world around them.

From the point of view of the world, however, they seem to disappear from one location and reappear at another, as per the Space 4 spell “Teleportation.” Wily adepts of this attainment have a repertoire of tricks to render this effect less obtrusive to Sleepers: scrying out corners to appear behind and unoccupied rooms (or even closets) to emerge from, disappearing into anonymous crowds, popping in and out of sight among cubicles, stalls, colonnades and other repetitively designed spaces and distracting the cabdriver so that he does not notice that his five-miles-crosstown-during-crush-hour fare took no time according to his wristwatch.

**Optional Arcanum:** Mind 4

The wave-particle duality at the core of any discussion of quantum mechanics mirrors a long-standing conundrum plaguing the history of scientific thought, the mind-body problem. At this level of attainment, the Threnodist may take full advantage of both the non-local properties of his own waveform and the highly localized particular nature of his body, leaving the latter behind while extending the former. His consciousness (his “pilot wave”) may then move freely and interact with the low-amplitude waveform of the earth — what other mages call Twilight — as delineated in the Mind 4 spell “Psychic Projection.”

## *Sample Character*

### *Aziphos*

**Quote:** “Why choose the path of least resistance, when the improbable edges of the bell curve are so much more interesting?”

**Background:** Aziphos was a brilliant young physicist poised on the verge of a major breakthrough in a branch of theoretical physics that would spawn “superstring” theory decades later. Older and wiser heads puzzled over his exotic calculations in universities around the world. Then came the breakdown. The young genius began to hear voices talking about him, voices belonging to other scientists who were nowhere near him at the time. At a conference in Zurich in 1973, he confronted a rival unified field theorist with accusations of slander — accusations apparently accurate enough to provoke a physical attack with a folding chair. The rival lost his chance at tenure and Aziphos was curiously unscathed, but the incident reduced him to a gibbering wreck. The young physicist spent the next several years in a mental institution, where he continued his theoretical work by scrawling calculations on the padded walls of his cell using his own waste as ink. One night around 1990, Aziphos “dreamed” that he found a hidden passageway out of the cell; in fact, he had finally completed his tortuous Awakening and escaped through magic. (According to the forgetful guard, lazy chef and overworked administrator at the institution, Aziphos is still there.)

An attempt to re-enter the academic world with his new discoveries was intercepted by a Threnodist tutor who took Aziphos under his wing and helped him understand his new place in the scheme of things. Since that time he has wandered the world in a variety of guises — conman, clown, stand-up comic, stage magician, high school science teacher, faith healer — subtly testing the limits of what Sleepers will accept as reality. The success of his latest venture, as a speaker on pop science on the New Age lecture circuit, will depend upon two factors: the judgment of the agents from the Guardians of the Veil who are tailing him and whether his recurrent dreams of waking up back in his padded cell continue to increase in frequency.

**Description:** Now in his mid-50s, Aziphos strikes the observer as an overgrown kid, paunchy and balding but with a mischievous smile and twinkling, if somewhat bulging, eyes. His wardrobe is as varied as the jobs he has held, but he generally favors the well-worn tweeds from his days in academia. His pockets are usually crammed with scribbled notes along with a few cheap illusionist’s gimmicks, brain-teaser puzzles and novelty gag items.

When working his magic, Aziphos’ body may seem to distort, not unlike the spatial anomalies that are his specialty. His eyes bug out absurdly, and his limbs stretch or grow bulbous, enhancing the clownish demeanor he often affects.



## Storytelling

**Hints:** Aziphos' every act and utterance is tinged with an anarchic but gentle sense of humor. While he enjoys lecturing on his favorite subjects, Aziphos would rather hear what other people have to say and encourage them to try to fulfill their wildest dreams. Even when confined to difficult choices, Aziphos never ceases to look for the most creative alternative. Attempting — and mostly succeeding — to play the divine fool, Aziphos can stumble/dance out of dangerous situations with a grin, but direct physical violence and emotional betrayal tend to unnerve him. He has never quite managed to shake the feeling that his life over the last decade and a half has only been an insane dream.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Aziphos always keeps a well-chewed pencil stub behind his right ear, a "wand" he uses to redraw the boundaries of Space — in the style of Wile E. Coyote, whenever possible. Aziphos maintains that the pencil nub is nearly 100 years old, and, by sheer coincidence, was used by both Werner Heisenberg and John Stewart Bell.

**Real Name:** Wulf Alnfried

**Path:** Mastigos

**Order:** Free Council

**Legacy:** Threnodist

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 5, Wits 4, Resolve 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

**Mental Skills:** Awareness 4, Academics 3, Computer 2, Medicine 1, Science (Physics) 5

**Physical Skills:** Athletics (Tumbling) 4, Drive 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 2

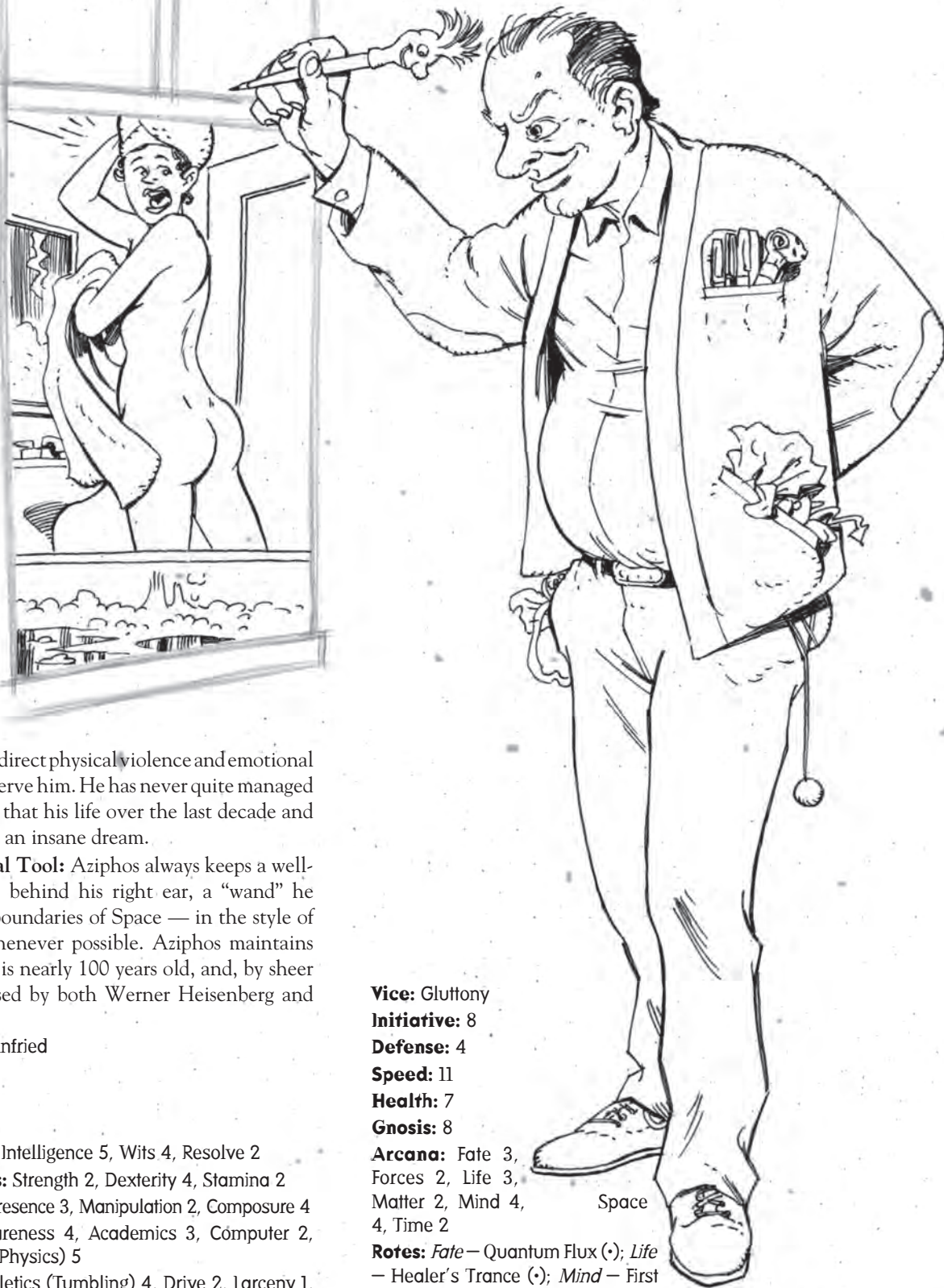
**Social Skills:** Empathy 3, Expression (Stage Magic) 4, Socialize 3, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 3

**Merits:** Dream 3, Destiny (Bane: Psychiatrists) 2

**Willpower:** 6

**Wisdom:** 6

**Virtue:** Hope



**Vice:** Gluttony

**Initiative:** 8

**Defense:** 4

**Speed:** 11

**Health:** 7

**Gnosis:** 8

**Arcana:** Fate 3, Forces 2, Life 3, Matter 2, Mind 4, Space 4, Time 2

**Rotes:** *Fate* — Quantum Flux (•); *Life* — Healer's Trance (•); *Mind* — First Impressions (••), Misperception (••); *Space* — Untouchable (••), Pocket Realm (•••), Safe Keeping (•••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Faster-Than-Light Information Transference, 2nd — Correlated Entanglement (optional healing version), 3rd — Non-Locality

**Mana/per turn:** 30/8

**Armor:** 4 ("Untouchable," Space ••)

# THE TRANSHUMAN ENGINEERS

*The Apocalypse is nigh, and it will be digital and broadcast live!*

In the 1960s, Gordon E. Moore (one of Intel's co-founders) predicted that, at the perceived rate of technological progress, the number of transistors on a microchip would double every 18 to 24 months. He's been right for 40 years, and this theory was canonized as "Moore's Law."

Some might say that this idea applies to all current technological and scientific development. Over the last century and into this one, progress looks truly exponential. In every field, whether robotics or pharmaceuticals, artificial intelligence or biotechnology, the evolution of human knowledge arcs upwards with an astounding curve. What humans have achieved during the last two millennia pales in comparison to what humanity has achieved during the last 100 years. And, in some fields, what humanity has realized in the last 10 years easily dwarfs everything of the last 100.

Enter the Transhuman Engineers. The mages of this Legacy believe wholeheartedly in the ever-accelerating growth of technology. They see the entire depth and breadth of history as a slowly gathering storm of possibility. The Fallen World has taken its time building steam to this level of raw potential, but that is how it should be. If a child accepts an allowance raise of a single cent that doubles every week, he doesn't see any significant growth for what feels like forever. But, as the weeks go on, he finds that, suddenly, his allowance skyrockets, and his meager piggy bank can no longer hold the sudden rise in his childhood income. In a year, this doubling allowance would bankrupt the planet. This world has taken a long time to get to here, inching forward step by step in its crawl toward development. But this is now the point at which progress is only *just beginning*.

With technology advancing in this way, the mages of this Legacy believe humanity will soon reach a point of *Singularity*. In mathematics, a singularity is a point at which calculation breaks down. A curve leaps to infinity. Technological singularity is the same, except here humankind's progress will grow to a point that *nothing* can stay the same and *everything* must change. Artificial intelligence surpasses our own. Lifespans stretch forever outward, granting everyone equal eternities. Flesh and machine merge. In this scenario, humans are no longer human, but *post-human*.

This is what the Transhuman Engineers want, and this is what they try to achieve. They know that other mages do not share the Engineers' view, but so what? The Engineers see themselves as the Prime Movers, the catalysts who push the envelope just a little bit further. They truly believe that they usher humanity toward the light at the end of the tunnel. The Engineers don't know what exists beyond the light. Is it another Atlantis? Something better? Will the Fallen and the Supernal Worlds reunite? Will all of the Sleepers have their eyes torn open? Will all things unite and become one? The Engineers don't know. They only know that they will help this to happen, and that everyone who stands in the way of progress is the enemy of a greater future.

**Parent Path:** Obrimos

**Nickname:** Prime Movers

**Orders:** The majority of Engineers come from the ranks of the Free Council, if they come from an order at all. The past is obsolete, so why cling to it? The process is forward. The future is key. The Prime Movers believe that technology captures a little bit of the Supernal. No one should waste time looking backward, and, hence, the Free Council and the Transhuman Engineers are an easy fit. It's the *only* fit, however. A few mages from the Mysterium join the growing numbers of Prime Movers. The mages who catalog and study the strange finds in the order's treasuries of lore sometimes feel attracted to the possibilities of this Legacy.

The other orders are less comfortable with the Engineers' mania for progress. The Guardians of the Veil, for instance, grow uneasy at the thought of "sharing" magic or "inspiring" the mortal herd. Magic must be concealed, lest Paradox rear its head and power fall into foolish or unworthy hands. To the Guardians, the Prime Movers represent an open door—straight to the Abyss. Therefore, the Guardians feel themselves duty-bound to prevent the Engineers' chaos. The Guardians keep a close eye on the Prime Movers, waiting for the day the Guardians have to move in and "fix" the Engineers' egregious errors.

The Adamantine Arrow and Silver Ladder both think the Engineers are nuts. The Prime Movers want to change the world beyond recognition, rendering both orders pointless. For the Engineers' part, most don't care much for war or



secret power: That's all so last millennium.

**Appearance:** Transhuman Engineers see themselves as a progressive, driving force and tend to dress the part. Every mage interprets this in her own way, but most Prime Movers dress more ostentatiously than their counterparts on the Path of the Mighty. The Prime Movers favor power suits, loud outfits and *haute couture* fashions that call attention to themselves. A few Engineers parade around in garish makeup straight from cyberpunk movies such as *Blade Runner*, or adopt industrial piercings and unconventional tattoos (binary code, JavaScript, *faux-circuitry*). Prime Movers all love gadgetry, from iPods to PDAs, from low-grade microchip implants to “smart shoes”; this gadgetry provides the surest guide to this Legacy's members.

**Background:** Transhuman Engineers can come from any race, creed, culture or income bracket within the developed world or advancing regions such as India. The only core tenet they all share is an unswerving interest in both technology and its effects upon culture. Anybody from a computer science student to a bleeding-edge pop culture blogger will do.

Most Engineers tend to be educated, and, thus, possess high Mental Attributes and Skills (especially Academics, Computer, Crafts and Science). That doesn't forbid these mages from being social creatures as well. They often act as the muses or false competitors for real inventors and scientists, and that takes the ability to understand and manipulate others, making Social Skills such as Empathy, Persuasion and Subterfuge common.

The Prime Movers share no common Awakenings, though many have claimed to “see” a literal singularity in their vision — meaning a point in which all things seem to merge and become one. Such a moment usually happens just before the mage finds herself in the Watchtower. Outside of that small feature, an Engineer's Awakening is as unique as anybody else's.

**Organization:** The Transhuman Engineers have an informal organization. Although many mages of this Legacy like to stay in touch with each other to commune and plan, constant communication is not required. Once an Engineer's apprenticeship ends, he can choose to live the

rest of his life without ever meeting with another Engineer. Few will condemn him for that.

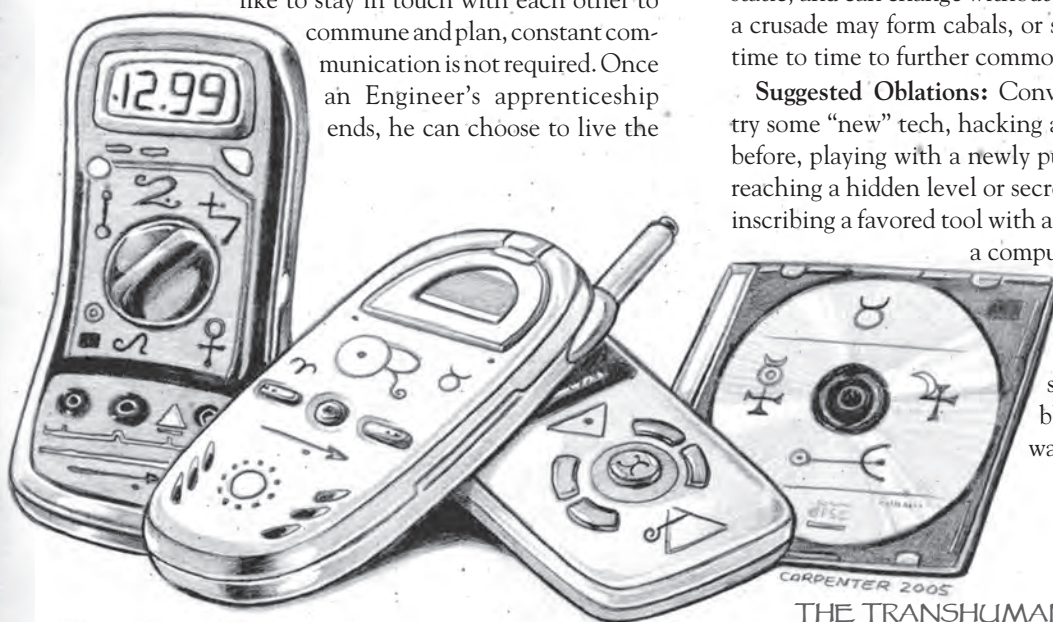
That said, the Prime Movers do create opportunities for members to gather. The most important are the Legacy's “Expos.” Once a year, invitations go out (via e-mail or text message) to the various Engineers. They meet at a prepared and protected location and show off what they've done and seen. Some Engineers create elaborate technical displays, whereas others hold a number of disquisitions and colloquia on any number of subjects — from medical nanotechnology to the artificial intelligence of upcoming video games. Other Engineers just sit in the bar and drink. Past Expos have been held on a hidden floor in the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, in the desert near Los Alamos, and in the tunnels below the Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technical Museum in Bangalore. At least a third of the Engineers do not come physically, but attend the Expos via some manner of telepresence.

The Engineers occasionally build communal citadels in the Obrimos fashion. They don't care for peaceful cloisters; innovation is not found in a vacuum. Prime Movers place their citadels where people and ideas gather and compete: in downtown city centers, on the most traveled highways and byways or among the throngs of students at huge universities. These places are the Engineers' war zones. Yes, nearby populations present risk, but these densely populated areas also the most fertile breeding grounds for raw *possibility*. The next generation of inventors, programmers and powerful minds won't be found wandering around a meadow. Such dynamic personalities will be in the thick of things, and so that is where the Engineers go, too.

Every Prime Mover has a favored area of technological interest or expertise, called her “crusade.” A mage's crusade gives her a number of pet projects upon which to work. A Prime Mover whose crusade is portable computing devices might attach himself to an industry insider in an effort to inspire that individual. Or the mage might *be* the industry insider. Of course, an Engineer's crusade is by no means static, and can change without warning. Mages who share a crusade may form cabals, or simply work together from time to time to further common goals.

**Suggested Oblations:** Convincing another person to try some “new” tech, hacking a system you never hacked before, playing with a newly purchased (or stolen) “toy,” reaching a hidden level or secret in a video game, ritually inscribing a favored tool with alchemical symbols, writing a computer program

**Concepts:** Early adopter, hacker, identity thief, inventor's muse, metrosexual philosopher, tech blogger, video game designer, war driver



## History

The Engineers are unexpectedly numerous for a relatively new Legacy. Their history, as such, is not particularly long. They do claim an unofficial heritage of various mages, however.

The Transhuman Engineers trace their heritage backward to various Free Council mages over the last century. These mages acted as muses to various significant figures of scientific and technological development and are said to have helped shepherd the destinies and inventions of paragons such as Nikola Tesla (genius of electrical engineering), Wernher von Braun (pioneer of rocket technology), Philo Farnsworth (inventor of the TV) and Allen Newell (originator of theoretical cognitive AI).

## V.V.

V.V. is the Free Council mage who first crafted his soul in an effort to help push society toward a technological singularity. He takes his shadow name from the initials of a prominent science fiction author whose novels and essays helped introduce the idea of the Singularity. The founder of the Prime Movers believes that the Fallen World is on the cusp of a technological singularity, and that forces conspire to keep the Fallen World from going further. By driving technology forward with compulsive devotion, the Transhuman Engineers can help bring the world to Supernal enlightenment.

V.V. is still around. Few mages see him anymore; he is rumored to be working on “something big,” though precisely *what* it is remains a secret. Mages who’ve worked with V.V. say he has a number of leading Sleeper scientists and inventors as his cronies, and what he is planning will change the world forever — one way or another.

V.V. leads a fluctuating cabal of mages young and old. Prime Movers consider it a great honor to be invited to meet V.V. and help him achieve his goals. Some mages who meet with him return to the world a month or a year later, wild-eyed with newfound enthusiasm for their crusades. Other mages do not return at all.

## Society and Culture

While the Engineers have an informal (some would even say scattershot) organization, they still have a formalized culture. The Prime Movers endeavor to instill in their apprentices similar values, ideas and teachings. What these apprentices do with such lessons is up to them, but the Legacy considers it important that they all begin with a few shared precepts.

## Action and Inspiration

For mages who think about crafting their souls in the forge of this Legacy, it comes down to the simple question

of *what do the Engineers do?* The Prime Movers don’t require their mages to “do” anything except support technological progress. That’s it. Many mages ignore technology, or show contempt for it. The Engineers think this is short-sighted. Like it or not, they say, technology is the ladder upon which humankind climbs. To eschew technology means to forego progress. And progress is everything: it is the way the Fallen World will bridge the Abyss and reach the Supernal.

To the mages of this Legacy, progress means using technology and be *seen* using it. Many Engineers stay on the bleeding edge of technology. These early adopters buy whatever comes to market, no matter how expensive or impractical. If the product comes emblazoned with the hottest or weirdest technological buzzword, the mage probably wants it. Teraflops, telemedicine, bioinformatics, Bluetooth, pixel-shader effects, Turing tests — these are the words of the Prime Movers, and this language changes and grows *daily*. Owning the latest, gee-whizziest techno-toy is not mandatory. In fact, some Engineers cherish antiquated technology such as BBS’s or ham radio. Slipping off the bleeding edge, however, does tend to reduce status within the Legacy.

Transhuman Engineers don’t just use the latest technology. Some of them create it, too. A number of Prime Movers are themselves inventors, programmers or scientists. They try to push the limits of technology and magic alike. They imbue machines with magic; they use magic to further their scientific and technological research. (Of course, they realize that magic cannot be technology’s sole component or driving force. Humanity must be able to harness and create technology for it to drive humankind toward the Singularity.) These mages do not work in isolation, and prefer to surround themselves with other mages, Sleepwalkers or even Sleepers who can contribute to whatever overarching design goal drives these Engineers. Engineers of this stripe are found in wildly varying fields — their crusades might mean helping map the genomes, building the world’s largest Wi-Fi Internet-access “bubble” or helping to feed starving nations through biotechnology. No field is off-limits.

Still other Transhuman Engineers motivate and inspire their Sleeper colleagues. These mages become muses for the creators and architects of new technology. An Engineer could anonymously e-mail an inventor tips, tricks, insider information or even stolen or classified data. Alternatively, the mage could develop a close, personal relationship with the Sleeper. The Engineers often become friends or lovers to mortals they perceive as innovators like themselves. If this means buddying up to a video game designer with an interest in artificial intelligence, so be it. If it requires becoming lover to an inventor on the political and cultural fringe, then that’s what’s necessary. The Engineer can help shepherd the individual’s progress, which might mean salvaging a damaged ego, leaving little “hints” behind illustrating mistakes or corrupted data or helping to foster much-needed competition (for competition breeds progress).



For example, a Prime Mover might build an Enhanced or Imbued device that does something *just* outside the current range of expected technology. The device provides a feature or service that has long been sought after, but has not yet been achieved. Perhaps the Engineer offers a robot that can run (a long-existing stumbling block for inventors of bipedal robots), or maybe designs an engine that uses fuel more efficiently than anything in current production. The Engineer can show this “prototype” to a handful of Sleeper inventors (either by bragging about it or by purposefully leaving the specs where a Sleeper can find them) and say that, gosh, he sure hopes nobody beats him to market. With that said, the mage can stand back and let the competitive tech sector go to battle over designing the same or similar prototypes. What once needed magic becomes real. The Prime Movers say the trick has worked dozens of times.

### *Core Tenets*

Tutors of the Transhuman Engineers teach their apprentices the following tenets. An apprentice doesn’t have to agree with these precepts, though open disavowal of them may earn her more than just a disgruntled look. More than one Engineer has lost status within the Legacy by mocking one or another tenet when other Engineers could hear.

#### **Unopposed Progress**

Innovation cannot be opposed. People who block advances in technology are enemies of the Transhuman Engineers. The world moves toward an ineluctable point, a wonderful and necessary sublimation in which primitive humanity (i.e., the human race as it is now) becomes something greater, something *different*. Anyone who places roadblocks in the way of this objective is hurting the world. Such a person denies the Supernal.

Most Engineers take a subtle approach. If a pharmaceutical company deems a potential new drug non-profitable and tries to bury the project, an Engineer might steal the formula and give it to someone who *will* produce the drug. If a politician stands in the way of pro-technology or scientific legislation, the mage might dig up some dirt on the politico (an affair, an old DUI charge, a scandalous investment) and blackmail her into “going with the flow.”

Not all Prime Movers are so restrained, however. Some Engineers engage in acts that other mages see as dangerous or cruel. In the case of the aforementioned politician, the Engineer might forge evidence of a scandal (easily done with magic), threaten her or her family — or worse, simply assassinate or brainwash her. If a group openly opposes animal testing, even when such experimentation can save human lives, a Prime Mover might “dissuade” the group from further interference. It’s regrettable if such dissuasion takes the form of coercion, torture or turning the members into lab animals themselves, but sometimes maintaining progress means making hard decisions. In this way, Engineers can become extremists as their Wisdom drops. Where once they might have taken a delicate tack in removing the

obstacles of innovation, they eventually decide on more excessive (but “necessary”) tactics to preserve the flow of information and advancement.

#### **Unfettered Access to Technology**

Not only should progress remain unopposed, its benefits must be available for everybody’s benefit. How can technology change the world if it stays in the jealous hands of an elitist few?

Many Engineers strive to expand access to modern technology. Why shouldn’t the homeless have cell phones? Why can’t a small African village connect to the Internet, have its own website and be entirely wireless? Whatever technology the Engineers possess, others should equally be allowed to have. In some cases, this means the Engineers purchase or steal technology, and distribute it among the masses like some kind of tech-obsessed Robin Hood. In other cases, the Prime Movers teach others how to pilfer their own tech. Perhaps the Engineers impart the secrets of hacking wireless networks or using peer-to-peer (P2P) pirate networks. The Engineers agree that the power of technology should be free, and one should make the utmost effort to keep it that way.

#### **Anti-Corporate Attitude**

This Legacy upholds a somewhat counterintuitive — some might even say hypocritical — outlook toward corporations. Without funding from big companies, a lot of technological research just wouldn’t happen. And yet, the Engineers still purport that corporations ultimately hurt advancement more than helping it.

The reason for this is that corporations are driven by their profit margins; any technology advanced by the corporations is geared toward their bottom line. How many possibilities have been pushed aside in the name of money? The corporations are not altruistic. They don’t push the envelope based on humanity’s needs — only the needs of their stockholders.

In fact, tutors in this Legacy teach their apprentices a number of corporate-level conspiracies. The pharmaceutical companies keep the cure for cancer hidden, because imperfect drugs and therapies make too much money. The oil companies similarly suppress the engines that run by splitting water molecules. The electric companies (in tandem with various world governments) keep Nikola Tesla’s papers under wraps — not because he designed powerful weapons that could fall into the wrong hands, but because he designed technologies to deliver free wireless electricity. A number of Engineers claim they have proof of such conspiracies, though few will show the evidence to anybody outside the Legacy. (And, in the World of Darkness, of course, many conspiracies *are* true.)

#### **Technology Will Become Magic**

The Transhuman Engineers believe that true technology invites magic from the Supernal and enlivens the Fallen World. Occultist Aleister Crowley called magic “the art of



causing change according to Will." The Prime Movers say technology fits that definition, too. As humanity controls the physical world more completely and more invasively through technology, brute matter becomes imbued with meaning. Technology, therefore, is the only part of culture (not art, politics or academics) that actively draws down and captures this mystery.

Modern technology comes closer than anything else to letting a Sleeper feel like a mage, too: will it, and it shall be so. Flick a switch, press a button or type a password and a thousand hidden forces and electromechanical *djinni* are at your command.

All of this ever-increasing knowledge and power converges in the Singularity. The Prime Movers believe the Exarchs won't be able to keep up with their Sleeping prisoners. The scientists will catch the Exarchs in their Lie and expose the secret, Supernal underpinnings of reality, the technologists will apply their discoveries and, thus, will the entire world be transformed.

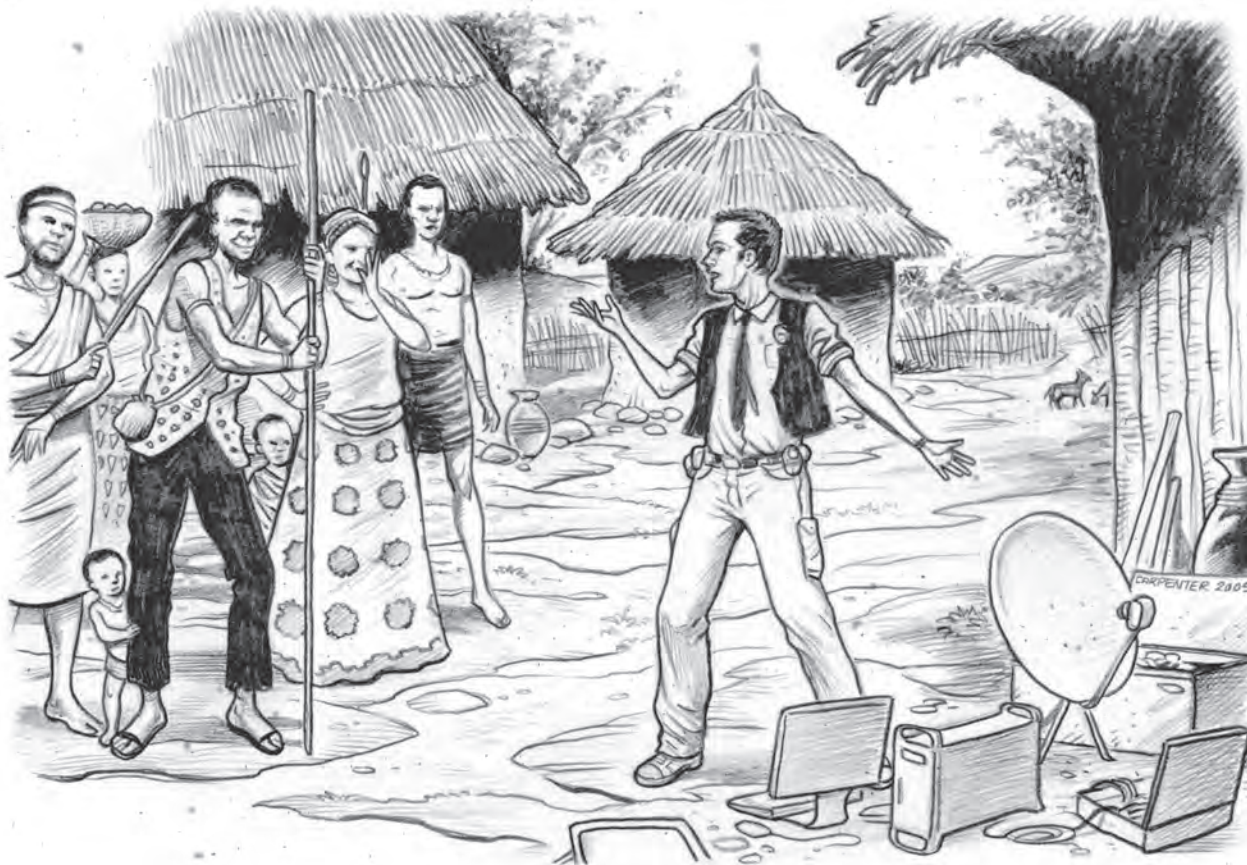
Religion? Politics? Art? The Transhuman Engineers don't think those fields bring Supernal influences to the Fallen World. At best, religion, politics and art are amusements; at worst, they are deceptions to propagate the Lie. Only technology can change the world.

In this way, the Prime Movers' views are very limited, and they clash sometimes even with the rest of the Free Council. Libertines acknowledge technology's power but do not focus solely upon it. The Engineers do.

### *Magical Technology*

Prime Movers make frequent use of Enhanced and Imbued technological items. They even find a few Artifacts of technology that somehow captured Supernal power. An example might be an Imbued MP3 player that uses Forces and Space magic to pick up frequencies from across the world — or Mind magic to hear the thoughts of people nearby. Transhuman Engineers make heavy use of Enhanced items, which allow for subtle advantage out in the field (and the Engineers prefer to avoid Paradox for obvious reasons). Usually, an Enhanced item in the hands of a Prime Mover simply provides an equipment bonus toward its use — a laptop that gives a bonus when performing research, a cell phone that offers advantage when transmitting viruses to other cell phones or a Taser weapon that fires with unerring accuracy.

Prime Movers almost invariably dedicate technological devices as magical tools. (These often relate to an individual mage's chosen crusade). Any Free Council mage can do this as his order tool, of course, but Transhuman Engineers may dedicate high-tech *Path* tools, too. The device echoes a classic Path tool through its form or function: similar to a mirror, a picture phone captures an image; a Taser is as much a weapon as any spear or dagger. And what could represent an Obrimos mage's affinity for Forces better than a device that actually carries and manipulates energy through circuits and batteries?





## Gadget Acquisition

Transhuman Engineers usually own a great deal of technology. It is not unusual to see a Prime Mover saddled with two iPods, a GPS device, wireless headphones, smart sneakers, a PDA, a keychain full of JumpDrives, a digital camera the size of a credit card, a handheld gaming device and a couple of different digital phones. Their sanctums are often similarly loaded with gadgetry: robotic “toys,” kitchen appliances that connect to the Internet, LCD screens on every wall acting as windows, several PCs and so forth. Prime Movers often own a number of “black” technologies (i.e., items that have yet to be mass-produced or announced to the public) such as stealth surveillance devices, transparent silicon circuitry, hologram monitors or biometric eye-scanners.

Such items are not only expensive but, in many cases, impossible to actually *own*. Some Engineers are wealthy, but few are wealthy enough to support their excessive “habits.” Transhuman Engineers don’t always stay within the law. Mages of this Legacy are not only allowed to use magic to pilfer new technology, they are *encouraged* to do so. If progress is meant to be unopposed and available to all, the Engineers see little issue with taking it for themselves using the tools at hand.

The Engineers’ overwhelming passion for technology can hobble them in some circumstances. They rely so heavily upon their gadgets that being *without* them is tantamount to total helplessness. Woe to the unfortunate Prime Mover who finds himself in the wilderness without GPS tracking, a digital phone and an air-conditioned weatherproof tent.

### Vogue Tech

While all technology is created equal in the eyes of the Prime Movers, some forms of tech are more “in vogue” than others:

**AI:** Artificial intelligence is a crusade among many Engineers. In true AI, the mechanism would transcend itself and deterministic programs would become creative thought. Right now, two schools of thought compete for attention among the Prime Movers. One theory says that artificial intelligence should be made in the image of humans and that computers should learn to think with the free logic of which a human is capable. Other mages seek what is called “emergent technology,” in which the system intelligence is given the adaptability of an ant colony. While individual ants are stupid and capable of only the simplest acts, an entire colony performs complex feats of creation and survival. These “multi-agents” might help resolve urban traffic flow, information retrieval, medical diagnosis, even *pizza delivery*.

**Cyborgs:** The Prime Movers have their share of cyborgs among them. A “cyborg” isn’t a full-blown Terminator, but simply a human who has technology integrated *into* his body. Examples include pacemakers, tracking devices, microchips that monitor health and life signs and digital phone receivers planted in the ear. Some Engineers have “environmentally reactive” chips planted in the flesh of

their arms. When an appropriately-fitted Engineer enters his home, the chip sends a signal to various parts of the house. Windows dim, lights turn on, coffee begins to brew or the house greets the mage in a pleasant voice.

Other mages conduct more radical experiments with chips implanted into their brains. With these chips, mages can control a mouse cursor or machine without touching it, because the chip allows them to do it just by *thinking* about it. Microchips in this fashion can also curb addictions and mental illnesses. So far, “brainchips” all require enchantment — but the Engineers think their experiments will lead to devices that Sleepers can make and use.

**Communication:** The last decade has seen an explosion of communication technologies. The two paragons of this technology are the Internet and the digital phone. With this one-two punch, the world can be informed of events *nigh-instantaneously*. If a bomb goes off in Berlin, a remote town in Alaska can hear about it (and see pictures of it) *minutes* later. The Internet similarly gives everyone a voice. All are free on the Net, unhindered and equal. (The “blogger” phenomenon is a perfect example of this, and one a number of Engineers join, as well.) The Engineers want to push these technologies until humanity has what amounts to a “hive mind.” With the aforementioned brainchips, information can be relayed immediately through the global mind without hesitation or filter — someday.

Some other technologies and sciences (genengineered crops, cloning, medical tech) are regarded highly by the Transhuman Engineers but don’t often make an appearance as a Prime Mover’s crusade. While many of these technologies are touted as the “next big thing,” most mages of this Legacy have a greater knack for “hard tech” than these particular crusades.

## Other Precepts

The Transhuman Engineers follow a number of lesser “guidelines” that complement their overarching principles. These precepts are less likely to be followed with obsessive diligence, and instead provide a list of general characteristics that a mage in this Legacy might possess.

- Many Engineers complement their Forces and Prime Arcana with Matter magic. This enables their magic to control or create technology in almost any way they can imagine.

- The Libraries of the Prime Movers are often more technologically byzantine than those of other Free Council mages. Engineers establish labyrinthine networks, each concealed behind firewalls, wireless access keys and biometric scanners. Some Transhuman Engineers spread their Libraries out over hundreds of DVD-ROMs or USB JumpDrives. Some Prime Movers actually make their own storage devices, items that others cannot understand to hack.

- As Obrimos, the Engineers embody a kind of strength. They generally believe they are the only mages willing to guide the world toward its proper end (an “end” meaning





“new beginning”). They are used to conflict, and do not avoid it. That said, despite their strengths, the Legacy openly defies the usual organizations of the Obrimos. While some mages on the Path of the Mighty find a power in uniformity, the Prime Movers disagree. They believe that, as individuals, they unconsciously work toward a singular harmony. Forcing homogeneity breeds predictability, complacency — weakness, the Engineers suggest. Therefore, the mages of this Legacy are sometimes at odds with their Obrimos allies.

- Despite relying upon technology, the Prime Movers are not without occult interests. In fact, they usually inscribe their tech devices with occult symbols. In addition to the Atlantean sigils common to all mages, the Engineers often draw upon astrology and alchemy — the precursors of physical science. Some cobble together their own symbols, often mashing together various alchemical symbols (for example, the symbol of gold with a lightning strike through it, to represent the microscopic gold wiring in every computer chip).

## Induction

It's not too hard to join up with the Prime Movers. For this reason, the Legacy has an unusually large number of mages in its ranks. A mage who wants to join the Transhuman Engineers faces only one test: *impress me*. That's all it takes, is to impress a current standing member. Of course, impressing a Prime Mover isn't easy, as many of them have seen it all (or believe they have). The nature of this impression is unique to each tutor. It can be as difficult and drastic as a mage showing how she podcasted from the top of Mount Everest. It can be as simple as designing a cool new GUI (graphical user interface) for a hip, pop culture website. What amuses and astounds one Engineer might bore another one.

## Shadow Names

When a mage crafts his soul in this Legacy, he chooses a new shadow name. Prime Movers often base their names on influential or revered figures of science or technology. (An Engineer usually picks someone who is dead out of respect, and also to make sure the Engineer doesn't get confused with the still-living individual; someday, they might be in the same room.) One Prime Mover might call herself Tesla (or merely Nikola), Edison or Einstein. Prime Movers also choose names of particularly visionary science-fiction writers (again, also deceased) such as Asimov or Heinlein. Other Prime Movers choose “133t” hacker names, the names of technological products or titles of characters from tech-friendly pop culture (maybe the film *Tron*). The name generally reflects the mage's personality and his crusade. A mage devoted to non-linear emergent artificial intelligence might call himself Turing, since Alan Turing is perceived as the father of modern computer science and helped define the Turing test, a way of testing how well a program can truly mimic human



behavior. (Alternately, a similarly-interested mage might name herself after a prominent computer game character in “honor” of artificial intelligence.)

## Story Hooks — Toward the Singularity

- **Free Tech:** The players assume the roles of a cabal of Prime Movers. They catch wind of some new technological innovation that sits in the hands of a local corporation or the federal government. (The nature of this tech is up to you. Is it a piece of code for the next utopian step in a P2P (peer-to-peer) file-sharing network? A program that cannot be tracked or monitored from outside sources (such as the government or corporations)? A device that can trace a cell phone call to a precise geographical location? The goal is to offer a technology that can be used for both fortune and misfortune. Can the characters liberate this technology for themselves and the free world? What happens if they run afoul of the mortal authorities? Worse, what happens when the Guardians of the Veil come to stand in the characters’ way?

- **The Real Bleeding Edge:** An unusually powerful Engineer has immersed himself in the Spirit Arcanum, believing that one way to usher technology forward is to merge the corporeal with the ephemeral. Artificial intelligence, after all, is just a term — there needn’t be anything *artificial* about it. Unfortunately, he does not mitigate his experiments with prudence or caution. He imbues some kind of device (could be anything: computer, bullet train, a robotic toy) with a trapped spirit, but the spirit is too powerful. The mage cannot control it, and it flees. The spirit goes mad and attacks this world and its inhabitants. This isn’t a robotic monster tromping through downtown Tokyo; the horror and pain the spirit brings should be subtle. Maybe a train develops a cult following of mortals who will not leave its comfort. Or perhaps the spirit uses the computer to flee to the Internet where it can get into *any* connected system (home networks, traffic lights, NORAD...) and cause irreparable harm. Can the characters find the mage and help him stop his “creation?” What if he doesn’t want to stop it but *protect* it, instead?

- **The Invitation:** The characters (who needn’t be Prime Movers, though one of them probably needs some degree of scientific or technological expertise) are invited to join V.V., the founder of the modern Engineers, at one of his various homes across the world. There, he asks for their help in pursuing the “next big thing.” He won’t tell them what it is, he only asks them to commit fully or not at all. Will they join his crusade, sight unseen? What if he attempts to magically seal them to his service — are they willing to make that sacrifice for the greater

good? What happens when V.V. himself is willing to sacrifice innocents for his idea of progress? Is he some kind of technological reality terrorist, staging attacks against mortals in an effort to freely steal technology and give it to the masses?

## Attainments

The attainments of the Transhuman Engineers are meant to help the mages push themselves and others toward the unknown future. The Forces Arcanum represents a dynamic connection with the raw elements that drive technology. By tapping into this primal flow, the Prime Movers can connect the Fallen World to the Supernal. The attainments help them become dynamic forces in their own right, fueling change and providing the energy and momentum that allows humankind to continue ineluctably toward the technological singularity.

### 1st: Connection

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Forces 2, Science 1

This attainment grants the Prime Mover both the Forces 1 effect “Tune In” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 164) and the Forces 2 effect “Transmission” (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 167). Without cost, the mage can home in on any one wireless transmission with a successful Wits + Science roll. This includes transmissions of satellite television, cell phones, radio, walkie-talkie traffic, police bands and Internet wireless transmissions. The character hears the information transmitted. She cannot establish a visual connection with this information unless the player rolls an exceptional success on the Wits + Science roll.

Once the mage can hear a transmission, she can interrupt it with her own voice. She literally hijacks the feed, speaking over whatever television transmission or cell phone conversation is going on. Anyone listening or watching that particular feed at that particular moment will hear the mage speaking. The mage’s hijacked transmission is limited to a number of minutes equal to her Gnosis score.

A Prime Mover can limit her transmission to *one* receiver. In this way, her voice comes through to only *one* television set, cell phone, walkie-talkie or radio of her choosing. If she cannot see the target, however, the mage must have a sympathetic link to him. This *can* be the standard hair, blood sample or nail clippings, but the Engineers prefer to achieve this link through Social Security numbers, RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) badges from a person’s employer or the exact GPS coordinates of the target’s current location.

### 2nd: Dissolution

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Forces 3, Stealth 2, Subterfuge 1

For a single scene, the mage can make herself completely invisible (per the Forces 3 spell “Personal Invisibility”) and totally silent (per the Forces 3 spell “Sound Mastery”).

The Prime Movers use this attainment to gain access to coveted technologies, whether to use such technology for themselves or to disseminate it to the masses. Some also use this attainment to steal clandestine or “black” tech, hoping to take it out of the hands of corrupt corporations and governments (and into the hands of like-minded inventors or scientists).

This attainment requires total, uninterrupted concentration. Penalties up to -5 apply if such concentration is interrupted or otherwise impossible.

#### **Optional Arcanum: Prime 2**

With the addition of Prime 2, the mage can also achieve the “Transform Aura” effect. With this, he also masks his aura, completely hiding it from onlookers. In this way, he becomes obfuscated physically, aurally and magically. Witnesses may still sense or track him by scent, however, with an appropriate Wits + Survival roll.

### *3rd: Activation*

#### **Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Forces 4, Science 2

An Engineer with this attainment becomes a living battery. Energy is generated from countless sources. Walking generates kinetic energy. Sunlight brings in solar power. Touching a wall draws current if an outlet is nearby. The mage simply *absorbs* all the energy and contains it within her in whatever form it needs to be. The predominant application is that any device near to the mage (within a number of yards equal to her Forces score) needs no power source other than the mage to operate. A cell phone clipped to her belt never needs a battery. All the appliances in a room receive power just from her presence. And any devices implanted in her body (whether a microchip or a pacemaker) can go forever, theoretically. Even items that require alternate sources of power are fueled by the mage’s presence. A car need both gas *and* electricity to run, but the mage generates enough raw potential to keep any vehicle going without ever needing to stop for gas or replace a battery.

### *Sample Character*

#### *Panopticon*

**Quote:** “I see you. You see me. Everybody wins.”

**Background:** Alex wasn’t a popular boy in high school. His face was marked with acne; he wore ill-fitting clothes, and listened to symphonies instead of rock bands. He was obsessed with the Internet, video games and television, finding them all to have a narcotic allure from which he could not withdraw. When dealing with others, Alex was ill at ease, often saying the wrong thing at the wrong time. Often to the wrong people.

One of these wrong people was another student, a mal-adjusted fifth-year senior named Jason O’Brien. O’Brien was unmerciful in his bullying of Alex, going well beyond

Charlie horses and swirlies in the boys’ room. The boy was cruel, never hesitating to throw a punch toward Alex or trip him in the stairwell at school.

One day, it went too far. O’Brien took Alex into the locker room just after school, and started choking him. It was then that Alex Awakened — the world dimmed and he heard a dissonant hum like the wings of a thousand bees. He glided into the Watchtower of the Golden Key on wings of light, wielding a sword made of many eyes. He burned his name into the Supernal World, and then he awoke to fiercely coruscating light. O’Brien was there, kneeling in the corner, holding his eyes as if he’d been blinded.

Alex didn’t stick around to find out what happened. He knew he was either dead or in trouble, and so he packed his stuff and fled. In the subsequent years, Alex became Panopticon (or simply Pan), and turned his technological interests toward the study of magic, merging the two. He was a perfect fit for the Transhuman Engineers, seeking to go beyond the Free Council’s ideas of merging magic and technology, helping to push humankind toward a point of singular enlightenment.

Alex’s crusade stems from his near-death experience and his resultant Awakening. He often says, “If only someone could’ve seen what was going on in that locker room.” He is obsessed with the idea of destroying privacy laws. Not just for criminals or miscreants, but for everybody. The eyes of the world shouldn’t be limited to a select few, but all should find themselves in the camera’s eye for any to see. It is a two-way street for Alex. Not only does he feel that he should be allowed to see what everyone else is doing, but *they* should be able to see *him*, as well. He has cameras everywhere, in his home and outside of it. He is the ultimate voyeur, making it his crusade to put surveillance equipment on every street corner and in every room. When all can freely see one another, humankind will truly transcend.

**Description:** Pan is a tremendously ordinary person stuffed into extraordinary fashions. He’s not very tall (5’8”), of an average weight, with a mop of dirty-blond hair overlooking a pair of blue eyes. His clothing style changes from day to day. One day it’s a tuxedo, another day a track suit.

His nimbus comes off him with quick pulses of light, like flashbulbs going off. His pupils go red for a split second. Those around him tend to feel as if they have eyes watching them from a number of obscured angles.

**Storytelling Hints:** Nervous and fidgety, like an introvert trying desperately to be an extrovert. This conversion from one to the other probably works about half the time. Sometimes Pan is the life of the party, snapping pictures and feeling the vibe. Other times, he comes off as creepy and awkward because of his intensely unblinking stare and forced smile. He watches everything and everyone. When he can, he records it, as well.

In a strange way, Alex believes he is the star of his own show. The world is his supporting cast, guests in his life and living room.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Camera phone



**Real Name:** Alex Tambor

**Path:** Obrimos

**Order:** Free Council

**Legacy:** Transhuman Engineers

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

**Mental Skills:** Academics 2, Computer 3, Investigation 1, Science 1

**Physical Skills:** Drive 2, Larceny 2, Stealth 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Expression 3, Persuasion 3, Social-

ize 2, Subterfuge 2

**Merits:** Eidetic Memory 2, High Speech 1, Imbued Item 3, Library (Surveillance Footage) 1, Resources 2, Sanctum 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Wisdom:** 7

**Virtue:** Charity

**Vice:** Lust

**Initiative:** 4

**Defense:** 2

**Speed:** 9

**Health:** 7

**Gnosis:** 3

**Arcana:** Forces 3, Prime 2, Space 2

**Notes:** *Forces* — Nightsight (•), Invisible Object (••), Light Mastery (•••); *Prime* — Supernal Vision (•); *Space* — Omnivision (•), Scrying (••)

**Legacy Attainments:** 1st — Connection

**Mana/per Turn:** 12/3

**Armor:** n/a

**Magic Shield:** 2 (Prime DD)



### Imbued Item: Camera Non-Obscura (•••)

Durability 2, Size 1, Structure 3

Panopticon's Imbued camera appears as nothing more than a thin, high-megapixel digital camera. When the camera takes a picture, however, the digital photo itself captures the scene with two magical effects captured into the image: "Correspondence" (Space 1) and "Spatial Awareness" (Space 1; see **Mage: The Awakening**, pp. 232–233). He can take the camera, load the pictures onto a PC and view the image captured. He can then examine the image using the two effects listed above. With the first effect, he can analyze the connections between things (sympathetic connections, specifically). With the second effect, Pan can check for disturbances in Space, including most magical effects that indicate Spatial manipulation of a given area.

This effect is *contingent* upon the camera's trigger, which is the button pressed when capturing an image. It requires no Mana.

# THE CULT OF THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK

*Your time has run out.*

On July 17, 1997, the Past Masters, a powerful Mysterium cabal specializing in scrying the distant past to reconstruct the magic of ancient cultures, finally cornered the March of History, a Seers of the Throne group devoted to historical revision and occlusion. Their battle spilled out of the March of History's sanctum at a university campus. Dozens of students saw two of the world's leading masters of Time casting vulgar magic against each other.

None of the mages survived, body or soul. Investigators from the Guardians of the Veil recovered the bodies. The Guardians could only obtain glimpses of how the mages died. The investigators found a massive surge of Paradox and one clear image: a member of the Past Masters being slain by — himself (!) — but the other self carried a large pocket watch with a death's-head engraved on the cover. Behind them, the tattered edges of the world frayed into the Abyss.

Since then, mages who look like the deceased Mysterium mages and Seers have mounted attacks around the World of Darkness. They kill selected people (both mages and Sleepers), steal soulstones and Artifacts with powers of Time, Fate or Death, and destroy various objects, buildings and locations whose significance remains obscure. They cause a lot of Paradox in the process. Always, they carry the death's-head watches. One mage who survived a clash with these murderous and destructive doppelgangers learned a name: the Cult of the Doomsday Clock.

Worried mages have learned little about the Cult. The doppelganger-mages routinely use magic to block attempts to scry on them after the fact. Mages of the orders soon found, however, that the Cult seeks new members from the Moros Path. What's worse, the Cult sometimes locates newly-Awakened mages and brings them into its fold. In 2000, the Cult issued its first manifesto as part of a drive to attract new members. As the Legacy's name suggests, the Cult wants to destroy the world. Not just to destroy civilization, or humanity; they want to destroy the Fallen World *in toto*, material realm and Shadow Realm alike. Only then, they say, can the souls of mages escape the vile prison that is Creation and ascend to the Supernal World.

No one can imagine how the Cult of the Doomsday Clock could actually annihilate the world. But no one could have imagined a Paradox eruption creating evil twins of the mages involved, either. The more the orders learn about

this Legacy, however, the more certain they are that the Cult must be destroyed — for every clue about the Cult's origins, masters and magic points straight to the Abyss.

**Parent Path:** Moros

**Nickname:** Ticktock Men

**Orders:** All the orders, including the Seers of the Throne, hate and fear the Cult of the Doomsday Clock.

The Seers suffer attacks by the Ticktock Men just as the Atlantean orders and the Free Council do. Besides, the Seers can't serve as the Exarchs' trustees if the Doomsday Clock destroys the world. Small numbers of mages from every order, however, have defected to the Cult.

**Appearance:** Doomsday Clock mages tend to dress in classic Man (or Woman) in Black style: black suit, white shirt, narrow black tie, black sunglasses. However, the suit jacket has large pockets on each breast with a chain hanging between them. One pocket holds the death's-head pocket watch, the other the counterbalancing fob. Cultists tend to accumulate timepiece or clockwork-themed Paradox brandings, such as hands of jointed brass or eyes turned into digital clock displays.

**Background:** Doomsday Clock mages recruited from the orders share a great discontent with their lives and disappointment with the world. Some join the Cult out of grief or anger. Others join the Cult out of excessive idealism or spirituality: They long for the Supernal World so much they don't care what harm they cause to get there. Some people despise the world just because they didn't receive all the rewards they wanted. Such discontent can express itself through any Vice. Of course, mages found and trained by the Cult itself can come from any background.

**Organization:** Although the Cult is still very small, it observes a strict hierarchy. All members must supply the Cult's leaders with their true names and samples of their hair and blood, giving their superiors an Intimate connection for sympathetic magic of Time and Space. Any recruit can expect the Doomsday Clock's leaders to study his past and probable future.

Mages who join the Cult but do not yet qualify for the first attainment are Foliots. Members who possess the first attainment are called Hands. Foliots and Hands must obey higher-ranking members without question. The Cult does



not like lower-ranking members to operate without supervision. A recruit who can hide her Cult membership may be asked to spy on her cabal, order and Consilium, but the Cult still insists that the recruit report to a superior every week or so. Most infiltrators are Foliots, since they lack the alterations to their souls that reveal Cult membership.

Cultists who reach the second attainment are called Tollers. The Cult trusts them to oversee missions and teach Hands and Foliots the Legacy's magic of Time and destruction. Tollers also learn some of the Cult's deeper mysteries and meet the Legacy's true leaders. Nevertheless, Tollers, too, are watched and never go more than a month without meeting with the Cult's senior members for thorough debriefings. Foliots and Hands may keep up the façade of mundane lives, but Tollers abandon such pretenses and devote their entire lives to the Cult.

After learning the third attainment, Cultists called Anachrons. These powerful mages oversee the Cult. Thus far, only a few recruits have joined the doppelgangers who emerged from the Paradox storm, but these converts are fully trusted by their colleagues. Anachrons take the most important missions, usually with Tollers or Hands as assistants.

The Cult's true leaders are the three Horae. These enigmatic beings never leave the Cult's headquarters, the Clocktower. The Anachrons frequently consult with the Horae; the Tollers see the Horae occasionally. Ticktock Men do not even learn the Horae exist until they graduate to being Tollers.

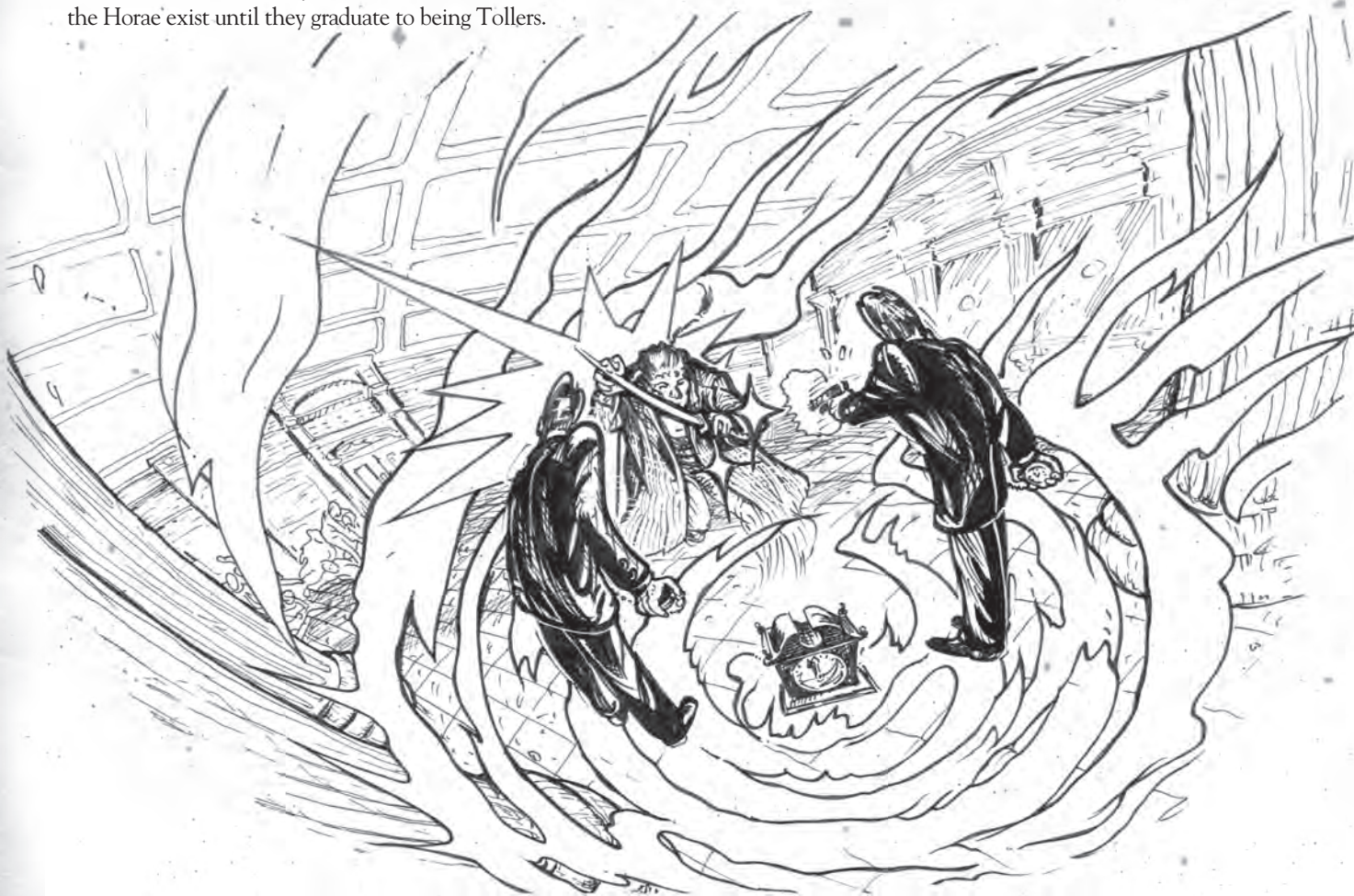
**Suggested Oblations:** Causing death and destruction by disrupting a schedule or deceiving someone about the time (anything from tricking someone into mis-timing her medication, to reprogramming traffic lights), using Death and Prime to annihilate something completely, meditating on oblivion in a room full of clocks

**Concepts:** Watch repairman, occult kook, ascetic priest, libertine priest, efficiency expert, temp worker, computer geek, convenience store clerk, science fiction fan

## History

New recruits learn that the Doomsday Clock is just the latest manifestation of a tradition that dates back millennia. Always, a few mages and especially perceptive mortals have known the Fallen World was a prison for their souls. Buddhists rejecting the world, Jains starving unto death, the desert hermits and willing martyrs of early Christianity, Kabbalists who sought to see the throne of God — they all knew they did not belong in this world and were eager to leave it.

During all ages, mystics have tried to escape the Fallen World, but their attempts have all failed. After all, does anyone know a mage who actually, provably Ascended? No, the only solution is to destroy the prison. Burn it down from the inside! The souls of the Awakened will be purified and freed to return home.





During the late Hellenist period, mages associated with certain Gnostic cults believed that if they could study the flow of Time in the world with greater accuracy, they could find the flaws in Time and force them open, creating an escape route from the cosmic prison. These Gnostics studied the movements of the sun, moon and planets in search of gaps in Time. When mechanical clocks were invented in Europe, a new generation of mages used them to search for subtler flaws in Time. The mages found the flaws, and realized that the instruments used to measure time could control it — and destroy it. These mages became the founders of the Cult of the Doomsday Clock.

Sometimes, recruits hear that the Cult did not exist before 1997, and appeared in a massive Paradox manifestation. The recruits' tutors compliment them on their perspicacity. The Exarchs, as the creators of Time in the Fallen World, try to erase the Cult from history — not just knowledge of the Doomsday Clock, but the members themselves, changing history so members never joined the Ticktock Men. The leaders of the Cult, however, wield enough power to protect themselves from these attempts. When the fabric of Time rips in massive Paradoxes, the Ticktock Men can return to history. They've done it before; some Anachrons have lived in two or three alternate histories before this world.

### Penetrating the Mask

Much of the Cult's story does not jibe with what the orders teach about the origin and history of mages, and for a very good reason: the Cult's story is a pack of lies. The doppelganger-mages who appeared on July 17, 1997, are not mages from an alternate history. They are creatures of the Abyss, literal Things From Beyond hiding in human form — and the mages they recruit become creatures like them.

Such abominations cannot be persuaded, tricked or tortured into giving away what they really are. They would rather die. They even think false thoughts for other mages to read. Only determined and powerful Mind magic can rip aside the mask of humanity (however twisted that humanity may be) to find the inhuman monster. Perceiving the true thoughts of a Doomsday Cult leader requires the Mind 4 spell "Read The Depths" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 215) which further must penetrate a Mind 3 "Mental Shield" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 208) with a Potency of 3. This special Mental Shield exists only to protect the false mage's true inhuman thoughts but is active all the time, even when the mage is asleep or unconscious.

### Society and Culture

Humans don't run the Cult of the Doomsday Clock. This is the Legacy's deepest truth, and the truth the Cult most wants

to hide. Even the most fanatical humans develop disagreements, get tired or make exceptions. The Anachrons don't. They agree on everything. Their zeal never flags. They really, truly want to destroy the universe and will do or say *anything* to further that goal. Most of what a Doomsday Cult member learns is a lie designed to draw her further into the Cult.

### Recruitment

Just as any cult or radical group, the Doomsday Clock needs some way to attract new members. The Cult has two problems in this respect. First, the leaders of every order condemn the Doomsday Clock and want to destroy it. Second, the Cult's doctrine is blatantly insane.

The first problem is simply an inconvenience. Consilium leaders and order luminaries tell other mages not to read the Doomsday Clock's manifestos, but the leaders can't stop anyone. If a mage really wants to spread a message to other mages, he can do it, and even maintain his own secrecy. Methods can range from broadsheets in Atlantean stapled on telephone poles to cockroaches programmed to type out messages by jumping around a keyboard. Many mages will read the manifesto just because they wonder what their seniors don't want them to know.

The second problem is not as great for mages as for Sleepers. From personal experience, mages know the universe of common sense and Sleeper perception is a Great Lie. Annihilating the universe doesn't seem *quite* as crazy when you know a whole other Supernal World exists. Some mages find the Fallen World distasteful enough, or the Supernal World alluring enough, that they can seriously consider destroying the one to reach the other. Ninety-nine out of 100 mages read a Doomsday Clock manifesto, think it's claptrap and throw it away. The 100th mage — wonders.

Doomsday Clock manifestos lay out the basic doctrine that the Fallen World is a trap for mages' souls. Mass Ascension requires annihilating the Fallen World. Without the ballast of matter and spirit dragging them down, souls can rise to the Supernal World and the Exarchs won't be able to push them down again.

Mages who want to learn more can go to various web pages or mail-order tracts with material in both everyday languages and High Speech. Of course, everything is sanitized of sympathetic ties that could lead back to Cult members. A mage who finds this further information attractive can ask for a meeting with a Ticktock Man.

Cult leaders expect attempts to trap recruiters. Hands and Tollers covertly investigate mages who ask to meet the Cult, looking for evidence of treachery and to assess the mages' characters. If the applicants seem sincerely interested, the Cult tells the mages to appear at a certain time and place — then visits them somewhere else, earlier, and whisks them away for active recruitment.

The Doomsday Clock uses standard cult techniques to mold the thoughts of candidates. Interested mages attend retreats in



which they only associate with Foliots and Hands, all directed by a Toller. The Cultists drum in the message that the world is evil and only transcendence from it is good. The Cult has canned answers for most questions and doubts about its doctrine. Cultists never use magic on a candidate. The Cult's leaders know that magical brainwashing can backfire, or leave traces that other mages can detect.

### *Trial Membership*

Candidates become Foliots when Cult officers decide the recruits sincerely want to join. Doomsday Clock recruits all start as Foliots, even if they have the Gnosis and Arcana to become Hands.

First, Tollers skilled at Mind magic examine the candidates' thoughts in depth, searching for any hint of treachery. If applicants cannot trust the Cult in this, the Cult certainly has no reason to offer trust in return. The induction happens in one of the Cult's minor sanctums. The recruits sign their true names on slip of papers while Hands snip off a lock of the recruits' hair and draws an ounce of their blood into a small phial. The presiding Cultist (usually a Toller) places these three items inside a grandfather clock bearing symbols of the Arcana and Watchtowers. The presiding Cultist tells the recruits they have sealed their destiny to the Doomsday Clock for all time. If they try to leave, or betray the Cult's secrets, this Doomsday Clock shall toll the recruits' final hours.

The clock at this ceremony is imbued with auras of Death, Fate and Time, but it doesn't have any real powers; it just looks impressive. Later, an Anachron uses the sympathetic links to perform divinations about the new Foliot's future loyalty, as another check against mind-altered spies and cowards who



might turn on the Cult. The signature, blood and hair are also kept in case sympathetic magic becomes necessary in the future.

Once a mage becomes a Foliot, her contacts in the Cult (never more than one Toller and three Hands) encourage her to draw back from other associations, both Sleeper and Awakened. The Cultists take the Foliot on more retreats, where she is further catechized in the Cult's ideology. Her handlers teach her whatever Arcana and Skills she needs to qualify as a Hand and serve the Cult, from Science to Subterfuge. The Foliot also receives small missions as tests. Her handlers closely examine her performance. When the Foliot's supervising Toller believes the Foliot knows the necessary Skills and Arcana, and has proven her loyalty, the Toller arranges for full induction into the Legacy. For the first time, the new member visits the Cult's headquarters — the Clocktower.

### *The Clocktower*

Individual Cultists may create their own sanctums, but the Cult itself has one special magical stronghold. The Ticktock Men call it the Clocktower. New members are told that the name pays homage to the Watchtowers. The Anachrons know the name is a challenge. Hands are told the Clocktower touches the Supernal World. Actually, the Clocktower exists in a pocket of space and time within the Abyss. The Clocktower is, indeed, a realm of its own, with powerful enchantments that Cultists may call upon, and it follows laws different from those of the material world or the Shadow Realm.

From the Clocktower, a Cultist (or any mage with at least Time 4) can open a door to anywhere on Earth. This door is made of polished iron, carved with a clock face overlaying a large hourglass; the engraved hands of the clock visibly move. The door can appear in any wall where a normal door already exists. Only mages



with Time senses can see the Clocktower's door, though: the Clocktower and its doorways never exist in the *now*. They are always three seconds in the future. To pass through the door without assistance, a mage must possess the first attainment of the Cult, or use the Time 4 spell "Time Stutter" to jump at least three seconds ahead in time when he grasps the doorknob. Anyone who doesn't meet these requirements steps through an ordinary door, to the ordinary place on the other side. Cultists call these doors Escapements, since the Cultists use them to get away after missions (or if missions go wrong).

Inside, the Clocktower is an Escher-like maze of impossible perspectives. Stairways form closed loops with no beginning or end. Every window looks out on another room or hallway of the Clocktower, possibly turned at right angles or upside-down. Angles are sometimes concave, sometimes convex. Everywhere, there are clocks or parts of clocks: wheels of numbers or digital readouts, swinging pendulums and pulsing springs, gears and escapements, sundials and hourglasses. Some clocks run too fast or too slow; some run backwards (even the hourglasses and water-clocks), or their hands move at random.

The Clocktower holds the Cult's Library of magic lore, chambers where members can practice their spells, briefing rooms for planning missions and comparatively ordinary living quarters. One section holds a maze where the walls shift every few seconds. To traverse this maze, you need to know where the walls and open passages will be in the future; thus, only mages with temporal perceptions can solve this labyrinth. The center holds the Clocktower's heart, the cathedral-like hall called the Aenigma Temporis. Time is deeply out of joint in the Aenigma Temporis, speeding, slowing and reversing without rhyme or reason. Here, the three Horae hold court, seated before the pendulum of an enormous clock with three randomly turning hands and a blank dial. The cabinet of the giant clock bears the ominous cliché, "It Is Always Later Than You Think."

Every visitor can find his own image in the hall's stained-glass windows. The windows shine as if there were a sunny day outside. Anyone who breaks a window, however, finds the dark horror of the Abyss on the other side.

### Magic in the Clocktower

In the Abyssal realm of the Clocktower, members of this Legacy gain a +2 bonus to all Time magic. Anyone else suffers a -2 penalty to spells and rites using that Arcanum because of the warped flow of time. In the Aenigma Temporis, Anachrons and Horae receive the further advantage of a continuous Time 2 "Glimpsing the Future" effect (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 259), enabling them to roll twice for one instant action every turn, and take the better of the two rolls.

All magical senses are "whited out" in the Aenigma Temporis. The mystical forces are too disrupted by the Paradox of the place's own existence to reveal anything else. Anachrons and Horae are immune to this effect.

### Operations

As specialists in Time, the Cultists of the Doomsday Clock plans for the future. Many of the Cult's operations are designed to forestall or create some future possibility that sends the Fallen World closer to the Abyss.

Every eruption of Paradox frays the fabric of reality a little more, so Doomsday Clock members don't worry much about causing Paradox. This necessarily means a greater likelihood of branding. For Cultists, branding usually has a clock or temporal theme, ranging from part of the body looking incongruously aged (or young) to a limb transforming into still-living structure of jointed metal and clockwork.

Sometimes the Cult works stealthily to acquire lore and magic that may help in future acts of destruction. The Cult especially seeks soulstones and Artifacts. Soulstones let the Cult enslave other mages as thralls and are used to build Demesnes. Artifacts charged with Death, Time or Prime may provide clues to unmaking reality. The Cult also seeks mystic lore as assiduously as any other magical group, in hopes of finding ways to wreak destruction more completely and on a vaster scale.

Quite often, though, the Cult must act openly and violently. For instance, acquiring soulstones usually means attacking the mages who created a Demesne. Ticktock Men also attack cabals to loot their Libraries of any Artifacts they possess.

The Sleeper world comes in for attack as well. At least once a year, the Cult murders a Sleeper for no apparent reason — at least, no reason the Sleepers can see. The orders feel sure the Cult kills Sleepers who could oppose its plans in the future. For instance, a child destined to become a great diplomatic peacemaker could put a crimp in the Cult's plans for mass destruction. A murder or the destruction of a building might also change another person's destiny, making him more likely to become angry, despairing or otherwise more likely to choose a path that brings destruction to the world.

Finally, some atrocities are tests and training. Mass destruction — or even universal destruction — may sound easy in the abstract, but a person who thinks she's a hardened badass or resolute idealist might choke when asked to bomb a crowd or cut a child's throat. The Cult gradually leads recruits to more brutal and ruthless deeds. No Cultist becomes a Toller without committing cold-blooded murders and other sickening atrocities. Not only can such people never leave the Ticktock Men without admitting their guilt to themselves, such vile deeds lower a mage's Wisdom and, therefore, make Paradox eruptions last longer, for a more severe erosion of reality.

### The Doomsday Clocks

The Cult's name is more than just a poetic figure of speech or a reference to their pocket watches. The Anachrons build actual Doomsday Clocks. These magical devices destroy an area. Fire or bombs seem destructive enough to Sleepers. But, to the Cult, such destructive devices merely change



the form of matter. The Cult wants complete annihilation — a bit of reality gone forever.

Each Doomsday Clock works only once and is difficult to produce, so the Cult cannot use these infernal devices as often as the Cultists would like. Some Doomsday Clocks destroy material objects; other Doomsday Clocks kill the living or disrupt ephemera. The Cult's ultimate goal is to build a Doomsday Clock powerful enough to unmake the entire Fallen World. No mage can imagine how they might do this — but no mage who has seen the effect from a little Doomsday Clock can say it's categorically impossible. This, above all, explains the fear the Cult inspires.

**Sample Doomsday Clock (Imbued Item •••••)**

Durability 3, Size 2, Structure 5

**Mana:** 12

A Doomsday Clock looks like an old-fashioned clock, small enough to fit into an attaché case. The Clock's case is made of polished black iron with lead trim. Instead of numbers, however, the Clock's dial carries cryptic sigils known only through studies of the Abyss.

This particular Doomsday Clock destroys every object made of normal matter within 32 yards. The Clock does not destroy "extraordinary matter" such as enchanted items, supernatural materials such as thaumium or matter that carries an extra "charge" of meaning, such as gold or diamonds. Sometimes that isn't a bug, it's a feature: Cultists can disintegrate a sanctum with the assurance that any Artifacts, soulstones and other magical objects will remain undamaged — and easy to loot.

The Clock carries two spells that "fire" at once. The first consists of the Matter effect, "Annihilate Matter" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 201) raised to Matter 5 for a combined spell; this also lets it affect an area. The Clock combines this with a Time 4 effect, "Erase History" (described below). Nothing destroyed by the Clock can be scribed later using Time 2 "Postcognition" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 260) or other spells to look back in time. That means anything destroyed by the Clock is truly gone *forever*, with no chance that a mage could look back in time and re-create it — true, total annihilation. Doomsday Clocks raise this effect to Time 5 for a combined spell, area effect and advanced prolongation (to erase a destroyed object's temporal traces back to its origin). The spells require lots of successes to annihilate large areas — but the Cult includes several masters of each requisite Arcanum, and they use every trick to ease the accumulation of successes in an extended casting.

Each round, the Clock expends one Mana and projects the combined spells over its area. As damage accumulates from repeated uses of "Annihilate Matter," first small objects disappear, then large objects, walls and even the ground underneath. At the same time, "Erase History" renders everything in the area impossible to see through temporal magic, reaching back through time: a few minutes before the clock struck, an hour, a day.... If the Doomsday Clock tolls enough times, the area's entire history becomes impossible

to scry. After expending the last point of Mana, the Clock itself disintegrates. Once the Clock strikes, the only way to stop it is to destroy it. Because the Doomsday Clock works only once, its cost is reduced by one dot.

No one but the Anachrons and Horae know how to build the Doomsday Clocks. It cannot be easy, because the Cult does not use the enchanted clocks very often.

*Erase History (Time •••••)*

This magic removes information about a target from the past, so that the information cannot be detected through temporal senses such as "Postcognition" (Time 2). The spell has to target a specific person, object or place. Neither the target nor the world suffers physical or mental change; a person who had a span of her past erased would still remember that time, and so would anyone she was with.

By itself, "Erase History" only blocks attempts to observe through time. Unlike a mere warding spell, however, "Erase History" actually *destroys* information about a target's past — the gap in time can't be broken or bypassed with a stronger spell. "Erase History," therefore, offers a perfect defense against magical attempt to probe a target's past — but any mage must realize something very strange is going on when "Postcognition" on a person can find no trace of her existence between 10 and 11 o'clock last Tuesday.

When most mages use "Erase History," the subject's past merely becomes undetectable: another mage using "Postcognition" simply can't find the target during that timespan. Doomsday Clocks are worse. They leave gaps in history that inspire horror in Time-sensing mages. Part of the past is *gone*, leaving a soul-shuddering void. Every memory or record of what (or who) was destroyed is a little Time-Paradox — one thread of reality pulled out, fraying the whole.

**Practice:** Unraveling

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Lasting

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** None

"Erase History" requires a simple success, but the character's dice pool is penalized by the span of time he wants to occlude. Use the Duration chart for Prolonged spells to find the dice penalty (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 119). If a character has Time 5, use the Advanced Prolongation chart (so blocking an Indefinite span of time, such as occluding an entire human life or the history of a building, would require Time 5 and a -10 dice penalty). Large or multiple targets can impose further penalties.

If a mage wants to block a section of time that itself is far in the past, use the modifiers for sympathetic ties (see **Mage: The Awakening**, pp. 114–115), but for the temporal connection. The less accurately you can define the span of time you want to occlude, the weaker the sympathetic tie will be. For instance, erasing "Bob's history between 8 and 10 p.m. last Tuesday, when he was at that motel" would provide a

Known connection: you know exactly what time, by clock, calendar and what the subject was doing. Having an object tied to a specific event in that timespan, such as the wrapper of a cheeseburger Bob ate in the motel room, would raise the connection to Intimate. However, hiding "Bob's visit to the motel some time last week" would provide, at most, an Acquainted connection. If you had no idea when Bob might have visited the motel, the connection would be Unknown, and the spell would fail; and, of course, you would need Bob's presence to block that episode in his past, anyway.

A mage can also perform "Erase History" through an Extended casting, and try to accumulate enough successes to erase a span of history from temporal sensing.

### **Guardians of the Veil Rote: Forgotten Past**

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Subterfuge + Time

Sometimes the Guardians of the Veil need to make sure nobody can *ever* find out what they did, or what someone else did. This rote can shield hours or even days from "Postcognition" and similar attempts to view the past. The Seers of the Throne also use the rote to hide mystical events from later viewing, while the Cult of the Doomsday Clock erases its operatives' time-traces during missions. The Mysterium loathes this rote, and "Erase History" in general, for mages have blocked many significant moments in Sleeper and occult history from later viewing.

## *The Horae*

These powerful Abyssal entities created the Clocktower and sent the doppelganger-mage Anachrons into the world. The Horae cannot enter the Fallen World themselves, so characters are not likely to encounter them anywhere but the Clocktower.

Horae look like black, hooded monastic robes draped over unseen figures. Two gearwheels spin where eyes should be, and hands of jointed brass emerge from the sleeves. The Horae wield powers of Time and Death comparable to master mages. The Horae have other vast powers, too — they apparently created the Clocktower — but, in a direct confrontation, they use Numina that duplicate Time and Death rites.

**Rank:** 4

**Attributes:** Power 10, Finesse 10, Resistance 10

**Willpower:** 20

**Essence:** 25 (25 max)

**Initiative:** 20

**Defense:** 10

**Speed:** 25

**Size:** 5

**Corpus:** 15

**Influence:** Death 5, Time 5

**Numina:** Horae can duplicate any rote based on Death or Time. For instance, an Hora might attack using a ranged version of the Death 4 spell "Rotting Flesh."

**Ban:** Horae cannot maintain their quasi-physical form outside the Clocktower. If one of these creatures is forced into the Fallen

World, the Hora tears apart and vanishes, leaving a Time-based Paradox anomaly. If forced into the Abyss, an Hora expands into a huge, menacing phantom and vanishes, but reappears in the Clocktower a scene later. If all three Horae are destroyed, the Clocktower crumbles within minutes.

## *Induction*

Initiation to the Legacy itself comes once a Foliot meets the requirements for the first attainment and has proven his loyalty through some deadly betrayal of former colleagues. An Anachron brings the candidate to the Clocktower. The candidate proves his readiness by negotiating the maze to the Aenigma Temporis. In that zone of twisted time, the candidate's own future self helps the mage craft his soul to achieve the first attainment. At least, that's what it looks like to the candidate. Any Anachron or Toller can guide the soulcrafting; the Cult uses an illusion of the candidate's older, future self as another stratagem to convince the Cultist he can never leave — because, apparently, he hasn't. Or maybe it's no illusion at all. In the Aenigma Temporis, it's impossible to tell. The experience points normally tithed to the tutor pass to the Horae instead, so it doesn't matter who actually initiates the new Hand. The initiate receives his death's-head pocket watch and becomes a field agent for the Cult.

A Doomsday Clock cultist receives the second attainment in the material world, outside the Clocktower. The nascent Toller repeatedly invokes "Shifting Sands" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 263), replaying the same moments but acting differently each time, until she causes a Paradox. Instead of quelling the Paradox, the new Toller must embrace it. As reality twists and tears, the mages forces her soul to twist and tear along with it, further separating the Cultist from the natural flow of Time. After the ceremony, the Toller visits the Clocktower and meets the Horae.

Despite what the Cult teaches, Foliots, Hands or Tollers can leave the Cult — if they don't mind being hunted by a group of mages with Intimate sympathetic links to them, and able to see the future. Not so after the third attainment. This ceremony takes place in the Aenigma Temporis. The Horae guide the nascent Anachron in scrying his own past, right back to his Awakening — and then he attacks and kills his past self, making his very existence a Paradox. Once again, maybe this is just an illusion, or maybe it's not. At the moment when the Cultist invokes his own non-existence, the Horae finish his soul's transformation. The new Anachron does not simply possess a new attainment. The person he was has truly ceased to be. He is a creature of the Abyss, dedicated to Oblivion forevermore.

## Story Hooks — Hours Winged With Death

- The Cult takes great precautions against infiltration or subversion of its membership. Nevertheless,



a cabal of clever and audacious mages might be able to sneak a spy into the lower ranks of the Ticktock Men. Any order would appreciate intelligence about the Doomsday Clock's magic and capabilities.

Revealing the existence of the Clocktower, and a look inside it, would be especially valuable.

- In a daring raid, a cabal of Ticktock Men stole the soulstones from another cabal's Demesne. (Or that of the player's characters, if they have one.)

Soulstones can be traced, however, for no sympathetic link is stronger or more unbreakable than that between a person and her soul. Anyone who can retrieve the soulstones would receive a great reward — or could hold an entire cabal in thrall.

- The characters are contacted by a Necromancer one of them used to know. This Moros' mage says he joined the Doomsday Clock, but now he wants out: he fell in love, and realizes how stupid it was to want the end of the world. Can they help him escape the Cult and avoid its vengeance? Is this real, or some sort of trap?

## Attainments

Doomsday Clock attainments give Cultists an increasing power to violate the normal passage of Time. The Cultists see this as a sign of their greater liberation from the restrictions set by the Exarchs. When the Fallen World is destroyed, all souls shall dwell in Eternity. A Cultist's warped soul and mutilated connection to Time marks her, however, as tainted by the chaos of the Abyss. Mages with choral senses can feel the way Time frays around a Doomsday Clock Cultist; and even if the mage doesn't recognize this as a sign of the infamous Cult, any sensible mage sees the danger from this weakening of reality. The Cult grows because not all mages are sensible.

### 1st: *Time Out of Joint*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Death 1, Time 2 (primary), Occult 2, Science 1

At first, a Ticktock Man can disrupt Time only in small ways. When a Cultist wants, she can make time shiver and swirl around her. She, and objects in her immediate vicinity, speed up and slow down from moment to moment, and even seem to move backwards for fractions of a second. One part of the Cultist may be accelerated while another part of her body slows. This makes the Cultist more difficult to hit and reduces the force of any attack that succeeds. The result is exactly like the Time 2 rote, "Temporal Dodge" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 261). The Cultist gains one point of armor per dot she possesses in the Time Arcanum.

Time Out of Joint is not a covert effect, though: the mage's herky-jerky movement looks deeply *wrong*. Even Sleepers can see this (though they usually Disbelieve what they see).

Doomsday Clock initiates also possess an innate sense for the passage and manipulation of time, such as the Time 1 rote, "Temporal Eddies" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 258) — but only for an internal clock and to register the use of other Time-based magic (including the Cult's own attainments). To sense other magic or resonance, a Ticktock Man must cast a spell or rote of some sort.

### 2nd: *Bid Time Return*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Time 3

Tollers gain the power to disrupt time and history enough to double back on their own timelines. When a Toller wants, he can jump back a few seconds and live them over again, but make different choices and perform different actions. This attainment mimics the Time 3 effect, "Shifting Sands," (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 263) except Bid Time Return does not require any sort of dice roll. Undoing history still costs the Cultist a point of Mana, though.

Bid Time Return makes Ticktock Men into incredible tacticians. A Toller can try one course of action, then jump back and try again if his first choice was wrong — so long as he lives, and still has Mana to spend. For example, a Toller could take a turn out of combat to wedge a door shut, right before his enemy's reinforcements were about to run through it. The moment the reinforcements burst in, the Cultist realized blocking the door mattered more than launching his last attack, so he rewound the last turn and did that instead. Bid Time Return doesn't guarantee victory, for the new choice may bring consequences of its own. In this example, the Toller gives his opponent a chance to attack him without a response; his actions to block the door might even make him easier to hit.

**Optional Arcanum:** Death 4

If a Ticktock Man also possesses Death 4, his ability to Bid Time Return is not limited by death. If circumstances lead to his immediate death, he automatically bounces back a turn. Unlike "Shifting Sands" alone, the damage that killed the character also reverses, so he's alive again and can try to avoid his doom. If no possible action can save him, he must experience his death over and over — at least until he runs out of Mana or gives up.

### 3rd: *Off The Clock*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Time 4

Anachrons possess such a power to twist and disrupt Time that they can step outside its flow, watching the world while their personal time passes more quickly or slowly. Off the Clock resembles the Time 4 rote, "Seven Breaths in an Instant" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 265), even to using the successes from a Wits + Occult + Time roll to set the ratio between external time and the Anachron's personal time. A Ticktock Man can also make time run more *slowly* for her, however, so an hour can seem to pass her by in minutes. For instance, with three successes, a Cultist could



spend one hour Off the Clock while 15 minutes pass in the wider world, or spend 15 minutes Off the Clock while the rest of the world sees an hour pass.

**Time within Pocket      Target Number**

x2 (faster or slower)	1 success
x3	2 successes
x4	3 successes
x5	4 successes
x6	5 successes

Anachrons can use Off the Clock to rest, recuperate or prepare ritual spells. This attainment makes a useful escape route, too: a mage in a temporal pocket can only be affected by other mages with Time magic.

Anachrons use Off the Clock to infiltrate locations that are guarded only some of the time. For instance, a Ticktock Man who wants to spend a few hours in a heavily guarded museum's archives could enter during the public hours, slip Off the Clock, then re-enter normal time after the museum closes and is locked up tight. When he finishes his research, he goes Off the Clock again until the museum opens, then walks out with other visitors.

The Cultist's mutilated soul also becomes a slave to the Abyss, an inhuman horror that merely wears the mage's body and mind as a disguise. In the unlikely event that a mage waited until Gnosis 8 to craft her soul without the help of an Anachron or the Horae, she would avoid this fate.

## Sample Character

### Dexter Nuremburg

**Quote:** "And why do you think their lives matter to me?"

**Background:** Dexter Nuremburg, Toller of the Domsday Clock, has gone through several pseudonyms in his passage from Sleeper to mage to Domsday Clock Cultist. Once he was just a bookish, unpopular young nerd. Rejection by a girl he had a crush on led to an unsuccessful suicide attempt, and that, in turn, led to his Awakening. He signed his name in the Watchtower of the Lead Coin and eventually joined the Mysterium.

The July 17 Incident piqued his curiosity. He learned everything he could about this bizarre Paradox manifestation and read the Domsday Clock's early manifestos. He was curious enough to try learning more, and the Cult swept him





away with its tale of a War for Transcendence between the heroic rebel Cultists and the evil Exarchs who kept trying to erase the Cultists from history. The Cult easily recruited the otherworldly mage, as much through the promise of comradeship in a grand, impossible struggle as through its philosophy. Dexter Nuremburg chose his latest name as an obscure reference to an early center of watch and clock manufacture. He has served the Cult loyally ever since, and became one of its leading field agents. Dexter believes he will soon become an Anachron, and he's probably right.

As a Toller, Nuremburg no longer maintains any semblance of a life among Sleepers. He moves between Cult safe-houses, planning and leading raids on sanctums and other sources of magical power, lore or resources. Nuremburg's contributed a three-dot Sanctum to the cult. He derives his income entirely from tithing the Foliots and Hands under his command or as an expense account from the Anachrons. If that isn't enough to finance a passing whim (and he can't satisfy his desire through his own magic), Nuremburg easily steals whatever he wants. Nuremburg doesn't care much about legal consequences: he'll be gone in a week or two, and any cop who finds him before then will die.

**Description:** Dexter Nuremburg is a middle-aged Caucasian man. His short-cut, dark hair is turning gray at the temples. He dresses in the usual Doomsday Clock uniform of black slacks, sport coat and tie, white shirt, polished black shoes and sunglasses. He needs those sunglasses when in public, because his eyes have become a digital clock readout. Normally, his eyes give the time (always correct for his time zone), but, when Nuremburg sets a time-release spell, his eyes count down the minutes and seconds until the spell goes off. Nuremburg's suits are immaculately tailored and made from the finest silk with a ballistic cloth lining.

Dexter's nimbus appears as a shadow around him and the slow, deep tolling of half-heard bells. That wasn't his nimbus in his Mysterium days, but Dexter embraced the Cult with all the power of his soul.

**Storytelling Hints:** Dexter Nuremburg has become a true fanatic. Loss of Wisdom hasn't caused any derangements; no ordinary mental dysfunction could compete with the towering madness of Nuremburg's dedication to destroying the world. That dedication does not prevent Nuremburg from cultivating a taste for fine food and wine, tailored clothes and skilled prostitutes. After all, the appetites of the body do not affect his soul's Gnosis — and everything will be even better in the Supernal World. Nuremburg can lie without shame, steal without pity and kill without remorse because he truly, deeply believes this world and the people in it don't

matter. On a less exalted level, his indulgences, cruelties and acts of destruction let him take revenge for all the slights and loneliness of his youth, though he'd never admit his desire to end the world comes from anything so petty.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Death's-head pocket watch

**Real Name:** Peter Hull

**Path:** Moros

**Order:** Mysterium (formerly)

**Legacy:** Cult of the Doomsday Clock

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 5, Wits 4, Resolve 4

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 4

**Mental Skills:** Academics (History) 4, Crafts 2, Investigation (Research) 4, Occult 3, Science (Demolition & Explosives) 2

**Physical Skills:** Firearms 2, Larceny (Case the Joint) 4, Stealth 3, Weaponry 2

**Social Skills:** Expression 1, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 3, Socialize 1, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge (Convincing Lies) 4

**Merits:** Contacts (Museums, Art/Antiquities Dealers), Danger Sense, High Speech, Sanctum (Contribution to Legacy) 3, Status (Legacy) 3

**Willpower:** 7

**Wisdom:** 4

**Virtue:** Faith

**Vice:** Lust

**Initiative:** 8

**Defense:** 4

**Speed:** 11

**Health:** 8

**Gnosis:** 6

**Arcana:** Death 4, Matter 3, Prime 2, Time 4

**Rotes:** *Death* — Speak with the Dead (•), Suppress Aura (••), Destroy Object (•••), Twilight Shift (••••); *Matter* — Dark Matter (•), Steel Windows (••), Transmute Earth (•••); *Prime* — Analyze Enchanted Item (•), Magic Shield (••); *Time* — Perfect Timing (•), Shield of Chronos (••), Acceleration (•••), Temporal Stutter (••••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Time Out of Joint, 2nd — Bid Time Return

**Mana/per turn:** 15/6

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage	Size		Special	Dice Pool
Knife	1(L)	1		—	4
Type	Damage	Range	Clip	Special	Dice Pool
Pistol, Light	2	20/40/80	17+1	—	6
SMG, Small	2	25/50/100	30+1	Autofire	8

**Armor:** 1/2 (thin Kevlar vest; bulletproof)

**Magic Shield:** 2 ("Magic Shield," Prime ••)



# THE FANGS OF MARA

**Fear is the chain that binds all souls together: men, beasts, spirits and gods alike. Nothing that lives is free from fear.**

The Fangs of Mara are, if the Legacy's adherents are to be believed, practitioners of an old Legacy. Some Awakened scholars believe that its philosophy has *always* existed, in one form or another. Such allegations can neither be confirmed nor denied, however, and only a scant few facts exist to corroborate the claims of the Fangs, or of the mages, who condemn them.

What is known is that the Fangs derive some measure of their power from the acamoth and their Abyss-bound kin. In the eyes of most other willworkers, this offense makes the Fangs as bad as the Scelesti. After all, how much difference can there *really* be between bending knee to the Devil, and making use of his tools?

In truth, the Fangs of Mara make use of the darkest of magics, though not in the same manner as the Scelesti. Rather, the Fangs wrest their attainments from the restless dreams and hideous imaginings of the demon-gods, nightmares literally beyond any human comprehension. But why? Though known to but a handful of living willworkers outside of the Legacy, the Fangs aspire to the goal of using their knowledge to destroy those elder monstrosities and, perhaps, bridging the unfathomable gulf between the Fallen World and the Supernal.

**Parent Path:** Mastigos

**Nickname:** Nightmares

**Orders:** What little the orders know about the Fangs of Mara leads most mages to abhor them — but can tempt a few. Mages of the Mysterium regard fear as a product of ignorance. Still, some wisdom might be distilled from terror or some secret lore wrested from the dreams of the native entities of the Abyss. For mages of the Adamantine Arrow and the Silver Ladder, the promise of the Nightmares is especially tempting: the fear of one's enemies, and, potentially, critical (if cryptic) knowledge about the acamoth and the denizens of the Abyss. Of course, all but a handful of Arrow and Ladder willworkers turn away from the poisoned gifts of the Fangs, but a few succumb.

The Guardians of the Veil are the mages perhaps most likely to embrace the way of the Nightmares. Many Guard-

ians are well-versed in terror tactics used to preserve the sanctity of the Mysteries. Mages in the most secretive

Atlantean order can also fall prey to the romance of the hard choice and accept terrible stains upon their souls to serve some greater good. Such

Guardians embrace their darkest fears, and those of others, in order to obtain the secrets they desire or to unravel the dark designs of the Abyss. Another sort of Guardian entirely is occasionally drawn to the Nightmares, one who has lost the way of Wisdom and has become a creature of the terror he creates in order to preserve the sanctity of the hidden world.

The Fangs hold little attraction for the Free Council; what little the order knows about the Legacy inspires loathing, just as with most sensible mages. An unwary Libertine might seek out the Nightmares just to find out why other mages hate them so much, however, and so be ensnared.

**Appearance:** Most Nightmares try to appear relatively normal (by whatever local standards apply). After all, they have enough to worry about in dealing with other willworkers without drawing undue attention to themselves from Sleepers. Other Fangs of Mara, younger and less experienced, put on what they perceive to be frightful trappings (theatrically sinister-looking clothing, menacing tattoos or piercings, even ritual scarification or other acts of self-mutilation), but most older Nightmares look down on that sort of attention-grabbing nonsense. Of course, more powerful Fangs tend to carry an aura of dread and unease with them, no matter how they attire themselves.

Fangs of Mara often have an unnerving quality in their stares, somewhat akin to that seen in the eyes of a hardened killer or someone on the brink of madness. Some Fangs develop nervous habits (or maybe tics), go gray at a young age or otherwise exhibit characteristics of longtime exposure to an unhealthy amount of fear. Some Nightmares lose their appetites and become gaunt, while others have nearly constantly accelerated pulses and respiration, and seem perpetually on the verge of "fight or flight" panic. A few Fangs become the archetypal "cackling madmen," babbling to themselves (or to anyone that will listen) about, "unspeakable terrors, roiling just beyond the edge of the mind's eye," and such. Aside from one or two disturbing qualities, though, most Nightmares seem ordinary enough to pass among Sleepers (or other Awakened).





Nightmares occasionally find their nimbuses twisted into terrible shapes, as the fear they hold within their souls twists the outward reflections of their Awakened power. Some Fangs manifest half-seen twisting tentacles curling around their bodies, while writhing shadows or hideous, demonic shapes loom around others. Odd tricks of space may surround a Nightmare, such as free-floating shards of a mirror or the warpage of a mirage, revealing unearthly vistas. There appears to be no rhyme or reason as to why this phenomenon happens to some Fangs and not to others.

**Background:** Prospective Fangs of Mara are often people who have, in some way, worked with fear during the course of their lives, especially those to whom fear becomes both art and science. A crude and bullying bouncer at a nightclub revels in the fear he creates, but he wields it as a blunt instrument and has no appreciation for its subtleties. A psychologist who works with sleep studies, trying to unravel the chemical and psychological causes of nightmares, on the other hand, would make an attractive recruit for the Fangs.

Another type of potential Fang is someone whose Sleeping life was, at some critical juncture, defined by fear and who eventually learned to overcome it. A person driven into an institution after a mind-numbing trauma, for instance, and who later conquered the terror of that event, could well be sought out by the Nightmares. So could someone with recurring night terrors who finally won out over them through force of will, rather than medication. Confronting horror is important to the Fangs of Mara, and a person who understands her own fear is a step closer to mastering *all* fear.

Perhaps the least common of the “default” ways by which one comes to the attention of the Fangs of Mara is to survive an encounter with an acamoth or other powerful Abyssal being. People who do so come away with scars (both physical and psychological, though only the latter interests the Nightmares). Given the rarity of willworkers who actually clash with entities of the Abyss and live to tell the tale, however, these sorts of Nightmares form a clear minority of the Legacy’s already-small membership.

**Organization:** The Fangs of Mara are loosely organized at best, though the mentor-student bond is a powerful one. Given the fervor with which Consilii hunt the Nightmares (if the Consilii know one is near), the Legacy needs a widespread and decentralized organization to survive. Still, the ties between teacher and student, for good or ill, help to hold them together as adherents of a single, cohesive philosophy.

A Nightmare usually adopts a cellular structure. Each individual Fang knows his teacher and one or two others. More powerful adherents to the Legacy often know a few more members, but even the most well-connected Nightmare doesn’t know more than seven or so others. In the rare Consilium in which the Fangs of Mara are not hunted (or, perhaps, hold sway, whether covertly or blatantly), this restriction is somewhat relaxed. Fangs from outside such Consilii, however, rarely associate with those within them. The Nightmares sensibly doubt the prospects of

such a “good thing” lasting forever and know the probable consequences when it eventually goes bad.

The Fangs of Mara have killed their own over potential threats to the Legacy as a whole. For instance, a powerful and influential Nightmare captured and delivered to a Consilium could expose a significant fraction of the Legacy to danger (or at least force the Fangs to flee their current lives). Such a thing is extremely uncommon, however. Few mages from outside the Legacy combine the knowledge, desire, mystic might and opportunity needed to effectively besiege an entire (deliberately scattered) Legacy.

Outside of the mentor-student relationship, the Legacy has no formal titles, no special forms of address or ceremonial gestures of obeisance made by one Nightmare toward another. Experienced and powerful Fangs simply *command* the respect they feel they are due, and can make their displeasure manifest upon irreverent younger Nightmares in many awful ways. For the most part, though, young Nightmares show honor to their elders. Such willworkers have seen things that would shatter most human minds, and many of them have indulged in acts of such splendid fear and horror that would make even the most callous and jaded mental health professional cringe.

**Suggested Oblations:** Writing in a journal of one’s nightmares (or carefully scrutinizing and analyzing previous entries), indulging or confronting one’s own fears, inducing fear or nightmares in another, engaging in a deep and meaningful discussion on the subject of fear, methodically researching the fears of another

**Concepts:** Prodigal psychiatrist, cerebral torturer, shell-shocked veteran, dignified lunatic, long-term abuse survivor

## History

As one might expect for such a secretive Legacy, other mages can find little reliable information about the origins and history of the Fangs of Mara. The Fangs tell their students that the Legacy is very old, but even they don’t know their origin. Anyone inside the Legacy or out who wants to learn more must follow slender clues found in manuscripts known only to the Awakened.

For instance, a 16th-century Greek willworker known only by his shadow name, Armenius, makes reference in his journals to the destruction of a thing that may or may not have been an acamoth. It was almost certainly an Abyssal being of tremendous power. He writes of “those wise in the Power, and sworn to the service of fear,” as the mages responsible for the entity’s demise. Armenius collected his account from the lone survivor, a ranting madman. Some scholars of obscure Awakened lore believe the willworkers mentioned were Fangs of Mara. Naturally, the entry invites some uncomfortable questions for other mages about what the Nightmares want. Nightmares who have read the account believe it describes a phenomenal success on the part of their Legacy. Armenius said only

that the battle took place in the Black Forest of Germany. Attempts to find the battleground so the truth might be divined with magic have so far failed.

The first mage definitively identified as a self-proclaimed "Fang of Mara" was a Silver Ladder willworker whom the Guardians of the Veil captured in London in the 1893. She had used her mastery of the mystic arts to pose as an inmate in a lunatic asylum. The Guardians caught her torturing the other inmates with terrible visions of fear, using them as studies into the tolerances of the human psyche. Under great duress, the captive revealed that she had intended to unleash the fruits of her research upon her rivals within the Ladder.

No other such reference would be heard (outside of the Legacy itself) until 1967, when a Guardian of the Veil living in Los Angeles, California, became the hollowed-out host for an Abyssal entity. After he was put down (at the cost of three mages' lives), the papers retrieved from his home mentioned the Fangs of Mara. The documents did not make clear whether the Guardian had pursued, or aspired to pursue, the way of the Nightmares. No Fang is known to have mentored him, but the ignominy of his demise was also poor incentive for any teacher to come forward and claim him.

Since that time, the Fangs of Mara have become, slowly but surely, known among certain scholars of obscure Awakened lore. The Fangs' appearances are always brief but always accompanied by horror. Few mages care to know much about them; some Fangs are amused by what they perceive as an "ignore it and it'll go away" mentality. Then again, few mages have much opportunity to learn about the Fangs, anyway. Allegedly, the Fangs hide in the underbelly of Awakened society, recruiting from among infernalists with few scruples and an unhealthy fascination with the power of fear. Their critics say the Fangs are willing thralls to the acamoth and their kin in the unfathomable horror of the Abyss.

The Fangs themselves consider this a slander born of misunderstanding. While some Fangs of Mara quite probably are slaves to Abyssal entities, such Fangs are, given the Legacy's self-appointed task, in the minority.

In fact, Fangs of Mara occasionally drop a dime on Scelesti or other slaves to dark powers (Awakened or not) to cabals or even entire Consilii. Likewise, scattered accounts circulate of mages facing off against Abyssal horrors that were only defeated through the timely intervention of a Nightmare. The stories certainly aren't enough to make the Fangs seem trustworthy, but the Fangs in them *do* sometimes manage to seem noble, or at least a necessary evil. No willworker is concretely known to have slain one of the acamoth, but the Nightmares may represent the best chance the Awakened have of actually doing so.

## What's in a Name?

"Mara" has two meanings, both potentially relevant to the Legacy's name. In Anglo-Saxon folklore, the mara was an evil spirit that sat on the chests of sleeping people and induced bad dreams. The "mare" in the word "nightmare" refers to this entity. In Buddhism, on the other hand, Mara is a Satanic figure who personifies all the illusions and obstacles that prevent enlightenment. Mara strove to prevent Siddhartha Gautama from becoming the Buddha by distracting him with desire — and terror.

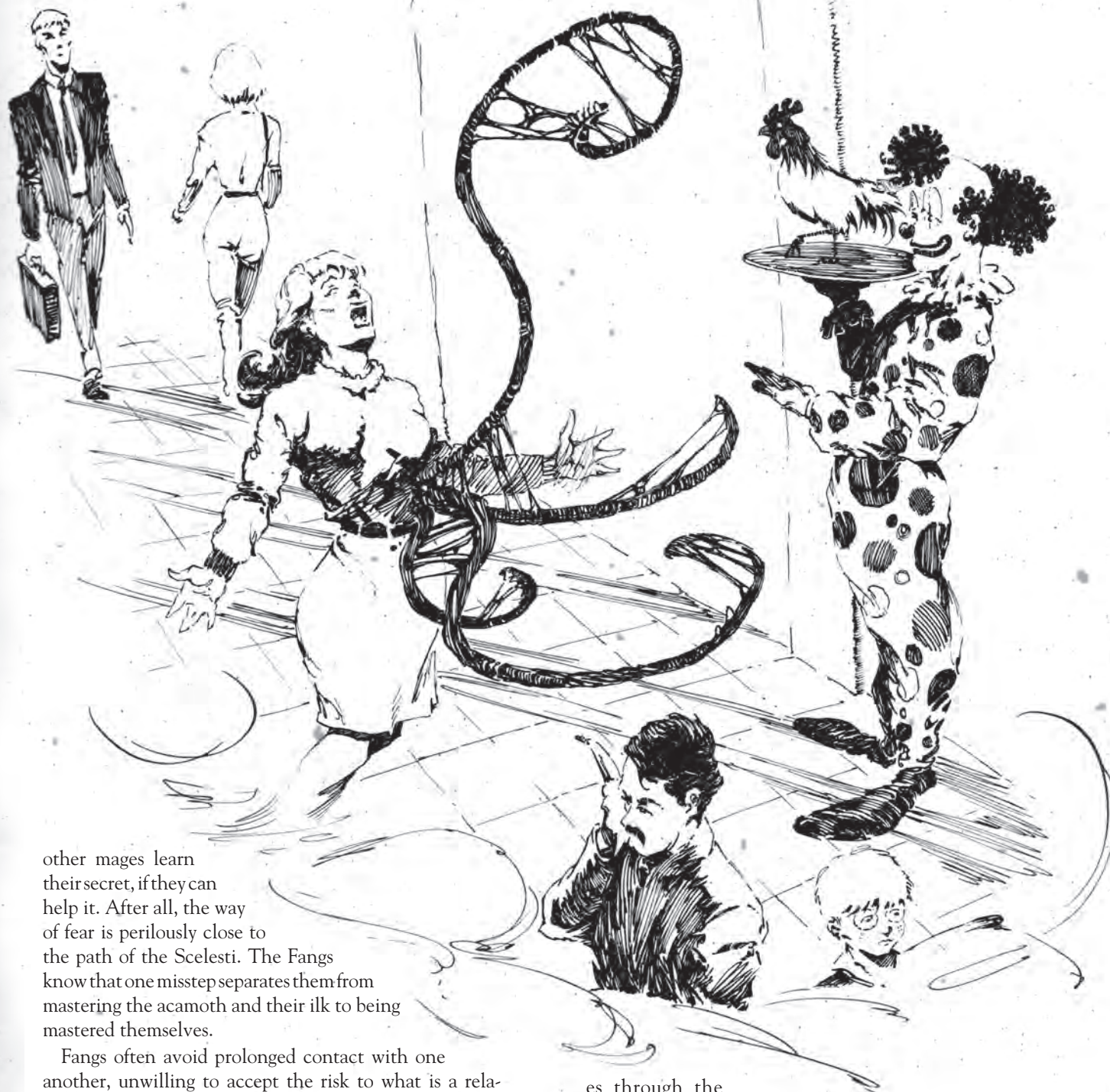
"Fangs of Mara" seems to suggest a unique entity. Could the Germanic dream-tormentor come from the Buddhist archdemon? Or does one of the legends conceal some deeper meaning? Other theories put forth over the years by members of the Legacy range from lost knowledge of an Abyssal lord of nightmares to the shadow name of an Oracle to a simple mistranslation that somehow stuck. If any of the elder Fangs know some shred of ancient lore that sheds some light on the Legacy's name, they aren't talking.

## Society and Culture

Fangs of Mara are ill received by most Consilii that know anything about the Fangs, and most of them are thus forever mindful to keep their true natures secret. Indeed, Nightmares are exceedingly wary of other mages who learn of their Legacy. Fangs *do not* react with immediate hostility and violence when







other mages learn their secret, if they can help it. After all, the way of fear is perilously close to the path of the Scelesti. The Fangs know that one misstep separates them from mastering the acamoth and their ilk to being mastered themselves.

Fangs often avoid prolonged contact with one another, unwilling to accept the risk to what is a relatively small Legacy. The loss of three or five Nightmares is intolerably large by their reckoning, and so they stay in contact with one another through less direct means. Communication through dreams is a common tactic for them, and they establish and destroy the connections between their members (via the Space Arcanum) as needed, making it virtually impossible for outsiders to use one Fang to track down others. Particularly potent Nightmares convene during Astral sojourns in the Temenos, though the subjects discussed during these incorporeal gatherings remain unknown to lesser Fangs.

Teachers pass on to their students the arts of working strange magics upon the acamoth and sending messag-

es through the dreams of such beings. Any mage who has undergone the "Nightmare Journey" spell can use the Mind Arcanum to transmit messages to any other such willworker through the dreams of the acamoth. The Arcanum dot effects for such telepathic communication are as normal, but count as a "Familiar" connection and cannot be traced by mages who have not entered the nightmares of the spawn of the Abyss. Given the medium of the missives' transmission, these missives are almost always tainted by disturbing and unearthly imagery, and unclean feelings. Individual Nightmares may know other magics worked on or through the acamoth, but these are not common to all Fangs.



Because of the Legacy's induction practices, many students see their teachers as tormentors and hold considerable enmity toward them, even long after the students have joined the Legacy. As a whole, the Nightmares consider this arrangement a good thing: it keeps the students sharp. So long as neither the teacher's nor the apprentice's personal issues escalate to actual violence, the Fangs don't usually intrude upon one another's student-mentor relationships. Fangs who do not endure such an adversarial relationship, however, often remain close to their teachers and are happy to maintain ties to wiser and more experienced Fangs. If at all possible, however, the Nightmares keep those ties at a distance. Only in places where one or two of them are powerful enough to hold secret sway in a Consilium (or, alternately, in the rare Consilii that accept them), do they begin to demonstrate any higher level of organization.

Under very rare circumstances, a Fang will find some small measure of acceptance in "polite" Awakened society. Perhaps a particular Consilium has an exceedingly tolerant Hierarch or the Nightmare was a student or favorite of an influential Councilor before his induction. In such a case, an adherent to this Legacy can operate with reasonable safety. Slightly more often, an influential willworker understands the potential benefits from having civil, reliable, but secret, contact with a Nightmare. One never knows when the most intimate possible understanding of fear could come in handy.

The ultimate objective of the Fangs of Mara is so grandiose, and seen (by those few non-Nightmares that know if it) as such a colossal work of Hubris, as to make virtually any sane willworker see the Fangs as enemies. It takes an especially powerful sense of pride to imagine that any artifice of mortal magic could destroy the acamoth and their ilk (despite how much some mages *want* to believe).

The Fangs believe it, though. More even than their reverence for the power of fear, this objective — the overthrow of the lords of the Abyss — binds the Legacy together. It is the one thing they all agree upon. If the Awakened world paints the Fangs as villains because of that struggle, well, the Fangs will be vindicated in the end. History will remember them as the saviors that they are. At least, that's how the Nightmares see things.

The Fangs of Mara have less certainty about *how* to achieve this great work. Some of them struggle to decipher the fever-dreams of the acamoth, certain that unlocking their unholy wisdom is the surest path to obtaining the power necessary to destroy them. Other Fangs maintain that a shift in human consciousness as a whole, affected through the medium of fear, will harden even Sleepers to the terrors of the Abyss. The Fangs agree only that that the acamoth need human dreamers. Therefore, experimenting with nightmares may expose some critical weakness within the chthonic beings' seemingly unassailable power.

## Induction

Nightmares tend to be drawn into their Legacy in one of two ways. The first way is a harrowing journey into fear, inspired by the would-be teacher without the prospective student's knowledge or consent. Terrifying dreams await her each time her head hits the pillow and half-glimpsed visions of horror dog her waking steps. Depending upon how she reacts to the "training," she may be approached by the Nightmare, left broken in mind and spirit or eventually left alone. Fangs inducted through such means tend either to be of higher Wisdom than the other sort, or else of very low Wisdom (having been all but broken by the tender mercies of their teachers.)

### The Hard Sell

Time and again, it has been shown that a person who suffers intense or long-term torture can be made to feel identity with and loyalty toward his tormentor. Cults, kidnappers, professional interrogators and abusive spouses alike have all exploited this natural human tendency, at the expense of their victims.

Some Fangs of Mara use this technique to draw in new members, though only the most skilled or powerful tend to enjoy much success with it. Consider the process to be similar to that of brainwashing (see **World of Darkness: Antagonists**, p. 77). Since it is rarely good Storytelling to attempt to horrify a player's character into a Legacy she may not want to belong to, no systems are actually provided for this process. (You may simply allow a character to react to this treatment however she wishes, subject to the results of some Composure + Resolve rolls, perhaps suffering a temporary derangement if she fails a roll during a particularly bad episode.) An Awakened ally of the characters' cabal, however, may speak of hideous visions, recurring night terrors and a feeling of dread that simply will not subside, even as his sanity frays and, eventually, crumbles.

The other common path to induction begins with the prospective student approached by the mentor, and encouraged to create fear and terror in others. Of course, only a mage who seems truly receptive to this notion is offered this opportunity, save by the most foolish Nightmares (and few of those sorts survive long enough to develop their own abilities, let alone pass on anything they learned.) The end result, ideally, creates a willworker monstrous and callous enough to adopt the philosophy of the Fangs of Mara — to embrace the tools of the enemy, so that those very tools might be turned back upon him.

Regardless of which road brought the new Nightmare to her Legacy, she is next made to enter into what may well be one of the greatest trials of her Awakened life. She submits herself to the "Nightmare Journey" spell (see below), with the deliberate intent of encountering one of



the acamoth and immersing herself in the thoughts and dreams of that chthonic intelligence. Once there, the mage either learns to master the nightmare imaginings of those dread beings, or is consumed by them. Some willworkers' bodies die with their faces contorted into expressions of purest fright, while others snap back to wakefulness, their minds shattered by the horrors they have witnessed. The Fangs lose about half of their prospective members that way, but the mages who survive with their sanity more or less intact are reborn, having harnessed the dreams of that which should not exist, and conquered fear thereby.

At each stage of growing understanding (as a Fang prepares to learn his next attainment), he again undergoes the "Nightmare Journey." Some say that each sojourn is easier than the last, as the spirit becomes inured to the agonies of looking upon such unadulterated monstrosity. Others claim that each successive journey is more difficult than the previous one, as more and more of the entity's attentions become focused upon a mind and spirit too small to easily weather such scrutiny. Still others find that the descent into the dreams of the unthinkable gets neither easier nor more difficult with time. It is, simply, what it is. Many Fangs prefer not to dwell overmuch on the subject, though. Some things are best kept locked away in the heart, even by mages who would learn to master horror from beyond space and time.

### Nightmare Journeys

Needless to say, delving into the thoughts of demon-gods is a dangerous, potentially fatal, undertaking. While within the dreams of the acamoth and their ilk, a mage uses only Mental and Social Attributes, though she may make use of Physical Skills. For instance, fighting a guardian entity while within a maze with no beginning and no end, and which can only be escaped through intense contemplation of patterns of fear and madness scribed in entrails on the walls, might entail an Intelligence + Brawl roll. Conversely, pilfering a memory from the deepest recesses of an acamoth's mind may involve a Manipulation + Larceny roll.

A character upon such a journey should also have to make frequent Composure- and/or Resolve-based rolls, and may well be called upon to make rolls involving his Mind Arcanum or Gnosis: Damage that the mage suffers can be applied to either Willpower or Health, or might inflict (probably temporary) derangements.

### Story Hooks — Fear and Loathing

• **Welcome to My Nightmare:** A Fang of Mara contacts a Mastigo or Guardian of the Veil in the cabal (her own Path and order, respectively)

and informs the character that she believes one of the acamoth slumbers somewhere nearby. The Fang claims to have a plan to destroy the thing, an undertaking, however, that she describes as "legendarily dangerous." Do the characters trust her? What if she's lying? What activities could she conduct under the cover of this mission? What if she's telling the *truth*?

• **Recruitment Drive:** A Fang of Mara targets one of the characters as a potential recruit. He experiences terrible nightmares and catches glimpses of unspeakable horrors at the corners of his vision.

When he is alone, voices whisper terrible things in his mind. And yet — the nightmares and voices sometimes tell him useful things about other mages; perhaps they lead his cabal to a hidden Scelestus. The character knows that his mental defenses, if any, are being breached, but the would-be mentor keeps a low profile and conceals herself from direct notice. How does the character deal with this downward spiral of fear and madness? When the Nightmare is eventually discovered, does the mage want revenge for the things that have been done to him, or is his curiosity aroused? Does he set out to join the Fangs, or perhaps to destroy them? Or does he just try to get on with his life and put the whole ugly incident behind him?

• **Panic in the Streets:** An exceptionally large number of local Sleepers suffer from bad dreams, anxiety and bouts of inexplicable panic. A respected Mysterium mage of the local Consilium believes that a Fang of Mara could be responsible. She doesn't know why the Nightmare induces fear on such a scale, but doesn't imagine that the reasons could be very good for anyone else. Perhaps the Fang is carrying out an experiment into mass-manipulation of fear, or maybe he seeks to create new kinds of phobias or psychoses. It may be that the Fang has actually been *drawn* to the city by this sudden surge in terror (though he is likelier to try to usurp control of it or otherwise profit by it than he is to try to alleviate it).

### *Magic of the Fangs*

The Fangs of Mara have developed a number of unique spells and rites that call upon the power of fear and nightmare. Other mages could learn these spells, but the learning probably would not be pleasant.

### *Psychic Violation (Mind ••••)*

This spell floods the mind of another thinking creature with images torn from the most horrific thoughts and memories of a Fang of Mara, those spawned by looking upon the naked consciousness of one of the greatest and most powerful beings native to the Abyss. The result is typically



mind-numbing terror, as the consciousness recoils from concepts and vistas it was truly not meant to encompass.

**Practice:** Unraveling

**Action:** Instant and contested; resistance is reflexive (Composure + Gnosis)

**Aspect:** Vulgar

**Cost:** None

If the caster accrues more successes than the subject, the target loses a point of Willpower. She also loses her action for that turn, as her mind reels from terror.

This spell may also be cast as through extended spellcasting. Unless the Fang has some way to keep subject in sight for perhaps hours, the extended version of the spell requires a sympathetic tie to the victim. (The character therefore needs Space 2 and the Mind component rises to 5, since the spell directly affects the target.) At each increment of the spell, the character's player rolls Mind + Gnosis against the target's reflexive roll of Composure + Gnosis. If the Fang can accumulate more successes than the target's Willpower before the end of the spellcasting, the subject loses *all* points of Willpower and collapses in a heap (losing her action for the turn) images of unearthly terror overwhelm her mind. For the rest of the scene, the subject may defend herself (at her full normal Defense, and she may take dodge actions) and can, after her one turn of inactivity, take any action that does not involve directly confronting the caster. When the subject first recovers Willpower (by whatever means) after that scene, she must make a Resolve + Composure roll. Failure results in a temporary mild derangement or, if she already has at least one derangement, a severe one.

The use of this spell by a character with a Wisdom of 4 or greater requires a degeneration roll.

**Fangs of Mara Rote: Gazing Into the Abyss**

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Intimidation + Mind (Instant) or Manipulation + Empathy + Mind (Extended)

The Fangs of Mara use this spell to cow their enemies into submission and to render them more pliant for other uses of the Mind Arcanum. In combat, Nightmares generally prefer the faster variant of the spell, while the slower one is reserved for "interrogations" and the like.

### *Nightmare Journey* (Mind •••••)

Teachers of the Fangs of Mara use this spell to separate students' consciousnesses from their bodies and send the consciousnesses into the thoughts of the acamoth.

**Practice:** Making

**Action:** Extended (the caster must accrue successes equal to the subject's Willpower dots); the spell automatically fails when cast on an unwilling subject

**Aspect:** Covert

**Cost:** 1 Mana

As with the Mind 5 "Shadow Projection" spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 218), "Nightmare Journey" creates fetters that bond the mage's consciousness back to his body. Instead of silver thread, however, iron chains enmesh his psychic body and wind through the bleak unreality of Abyssal consciousness, marking the path back to life and sanity.

In game terms, these chains are identical to the silver cord created by "Shadow Projection."

The spell's effect usually lasts for one hour, but the mage's experiences within the horrid musings of the entity he encounters could haunt





him much longer, or perhaps even forever. The mage gains no Investments from communing with the acamoth, but also does not suffer Willpower loss or degeneration: the Abyssal entity doesn't know the mage is there to tempt or torment — unless the Fang's player rolls a dramatic failure during the spellcasting. In that case, the acamoth is quite aware of the psychic intruder and can make its customary offer.

**Fangs of Mara Rote: Bleak Sojourn**

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Mind

By means of this rote, Fangs of Mara make the Astral journey into the thoughts and dreams of the acamoth and other Abyssal entities, there to harness the maddening nightmares of things never meant for human minds to experience.

### *Attainments*

The attainments of the Fangs of Mara reflect the unholy dreams and restless musings of the horrors of the Abyss. Though the effects that such magics accomplish would normally constitute sins against Wisdom, the willworker incorporates such powers into her soul, making them a part of her road to a perfected understanding.

#### *1st: Fear's Joy Hand*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, Mind 2, Empathy 2 or Intimidation 2

The willworker learns how to project the horrors of the Abyss, inducing a sense of unnatural unease in another person. This resembles the Mind 2 effect "Emotional Urging" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 207) but the mage isn't broadcasting any emotion so much as simple opening the floodgates and inflicting the fear and madness she has experienced firsthand.

When she chooses to activate this attainment (as an instant action), the mage rolls Presence + Intimidation + Mind. If her target cannot match or exceed the Fang's successes on a contested roll of Composure + Gnosis roll, she suffers a penalty to all dice pools equal to the Nightmare's dots in the Mind Arcanum.

#### *2nd: Glimpse of Madness*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, Mind 3

The Fang of Mara offers the barest glimpse of what he has seen within the labyrinthine consciousness of an Abyssal entity. Glimpse of Madness requires an instant action and a roll of Manipulation + Intimidation + Mind, contested by the target's Composure + Gnosis. For each success by which the Nightmare's total exceeds the subject's, the target suffers a horrific, nightmare hallucination for one turn. Not only may the victim think she's going mad, sheer panic renders her unable to take any actions except the defend herself (targets do not lose their Defense trait) and

run away from the Fang of Mara. Once the hallucinations end, the target regains full self-control.

Although Glimpse of Madness resembles Mind 4 "Hallucination" (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 215), this attainment has the limitations that it only projects frightful images and sensations, and at first the Fang has no control over their content. At Mind 4, a Fang can project horrors crafted from her own twisted imagination, and truly live up to the nickname of "Nightmare."

**Optional Arcanum:** Space 3

If a Fang also knows Space 3, he can forge false strands of correspondence between himself and other thinking creatures for the purposes of her other magics, an effect akin to the Space 3 "New Threads" spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 237). By performing an instant action, the Fang can improve the connection between himself and the other being by one level per dot he possesses in the Space Arcanum. These threads last for an hour, or less, if the mage chooses to terminate them prematurely. Because they are an attainment rather than a rote or spell, the false strands are only perceptible with a dramatic success on a "Mage Sight" attempt. They bypass wards based only on Mind or Space, but not a shielding spell that uses both Arcana. Finally, the mystic connection can only carry Mind magic to the target — including the Legacy's other attainments. Nightmares use this power to torment victims from far away.

#### *3rd: Throw Wide the Gates*

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, Mind 4

With this attainment, a Fang of Mara can open another person's mind to the horror she has seen. This effect creates a vision within the mind of the subject (an instant Presence + Intimidation + Mind roll, contested by Composure + Gnosis), allowing him to gaze upon the true, mind-shattering splendor of the acamoth and their kin. For each success by which the Nightmare exceeds the subject's successes, the subject loses a point of Willpower. Also, the target gains a temporary derangement (mild, if he currently has none, and severe if he already has one or more derangements.) This attainment can only be used once on a given subject, until the victim regains Willpower (whether through sleep, the fulfillment of his Virtue or Vice or some other means). Without that opportunity to heal and process what it has seen, the mind simply becomes desensitized to such terror.

**Optional Arcanum:** Space 4

By skirting the edge of the nightmares of the lords of the Abyss, where place and distance are meaningless, a Fang of Mara with Space 4 can project her mind into another person's Oneiros. The Nightmare can be physically present, or reach the victim through a sympathetic tie (or the previous attainment). Though this attainment is an unconventional way to enter an Oneiros, crossing the Astral barrier still costs one Mana.



Once inside, the mage can examine the subject's dreams — or manipulate them using her magic and attainments. A Fang can also interrogate the daimon of the person's soul, or search the target's mind in other ways. On the other hand, the various dream-figures within an Oneiros can affect the mage, too. Conceivably, a mage could meditate, enter her own Oneiros and confront a lurking Fang of Mara. See **Mage: The Awakening**, pp. 283–286, for information about the Oneiros and using magic within it.

## Sample Character

### Lilitu

**Quote:** “I can taste your fear.”

**Background:** Kylie Machuv was born the daughter of Dr. Yitzak Machuv and his wife, Constantina. Her parents died in a car crash when Kylie was a young girl. She ended up living with Constantina's brother, Spiro. For years afterward, she suffered from terrible nightmares about her parents returning to her, their bodies broken and mangled, their pleas delivered through voices garbled by rent throats and ruined faces. Kylie's uncle, distraught over the death of his sister and her husband, dismissed these visions and tried to get his niece to do the same. As time went on, and Kylie grew into adolescence, he became ever more insistent. Eventually, when he grew tired of words, he resorted to violence. The shy, timid girl eventually learned to keep her silence — but the hauntings persisted, and Kylie spent her nights trembling in terror, trying to make the apparitions disappear.

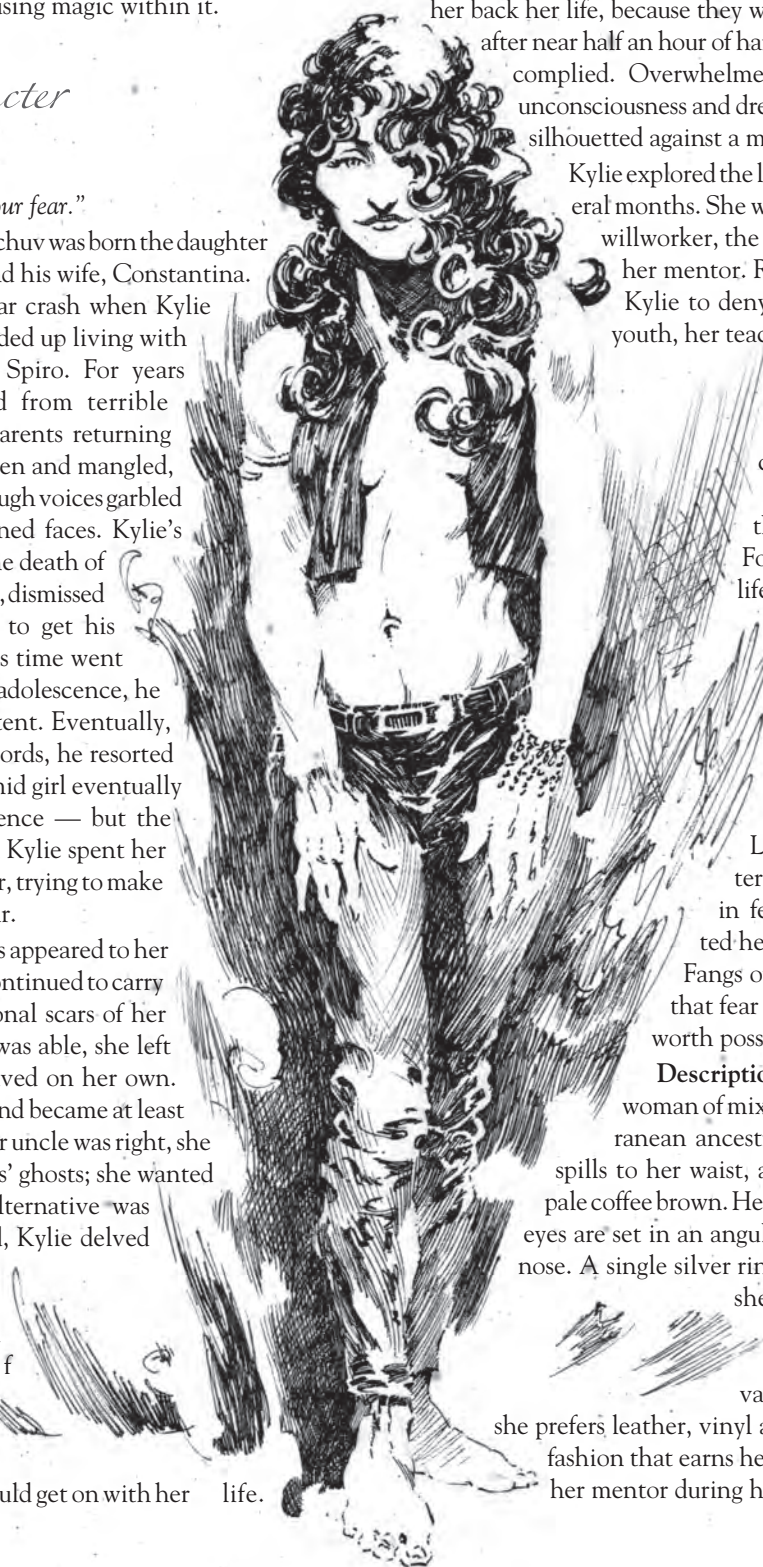
In time, Kylie's parents appeared to her less frequently, but she continued to carry the physical and emotional scars of her ordeals. As soon as she was able, she left her uncle's house and lived on her own. She enrolled in college and became at least partly convinced that her uncle was right, she *had* imagined her parents' ghosts; she wanted to believe that. The alternative was just too terrible. Instead, Kylie delved into the mysteries of the mind and wrote off the occasional manifestation as some expression of subconscious guilt or regret. At last, the hauntings ended entirely. Kylie felt she could get on with her life.

She convinced herself that her parents' ghosts were just the nightmares of a grief-stricken little girl.

While Kylie pursued her master's degree in psychology, a final manifestation came. Her parents appeared to her while she was awake and studying. Unwilling to be bullied anymore by gruesome figments of her imagination, Kylie leapt out of her chair and confronted them, yelling and cursing at them. She commanded the specters to leave her alone, to give her back her life, because they were only dreams. Finally, after near half an hour of haranguing, the apparitions complied. Overwhelmed, Kylie collapsed into unconsciousness and dreamt of a great iron tower silhouetted against a mad crimson sky.

Kylie explored the limits of her power for several months. She won the notice of another willworker, the man who would become her mentor. Rather than encouraging Kylie to deny the fear that ruled her youth, her teacher exhorted her to embrace that terror. She could command and control it, he said. She could even learn how to inflict it upon others and, thereby, rule over them. For the first time in her life, Kylie felt powerful. She took the shadow name of Lilitu after the legendary first woman of Hebrew legend, cursed and demonized because she would not submit to the authority of others. Lilitu became a creature of terror, just as she had lived in fear. She readily submitted herself to the beliefs of the Fangs of Mara, at last accepting that fear was the only power *truly* worth possessing.

**Description:** Lilitu is a beautiful woman of mixed Semitic and Mediterranean ancestry. Her wavy black hair spills to her waist, and her complexion is a pale coffee brown. Her gleaming, black almond eyes are set in an angular face with an aquiline nose. A single silver ring pierces her navel, and she has five piercings in her left ear and four in her right. Her wardrobe varies by situation, though she prefers leather, vinyl and the like. (A sense of fashion that earns her no end of chiding from her mentor during his infrequent visits.)





Lilitu's nimbus manifests as a crawling black frost that clings to all lifeless matter in her immediate vicinity. The frost fades quickly, and a given patch dissipates instantly if touched.

**Storytelling Hints:** Lilitu is whipsawed between fear and desire. Her terrorized, abused childhood left her simultaneously yearning for human connection and driven to lash out in revenge. She loves and grieves for her parents; she hates them for haunting her. Banishing them finally gave her power over her fear, and she despises herself for driving them away. Lilitu sees the world as a place of tormentors and the tormented, and she has decided which side of that equation she wishes to be on. Most of the time, a life spent hiding her terror lets her appear relatively well-adjusted. When Lilitu has the opportunity to indulge her morbid and sadistic obsessions, however, she gets a disturbing gleam in her eyes, and her tone of voice becomes almost fanatical.

Between a modest inheritance from her parents and her own magic, Lilitu has no need of a day job. In fact, she sees her work as a Nightmare as the only task worthy of her prolonged attentions. She has trouble remaining interested in anything else for very long. Lilitu takes men as lovers, then drives them to the edge of madness with her magic before she cuts them loose; the more well-adjusted her lover seems, the more Lilitu's envy and suspicion drives her to torment and abandon him. Were Kylie able to turn her psychological insights inward, she would likely realize what a damaged and incomplete person she is.

**Dedicated Magical Tool:** Heavy iron coin the size of silver dollar, inscribed with Atlantean sigils. One side has the character for "fear," and the other, "enlightenment."

**Real Name:** Kylie Machuv

**Path:** Mastigos

**Order:** None

**Legacy:** Fangs of Mara

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 4

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

**Social Attributes:** Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 5

**Mental Skills:** Academics (Psychology) 4, Computer 1, Investigation (Body Language) 4, Medicine (Pharmaceuticals) 3, Occult 4

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Larceny 2, Stealth 3, Weaponry 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy (Personalities) 5, Expression 1, Intimidation 4, Persuasion 3, Socialize 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

**Merits:** Artifact (Diralá's Talon) 6, Language (Latin), Resources 2, Sanctum (Personal) 2, Status (Order) 1, Striking Looks 2

**Willpower:** 9

**Wisdom:** 4 (Narcissism, Suspicion)

**Virtue:** Fortitude

**Vice:** Envy

**Initiative:** 7

**Defense:** 2

**Speed:** 9

**Health:** 9

**Gnosis:** 4

**Arcana:** Death 3, Life 2, Mind 4, Space 2

**Notes:** *Death* — Forensic Gaze (•), Animate Shadows (••), Quicken Corpse (•••); *Life* — Cleanse the Body (•), Self-Healing (••); *Mind* — Aura Perception (•), Misperception (••), Telepathy (•••), Read the Depths (••••); *Space* — Correspondence (•), Scrying (••)

**Legacy Attainment:** 1st — Fear's Icy Hand

**Mana/per turn:** 13/4

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Size	Special
Knife	1(L)		1
N/A	4		

**Armor:** 4 ("Misperception," Mind ••)

## Diralá's Talon (Artifact •••••)

Durability 5, Size 1, Structure 6

**Mana Capacity:** Maximum 16

Lilitu's teacher gave her this dagger, as he had received it from his own tutor. He also passed on the story that the dagger first belonged to the powerful willworker, Diralá, in the days just after the fall of Atlantis, and that it once tasted the blood of an acamoth (or at least what passed for its blood). The weapon is 18 inches long, a foot of that consisting of a slender, narrow blade made of some mirrored black metal. The blade curves outward into a very slight leaf shape at the tip. The small cross-guard and egg-shaped pommel are of a slick-looking red metal or stone, and the grip is the color of ivory, with the consistency of worn sharkskin.

The wielder of Diralá's Talon can expend Mana (her own or that held within the Artifact) to make attacks using the Space 3 "Ranged Blow" spell (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 238). Sometimes, when seen out of the corner of the eye, the blade seems wet with blood, and Lilitu finds the dagger appearing in her dreams more often than might be considered normal.

# APPENDIX: SHAPING THE SOUL

When taken together with the Legacies found in the back of **Mage: The Awakening**, **Legacies: The Sublime** provides a lot of choices for characters, player and Storyteller alike. But, what if you're looking for something that *isn't* there? No problem. You can create your own.

Crafting a Legacy is an astounding act of will for a mage, a deliberate manifestation of a willworker's desire to redefine himself, to become less the person that he is and more the person that he desires to be. However, declaration of intent is just the first step toward creating a new school of mystic thought. The actual process can take years of the most extreme mystical effort.

It's a fair bit of work for players and Storytellers, too. Designing a new Legacy becomes much easier, though, if you take it step-by-step.

## *The Premise*

In creating a Legacy, the first question to ask is, what does this Legacy add to the game? If you have a hard time answering that question (or the answer ends up being nothing more than, "They'd be so cool!"), then you probably ought to go back to the drawing board. Does the Legacy provide new antagonists for the player characters? Does it represent a potential path to enlightenment, influence or mystic power for one or more members of the cabal? Does the Legacy translate some mythic tradition into mage terms for your chronicle? Remember, a Legacy is far more than its attainments. It is a way of looking at the world and, indeed, a way of life. A Legacy's core beliefs and practices say something about the beliefs and practices of the willworkers who embrace it.

## *Player-Created Legacies*

Legacies offer players a chance for their characters to create something new and enduring in Awakened society. No character *has* to do this, of course, but it's an option.

Legacies created by players' characters are much simpler in many ways, because the Legacies are brand new. They don't have histories, traditional enemies or allies, or indeed traditions of any sort. At first, the Legacies just have one strongly-motivated mage. All the rest can happen in play: The character's own deeds become the legends that later adherents will tell. The character's choices become the Legacy's traditions. The character's enmities shall affect mages yet unborn.

Along with the opportunities, a number of pitfalls and temptations await the player who wants to create a Legacy for her character. For one thing, it is perfectly legitimate for a player to set out to craft a Legacy that will (by her own standards, anyway) help her character become among "the best" at a given kind of magic. After all, this sort of focused ideal gives the character something to aim for, a difficult long-term goal that requires dedication, patience, study and, perhaps, at least a small measure of good fortune. This can easily slide into a desire to create a "super-Legacy" — unbeatable magical fighters are the most obvious temptation, but "the most erudite scholars" or "the most powerful Necromancers" would be "super-Legacies" too. When you design a Legacy's attainments, ask yourself (or your Storyteller) if they seem so powerful, so *useful*, that any character without them would inevitably come out second-best. Remember that the game is about *everyone's* enjoyment. Playing a mage on a solitary path toward ultimate power is not a lot of fun for other players.

The solution is to refine your concept into something more precise. A character can want to be "the best," but at some narrowly defined endeavor. For instance, instead of "the best magical fighter," he might seek attainments to become "the best Awakened fencer in the world." That's great, as long as an enemy sticks to swords, and the achievement will bring the mage great respect from other Awakened. "The greatest Awakened fencer" is a far cry, though, from "I always win." In the same manner, pick a particular technique of Awakened scholarship, a particular application of necromancy or whatever.

The founder's motivation becomes especially important when the founder is a player's character. If you want your character to create a Legacy, consider the reasons why she does this. What does she seek that ordinary magic, and Awakened society doesn't provide? (That includes other Legacies, too.) Does she yearn to perform some signature feat of magic without fear of Paradox? Perhaps her motives are social: Does she want the prestige and honor afforded to a mage who reshapes her own soul in a manner previously unknown? Does she want to gather loyal Awakened followers? Or, maybe her motives are personal: she needs a certain attainment to trump an enemy's magic, or to help someone she loves. The reasons behind why a character creates a new Legacy are easily just as important as its attainments and oblations.

Of course, the character needs the Arcana, Skills and Merits to become the paragon of his new Legacy. Here it's



important to remember the difference between the player's knowledge of the story and the character's own awareness. You, the player, can single-mindedly move your character toward developing the specific dots on a piece of paper that will enable him to realize a planned Legacy. The *character* doesn't need to show any sort of monomaniacal zeal for the process. To him, the capabilities he develops may be nothing more than the accidents of his existence: He stumbled into a conflict with a ghost, and had to learn exorcism. He enjoyed a camping trip, and decided to learn magic for wilderness survival. And so on. You may *choose* to have the desire for a Legacy become an obsession for the character, but this need not be the case.

## Legacy Purpose

A Legacy's adherents need some common purpose and beliefs. The members need to decide what means are acceptable to recruit and train pupils, the customs and practices of the Legacy and whether the Legacy pursues any goals besides the magic itself. The members must decide what the Legacy's *for*. Even when a Legacy seems utterly disorganized, with little contact between members, the adherents probably share certain goals and attitudes; that's why they joined the Legacy in the first place.

Consider that passing on a Legacy is even more difficult an act of will than joining one. In game terms, a mage who joins a Legacy expends a point of Willpower. The mage who helps her join spends a *dot* of Willpower. That's eight experience points. Does your character have eight experience points — the game representation of months of her life, and perhaps terror, blood, toil and sacrifice — just to toss away? Either the would-be pupil needs to offer some great incentive to the tutor, or the tutor must think passing on the Legacy is terribly important — more important than just a few Paradox-free magic tricks or an extra way to regain Mana.

During the course of Awakened history, there have been Legacies predicated upon very nearly any sort of concept. Just look at the Legacies in this book and **Mage: The Awakening**. You'll find everything from contemplative mystics to radical activists who want to transform the world, from paragons of altruism to depraved soul-stealers, religious sects to scientific research groups. A Legacy is more than its magic; a Legacy has goals.

However broad a Legacy's ultimate goals may be, its favored magic narrows those objectives down to something more precise. General purposes, for example, "secret manipulation" or "spirit interaction," are more the province of Paths and orders. A Legacy's attainments, in particular, should suggest the particular methods by which it pursues its objectives. Ultimately, you need to narrow the focus of a custom Legacy down to a single idea. If you can't reduce *both* purpose and method to a short phrase, you probably need to make your concept more focused and concrete.

Again, look at the published Legacies for examples. The Clavicularius — summoners of inner demons (method) who force their sins to serve good ends (purpose). Or the House of Ariadne — they trace the threads of Fate (method) to study, guide and protect the city (purpose).

## Theme

What themes does the Legacy explore? This is linked to the question of what the Legacy brings to the game, but is also distinct. *Scelesti* and *Fangs of Mara*, for example, both pit the players' characters against mages who call on the powers of the Abyss — but the two Legacies explore very different themes. One is a path of enslavement to dark forces, while the other seeks power over those forces by understanding their nature. Any sane mage knows the *Scelesti* are *wrong*. With the *Fangs of Mara*, things aren't so clear.

The devil is in the details. Does the Legacy involve transformation, transcendence or even simple acceptance? A Legacy that works toward immortality through the harmonious alignment of internal energies is very different from one that does so through live human sacrifice.

## Legacy Sources

Most Legacies emerge from a Path, an order or both. Herewith, then, are some thoughts on the sorts of Legacies that Paths and orders tend to spawn. Two special classes of Legacies also deserve discussion. "Left-Handed Path" Legacies embrace doctrines, practices and powers that other mages find abhorrent or a threat to all Awakened. The new "technostic" Legacies explore the intersection between magic and modern science and technology.

## Legacies by Path

Legacies usually begin with a Path. In many ways, a willworker's Path is the outward reflection of his soul, the very thing that a Legacy alters. A Legacy may focus on a certain aspect of a Path, making it even stronger in a mage. A Legacy could also illustrate a Path's approach to a certain kind of magic, such as how a Path might adapt a non-favored Arcanum to the Path's favored uses. Other Legacies can take a more oblique approach. Imagine an *Obrimos* Legacy devoted to temporal manipulation: that's an exercise of force and power, though it's not what the *Mighty* are most known for. *Acanthus* who practice arts of invisibility and misdirection, or *Thyrus* ghost-hunters, are other examples of potential Legacies that take an unusual approach to their Path.

### Acanthus

Time and destiny are, of course, thoroughly appropriate base ideas for *Acanthus* Legacies. Given the fae nature of

the Enchanter's Path, these Legacies are often cunning and capricious, rather than studious and exacting. Remember, too, that faeries were seen as being terrible, as well as beautiful and whimsical, and often struck fear into the hearts of mortals (see the Daoine for an example of such a vision of the "fair folk.") Acanthus Legacies might weave enchantments of love or hate, or whip up storms conjured from the roiling passions of the mage herself. Some further thoughts that may inspire you:

#### **Mastigos**

The concepts of thought and place factor heavily into the creation of Mastigos Legacies. Warlock Legacies often push boundaries (especially those of the self) and assert command; see the Clavicularius for an example of both traits. A Mastigos whose Legacy focuses on magics of Death or Spirit may bind ephemeral entities, or raise zombies and revenants to service. A Mastigos who studies magic of Forces or Matter may create or destroy walls and other barriers.

#### **Moros**

Mastery over inert materials and the morbid arts of death itself are the most common bases for Moros Legacies. Necromancer Legacies usually advocate a methodical and patient outlook, encouraging a gradual but inexorable progress toward objectives. A Moros Legacy specializing in Space magic may favor crossroads, rivers and other places symbolically linked with death and the dead, while one that focuses on Time (such as the Cult of the Doomsday Clock) might use its attainments to bring things to their final state, whatever that may be.

#### **Obrimos**

Energy and force are the usual focus of Obrimos Legacies. Most Theurgists favor bold, powerful expressions of their Awakened wisdom in the Legacies. An Obrimos Legacy with Spirit Arcanum attainments may bind powerful spirits of energy or other dynamic forces or concepts, while one devoted to the arts of Mind could instead hone the intellect, aspiring toward a perfected and Supernal vision of reason and wisdom. The Daksha employ Life in their messianic quest to become an Awakened super-race. In any case, Obrimos usually create Legacies with well-defined objectives and attainments that generate magic of obvious effects and benefits.

#### **Thysus**

Vitality, both of the flesh and of the soul, is the province of most Thysus Legacies. Whether forthright or subtle, Shaman Legacies often possess an air of mystery and just a touch of menace. Primal magic such as conjuring fire, speaking with beasts or singing down rain, could translate the Thysus attitude to Forces, Mind and Life or Matter. Space Arcanum attainments could hone senses and spatial awareness to preternatural levels, while Matter magic may reshape the "urban wilderness" to supply the mage with shelter, weapons and even the wealth he requires to see to his needs.

## *Legacies by Order*

Some Legacies, especially those closely tied to the philosophy or agenda of a given order, pass into the hands of mages not necessarily tied to the Legacy's founding Path, and can be taught to students not of that Path. Purely order-based Legacies are rare but they occur often enough to warrant mention.

#### **Adamantine Arrow**

Arrow Legacies tend to be combative in some way, though not always in ways that are immediately obvious. A creed of personal struggle toward perfection for its own sake, and not for the purposes of ruling others, for example, would work well as an Adamantine Arrow Legacy. Likewise, any militant sect of the Awakened could reasonably find a home among the mages of the Arrow. These can conceivably range from front-line soldiers to lone weapon-masters, savants of the Duel Arcane, generals, spies and almost anyone else that could possibly be involved in defending Consilii and cabals, and destroying their enemies.

#### **Free Council**

The Council often embraces anti-authoritarian Legacies, but not all of the Legacies passed from mentor to student within the Council are comprised of rugged individualists. Most techgnostic Legacies are found within the Free Council; see the Threnodists and Transhuman Engineers for examples. Council willworkers also teach Legacies tied to progressive thought, edge science (whether technological or otherwise), innovations in Sleeper society (largely secular, in this case, such as new political movements) and just about anything else that doesn't intrinsically harken back to the days of Atlantis and its legendary mystic hegemony.

#### **Guardians of the Veil**

Guardian Legacies usually teach the lore of secrecy, misdirection and protection. In some cases, this tendency leads to a Legacy of spies. For another "typically Guardian" example, consider a fellowship of occult assassins who hunt down rogue spirits, escaped Abyssal entities, careless willworkers and even Sleepers who just happen to know too much. Guardian Legacies often seem insular, elitist and cruel, and that perception sometimes isn't terribly far off the mark. As they see it, however, the Guardians have a grim and terrible job to do, but *someone* has to do it, and Legacies passed along within the order usually impart attainments that facilitate such unsavory tasks.

#### **Mysterium**

A typical Mysterium Legacy usually seeks knowledge, in one form or another. Mysterium Legacies might focus upon the lost teachings of Atlantis and claim some special access to the ancient lore — or they might seek it even more fanatically than other mages in the order. Of course, knowledge is a living, evolving thing, and it stands still for no mage. Thus, Mysterium Legacies could also explore other kinds of learning. Mundane forms of scholarship,



however, seldom hold much challenge or appeal for the Mysterium. Most Mysterium willworkers would much rather be unraveling the secrets of the universe than dissecting the intricacies of the 14th-century Roman Catholic Church, for instance. Whether Mysterium mages seek Atlantean artifacts or the protocols of spirit courts, however, the attainments and oblations of Mysterium Legacies reflect the pursuit of knowledge.

### Silver Ladder

Legacies of the Silver Ladder typically focus on power and authority. The mainstream Silver Ladder tries to make the Awakened the “secret masters” of the world. Legacies built around such concepts could develop into occult conspiracies every bit as complex as the most intricate mystery societies of the Guardians of the Veil (or the Seers of the Throne). Divergent Legacies, however, might promote less orthodox systems of governance such as plutocracy (rule by the wealthy) or a republic (rule by elected leadership), seeing in those systems the potential for mystic learning untapped by colleagues that are more traditional. Silver Ladder Legacies might form religious or pseudo-religious sects, too.

### Seers of the Throne

As with all things, the Seers of the Throne seek nothing less than total dominion over all forms of magic, and that includes knowledge of Legacies. Some Seers pose as members of other orders, so they might persuade a member of a particularly appealing Legacy to divulge its secrets. The lore of the Legacy then becomes part of the intricate web of favors, coercion and toadying that typifies internal Seers politics. Of course, the Seers of the Throne could invent their own Legacies, labyrinthine philosophies developed by charismatic power-mongers and exclusive cliques, all of which eventually come down to the fundamental goal of dominating the Fallen World. Some such Legacies might advocate direct (though, usually subtle) conflict with other Seers in a struggle for supremacy, while other Legacies could encourage Seers to suborn their own wills in favor of the greater desires of the collective and the enigmatic Exarch masters.

## *Left-Handed Legacies*

First, throw out the notion that a Left-Handed Legacy is, by definition, for antagonist Storyteller characters. You can certainly play things that way, but such is not the fundamental intent behind a Left-Handed Legacy. What characteristics, though, typify such a Legacy?

The following factors, while not comprehensive, should give you a good idea of a Left-Handed Legacy's nature, and the perils of joining one:

- A Left-Handed Legacy usually embraces magic and/or a philosophy that is inherently hurtful in some way. Even if inflicting harm upon others is not part of the core ethics of the Legacy, turning the use of hurtful magic into a fun-

damental part of one's soul often indicates a Left-Handed approach to magic. The Fangs of Mara, for instance, specialize in inflicting terror. They think they serve a greater good; their victims could reasonably disagree.

- A Left-Handed Legacy may practice supplication toward, enslavement to or the subjugation of malevolent spiritual entities. The archetypal infernal Cultist is the classic practitioner of a Left-Handed Legacy, as might be a Necromancer who torments the souls of the dead and compels them to serve him.

- Membership in a Left-Handed Legacy is usually politically dangerous for a willworker to acknowledge. At best, practitioners of Left-Handed Legacies are seen as fools dabbling in forces beyond their comprehension (or, at least, better left undisturbed). At worst, they are seen as soul-stealing monstrosities like the Tremere liches, willing slaves to the inhuman lords of the Abyss like the Scelesti, or any number of equally unflattering options. These certainly aren't mages whom most Consilii want to attain power, if the Consilium members allow them to stay around at all.

- As a corollary, known membership in a Left-Handed Legacy will endanger a member's physical well-being, too. Many willworkers would gladly kill a practitioner of a Left-Handed Legacy for nothing more than the crime of cleaving to such a philosophy.

- Members of a Left-Handed Legacy almost never allow themselves to be sought out by prospective candidates. Instead, they hand-pick mages whom they wish to take on as students. Given the dangers inherent in practicing a Left-Handed Legacy, only the most short-lived such Legacies (or the most powerful) can afford to make themselves accessible for would-be applicants. Alternately, the Legacies must take extraordinary care in approaching and screening mages who express interest in the Legacies. (See the Cult of the Doomsday Clock for an example.)

- The induction ceremonies to join a Left-Handed Legacy frequently involve acts that the average willworker would consider antisocial, repulsive or demeaning in the extreme. Ritual self-mutilation, murder, forced sexual acts (enacted either upon the prospective member or by him upon another), cannibalism and similar atrocities are all fair game for Left-Handed Legacies. In part, these sorts of activities serve to reinforce the beliefs and practices inherent to the Legacy, but they also give the aspirant an opportunity to demonstrate the depths of his conviction (weeding out the weak and unworthy.) Furthermore, these acts bind the new member of the Legacy to his fellows through the covenant of shared crimes.

- Membership in a Left-Handed Legacy leads to rapid loss of Wisdom. As **Mage: The Awakening** makes clear, loss of Wisdom has more than moral consequences. Even if other mages don't realize a colleague has joined a Left-Handed Legacy, the duration of her Paradox eruptions show that she travels a dark and descending path.

If you wish to create a Left-Handed Legacy as a player, then you need to understand that not every other character within the cabal is necessarily willing to accept it. Certainly, even if all of your character's closest friends and allies (probably reluctantly) allow him to create a dark and deadly Legacy, some mages within the local Consilium will not. After all, common wisdom holds that Left-Handed Legacies are for criminals, infernalists and other renegade willworkers.

If you are a Storyteller, ask yourself one very important question: is the Legacy even potentially open to player characters? (Other than as a trap they must try to escape, if they have any sense or decency, that is.) If so, then you need to strike a delicate balance between the necessarily unsavory nature of a Left-Handed Legacy and outright Awakened monstrosity that is apt to get characters killed. As it stands, joining a Left-Handed Legacy is a dangerous proposition (and don't sugar-coat that if players ask you about it), but some Legacies (such as Scelesti and the Tremere liches) are just too revolting, too uncompromising in their evil, to work as player characters under any circumstances.

Of course, if your Left-Handed Legacy isn't intended for use by player characters, then it can be as detestable as you like. Just try not to portray these Legacies, even groups that player characters could never pursue, as caricatures of villainy. Evil doesn't need pyrotechnics, wailing guitars or black cloaks. In fact, evil is usually far more effective (both in terms of quality of story and efficiency in the game) when lacking such obvious warning signs. A practitioner of a Left-Handed Legacy can be brutal, sadistic, violent or in some other way fundamentally fucked up, but he *doesn't* have to look and act as if he just wandered off the set of a bad horror movie.

## *Technostic Legacies*

Some Awakened seek to incorporate their knowledge of modern technology into Legacies, just as these same Awakened work to reconcile such technologies with their less-grandiose acts of will. These Legacies are referred to by a number of different titles. (And some, particularly those used by the Guardians of the Veil and the Silver Ladder, are less than flattering.) In the 1980s, though, Free Council mages started calling such Legacies *technostic*, and the term is now recognized in many Awakened circles. Adherents to technostic Legacies sometimes claim they simply use the tools that the Sleepers provide for them, the same way that mages of old enchanted swords to cleave through stone and ensorcelled horseshoes to make steeds run on water. Other technostics claim much more: they believe modern technology carries forms of Supernal power just as valid as ancient spirit-sigils, religious myths and tribal rites.

So far, technostic Legacies are rare. Many members of the Atlantean orders resist the curve of Sleeper advance-

ments, and many Free Council willworkers just don't care to take their understanding of the modern world to such an extreme. Also, modern science and cutting-edge technology are just too *new* for many mages to assimilate. It's far easier to find texts of lore regarding mystical metallurgy than Awakened guides to superconductors. Technostics usually have to build their philosophies on magic from the ground up. Only a few prodigies have reached the heights of Gnosis needed to craft third attainments.

For those technostic Legacies that *do* exist, however, here are a few guidelines:

- Technostic Legacies incorporate the use of technology into magic and *vice versa*. Some mages say that even the use of the simplest spell upon something as basic as a lever or pulley is an act of technostic willworking, but most mages restrict the definition to the use of Awakened arts upon more complicated devices. For such mages, technostic spells would involve, for example, creating an impossibly efficient superconductor for use in an electric motor or imbuing a computer with a mystically fabricated artificial intelligence.

- Most technostics recognize the difference between *Supernal power* and *magic*. Legacies such as the Transhuman Engineers, for instance, believe that technology might become magical — someday — but for now, it's a tool for working magic and a subject to work magic upon. (The Threnodists take a more radical view, but even they realize that their quasi-scientific magic is, nevertheless, willworking.)

- Technostics don't have to look, talk or act like reject extras from the *Matrix* trilogy. In fact, a lot of technostics look, speak and act just like anyone else. Or at least technostics look and act like people who immerse themselves in science and technology. There may be the occasional Legacy composed of maverick young hackers with collective delusions of being vinyl-clad, trenchcoat-wearing enlightened saviors of humanity — but that sort usually lacks the strength of conviction to reshape their own souls into something entirely different. Technostics are more likely to look like college professors, electronics hobbyists or auto mechanics.

Among Sleepers, a number of modern mystical practices incorporate the use of technology into the practitioner's magical worldview. Some people believe that the most rarified particles manipulated by modern science's most complicated machines are the same as those used by wizards and high priests of old during the course of their spells and miracles. Other Sleepers receive online horoscopes, making use of a contemporary technology to divine the future. Even placing a statue or medallion of St. Christopher, patron saint of safe travel, in a car can be seen as a simple technostic act. The Sleepers have the idea; mages were bound to follow.



## Choosing Attainments

Once you have a premise for your Legacy, devise a set of attainments to express the Legacy's interests and purpose. Figuring out the attainments for a new Legacy can be a daunting prospect. After all, attainments are the abilities that Legacy members will be able to use without risk of Paradox or other deleterious consequences, which makes for a rather weighty decision. The rules of **Mage: The Awakening** also permit an extraordinary range of magical effects.

Far more than just Paradox-free powers, attainments express the way a Legacy implements its Awakened philosophy. A Legacy with attainments for apportionment and teleportation probably has a very different view of the world than a Legacy that concentrates on reshaping inert matter. These abilities are the outward evidence of the ways in which a mage has reshaped her soul, and they require great effort to obtain. Attainments that seem frivolous are almost *never* appropriate.

Good ideas for attainments include (but are not limited to) the following:

- The second-dot protective spells found within every Arcanum. The ability to have armor at will is a good thing, and one that a Legacy could plausibly find valuable enough to make into its first attainment. The armor granted by such an attainment is always equal to the mage's number of dots in the (primary) Arcanum involved in the attainment, and can be shut off or turned back on at will, as an instant action. See the Orphans of Proteus for an example.

- If a conjunctive first-dot Arcanum is involved in a Legacy's first attainment, a permanently active "Mage Sight" effect could prove to be *very* useful. Remember, however, that there are ways of hiding things from such sensory abilities (so that a constant "Mage Sight" effect doesn't end up ruining a plot).

- Covert effects make good attainments for Legacies with a subtler perspective on things. A mage with the ability to get certain things done "under the radar" of both mystic and normal senses has a strong edge. The Subtle Ones are a premier example. Of course, some Arcana naturally produce subtler effects than others — Fate and Mind, for instance, are a lot less "flashy" than, say, Forces or Matter.

- Conversely, certain vulgar effects can be quite useful for attainments, since they don't produce Paradox. Still, this is a careful line to walk, so that you don't have willworkers running around, slinging powerful, blatant magic at everything that gets in their way. (See the examples of *inappropriate* attainments, below.)

- Any spell that can be used to avoid or escape from dangerous situations (such as Space Arcanum teleportation) or to mitigate the harm that has been done by falling prey to such a situation (for example, Life Arcanum healing) can become a good attainment.

- Spells that enable a mage to use other forms of magic more easily can become highly useful attainments without making a character over-powerful. For instance, the attainments of the Stone Scribes open up new possibilities for sympathetic magic and uncovering the past, while the attainments of both the Scions of God and the Scelesti help them interact with the spirit world — in different ways, to *very* different ends.

The following are some examples of what *does not* make for appropriate attainments:

- Attainments should generally not be attack-based abilities (such as the Forces 4 "Energetic Attack" spell.) Infinitely recyclable offensive magic, of whatever level, is probably too powerful to make for a balanced attainment.

- Any spell that is, of its nature, extremely vulgar probably shouldn't be made into an attainment. Paradox is not just a game mechanic: Paradox exists to reinforce certain fundamental truths about **Mage: The Awakening**. Allowing characters to circumvent those truths cheapens the "feel" of the setting (balancing the quest for power against the need for subtlety.)

- Attainments should not make a character's life easier at every turn. A continually-active Life 2 "Self-Healing" effect is just too powerful and useful to allow, as is an at-will Fate 3 "Superlative Luck" attainment. Either effect could be acceptable as an attainment — but only if mages still suffer some restriction on their use. For instance, members of the Sodality of the Tor give themselves "Exceptional Luck," but they can apply it only for limited purposes.

Attainments should proceed in a logical manner, from one into the next, with each being a development or refinement of the previous one. For instance, a Solomonic spirit-summoning Legacy might use Spirit 2 to call to such beings, Spirit 3 to cross the Gauntlet to interact directly with them and Spirit 4 to bind them into service. Or, a Prime-wielding Legacy could grant attainments that allow willworkers to alter their auras and then, building upon those subtle manipulations of the flow of Mana through Creation, to create first inanimate and then animate non-human phantasms. Because each attainment builds upon the linear progression of an Arcanum, it's often easy to tie them together — but a single Arcanum can still be used in many ways. Always make sure the attainments stay relevant to the Legacy's self-defined purpose.

Sometimes, attainments that seem reasonable at first end up being rather more potent than originally intended, and become unbalancing to the game. If you're a player creating a Legacy, be willing to switch some things around if the Storyteller requests, or the balance of the game requires it. Likewise, if an attainment that seemed to work either turns out not to be as good as other attainments of equal level, or else doesn't end up fitting with the flavor of the Legacy, don't be afraid to ask to change things around. Designing a Legacy is by no means an exact science, and you might not be satisfied with your first version.

If you end up having to play around with a Legacy's attainments, you can approach the situation in one of two ways. You can just discuss the Legacy's shortfalls with the other players and Storyteller, rewrite the attainments and never again mention the old powers. If you don't like breaking story continuity that way, a Storyteller could say that a new Legacy may be somewhat fluid for a time, as the mage's soul instinctively struggles to once more find equilibrium. Or maybe some... other force... secretly interfered to make the new attainments more or less powerful. All these approaches have their virtues and their drawbacks. As long as you don't allow Legacy-tinkering to completely derail a chronicle, everything should eventually work out just fine.

### *Attainment Format*

Attainments adhere to the following formula:

#### **1st Attainment**

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 3, primary Arcanum at 2 dots, optional conjunctural Arcanum, one or two Skills

Even with the first attainment, a character shows development toward the concepts embodied by the Legacy. The character must have a reasonably solid magical understanding (represented by the Gnosis 3 requirement) and needs to have devoted at least some time and effort to the lore, both occult and mundane, that contribute to those practices important to the Legacy as a whole.

You may need (at this or any other level of attainment) to create a magical effect, or perhaps simply modify one. Don't be *too* worried about coloring within the lines, so long as the effect you create stays roughly equivalent to other Arcanum effects of the same level. Attainments can diverge somewhat from standard mystic practices (that's part of what Legacies are, after all). Doing so helps set a Legacy apart, make it unique and, well, cool. Players will be confounded by magic they've never seen before. Characters may want to research these novel powers, whether to learn them or to counter them. Some characters may even be drawn to join or oppose the Legacy, based solely on what its attainments allow its members to do.

#### **2nd Attainment**

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 5, primary Arcanum at 3 dots, optional Arcanum

At this point, overall magical potential (in the form of Gnosis) becomes more important to the development of attainments than knowledge of the Arcana or any mundane capabilities. Not every mage will ever develop this level of raw mystic prowess, meaning that mages who obtain their second attainment are important people within their Legacy.

The optional Arcanum ability granted at this level may actually be separate and distinct from those conveyed by the Legacy's first attainment (though it likely supports that attainment, and all of the Legacy's other attainments), and will require explanation of its own.

#### **3rd Attainment**

**Prerequisites:** Gnosis 7, primary Arcanum at 4 dots, optional Arcanum

A mage with a Gnosis of 7 achieves levels of power and enlightenment that lesser willworkers can hardly imagine. At this point, the mage has, in many ways, *become* the philosophy of his Legacy. Such characters are quite rare, and command respect from all junior members of the Legacy. Only in the largest Legacies can third-attainment members be numerous enough to form cliques or divide into ranks of their own.

The formula for this attainment (both the primary effect and the secondary) follows the same model as the second, save for the greater power involved.

### *The Final Attainment*

Legacies often have a legend about a fourth attainment, a transcendent final ability inherent in its teachings. Your Storyteller must determine if such a thing is even possible in the scope of your chronicles. If such an attainment exists, it is almost certainly based on a fifth-dot Arcanum effect from the Legacy's primary attainment Arcanum, as well as an optional fifth-dot ancillary Arcanum. There may be all sorts of requirements, above and beyond the norm, to obtain this degree of power, some of which may be represented by dots and others of which might not.

If any Awakened alive today can speak of such matters, they aren't talking. Or, at least, they aren't talking to anyone save perhaps the player characters in *your* game, when the members of the cabal finally prove themselves worth of such powerful and elusive wisdom.

### *Oblations*

Oblations are the ritual practices by which a member of a Legacy may regain Mana without the need for a Hallow. Every mage knows that the Supernal power of Mana permeates the Fallen World — the power is just not in forms they can use. Oblations do more than illustrate a Legacy's mystical priorities, practices and biases; oblations show the Legacy's beliefs about how the soul connects to the Supernal World — about what's sacred, about what *matters* in the world.

You can do a lot with oblations to set the tone of the Legacy. For instance, a Legacy whose oblations involve ritual scarification, bloodletting and other masochistic activities could embody themes of embracing or overcoming pain, denying the flesh through its mortification, creating fear and/or disgust in others or forging tight bonds of brotherhood through shared disfigurement. Conversely, oblations that involve bathing in a river likely represent themes of purification, acceptance of ordeals (if the water is rough or especially cold, for instance), time, healing (if the water is placid and temperate) or, perhaps, fecundity



and reproduction. Even if both Legacies had the exact same attainment (say, related to self-healing), their reasons for that attainment could be very different, as would the way members of each Legacy perceive it. Their oblations would reflect those different perspectives.

The oblations you choose should make sense for the Legacy. It probably doesn't make sense for a sect of benevolent healers to recuperate Mana by inflicting pain upon others, for instance. You might be able come up with a justification, but it is often better to let the Legacy's ritual practices illustrate its beliefs, rather than contradict them.

If you do assign a seemingly uncharacteristic oblation, however, you can create an interesting mystery for characters — perhaps even a moral quandary. What does the cabal do when the aforementioned healers shamelessly draw blood for their power or a Legacy of haughty, antagonistic and ruthless warrior-mages takes 10 hours out of every week to humbly perform generous acts of public service? Perhaps the oblations indicate a hidden agenda within the Legacy or some philosophical stance that's not obvious to outsiders. Or maybe some ritual act that looks like an oblation really isn't: when other mages are watching, maybe the Legacy adherents just do a little play-acting and shove a few points of Mana around, to make it look as though they're performing some act of Supernal significance.

Then again, the Legacy's members might not realize the full significance to an oblation. As with so much about a Legacy, an oblation may reflect some quirk of the founder that became hallowed as tradition: she convinced her pupils an act was Supernally significant, and they accepted it with blind faith.

Even the *founder* might not have understood the real reason for an oblation's power. This becomes especially likely early in a Legacy's history, when the founder's influence is strongest. Players may want to keep this possibility in mind, as a way to illuminate the character's psychology. For example, your *character* doesn't realize that his new Legacy's oblations are a way of subconsciously acting out his feelings of pre-Awakening victimization (or whatever), but you, as a *player*, likely do.

Analyze the Legacy's proposed oblations from an out-of-game perspective, too. Certain oblations that make a great deal of sense from an in-character perspective may prove to be inappropriate or disruptive on an out-of-game level. For instance, it may be perfectly reasonable — from a character's perspective — to practice an oblation that involves insulting authority figures to their faces, but this is apt to make the character's cabal quite unpopular around the Consilium, and the other characters are going to suffer for it.

Here are a few ideas for oblations. They are merely examples to show how oblations can reflect the values and mystic teachings of a Legacy.

- *Whispered chants.* Such an oblation might be practiced by a Legacy that finds its basis in some religious sect or per-

haps one that values secrets (making the whispered chant a mantra of learned lore or maybe even the character's own darkest secrets.)

- *Martial arts.* Naturally, a Legacy that values physical prowess and skill at arms could encourage its members to train in the arts of combat, but also consider the possibility of a sect of pacifist willworkers who hone their bodies through martial skills that they patently refuse to use against any living thing.

- *Hunting.* A Legacy begotten by a modern survivalist could consider the hunt as sacred and profound an act as any Legacy of tribal shamans, backwoods witches or aristocratic outdoorsmen. Members of a Left-Handed Legacy might indulge the thrill of the hunt upon the "most dangerous game."

- *Sexual congress.* Fertility cults traditionally practiced ritual sex acts. These could range from highly formalized affairs, some of which were great, chaotic, writhing orgies with scores of participants. Some schools of thought maintain that sexual denial (such as by terminating sex before orgasm) allows an individual to re-channel that creative energy into some other endeavor.

- *Sacramental narcotics.* The use of sacred substances to induce altered states of consciousness may well be as old as sentient thought. Many Legacies that make use of such sacraments are primal in nature, but such is not necessarily the case. Perhaps a modern Legacy taps into the hallucinogenic properties of LSD as an oblation. A Left-Handed Legacy might make use of harsher drugs, for example, heroin or PCP.

- *Study.* The capacity for knowledge of refined subjects, such as mathematics, philosophy and metaphysics, helps sets humanity apart from beasts. A wise sage may pore over crumbling texts in long-dead tongues, while a computer-savvy prodigy sifts the web for the information that helps to expand her awareness and understanding. Learning or creating new knowledge affirms the mage's conviction in her Legacy.

- *Ordeals.* In many ancient cultures, people who wanted to commune with spirits, or otherwise have a vision, could leave their home and suffer trials of will and endurance in unforgiving places. Some modern cultures still use ordeals of pain, such as piercing the body with hooks or self-flagellation, as shows of religious devotion. Modern versions of these trials could range from holding a flame under one's palm until the flesh blisters to free-climbing a mountain with the members of one's cabal.

## Legacy Culture

A Legacy is always more than just a set of magic tricks. A Legacy is a culture, too — a little (or not-so-little) society that can become a power in its own right in the Awakened world. A Legacy has traditions, standards of conduct and

ways of attracting new members. One important part of designing a Legacy is explaining how its culture began.

## *Origin Stories*

Where and how, and with whom, did the Legacy originate? And what happened since its beginning? A Legacy's history tells you what its adherents have seen over time and (if it is still extant) what they have successfully weathered.

From a Storyteller's point of view, a Legacy's origin and history can set up expectations in the players' minds. Maybe those expectations are correct, or maybe not. For instance, when characters discover that a Legacy began in Berlin in 1938, the players probably think "Nazis!" and look for signs of Left-Handed practices. Maybe the players are right, and the Legacy is the Awakened version of the Thule Gesellschaft, Armanen Order or one of the other proto-Nazi occult groups of that period. Or maybe the Legacy began with an Awakened cabaret singer, and the characters are barking up the wrong tree. A Storyteller could use either option.

Maybe the history of the Legacy is shrouded in myth. A Legacy's practitioners may claim witches on the fabled isle of Avalon begot it or that its founder wrested its secrets from the goddess Hel, in Niflheim. It can be tricky to make legendary (or even just ancient) origins relevant to modern games, however, so take a moment to consider some possibilities for getting characters hooked into a Legacy's past.

Ancient or new, a Legacy can come with a complement of allies and enemies. Any character who joins the Legacy acquires both. A character might also have ties that lead him to support or oppose a Legacy. For instance, suppose the Legacy's founder offended a powerful spirit noble. A Thyrus character allied to that court might be drawn into conflict with the Legacy.

A Legacy's history could also make it a resource. For example, perhaps a Legacy's members are rumored to possess information, passed down from the days of Atlantis, about several potent Artifacts. A character who seeks one of those Artifacts might try to beg, buy or steal the lore she needs for her search.

Whatever you do, though, remember to make the history of the Legacy compelling. Make the players want to unravel the mysteries of how it came to be and how it got to be where and what it is today. **Mage: The Awakening** is, in no small part, a game about occult conspiracy and the hidden history of the heirs to Atlantis. Having a well-detailed and intricate history for a Legacy can go a long way toward establishing and maintaining those themes in your game.

## *The Founder*

Of course, the most important figure in a Legacy's history is its founder. Almost by definition, the founder sets the

tone for every feature of the Legacy — its attainments, its oblations and its attitudes. A Legacy that began with a persecuted scholar in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1968 probably looks quite different than one created by an Awakened courtier in Paris, France, in 1305. The more that characters learn about a Legacy's founder, the more they should be able to understand the connections between the founder's beliefs, practices and attitudes and those of the fellowship that descends from him. If the founder is known (which might not be the case for an old Legacy), give some thought to his personality and history, just like creating a character for a chronicle. What drove the founder to create the Legacy?

## *Ways to Craft the Soul*

The first time a mage crafts her own soul deserves to be a special occasion. For a player's character, it can be the culmination of a story arc. For a Storyteller-created Legacy, the origin story is a sort of mythic charter that sets the tone for its particular culture. But what sorts of steps are required to create a new Legacy? You can go about this in one of a few different ways, as either a player or a Storyteller.

- **Legendary Deeds:** Inventing a Legacy is an epic achievement, so the founder may have performed correspondingly epic deeds that sculpted her soul into living expression of the willworker's values and beliefs. For comparisons in Sleeper mythology, legend and religion, modern mages point to such tales as Orpheus' descent into the Underworld, Moses' parting of the Red Sea or Merlin's crafting of Stonehenge as a burial place of Aurelius Ambrosius as examples of deeds that can reshape a soul.

- **Secret Lore:** As Awakened beings, mages know secrets denied to ordinary people. Founding a Legacy can play on this theme by involving great and terrible secrets denied to most Awakened. These origin stories feature long-lost ancient lore from dusty scrolls, ancient tablets and ponderous tomes, esoteric philosophies from distant lands or propounded by mad visionaries and experiments in strange, occult sciences. The mage redefines the nature of his soul by expanding his consciousness and breadth of experience to encompass ideas formerly inconceivable by him. See the Threnodists and the Scions of God for examples using quantum mechanics and tribal mask-lore as the "secret lore" behind a Legacy's creation.

- **Subconscious Drives:** For some mages, the creation of a Legacy is a product of subconscious, rather than deliberate, desire. Some mages may find their souls sufficiently pliant after a sudden trauma, such as a near-death experience. In other cases, the soul might change from months or years of slowly building desires, fears or hatreds. See the Stone Scribes for an example of a Legacy born from a founder's emotions.

(Storytellers should be wary of these sorts of origins for player-created Legacies. "After that run-in with the murderous Scelestus, my mage instinctively begins to develop a Legacy with combat attainments!" probably isn't an



acceptable background for a new approach to Awakened existence. On the other hand, "My Mastigos has suffered failure after failure for the last year of the chronicle, so I want her to begin subconsciously developing toward a Legacy with Mind Arcanum attainments based on feelings of loss, despair and futility," is probably a better justification. As a Storyteller, you need to play this method of Legacy development by ear, and be ready to veto any idea that doesn't seem thoroughly developed.)

• **Outside Intervention:** Powerful magic, or the powers of god-like spirits, might be able to warp a mage's soul so completely that he starts a Legacy. A particularly confident, daring or foolish mage might seek out a god-like entity and ask it to craft his soul. Other mages might start Legacies by accident, as they cope with a powerful curse or some other supernatural contamination. The Tremere liches are an example of such a Legacy.

Of course, these aren't the only ways that a Legacy can come into being. Potentially, the number of means for shaping the soul equals the number of living willworkers. You need to decide, either as a player or (especially) as a Storyteller, what constitutes an acceptably rigorous course of spiritual growth and change to create a new Legacy — but the final step should *always* require a conscious decision on the mage's part.

### *The Legacy Grows*

Other mages may come to see advantages in a mage's new Legacy. Maybe they think its attainments would be useful. Maybe they agree with the founder's ideology or mystical praxis. Maybe they're just attracted by the founder's power and charisma. As soon as a Legacy grows larger than a founder and a pupil or two, its members need to set some standards for behavior: who they accept as pupils, how they train them, how members will get along.

This common practice does not always mean cooperation between members. A Legacy could well be founded on the notion of intense competition and rivalry between its adherents. (Maybe they think personal perfection is only achieved through competition, or they believe that all existence is strife.)

A Legacy's ideals and practices can manifest in many and varied ways. A Legacy could train its pupils at a monastery, in which potential adherents work and study together. Conversely, solitary, semi-abusive, wandering mentors may pass a Legacy to the students who take to the road at their sides. Almost any system, from the most tight-knit and regimented community to a ragged and scattered handful of contentious willworkers, can potentially work as a Legacy's chosen means to propagate itself.

### *Recruitment*

One important choice for a new Legacy is who it seeks as members. From what strata of Awakened society does the

Legacy tend to recruit? (And does it only recruit mages? A Legacy might seek particular Sleepers or Sleepwalkers to assist its members. Or, as in the example of the Sodality of the Tor, a Legacy may consider its own magic secondary to some religious or ideological goal that Sleepers can share.) Does the Legacy recruit at all, or do prospective members have to quest for teachers to induct them into the Legacy's mysteries?

Does the Legacy prefer members from a particular order? That will surely influence, or reflect, the Legacy's character. For instance, a Legacy that only accepts members from the Silver Ladder automatically creates for itself a reputation for command, authority, ambition and perhaps even tyranny, regardless of which Path the Legacy stems from. Likewise, recruiting from the Free Council gives a Legacy a maverick, irreverent or modernist feel.

Even if an order is not specified, social class, outside of mages' social circles, can influence who a Legacy accepts. A fellowship of scientists and technologists, such as the Threnodists or Transhuman Engineers, suggests a preference for the developed world and relatively affluent people who can afford technical education or hobbies. A more nature-oriented Legacy such as the Orphans of Proteus or the Walkers in Mists, on the other hand, suggests a more rural population, perhaps from tribal societies or the Third World.

### *Preparation and Training*

When creating a Legacy, consider that a willworker alters the most fundamental part of herself. Crafting the soul is similar to getting a heart transplant, converting to a religion and passing boot camp all at the same time. This is a *big choice* for a mage. Next to Awakening itself, joining a Legacy may well be the most monumental spiritual event in a mage's life.

Remember to play up the journey leading to the singular act of Awakened will that reconfigures a character's soul. A mage who joins a Legacy intends to seize his destiny and redefine his very essence. Does the willworker rise to the challenge, accomplishing the objectives set forth by her prospective teacher? Does he find the secret to realize his own new road to enlightenment? Or does the mage fall short, unable to overcome the obstacles in her way?

You can play the initial act of soulcrafting as nothing more than the expenditure of points and dots on characters sheets. Doing so, however, means missing out on roleplaying and Storytelling opportunities. For a character, does preparing yourself for the lifelong road of a given Legacy require long periods of solitary meditation? Intense physical training? The contemplation of riddles without answers? Insinuating yourself into the halls of power in local government? Different manipulations of the spirit require different sorts of preliminary activities.

Think of them as doing stretches before a workout. The mage is “limbering up” the particular metaphysical “muscles” that will most aid him in his efforts to reshape her soul. Months of enjoyable roleplay can develop out of these preparatory activities, whether or not a character succeeds in joining his chosen Legacy.

The initial induction into a Legacy is the first and perhaps most potent act of soul-shaping, but don’t forget that it is not the *only* one a Legacy member undertakes. Before realizing each new attainment, the willworker must configure her spirit into something else, something conducive to the new abilities she aspires to possess.

These later acts of soul-shaping may take forms familiar to the Legacy adherent, and simply repeat or refine his efforts before induction into the Legacy. On the other hand, they could be radically different. New preparatory efforts could represent a changing perspective the practitioner should develop, or a revelation of deeper “circles of mystery.” For a simple example, the Sodality of the Tor’s initiations take place in a ceremonial spiral path. For the first attainment, the initiate walks the path to the center, ritually leaving the wider world for a sacred place of transformation. The second attainment takes place entirely in that center. For the third, the initiation starts at the center and moves out, as the initiate symbolically asserts his independent, divine authority over the world.

If a player character creates the Legacy in question, then the Storyteller must work with the player to define the actions a character takes at each stage of initiation. This can help keep each act of soulcrafting both challenging and consistent with the theme of the Legacy.

The act of soulcrafting sometimes works changes upon a mage’s nimbus. Often, these alterations are subtle, like the “elvish” look Daoine may acquire when they work magic. Other times, joining a Legacy works a truly obvious change upon a mage’s nimbus, like a Scion of God whose nimbus now echoes her ceremonial mask and costume. For a few Legacies, initiation causes *physical* changes, like the bizarre mutations of the Daksha.

### *The Student-Tutor Relationship*

Even if you don’t intend for players’ characters to join a particular Legacy, take a moment to consider how its members pass their secrets from tutor to student. Does the tutor take something like a parental role? Is the relationship flatly antagonistic, as the teacher drives the student to outgrow her and transcend her? The decisions you make at this point can set the tone for the Legacy’s priorities and beliefs.

The common image of the magical tutor-pupil relationship is that of an aged willworker, stooped with years, solemnly imparting knowledge to an awed and eager apprentice. In many cases, this image still holds true. Teacher

and student can have other sorts of relationships, though. Some mentors are scarcely a few years older than their students — a rare few are, in fact, *younger* than those they induct. (Though this almost always involves a mage joining a Legacy later in life.) Relationships like this may be more akin to friendships, and, for some Legacies, the bond between lovers is more appropriate.

Some mentors make their students perform tasks apparently unrelated to the reshaping of the students’ souls. Some mentors do this to surreptitiously teach important lessons that only later become clear to the inductees. Other tutors do this to teach the students humility, to drive home their superior position in the relationships or even by way of payment. Particularly loathsome mentors may require the students to perform distasteful errands or acts (for instance, committing theft or violence or entering into sexual servitude, particularly of a most demeaning sort). Such atrocious behavior is usually condoned only by Left-Handed Legacies, however.

### *Legacies in Awakened Society*

A Legacy can be more than a philosophy on magic. A Legacy can become a force within Awakened society as a whole. Perhaps a given Legacy is founded upon the notion of political change (or support of the status quo) or encourages its members to seek positions of power and esteem within their Consilii. Or maybe the Legacy focuses upon a particular order, bridging the gulfs between that order and the others or advocating an isolationist policy. These stances need not necessarily be a product of a Legacy’s mystic practices, but can instead simply be an outgrowth of the prevailing attitudes shared among its members.

You shouldn’t feel that an apolitical (or even asocial) Legacy is somehow inferior to more socially dynamic Legacies, however. In fact, many mages look *down* on politically minded Legacies, seeing them as trying to usurp the “rightful” positions of the Consilium and the orders. It’s all just a matter of perception and one’s views on Awakened existence. Some Legacy willworkers find enlightenment in the myriad processes of society (on whatever level,) while others obtain such a state only through the denial of those mechanisms.

### *Tying It All Together*

When you’ve pieced together the results of the disparate stages of Legacy creation, take a step back and look over your finished product. You may tweak some details, here and there, just to make certain that everything flows naturally. This stage is probably a little easier for a player-created Legacy than a Storyteller-created one (since the player just needs to make sure that everything makes sense for

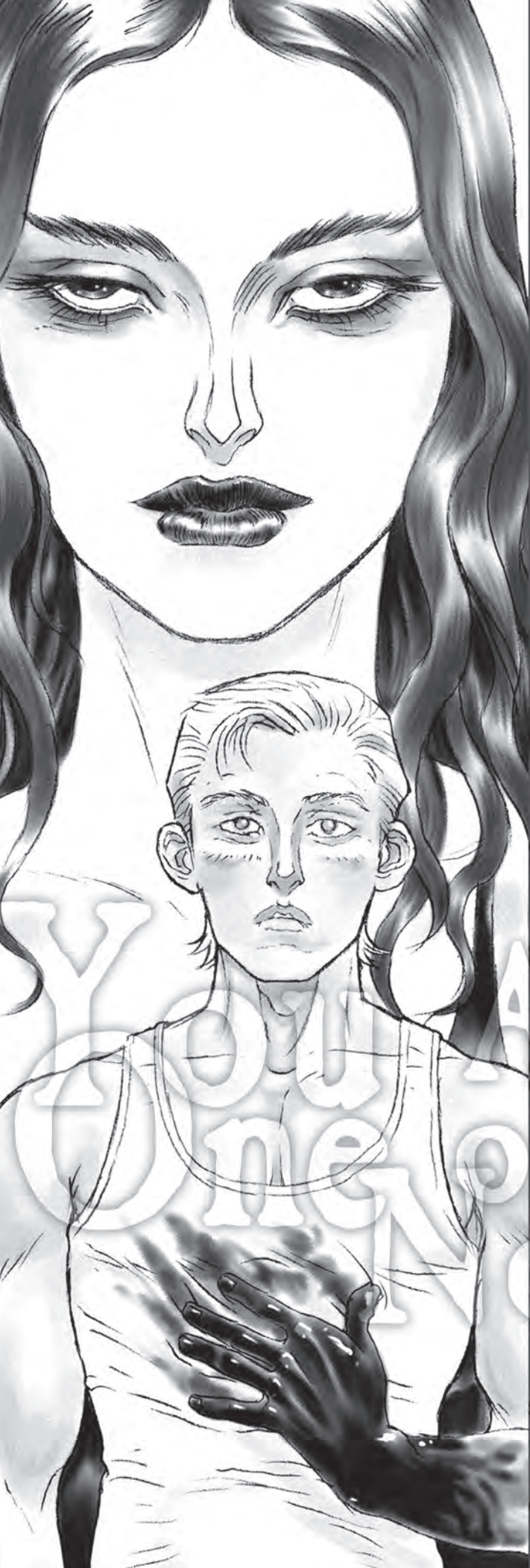


one character, while the Storyteller usually has a broader scope to consider.)

If anything looks really out of place at this point, go back and smooth over the rough edges. If the result looks *completely* untenable, then cut out whatever you need to and rebuild toward a stronger finished product. It may well be that a vision for a Legacy that looked good in the beginning looks downright terrible by the time you're done with it. Don't be disheartened, though; perfection is rarely accomplished on the first try, and you may need to accept

that a given idea for a Legacy might look good on the drawing board but perhaps less so as a completed work.

In the end, though, you have to do what works for *your* game. While we can suggest checks and balances, and define the rough "default" scope of a Legacy, determining what works best for your group is really up to you. If you want Legacies to be significantly more or less powerful than those presented here, then go for it. If you want them to be "sub-orders," then that's fine, too. Legacies are about diversity, so don't hesitate to deviate from the rules if doing so yields a better game.



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