

MANY-FACED STRANGERS



A SOURCEBOOK FOR

EXALTED
THIRD EDITION



MANY-FACED STRANGERS

CONOR ANDERSON, ADAM CARBONE, ELLIOTT FREEMAN, HENRIK JÄDERKVIST,
CHAZZ KELLNER, DANIELLE LAUZON, JAMIE MICHAELS, ERIC MINTON,
KATRIEL PAIGE, LAUREN ROY, RACHEL SAVICKI, JOHN SNEAD,
GRÉGOIRE SOULHIER, MONICA SPECA, DREW STEVENS, H. ULRICH,
ROBERT VANCE

CREDITS

Developer: Eric Minton and Lauren Roy

Writers: Conor Anderson, Adam Carbone, Elliott Freeman, Henrik Jäderkvist, Chazz Kellner, Danielle Lauzon, Jamie Michaels, Eric Minton, Katriel Paige, Lauren Roy, Rachel Savicki, John Snead, Gregoire Soulhier, Monica Specia, Drew Stevens, H. Ulrich, Robert Vance

Editor: Gavyn Duthie

Art: Digital Art Chefs, Studio Navela, HIVE Studios, Gong Studios, Melissa Uran

Art Director: Maria Cabardo and Mike Chaney

Graphic Designer: Mike Chaney

Creative Director: Richard Thomas



© 2024 PARADOX INTERACTIVE AB.

All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written consent of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and for blank character sheets, which may be reproduced for personal use only. Exalted and Exalted 3rd Edition are registered trademarks of Paradox Interactive AB (publ). All rights reserved.

Introduction	9	<i>Master of Midnight Runes</i>	37
This Book at a Glance	9	<i>Enraged Predator's Howl</i>	37
Chapter One: Luna's Beloved	12	<i>Ogre-King's Challenge</i>	38
The Shadow Fang Vanguard	12	Warfare	39
History of the Vanguard	12	<i>Feral Rage Empowerment</i>	39
The Vanguard Today	13	<i>Sheepdog Guards the Flock</i>	39
Organization	14	Territory	40
Vanguard Dominions	16	<i>World-Soul Awakening</i>	40
Potential Recruits	17	<i>Wolf Pack's Den Approach</i>	40
Relations with the Silver Pact	17	Dexterity	40
Adherents of Note	18	Heart's Blood	40
Mount Namas	19	<i>Serpent-and-Rat Refinement</i>	40
History	19	Offense	41
The Mountain Today	20	<i>Herd-Assailing Gadfly</i>	41
Religion and Spiritual Beliefs	21	<i>Quicksilver Arsenal Adaptation</i>	41
The Two Shahan-yas	22	<i>Argent Hydra Flourish</i>	41
Other Prominent Figures	23	<i>Vexing Ape Antics</i>	41
Neighbors	24	Defense	42
Sublime Danger	24	<i>No Cub Unprotected</i>	42
Pact Relations	25	Mobility	42
Mentorship	26	<i>Peregrine Speed</i>	42
Adherents of Note	26	<i>Moonlight Hunt</i>	42
Spirit Courts of Luna	27	<i>Startled Hare Escape</i>	42
The Night Bloom Garden	27	<i>Swift Den Mother Technique</i>	43
The House of Dream's Ebb	28	Subterfuge	43
Other Spirits of Luna	29	<i>Scale-Shedding Escape</i>	43
Chapter Two: Charms	34	<i>Stalking Shadow Hunt</i>	43
Universal	34	Swarm	43
<i>Mercurial Moonrise Soul</i>	34	<i>Engulfing Swarm Embrace</i>	43
<i>Skin-Changer's Subtlety</i>	34	<i>Soldier Bee Tactics</i>	44
Appearance	34	<i>Infinite Quicksilver Self</i>	44
Influence	34	Intelligence	44
<i>Lapdog's Quiet Reign</i>	34	Heart's Blood	44
<i>Sacrificial Bull Perfume</i>	35	<i>Shape-Stealer's Riddle</i>	44
<i>Unbroken Predator Dominance</i>	35	Knowledge	45
<i>Hope-Renewing Gesture</i>	35	<i>Foxglove and Wolfsbane Alchemy</i>	45
Subterfuge	35	<i>Silver Blood Infusion</i>	45
<i>Smile Hides Everything</i>	35	<i>Crossing Midnight's Threshold</i>	46
<i>Lost Mirror Flight</i>	36	<i>Argent Sphinx Enigma</i>	47
Warfare	36	Mysticism	47
<i>Pack Fights As One</i>	36	<i>Insatiable Barghest Hunt</i>	47
Charisma	36	<i>Otherworldly Familiar Pact</i>	48
Influence	36	<i>Arcana-Devouring Beast</i>	48
<i>Songbird's Passions Confessed</i>	36	<i>Beast-God Apotheosis</i>	48
		<i>Legion-of-Wolves Transformation</i>	49
		<i>Shrine of Midnight's Covenant</i>	49
		Crafting	50
		<i>Witch of the Forge</i>	50

Sorcery	50	Animal Ken	62
<i>Witch-Goddess Puissance</i>	50	<i>Ghost-Stalking Hunter</i>	62
Manipulation	50	<i>Two Selves As One</i>	62
Influence	50	<i>Divine Soul-Beast Exaltation</i>	63
<i>Snake-Oil Panacea</i>	50	Cache	63
Subterfuge	51	<i>Argent Nagamani Boon</i>	63
<i>Laughing Hyena Mockery</i>	51	<i>Stolen Power Bezoar</i>	64
<i>Lone-Wolf Pack Formation</i>	52	Navigation	64
<i>Fog-Shrouded Guerrilla Force</i>	52	<i>Rat's Secret Voyage</i>	64
Perception	52	Territory	65
Senses	52	<i>Lair-Sculpting Beast</i>	65
<i>Blighted Herd Examination</i>	52	<i>The World Within the Mirror</i>	65
<i>Toppled Domino Foresight</i>	52	Chapter Three: Martial Arts and Sorcery	68
<i>Behind the Beast's Eyes</i>	53	Martial Arts	68
<i>All-Seeing Guardian Vigil</i>	54	Bear Style	68
<i>Guardian Beast of Five Directions</i>	54	<i>Claw-Fist Blow</i>	68
Scrutiny	54	<i>Inescapable Fang Technique</i>	68
<i>Echo Precedes Voice</i>	54	<i>Ursine Hide Endurance</i>	68
Stamina	55	<i>Bear Form</i>	68
Defense	55	<i>Grizzly Maiming Strike</i>	69
<i>Guardian Silverback Tactics</i>	55	<i>Foe-Crushing Embrace</i>	69
<i>Argent Monster Evolution</i>	55	<i>Bear Gives Chase</i>	69
<i>Roaring Defiance Approach</i>	56	<i>Prey-Subduing Strength</i>	69
Endurance	56	<i>Unmatched Brutality Hold</i>	70
<i>Gifts of Protean Vigor</i>	56	Monkey Style	70
<i>Infinite Adaptive Perfection</i>	56	<i>Unpredictable Monkey Capering</i>	70
Berserker	57	<i>Flashing Monkey-Tail Distraction</i>	70
<i>Ravening Beast Excitement</i>	57	<i>Monkey Paw Snatch</i>	71
<i>Least Provocation Outburst</i>	57	<i>Monkey Form</i>	71
<i>Blood Rage Reckoning</i>	57	<i>Outrage-Stirring Jackanapes</i>	71
Strength	57	<i>Tail-Tripping Mischief</i>	71
Offense	57	<i>Flowing Mirror of Opposition</i>	71
<i>Leopard Drags Carcass</i>	57	<i>Lost Monkey Escapade</i>	72
<i>Guard-Shattering Pounce</i>	58	<i>Four Halo Golden Monkey Palm</i>	72
<i>Illimitable Beast-Self</i>	59	Rat Style	73
<i>Primal Beast Ascension</i>	59	<i>Hungry Gnawing Fang</i>	74
<i>God-Monster Transcendence</i>	60	<i>Rat Brings Fleas</i>	74
Mobility	60	<i>Scurrying Rat Retreat</i>	74
<i>Falling Moon Cataclysm</i>	60	<i>Rat Form</i>	74
Feats of Strength	60	<i>Escape the Cat's Claws</i>	75
<i>Terrifying Rampage</i>	60	<i>Red-Eyes-Darting Strike</i>	75
Wits	61	<i>Audacious Trespasser Technique</i>	75
Heart's Blood	61	<i>Swarming Pestilence Strike</i>	75
<i>Shepherd at the Crossroads</i>	61	<i>Rat King's Secret Art: Death of a Thousand Fangs</i>	75
Resolve	61	Thousand Blades Style	76
<i>Argent Aspect Incarnation</i>	61	<i>Arsenal</i>	76
<i>Darkness-Waking Howl</i>	62	<i>Thousand Blades Unsheathed</i>	76
		<i>Wings-of-Steel Bulwark</i>	76

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Flying Sword Technique</i>	77	<i>Seek the Dreaded Lair</i>	97
<i>Thousand Blades Form</i>	77	<i>Hunter of Mysteries</i>	97
<i>Thousand Blades Strike as One</i>	78	<i>Prey's Strength Embodiment</i>	97
<i>Sword-Shrike's Garden</i>	78	<i>Slain Legend Arete</i>	97
<i>Storm of Flying Swords</i>	78	Magpie's Wing	98
<i>Thousand Daiklave Wings</i>	78	Evocations of the Magpie's Wing	98
<i>Infinite Arsenal Apotheosis</i>	78	<i>Corvid's Many Secrets</i>	98
Toad Style	79	<i>Magpie's Hidden Hoard</i>	99
<i>Iron-Skinned Toad</i>	79	<i>Covetous Talon Swoop</i>	99
<i>Poisonous Fist</i>	79	<i>Expansive Avarice</i>	99
<i>Unyielding Toad Stance</i>	79	<i>Ingenuity of the Magpie</i>	99
<i>Toad Form</i>	80	<i>Greed Lines the Nest</i>	99
<i>Poison-Eater Cultivation</i>	80	Ajelin of Accursed Silver	100
<i>Trouble the Still Pond</i>	80	Evocations of Ajelin	100
<i>Humbled Predator Rebuke</i>	80	<i>Accursed Blade Embodiment</i>	101
<i>Five Poisons Aegis</i>	81	<i>Sheathed in Moonsilver</i>	101
<i>Secret of the Immortal Toad</i>	81	<i>A Sword's Purpose</i>	101
Sorcery	81	<i>Mastering Cursed Silver</i>	101
<i>Dreamer of the Caul</i>	81	<i>Armored Blade-Beast Transformation</i>	102
<i>Shaping Rituals</i>	82	<i>Unhesitating Blade</i>	102
<i>Other Benefits</i>	82	<i>Harbinger of Slaughter</i>	102
Witch-Beast Pact	82	<i>Living Weapon Perfection</i>	102
<i>Shaping Rituals</i>	82	Moonreaver	103
<i>Other Benefits</i>	82	Evocations of Moonreaver	103
Terrestrial Circle Spells	83	<i>Cold Breath of the Moon</i>	103
<i>Hound of the Five Winds</i>	83	<i>Lost to the Night</i>	104
<i>Path of Shimmering Mist</i>	83	<i>Rimed by Lunar Ice</i>	104
<i>The Violent Opening of Closed Portals</i>	85	<i>Freedom Is A Scythe</i>	104
Celestial Circle Spells	86	<i>Moonlit Horizon Reaper</i>	104
<i>Invoking the Animal Avatars</i>	86	<i>Beneath a Strange Sky</i>	105
<i>Designing Animal Avatars</i>	87	Night Hag's Braid	105
<i>Nightmare Jungle Flourishing</i>	88	Evocations of the Night Hag's Braid	106
<i>Stolen Face Masquerade</i>	89	<i>Accursed Lash</i>	106
Chapter Four: Moonlit Treasure Panoply	92	<i>Night Hag's Feast</i>	106
Azure Scorpion Gauntlets	92	<i>Fever Dream Arcana</i>	106
Evocations of Azure Scorpion Gauntlets	92	<i>Witch-Scourge Terror</i>	107
<i>Distant Claw Retrieval</i>	93	<i>Baleful Omen Strike</i>	107
<i>Prey-Dragging Barb</i>	93	<i>Nightmare Oubliette Affliction</i>	108
<i>Scorpion-Soul Communion</i>	93	Fond Remembrance	108
<i>Flying Scorpion Chain</i>	93	Evocations of Fond Remembrance	109
<i>Thousand Venoms Sting</i>	94	<i>Heartfelt Memory Feint</i>	109
<i>The Scorpion Awakens</i>	94	<i>False Life Monologue</i>	109
Smiling Yathe	94	<i>Recollection's Edge</i>	110
The Hungering Fangs	95	<i>Shattered Mosaic Reconstruction</i>	110
Evocations of the Hungering Fangs	95	<i>Scars of the Past</i>	110
<i>Lessons of the Hunt</i>	95	<i>Never Forget Me</i>	110
<i>Beast-Slayer's Wisdom</i>	96	<i>Cutting Reminiscence</i>	110

<i>All Your Yesterdays</i>	110	Evocations of the Cloak of Forgotten Midnights	124
<i>Unshakable Belief Affliction</i>	111	<i>One With Night</i>	124
<i>History Rewritten</i>	111	<i>Gloaming Shroud</i>	124
<i>Sorrowful Departure</i>	111	<i>Hidden Moon Mantle</i>	125
The Shifter's Skin	112	<i>Queen of Darkness</i>	125
Evocations of the Shifter's Skin	112	<i>Veiled in Midnight</i>	125
<i>Ever-Changing Hunt</i>	112	<i>Endless Walpurgisnacht Revel</i>	125
<i>Shifter's Claw Strike</i>	112	Inkwarden, Seal of Chi-E-Su	126
<i>Stolen Skins Unshed</i>	113	Evocations of Inkwarden	126
<i>Mercurial Predator Transformation</i>	113	<i>Masterpiece-Acclaiming Mark</i>	126
<i>Shape-Dancer's Defense</i>	113	<i>Spirit-Binder's Seal</i>	127
<i>Chrysalis-Self Evolution</i>	113	<i>Evil-Sealing Stamp</i>	127
Shadow Moth Raiment	114	<i>Myth Made Real</i>	127
Evocations of the Shadow Moth Raiment	114	<i>Labyrinth-Oath Binding</i>	127
<i>Fluttering Step</i>	114	<i>Seal of Enduring Legend</i>	128
<i>Shadow-Wing Escape</i>	114	Neritoum, the All-Beast Avatar	128
<i>Moth Shroud Feint</i>	115	Evocations of Neritoum	129
<i>Stance-Concealing Camouflage</i>	115	<i>Apex Beast Evolution</i>	129
<i>Silver Moth Stance</i>	115	<i>Ever-Shifting Titan Activation</i>	129
<i>Thousand Twilit Wings Form</i>	115	<i>Mirror-Shell Adaptation</i>	129
The Oud of Infinite Strings	116	<i>Stalking Behemoth Camouflage</i>	130
Evocations of the Oud of Infinite Strings	117	<i>One Flesh Symbiosis</i>	130
<i>Suspicion-Silencing Tune</i>	117	<i>Infinite Inchoate Potential</i>	130
<i>Subtle Virtuoso Strumming</i>	117	<i>Quicksilver Subtlety Refinement</i>	130
<i>Troubadour-Trickster Cunning</i>	117	<i>Behemoth-Heart Empowerment</i>	130
<i>Sentry-Distracting Song</i>	117	<i>Unseen Devastation Strike</i>	130
<i>Infinite Strings Reverberation</i>	118	<i>Apocalyptic Titan-Beast Ascendancy</i>	131
<i>False World Fugue</i>	118	Chapter Five:	
Resplendent Dream Brush	118	Children of Luna and Gaia	134
Evocations of		Heroes of the Silver Pact	134
Resplendent Dream Brush	119	Aqadar	134
<i>Painter of Dreams</i>	119	Aum-Ashatra	136
<i>Argent Brush Flourish</i>	119	Leviathan	138
<i>Fantasy Given Form</i>	119	Elder Prowess	140
<i>Landscape-Correcting Brushstroke</i>	120	Sazay Shadow-Dancer	141
<i>Within a Painted World</i>	120	Seven Obsidian Leopard	142
<i>Painted Peril Approach</i>	120	Smiling Zamisha	144
<i>World-Canvas Miracle</i>	120	Sublime Danger	147
Thousand-Winged Fiddle	121	Elder Prowess	149
Evocations of the Thousand-Winged Fiddle	122	Tanisa Ring-Eater	149
<i>Cadence of the Locust</i>	122	Tegama Asarkon	151
<i>Stridulating Strings Technique</i>	122	Ül the Burning Eye	153
<i>Dulcet Song of Battle</i>	123	Elder Prowess	155
<i>Swarm-Summoning Song</i>	123	Generals of the Caul	156
<i>Apocalypse Swarm Virtuoso</i>	123	Lintha Haquen Fia-Shaw	
Cloak of Forgotten Midnights	124	Flowers Unbending in the Storm	156
		Sandswept Garda-Empress	158

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sha'a Oka, His Divine Lunar Presence	160	The Belligerents	201
Skathra Venomchild	163	Lunars	201
Third Daughter of the Leaves	165	The Realm	205
The Shadow Fang Vanguard	167	The Martial Orders	206
Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen	167	Faxaians	208
Elder Prowess	170	Merchants and Sailors	208
Tayan Silver-Crowned	170	Pirates and Privateers	209
Independent Lunars	172	The Caulborn	210
Silent Pearl	172	Regions of the Caul	210
Tula the Reaver	174	Asura	211
Spirits	176	Faxai	211
Ceilancea, the Midnight Roar	176	Kama	211
Horizon Chanter	178	Logistics	212
Bestiary	180	Morovath	212
Binturong	180	Noteworthy Strategic Locales	213
Burrow Lok	181	Noteworthy Occult Locales	213
Cave Hyena	182	A Possible Future	214
Cheetah	183	Prelude: Joining the Fray	214
Cone Snail	184	Stage One: Opening Maneuvers	215
Fox	186	Stage Two: Calling the Council	219
Giant Centipede	187	Stage Three: Pact Escalation	223
Great Leech	188	Stage Four: Rising Opposition	226
Hatra	189	Stage Five: The Battle of Faxai	229
Mudskipper	190	Stage Six: The Lion Disappears	231
Orca	191	Stage Seven:	
River Basilisc	192	The Dragon Regains Its Footing	232
River Bastion	194	Storytelling the Aftermath	233
Scorching-Venom Lizard	195	Decisive Lunar Victory	233
Turtlewolf	197	Pyrrhic Lunar Victory	233
Chapter Six: War for the Caul	200	Pyrrhic Realm Victory	233
About This Adventure	200	Decisive Realm Victory	233
Battle Lines	201	Third-Party Victory	233
		The Caul Unmoored	234
		Appendix: Lunar Exalted Intro Sheet	235





Introduction

“Fancy thinking the Beast was something you could hunt and kill!”

— William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*

The Lunar Exalted were figures of awe and majesty in the First Age where they stalked the wilderness as divine beasts or sat as witch-princes upon silver thrones. But when the Dragon-Blooded murdered the Solar Exalted, they turned against the Lunars as well, driving them out to the edges of the world.

In the millennia since the Usurpation, Lunars have sought revenge against the Dragon-Blooded and their Sidereal puppeteers. They wage their endless war from the wilds, raiding Threshold satrapies, sabotaging trade, and wearing stolen faces to sow chaos in the halls of power. Though the shahan-yas may not agree how best to defeat their enemy, every member of the Silver Pact seeks the Scarlet Realm’s demise. From the forests of Mahalanka to the shrine cities of the Caul, the Lunar Exalted sharpen their blades and bare their teeth for the battles to come.

To play a Lunar, and gain setting information about the Silver Pact and the dominions they rule, as well as other Lunar polities you’ll need **Lunars: Fangs at the Gate**. This book, **Many-Faced Strangers**, is a companion volume funded through Kickstarter. It expands on settings and characters introduced in **Lunars**, including the Shadow Fang Vanguard, Mount Namas, and the major players fighting for control of the Caul’s shrine cities. It also includes new Charms, artifacts, and animals created with the help of Kickstarter backers who submitted their custom concepts. Thank you to everyone who made this book possible by backing the **Lunars** Kickstarter!

This Book at a Glance

- **Chapter One: Luna’s Beloved** goes into greater depth on Lunar factions, such as the Shadow Fang

Vanguard, a military enclave operating out of the Northeastern forests. It details Mount Namas and the schools led by Seven Obsidian Leopard and Tanisa Ring-Eater, as well as providing information on the daiklave-winged Sublime Danger. Finally, the chapter introduces several new spirit courts and individual spirits associated with Luna themselves.

- **Chapter Two: Charms** supplies new Lunar Charms, expanding on the legendary prowess and protean power of the Lunar Exalted.
- **Chapter Three: Martial Arts and Sorcery** supplies new martial arts styles, shaping rituals, and spells.
- **Chapter Four: Moonlit Treasure Panoply** offers powerful artifacts from throughout the Lunars’ long and varied history.
- **Chapter Five: Children of Luna and Gaia** presents Quick Character write-ups for a number of Lunars, ranging from new adherents discovering what it means to be one of Luna’s Chosen to legendary heroes of the Silver Pact.
- **Chapter Six: War for the Caul** provides Storyteller guidance for including the Caul in their games. It also covers the War for the Caul, a scenario detailing possibilities for how a Lunar campaign to take Faxai-on-the-Caul back from the Dragon-Blooded might unfold.

- The **Appendix** encompasses a two-page lore sheet intended for new players, summarizing the setting details relevant to Lunar characters.

The ring of steel on steel filled the morning air. Exquisitely Violent Axe had heard New Dakuo's residents say the dawn drills had become as birdsong to them, telling them that the sun was rising and the day begun. The young Lunar walked among her troops, calling out orders and watching as the soldiers moved to carry them out. They flowed smoothly into formation, executing maneuvers or demonstrating fighting strategies for her inspection. Everything seemed in order, but that wasn't quite enough to satisfy the colonel.

Tayan Silver-Crowned, autarch of the Shadow Fang Vanguard, was coming to New Dakuo to inspect the reserve army and meet with Exquisitely Violent Axe and Meraki Lasolesh, the city's duumvirs. This wasn't unusual; in fact, Axe herself had stood at the forefront of the troops during Tayan's previous visits to the city, a proud Vanguard taizei eager to prove her worth.

Rises-With-Fire had led New Dakuo for hundreds of years. If he didn't always have the citizens' love, he certainly commanded their respect. Exquisitely Violent Axe didn't find the same to be true for herself — in the handful of years since becoming duumvir, she'd contended with insubordinate troops and a city frequently on the verge of unrest.

Her greatest frustration was the thin man striding down the line toward her. Meraki Lasolesh, the Bitter Justice Legion's Dragon-Blooded chumyo — he had spent the last few years questioning every order Axe gave, often directly countermanding her decrees. *"You'll understand when you have more experience,"* Lasolesh would tell her.

"I have some suggestions about the exercises," he said when he reached her. "Just a few improvements to your demonstration for the autarch."

If it weren't for the covenant the Vanguard had forged with the Wood Aspect's ancestors, Axe might have been tempted to try snapping him like the twig he resembled.

The peace between the Vanguard and his renegade legion stayed her hand. She recalled the counsel of her friend, the sorcerer Aki the White Demon: *"He's testing your boundaries. He's testing you."* Aki had told her. *"This is the first time in the city's history the legion's officer has had seniority over the Vanguard's. Stand your ground."*

Axe forced a smile. "I'll take them into consideration." She was determined to show the autarch a city well in-hand, and a transition proceeding smoothly.

The troops continued their drill. Whatever reservations the Dakuins might have about Exquisitely Violent Axe, they were part of the Shadow Fang Vanguard themselves, and would behave accordingly, with discipline and determination, courage and confidence. It was the common thread that tied them all together, the one that guided Axe in her interactions with the people under her command. She'd gain their loyalty and trust. It would take time and patience, but as Rises-With-Fire used to tell her, *"You rarely win hearts with lightning raids."*

A rider appeared over the crest of the road. *Tayan's advance scout*, Axe thought. The autarch was arriving early.

"I'm sorry, Lasolesh," Axe said. "It looks like we'll have to keep to my plans after all." The troops were ready. She was ready. "Soldiers!" she called. "To your lines!"

She watched her orders ripple through them: a well-trained army, ready for inspection. Lesolash paused a moment, as though considering one last contradiction. Then he shook his head and saluted her, and took his place beside her to await the autarch's arrival.





Chapter One

Luna's Beloved

The Shadow Fang Vanguard

In the deep Northeast, the winters are long and the summers short. A woman must be disciplined, frugal, and ruthless if she wishes to feed her family here. She and her followers must act decisively. Anything less courts disorder, which is the herald of death. Fitting, then, that the Shadow Fang Vanguard is the power that guards these dark woods.

In the chaotic wake of the Usurpation, the Silver Pact formed — that web of favors and fangs upon which Dragon-Blooded ambitions have broken for centuries. But there are other theories of resistance, and other methodologies of prosecuting vendetta. Splintering from the mainstream, some Lunars chose a stricter path.

History of the Vanguard

The war is long, and many forces have fought it.

Abandoned by his princes, Thousand-Swords Oravan (**Lunars**, p. 22) died alone at the hands of the Wyld Hunt's shikari, in the meditation chamber of the last stronghold of his ruined Silver Principiate. In the years that followed, Pact Lunars pointed to his failure as justification for their own manner of organizing, but to those who still cleaved to the necessity of central authority in making war, Oravan became a martyr and an inspiration.

The lack of a clear chain of command led to some significant losses: When Takes-By-Right ordered her horsewomen to give chase — against the counsel of her Circlemate Inyonyi Yamanzi — they rode directly into a Sidereal ambush. The siege of Cold Osmanthus stalled into failure thanks to the squabbling of the Warlord Twins Hupatsu and Xbilitzi. When Bluegill the Patient and Al-Tahakdul both infiltrated the court of Daimyo Serenga, they worked for years unbeknownst and at cross-purposes to each other.

A handful of Lunars gathered in Frost-Fasting, a Lunar fortress that predated the Shogunate. Among their

number were Uturi, the Princess of Hooks; Alafia of the Burning Necklace; Inyonyi Yamanzi, the Chimera; and the warlord and former legion sergeant Tayan Silver-Crowned. All had seen key operations against the Shogunate fail due to lack of communication, discipline, or clear command. All were committed to seeking a more effective way. The participants set the ideological foundations of the Vanguard in a raging debate that lasted twelve days.

All agreed that they'd maintain their standing in the Silver Pact — their ultimate goals were the same, even as their methodologies diverged. They claimed ideological descent from Thousand-Swords Oravan instead, and reiterated the need for military discipline and an explicit chain of command. Disagreements over the organization's hierarchy led to some initial infighting and jockeying for position, but over time the Vanguard's leadership stabilized, its founders rotating through the newly established role of autarch. The organization's philosophy turned away from power gained through violence or personal connection, pivoting to focus on those qualities they felt made an effective military run smoothly, such as discipline, strategic planning, and communication.

When the Contagion struck, the Vanguard put their ideals to the test. Inyoni led her coterie against a faerie army, where she slew a score of Fair Folk warrior-princes and monstrous Wyld-behemoths before she fell. As Uturi succumbed to the Contagion, she spent her final hours scribing her insights into military organization and law so that they wouldn't be lost. Frost-Fasting, where Shadow Fang Lunars debated their philosophy of war, was swallowed up by madness and the Marches. Many more were lost. Alafia became the sole autarch, rallying the remaining Vanguard forces to defend their peoples and dominions and turn back the Fair Folk tide where they could.

While the Scarlet Empress solidified her rule, the Vanguard celebrated its early successes. It pushed back against the empire's expansion into the Northeast, killing high-profile targets and ravaging satrapies throughout the North and the Scavenger Lands. Such aggression

came at a cost: the Realm's counterstrikes were swift and intense, and Dragon-Blooded generals made little distinction between the Shadow Fang Vanguard and Silver Pact. Lunars from both factions were killed, antagonizing Pact allies like Ma-Ha-Suchi and deepening the rift between the two sects. Some Vanguard members, deeming the group's strategy too dangerous and the cost of its operations too high, formed splinter sects or rejoined the Pact.

In the second century post-Contagion, major events in the Northeast coaxed the Vanguard into a more reticent stance. Its forces withdrew into the wilderness to avoid conflict with the sorcerer-emperor Bagrash Köl, preferring to let him struggle against the Realm on their behalf. Then the Second Contagion's plagues afflicted the Vanguard's dominions, leading to a long period of retrenchment.

Two and a half centuries later, Autarch Avarin Stonefist — his reckless nature spurred on by his Solar mate Linara-of-the-Ways, who'd sought membership in the Vanguard to use it as a tool of vengeance against the Realm — declared that the time had come for open war. Vanguard officers led armies against Realm satrapies, while envoys sought to rouse the Silver Pact into the fray. Though they met with initial success, several pyrrhic victories and a few costly defeats bled away troops and Lunar members, while the Realm's feuding houses set their disputes aside to unite against the Anathema.

Tayan Silver-Crowned, who'd helped shape the Vanguard and navigated its thorny politics for the autarchs she'd served, ardently advocated for the Vanguard to cut its losses and reassess its circumstances. When talks fell through, and with the blessing of several other key members, she challenged Avarin to single combat. After he was slain, his Solar mate was driven out and left to the Wyld Hunt's mercies, while Tayan claimed the mantle of autarch.

Withdrawing her surviving troops from the field, Tayan redirected the Vanguard down a more conservative path while working to secure Vanguard dominions throughout the Northeast and mend the riven alliances with the Silver Pact. Strikes Tayan authorized against garrisons and trade routes emphasized damage to the empire's troops and coffers while minimizing Lunar casualties. Shortly after Tayan's ascension as autarch, her former teacher Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen sought her out. The First Age occultist quickly became one of her most valued advisors, and has remained so ever since.

Only a handful of rivals have challenged Tayan's leadership in the time after she took power. She values these

contests; they keep her nerve sharp and remind her of the Vanguard's own needs and to hold a critical eye to her own methods.

The Vanguard Today

Nearly a score of Lunars shape the modern Vanguard, each a general or warlord in their own right. Mortal lieutenants, beastfolk heroes, and loyal outcastes form the remainder of the Vanguard's officer corps. In turn, these leaders recruit and train troops from local settlements within the Lunars' dominions.

The Vanguard's territory spans the Northeast. Its dominions include the forested fastness of Sifar; Helm, its rolling hills rich in silver and tin; and the fortress-city of New Dakuo (**Lunars**, p. 107). Vanguard troops patrol the Grand Battalion Road that links the sect's core dominions, protecting travelers from bandits and keeping a watchful eye for invading forces.

Though the Shadow Fang Vanguard branched off from the Silver Pact, the degree to which they're separate entities often depends on one's perspective. Some Vanguard members retain close ties with the Pact, attending Pact councils and coordinating operations with other Lunars in the region; many have Pact shahan-yas or adherents uninterested in joining the Vanguard's ranks. Others keep their distance, eschewing counsel — and occasional criticism — from Pact members they see as overly individualistic. Likewise, Pact Lunars' opinions on their Vanguard peers vary widely. Many chafe at the very notion of military hierarchy and subservience, while others see the Vanguard as useful allies, and may support its members' proposals in Pact councils.

With the Great Houses pulling their legions back to the Blessed Isle, the Vanguard sees new opportunities to strike at their ancient enemies. Scouts report on satrapial holdings whose people are on the verge of rebellion; Lunar agents seek to tip them over into open resistance. They court notables with access to Realm luminaries capable of feeding the Vanguard useful information — paramours, majordomos, junior officers, merchant princes, and the like.

Several of Tayan's advisors lobby for her to adopt a more aggressive stance against the Realm's forces now that its attentions are divided. Opportunities for glory abound, but still the autarch exercises caution. Her informants bring her word of the Great Houses' machinations against one another, and Tayan believes the perfect moment to strike is yet to come. Though the longer Tayan delays, the more that certain of her generals consider challenging her for control.



One major difference between the Shadow Fang Vanguard and the Silver Pact is membership criteria. While the Silver Pact's shahan-yas only rarely acknowledge non-Lunar members, the Vanguard is far more welcoming to outsiders. Mortal heroes, beastfolk champions, outcastes, and even various spirits comprise the preponderance of the Shadow Fang Vanguard's lower ranks. Newly Exalted Lunars endure a probationary period among these ranks themselves, practicing soldiering and tactics under their superiors. Most are promoted swiftly as they prove themselves in the field.

It's been centuries since a Solar was welcome amongst the Vanguard: Linara-of-the-Ways' disastrous influence remains fresh to Tayan and other longtime members. Until recently a rare concern, with the return of the Solar Exalted, the Vanguard's leadership steels itself to confront the issue again.

Organization

The Vanguard is structured along military lines. It draws much of its system of ranks from early Shogunate

practices. Tayan currently serves as *autarch*, the supreme commander of the Vanguard's forces. The autarch has ultimate authority over the Vanguard's goals and operations. She holds final veto power over her subordinates' decisions — including promotion through the Vanguard's ranks.

Instead of residing permanently in a capital city, the autarch travels among her dominions to review troops, consult with generals, and lend her experience and wisdom to military and civilian operations. She attends Silver Pact councils and meetings with local powers — from clan chieftains to spirit courts — as an emissary plenipotentiary and honored guest. A handful of advisors offer insights on the organization's holdings, opportunities to strike against the Realm, or other pressing issues, but in the end the Vanguard's victories and losses lie squarely at the autarch's feet.

The autarch's role must be earned, often by a Lunar capable of proving herself to her peers over decades of service. The title is hers for as long as she can hold it — while most prior autarchs died in battle, at least one lost the position when rivals challenged them.

THE AUTARCH'S INNER CIRCLE

Carnelian Saber, the Princess of Hooks, once stood among Alafia's adherents alongside Tayan herself. Originally a tutor to petty nobility, she's renowned in the Vanguard and Pact alike for the breadth and depth of her academic knowledge. She holds sway over a coterie of the sect's most hardline traditionalists, whom Tayan must appease to retain their support. But even beyond that, the two are old friends. Saber has the autarch's ear, and with it significant influence over Vanguard policy.

Hqagwu Fire-Beacon, the Burning Necklace, is a huge man with the spirit shape of a mandrill, originally from the far South. Like most to hold this title, he's dynamic and iconoclastic; Tayan chose him as much to counterbalance Carnelian Saber's faction as for his own strategic genius. Hqagwu aims to take the autarch's seat eventually, intending to shift the Vanguard to a more aggressive posture. The Realm's sudden weakness has made his politics more popular, leaving Tayan especially vulnerable should he issue a challenge.

Adera Thrice-Blessed, the Ivy-Wreathed Chimera, is among the most feared living Lunar warriors. Though capable of defeating Tayan in battle, they have no interest in the autarch's seat and its attendant responsibilities. Instead, they focus on a variety of personal interests — collecting storied musical instruments, attending religious festivals, and challenging powerful foes to combat. They gleefully throw their weight around seeking opportunities to pursue them. Adera has little patience for any who would use them as a figurehead in Tayan's place.

No formal rules exist for how or when someone might pose such a contest, but a claimant who secures the backing of several influential Lunars can demand the autarch meet him in single combat and expect to be treated seriously. Ignoring such a challenge would risk the Vanguard collapsing into infighting. Not only has Tayan taken to the field to defend her position, she's also demanded several duels herself when a particularly savvy rival's maneuvering threatened to undermine her. As yet, she remains undefeated.

Her highest officers hold titles named for the Vanguard's founders. The *Princess of Hooks*, the high judge, presides over all cases of military justice. The *Burning Necklace*, the autarch's second-in-command, directs forces on the ground and plays devil's advocate to the autarch's decisions. The *Ivy-Wreathed Chimera* is the foremost combatant in the Vanguard, equal parts combat instructor, trusted bodyguard, and battlefield champion.

Below these four are the “standard” ranks, though even the lowest-ranking Lunar hero of the Vanguard potentially commands entire armies and dominions:

Kazei, or colonels, have demonstrated both deep loyalty to the Vanguard and an astute strategic mind, above and beyond whatever accomplishments secured their previous rank; this takes anywhere from a few years to several decades. They've usually recruited new members to the cause and won significant victories against the Realm. Each oversees one or more *shozei*, providing direction and coordinating with their peers and the autarch's inner circle. The *kazei* also form an advisory

council once every few years, when the autarch revises the Vanguard's grand strategy. While experienced Lunar members dominate the ranks of the *kazei*, there are others among its membership. There are close to 20 *kazei* in the Vanguard.

Shozei, or majors, have established themselves as providing a valuable skillset to the Vanguard, or have demonstrated their worth through deeds such as adding significant territory to the Vanguard's dominions, retrieving critical intelligence, or noteworthy military victories; promotion to this rank may take anywhere from a few months to several years. There are roughly 50 *shozei* in the Vanguard. Each is typically assigned to oversee a group of *taizei* — initially just one, but gaining more as they demonstrate leadership and managerial abilities — providing assignments in the absence of commands from above. All *shozei* are authorized to maintain a dominion — whether establishing a new one or assuming responsibility for a deceased member's — either alone or as part of a coterie. However, many remain mobile troubleshooters, like *taizei* with more authority to self-direct. Like *taizei*, most *shozei* are non-Lunars.

Taizei, or captains, hold the lowest rank in the Vanguard proper. Still, every ordinary officer in the sect's dominions acknowledges their authority. *Taizei* encompass most non-Lunar members, as well as Lunar probationers who've recently joined the Vanguard and have yet to prove themselves. Numbered in the hundreds, *taizei* take assignments from higher-ups and travel to various dominions within the Vanguard's influence.

A SPIRITUALITY OF WAR

Aside from the practical considerations of the chain of command, there's a spiritual element to these hierarchies. The Vanguard accompanies promotions with initiation ceremonies honoring Luna as the Supreme General, and several Lunars welcome like-minded members to partake in mystery rites passed down over the centuries. Belief isn't mandatory, nor is cultic worship outside of initiatory rites. Tayan frowns as harshly on partiality toward fellow mystery cultists as she does toward any other form of favoritism.

They're often given command of Vanguard resources — regiments, fortresses, bands of assassins, and the like — for an assignment's duration. Sufficiently talented taizei are authorized to go on detached duty to establish and maintain a dominion, or to assume responsibility for a deceased member's dominion.

THE CODES BELLICOSE

At the center of the Vanguard's operations are the Codes Bellicose. Compiled and annotated over the centuries by Vanguard leaders, these books of strategy and legal doctrine guide the Vanguard's philosophy. Its officers refer to the Codes when planning operations, and rely on the writings within to inform their own approaches to leadership.

The Princess of Hooks interprets them from the Accounted Woods, where she also presides over courts martial and lesser charges. A Shadow Fang Lunar is expected to obey commands from above without complaint in the field, but as soon as the operation is completed, she may bring complaint if she feels the commands were ill-advised or the commander incompetent. The autarch may override the Princess' decisions in these matters if she believes circumstances call for it. Tayan herself has invoked the privilege on only a handful of occasions.

Vanguard Dominions

For centuries, the Northeast has been the Vanguard's main stronghold. Horse-nomads that hunt with eagles tied to leather gloves covered in intricate beadwork run messages from dominion to dominion. Merchant-raiders pilot boats through mazy rivers and swamps, the smoke from burning warehouses rising behind them. Deep in the forests, beastfolk warriors drill in anticipation of coming battles.

The Vanguard maintains tight control over dominions ruled in its name, and very little escapes the notice of its many informants. Military discipline is the order of the day, though life can be surprisingly permissive for the common people.

Dominions include:

For centuries, the river port of **Dømklave** has been the personal fiefdom of Carnelian Saber, the Princess of Hooks, and is home to the Accounted Woods, where military tribunals are held. Because of the military court's importance in maintaining order among the Vanguard's heroes, the city is fiercely protected. Tayan frequently spends time here, and at least one kazei is usually in attendance, along with the Princess herself.

The high buildings are made of gray brick, their sharply pointed roofs adorned with countless iron weathercocks to keep the pegasus-riding Fair Folk of nearby Inness at bay. The Accounted Woods grow in the city's center; serving as a public park, the austere and thin-leaved willows provide shade in the brief summer. Tribunals are held under moonlight at one of three auditoria at the north, east, and west quadrants of the Woods. The Princess herself resides in the Tower Moonstruck, a grim gray manse rising from the Woods' heart.

The Dømkleven are a hidebound, litigious people who lease their lawspeakers' services to neighboring city-states in need of prudent counsel. They grow millet, oats, and beans in terraced fields, and send their fleets to harvest vast quantities of lake whitefish, perch, and walleye; fishy smoke wafts through the city day and night.

Sthero has been a Vanguard dominion for only a few decades. A rocky land rich in salt and tin deposits along the White Sea, it was a far-flung, isolated tributary of the Realm, which proved to be its downfall. Where yields grow thin, miners dig gullies to follow the lode into the earth; as a result, man-made streams striate the landscape, tracing the course of the deposits.

The young Full Moon Ran-ga-ran spearheaded a campaign to foment peasant rebellions throughout Sthero, providing cover for a full-scale invasion. The satrap's preserved head is still prominently displayed in the central longhouse of the main settlement of Tethis. Today, the dominion is at the forefront of the Vanguard's new, more aggressive operations in the North.

Messengers, convoys, and soldiers now stream into Sthero from nearby Vanguard advance camps, turning the once-sleepy land into a hub of disciplined activity. Ran-ga-ran's dog's-head sigil is a common sight, emblazoned on banners fluttering above the rotting bodies of executed dissidents. As the Vanguard's westernmost holding, with direct access to the White Sea and the ocean beyond, it will play a leading role in the coming campaigns.

Hqagwu Fire-Beacon masterminded Ran-ga-ran's invasion of Sthero. Now Hqagwu himself operates out of Sthero's hinterlands, drilling his mandrillfolk personal guard and teaching new recruits the details of military strategy.

The inland dominion of **Sifar** spends much of its time at war. The territory is full of thick forests flush with game. Hunters wield bows and atlatls against deer, bears, and wild boars, and employ blowpipes to bring down birds and smaller animals. They tip their arrows with curare and other plant-based poisons. At monthly festivals, elders play bladder-pipes and five-stringed balalaikas while their juniors perform circle dances and dine on roasted meat. More common meals involve river fish pounded to paste with herbs or stewed with root vegetables and greens.

Several disparate clans make their homes here; they've clashed with one another — and with their neighbors — for centuries. Alliances are rarely permanent; warriors from clans who fought side-by-side one season might be bitter enemies the next if a resource grows scarce or disease leaves a previously robust settlement vulnerable. Old feuds resurface decades after they were deemed settled, as a clan leader remembers a slight against an ancestor and renews the grudge.

The Changing Moon Sanne Cloudcaller has long claimed Sifar as her dominion; she wields authority as an immortal culture-hero. Some Vanguard members believe that she's behind the never-ending hostilities, aiming to keep warriors' skills sharp and generate a steady supply of experienced veterans. In truth, while she rarely discourages conflict when clan leaders come seeking her advice, Sanne prefers not to manufacture it.

Potential Recruits

The Vanguard has stringent requirements for its recruits, much like a demanding Pact shahan-ya. The distinction lies in greater organization and commitment to established traditions, hierarchy, and precedent, as laid down by soldiers past. When a Lunar commits herself to a shahan-ya of the Pact, she must usually impress one person; when she joins the Vanguard, she enters into a formal process of vetting and presentation.

The ideal Shadow Fang Lunar is driven by strong passions for ideals and comrades alike. Stern but thoughtful with her subordinates, she's disciplined and controlled, and utterly dedicated to victory. A savvy soldier respects her superiors and defers to their orders without being afraid to question them and seek alternatives through proper channels when she finds them tactically unsound.

That said, the Vanguard believes most of these traits can be taught, and ideological compatibility forgives many flaws in a recruiting Lunar's eyes. The most important trait in a potential new member is her desire to integrate herself into an existing organization and her willingness to submit herself to its procedures. From that, many virtues can be cultivated.

Like the Silver Pact, the Vanguard eschews coercion when courting new members. Instead, Shadow Fang Lunars aim to sway potentials by emphasizing a camaraderie that the Pact's individualistic shahan-yas are hard-pressed to match, along with the prospect of rapid advancement and increasing authority. A recruiter happily makes her pitch without expecting an immediate answer, knowing that a recruit with the right temperament will likely return.

Young Lunars are drawn to the Vanguard for many reasons. Many find comfort in the hierarchy and structure the faction provides, and may gravitate toward Shadow Fang recruiters if they're dissatisfied with the Pact's lack of the same. Some join because the Vanguard has a legitimate claim to effectiveness; its success in minimizing Realm expansion in the Northeast, along with its formal guidelines for action, appeals to practical-minded recruits. And ambitious Lunars know that Vanguard membership allows for quick advancement to positions of power and authority, often entrusting even the greenest taizei with command of a mortal army, spy ring, or military installation.

The Vanguard expects members to watch for newly Exalted Lunars at all times, whether on assignment or on leave. Successfully recruiting another like-minded Lunar is a great honor and grants significant spiritual merit, alongside a strong recommendation for promotion.

Relations with the Silver Pact

In some ways, the Vanguard can be thought of as an extended, organized Silver Pact coterie, whose multiple shahan-yas and their adherents all take the autarch as their ultimate shahan-ya. The difference lies in the Vanguard's reliance on an official code of law to manage its affairs, and the existence of a formal chain of command that its members obey.

The Pact and the Vanguard enjoy a complicated relationship fraught with tension and no small amount of suspicion. In their worst moments, Pact Lunars see the Vanguard as pointlessly authoritarian dupes with an inflated sense of their own accomplishments. In *their* worst moments, Shadow Fang Lunars see the Pact as a glorified social club where young fighters jockey for attention from dilettante elders. Neither stereotype accurately reflects reality on the ground, but they demonstrate major points of tension between the two factions.

Cooperation is common but tense. Shadow Fang Lunars sometimes alienate Pact allies with a tendency to snap orders and expect them to be obeyed. Not all Vanguard members hide their disdain for lack of discipline. Conversely, Pact Lunars' disregard for proper procedure — with which many are unfamiliar — can prove vexing. Despite that, the two factions have had many successful joint operations. For instance, the long-ago expedition into the Wyld-warped ruins of Frost-Fasting to reclaim assets lost in its fall — stocks of magical materials, First Age records, relics of the sect's founders, and the like — from the Fair Folk was aided by the lauded Pact raksha-hunter and Wyld expert Watchful Belog.

When the two factions clash over a recruit, the Vanguard emphasizes its opportunities for advancement and prestige. Sometimes recruiters sacrifice a thorough explanation of their ideology, intending to provide it once the new Lunar is away from Pact rivals. While recruiters make it clear that they'd like to bring the new member into the fold, they're careful not to push too hard. The Vanguard wants members who join the ranks willingly and commit fully to the cause. If the recruit has reservations, the Vanguard will be waiting for her when she's sorted them out.

The close relation between the Vanguard and the Silver Pact means that a Lunar might move her primary allegiance from one to the other, even after decades of membership. Doing so too often might gain the Lunar a reputation for flightiness, though it rarely sows mistrust. The Vanguard doesn't hold the member's old rank open for her while she's inactive — someone else is almost certainly capable and eager to fill the role. However, should she prove herself worthy, a returning Lunar finds herself quickly promoted back to her former rank.

Adherents of Note

Cythyr, a No Moon petty thief with the spirit shape of a roseate tern, fled House Peleps's conquest of her western nation seven years ago, buffeted by terrible winds and hounded by hunters all the way to the cold North. She showed great potential upon being recruited, mastering sorcery in a matter of whirlwind months.

Her heart nearly broke with joy when her mentor, the shozei Burning Sky, chose her to accompany him on a covert expedition to harry the Tepet legions on their march against the Bull of the North.

When Burning Sky died, caught and cornered by Tepet yamabushi, Cythyr found herself recalled from the field. She holds herself responsible for her teacher's death, as do some of her fellow Vanguard members. Meanwhile, Tenya Thorn-Amidst-Roses, a loud, brash brawler always eager for a fight, has taken Cythyr's perceived failure as a personal challenge. He harasses her at every turn, carefully walking the line of acceptable behavior within the Vanguard, hoping to bait her into a duel wherein he fully expects to humiliate her. Tayan watches this development with concern, worried that too much responsibility lies heavily on the young taizei's shoulders.

Vipersent Gwai is a venomous woman, in more ways than one. A belligerent Changing Moon with a saw-scaled viper spirit shape, she's recently been promoted to the rank of shozei after infiltrating the garrison at Carowyth's Ferry and assassinating its Sesus commander. While she remains scrupulously obedient to her duties, she stands aloof from her fellows; her skills at driving wedges between Dynasts carry over to her personal relationships as well, whether she intends it or not. An adherent of Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen, she undertakes dark assignments for her mistress that others in the Vanguard remains unaware of.

Gwai has been studying Feather's fate-disrupting magic, the better to prosecute her own vendetta against the Sidereal Exalted; her youthful Exaltation was attended by one of the Chosen of Endings, who slew her parents while trying to kill her. Now, she ranges far and wide when not on assignment, tracking Sidereals in hopes of vengeance. She's made contact with another Changing Moon named Kathaf Siad, a hunter who deems fellow Exalted the only foes worth hunting, to share techniques — and, she hopes, to sway Siad to join her crusade.

Among the Vanguard, **The Spiderwife** is widely considered preeminent in the art of subtly spinning an impenetrable web of surveillance. She monitors the prosperous Northern satrapies — in particular keeping tabs on Cherak and House Ferem — from the haunted Intristarín Swath. A forbidding tangle of chilly woods with a fearful reputation, the Swath is home to several reclusive tribes of spiderfolk and ravenfolk.

To those outside her chain of command, the Spiderwife seems grandmotherly; indeed, she relies upon descendants from her mortal days in Cherak's quartermaster

corps as contacts and informants. Vanguard members interested in spying and espionage — and no few interested Pact members as well — spend a stint under this kazei's tutelage, aiding her operations against the Realm. At present, her most prized adherent is Bright Flowering Garden, a master poisoner and spy. Though Garden's skills are undeniable, she's also the Spiderwife's great-grandniece, prompting murmurs of favoritism among her peers.

The Full Moon general and armsmaster **Eyes-Like-Knives** holds membership in both the Pact and the Vanguard, and is highly regarded in both. A former Shogunate-era mercenary possessed of roguish charm, he's friends with Tayan and many other high-ranking Vanguard and Pact elders throughout the Northeast and the Scavenger Lands. His connections allow him enormous latitude despite his divided loyalties.

He maintains no dominion of his own, preferring instead to travel the region and offer his services where needed. Other Lunars welcome his expertise on the battlefield, as well as in officer training and strategic planning, and shahan-yas listen when he speaks at councils. But he can be hard to track down; when not serving the Pact, he indulges in months-long drinking and gambling binges from Iscomay to the River Province.

Mount Namas

The view from towering Mount Namas should offer visitors a spectacular glimpse of the ruins, mountains, and forests below. But during the day a pall of crimson shadowland haze shrouds the horizon, obscuring the landscape. After sunset, the sky grows stranger still; auroras blaze overhead in a ghostly ring, encircling a bleak vista of dead stars.

The mountain is the epicenter of a community drawn together by shared history, reverence for their ancestors, and the guidance of their Lunar guardians. Now, as the Empire of Prasad presses outward intent on conquering all the lands of the Dreaming Sea, the accord between Tanisa Ring-Eater and Seven Obsidian Leopard grows strained, and the chaos of the age brings change and upheaval.

History

Histories, poetry, and legends ascribe many names to the First Age city on Mount Namas' slopes. Once it was Kiryat, where the accused proved their innocence by escaping from the Underworld. As Shimroulan, its summit housed the fortress-temples where the Ivory-and-Cinnabar Court (p. 21) — an ancient conclave of gods of war and death — convenes to this day. In the

city of Thaknanma, a Dragon-Blooded hero ascertained from the stars where to find her lover's shade. Scholars agree that by the age's end, the city of Ka-pala-nyama hosted an Underworld observatory upon Mount Namas, whose nighttime skies displayed stars dead since time immemorial.

The city suffered little damage during the Usurpation, but its inmost precincts became inaccessible and were abandoned. One legend says an Anathema prince fled Ka-pala-nyama into the sky, to be defeated in battle by the stars. Without her magic to appease the inner city's occult guardians, none but her handpicked officials could enter and live, eventually leaving it empty.

Ambitious Eastern daimyos tested the mountain's defenses, aiming to seize its First Age relics for themselves. Rival armies warred against each other, seizing and brutally sacking the outer city, and even breaching the inner city's walls only for their vanguard to fall before its sorcerous defenses. As blood soaked the mountain-side, new shadowlands seeped down the slopes.

The Contagion's survivors abandoned the city to escape military violence and hungry ghosts. Many lingered nearby in villages crammed onto natural plateaus or carved into terraces. Survivors from the Eastern forests' collapsed city-states and fallen nations trickled in to expand that population.

THE LUNARS ARRIVE

Seven Obsidian Leopard and Tanisa Ring Eater first arrived mere decades after the Contagion ended. Braving the dangers of the mountain's First Age defenses, they battled past hungry ghosts, ancient automatons, and sorcerous traps to establish a secure lair within the overgrown inner city. To cement and extend their influence in the region, Leopard bargained with the grim gods atop Mount Namas' peak, while Tanisa negotiated with the Namasi peoples — native and immigrant alike — and their more approachable divinities.

For a time, the pair focused their efforts on destabilizing the neighboring Peleshar Domain, a rich and powerful Shogunate successor state along the Dreaming Sea coast, and thus a target for the Pact's vengeance. Tanisa engineered unrest and internal conflict; Leopard lent supernatural aid to rebels and rival states.

After the Domain's fall over three centuries ago, Leopard and Tanisa shifted their focus from Dreaming Sea affairs to sheltering and training young Lunars not yet ready to openly oppose the Realm and Lookshy. As local empires rose and fell, the guardians of Mount Namas supported none and opposed only those who threatened their dominion.

THREE FALLS

Many towns dot the valleys leading to the Karun Naghe (p. 24.) Near the valleys' head, Three Falls perches amidst the cascades that serve as its namesake. A carved wooden temple to its divine patron, the ox-dragon god Might-Breaks-the-Trees, overlooks the round lake carved into the mountain by the largest of the waterfalls. Three Falls' placement offers her a special retreat to overlook the lands under her protection.

Even Tanisa's frequent presence can't render Three Falls immune to the factional divides between her and Leopard. Many young hunters, riled by stories of faraway Prasad's violent expansion, want to take the fight to the enemy. One young hunter, Isubo, recently gathered a group of his peers — other youths eager to prove themselves — and set off toward the distant empire. Tanisa wonders with simmering frustration whether Leopard intentionally found a voice within her refuge to echo his own words.

THE RISE OF PRASAD

When the Realm conquered Kamthahar, and later as Burano and Ophris broke from the Realm, the Peleshar Domain was a greater threat than one city a thousand miles from the Dreaming Sea. By the time Prasad began its campaign against the Simharajala empire a century ago, Tanisa was scheming to wield the Prasadi against the Scarlet Dynasty. Leopard, however, couldn't overlook the spread of the Pure Way and its Wyld Hunt. As the two debated, Prasad expanded, reaching the Dreaming Sea's shores.

Leopard still presses to unleash his necromantic horrors and urges the Ivory-and-Cinnabar Court to turn its influence and prowess against the Prasadi. Tanisa's bargains with the Namasi gods have restrained Leopard so far. Tanisa continues to try to shape Prasad from afar, sending students to support its movement for independence from the Realm, but fears leaving Mount Namas herself for too long lest Leopard convince the court of his cause's righteousness.

The Mountain Today

Few living mortals have ever seen Mount Namas' upper reaches. The Ivory-and-Cinnabar Court dwells upon the summit. Ruins of the old city — known as "Nama-ur-acha" to the Namasi — spread atop the upper slopes, ringed by stone stelae raised to mark the shadowland's original boundaries. Seven Obsidian Leopard resides here, high in the inner city, his lair protected by enigmatic First Age wards and his own prodigious enchantments.

A few small mortal communities cling to Nama-ur-acha's outer districts, where the dead outnumber the living. Despite the shadowland's influence, blessings from gods and ancestors keep residents hale. Most of these families maintain ancient traditions honoring the spirits, with many serving as priests or acolytes.

The Namasi govern their towns through consensus and negotiation. Families gather in meeting halls to discuss matters of importance. When they cannot reach consensus, they turn to their priests to consult gods and ancestors for guidance.

On the mountain's lower slopes and among surrounding hills and valleys, small self-sustaining towns eke out an agricultural existence, bound to their neighbors through networks of trade and shared culture. Tanisa Ring-Eater wanders these lands to arbitrate disputes, ward off beasts and bandits, and perform favors to be called in later — sometimes centuries later, from her beneficiaries' descendants. She maintains no fixed dwelling, preferring to guest with local families.

CLOTHING AND CUISINE

Traditional Namasi clothing consists of long cotton shirts with matching pants. Women wear a contrasting sash. The wealthy wear brightly dyed or patterned clothing of the same style, occasionally made of silk. Carved greenstone and brightly colored feathers provide personal decoration. Fading traditions of facial piercing and scarification still appear, especially on those who support Leopard's hardline position against Prasad. Priests and shamans wear feather cloaks. Most Namasi are skeptical of outside fashions, but some — particularly those benefiting from trade beyond the region — incorporate foreign items as a mark of status.

Mount Namas is blessed with easy access to a variety of spices, whether cultivated locally or imported from the Dreaming Sea. Traditional meals consist of stewed and curried vegetables served wrapped in maize flatbreads. Many dishes use a mix of cardamom, cinnamon, chili peppers, and cumin for spice; cloves imported from the Dreaming Sea are reserved for wedding feasts. Meat, milk, cheese, and yogurt are available from goats kept on the mountain. Turkeys and jungle fowl, allowed

THE PAINTED GOATS

Visitors to the mountain often notice its brightly painted goats displaying strange and colorful sigils. To the Namasi, this custom, marking which goats belong to which village, goes back generations and helps avoid disputes over ownership while letting the goats roam free to feed themselves. What most don't know is that the sigils reinforce the befuddling magic of the First Age defenses that divert travelers approaching the mountaintop.

to wander the periphery of most towns, offer another source of easily available meat.

CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

The night sky above Mount Namas has always shown the Underworld's cold stars, visible in few other places in Creation, and in none so extensively. While sages across Creation understand the shifting of Heaven's constellations, the Underworld sky follows different patterns. One legend claims that the honored dead ascend to become stars; the Namasi know which represent their ancestors.

The Underworld stars and the ritual calendar guide Namasi life. Shadow-astrologers watch the sky above the mountain and declare the proper times for festivals, which occur at conjunctions between certain days of the month and the appearance of particular dead constellations. The festival of Happy Tears occurs when the constellation of the Hunter appears on the seventh day of Descending Water; Morilang-Ha's Procession of Passing takes place any time the Beetle is visible on the second day of any month. With the dual nature of the festival calendar, some festivals transpire regularly while others may not happen for decades.

For auspicious days and constellations, parents often use the combination to name their children. Most Namasi constellations represent animals, creating names like Fifteen Hunter or Two Beetle. They consider the Leopard and the Gecko especially lucky, though they reserve Seven Leopard for the guardian of the mountain peak. When the combination is ill-omened, parents name their children for ancestors and favored gods instead, to encourage a change of luck. For instance, Aashima and Aashim are common names in the village of Task, where many families claim descent from the culture hero Aashima River-Tamer. In the town of Marati, parents favor names derived from Nabhesht, the god of bountiful harvests.

While most Namasi have only one name, the Namasi see twins as a powerful symbol and grant them two shared names. The day of birth and constellation determines one name and the twins' mother picks the other, such as "Three Hawk Lajjin." The twins are both called by this shared name throughout their early childhood, though friends and family often grant them nicknames to differentiate them. When they come of age, each twin keeps one of the shared names. If the two are not in accord, a series of ritual competitions determines which of the two keeps their favored name.

Religion and Spiritual Beliefs

Most towns and villages on Mount Namas' slopes revere a divine patron. Various local gods of the surrounding lands have made pacts with the Namasi over the centuries, offering blessings and protection in exchange for reverence and worship. Priests oversee their small shrines and temples. A few temples maintain orders of cenobites, like the shrine maidens of Three Falls or the sacred hunters of Chitlan.

The Namasi revere their ancestors, who continue to guide their descendants from the afterlife. That reverence begins with elaborate funerary rites that extend up to a year depending on the status of the deceased. The rites include regular oblations of incense and burnt offerings crafted from folded leaves to represent various animals. Three days after death, friends and family form a procession and bring the dead to one of the burial sites on the mountain's slopes. When direct family isn't available, the extended community stands in. Beyond the formal mourning period, the Namasi often beseech their ancestors for blessings and advice.

Namasi customs ensure that the recently deceased and those who do not pass on to Lethe receive sufficient Underworld wealth to establish their home in the Namasi afterlife. Most Namasi ghosts rise in the Precinct of Threshed Grain, high amid Ka-pala-nyama's shadowland ruins, to be judged by gods and ancestors — and, in special cases, by Seven Obsidian Leopard himself. Those not found wanting may secure employment with the spirit court as minor functionaries, or turn to mastering ghostly crafts or completing whatever life's work ties them still to the shadow of Creation. For a time, ghosts answer the petitions of living descendants, but as they pass on to Lethe, younger ghosts take on the duties of family guardians.

THE IVORY-AND-CINNABAR COURT

The gods on the peak comprise the Ivory-and-Cinnabar Court, a terrestrial spirit court of war and death divinities. Between the chaos of the Usurpation, the Great

Contagion, and other disruptions, no celestial deity currently holds jurisdiction over the court, which remains in bureaucratic limbo in the halls of Yu-Shan.

These gods have grown wealthy and powerful from tribute offered up by generations of worshipers, the service of their ghostly cohorts, and bargains with the Lunars. They now head a bureaucracy of the dead that mirrors the complexity of Yu-Shan's byzantine ministries. Ghostly clerks file petitions, validate edicts, compile studies, and jockey for promotion. Various departments with overlapping jurisdictions pass projects to and fro, some lasting centuries. The extent of this bureaucracy is largely unnecessary, but offers employment for ghosts and fodder for the egos of small gods, who imagine their works prepare them for eventual promotion to Heaven's halls.

Gods of the Ivory-and-Cinnabar Court include:

Ix Lan, goddess of burial-shroud weavers, leads the court and diligently sends reports to a heavenly office that's been unstaffed for centuries. A socialite and inveterate gossip, she keeps her post through the same combination of charm, perspicacity, tenacity, and occasional blackmail with which she first won it a millennium ago. Ix Lan's longtime personal friendship with Tanisa grows strained by her staunch political alliance with Seven Obsidian Leopard, fueled by fears that the expansionist Prasadi pantheon has designs on Mount Namas and her court.

Ruyahadran Mercy-to-the-Fallen receives worship from soldiers around the Dreaming Sea praying for a quick death should they be injured in battle, but enjoys the ease of his longtime post at Mount Namas. He takes pride in his duties, which presents him with a conundrum should Leopard prevail in his desire to go to war: Ruyahadran would certainly accept the additional worship conflict would bring, but he fears that having a higher profile in Heaven would draw attention to his violations of Celestial Law.

The psychopomp twin gods **Two Raiton** and **Morilang-ha** hold a special place of reverence among the Namasi for their participation in funerary rites. Together, the gods travel the surrounding lands in various guises to enjoy mortal company, guide recently deceased ghosts up the mountain, and drag interesting or irksome mortals into divine affairs. Because of this, the Namasi treat folk traveling in pairs with cautious respect.

The Two shahan-yas

Mount Namas has always been a dominion with two faces. In recent decades, tension between the shahan-yas

TANISA RING-EATER'S TERRITORIES

The towns and villages surrounding Mount Namas, such as Three Falls (p. 20), are *serene, resolute, and interconnected*.

has pushed those faces farther apart. Seven Obsidian Leopard secludes himself on the peak while Tanisa Ring-Eater wanders farther and longer between journeys to the summit. The two intermittently confer on matters concerning the domain as a whole, and put on a genial face for their peers when hosting Pact councils. But tension and resentment bubble beneath the surface of their camaraderie, such that their discussions often dissolve into rancorous arguments.

These two notable shahan-yas in close proximity, insulated by distance from the Realm and Lookshy, make Namas attractive to many young Lunars seeking tutelage. Most students begin their studies with Tanisa. They travel with her as she visits towns, villages, and nomadic peoples around the mountain and in neighboring lands. As they gain experience, she brings them farther afield on missions to the Dreaming Sea's great cities to meddle in the affairs of the region's imperial powers.

Students observe Tanisa's interactions as she calmly reshapes the web of relationships among the mountain's peoples. She occasionally disappears mid-lesson, leaving students to deal with fraught situations alone. She's also been known to misinform students about such situations, teaching them to trust their instincts and verify the truth before committing to action.

Students seek Leopard at the mountain peak to learn from his occult and necromantic expertise. Leopard is among the Silver Pact's foremost experts on necromancy. Especially in recent years, with stories of death-knights and other strange deathly powers reaching the Pact, more Lunars have sought Leopard's advice. Leopard's tutelage is analytical and direct. He has little patience for students who don't grasp concepts quickly.

Leopard is served by the Cinereal Assembly, a celibate order of leopardfolk drawn from among skilled Namasi

LEOPARDFOLK

Seven Obsidian Leopard's leopardfolk have one-dot Claws (**Exalted**, p. 165), Night Vision, and Silent Movement (**Fangs at the Gate**, p. 120, 121).

SEVEN OBSIDIAN LEOPARD'S TERRITORY

The ruined city Nama-ur-acha upon Mount Namas' slopes is *haunted, guarded, and necromantic*.

warriors, priests, and savants. Their testing grounds lie half in the Underworld, where initiates venture to prove their courage and hardiness.

The **Tree of Blossoming Stars**, the manse commanding ruined Nama-ur-acha's First Age defenses, now serves as Leopard's abode. Its open plan — all low buildings and galleries encircling an ancient banabá tree — allows visitors to view the Underworld sky regardless of the time of day. Murals and statues depict gods and heroes of the First Age. Ix Lan held court here for centuries after the Usurpation; then the Lunars arrived, and Seven Obsidian Leopard laid claim to the Tree despite the goddess' protests. Although appeased by the Lunars' efforts to spread her worship, she still resents the loss.

Leopard uses the manse's energies to fuel his necromantic workings. The Tree is an Abyssal manse producing a Gem of Ghostly Protection (**Exalted**, p. 610). The manse itself generates the same effects as the hearthstone, but encompassing the entire ancient ruin out to the boundary stelae. Control of the manse and access to the Underworld stars count as First Age sorcerous infrastructure for necromantic workings (**Exalted**, p. 488).

Once, students moved freely between the two schools, but with the widening rift between the shahan-yas, many feel pressured to pick a single teacher. Since the shahan-yas of Mount Namas now speak only infrequently, they turn to their students to continue their debate. As students transition between them, the Lunar elders grill them with questions, seeking any sign that the other wavers in their position.

ADHERENTS OF NOTE

Formerly a funerist from Prasad's Corporal Caste, **Jasweeer** grew up in Kamthahar before the current wave of imperialist expansion. She came to Mount Namas to consult with Leopard on certain scholarly texts, and has since collaborated with Zayn Leather-Wing, a No Moon archaeologist who briefly visited Nama-ur-Acha to verify information for the restoration of a First Age manse. She's since continued her work with Leopard, corresponding with Zayn regarding Underworld geomancy.

Tanisa sees Jasweeer's personal familiarity with Kamthahar as an advantage in influencing Prasad. Leopard believes that Jasweeer's experience seeing Kamthahar's changes firsthand will sway her to see the

need for its destruction. For her part, Jasweeer maintains a strong sentimental attachment to her homeland. Though Prasad's actions don't always support her assertions, she believes it's different enough from the Realm that they could shape it to the Silver Pact's advantage. She's shared her opinion with Tanisa but remains cagey with Leopard, upon whose expertise she relies to complete her project.

Joyous Song, a Full Moon hunter, herbalist, and storyteller from the Blessed Isle, fled across the South pursued by the Wyld Hunt. He escaped with the aid of the charismatic pirate queen Monsoon Dancer, who parted ways with him after departing the Isle to split the pursuing forces. Song became a wandering hero, and his adventures brought him across the Dreaming Sea to Mount Namas. He received his moonsilver tattoos at Tanisa's hand shortly after his arrival, and travels among the villages on the slopes offering his aid.

Leopard sees Song's experience with the Wyld Hunt as a lever to push the young Lunar to share his hardline ideology regarding Prasad. For his part, Song is inclined to agree, but is stayed from vocal support for the cause by Jasweeer's apparent uncertainty. Tanisa hopes to use Song's admiration of and fondness for Jasweeer to sway him to her side.

The Changing Moon diplomat **Mahina**, a friend and supporter of both shahan-yas over the long centuries, has found herself drawn into the dispute. They came to Mount Namas seeking to study how the Underworld influences cultures and traditions among communities on the mountain. During their stay, they gained a deep respect for Tanisa and Leopard, and have since lent their political acumen to each shahan-ya's operations within the region.

Returning to Mount Namas after decades away, Mahina is surprised by the stark difference between the shahan-yas' former camaraderie and the current situation, which they were warned about by the wandering storyteller Rei of the Silver Tribe, a passerby through Namasi towns in her quest to catalog Creation's lost histories. They find common cause with Leopard's approach, driven by grim anger after the death of their longtime friend and mentor Walks in Shadowed Halls at the hands of Pure Way monks. Tanisa has sensed Mahina's distance, though she's as yet unaware of its cause.

Other Prominent Figures

The ancient ghost of the necromancer **Keyo** now advises Leopard in the Tree of Blossoming Stars. Keyo's presence on the mountain is a puzzle. He remembers nothing of his living years, only that he isn't Namasi, nor

is he one of the mountain's original inhabitants. Keyo often disagrees with Ix Lan on matters of governance — a rift Leopard sometimes uses to further his own agenda.

The priest **Ashai** travels the region seeing to the people's ritual needs. She began her service as a shrinemaiden in Three Falls. Over her lifetime, she's befriended gods and mortals alike, and counts Tanisa as a personal confidant. With fading god-blessed vitality, she may be the oldest mortal Namasi; she still does her best to travel and preside over important festivals. She's mentored several younger priests, but fears a factional struggle will ensue if she passes without a clear successor.

Neighbors

North of the mountains lies **the Karun Naghe**, a series of river valleys that stretches into the endless rainforests of the East. Cloud forests creep out of the fertile valleys and up the mountain slopes. The small towns dotting the region have subsisted for centuries. The local gods long ago made pacts with the mortals who live there. The region now flourishes

through trade under Tanisa's guidance, exporting rare herbs, luxury wood, decorative feather garments, and even gold panned from the rivers that run out of the mountains.

The small port city **Petrel's Landing**, on the nearby Dreaming Sea, not only persists but prospers. Citizens fish in the estuaries and trade the wealth of the Karun Naghe to Volivat and other neighboring ports. While not grand, the harbor is a convenient stopover for costal traders seeking to avoid the raksha pirates who sail the Dreaming Sea in ships of glass and fire. A few seasons ago, *Flames Ascending*, a Dragon-Blooded monk of the Pure Way, defended the town from a raksha raid with a display of elemental might. Some of the awed townsfolk now worship the monk in secret.

Sublime Danger

During the late First Age, Sublime Danger was an infamous thief, mercenary, and bandit who regularly sold her services to the highest bidder. Even as a mortal, she widely boasted that she could successfully outfight or rob anyone other than the Exalted.



Her life changed when she attempted to steal a precious jewel from Tiramón Ironbane, a young Solar traveling in disguise. Chosen in that moment by Luna, she not only survived, but triumphed. After the battle, she transformed into her shriek spirit shape and flew off, carrying the jewel as a trophy.

In large part, Sublime Danger continued her life as it had been before her Exaltation, except on a far grander scale. As a Lunar, she was no more inclined to follow rules or support the status quo than as a mortal; indeed, her exploits made her persona non grata across several major cultures and polities. Instead, she spent much of her time at Creation's fringes, hunting ancient beasts or battling bandits and pirates — sometimes recruiting the bravest and most daring foes as her followers. Regardless of whether she confronted mortal soldiers, spirits, behemoths, or Exalted foes, her greatest joy was challenging the limits of her ability.

When not at world's edge, she spent much of her time studying battle arts under peerless masters. She developed an especial passion for Thousand Blades Style martial arts, a style obscure even then, and now all but lost to history outside of her tutelage. Its techniques allow her to fly using wings made from daiklaves; she's since claimed many such weapons as trophies, visibly demonstrating her victories over fellow Exalted throughout the centuries.

While she cared little for Exalted politics, she found herself drawn once more to Tiramón, who proved to be her Solar mate. Theirs was a tempestuous relationship in which she constantly challenged him, attempting to demonstrate her superiority and gain the upper hand. Nonetheless, she supported his machinations in the Second Deliberative, on several occasions secretly sabotaging his rivals' projects — whether stealing a daiklave, crippling a wondrous floating city, or publicly exposing schemes and indiscretions.

Sublime Danger had only been Chosen for a century when the Usurpation utterly transformed her world. Though unconcerned by the Deliberative's fall, she couldn't forgive the usurpers for killing her beloved — whose death she'd felt through their bond — and their two children. She began a brutally efficient campaign of guerilla warfare against the newly formed Shogunate, hunting down the Dragon-Blooded she believed to have betrayed and slain Tiramón. The Contagion made little difference to her efforts, and she continued harrying the Shogunate's successors in the Second Age.

Sublime Danger currently lives in the East, where she focuses her efforts on Lookshy. Her hatred of the usurpers has dimmed with time, but the thrill of pitting

herself against skilled and deadly foes hasn't. While she enjoys hard-won victories on the battlefield, she also deploys the strategic sabotages she earned a reputation for in the First Age: undermining politicians' plots, exposing a general's shameful actions, sabotaging military infrastructure, and the like. She prefers to lure worthy targets away from the safety of their peers, testing herself one-on-one against well-trained monks, cunning sorcerers, and other expert shikari.

One secret to her longevity is knowing when to flee and lay low — often for years at a time. Sublime Danger has established hideouts throughout the East that she and her students use as boltholes, safe houses, and supply caches. She charted and expanded a series of caves in the Garnet Hills, their twists and turns a maze whose true path only Sublime Danger and a trusted few know. The remains of lost enemies haunt many a dead end, their hungry ghosts yet another danger for trespassers to face. The beaverfolk along the Porian River welcome her to their lodges, repayment for a favor she did their ancestors in ages past.

Other hideouts offer urban accommodations. Some conceal themselves in slums and tenements, whether winding spaces lodged between the walls, or hidden cellars and catacombs deep beneath the streets. She also enjoys the luxury of opulent apartments and estates, paid for through proxies, filled with secret entrances and hidden rooms.

Pact Relations

While Sublime Danger's efforts support the agenda of the Silver Pact — of which she's technically a member — she cares little for others' plans or orders. However, she understands that with the Scarlet Empress' disappearance and the return of the Solar Exalted, change has come to Creation.

She wishes to find, test herself against, and defeat her mate's reincarnation. She pays dearly for rumors that might lead to them, meanwhile collecting stories of Solars and other Exalted in the Scavenger Lands who might present an intriguing challenge. These include Kirana Liset, who slew the behemoth Bloodreaver; the warrior-poet Red Emerald, whose words are said to cut like knives; the infamous shape stealer Zera the Many; and the Night Caste assassin Novia Claro, who stalks the rooftops of Nexus.

With the Realm's instability Sublime Danger sees opportunity, preparing to strike greater and more terrible blows against the Shogunate's successors than she could before. She cares neither for ruling nor for re-establishing the lost Deliberative. Instead, she dreams

of eradicating the Immaculate religion, Lookshy's Dragon-Blooded gentes, and the Scarlet Dynasty, leaving someone who cares about such matters to pick up the pieces and build something new.

Sublime Danger is daring, but not foolhardy; she understands that she can't topple Lookshy and the Realm alone. While unwilling to commit to long-term alliances or to submit to another's authority, she may adjust and change specific plans to cooperate with fellow Pact members. These are her best allies, although her relations with them have always been eccentric, largely due to her active disinterest in politics and power structures. She's worked with other shahan-yas on multiple occasions, but only when their goals align with hers.

Mentorship

Sublime Danger rarely accepts students, only selecting those who share her willingness to repeatedly test themselves to their limits and who understand the potentially deadly thrill of doing so. Some shahan-yas maintain that the only students Sublime Danger takes on are thrillseekers who enjoy risking their lives in the same fashion as gamblers who enjoy risking their fortunes.

Newly chosen Lunars who meet these criteria find that they have a passionately devoted mentor who carefully and patiently trains them to meet any challenge. However, these students must also face threats that Sublime Danger regularly springs on them as part of her instruction. Her adherents occasionally awaken to find themselves facing an angry elemental, a well-armed mob, or whatever other foes their tutor has placed in their way.

Early in her student's training, Sublime Danger stands ready to intervene if she's overestimated his capabilities. But once she's learned his limits and he's mastered the basics of his own gifts and strengths, she informs him that survival is now his responsibility, not hers. She never selects challenges that are too obviously dangerous, and acknowledges that sometimes the best choice is flight, but occasionally loses careless or overconfident pupils.

However, Sublime Danger is exceedingly generous with students who thrive under her tutelage. She regularly gifts apprentices who survive her instruction with artifacts from her collection, carefully chosen to fit their fighting style, although the nature of their Evocations often divulges her opinion of them. She's taught a rare few apprentices Thousand Blades style, but expects them to obtain for themselves the weapons necessary for its best use.

While some of Sublime Danger's former students prefer to avoid her attentions, many who excel become devoted to her, remaining close even after completing their tutelage. She rarely requests an adherent's aid. When she does, most respond swiftly and eagerly, understanding that any endeavor where Sublime Danger seeks assistance will test any of Luna's children to their limits, and perhaps beyond.

Adherents of Note

Born in Greyfalls, **Arel River-Terror** found himself hunted by the Realm garrison and his own people when he Exalted. His older sister Shosa died while aiding his escape; her death filled him with burning hatred for the Realm and Greyfalls, prompting a reckless, devastating campaign of destruction across the rivers east of the Hundred Kingdoms. In his crocodile spirit shape, he smashed riverboats, devoured merchants and soldiers, and barely escaped death several times. Rage consumed him; he thought of nothing beyond his next attack.

Sublime Danger found him preparing to ambush a Wyld Hunt assembled to kill him. Admiring his daring and his willingness to embrace danger, and seeing his need for training and counsel, she rescued him and became his mentor. His tutelage complete, he wanders the eastern Scavenger Lands but remains devoted to his teacher, ready to assist her should she call.

His closest ally, the Lookshy-born Lunar Amilar Yo-Tsu, passes himself off as an Anathema hunter, the better to gather information on Wyld Hunts. After years of playful encounters and fighting alongside one another, Arel has learned much from his friend about trickery and deception — and fallen passionately in love. But Yo-Tsu's outspoken hatred of Sublime Danger, who slew his parents years ago, stands between them.

The Haltan warrior **Zertha** drew her Second Breath when bandits killed the rest of her hunting party. In her spirit shape of a green-spotted Northeastern leopard, she hunted the bandits, then set off to better understand what she'd become. For a time she studied in the Lunar Metick the Twice-Blessed's hidden forest village. But he was a contemplative mystic, while she was a deadly predator eager for physical challenge and glory. After teaching Zertha the basics of sorcery, Metick directed her to Sublime Danger for further study.

Recognizing in Zertha a fearless, precise hunter craving the thrill of victory, Sublime Danger knew she'd met a like-minded companion. Despite the vast gulf between them in age and skill, they spent time together more as equals than as teacher and student. Decades have passed since Zertha completed her tutelage, mastering

Thousand Blades style and setting out to acquire the tools to best employ it. In a century or two, the adherent might even become her shahan-ya's equal. In the meantime, Sublime Danger trusts Zertha to speak for her at Silver Pact conclaves and act as an ambassador to other forces in the region.

Arel River-Terror took an immediate dislike to Zertha; her green hair and haughty demeanor reminded him of the Nuri overlords who'd oppressed his people in Greyfalls. They've fought alongside one another several times since; while unlikely to ever be friends, they've developed a mutual respect. However, Zertha has defeated Arel every time Sublime Danger has arranged for them to spar. Arel has trained for a rematch ever since his apprenticeship ended and dreams of impressing his mentor by finally defeating Zertha and claiming one of her daiklaves as his own.

After a neighboring tribe slaughtered her people, **Eska of the Seven Blades (Adversaries of the Righteous, pp. 129-131)** sought revenge, hunting down those who murdered her loved ones. Her wanderings afterward carried her into Sublime Danger's territory; rumors of her bravery and desire to challenge heroes and champions caught Sublime Danger's attention. The elder Lunar became Eska's mentor, encouraging her desire to gain strength through testing herself against anyone she deems her rival. These include both Sublime Danger's other adherents, and heroes operating between the Scavenger Lands and Dreaming Sea.

Spirit Courts of Luna

Luna's spirit courts (**Lunars, p.52**) reflect the god's many aspects and purviews. They stand aloof from the rest of the Celestial Bureaucracy, ultimately reporting not to Heaven's bureaucrats but to Luna herself. An active court near a Lunar's territory may offer help or be a hindrance, depending on both parties' goals and their relationships with Luna. Other courts remain entirely aloof from Lunar affairs unless the Chosen's activities encroach upon their plans.

The Night Bloom Garden

Beyond the River of Tears, where the hills give way to stands of ancient pine and snow-fed brooks, a poor woman dying of pox walks into the night on unsteady legs. A father wanders the wilderlands, his feverish infant clutched in his arms. With only the barest sliver of hope, the desperately ill go out into the world in hopes that they'll find the Night Bloom Garden, where gods of healing and disease gather.

The Night Bloom Garden is a Northeastern spirit court ruled by the stern but avuncular **Meverin Fever-Dream**. From his gnarled throne of cedar, Meverin oversees the affairs of a dozen puissant gods and scores of lesser servitors. Mortals who find their way to his garden — a paradise of temple-trees hidden behind walls of thorn and vine — can hope to be healed of their illnesses, but few find their way there, and fewer gain what they seek.

The spirits make strange demands of petitioners, not all of which a mortal can hope to fulfill. They might be tasked with acquiring items from a long-dead city, plucking a feather from a cockatrice, or journeying into the Wyld and returning unscathed. Often, such a request is issued as a face-saving measure when the illness is beyond the god's power to heal. Those who do survive sometimes pledge themselves to Meverin and his court, learning the secrets of healing and medicine at the hands of their godly instructors.

The court's task isn't a happy one: They play shepherd, watcher, and warden to plagues, epidemics, and all other diseases that afflict mortals. Even in an age of godly dereliction, the Night Bloom Garden's gods hold tightly to their ancient duties.

This diligence is due in no small part to Meverin himself, a powerful moon-spirit given domain over the passions of a fevered mind. A wizened, haggard figure, his sweat-matted hair and beard trail down to his feet; his eyes burn with rainbow fire. As one of Luna's vassal-gods, he's beholden only to her — much to the chagrin of censors and rivals. He dotes on his favorites and showers them with attention, but withdraws his affection just as quickly from those who disappoint him. Those who truly offend him he exiles, making them fair game for rival spirit courts — many of whose members delight in any chance to vent their frustration at Meverin, even if only on his banished subordinates.

His ancient charge is to oversee the ebb and flow of disease throughout his domain: smallpox in Rubylak, measles in Iscomay, influenza in the Jhiwai clans, and a hundred lands and peoples besides. More than anything, Meverin fears the return of the Great Contagion — or the ascent of something more dire. To that end, Meverin Fever-Dream works to strengthen the region's mortal populace by culling the vulnerable. Epidemics are more frequent than Yu-Shan prescribes; he appeases his superiors in Heaven — insofar as they read his reports at all — with false records and rumors of strange powers abroad in his land. With each outbreak, he taxes mortal bodies to their utmost, pushing healers and sages to develop ever-stronger medicines.

Although his courtiers typically lack authorization to interfere with a disease's natural course, many provide succor and comfort to the ill and the dying nonetheless. Some preserve the fever-dreams of the infected as gifts for Meverin; exorcists often mistake these gods for raksha and attempt to drive them away.

The Night Bloom Garden operates in territory claimed by the Shadow Fang Vanguard, and the two groups have an uneasy détente. Although Meverin Fever-Dream — as a moon-god anointed by Luna's own hand — holds some small favor for Lunars in general, he has little love for the Vanguard's strict hierarchy. For their part, the Vanguard see him as a useful (if frustrating) resource, securing his cooperation through gifts of rare herbs, medicine, and wine. He welcomes young Lunars, eager to help shape their worldviews while they remain new to power.

The Night Bloom Garden's major gods tend towards the dark and dire, burdened by the weight of their gloomy purviews and Meverin's expectations. Many are shadow-cloaked wraiths who oversee specific illnesses, such as **Last Blush**, the demure goddess of scarlet fever, or **Death-Rattle Uttawa**, who both presides over and suffers from all manner of respiratory ailments. A few, like sweet-smiling **Guenn**, are gods of medicine — in Guenn's case, willow bark and its power over pain. Finally, a few gods pledge themselves to Meverin not out of shared purview, but seeking his patronage; foremost among them is devilishly cunning **Mi Mulong**, a leopard-god and trickster driven from his homeland by Immaculate monks.

Lesser spirits and elementals serve as functionaries and attendants; Meverin takes little vanity in his appearance, but a great deal in the trappings of his station. Most find places in the court for their beauty, grace, or eloquence. These include a band of fawn-hooved performers, several petal-clad dancers, and even a pair of rogue angyalkae — demons who serve Meverin as harpists without parallel.

The Exalted sometimes seek the Night Bloom Garden for healing, just as mortals do. Though they're foremost masters of plague-medicine, the Garden's gods have many talented healers who specialize in other afflictions. They take on Exalted devotees as surely as they accept mortals — albeit as apprentices rather than sworn acolytes. The No-Moon Antigone is one such apprentice; once a sorcerer-queen of the First Age, she fell into hibernation to awaken in this benighted age. Newly humble, she works to master medicine to better serve humanity.

The House of Dream's Ebb

As evening falls amid the eastern Cinder Isles, a pungent earthy smoke rises from shrines at the mouths of sea caves. Here, folk leave offerings of honey, marijuana, and old childhood things to propitiate the gods of the House of Dream's Ebb, an aquatic spirit court of gods associated with the tides, memories, and dreams. Petitioners wade into the surf — until the water covers their knees, their thighs, their waists — hoping the ebbing tide will carry painful memories out to sea. Expecting parents sleep on the shore, seeking a dream of what fortune might await their child-to-be, while pirate sails cut the moonlit water, their crews searching for shipwrecks far below.

Once, by Heaven's mandate, the gods of Dream's Ebb ensured that lost things were forgotten, only to be recalled and rediscovered once more with the passage of time. But they've gone astray with the turning of ages. Today, most that perform their duties at all expect worship and sacrifice in exchange. Many a Southwestern smuggler uses a sea cave as both cove and temple, giving libation to a moon-god in exchange for concealing her ship from pursuit.

The court was once overseen by the divine lovers **Malina the Rising-Tide Prince** and **Ledona the Falling-Seas Suzerain**. But Malina vanished in the chaos of the Great Contagion. Ledona has remained disconsolate ever since, withdrawing to the deepest sunken depths of the sea-cave manse called Yesteryear's Echo from which the two once jointly ruled. There she roams their treasury of lost wonders now encrusted with barnacles and coral, sculpts twisted and melancholy statues of limestone and nacre, or sits staring blankly upon her throne for months at a time. Only a handful of sea-spirits attend her, fearful of her occasional rages. She neglects her duties to the court, but likewise refuses to allow another to take Malina's place.

Lacking leadership, the court's spirits muddle through their duties with neither immediate oversight nor instructions from Heaven. Instead of assembling at Yesteryear's Echo, small groups gather beneath the full or new moon at one or another of the gods' sanctums or in certain sea-caves and ruins sanctified to the court long ago. There they gossip, meet with foreign spirits or mortal petitioners, discuss problems, and negotiate conflicts between their number.

The House's gods are often laconic, peripatetic, and enigmatic. **Qadal Combs-the-Deep**, who ensures treasure-laden shipwrecks remain lost until they're

destined to be rediscovered, appears as a shipwrecked mariner-prince, his jeweled coat and trousers spangled with squirming starfish. **Drowning-Sands Beiragan**, god of youthful ambitions reawakened in old age, is an infamous meddler; her gray-maned visage appears in pools and mirrors to those who unexpectedly become suitors, insurrectionists, or heirs. **Tursum Lavasong**, a red-eyed and dusty-bearded god of dormant volcanic islands, neglects his purview to wander seaside hills and cliffs, painting landscapes and composing poetry.

Mortals often seek blessings and aid from the court's spirits. Most commonly, those who've suffered painful losses ask for the gift of forgetfulness. Meanwhile, criminals and wrongdoers ask that their misdeeds be forgotten or that evidence against them become lost. Savants seek wisdom lost to the ages; scavengers and treasure hunters petition for clues to unremembered cities, ancient tombs, and forgotten shipwrecks.

The gods of Dream's Ebb demand prices commensurate with their aid. A pirate captain who wishes the Imperial Navy captain relentlessly pursuing her would be lost at sea may have to let her stolen cargo sink to the sea floor. A widower asking the gods to take away his heartache over his wife's passing may have to yield up the sweetest memories of their years together as payment. Sages seeking lost wisdom have burnt books — and sometimes entire libraries — to uncover the key to completing their life's work.

GATHERING PLACES

The skerry called **Scatterwind** appears only beneath the new moon, vanishing with the dawn to cast visitors into the sea. Many a shipwreck hangs rotten upon its shores, their bellies full of lost cargoes. Rumor holds that the sorcerer-pirate who first ensorcelled the isle laid a greater treasure in its foundations. Qadal Combs-the-Deep's spirit sanctum appears on the adjacent sea floor — a hidden palace-tangle of wrecked ships where gemstones sparkle beneath branching corals and anemones.

Myrtle and magnolia thrust up between the flagstones of the **Harrowmoon Amphitheater**, overlooking the waters of the Waning Sea. Ghostly echoes of long-dead thespians appear here beneath the full moon, reenacting plays forgotten to Creation's dramaturges.

In the sunken city of **Karapol**, ancient stone clockworks thrum endlessly in the ruin's deep places. Most of the clockwork has long since seized up, tangled in sea-wrack. But some engines still turn, calculating unknown formulae for bygone savants.

The idyllic sea-cavern of **Laza's Grotto** sports a great natural oculus through which the moon shines down upon gathered spirits. In better days, the Southwest's horizon chanters (p. 178) met the gods of Dream's Ebb here in a grand annual gala to share their knowledge of lost things, and to accept the duty to spread stories about forgotten things whose time had come to be rediscovered. Nowadays the chanters come and go in twos and threes, gathering at the full moon to share stories with one another and with any other members of the court who can be troubled to attend.

Other Spirits of Luna

Abyss Dancer — a luminous eel-spirit of the Great Western Ocean's deepest waters — knows the secret places where lost things lie and benthic horrors dwell. They may be petitioned as a guide amid the ocean deeps. Playful and treacherous by turns, they often lead travelers through strange and unexpected perils, or to a different destination that technically meets the parameters of their request. Lunar Exalted, as the Chosen of Abyss Dancer's patron, receive better treatment.

Kama-Soth is the Moonshadow Prince, a mischievous bat-spirit who holds domain over solar eclipses — those moments when Luna interposes herself between Creation and the brilliance of the sun, throwing the world into brief, unnatural night. To that end, Kama-Soth is also a bringer of strange tidings and dark omens, a constant reminder to the people of Creation that though the sun may be unconquered, he isn't unrivaled.

Despite his place in Yu-Shan, Kama-Soth much prefers wandering the world in the guise of a brooding poet-provocateur; when called upon to fulfill his duty, he wearily shrugs off that shape and unfurls his leathery wings, shot through with delicate veins of silver. Lunars sometimes seek him out as a herald and a guide to social circles both divine and mortal, for he's a constant traveler and bon vivant with friends, lovers, rivals, and other intimates all across Creation.

Of late, he's taken residence in a hidden temple in An-Teng. Immaculate interlopers following rumors of heresy find themselves cut down by Kama-Soth's newest ally, Rain on the Roof — a Changing Moon assassin entangled in the god's misadventures by Kama-Soth's promise to introduce him to martial arts masters across Creation.

Twin granddaughters of Luna — with the same mother but different fathers — **Kestra** and **Peladoshi** oversee the purity of the Northeast's Fang Lakes. The grim Peladoshi sieves contaminants from the waters, turning



them over to shining Kestra to be cleansed. An inseparable pair, they spend little time on their duties, preferring to carouse in Heaven or to hunt on horseback amid the vast Northeastern forests and prairies. Sailors upon the lakes pray to the divine twins for protection from shipwreck and drowning.

Mothlight is one of Luna's Lanterns, rare moon-spirits who stand vigil on piers in the West and sing lost ships home. She usually takes the visage of a fisherman's daughter, full grown and strong. Her domain is the small island of Balm; by night, she appears clad in silken moonlight to wait for any boats still at sea in exchange for their prayers. Her blessings are much needed; Balm stands on the border of two feuding storm-mothers' courts. Wind-tossed ships are a common sight on the island, and those who offer something of value to Mothlight's people can secure her guidance through the storms. Among the West's numberless islands, she has a score of siblings who grant safe harbor to anyone that flies Mothlight's lilac shawl below their flag.

Ouaxa Mother-of-Claws is one of the animal avatars — spirits neither god nor elemental that embody Creation's beasts. She holds a prominent place among them; as the bear avatar, she's the living incarnation of every story of motherly ferocity. She commands the loyal service of hundreds of lesser forest-gods, offering her protection to those too weak or gentle-hearted to fight for themselves. Those who help to protect her chosen wards and their sacred groves sometimes earn her favor, as she blesses them with bearlike strength. While she counts a handful of Lunars among her favorites, such as the stealthy hunter *Stalks Before the Sun*, she's utterly contemptuous of politics and brushes aside anyone who tries to drag her into their schemes and intrigues.

Quaymal Hidden-Face oversees a forest pool from which Luna herself once drank. His natural form is that of a wildcat, his ivory fur splotched with markings that read as peculiar riddles in Old Realm. It's his way to borrow the shape and memories of a traveler who gazes into her own reflection — whether in his pool or amid the surrounding lands — and then use that shape to

reveal her secret desires to others. Quaymal claims that his trickery spreads the virtues of honesty and liberation, but the region's peoples see him as a treacherous devil to be propitiated.

Red Smirk was once a god of saboteurs, a patron to brigands and rebels throughout Creation. His domain, temperament, and passions were perfectly aligned; as one of Luna's lieutenants, he showered blessings on chaos-bringers wherever he went. But Red Smirk was never one to escape self-sabotage; he set himself against the Immaculate Order a few decades ago and hasn't been seen since.

In truth, he's sealed far below Chanos' oldest Immaculate temple in the form of a rot-infested willow. If freed, he'd make an exceptionally powerful ally to any Lunar — but especially to insurgents prosecuting a shadow war against the Realm. Although the lion's share of his power is bound, he sometimes sends fragmented dreams to any Lunar bold enough to approach

within a hundred miles of his prison, beckoning them with disjointed images of his glorious past.

Among the greatest divinities in Luna's retinue, **Tethys of the Untrammeled Path** — a daughter of Mercury herself — holds sway over the exiled, vagrant, and lost. It's her role to ensure that those who are meant to become refugees do so, and to guide them into situations where they can reclaim their places — often by banishing their oppressors in turn. At times she guides an exile personally, offering aid and tutelage, but this bargain comes at a price; those who fail to gain wisdom and self-reliance along the path fall under the shadow of her cloak, there to wander forever in an endless midnight landscape.

Tethys favors the Lunar Exalted, who she's been known to harbor and aid in times of need. Her price is that they scatter their enemies to the four winds, creating more exiles for Tethys to guide.

The sands rumbled and shook beneath Smiling Zamisha as she danced deeper into the desert. Two Princes of the Earth chased her; theirs was not the first Realm supply caravan she'd attacked in the last few months, but they seemed determined to make it the last. The white-haired Earth Aspect slammed her tetsubo on the ground again, and this time the shock wave hit Zamisha with a force that knocked her off her feet.

Sand scraped her hands and cheeks as she skidded along. When she looked up, the two stood over her. The sun was behind them, rendering them little more than silhouettes: one stocky and solid, the other tall and lean. Back the way they'd come, a coyote howled.

They gave her no time to recover. Even as Zamisha leapt to her feet, the second Dynast struck. He flowed like water and met her mid-lunge with a blow to her jaw. Zamisha caught his arm and wrenched it hard, attempting to use his momentum to swing him to her other side, away from his ally. But holding onto him was like trying to hold a fistful of water in an oasis. He slipped from her grasp just as the white-haired woman came in swinging that pale jade club.

Zamisha flitted backwards, out of its range. The woman had gotten a solid hit in back at the caravan, hard enough that Zamisha suspected she'd be pissing blood for the next few days. She didn't relish the idea of taking another blow. She spat a bright red mouthful onto the sand, and was pleased to see no teeth in the gob. "Come on then," she taunted. "Catching me would surely earn you both a promotion. Maybe it'll get you out of this desert and into a cushier posting where you don't have to be hot and thirsty for weeks on end."

The white-haired woman opened her mouth, perhaps to prattle on about the hardships an Immaculate education prepared one for, but a war cry rose up in the distance, in the direction of the caravan. The Water Aspect looked back, but his companion's eyes never left Zamisha. Smart move. But the Earth Aspect had *ears*, and her confident smile faded as the sound of clashing swords reached them.

This time, Zamisha hadn't been alone; an Eskari war band had lain in wait a little way off the route, keeping low and quiet, their mottled clothing blending into the scrub. They struck only after she'd led the Dragon-Blooded officers away. The howl she'd heard was her protégé, Barking in Circles, giving the signal to attack.

A column of smoke billowed up from the caravan. The Eskari wouldn't let anything useful go to waste, but what they couldn't carry or didn't need they'd destroy — depriving the Realm outpost of creature comforts and trade goods in addition to food supplies and precious water.

The wind carried a song to them, about the devil of the sands. The Eskari sang about how her touch was the scouring wind and her fury that of the noonday sun. The sound of raiders' swords hitting caravan guards' shields provided a frenetic rhythm for their hymn.

Smiling Zamisha, the devil herself, laughed. "You hear that refrain?" she asked. "That's me they're singing about."

"Go," the Earth Aspect said to her companion. "I'll handle her."

But before the other officer could turn, Zamisha was in motion. "I didn't bring you all this way out here only to have you turn tail." She snarled with a mouthful of sharp teeth and launched herself toward the pair.

The wind howled as the Eskari began singing a victory song.



Chapter Two

Charms

Universal

MERCURIAL MOONRISE SOUL

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: None

The Lunar has mastered her chosen Caste, embodying its archetypal prowess.

The Lunar's once-per-day anima power resets when she accomplishes something that could earn her Caste's Role Bonus (**Lunars**, p. 135), even if she doesn't receive one.

Additionally, Casteless no longer need to cycle through all three Castes' powers, although they can't use the same Caste's power twice in a row.

SKIN-CHANGER'S SUBTLETY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: Constant Quicksilver Rearrangement

The Lunar has refined her shapeshifting to the utmost subtlety.

The Lunar mutes the cost of shapeshifting — including Charms like Emerald Grasshopper Form and Constant Quicksilver Rearrangement.

Appearance

Influence

LAPDOG'S QUIET REIGN

Cost: —; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

APPEARANCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Bird-of-Paradise Plume (Essence 1; Peacock Quill Flourish): Use Peacock Quill Flourish on written influence against people who've never seen her; reading the text gives them a clear mental image of the author. Can be used with Cuckoo's Nest Hospitality or Dreams-and-Expectations Stance to give false impressions.

Cat Among Tigers (Essence 2; Cuckoo's Nest Hospitality): While using Cuckoo's Nest Hospitality to assume social roles of lowly station, others overlook her and are less likely to watch their tongues, bolstering her Guile and read intentions rolls.

Moonflower's Hidden Petals (Essence 3; Essential Mirror Nature, Moon's Hidden Face): Use Moon's Hidden Face to conceal any overtly supernatural effects of a single Lunar Charm while her anima is dim.

Untouchable Beast-God Majesty (Essence 3; Hunted Stag Majesty): Clash an attack with a threatening or seductive influence roll. Can be used with Hunted Stag Majesty to clash ambushes.

Moth-Drawing Lunacy (Essence 4; Moon Beckons Tide): Use Moon Beckons Tide to inflict enduring Psyche effects that compels victims to seek her out.

Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: Glance-Oration Technique

The Lunar need not speak to be obeyed; she beckons adoring masses to tend to her every need with naught but her animal charms.

When the Lunar uses Glance-Oration Technique, she ignores multiple target penalties. Targets with a positive Tie toward her or her current form or whose Resolve is lower than her Appearance suffer -1 Resolve (which may increase the dice added by the Lunar's Appearance). If it's a Tie of loyalty or affection, bonus dice from Appearance are converted to automatic successes.

Backer: Zack Simon

SACRIFICIAL BULL PERFUME

Cost: —; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Alluring Scent Technique

The Lunar smells of sweet incense and the fragrant smoke of burnt offerings, drawing spirits to her pleasing scent.

The Lunar's Alluring Scent Technique affects spirits within medium range of her, in addition to its usual targets. Its effects are heightened against them:

- Spirits with a negative Tie toward the Lunar are also subject to the "No Tie" effect.
- Spirits with no Tie to the Lunar are also subject to the "Positive Tie" effect.
- Spirits with a positive Tie to the Lunar also suffer -1 Resolve against her influence leveraging such ties.

If the Lunar enhances Alluring Scent Technique with Mysterious Stranger Intimation or New Friend Aroma, spirits can't spend Willpower to resist those Charms' effects unless their Essence exceeds the Lunar's.

UNBROKEN PREDATOR DOMINANCE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Archetype (Stamina)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Feral Smile Tactic

Standing tall despite grievous wounds, the Lunar terrifies her prey — if such wounds couldn't fell the beast, what hope do they have?

The Lunar ignores wound penalties on a threaten roll or other fear-based influence, converting them to bonus dice, and counts as having the Hideous Merit (**Exalted**, p. 162). If she already has Hideous, she reduces Feral Smile Tactic's mote cost by two if she uses it with this Charm.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has the Berserker Merit may learn this as a Stamina Charm, with Relentless Lunar Fury as its prerequisite.

HOPE-RENEWING GESTURE

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Argent Muse Approach or Divine Paramour's Embrace

The Lunar reaches out to those taken in by cunning deceptions or sweet-sounding words, reminding them of who they really are with a dramatic display.

The Lunar makes an (Appearance + Presence) persuade roll to overturn influence (**Exalted**, p. 221) as she makes a dramatic physical display to catch her target's attention. She might brandish a symbol of something he's forsaken, strike an inspiring heroic pose, toss him a sign of her favor, shoot a firewand into the air, slap him across the face, etc. Appropriate stunts may let her substitute another Ability for Presence.

The Lunar doesn't subtract her target's Resolve from her Appearance to determine how many bonus dice she adds, and rerolls all dice that initially show failures. She doesn't need to spend Willpower to attempt the roll. If her target cites a Defining Intimacy or a positive Tie to the Lunar, the Willpower cost to abandon the course of action is reduced by one Willpower.

Using this Charm on the Lunar's Solar mate always succeeds, without needing a roll. If he abandons his course of action, both he and the Lunar lose Limit equal to (the Intimacy of the highest positive Tie either of them has to the other).

With Essence 4, this Charm can overturn Psyche effects based on fear, despair, or sorrow, even if they aren't usually susceptible to being overturned. The target never needs to spend Willpower to resist.

Reset: Once per story.

Backer: Aaron Haaf

Subterfuge

SMILE HIDES EVERYTHING

Cost: —(1m); **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Lunar controls her facial expression and body language as only a shapeshifter can, conveying only what she wishes her audience to see.

The Lunar can calculate Guile with Appearance instead of Manipulation. If someone whose base Resolve is lower than her Appearance rolls opposing her Guile, she may pay one mote to have up to (her Essence) of his 1s subtract successes.

LOST MIRROR FLIGHT

Cost: 10m, 1wp (3m, 1wp); **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 5

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Perilous

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Silver Ripple Mirage

No more substantial than a reflection, the Lunar mocks her foes as their blades pass harmlessly through where she seems to be.

When an enemy attacks the Lunar, she may dematerialize as per Silver Ripple Mirage. Unless the attack was enhanced with magic capable of striking the dematerialized, she perfectly defends against it. Even against attacks capable of striking the dematerialized, any damage dealt is halved, rounded down. This damage reduction applies only to whichever attack the Lunar uses this Charm against, not subsequent attacks during this Charm's duration.

While using Silver Ripple Mirage, this Charm's cost is reduced to three motes, one Willpower.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by using Mirror Slip Trick to enter a reflective surface the Lunar hasn't previously entered this scene.

Warfare

PACK FIGHTS AS ONE

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Archetype (Charisma)

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Wasp-and-Termite Dance

The Lunar and her allies fight as one, a pack rallied against a common foe.

To use this Charm, Wasp-and-Termite Dance must be active. The Lunar and all other affected characters gain the following benefits:

- Their communication transcends body language, speaking soul to soul. It's impossible for outsiders to detect unless they have specialized magic.
- Pack members' positive Ties to each other increase their Resolve bonus by one.
- On each pack member's turn, he can reflexively take either a defend other or distract gambit to benefit another pack member.
- As long as one pack member is aware of a hidden threat, all of them are. This may render them immune to unexpected attacks or allow them to attack concealed enemies.

Archetype: Lunars with hive-dwelling spirit shapes may learn this as a Charisma Charm.

Backer: Joe R./C.

Charisma Influence

SONGBIRD'S PASSIONS CONFESSED

Cost: —; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Rapture of the Nightingale

Stirring the passions of others, the Lunar lays their hearts bare.

When the Lunar successfully reads the intentions of someone affected by Rapture of the Nightingale, her player can ask the Storyteller one of the below questions about the inspired emotion. Every three extra successes let her ask an additional question.

- What's an Intimacy he has that involves that emotion?
- What's an Intimacy he has that opposes that emotion?
- Is there something involving that emotion that he's not being honest about with me?
- Is there something involving that emotion that he's not being honest about with himself?

Questions about Intimacies can be asked multiple times.

CHARISMA CHARM CONCEPTS

Curse-Defying Exuberance (Essence 2; Argent Revelry Festival, Herd Reinforcement Stance): Free an organization from hostile magic like Indolent Official's Curse by leading its members in a custom, ritual, or celebration that's meaningful to them.

Questing Beast Mythos (Essence 2; Lightning-Calling Challenge): Mock or taunt someone into obsessing over the Lunar as their rival or the object of a grudge or vendetta.

Captivating Devil-Saint Iconography (Essence 3; Beast-God Idolatry): Art created with Beast-God Idolatry exerts a mesmerizing Psyche effect, drawing attention to itself and causing those affected to obsess over both possessing the artwork and meeting the character depicted in it.

Primal Passion Intensity (Essence 3; Heart-Stirring Expression): Inspire emotions that endure beyond a scene and are harder to resist.

Wilderness-Carved Visage (Essence 3; Beast-God Idolatry, Boundary-Marking Meditation): The Lunar can use Beast-God Idolatry to imbue its influence in all artworks in a territory that depicts her or one of her shapes.

Wolf Unites the Flock (Essence 3; Herd Reinforcement Stance): By insulting, mocking, or deriding a particular culture or one of its customs, the Lunar rouses even outcasts and malcontents to its defense, weakening members of that culture's negative Ties toward it or similar Intimacies, or persuading them to do something that opposes such Intimacies. With Ogre-King's Challenge, this can be used to reinforce a leader's standing if he bests — or “bests” — the Lunar.

Untamed Revelry Enticement (Essence 4; Unceasing Hunger Affliction x2): Make a festivity, entertainment, recreation, or worldly pleasure hypnotically captivating.

If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer in mind for a question, the Lunar's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

If the Lunar has Creation-Spanning Passion (**Lunars**, p. 167), when she's sharing dreams, her player can ask one of the above questions about any emotion, in addition to the usual question.

MASTER OF MIDNIGHT RUNES

Cost: —; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Shining Moon-Child Mark

The Lunar marks those closest to her heart with her sacred brand.

The Lunar gains the following benefits when using Shining Moon-Child Mark:

Argent Dreamer Glyph: If she has Creation-Spanning Passion (**Lunars**, p. 167), she may imbue a mark with a spiritual link when she bestows it on someone she has a positive Tie for, causing them to share dreams as per that Charm.

Boundless Argent Patronage: She reduces the total mote cost of all uses of it by (higher of Essence or 3). For example, an Essence 1 Lunar would pay zero motes for the first use, one mote for the second use, and full cost for further uses.

Mark of Distant Embrace: If she has Divine Paramour's Embrace (**Lunars**, p. 148), she can use it on a marked character whenever he sleeps without requiring a roll, as if she were there to comfort him herself. With that Charm's repurchase, she can do so at any time.

Sigil of the Eclipse: She can use Shining Moon-Child Mark based on her Solar mate's Tie toward someone rather than one of her own. Her mate must either be present or have previously expressed his Tie to the Lunar.

Backer: Veronica

ENRAGED PREDATOR'S HOWL

Cost: —; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Archetype (Strength), Clash

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Lion's Roar Rebuke



As her foe closes in, the Lunar unleashes a mighty howl, hurling him away with an earth-shaking roar.

The Lunar can use Lion's Roar Rebuke reflexively to clash an attack from within short range.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has a threaten or intimidate dice pool may learn this as a Strength Charm.

OGRE-KING'S CHALLENGE

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Until the contest ends

Prerequisite Charms: Herd Reinforcement Stance, Lightning-Calling Challenge

Challenging the weak and unworthy for their thrones, the Lunar overthrows them in the hearts of their subjects.

The Lunar issues a public challenge to a formal or informal leader or figure of authority, rolling (Charisma

+ Presence) as a special persuade roll against both the leader and his followers that ignores multiple-target penalties.

Against the leader, the Lunar can convince him to engage her in a physical contest without needing to leverage a supporting Intimacy: a duel, an archery competition, a race, etc. However, this benefit doesn't apply for contests that are obviously one-sided or so dangerous as to be nigh-suicidal. Resisting this influence requires him to cite at least a Major Intimacy in a Decision Point and spend (Lunar's Essence) Willpower.

Against the leader's followers, any Ties they have to him — positive or negative — count as supporting this influence. Affected characters must watch this contest without disturbing or interrupting it. If time allows, they'll try to convince as many people as possible to watch with them, adding (Lunar's Essence) dice on persuade rolls to do so. Nontrivial characters can resist this influence for one Willpower, or two Willpower if they wish to interfere with the contest.

If the Lunar successfully influences the leader and subsequently wins the contest, she breaks his will. She rolls (Essence) dice. The leader loses that many Willpower, which the Lunar gains. She may opt to lose points of Limit in place of gaining that much Willpower. The leader forms a Defining Tie toward the Lunar, with a context chosen by his player — whether he respects her or hates her, she looms large in his life. Winning by cheating is valid if the Lunar isn't caught.

If any onlookers have positive Ties to the leader, the Lunar becomes the object of those Intimacies, displacing his place in his loyal subject's hearts. Anyone with a negative Tie to the leader gains a positive Tie of equal intensity to the Lunar, with a context chosen by their player.

Reset: This can't be used against the same character more than once per story.

Backer: Jordan Neal

Warfare

FERAL RAGE EMPOWERMENT

Cost: 5m, 1wp (1m, 1wp); **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Rampage-Unleashing Provocation

The Lunar invites others to embrace their rage, teaching them to draw strength from it and bend it to their ends.

The Lunar interacts with someone in a way that involves anger: provoking him into a fight, talking about the roots of her own rage, telling a story of a legendary berserker-hero, etc. She imbues that character's anger with formidable power.

That character gains the following benefits while acting in accordance with a Major or Defining Intimacy based on anger or hatred, or while inspired with such emotions by social influence:

- A bonus dot of Strength, which can raise his Strength above 5.
- He ignores one point of wound penalty.
- +2 Resolve against influence to weaken rage-based Intimacies or to convince him to withdraw from combat.

- If the Lunar uses Rampage-Unleashing Provocation on him, he adds one bonus die on all physical actions and threaten rolls.

Descended from Luna's Chosen, the Moon-Touched (**Lunars**, p. 18) are heirs to their rage. No extended interaction is required to use this Charm on Moon-Touched, and it costs only one mote, one Willpower to use on un-Exalted Moon-Touched.

Backer: Nicholas Scott

SHEEPDOG GUARDS THE FLOCK

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Archetype (Strength), Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Fearless Beast-Warrior Exhortation, Raiton's Banquet Assault

The Lunar rallies her armies in defense of her chosen peoples, holding the line against the forces that would see them enslaved or eradicated.

To use this Charm, the Lunar must be fighting in defense of a culture she has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward, or leading battle groups made up primarily of such a culture's members. She grants an allied battle group the following benefits:

- +1 Might.
- Its positive Ties to the Lunar or the culture increase its Resolve bonus by +1.
- It rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on rout checks.
- Upon reaching Size 3 or lower, it gains perfect morale for the rest of the scene, as its remaining members make a defiant last stand.

The Lunar can stack multiple uses of this Charm to benefit multiple battle groups. She waives this Charm's Willpower cost for each battle group past the first.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape hunts in groups may learn this as a Strength Charm.

Backer: Patrick Colford

Territory

WORLD-SOUL AWAKENING

Cost: —; **Mins:** Charisma 3 or Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Boundary-Marking Meditation

The Lunar draws power from her spiritual ties to her territories, evoking miracles from her sacred domain.

The Lunar can awaken Evocations from territories. Their themes can draw on the territory's history and chosen qualities and the Lunar's character concept, Caste, and spirit shape. She need not be within a territory to use its Evocations, though many are most powerful when used within her territory. Upon purchasing this Charm, she awakens a single territory Evocation for free.

If a Lunar abandons a territory, she loses its Evocations and is refunded their experience cost. Likewise, if changes to a territory render one or more Evocations thematically inappropriate, she loses those Evocations and is refunded their experience cost.

WOLF PACK'S DEN APPROACH

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 5 or Wits 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Boundary-Marking Meditation, Lead the Pride or Monarch-Wing Migration

The Lunar warlord's forces are unparalleled within her territory, outpacing and outmaneuvering enemy armies.

When the Lunar leads battle groups within her territory, they gain the following benefits:

- They convert specialty dice added by the territory's qualities to automatic successes. If a roll against such a battle group is penalized by a territory's quality, the penalty subtracts successes instead of dice.
- They double 9s on movement actions. Outside of combat, they double the speed at which they move while marching toward battle or engaging in other tactical movements.
- While fighting under an Ambush, Back to the Sea, Pincer Attack, or Strategic Placement stratagem enacted by the Lunar, their attacks gain +1 Accuracy. Battle groups with Might instead convert its Accuracy dice bonus to automatic successes.

If the Lunar uses Fleeting Silver Mirage (**Lunars**, p. 295) while this Charm is active, she can bring an allied battle group of up to Size (Essence) with her for a surcharge of five motes per dot of the battle group's size and one Willpower.

If the Lunar uses Fleeting Silver Mirage this way to bring a battle group into combat, her Join Battle roll also counts as a Strategic Maneuver roll to enact a stratagem appropriate under the circumstances. The Strategic Maneuver roll counts as unopposed, but the stratagem's threshold is increased by two.

Backer: Josh Raveling

Dexterity

Heart's Blood

SERPENT-AND-RAT REFINEMENT

Cost: —(+1wp); **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Archetype (Wits)

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Lunar has learned the ways of rat and rattlesnake, songbird and alley cat, wearing such humble shapes with effortless grace.

The Lunar gains the following benefits

- She can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when she shapeshifts into an animal form to grant it the Tiny Creature Merit (p. 185). This replaces the Minuscule Size and Legendary Size Merits, if applicable, and waives the need to use Emerald Grasshopper or Towering Beast Form for forms of such sizes.
- When she uses a Protean Charm that receives a benefit because she is in a shape with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size, she adds a bonus die on the roll enhanced or created by that Charm. Using multiple Protean Charms on one action doesn't add additional dice.
- When she uses Herd-Assailing Gadget, she adds one die of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage.
- If she knows Emerald Grasshopper Form, she waives its Willpower cost when she uses it in a shape with Tiny Creature.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Minuscule Size or Tiny Creature may learn this as a Wits Charm.

Backer: Justin Miller

DEXTERITY CHARM CONCEPTS

Face-Thieving Legerdemain (Essence 2; Nest-Raiding Slyness): Perform a sacred hunt that concludes when you steal whatever's most valuable to someone or something they have a positive Major or Defining Tie to while they're nearby.

Flowing Moonsilver Infiltration (Essence 3; Shifting Octopus Trick): The Lunar's flesh warps to fit through a space too small for her. Minuscule Size shapes can slip through even the slightest crack; Tiny Creatures can fit through finger-sized openings; humans and larger forms can fit through openings the size of their head, and Legendary Size creatures can fit through anything a person could.

Offense

HERD-ASSAILING GADFLY

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Emerald Grasshopper Form or Finding the Needle's Eye

A wasp's sting can be as deadly as any dagger; a cat's claws, an executioner's blade.

When the Lunar makes an attack in an animal shape with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size (p. 185) against a larger enemy, she ignores those Merits' drawbacks, dealing damage normally.

The first time the Lunar uses this Charm in a scene, her attack becomes a surprise attack (**Exalted**, p. 203).

Backer: Nathan Henderson

QUICKSILVER ARSENAL ADAPTATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Dexterity 3 or Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Lunar's fluid battle style draws no distinctions between weapons.

Upon purchasing this Charm, for each dot that the Lunar has in Archery, Brawl, Martial Arts, Melee, or Thrown, she gains a dot that may be placed in another

of those Abilities with a lesser or equal rating, up to a maximum of (Essence + 5) dots.

When the Lunar purchases a dot in one of these Abilities with experience, she likewise receives an additional dot to assign as above. This can't take her above the (Essence + 5) limit.

Backer: Fukata

ARGENT HYDRA FLOURISH

Cost: —(+2m, 2i); **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Wasp Sting Blur

The Lunar shifts between weapons like flowing quicksilver, unleashing a barrage with bow and blade.

The Lunar may pay a two-mote, two-Initiative surcharge when she uses Wasp Sting Blur, replacing its special attack with a normal **withering** or **decisive** attack. She adds her enemy's onslaught penalty as dice of raw **withering** damage or **decisive** damage. The Lunar must use a different combat Ability than her first attack and can reflexively ready a weapon to do so. If she makes an Archery attack, she counts as attacking from short range.

VEXING APE ANTICS

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Protean

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Coyote-and-Badger Tactic, Cunning Beast-Warrior Reflexes, Weapon-Snatching Coils

The Lunar bedevils her foe with ever-shifting tactics, making use of every dirty trick in her arsenal.

The Lunar makes up to (highest combat Ability) gambits against a single enemy. These can include disarm, unhorse, and distract gambits, as well as appropriate custom gambits. She can't include grapples unless she has Strength 5, and they can only be the last gambit in this sequence. She needn't use the same Ability for all gambits, and may reflexively change weapons between gambits.

The Lunar doesn't pay the Initiative cost for these gambits normally; instead, upon completing all of them, she pays (highest difficulty among successful gambits + number of successful gambits) Initiative. She can't use

this Charm if she doesn't have enough Initiative to pay the full cost for all attacks hitting.

Protean: In animal shapes with a special ability or Merit that enhances an included gambit, the Lunar adds a non-Charm success on that gambit's attack roll and (higher of Essence or 3) dice on the Initiative roll.

Special activation rules: If the Lunar has Charms that let her make unique gambits, she can activate them reflexively with this Charm to add their gambits to the list of those she can make with Vexing Ape Antics, as long as she meets all necessary conditions and the gambits make sense in context. If a Charm offers multiple unique gambits, like Four Halo Golden Monkey Palm (p. 72), she need only use it once to add all those gambits to the list.

Backer: Marijane Strolla

Defense

NO CUB UNPROTECTED

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Ferocious Guardian Beast Stance

The Lunar stands as a living bulwark against even the most sweeping onslaught.

The Lunar counts as protecting all allies within short range with a defend other action, even if she's already using that action. If an area-of-effect attack targets at least one of her wards, her protection extends to all allies targeted by that attack, even those beyond this Charm's range.

If the Lunar knows Quicksilver Guardian Defense, she may pay a four-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's range to medium. If she knows Swift Den Mother Technique (p. 43), she may instead pay a nine-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's range to long.

Mobility

PEREGRINE SPEED

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Protean

Duration: One hour

Prerequisite Charms: Instinct-Driven Beast Movement

Hollowing bones or sleeking her body, the Lunar refines her shape for unmatched speed.

The Lunar rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on opposed movement rolls or rolls involved in a race or similar contest of speed. For each die that's rerolled into a success in combat, she gains either one Initiative, or a non-Charm bonus die on the next interval's roll in a race.

Outside of combat, the Lunar can move at ([Dexterity + Stamina] x5) miles per hour over open terrain. This is compatible with all forms of movement under her own power.

If the Lunar reactivates this Charm at the end of its duration, she waives its Willpower cost.

Protean: In animal shapes capable of moving faster than this Charm's speed, the Lunar instead increases their overland speeds by ([Dexterity + Stamina] x2) miles per hour and can maintain their top speed indefinitely.

MOONLIGHT HUNT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Peregrine Speed

Embracing protean fluidity, the Lunar urges her body to speed beyond all limits.

The Lunar dramatically increases her Peregrine Speed; what would take her a week with that Charm's normal speed can be completed in a day, a day's journey in a few hours, and an hour's journey in ten minutes. This applies when one of the following conditions is met:

- She's traveling to someone she has a Major or Defining Tie toward, or who has a Major or Defining Tie toward her.
- She's traveling to her Solar mate.
- She's pursuing someone as part of a sacred hunt.
- She's traveling within her territory (**Lunars**, p. 176).

STARTLED HARE ESCAPE

Cost: 1i; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Wounded Beast Flight

Cunning and full of tricks, the Lunar eludes even the greatest hunters.

The Lunar doubles 8s on a withdraw roll or a Stealth roll to go to ground. Alternatively, she can disengage from enemies at short range, as long as she has at least a -1 wound penalty.

Wounded Beast Flight waives this Charm's Initiative cost if the Lunar has at least a -2 wound penalty. Wounded Beast Flight can enhance rolls to go to ground when used with this Charm.

SWIFT DEN MOTHER TECHNIQUE

Cost: —(+2i, 1wp); **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Quicksilver Guardian Defense

The Lunar moves with blinding speed to protect her allies, crossing the battlefield faster than a sword is swung.

The Lunar can pay a two-Initiative, one-Willpower surcharge to use Ferocious Guardian Beast Stance when an ally within long range is attacked, reflexively moving into close range to take a defend other action. This doesn't count as her movement action.

If the Lunar protects her Solar mate with this Charm, she waives the Willpower surcharge.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by landing a **decisive** attack against a nontrivial enemy who's attacked someone under the Lunar's protection or her Solar mate this scene.

Subterfuge

SCALE-SHEDDING ESCAPE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Protean

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Quicksilver Second Face, Skulking Rat Spirit

The Lunar slips away from her foes with a well-timed transformation.

When the Lunar uses Quicksilver Second Face and makes a Stealth roll on the same tick, characters whose Initiative is lower than hers suffer a -3 penalty on their rolls against her Stealth. Characters who weren't aware the Lunar could shapeshift also suffer this penalty. Penalized characters who fail their roll lose 1 Initiative.

Protean: Shifting into a shape with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size lets the Lunar roll Stealth to enter concealment without needing a hiding place.

STALKING SHADOW HUNT

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute, Protean

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Cryptic Unknown Beast, Silver Jaguar Pounce

The Lunar's prey doesn't see her as she hunts him, blind to the monster just behind him.

When someone the Lunar is pursuing or following makes a Perception roll against her, he must reroll a successful die for each 1, starting with 7s and moving up. If her pursuit is motivated by a Major or Defining Intimacy, his 2s force him to reroll successes as well. Trivial characters fail automatically.

Once the Lunar's pursuit concludes, this Charm lasts for one additional scene to resolve the consequences, then ends.

Protean: In animal shapes with the Ambush Hunter ability, opposing characters lose one Initiative for each die on their roll that's rerolled into a 1 (or 2, if applicable).

War

ENGULFING SWARM EMBRACE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Archetype (Manipulation, Wits), Decisive-only

Duration: Until the grapple ends

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Anglerfish Decoy

Casting off countless duplicates, the Lunar traps foes within the teeming mass of herself.

As the Lunar makes a grapple gambit, she splits off a copy of herself, as with Cunning Anglerfish Decoy, to join in the clinch. She can further bolster her ranks by using Cunning Anglerfish Decoy reflexively to create additional replicas before rolling. The gambit inflicts an additional point of onslaught penalty, and each replica within close range of the Lunar adds one die on her attack and control rolls.

If an enemy's attack would cause the Lunar to lose a round of control over the grapple, she can sacrifice a replica within close range instead, letting the attack destroy it to preserve her control. Once the grapple ends, all of these duplicates fade away.

If the Lunar has Ant-and-Starfish Trick, she can transfer control of the grapple to independent replicas to maintain, leaving her free to act. Those replicas can still sacrifice other replicas to preserve rounds of control. She can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to enhance the replica created by this Charm as per Ant-and-Starfish Trick.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size may learn this as a Manipulation or Wits Charm.

Backers: Adam Pecar and Eric Schalk

SOLDIER BEE TACTICS

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Archetype (Manipulation, Wits), Protean

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Anglerfish Decoy

The Lunar and her swarming duplicates fight as one.

When the Lunar rolls Join Battle, she adds a bonus die for each Cunning Anglerfish Decoy duplicate within long range, maximum (higher of Essence or 3). She banks a pool of swarm points equal to the 9s and 10s on the roll that can be spent on the following effects:

1 point: Prevent a replica within long range from being dissipated by an attack. For replicas enhanced with Ant-and-Starfish Trick, this instead prevents a **decisive** attack's damage from filling their Incapacitated health level.

1 point: The Lunar waives Engulfing Swarm Embrace's cost.

1+ points: While within close range of a duplicate, the Lunar can add automatic successes on a Stealth roll for one swarm point each.

1+ points: When the Lunar attacks an enemy within close range of a duplicate, she can add up to (Essence) dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage for one swarm point each.

2 points: A duplicate enhanced with Ant-and-Starfish Trick takes a reflexive defend other action.

2 points: A duplicate enhanced with Ant-and-Starfish Trick makes a reflexive distract gambit.

3 points: The Lunar uses Cunning Anglerfish Decoy reflexively. Its cost is waived for the scene (including the surcharge for Ant-and-Starfish Trick), but once the scene ends, the Lunar must pay the cost to maintain the duplicate.

If the Lunar wins the battle with 4+ swarm points remaining, she gains one Willpower.

Protean: If the Lunar is in the same shape as an animal duplicate, the die she adds for it is non-Charm.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size may learn this as a Manipulation or Wits Charm.

Backer: Michael Watkins

INFINITE QUICKSILVER SELF

Cost: —; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Archetype (Manipulation, Wits)

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Ant-and-Starfish Trick

The Lunar has honed her powers of self-division and duplication to perfection.

The Lunar gains the following benefits when she uses Ant-and-Starfish Trick:

- She can create replicas of forms that she isn't currently in.
- She can use Ant-and-Starfish Trick to create replicas that are truly independent of her. She doesn't need to commit motes or stay within range of them, but independent replicas don't have an imposed Tie of loyalty.
- Non-independent animal replicas count as her familiars. If she knows Blessed Moon-Beast Empowerment or Erudite Beast-Mind Expansion, they gain those Charms' benefits for free.
- If she knows Inchoate Self Realization, its cost is reduced by five motes and one Willpower when she uses it to trade places with a duplicate, revealing that it's actually been her all along. If a roll is necessary, she adds a free full Excellency.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size may learn this as a Manipulation or Wits Charm.

Backer: Refhi

Intelligence

Heart's Blood

SHAPE-STEALER'S RIDDLE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

INTELLIGENCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Purge the Tarnished Silver (Essence 1; Bone-Mending Technique): The Lunar anoints someone's wounds with her blood to convert aggravated damage to lethal.

Confounding Wisdom Guidance (Essence 1; Inevitable Genius Insight): An organization speeds its work on a project as long as its members follow a strange prohibition, ritual, or geas given by the Lunar. If it doesn't heed her, the project is impeded instead.

Devil-Swine Imprisonment (Essence 3; Cage of Horn and Sinew): After dealing a meaningful defeat to a spirit or fae, the Lunar can bind him with Cage of Horn and Sinew, rather than needing to exorcise him. This upgrade also applies to Spirit-Sealing Talisman.

Fever Dream Odyssey (Essence 3; Midnight Soul Reprieve): Help someone by entering their mind-scape while they're in an altered state of consciousness — intoxication, hallucination, feverish delirium — or in the Wyld. Potential uses include restoring erased memories, searching for evidence of possession, confronting Derangements in symbolic encounters, and more.

Moon-Graced Mystic's Hands (Essence 3; Burning Moonfire Mind): Commit the costs of Flesh-Sculpting Art, Night's Mercy Panacea, or Plague-Swallowing Kiss to extend their benefits to all relevant Medicine rolls for one scene. This doesn't apply to repeat attempts at treating the same patient.

Herd-Healing Mercy (Essence 5; Moon-Graced Mystic's Hands): The Lunar can use Bone-Mending Technique, Midnight Soul Reprieve, or Starfish-and-Salamander Meditation to treat multiple patients simultaneously, including large numbers of trivial characters.

Outwitting a worthy foe in a duel of minds, the Lunar claims his shape as proof of her superior intellect.

The Lunar performs a sacred hunt to claim a human's shape by challenging him to an intellectual contest, battle of wits, or the like — philosophical debate, games of riddles, racing to solve a puzzle, making legal arguments to a judge, etc. This can often be resolved with an opposed (Intelligence + Lore) roll.

If the Lunar wins, she may conclude the sacred hunt and claim her opponent's form by accepting a Major Tie of respect toward the opponent — if she deems him unworthy, she can't gain his form. This counts as the Intimacy needed to take a human shape. Winning by cheating is valid if the Lunar isn't caught, but her opponent must be genuinely trying to win.

If the Lunar's target wins or catches her cheating, the sacred hunt fails, and she can't take his shape through this Charm for the rest of the story. She may still attempt sacred hunts against him by other means.

Backer: Nathan Henderson

Knowledge

FOXGLOVE AND WOLFSBANE ALCHEMY

Cost: —(+1wp); **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Archetype (Wits), Uniform

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Night's Mercy Panacea

Wise in nature's mysteries, the Lunar is a master of efficacious medicines and death-dealing venoms.

The Lunar can use Night's Mercy Panacea on Craft and Survival rolls that involve medicinal herbs. She can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to double 8s on a Medicine roll to make use of such herbs or a Craft or Survival roll involving them.

Alternatively, the Lunar can pay the one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm on an attack that can poison an enemy or when she otherwise doses someone with poison. His 1s on the roll against it subtract successes. If the Lunar uses Mamba-and-Cobra Mastery (**Lunars**, p. 258), his 1s count as her 10s for its effect.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape is venomous or poisonous may learn this as a Wits Charm, with Adder Fang Method (**Lunars**, p. 258) as its prerequisite.

SILVER BLOOD INFUSION

Cost: 10m, 1wp, 1ahl per temporary health level; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Flesh-Sculpting Art

Feeding her blood to another, the Lunar imbues him with primal vitality.



The Lunar grants a touched character up to (Essence) temporary -1 health levels, paying one level of aggravated damage for each temporary level she grants. These are the first of her ally's -1s to be filled when he's damaged, and they vanish when filled.

When the Lunar uses this Charm on her Solar mate, she need only pay one aggravated health level per two temporary health levels granted, and she can use her mate's Essence instead of hers to determine how many she can grant.

CROSSING MIDNIGHT'S THRESHOLD

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Counting the Elephant's Wrinkles

The Lunar blurs the boundaries between her mind and the world, thoughts and memories spilling out to form a dream-realm around her.

To use this Charm, the Lunar must be meditating or engaged in a slow continuous activity — performing, crafting, writing, reading, etc. As long as she continues to do so, she can manifest phantasmal imagery out to medium range, and project her memories — or those stolen with Memory-Drinking Meditation — into the world. Very old or muddled memories may require an (Intelligence + [Integrity or Lore]). These images are obviously illusionary to those who perceive them, and are exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) on rolls that benefit from them.

By examining her memories from the outside, the Lunar and others can make Awareness and Investigation rolls to find things that the Lunar didn't consciously recognize before. Additionally, she can use appropriate Crafts to give her memories permanent form: carving her memory of a statue into reality as a forgery of the original, mixing memories of someone into paint to create a portrait that displays glimpses of mystery, or weaving tapestries from her dreams. She can't turn memories into raw materials, including the magical materials, though she could incorporate them into artifacts.

If the Lunar uses Secure Den Technique (**Lunars**, p. 292), she can use this Charm reflexively to make the den a permanent dream-realm. While in the den, she always receives this Charm's benefits without needing to meditate, and its range encompasses the entire den. She can leave phantasmal images that will linger indefinitely after she leaves the den.

If the Lunar has Many-Pockets Meditation (**Lunars**, p. 290), she can use it to store her belongings within the dream-realm when this Charm ends, letting her recall them when she uses it again. A single use of Many-Pockets Meditation banishes all qualifying mundane objects, but the Lunar can't end her mote commitment until she reuses this Charm.

If the Lunar uses Dream-Delving Voyage (**Lunars**, p. 246), she can use this Charm reflexively to display her target's dreams to onlookers if she succeeds.

Backer: AG

ARGENT SPHINX ENIGMA

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Moon-Kept Mysteries

The Lunar's cryptic enigma captivates and beguiles those who hear it, but offers secret wisdom to those who solve it.

As the Lunar speaks a riddle, her player chooses some area of expertise, comparable in scope to a specialty, that a successful answer provides insight to. (Players don't actually need come up with a riddle and its answer — they can simply stunt descriptions of the wit and cunning with which they're spoken).

The Lunar makes an opposed (Intelligence + [Lore or Occult]) roll against someone who can hear and understand her (or can otherwise perceive and understand the riddle, such as if she uses Glance-Oration Technique to convey it through body language). In combat, this requires a difficulty 4 gambit against enemies. The Lunar may add up to five non-Charm dice on the other character's roll by tailoring the riddle to his knowledge, letting her give allies easier riddles.

A character who succeeds discovers an answer to the riddle, gaining insight into the chosen area of expertise. He banks non-Charm successes equal to his total successes on the roll. He can add up to (his Essence) successes on rolls involving the chosen area of expertise, or to increase a static value by +1 per success when it falls within that expertise. They can't be added to attack rolls or on extended actions. The pool of successes lasts one day.

A character who fails the roll obsesses over the riddle for the rest of the scene. He must roll (Intelligence + Lore) at difficulty 5 each turn as he tries to solve it, requiring him to flurry to take other actions. Success frees him, but offers no insight. He also suffers a -3 penalty on rolls involving the chosen area of expertise, his thoughts still perturbed by the riddle, which lasts until he next rests.

This Charm risks aiding enemies or hindering allies. Using it again lets the Lunar strip an enemy of his insight if he fails the opposed roll, or free an ally from his captivation if he succeeds. She waives such uses' Willpower costs and can use them reflexively, but only once per round on her turn.

Using this Charm to conclude a sacred hunt with Shape-Stealer's Riddle lets the Lunar steal one Willpower from her target.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a character once per day. This doesn't apply to using it to negate a previous use's effect.

Backer: Nathan Henderson

Mysticism

INSATIABLE BARGHEST HUNT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Raiton's Dark Auspice

The Lunar devours the dead, drinking the blood of hearts that long since stopped beating.

The Lunar may perform sacred hunts on ghosts of humans and animals, taking the shape that the ghost had in life. She need not permanently destroy a ghost if she takes its heart's blood by lethally incapacitating it.

The Lunar can use Memory-Drinking Meditation (**Lunars**, p. 197) to access a broad category of memories from the ghost's living existence — romance, his home city, the events of the last year of his life — without needing to take an Intimacy. If she has that Charm's repurchase, she can gain all of a ghost's memories from life without taking one of their Intimacies.

The Lunar can use God-Body Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 250) to take a ghost's Eclipse Charms along with its shape.

Backer: Sonja Mertens

OTHERWORLDLY FAMILIAR PACT**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Penumbra Witch Mastery

The Lunar witch commands the loyalty of otherworldly companions, familiar spirits, and faithful hobgoblins pledged to her service.

The Lunar may take willing spirits and fae of up to Essence 3 as familiars. She can have up to (Essence) such familiars at a time. Spirits and fae that are sorcerously bound by someone else can't be taken as familiars.

A Lunar who knows Moon-in-Well Emanation (**Lunars**, p. 159) treats her reflection-spirit as a familiar. It doesn't count toward this Charm's limit.

Backer: David Bufkin**ARCANA-DEVOURING BEAST****Cost:** 5m, 2i; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 3**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Decisive-only**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Spell-Rending Talon

The Lunar bends her enemy's magic to her will, breaking the power of lesser sorcerers to bolster her own.

The Lunar doubles 8s on a roll to counter or distort a spell (**Exalted**, p. 466) or to weaken, disrupt, or interfere with a spell, sorcerous working, or curse. Successfully countering or distorting a spell or otherwise ending such an effect awards (Essence) sorcerous motes, which last for one scene.

Alternatively, the Lunar can use this Charm with Spell-Rending Talon, increasing each level of damage to counting as three successes of distortion. She can gain sorcerous motes as above.

Backer: Scott Morris**BEAST-GOD APOTHEOSIS****Cost:** 20m, 1wp, 8xp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Keeper of Midnight's Gates, Otherworldly Familiar Pact

Drawing from the wellspring of her own divinity and the heart's blood flowing in her veins, the Lunar looses one of the countless beasts that dwell within her as a feral spirit.

The Lunar performs a ritual under the full moon, lasting from the time it rises to the time it sets, as she invokes one of the animals whose heart's blood she possesses. As she channels bestial Essence, she might exhibit fits of animalistic behavior, uncontrolled shapeshifting, or glossolalia in the secret tongues of beasts. At the ritual's culmination, the primal force inhabiting the Lunar emerges as a beast-spirit, a divine personification of that animal. The Lunar loses the shape the spirit was born from. She can't choose her spirit shape; there can be no greater embodiment of it than her.

None would mistake a beast-spirit for an ordinary animal. Some are humanoid in form, or have a human's face or a human-like mask in place of a bestial visage. Some have multiple eyes, tails, limbs, or even heads. They have intelligence comparable to a human's.

A beast-spirit uses the same traits as its animal form, plus the below:

- It's a spirit, rather than an animal. It's naturally material, but can dematerialize, using the same rules as materializing (**Exalted**, p. 510), but in reverse. If slain, it reforms at the Lunar's side on the next full moon.
- It's the Lunar's familiar.
- It has Essence 3 and a pool of (50 + [Essence x10]) motes.
- It has a Defining Tie of loyalty to the Lunar, which can't be weakened or altered by any means. Upon creation, it has one other Defining Intimacy and two Major Intimacies, typically reflecting some aspects of its animal's instincts, behavior, or socialization.
- It knows Hurry Home (**Exalted**, p. 509), allowing it to return to the Lunar, and (Lunar's Essence) additional spirit Charms appropriate to its animal's nature, the symbolic significance it has to the Lunar, or the beast-spirit's changed form. Animal avatars' Charms (p. 87) are often appropriate. It gains new Charms as the Lunar's Essence increases, and an additional Charm at the end of any story in which it played a meaningful role.

This Charm's experience point cost is waived the first time the Lunar uses it. If a beast-spirit is permanently destroyed or otherwise becomes narratively irrelevant, the Lunar's player regains the experience spent to create it.

Reset: Once per story.**Backer:** Mark Hales

LEGION-OF-WOLVES TRANSFORMATION**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 4**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Shaping (Body)**Duration:** One scene or One hour**Prerequisite Charms:** Selkie Mantle Endowment

Soldiers shed their human skins as the Lunar works her witchcraft, emerging as snarling beasts or helpless prey.

The Lunar transforms a battle group of willing mortals within medium range into an animal shape she possesses, except for Legendary Size shapes, using the normal rules for Lunar shapeshifting (**Lunars**, p. 131). The battle group's dice limit for shapeshifting is (Lunar's War). Additionally, the combination of animal prowess and human intelligence grants Might 1.

If the Lunar has Witch-Among-Swine Spite (**Lunars**, p. 209), she can use this Charm to transform an enemy battle group with a difficulty 5 gambit, rolling (Intelligence + [Lore, Occult, or Presence]) against its Resolve for the attack. Enemies use the *lower* of their dice pools or the animal's, or 3 dice if the animal lacks a pool.

This Charm's transformation normally last one scene, but willing battle groups extend this to one hour outside of combat. If the Lunar renews it once the hour expires, she waives its Willpower cost.

Reset: Once per scene.**Backer:** ReshyShira**SHRINE OF MIDNIGHT'S COVENANT****Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 5**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One project**Prerequisite Charms:** Devil-Pleasing Chiminage, Dreaming Wisdom Revelation

The Lunar offers her patronage to those who worship at her shrine in the wilderness, blessing them with secret rites of otherworldly power.

The Lunar creates a shrine, monument, cairn, or similar site in a place that's close to a community, but set apart from it — a forest bordering a village, a mountain peak that looms above a mining town, First Age ruins beneath a city, etc. This requires at least a major Craft project (**Exalted**, p. 240). As part of this project, the Lunar must spread word of her shrine among the community, teaching them the rites that must be performed there. Once the Lunar completes her shrine, the community's people may invoke her favor and protection by performing the shrine's rites.

The shrine's rites can take many forms, but always require a community member to travel to the shrine no less than once a year at Calibration. The Lunar also imposes additional requirements whose severity depends on how much of the community must be involved to meet them. If a majority of its populace is required, their obligation need only be an inconvenient task (**Exalted**, p. 216), like observing a dietary restriction or praying to the Lunar. If a smaller group is necessary, it must be at least a serious task, like making lavish offerings of animal sacrifices. If only the person who travels to the shrine is necessary, it must be a life-changing task, like killing a lion alone and bringing its carcass to the shrine.

As long as the rites are performed, the community gains the following benefits. They extend out to (Essence x10) miles from the center of the community proper.

- The Lunar can hear any prayers made to her from the shrine. If she knows Fleeting Silver Mirage (**Lunars**, p. 295), she can use it in response to a prayer to appear at the shrine.
- The community is warded against the encroachment of the Wyld, shadowlands, and similar forms of corruption. This includes all environmental Shaping effects. It doesn't undo corruption that's already taken place.
- Spirits and fae within the community count as having a Minor Principle of respect for its customs. They can't attempt to harm community members or refuse to hear out their requests, so long as the community treats them peacefully and inoffensively. Characters whose Essence equals or exceeds the Lunar's may pay one Willpower to resist this for a scene, or two Willpower to harm community members unprovoked.
- If the Lunar knows Heaven-Darkening Eclipse or Unraveling the Tapestry (**Lunars**, p. 206), she senses whenever the community comes under that from magic that could be negated with that Charm, letting her use it from afar. If she succeeds, the solution she introduces is revealed to the community's members by dreams, strange portents, or spiritual ecstasies.

The Lunar can only have one shrine at a time with this Charm, but shrines raised in territories claimed with Boundary-Marking Meditation (**Lunars**, p. 176) don't count toward this limit.

Backer: Tim Aumonier

Crafting

WITCH OF THE FORGE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Ecstatic Creator Inspiration, Implicit Design Epiphany

Wise in many arts, the Lunar works iron with witchcraft and hammers out spells upon her anvil.

The Lunar gains the following benefits:

- Once per story, when she accomplishes a major character or story goal through crafting, sorcery, dealings with spirits, or knowledge, she rolls (Intelligence + appropriate Ability), gaining gold points equal to her successes.
- Completing a sorcerous working awards gold points equal to (its Circle x2).
- She can spend white points as though they were experience points to purchase dots in Craft abilities and Craft specialties.
- She can pay the experience point cost of sorcerous workings with white points, paying five white points per experience point.

Backer: David Bufkin

Sorcery

WITCH-GODDESS PUISSANCE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Terrestrial Circle Sorcery

The Lunar witch invokes forces both within and without, drawing on bestial Essence and places of ancient power to work her wonders.

When the Lunar undertakes a sorcerous working of a Circle she's initiated into, she gains the following benefits:

- She negates the first botch the working suffers.
- Animal shapes that thematically support a working count as complementary Ability Means (**Exalted**, p. 487). The Storyteller may increase

their terminus bonus to +2 if the Lunar has a significant number of relevant Charms or other supernatural powers. Workings that might benefit from this include creating chimerical animal hybrids, cursing someone with an animal species' enmity, or blessings similar to one of an animal's natural strengths or cultural significance.

- Territories whose properties thematically support a working (**Lunars**, p. 176) count as sorcerous infrastructure Means for workings performed within them, as do demesnes and manses with relevant geomantic aspects or other qualities. The terminus bonus increases to +2 if the Lunar has a significant number of Charms or other supernatural powers that enhance territories.
- If her Solar mate provides Means for the working — either as a cooperating sorcerer or by offering a complementary Ability — he adds an additional +1 to the working's terminus.

Backer: Brent Ezell

Manipulation

Influence

SNAKE-OIL PANACEA

Cost: —; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute, Psyche

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Trash-is-Treasure Misdirection

With slick presentation and a silver tongue, the Lunar passes off placebos as cure-alls and harmless herbs as poison.

The Lunar can use Trash-is-Treasure Misdirection to convince someone that a given substance possesses a fictitious quality, beneficial or harmful, making an instill roll instead of a bargain roll. She might claim that silver burns the skin of the truly virtuous, or that bear meat is deadly unless prepared by a chef of legendary skill. She can't choose a substance that's so common that avoiding exposure is nigh-impossible, like air, or that's necessary for someone's survival, like water. A narrower subset, like "the air inside the satrap's manse" or "water from this river" is permissible.

Success causes the Lunar's victim to believe her lie so deeply that the substance is truly beneficial or harmful to him:

Beneficial: When ingested, the substance counts as exceptional equipment for him on rolls appropriate to the

MANIPULATION CHARM CONCEPTS

Birds of Ill Feather (Essence 2; Gnawing Mouse Malaise): Interacting with an organization lets the Lunar insinuate herself into the company of group members who are corrupt, disloyal, or shiftless.

Dreams-and-Nightmares Storyteller (Essence 2; Herd Subversion Approach): The Lunar tells a story that will be spread by those who hear it. The story counts as a custom held by those who've heard it for purposes of her Lunar Charms.

Shape-Stealing Betrayal (Essence 2; Argent Trickster's Rook): Perform a sacred hunt that concludes when the target makes a meaningful expression or gesture of trust in the Lunar that she doesn't deserve.

Suspicion-Stirring Deviltry (Essence 2; Night Sky Burial): When someone uncovers false evidence planted with Night Sky Burial, they're compelled to spread word of their discovery and they gain a pool of bonus dice for convincing others.

Any-Trinket Allure (Essence 3; Trash-is-Treasure Misdirection x2): The Lunar can use Trash-is-Treasure Misdirection to create long-lasting illusions that affect anyone who encounters the object, not just those present for her influence roll.

Coyote Chases Tail (Essence 3; False Burrow Pursuit, Whispering Silver Serpent): When someone lies, the Lunar deludes him into believing his own falsehoods, suppressing any memories that contradict this belief. She must know that he's lying, either from prior observation and knowledge or Charms like Forked Tongue Discernment.

Cuckoo's Egg Recollection (Essence 3; Forgetful Victim Technique): Implant false memories over the course of telling a story, sharing an intimate moment, speaking at length to a captive audience, or the like. With Essence 4, the Lunar can do so instantly.

Night's Own Alibi (Essence 3; Whispering Silver Serpent): Those who believe the Lunar's claims must enter a Decision Point to pursue an opportunity to investigate or follow up on her claims.

Hovel-and-Palace Equivocation (Essence 5; Any-Trinket Allure): The Lunar can use Trash-is-Treasure Misdirection on structures.

Lunar's claims for one scene, adding a non-Charm bonus die. This doesn't enhance attacks, Shape Sorcery rolls, or similar offensive actions. Other characters' rolls can also gain this bonus if the quality benefits their action, like a Medicine roll to treat him with an alleged panacea.

Harmful: The substance is poisonous to the victim, with Damage 2B/hour, duration (Essence x2) hours, a -2 penalty, and a vector of either touch, inhalation, or ingestion. Doses of this poison don't stack — he can't suffer a new one until the existing dose leaves his system. The effects of the poisoning have at least a convincing resemblance to the effects of whatever harm the Lunar described.

Unlike with Trash-and-Treasure Misdirection's usual effect, this Psyche effect lasts until the target encounters evidence that refutes the Lunar's claim and spends three Willpower to resist.

Reset: This Charm's effect can only be used once per story against a character.

Backer: David Scott

Subterfuge

LAUGHING HYENA MOCKERY

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Manipulation 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Laughing Devil Distraction

The Lunar exhausts the patience of saints and provokes the wise to folly.

The Lunar makes a **withering** attack against the Resolve of an enemy who can perceive her, rolling (Manipulation + [Performance, Presence, or Socialize]), with an Accuracy bonus of (Essence, maximum 5). Its raw damage is (Appearance + Charisma + Manipulation + extra successes) and it has Overwhelming (Essence, maximum 5). It can be enhanced both by magic that enhances inspire rolls, as well as attacks. An enemy crashed by this attack loses one Willpower.

Note that this Charm's range is based on the target's ability to hear the Lunar's words or see her nonverbal displays. Under normal conditions, it can't affect characters at long range, and can only target characters at medium range if the Lunar shouts.

Special activation rules: This Charm may be flurried.

Backer: C. Lowe

LONE-WOLF PACK FORMATION**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Archetype (Appearance), Mute, Protean**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Laughing Devil Distraction, Uncertain Sky Ambiguity

Though the Lunar may lead only a handful of warriors, cunning tactics and misdirection multiply their ranks a hundredfold in her enemies' eyes.

An allied battle group gains +1 effective Size, maximum 5, and adds (Lunar's Essence) Magnitude to its health track. This is a result of trickery and deception on the Lunar's part, not additional numbers; if the battle group is reduced to Size 1, it dissipates entirely.

If the Lunar is fighting under an Ambush stratagem she's enacted or if the targeted battle group has Size 2, she waives this Charm's Willpower cost.

Protean: In animal shapes, the Lunar also waives this Charm's Willpower cost when using it on a battle group made up of the same kind of animal.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Camouflage may learn this as an Appearance Charm, with One of the Herd and Victorious Beast-King Spirit as its prerequisites.

Backer: David Kotsonis**FOG-SHROUDED GUERRILLA FORCE****Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 2**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Archetype (Appearance)**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Lone-Wolf Pack Formation

The Lunar's forces move unseen to strike at the heart of enemy armies, emerging like stalking beasts from the mist.

The Lunar rolls an Ambush stratagem with ([Appearance or Manipulation] + War), doubling 9s and ignoring penalties for poor Drill. If the total forces on her side are no greater than Size 4, she doubles 8s; if they're no greater than Size 2, she doubles 7s. If successful, allied battle groups add (6 - Size) successes on rolls to establish concealment or take cover, weaving in and out of sight.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Camouflage may learn this as an Appearance Charm.

Backer: Dmitri Kolytchev

Perception

Senses

BLIGHTED HERD EXAMINATION**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Stricken Calf Sense

Sharp senses foil the plots of poisoners and track plagues back to their source.

When the Lunar successfully diagnoses a malady with Stricken Calf Sense or detects a harmful substance with Spider-Amid-Roses Discernment, her player can ask the Storyteller one of the following questions about that malady or substance. Every three extra successes let her ask an additional question.

- How could I identify its source?
- Where could I find something to help treat it?
- Has someone tried to conceal anything involving it?
- Are there any supernatural forces involved with it?

If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer in mind for a question, the Lunar's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

TOPPLED DOMINO FORESIGHT**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Mute**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Ever-Wary Fox Technique

The Lunar's eye takes in fleeting details of movement and geometry that pass too quickly for most to notice, foreseeing the outcomes of complex interactions.

Once an object or group of objects has been set in motion, the Lunar can perfectly predict the trajectory and outcome of that motion in the absence of outside intervention. This includes perfectly predicting the outcomes of coin tosses, dice rolls, roulette wheels, and the like. If a character cheats at such a game, the discrepancy in results alerts the Lunar to this tampering, although it does not let her discern how the cheating was accomplished or single out the individual responsible if there are multiple potential candidates.



The Lunar can also benefit from this Charm when she rolls opposing an environmental trap or hazard where her ability to predict the outcome of moving objects lets her find a place of safety, such as weathering a rock-slide. She can oppose such hazards with (Perception + Awareness), adding (Essence) non-Charm dice.

This Charm's potential applications aren't limited to those above. The Storyteller is encouraged to reward creative uses by providing mechanical advantages or revealing useful information.

Backer: Benjamin Bowley-Bryant

BEHIND THE BEAST'S EYES

Cost: —(+1wp); **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Sense-Borrowing Method

Reaching into the depths of an animal's mind, the Lunar subsumes it into her own will.

The Lunar can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Sense-Borrowing Method on an animal to

forge a more controlling mental bond. While sleeping or meditating, she can assume control of the animal. Use the rules for shapeshifting to determine her dice pools and static values while doing so (**Lunars**, p. 131). She can't use Charms or other magic through it, but isn't affected by any harm it suffers.

Even while the Lunar isn't directly controlling the animal, it won't harm her and is generally docile and compliant, unless it has strong reason not to be or would qualify as a three-dot Familiar. Even then, it won't attack or otherwise harm her or her allies.

With Sense-Borrowing Method's second purchase, the Lunar can use this Charm on trivial mortals. She need only pay one Willpower to use both effects. Sense-Borrowing Method's third purchase likewise lets it be used on trivial spirits or fae. (Spirits are rarely trivial, but the Wyld abounds with weak, minor fae).

This Charm is incompatible with Hundred-Eyed Watcher.

Backer: Mike McAvoy

PERCEPTION CHARM CONCEPTS

Hunting the Secret Self (Essence 2; Whispering Heart Revelation): Complete a sacred hunt by witnessing your quarry do something he'd never do if he knew someone else was watching.

Swift Hunter's Eye (Essence 2; Prowling Stalker Concentration): The Lunar can use Prowling Stalker Concentration instantly, without needing to survey the area. When she defends against an ambush with Observed Prey Instinct, she can spend banked successes to raise her Defense up to its base rating. With Essence 3, winning Join Battle lets her use it reflexively to bank her Join Battle successes.

Eye-and-Fingertip Wisdom (Essence 3; Fivefold Transcendent Insight): The Lunar can use Charms that only enhance a specific sense with any of her senses through creative stunting.

Enemy Within Infestation (Essence 4; Behind the Beast's Eyes, Flowing Moonsilver Infiltration, Sense-Borrowing Method x2): The Lunar merges with an enemy's body, becoming a parasitic presence within him. This is a special grapple that lets her control his body while she maintains it and renders him vulnerable to Memory-Drinking Meditation. Trivial characters can be controlled indefinitely.

ALL-SEEING GUARDIAN VIGIL

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Heightened Sense Method, Soul's Eclipse Unity

The Lunar watches over her trusted companions from afar, not with her senses, but with her soul.

The Lunar gains the benefits of Soul's Eclipse Unity for someone she has a positive Defining Tie toward. She only needs a Major Tie if her Solar mate has a positive Defining Tie toward that character, or if he belongs to a culture the Lunar has a positive Defining Tie toward or that's ruled by her Solar mate.

With Essence 4, this Charm's cost is reduced to three motes.

GUARDIAN BEAST OF FIVE DIRECTIONS

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: All-Seeing Guardian Vigil, Moonlit Sentinel Vigilance, Watchful Spider Stance (x2)

The Lunar is an ever-watchful guardian, appearing just in time to defend those closest to her heart.

This Charm represents the Lunar's legendary prowess as a guardian and her foresight in anticipating danger. Whenever her Lunar's Solar mate or someone she has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward comes under meaningful threat of harm, the Lunar's player may declare that she's present in the scene, revealing that she's secretly been following that character to protect him. The details of her appearance are up to the Storyteller, but should guarantee she's in a position to protect her ward. She can't use this Charm to gain a tactical advantage over a ward, only to aid him.

Upon arriving, the Lunar rolls (Perception + Awareness), gaining both Initiative equal to her successes and a pool of motes equal to twice her successes that can only be spent on Charms that let her protect the other character, such as Ferocious Guardian Beast Stance or Pack-Preserving Instinct.

If the Storyteller finds it implausible for the Lunar to appear in a scene — for example, if her ward's been locked in a cell for solitary confinement — he may set a difficulty, maximum 10, that the Lunar must beat with her roll for this Charm to succeed. Sneaking past a Realm military camp's guards to protect someone being held prisoner within might be difficulty 2-4, depending on the quality of the troops posted, while appearing to someone being held in Heaven's Jade Pleasure Dome or someone imprisoned within a sorcerously sealed artifact sarcophagus at the bottom of the sea might be difficulty 10 ("it turns out I was a flea in your hair all along!")

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by upholding a positive Major or Defining Tie or a Tie to her Solar mate by protecting that character from danger that is both narratively relevant and perilous enough to challenge even the Exalted.

Backer: Kate Crittenden

Scrutiny

ECHO PRECEDES VOICE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Exquisite Heart's Taste

The Lunar knows others better than they know themselves, anticipating their words before they think to speak.

The Lunar reflexively makes a special (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Socialize]) read intentions roll against someone within short range. If successful, she anticipates that he's about to say something. His player tells the Lunar's player what he is about to say; the Lunar may mockingly predict his next words aloud, preempt him with a witticism of her own, or offer some similar derision. This catches that character off-guard, imposing a penalty of (1 + extra successes, maximum [Lunar's Perception]) on his next action. In combat, he also loses (Lunar's Essence) Initiative, which the Lunar gains. If it's vital that he remain silent, he may pay one Willpower to do so, but still suffers this Charm's other detrimental effects.

When a character within short range makes an influence roll, the Lunar may use this Charm reflexively to anticipate it. If successful, this Charm's penalty is imposed on the influence roll.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by succeeding on an opposed roll against a nontrivial character whose intentions the Lunar has read previously in the scene, or a roll against the Resolve or Defense of such a character.

Backer: Kyle Rimmer

Stamina

Defense

GUARDIAN SILVERBACK TACTICS

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Archetype (Dexterity), Perilous, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Den Warden Method

The Lunar guards her pack, covering for openings in their defenses and holding off foes.

The Lunar can use this Charm after a **withering** damage roll against an ally within close range, redirecting up to (higher of Essence or 3) points of damage from him to her.

If the Lunar's protecting him with a defend other action, the attacker doesn't gain Initiative from the **withering** damage transferred to her. If she uses magic that extends the action's range, it applies to this Charm as well.

STAMINA CHARM CONCEPTS

Assumption of Unmarred Form (Essence 1; Bear Sleep Technique): Reduce the time it takes to recover from any crippling effect or other physical ailment, including Shaping effects and curses that affect the body.

Guardian Beast's Stand (Essence 2; Unyielding Silver Sentinel): The Lunar ignores onslaught penalties, and **withering** attacks don't award the usual one Initiative for hitting her. This ends if she takes a move action or is forcibly moved.

World-Killing Serpent Exhalation (Essence 2; Behemoth's Terrifying Inhalation, any Charm enhanced by this): Use Adder Fang Method to create clouds of poisonous vapor, Rabid Beast Bite to create pestilential miasmas, or Acid-Spitting Attack to create corrosive vapors.

Recumbent Elephant Hold (Essence 3; Moon-silver Thew Exertion): Pinning an enemy beneath the Lunar's magically amplified mass lets her take hold actions by expending only one round of control and makes it harder for him to resist for the grapple's duration.

Enfleshed Arsenal Eruption (Essence 3; Weapon-Trapping Body Dominion): When attacked from close range, the Lunar expels a weapon absorbed with Weapon-Trapping Body Dominion to make a powerful counterattack. Alternatively, she can reflexively make such attacks against grappled foes.

Breath-Drinking Executioner (Essence 5; Storm-Swallowing Technique): Placing her mouth near someone else's, the Lunar draws the breath from his lungs, making opposed (Stamina + Resistance) rolls to render him unconscious. This requires a difficult gambit in combat, but is easier against grappled foes.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has a special ability or Merit that enhances the defend other action may learn this as a Dexterity Charm, with Bending Before the Storm as its prerequisite.

ARGENT MONSTER EVOLUTION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 4 or Strength 4, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Claws of the Silver Moon or Invincible Moonsilver Carapace

The Lunar manifests claws and armor from silvery Essence with but a thought, instantly adapting to her circumstances.

The Lunar may use this Charm's prerequisites reflexively. If she uses them together with Deadly Beastman Transformation, she gains one Initiative — two if she uses both Charms.

ROARING DEFIANCE APPROACH

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous, Protean, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Frenzied Bear Fortification

The Lunar meets her foe head on, letting him waste his strength as he strikes her.

The Lunar forgoes the chance to defend against a **withering** attack, whether by applying her Evasion or Parry against the attack roll, clashing it, or other means. Instead, she adds her effective Defense against the attack — potentially modified by Charms — to her soak. Her attacker doesn't gain Initiative for hitting her.

If the attack doesn't crash the Lunar, her attacker resets to base Initiative before he's awarded any Initiative from the attack.

Protean: In animal shapes with the Impenetrable Armor Merit, enemies whose Initiative was lower than the Lunar's when they attacked her reset to base Initiative *after* receiving Initiative from the attack if they fail to crash her.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by taking no damage from a **withering** attack with 20+ raw damage.

Backer: Benjamin Mire

Endurance

GIFTS OF PROTEAN VIGOR

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Lunar's mastery of shapeshifting affords precise control of her metabolism and bodily processes.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Lunar gains two of the following gifts. She may purchase additional gifts for one bonus point or three experience each.

Internal Form Mastery: The Lunar gains up to three dots of the Boundless Endurance, Iron Stomach, Natural Immunity, Selective Conception, Strong Lungs, or Toxin Resistance Merits. This boon can be purchased multiple times.

Lesson of the Camel: The Lunar doubles her Stamina to determine how long she can go without food, water, and air, and reduces deprivation penalties by one (**Exalted**, p. 232).

No Time to Bleed: The Lunar doesn't increase the time it takes to heal from damage for engaging in strenuous physical activity (**Exalted**, pp. 173-174), and treats such activities as bedrest for purposes of magic like Wound-Mending Care Technique.

Plague-Ridden Mimicry: The Lunar can voluntarily induce symptoms of disease and immune responses in herself, like fever, nausea, rashes, or sweating. Sustaining a high fever or similar symptoms adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on rolls against disease indefinitely, but inflicts a -1 penalty on mental rolls. Attempts at diagnosing the Lunar return a result consistent with her apparent condition unless the opposing character uses magic or has reason to suspect the Lunar of trickery. In the latter case, a diagnosis roll at difficulty (Lunar's Essence + Stamina) will reveal that something's amiss.

Tiger-and-Seahorse Dynasty: The Lunar's children inherit her Exalted Healing (**Exalted**, p. 165), in addition to any gifts they may receive as one of the Moon-Touched. She receives +2 Resolve against influence that would cause her to neglect or harm her children.

Winter Without Hibernation: The Lunar only needs (6 - Stamina) hours of sleep each night. Any fatigue penalties she suffers are reduced by one.

Backer: Jeremy Islip

INFINITE ADAPTIVE PERFECTION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: All-Consuming Crucible, Disease-Purging Essence, Perdurant Beast Perfection, Shifting Breath Inversion

The Lunar has adapted to all adversity, becoming the ultimate survivor.

The Lunar gains the following benefits:

- She no longer needs to adapt to a specific environment when using Rugged Beast Endurance, gaining its benefits wherever she goes.

- She doubles 9s on rolls against poison, disease, environmental hazards, fatigue, and similar physical ailments.
- Once per scene, she can add a free full Excellency on a roll enhanced by this Charm.
- Once per day, success on a roll enhanced by this Charm awards one Willpower.

Berserker

RAVENING BEAST EXCITEMENT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Archetype (Wits)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Great forces sent against the Lunar merely multiply her opportunities for carnage.

The Lunar adds a non-Charm die to her Join Battle roll for each nontrivial enemy she faces, maximum (higher of Essence or 3). If she wins Join Battle, on her first turn, she ignores penalties from flurrying and can flurry an attack with a shapeshifting action.

Archetype: Lunars with predatory spirit shapes may learn this as a Wits Charm.

LEAST PROVOCATION OUTBURST

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Relentless Lunar Fury

The Lunar's rage rises to meet her foes' hostility.

Relentless Lunar Fury can be used upon taking **withering** damage. If the Lunar knows Mother Grizzly Attitude or similar Charms, their conditions can also be met by **withering** damage.

Using Relentless Lunar Fury grants the Lunar Initiative equal to her wound penalty. If her wound penalty increases while using it, she gains Initiative for each point of increase.

BLOOD RAGE RECKONING

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Archetype (Wits), Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ravening Beast Excitement

Bellying with rage, the Lunar comes back from the brink.

To use this Charm, the Lunar must have reset to base Initiative on or since her last turn, and must still be at or below her base Initiative. She rolls Join Battle.

The restrictions on using this Charm are waived while using Relentless Lunar Fury.

Reset: Once per scene.

Archetype: Lunars with predatory spirit shapes may learn this as a Wits Charm.

Strength

Offense

LEOPARD DRAGS CARCASS

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Grizzly Bear Embrace

Pulling with insuperable strength, the Lunar plunges foes into roaring flames or drags them down to the uttermost depths.

The Lunar need only sacrifice one round of grapple control to drag a grappled enemy. If she drags him into an environmental hazard or similarly imperils him, like dragging him off a cliff, he suffers a penalty equal to her remaining rounds of control on any roll to resist. On a failed roll, the Lunar can forgo any number of rounds of clinch control, adding two dice to the damage roll for each. Alternatively, if she drags him underwater, he halves his Stamina for determining how long he can hold his breath (**Exalted**, p. 232) while she controls the grapple.

If the Lunar uses Mangling Grasp Might to throw an enemy into an environmental hazard or similar peril, she may use this Charm to enhance it, inflicting a penalty equal to the rounds of control forfeited. Likewise, she may also use it if releasing an enemy endangers him — e.g., if she does so while flying at long range above the ground.

With a Strength 5, Essence 4 repurchase, the Lunar can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to cause her foe to automatically fail his roll against any peril she drags him into.

Backer: Robert “Jefepato” Dall

GUARD-SHATTERING POUNCE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ferocious Biting Tooth

The force of the Lunar's blows shatters her foe's stance, leaving him reeling and defenseless.

If the Lunar's attack deals damage, her target's onslaught penalty doesn't refresh on his next turn. Until it refreshes, the onslaught penalty is doubled for his Parry and he can't take full defense actions. Successive uses of this Charm can prolong these effects by potentially preventing that foe's onslaught from ever refreshing.

Backer: Jason Italiano



ILLIMITABLE BEAST-SELF**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Perfected Body Interaction, Terrifying Ogre Alteration

The Lunar's Essence seethes with inchoate possibilities of form, monstrous shapes yearning to become.

**STRENGTH CHARM CONCEPTS**

Grasping at Mist (Essence 2; Ground-Denying Defense): The Lunar can use Ground-Denying Defense and Foot-Trapping Counter to oppose the movement of dematerialized enemies and magical transportation, like the spell Travel Without Words.

Stone-Shattering Rampage (Essence 2; Fero-cious Biting Tooth, Surging Thew Technique): An attack also counts as a feat of demolition to destroy and bypass an enemy's cover.

Dream-Devouring Monstrosity (Essence 3; Nightmare Scar Memento, Stalking Nightmare Hunter): The Lunar haunts the dreams of someone affected by Nightmare Scar Memento.

Ogre's Hostage Brutality (Essence 3; Foe-Ham-mer Technique, Jaws of the River Dragon): While grappling, the Lunar clashes an attack using her clinched foe. If she succeeds, the opposing attack is redirected to the grappled foe and becomes un-blockable and undodgeable.

When the Lunar uses Hybrid Body Transformation, she can choose an additional two dots of mutations from Perfected Hybrid Interaction's repertoire, which need not reflect her spirit shape. When she uses Deadly Beastman Transformation, she can choose another two dots. She can choose different mutations each time.

Backer: Matthew Parker**PRIMAL BEAST ASCENSION****Cost:** —; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 3**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Horrifying Beast-God Might

Drawing forth ancient power, the Lunar takes on the monstrous shape of a primal beast.

The Lunar can use Deadly Beastman Transformation while in an animal shape to transform into a primal form of that animal. This doesn't use Hybrid Body Transformation or confer mutations. Her animal form's natural prey count as having a Major Tie of fear toward her. Familiars, other magically enhanced animals, and non-animal prey only count as having a Minor Tie.

Deadly Beastman Transformation doesn't end if the Lunar shifts into another animal shape, or if she returns to her human shape and immediately uses Hybrid Body Transformation.

Special Activation Rules: Whenever the Lunar uses Towering Beast Form or Mountainous Spirit Expression in an animal shape, she may use Deadly Beastman Transformation reflexively with this Charm.

Backer: Gregory Scott

GOD-MONSTER TRANSCENDENCE

Cost: 5i; **Mins:** Strength 5, Stamina 5, Essence 5

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Archetype (Stamina), Dual

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Undaunted Behemoth Avatar

Descending on the battlefield in titanic form, the Lunar strikes like a force of nature.

While in the shape of a Legendary Size animal, the Lunar gains the following benefits:

- Her defenses against smaller enemies are amplified: **withering** attacks need 15+ dice of post soak damage to crash her. The limit on how much **decisive** damage she can take from their attacks now includes levels of damage added by magic. Likewise, her immunity to onslaught penalties now includes those inflicted by magic. An enemy can overcome this by spotting a weak point in her titanic form, spending 4 Initiative to make a difficulty 5 (Perception + Awareness) roll that can't be flurried. Success denies the Lunar these benefits against him.
- She can move away from smaller enemies without needing to disengage.
- She waives the Willpower costs of Lunar Charms that enhance her feats of strength.
- Against battle groups, her **withering** attacks double their attack roll extra successes when determining their raw damage. **Decisive** attacks against them double the damage bonus they receive (**Exalted**, p. 208). 1s subtract successes on rout checks triggered by her attacks.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has Legendary Size may learn this as a Stamina Charm. (While it has a dual-Attribute prerequisite, it counts as a Strength Charm normally).

Backer: Jason Duncan

Mobility

FALLING MOON CATAclysm

Cost: —; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 5

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Decisive-only, Protean

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Behemoth's Footprint Tread, Mighty Behemoth Leap

The Lunar leaps across the sky with a mighty bound that craters the earth beneath her, descending on her foes with world-shattering force.

When the Lunar uses Mighty Behemoth Leap, she may use Behemoth's Footprint Tread reflexively, waiving its Willpower cost. Rather than striking her foes with a weapon, she unleashes an earth-shaking shockwave as she leaps, rendering the attack unblockable. This doesn't reset her Initiative.

The force of the shockwave propels the Lunar an additional range band horizontally or two range bands vertically as she leaps. Upon landing, she can repeat Behemoth's Footprint Tread's attack, waiving its cost. This takes the place of Mighty Behemoth Leap's normal attack and opposed roll to knock foes prone.

Once the Lunar lands and makes any attacks, her Initiative resets, as long as she hit at least one enemy.

Protean: In animal shapes with Trample, the Lunar receives Mighty Behemoth Leap's Protean benefit if she uses Behemoth's Footprint Tread.

Backer: Everett Oakley

Feats of Strength

TERRIFYING RAMPAGE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Archetype (Appearance), Protean

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Surging Thew Technique

Wrenching mead-halls' doors from their hinges or charging through stone walls, the Lunar spreads fear and destruction.

A successful feat of strength counts as a threaten roll against enemies who witnessed it. In combat, affected enemies lose one Initiative. On a Strength 5+ feat, they lose Initiative even if they resist with Willpower.

Protean: In animal shapes capable of Strength 5+ feats, the Lunar gains one Initiative on a successful feat.

Archetype: A Lunar whose spirit shape has a special ability or Merits that involves threaten rolls or other fear-based influence may learn this as an Appearance Charm, with Glance-Oration Technique as its prerequisite.

Wits

Heart's Blood

SHEPHERD AT THE CROSSROADS

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Shaping (Varies)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Moonlit Path Guide

A creature of boundaries and crossroads, the Lunar guides others on transformative journeys.

The Lunar guides a character through a transfiguration or metamorphosis, assigning him a quest or task that will set him on the road to change. That character's player must consent to the transformation, although the character needn't do so. The more extensive the transformation, the more onerous the task that must be fulfilled:

- Transformations that could at least notionally be accomplished by mundane means and that don't hold great personal significance to the questant require an inconvenient task (**Exalted**, p. 216). Examples include changing hair color, repositioning a crooked tooth, or causing a character's skin to tan.
- Mundane transformations that have great personal significance to the questant and supernatural transformations on the level of what a Terrestrial Circle working could accomplish (**Exalted**, p. 485) require a serious task. Examples include physically transitioning genders, making someone grow significantly taller, or turning a mortal into a bear.
- Supernatural transformations on the level of what a Celestial Circle working could accomplish require a life-defining task. This can also include transformations that completely change the nature of a supernatural being, which normally requires a Solar Circle working. Examples include undoing a decade or two of aging, turning a demon into a god, or turning a raksha into a human.

EXPERIENCE DEBT

Some Charms let player characters go into experience debt to increase trait ratings or gain new traits. Once a character incurs experience debt, any experience she subsequently receives go toward paying it off until it's paid in full. An Exalt's player may choose to pay a debt solely with Lunar Experience or the like, if applicable. A character in experience debt can't incur further experience debts; she must pay off the debt before she can benefit from other such effects. Storyteller characters never go into experience debt; instead, they can only benefit from such an effect once per story.

Upon the quest's completion, the questant undergoes the chosen transformation as a shaping effect. Sometimes this is sudden and spectacular; sometimes, it is subtle, the culmination of a gradual metamorphosis the questant didn't even realize had begun. If the transformation conveys mutations, improves the questant's Attributes, or the like, the questant incurs experience debt.

The Lunar, in turn, gains the questant's heart's blood upon the completion of his quest. If the quest supported one of her Major or Defining Intimacies, she also loses a point of Limit.

Backer: Chase Burton

Resolve

ARGENT ASPECT INCARNATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Intransigent Silver Soul, Sacred Guardian Renewal

The Lunar embodies the inviolate core of her being, her inchoate Essence shaped by her most deeply held beliefs.

Upon learning this Charm, the Lunar's player chooses one of her Defining Principles. She gains the following benefits:

- Her iconic anima and Tell subtly shift to reflect her Principle. Those who see either intuit that the Lunar has the Principle. If they share it with her, their Principle also counts as a positive Tie to her for the scene unless they pay one Willpower.

- Once per scene, she waives the Willpower cost to add an automatic success on an action that aligns with the Principle.
- When she regains Willpower from upholding the Principle, she loses one Limit.
- The Principle counts as a Tie to her Solar mate for purposes of Charms. It counts as positive or negative if that's advantageous to her. If she has Moon-Follows-Sun Assurance, its defense isn't absolute; characters can make a special instill roll, rolling twice and taking the lower result, to suppress that Charm's protection until the Lunar next gains Willpower from upholding the Principle.

If the Lunar willingly weakens the Principle, she rolls ten dice and gains Limit equal to her successes. She loses this Charm's benefits until the Principle returns to Defining. If she fully erodes the Principle, she can choose a new Defining Principle for this Charm at the end of the story.

Backer: Thomas Moss

DARKNESS-WAKING HOWL

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 5, Manipulation 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Herd Subversion Approach, Shadow-Mind Meditation

Filling her victim's heart with bleak pessimism and rage, the Lunar awakens the primal darkness dwelling in his unconscious mind.

Over the course of a few minutes' conversation with someone, the Lunar makes a special (Manipulation + Presence) instill roll. If successful, she beckons forth his shadow-mind, designed by that character's player using the rules for Shadow-Mind Meditation (**Lunars**, p. 281). The Lunar also imposes a negative Major Tie or a pessimistic or skeptical Major Principle on the shadow-mind. The shadow mind immediately takes control.

If the shadow-mind tries to act against one of the victim's Intimacies, he may enter a Decision Point, weighing that Intimacy against his shadow-mind's strongest negative Tie or pessimistic or skeptical Principle. If his Intimacy prevails, he may pay one Willpower to regain control.

The shadow-mind still lingers once resisted. When circumstances support one of its negative Ties or cynical or

pessimistic Principles, the victim must enter a Decision Point and cite an equal or greater Intimacy to spend Willpower, or else the shadow-mind regains control.

Once a character has spent a total of (Lunar's Essence) Willpower in these Decision Points, the shadow-mind is permanently subsumed back into his subconscious, unless his player wants to keep it around.

Lunars with Shadow-Mind Meditation and others with alter egos of similar nature are immune to this Charm.

Backer: Bryant Devillier

Animal Ken

GHOST-STALKING HUNTER

Cost: —(+1m per familiar); **Mins:** Wits 3, Perception 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Blessed Moon-Beast Empowerment, Perceiving the Hidden World

A Lunar's companion beasts pursue their prey even to the hidden realms of spirits.

When the Lunar uses Perceiving the Hidden World, she can extend its benefits to any familiars present in the scene for a one-mote surcharge each..

If the Lunar knows Spirit-Rending Fury, she can extend its benefits to any familiars enhanced with this Charm when she uses it

If the Lunar knows Demon-Drinking Fang, spirits slain by familiars enhanced with this Charm are permanently destroyed.

TWO SELVES AS ONE

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 3, Intelligence 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Blessed Moon-Beast Empowerment, Memory-Drinking Meditation

Blurring the boundaries between herself and her familiar, the Lunar opens her mind to her companion.

As the Lunar and an intelligent familiar meditate together, they open a mental bond that allows them to share memories. They can either share glimpses of memories or permanently impart memories to each other. A glimpse allows both Lunar and familiar to relive

WITS CHARM CONCEPTS

Beast-Waking Boon (Essence 2; Erudite Beast-Mind Expansion): Use Erudite Beast-Mind Expansion to temporarily enlighten an animal or creature of animal-like intelligence for a scene, facilitating complex communication.

Ever-Shifting Wilderness (Essence 3; Forbidding Wilderness Perils): Reshape a territory's terrain, landscape, and biome through strange means, potentially changing its properties.

Lunar Eclipse Technique (Essence 3; Silver-and-Gold Union): Temporarily borrow one of your Solar mate's Intimacies to defend against social influence, gain Willpower from upholding it, use it with Charms, etc.

Moon-Shrouds-Sun Unity (Essence 3; Lunar Eclipse Technique): Let your Solar mate borrow your Intimacies while you're present. With Soul's Eclipse Unity, the Lunar can sense when it could help her mate and use it from afar.

Sagacious Beast Dominion (Essence 3; Beast-Waking Boon, King-of-Beasts Sovereignty): The Lunar permanently enlightens all animals native to a territory and can easily win their loyalty.

Unexpected Pitfall Ruse (Essence 4; Cuckoo's Nest Cunning, The Spider's Trapdoor x2): Use The Spider's Trapdoor to clash any attack, not just one against the Lunar.

a memory. They can't make rolls to notice anything that was missed the first time around — if the familiar failed an Awareness roll, the Lunar wouldn't get a second chance. The Storyteller may require a roll to recall memories with clear detail — typically the familiar's Senses pool or the Lunar's (Intelligence + Lore).

Alternatively, the Lunar and her familiar can permanently grant memories to each other, along with all of their Intimacies related to that memory. The clarity and accuracy of these memories are limited as above. It's even possible for them to share the entirety of their memories with each other. For such large-scale transfers, the Storyteller should reveal specific memories when they become relevant.

If the Lunar knows Erudite Beast-Mind Expansion (**Lunars**, p. 284), she may pay its four-experience surcharge as she uses this Charm to instantly confer its benefits on a qualifying familiar.

The Lunar can use this Charm from afar on a familiar whose senses she's inhabiting with Behind the Beast's Eyes (p. 53).

Backer: Michael Maitan

DIVINE SOUL-BEAST EXALTATION

Cost: 5m per familiar dot, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Beast-Power Awakening, Instinctive Unity Approach

The Lunar manifests her spirit shape as a divine beast, a moon-graced familiar born of her Exaltation.

The Lunar manifests her spirit shape as a familiar to fight alongside her, paying five motes per dot of its Familiar rating and one Willpower. The manifested spirit shape uses its normal animal traits, but Tiny Creature and Minuscule Size don't reduce its damage. It has a defining Tie of loyalty to the Lunar, and any of her Intimacies that are compatible with its level of intelligence.

The spirit shape has all latent and magical abilities listed with its traits, and any latent or magical abilities the Lunar has trained other familiars in, as long as they're physically compatible with the spirit shape's body.

The spirit shape gains the benefits of Blessed Moon-Beast Empowerment, and any of Erudite Beast-Mind Expansion and Witch-Beast Ascendancy that the Lunar knows. Witch-Beast Ascendancy also conveys all Terrestrial Spells known by the Lunar. If the Lunar has Eternal Companion Endurance, the familiar gains the benefits of (Lunar's Essence) purchases.

The divine beast's arrival rallies the Lunar's other familiars. Each of them rolls Join Battle and gains one Willpower.

Special activation rules: The Lunar can use Supreme God-Beast Unleashed reflexively with this Charm to enhance the familiar. Its anima and Willpower costs are waived.

Backer: Brian Rivers

Cache

ARGENT NAGAMANI BOON

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Radiant Basilisc Jewel

The Lunar's soul-jewel brings her into harmony with the world's Essence.

The Lunar gains the following benefits:

- If she knows Radiant Basilic Jewel's hearthstone counts as being socketed in all artifacts she's attuned to for all purposes: enhancing weapons, powering warstriders, enabling dependent hearthstones, etc. This doesn't use up a socket.
- She doubles 9s on non-extended Craft, Lore, or Occult rolls with any Attribute that involve geomancy — demesnes, manses, hearthstones, dragon lines, etc. Double 8s for Lunar geomancy.
- Attuning a demesne lasts indefinitely as long as she bears its hearthstone. If someone attempts to sever her attunement (**Exalted**, p. 161), their roll is opposed by her (Wits + Occult). Success preserves her attunement and alerts her, but doesn't reveal the opposing character's identity.
- If she knows Devil's Hidden Footprints (**Lunars**, p. 249), she can spend extra successes on rolls to sense Essence use within an attuned demesne or manse to apply that Charm's benefits. This also applies on opposed rolls to preserve her attunement.

STOLEN POWER BEZOAR

Cost: 1m or 3m; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Desert Basilisc Diadem, Rousing Hidden Power

Feeding on the Essence of her foe's defeat, the Lunar makes his power a part of her own.

Upon defeating or taking the shape of an enemy powerful enough to pose formidable opposition, the Lunar can crystallize his defeat into a hearthstone within herself, paying one mote for a lesser stone or three motes for a greater one. Defeat need not be in combat; public debate, business competition, or a race to retrieve a First Age relic all qualify.

The chosen hearthstone should reflect the enemy's nature, his relationship with the Lunar, the nature of his defeat, or some combination of these. It may have Evocations that reflect or emulate his distinctive powers or replicate Eclipse Charms he knew. The Lunar's

player doesn't need to decide on a stone immediately, especially for custom designs.

The stone gains the Steady keyword and loses Dependent. It manifests within the Lunar per Desert Basilisc Diadem, but doesn't count against that Charm's limit. It can't be removed from her body.

The Lunar can incur experience debt to make a hearthstone permanent: six experience for a lesser stone or twelve experience for a greater stone. The first time she does so, she waives the cost for a lesser stone or reduces a greater stone's cost to four experience.

This Charm can be stacked to manifest up to (higher of Essence or 3) multiple hearthstones. Stones made permanent with experience don't count against this limit.

Backer: Dayton Johnson

Navigation

RAT'S SECRET VOYAGE

Cost: —(4m, 1wp); **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Lodestone Reckoning Manner, Rats-in-the-Basement Style

The Lunar walks many hidden roads, roaming her dominion in secret or retreating to her lair unseen.

The Lunar can use this Charm's prerequisites together for four motes, one Willpower to reveal a path to a faraway territory or lair. She makes a single (Wits + [Sail or Survival]), doubling 9s and adding (higher of Essence or 3) dice. The roll's difficulty is 7 for a route of up to (Essence x10) miles or 10 for a route of up to (Essence x 100) miles. She can't go any further than that.

Success introduces a secret route, which is concealed as per Secure Den Technique (**Lunars**, p. 293), and lets the Lunar bank her successes as per Lodestone Reckoning Manner. Such routes include many supernaturally advantageous shortcuts, halving the time necessary to complete the journey. This is compatible with the speed increase from Charms like Monarch-Wing Migration.

It's difficult to keep such routes secret for long. The path remains concealed as above for however long it would take the Lunar to complete the journey on foot, without using shapeshifting or any other magic. Once this time elapses, the concealment fades. The route also loses its concealment if the Lunar ends her mote commitment. When concealment fades, the travel time reduction is also lost.

If the Lunar knows Ranging Wolf Deception (**Lunars**, p. 288), she waives its Willpower cost while traveling along a concealed path.

Backer: Andrew Stephens

Territory

LAIR-SCULPTING BEAST

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Boundary-Marking Meditation

The Lunar's territory subtly shifts and changes, serving her will and expressing the nature of the monster who lairs there.

The Lunar makes a special (Wits + Survival) introduce fact roll, adding (Essence) non-Charm successes, to reveal a change in her territory's geography, climate, or other natural features. This typically involves the Lunar revealing or discovering a change that's already taken place — it can't create sudden, drastic changes. She could reveal a pass through a perilous mountain range, a natural hot spring in a frozen tundra, or the fact that a dormant volcano has reawakened. This can't create supernatural phenomena — a river's course might change to speed the Lunar's journey, but it won't turn to liquid flame.

Once per story, the Lunar can use this Charm to change one of her territory's qualities with a (Wits + Survival) roll. The difficulty depends on how similar the new property is to the one that it replaces: difficulty 3 for similar qualities, difficulty 5 for unrelated qualities, or difficulty 7 for qualities that conflict with each other. If successful, the territory is transformed to reflect the change in qualities. This change is a slow one, and isn't completed until the story ends.

Backer: Laughter on Midnight Roads

THE WORLD WITHIN THE MIRROR

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 4, Appearance 4, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Boundary-Marking Meditation, Mirror Slip Trick

The Lunar claims a twofold dominion, stalking behind the mirrors of her sacred ground.

Each of the Lunar's territories has an otherworldly reflection, a twinned mirror-world born of her protean Essence. She can access a territory's mirror-realm by using Mirror Slip Trick on a reflective surface within it, and can bring her Circle and up to (Essence x2) other characters with her when she does so. In combat, leaving that reflective surface to enter the mirror-realm proper requires withdrawing from combat (**Exalted**, p. 199).

The reflected territory is not completely identical to the original, for Lunar Essence is a fickle mirror. The sky is always midnight, and the moon looms larger and brighter than it should. The mirror-world's wilderness is more verdant than the original; its cities are ruined or overgrown. Light is starker, shadows deeper, and heights and depths seem far greater. It counts as a greater Lunar demesne, though it has no hearthstone. This reflection doesn't extend past the territory's boundaries; beyond them, there is only darkness.

The mirror-world is a lonely place. The reflections of people and beasts are trapped within the glass of their mirrors, unable to break away and find the larger mirror-world. Visitors might sometimes hear the sound of rustling underfoot or the cries of strange beasts, but never find any trace of their existence. Others can follow the Lunar into the mirror-realm using magic like Silver Curtain Parted or Obsidian Shards of Infinity style, and if there should be strange things that dwell behind mirrors, they may intrude.

The Lunar can travel through the mirror-realm to observe her territory through mirrors and other reflective surfaces. Nontrivial characters can make Awareness rolls to notice her in the mirror, but suffer a -4 penalty on rolls against her Stealth unless they have reason to suspect they're being watched through mirrors.

The Lunar can use Mirror Slip Trick on any reflective surface in the mirror-world to reenter her territory, waiving its Willpower cost. Characters without such magic aren't trapped — they can return through a reflective surface with a difficulty 4 roll using a (Mental Attribute + Occult) roll to understand the mirror-world's nature or (Strength + Athletics) to smash their way back.

Backer: Déan Pijpker

Between the shoreline and the expanse of the sea, a sandbar appeared at precisely noon on the fifth day of the seventh month. Here, in sandy, ankle-deep water amid the shrine's coral-and-basalt pillars, Venomous Spur knelt. She bent her head forward in supplication to the Assembly of the Tide, her black hair spilling around her face and her powerful, tattooed shoulders exposed to the unforgiving sun. The No Moon priestess spread her hands in a disarming gesture of obeisance, though she knew the four spirits before her could certainly see through the magic of the Tell and spot the eponymous venomous spurs poking from her wrists. The weight of her appeal hung like a stone around her heart. Countless lives back home would be consumed by the flames of conquest if she did not secure the aid of the Tidal Court. Even now in her absence, the would-be warlords' bloodthirsty eyes hungrily observed her homestead.

Before each pillar sat a member of the Assembly. The first, Elder Driftwood: A nautilus-faced bare-chested man; at once elderly and young. In his hale-but-gnarled hand he grasped a twitching caduceus of kelp and worms. To his left sat the Maiden of the Floating Mystery, a figure in countless seafoam veils, each cascading towards the ground but never reaching it; her face and hands obscured. Beside them, Forgotten Reflection — a being neither human nor sea-beast — observed the Lunar with cool disdain. Venomous Spur avoided making eye contact with their mutable form, which seemed different every time she looked. Upon the final throne sat Kukrhi, the Willful Scavenger, a crab-spirit of fearsome proportions. The Assembly listened to her plea with tenuous patience.

"Esteemed spirits," Venomous Spur spoke, "I come to beg your aid. My domain, not far from here, is beset on its borders by a Sworn Kinship. The impetuous Princes of the Earth thirst for conquest and blood. Though my fellows may be fierce, the Dragon-Blooded have the advantage in numbers and superior equipment. A willful heart is little match for priceless jade."

Elder Driftwood gestured with its staff. "I recognize you, Spur, as servant of Luna and as a living goddess. I will honor your request."

With a great shivering motion, the Maiden raised a veiled hand. "We do not all agree to this, Driftwood. This is not a war we need to fight."

Forgotten Reflection tapped a slim, shifting finger to their chin. "I would like to hear more of what the walking goddess has to say. What do you offer, in return for our aid?"

Kukrhi said nothing, but pounded its enormous claw against the side of its throne in loud agreement.

"Surely a priestess such as yourself is aware of the price of such a request," Elder Driftwood said.

Spur knew it might come to this. She placed her upturned hands onto her thighs and lifted her face to the Assembly. "I offer you their jade. All of it, every daiklave and plate of armor. Each earring and pendant, even their coin. Either given as a material reward, or broken and sacrificed, so you might reap the benefit in Heaven."

Elder Driftwood nodded, satisfied, though the crab pounded its claw again, demanding more.

"Agreed," said Stillness. "That is not enough."

Venomous Spur bit the inside of her lip, reluctant to meet their demands, but equally fearful of rejection. Succumbing to the Assembly's demands meant giving in to their insatiable desire for jade and mortal flesh. Demands would follow, each more onerous than the last. She steeled herself, and said, "The price of blood then. Their lives claimed in battle, offered as glorious sacrifices, their corpses flung to the tide."

A greedy cry of agreement rose from the Assembly of the Tide. With wild hunger in his eyes, Elder Driftwood planted his caduceus before Venomous Spur. "We will assist you, goddess-upon-the-earth. Our children will harry their entourage, our waters will flood their approach, and every cool sip of water will carry the taste of the ocean."

Venomous Spur reached up to clasp the spirit's hand in hers. "Together, we will cast their lives to the tide of memory. May they be forgotten."





Chapter Three

Martial Arts and Sorcery

Martial Arts

Bear Style

Bear style emphasizes grappling, using techniques inspired by its namesake animal that emphasize brute force and unyielding resilience. Once enemies have been caught in the style's signature hug-like hold, stylists exert pressure on joints or the windpipe to end the fight.

Bear style is most prominent in the East, particularly the Northeast, and in parts of the North beyond. It holds especial importance in Iscomay, where it's studied by janissaries, khojas, and other martial artists — including Moon-Touched princes powerful enough to master the style's Charms.

Bear Style Weapons: This style's unarmed attacks combine punches, open-handed strikes, and headbutts. Unarmed attacks enhanced by Bear style Charms can be stunted to deal lethal damage.

Armor: Bear style is incompatible with armor.

CLAW-FIST BLOW

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Her strength magnified by training and Essence, the stylist grabs and strikes with overwhelming force.

The stylist adds (Strength) dice on a **decisive** attack roll. Up to (Strength) attack roll extra successes let her reroll failed dice on a damage roll or on the Initiative and control rolls for a grapple gambit.

Terrestrial: The stylist can only reroll (lower of Essence or Strength) dice.

INESCAPABLE FANG TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Claw-Fist Blow

Armor means nothing once a Bear stylist has you pinned.

A drag or restrain action steals one Initiative from a grappled enemy and inflicts a -1 onslaught penalty. Her enemy's onslaught penalty doesn't refresh at the start of his next turn.

URSINE HIDE ENDURANCE

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Essence and aggression temper the stylist's body, making her skin as resilient as a bear's hide.

The stylist gains +2 soak. While grappling, this increases to (1 + rounds of control) soak. The stylist doesn't lose rounds of control for being attacked or damaged if her soak reduces a **withering** attack to minimum damage, her Hardness negates a **decisive** attack, or an attack deals no damage.

Mastery: This Charm can be used after the attack roll.

BEAR FORM

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Form

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Inescapable Fang Technique, Ursine Hide Endurance

Rearing up into a stance that makes her seem larger than she actually is, the stylist emulates the movements of an enraged bear.

The stylist gains the following benefits:

- She adds a non-Charm success on grapple attack and control rolls.
- She reduces the Initiative cost of grapple gambits by 2.
- She ignores the Defense penalty from grappling.
- She adds (Strength) soak.

Special activation rules: When the stylist wins control of a clinch against a nontrivial enemy, she may reflexively enter Bear Form.

GRIZZLY MAIMING STRIKE

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bear Form

Rending flesh with deadly claw-blows, the stylist breaks her foes.

The stylist adds an automatic success on a damage roll. On a savaging attack against a grappled enemy, she also adds dice of **decisive** or post-soak **withering** damage equal to her current rounds of control.

If the attack crashes the stylist's enemy or deals 3+ levels of **decisive** damage, it inflicts a -1 crippling penalty on her enemy's physical rolls until he receives medical treatment. This stacks, up to a maximum of (stylist's Strength).

Once per scene, the stylist may invoke Enduring Frenzy Empowerment: When a savaging attack incapacitates a nontrivial enemy or raises his crippling penalty to -5, she rolls Join Battle.

Terrestrial: The stylist can't use Enduring Frenzy Empowerment.

FOE-CRUSHING EMBRACE

Cost: 3m, 1i; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mastery, Stackable, Terrestrial, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Grizzly Maiming Strike

Crushing her opponent to her chest, the stylist grabs him hard enough to crack ribs and crush windpipes.

A drag or **withering** savaging attack inflicts (Essence) dice of **decisive** damage. If this crashes or incapacitates a foe, it inflicts a -1 crippling penalty, as per Grizzly Maiming Strike. It stacks with that Charm's penalty, but counts toward its maximum.

Mastery: This attack always inflicts the crippling penalty.

Terrestrial: The penalty stacks to a maximum of (stylist's Essence).

BEAR GIVES CHASE

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bear Form

Moving with terrifying speed, the stylist grabs hold of an enemy before he can even try to move away from her.

When an enemy disengages from the stylist, she can oppose it with a reflexive grapple gambit. If she succeeds, she gains the Initiative her enemy lost from disengaging after after she pays the gambit's Initiative cost.

Mastery: The stylist can also use this Charm to make a reflexive grapple gambit after she succeeds on a rush.

Terrestrial: This counts as the stylist's attack for the round. If she's already attacked this round, it counts as her attack for the next round.

PREY-SUBDUING STRENGTH

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery, Terrestrial

Duration: Until the grapple ends

Prerequisite Charms: Bear Form

Pinned by overwhelming force, the Bear stylist's foe is helpless to fight back against her.

On a successful grapple, the stylist waives Ursine Hide Endurance's cost against a grappled foe. She gains Hardness equal to twice her current rounds of control against him, maximum (Essence + Stamina + Strength). The attack roll penalty for being clinched subtracts successes instead of dice if he attacks her.

Once per scene, the stylist may evince Invincible Predator Defiance: After a grappled enemy makes a damage roll against her, she can pay one Willpower and expend all rounds of clinch control to subtract that many successes from the damage roll.

Mastery: Invincible Predator Defiance doesn't expend rounds of control.

Terrestrial: The stylist can't use Invincible Predator Defiance.

UNMATCHED BRUTALITY HOLD

Cost: 5m, 5i, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Terrestrial

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Bear Gives Chase, Foe-Crushing Embrace, Prey-Subduing Strength

The stylist exerts overwhelming pressure, building to this style's signature technique: breaking an enemy's fighting spirit and maiming his flesh with monstrous force.

To use this Charm, the stylist must have 5+ rounds of grapple control. Her enemies have until her next turn to stop her from unleashing her finishing move. They can do so either by breaking the grapple or crashing the stylist, ending this Charm.

If the stylist isn't stopped, on her next turn, she takes all of the grappled foe's Initiative, crashing him. This uses her entire turn. If her enemy has any crippling penalties from this style's Charms, he suffers levels of damage equal to his total penalty unless he accepts a crippling injury, which doesn't count toward the once-per-story limit (**Exalted**, p. 201).

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by dealing 10+ **decisive** damage with a savaging attack.

Mastery: Successfully crashing her foe lets the stylist reflexively make a **decisive** savaging attack against him.

Terrestrial: The stylist can't steal more than (Strength + rounds of grapple control) Initiative.

Monkey Style

Monkey style emphasizes misdirection, mobility, and unpredictability. It's distinctive for its acrobatic maneuvers, with stylists tumbling, flipping, and cartwheeling around their foes. Its practitioners are called "blissful sages," for laughter is frequently heard coming from this style's schools. This isn't just good humor — it's training for this style's arrhythmic breathing exercises. This jocularity often carries over to the battlefield, with stylists employing taunts, japes, and bewildering facial expressions to throw enemies off balance. Stoic, humorless practitioners are instead referred to as "stone monkeys."

Monkey style is most commonly practiced in the East and Southeast. Its schools have a reputation for being far less formal or structured than those of other animal styles, with some resembling social clubs or dens of vice more than places of learning. It's also among the animal styles commonly studied by Immaculate monks — predominantly stone monkeys, though some are blissful sages.

Monkey Style Weapons: Stylists' unarmed attacks employ open-handed slaps and clawing strikes, as well as rolling kicks from the ground. It's also compatible with batons, staffs, and seven-section staffs, and with improvised weapons that are similarly shaped.

Armor: Monkey Style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Athletics is important for this style's acrobatic maneuvering. Stylists use Performance or Presence for taunts and mockery.

UNPREDICTABLE MONKEY CAPERING

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Taking advantage of an enemy's misstep to tumble beneath his legs or spring over his head, the stylist moves into position for an unexpected strike.

The stylist gains +1 Defense. Successfully defending lets her maneuver into her attacker's blind spot: If she makes a gambit against him on or before his next turn, it becomes a surprise attack, inflicting -2 Defense.

Mastery: The stylist can use this Charm after the attack roll.

FLASHING MONKEY-TAIL DISTRACTION

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Moving with alarming speed, the stylist flashes sideways in an elaborate maneuver that breaks her opponent's focus.

A successful distract gambit inflicts an additional point of onslaught penalty. The target's onslaught penalty doesn't refresh on his next turn.

MONKEY KING TAUNT

With appropriate stunting, Monkey Charms can be used with magic like Laughing Devil Distraction (*Lunars*, p. 231) that convey distract gambits through taunting, mockery, or similar verbal distractions.

Mastery: If the gambit's beneficiary makes the enhanced attack before the enemy's next turn, she adds dice of damage equal to the enemy's onslaught penalty.

MONKEY PAW SNATCH

Cost: 2m, 1i; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unpredictable Monkey Capering

Striking an enemy's weapon hand with a well-timed slap, the stylist relieves him of his armaments.

When the stylist flurries a disarm gambit with a ready weapon action to retrieve the disarmed weapon, the flurry penalty on the attack roll is reduced by one and her Defense isn't penalized.

If successful, the stylist gains +3 non-Charm against that enemy's disarm gambits against the same weapon until the end of his next turn.

MONKEY FORM

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Form

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Flashing Monkey-Tail Distraction, Monkey Paw Snatch

The martial artist assumes this style's distinctive side-ways stance — one leg in front of the other, weight on the balls of the feet, arms bent at the elbow, wrists facing down.

- A successful distract or disarm gambit rolls one die of **decisive** damage for each 10 on the Initiative roll, ignoring Hardness.
- She gains +1 Defense.
- She doubles 9 on rush and disengage rolls.
- She ignores penalties for being prone.

Special activation rules: When the stylist succeeds on a distract or disarm gambit against an enemy who is unaware of her or has lower Initiative, she may reflexively enter Monkey Form.

OUTRAGE-STIRRING JACKANAPES

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Monkey Form

Blissful sages master countless methods of provocation to sow chaos among their enemies.

The stylist rolls (Social Attribute + [Performance or Presence]) to enrage all enemies who can see or hear her. Until her next turn, whenever an enemy takes a turn without attacking her, she can reflexively make a distract gambit against him, using the initial roll's successes as her attack against his Resolve. She can also do so against enemies who use magic to reflexively attack someone other than her outside of her turn.

The Initiative cost of all distract gambits made using this Charm is reduced by one. If an Intimacy penalizes an enemy's Resolve, the cost reduction increases to (Intimacy).

Mastery: This Charm's duration is one scene, but it ends if the stylist uses her turn to make an attack. Reflexive attacks don't end it.

Special activation rules: The stylist can use this Charm reflexively when she uses Flowing Mirror of Opposition or Monkey Form, or when she succeeds on one of Four Halo Golden Monkey Palm's gambits.

TAIL-TRIPPING MISCHIEF

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Monkey Form

Tumbling beneath a foe, the stylist sends him sprawling with a sweeping kick or staff-blow.

A successful disarm or distract gambit knocks its target prone. He loses Initiative equal to the 9s and 10s on the damage roll.

Mastery: If this crashes the enemy, the gambit's Initiative cost is refunded.

FLOWING MIRROR OF OPPOSITION**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Mastery, Uniform**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Tail-Tripping Mischief

The stylist dances around a foe, alternating unpredictably between moving in too close for proper leverage and pivoting back just out of reach.

The stylist chooses an enemy within close range. Her target suffers a -3 penalty on attack rolls, rush rolls, and disengage rolls against her, and on his rolls to rise from prone. Whenever he fails on a penalized roll, he loses one Initiative.

This Charm ends if the stylist moves out of close range with her target.

Special activation rules: This Charm can be used reflexively upon moving into close range with a target whose Initiative is lower than the stylist's.

Mastery: This Charm's reflexive activation can be used against enemies with equal or higher Initiative.

LOST MONKEY ESCAPADE**Cost:** 3m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Mastery, Perilous, Terrestrial**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Flowing Mirror of Opposition

Moving in bounding leaps or nimble cartwheels, the stylist maneuvers freely across the battlefield to strike.

The stylist moves two range bands horizontally or jumps or climbs one range band vertically. She may make a single **decisive** attack or disarm or distract gambit at any point during this movement. She can take the movement and attack in any order — dashing two range bands toward an enemy to attack, moving into close range to attack and then falling back, etc. This counts as her attack and movement action for the round.

Using this Charm to leave close range with an enemy the stylist's used Flowing Mirror of Opposition on doesn't end that Charm as long as the stylist ends her movement back within close range of him.

Mastery: The stylist can jump or climb two range bands vertically. She doesn't suffer falling damage from leaping attacks.

Terrestrial: The stylist can't make damaging **decisive** attacks.

FOUR HALO GOLDEN MONKEY PALM**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Mastery, Psyche, Terrestrial**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Lost Monkey Escapade, Outrage-Stirring Jackanapes

Monkey grandmasters speak of the Four Gates, meridians of Essence thought to be wellsprings of passion and virtue. The style's finishing move is a strike to one of these gates that seals its wellspring.

The stylist strikes one of her target's gates using one of the gambits below, making a **decisive** attack. All of these gambits have difficulty equal to the target's Resolve, modified by any applicable Intimacies. Success alters her target's mood or behavior for the rest of the scene:

Monkey Mocks the Crown: The Crown Gate, located in the brow, is said to be the font of reason, wisdom, and self-discipline. This gambit reduces its victim to humiliating capering. They must take an action each turn to engage in some demeaning frivolity, requiring him to flurry to take other actions. He can still take actions that couldn't normally be flurried, like using Simple Charms, though he must humiliate himself as he does so. Anyone who sees this and has a Tie to the gambit's victim that's inconsistent with his debasing behavior weakens the Tie's intensity by one unless they spend one Willpower.

Monkey Spills the Chalice: The Chalice Gate, located in the heart, is seen as the seat of empathy, love, and mercy, the gate that governs strong relationships. This gambit renders its victim incapable of considering or prioritizing the needs of others. Any positive Ties he has are suppressed. He can't use defend other actions, distract gambits, or other forms of teamwork. Unless he thinks continuing to fight is in his best interest, he'll attempt to retreat, negotiate a surrender, or otherwise advance his own interests over anyone else's.

Monkey Fouls the Throne: The Throne Gate, located in the navel, is thought to be the source of ambition, will, and drive. This gambit renders its victim incapable of restraint. He suffers -2 Defense, Guile, and Resolve. At the end of each of his turns, he loses five Initiative unless he made a **decisive** attack or spent at least seven motes or one Willpower on an attack. He can't disengage, withdraw, or take full defense actions.

Monkey Plucks the Root: The Root Gate, located in the groin, is said to be the seat of courage, wrathful passions, and fighting spirit. This gambit breaks its victim's will to fight. He gains a Major Tie of fear toward the stylist, or strengthens an existing Tie to Defining.



At the end of each of his turns, he loses five Initiative unless he took a movement action to move away from the stylist or rolled Stealth to establish concealment. He can't attack, threaten, or rush the stylist.

These gambits are both Psyche effects and crippling effects. They can be resisted for two Willpower. Those who do so must roll Initiative, losing one Initiative for each die that rolls a failure. Doing so renders them immune to this Charm's gambits for the rest of the scene.

This Charm is compatible with Monkey Charms that enhance disarm or distract gambits. It can be used against enemies without the relevant anatomy with appropriate stunting.

Special activation rules: When the stylist uses Lost Monkey Escapade, she can use this Charm reflexively for the attack.

Mastery: The stylist inflicts **decisive** damage equal to her extra successes on the gambit's Initiative roll.

Terrestrial: The gambit's effect ends if the victim crashes or incapacitates the stylist.

Rat style

Rat style is known for its nimble acrobatics, stealth tactics, and ruthless methods. Stylists' strikes and footwork are rapid and erratic, making their movements difficult for enemies to track. They dart towards foes, making a flurry of swift blows before dancing out of reach. Sometimes, one such exchange is all it takes — Rat stylists specialize in making use of disease to finish off their foes.

Rat style's most famed practitioners are assassins. Its masters can be found among the Grass Spiders, the Blessed Isle's Gallows Dogs, and the Clan Best Forgotten. It's also practiced for self-defense, particularly in the urban slums in which it's said to have originated. Rat style generally holds a low reputation among practitioners of other styles, sometimes breeding feuds between schools.

Rat Weapons: Rat style uses rapid successions of punches, claw strikes, and eye gouges, as well as sweeping low kicks. It's also compatible with hand needles, knives, and tiger claws. Unarmed attacks enhanced by Rat style Charms can be stunted to deal lethal damage.

HAND NEEDLE/KAKUTE

A handle needle is a ring, worn on the wielder's finger, with thick metal spikes on one side for punching. The spiked side is often worn on the inside of the hand, concealing it from view.

Light (Accuracy +4, Damage +7, Defense +0, Overwhelming 1)

Tags: Lethal, Martial Arts, Concealable, Grappling, Worn

Armor: Rat style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Dodge and Stealth are key to Rat style's hit-and-run tactics.

HUNGRY GNAWING FANG

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Lunging out unpredictably, the stylist delivers a rapid volley of blows to an unwary foe.

When the stylist makes an unexpected attack, she adds (higher of Essence or 3) to a **withering** attack's raw damage or rerolls that many 1s on a **decisive** damage roll. She gains the same benefit against enemies suffering from disease.

RAT BRINGS FLEAS

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Embracing the most underhanded of tactics, the stylist wields disease as a weapon.

If a **decisive** attack deals damage, the stylist's target must roll against infected wounds (**Exalted**, p. 235), even if he has Exalted Healing. If he's infected, he loses (stylist's Essence) Initiative. The stylist can convey other diseases with an appropriate stunt, like fouling her blade to convey cholera.

A surprise attack subtracts two successes from the enemy's roll against the disease. An ambush causes him to fail automatically.

Special activation rules: This Charm can be used with others that inflict disease, causing the victim to lose Initiative if infected and penalizing him on unexpected attacks as above.

Mastery: Add +2 to the disease's virulence and morbidity.

SCURRYING RAT RETREAT

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mastery, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hungry Gnawing Fang, Rat Brings Fleas

The Rat stylist darts away and out of sight.

The stylist flurries a Stealth roll to enter concealment with a disengage roll, ignoring the penalty for using Stealth in combat.

If the stylist succeeds on both rolls, she also ignores the combat penalty on the roll to maintain concealment if an enemy provokes her reflexive movement from disengaging.

Mastery: The stylist ignores all penalties from flurrying.

RAT FORM

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Form, Mastery, Withering-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Scurrying Rat Retreat

The stylist moves in bursts of feral speed, outpacing and outmaneuvering her foes.

The stylist gains the following benefits:

- +1 Evasion
- Crashing an enemy suffering a Minor disease increases it to Major.
- Diseased enemies suffer a penalty equal to their sickness' intensity on rolls opposing the stylist's disengage and Stealth rolls: -2 for Minor, -3 for Major, and -4 for Defining.
- She doesn't lose Initiative from disengaging on a successful roll.

Special activation rules: When the stylist's Stealth roll to enter concealment beats the opposed rolls of all enemies, she may reflexively enter Rat Form.

Mastery: With Essence 3, the stylist can increase a crashed enemy's Major diseases to Defining.

ESCAPE THE CAT'S CLAWS

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rat Form

The stylist's unpredictable footwork and nimble grace keep her just out of harm's way.

When an enemy within close range attacks the stylist, she can clash with a disengage roll. If successful, she may move one range band away from her attacker, in addition to the usual benefits of disengaging. This doesn't count as her movement action. She can't clash undodgeable attacks.

In Rat Form, the stylist can clash attacks from enemies at short range.

RED-EYES-DARTING STRIKE

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rat Form

Moving faster than her foe can follow, the Rat stylist closes the distance to strike him.

The stylist makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy at short range, moving into close range with him to strike. She adds (Essence) dice of damage, and an additional die for each 10 on the attack roll. If she attacks from concealment, she doesn't need to roll to roll Stealth again for moving. This counts as her movement action for the round.

Mastery: While in concealment, the stylist can attack enemies who are unaware of her at medium range.

Terrestrial: The stylist must still roll Stealth, but ignores the penalty for using it in combat.

AUDACIOUS TRESPASSER TECHNIQUE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Escape the Cat's Claws, Red-Eyes-Darting Strike

Having claimed a delicious morsel, the rat scurries away to enjoy it.

The stylist can use this Charm after dealing 2+ levels of damage with a **decisive** attack, letting her forgo one level of damage to reflexively disengage from her target.

She doesn't lose Initiative for doing so. It doesn't count as her movement action.

Special activation rules: With Essence 3, the stylist can use Scurrying Rat Retreat reflexively with this Charm to reflexively flurry the disengage roll with a Stealth roll to enter concealment.

Mastery: The stylist doesn't need to forgo damage.

Terrestrial: The stylist doesn't gain the Essence 3 effect.

SWARMING PESTILENCE STRIKE

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Audacious Trespasser Technique

Once disease has ravaged the stylist's foe, she moves in to finish him off.

The stylist doubles 10s on the damage roll of an unexpected **decisive** attack. If her enemy is diseased, this benefit increases with his symptoms' intensity: double 9s for Minor, double 8s for Major, and double 7s for Defining.

Terrestrial: Once per scene, unless reset by rolling Stealth to enter concealment and beating the Awareness roll of at least one nontrivial enemy with lower Initiative.

RAT KING'S SECRET ART: DEATH OF A THOUSAND FANGS

Cost: 10m, 3i, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Swarming Pestilence Strike

The Rat master strikes from every direction, an all-consuming blur of steel and shed blood.

To use this Charm, the stylist must have Initiative 10+. She makes two **decisive** attacks against a single enemy, plus additional attacks as below, to a maximum of (Wits + 1).

- Against diseased enemies, additional attacks equal to the disease's intensity.
- An additional attack if she attacks from concealment, or two more attacks for an ambush.
- An additional attack if she's disengaged from her target since her last turn.

- An additional attack while in Rat Form.

The stylist's Initiative doesn't reset normally — instead, after each attack, she loses one Initiative for each die that shows a success on the damage roll. This can't reduce her below her base Initiative.

If the stylist attacks from concealment, she doesn't lose it until she's completed this flurry, giving all her attacks the benefit of being unexpected.

Special activation rules: The stylist can use this Charm reflexively with Red-Eyes-Darting Strike, applying its benefits to each attack.

Mastery: Each successful attack adds one die of damage to all successive attacks.

Terrestrial: The stylist can't make more than (Essence + 1) attacks, maximum 6.

Thousand Blades Style

Thousand Blades is an ancient battle-art of the First Age, an esoteric style that can only be practiced with artifact weapons. Its signature technique lets a stylist wield these weapons with Essence alone, letting them float at her side until she wills them to strike. It can be practiced with only a single daiklave, but unlocking the style's true potential requires mastering many weapons.

Students hone their mastery of Essence through meditation and breathing exercises. They perform the style's ancient rites and undergo tests of will and endurance to heighten their rapport with the weapons in their arsenal.

Few in the Second Age still practice this style, but it's not been forgotten. Prominent modern-day masters include Sublime Danger, elder of the Silver Pact; Cathak Tatsuzo, a blood-drenched renegade Dawn Caste spear-master; and the Silver Prince, the Deathlord who rules the Skullstone Archipelago.

Special: Learning this style doesn't require the Martial Artist Merit, as it has no foundation of mundane techniques.

Thousand Blades Style Weapons: Unlike other styles, Thousand Blades doesn't have style weapons. Instead, upon learning this style, the martial artist chooses a single type of close-range artifact weapon as their *signature weapon*. Daiklaves and other bladed weapons are the most common signature weapons, but some stylists employ the likes of goremauls, direlances, or razor parasols.

Armor: Thousand Blades Style is compatible with medium armor.

ARSENAL

Many of this style's Charms make use of the martial artist's *Arsenal* — the number of signature weapons they wield with Thousand Blades Unsheathed. Arsenal can't exceed 5, even if the stylist has more weapons.

THOUSAND BLADES UNSHEATHED

Cost: —; **Mins:** Martial Arts 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Bound to her weapons by will and Essence, the stylist need not grasp their hilt to wield them.

The stylist may wield her signature weapons with will alone, causing them to float at her side and move as she directs. This has the following benefits:

- Fighting with multiple signature weapons uses the rules for dual wielding (**Exalted**, p. 586).
- Crippling effects that target her limbs, off-hand penalties, and the like don't apply while wielding weapons this way.
- She can still be disarmed, which knocks her weapons from the air, but the disarm gambit suffers +1 difficulty. She can retrieve fallen weapons with a ready weapon action.
- When the stylist attunes multiple of her signature weapon, weapons past the first reduce their cost to one mote. Once she's attuned five weapons, further attunements are free.

Special activation rules: Charms that create a signature weapon, like Glorious Solar Saber, also receive this Charm's attunement discount. As long as the stylist has attuned another signature weapon, such Charms also waive their Willpower cost and can be used reflexively.

WINGS-OF-STEEL BULWARK

Cost: 3m, 1i; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mastery, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Blades Unsheathed

The stylist's weapons whirl into formation, forming a bladed aegis to fend off attack.

The stylist gains +1 Parry. On a successful block, if her Arsenal equals or exceeds her current onslaught, that attack doesn't inflict onslaught.

With Arsenal 3+ the Parry bonus is replaced by a +1 Defense bonus from light cover (Cover bonuses are non-Charm). This becomes a +2 bonus from heavy cover with Arsenal 5+.

Mastery: If the stylist's Arsenal equals or exceeds her current onslaught penalty, she can use this Charm after the attack roll.

FLYING SWORD TECHNIQUE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mastery, Terrestrial, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Blades Unsheathed

The stylist unleashes one of her flying weapons to strike a distant foe.

The stylist makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack against an enemy at short range, adding (Arsenal) dice on the attack roll. This increases to medium range at Arsenal 3+ and long range at Arsenal 5+. Her weapon returns to her side after the attack.

Mastery: The stylist increases the attack's range by an additional band. This doesn't let her attack at extreme range until she reaches Essence 3.

Terrestrial: The stylist can't attack beyond medium range.

THOUSAND BLADES FORM

Cost: 10m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Form

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Flying Sword Technique, Wings-of-Steel Bulwark

Countless phantasmal copies of the stylist's signature weapons fill the air around her as her Essence becomes one with that of her chosen weapon.

To use this Charm, the stylist must have Arsenal 1+. She gains the following benefits:

- +1 Arsenal, which can raise it to 6.
- Her **withering** attacks add +(Arsenal) Overwhelming.



- She doubles up to (Arsenal) 10s on **decisive** damage rolls.
- She can combine Evocations from multiple signature weapons on a single attack or defense.

Special activation rules: Upon dealing (5 – Arsenal, minimum 1) levels of damage to a nontrivial enemy with a **decisive** attack, the stylist may reflexively enter this Form. Damage dealt by Sword-Shrike's Garden can also trigger this.

THOUSAND BLADES STRIKE AS ONE

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2
Type: Simple
Keywords: Mastery, Terrestrial, Uniform
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Blades Form

Blade after blade flies at the stylist's foe, pinning him down beneath a deadly barrage.

The stylist makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack, adding (Arsenal) dice on both the attack and damage rolls. She adds (Arsenal/2, rounded up) to the attack's onslaught penalty.

Mastery: This Charm is Supplemental, enhancing attacks rather than creating them.

Terrestrial: A **withering** attack adds (Arsenal) raw damage rather than damage dice, while a **decisive** attack instead adds up to (Arsenal) extra successes as damage dice.

SWORD-SHRIKE'S GARDEN

Cost: 5m, 4i, 1wp, **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2
Type: Simple
Keywords: Mastery, Perilous, Terrestrial
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Blades Strike as One

The stylist's panoply whirls rapidly around her in a deadly ring of god-metal, cutting down foes who dare approach her.

The stylist's whirling weapons extend out to close range. They're an environmental hazard with difficulty (Arsenal), Damage (Arsenal)/round. (The hazard deals the same type of damage as the weapon.) With Arsenal 3+, they also count as difficult terrain (**Exalted**, p. 199). They don't affect the stylist or her allies — her blades gracefully swerve to avoid them.

While using this Charm, the stylist waives Wings-of-Steel Bulwark's Initiative cost.

This Charm ends if the stylist is crashed.

Mastery: With Arsenal 5+, the stylist's whirling blades extend out to short range.

Terrestrial: The stylist must pay four Initiative on each of her subsequent turns to maintain this Charm.

STORM OF FLYING SWORDS

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3
Type: Simple
Keywords: Dual, Terrestrial
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Sword-Shrike's Garden

Wind and steel, then only blood: this is the Storm of Flying Swords.

The stylist makes an undodgeable **withering** or **decisive** attack against all enemies within close range. This increases to short at Arsenal 3+ and medium at Arsenal 5+. A **withering** attack awards Initiative only for the highest damage roll. A **decisive** attack divides the stylist's Initiative evenly among enemies, rounding up, for damage. Battle groups and trivial enemies suffer her full Initiative in damage instead.

Special activation rules: The stylist can use this Charm reflexively when she uses Sword-Shrike's Garden or Thousand Daiklave Wings, waiving its Willpower cost.

Terrestrial: This Charm's special activation rules can't be used.

THOUSAND DAIKLAWE WINGS

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: Terrestrial
Duration: One scene
Prerequisite Charms: Sword-Shrike's Garden

Her Essence as one with that of her weapons, the stylist takes on their weightless grace, rising to join them in their air.

To use this Charm, the stylist must be using Thousand Blades Form or Sword-Shrike's Garden. She can fly using her signature weapons, either riding atop one as it moves through the air or rising up as if her signature weapons were wings. She adds (Arsenal) dice on aerial movement rolls. She can't rise higher than medium range from the ground unless moving toward an aerial enemy.

Terrestrial: This Charm is Perilous and ends if the stylist is crashed. She must pay 4 Initiative on each subsequent turn to maintain it.

INFINITE ARSENAL APOTHEOSIS

Cost: —(+10m, 1wp); **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4
Type: Permanent

Keywords: Counterattack, Clash, Dual, Mastery, Terrestrial

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Daiklave Wings

Calling upon her bond to each weapon in her arsenal, the Thousand Blades master wreathes them in their own iconic displays of power.

The stylist may pay a ten-mote, one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Thousand Blades Form to gain the following benefits:

- She adds (Arsenal/2, rounded up) to her base Initiative and to the Initiative she receives for crashing enemies.
- With Arsenal 3+, she may pay three Initiative to make a **decisive** counterattack once per round. With Arsenal 5+, she may reflexively clash instead of counterattacking.
- She can defend against environmental hazards with Parry instead of an opposed roll.
- Weapons wielded with Thousand Blades Unsheathed can't be disarmed or damaged.

While using this Charm, the stylist's weapons radiate light as a bonfire anima (**Exalted**, p. 175)

Special activation rules: If the stylist uses Thousand Daiklave Wings together with this Charm, she waives that Charm's Willpower cost.

Mastery: Weapons wielded with Thousand Blades Unsheathed are immune to Shaping effects. With Arsenal 5+, the stylist can block unblockable attacks.

Terrestrial: The stylist adds only +1 to her base Initiative and Initiative Breaks. Counterattacking or clashing counts as her attack for the round.

Toad Style

Toad style emphasizes defense above all else. Its stylists wear no armor, but their skin is said to be hard as iron. They go through grueling training regimens to toughen their bodies, enduring countless repeated blows until they can withstand them without flinching. Students also eat a variety of poisons and venoms to cultivate resilience and heighten their understanding of toxins. Some even develop the Venomous Merit (**Exalted**, p. 167) as a result.

This style is widely practiced throughout the East, Southwest, and the Blessed Isle, and in parts of the West. It's sometimes known as Frog style, especially

in tropical Eastern forests where colorful poison dart frogs thrive. Its defensive techniques are sometimes studied to complement other styles; Snake and Mantis are common combinations.

Toad Style Weapons: Toad style's offense focuses on delivering a single powerful blow rather than rapid flurries, using punches, palm strikes and kicks. It's incompatible with weapons.

Armor: Toad style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Resistance is key to Toad style's defense. The style's Charms don't use Medicine, but it's good to have if you're going to poison yourself.

IRON-SKINNED TOAD

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mastery. Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Hardening her body with precise control of her muscles and Essence, the stylist becomes unbreakable.

The stylist gains (Stamina + 1) armored soak. She still counts as unarmored for Martial Arts and similar effects.

Mastery: This Charm can be used after the attack roll.

POISONOUS FIST

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Iron-Skinned Toad

The stylist expels poisonous Essence through her blow, distilled from the countless venoms she's consumed.

If the stylist deals **decisive** damage with an attack, her enemy is exposed to arrow frog poison. It has Damage 3i/round (L in Crash), Duration 5 rounds, and a -2 penalty.

The stylist can also enhance a grapple, rolling (Stamina + Resistance) for the control roll and inflicting poison as above if she establishes control.

UNYIELDING TOAD STANCE

Cost: 2m, 1i; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mastery, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Iron-Skinned Toad

The Toad stylist's hardened body fends off blades and blows.

When the stylist parries an attack, she gains +1 Defense and can parry lethal attacks. Up to (Essence) 1s on the attack roll subtract that many dice from the damage roll.

This Charm can't be used against attacks that completely ignore soak or Hardness.

Mastery: The Defense bonus is non-Charm against poisoned enemies.

TOAD FORM

Cost: 7m (2i per counterattack); **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Counterattack, Dual, Form

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Poisonous Fist, Unyielding Toad Stance

A poisonous sheen of Essence spreads across the stylist's body as she settles into a crouched stance, skin and muscle taking on the toughness of steel.

The stylist gains the following benefits:

- She adds (Resistance) soak.
- She adds (Essence) dice on rolls against poison and reduces penalties from poisons by (Essence).
- She gains one Initiative when her soak reduces a **withering** attack to its minimum damage or her Hardness negates a **decisive** attack.
- When an enemy makes physical contact with her by landing an unarmed attack, spending a turn grappling her, etc., she may pay two Initiative to expose him to arrow frog poison. This counts as a counterattack.

Special activation rules: When the stylist's soak reduces a **withering** attack to minimum damage or her Hardness negates a **decisive** attack, she may reflexively enter Toad Form.

POISON-EATER CULTIVATION

Cost: 5m, 1i; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Toad Form

The countless poisons distilled and combined within the Toad stylist strengthen her venomous strikes.

Upon using this Charm, the stylist chooses one of the following benefits for all poisons she creates for the rest of the scene. When her soak reduces a **withering** attack to minimum damage or her Hardness negates a **decisive** attack, she may choose an additional option, maximum (Stamina). She can choose the same benefit multiple times.

- +1 Duration.
- +1 damage.
- Increase penalty by one.

This applies to poisons created with magic other than this style's Charms, but not to poisons obtained mundanely and applied to weapons. It doesn't apply retroactively to poisons the stylist has already inflicted.

TROUBLE THE STILL POND

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mastery, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Toad Form

Attacking with a leaping body slam, the stylist uses her Essence-hardened skin to crush her enemy.

The stylist leaps to make a **withering** attack against an enemy within close range horizontally or short range vertically. The attack's base damage is equal to her soak, maximum 20, and has Overwhelming (Stamina). This counts as her movement action for the round.

Mastery: The stylist can attack enemies at short range horizontally, leaping into close range with them.

HUMBLED PREDATOR REBUKE

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Trouble the Still Pond

The stylist strikes a well-timed blow to an enemy still reeling from her poison.

When the stylist attacks a poisoned enemy, the poison's penalty applies to his Defense, up to a maximum penalty of (stylist's Stamina). She adds the same amount in dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage on the attack. If an enemy suffers from multiple poisons, only the highest penalty applies.

If the stylist crashes a poisoned enemy or deals 3+ **decisive** damage one, the poison's duration is increased by one.

Special activation rules: This Charm's Willpower cost is waived when used with Trouble the Still Pond.

Terrestrial: The maximum is (lower of Essence or Stamina).

FIVE POISONS AEGIS

Cost: 1m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Perilous, Mastery, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Poison-Eater Cultivation

Poison suffuses the stylist's skin, strengthening her unto nigh-invulnerability as she channels the Essence of every venom she's ever encountered.

The stylist clashes an attack with a (Stamina + Resistance) roll. If her enemy is within close range, she exposes him to arrow frog poison if she wins the clash. Extra successes on the stylist's attack roll subtract that many successes from her enemy's roll against the poison.

Even if the stylist loses the clash, each 10 on her roll subtracts one die from her attacker's damage roll. If he deals no damage, he's exposed to poison, but doesn't suffer any penalty.

This Charm can't be used against attacks that completely ignore soak or Hardness.

Special activation rules: Unyielding Toad Stance can be used to enhance the clash, converting its Defense bonus to an automatic success on the stylist's roll and penalizing the damage roll as usual.

Mastery: No matter how many successes the stylist's victim rolls, the poison's duration can't be reduced below one.

Terrestrial: This counts as the stylist's attack for the round.

SECRET OF THE IMMORTAL TOAD

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Mastery, Perilous, Terrestrial

Duration: One Scene

Prerequisite Charms: Five Poisons Aegis, Humbled Predator Rebuke

Breathing in Essence through every pore of her skin, the stylist becomes all but invincible with Toad Style's ultimate technique.

The stylist gains Hardness (Stamina + Resistance) and only suffers onslaught penalties from attacks that

damage her. Her Hardness can't be reduced or bypassed, and damage dice added by magic and other effects aren't counted when determined if a **decisive** attack beats her Hardness — only her attacker's Initiative. (If an attack's damage doesn't include the attacker's Initiative, use the lower of his damage dice and his actual Initiative.)

This defense is strongest against poisoned enemies. They subtract the poison's penalty from their attacks' effective damage to determine whether it beats her Hardness, and from both **withering** and **decisive** damage rolls against her. While crashed, any **withering** or **decisive** damage they deal to her is halved, rounded down.

However, this technique has a single flaw. There is one point on the stylist's body that, when struck, will break this defense. Spotting this weak point requires a (Perception + [Martial Arts or Medicine]) roll as a miscellaneous action. Its base difficulty is (stylist's Stamina + 2), but the stylist's onslaught penalty subtracts from the difficulty.

Once an enemy spots the weakness, he or one of his allies can strike it with a gambit. The gambit's difficulty is again (stylist's Stamina + 2), reduced by her onslaught. If successful, this Charm ends.

Reset: Once per scene.

Special activation rules: The stylist can use this Charm reflexively when she enters Toad Form.

Mastery: Once per scene, the stylist can negate all **decisive** damage from a single source, even uncountable damage. She must declare this defense before the attack is rolled. Doing so ends this Charm.

Terrestrial: The base difficulty of the Perception roll and gambit to exploit the defense's weakness are only (stylist's Stamina).

Sorcery

Luna's Chosen walk strange paths in pursuit of sorcerous power. Lunar sorcerers are shamans, spirit-pacters, and witches, shaping the world by their will.

Dreamer of the Caul

The histories of the Caulborn clans who preserve this sorcerous tradition tell of how they discovered a secret as old as the continent-isle itself, left there by some divine hand. Each clan knows it by a different name — the Twice-Dreamt Road, the Midnight Pact, the Rite of Abraxus.

Sorcerers who walk this path commune with the Caul, opening themselves to its dreamlike existence through sleep deprivation, ecstatic rituals, and entheogens. Some in the Silver Pact have studied it under the Caulborn sorcerer Mekne-Mesi, whose pact with Skathra Venomchild allows any Lunar to receive his tutelage in exchange for three favors.

SHAPING RITUALS

Blurring the Boundaries: Deprived of sleep, the sorcerer ceases to distinguish between dreams and waking life. If she goes a day without recovering Willpower from rest, she gains (Essence + her fatigue penalty) sorcerous motes. These motes last until the next time the sorcerer completes the ritual. She can also forgo regaining Willpower when she upholds a Principle in a way that involves self-deprivation or ceaseless rituals or revelry to gain that many sorcerous motes. These last for the rest of the day.

Dreams of Green and Silver: Once per story, while engaging in austerities, entheogens, ecstatic rituals, or the like, the stylist experiences a strange vision or dream involving the Caul or its mysteries. She rolls (Essence + Willpower) and earns sorcerous motes equal to her successes, which last until the story ends. Once per story, she can stunt to declare that the events of a subsequent scene were foreshadowed by her most recent vision, gaining (Essence x [stunt + 1]) sorcerous motes for that scene.

World-Soul Rite: The sorcerer draws power from the Caul or another place of power touched by Gaia's or Luna's Essence, like a demesne or manse with an elemental or Lunar aspect. Once per day, she can roll (Wits + Occult) in such a place, gaining sorcerous motes equal to her successes. They last for the rest of the story or until she uses this ritual again.

OTHER BENEFITS

Ecstatic Discipline (Merit •••): When the sorcerer takes a Shape Sorcery action, she ignores penalties from fatigue, deprivation, poison, and mind-altering substances.

Lucid Soul (Merit •••): The sorcerer gains +2 Resolve as a Charm bonus against Psyche effects and social influence conveyed through spells and sorcerous workings. This bonus is non-Charm against magic that alters her perception of reality or intrudes on her dreams.

Ritual of the Sacred Land (Merit •): Once per day, the sorcerer may reduce a ritual spell's cost by one Willpower if she casts it while on the Caul or at another place of power touched by Gaia or Luna's Essence.

Witch-Beast Pact

Many of Creation's beasts are touched by strange magics. Some have fed upon the flora and fauna of demesnes,

bordermarches, and other places of power. Others bear divine blessings, or have the blood of gods or demons flowing through their veins. An ancient sorcerer's familiar might be its master's final work of magic. A sorcerer with this initiation has formed a mystical bond with such a creature as her familiar, and attained a deeper understanding of the world through it.

Witch-beasts are always three-dot familiars (**Exalted**, p. 161) for the supernatural powers they possess. Examples include a Fae-Blooded cat that walks through mirrors, a death-tainted raiton, or an oracular pig. Three-dot familiars that are apex predators, like tyrant lizards, don't qualify. A character must already have an appropriate familiar to take this initiation.

SHAPING RITUALS

Empowering Bond: Holding true to her part of the pact, the sorcerer is empowered by her familiar's gratitude. She may forgo the Willpower from upholding a positive Tie to the witch-beast to gain (Essence + Intimacy) sorcerous motes. The familiar may likewise forgo Willpower from upholding positive Ties to the sorcerer to grant her (its Essence + Intimacy) sorcerous motes.

Tribute to the Beast: Once per day, the sorcerer may make an offering to her witch-beast — from a prime piece of meat to a lavish ritual sacrifice. She rolls (Charisma + Survival) at difficulty (5 – Resources value of the offering). Success grants (Essence + extra successes) sorcerous motes, which last until the story ends or she uses this ritual again.

Witch-Beast's Boon: The witch-beast is a reservoir of sorcerous power. Once per scene, when she takes a Shape Sorcery action within medium range of the familiar, she draws (Essence) additional sorcerous motes from its presence. This isn't limited to once per scene when enhancing her control spell.

OTHER BENEFITS

Enchanted Beast Art (Merit •••): The sorcerer can cast spells that can only affect herself, like Invulnerable Skin of Bronze, on her witch-beast. It must be within close range. She can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to confer such a spell's benefits on both of them.

Familiar-Empowering Arcana (Merit ••): The sorcerer can spend her gathered sorcerous motes as though they were regular motes to pay the costs of her witch-beast's Charms, magical abilities, or other supernatural powers.

The Wisdom of Beasts (Merit •••): The sorcerer adds a non-Charm success on Survival rolls involving animals. She can use Survival instead of Lore to introduce facts about animals without needing a Lore background.

Terrestrial Circle Spells

HOUD OF THE FIVE WINDS

Cost: 15sm, 1wp

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One day

Bringing the wind to heel with a forceful whistle, the sorcerer gives it purpose and form as a great wolfhound.

The sorcerer summons a hound of the five winds, a wolfhound large enough for a human to ride. It obeys her faithfully for the spell's duration before dissolving back into wind. If summoned into battle, it rolls Join Battle immediately.

This spell ends if the sorcerer casts it again.

Control: The sorcerer may pay a one-Willpower surcharge and cast this as a ritual spell, singing paeans to the five winds of Creation and the fettered Wolf-Wind. Doing so summons (higher of Essence or 3) hounds.

Distortion (Goal Number: 10): The hound partially dissolves back into wind, gaining +1 Evasion but suffering a -4 penalty on all physical actions and damage rolls. This can't reduce a **withering** damage roll below its Overwhelming or a **decisive** damage roll below its base Initiative.

PATH OF SHIMMERING MIST

Cost: 10sm, 1wp

Keywords: None

Duration: Until ended

HOUD OF THE FIVE WINDS

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 5; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Health Levels: -0x2/-1x4/-2x2/-4/Incap.

Speed Bonus: +4. The hound can maintain a speed of sixty miles per hour over open terrain indefinitely.

Actions: Endure Poison/Disease: 10 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Intimidate: 9 dice; Senses: 12 dice (see Scent of Five Winds); Stealth: 9 dice; Tracking: 12 dice (see Scent of Five Winds)

Appearance 2 (Hideous), Resolve 4, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 12 dice (Damage 14L/2)

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (10 to control)

Combat Movement: 12 dice

Evasion: 4; Parry: 3

Soak/Hardness: 6/4

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: The Sorcerer (Loyalty)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Pack Hunting: The hound adds one automatic success on attack rolls for each ally within close range of

that enemy, maximum +3 successes. On a **decisive** attack, it may pay one Willpower to add that many dice on the damage roll as well.

Prey-Seizing Bite: On the turn that a hound moves into close range of an enemy, if it deals 5+ **withering** damage to him, that enemy can't disengage or withdraw on his next turn. It can pay one Willpower to reflexively grapple him, adding extra successes on the gambit attack roll as bonus dice on the grapple control roll. It can only take the restrain, savage, and release grapple actions.

MERITS

Guardian Beast: The hound ignores all penalties for flurrying defend other actions. It gains +2 Parry to protect the sorcerer.

Relentless Pursuit: Once the hound has caught its quarry's scent, it ignores fatigue penalties while pursuing its prey. It treats any influence that would impede its pursuit or cause it to stop as unacceptable, except for the sorcerer's orders.

Scent of Five Winds: The hound doubles 8 on scent-based Senses and Tracking rolls. Once it's caught its quarry's scent, it can roll to detect it from up to 100 miles away, though it may suffer penalties based on distance, weather, and the like. It can contest perfect track-concealing magic like Traceless Passage.



The sorcerer gathers a constellation of dewdrops in her cupped palms, then sends them flying with a single breath, forming a cloud of mist to be her path.

The sorcerer creates a cloud of mist that reaches out ahead of her, coalescing into a solid pathway beneath her feet as she walks. When she moves, the trail of mist lingers behind her, forming a path that others may walk on. However, if the sorcerer moves further than long range away from part of the path, that portion dissolves

into mist. At its full size, the path can hold a group equivalent to the sorcerer's Circle and either a Size 2 battle group of human-sized characters or a yeddin-drawn wagon.

The sorcerer and others walking the path are wreathed in cool mists, negating penalties from severe heat and reducing damage from heat-based environmental hazards by one die. While traveling over land, they're held just above whatever they walk on by the mist, letting



them cross unimpeded over surfaces too flimsy to bear their weight, including water. The path can likewise circumvent some kinds of difficult terrain and environmental hazards, if appropriate.

The sorcerer can even use the path to walk on thin air, so long as she remains within short range of the ground. She can move vertically up or down by tracing out a sloping or spiraling path. Ascending this way counts as difficult terrain (**Exalted**, p. 199) when the sorcerer first

does it, but not for those who follow a vertical path once she's done so.

The sorcerer can choose to step off the path, leaving it stationary. However, it disperses on the end of her next turn unless she returns to it, ending this spell. Smash attacks and similar forms of forced movement can also knock the sorcerer from the path. This spell isn't compatible with mounted movement, flight, shipboard travel, or the like.

Control: Any mist or fog the sorcerer comes near begins to swirl and billow unnaturally, moving in time with her breathing. She can sculpt the path with greater ease, adding (Essence) dice on movement actions she takes while on it and letting her ascend vertically without it counting as difficult terrain.

Distortion (Goal Number: 10): Distortion turns the mists freezing cold. Those on the path suffer a -2 penalty on all actions and suffer an environmental hazard with difficulty (distorting sorcerer's Essence or 3), Damage 1L/round.

THE VIOLENT OPENING OF CLOSED PORTALS

Cost: 15sm, 1wp

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Stamping on the ground, the sorcerer wrenches open vaults and brings down a walled city's gates.

The sorcerer rolls (Intelligence + Occult) as a special feat of demolition against all doors, windows, gates, or similar portal within a single structure out to (higher of Essence or 3) range bands. This ignores the minimum Strength requirement for such feats. Portal that are warded or strengthened by magic or other extraordinary means, like a First Age lock, are immune to this.

This spell is as destructive as its name suggests. Wooden doors are blasted to flinders, while sturdier portals are blown off their hinges, battered and bent out of shape, or otherwise rendered inoperable. For those within close range of a demolished portal, it's an environmental hazard with difficulty 3, Damage (Essence, maximum 5) L. Depending on the portal, the difficulty and damage may be higher.

Alternatively, this spell can create an opening in a wall or other barrier that has none. The sorcerer rolls a feat as above to blast open a hole that's just large enough for her to pass through, extending up to short range in length. Anyone within close range of the other side of the portal suffers a hazard as above.

Control: The sorcerer's passions influence doors and other portals around her. Doors swing open exuberantly when she's in good spirits, rattle in their frames when she's angered, or lock themselves when she wishes to be alone. She can use this to her advantage, adding (Essence) dice on lockpicking rolls and feats of demolition against portals.

Celestial Circle Spells

INVOKING THE ANIMAL AVATARS

Cost: Ritual, 2wp

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Long ago, the Ancient called Gaia brought forth the animal avatars, choosing a beast of each kind to receive her boon. Reciting the first five syllables of the blessing Gaia spoke upon them, the sorcerer calls upon one of these primeval spirits.

The sorcerer beckons one of the animal avatars with a ritual tailored to its desires. Bear Avatar answers to offerings of berries, salmon, and honey, while Thousand Thunders Belrane, the River Dragon Avatar, craves blood spilled in fresh water. The ritual takes at least four hours, regardless of the avatar summoned.

Once the ritual is completed, the animal avatar materializes before the sorcerer. Unlike summoning other spirits with sorcery, the sorcerer can't bind the avatar, requiring her to use the normal social influence rules. (Traits for animal avatars are discussed below). Both the sorcerer and the avatar gain a Defining Principle of "I must bargain in good faith" for the duration of the interaction. Sorcerers typically use this spell to request boons or favors of the summoned avatar with persuade or bargain actions, though they aren't limited to these forms of influence. Most avatars begin their interaction with a sorcerer by using Eye of the Animal Avatar (p. 87) to assess her treatment of their animals.

The following boons are commonly requested of the avatars. They include the level of task (**Exalted**, p. 216) they represent by default for someone the avatar deems worthy:

- **Service:** The avatar performs a single task for the sorcerer, which often involves invoking the aid of nearby animals using its Charms. The task's severity is typically adjudicated as usual, but it's always at least serious if it requires the avatar to command large numbers of animals or risks harming any of them.
- **Battle Groups:** The avatar can rally a battle group of nearby animals to fight for the sorcerer

or someone else in a single battle. The severity of the task depends on the animal's Familiar rating and the battle group's Size. As a serious task, an avatar will raise a Size 1-4 group of one-dot familiars, a Size 1-3 group of two-dot familiars, or a Size 1 group of three-dot familiars. A life-changing task provides a Size 5 group of one-dot familiars, a Size 4 group of two-dot familiars, or a Size 2 group of three-dot familiars. The battle group has average Drill, or elite Drill if it's made up of pack hunters.

- **Eclipse Charms:** The avatar will teach one of his Eclipse Charms to someone capable of learning them as an inconvenient task.

- **Familiar:** The avatar will summon a nearby animal to serve the sorcerer or someone else as a serious task.

- **Influence:** Some animal avatars possess considerable cachet among Creation's and Heaven's spirit courts, and a few dwell in the heavenly city of Yu-Shan. They can make introductions on the sorcerer's behalf to grant her up to three-dot Influence (**Exalted**, p. 162) with a group of spirits that the avatar holds sway with. Conferring one-dot Influence is an inconvenient task; two-dot Influence is serious; and three-dot Influence is life-changing.

The avatar and sorcerer may engage in lengthy negotiations, exchanging influence actions until one of them wishes to end the interaction. If they reach an agreement, each of them is bound to it. The animal avatar gains a Major Principle embodying his commitment to the agreement, which can't be weakened or altered by any means. The sorcerer gains no Intimacy, but if she breaks her agreement, she suffers as if she'd violated an Eclipse oath (**Exalted**, p. 176). Her divine punishment is carried out through avatar's animals: her horse throws her from the saddle in a life-or-death situation; rabid dogs spread disease through her city; ants swarm her in life-threatening numbers.

If the sorcerer can't reach a deal with the avatar, the avatar may choose to vanish back whence he came. He can also do so if endangered or greatly offended.

Control: Instead of summoning an animal avatar, the sorcerer may cast this spell to ensure that a prayer she makes to an animal avatar will be noticed. She can't convey social influence through such prayers. Doing so costs only one Willpower, and the ritual takes only a few minutes.

DESIGNING ANIMAL AVATARS

Animal avatars are spirits. They're material by nature, like elementals. All of them can dematerialize, using the same rules as materializing (**Exalted**, p. 510), but in reverse. If slain, they reform at the next full moon.

Essence: Animal avatars typically have Essence 5 to 7. They have $([\text{Essence} \times 10] + 50)$ motes.

Willpower: Animal avatars typically have 7-10 Willpower.

Health: An avatar uses one of three health tracks, depending on his animal's size:

- By default, the track is $-0x5/-1x10/-2x10/-4x5/\text{Incap.}$
- If his animal has Minuscule Size or Tiny Creature, the track is $-0x10/-1x10/-2x4/-4/\text{Incap.}$
- If his animal has Legendary Size, the track is $-0/-1x10/-2x10/-4x15/\text{Incap.}$

Dice Pools: Avatars have pools of 11+ dice in the one or two areas that they're best at, 8-10 dice in areas they're well-suited to, and 3-7 dice in other areas. (You can pick the same value for all of the pools in each category to streamline the process.) These typically include any dice pools possessed by their animal, which are usually in the first or second groups.

Defenses: Avatars typically have at least one of Evasion or Parry at 6-7, favoring whichever of the two their animal does.

Social Traits: Avatars' Resolve is typically 4-6, while Guile can be anywhere from 1-6. Their Appearance is usually the same or one higher than their animal's.

Attacks: Avatars have all natural attacks possessed by their animal. The avatar has a dice pool of 12+ dice for whichever of the animal's attacks has the highest dice pool and 9-11 dice for other attacks. Whichever of the animal's attacks has the highest damage has Damage 17-22 and Overwhelming 4-5. Other attacks have Damage 14-19 and Overwhelming 1-4. Grapple control roll pools usually follow their animal's size: 3-7 dice for animals with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size; 8-10 dice for default size animals; and 11+ dice for Legendary Size animals.

Soak and Hardness: Avatars typically have 10-15 soak and Hardness 0-10. They almost always exceed their animal's own soak and Hardness.

Intimacies: Avatars default to having a positive Defining Tie toward their animal and a negative Major

Tie towards those who mistreat their animal. Many have a Major or Defining Principle reflecting pride, dignity, or self-respect, for they are peers to gods and the Exalted. Common topics for other Ties include friends and enemies, the avatar's cult, other spirits, Gaia, cultures with significant interactions with the avatar's animal, and their animal's native environment and main predators. Common Principles include motivations, agendas, ethical tenets, philosophical stances, and personal idiosyncrasies.

Special Abilities and Merits: Avatars typically have any special abilities and Merits their animal has, including latent and magical abilities. If their animal doesn't have existing Quick Character traits, they can use appropriate special abilities and Merits from other animals instead. Avatars often have the Cult Merit at two to four dots (**Exalted**, p. 160).

Charms

Animal avatars can have any spirit Charms appropriate to the animal they represent and its mythic resonance, as well as the following unique Charms.

Behemoth-Beast Expansion (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 5): The avatar can grow as large as Legendary Size or shrink down as far as his animal's size, gaining or losing the Legendary Size, Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size Merits as appropriate (**Lunars**, pp. 179, 265, 362).

Eye of the Animal Avatar (5m; Simple; Instant; Essence 1; Eclipse): The avatar makes a special Read Intentions roll against someone to learn how she's treated his animals. Eclipse Castes roll (Perception + Survival). The avatar forms a Major Tie toward her based on what he learns.

Fealty of the Flock (1m, 1wp or 5m, 1wp or 10m, 1wp; Reflexive; One day; Essence 3; Eclipse): The avatar's animals count as having a Defining Tie of respectful obedience toward him. The Intimacy is only Major for animals that are domesticated or tamed, or Minor for familiars and other magically empowered animals. This costs one mote, one Willpower if the animal is a one-dot Familiar (**Exalted**, p. 161), five motes, one Willpower for two-dot Familiars, or ten motes, one Willpower for three-dot Familiars.

Primeval Exemplar (1m per die or 2m per +1 bonus; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 4): The animal avatar can use this Charm for one to three areas of competence, comparable to a specialty, that reflect his animal's strengths or mythic resonance. This might be grappling for Bear Avatar, stealth in darkness for Bat Avatar, or ancient wisdom for Salmon Avatar. The avatar can add dice to

rolls for one mote each, maximum +10, or increase static values for two motes per +1 bonus, maximum +5.

Thousand Beast Labors (30m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 5; Eclipse): The avatar rolls Social Influence as a special persuade roll to issue a command to its animals. Eclipse Castes roll (Charisma + Survival). This influence automatically succeeds against all such animals within a number of miles equal to the avatar's successes, except for those that are domesticated, tamed, or magically empowered. The effects of this are generally narrative rather than mechanical, limited only by the animals' number and capabilities. Nontrivial enemies affected by it can always use an appropriate opposed roll or static value to resist. Once per story, unless reset by accomplishing a legendary social goal that benefits the avatar's animal or when summoned by a sorcerer the avatar deems worthy of his service.

Unwavering Guardian (Permanent; Essence 5): The avatar may reject as unacceptable any influence that would weaken a positive Tie to his animal or cause him to neglect or harm his animal.

FLOURISHING JUNGLE NIGHTMARE

Cost: 20sm, 2wp

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

The sorcerer bites into a fruit and spits out the seeds, speaking the ancient words that commanded Creation's first plants to thrive.

A mass of trees, vines, brambles, and other plant and fungal life sprouts within long range of the sorcerer, breaking through flagstones and cellars alike if necessary. The sorcerer may exclude some portions of this area from the spell's effect. The plants are appropriate to the region, but always exhibit some form of strangeness: flowers have vivid, unnatural colors; trees bear fruits unknown to any in Creation; mushrooms seem to laugh mockingly as they disperse their spores.

The overgrowth is difficult terrain for everyone but the sorcerer — even her allies. It can provide heavy cover (**Exalted**, p. 199) and suffices for characters to enter concealment with Stealth rolls. The overgrowth can't be cleared by anything short of Solar Circle Sorcery or equivalent destructive forces— if hacked at or burnt away, it regrows almost instantly.

On each of the sorcerer's turns, she may take one of the following actions. They can only affect characters within the overgrowth, and the sorcerer must be within the overgrowth to use them. They count as her attack for

the round. However, the sorcerer can't take the same action twice in a row — she must alternate between them.

Entangling Vines Durance: The sorcerer makes a grapple gambit to entangle an enemy in vines, roots, or twisting branches. She rolls (Intelligence + Occult) for both the attack and control rolls. She can take grapple actions via the entangling plants and can flurry them with this spell's special actions at no penalty. She isn't penalized by the grapple or limited in what actions she can take, and doesn't lose rounds of control when attacked. However, the grappled enemy or one of his allies can spend his entire turn hacking or burning away the overgrowth to reduce the total rounds of grapple control by two. The sorcerer can have multiple enemies grappled this way at a time, but can only take one grapple action each round.

Maw of the Hungry Jungle: A one-time environmental hazard engulfs an enemy and everyone within short range of him — thorns erupt from vines and stems, spiked burrs twist through flesh, strange carnivorous plants bite at foes. The hazard has difficulty (Intelligence) and Damage (Essence)L. The sorcerer can spend Initiative to increase its damage, paying two Initiative per +1 Damage.

Poisonous Bloom: A cloud of poisonous spores or pollen fills the air out to short range from any point within the overgrowth. This inhaled poison has Damage 4i/round, Duration (Essence + Intelligence) rounds, and a -3 penalty. No matter how many successes victims roll, they can't reduce the poison's duration below one round.

Terror Hidden in the Leaves: The sorcerer grants (Essence) Initiative to an ally in concealment, and may also transfer up to half her own Initiative, rounded down.

The overgrowth remains after the spell's duration ends, but ceases to regrow if damaged, allowing it to eventually be cleared away. For a year and a day thereafter, any plant or fungi that grows in the affected land will be touched by this spell's strangeness.

Control: The sorcerer can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to increase this spell's duration to up to one day. If her blood or saliva is shed on a plant, it undergoes a brief burst of unnatural growth: a flower bud might bloom immediately, or a seed might begin visibly germinating just after being planted. She can use a drop of her blood or spittle in place of a seed to cast this spell.

Distortion (Goal Number: 10): Distortion reduces the spell's range by one range band, causing any overgrowth

outside its diminished area to wither and rot. The spell can be distorted multiple times, potentially reducing its range down to close.

STOLEN FACE MASQUERADE

Cost: 15sm, 2wp

Keywords: Decisive-only, Shaping (Body)

Duration: Instant

The sorcerer's hands crackle with sickly green Essence as she rips away her victim's face, leaving only a blank mask in its place.

The sorcerer exchanges someone's face with a mask, requiring an (Intelligence + Occult) roll against his (Appearance + [Integrity or Resistance]) roll. In combat, this requires a difficulty 4 unarmed gambit, with success letting the sorcerer roll as above. The sorcerer must prepare the mask beforehand; doing so requires at least a basic project with an appropriate Craft (**Exalted**, p. 240).

Success strips away both the victim's face and his identity: even his closest friends can't recognize him without a difficulty 7 (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Socialize]) roll to identify him. Characters without a Tie to the victim fail automatically unless they enhance the roll with magic or benefit from other circumstances, like knowledge of one of the victim's distinguishing features.

The victim can still see, speak, eat, and the like with the mask that is now his face, but its voice is dull and monotone and any sensations felt through it are muted.

He suffers a -3 penalty on spoken influence rolls and on Perception rolls. He also subtracts -3 from his effective Appearance when determining how many dice it adds on influence rolls.

The victim's stolen face can be worn as a mask. This requires no roll, but is treated as a disguise roll to impersonate the curse's victim. Body type, ethnicity, and gender are no obstacle, though extreme differences may render the disguise ineffective — a Lunar can't impersonate a human in tyrant lizard form. Rolls against the disguise are difficulty 7 and use the same rules for characters without Ties as the roll for recognizing the victim.

An affixed face can't normally be removed from a wearer, but the spell's victim can reclaim their visage. Outside of combat, this typically requires a (Dexterity + Larceny) roll opposing a (Wits + Larceny) roll. In combat, it's treated as an unarmed disarm gambit.

If the victim retrieves his face, he can exchange it with his cursed mask, freeing him from the curse. If the spell is instead broken by magic that can undo Shaping effects or sorcerous curses, the stolen face vanishes as the cursed mask transforms back into it.

Control: The sorcerer can freely remove her own face, as above, without needing to cast this spell. She doesn't suffer the penalty on influence rolls or sensory rolls.

Distortion (Goal Number: 10): Distortion restores a semblance of the victim's original semblance to the mask, freeing him from this spell's effects for one scene.

The evening wind tugged at Song of the Evening Sky's cloak as she ducked within the ruins of the ancient temple. Almost, she thought, as if it knew she was coming. She pulled her hood back, glancing around. Everything was as she remembered it: The stones carried a few hundred more scars; moss now grew across carvings that had once been polished clean. Twilight filtered through the places where the roof had fallen in. But the place stirred memories in Song's soul. Out of habit, she hefted the scythe that she carried but that had never quite felt right in her grip.

.....

For an instant, the scythe that was truly hers glinted in the twilight of her memories. It flashed through the air, carving a trail of nothingness where reality had been.

"Come on!" Song tugged at the young Solar's hand, pulling her toward the rift, trying to break her out of the shock of the attempt on her life. "I'm here to help, but you have to come *now*," Song pressed. "It won't take long for them to double back and find you again."

The woman's eyes snapped to Song's. She mutely nodded her understanding, her eyes still wide. Song half-led, half-pulled her into the otherworldly place revealed by her scythe. The rift faded back into nonexistence as soon as the two were through.

"It'll be all right," Song said as she tried to comfort her silent companion. "Come on, what's your name?"

"Emerald Horizon," the woman answered nervously.

.....

The temple's hallways were dense with debris and foliage after all these years, but Song's memories clearly recalled her path. She'd visited here before, in another lifetime, wearing another face. She'd walked these halls to the tomb that had held her mate, that she hoped would someday hold her too. As much as she'd longed then for Emerald Horizon, she longed now to have the scythe Moonreaver in her hands again. Both were equally a part of her.

.....

"Song!" Emerald Horizon screamed, her moonsilver knife turning away the Dragon-Blood's unexpected attack mere inches from her face.

Her mate was right beside her. She always was. Moonreaver glanced across their foe's armor, throwing him off balance.

In the opening, Emerald Horizon danced forward, bringing her moonsilver knife crashing against their assailant's throat.

Song recalled how her mate had stood staring at the crumpled form for minutes afterwards. Emerald Horizon had always been sentimental.

.....

Song paused at the end of the hallway. What a strange thing it was, to be opening one's own tomb. She wandered in slowly, the dust motes dancing in the golden twilight rays that filtered through the decaying building. Their two stone coffins stood untouched, side by side.

She walked to the first, running her fingers across the stone, then finding the alcove above it and the scythe that was hers still within it, protected all these years by the obscurity of the place. She lifted it, the familiar weight in her hand lightening her heart.

Then she paused and ran her fingers across the matching stone, tracing across the letters of Emerald Horizon's name, finding peace in the loops and patterns that adorned her resting place. "It's been a long—" Song's voice caught in her throat.

She dropped her hand, turning away before emotion could overcome her. As she did, her glance caught upon the alcove above the stone, where the moonsilver knife had rested, unclaimed, for centuries uncountable.

Where the knife should have been, there was only dust.

Song of the Evening Sky smiled. She had a new quest: At last, Emerald Horizon had returned.





Chapter Four

Moonlit Treasure Panoply

Azure Scorpion Gauntlets

(Moonsilver Razor Claw, Artifact ●●●)

Most of Katja Narrow-Pupils' peers in the Old Realm saw her as a brilliant but eccentric alchemist. She kept a poison garden the size of a forest, raised beasts of resplendent liquids bred to yield exotic toxins, and wore venomous insects as jewelry on the floor of the Deliberative. Few suspected that the soft-spoken genius was among the First Age's deadliest poisoners. Katja chose her victims carefully, each death the antidote to some infirmity she saw in the Old Realm.

In time, Katja's crimes were discovered by a Sidereal named Crucible Knife, part of the growing conspiracy behind the Usurpation. Instead of confronting her, he sought her out as an ally, arguing for the necessity of his cause. Katja found his rationale compelling. She too had seen horrors born of Exalted folly or hubris, symptoms of a disease beyond her power to cure. Crucible Knife gave Katja the Azure Scorpion Gauntlets to seal their alliance, forged by one of Luna's divine descendants to imprison Smiling Yathe, a cruel and mocking scorpion-spirit.

The warlord Endless Echo succumbed to a feast laced with Yozi venom. Lanovan of Ket, an Eclipse Caste diplomat, caught her prowling his manse's halls, but fell to the Azure Scorpion Gauntlets. But Bear the Lefthander, forewarned by a traitor among the Sidereals' ranks, was prepared for Katja. She fell to his daiklave, but the poison from the single strike she landed left him weakened when the Sapphire Pentacle Hearth came to strike him down three days later.

Katja was buried alongside the Azure Scorpion Gauntlets, but the Sidereals retrieved the gauntlets and returned them to Heaven's vaults. The Gold Faction has sometimes sought to use them as a gift or bargaining chip with the

Silver Pact, but to little avail. The Pact's elders have no desire for the weapon of a reviled traitor, nor for the wrathful thing that haunts them. But not all in the Pact heed their elders' warnings, and Sidereals have ample reason to work with Lunars independent of the Pact as well.

The gauntlets are made of blue-tinted moonsilver, their design reminiscent of a scorpion's carapace, while their long blades resemble stylized stingers. The gauntlets' wielder can launch these blades, extending chains of moonsilver behind them as they fly toward distant foes.

Smiling Yathe is a silent presence within the gauntlet, though his malice is at times palpable within its Essence. Some wielders have forged a deeper bond with him, communing with him to seek his counsel. Yathe saw Katja as a kindred soul — something the principled assassin disputed fiercely — and judges the gauntlets' wielders in comparison to her.

Attunement: 5m; Type: Light (+5 ACC, +10 DMG, +0 DEF, OVW 3)

Tags: Lethal, Brawl, Thrown (Medium), Concealable, Flexible, Worn

Hearthstone slot(s): 2

Era: The Era of Limitless Light

Backer: Michael Maitan

Evocations of Azure Scorpion Gauntlets

The gauntlets' Evocations center on the ability to fire its blades, using them both in and out of battle for a variety of purposes. They also draw on both Katja's and Smiling Yathe's associations with poison. Other Evocations let the wielder communicate directly with Yathe, or even manifest him to fight by their side.

The gauntlets' blades can be used to make Thrown attacks out to medium range. They're exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) when used as a grappling hook or for similar purposes. The wielder can reflexively withdraw the blades, concealing the gauntlets' nature as a weapon, or extend them.

DISTANT CLAW RETRIEVAL

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Reaching out with the gauntlet's blades, the wielder extends her grasp.

On the wielder's turn, she can reflexively fire the gauntlet's blades at an unattended object within medium range to retrieve it. It must be light enough that she could carry it. She rolls (Dexterity + Thrown) at difficulty 2 to retrieve it. If there are any enemies within close range of the object, the wielder must beat their Parry as well, though this doesn't count as an attack. However, the blades aren't gentle — attempting to retrieve something fragile, like a glass ornament or map, is likely to break or damage it.

If the wielder disarms an enemy and uses this Evocation to retrieve the weapon on the same turn, she adds her extra successes on the gambit's Initiative roll as non-Charisma dice on this Evocation's roll.

Resonant: The wielder gains one Initiative if retrieving an object provides an advantage in combat or deprives her enemies of one.

Dissonant: The object doesn't reach the wielder until the start of her next turn.

PREY-DRAGGING BARB

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Distant Claw Retrieval

As the gauntlet's blades strike true, the wielder retracts their chains, pulling her foe back with them.

An enemy damaged by a **decisive** Thrown attack is pulled one range band toward the wielder and falls prone. If the attack deals 4+ damage, the wielder can pull the enemy two range bands.

Resonant: With Essence 3, the wielder only needs to deal 2+ damage to pull an enemy two range bands.

SCORPION-SOUL COMMUNION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

Smiling Yathe speaks, his voice sizzling like a drop of acid in the wielder's mind.

The gauntlets' wearer can communicate with Smiling Yathe while meditating. Yathe is always eager to offer his counsel. He advises ruthlessness in all things, proposing the cruelest solutions to the wielder's problems. However, Yathe isn't cruel for cruelty's sake — he advises only what he sincerely believes is the most effective course of action.

Yathe's primary areas of knowledge are poison, spirits, and preying on emotional vulnerabilities, along with the gauntlets and their history. Communing with him lets the wielder use these topics as Lore backgrounds to introduce facts.

Yathe and the wielder can use social influence normally while communing. Yathe's social traits are listed below. He always has a Defining Tie toward his wielder, with a context depending on her conduct thus far. He admires those who share his ruthless pragmatism, while disdaining compassion, complacency, and indecision.

Awakening: This Evocation can't be purchased with experience. It awakens for free when the wielder upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy through ruthless pragmatism, cruelty, or mockery.

FLYING SCORPION CHAIN

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Prey-Dragging Barb

With the gauntlet's blades firmly anchored, the wielder uses their chains to drag herself across the battlefield with incredible speed.

The wielder fires the blades into a surface or large object within medium range. In combat or other circumstances where failure would be relevant, she must roll (Dexterity + Thrown) at difficulty 4. If successful, she pulls herself up to two range bands toward it by retracting the chains. This count as her movement action.

If the wielder moves upward, she can then jump to a nearby surface, grab something protruding from the ceiling or walls, etc. This may require a ([Dexterity or

Strength] + Athletics) roll. If she doesn't, she falls back to the ground, but the chain slows her descent enough that she doesn't take damage before the blade comes loose from the surface.

Outside of combat or similar circumstances, the wielder doesn't need to roll for this Evocation and waives its Willpower cost.

Resonant: This Evocation can be flurried. If the wielder flurries it with an attack after completing her movement, she ignores all penalties from flurrying.

Dissonant: If the wielder uses this Evocation within close range of any enemies, she must reflexively disengage. She uses the initial Thrown roll's result instead of making a new roll.

THOUSAND VENOMS STING

Cost: 5m, 3a, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Flying Scorpion Chain, Scorpion Soul Communion

Smiling Yathe manifests within the wielder's anima banner, his stinger dripping venomous Essence that coats the gauntlets' blades as the wielder strikes.

The wielder makes a **decisive** attack, inflicting a poison with Damage 1L/round, Duration (Essence + Strength) rounds, and a -2 penalty. The enemy's onslaught penalty subtracts successes from his roll against the poison, maximum (Strength). This includes the onslaught penalty inflicted by the wielder's attack.

A Lunar with Adder Fang Method (**Lunars**, p. 258) can use it to enhance this poison, gaining that Charm's Protean benefit.

Resonant: The poison's damage rolls double 10s, and double 9s against crashed enemies.

Dissonant: The poison's duration is (Strength).

THE SCORPION AWAKENS

Cost: -(10m, 1wp); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Divine Soul-Beast Exaltation, Thousand Venoms Sting

Defying Heaven's will, the wielder unleashes Smiling Yathe from his prison.

When the Lunar uses Divine Soul-Beast Exaltation, she can pay ten motes, one Willpower to manifest Smiling Yathe instead of her spirit shape. He takes the form of a monstrous scorpion the size of a draft horse with a sky-blue carapace. He's a spirit, but naturally material. Yathe receives all of Divine Soul-Beast Exaltation's benefits and counts as an animal familiar.

While Yathe is manifested, Thousand Venoms Sting's anima cost is waived.

Awakening: This Evocation can't be purchased with experience points. It awakens for free when the wielder and Yathe both have positive Defining Ties to each other. If either of them voluntarily weakens their Tie, the wielder loses access to this Evocation until it's restored to Defining.

Smiling Yathe

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 8; **Join Battle:** 10 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1x10/-2x10/-4x5/Incip.

Speed Bonus: +2

Actions: Ancient Knowledge: 10 dice; Feats of Strength: 8 dice (can attempt Strength 3 feats); Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 8 dice; Senses: 10 dice; Social Influence: 8 dice; Stealth: 12 dice; Tracking: 8 dice.

Appearance 5 (Hideous), Resolve 4, Guile 5

COMBAT

Attack (Pincer): 13 dice (Damage 13L/3)

Attack (Sting): 9 dice (Damage 17L/5; see Venom)

Attack (Grapple): 9 dice (10 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 10 dice (see Swift Skittering)

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 5

Soak/Hardness: 15/10

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: The wielder (Varies, see above)

Defining Tie: Katja Narrow-Pupils (Love)

Major Principle: I must ensure the Azure Scorpion Gauntlets' wielder is worthy of Katja's legacy.

Major Principle: Compassion is weakness.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambush Hunter: Add three dice on unexpected attack rolls.

Burrow: Yathe can use reflexive move actions to tunnel through sand, soil, and the like. If he burrows and makes an unexpected attack on the same turn, he adds two successes on the damage roll.

Cruelty's Reward: When Yathe deals enough damage with a **decisive** attack to increase a nontrivial enemy's

wound penalty, he adds that enemy's new wound penalty to his base Initiative when he resets, maximum +5.

Grasping Claws: When Yathe savages a grappled enemy with a Pincer attack, he adds one die of **decisive** damage or three dice of post-soak **withering** damage.

Piercing Sting: Yathe's **withering** Sting attacks ignore (4 + attack roll extra successes) points of soak, down to a minimum of (enemy's Stamina).

Tighten Clutches: If Yathe would lose rounds of grapple control for being attacked, he can retain them for one Willpower each. This can't prevent losing rounds of control from taking damage.

Venom: Yathe's **decisive** Sting attacks inflict a poison with Damage 3i/round, Duration 5 rounds, and a -2 penalty.

MERITS

Impenetrable Armor: A **withering** attack against Yathe suffers -1 Overwhelming.

Night Vision: Yathe can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight. His Senses rolls reduce any increase in difficulty due to darkness by one.

Swift Skittering: Yathe doubles 9s on Combat Movement rolls.

The Hungering Fangs

(Moonsilver Short Daiklaves, Artifact ●●)

Bitter Night's Fury was among the greatest hunters and monster-slayers of the First Age. Born too late to have fought in the Divine Revolution, her elder Circlemates' tales of battle against the enemies of the gods inspired the young Lunar to test herself against the countless terrors that still threatened the still-young Old Realm. Ekaterina of the Unhinging Jaw, who was Fury's Circlemate and the lover of her past incarnation, forged the Hungering Fangs as a gift for her before her first hunt. Armed with the moonsilver blades, Fury slew her quarry, the Miasma of Tongues — the first of many horrors to fall to her and her daiklaves.

In the end, it was love that undid Fury. When not on the hunt, she spent her days with her Solar mate, the soft-spoken sorcerer Lysander the Aureate Rose. But when she returned from her pursuit of the Catechism Moth, she found her beloved had changed. Lysander had called forth the demon Kalojan, a great thief of faces, and its power defied his words of binding. Overcome with terrible rage, Fury sought out the demon alone, too consumed by her rage to warn others or request aid. The fangs struck true, nearly claiming the demon's life — but Kalojan wore Lysander's face, and Fury hesitated just a split-second too long.

Wearing Lysander and Fury's stolen faces, Kalojan infiltrated the Old Realm's Deliberative, sowing much chaos among its ranks for a time — though it eventually acquired both a talent and a passion for lawmaking. But Ekaterina had loved Fury in two lives — as she met the demon's eyes, she knew they weren't those of her Circlemate. Rallying both her own Circle and fallen Lysander's, Ekaterina exposed the demon's intrigues and gave it over to the torments suited to its crimes.

The Hungering Fangs were passed down to Fury's reincarnation, Iryero Who-Breaks-The-Line, but a hunter's weapons were poorly suited to that ever-ambitious general. Instead, he used them to win the favor of the behemoth-slayer Advor Tideturner, who would later wield the daiklaves against the greatest prey of all in the Usurpation. They were a prized heirloom of Gens Advor in the Shogunate's early days, but were reclaimed by the Silver Pact after the Battle of Glass Rivers.

The Hungering Fangs are of unconventional design. Their hilts are perpendicular to their blades, not parallel as most are. They're held so that the blades face backward, requiring them to be wielded more like tonfas than swords. The hearthstone sockets on each daiklave's hilt are edged with star sapphires, said to have reminded Ekaterina of her beloved's eyes.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Light (+5 ACC, +10 DMG, +0 DEF, OVW 4)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Balanced

Hearthstone slot(s): 2

Era: The Luminous Ascension Era

Backer: Jamie Michaels

Evocations of the Hungering Fangs

The Hungering Fangs feed upon the power of mighty foes, stealing their prowess and power for the blades' wielder. They also reveal foes' secrets, that they might never fail another wielder as they failed Bitter Night's Fury.

The daiklaves gain +1 Accuracy and +1 Overwhelming against enemies with Essence 5+. At the Storyteller's discretion, this may also apply against behemoths or other uniquely powered beings even if they have lower Essence ratings.

LESSONS OF THE HUNT

Cost: 1m per specialty; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive



Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant, Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: None

The Hungering Fangs' master claims the prowess of her prey.

The wielder can use this Evocation when her **decisive** attack incapacitates an enemy powerful enough to have posed a challenge to her in combat. She gains up to (higher of Essence or 3) specialties that reflects that enemy's strengths or home territory: for instance, a Survival specialty in tracking for a giant God-Blooded wolf, an Occult specialty in necromancy or the Underworld for a nephwrack, or a Presence specialty in alluring beauty from a Fair Folk noble. She can go into experience debt (p. 60) to gain these specialties permanently.

The wielder can have specialties from multiple uses of this Evocation, but never more than (higher of Essence or 3) — she must discard old specialties if she wishes to take on new ones while at the limit.

Resonant: Add +1 to the wielder's maximum number of specialties.

BEAST-SLAYER'S WISDOM

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Lessons of the Hunt

Experience has taught the Hungering Fangs' master much, hard-won knowledge from slaying her monstrous foes.

When the wielder uses Lessons of the Hunt, she gains a Lore background related to the enemy she defeated. The background is typically related to what kind of being it is (e.g., gods, Fair Folk, Solar Exalted), a group or culture it belongs to (e.g., Chiaroscuro, the Immaculate Order, Luna's spirit court), or any exceptional skills or powers it possesses (e.g., swordsmanship, demonic magic, Randanese thaumaturgy). She doubles 9s on Lore rolls using those backgrounds.

The knowledge gained with this Evocation doesn't belong to the wielder — rather, it's imbued in the Hungering Fangs. The wielder can't use these Lore backgrounds without them.

Reset: Once per session.

Resonant: The wielder doubles 8s on applicable Lore rolls.

SEEK THE DREADED LAIR

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: Resonant
Duration: Indefinite
Prerequisites: Beast-Slayer's Wisdom

The Hungering Fangs urge their wielder to seek out monsters in their dens.

When the wielder tracks an enemy who's powerful enough to pose a challenge to her in combat, she adds (his Essence) dice on the roll and banks her extra successes. She can add banked successes to the following:

- Awareness rolls opposing her quarry (including Join Battle rolls).
- Stealth rolls opposing her quarry.
- Threaten rolls against her quarry.
- Introduce fact or challenge fact rolls relevant to her quarry or her pursuit of him.

If the wielder is using Lessons of the Hunt from a past defeat of her quarry, she can add banked successes on attack rolls, or spend them to raise her Defense against her quarry.

Resonant: While using Lessons of the Hunt against her quarry, the wielder can also expend banked successes to add that many dice of damage on a **decisive** attack, maximum (higher of Essence or 3).

HUNTER OF MYSTERIES

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisites: Seek the Dreaded Lair

The Hungering Fangs claim their quarries' secrets, unveiling the intrigues of faerie princes and wresting forbidden knowledge away from its keepers.

When the wielder uses Lessons of the Hunt, she learns one of her enemy's secrets — whichever one is most advantageous for her to learn in that moment, or that enemy's greatest secret if none are immediately advantageous.

Awakening: This Evocation can't be purchased with experience points. Instead, it awakens for free when the wielder incapacitates an enemy who knows a secret that could be disadvantageous to her or a threat to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies. She may then use Lessons of the Hunt against him.

PREY'S STRENGTH EMBODIMENT

Cost: —(1m per mutation dot); **Mins:** Essence 2
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisites: Lessons of the Hunt

Drawing on moonsilver's protean Essence, the fangs' wielder takes on her prey's form.

When the wielder uses Lessons of the Hunt, she may take dots of mutations that reflect her prey's form in place of specialties.

A Lunar with Perfected Hybrid Interaction (**Lunars**, p. 144) can add mutations gained this way to that Charm's selection of mutations, paying two experience per mutation dot.

SLAIN LEGEND ARETE

Cost: —(3m per Charm, Evocation, or spell); **Mins:** Essence 3
Type: Permanent
Keywords: Resonant
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisites: Hunter of Mysteries, Prey's Strength Embodiment

The Hungering Fangs are stained with the blood and power of countless beasts, letting their wielder draw on the puissance of her slain prey.

When the wielder uses Lessons of the Hunt, she may gain up to (Essence) of that character's Eclipse Charms, or any other Charms or spells he knows whose prerequisites she meets. (She can't learn other types of Exalted Charms.) She can still gain specialties and mutations from Lessons of the Hunt as usual. These powers can only be used while wielding the blades.

At the Storyteller's discretion, if the defeated enemy knew an Evocation that could be used with short daiklaves, the wielder can gain that Evocation this way if she meets its prerequisites, though she can only use it with the blades.

The wielder may permanently learn Charms, Evocations, or spells accessed this way for their normal cost, paying eight experience for Eclipse Charms. She waives the experience point cost of the first such power she purchases this way.

A Lunar who uses Stolen Power Bezoar (p. 64) together with this Evocation may choose to manifest its hearthstone within the Hungering Fangs instead of herself. This doesn't use one of their hearthstone sockets — the hearthstone rises out of the moonsilver surface of one of the blades.

Resonant: The wielder can also gain native Charms of her Exalt type that relate to how she bested her quarry or that resemble her prowess. She must still meet their prerequisites, as above.

Magpie's Wing

(Moonsilver Skycutter, Artifact •••)

Vorsay Red-Veiled forged Magpie's Wing in his early days as one of Luna's Chosen, before he rose to fame as a legendary thief-king of the First Age. In his mortal life, he'd been a criminal, running contraband past the Old Realm's enforcers, and he put every smuggler's trick he'd learned into Magpie's Wing's ingenious design. More than just a weapon, its mirrored surface conceals hidden chambers, thieves' tools, and intricate mechanisms of fluid moonsilver.

The skycutter's design resembles its namesake bird, with the skycutter's three-foot blade forming its feathered wings. The stylized magpie's head bears what seems to be a hearthstone slot, socketed with a red stone — but in truth, the hearthstone is a fake, concealing a hidden compartment within the skycutter. Its actual hearthstone socket is formed by the magpie's talons, near the skycutter's grip, which will grasp a stone placed in them. Some among its wielders say it has a larcenous streak, that its metal and Essence yearn to be put to use for underhanded purposes.

Magpie's Wing accompanied Vorsay on all his storied crimes. Countless treasures disappeared into its deceptively large secret compartment: the cursed jewels of Dis, a faerie prince's hoard of souls, and most famously, the Crown of Thunders. None know how he met his end, nor what his final heist was — only that he never returned from it. Magpie's Wing remains lost with him, despite the efforts of some in the Silver Pact to retrieve it.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Medium (+12 DMG, OVW 4)

Accuracy: Close +5; Short +4; Medium +3; Long +0; Extreme -2

Tags: Lethal, Thrown (Long), Cutting, Special

Special: Magpie's Wing returns to its wielder when thrown unless she botches the roll to throw it.

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Era: The First Fracturing

Backer: Michael Brewer

Evocations of the Magpie's Wing

Magpie's Wing's Evocations center around the skycutter's mutable form and secret compartment, aiding the wielder in larcenous endeavors.

The skycutter's secret compartment is exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) for concealing an object up to the size of a hen's egg or a hearthstone within it. Upon attuning to it, the wielder awakens Corvid's Many Secrets for free.

CORVID'S MANY SECRETS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

Magpie's Wing holds more tricks than could be mastered in a lifetime.

Upon purchasing this Evocation, the wielder gains two of the following secrets. She can purchase additional secrets for one bonus point or three experience each.

Chained Talon Blade: The skycutter's wielder may separate it into two half-blades linked by a moonsilver chain, requiring a ready weapon action. It can be used as a fighting chain, but deals lethal damage and is compatible with Melee (+2 ACC; +9 DMG; +1 DEF; Lethal, Melee, Disarming, Flexible, Grappling, Reaching). In this form, it's exceptional equipment if used as a grappling hook to aid in climbing or similar tasks. It can be changed back with another ready weapon action.

Eager Accomplice Draw: Once per round, the wielder may reflexively ready Magpie's Wing. This can be used for any ready weapon action required by the artifact's Evocations.

Ever-Expanding Compartment: The hidden compartment can be expanded to take up almost the entirety of the skycutter. It can contain most objects large enough to be worn or held in one hand, although especially bulky or unwieldy objects may be too large.

Hidden Talon Trick: Magpie's Wing can be shrunk down to the size of a dagger with a ready weapon action, granting it the Concealable tag (**Exalted**, p. 588). In this form, it can be wielded as a knife (+4 ACC, +7 DMG; Lethal, Melee, Thrown (Short), Concealable). It can be changed back with another ready weapon action.

Jeweled Egg's Nest: Magpie's Wing's secret compartment can be used as an actual hearthstone slot.

Quicksilver Pinion Trick: The skycutter's wielder may remove one of its feathers with a ready weapon action, a slender shaft that can be used for many purposes. It's exceptional equipment for picking locks and for Linguistics rolls where the wielder's handwriting matters, like forgery. It can also be thrown as a dart (ACC: Close +4, Short +3, Medium +2, Long -1, Extreme -3; +7 DMG; Lethal, Thrown (Medium), Concealable, Mounted, Poisonable).

MAGPIE'S HIDDEN HOARD

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Squirrel's Cunning Technique

There's no safer hiding place than the secret chambers of Magpie's Wing.

The Lunar waives the cost of Squirrel's Cunning Technique when she uses it to conceal an object in the skycutter's hidden compartment.

COVETOUS TALON SWOOP

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Corvid's Many Secrets

Magpie's Talon moves as deftly as any thief's fingers, sowing chaos from afar.

The wielder makes a Larceny roll for pickpocketing or theft out to short range by throwing Magpie's Talon. If successful, she retrieves the stolen object, typically catching it as it ricochets into her hand. As with attacks, if the roll botches, Magpie's Talon doesn't return to the wielder's hand.

If the wielder knows a Charm that lets her steal objects or take similar Larceny actions from afar, like Magpie's Invisible Talon (**Exalted**, p. 319), she can instead use this Evocation with it to extend that Charm's range by one band. If that Charm's range isn't measured in range bands, it becomes medium range instead.

Resonant: A successful roll in combat awards one Initiative.

EXPANSIVE AVARICE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Hidden Wonders Cloak, Magpie's Hidden Hoard

Magpie's Wing has room to hold whatever its master can lay her hands on.

The Lunar waives Many-Pockets Meditation's cost when using it to store objects in the skycutter's secret compartment with Hidden Wonders Cloak. However, they can still be retrieved from the compartment by others normally. If she has the Ever-Expanding Compartment secret, she adds (Essence) to the number of objects she can store this way.

INGENUITY OF THE MAGPIE

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Covetous Talon Swoop

A tool worthy of a prince of thieves, Magpie's Wing is fit to any challenge.

The wielder adds a free full Excellency on a roll that receives an exceptional equipment bonus from Magpie's Wing

Reset: Once per scene.

GREED LINES THE NEST

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant, Resonant

Duration: Until the stolen object is retrieved

Prerequisites: Ingenuity of the Magpie

Magpie's Talon keeps a tight grip on plundered treasures, defying those come to reclaim what's rightfully theirs.

The wielder reflexively makes a special disarm gambit against something that could fit within Magpie's Wing. This isn't limited solely to weapons — anything that could be stolen with a Larceny roll can be targeted. On a successful gambit, that object is trapped within the skycutter's secret compartment before it flies back to the wielder.

The wielder can retrieve the stolen object from Magpie's Wing with a ready weapon action, but it's much harder for others. Even if they can get the skycutter away from the wielder — typically via a disarm gambit of their own — opening the hidden compartment while it's reinforced by this Evocation requires a difficulty 7 lockpicking roll or feat of strength that must be enhanced by magic. Such feats of strength require Strength 5+. In combat, each such roll costs two Initiative and can't be flurried.

If the wielder knows a Charm that lets her break the attunement of a stolen artifact, like Flashing Steel Reversal (**Lunars**, p. 192), upon successfully stealing an artifact with this Evocation she breaks that artifact's attunement at no cost.

Resonant: In combat, the compartment can't be opened against the wielder's will unless she's crashed or incapacitated.

Dissonant: This Evocation's type is Simple.

Special activation rules: A Lunar with Expansive Avarice can use Many-Pockets Meditation reflexively on a successful disarm to store the object.

Reset: Once per round.

Ajelin of Accursed Silver

(MoonSilver Daiklave, Artifact ••••)

Nafiss of Depths forged the blade Ajelin to celebrate the death of the first Ancient in the Divine Revolution, a sword that would stand as eternal proof that even the world's makers can be slain. She tempered the daiklave in the fallen titan's blood, not knowing of the dread power that lingered within it. Death's Essence tainted Ajelin, tarnishing its moonsilver blade to midnight black. As Nafiss drew it, its moonsilver flowed around her arm, becoming one with its creator as she succumbed to the blade's curse.

Nafiss turned Ajelin's direful power against the enemies of the gods, but with every victory, she lost more and more of herself to the sword. When the Divine Revolution came to a close, leaving her with no more foes to slay, she turned against her own. She cut down old allies and beloved companions, terrorizing the Chosen until at last her Circle slew her.

Fearful of the power that had corrupted Nafiss, her Circlemates sealed Ajelin away within her tomb, binding it with seven sorcerous wards. There it remained until the final days of the First Age. Inspired by memories of his past life as Nafiss, the swordsman Mabonai claimed the cursed blade. Sworn to the cause of the Solar Purge, Mabonai willingly surrendered himself to Ajelin, unleashing its terror against the Lawgivers.

Mabonai and Ajelin both vanished after the Usurpation, but the daiklave has reappeared throughout the Second Age. Every hand that's touched it has felt its curse. The outcaste Second Thunder wielded it to defend his homeland against an undead horde, but massacred his own people under Ajelin's sway. Sky Wolf killed his own

family after a faerie prince tricked him into taking up the blade, and stained the Wyld red with his revenge. The Silver Pact follows rumors of Ajelin closely, seeking to reclaim it and seal it away once again, but some would see it brought to bear against the Realm.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Medium (+3 ACC, +12 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 4)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Balanced

Hearthstone slot(s): 3. Socketed hearthstones are absorbed into Ajelin's moonsilver, rendering them immune to harmful effects that specifically target hearthstones.

Era: Dawn of the First Age

Backer: Nicholas Scott

Evocations of Ajelin

Ajelin's Evocations draw power from hatred and rage, poisoning its wielder's soul until she no longer sees herself as anything but an extension of the blade. They also strengthen the physical bond between wielder and weapon, letting Ajelin spread around her to form moon-silver armor.

When attuned, Ajelin merges with its wielder's arm and cannot be separated, rendering it impossible to disarm. The wielder is immune to crippling effects that would completely sever that arm, and can't choose to take crippling injuries that would do so. She can withdraw Ajelin's blade, leaving her hand covered in moonsilver like a clawed gauntlet. Doing so requires a ready weapon action, as does unleashing the withdrawn blade.

The wielder can release her attunement to Ajelin to separate from it, but must fight the blade's influence to do so. She must roll (Wits + Integrity) at difficulty 5. If she fails, she can't try again for the rest of the session.

Many of Ajelin's Evocations rely on its wielder's *Enmity* — her strongest Intimacy involving hatred, rage, or seeing herself as a weapon rather than a person. The Intimacy must be appropriate to the circumstances — a Defining Tie of hatred for the Realm might provide the wielder's enmity in battle against a Wyld Hunt, but not against the Fair Folk.

When Ajelin's wielder suffers Limit Break, the usual effect is replaced by Berserk Anger or Deliberate Cruelty (**Exalted**, pp. 136-137), or a comparable expression of Ajelin's curse chosen by the Storyteller. While experiencing Limit Break, she gains +1 Enmity.

AJELIN AND THE GREAT CURSE

For Exalted who don't have Limit Breaks, the Storyteller should choose an alternate effect to express this. For example, a Dragon-Blood's Great Curse might award her experience from roleplaying the effects of Ajelin's corruption, rather than her elemental temperament (**Dragon-Blooded**, p. 159).

Special: Ajelin's death-tainted curse makes it resonant with Abyssals.

ACCURSED BLADE EMBODIMENT

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: None

Calling upon Ajelin's cursed power, its wielder draws strength from hatred.

The wielder gains the following benefits:

- Ajelin gains +1 Accuracy.
- Her attacks ignore (Enmity) soak and Hardness.
- She adds (Enmity) dice of damage on **decisive** attacks against crashed enemies.
- Her Enmity's Resolve bonus increases by one.

Once the wielder has used this Evocation, she can't voluntarily weaken Intimacies that could qualify as her Enmity for the rest of the session, nor can she attempt to end her attunement to Ajelin.

Resonant: With Essence 3, the wielder can use this Evocation reflexively when she wins Join Battle. If her Enmity is a Defining Intimacy, she waives the Evocation's Willpower cost.

SHEATHED IN MOONSILVER

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Accursed Blade Embodiment

Ajelin's tarnished moonsilver spreads across its wielder's skin, encasing her in accursed armor.

The wielder gains +1 Parry and (Enmity) armored soak. Piercing attacks and similar mundane effects can't reduce or bypass this soak.

This Evocation's Willpower cost is waived while Accursed Blade Embodiment is active.

Resonant: This Evocation's soak can't be reduced or bypassed by magic.

A SWORD'S PURPOSE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Accursed Blade Embodiment

Ajelin has but one purpose: to kill.

The wielder rerolls (Enmity) dice that show failures on a **decisive** damage roll. If she deals enough damage to increase a nontrivial enemy's wound penalty, she gains motes equal to his new wound penalty. This can't grant more motes than she spent on the attack.

Resonant: This Evocation can be used after the damage roll.

MASTERING CURSED SILVER

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Last Warrior's Unity

None can defy Ajelin's curse forever, but a Lunar's affinity for moonsilver aids her in bending the blade to her will.

The Lunar gains the following benefits:

- She doesn't need to roll to end her attunement to Ajelin.
- She can withdraw or ready Ajelin reflexively.
- Accursed Blade Embodiment doesn't prevent her from voluntarily weakening Intimacies.
- Once per session, when she suffers a disadvantage because of a choice not to use violence, she rolls (higher of Essence or 3) dice and loses Limit equal to her successes.

Awakening: This Evocation awakens for free if the Lunar meets its prerequisites.

ARMORED BLADE-BEAST TRANSFORMATION**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** Resonant**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisites:** Invulnerable Moonsilver Carapace, Sheathed in Moonsilver*Ajelin's cursed metal merges with the Lunar's own armored shell.*

Sheathed With Moonsilver's armored soak stacks with Invulnerable Moonsilver Carapace's soak (**Lunars**, p. 253). The Lunar doesn't gain this benefit if she's fused her Invulnerable Moonsilver Carapace with other armor.

Resonant: The Lunar can use Invulnerable Moonsilver Carapace reflexively when she uses Accursed Blade Embodiment.

Awakening: This Evocation awakens for free if the wearer meets its prerequisites.

UNHESITATING BLADE**Cost:** 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Dissonant, Resonant**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisites:** A Sword's Purpose*Ajelin makes violence second nature to its wielder, sharpening their instincts and speeding their sword-hand.*

The wielder reflexively makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy whose Initiative is lower than (her Initiative + Enmity). She can always attack crashed enemies.

An enemy damaged by the attack is caught off guard by the wielder's deadly speed. In the next round, he can't take his turn until the tick after the wielder, regardless of his actual Initiative.

This Evocation's Willpower cost is waived if the wielder uses it simultaneously with Accursed Blade Embodiment.

Resonant: The wielder doubles her Enmity when determining if she can use this Evocation against an enemy.

Dissonant: A successful attack can't delay its target's turn by more than (Enmity) ticks.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by crashing an enemy whose Initiative was higher than the wielder's. She can't reset it if she's crashed.

HARBINGER OF SLAUGHTER**Cost:** 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Dissonant, Resonant**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisites:** Unhesitating Blade*Hatred hones Ajelin's edge, sharp enough to cut down even the enemies of the gods.*

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have 12+ Initiative. She adds (Enmity) dice of damage to a **decisive** attack, and also converts up to (Enmity) attack roll extra successes to dice of damage. If this incapacitates a nontrivial enemy, the wielder rolls Join Battle with (Enmity) non-Charm bonus dice.

Resonant: The wielder adds up to (Enmity x2) extra successes as dice of damage.

Dissonant: The Initiative awarded by the Join Battle roll is halved, rounded up.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by dealing 7+ **decisive** damage to a nontrivial enemy.

LIVING WEAPON PERFECTION**Cost:** —(+5m, 1ahl); **Mins:** Essence 4**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** Resonant**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisites:** Harbinger of Slaughter, Sheathed in Moonsilver*Ajelin's moonsilver seeps through skin and burrows into muscle, rooting itself in its wielder's flesh as she becomes the perfect sword.*

Resonant: Only characters resonant with Ajelin can awaken this Evocation.

The wielder may pay a surcharge of five motes and one aggravated health level when she uses Accursed Blade Embodiment to gain the following benefits:

- She suffers a Limit Break appropriate to Ajelin's curse (p. 100) until the end of the scene, even if she doesn't normally have Limit Breaks. This doesn't reset her Limit.
- She adds that Evocation's damage bonus on all **decisive** attacks.
- She adds (Enmity) to her base Initiative and to the amount of Initiative she receives for crashing enemies.

- She's immune to crippling effects.
- Influence that would dissuade her from battle or that opposes her Enmity is unacceptable (**Exalted**, p. 220) and must be rejected.

A Lunar with Mastering Cursed Silver may roll (Wits + Integrity) at difficulty 7 when she uses this Evocation. If successful, she doesn't enter Limit Break.

Moonreaver (Moonsilver Grimscythe, Artifact ●●●)

The assassin Bright Withering was among the most reviled conspirators of the so-called Shadow Deliberative, a political coalition opposed to the Deliberative that ruled the Old Realm in that era. While most in the Shadow Deliberative played subtle games of intrigue and politics, Bright Withering took the direct approach, assassinating Exalted whose governance they deemed a threat to the Old Realm. None today remember whether they were caught by the Deliberative or betrayed by their co-conspirators, but their punishment is still legend. Using powerful sorcery and the greatest of Lunar witchcraft, the eldest of Luna's Chosen fettered Bright Withering in moonsilver and cast them out beyond existence, exiling them to a moon that might have been, but never was.

For centuries, Bright Withering knew only cold, darkness, and rage. At first, escape consumed their every waking moment. They explored the othermoon's alien landscapes and eerie caverns until they knew every inch, but found no escape. They sought counsel and mystical wisdom from their past lives, but none could help them. Finally, Bright Withering realized why they had failed. They were not an explorer or a mystic; they were Bright Withering, the killer. What they needed was a weapon.

Bright Withering had slipped their moonsilver fetters in the second century of their exile, but there wasn't enough metal for the weapon they envisioned. They carved their scythe-blade from the othermoon's pale stone instead, making sparing use of moonsilver to line its cutting edge and fill in cracks and flaws in the stone. At the end of their long toil, they took the grimscythe in hand, swung it through the air, and found themselves back in Creation.

In the days to come, the blood of their enemies would stain both Moonreaver's edge and the othermoon's bone-white sands. Bright Withering ultimately fell, slain by a victim's Dawn Caste mate amid the chaos of the Old Realm's fall, but not before they saw their

vendetta completed against those who'd imprisoned them. They were entombed alongside their grimscythe, which is said to still remain undisturbed.

Moonreaver seems a crude weapon, created by an inexperienced artificer without workshop or tools. The stone of its scythe-blade is rough and uneven, while its moonsilver haft is knobbed and uneven in places, like a gnarled tree branch. At times, the moonsilver's polished surface reflects the othermoon, rather than reality, exuding a cold that rimes the grimscythe with ice.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Heavy (+1 ACC, +14 DMG, +0 DEF, OVW 5)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Piercing, Reaching, Two-Handed

Hearthstone slot(s): 2

Era: Broken Blade Concordat

Backer: Scott Morris

Evocations of Moonreaver

When swung by an attuned wielder, Moonreaver seems to cut through space, briefly revealing the othermoon's vistas before the tears in reality close. Its Evocations unleash freezing winds through these rifts and banish things to the othermoon.

Upon attuning to Moonreaver, the wielder awakens Cold Breath of the Moon for free.

COLD BREATH OF THE MOON

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

The othermoon's icy winds are loosed into Creation as Moonreaver cuts the boundary between worlds.

The othermoon's chill adds one die of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage to an attack. If it deals any **decisive** damage or 5+ **withering** damage, it inflicts a -2 environmental penalty on all rolls its target takes until the end of his next turn.

This penalty doesn't stack. Instead, for enemies affected by a subsequent use, the penalty doesn't expire at the end of their next turn, but at the end of the turn he takes after that one.

Resonant: The penalty is -3.

LOST TO THE NIGHT**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Resonant**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisites:** Cold Breath of the Moon

Moonreaver's master banishes obstructions with a contemptuous stroke.

Bringing Moonreaver down on a mundane object, the wielder banishes it to the othermoon. This Evocation can't be used on objects that are too large for the wielder to lift or wear, or on objects being used, worn, or carried by someone. The wielder can choose to banish objects temporarily, in which case they return at the end of the scene, or send them permanently to the othermoon. Objects are exposed to the othermoon's freezing cold while banished, and may return the worse for wear.

The Storyteller may require an (Intelligence + Melee) roll to banish objects that are especially durable or narratively significant, like a locked door in the way of an important goal. The difficulty is half that of a feat of demolition to destroy the object, rounded up (**Exalted**, p. 231). Such objects can't be banished permanently.

The wielder can use this Evocation reflexively when she kills an enemy to banish his corpse. No roll is necessary, though especially powerful or narratively significant characters' corpses can only be banished temporarily.

Resonant: With an Essence 3 repurchase, the wielder can permanently banish objects significant enough to require a roll. Alternatively, she can temporarily banish artifacts and other magical objects, rolling against difficulty (Artifact + 2), or a similar difficulty for non-artifacts.

Special activation rules: This Charm can be flurried.

RIMED BY LUNAR ICE**Cost:** —(+3m); **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** Dual, Resonant**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisites:** Cold Breath of the Moon

Few can endure the othermoon's killing cold for as long as Bright Withering did.

The wielder may pay a three-mote surcharge when she uses Cold Breath of the Moon against an enemy still suffering the penalty from a previous use of that Evocation. This increases the **decisive** damage bonus to +2 dice and the **withering** bonus to +(higher of Essence or 3) dice. An enemy damaged by the attack loses one Initiative.

Resonant: The wielder gains the Initiative lost by her enemy after she resets to base.

FREEDOM IS A SCYTHE**Cost:** 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Dissonant, Uniform**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisites:** Lost to the Night, Rimed by Lunar Ice

Moonreaver's master cuts a path through the othermoon, darting between worlds to strike.

The wielder vanishes into the othermoon before reappearing up to two range bands horizontally in any direction. This counts as her movement action for the round. If the wielder uses this Evocation while within close range of any enemies, she must reflexively roll to disengage to gain its benefits.

If the wielder reappears within close range of an enemy, she may make a **withering** or **decisive** attack against him. If he's affected by Cold Breath of the Moon, its penalty subtracts from his Defense, soak, and Hardness against the attack.

Even brief jaunts through the othermoon can be perilous. The wielder suffers one die of lethal damage, ignoring Hardness, from exposure to the cold. If she's damaged, she's penalized as per Cold Breath of the Moon.

Dissonant: Cold Breath of the Moon doesn't penalize enemies' Defense against the attack.

MOONLIT HORIZON REAPER**Cost:** 5m, 1i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Dissonant, Perilous, Resonant**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisites:** Freedom Is A Scythe

Fleeting rifts trail behind Moonreaver's edge like an afterimage, a flickering ribbon of otherworldly moonlight.

The wielder gains the following benefits:

- The cold that emanates from the rifts is an environmental hazard with difficulty (Strength) and Damage 1L/round, extending out to short range from the wielder. Those damaged by it are penalized as per Cold Breath of the Moon.
- Enemies who hit the wielder with an unarmed attack or spend a round grappling her suffer one die of **decisive** damage, ignoring Hardness. Those damaged by it are penalized as per Cold Breath of the Moon.

MOONREAPER'S PENALTIES

The penalties inflicted by *Beneath a Strange Sky* and *Moonlit Horizon Reaper* count for Evocations that gain additional benefits against enemies penalized by *Cold Breath of the Moon*.

- Against enemies affected by *Cold Breath of the Moon*, damage dice added by subsequent uses of that Evocation are converted to automatic successes.
- Arrows vanish into the rifts, scattering across the othermoon. When an enemy makes a ranged attack against her, 1s on the attack roll subtract successes.

Resonant: On the wielder's turn, she can reflexively banish all trivial enemies within close range to the othermoon, where they're incapacitated by cold almost immediately. She may choose to have any survivors return once the scene ends.

Dissonant: The wielder must pay one Initiative on each of her subsequent turns to maintain this Evocation.

BENEATH A STRANGE SKY

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: *Moonlit Horizon Reaper*

With a whirling slash, the walls of the world fall away, leaving Moonreaver's master and her foe in the strange sands of Bright Withering's durance.

The wielder can use this Evocation after crashing an enemy affected by *Cold Breath of the Moon*. Add *Cold Breath of the Moon*'s penalty to the Initiative awarded by the attack. As she strikes, the scythe cuts open a rift to the othermoon, drawing in both the wielder and the crashed enemy, along with any trivial enemies within short range the wielder wishes to bring along. They appear in the otherworld's pale sands, the same distance from each other as they originally were.

The combatants arrive in a wide-open stretch of the moonscape's terrain, letting them move freely across it. At the Storyteller's discretion, it may include difficult terrain — craters, rock formations, etc. — or other natural features. Exposure to its freezing cold is an environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 4L/round. Those damaged by it are penalized as per *Cold Breath*

of the Moon. The wielder isn't immune to this. The Storyteller shouldn't roll for trivial characters; they're incapacitated automatically by the hazard.

The wielder and her foe remain on the othermoon until this Evocation's duration ends, at which point the rift reopens, returning them to where they were. It's up to the wielder whether trivial foes return. The wielder can't end this Evocation prematurely unless her enemy is incapacitated, or if neither wishes to continue fighting. Her enemy can likewise end it by incapacitating her. He can also escape by withdrawing from combat (**Exalted**, p. 199) to escape through a lingering echo of the rift he was caught in.

Others can't perceive or interact with those banished to the othermoon, or vice versa. However, magic like *Silver Curtain Parted* (**Lunars**, p. 249) can be used to follow the wielder through the rift. Note that the othermoon isn't normally accessible by such magic; the rift cut open by this Evocation is necessary to make it possible.

Moonlit Horizon Reaper's environmental hazard doesn't stack with the othermoon's. Instead, while using that Evocation, the othermoon's hazard gains +1 difficulty and Damage and the wielder becomes immune to it.

Resonant: With an Essence 5 repurchase, the wielder can also bring allies within short range of her to the othermoon along with her, paying a surcharge of five Initiative per ally and one Willpower to do so.

Dissonant: This Evocation is Supplemental and must be declared before the attack roll.

Night Hag's Braid

((Moon|Silver Direlash, Artifact •••))

Long ago, when the Old Realm still was young, a witch came to a faerie queen's palace. A sorcerer and spirit-binder, *Thousand Rainbow Petals* had come to the Court of Unlit Candles as an emissary of the Exalted host, seeking to pact with the court's leader, Kethara of Sere Autumn. Kethara welcomed them as an honored guest, giving great consideration to the Lunar envoy's words.

Therein lay the trap. Kethara was obsession personified, and sought to claim the Lunar as her champion. She hid words of binding within the terms of their treaty, twisting the pact to trick *Thousand Rainbow Petals* into swearing eternal service to her.

It might have worked, had *Thousand Rainbow Petals* been a lesser witch. Not long after their arrival to the

court, they'd unraveled the court's ever-shifting web of alliances, vendettas, and rivalries. The Lunar had made other bargains with Kethara's enemies, and learned of her schemes long in advance. When the two of them swore to their pact, it was the queen who was bound, for Thousand Rainbow Petals had changed the oath's terms at the last minute.

As punishment for Kethara's treachery, Thousand Rainbow Petals plucked every hair from her head. Braiding the faerie queen's hairs together with wire-thin lengths of moonsilver, the Lunar created the Night Hag's Braid, a trophy of Kethara's defeat and a warning to others who would cross the witch. Having exacted their justice, Thousand Rainbow Petals departed, leaving Kethara to the mercies of her own court.

The Night Hag's Braid has had many masters since Thousand Rainbow Petals. Lost in the Usurpation, the Silver Pact discovered it by chance when the Lunar Dances-Between-Raindrops infiltrated the fortress-manse of the direlash's current owner, the warlord-savant Taharu Voja. Since then, it's been passed down among the Pact's mystics, shamans, and sorcerers.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Light (+5 ACC, +10 DMG, +0 DEF, OVW 3)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Disarming, Grappling, Flexible, Reaching

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Era: The Eight Directions Embassy

Backer: Brian Rivers

Evocations of the Night Hag's Braid

This direlash's Evocations curse enemies with a fae delirium that echoes Kethara's curse, sapping their strength to empower the direlash's wielder. Its Evocations also aid sorcerers who rely on spells in combat.

Upon attuning to the Night Hag's Braid, the wielder awakens Accursed Lash for free.

ACCURSED LASH

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Psyche, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

A feverish delirium afflicts those scourged by the Night Hag's Braid.

The wielder rerolls up to (Essence) 6s on a **withering** or **decisive** damage roll. If she deals 3+ **decisive** damage or crashes her target with a **withering** attack, she curses him for the rest of the scene.

When a cursed enemy makes an (Attribute + Ability) roll, up to (Essence) 6s subtract successes. 6s also count as 1s for determining if the roll botches (**Exalted**, p. 186). The cursed enemy also suffers -1 Resolve and Guile. This Psyche effect can't be resisted with Willpower.

Resonant: The wielder adds an automatic success on the attack roll.

NIGHT HAG'S FEAST

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Accursed Lash, Terrestrial Circle Sorcery

The Night Hag's Braid draws power from the fevered visions of those under its curse.

When a cursed enemy's roll is penalized by his 6s, the wielder gains one *curse point* for each success subtracted from his roll, up to a maximum of (Essence + Occult) total. She can spend curse points on spells as though they were sorcerous motes. At the end of the scene, all curse points are lost.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, the wielder can spend curse points as though they were motes to pay the costs of this weapon's Evocations and of any magic that enhances an Occult roll.

A third purchase, also at Essence 2, lets the wielder spend four curse points in place of one Willpower for one of the above effects or for spells.

FEVER DREAM ARCANA

Cost: —(+2i or +4i); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Accursed Lash, Shadow-Hands Invocation

A fearsome witch-weapon, the Night Hag's Braid channels its wielder's sorcerous power.

The Lunar can pay a two-Initiative surcharge when she uses Shadow-Hands Invocation (**Lunars**, p. 216) to flurry a Shape Sorcery action with an attack.

With Shadow-Hands Invocation's repurchase, the Lunar may pay a four-Initiative surcharge to extend this benefit to the scene-long version of the Charm.



Resonant: The Initiative cost is waived if the Lunar flurries a Shape Sorcery action with a distract or disarm gambit. This lets her use this effect while crashed. It isn't compatible with the scene-long version of Shadow-Hands Invocation.

WITCH-SCOURGE TERROR

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Accursed Lash, any one Charm this Evocation enhances

The Lunar witch can weave many curses into the Night Hag's Braid.

The Lunar can use Night Hag's Braid instead of touching an enemy with the following Charms (**Lunars**, pp. 207, 232-233), gaining additional benefits when she does so:

Devil's-Eye Brand: Once per day, the Lunar may waive this Charm's Willpower cost. Against a cursed enemy, the difficulty of the required gambit is reduced to 3. Each success subtracted from his opposed roll by the curse increases the transformation's length by one hour (or one day, with the Charm's Essence 3 effect).

Insidious Lunar Transformation: This Charm's health level cost is waived. Against a cursed enemy, the difficulty of the required gambit is reduced to 3. Each success subtracted from his opposed roll by the curse increases the transformation's length by one day.

Enemies affected by either Charm count as being cursed for Evocations like Baleful Omen Strike.

BALEFUL OMEN STRIKE

Cost: 3m, 1wp, 0+ curse points; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Night Hag's Feast (x3)

The Night Hag's Braid lashes the cursed with ferocious intensity, bringing their fever dreams to an end.

When the wielder makes a **decisive** attack against a cursed enemy, she adds dice equal to her banked curse points on the damage roll or on a gambit's Initiative roll. She can spend curse points to add that many additional dice. On gambits, each curse point spent this way also counts as one Initiative toward the gambit's cost.

If the wielder incapacitates her target, she's refunded all curse points spent on the attack. Against a nontrivial enemy, she banks (his Essence) additional curse points.

Resonant: The wielder can use this Evocation to make a **decisive** attack while crashed. She doesn't add the damage bonus for banked curse points, only those that she spends. She must spend at least one curse point. This attack doesn't include or reset her Initiative.

Dissonant: This Evocation's base damage bonus can't exceed five dice, and the wielder can't spend more than five curse points to add additional damage.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by banking 3+ curse points from a single roll.

NIGHTMARE OUBLIETTE AFFLICTION

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Baleful Omen Strike

Deepening her enemies' delirium, the direlash's master traps them in a waking nightmare.

Resonant: Only characters resonant with this weapon can awaken this Evocation.

The wielder gains the following benefits:

- Overwhelmed by delirium, cursed enemies must flurry just to take a single action on their turn. They can take actions that can't be flurried, like using Simple Charms, but still suffer the penalties for flurrying.
- Landing an attack against a cursed enemy with Night Hag's Braid or a spell grants one curse point, maximum one per tick.
- When the wielder takes a Shape Sorcery action, she gains an additional sorcerous mote for each cursed enemy within short range.
- Cursed enemies count as having a Major Tie of fear to the wielder. If they already have such a Tie, its intensity increases to Defining.

Fond Remembrance

(Moonsilver Reaper Daiklave, Artifact •••••)

When the behemoth Entalion broke free of its imprisonment in Zen-Mu and escaped into Creation, it was greeted by the sorcerer-swordsman Kindu Slays-the-Cloud. The

grotesque beast of coiling flesh fell easily to the Dawn Caste's blade — but that was not Entalion, only his host. Formless and immaterial, Entalion hid itself in Kindu's daiklave, biding its time until it could find another host. Its opportunity came when the Solar returned home to his family. As his husband, Melodious Flame, helped relieve Kindu of his arms, Entalion crept into the mortal's mind. It rooted there, feeding on Melodious Flame's memories until nothing of him remained.

When Kindu learned what had happened, he fell into a rage beyond all measure. With dread sorceries of world-shaking power, he ripped Entalion from Melodious Flame's mind and nailed it to the sky. But for all his power, he could not restore what had been taken from his beloved. Desperate, he summoned the demon-smith Ligier, who is the green sun of Hell itself, and demanded a way to return Melodious Flame's memories.

Ever eager to demonstrate his prowess, Ligier set to work forging a moonsilver blade, harnessing the metal's affinity for insight and madness. But the demon warned Kindu of his craft's cost: the only way for the Solar to win back his past was to sacrifice the future, tempering the daiklave in his children's blood. Already stricken with grief, Kindu could not bear another loss. Instead, he ensorcelled three cows, transforming them into simulacra of his children and offering them to Ligier. If the demon-smith noticed this deception, he spoke not of it.

As Kindu lay the blade against Melodious Flame's brow, his beloved finally stirred from his insensate stupor. He thought nothing of Ligier's warning, certain that he'd outwitted the demon with his sorcerous deception. But as time went on, Melodious Flame grew more and more troubled by his memories. To be sure, they were memories of the life he'd lived, seen through his eyes... but they were not his.

When at last Melodious Flame revealed this to Kindu, the Solar realized what he had done. Fond Remembrance did not restore memories — it created them. He had damned Melodious Flame to an existence as a hollow parody of himself, cast in the mold of Kindu's perception of him. Their story ended in tragedy, and Fond Remembrance was cast into the sea. The Silver Pact has explored the ocean's depths in search of it, as have others who've heard the blade's legend, but none yet have found it.

Fond Remembrance has a curving blade of moonsilver, ornamented with etchings of flowers inlaid with petals of blue jade. Its hilt is wrapped in blood ape leather, the only hint to its demonic origins. Its name is engraved upon its pommel, in commemoration of the purpose for which it was forged.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Medium (+3 ACC, +12 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 4)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Balanced

Hearthstone slot(s): 2

Era: Dreams of the First Age

Backer: Benjamin Bowley-Bryant

Evocations of Fond Remembrance

Fond Remembrance's wielder can alter memories with *false memory gambits*. They have a difficulty of the target's base Resolve. Success lets the wielder insert herself into one of the target's memories, comparable in length to the events of a single scene. She can either choose a memory of a specific occurrence that she's aware of, or provide a general description — e.g., “a memory from adolescence” or “a memory about his neighbor.” Memories of the current scene can't be altered.

If successful, the wielder's player briefly narrates her actions and their consequences within the altered memory. Alternatively, she can replace someone already in the memory, reenacting their actions. The target sees her filling the same role as whoever she replaced — parent, friend, schoolyard bully. The memory rises to the target's mind with uncanny clarity, making him aware of the wielder's seeming presence in his past.

If a character's memory has been erased by magic, a false memory gambit can fill in the blank with a reconstructed memory. The memory is based on the wielder's recollection of the event, or her understanding of what occurred if she wasn't there. The wielder can make changes as above.

Changing memories doesn't change the target's Intimacies — his emotions remain unaltered, even if he no longer understands why he feels that way. Likewise, alterations to one memory won't affect others — if the wielder kills her target's mother in a memory, he'll remember both his mother's death and her life thereafter.

False memory gambits don't force targets to believe in the implanted memory — if it's too inconsistent with their other memories or simply too implausible, they may believe it's somehow been distorted or tampered with. Alcohol and drugs are often the first explanation to come to mind, though some may suspect the intervention of spirits, sorcerers, or the like.

A character who uncovers evidence that contradicts a false memory can pay five Willpower to remember the

true event for one scene. If the evidence relates to one of his Intimacies, the cost becomes (5 – Intimacy) instead. Once the scene ends, he forgets both the real memory and the fact that it was altered.

This alteration is a Psyche effect. It can also be undone by magic that weakens or removes Derangements, for which it counts as Major. If its effective intensity is reduced to Minor by such magic, the Willpower cost to temporarily resist it is lowered by one.

HEARTFELT MEMORY FEINT

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Psyche, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

As memories change, feelings follow.

A successful false memory gambit also instills an Intimacy related to the change. For example, if the wielder replaces the target's father in a fond childhood memory, she could instill a Tie to herself based on whatever emotions he feels for his father. This can strengthen or weaken existing Intimacy, subject to the usual requirements (**Exalted**, p. 215).

This influence can be resisted like other instill rolls (**Exalted**, p. 219), but enemies who do so in combat lose (wielder's Essence) Initiative.

Resonant: The wielder can use this Evocation reflexively after the gambit's attack roll, but before the damage roll.

FALSE LIFE MONOLOGUE

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous, Psyche, Resonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Heartfelt Memory Feint

Having tailored her enemy's past to her needs, Fond Remembrance's master need only say the right words to break him.

The wielder's social influence treats any Intimacy related to a false memory as a Principle of belief in it. In combat, enemies who spend Willpower to resist influence that leverages such Intimacies lose (wielder's Essence) Initiative.

Resonant: Once per scene, when the wielder succeeds on an influence roll against a nontrivial character that's supported by such an Intimacy, she gains one Willpower.

FALSE MEMORIES

Evocations like Shattered Mosaic Reconstruction that refer to false memories only include those the wielder has created with Fond Remembrance, not any other magic.

RECOLLECTION'S EDGE

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dissonant, Psyche, Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Heartfelt Memory Feint

With a deft stroke, Fond Remembrance's wielder alters her foes' recollection of events.

The wielder makes a **withering** attack with double 9s on the damage roll. If she crashes an enemy, she may inflict the effects of a false memory gambit by paying its Initiative cost.

Resonant: If the wielder doesn't crash her enemy but still deals 5+ **withering** damage, she can still inflict a false memory, but must make an Initiative roll as per the gambit.

Dissonant: The wielder can't double more than (lower of Essence or Strength) 9s. She must make an Initiative roll to inflict the false memory.

SHATTERED MOSAIC RECONSTRUCTION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Recollection's Edge

Once Fond Remembrance's victim begins to believe in one memory, he opens his mind to more.

When the wielder makes a false memory gambit against an enemy with an Intimacy related to a false memory, the gambit's Initiative cost is reduced by (Intimacy). This includes Intimacies created by Heartfelt Memory Feint, instilled with social influence, formed voluntarily by the target, and so on.

SCARS OF THE PAST

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Heartfelt Memory Feint, Nightmare Scar Memento

The wounds left by Fond Remembrance are nothing compared to the damage of one's past.

The Lunar gains the benefits of Nightmare Scar Memento (**Lunars**, pp. 270-271) against characters with false memories. False memories created with All Your Yesterdays are severe enough to impose Major Ties of fear. The Lunar may suppress this or resume it reflexively.

NEVER FORGET ME

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: False Life Monologue

Fond Remembrance leaves memories that last long after the physical wounds are healed.

Resisting false memories becomes more difficult for characters with Intimacies related to them. Resisting with Willpower when they encounter evidence requires a Decision Point. They must cite an Intimacy related to the evidence, which must equal or exceed the intensity of the memory's Intimacy.

CUTTING REMINISCENCE

Cost: 5m, 3i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant, Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Never Forget Me, Shattered Mosaic Reconstruction

Fond Remembrance cuts deep, wounding body and mind.

The wielder makes a false memory gambit, adding her attack roll extra successes as dice on the Initiative roll. The gambit's Initiative roll also deals **decisive** damage, even if it doesn't meet the gambit's difficulty.

If the attack hits, the wielder resets to base Initiative instead of paying the gambit's Initiative cost, but she can't use this Evocation if she doesn't have enough Initiative to pay that cost without crashing herself.

Dissonant: The wielder can't add more than (Manipulation) attack roll extra successes as dice.

ALL YOUR YESTERDAYS

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant, Decisive-only, Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Cutting Reminiscence

With a single cut, the past is rewritten.

The wielder makes a special false memory gambit. The consequences of any actions she takes within that memory persist throughout all memories thereafter. If the wielder kills an enemy's mother, she will remain dead in his memories of subsequent events. Likewise, if the memory establishes that something occurred in the past, memories of previous events change to reflect that event having occurred.

This Evocation can potentially alter vast swathes of an enemy's life. Changes generally focus on the direct consequences of the wielder's actions, and on any indirect consequences that have a significant impact on the victim's Intimacies. For instance, if the wielder inserts a memory of her killing a victim's mother, he might lose all memory of his beloved wife, to whom his mother introduced him. At the Storyteller's discretion, the wielder may perform more extensive or precise changes by increasing the gambit's difficulty by 1-3.

Affected characters can still spend Willpower to temporarily recover memories, but doing so only restores their memory of a single scene, not all of their changed memories. The Psyche effect counts as a Defining Derangement for magic capable of healing them.

If the wielder uses Heartfelt Memory Feint to enhance this gambit, it instills a Major Intimacy that reflects the person he would have become had the false past been true, like a Tie of grief to a slain mother. It can't be resisted with Willpower.

Special activation rules: The wielder can use Cutting Reminiscence reflexively with this Evocation, applying its effect to the gambit.

Dissonant: Characters who are dissonant with Fond Remembrance can't awaken this Evocation.

UNSHAKABLE BELIEF AFFLICTION

Cost: 10m, 1wp (5m, 1wp); **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Psyche, Resonant

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: All Your Yesterdays

The difference between belief and illusion means little before Fond Remembrance's edge.

Resonant: Only characters who are resonant with Fond Remembrance can awaken this Evocation.

The wielder can use this Evocation when she strengthens one of a character's Intimacies related to a false memory to Defining intensity. Until that false memory's Psyche effect is broken, that Intimacy can't be weakened or altered.

If the wielder raised the Intimacy to Defining with Heartfelt Memory Feint, this Evocation costs only five motes, one Willpower.

Reset: This Evocation can only be used against a character once per story.

HISTORY REWRITTEN

Cost: 25m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Psyche, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Unshakable Belief Affliction

Striking at the past itself, False Remembrance's master carves out her place in history.

Resonant: Only characters who are resonant with Fond Remembrance can awaken this Evocation.

The wielder makes a false memory gambit against any number of characters within (Essence) range bands. For mortals, this extends to (Essence x5) miles. She can choose to exempt characters from the effect. The gambit's difficulty is the highest Resolve among all targets that are present in the scene.

Rather than changing each target's memories individually, the wielder alters their memories to indicate that she took some action in that region's past: rescuing a lost child, fending off a raiding warband, murdering a prince. Their memories are adjusted to reflect the occurrence and consequences of this event, as per All Your Yesterdays. The wielder can alter significantly more than a single scene of memory, affecting spans of memory comparable in length to a story instead.

The wielder can use this Evocation outside of combat, but can only affect mortals when she does so. Instead of making a gambit, she rolls (Manipulation + Melee) against the Resolve of all targets.

Reset: Once per story.

SORROWFUL DEPARTURE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Mind-Blanking Fear Technique, Never Forget Me

When the pain of parting is too much to bear, Fond Remembrance offers the mercy of a clean cut.

When a character spends Willpower to see through a false memory, the Lunar can reflexively use Mind-Blanking Fear Technique (**Lunars**, p. 226) to erase all his memories of her, real and fake. This Evocation doesn't alert the Lunar to the fact that the character resisted.

Against trivial characters, the Charm's cost is waived and it succeeds automatically.

The Shifter's Skin

(Moonsilver Chain Shirt, Artifact ●●)

Kintai Shatterstep devoted herself to making an art of shapeshifting, flowing between forms with a dancer's grace. This virtuoso talent made her a master of infiltration and subterfuge, clad in stolen faces and the skins of beasts. Those who stood against her found their kingdoms and armies collapsing from within, undone by sabotage and devilment.

The Shifter's Skin was born of Kintai's ordeal, infiltrating the citadel of the Seven Tyrants of Bruhn to sow the seeds of their downfall. But the tyrants were more prepared than she knew — she was found, and forced to flee into the labyrinth of the Ashknell Forest. She clambered through trees in a squirrel's shape, tunneled beneath the earth as a badger, and took to the air on a larch's wings, but it wasn't enough. The keen-eyed tyrants pursued her no matter what shape she took, striking her again and again with arrows that spread rot through her flesh.

As midnight fell, Kintai finally escaped her pursuers, but she knew her cursed wounds were fatal. In a final act of defiance, the master shapeshifter cast off her skin like a serpent's scales, stripping away the rot that consumed her as she drew her last breath. Her Circle retrieved her remains to entomb them, but kept her cast-off skin, reinforcing it with moonsilver and forging it into armor as mutable as Kintai herself. It's been passed down through the Silver Pact since then, a faithful companion to those who would match Kintai's skill in shapeshifting.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Light (Soak +5, Hardness 4, Mobility Penalty -0)

Tags: Concealable, Silent

Hearthstone slot(s): 1

Era: Fall of the Bruhnian Heptarchy

Backer: Kolbey Araujo

Evocations of the Shifter's Skin

The Shifter's Skin's Evocations bolster its wielder's shapeshifting prowess, enhancing many Lunar Charms that involve shapeshifting.

The Skin's wearer reduces the cost of shifting into animal shapes by one mote. This includes Charms like Emerald Grasshopper Form.

Non-Lunars: This artifact's listed Evocations are unsuitable to non-Lunars. Such characters might instead awaken Evocations that grant them limited animalistic shapeshifting and upgrade their native Charms in ways that expand on that shapeshifting. Alternatively, characters who already have some form of transformation, like an Infernal's Devil-Body, could awaken Evocations that upgrade it with bestial power.

EVER-CHANGING HUNT

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: None

Drawing on the Shifter's Skin's mercurial nature, the Lunar transforms her sacred hunt.

The Lunar temporarily gains a single Lunar Charm that lets her take shapes, either by expanding how she can perform sacred hunts or other means. She must meet its prerequisites, but if it requires any Charms that also let her take shapes, she can substitute another Charm that does so. For example, if she chooses Face-Taker's Gaze, she may use Debt of Borrowed Skin instead of Whispering Heart Revelation to meet its prerequisites.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by learning the chosen Charm normally. The Lunar may incur experience debt to do so and waives training times.

Awakening: This Charm can't be bought with experience points. It awakens for free when the Lunar upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy in the course of a sacred hunt.

SHIFTER'S CLAW STRIKE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Drawing strength from the countless predatory shapes the Shifter's Skin has known, the Lunar hones her own claws.

When the Skin's wearer attacks with an animal shape's natural weapon or a natural weapon granted or enhanced by mutations, a **withering** attack adds up to (Strength) extra successes to its Overwhelming, in addition to raw damage. **Decisive** attacks add one die of damage. The total cost of any Charms whose Protean effects apply on the attack is reduced by (Essence/2, rounded up).

Resonant: Once per scene, if the wearer uses this Evocation on the same tick she shifts into the animal shape or gains the mutation to attack, her enemy must roll (Wits + Awareness) against her attack roll. If he fails, it becomes a surprise attack, inflicting -2 Defense.

STOLEN SKINS UNSHED

Cost: -(1wp); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Life of the Hummingbird

Binding her borrowed faces to the Shifter's Skin, the Lunar effects a more lasting deception

Life of the Hummingbird's duration becomes one day. It receives this artifact's cost discount. The Lunar can pay one Willpower to imprint a borrowed shape on the armor, extending its duration to indefinite and letting her leave the shape without ending Life of the Hummingbird. She can imprint up to (higher of Essence or 3) shapes.

If the Lunar has Life of the Hummingbird's repurchase, she can use it whenever she fulfills the condition of a Charm that grants a new kind of sacred hunt, but didn't declare a sacred hunt in advance or doesn't qualify to take the shape for some other reason (like being caught cheating when using Argent Trickster's Rook).

MERCURIAL PREDATOR TRANSFORMATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Quicksilver Second Face, Shifter's Claw Strike

The Lunar is a blur of beasts in battle, shifting between shapes with each strike.

When the Lunar uses Quicksilver Second Face to enter an animal form and attack on the same tick, she adds +2 to the Initiative awarded by a **withering** damage roll or to her base Initiative after resetting with a **decisive** attack.

SHAPE-DANCER'S DEFENSE

Cost: -(+1wp); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Ever-Evolving Defense, Mercurial Predator Transformation

The Lunar evades harm with a well-timed transformation, ducking beneath a blow as she shrinks into a cat or fending off blades with an elk's antlers.

The Lunar can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to activate Quicksilver Second Face after an attack roll against her.

Resonant: The Lunar may waive the surcharge once per day.

CHRYSLIS-SELF EVOLUTION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Constant Quicksilver Rearrangement, Mercurial Predator Transformation, Shape-Dancer's Defense

Shifting between skins with effortless grace, the Lunar attains the pinnacle of formless perfection.

The Skin's wearer gains the following benefits while using Constant Quicksilver Transformation:

- In animal shapes, the armor's Hardness increases by (Essence).
- Mercurial Predator Transformation's bonus increases to +3.
- The Protean discount from Shifter's Claw Strike can be applied to Initiative costs as well as mote costs. If this reduces a Charm's Initiative cost to zero, it loses the Perilous keyword, letting the Lunar use it while crashed.
- If the Lunar renews Constant Quicksilver Rearrangement at the end of its duration, she waives its Willpower cost.

Shadow Moth Raiment

(Moonsilver Silken Armor, Artifact ••••)

The Azure Dawn Players are a famed troupe of traveling actors in the Hundred Kingdoms, performers to many of the region's sundry princes and queens. Unbeknownst to their audience, the troupe is also a secret sect of White Veil stylists, using performances as a front for covert assassinations. They do so in the name of unifying the Hundred Kingdoms, the unrealized ambition of their long-ago founder, grandmaster Ondari Witherroot. None among the troupe today realize that Ondari was one of Luna's Chosen, but their nigh-religious devotion to her is no less for it.

The Shadow Moth Raiment is the troupe's most sacred relic of Ondari. It's a cape-like cloak of charcoal silk, embroidered with moths — her spirit shape — in moon-silver wire. None in the troupe today are able to attune to it; four strong players guard the ark that contains it at all times. They would fight to the last of them in the mantle's defense, but might give it to one who can convince them that she's Ondari Witherroot reborn.

Attunement: 5m; **Type:** Light (Soak +5, Hardness 4, Mobility Penalty –0)

Tags: Silent

Hearthstone slot(s): None

Era: The Hundred Thrones War

Backer: Robert “Jefepato” Dall

Evocations of the Shadow Moth Raiment

While attuned, black-winged moths occasionally fly forth from the Shadow Moth Raiment's folds. Its Evocations mislead and misdirect enemies with deceptive movements, feints, and footwork, some using the armor's moths to do so. Martial artists can awaken Evocations that let them combine the armor's themes with their fighting styles.

The raiment doesn't count as armor for its compatibility with Martial Arts.

FLUTTERING STEP

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

THE AZURE TROUPE PLAYERS

Players who take the Shadow Moth Raiment at character creation may also want to establish their relationship with the troupe. The players are two-dot Followers (*Exalted*, p. 161). They use assassin traits (*Exalted*, p. 499), except as follows:

Actions: Acting: 9 dice; Larceny: 7 dice; Senses: 6 dice; Stealth: 7 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice.

Attack (Hand Needle): 9 dice (Damage 10L)

Soak/Hardness: 6/0

Common Ties include loyalty to fellow Azure Dawn Players and devotion to **Ondari Witherroot**. Common Principles involve **Ondari's** goals, the efficacy and legitimacy of violence as a tool for political change, and keeping White Veil style's secrets.

Alternatively, a player character might have made an enemy of the troupe when they took the Shadow Moth Raiment. If the troupe's efforts to reclaim the artifact make them a recurring antagonist, this counts as a Flaw (*Exalted*, p. 167).

Prerequisites: None

Graceful as a moth in flight, the raiment's wearer outmaneuvers foes with nimble footwork.

The wearer adds an automatic success on a rush or disengage roll. If successful, until her next turn she gains +1 Evasion against each enemy whose opposed roll she beat.

Resonant: The automatic success and Evasion bonus are non-Charms.

SHADOW-WING ESCAPE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Fluttering Step

Unable to follow the wearer's movements, no enemy can strike true against her.

The wearer can use this Evocation after a **withering** attack beats her Evasion, but before the damage roll. The damage roll suffers a –2 penalty, or a –3 penalty if the wearer received Fluttering Step's Evasion bonus against the attack.

If the wearer takes no damage, it's revealed that her movements misled her attacker — what he struck was only a cloud of moths from the raiment. The wearer is actually somewhere within short range of her apparent position. This counts as dodging the attack. There must be a clear path between the two points.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, the wearer can pay a two-mote, two-Initiative surcharge to use this Evocation against a **decisive** attack.

Dissonant: The Essence 2 repurchase's effect can only be used once per scene, unless reset by landing an unexpected attack against a nontrivial enemy.

MOTH SHROUD FEINT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Shadow-Wing Escape

Fluttering moths emerge from the raiment, concealing its wearer behind a veil of black wings.

Successfully dodging an attack obscures the wearer from her attacker. He suffers a -3 penalty on vision-based rolls opposing her until the end of her next turn. The first attack she makes against him while he's suffering this penalty is a surprise attack, inflicting -2 Defense.

The wearer loses this Evocation's benefits if she attacks a different enemy.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, the wearer can pay a two-Initiative surcharge to swarm all enemies within short range with moths, inflicting this Evocation's penalty on them as well as her attacker. The wearer can make a surprise attack against any of them, though this benefit is still limited to only her first attack.

Resonant: The wearer can use this Evocation after the attack roll.

STANCE-CONCEALING CAMOUFLAGE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Any two Form Charms

The wearer's technique is a lie, concealing one style behind the semblance of another.

To use this Evocation, the wearer must be in a Form Charm. She reflexively activates a different Form,

changing between them as she reveals that her enemies have misread her fighting style.

Resonant: With an Essence 4 repurchase, the wearer can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Evocation even when she isn't in a Form, her style concealed behind seemingly ordinary movements.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by using a different Form Charm.

Awakening: This Evocation awakens for free if the wearer meets its prerequisites.

SILVER MOTH STANCE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Stance-Concealing Camouflage, any one Charm this Evocation enhances

Imbued with the Essence of Daraya's spirit shape, the Shadow Moth Raiment empowers other Lunars who follow her path as a martial artist.

While using a Form Charm, the Lunar always gains the Protean effects of Cryptic Unknown Beast, Cunning Prey Reversal, Midnight Phantom Movement, and Nimble Squirrel Evasion (**Lunars**, p. 186-187, 192-193).

THOUSAND TWILIT WINGS FORM

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Form, Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Moth Shroud Feint (x2), Shadow-Wing Escape (x2), Silver Moth Stance

The Lunar becomes one with the Shadow Moth Raiment, her body dissolving into dark-winged moths and reforming with fluid grace as she masters Daraya Nightbloom's ultimate technique.

The Lunar gains the following benefits:

- She can fly, partially dissolving and rising on many wings. She can move through the air in any direction with her movement actions and can hover in place while not moving.
- When attacked, her body dissolves to let weapons pass through it. Is on attack rolls against her Evasion subtract successes — both from the attack roll itself, and from the damage roll, if it hits. This doesn't apply against firewands, area-of-effect

attacks, and similar attacks that aren't impeded by dispersing into moths.

- Her form is blurry and indistinct, constantly shifting between flesh and moth. Perception-based rolls opposing her suffer a three-success penalty.
- She waives the Initiative surcharges of Moth Shroud Feint and Shadow-Wing Escape's repurchase effects.

Special activation rules: Once per scene, the wearer can reflexively enter Thousand Twilit Wings Form.

The Oud of Infinite Strings

(Moonsilver Oud, Artifact ●●●)

No story of Dancing Mockingbird would be complete without the Oud of Infinite Strings — for what is any musician without her instrument? The Changing Moon joined the Silver Pact soon after his Exaltation, but cared not for its vendetta. In those days, he was ruled by pride and avarice, plundering the vaults of Creation's wealthiest merchants, scavenger princes, and queens.

The oud was created by Quan Sinh Bao as a bribe for Dancing Mockingbird, for the No Moon had need of the thief's skills to recover a sacred treasure of her people, the Tengese, from the Scarlet Dynasty. She carved the oud's body from the burgundy wood of the Forest of Liars, a bordermarch where plants grow by deceit. Its moonsilver strings are so many and so fine that they can't be counted with the naked eye, lending the artifact its name.

Impressed by Bao's artifice and the power he could feel in the oud's strings, Dancing Mockingbird dared the treasure-manse of the sorcerer Ragara Ori. He won back the relic that Bao had sought for An-Teng, along with a considerable sum of other treasures. From then on, the oud accompanied Mockingbird on every heist, from stealing the Garda's Heart diamond to robbing the Guild Directorate's headquarters in Nexus.

In time, Dancing Mockingbird grew jaded to the pursuit of riches. Instead, he turned his efforts to mentoring the Pact's recruits, mending rifts between its members, and courting Bao. Now a respected shahan-ya, he entrusts the oud to those he thinks might put it to good use — or at least, interesting use.



Attunement: 2m**Hearthstone slot(s):** None**Era:** The Six Rivers Period**Backer:** Quinn Radich

Evocations of the Oud of Infinite Strings

The Oud of Infinite Strings' Evocations aid its player in deception and subterfuge, lulling those who hear its music into complacency.

The oud is an exceptional instrument (**Exalted**, p. 580). It's also exceptional equipment for Larceny and Stealth rolls the musician makes opposing characters listening to the oud's music. (The musician can take such actions while performing by flurrying.)

A Lunar musician can use Performance instead of the usual Ability for any Manipulation-based influence roll she makes or enhances with a Lunar Charm. She can't rely on music alone, though — she must talk to her targets as or after she performs.

SUSPICION-SILENCING TUNE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Mute, Resonant**Duration:** One performance**Prerequisites:** None

Anything sounds plausible when set to the oud's accompaniment.

As long as the musician plays, any of her listeners' Intimacies that would give them reason to disbelieve or suspect her or her allies are treated as one step lower, suppressing Minor Intimacies entirely. This doesn't affect Ties of suspicion to specific individuals.

When the musician or one of her allies makes an influence roll against such characters, any penalties for making implausible claims are halved, rounded down.

The musician can take other actions while performing by flurrying them, either with a miscellaneous action to continue playing or a Performance-based influence roll.

Resonant: The musician converts the oud's equipment bonus to a non-Charm success.

SUBTLE VIRTUOSO STRUMMING

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant

Prerequisites: Suspicion-Silencing Tune, any one Charm this Evocation enhances

The Lunar musician works wonders with the oud's moon-silver strings.

This Evocation upgrades the following Charms (**Lunars**, pp. 145-146, 219, 231).

Glance-Oration Technique: The Lunar can convey complex meaning through the oud's music.

Many-Voiced Mockingbird Attitude: The Lunar can mimic the sounds of other instruments on the oud.

Subtle Speech Method: The Lunar can convey hidden messages through the oud's music. This doesn't circumvent the Resolve bonus targets receive if she doesn't share a language with them.

Voice-Hurling Method: The Lunar can project the oud's sound.

TROUBADOUR-TRICKSTER CUNNING

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent

Prerequisites: Any one Charm this Evocation enhances

Who would suspect a humble performer?

The Lunar receives a two-mote discount on Falling Leaf Distraction, Fox-Tailed Trickster's Grace, Grows-in-the-Telling Technique, and Uncertain Sky Ambiguity (**Lunars**, pp. 216, 218, 221, 230).

SENTRY-DISTRACTING SONG

Cost: —(2m per round or minute); **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** Dissonant, Mute, Stackable**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisites:** Suspicion-Silencing Tune

Ignore the breaking glass and the barking guard dogs — listen to the oud's sweet song.

While performing with one of the oud's Evocations, the musician can use her song to cover up a specific sound

or noise: the ringing of blade against blade, a person's voice, birdsong in a forest, etc. This costs two motes per round in combat or per minute outside of it. It affects sounds within long range of the musician, or (Essence + Manipulation) range while using Infinite Strings Reverberation. The musician can begin doing so in the middle of a performance — no hecklers allowed.

Nontrivial characters can attempt a (Perception + Awareness) roll with a minimum difficulty of 7 to hear the hidden sound if doing so helps them protect or support a Defining Intimacy. They can also do so if they have superhuman hearing or magic that specifically enhances hearing-based rolls. This is easier if the sound's source is in plain view to a listener — no Intimacy or enhanced hearing is necessary to roll, and the minimum difficulty is 4.

A nontrivial character silenced by the song can pay one Willpower to be heard over the song if doing so supports one of his Major or Defining Intimacies. This lasts for around ten seconds of speech or one influence roll.

The musician can drown out up to (Manipulation) different sounds, paying this Evocation's cost separately for each.

Dissonant: The musician must pay one Willpower the first time she uses this Evocation in a scene.

INFINITE STRINGS REVERBERATION

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Instant or One performance

Prerequisites: Sentry-Distracting Song

The oud puts orchestras to shame and rivals thunderstorms for volume.

The oud's music can be heard out to (Essence + Manipulation) range bands for an influence roll or an extended performance like Suspicion-Silencing Tune. She ignores penalties from distance, loud noises, or similar environmental factors.

The oud's song can be heard even through magical silence. The musician rolls (Manipulation + Performance) against the effect's difficulty, or an appropriate (Attribute + Ability) roll by the effect's user. Once she succeeds, she doesn't need to roll again for the rest of that effect's duration.

Resonant: The musician may pay a one-mote surcharge to extend this Evocation's duration to one scene.

FALSE WORLD FUGUE

Cost: —(+1wp); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Butterfly Eyes Mirage, Sentry-Distracting Song

The Lunar lulls her audience into a phantasmagorical reverie, beguiling them with her irresistible song.

The Lunar can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Butterfly Eyes Mirage (**Lunars**, p. 233) to affect multiple characters. She ignores multiple target penalties and gains the Charm's Protean effect regardless of shape. The Lunar must choose the same thing to conceal from each target.

The Lunar must continue performing to maintain the illusion, using the same rules as Suspicion-Silencing Tune.

While using this Evocation, Sentry-Distracting Song costs only one mote per round or minute.

Special activation rules: The Lunar can reflexively activate Suspicion-Silencing Tune when she uses this Evocation, combining the effects of both performances.

Resplendent Dream Brush

((MoonSilver Brush, Artifact •••))

At the height of his career, Dharma the Snake decried Meru's art culture, condemning his peers' work as passionless, trite, and self-glorifying. The iconoclastic painter left the city of the Chosen to seek out the company of his true equals. His journey spanned the cosmos, from the subterranean city Urvar's Jadeborn pattern sculptors to the Brazen Nautilus Collective of neomah flesh-artists in Hell. But it was not until he found the raksha prince Jadan Ruby-Eyes, exiled from the Court of Riverine Stone for his use of heretical colors, that he found his match.

Creative collaborators, fast friends, and sometimes lovers, Dharma and Jadan created works of strange, impossible beauty: artistic arrangements of equations, counter-erotic portraiture, sculptures with spatial dimensions unknown to Creation. Their masterpiece was the Resplendent Dream Brush, a wonder that would let true artists shape the world with their artistic vision. The brush's handle is teakwood, taken by Jadan from the Verdant Khamsal's dreams. Dharma worked in a dream-like trance, shaping the moonsilver of the bristles and of the inscription upon its handle. Written in an obscure fae tongue, the inscription is Jadan's epitaph: to complete the Resplendent Dream Brush, he became part of it, the apotheosis of his art.

Dharma was never welcomed back by his peers, nor did he ever care to return. He occasionally traveled Creation, seeking new subjects for his art and enjoying the company of the few he counted as friends. But most of his days were spent among the Fair Folk, having grown accustomed to their mores and their alien ways. When he died, the Resplendent Dream Brush was bequeathed to the Court of Riverine Stone, that Jadan's exile might finally be ended. The court's prince, Kayesa Who-Is-Drowning-You, has granted the brush to Lunars who've bargained with her in the past, but always requires that it be returned to her in the end.

Attunement: 2m

Hearthstone slot(s): None

Era: The Wave Lattice Period

Backer: David Scott

Evocations of Resplendent Dream Brush

The Resplendent Dream Brush's Evocations let the artist paint dreams into reality. It draws from the painter's passions and Intimacies, imbuing her creations with emotional resonance.

Some of the Resplendent Dream Brush's Evocations *invoke Intimacies*, drawing power from them. This weakens the Intimacy by one level. Only emotion-based Intimacies can be invoked, and each Intimacy can only be invoked once per day. In the Wyld, the painter can draw on its chaos instead of invoking Intimacies. Bordermarches count as Minor Intimacies, middlemarches as Major, and the deep Wyld as Defining.

The brush is exceptional (**Exalted**, p. 580). It has no need for paint, creating whatever colors the painter requires from her own emotions. Upon attuning to it, the artist awakens Painter of Dreams for free.

PAINTER OF DREAMS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

The Resplendent Dream Brush proclaims its painter's brilliance to the world.

The artist gains the following benefits:

- Artists see her as one of their own, and count as having a Minor Tie of respect to her. She can suppress or resume this effect reflexively.
- Fair Folk and other fae can sense her artistic brilliance, and count as having a Minor Tie of fascination to her. She can suppress or resume this effect reflexively.
- She adds the Resplendent Dream Brush's equipment bonus on Socialize rolls involving artists or fae.
- She can invoke an Intimacy when she rolls for a Craft (Painting) project that's related to that Intimacy, reducing the roll's craft point cost by (Intimacy) silver points or (Intimacy/2, rounded up) gold points.

ARGENT BRUSH FLOURISH

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Beast-God Idolatry, Painter of Dreams

Painting with moonlight and dreams, the Lunar creates works of heartbreaking beauty.

When painting, the Lunar can use Beast-God Idolatry to convey any inspire or instill roll. She must still include a depiction of herself or one of her shapes in the painting.

Once per day, the Lunar can invoke an Intimacy to waive Beast-God Idolatry's Willpower cost if her art relates to that Intimacy.

With Essence 2, the Lunar can also convey persuade rolls.

FANTASY GIVEN FORM

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: One project

Prerequisite Charms: Painter of Dreams

The Resplendent Dream Brush's art blurs the lines between fantasy and reality.

The artist invokes an Intimacy to begin a Craft (Painting) project to create any mundane object, adding (Intimacy) non-Charm dice on all rolls. No other tools or raw materials are needed — the artist simply paints the object into being. It's always exceptional (**Exalted**, p. 580). The created object's appearance or design always reflects or expresses the invoked Intimacy in some way.

Any Intimacy can be invoked for a basic project, but major projects require at least a Major Intimacy. The level of Intimacy required increases by one if the object is larger than personal scale, has a complicated design, or is made of rare materials.

Once per scene, the painter may waive the cost of a Charm that accelerates a project with this Evocation, like Pattern-Realizing Genius (**Lunars**, p. 211).

Resonant: If the painter uses magic to accelerate the project, she completes it instantly.

LANDSCAPE-CORRECTING BRUSHSTROKE

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Fantasy Given Form

Improving on nature's beauty, the artist paints a better world.

The artist invokes an Intimacy to reshape her surroundings, creating difficult terrain in a patch that extends out to short range from a point within medium range of her. If there are any enemies within that space, the artist must roll (Craft + [Painting]) opposing their (Dexterity + Athletics) rolls to work around them.

The terrain's appearance always reflects the invoked Intimacy in some way. The transformation reverts once the scene ends.

Resonant: The artist adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charm dice on this Evocation's roll.

Dissonant: The transformation only extends out to close range.

WITHIN A PAINTED WORLD

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Crossing Midnight's Threshold, Painter of Dreams

Drawing the Resplendent Dream Brush across a painting, the artist steps into a new world.

The Lunar can use Crossing Midnight's Threshold on a painting — one of her own or another artist's — to transform it into a dream-realm. Anyone can freely enter or leave the painting through its frame while the Charm remains active. The Lunar doesn't need to meditate to sustain the painted world.

The painting-world can only hold (Essence + Craft [Painting]) people, but it seems far larger than that to those within it, a sprawling landscape rendered in the painting's style. Their unique perspective of the painting lets them make read intentions rolls to discern its artist's Intimacies at the time he painted it and Awareness and Investigation rolls to notice otherwise-imperceptible details of the painting's creation or subsequent treatment. Such rolls receive the Charm's exceptional equipment bonus.

If the painter is a sorcerer, she waives the experience cost of workings she performs within the painted world. However, such workings have no power or effect outside the painting. The Storyteller may retroactively charge a player experience if a working somehow ends up circumventing this restriction.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, the artist can pay a five-mote surcharge to create a larger painting-world, capable of holding ten times as many people as normal.

Special activation rules: If the Lunar knows Secure Den Technique (**Lunars**, p. 293), she can use it reflexively to confer its benefits on the painting-world. She doesn't need to roll.

PAINTED PERIL APPROACH

Cost: —(+2i, 1wp); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Landscape-Correcting Brushstroke

The artist paints with lightning and wildfire.

The artist can pay a two-Initiative, one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Landscape-Correcting Brushstrokes to create an environmental hazard instead of difficult terrain. It has difficulty (Intimacy + 2), Damage (Intimacy + 3)L/round. If she has to paint around enemies, they oppose her roll with the same (Attribute + Ability) pool used to resist the hazard. If she succeeds, they must use that roll's result against the hazard as well.

The hazard's nature or appearance always reflect the invoked Intimacy in some way. It fades away once the scene ends.

Dissonant: Characters who are dissonant with the Resplendent Dream Brush can't awaken this Evocation.

WORLD-CANVAS MIRACLE

Cost: 10m, 1wp (+5wpx); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant, Shaping (Mind, Terrain)

Duration: One project

Prerequisite Charms: Painted Peril Approach

With every brushstroke, the artist shapes a dream of the world as it could be — until at last, there is no difference between dream and reality.

Resonant: Only characters resonant with the Resplendent Dream Brush can awaken this Evocation.

The painter invokes a Defining Intimacy to undertake a mundane superior Craft (Painting) project (**Exalted**, p. 243). She paints her surrounding environs, but with a notable change to their landscape that relates to the invoked Intimacy. She might change a river's course, add a forest, or erase one mountain from a range to improve her manse's view.

The end result must be one that could exist naturally — she couldn't fill a barren tundra with fields of wheat or make a river run up a mountain. The change can't destroy anything other than natural features or cause harm. If she creates a mountain on top of a city, its buildings are transplanted to the mountain in roughly the same configuration. If she creates a lake over a besieging army's encampments, the enemy's soldiers will be able to swim to safety rather than drowning.

When the artist uses this Evocation, her location becomes the seed of this transformation, and her painting must remain there for the entirety of the project. Her changes are limited to the area within (Essence x5) miles of the painting. If the change would impact a location that's controlled by a supernatural being, formally or informally, his player may veto changes that affect his domain or propose alternatives. Players may also do this for changes that affect their attuned demesnes or manses, or similar holdings.

Once the artist completes her painting, all of existence seems to flicker, like when a sleeper nearly wakes but falls back into dream. When the world returns, the change in the painting now exists in reality. Everyone but the artist remembers the landscape as if it had always been that way. This is a Shaping effect, but magic that specifically protects against memory-altering Psyche effects can also be used against it.

Within the Wyld, the artist can reshape the landscape entirely rather than making only a single change. She may pay five white craft points to make the landscape real, forming an island of Creation amid the chaos. The changes aren't integrated into others' memories; such continuity is superfluous in the Wyld.

The artist must remain within the affected area for the project's duration. As she works, a glamour falls over

the area. Those within may have dream-like visions in which both landscapes paradoxically coexist or psychedelic experiences in which the world is artistically stylized.

Characters using magic like All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight (**Exalted**, p. 356) can roll (Perception + Occult) at difficulty 7 to sense the glamour. The difficulty falls to 5 within ten miles of the painting and to 3 within one mile. Characters who roll 3+ extra successes identify the rough distance and direction toward the painting, and can identify it as the magic's source if it's in view. Fae can make this roll without needing any magic and add (Essence) automatic successes.

Once a character has sensed the coming transformation, they can avert it by destroying the painting in progress. However, it's no mere thing of canvas and paint. A feat of demolition to destroy it requires Strength 5 and has difficulty 10, and other approaches to destroying it are similarly challenging. Mundane environmental conditions, like catching flame or being immersed in water, can't harm the painting.

Even if they're unsuccessful in averting the transformations, characters who've sensed it won't have their memories revised when it occurs.

A Lunar with Boundary-Marking Meditation (**Lunars**, p. 176) may claim the transformed region as a territory. She can have up to (Essence) such territories beyond that Charm's limit.

Reset: Once per story.

Thousand-Winged Fiddle

(Moonsilver Fiddle, Artifact •••)

The Thousand-Winged Fiddle owes its origins to Haparin Two-Shadow's slight of Shalbah, a story that's become legend within the Silver Pact. The two shahan-yas met at a council of the Pact's Southern elders. As the assembled shahan-yas retired from their first day of deliberations to feast and revel, Haparin grew intemperate with dream root and wine. When she began her drunken mockery of Shalbah, he laughed it off, even applauding her better barbs. But when she spoke ill of his spirit shape, the grasshopper, even his famous good humor faltered.

In the days thereafter, Shalbah dedicated himself to crafting the Thousand-Winged Fiddle, the instrument of Haparin's comeuppance. He fashioned its body and bow from the chitin of Locust Avatar's carapace, freely given when Shalbah told the grasshopper-spirit of

Haparin's slander. Its strings, pegs, and bowstring were of moonsilver; its bridge was carved from demon-bone. Its timbre is not that of any viol, but of the stridulation of grasshoppers.

For seven days and seven nights, Shalbah played his fiddle without pause as he traveled Haparin's dominion. For seven days and seven nights, swarming locusts ravaged its fields. Haparin sought out Shalbah to end his chaos by force — but Shalbah was a master of Nightingale style. In his hands, the fiddle was a weapon as mighty as any daiklave. Seeing no other choice, Haparin finally relented and apologized.

The Thousand-Winged Fiddle passed through the hands of many of Shalbah's adherents in the decades thereafter, and even some of Haparin's. For a time, it was lost to the great demon Erembour. It only returned to the Silver Pact when the shaman Dekallion bargained with the demon, paying a price that he never revealed.

Attunement: 2m

Hearthstone slot(s): None

Era: The Season of Broken Shields

Backer: Andrew Stephens

Evocations of the Thousand-Winged Fiddle

The Thousand-Winged Fiddle's Evocations give its wielder the power to command and communicate with insects through its music, enhancing many Lunar Charms that do so. It can also be used as a weapon for Silver-Voiced Nightingale style (**Exalted**, p. 447).

The fiddle is an exceptional instrument (**Exalted**, p. 580). Its bonus die is converted to an automatic success against insects and insect-like beings. Upon attuning to it, the wielder awakens Cadence of the Locust for free.

CADENCE OF THE LOCUST

Cost: —(2m); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

The fiddler's performance calls to creeping insects, drawing a swarming audience.

The fiddle's music can be used to communicate with insects and insect-like beings, conveying ideas as complex

GRASSHOPPERS

Grasshoppers use beetle traits (**Lunars**, p. 361). They have a pool of only three dice for Flight, but have seven dice for Jumping. Battle groups of swarming grasshoppers — also called locusts — inflict a –3 penalty on the movement actions of enemies within close range, and cause those enemies to lose one Initiative at each round's end. Note that beetles' **withering** attacks have Damage 1B against larger enemies

as they can understand without the need for a shared language. This negates the Resolve bonus targets receive for lacking one. However, the fiddler doesn't gain any ability to understand them.

The fiddler can pay two motes to add (higher of Essence or 3) dice on any roll that involves communicating with insects or insect-like beings, as long as she uses the fiddle to do so. This includes influence rolls, Survival rolls, and command actions for battle groups of such characters. Enhanced command actions can be rolled with (Charisma + Performance). The dice are non-Charms for grasshoppers.

STRIDULATING STRINGS TECHNIQUE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Cadence of the Locust, any one Charm this Evocation enhances

Grasshoppers harken to the Thousand-Winged Fiddle's song, eager to aid its master.

This Evocation upgrades the following Charms (**Lunars**, pp. 164, 238, 240, 283).

Pack-Calling Cry: The Lunar adds (Essence) non-Charms dice on this Charm's roll when calling an insect. Insects called with it add three dice on all rolls they make to fulfill the Lunar's command. Grasshoppers add three automatic successes instead.

Pack Instinct Affirmation: The Lunar gains the Charm's Wits 3 benefit with insects regardless of her shape. Ties imposed by the Charm are one level higher for grasshoppers.

Sense-Borrowing Method: The Lunar can share an insect's senses while playing the fiddle instead of meditating, letting her continue to take Performance

actions while seeing through the insect. She waives this Charm's cost when she uses it on a grasshopper.

Hundred-Eyed Watcher: The Lunar can share Minuscule Size insects' senses without reducing this Charm's dice bonus. While sharing grasshoppers' senses, she converts the bonus dice to automatic successes. While controlling insects, the bonus is non-Charm.

DULCET SONG OF BATTLE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: Voice of the Night Bird

Drawing the fiddle's bow across moonsilver strings, the musician assails foes with agonizing harmonies.

When the fiddler uses Voice of the Night Bird (**Exalted**, p. 447) to attack with the fiddle, it counts as a light artifact weapon (ACC: Close +5; Short +4; Medium +3; Long +0; Extreme -2; +10 DMG, OVW 3; Bashing, Martial Arts, Thrown (Short, Natural)).

If the fiddler has Voice of the Night Bird's Mastery effect, this Evocation instead grants medium artifact weapon traits (+12 DMG, OVW 4).

Note: This Evocation is appropriate for any artifact instrument meant to be used with Silver-Voiced Nightingale style.

SWARM-SUMMONING SONG

Cost: —(+2i); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Cadence of the Locust, Thousandfold Wasp Dance

The fiddler's tune commands a fearsome swarm, vexing foes with their biting mandibles.

When the Lunar uses Thousandfold Wasp Dance, the swarming hazard never damages her allies. She may pay a two-Initiative surcharge to add +2 to the hazard's Damage.

Resonant: If the Lunar pays the Initiative surcharge, the swarm counts as difficult terrain (**Exalted**, p. 199) for enemies.

APOCALYPSE SWARM VIRTUOSO

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

WHAT'S INSECT-LIKE?

"Insect-like being" is a broad category that the Storyteller should apply generously. Examples include shapeshifters in insect forms, spirits or raksha with insects' heads or whose bodies resemble them, and insect beastfolk. Note that effects that apply only to grasshoppers don't apply to grasshopper-like beings.

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Stridulating Strings Technique, Wild Fury Awakening

Playing with fervent intensity, the fiddler calls a plague of locusts to descend upon the battlefield.

When the Lunar uses Wild Fury Awakening (**Lunars**, p. 175) to call a battle group of insects, she gains the following benefits

- The battle group appears in a single round.
- The battle group has elite Drill and Might 2. Battle groups of grasshoppers have Might 3.
- The battle group gains +1 Size and adds (Lunar's Essence) to its Magnitude (**Exalted**, p. 208).
- The battle group adds three dice to all dice pools, maximum 14. For pools lower than six dice, add four dice instead.
- The battle group's attacks gain +3 Damage and Overwhelming (Lunar's Essence).
- The battle group adds +2 Evasion and Parry, maximum 7. For values lower than 3, add +3 instead.
- The battle group adds +5 soak, maximum 15, and gains Hardness (Lunar's Essence + 2).
- If the battle group's members have the Minuscule Size or Tiny Creature Merits, their attacks deal damage normally to larger enemies.
- The Lunar gains the Charm's Protean benefit regardless of her shape.

If the Lunar uses Wild Fury Awakening to summon a battle group of grasshoppers, its cost is reduced to five motes, one Willpower.

Cloak of Forgotten Midnight

(Moonsilver Cloak, Artifact ●●●)

In the oldest legends, the first night came to Creation wrapped around Luna's shoulders, spreading from horizon to horizon like a cloak unfolding. Many among the Old Realm's savants considered this cloak of night an allegory or a metaphor, but not Ashla Hidden-Key. Captivated by the myth, the young sorcerer offered up prayers and sacrifices to Luna, petitioning the Incarna for but a single thread of their cloak of night. When no answer came, Ashla found herself a laughingstock among her peers, the subject of endless jests and satires. But the Lunar was unmoved. She confronted those who mocked her on the floor of the Deliberative, rebuking them with righteous fury. It was only then that a moonbeam lit her, as the Deliberative's ceiling became the night sky, and a skein of night fell into her hands.

From Luna's gift, Ashla wove her own cloak. She kept her workshop in utter darkness as she worked, spinning threads of night on a wheel of raksha-bone and working the moonsilver of the cloak's stitching and clasp. Clad in her mantle of midnight, the sorcerer forced even the most bitter of her rivals in the Deliberative to acknowledge her prowess and achievements, beguiling the Old Realm's foes and binding them with Lunar witchcraft. It has been passed down to many Lunar sorcerers since her, entrusted only to those deemed worthy to guard a sacred relic of Luna.

The Cloak of Forgotten Midnight seems cut from the night sky, lit by countless stars. Strange constellations come into view when the hooded cloak's wearer casts sorcery or calls on otherworldly forces. The cloak's moonsilver clasp forms a prayer of thanks to Luna in the glyphs of the Old Realm's tongue when its two halves are fastened.

Attunement: 5m

Hearthstone slot(s): None

Era: Rise of the Second Deliberative

Backer: Déan Pijpker

Evocations of the Cloak of Forgotten Midnight

The Cloak of Forgotten Midnight is a sorcerous relic (**Exalted**, p. 470), letting its wielder initiate into sorcery. Its Evocations create and control darkness, and can draw on it as a wellspring of sorcerous power.

The cloak is exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) for Stealth rolls made in darkness and Occult rolls involving spirits or fae related to darkness, night, or the moon.

As a sorcerous relic, the cloak can be taken at character creation as a sorcerous initiation instead of requiring the Artifact Merit. It has the following shaping rituals:

Mystical Focus: A sorcerer with a mote pool may commit up to ten additional motes to the cloak after a scene spent interacting with it. When she takes a Shape Sorcery action, she may release up to (Essence + 2) of these committed motes to add that many toward the spell. When casting her control spell, each committed mote released contributes two sorcerous motes. This ritual can only be used once per day.

Night-Witch Arcana: The sorcerer can use this ritual while in darkness that would let her make a Stealth roll to enter concealment. Once per scene, when she takes a Shape Sorcery action in such conditions, she gains an additional (Essence) motes. (She doesn't need to be in concealment). If she has established concealment in the darkness, she's not limited to once per scene, as long as any targets her spell has are unaware of her.

Sorcerer's Mantle: Once per scene, when the sorcerer stunts a Shape Sorcery roll by describing how she draws power from the cloak, she gains an additional (stunt + 2) sorcerous motes. She's not limited to once per scene when casting her control spell.

ONE WITH NIGHT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

The night keeps no secrets from the cloak's wearer.

The cloak's wearer ignores vision-based penalties from poor lighting, unimpeded even by total darkness — including magical darkness. When she makes a Shape Sorcery roll in such conditions, she adds bonus dice equal to the darkness' penalty.

Resonant: The bonus dice are non-Charms when casting her control spell.

GLOAMING SHROUD

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: One With Night

The cloak billows around its wearer, hiding her from view.

When an enemy makes a roll opposing the cloak's wearer, if it relies on his sense of sight, he suffers a -1 penalty from the cloak's swirling darkness. This penalizes most attacks, but can also affect rolls opposing the wearer's Stealth, an attempt to pickpocket her, etc. If the penalized roll fails, the opposing character loses one Initiative.

Against characters already suffering a penalty from poor lighting, darkness, or magic like the No Moon anima power (**Lunars**, p. 130), this Evocation instead causes up to three points of penalty to subtract successes, rather than dice.

Resonant: Against enemies already suffering a vision-based penalty from darkness, the wearer can use this Evocation after their roll.

HIDDEN MOON MANTLE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: One With Night, Subtle Silver Declaration

The cloak conceals its nature, shrouding the sacred in darkness.

This Evocation conceals the cloak's supernatural nature. Its appearance doesn't change, but observers feel no differently about its cloth of spun darkness than they do any luxurious fabric, and take its moonsilver for the material's mundane cousin. It's impossible to tell that it's an artifact without using magic. Characters who see through the Lunar's Tell aren't affected.

In animal shapes, the cloak vanishes, becoming an actual part of the Lunar's Tell. In a snake's shape, her scales become black as midnight; as a strix, her outstretched wings seem to contain the night sky. This doesn't replace her Tell, although it can alter it — a scar might become a scar-shaped void filled with starry darkness.

QUEEN OF DARKNESS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Any one Charm this Evocation enhances

Shadows answer to she who bears the Cloak of Forgotten Midnights.

The Lunar receives a two-mote discount on Clouds Cover Moon, Noonday Shadow Tread, and Subtle Chameleon Practice (**Lunars**, pp. 157, 191, 231-232). She also waives the anima cost of Shifting Penumbra Stance (**Lunars**, p. 156).

VEILED IN MIDNIGHT

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Resonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Gloaming Shroud

The cloak's starry darkness spills out into its surroundings, plunging all into darkness.

The cloak's darkness extends out to medium range from the wearer, following her as she moves. It inflicts a -3 penalty on her enemy's vision-based rolls, but not hers or her allies. Mundane light sources can't illuminate the darkness, while anima banners and other supernatural light can't reduce the penalty below (the wearer's Essence/2, rounded up).

While using this Evocation, spirits or fae related to darkness, night, or the moon count as having a Minor Tie of reverence toward the Lunar.

Resonant: Supernatural light sources can't illuminate the darkness.

Special activation rules: This Charm can be flurried with a Shape Sorcery action.

ENDLESS WALPURGISNACHT REVEL

Cost: —(+10m); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Queen of Darkness, Veiled in Midnight

Echoing Luna's legend, the cloak's master brings night to the world.

The Lunar may pay a ten-mote surcharge when she uses Veiled in Midnight to bring an end to day:

- The darkness extends out to long range.
- The Evocation's duration becomes one hour.
- The fall of darkness counts as sunset for purposes of magic that can only be used at that time or that gains additional benefits at night. If the wearer uses this to cast a demon-summoning spell, the ritual's duration is shortened to one hour.

- The Lunar gain one sorcerous mote on the start of each of her turns as long as she remains within the darkness.
- The Lunar's anima banner doesn't impede Stealth rolls she makes within the darkness.

Special activation rules: The Lunar may use Shifting Penumbra Stance and Subtle Chameleon Practice reflexively with this Charm, waiving their costs.

Reset: Once per day.

Inkwarden, Seal of Chi-E-Su

(Moonsilver Seal, Artifact ●●●)

The sorcerer Chi-E-Su cared little for his own fame. In his eyes, the First Age's greatest injustice was that the Exalted shone too bright in their glory, denying mortals of great skill and greater passion the chance to make their mark on history. He created Inkwarden to elevate the creations and works of mortals, turning his power to the ennoblement of others.

The seal is a finger-length rod, ending in a blank disc of moonsilver that's shaped to make Inkwarden's mark. The rest of the seal seems made from glass, spun from the heart grace of an ancient faerie smith. Within the glass roils midnight-black ink — a drop of blood from the Demon Prince called Elloge, whose flesh is language and legend.

Chi-E-Su invited crafters from across Creation to seek out Inkwarden's blessing. Each suppliant recounted the tale of their masterpiece's creation, telling him how they spent years laboring atop a mountain, stole precious jewels from the Jadeborn's vaults, or used a behemoth's skull for their anvil. When the sorcerer deemed a suppliant worthy and their tale true, Inkwarden imbued their story into their own creation, empowering it with its own legend.

After the sorcerer's death, Inkwarden was entrusted to his Moon-Touched descendants, passed down over generations. But none could wake the full power that the seal had held in Chi-E-Su's hands, and not all followed his example in their deeds. Some mastered its power over spirits, like Cheseth of Mari, a magistrate of the Old Realm and binder of criminal gods. Others turned it to selfish ends, like the wayward Logue, who made her fortune lending the seal's imprimatur to all manner of counterfeit wares, forgeries, and damaged goods.

Chi-E-Su's descendants were among the collateral damage of the Usurpation. The family's surviving members

were scattered throughout Creation, and many fell in the first days of the Wyld Hunt. No Shogunate records Inkwarden's discovery, nor has the Silver Pact sniffed out its location. Some say it remains yet in the hands of Chi-E-Su's descendants; such tale-tellers invent details of the Moon-Touched clan's secret sanctuary around campfires or over drinks.

Attunement: 2m

Hearthstone slot(s): None

Era: Dreams of the First Age

Backer: Chase Burton

Evocations of Inkwarden

Inkwarden's moonsilver disc bears no emblem — with concentration, its bearer can cause it to stamp any design. It needs no ink. The seal is capable of such intricate detail that others' attempts to forge the bearer's own seal suffer a –4 penalty. Such rolls have a minimum difficulty of 5, even for magic otherwise capable of copying a seal without a roll. Inkwarden is exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) for forging other inked seals.

MASTERPIECE-ACCLAIMING MARK

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: None

This is the power for which Chi-E-Su was famed: to hear the story of something's crafting, and bind that legend to its reality with the sanction of his seal.

This Evocation can be used when a suppliant comes before Inkwarden's bearer with a mundane object that they've created, or that was created for them. The bearer must be told the object's story to convince her it's worthy of her blessing. The tale might tell of the skillful methods and wondrous materials used in its crafting, the heroic purpose for which it was forged, or the virtue and prowess of the one it was meant for. It doesn't matter if any of this is actually true, so long as Inkwarden's bearer believes it.

Telling the story is a special instill roll. The bearer can't decline to assert her Resolve against it. The influence roll doesn't have to be made by the suppliant — in Chi-E-Su's time, petitioners often hired poets and orators to speak on their behalf. The player should record the number of successes for this effect.

If Inkwarden's bearer has firsthand knowledge of an object's crafting, maker, or wielder, she can speak its legend herself if she believes the object worthy. She rolls (Charisma + Performance) at difficulty 5. However, she can't bless an object that she created.

On a successful roll, Inkwarden's bearer may stamp the object, binding the legend to its reality. Anyone who encounters the object for the first time faces an instill action from it as they feel the weight of its legend. This uses the successes from this Evocation's initial roll. Alternatively, the bearer may specify a condition required to trigger this, like wielding a blessed weapon.

This influence instills a Principle of belief in the object's story. For some, it's as if they suddenly remembered a story they'd heard once, long ago; for others, the legend plays out in a hallucinatory break from reality.

This Evocation can be used multiple times to bless up to (higher of Essence or 3) objects.

Resonant: Inkwarden adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charm dice on this Evocation's initial roll.

SPRIT-BINDER'S SEAL

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Any one Charm this Evocation enhances

Many ancient oaths are recorded within the seal's ink-blood, conferring binding authority over spirits.

The Lunar receives a two-mote discount on Chains-of-Silver Geas, Crossroads Walker Entreaty, Keeper of Midnight's Gates, and Perceiving the Hidden World (**Lunars**, p. 202, 204, 208-209, 247), so long as she brandishes or otherwise displays Inkwarden.

EVIL-SEALING STAMP

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Argent Guardian Yantra, Spirit-Binder's Seal

Stamping Inkwarden to the ground, the Lunar creates a binding ward of sigils.

The Lunar waives Argent-Guardian Yantra's anima cost (**Lunars**, p. 204) and extends its duration to indefinite. It doesn't end if she moves outside of or through the ward.

MYTH MADE REAL

Cost: —(5m, 1wp); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Masterpiece-Acclaiming Mark

The imprimatur of Inkwarden's master elevates masterpieces to things of legend.

When Inkwarden's bearer is told a story of an object that aligns with one of her Defining Intimacies, she can use Masterpiece-Acclaiming Mark for five motes, one Willpower to imbue it with supernatural power. In addition to the influence, the object can be attuned as if it were an artifact, letting characters awaken Evocations from it. It doesn't gain artifact weapon or armor traits, nor does it become indestructible.

The object's Evocations are based on its legend and any Intimacies of Inkwarden's master that aligned with the story. They have power comparable to those of a three-dot artifact. The character that the object was created for waives the experience cost of the first Evocation he awakens this way.

If the object is destroyed, any experience spent on such Evocations is refunded. If Inkwarden's bearer ends Masterpiece-Acclaiming Mark, she can use it again to restore this power to a previously blessed object. Doing so requires no roll and doesn't require the object to be present. However, if circumstances render a player character effectively unable to regain such Evocations, the Storyteller should provide a refund.

Dissonant: This Evocation requires minimum Essence 3.

Reset: Once per story.

LABYRINTH-OATH BINDING

Cost: —(+5m); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Argent Sphinx Enigma, Evil-Sealing Stamp

The Lunar draws upon the ancient oaths, pacts, and covenants recorded in the seal's ink-blood, imprisoning spirits within cages of law and language.

The Lunar can pay a five-mote surcharge to enhance Argent Sphinx Enigma (p. 47) when she uses it against a spirit or fae. Rather than telling a riddle, she vexes her foe with binding words. Gods and elementals obsess over complex issues of heavenly law, while demons are

trapped in contemplation of their place in the surrender oaths of the Yozis. Ghosts are overcome by the words they once spoke in life, speaking seemingly nonsensical statements in fits of ecstatic passion. The Fair Folk are burdened by memories of every oath they've ever sworn, each promise a link in their chains.

This Evocation has the follow benefits:

- The Lunar can roll with Bureaucracy or Linguistics in addition to the usual Abilities.
- The Lunar doesn't choose an area of expertise when she uses this Evocation. Her target gains no benefit from succeeding on the opposed roll, and the penalty he suffers if he fails applies on all rolls he makes.
- If the Lunar's Initiative roll successes equal or exceed her target's Essence, he's overwhelmed by the binding, effectively incapacitating him for the rest of the scene. He breaks free of this if attacked, though he still suffers the Charm's other effects.
- If a character fails his opposed roll against the Charm, the difficulty of subsequent rolls to break free of the binding increases to 7. If he flurries this roll with another action, the penalties on both rolls subtract successes instead of dice.

SEAL OF ENDURING LEGEND

Cost: —(+10m); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Myth Made Real

Blessed by Inkwarden, a mortal smith's work will endure for millennia after her end.

Resonant: Only a character resonant with Inkwarden can awaken this Evocation.

Inkwarden's bearer can pay a ten-mote surcharge when she uses Myth Made Real to permanently empower an object, rather than needing to maintain Masterpiece-Acclaiming Mark indefinitely. It becomes indestructible, like an artifact, but still doesn't gain artifact traits. The first character to attune to the blessed object waives the experience point cost of the first Evocation he awakens from it, even if he wasn't its intended recipient.

The blessed object still counts against the limit on how many the bearer can have. She can still rescind her blessing if she wishes.

Neritoum, the All-Beast Avatar (Moonsilver Warstrider, Artifact § ••••)

The Exalted of the early First Age faced many challenges as they sought to bring all the world under their rule. Among the foremost of these were the behemoths that roamed Creation, colossal monstrosities and immortal god-beasts. Created by the Ancients, the sheer power and titanic size of many behemoths made their mere existence a threat to humanity.

A hero of the Divine Revolution, Seventeen Awaiting Terrors was chosen to lead the Exalted host's first campaign against the behemoths. They set out on the hunt in the shapeshifting warstrider Neritoum, the All-Beast Avatar, created by Thunder's Promise, their Circlemate.

Thunder's Promise forged Neritoum from the many trophies of Terrors' hunts: the scales of an ancient river dragon, the sinews of a giant cave bear, the colossal squid Vig'nagha's many-colored gladius. She alloyed the warstrider's moonsilver armor with these trophies, innovating techniques of sorcerous artifice inspired by Lunar shapeshifting. Neritoum's flesh and metal are inextricable from each other; few can tell where one ends and the other begins.

With the All-Beast Avatar's power, Seventeen Awaiting Terrors made the most dreaded of behemoths their prey — the Horizon Spider, the River That Walked, the Wolf of Calibration. In the Niobraran War, the young Lunar Ravening Lamprey piloted it into battle against horrors of the ocean depths summoned by the Spoken. In the Usurpation, Daughter of First Frost hunted the Dragon-Blooded betrayers from Neritoum's helm until it fell to the starmetal warstrider Saint of Dooms Foretold.

No artificer of the Second Age has yet succeeded in repairing the Neritoum's ruin. Gadhaj Winter-Wheel sought to, raising a vast forge around the shattered warstrider, but the shahan-ya abandoned the project when conflicts over the Silver Pact's priorities drove them to leave it. Neritoum still remains in what are now the ruins of Gadhaj's workshop, accompanied by a teeming population of war refugees who've made their new home in the cyclopean forge's shelter.

Attunement: 15m

Soak: 15; **Hardness:** 10

Damage track: —0x5/—1x5/—2x10/—4x10

Speed bonus: +2

Hearthstone slot(s): 3

Era: The Hunt for the Seven Titans

WARSTRIDERS

For more information on warstriders, see **Arms of the Chosen**, Chapter Five.

Backer: Josh Raveling

Evocations of Neritoum

Neritoum isn't piloted using the control harness typical of most warstriders. Instead, tendrils of living flesh emerge from the many-hued shell that is Neritoum's fuselage, affixing themselves to the pilot's Essence meridians. The tendrils can merge with a Lunar's protean flesh, waiving the need for warstrider specialties (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 140-141).

When a Lunar shapeshifts into an animal form while piloting Neritoum, the warstrider's moonsilver frame shifts to take on the animal's shape. She waives the cost of such transformations. They use the normal rules for shapeshifting (**Lunars**, p. 131), but the Lunar can use the animal's soak and Hardness if they're better than the warstrider's. She can also use animal dice pools, special abilities, and Merits that couldn't normally be used through a warstrider, like an eagle's flight.

The warstrider always remains at Legendary Size, replacing the Tiny Creature and Minuscule Size Merits. (They still count as having those Merits for purposes of Protean Charms). She can enter shapes with Minuscule Size or Legendary Size without needing to use Emerald Grasshopper Form or Towering Beast Form, paying only the usual four-mote cost for shapeshifting. However, she must still know the appropriate Charm.

Charms that let the Lunar manifest mutations, like Perfected Hybrid Interaction, can also transform the warstrider. This allows such mutations to enhance the warstrider's Strength, Hardness, soak, and damage track, and also enables mutations like Wings that wouldn't normally be usable from the cockpit.

Non-Lunars: This warstrider's listed Evocations are unsuitable to non-Lunars. Such characters might instead awaken Evocations that let them transform the warstrider into a variety of animal-like forms and expand on each of those forms' unique strengths.

APEX BEAST EVOLUTION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

Neritoum becomes an extension of the Lunar's body, shifting its shape as readily as her own flesh.

The Lunar gains the following benefits:

- She reduces the cost of shapeshifting by two motes.
- When she uses an Instant-duration Lunar Charm whose Protean benefit she qualifies for, she receives a two-mote discount. If she uses multiple such Charms together, the discount only applies once.

EVER-SHIFTING TITAN ACTIVATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Apex Beast Evolution, any one Charm this Evocation enhances

Neritoum's moonsilver malleability heightens the Lunar's control of its form.

This Evocation upgrades the following Charms (**Lunars**, pp. 144, 186):

Ever-Evolving Defense: The Lunar can convert Initiative from this Charm to motes. If she has Infinite Inchoate Potential, she may add those motes to its pool.

Perfected Hybrid Interaction: Each mote the Lunar commits to this Charm lets her manifest two dots of mutations.

Quicksilver Second Face: The Lunar receives a one-Initiative discount on this Charm. If she has other discounts that reduce the Charm's total Initiative cost to zero, it loses the Perilous keyword.

Scale-Shedding Escape: All enemies suffer this Charm's penalty regardless of their Initiative.

MIRROR-SHELL ADAPTATION

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Apex Beast Evolution

Neritoum's moonsilver plating mimics the color and texture of its surroundings, hiding in plain sight.

The Stealth penalty for piloting a warstrider (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 142) subtracts dice from a roll instead of successes. If the roll is enhanced by a Lunar Charm whose Protean benefit she receives, she ignores the penalty entirely.

Resonant: The Lunar doubles 9s on the Stealth roll.

STALKING BEHEMOTH CAMOUFLAGE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Mirror-Shell Adaptation, Subtle Chameleon Practice

The Lunar enhances Neritoum's concealment with her protean power.

This Evocation upgrades Subtle Chameleon Practice (**Lunars**, p. 157), granting a five-mote discount and extending its duration to Indefinite.

ONE FLESH SYMBIOSIS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Apex Beast Perfection, Halting the Scarlet Flow

Neritoum's flesh and moonsilver are suffused with the Lunar's incredible vitality, healing the All-Beast Avatar's wounds.

When the Lunar uses Halting the Scarlet Flow (**Lunars**, p. 256), she adds one round to its duration or one level to the damage it heals outside of combat. Its healing applies both to the Lunar and to Neritoum's damage track.

Resonant: The bonus increases to two rounds or levels of damage.

INFINITE INCHOATE POTENTIAL

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Ever-Shifting Titan Activation

The power of ten thousand beasts surges within Neritoum's beating heart.

Neritoum gains a pool of ten motes, which its pilot can spend on the warstrider's Evocations and Lunar Charms whose Protean benefits she qualifies for. Neritoum doesn't

regain motes naturally, but the Lunar can transfer motes to it after a few minutes spent meditating in its cockpit.

QUICKSILVER SUBTLETY REFINEMENT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Ever-Shifting Titan Activation, Mirror-Shell Adaptation

Neritoum conceals its master's power from her monstrous prey as they hunt in the shadows.

When the Neritoum's pilot spends motes on a Lunar Charm whose Protean benefit she receives, those motes are muted.

BEHEMOTH-HEART EMPOWERMENT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Infinite Inchoate Potential, Undaunted Behemoth Avatar

Having worn the skins of many colossal beasts, the Lunar attains greater mastery of Neritoum.

Neritoum gains the following benefits:

- It gains an additional five –1 health levels.
- Its Speed Bonus increases to +3.
- It adds +2 to the difficulty of special warstrider gambits against it (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 143).

Awakening: This Evocation awakens for free if the Lunar meets its prerequisites.

UNSEEN DEVASTATION STRIKE

Cost: 8m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Quicksilver Subtlety Refinement

Striking in a blur of flashing quicksilver and bestial speed, Neritoum finishes its prey.

When the Lunar makes a **decisive** surprise attack against an enemy whose Initiative is lower than hers or who has Legendary Size, it becomes an ambush. She doubles 9s on the damage roll against Legendary Size enemies.

If the Lunar uses this Evocation to enhance her devastating action (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 141), its cost is reduced to five motes and it doesn't break concealment. Such uses don't count against this Evocation's once-per-scene limit.

Resonant: The Lunar doubles 9s on the damage roll against all enemies, and doubles 8s against Legendary Size enemies.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by incapacitating a nontrivial enemy with an unexpected attack or incapacitating a Legendary Size enemy. This Evocation can't reset itself.

APOCALYPTIC TITAN-BEAST ASCENDANCY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Behemoth-Heart Empowerment, God-Monster Transcendence

Becoming one with Neritoum, the Lunar embodies the world-shaking power of a monster that knows no equal.

The Lunar can use God-Monster Transcendence (p. 60) while piloting Neritoum.

Awakening: This Evocation awakens for free if the Lunar meets its prerequisites.

The Lookshyan patrol advanced through the rain-soaked forest. The green-haired chuzei clutched her spear — instinct told her they were being hunted. The 25 soldiers under her command picked up on her unease and glanced around warily.

Up in the trees, Sublime Danger grinned.

"You strike the head," Menefer Bisa said. Sublime Danger had tasked her student with planning the ambush as a test. "Pin down the Dragon. I come from behind, slaughter the soldiers, then it's two on one." He smiled fiercely. "Hope you'll leave me a piece."

"Of course." Sublime Danger doffed her cloak and let the rain soothe her face. Her student made the conflict sound easy, but battles could be unpredictable. She looked forward to a challenge.

Bisa moved. She waited for him to be in position, then leapt.

Lightning fell as she landed on the path. Men screamed. Horses panicked. A dozen swords — some sheathed at her back, others shimmering into existence — unfolded gracefully into her Thousand Daiklave Wings as she rose to her full height. Two beats of her wings reaped five Lookshyan soldiers, each impaled on a blade of legend, hoisting them into the air. The rain turned crimson.

The gochei's anima exploded in a burst of white lilies. She thrust her direlance at Sublime Danger, whirling in for the attack. The Lunar folded her arms and her wings furled in; the spear hit a razor-wall of moonsilver and jade. Sublime Danger made a sweeping gesture; one wing lashed out, swords streaking away after her motion. The Dragon-Blood reeled under the assault, bloodied, trying to deflect a dozen flying daiklaves with one spear.

The Lookshyan rearguard were rushing to their officer's aid when the shadow fell upon them. They couldn't see its source, only its shimmering trail — men stumbled into each other, a soldier tried to strike the creature with her spear only to stab her comrade in the back; cries of panic echoed as discipline broke. The shadow returned, landing on the ground: a black swan as tall as a man, whose gracile neck ended in a mamba's head, forked tongue licking the air.

Bisa moved his wings in a disharmonious stance, afterimages confusing the eye. Soldiers struck at him only to trip on their own feet and fall into the mud. Laughter echoed around the soldiers as imp-like shadows drawn out of their own thoughts danced in the rain.

Sublime Danger found it indulgent, but her student had always been more about entertainment than challenge.

The Dragon-Blood howled, her veins pulsing green, her direlance overgrown with thorns. She darted right, trying to flank Sublime Danger. The Lunar grinned and brought down her wing; six shining swords slammed around the spear like a cage, driving it into the ground, and the Lunar paused with her hand an inch from the Dragon-Blood's neck. The officer froze.

"Tell you what," Sublime Danger whispered, the fight filling her with such reckless joy that she felt inclined to gratitude. "If you can reach past my wings and cut me, I'll let you live."

At this impudence — this arrogance — the chuzei's eyes flashed with outrage. Her anima billowed, a wall of vines forcing Sublime Danger back a step. The Lunar cackled with glee.

Behind them, Bisa slammed a taloned foot on a prone man's chest, ready to end his part of the fight and join her.

The soldier's eyes gleamed underneath his hood, and his hand caught Bisa's leg in an unbreakable grip.

The student's snake-eyes blinked sideways as he realized his mistake. This was no mere soldier.

The soldier roared, his free hand pulling a gigantic hammer out of the very earth.

"You knew this, didn't you?" Bisa cried out accusingly.

So what if Sublime Danger had known the patrol would have a second Prince of the Earth concealed among the guards? And what if she hadn't shared that information? And what if she'd always intended to keep the spearwoman for herself?

White lies from master to student. She had complete trust in Bisa to adapt to the situation.

But she had been going gentle on him so far, and he needed to be tested.

She laughed, and crossed blades with the chuzei.



Chapter Five

Children of Luna and Gaia

This section details Lunars throughout Creation, from First Age elders to the recently Chosen.

Heroes of the Silver Pact

Aqadar

Sometimes, Aqadar recalls his youth among the Emin, a nomadic clan that wandered the chill Northwestern prairies. A welcoming people of modest means, they accepted his strangeness and found him a place where his talents could blossom. Gifted with sorcery and wise beyond his years, he proudly served the foaling-god Plum Blossom as her priest. Her shrine was a cloth tent open to the night sky, easy to break down and move with the herds.

Aqadar still blames himself for the Shogunate's destruction of his people and his god. If he'd only been better prepared, he might have been able to save them. But he was unready — unskilled in warfare, untrained in battle magic, knowing little of reconnaissance or negotiation. After long years of Immaculate missionaries' proselytization, the sudden appearance of a daimyo's troops caught him and his people by surprise. Even when his startled fury blazed up in the silver fire of Exaltation, it wasn't enough. Plum Blossom led her followers in the ensuing battle, but the Princes of the Earth slew her with soul-destroying fire. With his god dead and his companions routed, the inexperienced Aqadar fled in horror, leaving his people behind.

Over the years, he freed some of the Emin from bondage as serfs and conscripts. But they were a peaceful people; few shared his rage, and none to the extent of making war against the entire Shogunate. He abandoned them in the end, choosing to seek revenge alone, in his own way. Joining the nascent Silver Pact, he sought out its greatest sorcerers and trained with a terrifying zeal until they had little more to teach him.



As his masterwork — marking himself a peer of any Pact sorcerer and a master far beyond any Dragon-Blooded foe's power — Aqadar performed a great enchantment to defeat the behemoth Pyre vein. The creature had rampaged through the Northwest since the dawn of time, and none since the Usurpation could challenge it. Through years of preparation, he called down a towering monolith from between the stars that pierced Pyre vein's heart and plunged the creature into the earth. By establishing his lair upon the monolith's heights, he offers a constant reminder of his capabilities to those who'd approach him.

The people of Fajad, colonists from the now-fallen city of Fai-Yasar, immigrated centuries ago to gather around

the skirts of his monolith — which they call the Needle — and bask in the warmth that arises from the pinned Pyrevein. Aqadar had little use for them then, and even less once they submitted to Realm authority.

It irks Aqadar that a Realm satrap and garrison reside so close to his lair, but he won't be caught unprepared again. He lays plans upon plans, making predictions and plotting contingencies, preparing himself for future conflicts. He crushes the occasional Wyld Hunt thrown against the Needle, but won't retaliate until he feels ready to tackle everything the entire Realm might throw at him.

Today, all that remains to Aqadar of his youth are pride in his skills and smoldering fury toward the Scarlet Realm, which has inherited all of his rage toward the Shogunate. To him, the Realm and the Immaculate Order represent the same thing: destruction of life and vitality, destruction of peoples, destruction of heritage and poetry. This anger fuels his obsessive research into sorceries that he might wield against his enemies. When it boils over, he vents it by haranguing the people of Fajad from the Needle's minarets or by tormenting the quiescent Pyrevein.

Visiting Lunars receive a harried welcome; Aqadar sees them as a distraction from his great work, but accepts the necessity of good relations with the Silver Pact. He grants guests limited access to his library; for more in-depth access or personal tutelage, they must perform some task in exchange — aiding a sorcerous ritual, fetching exotic reagents, unearthing forgotten First Age secrets, or the like. He occasionally takes tea or breaks bread with them, aiming to cultivate an image of himself as meticulous and reasonable. He wants to present himself as only reacting justly to the terrors done him and the world he once knew, but his temper inevitably slips; sooner or later, guests find themselves on the receiving end of one of his tirades.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Markhor; **Tell:** Casts no shadow

Essence: 5; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 8 dice

Personal: 20; **Peripheral:** 44

Health Levels: -0x1/-1x2/-2x6/-4x3/Incap.

Actions: Esoteric Lore: 11 dice; Investigation: 8 dice; Medicine: 6 dice; Mysticism: 11 dice; Read Intentions: 8 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 5 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice; Sorcery: 11 dice

Appearance 2, Resolve 6, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Cunning Asp, moonsilver short daiklave): 12 dice (Damage 11L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 8 dice (Damage 8B)

Attack (Grapple): 4 dice (4 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 3; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 11/7 (Firmamentine Mantle, moonsilver reinforced robes)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I alone know the best way forward.

Defining Principle: Vengeance must be overwhelming and merciless.

Defining Tie: Shogunate successor states (Hatred)

Major Principle: There's no such thing as too much preparation.

Major Tie: The Immaculate Order (Hatred)

Minor Tie: The Silver Pact (Pragmatic Partnership)

Minor Tie: Fajad (Frustration)

Minor Tie: The Abhari prophets (Wary Respect)

MERITS

Insidious Hatred: Aqadar adds +5 dice on Social Influence rolls to inspire hatred or leverage Intimacies based on hate.

SHAPESHIFTING

Aqadar has a variety of Northwestern animal shapes as well as those of many Fajadi and visitors to the city. He can claim shapes with Shape-Stealer's Riddle and Whispering Heart Revelation (p. 44; **Lunars**, pp. 235).

EXCELLENCIES

Aqadar can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Aqadar can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +5 soak or Hardness 3.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Intransigent Silver Soul (4m; Reflexive; Instant): Add +3 non-Charm Resolve against influence that would weaken a Defining Intimacy, or that's opposed by a Tie to Aqadar's Solar mate. This can only protect each Intimacy once per story.

SORCERY

Master of the Fallen Needle: Once per story, while within the Needle, Aqadar may pay one Willpower to draw twelve sorcerous motes from Pyre vein, which last for the rest of the story. While casting a spell within the needle, he gains an additional sorcerous mote each turn.

Scholar of Sorcerous Lore: Once per story, Aqadar may research arcane texts and roll Sorcery, banking sorcerous motes equal to the successes that last until end of story. Access to the Needle's archives adds +2 dice.

Cosmos-Rending Fury (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): Upon winning Join Battle, make a reflexive Shape Sorcery action with +10 dice.

Penumbra Witch Mastery (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Add five non-Charm dice and reroll 1s until they cease to appear on a Sorcery roll, an Esoteric Lore roll involving the supernatural, or an Investigation or Read Intentions roll against a spirit or fae.

Shadow-Hands Invocation (2m [6m, 1wp]; Reflexive; One turn): Aqadar can flurry Shape Sorcery with non-attack actions and ignores all penalties from flurrying. For six motes, one Willpower, this lasts one scene.

Cantata of Empty Voices (15sm, 2wp; Instant or Until ended; Perilous): Create a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 2L out from Aqadar. Individuals who fail their opposed roll lose one Willpower; battle groups check for rout. Can continue casting with unrolled Shape Sorcery actions, extending the range by one band. Upon reaching long range, it slows to three rounds per additional band, maximum one mile. If crashed, the spell ends.

Corrupted Words (15sm, 1wp; Indefinite; Psyche; Control): Roll Sorcery against the Resolve of a target at short range to forbid her from speaking of a single subject. This can't be detected without magic.

Death of Obsidian Butterflies (15sm, 1wp; Instant; Decisive-only): Roll Sorcery as an undodgeable **decisive** attack against enemies in a line out to medium range, rolling (5 + extra successes) damage against individuals or (10 + extra successes) against battle groups. This doesn't reset Initiative.

Demon Summoning (Ritual, 2wp [+1wp]; Instant): Summon a First Circle demon in a night-long ritual, rolling Sorcery against its Resolve to bind it. On the night of the full moon, Aqadar can pay an additional Willpower to summon a Second Circle Demon.

Infallible Messenger (5sm, 1wp; Instant): Send a five-minute message to someone anywhere in Creation, reaching him within a day. Can convey influence, but not Charms.

Insidious Tendrils of Hate (Ritual, 2wp; 5 days; Psyche; Control): Burn something personally significant to the target, or a piece of her taken in the last three days; roll

Sorcery with +5 dice against her Resolve and anyone in short range of her as an inspire roll to create hatred for the duration. Can't be resisted with Willpower; treat positive non-Defining Intimacies as one step lower.

Aum-Ashatra

Born of a nomadic Southern people, Aum-Ashatra was enslaved as a youth by the early Realm's legions, who sent him to the mines of Chanos. Seething with resentment and unwilling to quietly accept his fate, he spent months ingratiating himself with the overseers to study camp security and learn the lay of the surrounding land, while helping his fellow prisoners organize an insurrection. To start the rebellion, he strangled the mine commandant while sharing the man's bed, fully expecting to be slain by the guards — only for Luna to place a knife in his hand and Exaltation's flame in his heart.

After a century of wandering, Aum-Ashatra chose what would later be called the Mountain of the Spider King as his lair, throwing its gates open to outcasts and exiles. Today, it's both his fortress and his home, and the Mountain's people his army and his kin. He'll die for his grudge against the Realm, if he must, and his raiders risk their lives on his behalf. But the Mountain and its families aren't pawns to be sacrificed, and he'll fight like a man possessed to protect them.

Aum-Ashatra deftly wields his image and appearances to influence others. His favored granddaughters speak for him when he holds court, the better for him to seem impartial and wise; he measures his own public statements carefully to maximize their impact among the Mountain's four families. He offers generous hospitality to guests and brutal, gruesome reprisal to enemies.

Recognizing how little direct power he has in the face of the Realm's legions and imperial apparatus, Aum-Ashatra focuses on reconnaissance and espionage. He waits and listens at the center of his web, recruiting spies from among the downtrodden outside the Mountain to gather intelligence about Realm activities and plans. This allows his troops — numerically weak and unsuited to a stand-up battle with legionary forces — to strike unexpectedly at ungarded points, then retreat to the Mountain before targets can reorganize and retaliate. He likewise offers information to neighboring shahan-yas about Realm movements touching upon their domains.

He's long planned for this moment, when the Realm itself lies vulnerable. His scouts have painstakingly charted the region for hundreds of miles, readying ambush spots and maintaining fortified caches in caves and ruins. His agents stand ready to turn from merely



providing intelligence to rousing rebellion and sabotaging infrastructure everywhere along the Black Shale Road. He keeps his adherents aware of these plans, readying them to personally command war parties and lead insurrections against the local satrapies' most capable officers and officials.

Caste: Changing Moon

Spirit Shape: Trapdoor spider; **Tell:** Venom dripping from his hollow fangs

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 9; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 50

Health Levels: -0x1/-1x2/-2x8/-4x4/Incap.

Actions: Administration: 8 dice; Ancient Knowledge: 6 dice; Command: 10 dice; Conceal Evidence/Tracks: 9 dice; Feats of Strength: 8 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Investigation: 7 dice; Read Intentions: 11 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 8 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 11 dice; Stealth: 10 dice; Strategy: 11 dice; Tracking: 9 dice; Trapmaking: 11 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 5, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Unarmed): 11 dice (Damage 11B)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (8 dice for control)

Combat Movement: 9 dice

Evasion: 6; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 5/0

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I am a protector of the weak and downtrodden.

Defining Principle: Deception and misdirection can best even a superior foe.

Defining Tie: The Mountain's people (Responsibility)

Defining Tie: The Realm (Hatred)

Major Principle: Hospitality is sacred.

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Responsibility)

Minor Principle: Laughter makes life worth living.

SHAPESHIFTING

Aum-Ashatra has a few animal shapes, both from the North and the South, and a variety of stolen faces he uses to walk among the Mountain's residents in secret. He can claim shapes with Blood Geas Binding, Debt of Borrowed Skin, and Whispering Heart Revelation (**Lunars**, pp. 162, 197, 235).

EXCELLENCIES

Aum-Ashatra can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Aum-Ashatra can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Adder Fang Method (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Protean): A **decisive** attack inflicts poison with Damage 2i/round (B in Crash), Duration 5 rounds, and a -2 penalty. Alternatively, add +4 Duration to animal shape's poison. *Mamba-and-Cobra Mastery*: Pay two Initiative for +1 Duration. Each 10 on the attack or damage roll adds +1 Damage (maximum 5i/round) or +1 Duration, or increases the penalty by one (maximum -5).

Deadly Beastman Transformation (1m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Withering-only): Hybrid Body Transformation must be active; can use reflexively with it. +4 dice on raw **withering** damage rolls, feats of strength, and move actions. +4 soak. +4 effective Strength for attempting feats of Strength. -1 Defense.

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Simple; Indefinite): Gain Extra Limbs and Spinnerets (**Exalted**, p. 166, **Lunars**, p. 121). *Terrifying Ogre Alteration*: While using Deadly Beastman Transformation, gain one-dot Fangs and three-dot Venomous (**Exalted**, pp. 165, 167).

The Spider's Trapdoor (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only, Mute): Make an unblockable, undodgeable grapple gambit against an enemy within medium

range. The gambit has difficulty 4. Make one Trapping roll for both the attack and grapple control rolls. On an unexpected attack, extra successes on the Initiative roll subtract that many dice on the target's opposed control roll, and it doesn't break concealment. If successful, Aum-Ashatra suffers no downsides for grappling, but characters can spend their turn helping free the victim to reduce the grapple's duration by two rounds. Once per scene.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +4 soak or Hardness 5.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Coyote-Laughing Hilarity (3m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Mute): Roll Social Influence opposing another character's influence roll. Success causes the influence's other targets to take it as a joke, inverting the influence's effect.

Empress-Grifting Confidences (4m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Mute): Roll Social Influence for a lie to instill a Principle of belief in it or a similar Intimacy. If a target's Resolve was penalized by one of his Intimacies, he can't spend Willpower to resist that scene unless he finds evidence of the lie. If no affected character has resisted with Willpower by the scene's end, Aum-Ashatra gains one Willpower.

Forked Tongue Discernment (2m; Reflexive; Instant): Roll Read Intentions to determine if someone's lying, adding two automatic successes, or four with a stunt. Once Aum-Ashatra catches someone lying, subsequent uses against her that scene don't require rolls.

STEALTH CHARMS

Skulking Rat Spirit (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Mute, Protean): Reroll 1s until they cease to appear on a Conceal Evidence/Tracks or Stealth roll. In animal shapes with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size, reroll 2s as well.

WARFARE CHARMS

Fog-Shrouded Guerilla Force (5m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant): Roll Strategy for an Ambush stratagem, doubling 9s and ignoring penalties for poor Drill. If the total forces on Aum-Ashatra's side are no greater than Size 4, he doubles 8s; if they're no greater than Size 2, he doubles 7s. If successful, allied battle groups add (6 – Size) successes on rolls to establish concealment or take cover.

Lone Wolf Pack Formation (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; One scene; Mute): An allied battle group gains +1 effective Size, maximum 5, and adds 4 Magnitude to its health track. If the battle group is reduced to Size 1, it dissipates entirely. If Aum-Ashatra is fighting under an

Ambush stratagem he's enacted or if the targeted battle group has Size 2, waive this Charm's Willpower cost.

Quicksilver Strategy Meditation (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): Choose two stratagems for a Strategic Maneuver. Aum-Ashatra can allocate successes to either or enact both with sufficient successes.

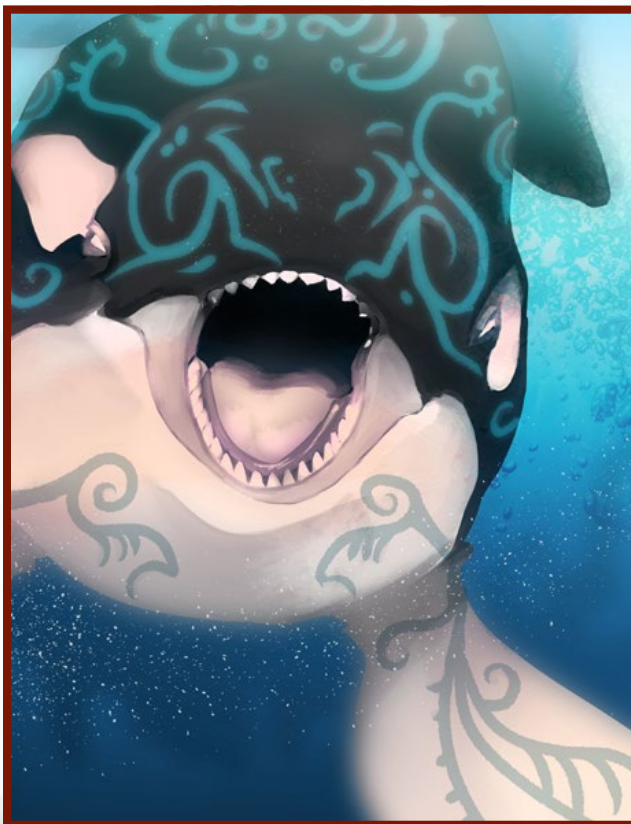
MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

Watchful Spider Stance (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): While meditating in the Mountain, can make Senses rolls to perceive anything within it. Outside of it, extend sight to one mile in all directions and hearing and smell to four miles, or twenty miles for very strong sounds or smells. Double 7s on touch- and taste-based Senses rolls.

Leviathan

For centuries, Leviathan nursed his hatred toward the Dragon-Blooded usurpers. Grief and guilt over his Solar mate's death kept him under the waves, watching over Sunken Luthe rather than scourging the seas as he had during the First Age. Then the Realm turned its ambitions Westward, and the sight of enemy sails in his sacred waters drove Leviathan to the surface once more.



In recent decades, Leviathan has frustrated the Luthian Council that managed the city in his absence by taking a more active role in politics, moving Luthe to a war footing and making military training mandatory for its citizens. His Lunar adherents and Silver Pact envoys meet in the Sunken Hall, planning guerilla operations against the Imperial Navy. This new dynamism has gained Leviathan new adherents, including Swims-in-Shadows, whom he considers both a trusted ally and a respected companion, and Gjalla the Tusk, who Leviathan has never quite managed to like.

Leviathan's Moon-Touched daughter, Blood-Dimmed Deep, largely supports her father's agenda in council, though they differ on specifics; she favors more direct approaches, while he follows the Pact's consensus on irregular warfare, deeming the Imperial Navy's forces too numerous, coordinated, and Exalt-backed to defeat in open battle. But as the Realm's civil strife distracts and destabilizes its Western presence, he may well see opportunity in his daughter's vision.

Meanwhile, Leviathan's centuries of seclusion and inaction against the Realm have earned the disdain of some Silver Pact members, including Sha'a Oka, and strained his relations with several others. A grand display of his might may bring them back to Luthe's halls, but pride and precaution stay Leviathan's hand.

Leviathan's brusque nature can make him seem unapproachable to newer adherents, but through reports from his senior adherents and his own observations at war councils, he's aware of Lunars within Luthe and their capabilities. He responds well to bold and decisive plans.

Like many other First Age Lunars, Leviathan regards the Solars' recent return with caution and a degree of distrust. Though his rage against the Dragon-Blooded and Sidereals still runs as hot today as it did during the Usurpation, he takes a wait-and-see approach toward the Solars in the Time of Tumult.

Strategy: Leviathan is rarely encountered outside his orca form (p. 191). He relies on grappling, especially when battling foes one-on-one, while using Charms like Octopus-and-Spider Barrage when outnumbered.

Caste: Full Moon

Spirit Shape: Orca; **Tell:** White patches behind and above his eyes.

Essence: 6; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 11 dice

Personal: 21; **Peripheral:** 58

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x12/-4x11/Incap.

Actions: Administration: 9 dice; Command: 8 dice; Feats of Strength: 11 dice (may attempt Strength 5

feats); Knowledge of the Seas: 12 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 11 dice; Senses: 10 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice; Strategy: 10 dice; Swimming: 12 dice; Tracking: 12 dice

Appearance 5, Resolve 5, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Unarmed): 14 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (11 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 10 dice

Evasion: 6, **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 5/0

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I must not fail in my duties again.

Defining Tie: Luthe (Responsibility)

Defining Tie: The Usurpers (Hatred)

Major Principle: The West will not fall to the Realm.

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Tentative Hope)

Minor Principle: I am Luthe's guardian, not its tyrant.

Minor Tie: Blood-Dimmed Deep (Strained Respect)

Minor Tie: Luna (Devotion)

SHAPESHIFTING

Leviathan is almost never seen outside his spirit shape's form, an orca (p. 191). He has a wide range of other shapes, human and animal alike, taken during the First Age. He can take shapes with Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Leviathan can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Leviathan can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Behemoth's Footprint Tread (15m, 3a, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only, Protean): Make a **decisive** attack against all within medium range. Roll (Initiative/3, rounded up) damage against each, adding attack roll extra successes as dice. Damaged enemies are knocked back one range band and fall prone. **Ocean-Vast Stature:** In aquatic animal shapes with Legendary Size or animal shapes with Trample, roll (Initiative/2, rounded up) damage.

Finding the Needle's Eye (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Uniform): Inflict -1 Defense against an attack and reroll up to six 1s on the attack roll (seven 1s if attacking with a shape's tail, tentacles, etc.). Can attack lower-Initiative enemies through cover, but they receive +3 non-Charm dice.

God-Monster Transcendence (5i; Reflexive; One scene; Dual): While at Legendary Size, **withering** attacks need 15+ post-soak dice to crash Leviathan. The Merit's protection extends to levels of **decisive** damage added by magic and magically-inflicted onslaught penalties. He can move away from smaller enemies without needing to disengage. Against battle groups, **withering** attacks double their attack roll extra successes and **decisive** attacks double their damage bonus. 1s subtract successes on rout checks he forces.

Mangling Grasp Might (6m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): When savaging a grappled enemy, double 9s on a **withering** damage roll or add +6 dice of **decisive** damage. Throws and slams double the rounds of control they can benefit from, and can throw enemies out to short range.

Octopus-and-Spider Barrage (5m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only, Protean): Make up to five **decisive** attacks, splitting Initiative evenly among them, rounded up. In animal shapes with more than four limbs, each successful attack adds one die to damage of subsequent attacks.

Spine-Breaking Technique (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only): Make a **decisive** savaging attack against a grappled enemy without resetting to base Initiative. Once per scene.

Striking Mospid Method (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): Reroll up to six failed dice on a **withering** attack roll, beginning with 6s and moving down.

Thousand Claw Affliction (5m, 5i, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Perilous, Protean, Withering-only): Make up to five **withering** attacks. Can't gain more than 6 Initiative per damage roll; 8 in shapes with more than four limbs. Once per scene, unless reset by incapacitating an enemy with an attack that resets Initiative, then reaching Initiative 15+.

Winding Constrictor Coils (6m; Supplemental; Until grapple is released): Leviathan lowers the Defense penalty for grappling by one. He doesn't lose rounds of control for being attacked or damaged by lower-Initiative enemies.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Heron Sheds Rain (5m [+2m, 1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Uniform): Block unblockable attacks. For two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, roll Initiative, add successes as non-Charms Parry, and reset to base. Once per scene, unless reset by gaining 20+ Initiative in an instant.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +6 soak or Hardness 5.

Unstoppable Juggernaut Incarnation (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only, Perilous): If Leviathan takes enough **decisive** damage from a source to fill all his health levels of one kind, any further damage is negated. Once per day.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Hundred-Handed Titan Thew (1m, 2a; Supplemental; Instant; Protean): If Leviathan adds a full Excellency on a feat of strength, he can attempt Strength 10 feats. In animal shapes that can already do so, he can attempt feats no matter how much Strength they require. *Ocean-Vast Stature*: This Charm is free in aquatic animal shapes with Legendary Size.

Iron Tyrant Impact (1a, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Protean): A feat of strength rerolls 5s and 6s until they cease to appear and can affect objects up to one range band beyond usual, plus an additional band for every five extra successes — or every three successes, in Legendary Size forms. Once per day. *Ocean-Vast Stature*: This Charm is free in aquatic animal shapes with Legendary Size.

Towering Beast Form (15m, 1wp; Simple; One day): Change into a Legendary Size animal. Must pay five motes each subsequent round in combat, unless Third Daughter makes a **decisive** attack or spends 8+ motes on offensive effects, or each hour outside combat. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Legendary Size shapes. *Ocean-Vast Stature*: Waive the recurring mote cost.

Elder ProWess

OCEAN-VAST STATURE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 6

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Protean

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Behemoth's Footprint Tread, God-Monster Transcendent, Hundred-Handed Titan Thew

Leviathan gains the following benefits while in his orca shape or those of other aquatic animals with Legendary Size:

- He doubles 7s on Swimming rolls.
- He retains Undaunted Behemoth Avatar's benefits while crashed.
- He waives Behemoth's Footprint Tread's anima cost and can use it to attack underwater enemies without needing to be on the same surface as them. He gains that Charm's Protean benefit.
- He waives the cost of Hundred-Handed Titan Thew and Iron Tyrant Impact.

Sazay Shadow-Dancer

Sazay Shadow-Dancer learned how to weave stories the way other members of her clan wove cloth. As a child, she sat at the griots' feet and drank in the tales they told: how the hero Jalani placed the stars in the sky; how the scorpion got its sting; why her people wandered the desert. She learned how to tell those tales, and how to pause at the right moment or speak softly to make her audience lean in close. She adopted different voices and expressions for each character. By the time she was 20, she was a storyteller herself, with the clan's children gathered at her feet.

At a trading post near Urim, a merchant accused her of stealing. Though Sazay had done no such thing, the guards arrested her — being one of the Isangi people was evidence enough for them. They clapped her in irons and left her to suffer for three days beneath the brutal sun. No shade, no water, no respite. At night, shivering with cold and half-delirious from heatstroke, she whispered stories of clever vengeance to stay awake. Luna came to her as a young man who touched cool fingers to her cracked lips. He freed her from the irons, and together they ran as foxes under the desert moon.

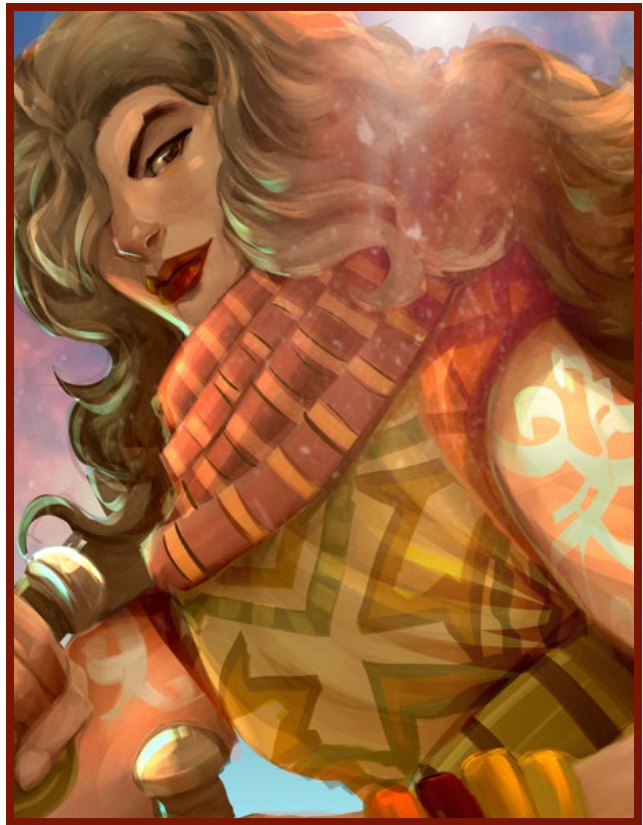
In the months that followed, Sazay meted out revenge against the trading post's merchants and guards. One by one, she lured them out into the desert, toying with them the way sand cats played with lizards before killing them. She returned to the trading post wearing her victims' faces, and reveled in the chaos she caused.

Sazay's travels throughout the South took her to the Burning Sands and into Eskari lands. There she met the Lunar trickster Smiling Zamisha, and became her adherent. Zamisha recognized the cruel streak her young student possessed, and taught her how to hone it into a weapon.

At a Silver Pact council, Sazay met Tegama Asarkon. The two forged a fast friendship. Sazay's humor and occasional irreverence cut through Tegama's formality; in return, Tegama's caution reined in some of Sazay's more reckless impulses. They traveled together for a time, a Circle of two.

Sent by Zamisha to pursue rumors of a newly Exalted Lunar named Tula the Reaver, they traveled to the petty satrapy of Kulinth. There, they found a city in rebellion, with Tula at its head. Sazay and Tegama joined the cause, and by the time the satrap and her troops fled the city, had begun forming their Circle with Tula and the No Moon witch Silent Pearl.

Sazay is a skilled spy and infiltrator. She takes pride in sowing seeds of distrust between the Realm's representatives, and would like nothing more than to see the Realm crumble — so much the better if she helps kick it



over. She has a strong sense of community, and makes friends quickly. Her found family means the world to her, and she'll go to great lengths to defend them.

Caste: Changing Moon

Spirit Shape: Fennec fox; **Tell:** A fennec fox's shadow

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Personal: 18; **Peripheral:** 41

Health Levels: 0/-1x2/-2x4/-4/Incap.

Actions: Conceal Evidence/Tracks: 8 dice; Disguise: 7 dice; Investigation: 6 dice; Oral History: 10 dice; Read Intentions: 11 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 8 dice; Senses: 8 dice; Stealth: 9 dice; Social Influence: 11 dice; Theft: 6 dice; Tracking: 8 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 4, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Dagger): 9 dice (Damage 8L)

Attack (Unarmed): 9 dice (Damage 8B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 3

Soak/Hardness: 2/0

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I delight in the suffering of the wicked.

Defining Principle: Community and friendships should be treasured.

Major Tie: The Realm (Hatred)

Major Tie: Tegama Asarkon (Friendship)

Major Tie: Tula the Reaver (Fondness)

Major Tie: Silent Pearl (Companionship)

Minor Principle: The truth shouldn't stand in the way of a good story.

Minor Tie: The Silver Pact (Camaraderie)

Minor Tie: Smiling Zamisha (Respect)

SHAPESHIFTING

Sazay is a prolific shapeshifter. In battle, she often takes a wolf's form (**Exalted**, p. 562). Other common forms include a mouse, kestrel, and marten, and but she's taken forms from nearly every Direction. She also has a wide range of human shapes, from beggars to princely courtiers. She can take shapes with Argent Trickster's Rook, Debt of Borrowed Skin, and Hero's Heart Challenge (**Lunars**, pp. 216, 251).

Skin-Changer's Subtlety (p. 34) mutes motes Sazay spends on shapeshifting.

EXCELLENCIES

Sazay can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Sazay can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Elusive Prey Approach (3m, 3i; Reflexive; Instant; Mute, Perilous, Uniform): After dodging an attack, roll Stealth.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Empress-Grifting Confidences (4m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Mute): Roll Social Influence for a lie to instill a Principle of belief in it or a similar Intimacy. If a target's Resolve was penalized by one of his Intimacies, he can't spend Willpower to resist that scene unless he finds evidence of the lie. If no affected character has resisted with Willpower by the scene's end, Sazay gains one Willpower.

Forgetful Victim Technique (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Psyche): When a scene ends, roll Social Influence against one character. Success erases his memory of the scene and resets any failed influence actions against him. If he was affected by a bargain, persuade, or threaten

roll, this counts as a roll to overturn it. Victims can pay three Willpower to exist if they encounter evidence of the scene's events. Once per day. Can't be used against the same character again for (his Integrity) days.

Moonlight Curtain Drawn (3m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): Gain +1 Guile, or +3 Guile to conceal information inconsistent with her current shape. **Argent Deceiver Smile**: For two motes, increases bonus to +3 when concealing that she's lying or intends to deceive someone.

Outburst-Provoking Posture (4m; Supplemental; Instant): A Social Influence roll of any kind also instills a Tie of irritation, anger, or disgust to Sazay or her current shape in targets of her choice. They suffer a -2 penalty on mental and social rolls for the rest of the scene.

Predator-and-Prey Mirror (3m; Reflexive; One scene): Sazay is seen either as the natural predator of anyone who encounters her, or as a vulnerable target for their predations. This perception can be leveraged with influence as a Minor Intimacy.

STEALTH CHARMS

Skulking Rat Spirit (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Mute, Protean): Reroll 1s until they cease to appear on a Conceal Evidence/Tracks or Stealth roll. In animal shapes with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size, reroll 2s as well.

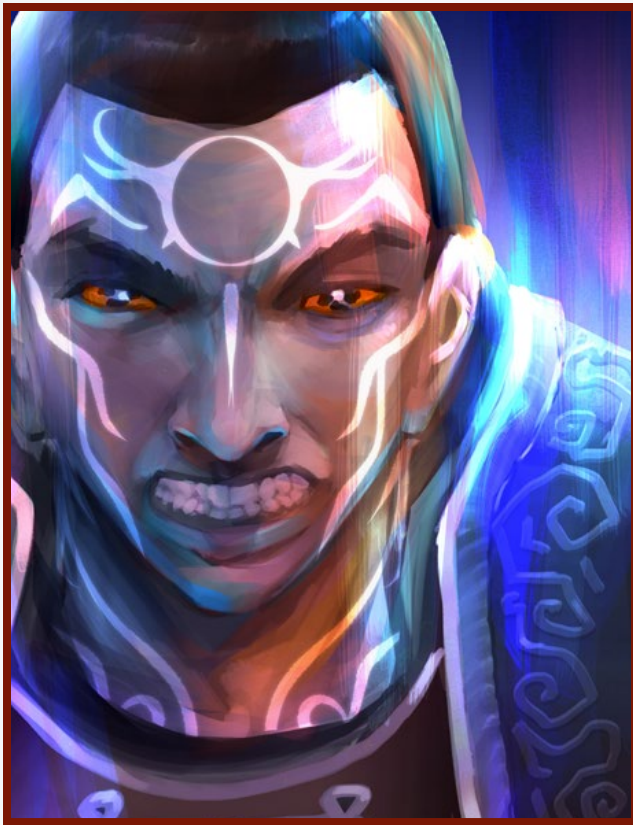
MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Quicksilver Second Face (2i; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): Shapeshift reflexively. **Scale-Shedding Escape**: Using this Charm and rolling Stealth on the same tick inflicts a -3 penalty on the opposed rolls of lower-Initiative enemies. Penalized characters who fail lose one Initiative. In shapes with Tiny Creature or Minuscule Size, no hiding spot is necessary.

Seven Obsidian Leopard

Seven Obsidian Leopard grew up a half-illiterate farmer in the polity of Daratal, on the shores of the Dreaming Sea. News of battle was on every trader's tongue: if Shogunate armies weren't on the march, the Fair Folk were. When the Haze Wars came to Daratal, its militia was no match for the Shogunate forces. Leopard volunteered to escort children and the elderly to seek shelter in a nearby ruin — better to risk the ghosts within than the slaughter without, despite his fears. As a band of Dragon-Blooded soldiers scoured the ruin looking for survivors, he crept along in their wake, ready to die as a decoy so his people could have an opportunity to escape.

As Leopard skulked past tombs and long-abandoned shrines, Luna rose above him in the form of a giant raiton. Its sudden appearance and grotesque shape terrified him, but Leopard neither cried out nor fled. When he steeled himself to move past the raiton, it smiled.



“Come,” it said, as ghosts gathered around, “let’s show them what it is to be afraid.” Wreathed in silver and flanked by the dead, Leopard drove the soldiers away and led the survivors to safety.

Thus began his initiation into necromancy. No longer did Leopard fear places where the dead walked. Ancient shades knew ancient secrets. For some of his divine blood, they divulged the keys to many mysteries of the Dreaming Sea — which Leopard intended to use to make war against the Shogunate.

Meeting one another through local Pact councils, Leopard and Tanisa Ring-Eater cooperated on several ventures against the Shogunate, harrying Dragon-Blooded throughout the Dreaming Sea. The two formed a fast friendship. After the Contagion subsided, the pair ventured into the ruins on Mount Namas, thwarting the First Age defenses. There, they founded their school: Leopard in the ancient city, Tanisa upon the slopes.

Leopard dwells in The Tree of Blossoming Stars, his sanctum-manse carved into the mountainside. There, he consults with his ghostly court, offering them both his blood and that of his Dragon-Blooded captives in exchange for their services and valuable information. Within its halls, he welcomes the Underworld’s wraith-scholars and deathly priests to share knowledge and engage in debate.

Though their goals have dovetailed for centuries, Leopard and Tanisa disagree intensely on the matter of Prasad. Viewing it as nothing more than an extension of Realm power, he intends to cast it down, whether through undead armies and terrible necromancies, or by grinding it down through asymmetric warfare and sowing dissension until it collapses into rebellion and civil war. His efforts toward influencing Volivat and Ysyr to go to war with Prasad are frequently undermined by Tanisa’s conflicting operations.

The split has cooled relations between the shahan-yas, though they still share students and consult with one another on matters relating to Mount Namas. While their arguments over Prasad are heated, their long years of cooperation and collaboration have thus far prevented hostilities from boiling over.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Leopard; **Tell:** A leopard’s rosette in each iris

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 8; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 40

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x8/-4x4/Incap.

Actions: Command: 7 dice; Investigation: 6 dice; Lore of the Dead: 11 dice; Medicine: 7 dice; Mysticism: 11 dice; Necromancy: 11 dice; Read Intentions: 9 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 10 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 9 dice; Strategy: 8 dice.

Appearance 4 (Hideous), Resolve 5, Guile 4

COMBAT

Attack (Blood Winnower, moonsilver grimscythe): 9 dice (Damage 18L/5)

Attack (Unarmed): 7 dice (Damage 11B)

Attack (Grapple): 6 dice (6 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 3; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 13/7 (Gloaming Hide, moonsilver reinforced buff jacket)

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: Tanisa Ring-Eater (Respect)

Defining Tie: The Usurpers (Steadfast Defiance)

Major Principle: Harmony between the living and the dead is founded on reciprocity between them.

Major Principle: Restraint and mercy have no place against an enemy like the Realm.

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Solidarity)

Major Tie: Prasad (Distrust)

Minor Principle: Death is a respite from struggle, not something to be feared.

Minor Principle: The enemy of my enemy is not my friend.

Minor Tie: The Namasi (Compassion)

Minor Tie: Those who disrespect the dead (Reproachful Scorn)

Minor Tie: Luna (Fearful Reverence)

ESCORT

Seven Obsidian Leopard is a solitary figure, but might be accompanied by Lunar adherents, bound ghosts, and Namasi deadspeakers (use exorcist traits, **Exalted**, p. 498).

SHAPESHIFTING

Seven Obsidian Leopard has animal shapes from across the Southeast. The most formidable include a boar-tusk crocodile, a tiger, an ox-dragon, and a Legendary Size octopus (**Exalted**, pp. 559, 565, 567; **Lunars**, p. 367). He's also amassed many human shapes. He can claim shapes with Debt of Borrowed Skin and Insatiable Barghest Hunt (p. 47; **Lunars**, p. 162)

EXCELLENCIES

Leopard can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Leopard can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Halting the Scarlet Flow (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; 5 turns; Perilous): Heal one level of non-aggravated damage at the start of each turn, or 5 levels of non-aggravated damage over a minute outside of combat. Ends if crashed. Once per day.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +4 soak or Hardness 5.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Raiton's Dark Auspice (Permanent): Add four dice on bargain and persuade rolls against ghosts. If the Lunar has gave a ghost funereal rights or has his heart's blood, he counts as having a Major Tie of friendship to her, or a Minor Tie if he has reason to oppose her. He can pay one Willpower to suppress this for (Integrity) days if she attacks him or threatens a Major or Defining Intimacy.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Towering Beast Form (15m, 1wp; Simple; One day): Change into a Legendary Size animal. Must pay five motes each subsequent round in combat, unless Leopard makes a **decisive** attack or spends 8+ motes on offensive effects, or each hour outside combat. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Legendary Size shapes.

NECROMANCY

Seven Obsidian Leopard's necromantic spells and shaping rituals use the same rules as sorcery.

Blood is Power: When Leopard takes a Shape Necromancy action, he can draw on blood's power — either his own or that of any character within close range who's taken lethal or aggravated **decisive** damage this scene. He gains additional necromantic motes equal to that character's base wound penalty. Incapacitated characters provide five necromantic motes. Leopard can't draw on someone's blood more than once per day, except his own.

Crimson Bargain Reciprocity: Once per day, Leopard may offer his blood to a ghost for power, paying one lethal health level and gaining (ghost's Essence + 3) necromantic motes, which last for the rest of the day. The ghost loses that many motes.

Penumbra Witch Mastery (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Add four non-Charms dice and reroll 1s until they cease to appear on a Necromancy roll, a Lore of the Dead roll involving the supernatural, or an Investigation or Read Intentions roll against a spirit or fae.

Raising the Rotting Horde (10nm, 1wp; Indefinite): Leopard rolls Necromancy against difficulty 1 to animate a battle group of zombies (**Exalted**, p. 502) if successful. Its base traits are Size 1, poor Drill, and Might 1. Every three extra successes on Leopard's roll lets him add one dot of Size, with sufficient corpses, or improve the group's Drill by one step. They have a Defining Tie of loyalty to him. Leopard can sustain a battle group of up to Size 4 indefinitely. Excess zombies last for a day or until exposed to sunlight.

Slumber of the Wandering Shade (Ritual, 3wp; Indefinite; Control): While meditating, Leopard expels his higher soul from his body, acting through it using his normal traits. He's dematerialized and counts as both undead and spirit. His emotion-based Intimacies count as one step lower, bereft of the lower soul's passion. Damage he takes in this form carries over to his body as sympathetic wounds.

Summon Ghost (Ritual, 2wp; Instant; Control): Summon a ghost of up to Essence 3 in an hour-long ritual at night. He can summon specific ghosts if he knows their names. Leopard rolls Necromancy against its Resolve to bind it, as with a demon. Ghosts gain +4 Resolve if they have Essence 2+ or some exceptional power like necromancy. Leopard can circumvent this by incorporating one of the Intimacies they had in life into the ritual. Once per night.

Smiling Zamisha

Born in the satrapy of Thousand Pillars, Zamisha's enmity toward the Realm took root before she took her first steps. Her people mined gems and precious metals



from the surrounding hills, yet still they starved as the Realm claimed its tribute. She lost friends and siblings to cave-ins, cruel and neglectful overseers, and garrison soldiers' brutality. When her people rose up, she joined them. As she led insurgents on a raid against the satrap's palace, Luna ran at her side, singing battle songs.

When the Wyld Hunt came for her, Zamisha escaped into the desert. Any hope she had that the satrap would show her people mercy in her absence was swiftly dashed. Unable to capture Zamisha, the satrap declared all her people complicit, ordering hundreds executed as punishment. Anguished by the loss and afraid her return would only visit more grief upon her people, she fled.

Zamisha spent years carrying out solo strikes against Realm interests, haunting trade routes and oases, but she knew if she wished to destroy a power as large as the Realm, she'd need help. To that end, she's spent generations honing the nomadic Eskari into a weapon against the Realm. To the Eskari, she's a devil-figure out of their own mythology — a legend she personally crafted and still cultivates to this day. Using dreams and disguises, she stokes resentment toward the Realm and encourages the Eskari to raid caravans full of supplies and tribute bound for Realm holdings.

Zamisha cares for the Eskari the way an artisan is fond of a favorite tool. Her importance in their culture is

a point of pride for her, though she rarely admits it. Eskari who display especial ruthlessness, fearlessness, or cunning may earn her esteem. Though she frequently has favorites, like the charismatic raider Gyula Zita, Zamisha has seen many such Eskari fall in battle or succumb to old age over her lifetime. The clans are her legacy, not any one individual. While she hopes they'll survive the Pact's conflict with the Realm, she never hesitates sending them into danger. If the axe breaks while felling a tree, does the logger mourn the axe, or heft another?

A quick thinker and clever strategist, Zamisha expects any who seek her out to keep up with her, whether that involves following her unflinchingly into battle or changing tactics to adapt to rapidly shifting situations. She's friendliest to Lunars who approach her on Pact business, willing to listen to proposals and lend help where needed. For those outside the Pact, she's most amenable when their requests involve stymieing Realm plans, or can benefit her own operations in the long run.

She has little time for those who balk at bold or dangerous ideas — not everyone will survive the Lunars' dismantling of the Realm, and almost no one will survive it *unchanged*. Lunars frightened by the notion earn Zamisha's contempt.

Caste: Changing Moon

Spirit Shape: Sand cat; **Tell:** Streaks of white hair at her temples

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 41

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x6/-4x3/Incap.

Actions: Command: 8 dice; Conceal Evidence/Tracks: 10 dice; Desert Survival: 12 dice; Disguise: 11 dice; Investigation: 8 dice; Read Intentions: 11 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 8 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 11 dice; Stealth: 10 dice; Strategy: 6 dice; Tracking: 10 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 4, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Raptor's Grace, moonsilver power-bow): 9 dice at short range (Damage 13L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 7 dice (Damage 8B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice for control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 9/4 (Forlorn Oasis, moonsilver chain shirt)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: Bold, decisive action is necessary for the Realm's destruction.

Defining Tie: The Silver Pact (Zealous Loyalty)

Defining Tie: The Realm (Vengeful Hatred)

Defining Tie: The Eskari (Ambition)

Major Principle: I enjoy my place in Eskari culture.

Major Principle: Adaptability is key to survival.

Major Principle: There's no truer test of character than suffering.

Major Principle: Suffering brings strength to those who can endure it.

Major Tie: Gyula Zita (Affection)

Minor Tie: Amatha Kinslayer (Respect)

MERITS

Cult 3

SHAPESHIFTING

Smiling Zamisha favors her sand cat spirit shape (**Exalted**, p. 560), but has the shapes of several animals from the Southern deserts, including an austrech, camel, mouse, oryx, hyena, cobra, and mongoose. She has far more human shapes, including scores of Eskari. She can claim shapes with Heart-Drinking Allure, Nest-Raiding Slyness, and Whispering Heart Revelation (**Lunars**, p. 145, 179, 235)

EXCELLENCIES

Zamisha can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Zamisha can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Elusive Prey Approach (3m, 3i; Reflexive; Instant; Mute, Perilous, Uniform): After dodging an attack, roll Stealth.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Coyote-Laughing Hilarity (3m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Mute): Roll Social Influence opposing another character's influence roll. Success causes the influence's other targets to take it as a joke, inverting the influence's effect.

Cuckoo's Nest Hospitality (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): Tanisa appears to have a specific social role

to all who perceive her, no matter how implausible it seems. Her influence can leverage this perception as if it were a Minor Intimacy. She inflicts a -3 penalty on read intentions and profile character rolls that contradicts this perception. Even if a character succeeds, he won't suspect the Lunar of intentional deception.

Empress-Gifting Confidences (4m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Mute): Roll Social Influence for a lie to instill a Principle of belief in it or a similar Intimacy. If a target's Resolve was penalized by one of his Intimacies, he can't spend Willpower to resist that scene unless he finds evidence of the lie. If no affected character has resisted with Willpower by the scene's end, Sazay gains one Willpower.

Intransigent Silver Soul (4m; Reflexive; Instant): Add +3 non-Charms Resolve against influence that would weaken a Defining Intimacy, or that's opposed by a Tie to Ül's Solar mate. This can only protect each Intimacy once per story.

Moonlight Curtain Drawn (3m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): Gain +1 Guile, or +3 Guile to conceal information inconsistent with her current shape. *Argent Deceiver Smile*: For two motes, increases bonus to +3 when concealing that she's lying or intends to deceive someone.

Wolf-Amid-the-Fold Approach (1m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant): Characters with Major or Defining Ties to Zamisha's current human form must pay an additional Willpower to resist her Social Influence. If no affected character resists with Willpower, Zamisha gains one Willpower.

STEALTH CHARMS

Cryptic Unknown Beast (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Mute, Protean): Zamisha can use this after characters have rolled against her Stealth, making them reroll all dice that show successes. In animal shapes with Ambush Hunter, if she beats all enemies' rolls, she rolls Join Battle. Once per scene.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Devil's-Eye Brand (6m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Mute): Roll Social Influence opposing the ([Appearance, Stamina, or Wits] + Integrity) of a touched character to inflict Zamisha's Tell on them. It lasts (1 + extra successes) hours, or that many days if Zamisha commits its cost. Attempts to conceal the Tell suffer a -4 penalty, and realizing it's not Zamisha's Tell requires a difficulty 7 (Perception + Awareness) roll. If the Zamisha and marked character together, rolls to spot her Tell or distinguish his suffer a -2 penalty.

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

Sublime Danger

Sublime Danger is a legend even among other Lunars, who tell exaggerated, blood-drenched stories of her daredevil exploits. At the Battle of the First Pillar, she rescued the Fair Folk prince Werian Gray-Eyes from the Wyld Hunt, claiming only the shikaris' blades to enhance her uncanny daiklave wings. She flew alongside the hawkfolk of Lim when they drove the troublesome Deles clan from their lands, harrying their god-blooded warrior queen across the plains. She entered a tournament at Rake wearing a stolen face, defeating heroes and generals alike until she faced the prince himself. With her blade at his throat, she unfurled her wings and demanded he set her captured adherent free.

She welcomes challenges from other Exalts, pushing them to their limits to test both their mettle and her own. Though she doesn't take on as an adherent every Lunar who fights well, she believes she learns a lot about a person from how they comport themselves on the battlefield. With this knowledge, she recommends new Lunars to other shahan-yas, and sends opportunities their way.

While she's a member of the Silver Pact, she's not heavily involved in Pact politics. Her concerns are regional, attempting to shore up the Confederation

of Rivers against Lookshy and the Realm's Eastern satrapies. Lunars who come to her with ideas to help the Confederation and other Scavenger Lands interests are the most likely to gain her aid. Despite — or perhaps because of — their vastly different interests, she and her fellow First Age survivor Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen are friends after a fashion; they meet on occasion to share information, spar, or ask the other to help hone an adherent's skills.

As an ally, Sublime Danger is an eager participant in perilous schemes. She's a daredevil, but she's not reckless. She'll challenge her companions' assumptions and point out flaws and potential weaknesses in their plans, but she does so to make those plans stronger, not undermine them. When she plays others off of one another, it's not out of cruelty but in the spirit of strengthening their bond or forcing them to admit a weakness and ask for their allies' help.

As an adversary, Sublime Danger is a ruthless foe. She relies on her past as a bandit and a mercenary, striking from stealth and exploiting weaknesses in her enemies' defenses. She harries those who set themselves against her or her interests until they leave her territory or admit defeat. Others she considers worthy of a challenge: characters whose actions have earned them fame may find Sublime Danger waiting for them, wanting to truly test their mettle.

Strategy: Sublime Danger generally opens battle with a combination of Sword-Shrike's Garden and a **withering** area attack from Storm of Flying Swords. Using Flying Sword Technique with Thousand Daiklave Wings lets her fly above the reach of melee combatants while attacking from range.

Caste: Full Moon

Spirit Shape: Loggerhead shrike; **Tell:** The smell of the forge.

Essence: 7; **Willpower:** 10; **Join Battle:** 11 dice

Personal: 22; **Peripheral:** 52

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x12/-4x11/Incap.

Actions: Command: 8 dice; Feats of Strength: 11 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Larceny: 12 dice; Read Intentions: 6 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 10 dice; Senses: 11 dice; Social Influence: 8 dice; Stealth: 12 dice; Strategy: 8 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 5, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Countless Daiklaves): 14 dice (Damage 17L/5)

Attack (Unarmed): 9 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice for control)



Combat Movement: 10 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 7

Soak/Hardness: 13/7 (Night Sky Mantle, moonsilver reinforced buff jacket)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I thrill in testing myself and my skills against formidable opponents.

Major Principle: There's no vengeance to be had against the Shogunate's successors, though there's still a challenge.

Major Principle: If I find my Solar mate, I'll make sure they respect my superior skills.

Major Tie: Her Adherents (Pride)

Minor Principle: Defeat is an opportunity to learn.

Minor Principle: I'm bound by no law, mortal or divine.

Minor Tie: The Silver Pact (Noncommittal Amiability)

Minor Tie: Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen (Companionship)

Minor Tie: The Solar Exalted (Interest)

Minor Tie: Her Daiklaves (Possessive Pride)

SHAPESHIFTING

Sublime Danger has acquired many animal shapes over the centuries, using them primarily for infiltration, travel, and making an impression. She's likewise claimed the faces of many who've lost to her in a variety of competitions. She can claim shapes with Argent Trickster's Rook, Hero's Heart Challenge, Nest-Raiding Slyness, and Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 179, 216, 251, 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Sublime Danger can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Sublime Danger can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

Sublime Danger's dice limit is increased to her maximum against her rival by Best Enemy Excitation, below.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Ferocious Biting Tooth (2m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): A **withering** attack gains +7 Overwhelming. On a **decisive** attack, add up to five attack roll extra successes as dice of damage.

Finding the Needle's Eye (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Uniform): Inflict -1 Defense against an attack and reroll up to seven 1s on the attack roll (eight 1s if attacking with a shape's tail, tentacles, etc.). Can attack

lower-Initiative enemies through cover, but they receive +3 non-Charm dice.

Flying Sword Technique (5m; Simple; Instant; Uniform): Make a **withering** or **decisive** attack against an enemy within long range, adding five dice on the attack roll (six dice in Form).

Limb-Maiming Flourish (3m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): While at Initiative 10+, if enemy doesn't take a crippling injury, roll dice of damage equal to dice on original roll that showed successes. In animal shapes with crippling attacks, gain one Willpower for incapacitating or crippling a nontrivial foe. Enemies that take crippling injuries are immune for rest of scene.

Storm of Flying Swords (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Dual): Make an undodgeable **withering** or **decisive** attack against all enemies within medium range. **Withering** attacks only award Initiative from the highest damage roll. **Decisive** attacks divide her Initiative evenly among all enemies, rounded up. Battle groups and trivial enemies take her full Initiative in damage. Sublime Danger can use this reflexively, waiving its Willpower cost, when she uses Sword-Shrike's Garden or Thousand Daiklave Wings.

Striking Mospid Method (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): Reroll up to seven failed dice on a **withering** attack roll, beginning with 6s and moving down.

Sword-Shrike's Garden (5m, 4i, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Perilous): An environmental hazard with difficulty 5 and Damage 5L/round extends out to close range from Sublime Danger (difficulty 6 and Damage 6L in Form). It counts as difficult terrain. Sublime Danger and her allies aren't affected. This ends if she's crashed.

Thousand Blades Form (10m; Simple; One scene; Dual, Form): **Withering** attacks add +6 Overwhelming. **Decisive** attacks double up to six 10s on damage rolls. Can activate reflexively after damaging an enemy with a **decisive** attack or Sword-Shrike's Garden. *Infinite Arsenal Apotheosis*: For a ten-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, add +3 to Sublime Danger's base Initiative and the Initiative she receives for crashing enemies. Once per round, she can pay three Initiative to make a **decisive** clash or counterattack. Her daiklaves can't be disarmed or damaged.

Thousand Daiklave Wings (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; One scene): Sublime Danger can fly while using Thousand Blades Form or Sword-Shrike's Garden, adding five dice on aerial movement rolls (six in Form). She can't rise above medium range unless pursuing an aerial enemy. Waive the Willpower cost if used together with Infinite Arsenal Apotheosis.

Thousand Blades Strike as One (3m, 1wp; Simple; Uniform): Make a **withering** or **decisive** attack, adding five dice on both the attack and damage rolls (six dice in Form). The attack inflicts a -3 onslaught penalty.

Thousand Blades Unsheathed (Permanent): Sublime Danger's many floating daiklaves add two non-Charm dice on clash attacks, as per dual wielding. Her attacks aren't affected by crippling penalties to her limbs, off-hand penalties, etc. Disarm gambits against the floating blades suffer +1 difficulty.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Gleaming Crescent Block (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After an attack roll, up to seven 1s subtract successes.

Heron Sheds Rain (5m [+2m, 1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Uniform): Block unblockable attacks. For two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, roll Initiative, add successes as non-Charm Parry, and reset to base. Once per scene, unless reset by gaining 20+ Initiative in an instant.

Wings-of-Steel Bulwark (3m, 1i; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Uniform): Sublime Danger's daiklaves provide heavy cover against an attack, adding +2 non-Charm Defense. If her current onslaught penalty is -5 or less (-6 in Form), she doesn't suffer onslaught penalties from attacks she blocks. Waive the Initiative cost while using Sword-Shrike's Garden.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Intransigent Silver Soul (4m; Reflexive; Instant): Add +3 non-Charm Resolve against influence that would weaken a Defining Intimacy, or that's opposed by a Tie to Sublime Danger's Solar mate. This can only protect each Intimacy once per story.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

Elder ProWess

BEST ENEMY EXCITATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 6

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Intransigent Silver Soul, any four of Argent Trickster's Rook, Hero's Heart Challenge, Nest-Raiding Slyness, Shape-Stealer's Riddle, or Terrifying Predator Consumption

Sublime Danger gains additional benefits against her rival. She can only have one rival at a time. Her Solar mate is her rival by default, even if she hasn't met him yet, unless the Storyteller decides otherwise.

- Her dice limit increases to +10 dice and +5 on static values when she takes an action that's opposed by her rival, or when she's trying to impress or intimidate him.

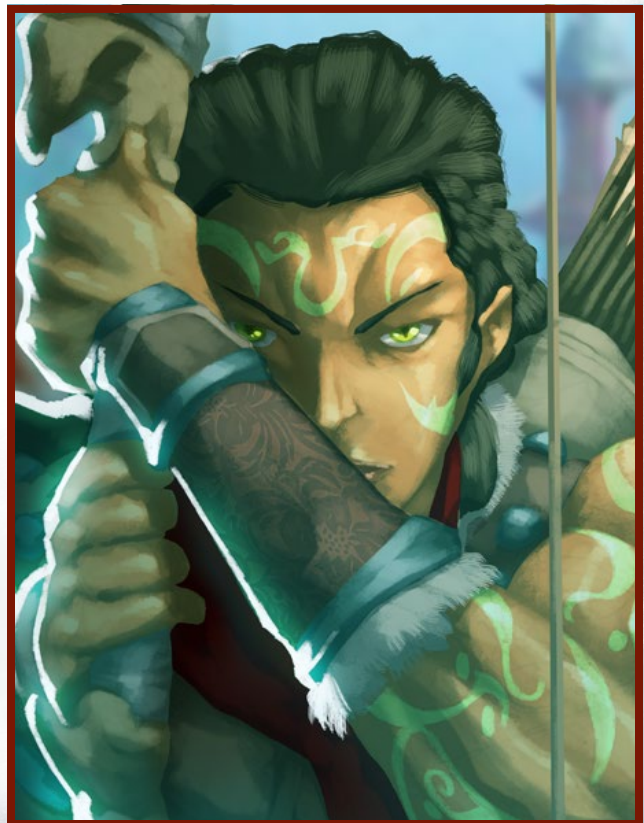
- Ties to her rival can't be weakened or altered by other characters' influence or magic, unless it's the rival himself. The same applies to magic that would erase, alter, or tamper with her memories or perception of him.

- When she Joins Battle against her rival or enters into another form of competition with him, her current temporary Willpower is set equal to his, if his is higher. This can't raise her above her permanent Willpower.

- She gains one Willpower when her rival voluntarily strengthens a Tie to her while in her presence.

Tanisa Ring-Eater

Tanisa Ring-Eater was a fisher's daughter in the Dreaming Sea port city of Serche. While her siblings followed in their parents' footsteps, Tanisa instead took work at a teashop, where her amiable nature and keen social insights won her connections among the patrons. She became a merchant, and clients sought both her wares



and her advice. While she never had children, Tanisa had many nieces and nephews, becoming a respected elder in her clan. She kept her finger on the community's pulse, making matches and guiding peoples' affairs.

Very little escaped Tanisa's notice. Adept at divining kernels of truth hidden in rumors and gossip, she knew when someone was acting strangely. When troubles between two families escalated, it was Tanisa who foresaw their feud spilling over into violence. Piecing together oddities in family members' recent behavior and fragments of overheard conversations, she realized with dawning horror that one branch of the family — determined to settle their differences through bloodshed — had planned an ambush that very night which would leave all too many dead. Racing past the point of exhaustion to warn the families' elders before catastrophe could strike, Tanisa Exalted.

Upon joining the Silver Pact, Tanisa met Seven Obsidian Leopard. In him, she saw a keen mind, a clever strategist, and a kindred spirit. For centuries, the pair worked together, finding comfort in each other's company and discovering they shared a singularity of purpose in their opposition to the Realm. Together, they took students who split their time between the two shahan-yas, learning to draw on the strengths of both.

In recent years, that singularity of purpose has fractured. While both still strongly oppose the Realm, they've come to sharp words over Prasad. Tanisa remains staunchly convinced that it can be turned against the Realm, forcing the Dragon-Blooded to splinter and fight among themselves. To Leopard, however, Prasad can only be destroyed. As tension over the issue has increased, so too has the distance between the former partners. While they still share students, Leopard now stays at the mountain's peak, while Tanisa remains content to wander the more populated forests below, beguiling travelers and working her schemes.

Caste: Changing Moon

Spirit Shape: Tokay gecko; **Tell:** Vertical slit pupils

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 41

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x6/-4/Incap.

Actions: Assess Goods: 9 dice; Economics: 11 dice; Investigation: 11 dice; Larceny: 8 dice; Read Intentions: 10 dice; Senses: 6 dice; Social Influence: 10 dice; Stealth: 9 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 5, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Brida's Crescent, moonsilver power-bow): 10 dice at short range (Damage 13L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 7 dice (Damage 8B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 7/4 (Lattice Mirror, moonsilver breastplate)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: Sometimes, you have to manipulate people for their own good.

Defining Tie: Seven Obsidian Leopard (Companionship)

Defining Tie: The Usurpers (Hatred)

Major Principle: Turn your enemies against each other, and they'll do your work for you.

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Kinship)

Major Tie: Prasad (Opportunistic Interest)

Major Tie: The Namasi (Magnanimity)

Minor Tie: The gods of Mount Namas (Respect)

SHAPESHIFTING

Tanisa Ring-Eater has a variety of animal shapes from across the Southeast, using them primarily for stealth, surveillance, and travel. She's taken many human forms as well, including a number of nobles, merchants, and other minor power players of the Dreaming Sea. She can take shapes with Debt of Borrowed Skin, Nest-Raiding Slyness, Heart-Drinking Allure, and Whispering Heart Revelation (**Lunars**, pp. 145, 162, 179, 235).

EXCELLENCIES

Tanisa can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Tanisa can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Flowing Body Evasion (5m [+1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Uniform): Dodge an undodgeable attack or add +1 Evasion. Once per scene, if hit, pay one Willpower to subtract (Evasion against the attack) successes from the damage roll. Can be reset by successfully dodging three **decisive** attacks from nontrivial opponents.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Cuckoo's Nest Hospitality (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): Tanisa appears to have a specific social role to all who perceive her, no matter how implausible it seems. Her influence can leverage this perception as if it were a Minor Intimacy. She inflicts a -3 penalty on read intentions and profile character rolls that contradicts this perception. Even if a character succeeds, he won't suspect the Lunar of intentional deception.

Forked Tongue Discernment (2m; Reflexive; Instant): Roll Read Intentions to determine if someone's lying, adding two automatic successes, or four with a stunt. Once Tanisa catches someone lying, subsequent uses against her that scene don't require rolls.

Goddess Crowned by Horns (6m; Supplemental; Instant): A Social Influence roll that upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy adds (Intimacy) non-Charm dice. 10s increase the cost to resist by one Willpower each, maximum three. Once per story, unless reset by upholding that Intimacy through social action.

Herd Reinforcement Stance (4m; Supplemental; Instant): A Social Influence roll treats members of a culture as having a Minor Principle reflecting one of its customs. If Tanisa has a Defining Tie to the culture, she may pay one Willpower to impose a Major Principle instead, except against outcasts, dissidents, etc.

Intransigent Silver Soul (4m; Reflexive; Instant): Add +3 non-Charm Resolve against influence that would weaken a Defining Intimacy, or that's opposed by a Tie to Tanisa's Solar mate. This can only protect each Intimacy once per story.

Moonlight Curtain Drawn (3m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): Gain +1 Guile, or +3 Guile to conceal information inconsistent with her current shape. *Argent Deceiver Smile*: For two motes, increases bonus to +3 when concealing that she's lying or intends to deceive someone.

Understanding the Prey (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Mute): Double 9s on a Read Intentions roll, an Investigation roll for profiling, or a Senses roll opposing disguise.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

Gnawing Mouse Malaise (5m, 1wp; Simple; One story; Mute): Spend a scene sabotaging an organization Tanisa has authority within, rolling Social Influence with four automatic successes, opposed by an appropriate roll by an involved group member. Rolls for the organization's business take twice as long, and 1s subtract successes. Once per day, Tanisa gains one Willpower when a penalized roll fails. She gains +3 Guile to conceal his culpability. This can be ended by uncovering Tanisa's involvement and completing a relevant project.

Tegama Asarkon

Tegama Asarkon was born into a life of plenty. His father, an azu — a title of minor nobility in their small corner of the Scavenger Lands — ensured the boy wanted for nothing. But when he was seven, a worn and hungry beggar came to his father's estate with her child in tow, asking for aid. The azu turned them away, then tossed the scraps of his roast meat to the dogs a moment later without a second thought. That day, a small flame of doubt sparked in Tegama's heart.

Years passed, and Tegama rose to fill his father's role. When times grew lean, Tegama appealed to the tyrant he served, begging her to help him feed his people. She refused, just as his father did to the beggar years before. Instead, she dispatched him to put down a peasant revolt on his neighbor's land. But he found himself unable to strike down folk who were only struggling to survive. Facing the rebels on the field, he yielded, pledging his sword and his house's resources to join the rebellion.

As they stormed the tyrant's palace, he Exalted.

Afterward, Tegama left his homeland behind, fearing his largely Immaculate people would turn against him, and aiming to avoid the Wyld Hunt. Traveling northward — one direction being as good as another — he



came upon the Mountain of the Spider King, where he sought Aum-Ashatra's tutelage.

At a council of Northern shahan-yas, Tegama met the Changing Moon Sazay Shadow-Dancer. The two became fast friends, and were tasked with traveling to the village of Kulinth to offer the new Lunar Tula the Reaver membership in the Silver Pact. There, Tegama found himself aiding in a revolt once more, as the Kulinthi rebelled against the satrap's forces.

Now, allied with Sazay, Tula, and the gruff elder Silent Pearl, Tegama remains determined not to repeat his father's mistakes, and strives to never turn away from those in need. However, years of comfort sometimes prevent him from fully understanding the struggles of those less fortunate, and he relies heavily on those around him to compensate for his shortcomings.

Strategy: Tegama almost always fights in his human form. A Single Point master, he enters the style's Form as soon as possible and uses the scene-long version of Liquid Steel Flow to enhance his **withering** attacks as he builds Initiative in both tracks. Reaching Initiative 15+ before making a **decisive** attack lets him make the most of his damage-adding Charms.

Caste: Full Moon

Spirit Shape: Spiny flower mantis; **Tell:** The smell of orchids

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 11 dice

Personal: 18; **Peripheral:** 36

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x8/-4x7/Incap.

Actions: Administration: 7 dice; Aristocratic Education: 6 dice; Command: 8 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Read Intentions: 11 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 8 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 11 dice; Strategy: 8 dice

Appearance 5, Resolve 5, Guile 5

COMBAT

Attack (Decorum, moonsilver reaper dai-klave): 14 dice (Damage 17L/5)

Attack (Unarmed): 9 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 6 dice (6 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 11 dice

Evasion: 2, **Parry:** 7

Soak/Hardness: 13/7 (Grace in Fury, moonsilver reinforced buff jacket)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: Righteous causes deserve my aid.

Defining Principle: It's better to create than destroy.

Major Principle: By aiding the weak, we make ourselves strong.

Major Tie: The Realm (Disgust)

Major Tie: Sazay Shadow-Dancer (Camaraderie)

Major Tie: Silent Pearl (Friendship)

Major Tie: Tula the Reaver (Pride)

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Loyalty)

Major Tie: Aum-Ashatra (Respectful Deference)

Minor Tie: The Scavenger Lands (Nostalgia)

SHAPESHIFTING

Tegama Asarkon has a handful of animal shapes from both the Scavenger Lands and the North, including a crab, snow hare, mountain goat, snowy owl, and mastiff. He has human shapes gathered from all across Creation. He can take shapes using Heart-Drinking Allure, Hero's Heart Challenge, and Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, pp. 145, 251, 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Tegama can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Tegama can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Fatal Stroke Flash (1m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): A **decisive** attack against an enemy with lower Initiative adds damage dice equal to the difference, up to a maximum of Tegama's Initiative. If the attack misses, Tegama's Initiative is set equal to the enemy's before he loses Initiative for missing.

Ferocious Biting Tooth (2m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): Add +3 Overwhelming on a **withering** attack. On a **decisive** attack, add up to 3 attack roll extra successes as damage dice.

Liquid Steel Flow (5m [+1 wp]; Reflexive; One round; Dual): Add +5 raw damage on **withering** attacks. For a one-Willpower surcharge, extend duration to one scene. Making a **decisive** attack ends it, converting three dice of damage on the attack to automatic successes and waiving Fatal Stroke Flash's Willpower cost for the attack.

Shining Starfall Execution (6m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): Add three dice of **decisive** damage, or five dice at Initiative 15+. If the attack misses, lose an additional three Initiative.

Single Point Shining Into the Void Form (10m; Simple; One scene; Form): Roll Join Battle to establish

a second Initiative track for Tegama's sword. He can only use the sword's turn to attack or delay. The base damage of **decisive** attacks using the sword's Initiative can't exceed Tegama's own Initiative. The sword loses one Initiative at the end of each round if Tegama didn't succeed on attack with its action. If the sword is crashed, the Form ends and can't be reused for three rounds. Can be used reflexively when Tegama wins Join Battle.

Unerring Fang Technique (1m, Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): If Tegama adds a full Excellency on a **withering** attack, add a non-Charm success on the attack roll and roll a non-Charm die for each 10.

Void-Slicing Wind (6m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only): Move into close range and make a **decisive** attack against an enemy within medium range. Add an automatic success on the attack and damage roll for each range band crossed. If Tegama misses, he moves one range band past his enemy.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Gathering Light Concentration (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After blocking an attack, inflict its onslaught penalty on the attacker instead of Tegama.

Gleaming Crescent Block (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After an attack roll, up to three 1s subtract successes.

Horizon-Swallowed Star Flash (8m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Clash, Decisive-only): Clash with a **decisive** attack, adding up to five extra successes as dice of damage.

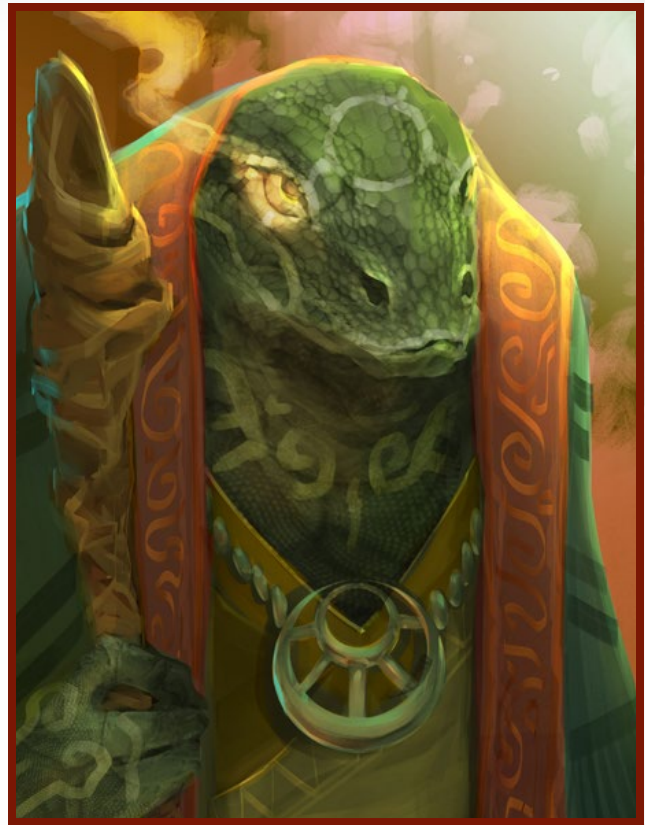
SOCIAL CHARMS

Moonlight Curtain Drawn (3m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): Gain +1 Guile, or +3 Guile to conceal information inconsistent with his current shape. *Argent Deceiver Smile*: For two motes, increases bonus to +3 when concealing that he's lying or intends to deceive someone.

River Reflects Desire (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Mute): After successfully asserting Guile against a read intentions roll with at least a single 1, Tegama causes his opponent to believe that they succeeded. Rather than seeing the truth, his opponent sees whatever he would most desire to see.

Ül the Burning Eye

Born in a humble coastal village in the late First Age, Ül preferred fishing alone under the stars, singing to little gods and elementals of wind and sea. When slavers from the city Sardonyx ravaged the shores, only Ül dared the Sea-Stack Labyrinth's eternal storms to seek aid from



the Blueflash Court's spirits. He set sail alone, but found Luna was his steersman; upon arrival, he Exalted.

A physician, sorcerer, poet, and scholar, Ül traveled the Southwest crushing plagues, gathering mystical herbs, taming rogue elementals, and investigating occult mysteries. But he always returned to the Fortress of the Fulgurite Spire, the citadel-town he founded alongside his platonic Solar mate and closest friend, the artificer Navo Forty-Lights. And when Ül wedded the Dragon-Blooded champion Sapphire Tiam, she joined him there to raise a bevy of offspring.

During the Usurpation, the Spire's Dragon-Blooded officers — led by Tiam and her children — cornered Navo and slew him. Unwilling to fight his own family, Ül fled into the wilderness. But for decades thereafter, descendants of his joined Wyld Hunts against him to prove their loyalty to a wary Shogunate.

Retreating across Creation, Ül witnessed common folk suffering from endless Shogunate civil wars and vicious Silver Pact guerilla tactics — dying in battle, being brutalized or enslaved, or enduring disease and famine. Already unwilling to bloody his hands, this forever cemented his aversion to military campaigning, which he deems inextricable from widespread civilian death and suffering.

Though horrified by the Contagion's death toll, Ül took solace in an end to the Shogunate's grip upon Creation's peoples. He returned home to the Fortress of the Fulgurite Spire to bury the last of his plague-slain descendants, hoping to establish a society free of violence and subjugation. But new empires sprang up, including the aggressive Southwestern Shogunate successor state of Intani, whose fleets soon dominated the region.

Unwilling to do nothing, Ül focused earthquakes and lightning strikes on Intani rulers' palaces and forts, and savaged their military fleets with storms and whirlpools, aiming to halt their advance. Mundane flooding later submerged lowland Intani beneath the sea; Ül attributes this to elemental instability fomented by his repeated sorceries, and still feels remorse. He welcomed survivors to his citadel, and still admits such refugees and runaway slaves as he can support.

Today, Ül invokes tailored diseases, demon assassins, and similar methods to slay individual Dragon-Blooded and key mortal officials, aiming to minimize civilian deaths. But he grows ever more intent on his current ambition: a sorcerous plague that would slay every Dragon-Blooded throughout Creation. He freely acknowledges that his willingness to kill unaffiliated Exalted to end the Shogunate's successor states is wicked, but feels that either perpetuating the Silver Pact's war or standing aside to give the Realm free rein would be a greater evil still.

Strategy: Ül's not one for battle — he'd prefer to escape via Cloud Trapeze while his bound demons, komodo-folk warriors, and other allies hold off his enemies. If forced into combat, though, his unique Elder Prowess Charm lets him combine Rabid Beast Bite with Thorn of Cold Rebuke to inflict potent diseases against enemies with an area-of-effect attack.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Komodo dragon; **Tell:** Right eye smolders a fiery red

Essence: 6; **Willpower:** 9; **Join Battle:** 8 dice

Personal: 21; **Peripheral:** 45

Health Levels: -0x1/-1x2/-2x8/-4x7/Incap.

Actions: Ancient Knowledge: 11 dice; Command: 6 dice; Investigation: 6 dice; Medicine: 12 dice; Mysticism: 11 dice; Poetry: 10 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Disease/Poison: 12 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 6 dice; Sorcery: 12 dice; Stealth: 6 dice; Strategy: 8 dice

Appearance 3, Resolve 6, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Sapphire Queen's Reliquary, soulsteel wrackstaff): 8 dice (Damage 14B/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 7 dice (Damage 9B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 6 dice

Evasion: 3; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 10/4 (Arasi's Arillode, moonsilver chain shirt)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I'll go to any lengths to avoid open warfare's cost in civilian lives.

Defining Principle: The extinction of the Dragon-Blooded will be my life's work, my magnum opus.

Defining Tie: Shogunate successor states (Hatred)

Major Principle: Always strike at an organization's head, not the body.

Major Principle: Remorse and regret will not stop me from pursuing my goals.

Major Principle: Sometimes there are no good options, so that one must choose between evils.

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Ambivalence)

Major Tie: The Fulgurite Spire (Security)

Minor Principle: Caution and precision are key to victory.

Minor Principle: Fear is as much a weapon as iron.

Minor Tie: The Lintha (Disgust)

Minor Tie: Raksi (Collegiality)

ESCORT

Ül is escorted by various spirits at all times — whether disease spirits, ghostly allies, or summoned demons or elementals. In his citadel, he's often accompanied by a Size 1-2 battle group of komodofolk soldiers with elite Drill and Might 1 (use elite troop traits, **Exalted**, p. 497). His komodofolk have Enhanced Scent, one-dot Tails, and three-dot Unusual Hide (**Exalted**, pp. 165-166). Other allies, such as Lunar adherents or his elderly necromancer-colleague Yasa Crow-Caller, sometimes join him as well.

SHAPESHIFTING

Ül prefers his own human and hybrid forms, but also uses numerous winged and aquatic shapes for travel, surveillance, and stealth. He knows the forms of numerous current and former residents of the Spire as well as a handful of long-dead Shogunate Dragon-Blooded and their mortal officers. Ül can claim shapes with Blood Geas Binding and Shape-Stealer's Riddle (p. 44; **Lunars**, p. 197).

EXCELLENCIES

Ül can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Ül can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Rabid Beast Bite (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): Dealing **decisive** damage with a natural attack inflicts one of the countless diseases that Ül's encountered. He often employs hemorrhagic fever and plague (**Exalted**, p. 235). Crashed enemies and trivial foes acquire the disease at Major intensity. *Pestilential Fang Strike*: Once per scene, pay one mote to add +2 virulence and morbidity to the disease. *Contagion's Burning Eye*: This Charm can enhance attacks made with spells.

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Reflexive; Indefinite): Gain Enhanced Scent, a one-dot Tail, and three-dot Unusual Hide (**Exalted**, pp. 165-166).

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +6 soak or Hardness 5.

SORCERY

Lord of Lightning's Spire: Ül gains six sorcerous motes at the start of each scene amid rain, winds, etc. In thunderstorms, high winds, and other harsh weather, he also gains two sorcerous motes each turn. Taking damage from a weather-based environmental hazard grants five sorcerous mote per level of damage. These motes last until end of scene.

Plague-Binder's Pact: When Ül takes a Shape Sorcery action, he can draw power from a character within medium range who's infected by a disease, gaining (Intensity) sorcerous motes. Each disease afflicting a character can only be invoked once per day, except when Ül casts a control spell.

Cosmos-Rending Fury (5m, 1 wp; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): Upon winning Join Battle, reflexively Shape Sorcery with +10 dice.

Penumbra Witch Mastery (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Add six non-Charm dice and reroll 1s until they cease to appear on a Sorcery roll, an Ancient Knowledge roll involving the supernatural, or an Investigation or Read Intentions roll against a spirit or fae.

Shadow-Hands Invocation (2m [6m, 1 wp]; Reflexive; One turn): Ül can flurry Shape Sorcery with non-attack actions and ignores all penalties from flurrying. For six motes, one Willpower, this lasts one scene.

Beckoning That Which Stirs the Sky (Ritual, 2wp; [1 + threshold successes] hours; Control): Roll Sorcery to alter the weather, with difficulty based on degree of

change and climate. Altered weather extends out to (6 + threshold successes) miles. Weather follows Ül if he spends half his threshold successes, rounded up.

Cloud Trapeze (30sm, 1wp; Until dismissed; Control): Create a cloud-barge that flies at ninety miles per hour and can carry up to nine hundred tons. Passengers aren't affected by ill weather or high altitudes. Vision-based rolls against those within the cloud suffer a -3 penalty. If it flies among other clouds, picking it out requires a difficulty 5 (Perception + [Occult or Survival]) roll or weather-predicting magic. In combat, Ül can use his movement action to move the barge and everything on it one range band in any direction, as a miscellaneous action.

Death of Obsidian Butterflies (15sm, 1wp; Instant; Decisive-only): Roll Sorcery as an undodgeable **decisive** attack against enemies in a line out to medium range, rolling (6 + extra successes) damage against individuals or (11 + extra successes) against battle groups. This doesn't reset Initiative.

Demon Summoning (Ritual, 2wp [+1wp]; Instant): Summon a First Circle demon in a night-long ritual, rolling Sorcery against its Resolve to bind it. On the night of the full moon, Ül can pay an additional Willpower to summon a Second Circle Demon.

Infallible Messenger (5sm, 1wp; Instant): Send a five-minute message to someone anywhere in Creation, reaching him within a day. Can convey influence, but not Charms.

Thorn of Cold Rebuke (10sm, 2wp): Roll a **decisive** attack with Sorcery, adding +5 bonus dice, against all enemies within medium range of a point that's within long range of Ül. It has a base damage of five dice against each hit enemy, and Ül divides his Initiative evenly among them, rounded up. Battle groups instead suffer (Ül's Initiative + 5) dice of damage. A freezing mist lingers in the area for six hours, an environmental hazard with difficulty 5 and Damage 1B/hour. Exposed surfaces freeze, becoming difficult terrain and inflicting a -3 penalty on balance-related rolls. Bodies of water freeze over. Alternatively, Ül can use the spear as a weapon with Damage 12L/4, rolling Sorcery to attack. He can use his entire turn to throw the spear and unleash the spell's area attack.

Elder ProWess

CONTAGION'S BURNING EYE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Stamina 5, Essence 6

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Circle Sorcery, Doom Brought to Heel, Friend of the Plague, Pestilential Fang Strike

Ūl gains the following benefits:

- Characters must roll against the virulence or morbidity of diseases he inflicts with magic, even if they have magic that renders them immune to disease or lets them cure disease without rolling.
- Mundane diseases he inflicts with magic are capable of killing those with Exalted Healing.
- He can use Rabid Beast Bite to enhance attacks made with spells.

Generals of the Caul

Lintha Haqwen Fia-Shaw Flowers Unbending in the Storm

Fia-Shaw grew up among Asura's Lintha. After a childhood spent fishing, mending sails, and scrubbing blood-stained decks, she joined Asura's piratical fleet. Aboard ship she raided merchant traffic, smuggled goods via secret routes, and traded with non-Lintha in hidden coves on moonless nights.

She'd served aboard the *Skua* for three years, long enough to see it as her own, when an Imperial Navy squadron caught them at sea. Limping away from a boarding action that killed the captain and much of the crew, the *Skua* found itself driven toward a chain of reefs. Unwilling to let the Realm run her ship aground — nor to let its interrogators coax out her knowledge of Asura's secret routes and hidden caverns — Fia-Shaw fought to save the ship from crashing on the reef, relaying the acting captain's desperate orders as she hauled on the lines with all her strength.

She stood, screaming with blood and salt in her hair, and Exalted.

Upon her return to the Caul, Fia-Shaw dedicated her efforts toward harrying Realm craft — both Imperial Navy warships and Merchant Fleet vessels whose bellies were heavy with tribute, whose plunder she supplied to aid Lunar efforts. Her daring strikes and strategic instincts quickly earned her a seat at Sha'a Oka's councils. Her victory at the Battle of Churning Waters, which left the glorious Peleps flagship *Empress' Diadem* little more than flinders, won her a place as one of the Black Lion's lieutenants, a position she's held proudly since.

Fia-Shaw doesn't stay in the shrine city of Melilune for more than a few days at a time, always returning to the joys of the open water and her endless naval campaign against the Realm. She's installed her trusted adherent Vidatha Riverfisher to govern Melilune while she's at sea.



For the newly Exalted, she's a mentor who excels at helping her adherents carve out their new place in the world — sometimes literally. She learns her students' passions and guides them toward missions that make use of their skills. When she knows the sources of their rage, she helps them plan their vengeance.

At sea, Fia-Shaw prefers her siaka form to any other. She scouts Realm ships' locations and leads Lintha vessels to confront them. A small fleet of swift ships, the Quicksilver Marlins, are dedicated to Fia-Shaw and this purpose. To become a captain in that fleet is a mark of honor among Asura's Lintha. Though she doesn't spend much time on deck, the captains and crews acknowledge her as their commander. Fia-Shaw offers advice on crew composition, promotions, and strategies, and ensures that mortals under her command receive the same respect as Lunar trainees.

Fia-Shaw serves as liaison between the Black Lion and her Lintha family, who've held fiercely to their port on the southern coast since they settled here centuries ago. They're a line of defense against Realm ships trying to drop anchor anywhere other than Faxai.

Though her loyalty to Sha'a Oka is ironclad, Fia-Shaw sees his enmity toward Leviathan as detrimental to the Pact's overarching goals, resulting in countless lost opportunities to harry the Realm. Although it risks the

Black Lion's wrath should he find out, Fia-Shaw secretly joins Leviathan's operations on occasion — partly to further the Pact's goals, but partly in hopes of building a bridge between the two shahan-yas' camps.

Strategy: Fia-Shaw prefers to do battle in her siaka form (**Hundred Devils Night Parade**, p. 187), but takes up the daiklave when she doesn't have that option. Limb-Maiming Flourish lets her make potentially fatal attacks even with relatively low Initiative.

Caste: Changing Moon

Spirit Shape: Siaka; **Tell:** The smell of tar.

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 18; **Peripheral:** 42

Health Levels: -0x1/-1x2/-2x8/-4x4/Incap.

Actions: Command: 7 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Larceny: 9 dice; Knowledge of the Lintha: 11 dice; Read Intentions: 10 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 7 dice; Seafaring: 11 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 11 dice; Stealth: 7 dice; Strategy: 6 dice

Appearance 2, Resolve 4, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Far-Flung Talon, moonsilver reaver daiklave): 10 dice (Damage 17L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 11 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice for control)

Combat Movement: 5 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 5

Soak/Hardness: 8/4 (The Trickster's Net, moonsilver chain shirt)

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: The Realm (Hatred)

Defining Tie: Sha'a Oka (Loyalty)

Defining Tie: The Silver Pact (Commitment)

Major Principle: Unity within the Silver Pact is necessary for its success.

Major Tie: The Lintha (Kinship)

Minor Tie: Sandswept Garda-Empress (Admiration)

Minor Tie: Third Daughter of the Leaves (Wary Respect)

Minor Tie: Skathra Venomchild (Caution)

Minor Tie: The Quicksilver Marlins (Trust)

Minor Tie: Leviathan (Pragmatic Cordiality)

ESCORT

Fia-Shaw is sometimes accompanied by one or more of her young Lunar adherents, and may lead Size 1-3 battle groups of Lintha reavers with elite Drill (**Exalted**, p. 497).

SHAPESHIFTING

Fia-Shaw has a number of animal shapes from the Southwest, and some from the broader West, acquired in her journeys to Luthe. She uses her stolen human shapes to gather information on the Realm, often moving within the ranks of legionnaires and auxiliaries. She can claim shapes with Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Fia-Shaw can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Fia-Shaw can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Ferocious Biting Tooth (2m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): Add +3 Overwhelming on a **withering** attack. On a **decisive** attack, add up to 3 attack roll extra successes as damage dice.

Limb-Maiming Flourish (3m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): While at Initiative 10+, if enemy doesn't take a crippling injury, roll dice of damage equal to dice on original roll that showed successes. In animal shapes with crippling attacks, gain one Willpower for incapacitating or crippling a nontrivial foe. Enemies that take crippling injuries are immune for rest of scene.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all against lower-Initiative enemy. This doesn't reduce the penalty from a surprise attack.

Gleaming Crescent Block (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After an attack roll, up to three 1s subtract successes.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Forked Tongue Discernment (2m; Reflexive; Instant): Roll Read Intentions to determine if someone's lying, adding two automatic successes, or three with a stunt. Once Fia-Shaw catches someone lying, subsequent uses against her that scene don't require rolls.

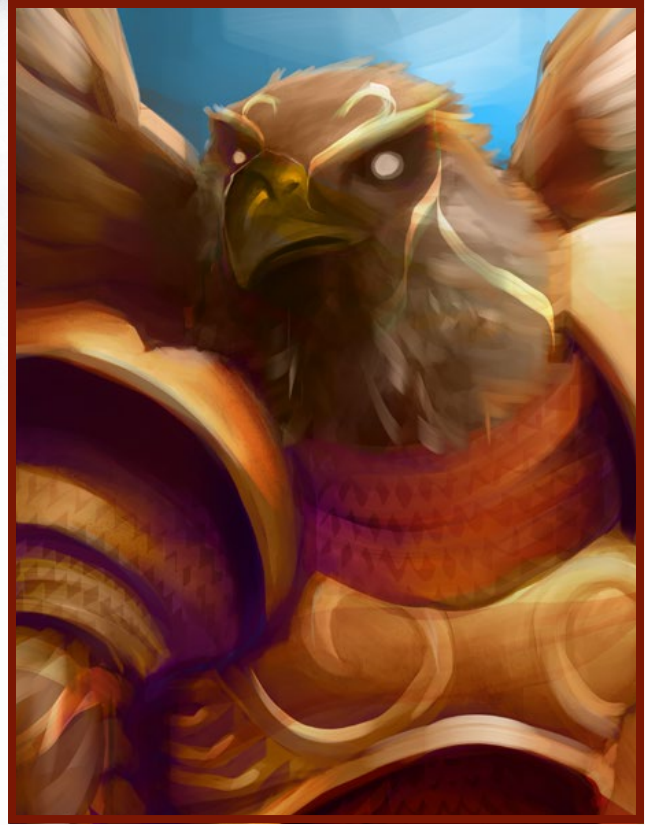
Goddess Crowned by Horns (6m; Supplemental; Instant): A Social Influence roll that upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy adds (Intimacy) non-Charm dice. 10s increase the cost to resist by one Willpower each, maximum three. Once per story, unless reset by upholding that Intimacy through social action.

Moonlight Curtain Drawn (3m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): Gain +1 Guile, or +3 Guile to conceal information inconsistent with her current shape. *Argent Deceiver Smile*: For two motes, increases bonus to +3 when concealing that she's lying or intends to deceive someone.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Lodestone Reckoning Manner (1m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Roll Seafaring with +3 dice and double 8s and bank successes. Fia-Shaw can add up to three successes on rolls to forage or find shelter and Seafaring rolls to navigate marine hazards. Once per day. *Monarch-Wing Migration*: For a four-mote surcharge, the speed of a ship piloted by Fia-Shaw increases to (Speed x4) miles per hour, so long as it carries no more than six other characters.

Towering Beast Form (15m, 1wp; Simple; One day): Change into a Legendary Size animal. Must pay five motes each subsequent round in combat, unless Fia-Shaw makes a **decisive** attack or spends 8+ motes on offensive effects, or each hour outside combat. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Legendary Size shapes.



Sandswept Garda-Empress

Centuries ago in the South, as satrapial tribute bled the Strayseed River valley dry, the Bejani people rebelled against the nearby Realm garrison, withholding tribute to procure mercenary aid. The Empress sent in the legions to make an example.

A shepherd in nearby hill country watched in fury and grief as smoke rose from the towns below. Guiding her kinfolk from the lowlands to hidden valleys and caves, she led raids against probing Realm forces. But the highlands that had repelled invaders for centuries proved insufficient against Dragon-Blooded tactical genius.

Amid the Bejani's failing last stand, Luna offered the shepherd escape on hawk's wings. Fleeing the carnage, she swore bloody vengeance against the Realm. She faded into the desert with the surviving Bejani, supplementing their numbers with nomads and outlaws to forge a cadre of hawkfolk raiders. Re-emerging a generation later, her lightning raids paralyzed several Southern satrapies, cutting off tribute for years. Awed by her vast, terrible avian shape, allies and enemies alike dubbed her "Sandswept Garda-Empress."

Despite Garda-Empress' pyrrhic victory over the 62nd "Dragonswrath" Legion at the Battle of Broken Diamond, the Realm's legions finally crushed her rebellion, and a series of Wyld Hunts sent her fleeing far from home. By the time she returned, her people were gone — most

slaughtered, the rest scattered and in chains. With nothing to hold her to the South, she traveled westward to the forgotten Caul, where she could harass Realm interests on friendlier ground. Allying with Sha'a Oka, she came to acknowledge the Black Lion as her shahan-ya.

In the Caul, Garda-Empress found a new people, the Ninga. Driven bloodily out of their homeland in the southeastern Caul, their anger at the Realm mirrored her own. Under her wing, they've grown strong amid the Caul's highlands. She leads them in brutal raids against Realm forces and lends air support to fellow Lunars' sieges of the shrine cities. She's claimed ruined Sekima as her own, both to spite the Realm and as a holy place to replace her homeland in her heart. This is her empire of the air, and no one — not the Realm, not Sha'a Oka — will challenge her here, nor threaten the Ninga as a people.

As a mentor and patron, she's cold and distant, though not without empathy. She tailors advice, education, and responsibilities to each adherent's needs, but speaks tersely and seeks to avoid personal attachment. Her demeanor in council is equally brusque.

In her true shape, Sandswept Garda-Empress appears as a thirty-something woman with dark brown skin, red hair, severe expression, and intense gaze. She dresses plainly, unconcerned with status or wealth. Among the Ninga, she wears a hybrid hawkwoman shape, feathered

white and russet, with wide glaring eyes and harsh, commanding voice.

Strategy: In battle, Sandswept Garda-Empress takes the form of a giant hawk, using Towering Beast Form to grant Legendary Size to her spirit shape (use eagle traits, **Exalted**, p. 563). A common tactic is grappling enemies, flying upward with them, and letting them fall.

Caste: Full Moon

Spirit Shape: Ferruginous hawk; **Tell:** The shadow of enormous wings

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 46

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x12/-4x11/Incap.

Actions: Command: 11 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (can attempt Strength 5 feats); Read Intentions: 10 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 6 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice; Strategy: 8 dice; Tracking: 10 dice
Appearance 5, Resolve 5, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Unarmed): 11 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (10 dice for control)

Combat Movement: 10 dice

Evasion: 6; **Parry:** 3

Soak/Hardness: 10/4 (Tanarel, moonsilver chain shirt)

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: The Realm (Vengeful Hatred)

Defining Tie: The Ninga (Dedication)

Major Principle: I won't lose my home again.

Major Principle: To submit to fear is to lose before the battle's begun.

Major Tie: Sha'a Oka (Guarded Respect)

Major Tie: Sekima (Possessiveness)

Minor Principle: Allies always leave when things get difficult.

Minor Tie: Fia-Shaw (Tenuous Respect)

Minor Tie: Skathra Venomchild (Frustration)

Minor Tie: Third Daughter of the Leaves (Admiration)

ESCORT

Sandswept Garda-Empress may be accompanied by Lunar adherents, hawkfolk champions (**Exalted**, p. 497), or a Size 1-3 battle group of hawkfolk with elite Drill and Might 1 (use mercenary traits, **Exalted**, p. 497). Her hawkfolk have Musical Voice and five-dot Wings (**Exalted**, p. 167; **Lunars**, p. 120).

SHAPESHIFTING

Sandswept Garda-Empress has a variety of animal shapes from across the South and West that she uses for

reconnoitering — primarily birds, fish, insect, and reptiles. She walks through the Realm's cities and camps in the stolen faces of soldiers and officers. She can take shapes with Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Sandswept Garda-Empress can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

She can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Ferocious Biting Tooth (2m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): Add +4 Overwhelming on a **withering** attack. On a **decisive** attack, add up to 4 extra successes from an attack roll as damage dice.

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Reflexive; Indefinite): Gain Musical Voice and five-dot Wings (**Exalted**, p. 167; **Lunars**, p. 120).

Jaws of the River Dragon (3m, 2i; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): Double 9s on a grapple's attack and control rolls.

Spine-Breaking Technique (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only): Make a **decisive** savaging attack against a grappled enemy without resetting to base Initiative. Once per scene.

Unerring Fang Technique (1m, Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): If Sandswept Garda-Empress adds a full Excellency on a **withering** attack, add a non-Charm success on the attack roll and roll a non-Charm die for each 10.

Winding Constrictor Coils (6m; Supplemental; Until grapple is released): Sandswept Garda-Empress lowers the Defense penalty for grappling by one. She doesn't lose rounds of control for being attacked or damaged by lower-Initiative enemies.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Halting the Scarlet Flow (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; 5 turns; Perilous): Heal one level of non-aggravated damage at the start of each turn, or 5 levels of non-aggravated damage over a minute outside of combat. Ends if crashed. Once per day.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +4 soak or Hardness 5.

MOBILITY CHARMS

Swift Killer Style (1m, 2i [+1wp]; Supplemental; Instant; Perilous, Protean, Uniform): When Sandswept Garda-Empress moves into close range with an enemy and attacks on the same round, a successful attack lets her move one range band in any direction. In flight-capable shapes, she can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to fly two range bands up or down.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Soul-Piercing Predator Gaze (6m; Simple; Instant; Protean): Roll Read Intentions to discover a character's greatest flaw. Sandswept Garda-Empress adds a non-Charm die on rolls with a specific pool that exploit the flaw. This lasts until she successfully uses this Charm again.

WARFARE CHARMS

Argent Battle Exemplar (2m; Reflexive; Uniform): After a successful attack roll, spend any number of extra successes to reflexively order a battle group to attack the same enemy, using those successes instead of rolling. This Charm's cost is waived against battle groups.

Victorious Beast-King Spirit (3m; Supplemental; Uniform): A successful attack lets Sandswept Garda-Empress make a reflexive rally or rally for numbers action, adding one die for each 10 on the attack and damage rolls.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Towering Beast Form (15m, 1wp; Simple; One day): Change into a Legendary Size animal. Must pay five motes each subsequent round in combat, unless she makes a **decisive** attack or spends 8+ motes on offensive effects, or each hour outside combat. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Legendary Size shapes. *Mountainous Spirit Expression*: Can expand her current animal shape to Legendary Size. *Undaunted Behemoth Avatar*: Waive recurring mote cost unless crashed.



Sha'a Oka, His Divine Lunar Presence

Sha'a Oka has always been at war. Born on the Caul in a town long since swallowed by the jungle, he spent his youth fighting the Shogunate in service to long-dead Lunar heroes — scouting, raiding supply lines, and ambushing patrols. Then, in a raid gone awry he was left for dead, impaled on a legionnaire's spear. But Luna took him — bloodied but not broken, defeated but not daunted — and set him back on his feet.

His might and fury made hundredfold by Exaltation, abetted by his personal magnetism and a knack for blindsiding foes through cunning and deceit, Sha'a Oka swiftly rose in the ranks among the Lunar crusaders. Even as the Contagion struck, ill as he was, he struck

out equally at the Shogunate's holdouts on the island continent and at the Fair Folk who followed on the heels of the plague. But then the Caul vanished without trace, and he — like so many others — vanished with it.

Unlike those others, when the Caul returned centuries later, Sha'a Oka returned with it. This raised his renown still further, such that when he called upon his peers to help him cast out the invading Realm, many rallied to his banner. But since his return, he's grown distant in dealings with others, seeking solitude whenever possible and speaking only when he has something important to say.

Now as much mystic as warlord, he seems attuned with the island continent's spiritual nature, describing the land as his “beloved,” and is privy to occult secrets that remain mysterious even to the Pact's sorcerers. Leaving mundane military concerns to his generals, he often wanders into the wilderness for reasons he can't or won't explain.

Both a general and a spiritual leader, Sha'a Oka values discipline and cleverness among his followers and adherents, and encourages them to value the Caul as he does. He sends adherents on missions that require them to learn the Caul's terrain and supernatural qualities, so they may use both to their strategic benefit. He names a select few as his lieutenants, elevating those Lunars

who show particular zeal in the fight against the Realm and long-term dedication to the theater of the Caul. Past lieutenants have taken or defended shrine cities, assassinated high-profile Dynasts in Faxai, intercepted critical communications, and proven themselves as formidable and versatile leaders in their own right.

Sha'a Oka strives to maintain a strong relationship with the Caul's peoples. They're allies in his fight against the Realm, and this is their land. He meets with Caulborn delegates to learn what they need and what they can offer to the cause.

In combat, Sha'a Oka is a terrifying foe. He fights on the front lines, unafraid to go toe-to-toe with the Realm's fiercest generals. He recognizes that the legends surrounding him — many of which he's encouraged and embellished upon over the years — make him both an inspiration to his own troops and the enemy's prime target. He views these things more as strategic advantages than egotistical triumphs; if his forces see him fight, fall, and regain his feet, they'll fight all the harder themselves.

Strategy: Sha'a Oka uses Deadly Beastman Technique and Claws of the Silver Moon as early as possible. After building Initiative with **withering** attacks, he'll use Limb-Maiming Flourish if one foe stands out from the rest, or Octopus-and-Spider Barrage otherwise.

Caste: Full Moon

Spirit Shape: Black lion; **Tell:** A thick, black mane of hair

Essence: 5; **Willpower:** 10; **Join Battle:** 11 dice

Personal: 20; **Peripheral:** 48

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x12/-4x11/Incap.

Actions: Command: 12 dice; Conceal Evidence/Tracks: 9 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Lore of the Caul: 14 dice; Mysticism: 12 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 10 dice; Senses: 8 dice; Social Influence: 10 dice; Stealth: 8 dice; Strategy: 12 dice; Tracking: 8 dice

Appearance 3, Resolve 6, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Unarmed): 11 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (10 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 9 dice

Evasion: 3, **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 16/10 (Aegis of Morovath, moon-silver reinforced breastplate)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I will drive the Realm from the Caul.

Defining Tie: The Caul (Kinship)

Defining Tie: The Usurpers (Hatred)

Major Principle: Open warfare will bring the Realm's downfall.

Major Tie: Skathra Venomchild (Companionship)

Minor Tie: Fia-Shaw (Confidence)

Minor Tie: Sandswept Garda-Empress (Trust)

Minor Tie: Third Daughter of the Leaves (Respect)

Minor Tie: Leviathan (Contempt)

Minor Tie: The Kongar lionfolk (Responsibility)

MERITS

Cult 3

Sobriquet: Once per story, when Sha'a Oka makes an influence roll that aligns with his image as an undying god-general, the level of the stunt he's awarded is increased by one.

SHAPESHIFTING

Sha'a Oka has a wide variety of animal shapes, including nearly every species found on the Caul. Most of his human shapes belong to people long dead, though he's claimed some from the Realm's ranks. He can claim shapes with Stalking Nightmare Hunter and Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Sha'a Oka can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Sha'a Oka can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Claws of the Silver Moon (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): **Withering** unarmed attacks gain +1 Accuracy, +3 Damage, and Overwhelming 5. Spend three motes for +5 non-Charm dice on feats of demolition. Can use reflexively with Deadly Beastman Transformation.

Deadly Beastman Transformation (1m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Withering-only): Hybrid Body Transformation must be active; can use reflexively with it. +5 dice on raw **withering** damage rolls, feats of strength, and move actions. +5 soak. +5 effective Strength for attempting feats of Strength. -1 Defense. *Horridifying Beast-God Might:* Initiative Breaks are increased by (1 + crashed enemy's wound penalty). *Undying God-Beast Perfection:* Heal one level of non-aggravated damage each time he resets to base Initiative, maximum once per round.

Ferocious Biting Tooth (2m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): A **withering** attack gains +5 Overwhelming. On a **decisive** attack, add up to five attack roll extra successes as dice of damage.

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Reflexive; Indefinite): Gain one-dot Claws, Imposing Features, and two-dot Unusual Hide (**Exalted**, pp. 165-166; **Lunars**, p. 120). **Terrifying Ogre Alteration**: While using Deadly Beastman Transformation, unarmed attacks gain +2 Damage, deal lethal damage, and gain the Chopping and Piercing tags.

Limb-Maiming Flourish (3m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): While at Initiative 10+, if enemy doesn't take a crippling injury, roll dice of damage equal to dice on original roll that showed successes. In animal shapes with crippling attacks, gain one Willpower for incapacitating or crippling a nontrivial foe. Enemies that take crippling injuries are immune for rest of scene.

Octopus-and-Spider Barrage (5m, 1wp; Simple; Instant, Decisive-only, Protean): Make up to five **decisive** attacks, splitting Initiative evenly among them, rounded up. In animal shapes with more than four limbs, each successful attack adds one die to damage of subsequent attacks.

Striking Mospid Method (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): Reroll up to five failed dice on a **withering** attack roll, beginning with 6s and moving down.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Form-Shedding Sacrifice (Reflexive; Instant): Sha'a Oka takes a crippling injury by sacrificing a shape, negating up to five levels of **decisive** damage. He can use False Death Technique reflexively to manifest the sacrificed form's corpse, treating its roll as a Stealth roll to go to ground.

Gleaming Crescent Block (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After an attack roll, up to five 1s subtract successes.

Halting the Scarlet Flow (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; 5 turns; Perilous): Heal one level of non-aggravated damage at the start of each turn, or 5 levels of non-aggravated damage over a minute outside of combat. Ends if crashed. Once per day.

Heron Sheds Rain (5m [+2m, 1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Uniform): Block unblockable attacks. For two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, roll Initiative, add successes as non-Charms Parry, and reset to base. Once per scene, unless reset by gaining 20+ Initiative in an instant.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +5 soak or Hardness 5.

Salamander's Tail Feint (5m; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only, Protean): Taking a crippling injury negates an additional three levels of damage. It doesn't count against the once-per-story limit when fighting in support

SHA'A OKA LIVES!

The Black Lion is a master of faking his own death. His Quick Character traits primarily include Charms suitable for his role as a warrior and general, but the Storyteller can add additional Charms for this, like Cunning Anglerfish Lure and its upgrades, Devil's-Eye Brand, and Ever-Present Shadow Insinuation (**Lunars**, pp. 194, 218, 232, 234). He could also conceal his survival with Charms like Butterfly Eyes Mirage, Mind-Blanking Fear Technique, The Shadow Who Wasn't There, Shifting Penumbra Stance, and Uncertain Sky Ambiguity (**Lunars**, p. 156, 218, 226, 233).

of a Defining Intimacy or animal shapes with Tail Decoy or similar abilities. Once per scene.

Soul Beyond Shape (1wp; Reflexive; Indefinite): Sha'a Oka can sacrifice a shape he's taken to prevent death from any cause, healing any damage to his incapacitated level. He falls unconscious, but reflexively uses False Death Technique and Bear Sleep Technique for free. He can't take damage except from **decisive** attacks, and doesn't need food, water, or air. If an attack would kill him, he may sacrifice another shape to prevent it. This ends once he heals any damage. Once per story.

Unstoppable Juggernaut Incarnation (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only, Perilous): If Sha'a Oka takes enough **decisive** damage from a source to fill all his health levels of one kind, any further damage is negated. Once per day.

Wound-Mastering Body Evolution (6m, 1wp + 1i per turn; Reflexive; One scene; Decisive-only, Perilous): After taking **decisive** damage, Sha'a Oka can use this Charm to gain +10 soak and Hardness 20 against his attacker and ignore her **withering** attacks' Overwhelming. This ends if he's crashed. The recurring Initiative cost is waived while using Soul Beyond Shape.

STEALTH CHARMS

False Death Technique (4m; Simple; Indefinite; Mute): Roll 14 dice to fake death, doubling 8s. Wound penalties are converted to non-Charms dice. Characters with superhuman senses or applicable magic can oppose this with a (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Medicine]) at difficulty 5 to see through this deception.

WARFARE CHARMS

Invincible Beast-Warrior Empowerment (8m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): Allied battle groups convert dice from Size and Might to successes. Successful command actions grant battle groups 6 successes on rout checks until the scene ends or Sha'a Oka gives another battle group a command roll.

Quicksilver Strategy Meditation (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): Choose two stratagems for a Strategic Maneuver. Sha'a Oka can allocate successes to either or enact both with sufficient successes.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Bear Sleep Technique (10m; Simple; Indefinite): Sha'a Oka enters hibernation, multiplying the rate at which he heals damage naturally by ten. This suspends his need for food and water, as well as his aging. He can choose to hibernate for a set period of time or until he's healed all damage. He can also awaken in response to external stimuli. Sha'a Oka can make Senses rolls at a -4 penalty while hibernating.

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

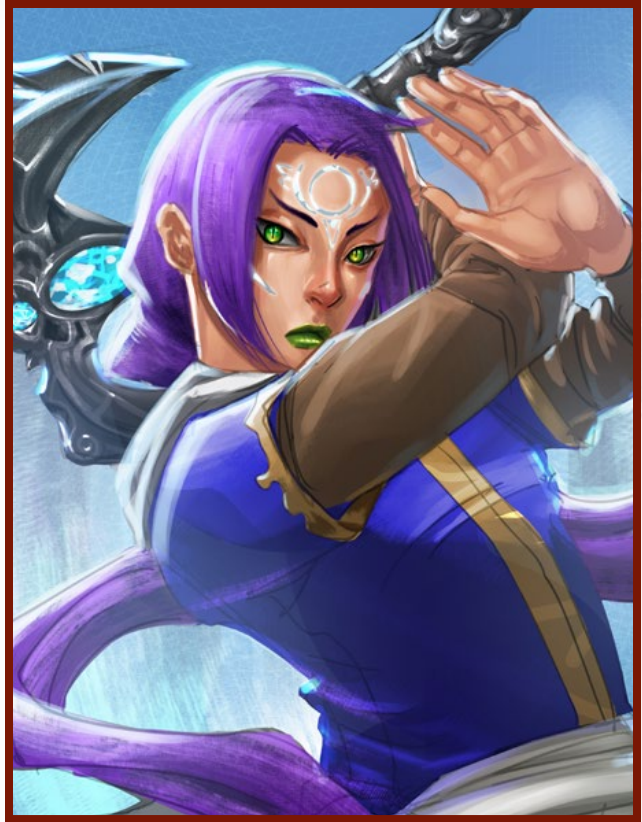
Skathra Venomchild

Born into slavery, Skathra experienced little in their childhood beyond backbreaking labor, cruelty, and abuse. They avoid speaking of that time, preferring to describe its end. As they lay writhing in agony from a tarantula hawk wasp's sting, Luna whispered a secret truth in their ear, something they felt they'd always known but had never been able to articulate: "Pain is a gift; despair is liberation; suffering is glory." That very night, Skathra — reborn as a divine monster — broke free of their shackles and slew their captors in a vicious revel of blood, in grateful repayment for years of generous torment.

Their form changes often, ranging from one of scales, scars, and stains, to a young pregnant woman, to a man so comely not even the gods can resist their poisoned lips. The one thing that never changes though, are their eyes. Skathra's gaze — brimming with terrifying wisdom — draws the onlooker in and dares him to peer deeper.

Throughout their life, Skathra traveled many lands. They were the beast that burned cities, but raised up heroes. With their bloody axe Opens-the-Mind, they slew unrighteous gods and corrupt priests. They seduced shahs and shophets into their bed while entire empires fell to ruin. They exult in their power. Skathra's resilience is both a personal triumph and a taunt to those who would see them fall.

A vision pointed Skathra toward the Caul. In a perfect moment of euphoric revelation, they saw the sacred city of Houshou — its fires the ultimate test of their resilience. The next day, Skathra flew to the Caul, where they swore themselves to the Black Lion's cause. The bond they formed — one of friendship and respect — was



immediate and unlike anything the Venomchild had ever known. Sha'a Oka had seen things no man had ever seen and, like them, he'd broken a bit under the weight of that madness.

The Caul itself, Skathra saw as their god made manifest: It changed, consumed, burned, and granted life. Taking up residence in Houshou, they perform ecstatic sacraments amidst its flames, welcoming anyone daring enough to join them.

None of the Black Lion's other adherents know why Skathra has come to the Caul, and few can even guess at their motives—of how they dream of the day Sha'a Oka's army takes the final shrine city, and they can pass at last into Feng-Yi. No Lunar knows what might happen should one of their own pass through its gates, but Skathra has spent much of their time on the Caul teasing out their sibling-isle's secrets. They believe they know what lies waiting in Feng-Yi, and seek the honor of being the first Lunar to complete the pilgrimage once the Dragon-Blooded are driven out.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Goanna; **Tell:** Distinctly reptilian eyes.

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 9; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 18, **Peripheral:** 37

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x6/-4x3/Incap.

Actions: Endure Flames: 12 dice; Feats of Demolition: 9 dice (can attempt Strength 5 feats); Lore of the Caul: 8 dice; Medicine: 7 dice; Mysticism: 11 dice; Navigation: 8 dice; Read Intentions: 6 dice; Resist Poison/Sickness: 10 dice; Senses: 8 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice; Stealth: 6 dice; Tracking: 7 dice

Intimidate: 9 dice; Knowledge of the Caul: 8 dice; Occult Knowledge: 8 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 9 dice; Senses: 8 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 5, Guile 6

COMBAT

Attack (Opens-the-Mind, moonsilver grim-leaver): 11 dice (Damage 16L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 12 dice (Damage 12B)

Attack (Grapple): 8 dice (8 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 3, Parry: 5

Soak/Hardness: 10/4 (Remembrance Half in Dreams, moonsilver breastplate)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: That which some call madness or monstrosity is sacred to Luna.

Defining Tie: Luna (Ecstatic Devotion)

Defining Tie: The Caul (Fascination)

Major Principle: One day, I will walk through the gates of Feng-Yi.

Major Principle: My survival is my enemy's ultimate defeat.

Major Principle: Suffering is a holy gift, both to give and to receive.

Major Tie: Sha'a Oka (Companionship)

Minor Tie: Fia-Shaw (Caution)

Minor Tie: Sandswept Garda-Empress (Amusement)

Minor Tie: Third Daughter of the Leaves (Interest)

ESCORT

Skathra often goes alone, but may be accompanied by Lunar adherents or spirits of the Caul.

SHAPESHIFTING

Skathra has many animal shapes from the West, including a coral snake, housecat, box jellyfish, hammerhead shark, and seagull. They've taken numerous human shapes throughout their journeys. Skathra can take shapes with Heart-Drinking Allure, Moonlit Path Guide, Shepherd at the Crossroads, Stalking Nightmare Hunter, and Terrifying Predator Consumption (p. 61; **Lunars**, pp. 145, 264, 278).

EXCELLENCIES

Skathra can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. They can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Skathra can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. They can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Adder Fang Method (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Protean): A **decisive** attack inflicts poison with Damage 2i/round (B in Crash), Duration 5 rounds, and a -2 penalty. Alternatively, add +Duration to animal shape's poison. *Mamba-and-Cobra Mastery*: Pay two Initiative for +1 Duration. Each 10 on the attack or damage roll adds +1 Damage (maximum 5i/round) or +1 Duration, or increases the penalty by one (maximum -5).

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Simple; Indefinite): Gain Chameleon and three-dot Venomous (**Exalted**, pp. 165, 167).

Relentless Lunar Fury (5m; Reflexive; One scene, Protean): Can only use upon taking **withering** or **decisive** damage. Halve wound and crippling penalties, rounded down. Gain 1 Initiative upon taking **decisive** damage. In animal shapes with Berserker, add one die on physical rolls. Can't withdraw, use social influence unrelated to combat, or stop fighting till all foes are dead or fled. *Least Provocation Outburst*: Using this Charm grants (wound penalty) Initiative. If Skathra's wound penalty increases while using it, they gain additional Initiative.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Halting the Scarlet Flow (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; 5 turns; Perilous): Heal one level of non-aggravated damage at the start of each turn, or 5 levels of non-aggravated damage over a minute outside of combat. Ends if crashed. Once per day. *Deathless Fury Unleashed*: Once per day, reset this Charm by using Relentless Lunar Fury. If she uses it with that Charm, it loses Perilous.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +3 soak or Hardness 5.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Rugged Beast Endurance (5m; Reflexive; One day; Protean): Adapt to an environment. Halve the damage of its environmental hazards and hazards like them, rounded down. Add a non-Charm die on rolls against its environmental hazard and Navigation and Tracking rolls within it. Enhanced rolls ignore environmental penalties. In animal shapes native to that environment, receive a one-mote discount on Charms for enhanced rolls.

Perdurant Beast Perfection (2m [+1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): Subtract three dice from an environmental hazard's damage. Against hazards that deal uncountable damage, pay a one-Willpower surcharge to reduce their damage to fifteen dice. Waive the Willpower cost if Rugged Beast Endurance applies against the hazard.

ECLIPSE CHARMS

Skathra has gained the following Charms using God-Body Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 250).

Toxic Cloud (5m, 2i; Simple; Five turns; Eclipse, Perilous; Essence 2): Skathra exudes a cloud of poison out to short range, with Damage 2i/round, Duration 2 rounds, and a -2 penalty. It extends to medium range on the second turn. Once the Charm ends, the cloud condenses, covering the ground and any exposed surfaces with the poison. They remain a touch vector (limited to open wounds or ingestion) for the scene.

Mind-Dissolving Spores (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Eclipse, Psyche; Essence 2): Roll Medicine against the Resolve of all characters within medium range. A character whose Resolve is beaten gains Hysteria, Madness, or Paranoia at Major Intensity (**Exalted**, pp. 168-169) until the scene ends. Characters who botch gain the Derangement at Defining intensity.

Waking Dream Affliction (10m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Eclipse, Psyche; Essence 3): Roll Social Influence against the Resolve of one or more characters. Affected characters perceive an illusion — either an alteration to the environment, or an illusory entity up to the size of a house — as real, unless physical interaction with it reveals otherwise. Characters can spend one Willpower to resist if their belief in the illusion imperils a Major or Defining Intimacy.



Five years ago, Third Daughter seized Garianghis without a fight, walking through the city gates singing a dirge of emptiness and sorrow that made ears bleed and eyes cloud over. Those citizens who didn't flee in terror died in agony, food for her turtlewolves. Ever since, she's dwelt in Garianghis' central plaza, attended only by chimeric pets and occasional Lunar pupils.

Third Daughter of the Leaves

Born three centuries ago on the Caul, Third Daughter of the Leaves was raised by her people's witch-priestesses and taught their arts, until one of them cursed the wrong man and drew the Immaculates' ire. Third Daughter was barely a woman when the monks slew her many mothers and made her people bow to the Realm. Seized by despair, she fled into the forest, where she would have died had she not found Luna's grace. In one feverish night Third Daughter relived centuries of Dragon-Blooded oppression, and awoke forged anew in silver and rage.

Drawn to Sha'a Oka by the Black Lion's aura of mysticism and knowledge, Third Daughter made her mark young, earning his followers' respect with her occult wisdom. She inspired fear in the Realm's forces with chimeric nightmares, onslaughts of wild beasts, and plague-bringing songs. For centuries she was a mist-shrouded horror haunting the shadows of their cities.

Third Daughter is tall and lithe, with dark brown skin and long, disheveled hair; her moonsilver tattoos form a pattern of leaves and vines. Reclusive and ill-inclined to hospitality, she nonetheless abides by her people's traditions; seekers can obtain counsel and shelter by giving her a song or story she's never heard, a smoking herb she's never smelled, or a meal she's never tasted.

Expressive but not talkative, Third Daughter says much with a look, frown, or smile. Her few students often find her compelling and wise, yet frustratingly cryptic. She's mercurial — sometimes kind and empathetic, at other times dismissive and quick to anger. But she's patient with those who show respect and care for her pets. Though willing to teach her pupils sorcery and loan them minions, she rarely acts directly on their behalf. She makes it clear where they err, but leaves them to figure out how to improve and grow.

In deserted Garianghis, Third Daughter grows purple flowers that feed on corpses, drying and crushing them into psychedelic powder that she smokes from a

turtle-shell pipe. Her many chimeric plants find use in sorceries she brews against Realm troops and in blessings she barter with fellow Lunars. She often withdraws into the past, seeking lessons from her mistakes and missteps — including those of prior incarnations. Her adherents write down the words she utters while she sleeps, and pass those on to one another as teachings.

She encourages her adherents to walk Garianghis' dreamscape, to seek Luna as they walk the hills of the Caul as it once was. Third Daughter herself has little time for such things, pursuing instead a way to harness the city's power as a weapon against the Dragon-Blooded. For Lunars, Garianghis is a beautiful dream of the past; for the Usurpers, Third Daughter intends to use its power to create an inescapable, eternal nightmare. While she and Sandswept Garda-Empress have discussed the similarities and differences between their plans for their shrine-cities, it's become a source of friction between them where their priorities diverge. She's formed a positive, businesslike relationship with the demon Makarios, the Sigil's Dreamer, to whom she bequeathed dreams of her past in exchange for service.

Third Daughter's ultimate goal is shattering the Realm. She's seen so much death that she thinks little of committing atrocities along the way. Neither is she above manipulating younger Lunars for her benefit.

Though Third Daughter herself has never experienced romantic or sexual desire, the doomed relationships of past incarnations leave her grief-stricken as if they'd been her own. Of late, she finds herself dissatisfied with transactional relationships of mentorship, and has begun reaching out to forge new friendships with Silver Pact members beyond the Caul. She's recently befriended Rukshara-Who-Remembers, who shares her ties with the distant past; they've never met in person, communicating only through sorcery.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Chimera of snapping turtle and wolf;

Tell: A particular snapping of the jaws that punctuates her sentences.

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 9; **Join Battle:** 8

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 50

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x6/-4x3/Incap.

Actions: Ancient Knowledge: 7 dice; Command: 6 dice; Conceal Tracks/Evidence: 6 dice; Lore of the Caul: 9 dice; Herbology: 11 dice; Mysticism: 11 dice; Read Intentions: 9 dice; Senses: 9 dice; Social Influence: 6 dice; Sorcery: 11 dice; Stealth: 6 dice; Strategy: 7 dice
Appearance 3, Resolve 5, Guile 4

COMBAT

Attack (Unarmed): 10 dice (Damage 11B)

Attack (Grapple): 6 dice (8 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 3; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 4/0

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: My allegiance is to the Silver Pact's cause, not any shahan-ya.

Defining Principle: I will do whatever must be done to destroy the Realm.

Defining Tie: The Realm (Hatred)

Major Tie: Sha'a Oka (Admiration)

Major Tie: The Caul (Veneration)

Minor Principle: I observe my clans' customs and taboos.

Minor Principle: My past lives are a part of who I am.

Minor Tie: Fia-Shaw (Suspicion)

Minor Tie: Sandswept Garda-Empress (Distant Respect)

Minor Tie: Skathra Venom-Child (Tolerance)

Minor Tie: Garianghis (Fascination)

Minor Tie: Rukshara-Who-Remembers (Friendship)

Minor Tie: Makarios (Cooperation)

Minor Tie: Turtlewolves (Companionship)

ESCORT

Third Daughter is typically accompanied by two or more turtlewolves (p. 197). She's escorted at times by one or more bound elementals such as vaktri (**Exalted**, p. 520), or occasionally by a Second Circle demon such as Makarios (**Hundred Devils Night Parade**, p. 113).

EXCELLENCIES

Third Daughter can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Third Daughter can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

SHAPESHIFTING

Third Daughter's chimeric spirit shape uses wolf traits (**Exalted**, p. 562) and gains a Shell, Strong Lungs, and four-dot Unusual Hide (**Exalted**, pp. 165-166; **Lunars**, p. 119)

Third Daughter has the shapes of many animals of the Caul, including a death moa, quoll-lion, and river dragon, along with numerous fish and seabirds. She has scarcely any human shapes.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Insidious Lunar Transformation (10m, 11hl, 1wp;

Simple; Decisive-only; Instant): By making a willing or helpless target consume her blood, or by succeeding at a Difficulty 5 Gambit in combat, Third Daughter forces a target to transform into an animal whose shape she possesses. The effect lasts (1+ her extra successes) days. Resisted by an (Stamina + [Integrity or Resistance]) roll vs 11 dice. In this form, the victim uses the *lower* of his or the animal's dice pools or static values.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Towering Beast Form (15m, 1wp; Simple; One day): Change into a Legendary Size animal. Must pay five motes each subsequent round in combat, unless Leviathan makes a **decisive** attack or spends 8+ motes on offensive effects, or each hour outside combat. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Legendary Size shapes.

SORCERY

Dreams of Green and Silver: Once per story, while engaging in austerities,entheogens, ecstatic rituals, or the like, Third Daughter rolls thirteen dice and banks sorcerous motes equal to her successes, which last for the story. Once per story, she can stunt to declare her visions have foreshadowed the current scene's events, gaining ([Stunt + 1] x4) sorcerous motes for that scene.

World-Soul Rite: Third Daughter can draw power from Caul, demesnes and manses with elemental or Lunar aspects, and other places of Gaia and Luna's power. Once per day, she can roll Sorcery in such a place, gaining sorcerous motes equal to her successes. They last for the rest of the story or until she uses this ritual again.

Penumbra Witch Mastery (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Add four non-Charms dice and reroll 1s until they cease to appear on a Sorcery roll, an Ancient Knowledge or Lore of the Caul roll involving the supernatural, or an Investigation or Read Intentions roll against a spirit or fae.

Demon Summoning (Ritual, 2wp [+1wp]; Instant): Summon a First Circle demon in a night-long ritual, rolling Sorcery against its Resolve to bind it. On the night of the full moon, Third Daughter can pay an additional Willpower to summon a Second Circle Demon.

Hound of the Five Winds (15sm, 1wp; One day; Perilous): Summon a giant hound (p. 83).

Infallible Messenger (5sm, 1wp; Instant): Send a five-minute message to someone anywhere in Creation, reaching him within a day. Can convey influence, but not Charms.

Flourishing Jungle Nightmare (20sm, 2wp): Third Daughter creates overgrowth out to long range from her, choosing which areas are included. It's difficult terrain and can provide heavy cover or a hiding spot for concealment. On each subsequent turn, she can use one of the powers below. She can spend pay a one-Willpower

surcharge to extend the spells' duration to one day.

Entangling Vines Duration: Make a grapple gambit against an enemy in the overgrowth, using Sorcery for the attack and control roll. She can take grapple actions through the entangling plants and can flurry them with Flourishing Jungle Nightmare's special actions at no penalty. She isn't penalized by the grapple or limited in what actions she can take, and doesn't lose rounds of control when attacked. Characters can spend their entire turn to reduce the total rounds of grapple control by two. Third Daughter can grapple multiple enemies, but only takes one grapple action per round.

Maw of the Hungry Jungle: A one-time environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 4L engulfs an enemy in the overgrowth and everyone within short range of him. Third Daughter can spend Initiative to increase the hazard's damage, paying two Initiative per +1 Damage.

Poisonous Bloom: A cloud of poisonous spores with Damage 4i/round, Duration 9 rounds, and a -3 penalty fills the air out to short range from any point within the overgrowth. This inhaled poison has. No matter how many successes victims roll, they can't reduce the poison's duration below one round.

Terror Hidden in the Leaves: An ally in concealment within the overgrowth gains four Initiative. Third Daughter may also transfer up to half her own Initiative, rounded down.

Silent Words of Dreams and Nightmares (Ritual, 1wp; One dream; Control spell): Roll Sorcery as an instill, inspire, or persuade roll against someone Third Daughter met in person or to whom she possesses a symbolic link, occurring the next time he sleeps. He can't raise Resolve with Intimacies and can't resist with Willpower unless the influence threatens an Intimacy. Once cast, Third Daughter must meet her target in person again or acquire another link before she can target him again.

The Shadow Fang Vanguard

Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen

Once, she was only Feather, a strange and distant child of a forest people. Even then, she had little use for humanity, preferring the company of her family's ancestor ghosts and the small spirits of tree and hill. She turned to witchcraft early, Exalting amid a duel of curses with a rival, and never looked back, setting out to wander the East in search of knowledge, challenge, and power. She browsed the libraries of Yu-Shan, debating occult lore and mysticism there with Sidereal scholars, many of whom she considered friends.



Embracing the occult significance of a bond that spanned lifetimes, Feather found happiness of a sort with Kelar Wrath-of-Flame, the quick-tempered warrior prince of Brace. She acknowledged little affection for her shining husband — indeed, they quarreled often and spent much time apart — but together they wound down centuries of intrigue among the citadels of the greatest civilization to have ever graced Creation. He was her equal and opposite, she a dark mirror hung in a twilight frame. She was dedicated to him as she has never been to another, before or since, living or dead.

Only when he died on that night of poisoned fire did she realize that this was love of a sort, after all. Only as she tore her way free of the Sidereals' web of lethal sorceries, escaping solely by dint of his self-sacrifice and her own indomitable will, did she grasp the magnitude of her loss and the depth of her Sidereal friends' betrayal.

Fleeing her pursuers, Feather disappeared into the Wyld. There she devoured raksha princes' hearts to subsume their destiny-defying nature. Upon returning to the world, she joined the Silver Pact and its vendetta. But her fellow shahan-yas' focus on war with the Dragon-Blooded Shogunate clashed with her single-minded obsession for revenge upon the Sidereal Host. After decades of fruitless politicking, she withdrew from the Pact's councils, seeking another avenue for her vengeance.

Feather watched the rise of the Shadow Fang Vanguard with little interest. But when Tayan Silver-Crowned — who'd studied under her for a time to learn more of the Sidereals — became its autarch, she saw an opportunity, and approached to offer her services. The lessons learned from outside the world and those long-ago salons in Heaven's halls serve her and the Vanguard well, snarling the Sidereals' plans with fate-rending artifice. In exchange for her aid and tutelage, the Vanguard assists her in targeting the Maidens' Chosen throughout the Northeast.

Feather maintains numerous lairs and caches throughout the Northeast, but has no fixed abode. Seeing routine as a vulnerability, she travels constantly and erratically; she may nest in animal form, rest in mortal homes under stolen identities, or intrude unexpectedly upon a spirit's sanctum to claim its hospitality.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Chimera of jaguarundi and black-crowned night heron; **Tell:** Two pupils in each eye.

Essence: 6; **Willpower:** 10; **Join Battle:** 10 dice

Personal: 21, **Peripheral:** 47

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x12/-4x6/Incap.

Actions: Ancient Knowledge: 12 dice; Artifice: 9 dice; Conceal Tracks/Evidence: 9 dice; Feats of Strength: 8 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Knowledge of Sidereals: 14 dice; Investigation: 9 dice; Mysticism: 12 dice; Read Intentions: 8 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 7 dice; Senses: 10 dice; Social Influence: 6 dice

Appearance 2, Resolve 6, Guile 4

COMBAT

Attack (Blood Swan, orichalcum daiklave): 12 dice (Damage 15L/5)

Attack (Unarmed): 8 dice (Damage 11B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 2, **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 15/10 (Sweet Promise of Retribution, moonsilver reinforced breastplate)

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: Bronze Faction Sidereals (Vengeful Hatred)

Defining Tie: Kelar Wrath-of-Flame (Grief)

Major Principle: I judge others by what they can offer to my vendetta.

Major Tie: Sidereals outside the Bronze Faction (Distrust)

Major Tie: The Shadow Fang Vanguard (Pragmatic Cooperation)

Major Tie: Tayan Silver-Crowned (Respect)

Minor Principle: Always assume the enemy is watching.

Minor Tie: The Silver Pact (Contempt)

Minor Tie: Sublime Danger (Companionship)

Minor Tie: Blood Swan (Reliance)

ESCORT

Feather may be accompanied by her adherents in the Vanguard or by spirits who've agreed to lend her their aid: elementals, wilderness gods, and others.

SHAPESHIFTING

Feather's spirit shape, a chimera of jaguarundi and heron, uses cat traits (**Exalted**, p. 562) and gains Musical Voice and five-dot Wings (**Exalted**, p. 167; **Lunars**, p. 120).

Feather has millennia's worth of stolen shapes — animals from every corner of Creation, and the stolen faces of many long since dead. She can claim forms with Blood Geas Binding, Shape-Stealer's Riddle, Whispering Heart Revelation (p. 44; **Lunars**, p. 197, 235).

EXCELLENCIES

Feather can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Feather can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Ferocious Biting Tooth (2m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): A **withering** attack gains +6 Overwhelming. On a **decisive** attack, add up to five attack roll extra successes as dice of damage.

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Reflexive; Indefinite): Gain one-dot Claws, Deadly Weaponry (Piercing), Musical Voice, a one-dot Tail, three-dot Unusual Hide, and five-dot Wings (**Exalted**, pp. 165-167; **Lunars**, pp. 119-120).

Relentless Lunar Fury (5m; Reflexive; One scene, Protean): Can only use upon taking **withering** or **decisive** damage. Halve wound and crippling penalties, rounded down. Gain 1 Initiative upon taking **decisive** damage. In animal shapes with Berserker, add one die on physical rolls. Can't withdraw, use social influence unrelated to combat, or stop fighting till all foes are dead or fled. *Least Provocation Outburst*: Using this Charm grants (wound penalty) Initiative. If Feather's wound penalty increases while using it, they gain additional Initiative.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Gleaming Crescent Block (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After an attack roll, up to six 1s subtract successes.

Halting the Scarlet Flow (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; 5 turns; Perilous): Heal one level of non-aggravated damage at the start of each turn, or 5 levels of non-aggravated damage over a minute outside of combat. Ends if crashed. Once per day. *Deathless Fury Unleashed*: Once per day, reset this Charm by using Relentless Lunar Fury. If she uses it with that Charm, it loses Perilous.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +6 soak or Hardness 4.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Resisting the Lure of Madness (2m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant): Gain +6 non-Charm Resolve against a Psyche effect. If successful, gain one Willpower. *Laughing into the Teeth of Madness*: Feather can use this Charm's Resolve bonus against Shaping effects or add six non-Charm successes on a roll opposing one. *Chaos-Defying Embrace*: Use this to protect a character within medium range that Feather has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Counting the Elephant's Wrinkles (2m; Reflexive; Instant): Reroll six dice that show failures on a roll involving memory or gain +3 non-Charm Resolve against an effect that would alter Feather's memories. Once per story, if she encounters evidence her memories have been tampered with, she can pay one Willpower to negate this.

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

Unraveling the Tapestry (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): Feather can use this Charm when she learns of a magical effect that will ensure an event comes to pass. She rolls Knowledge of Sidereals opposing the roll for that effect, or its creator's (Essence + 1) if it was unrolled. Success reveals a way to weaken the prophecy's effect. At minimum, this ensures it won't kill Feather, her Solar mate, or anyone she has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward. The Storyteller can use this Charm to counter a prophecy that would harm one of those people even if Feather's unaware of it.

EVOCATIONS OF BLOOD SWAN

Forged at the height of the First Age, Blood Swan suffered terribly from the sorceries that slew her wielder in the Usurpation. A greenish-black patina still lingers on her orichalcum blade where it was gnawed by poisonous fire; moonsilver trceries mark fractures mended by a Silver Pact smith. Only the warding eye set in her

crossguard — opening wide to blaze with heat when her wielder is threatened — remains unbroken.

Blood Swan loved Kelar Wrath-of-Flame ferociously, and her jealousy toward Feather from ancient days remains undiminished. But they're united in virulent hatred of the Sidereals.

Ever-Watchful Avenger (4m; Reflexive; Instant): Blood Swan's eye blazes with blistering light. For enemies within medium range, the penalty for attempting Stealth in combat subtracts successes, not dice. Enemies using magic to hide in places that wouldn't usually be feasible hiding spots increase the penalty by five.

Stain the Heavens Red (5m; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only): Feather makes a **decisive** counterattack. If her enemy's attack roll had its target number reduced by magic, Feather adds three dice of damage for each point of reduction. She deals aggravated damage to Sidereals and enemies attacking from concealment.

Elder ProWess

THING-BETWEEN-THE-STARS AGONY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 6

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Unraveling the Tapestry

Feather gains the following benefits:

- When she successfully resists a fate-altering Shaping effect, she learns the identity of the character who used it. She also gains this benefit when protecting other characters with Chaos-Defying Embrace.
- Once per story, when she incapacitates an enemy, she may end all fate-altering Shaping effects he's used on her.
- After successfully using Unraveling the Tapestry, if Feather averts the foretold event, she turns the the prophecy's power back against the character who made it. He suffers either the same outcome he'd predicted for others or a thematically similar one.

Tayan Silver-Crowned

Born to a retired Shogunate soldier in an isolated farmstead, the young Tayan fled an unpleasant home life to volunteer in the daimyo's army. There she learned strategy, tactics, and logistics not through tutors and



academies, but in the field. Where the conscripts she fought alongside retired as quickly as they could, she stayed on, finding purpose in military discipline. Over the decades, she rose in rank to become a minor officer, as the daimyo's forces warred against rivals, hunted bandits, and held off the Fair Folk.

Tayan was old when she volunteered for the Wyld Hunt against Alafia of the Burning Necklace. Her hair had turned gray; her joints and scars ached. But better to die as she'd lived, she thought, than to end her life bed-ridden and helpless. The trap sprung, caught in a cage of spears, a wounded Alafia lunged at Tayan's squad. Refusing to flee in the face of death, the old officer heard Luna's voice in her ear, offering another choice — life as a Lunar, caught up in endless struggle.

She didn't think twice. Blazing with silver fire, she turned on her own soldiers and their Dragon-Blooded commanders, clearing a path for her and Alafia to flee into the dark.

Diligent and driven, Tayan leveraged her military experience to great effect in the Silver Pact, and later in the nascent Shadow Fang Vanguard, which she joined alongside her shahan-ya. Under her command, the armies of Stones Waiting reclaimed the Dailin Pass from Shogunate forces. At the Contagion's height, she led her forces to triumph against the Fair Folk at the Battle of

Silent Waters, and rebuffed the 55th “Avalanche” Legion when they marched on Dømklave.

The Vanguard came to hail Tayan as one of its greatest heroes, and she rose into its highest circles of leadership. At last, three centuries ago, she challenged Avarin Stonefist to single combat when diplomatic methods failed to sway him from the aggressive policies that she felt would destroy the Vanguard. She’s held the role of autarch ever since.

An imposing woman whose presence is impossible to ignore, Tayan is tall and strong even in her advanced apparent age, draped in furs and silver chain. When she speaks, her voice is like a boom of thunder. Intense and devoted to her cause, she’s utterly loyal to her soldiers and to her ideals.

She expects much of her adherents, onto whom she passes the military strategies she’s learned over her long centuries. Though she has no intention of relinquishing command, Tayan sees no value in hoarding her knowledge — the smarter her generals, the faster the Realm falls. If someone uses her own tactics to challenge her, she’ll be ready.

Strategy: When backed by battle groups, Tayan uses Invincible Beast-Warrior Empowerment as soon as possible, sometimes using a flying form to take command actions to lead her forces while remaining outside her foes’ reach. When engaging enemies directly, she relies on Deadly Beastman Transformation and her formidable defensive Charms.

Caste: Full Moon

Spirit Shape: Caribou; **Tell:** Gray hair streaked with shining silver.

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 8; **Join Battle:** 11 dice

Personal: 19, **Peripheral:** 45

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x10/-4x9/Incap.

Actions: Administration: 7 dice; Command: 11 dice; Endure Cold: 11 dice; Feats of Strength: 8 dice (can attempt Strength 3 feats); Military Knowledge: 9 dice; Read Intentions: 9 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 10 dice; Senses: 10 dice; Social Influence: 9 dice; Stealth: 7 dice; Strategy: 11 dice

Appearance 5, Resolve 4, Guile 5

COMBAT

Attack (Winter’s Spine, moonsilver direlance): 12 dice (Damage 18L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 9 dice (Damage 11B)

Combat Movement: 9 dice

Evasion: 5, **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 16/10 (Inyoni’s Oath, moonsilver reinforced breastplate)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: Military discipline and the chain of command are necessary against a foe like the Realm.

Defining Principle: Only I can lead the Shadow Fang Vanguard to victory.

Defining Tie: The Shadow Fang Vanguard (Devotion)

Major Principle: I despise selfishness.

Major Principle: If you’re willing to compromise your principles, then you have no principles.

Major Tie: Those who fight with her (Responsibility)

Major Tie: Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen (Respect)

Major Tie: The Realm (Hatred)

Major Tie: The Silver Pact (Contempt)

Minor Principle: I have no time to waste on trivial concerns.

Minor Tie: New Dakuo (Possessiveness)

Minor Tie: Ma-Ha-Suchi (Rivalry)

Minor Tie: Luna (Gratitude)

SHAPESHIFTING

Tayan’s taken numerous animals shapes, which she uses primarily for travel and covert maneuvers. She’s taken few human faces, preferring to leave infiltration to others. She can take forms with Terrifying Predator Consumption (**Lunars**, p. 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Tayan can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to +2 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +4 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +5 dice on pools of 11+ dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 dice on pools of 3-6 dice, +7 dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and +10 dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Tayan can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4+. With a stunt this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +4 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6+.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Claws of the Silver Moon (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): **Withering** unarmed attacks gain +1 Accuracy, +3 Damage, and Overwhelming 5. Spend three motes for +5 non-Charm dice on feats of demolition.

Deadly Beastman Transformation (1m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Withering-only): Hybrid Body Transformation must be active; can use reflexively with it. +5 dice on raw **withering** damage rolls, feats of strength, and move actions. +5 soak. +4 effective Strength for attempting feats of Strength. -1 Defense. *Horrificing Beast-God Might:* Initiative Breaks are increased by (1 + crashed enemy’s wound penalty).

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Reflexive; Indefinite): Gain one-dot Horns, Tempered by the Elements (Snow), and three-dot Mighty Thew (**Exalted**, pp. 164-165). *Terrifying Ogre Alteration*: While using Deadly Beastman Transformation, gain two-dot Unusual Hide (**Exalted**, p. 166) and Imposing Features (**Lunars**, p. 120).

Limb-Maiming Flourish (3m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only): While at Initiative 10+, if enemy doesn't take a crippling injury, roll dice of damage equal to dice on original roll that showed successes. In animal shapes with crippling attacks, gain one Willpower for incapacitating or crippling a nontrivial foe. Enemies that take crippling injuries are immune for rest of scene.

Unerring Fang Technique (1m, Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): If Tayan adds a full Excellency on a **withering** attack, add a non-Charm success on the attack roll and roll a non-Charm die for each 10.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Halting the Scarlet Flow (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; 5 turns; Perilous): Heal one level of non-aggravated damage at the start of each turn, or five levels of non-aggravated damage over a minute outside of combat. Ends if crashed. Once per day. *Deathless Fury Unleashed*: Once per scene, reset this Charm when Relentless Lunar Fury is used. Waive Perilous when activating with Relentless Lunar Fury.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +6 soak or Hardness 5.

Unflagging Predator Vitality (5m; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Protean, Withering-only): Halve a **withering** attack's total damage, rounded down. It can't crash Tayan unless her attack's Initiative was at least (her current temporary Willpower) higher than hers when he attacked. In animal shapes with Impenetrable Armor, add +9 to the Initiative needed to crash her.

Unstoppable Juggernaut Incarnation (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only, Perilous): If Tayan takes enough **decisive** damage from a source to fill all her health levels of one kind, any further damage is negated. Once per day.

Wound-Mastering Body Evolution (6m, 1wp + 1i per turn; Reflexive; One scene; Decisive-only, Perilous): After taking **decisive** damage, Tayan can use this Charm to gain +8 soak and Hardness 20 against her attacker and ignore his **withering** attacks' Overwhelming. This ends if she's crashed.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Forked Tongue Discernment (2m; Reflexive; Instant): Roll Read Intentions to determine if someone's lying, adding two automatic successes, or three with a

stunt. Once Tayan catches someone lying, subsequent uses against her that scene don't require rolls.

Goddess Crowned by Horns (6m; Supplemental; Instant): A Social Influence roll that upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy adds (Intimacy) non-Charm dice. 10s increase the cost to resist by one Willpower each, maximum three. Once per story, unless reset by upholding that Intimacy through social action.

WARFARE CHARMS

Invincible Beast-Warrior Empowerment (8m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): Allied battle groups convert dice from Size and Might to successes. Successful command actions grant battle groups 6 successes on rout checks until the scene ends or Tayan gives another battle group a command roll.

Quicksilver Strategy Meditation (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): Choose two stratagems for a Strategic Maneuver. Tayan can allocate successes to either or enact both with sufficient successes.

Independent Lunars

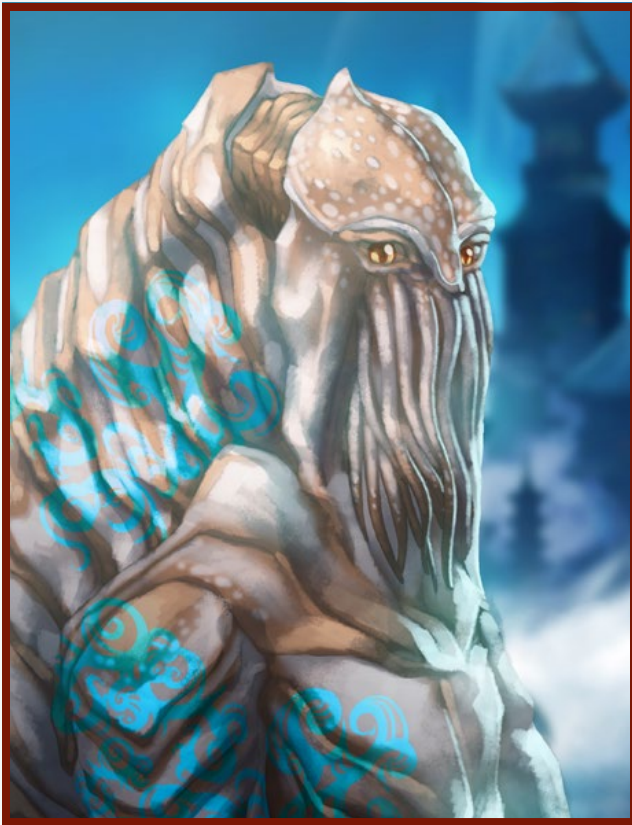
Silent Pearl

Silent Pearl grew up in a small coastal village on the Inland Sea. They were a healer, an herbalist, and a doula, tending to their people's needs. When a powerful member of the community harmed one of their charges, Silent Pearl poisoned the offender. They fled their village as an outlaw, but never once regretted the actions they'd taken. Luna came to them as a crone, testing their knowledge and sharing their makeshift shelter for the night.

Taking refuge in the marshes, Silent Pearl offered their services as a witch to those in need. They established a rapport with the local spirit court, acting as a no-nonsense negotiator between gods and mortals in their domain. More and more, Silent Pearl turned to poison to solve their clients' problems — word of mouth brought people from far and wide seeking their aid, and often the deadliest solution was also the simplest.

When a Wyld Hunt came searching for them, Silent Pearl fled once more, their travels taking them to the White Sea's shores. Sheltering beneath an ancient ruin, they fell into hibernation. They went to sleep in a world where the Shogunate reigned, and woke hundreds of years later when a young woman came digging through the rubble looking for anything that might assist her in her struggle against the satrap's forces.

Silent Pearl, along with Sazay Shadow-Dancer and Tegama Asarkon, helped Tula the Reaver and Kulinth's rebel militia drive the satrap from the city. Though they've declined the



other Lunars' offers to join the Silver Pact — Silent Pearl holds no love for the Realm, but sees it as no greater an evil than any other in the Age of Sorrows — they've decided to remain with the other three for the time being. Silent Pearl has much to teach Tula, and though they rarely admit it, they've come to enjoy the others' company.

Silent Pearl is wise and self-assured with an eccentric sense of humor. They can be socially awkward at times, which they cover with a gruff demeanor.

Caste: No Moon

Spirit Shape: Nautilus; **Tell:** A spiraling birthmark covering their back.

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Personal: 18; **Peripheral:** 46

Health Levels: 0/-1x2/-2x4/-4x2/Incap.

Actions: Alchemy: 9 dice; Ancient Knowledge: 8 dice; Medicine: 11 dice; Mysticism: 10 dice; Poisoning: 9 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 8 dice; Senses: 8 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice; Stealth: 7 dice

Appearance 3, Resolve 5, Guile 4

COMBAT

Attack (Unarmed): 8 dice (Damage 9B)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (5 dice to control)

Evasion: 3, **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 5/0

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: The world is full of woes; focus on the ones you can fix.

Defining Principle: I'll make hard choices if others can't.

Major Tie: Tula the Reaver (Mentorship)

Major Tie: Sazay Shadow-Dancer (Fondness)

Major Tie: Tegama Asarkon (Respect)

Minor Principle: Regret is useless.

Minor Tie: The Usurpers (Opposition)

Minor Tie: The Silver Pact (Wariness)

SHAPESHIFTING

Silent Pearl possesses several animal shapes, which they use for combat, travel, and stealth. They include a wolf, tern, cottonmouth snake, dolphin, and wild horse. They have fewer human shapes, and many of their stolen faces belong to people long since dead. They can claim shapes with Blood Geas Binding, Shape-Stealer's Riddle, and Whispering Heart Revelation (p. 44; **Lunars**, p. 197, 264).

EXCELLENCIES

Silent Pearl can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. The maximum depends on the size of their base dice pool for the roll: +2 for 3-6 dice, +4 for 7-10 dice, or +5 for 11-14 dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 for 3-6 dice, +7 for 7-10 dice, or +10 for 11-14 dice.

They can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. The maximum depends on the value's base rating: +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4-7. With a stunt, this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +3 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6-7.

OFFENSE CHARMS

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Simple; Indefinite): Gain three-dot Gills and three-dot Unusual Hide (**Exalted**, p. 166). **Beast-Form Empowerment:** Gain Carapace/Shell, Inhuman Visage, and Natural Shield (**Lunars**, pp. 119, 120).

DEFENSE CHARMS

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +3 soak or Hardness 5.

Invulnerable Moonsilver Carapace (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Silent Pearl hardens their anima into a carapace that provides the benefits of artifact armor (+11 soak, 10 Hardness, -2 mobility). This soak can't be reduced below 5 by effects that ignore armored soak.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Crossroads Walker Entreaty (6m; Simple; One scene; Protean): Gain +1 Resolve and Guile against spirits and fae. Such beings will hear Silent Pearl out peacefully, so long as the Lunar and her companions are peaceful and inoffensive. Resisting this costs one Willpower to ignore Silent Pearl or two Willpower to initiate hostilities, unless Silent Pearl or one of her allies

has already engaged in combat. Characters with a positive Major or Defining Tie toward Silent Pearl's shape must enter a Decision Point and cite an equal or strong Intimacy to resist.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Bear Sleep Technique (10m; Simple; Indefinite): Silent Pearl enters hibernation, multiplying the rate at which they heal damage naturally by eight. This suspends their need for food and water, as well as their aging. They can choose to hibernate for a set period of time or until they've healed all damage. They can also awaken in response to external stimuli. Silent Pearl can make Senses rolls at a -4 penalty while hibernating.

Bone-Mending Technique (6m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): After an hour of treatment, roll Medicine against a difficulty equal to a patient's total levels of damage in his health track. If the treatment is based on an introduced fact, Success multiplies the rate at which he heals naturally while resting by thirteen, or by eighteen if the treatment is based on an introduced fact. This ends once he's healed all damage or stops resting.

Emerald Grasshopper Form (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite): Change into a Minuscule Size animal. Waive Willpower cost when shifting between Minuscule Size shapes.

Plague-Swallowing Kiss (6m; Simple; Instant): Roll Medicine against a poison's remaining duration or a disease's morbidity. Success transfers it from Silent Pearl's patient to them, without letting them roll against exposure.

ECLIPSE CHARMS

Silent Pearl has created talismans with Spirit-Sealing Talisman (**Lunars**, p. 208) that grant the following Charms. They can commit three motes to a talisman to gain access to its Charm or to let others use them, as described further in Spirit-Sealing Talisman. Their mote pool above doesn't reflect any motes committed to talismans.

Curse of the Dead (5m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Eclipse, Psyche; Essence 2): Make a threaten roll against a character within medium range. If successful, he can't regain Willpower from sleep, his dreams haunted by the Underworld's horrors. After (Integrity) days of this, he gains Minor Paranoia (**Exalted**, p. 169). This curse can be broken with a ritual performed at dawn, requiring a difficulty 3 (Intelligence + Occult) roll to break it, though this won't heal the Paranoia.

Flesh-Melting Spores (1m, 5i, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Eclipse, Perilous; Essence 3): Unleash a cloud of spores, rolling Medicine opposing the (Resistance + Stamina) of all other characters within medium range. Those who fail are infested, taking one die of lethal damage on each of their turns, ignoring Hardness. Each level of damage dealt by the infestation inflicts a -1 crippling penalty until the end of the scene, maximum -(Essence). Taking

any damage from a fire-based source burns away the spores, ending both the ongoing damage and the penalty. When Silent Pearl is reduced to their -4 health level for the first time in a scene, they may use this Charm reflexively. Eclipse Castes and the like use (Stamina + Medicine) for this Charm's roll.

Tula the Reaver

Tula knew how to coax sprouts from seedlings, to plant them deep in the ground and let sun and rain do their work. Growing up, there was always dirt beneath her fingernails and chaff clinging to her clothes. As she grew older, she watched the lines on her parents' faces deepen, like furrows in a field. Every year, the satrap raised taxes with little concern for whether the people of Kulinth could feed their families. Every year, Tula's parents tightened their belts a little more.

Desperate, angry, and seeing no other recourse, Tula fell in with a bandit gang. It was far more lucrative to steal from traders on the Three Rivers Road than it was to work the farms. She learned how to stalk silently in the woods lining the road, observe guard patrols, and gauge the competence of a caravan's hired muscle. With her crew, she became adept at striking quickly, taking what she could carry, and disappearing into the forest. Sometimes, she thought about how she'd exchanged dirt under her nails for blood.

The Realm garrison took the gang by surprise in their hideout. The soldiers were neither clever nor quick, but they outnumbered the bandits, and their armor was made of steel rather than padded leather. Tula's crew never stood a chance. While her friends were fighting and dying, when the soldiers had her backed into a corner, feeling small and afraid, Tula heard Luna's voice, telling her she wasn't alone. She Exalted in a roar of silver flame, and when morning came, she was alive and the soldiers weren't.

While many of Kulinth's farmers feared her and named her Anathema, those who'd known her family gave her shelter, shuffling her from home to home ahead of the satrap's search parties. They spoke of how bad things had gotten, and watered down their stew a little more to make sure she was fed. *We take care of each other*, they said, and Tula knew she had to use the gifts Luna had granted her to take care of them in return. She searched the First Age ruins to the east, hoping to find a weapon to use against the Realm. Instead, she woke the sleeping Silent Pearl, and recruited them to her cause. Not long after, the arrival of Sazay Shadow-Dancer and Tegama Asarkon made the Circle complete.



Tula turned Kulinth's farmers into revolutionaries, and led her people in rebellion. After several bloody days, the satrap fled the city. Tula has yet to decide whether she'll join the Silver Pact — for the moment, she has work to do helping Kulinth rebuild and fortify.

Caste: Casteless

Spirit Shape: Emerald dove; **Tell:** Pointed ears

Essence: 2; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 18; **Peripheral:** 46

Health Levels: 0/−1x2/−2x4/−4x2/Incap.

Actions: Command: 10 dice; Conceal Evidence/Tracks: 8 dice; Cooking: 6 dice; Farming Lore: 8 dice; Feats of Strength: 8 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 9 dice; Senses: 7 dice; Social Influence: 6 dice; Stealth: 7 dice; Strategy: 9 dice; Tracking: 8 dice

Appearance 3, Resolve 4, Guile 2

COMBAT

Attack (Spear): 10 dice (Damage 13L)

Attack (Long Bow): 10 dice at short range (Damage 13L)

Attack (Unarmed): 8 dice (Damage 11B)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (7 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 3, **Parry:** 5

Soak/Hardness: 10/0 (Reinforced buff jacket)

INTIMACIES

Defining Tie: Kulinth (Responsibility)

Major Principle: It's my duty to protect those without the strength to protect themselves.

Major Principle: Community is a source of strength.

Major Tie: Silent Pearl (Admiration)

Major Tie: Sazay Shadow-Dancer (Respect)

Major Tie: Tegama Asarkon (Friendship)

Major Tie: The Realm (Hatred)

Minor Principle: I want to earn the trust of those who call me Anathema.

Minor Tie: The Silver Pact (Curiosity)

SHAPESHIFTING

Tula has acquired only a handful of animal shapes from the Northern wilderness near Kulinth, and has yet to take any human forms.

EXCELLENCIES

Tula can add dice on rolls for one mote per die. The maximum depends on the size of her base dice pool for the roll: +2 for 3-6 dice, +4 for 7-10 dice, or +5 for 11-14 dice. With a stunt, this increases to +4 for 3-6 dice, +7 for 7-10 dice, or +10 for 11-14 dice.

She can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. The maximum depends on the value's base rating: +1 for values of 2-3 and +2 for values of 4-7. With a stunt, this increases to +2 for values of 2-3, +3 for values of 4-5, and +5 for values of 6-7.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Armor-Rending Claw Fist (3m, 2i; Supplemental; Instant; Perilous, Withering-only): A **withering** attack ignores half the target's armored soak. Damaging him causes his onslaught penalty to penalize his armor's Hardness until his next turn. Once per scene unless reset by landing a **decisive** attack against a crashed enemy.

Prey-Hobbling Bite (4m; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only, Protean): Make a **decisive** attack against a lower-Initiative enemy. Dealing damage to him inflicts a −1 penalty on his rolls for the rest of the scene. Each 10 on the damage roll increases the penalty by one, maximum −4. In animal shapes with crippling attacks, add one damage die.

Unerring Fang Technique (1m, Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): If Tula adds a full Excellency on a **withering** attack, add a non-Charm success on the attack roll and roll a non-Charm die for each 10.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Bending Before the Storm (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Halve Defense penalties, or ignore all Defense penalties against lower-Initiative enemies. This doesn't reduce surprise attack penalties.

Gleaming Crescent Block (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): After an attack roll, up to two 1s subtract successes.

Impenetrable Beast-Armor (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Dual): +3 soak or Hardness 5.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Forked Tongue Discernment (2m; Reflexive; Instant): Roll Read Intentions with two automatic successes to determine if someone's lying. Once Tula catches someone lying, subsequent uses against him that scene don't require rolls.

Guiding the Flock (1m; Supplemental; Instant): Double 9s on a persuade, bargain, or threaten roll to convince targets to act in a way aligned with a custom of their culture.

True-to-the-Pack Dedication (5m; Reflexive; Instant): Against influence that would make Tula harm someone she has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward or her Solar mate, she rolls two dice and adds her successes to Resolve as a non-Charms bonus. If her Resolve is beaten, she may spend Willpower to resist without entering a Decision Point. *Shepherd Wolf Vigil*: This Charm can protect positive Ties to cultures.

War Charms

Pack Leader Attitude (2m; Supplemental; Instant): Add +3 non-Charms dice on a command action. With Initiative 12+, reroll 1s until they cease to appear.

Lead the Pride (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Add a non-Charms successes on an order action, and roll an additional non-Charms die for each 10.

Vengeful Beast Triumph (2m, 2i; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): When an allied battle group fails a rout test or takes Magnitude damage, make a reflexive rally or rally for numbers action, respectively. If successful, the enemy responsible loses 1 Initiative, which Tula gains.



Ceilancea is most often encountered on the hunt, running down wild beasts or stray mortals with equal exuberance. She's been known to strike back against organized efforts to exterminate a region's nocturnal predators, spelling out dire threats with a fallen hunter's blood and viscera. Wilderness gods who grant communities protection from such beasts may also find themselves targets of her ire.

Beyond blood and fear, her great pleasure is song — whether her own or another's. She loves to join in the cries of night birds or the howling of wolves, often beguiling such beasts to accompany her travels. But human music proves equally compelling. She's been known to relent on the hunt when hearing a lovely song, or to draw beasts away from a village whose festival music touches her soul.

In her human-like form, Ceilancea is tall and powerfully built. She wears leather garments trimmed with fur and bone; her spear is tipped with a huge, jagged fang torn from a living behemoth's jaw. In every shape, her fur (or feathers, scales, or skin) is night-black, with blood-red spots or streaks outlined in shining silver.

Essence: 6; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 10 dice

Personal Notes: 100

Health Levels: -0/-1x6/-2x6/-4x6/Incap.

Spirits

Ceilancea, the Midnight Roar

Grandchild of Luna, Ceilancea has stalked Creation's wild places for millennia, pursuing a celestial mandate of blood and terror. Nocturnal and crepuscular predators fall within her purview; her role is to ensure that they prosper amid wild places, and that their small gods do the same. This is largely a sinecure, leaving her free to roam and hunt as her charges do.

A shapeshifter herself, Ceilancea sees the Lunar Exalted as kin; she fought alongside them in the Divine Revolution, and occasionally joins a Lunar on a midnight hunt. More recently, she's fallen in with the Lunar priestess Shadow-Rending Razor (**Lunars**, p. 354). Razor's cult, which reveres Luna in their aspect as the Bloody Huntress, now worships Ceilancea as well, receiving the god's blessings and tutelage in turn.

Actions: Conceal Tracks/Evidence: 12 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Knowledge of her Purview: 9 dice; Read Intentions: 8 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 10 dice; Senses: 12 dice; Singing: 12 dice; Social Influence: 6 dice; Threaten: 11 dice; Tracking: 12 dice
Appearance 4, Resolve 4, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Yavahn's Rage, behemoth-bone longfang): 13 dice (Damage 17L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 10 dice (Damage 16B)

Attack (Grapple): 10 dice (11 dice for control)

Combat Movement: 11 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 13/7 (Black Stag's Skin, divine hide reinforced buff jacket)

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: I live for the hunt.

Major Principle: The dance of predator and prey is part of nature's beauty.

Major Principle: I find joy in music.

Major Tie: Luna (Awestruck Gratitude)

Major Tie: Her purview's animals (Companionship)

Major Tie: Formidable Hunters (Respect)

Major Tie: Formidable prey (Excitement)

Minor Principle: I prefer the company of animals to that of gods or mortals.

Minor Tie: Her worshippers (Responsibility)

Minor Tie: The Lunar Exalted (Kinship)

Minor Tie: Shadow-Rending Razor (Cooperation)

Minor Tie: The Celestial Bureaucracy (Annoyance)

ESCORT

Ceilancea may be accompanied by beasts that belong to her purview, including wolves, quoll-lions, bats, mospsids, strixes, and many great cats and smaller wild cats (**Exalted**, pp. 560, 562, 565, 569; **Hundred Devils Night Parade**, pp. 170, 184, 196). She might also be accompanied by a hunting party of wilderness spirits, like dogs of the unbroken earth, or mortal champions skilled in hunting (**Exalted**, pp. 497, 511).

MERITS

Cult 3: Ceilancea is revered as a goddess of the hunt among some cultures and as a guardian against predators by others, in addition to the worship of Shadow-Rending Razor's small cult.

Divine Huntress Mandate: Any influence that would weaken or alter Ceilancea's Principle of "I live for the hunt" is unacceptable.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Apex Predator Excellence (1m per die or 2m per +1 Defense; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 4): Add up to

five dice on an attack, movement action, threaten roll, or tracking roll for one mote per die, or increase her Defense by two motes per +1. Ceilancea's dice limit for this Charm is five plus the highest wound penalty among opposing characters, maximum +10. She can increase her Defense by up to half her dice limit, rounded down.

Midnight Panther Pounce (5m, 3i, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Uniform, Perilous; Essence 4): Make a **withering** or **decisive** attack against an enemy within medium range, instantly moving into close range with him. Ceilancea adds her target's wound penalty in dice of post-soak **withering** damage or **decisive** damage, maximum +5.

Principle of Motion (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 2): Ceilancea flurries, ignoring the usual penalties. She can combine two actions of the same type, including two attacks.

Red-Fanged Terror (8m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 5): When Ceilancea makes a **decisive** attack while at Initiative 15+, she doubles 9s on the damage roll. Her target bleeds for a number of hours equal to the total damage dealt. He suffers one die of lethal damage, ignoring Hardness, at the end of each hour. While bleeding, his wound penalty subtracts successes instead of dice on rolls to conceal his tracks and on Stealth rolls where his blood trail compromises his concealment. The bleeding can be stopped with a difficulty 5 (Intelligence + Medicine) roll, requiring an hour of treatment.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Implacable Huntress Resilience (1m; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 5): Ceilancea gains +5 soak against a **withering** attack. If her attacker's Initiative is lower than hers or if he has a -2 wound penalty or higher, any damage she takes is halved, rounded down.

Prey-Cowing Awe (15m, 1wp; Reflexive; One scene; Essence 4): Ceilancea's dread presence subtracts two successes from attack rolls against her. Animals and supernatural beings with animal-like mentalities can't attack her at all. This can be resisted for two Willpower, or one Willpower for characters with relevant Intimacies related to courage.

Thousandfold Beast Vitality (20m, 5i, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only; Perilous; Essence 3): After a **decisive** damage roll fills all of Ceilancea's health levels of one type (e.g. -1 levels), she can use this Charm to negate any further damage. Once per day.

MOBILITY CHARMS

Swift-Pawed Pursuit (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Protean; Essence 3): Ceilancea adds two automatic successes on movement rolls, ignores difficult terrain, and can run across surfaces unable to bear her weight, even water. Outside of combat, she can travel up to sixty miles an hour, unimpeded by harsh terrain. In animal shapes capable of moving faster than this, she can instead maintain their top speed indefinitely.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Song of the Hunt (5m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 3): Double 7s on a Singing roll to persuade people to join Ceilancea in the hunt or inspire violent passions. Resisting requires citing a Major or Defining Intimacy in a Decision Point, and costs two Willpower.

Night-Beast's Tongue (Permanent; Eclipse; Essence 1): Ceilancea can communicate with and understand nocturnal and crepuscular predators without needing a common language. She adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charm dice on influence rolls against them.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Call to Night's Children (10m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Essence 5): Ceilancea makes a difficulty 3 Singing roll to call nearby nocturnal or crepuscular predators. She can call different kinds of animals, but they must be sufficiently similar to use the same traits. Success calls a battle group of such animals, which assembles over the course of an hour. It has Size 1, plus additional dots of Size based on Ceilancea's extra successes and the animal's rating as a familiar (**Exalted**, p. 161). One-dot familiars gain one Size for every two extra successes, with a special maximum of Size 6. Two-dot familiars gain one Size for every three extra successes. Four-dot familiars gain one size for every four extra successes, maximum Size 3. Pack hunters have elite Drill, while others have average Drill. The animals gain a Major Tie of loyalty to Ceilancea and serve her for the Charm's duration.

Hurry Home (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): On Ceilancea's next turn, she dissolves into moonlight and shadows, reappearing her sanctum.

Many-Faced Midnight Beast (4m [+1wp]; Simple; Until next sunrise; Eclipse; Essence 4): Ceilancea can transform into a nocturnal or crepuscular predator, using the rules for Lunar shapeshifting (**Lunars**, p. 131). She can't take shapes with Legendary Size or other forms that would be three-dot familiars. Her dice limit for shapeshifting is +10 dice. Ceilancea's night-black fur, streaked silver or spotted red as blood, works like a Tell (**Lunars**, p. 133). Ceilancea can't use this Charm in the first few minutes after dawn, and must pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use it in the hour after dawn. This Charm works slightly differently for Eclipse Castes and the like, as discussed in the sidebar below.

Materialize (55m; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): Shadows twist and solidify into Ceilancea's material form.

Measure the Wind (5m; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): Ceilancea can use this on anyone she's currently hunting or who hunts alongside her. She can also take the measure of nocturnal and crepuscular predators, and those who wear their forms.

Moonlit Quarry Pursuit (10m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 3): Ceilancea doubles 7s on a Tracking roll. She succeeds automatically unless opposed by

MANY-FACED MIDNIGHT BEAST AND ECLIPSE CASTES

When learned by an Eclipse Caste or similar character, Many-Faced Midnight Beast grants a single animal form, or a group of closely related forms that can all use the same set of traits. It can be repurchased for additional forms.

On the upside, such characters only need Essence 3 to learn Many-Faced Midnight Beast. The Charm's higher Essence minimum in Ceilancea's traits reflects its broad flexibility.

Such characters gain Ceilancea's Tell while using the Charm. They still use their own dice limits.

magic and can oppose magic like Traceless Passage. With 5+ extra successes, she gains one Willpower.

Night Feather's Blessing (4m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Eclipse, Stackable; Essence 4): Ceilancea blesses a mortal with a token — a feather, claw, or the like — that lets him take on one of her shapes from Many-Faced Midnight Beast. So long as the blessed character bears his token, he can pay one Willpower to transform as per that Charm. His dice limit for shapeshifting is (Ceilancea's Essence). She can have up to (Essence) tokens. Eclipse Castes and the like must have Many-Faced Midnight Beast to learn this Charm.

Horizon Chanters

Minor spirits in service to Luna, horizon chanters travel Creation's wilderness in search of knowledge. They share their tales with terrestrial spirit courts — and with mortal fellow travelers who entertain them with new stories.

Horizon chanters can pass themselves off as human at night, but daylight reveals their true semblance: squirrel-like spirits that stand no taller than most children, indigo-furred and sharp-tusked. They dress as travelers appropriate to their region, but drape themselves with trinkets from faraway lands. Their demeanor is always pleasant and cheerful except where their stories demand — or when angered by a traveler's lies or aggression.

Each carries a matching pair of round percussion instruments, one black and one white, such as castanets, shekeres, or timbrels; by this they may also be recognized. Some instead carry a single hourglass-shaped drum, half-black and half-white. The sound of their



drumming carries far in the wilds; travelers often hear it follow them for days. In battle, the very sound of the instrument strikes like a hammer.

Horizon chanters' tales describe events in unsettled lands. Many encompass natural matters — beasts' lives and deaths, rivers shifting courses, storms, floods, droughts, and the like. But they also tell of outlaws that lair amid forests and hills, wandering behemoths, ghosts' mournful secrets, romance among the elemental hosts, and other intriguing prodigies.

Though horizon chanters are wilderness spirits averse to settled places and large crowds, they're nonetheless drawn to festivals where music is made and stories are told. Most merely enjoy the festivities and share their tales under the guise of traveling raconteurs, but a few reveal their divine nature, enchanting the people with music and reveling in the veneration they receive in exchange.

Essence: 2; **Willpower:** 5; **Join Battle:** 6 dice

Personal: 70

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incap.

Actions: Collected Knowledge: 9 dice; Disguise: 7 dice; Navigation: 8 dice; Percussion: 9 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 8 dice; Senses: 6 dice; Stealth: 6 dice; Storytelling: 9 dice; Tracking: 6 dice
Appearance 3, Resolve 3, Guile 3

COMBAT

Attack (Song): 7 dice (Damage 10B; see Raucous Percussion)

Attack (Unarmed): 6 dice (Damage 8B)

Attack (Bite): 4 dice (Damage 12L)

Attack (Grapple): 4 dice (8 dice for control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 3; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 5/4

INTIMACIES

Defining Principle: It's my sacred duty to find and share the stories of the wilds.

Defining Tie: Luna (Devotion)

Major Principle: Wherever I go, the wilderness is my home.

Major Principle: Storytellers (Respect)

Major Tie: Liars (Outrage)

Minor Principle: I'm drawn to festivals and revelry.

Minor Tie: Terrestrial spirit courts (Cooperation)

Minor Tie: Human communities (Wariness)

MERITS

Cult 1-2: Most horizon chanters receive a trickle of worship from village storytellers, travelers, and hinterlands folk. A few establish dedicated cults in villages and towns along their routes.

Raucous Percussion: When pressed, horizon chanters play music that strikes their audience like a physical blow, using the Song attack above. They don't take any penalties for flurrying such attacks with Percussion rolls.

Spirit: Horizon chanters are spirits. They're immaterial by nature, like gods. Sustained by Lunar's favor, they gradually reform if slain.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Heartbeat Drumming Rhythm (4m, 2i; Simple; One performance; Perilous, Uniform; Essence 2): The horizon chanter's feverish percussion rouses overwhelming passions. Characters gripped by strong emotion—typically those affected by inspire rolls—suffer a -3 penalty on rolls against the chanter and -1 Defense against her attacks. They lose one Initiative each time they fail a roll opposing her or are hit by one of her attacks. The chanter can take other actions while performing this song by flurrying them, either with a miscellaneous action to continue playing or a Percussion influence roll.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Lore-Keeper's Oath (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 1): The chanter gains +3 Resolve against a bargain, persuade, or threaten roll that's opposed by her Intimacy of "It's my sacred duty to find and share the stories of the wilds." If she catches someone lying while

Tale-Appraising Ear, she can use this Charm against any social influence he uses until the next sunrise.

Tale-Appraising Ear (5m; Reflexive; Instant; Eclipse; Essence 1): After hearing someone tell a story or recount past events, the chanter reflexively makes a Read Intentions roll, adding (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charm dice. Success reveals both the speaker's motives for telling the story and whether he intentionally deceived his listeners in telling it.

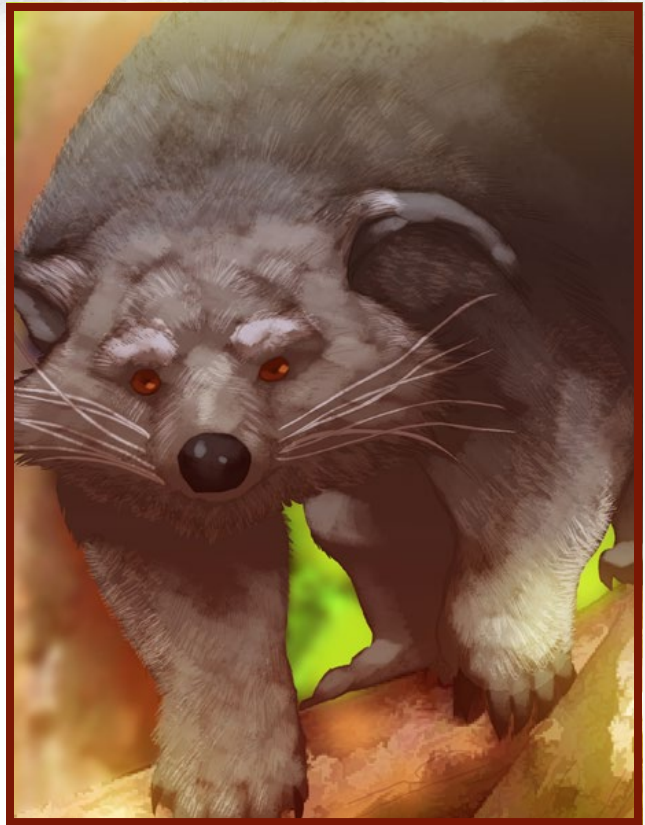
MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Humble Traveler's Cloak (1m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Eclipse; Essence 1): The chanter takes on the semblance of a human traveler or itinerant of humble means. She makes a Disguise roll to do so instantly, adding three automatic successes and ignoring penalties for concealing non-human features. She can't impersonate specific individuals. Rolls opposing the disguise fail automatically unless enhanced by magic. This Charm can't be used during the day, and the disguise fades away if exposed to sunlight.

Materialize (35m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): A drumbeat grows steadily louder, and then the horizon chanter appears as though it had been there all along.

Measure the Wind (5m; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): A horizon chanter can discern the nature of anyone who tells a story in its presence.

Wisdom of Wanderlust (1m per nontrivial character, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Eclipse; Essence 2): The chanter imparts invaluable knowledge with one of her tales, telling a story that grants a temporary specialty chosen by player: a Survival specialty in mountains for tales of exploring a mountain pass, a Socialize specialty in bandits from stories of treachery among outlaws, etc. This can't grant specialties in combat Abilities. The chanter can bless up to (higher of Essence or 3) nontrivial characters at a time and any number of trivial characters. Blessing trivial characters requires no mote commitment; such blessings are generally more a matter of narrative impact than mechanical benefit. Blessed characters can go into experience debt to gain the specialty permanently (p. 61). Eclipse Castes and the like must faithfully repeat a story learned from a horizon chanter to use this Charm. Once per session.



Within their native range, hunters target binturong for their fur and meat, a prized delicacy in An-Teng. They also make excellent pets — intelligent, affectionate, and deeply attached to their owners, with a potential lifespan of over 20 years. Such pets are most common among Southwestern peoples, but are occasionally available for purchase by Dynasts, merchant princes, and other wealthy foreigners.

In the wild, these reclusive creatures mostly stick to the treetops, though they must descend to the ground to move between trees. Their diet primarily consists of fruit, though binturong also hunt birds, insects, and other small animals.

When threatened, the binturong scrambles into the trees, hiding out of reach on the highest branches. Should predators — or determined hunters — pursue, it sprays them with urine or bares its teeth and snarls, balancing on its tail to appear larger in the hopes of driving off its pursuer. When cornered, it lashes out with teeth and claws, and flees as soon as it spots an opening.

Backer: Sean Riedinger

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 2; **Join Battle:** 5 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1/-2x2/-4/Incap. A binturong attempts to flee after taking damage to a -1 level.

Actions: Climbing: 8 dice (see Agile Climber); Jumping: 4 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 6 dice; Senses: 5 dice (see

Bestiary

Binturong

Colloquially called “bearcat” for its sturdy body, whiskered face, and powerful claws, the binturong dwells amid tall forests in the Southwest. Short, stout legs support its two-foot-long torso. It uses its prehensile tail — nearly as long as its body — to climb, maintain balance, and express its mood.

Keen Nose, Night Vision); Stealth: 5 dice; Swim: 6 dice; Threaten: 5 dice (see Binturong's Scent); Tracking: 4 dice
Resolve 3, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 5 dice (Damage 12L)

Attack (Claws): 6 dice (Damage 10L)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (6 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 5 dice

Evasion: 2, **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 3/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Leaping Pounce: When a binturong moves into close range with an enemy and deals 5+ **withering** damage to him on the same turn, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a grapple gambit against him.

MERITS

Agile Climber: Binturongs double 8s on rolls to climb trees and foliage.

Binturong's Scent: The binturong's urine has a distinct smell that clings to the animal's fur. While relatively pleasant to humans, it's a warning signal to other animals. Animals suffer -2 Resolve against binturongs' threaten rolls.

Keen Scent: Binturongs double 9s on scent-based Perception rolls.

Night Vision: Binturongs can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight and reduce the difficulty of Perception-based rolls in deeper darkness by one.

Prehensile Tail: The binturong's tail can grip and hold things, though the animal suffers a -3 penalty on any actions that require a roll, other than to hold on to something.

Burrow Lok

Native to the Southeast, these pony-sized jungle predators resemble giant badgers with saber-like fangs. Their long, slender limbs permit them to charge as quickly as a claw strider and to dig through packed earth with ease.

The burrow lok hunts by digging long burrows and complex tunnels close enough to the surface for prey to collapse and fall into. The burrow lok then pounces on the stunned creature. If prey doesn't come to them, the burrow lok ventures out at night to hunt. The Sosari people, who dwell in the jungles near Point Sunder, mark the location of burrow lok dens using bright red ochre to warn others of the threat close at hand. Scouts from these tribes regularly attempt to lure enemies or large and dangerous beasts to nearby dens, in the hope they'll fall in and be devoured.



Burrow loks' large size makes them useful mounts and hunting beasts for those who raise and train the beasts from birth.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 2; **Join Battle:** 6 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x4/-4x4/Incap. Burrow loks typically flee after taking damage to a -2 level.

Speed Bonus: +1

Actions: Feats of Strength: 7 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Resist Poison/Disease: 6 dice; Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing, Night Vision); Stealth: 5 dice; Threaten: 6 dice; Tracking: 5 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing)

Resolve 2, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 6 dice (Damage 14L)

Attack (Claws): 10 dice (Damage 10L)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (8 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 12/5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Burrow: The lok can use a reflexive move action to burrow one range band horizontally underground, ignoring difficult terrain. It reemerges at the end of its

movement. It can tunnel through sand or soil, but not stone or other solid barriers. If it makes an unexpected attack immediately after emerging, it adds two automatic successes on the damage roll.

Pitfall Hunter: A lok can use its entire turn to burrow one range band downward, as above, creating a trap for unwary prey that extends out to close range from its location. It reflexively rolls Stealth with double 9s to establish concealment,. The first time a character steps in this area, he must make a difficulty 4 (Dexterity + Athletics) balance roll or fall prone, losing three Initiative, which the lok gains. The lok may then reflexively make a **withering** or **decisive** against him. The pitfall comes apart, ending the lok's concealment, once it's been triggered or if the lok moves.

Mountain-Gnawing Beast (Magical; 5m): The lok can use its Burrow and Pitfall Hunter abilities to tunnel through stone and other barriers reflexively rolling a feat of demolition with double 7s to do so. Such feats are completed instantly. Mountain-Gnawing Beast is appropriate for any animal with the Burrow ability.

MERITS

Earth sight: While burrowing, a lok perceives through vibrations. With successful Senses rolls, it can pinpoint character's location and discern their actions as long as they produce any vibrations on the ground.

Keen Nose and Hearing: Double 9s on scent- or hearing-based Perception rolls.

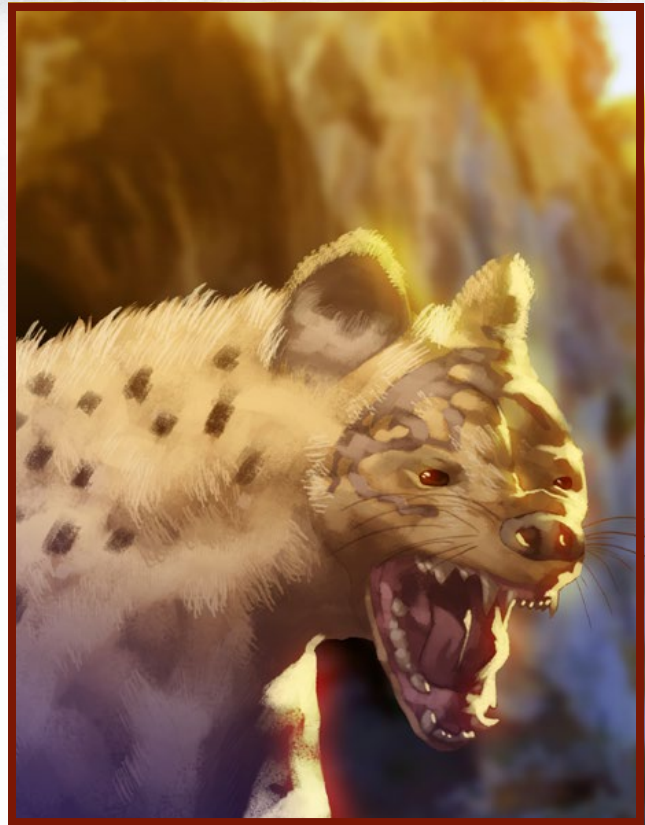
Night Vision: Loks can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight and reduce the difficulty of Perception-based rolls in deeper darkness by one.

Cave Hyena

Ranging from the Dreaming Sea's sultry southern shores to the Fang Lakes' bitter chill, the cave hyena can be found anywhere in the East that provides ample caverns within which it can make a den.

Unlike its smaller savannah-dwelling cousins, the cave hyena lives a solitary life. Even its mating rituals are brief affairs, sometimes ending in violence if the suitor doesn't leave quickly enough. The female cave hyena watches over her young until they're grown enough to hunt on their own, then forces them out to find new homes.

More than double the size of most other hyena species, cave hyenas share their characteristic incredible jaw strength and range of unnerving vocalizations. When hunting, they favor such large prey as wild horses, bison, and even woolly rhinoceros. Their primary tactic is to frighten their quarry. When it attempts to escape, the hyena grasps a leg and pulls it back.



The Ythura clan in the far North, who make their homes on the slopes of the Skyrazor Mountains, claims the cave hyena as their sacred animal. They name as chieftain whomever can tame and retrieve one of these great beasts. In the eastern forests, hunting a cave hyena is a rite of passage for groups of young men and women. Their pelts fetch high prices with traders. Kamthahar alchemists pay vast sums of money for the male's sex organs, praising its potency as both aphrodisiac and fertility medicine.

Training a cave hyena as a mount is possible, but arduous and very dangerous. Would-be riders can easily lose hands, fingers, or their lives attempting to befriend the animal.

Cave hyenas prefer to ignore humans. If threatened, they attack with alarming ferocity and terrifying growls, attempting to drive off the interloper.

Backer: Richard Javier Stephenson

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 5; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1x3/-2x3/-4x6/Incap. Cave hyenas typically flee after taking damage to their last -2 health level, but will fight to the death to protect their young.

Speed Bonus: +1.

Actions: Feats of Strength: 9 dice (can attempt Strength 5 feats; see Sundering Bite); Resist Poison/Disease: 6 dice; Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Senses); Stealth: 5 dice;

Threaten: 10 dice (see Predatory Laughter); Tracking: 5 dice (see Keen Senses)

Resolve 3, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 9 dice (Damage 16L/4)

Attack (Grapple): 9 dice (10 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 10/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bone-Crunching Bite: An enemy damaged by a **decisive** bite attack suffers a crippling penalty on Strength and Dexterity rolls equal to the attack roll's extra successes for the rest of the scene. This penalty stacks, up to a maximum of -5.

Iron Fang Grip: When the cave hyena moves into close range with an enemy and deals 5+ **withering** damage to him with a bite attack on the same turn, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a grapple gambit against him.

Prey-Seizing Jaws: Cave hyenas don't take Defense penalties for grappling. They can use their turn to both make a savaging bite attack and drag a grappled foe.

Swift Advance: When the cave hyena's reflexive movement from a successful rush is provoked, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a **decisive** bite attack against the rushed enemy.

MERITS

Keen Senses: Double 9s on vision-, hearing-, or smell-based Perception rolls.

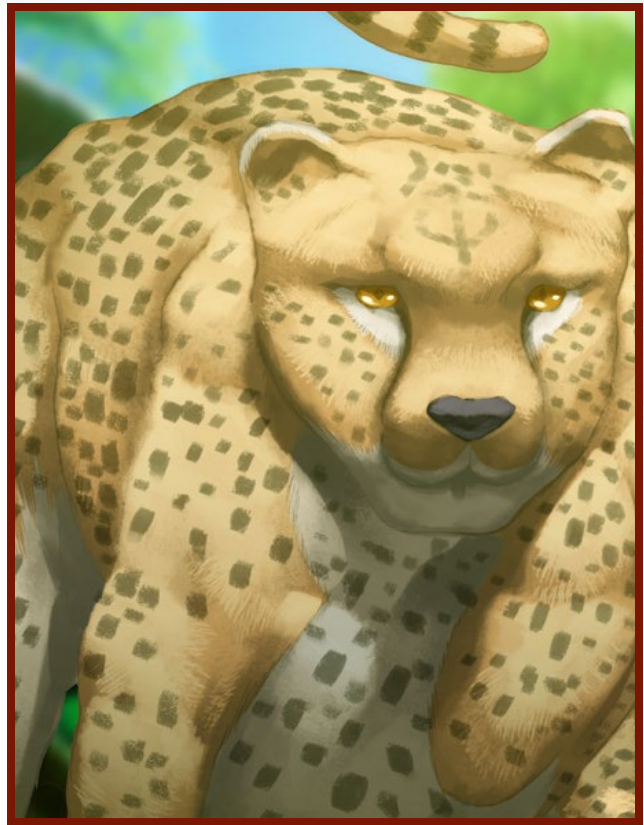
Predatory Laughter: Double 9s on threaten rolls. In combat, cave hyenas waive penalties for flurrying threaten rolls with attacks or rushes.

Sundering Bite: Double 8s on feats of demolition using the cave hyena's jaws.

Cheetah

These spotted cats hunt open savannah, scrublands, hills, and deserts from the Burning Sands to the shores of the Dreaming Sea. Where most wild cats stalk and ambush their quarry, cheetahs rely on keen vision and incredible sprinting speed to pursue and catch prey.

Cheetahs primarily target mid-sized ungulates such as antelope or gazelle, which they trip and kill with a strangling bite. They'll also hunt smaller animals like hares, or livestock like goats and sheep. They avoid humans and other predators; even while eating they remain wary of larger rivals stealing the kill, bolting down food without swallowing after taking several minutes to catch their breath from the sprint.



Most cheetahs hunt during the day, avoiding competition from nocturnal predators. Desert-dwelling cheetahs instead hunt at night and in the early morning; both they and their prey seek to avoid the daytime heat. While wild cheetahs are usually solitary hunters, training can lead them to work together or with their trainers. Male cheetahs also occasionally form packs in the wild.

Cheetahs are more social than other great cats. In addition to grooming one another, they display affection by licking their companions' faces or rubbing cheeks with one another. Young males group together in coalitions to hunt and defend their territories; they alert others when a member is wounded, and members share equally in their kills. Female cheetahs are more solitary; though they may remain near other mothers or their offspring, once their cubs are grown they set off on their own. Females have larger territorial ranges than males, and often only venture into the males' territory during mating season.

Cheetahs communicate via a broad range of vocalizations; some can be heard up to a mile away, most often when mothers are calling to their young. Their signal excitement with birdlike chirps, purr when content, and let out cat-like meows when irritated. Mothers guide their young through a series of unique sounds, depending on whether they're gathering them in close or leading them somewhere new.

Both male and female cheetahs mark their territory with urine. Other cheetahs examine the scents to determine who's in the area and whether to move on or roam nearby. They often leave their own marks for others to sniff.

Trained as hunting beasts or featured in menageries, cheetahs are a symbol of prestige in southern satrapies from Chalan to Jiara. Hunting experts prefer to capture adult cheetahs, who are already skilled hunters. Hoods restrict cheetahs' sight as hunters lead the beasts by leash or use carts to bring them into the field. In Prasad, beastmasters capture and train cheetahs to race for the honor of their sponsoring clan. The animals are painted in the clan's colors, making for a striking display in the hippodrome.

Lunars value the cheetah's form for its unmatched running speed. The cats also present an opportunity to infiltrate the households of those who use them as hunting beasts. Given the cats' propensity to hunt by day under the Unconquered Sun's watchful gaze, some say cheetahs are smaller cousins to the legendary simhata.

Backer: Kangstor

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 5; **Join Battle:** 6 dice (see Stalking Cat Advantage)

Health Levels: -0/-1x4/-2x2/-4/Incap. Wild cheetahs flee after taking damage to a -2 level.

Actions: Feats of Strength: 7 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing, Night Vision); Stealth: 7 dice (see Camouflage); Threaten: 5 dice
Resolve 2, Guile 2

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 10 dice (Damage 14L)

Attack (Claw): 12 dice (Damage 10L)

Attack (Grapple): 9 dice (9 dice to control). Cheetahs cannot throw or slam grappled enemies.

Combat Movement: 11 dice (see Unmatched Pursuit)

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 3/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambush Hunter: Add three dice on unexpected attack rolls.

Deadly Charge: Each range band a cheetah moves in a straight line towards an enemy grants it two Initiative, until it reaches close range and makes a **decisive** attack against him. It loses all this Initiative if it takes any action other than moving towards that enemy or attacking him.

Leaping Pounce: When a cheetah moves into close range with an enemy and deals 5+ **withering** damage to him on the same turn, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a grapple gambit against him.

Mauling Bite: Add four dice of damage on a **decisive** savaging bite attack against a grappled foe. Once per grapple unless reset by crashing the grappled foe.

Swift Advance: When the cheetah's reflexive movement from a successful rush is provoked, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a **decisive** attack against the rushed enemy.

MERITS

Camouflage: Double 9s on Stealth rolls in the cheetah's natural habitat.

Keen Nose and Hearing: Double 9s on scent- or hearing-based Perception rolls.

Night Vision: Cheetahs can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight and reduce the difficulty of Perception-based rolls in deeper darkness by one.

Stalking Cat Advantage: Add an automatic success on Join Battle rolls made while in stealth.

Unmatched Pursuit: Double 8s on rushes.

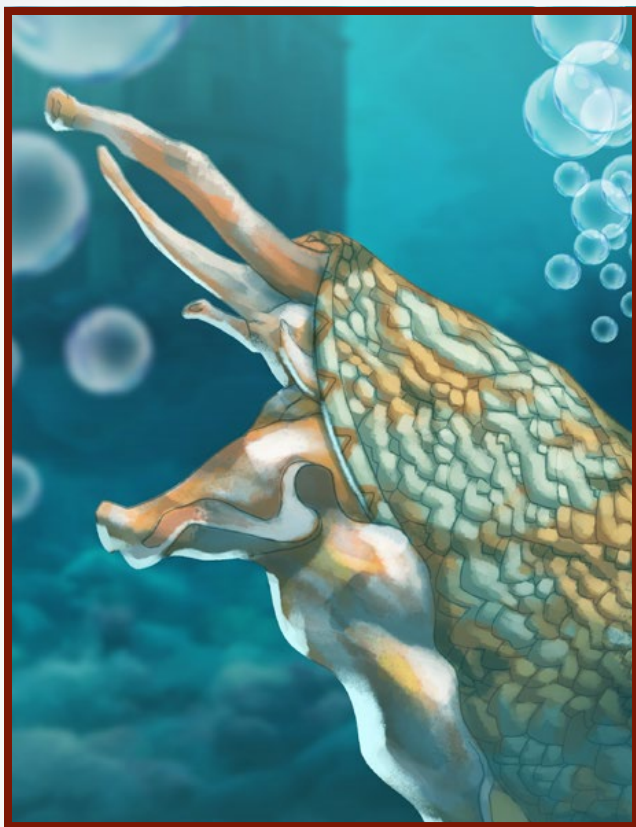
Cone Snail

The tiny cone snail lives in balmy Southwestern waters, among the Wavecrest Archipelago's southern islands, and along the Blessed Isle's southern coast. It hunts sleeping fish and seafloor worms, launching a poisoned harpoon at its unsuspecting prey. After it strikes, the snail reels in its speared victim while fast-acting venoms ravage the victim's body. It devours its prey whole, injecting more venom to ensure the meal remains inert yet conscious.

The cone snail inhabits an elongated spiral shell, typically mottled or patterned to blend into the sea floor; its striking appearance makes it prized for ornamental purposes, especially in the Wavecrest archipelago. Most range in size from a fingernail's length to a handspan. However, in demesnes and Wyld regions these tiny predators can grow to prodigious size, some as large as the small fishing boats that hug the shores.

Fisherfolk from the islands of Gualiaka call the deadliest local species the "last-draught cone," as those stung only have time for one final drink before succumbing to its venom. Along An-Teng's coast, the so-called sorcerer's snail — its shell patterned with ornate petal-like swirls — has a less deadly venom. Victims of its sting drool uncontrollably and suffer blurred hallucinations that purportedly show glimpses of geomantic dragon lines and immaterial spirits.

Around the Coral Archipelago, it's said that on one in a thousand cone snails' shells, the mottled markings depict nearby islands more accurately than any chart, showing reefs, sandbars, and other dangers to those who know how to read them. Though difficult to verify,



these so-called “archipelago cones” are prized by navigators, explorers, and pirates.

Despite the deadly risk, desperate divers collect cone snails for apothecaries, shamans, assassins, and sorcerers. They value the cone snail’s venom glands for their unique properties, from producing powerful poisons, medicines, and hallucinogens, to more esoteric purposes in sorcerous workings. Properly harvested and preserved, they’re exceptional equipment for appropriate Medicine, Occult, or Craft rolls (**Exalted**, p. 580).

Backer: Joseph Strolla

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 1; **Join Battle:** 3 dice

Health Levels: -1/-2/-4/Incap. Cone snails retreat and seek to hide after taking any damage.

Actions: Senses: 6 dice; Stealth: 6 dice (see Camouflage; Minuscule Size)

Resolve 1, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Sting): 10 dice (Damage 1L; 12L against enemies its size or smaller. Can’t deal **decisive** damage to larger enemies)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (4 dice to control. Can’t grapple larger enemies. Can only savage grappled foes.)

Combat Movement: 2 dice

VARIABLE SIZE

Storytellers can use animal traits to represent larger or smaller versions of existing species by adding or removing one of the following size-based Merits:

Minuscule Size: This Merit applies to most insects and other animals of similar size. It adds +3 Evasion against larger enemies and subtracts three successes from their Perception-based rolls against the animal. Against Tiny Creatures, these are reduced to +2 Evasion and -2. However, the base damage of their **withering** attacks is limited against larger enemies, ranging from 1-5, and they can’t deal **decisive** damage to larger enemies. They also can’t grapple larger enemies.

Tiny Creature: This Merit applies to animals up to about the size of a housecat or fox. It adds +2 Evasion against larger enemies and subtracts two successes from their Perception-based rolls against the animal. Their **withering** damage and grapples against larger enemies are limited as with Minuscule Size animals, but they can deal **decisive** damage normally.

Legendary Size: This Merit applies to the largest animals, usually those the size of an elephant or larger. It conveys several benefits:

- Smaller enemies’ attacks don’t inflict on-slaught penalties. Magically inflicted on-slaught penalties still apply.
- They can’t be reduced below Initiative 1 by smaller characters’ **withering** attacks unless they have 10+ dice of post-soak damage. Such attacks still award the full amount of Initiative damage rolled.
- They can’t take more than (attacker’s Strength + 3) levels of damage from **decisive** attacks made by smaller characters. Levels of damage added by magic don’t count against this limit.
- They can’t be grappled by smaller enemies unless they use magic like Dragon Coil Technique, nor can their grapple control rolls be resisted without such magic.
- They can’t be knocked back by smaller foes’ smash attacks, and are more difficult to knock back with magic (**Exalted**, p. 274).

Evasion: 1 (see Minuscule Size); **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 2/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Venom: The snail's **decisive** sting attacks carry a poison with Damage 1i/round (B in Crash), Duration 6 rounds, and a -2 penalty. Some have a venom that can be potentially fatal to humans, with Damage 3L/hour, Duration 6 hours, and a -4 penalty.

MERITS

Camouflage: Double 9s on Stealth rolls in the snail's natural habitat.

Minuscule Size: +3 Evasion against larger foes' attacks. Larger characters subtract three successes from Awareness-based rolls against them. Against foes with the Tiny Creature Merit, this drops to +2 Evasion and -2 successes. Larger snails may have Tiny Creature instead.

GIANT SNAIL

Giant cone snails use the same traits as their smaller cousins, with the following changes:

- **Willpower:** 5
- **Health Levels:** -0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incap. Giant cone snails don't retreat until they take damage to a -2 level.
- **Attack (Grapple):** 10 dice (8 dice to control)
- **Combat Movement:** 6 dice
- **Parry:** 3
- **Soak/Hardness:** 10/8
- **Harpoon Sting:** Giant cone snails can make sting attacks and grapple gambits out to short range. Grappled enemies are automatically dragged to close range.
- **Impenetrable Armor:** **Withering** attacks against the snail suffers -1 Overwhelming.
- They don't have the Minuscule Size or Tiny Creature Merits.

FOX

Foxes are small doglike mammals with pointed ears and noses and bushy tails. Red foxes, the largest of the species, appear in every Direction. Their cousins throughout Creation include tree-climbing gray foxes in the Eastern forests, the North's arctic foxes with their thick white coats, and the small-bodied, large-eared fennec



foxes of the Southern deserts. Most foxes are nocturnal and highly adaptable to their environment.

Foxes are normally solitary creatures, though some live in small family groups. They perform a wide range of vocalizations to signal danger, attract mates, and call to their cubs. The pitch and sequence of each fox's barks is a unique identifier, alerting others in the area to their presence. Threatened foxes make a sound called gekkering: a combination of guttural chattering, yelps, and howls to warn opponents away. Other fox sounds are frequently mistaken for other creatures: their yowls resemble an owl's call, while their high-pitched yips during the mating season can sound like human screams.

As omnivores, foxes eat berries, fruits, and nuts, and hunt smaller animals. Their predilection for poultry and livestock frequently makes them a nuisance to farmers. Conversely, some urban and nomadic cultures value them as vermin-hunters, ridding the environment of rats, pigeons, and termites.

Hunters seek foxes for their pelts, with certain subspecies being more valued based on uniform color or silkier texture. Capturing foxes can be quite the challenge: the clever animals quickly learn to spot and evade hunters' traps. Their intelligence gives rise to folktales painting them as trickster figures in cultures throughout Creation.

Though not a domesticated species, individual foxes can be tamed. These tend to form strong bonds with their owner and those in her Circle, including other animals. But even tame foxes often remain wary of strangers and prefer concealment. Tamed foxes typically live for over a decade.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 4; **Join Battle:** 4 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1/-2/-4/Incap. Foxes typically flee after taking any damage.

Actions: Hide Food for Later: 5 dice; Jumping: 5 dice; Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing, Night Vision); Stealth: 7 dice (see Camouflage, Tiny Creature) Resolve 2, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 6 dice (Damage 2L; 9L against enemies its size or smaller.)

Attack (Grapple): 6 dice (4 dice to control. Can only grapple enemies of its size or smaller. Can't throw or slam grappled enemies.)

Combat Movement: 5 dice

Evasion: 4 (see Tiny Creature); **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 2/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambush Hunter: Add three dice on unexpected attack rolls.

Leaping Pounce: When a fox moves into close range with an enemy and deals 5+ **withering** damage to him on the same turn, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a grapple gambit against him.

Prey-Shaking Attack: The fox shakes a grappled enemy back and forth, doubling 9s on a **decisive** saving attack's damage roll.

Stalking Shadow Hunter (Latent): An unexpected **withering** attack treats its target as being the fox's size or smaller.

Underfoot Menace (Latent): Ambush Hunter and Stalking Shadow Hunter's benefits apply on all attacks against larger enemies.

MERITS

Camouflage: Double 9s on Stealth rolls in the fox's native environment: arctic foxes amid snow fennecs in deserts, etc.

Keen Nose and Hearing: Double 9s on scent- and hearing-based Perception rolls.

Night Vision: Foxes can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight and reduce the difficulty of Perception-based rolls in deeper darkness by one.

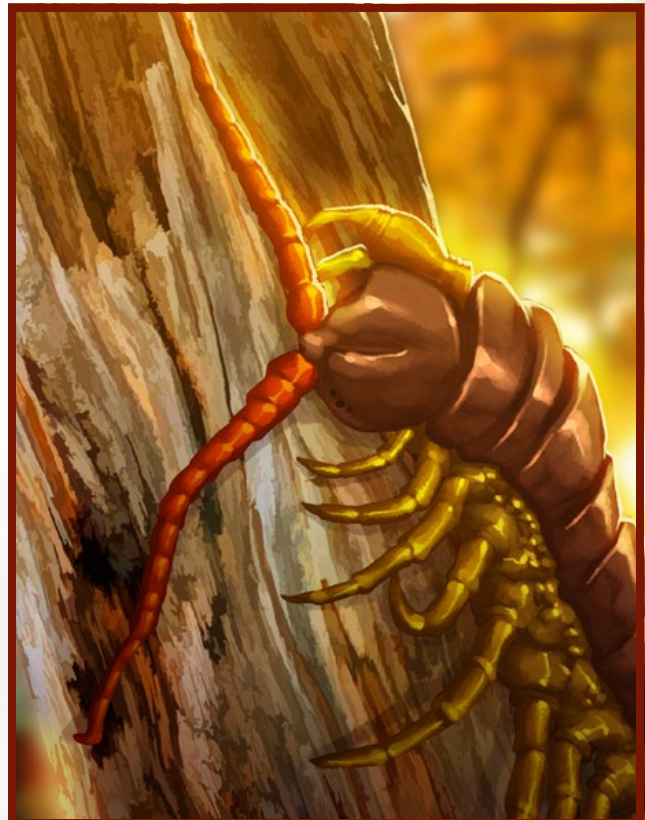
Tiny Creature: Add +2 Evasion against larger enemies' attacks. Larger characters subtract two successes from Awareness-based rolls to notice the fox.

Giant Centipede

Giant, arboreal centipedes are endemic to Creation's Far East. Immediately recognizable both for the odd shape of their long, flat, armored bodies and their size, they reach up to ten feet in length in the wild, while some domesticated species reach fifteen. Despite their great size and frightening appearance, most species are placid herbivores; when their hard carapaces don't suffice to deter predators, they rely on their venomous bite to numb the predator and escape.

Forest-dwelling humans, discovering that the giant centipede was easily handled and bred rapidly when its eggs were safe from predators, domesticated it centuries ago. Domesticated breeds are typically larger than their wild counterparts and understand simple orders. Their venom is milked for use in poisons, antivenins, anesthetics, and other drugs.

In the Cauldron Valley, farmhands climb atop domesticated giant centipedes, which carry them to work in far-off fields in the morning, and bring them home at the end of the day. Pilgrims seeking the shrines on the peaks of the Pachapunu Mountains board centipede funiculars to carry them up the steep slopes.



Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 2; **Join Battle:** 4

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x4/-4x2/Incap. Giant centipedes typically flee after taking any damage. Giant centipedes that have been trained for combat or belong to more aggressive species fight until they take damage to a -2 level.

Speed Bonus: +1

Actions: Climbing: 10 dice; Feats of Strength: 6 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Resist Poison/Illness: 7 dice; Senses: 5 dice; Stealth: 7 dice (see Camouflage) Resolve 1, Guile 2

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 8 dice (Damage 14L; see Venom)

Attack (Grapple): 8 dice (8 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice (see Swift Scurry)

Evasion: 3, **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 6/4

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grasping Claws: Savaging attacks against grappled enemies add three dice of post-soak **withering** damage or one die of **decisive** damage.

Venom: The centipede's **decisive** bite attacks carry a poison with Damage 2i/round (B in Crash), Duration 5 rounds, and a -3 penalty.

MERITS

Agile Climber: Giant centipedes double 8s on rolls to climb trees and foliage.

Camouflage: Double 9s on Stealth rolls in the centipede's natural habitat.

Curl Up: When a centipede takes a full defense, it gains +5 soak in addition to the Defense bonus. It loses this benefit if it takes a movement action.

Impenetrable Armor: **Withering** attacks against the centipede suffers -1 Overwhelming.

Swift Scurry: Double 9s on disengage rolls. Giant centipedes that belong to more aggressive species double 9s on rushes instead.

REGULAR CENTIPEDE

Normal centipedes use the traits of their larger cousins with the following changes:

- **Health Levels:** -1/-2/-4/Incap.

- **Actions:** Climbing: 5 dice (see Agile Climber); Senses: 5 dice; Stealth: 7 dice.

- **Attack (Bite):** 8 dice (Damage 1L; 14L against enemies its size or smaller. See Venom)

- **Combat Movement:** 5 dice

- **Soak/Hardness:** 2/0

- Their venom is much weaker, with Damage 1i/round (B in Crash), Duration 5 rounds, and a -2 penalty.

- They gain Minuscule Size (p. 185). Some are large enough to have Tiny Creature.

- They lose Agile Climber and Impenetrable Armor.

Great Leech

These foul horrors are leeches the size of large dogs. Most common in Southeastern jungles, unlucky explorers also find them in almost any warm underground environment, where they frequently hunt in packs of three to eight.

Great leeches have no legs, but move with surprising speed by stretching and retracting their powerful bodies. They have two long, muscular tentacles, which they use to grapple prey before feeding on its blood. Though blind, they possess exceptionally keen senses of smell and hearing, and are capable of swift, utterly silent movement. They can climb walls and ceilings as easily as on the ground, sometimes using this tactic to drop onto prey.



Great leeches are as intelligent as dogs and can be trained as trackers, for which they're sometimes called leech hounds. They make for loyal if unusual companions to entities willing to keep company with a large, blood-drinking horror. Great leech ichor is a vital ingredient in one formulation of age-staving cordial.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 4; **Join Battle:** 6 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incap. Great leeches flee after suffering damage to a -2 level.

Actions: Climbing: 8 dice; Squeeze Through Tight Spaces: 7 dice (see Wriggling Advance); Senses: 6 dice (see Blood Scent, Keen Nose, Vibration Sense); Stealth: 9 dice; Swim: 8 dice; Tracking: 6 dice (see Blood Scent, Keen Nose)

Resolve 2, Guile 2

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 7 dice (Damage 9L)

Attack (Tentacles): 9 dice (Damage 7L)

Attack (Grapple): 9 dice (10 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 1/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambush Hunter: Add three dice on unexpected attack rolls.

Exsanguination: When the great leech restrains a grappled enemy with blood it can feed on, that enemy suffers one die of **decisive** lethal damage, ignoring Hardness. Once per scene, when the leech damages an enemy this way, it heals one level of non-aggravated damage.

Grasping Tentacles: Great leeches can make tentacle attacks and grapple gambits out to short range. Grappled enemies are automatically dragged to close range.

Pack Hunting: Add one automatic success on an attack roll for each allied great leech within close range of the target, maximum +3 successes. On a **decisive** attack, the leech may also pay one Willpower to add that many dice of damage as its packmates join in the attack.

Hunting Companion (Latent): The great leech gains Pack Hunting's benefit with all allies, not just other leeches.

MERITS

Amphibious: Great leeches can breathe both in and out of water.

Blood Scent: Add three automatic successes on Senses rolls to detect blood within up to a mile away. Additionally, when rolling Senses against an enemy's Stealth or tracking an enemy, add bonus dice equal to his wound penalty.

Keen Nose: Double 9s on scent-based Perception rolls.

Vibration Sense: Great leeches have no sense of vision, instead feeling vibrations through the ground or water. They don't suffer the usual -3 penalty for lacking sight on rolls that target someone or something that's creating such vibrations. They double 9s on Senses rolls that benefit from such vibrations.

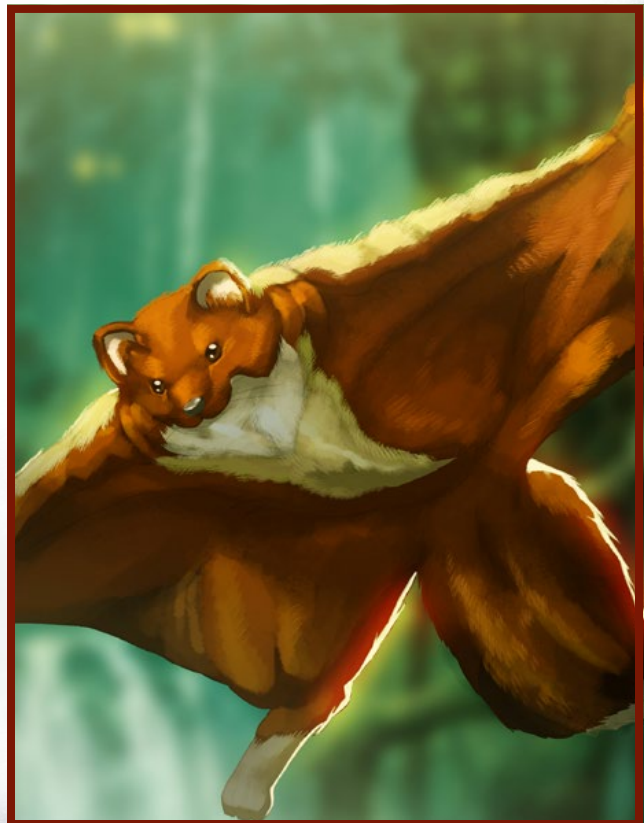
Wall-Walking: Great leeches can move up vertical surfaces and stop in place to hang from walls and ceilings.

Wriggling Advance: Double 8s on rolls to fit through tight spaces.

Hatra

Hatra are small weasel-like predators that live and hunt in the Eastern and Northeastern forests, in packs of between 10 and 30. The size of large domestic cats, they're most notable for the gliding membranes between their front and back legs. Hatra can glide for short distances, but cannot gain altitude when gliding.

In addition to gliding between trees, hatra packs also regularly swoop down from above to attack prey on the forest floor. Hatra regularly attack prey the size of deer, humans, or even ponies. Their preferred method of attack is for the entire pack to swoop down on a single



target and cling to it. A flurry of hatra biting and clawing weakens even relatively large prey.

Hatra fur is quite soft yet durable. Most hatra are covered in narrow stripes extending from their heads to their short tails. Clothiers sometimes use this fur as accents on clothing for wealthy individuals, but a single garment can require fur from a dozen or more hatra, making it a very difficult commodity to acquire.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 4; **Join Battle:** 4 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1/-2/-4/Incap. Hatra flee after taking damage to a -2 level.

Actions: Climbing: 7 dice (see Agile Climber); Glide: 7 dice; Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Nose); Stealth: 8 dice (see Tiny Creature)

Resolve 2, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 5 dice (Damage 4L; 12L against enemies its size or smaller).

Attack (Claw): 7 dice (Damage 3L; 9L against enemies its size or smaller).

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (6 dice to control. Can't grapple larger enemies)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 2 (see Tiny Creature), **Parry:** 2

Soak/Hardness: 2/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambush Hunter: Add three dice on unexpected attack rolls.

Falling Fang Strike: The hatra swoops down to attack an enemy up to medium range below it, taking no falling damage for doing so. It adds an automatic success on the damage roll for each range band it crosses. On an ambush, it instead inflicts damage equivalent to a fall from the height on its foe (**Exalted**, p. 232). Any enemy who wasn't aware of the hatra loses three Initiative from the startling display. This uses its movement action. Once per scene, unless reset by spending three consecutive rounds at least medium range above all enemies.

Latch On: After dealing 5+ **withering** damage with a bite attack, a hatra can reflexively make a grapple gambit against the same enemy.

Pack Hunting: Add one automatic success on an attack roll for each allied hatra within close range of the target, maximum +3 successes. On a **decisive** attack, the hatra may also pay one Willpower to add that many dice of damage as its packmates join in the attack.

Swooping Pack Terror: Hatra battle groups add three automatic successes on the attack and control rolls for engage gambits and waive their Initiative cost (**Exalted**, p. 209). Note that engage gambits aren't limited by a target's size, unlike grappling.

Hunting Companion (Latent): The hatra gains Pack Hunting's benefit with all allies, not just other hatra.

MERITS

Agile Climber: Double 8s on rolls to climb trees and foliage.

Drop Predator: Against hatra in trees or similar environs, characters below them suffer a -4 penalty on Awareness rolls against it unless they have superhuman senses. Those forewarned of their habits, like natives of hatra habitats or guides from such regions, can keep an eye out for them to reduce the penalty to -2. However, this halves the speed at which they travel.

Keen Nose: Double 9s on smell-based Perception rolls.

Night Vision: Hatra can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight and reduce the difficulty of Perception-based rolls in deeper darkness by one.

Tiny Creature: Add +2 Evasion against any attack made by a larger foe. In addition, larger characters subtract two successes from any Awareness-based roll made to notice it.

Mudskipper

A wide variety of mudskippers live in tidelands and estuaries across Creation, where salt and fresh water mix. Low tide reveals the broad, moist mud flats where they prefer to make their homes.



These foot-long fish have round, bulbous eyes protruding from the tops of their heads that allow them to see in any direction. Their smooth, slippery skin is brownish-green in color except during their spring and summer mating seasons, when males develop bright blue, green, or red spots across their backs. Mudskippers swim adeptly. They use their tails to throw themselves across the water's surface like a pebble skipped across a lake, allowing them to traverse long distances incredibly quickly. Unusually, these fish breathe both air and water with ease, and can use their pectoral fins to pull themselves out of the water. They must keep their skin moist while on dry land, using water retained in their gill chambers and coating themselves with mud. So long as they do so, they're capable of traveling long distances overland.

Mudskippers create elaborate burrows in their native mudflats. Tidal waters flood the burrows regularly, making them extremely difficult to see. This, coupled with the animal's natural camouflage, helps the mudskipper to avoid detection while within its burrow. Their homes often also serve as nurseries for incubating eggs. By digging a J-shaped burrow, the mudskipper creates a sheltered, airtight incubation chamber that stays dry when the rest of the burrow floods.

Mudskippers are strongly territorial, prepared to fiercely defend their homes from rival mudskippers and other predators when necessary. However, despite their tenacity, their offensive abilities are primarily limited to biting, though they have no teeth and aren't venomous. Battles between mudskippers primarily consist of posturing and elaborate feints to intimidate their opponents. They generally avoid conflict with other creatures unless they or their incubating young are threatened.

Mudskippers are commonly sold as a snack by Arjuf street vendors, where they're roasted whole and served on a spit. Cooks in coastal towns often hire street children to capture these elusive fish for a few coins; teens with nowhere else to turn have been known to support themselves comfortably with this menial, if frustrating, work.

Backer: Todd Berg

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 1; **Join Battle:** 3 dice

Health Levels: -1/-2/-4/Incap.

Actions: Climbing: 4 dice; Jumping: 4 dice; Senses: 6 dice (see Wide-Range Vision); Stealth: 5 dice (see Tiny Creature); Swimming: 8 dice

Resolve 1, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 4 dice (Damage 1L; 6L against enemies the mudskipper's size or smaller)

Attack (Grapple): 4 dice (4 dice to control. Can't grapple larger enemies. Can only savage grappled foes.)

Combat Movement: 4 dice out of water, 8 dice in water

Evasion: 2 (see Tiny Creature); **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 1/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aquatic Retreat: Mudskippers waive the Initiative cost to disengage when doing so to move into water.

Threat Display: Mudskippers don't take penalties for flurrying threaten rolls with attacks or rushes.

MERITS

Amphibious: Mudskippers breathe through gills underwater. Outside of water, they can breathe through their skin as long as it remains moist.

Tiny Creature: Add +2 Evasion against larger enemies' attacks. Larger characters subtract two successes from Awareness-based rolls to notice the mudskipper.

Wide-Range Vision: Add one die on vision-based Perception rolls, or three dice when opposing Stealth rolls.

Orca

Among the ocean's largest predators, orcas are easily identified by their black bodies and white undersides, with white patches above and behind their eyes. Orcas are found from the cold White Sea to the Great Western Ocean's southernmost tropical waters.

Deeply social, orcas live and travel in matrilineal pods, remaining with their mothers their entire lives. Pods involve complex social bonds, with up to four generations living together. They separate only to mate or forage, then return, with each community having its own distinct vocalizations.

Their eyesight and hearing are sharp, both above and below the water. They also have excellent hearing and echolocation.

These apex predators hunt in packs. Their prey includes fish, seals, seabirds, other whales, dolphins, sharks, and even the occasional swimming elk. With strong teeth and powerful jaws, they can withstand the powerful jerking movements of prey trying to wrest free from their grasp.

Orcas attempt to disable prey before killing it, whether by tail slaps, throwing prey into the air, ramming it, or breaching and landing on it. Groups sometimes use their bodies to create waves that wash animals from shores or ice floes into the sea. Individuals even temporarily beach themselves to grab prey and drag it underwater.

Some whalers hunt orcas for oil, although they don't produce as much as other whales and are more difficult and dangerous to catch. Orcas in turn have been known to *help* whalers catch other whales, loitering to scavenge the discarded meat. Because of this, captains and crews often have only moments to determine whether an approaching orca is aggressive or playful.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 6; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Health Levels: -0x4/-1x8/-2x8/-4x4/Incap. Orcas typically flee upon taking damage to a -2 level.

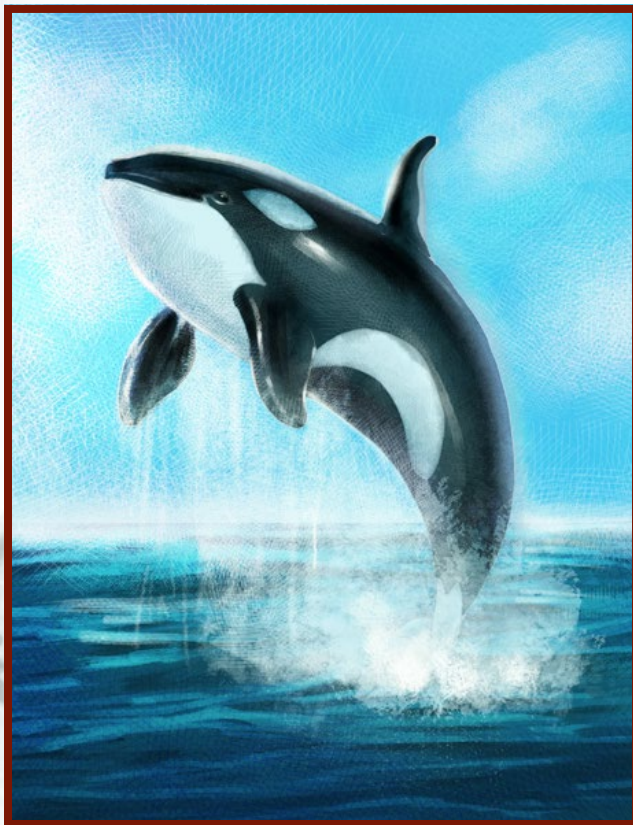
Actions: Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Resist Poison/Illness: 8 dice; Senses: 8 dice (see Echolocation, Keen Hearing and Sight); Swimming: 10 dice (see Swift Swimmer); Threaten: 7 dice

Resolve 3, Guile 2

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 8 dice (Damage 20L/5)

Attack (Slam): 10 dice (Damage 17B/4)



Attack (Grapple): 8 dice (10 dice to control. Orcas make unopposed control rolls against smaller enemies, unless they use magic like Dragon Coil Technique.)

Combat Movement: 10 dice (see Swift Swimmer)

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 10/5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fling Aside: When the orca crashes a grappled enemy with a savaging **bite** attack, it may reflexively make a **decisive** throw, which can toss its prey out to short range.

Pack Hunting: Add one automatic success on an attack roll for each allied orca within close range of the target, maximum +3 successes. On a **decisive** attack, the orca may also pay one Willpower to add that many dice of damage as its podmates join in the attack.

Swift Advance: When the orca's reflexive movement from a successful rush is provoked, it may pay one Willpower to reflexively make a **decisive** bite attack against the rushed enemy.

Tail Slap: An enemy that takes 5+ **withering** damage or any **decisive** damage from a slam attack is knocked back one range band. Stunned by the blow, he suffers a -3 penalty on all rolls until the end of his next turn. This penalty doesn't stack, but multiple uses of this ability — from one orca or more — stack their durations.

Hunting Companion (Latent): The orca gains Pack Hunting's benefit with all allies, not just other orcas.

MERITS

Bottomless Lungs: Orcas can hold their breath for fifteen minutes underwater. In combat, they can hold their breath for an entire scene, but must surface once it ends.

Echolocation: While underwater, orcas ignore vision-based penalties and double 8s on rolls to find or notice anything concealed.

Keen Hearing and Sight: Double 9s on hearing- and vision-based Perception rolls.

Legendary Size: An orca suffers no onslaught penalties from smaller foes' attacks, unless inflicted by magic. It can't be crashed by smaller enemies' **withering** attacks unless they have 10+ post-soak damage, although attackers gain the full amount of Initiative damage dealt. Smaller enemies' **decisive** attacks can't deal more than (attacker's Strength + 3) damage to it, not counting levels of damage added by magic.

Swift Swimmer: Double 9s on movement rolls underwater.

River Basilisc

This medium-sized lizard, native to the Southeast, is easily distinguished by prominent sail-like crests on its head, back,



and tail. Long legs and large hind feet grant it the remarkable ability to run on water. Holding its forelimbs out the side and rearing back, the lizard dashes across the surface to escape when startled, sinking into the water at the end of its dash and swimming away with its long, powerful tail.

When a water escape isn't possible, the basilisc buries itself beneath leaves in the jungle, its green and brown scales blending with its surroundings. The lizard is capable of staying still for long periods of time, waiting to emerge until predators have moved on. River basiliscs eat plants and small prey, including insects, smaller lizards, and birds.

The creature is sacred to nomads along the Gray River, whose small swift craft boast sails that resemble the basilisc's crest. Hunters along its southern waters fashion wide, flat-footed shoes that allow them to briefly run along the water's surface.

Backer: Katie Nelson

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 2; **Join Battle:** 3 dice

Health Levels: -1/-2/-4/Incap. River basiliscs flee upon taking any damage.

Actions: Climbing: 5 dice; Senses: 4 dice; Stealth: 5 dice (see Camouflage, Tiny Creature); Swimming: 5 dice
Resolve 1, Guile 1

THE BASILISC AND THE STAG

One story, popular across the Southeast, tells how the river basilisc cheated the Stag out of his third antler. A forest god offered a crown to the animal who could first reach the forest's heart. Stag boasted of his pending victory; the crown would make an excellent addition to his antlers. Knowing Stag's speed, most other animals conceded.

To everyone's amusement, the river basilisc declared that she'd not only compete, but also win. Stag laughed at the tiny lizard with her large, awkward-looking feet and complained the race would be no challenge at all. The river basilisc warmly suggested if he wanted a challenge, he should close his eyes and count to ten at the start of the race. Stag agreed. After ten breaths, he opened his eyes and set off for the heart of the forest, long legs carrying him swiftly. He didn't see the little basilisc as he dashed beneath the boughs. As he approached the forest's heart, he stopped to look back, sure he must have passed his fellow competitor. The lizard wasn't on the path behind him, so he turned to walk proudly into the clearing. Lounging in a patch of sun ahead of him — across the finish line — was the basilisc. She looked up at him lazily, showing no exertion, and said, "I was wondering when you'd finally get here."

The forest god laughed, knowing that the basilisc had grabbed Stag's tail at the beginning of the race, and only hopped off when he turned to look for her on the trail behind him. The victory crown became the crest that her descendants still display today.

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 6 dice (Damage 2L; 8L against enemies its size or smaller)

Attack (Grapple) 3 dice (3 dice to control. Can only grapple enemies of its size or smaller. Can't throw or slam grappled enemies.)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 2 (see Tiny Creature); **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 1/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Water Runner: The basilisc can run over water with its movement actions. It must continue running in a straight line at full speed to maintain this over multiple rounds.

MERITS

Bottomless Lungs: River basiliscs can hold their breath for thirty minutes underwater. In combat, they can hold

their breath for an entire scene, but must surface once it ends.

Camouflage: Double 9s on Stealth rolls while concealed in its native habitat's foliage.

Tiny Creature: Add +2 Evasion against larger enemies' attacks. Larger characters subtract two successes from Awareness-based rolls to notice the basilisc.

CRESTED-PRINCE LIZARD

In the Southeastern jungles between Rathess and Ixcoatl, some river basiliscs grow to tremendous size: easily 20 feet from head to tail and half as high as a horse. Like their smaller cousins, crested-prince lizards are opportunists, eating whatever small prey is available, though given their size, the range of their diet is considerably greater. Some jungle peoples have learned to capture and train the beasts as mounts for use in lightning raids across the water. One such band has incorporated as a mercenary company in Nexus, where their ability to rush across the Scavenger Lands' many rivers places them in high demand.

Crested-prince lizards used river basilic traits with the following changes:

- **Willpower:** 4; **Join Battle:** 7 dice
- **Health Levels:** -0/-1x3/-2x3/-4x2/Incap. Crested-prince lizards flee upon taking damage to a -2 level unless trained for battle.
- **Speed Bonus:** +1
- **Actions:** Climbing: 7 dice; Feats of Strength: 5 dice (may attempt Strength 3 feats); Senses: 4 dice; Stealth: 4 dice; Swimming: 7 dice
- **Attack (Grapple):** 5 dice (5 dice to control)
- **Evasion:** 3, **Parry:** 2
- **Soak/Hardness:** 4/0
- They don't have the Tiny Creature Merit.

River Bastion

These enormous freshwater turtles — large as a yeddim — dwell in lakes across the Southeast and the Scavenger Lands. Bright reds and blues form unique patterns on each turtle's shell. Though carnivorous, they feed mainly on fish.

River bastions' lack of hostility towards humans and their propensity to chase away dangerous aquatic



predators leads many communities to treat them as sacred animals. Their only predators are river dragons — whose fierce battles with the turtles have given rise to many legends and local folk tales — and humans. Peoples who don't revere the beasts often hunt them while they bask on the riverbanks, whether for their plentiful meat, their colorful carapace, or both.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 4; **Join Battle:** 5 dice

Health Levels: -0x8/-1x4/-2x4/-4/Incap. River bastions flee upon taking damage to a -2 level.

Actions: Feats of Strength: 11 dice (may attempt Strength 7 feats); Resist Poison/Illness: 14 dice; Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Nose); Swimming: 6 dice (see Aquatic Grace)

Resolve 3, Guile 2

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 7 dice (Damage 15L/5)

Attack (Stomp): 9 dice (Damage 15B)

Attack (Grapple): 8 dice (11 dice to control. River bastions make unopposed control rolls against smaller enemies, unless they use magic like Dragon Coil Technique.)

Combat Movement: 6 dice (see Aquatic Grace)

Evasion: 1 (see Aquatic Grace), **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 15/10

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Crushing Bite: The river bastion's toothless snapping beak lets its **withering** bite attacks ignore (4 + attack roll extra successes) armored soak.

Death Stomp: Add five dice of damage on **decisive** stomp attacks against prone enemies.

Trample: If a river bastion makes a stomp attack against an enemy that provoked its reflexive movement from a rush on his last turn, a hit knocks the enemy prone. Apply the prone defense penalty (**Exalted**, p. 202) retroactively when calculating the attack's extra successes.

MERITS

Aquatic Grace: While underwater, double 9s on movement actions and gain +2 Evasion.

Bony Shell: Full defense actions grant +4 soak and Hardness in addition to the Defense bonus, and don't cost Initiative. This stacks with the river bastion's own Hardness, but not Hardness from other sources.

Bottomless Lungs: River bastions can hold their breath for thirty minutes. In combat, they can hold their breath for an entire scene, but must surface once it ends.

Impenetrable Armor: **Withering** attacks against a river bastion suffer -1 Overwhelming.

Keen Nose: Double 9s on smell-based Perception rolls.

Legendary Size: A river bastion suffers no onslaught penalties from smaller foes' attacks, unless inflicted by magic. It can't be crashed by smaller enemies' **withering** attacks unless they have 10+ post-soak damage, although attackers gain the full amount of Initiative damage dealt. Smaller enemies' **decisive** attacks can't deal more than (attacker's Strength + 3) damage to it, not counting levels of damage added by magic.

REGULAR TURTLE

Ordinary turtles use the traits of river bastions with the following changes:

- **Willpower:** 1; **Join Battle:** 2 dice; 4 dice for aggressive species.

- **Health Levels:** -1/-2/-4/Incap.

- **Actions:** Climbing: 3 dice; Senses: 4 dice; Swimming: 4 dice (6 dice for sea turtles)

- **Combat Movement:** 4 dice

- **Attack (Bite):** 4 dice (2L; 8L against enemies its own size).

- **Attack (Grapple):** 3 dice (3 dice to control)

- **Parry:** 1

- **Soak/Hardness:** 3/0

- They don't have stomp attacks or the Death Stomp or Trample abilities.

- Most don't have the Crushing Bite ability, though snapping turtles do.

- They don't have the Impenetrable Armor Merit.

- They don't have Legendary Size. Some have Tiny Creature (p. 185).

Scorching-Venom Lizard

Wild legends persist about the scorching-venom lizard across the South. In the lowlands and hill country near the Lap, people believe the fierce reptiles only bite when thunder crashes or the sun leaves the sky. Across the mountains in An-Teng and Zhaojūn, tales tell of lizards whose very breath is deadly and claim its stench marks the beast's territory. The deep desert's nomads say scorching-venom lizards lick firedust from the sands, infusing their blood, scales, and venom with heat.

To escape the desert's searing daytime temperatures, these arm-length black-and-orange lizards spend most of their time in their burrows, emerging mostly in the morning or on warm summer nights. Eggs from birds or other reptiles represent the majority of their diet; they may eat as infrequently as half a dozen times a year before gorging on a cache of freshly laid eggs. Opportunists and scavengers, these lizards eat almost any creature small enough for them to swallow.

While their legends are known across the South, these lizards are actually quite rare. In many places, people pay exorbitantly for their capture and delivery, leading to local extirpation. The Yakasheri nomads cure their scaly hides as medicinal talismans. A cult in the Varang city-states believes that all scorching-venom lizards hatch under auspicious stars; they distill oils from the creature's fatty tissues for ritual anointments, believing the oil imparts good fortune.

Despite the myths, savants have derived genuine alchemical uses for the lizard's venom and blood. One tincture improves memory and can stave off the forgetfulness of old age. Another alleviates diabetic complications. Chemists in Chiaroscuro mix the venom into firedust to make it burn hotter and brighter. One young scion of House Mnemon reports some success in refining powdered lizards' blood into firedust.

A prospector's tale common in the taverns of Gem claims no venom save that of the Yozis inflicts more pain than the



scorching-venom lizard's. Some bordermarch tribes of the Southern deserts seek out the animal as a rite of passage. They provoke the lizards into biting, then attempt to remain silent as the agony radiates through their body.

Backer: Scott Ryder

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 2; **Join Battle:** 3 dice (see Strike Like the Spark)

Health Levels: -1/-2/-4/Incap.

Actions: Endure Heat: 5 dice; Senses: 7 dice (see Keen Nose); Stealth: 4 dice (see Tiny Creature); Tracking: 4 dice (see Keen Nose)

Resolve 2, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 6 dice (Damage 2L; 12L against enemies its size or smaller. See Venom)

Attack (Grapple): 4 dice (4 dice to control. Can only grapple enemies of its size or smaller. Can't throw or slam grappled enemies.)

Combat Movement: 4 dice

Evasion: 2 (see Tiny Creature); **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 1/0

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Venom: The lizard's **decisive** bite attacks carry a poison with Damage 1i/round (B in Crash), Duration 5 rounds, and a -4 penalty.

IT'S A GILA MONSTER

Scorching-venom lizards are slightly fictionalized versions of the Gila monster, whose name comes from a real-world river. The Prasadi beaded dragon's less aggressive behavior is truer to the actual Gila monster.

MERITS

Fat Reserves: Scorching-venom lizards can go extended periods without food, needing only a few large meals each year.

Keen Nose: Double 9s on all scent-based Perception rolls.

Strike Like the Spark: A lizard that initiates hostilities adds three dice on its Join Battle roll.

Tiny Creature: Add +2 Evasion against larger enemies' attacks. Larger characters subtract two successes from Awareness-based rolls to notice the lizard.

PRASADI BEADED DRAGON

The Prasadi beaded dragon is a less aggressive cousin of the scorching-venom lizard. It has a more subdued coloration, primarily black with splotches of dull yellow. Primarily found around Kamthahar, it also lives in tropical woodlands stretching to the southern shores of the Dreaming Sea.

Beaded dragons use scorching-venom lizards' traits, but don't have the Strike Like the Spark Merit.

FLAME-EATER LIZARD

Flame-eater lizards are much larger relatives of the scorching-venom lizard, roughly the size of a large dog. Their scales are black with streaks of red. Flame-eater lizards prowl the far Southern deserts, feeding on fire-dust deposits. They use scorching-venom lizards' traits with the following changes:

- **Willpower:** 5

- **Health Levels:** -0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incap.

- **Soak/Hardness:** 6/0

- They don't have the Tiny Creature Merit.

- The oldest flame-eater lizards gain incredible resilience to fire through a lifetime of consuming fire-dust. They gain +5 soak and have Hardness 10 against flame-based attacks. They take no damage from flame-based environmental hazards with Damage 4 or less.



Turtlewolf

Creations of the sorceress Third Daughter of the Leaves, turtlewolves are stocky beasts that stand as high as a man's shoulder. Though they're native to the Caul, several packs have been spotted among the Cinder Isles.

Hairless and scaly, a turtlewolf's lupine heritage is most evident in the shape of its head and limbs, its long muzzle, and its narrow build. Though its torso is encased in a heavy shell, it can't retreat inside as most turtles can. A turtlewolf's jaws are backed by massive neck muscles, granting them a terrifying bite while its long tail whips around to ward off attacks from the rear. Turtlewolves are semi-aquatic, able to swim in the shallows along the coast.

Though extremely aggressive and territorial, turtlewolves pack-bond easily in their youth. Those who raise them from birth find the beasts to be tame and affectionate towards them, nearly as much as dogs, making them powerful and loyal familiars — so much so that some brave soldiers in the Caul ride them in battle.

Unfortunately, the beasts don't extend that kindness to anyone else, and so are as dangerous to others as they are useful to their owner.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 5; **Join Battle:** 6 dice

Health Levels: -0x4/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incap. Turtlewolves flee upon taking damage to a -2 health level alone, but are much more aggressive in large numbers.

Speed Bonus: +0

Actions: Senses: 6 dice (see Keen Nose); Stealth: 3 dice; Swimming: 6 dice; Threaten: 6 dice; Tracking: 7 dice (see Keen Nose)

Resolve 2, Guile 1

COMBAT

Attack (Bite): 9 dice (Damage 11L/3)

Attack (Grapple): 6 dice (7 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8

Evasion: 4, **Parry:** 3

Soak/Hardness: 9/4

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Crushing Bite: **Withering** bite attacks ignore (4 + attack roll extra successes) armored soak.

Harry: If it a turtlewolf moves into close range with an enemy and makes a **withering** attack that deals 5+ damage to that enemy on the same tick, that enemy can't take a disengage or withdraw action on his next turn.

Pack Hunting: Add one automatic success on an attack roll for each allied turtlewolf within close range of the target, maximum +3 successes. On a **decisive** attack, the turtlewolf may also pay one Willpower to add that many dice of damage as its packmates join in the attack.

Hunting Companion (Latent): The turtlewolf gains Pack Hunting's benefit with all allies, not just other turtlewolves.

MERITS

Bony Shell: Full defense actions grant +4 soak and Hardness in addition to the Defense bonus, and don't cost Initiative. This stacks with the turtlewolf's own Hardness, but not Hardness from other sources.

Keen Nose: Double 9s on scent-based Perception rolls.

Impenetrable Armor: The minimum damage of any **withering** attack made against the turtlewolf is reduced by one die, to a minimum of zero.

High above the city, Sandswept Garda-Empress remembered the people who once lived in it. She had never known them; no living Lunar besides possibly Sha'a Oka had, and yet in her memories the citizens of Sekima looked up at her. As she crossed the city's expanse, they stared up in awe at her mighty wingspan or gasped in terror at the sky-shattering wake of her wings. Garda-Empress recalled some turning their gazes back to ground level, determined to continue their business in the city the Lunar had never seen while it lived, while others offered illicit half-formed prayers she certainly had never received, every trembling syllable engraved into her memory.

Troops training on Sekima's outskirts — solid and real in the present — tore her attention away. Sandswept Garda-Empress turned from the empty urban expanse. Those people were dead and gone, just like her own were, and the war against the Realm would falter and die if all Lunars lost themselves in the Caul's mysteries.

Watching her hawkpeople go through drop-and-catch drills as other allied forces made their way past, Garda-Empress dove closer. She didn't expect them to equal her, of course, any more than she expected the force of lionfolk loping past to take to the sky, but she demanded they be more than a match for the troops they'd face. The Pact needed them to be, to drive the Realm from the Caul.

Then Sandswept Garda-Empress noticed the figure of flawless midnight fur and mighty stature at the center of the lionfolk. She recalled the long-gone people of Sekima acknowledging His Divine Lunar Presence in a shuddering ripple of bows, kowtows, and dozens of different gestures of profound respect. Then she was landing and Sha'a Oka was there in the living flesh, perfectly transposed over the memory.

Sha'a Oka greeted her, a half-throated roar turned into a salutation: "Empress!" The lionfolk echoed his call, which spread to other Silver Pact forces all along the way. She spotted familiar faces among their number, including the warrior Soaring Lilac, whose sinuous neck and great wings rose up amidst the Black Lion's throng. Garda-Empress had fought at her side before; had indeed battled alongside many of those gathered. Other soldiers stood with them, too: a formation from the city's memories.

Garda-Empress acknowledged them all with a piercing screech. "You've brought quite the force, oh Black Lion. The decision has been made?"

Sha'a Oka laughed. "The stalemate on the water will be broken, Empress, as you suggested; we'll descend upon the supply convoys from above, in force."

Garda-Empress tilted her head, barely believing the news. "What of the concerns of Fia-Shaw, of the more... reserved shahan-yas?"

Sha'a Oka grinned, his fang-filled smile drawing attention both in memory and in the present. "Even if the Lintha break on the waves, the Realm forces will be unable to protect the supply ships and make landfall in Faxai in good order. The healer Adeline has agreed to tend to the wounded, if only for the memory of the dead; even if the Realm has a Wyld Hunt on every ship, they will see the bottom of the ocean by the time your work is done."

Sandswept Garda-Empress did her best to avoid preening, and ignored memories of Sekima's civilians running off in terror at talk of the impending slaughter.





Chapter Six

War for the Caul

The Caul — that cradle of mysteries and wonder — vanished from the world amid the Great Contagion. Centuries later it reappeared, a miracle matched only by the spiritual insights that it offers the Lunar Exalted, and by the blessings Dragon-Blooded earn by completing its pilgrimage.

The Caul is the Lunars' sacred sibling, a land that embodies Luna as Gaia envisioned them. Here, Luna's Chosen find safe haven in their continent-sibling's hidden coves, verdant valleys, and pristine waters. They hear Luna's voice in the river's rush and the wind's howl. The Caul is both home and holy place.

When the Dragon-Blooded hold all five shrine cities, their Essence opens the way to Feng-Yi, where the Elemental Dragons once walked. By completing a pilgrimage to all five cities, they may travel to the Last City and receive the Dragons' blessing: their next child will draw the Second Breath.

In a time softer than the Age of Sorrows, the Caul would be the treasure of the world.

Now, though, the children of the Dragons and Luna's Chosen fight bitterly over the shrine cities and the pilgrimage road. Since the Imperial legions' withdrawal after the Scarlet Empress' disappearance, Silver Pact forces under the generalship of His Divine Lunar Presence, the Black Lion Sha'a Oka, have driven the Imperial forces back to the fortress walls of Faxai-on-the-Caul — the Realm's final redoubt, and a key port commanding the Southwestern sea route to the West. Only desperate efforts by stubborn Realm officers and zealous outcaste crusaders alike hold off the Pact's final thrust.

But Lunar domination of the Caul faces mounting resistance. Squabbling Great Houses — especially Peleps and V'neef — send fleets and troops to the island continent, angling to secure a Western power base or gain prestige in their war for the throne. Immaculate prelates call for holy war; zealots from across Creation answer the

NON-LUNAR PLAY

While this adventure is written with Lunar characters in mind, it can support other Exalt types. Solars might seek to curry favor with the Silver Pact or help a Lunar mate active on the continent; a Caulborn Exigent could join forces with the Lunars in their fight against the Realm; and so forth.

Alternatively, the central conflict can support Dragon-Blooded characters disrupting the Silver Pact's offense while struggling against infighting among their own allies. This can be a standalone game, part of the "War in the West" adventure from **Heirs to the Shogunate**, or part of your own broader chronicle.

summons, swelling the martial orders' ranks. Should the Pact falter at this critical moment, that might be fatal both to individual Lunars and to the entire undertaking.

About This Adventure

The **War for the Caul** depicts the conflict between the Silver Pact and the Realm to dominate that holy continent. The Lunars stand confident in the wake of recent victories, and Sha'a Oka plans to conquer Faxai at last, finally bringing all five shrine cities under Silver Pact control. But this won't be as easy as it looks.

This adventure focuses on Lunar efforts to claim Faxai, unaware that incoming Realm reinforcements will bolster the city's defenses and motivate the invaders to strike back. Whatever the player characters' reasons to visit the Caul — whether to safeguard its sacred land, strike a blow against the Realm, pursue the pilgrimage once the way is clear, protect Caulborn kin, or the like — they'll have cause to involve themselves in the war.

The sections of this adventure break down as follows:

Battle Lines outlines the centuries-long struggle for the Caul between Realm forces aiming to command the pilgrimage route to Feng-Yi, and the Lunar-backed resistance struggling to drive the Realm from the sacred continent.

The Belligerents describes both the Lunar-backed forces aiming to seize control of the Caul and drive the usurpers from their sacred land, and the various Realm factions seeking to preserve their foothold in Faxai and reclaim the holy pilgrimage route. It also addresses other factions in play, from Lintha raiders to the native Caulborn.

Regions of the Caul details the sacred continent where the war takes place.

A Possible Future provides a timeline of story events, including both a main trunk of how the war will most likely go and various ways the story might twist and branch.

Storytelling the Aftermath gives advice on directions for the chronicle after the war ends — or when the player characters do their best to leave it behind.

Battle Lines

While the Dragon-Blooded have held all five shrine cities for long periods since the Caul's return, the Lunars never took more than two or three, halted by well-honed Realm legions or losing heart with Sha'a Oka's seemingly recurrent deaths. But the Black Lion's forces have taken advantage of the Realm's distraction and the legions' withdrawal to seize four shrine cities, driving the invaders behind Faxai's walls.

Though faithful Dragon-Blooded yearn to make a decisive counter-strike, the Great Houses aren't so eager. Civil war looms on the Blessed Isle; seasoned troops are needed there, not on a distant Western continent. The shrine cities' liberation falls not to house legions, but an understaffed garrison reinforced by martial orders, outcasts, and holy zealots who flock to the Caul to fight.

Sha'a Oka and his supporters see this as the perfect time for open war against the Realm. Taking Faxai and driving the Dragon-Blooded off the continent would not only strike a blow to enemy morale, it would diminish Realm access to Western trade routes and other strategic resources. Moreover, some Lunars eagerly hope to pursue the pilgrimage to Feng-Yi themselves after centuries of waiting.

Though the Caul is sacred to Lunars, few shahan-yas prioritize controlling it, focusing on operations

elsewhere. Many encourage adherents to undertake the journey at least once — and join the Black Lion's forces while they're there — but these elders themselves are conspicuously absent. Several shahan-yas, including Golden-Leaf Liseli, Aum-Ashatra, and Tanisa Ring-Eater, openly oppose Sha'a Oka in council; young Lunars eager to replicate his methods in the Threshold cause them no end of trouble. Leviathan in particular deems the Caul's proximity to Sunken Luthe a distraction to his adherents.

Lunars and Dragon-Blooded aren't the Caul's only inhabitants: Caulborn clans live in villages and enclaves across the land. Some lend aid to the warring factions, but many avoid conflict and its collateral damage. Guild-backed enterprises and other mercantile interests have footholds on the Caul; they rely on its ports for long-distance trade, and profit by supplying food and materials to Faxai and the Silver Pact. Meanwhile, Lintha and other pirates patrol the sea routes in search of plunder.

The Belligerents

The following groups and factions are active on the Caul.

Lunars

Ranging from sprawling armies to tight-knit strike forces to individuals waging personal wars, the Silver Pact employs no single official strategy when it comes to defending the continent or capturing the shrine cities. This isn't to say Pact operations are chaotic or undisciplined — most Lunars share information openly with peers, and willingly join forces when objectives overlap.

Sha'a Oka oversees this process, coaxing Pact commanders to follow an overall strategy. In council, he integrates individual Lunars' goals into the plan, smooths over personality conflicts, ensures strategic and logistical needs are met, and prevents major vulnerabilities in the Pact's defenses. No other has the presence and prestige to take his place. During those periods when he was believed dead, his generals found themselves at cross-purposes and Realm commanders took advantage to break their forces and drive them back into the Caul's wilderness.

Lunars assemble forces ranging from beastfolk warriors and loyal Caulborn to Fia-Shaw's Lintha and Third Daughter's turtlewolves. Visitors sometimes bring troops from dominions overseas to join the fray. Armor, weapons, food, and other supplies come in large part from local dominions and through forage, supplemented by trade with independent merchants, smugglers, and pirates.

NOT HERE TO FIGHT

Many Lunars visit the Caul at some point, whether sent by their shahan-yas or feeling called by Luna herself. This isn't solely for war. For some, visiting groves where Luna and Gaia walked is a holy pilgrimage. The continent holds mysteries and lessons for knowledge-seekers, and offers a haven for those in need — one that must be preserved, and is worth fighting for.

Storytellers running adventures on the Caul might focus on these aspects instead, and are encouraged to use characters and setting pieces from this chapter in their games. The Caul is massive; if you don't want to touch upon the war in your game, it might be set far from the fighting. Pact forces may still be gathering, or one of the resolutions in Stage Six might be in effect.

Despite Sha'a Oka's emphasis on open war, Lunars in his camp still engage in espionage and asymmetrical warfare. They target Realm fortresses and patrols, Imperial Navy vessels, and merchant caravans, focusing on attrition — sabotage, spying, assassination, and sudden strikes — to deplete supplies, infrastructure, communication, leadership, and trust. Only the sacred geometry of the shrine cities and pilgrimage road remain inviolate.

While the recent conflict gave the Pact control of four shrine cities, its armies suffered heavy casualties even as they harried their enemies along the pilgrimage road. Concerned about retaliatory strikes, generals whose dominions lie close to Realm strongholds have pulled their own forces back to defend their territories. As the seasons turn, some Caulborn conscripts return to their villages to aid in harvests, and even some adherents sail for other shores to continue their studies or participate in other Pact operations.

THE LUNAR GENERALS

Five Lunars command the Silver Pact's campaign to seize the Caul. Their numbers aren't fixed; others have held equally high station in the past before dying or moving on to pursue business elsewhere. Different Lunars may rise to generalship in the war today — perhaps even the player characters, should they prove themselves worthy.

Sha'a Oka informs every aspect of the war for the Caul. The Caulborn, unfriendly to most outsiders, regard him with high honors few ever receive. Silver Pact shahan-yas caution adherents to give Sha'a Oka the utmost

respect and consideration. Even those opposed to his goals rarely disregard his lead entirely.

His sole demand is that visiting Lunars fight against the Realm. He expects adherents to seek operations that best serve their talents, whether under his command or one of his generals. Even Sha'a Oka cannot oversee the entire War for the Caul, nor would he care to: the war must be fought and won by Exalted who can make their victories meaningful.

Third Daughter of the Leaves possesses enormous sorcerous power, packs of mighty and lethal armor-plated turtlewolves, and an endless well of rage towards the Realm. The defenders of Faxai should tremble before her! Though her orders are often cryptic, her adherents interpret them as best they can, knowing that the heart of every command is doing harm to the Realm.

Witches and savants benefit from Third Daughter's knowledge of the continent's enigmatic dreams, sacred geomancy, and resident spirits. She regularly corresponds with other sorcerers throughout Creation, seeking knowledge applicable to maneuvers against the Realm. Spies serving under her gather intelligence via occult means: scrying, divination, dream manipulation, and the like. Spirits fear her; she leads negotiations with their courts and dispatches them as infiltrators and shock troops.

Skathra Venomchild views the Caul as a crucible, and the Dragon-Blooded as one more test of their own resilience. They dance into battle rather than march, not so much commanding adherents as reveling alongside them. Many mistake Skathra's zeal for chaos. While the Venomchild is happy to sow chaos and discord, they act with intent.

While their peers rely on battle plans and discipline, Skathra rejects a general's traditional role. They personally engage in the same espionage missions they send adherents on — stealing Dynasts' faces and extracting secrets, ransacking weapons caches and spoiling supplies, or leading small bands of fanatics on lightning raids. They even volunteer in other generals' operations; to the Venomchild, true glory comes from fighting for the Caul and protecting their sacred sibling, no matter who leads the dance.

Vengeance for her lost people drives **Sandswept Garda-Empress** and her winged cohorts out of Sekima again and again, clawed prowess and inhuman might scattering Realm forces like chaff. She deeply respects Sha'a Oka, but thinks he suffers novices and fools too lightly, preferring to bring them to heel via sharp words or coercive measures. She lobbies for bringing war to

TERRITORIAL MATTERS

In addition to the specific shrine cities they protect, Sha'a Oka's generals oversee their own territories throughout the Caul. Fia-Shaw claims Asura and its coastal waters. Sandswept Garda-Empress controls lands around Ninga mountaintop forts. Third Daughter of the Leaves maintains sacred groves and places of power. Skathra retreats to the continent's untamed wilds, where Luna and Gaia's presence still feels strong.

Some generals forge ties with individual Caulborn clans, such as the forest-dwelling Sayata or the Nalqua fisherfolk, granting them easier passage through their lands and potential resources when the need arises. They curry favor with merchant groups, craftspeople, and clan leaders, both for supplying them in the fight against the Realm and to see to the needs of the people under their care.

the Realm as brutally and efficiently as possible, and marshals her attacks accordingly.

Garda-Empress is the most military-minded of the Caul's generals, having led raids against Realm forces for centuries. Her hawkfolk rule the skies, reconnoitering and raiding from above at her command. She possesses a deep knowledge of Realm commanders' land-based tactics and of appropriate countermeasures. Other Lunars consult with her on matters of strategy and logistics.

Lintha Haquen Fia-Shaw Flowers Unbending in the Storm finds good hunting off the Caul's coast. Her Lintha corsairs' mastery of the rocky waters offshore leaves them rarely knowing defeat, and when Fia-Shaw joins them in her murderous siaka-form, blood and plunder flow freely. While she desires a decisive victory over the Realm forces supplying Faxai, she knows the Imperial Navy and Merchant Fleet could slaughter the Lintha in an open battle away from the coast. Sha'a Oka's refusal to enlist Leviathan's aid frustrates Fia-Shaw; no matter Leviathan's past failures to act, the great Lunar's aid could prove pivotal in breaking local Realm naval forces *now*.

As a general, Fia-Shaw oversees Pact naval operations and amphibious assaults. She coordinates with fellow Lunar captains with vessels at their command — and with pirates, smugglers, and Caulborn crews aiding the Black Lion's cause — to stymie Realm seaborne operations. Fia-Shaw is the most outward-looking of Sha'a Oka's generals, negotiating with potential allies beyond

the Caul and attending Pact councils elsewhere in the West and Southwest, although this does risk her being unavailable at a crucial moment.

OTHER PACT MEMBERS

The number of Lunars on the Caul varies based on your story's needs. Player characters might be among the only survivors of the campaign to seize the shrine cities, leading Pact forces as a general's lieutenants, or replacing fallen generals. Alternatively, they could stand alongside dozens of Lunars operating throughout the Caul, taking various ground-level missions — reconnaissance, raids, or even leaving the Caul to recruit combatants or secure supplies — as they slowly earn prestige during the chronicle.

Following are a few Lunars who may be active on the Caul during your game.

The Changing Moon information broker **Gray Rook** haunts the wilderness outside Faxai, observing Dragon-Blooded troop movements and monitoring Dynasts' arrivals and departures. She maintains a network of contacts — merchants, dockworkers, Caulborn emissaries — whom she pays handsomely for rumors and actionable intelligence. An adherent of Fia-Shaw, she shares intelligence with Garda-Empress, whom she finds admirable but intimidating; the other two generals unnerve her.

The No Moon sage **Djel** makes his home in a sacred grove on the Caul's Northwest. There, he listens for Luna's word on the wind, and gives new Lunars moon-silver tattoos when they've chosen their caste. An adherent of Third Daughter, he's devoted to her service. He treats Skathra with wary reverence, but disdains the other two generals, seeing them as lacking respect for the Caul's spirit.

The Full Moon warrior **Tarin Six-Skins** commands a small strike force composed of followers and Caulborn. The group haunts the pilgrimage road between Sekima and Melilune, attacking any Dragon-Blooded foolish enough to travel within their territory. Unaffiliated with any general, Tarin works with other Lunars only begrudgingly.

Posing as Horizon Lota, purser aboard the merchant ship *Prosperity*, the young Lunar thief **Alika** oversees supply runs from Abalone to Kama and Faxai. In addition to smuggling arms to the Caul, they and their agents gather information on Imperial Navy movements and monitor activity among Guild businesses and the Western Trade Alliance. Unfortunately, Alika's kleptomania has already antagonized no few of their peers, and the impulse only intensifies as the war draws on.



Non-Lunar supporters of the Pact — those not merely soldiers in its armies, but accomplished figures in their own right — join the war for the Caul as well: beastfolk princes, mortal warleaders, and even outcaste Dragon-Blooded. The lionfolk general **Stalks-the-Reeds** serves as Sha’a Oka’s second in command among the Kongar and runs Morovath’s day-to-day affairs. The defrocked Immaculate monk **Cathak Vogar** participates in Skathra’s strikes; his personal heresy demands that the Anathema conquer the world so that the Immaculate Dragons will return to battle them. The Moon-Touched **Nalika Stormtalon** resents her mother, Sandswept Garda-Empress, after a falling-out over a strategy that left several of Nalika’s best soldiers dead; now, she follows Fia-Shaw into battle instead. The genius mortal physician **Eleya of Garianghis** leads a small troupe of healers, tending to the wounded and shuttling supplies and coded messages between Lunar camps.

THE PACT OVERSEAS

Lunars outside the Caul influence events on the continent. A foreign shahan-ya may send adherents to accomplish specific tasks, or ask students traveling to the Caul for their own reasons to deliver missives or carry out additional missions. A few shahan-yas visit personally, bringing students along. Ül the Burning Eye might create a new disease to test against Faxai’s

Dragon-Blooded; Rukhsara could remember ancient secrets of the Caul relevant to the war; or Sublime Danger might see opportunity to test herself and her adherents against Dragon-Blooded champions.

PACT FRACTURE LINES

While the Pact’s forces cooperate to oppose the Realm, the Lunars themselves don’t always act in harmony; some even actively dislike one another, enduring one another’s presence solely for the war’s sake. Powerful personalities and personal goals draw the four generals — not to mention their adherents — in different directions. Sha’a Oka only commands them through hard-earned loyalty and personal charisma. Should he falter or perish, the Pact’s war effort will stumble, if not collapse entirely.

Though the four have established some mutual respect through years of warfare, they rarely interact directly outside of war councils, where they often rankle each other with their conflicting temperaments and objectives. Garda-Empress makes no secret of her devotion to the Ninga people, whose future she prioritizes over Pact and Caul alike. Third Daughter scorns organized military force in favor of nightmare beasts and bizarre sorceries. Skathra acts unpredictably, often pursuing mystic visions over planned stratagems. Fia-Shaw, the

most straightforward and sociable of the four, disdains landside affairs, preferring to remain at sea with her abhorred Lintha kin.

Their adherents often do the same, each trusting their own mentor and Sha'a Oka while remaining cautious of the other generals. In addition, many adherents have their own ambitions. Visiting Lunars often find themselves put off by these squabbles — or worse, drawn into them.

The Realm

With the Empress' disappearance, looming civil war, and the reemergence of Solar Anathema, the Great Houses have withdrawn most of their forces from the Caul. But a steady stream of pious warriors — Dynasts, outcaste champions, monks, retired soldiers, penitent deserters, and more — flows in to replace them. Most join the Caul's extant martial orders, though some few — the charismatic, ambitious, or wealthy — seek to form their own.

Faxai's satrap and garrison commander coordinate Realm operations within the satrapy proper — notionally encompassing all five shrine cities, the pilgrimage road, Kama, and a scattering of fortresses and subordinate Caulborn settlements, but now reduced in practice to Faxai itself. The Harmoniously Guided Strategos oversees military operations outside those boundaries. Her counterpart, the Most Serene Hyparch, directs the Caul's martial orders and offers spiritual guidance for all troops.

Realm operations rely heavily on traditional military tactics: troops marching in formation, strict chain of command, and tried-and-true maneuvers. Discipline and a clear hierarchy help to counter the Silver Pact's guerilla tactics. (See Chapter 3 of **The Realm** for further details.)

The Pact's recent victories have greatly depleted Realm resources on the Caul. Battles in the shrine cities and along the pilgrimage road shattered forces already stretched thin; some retreated to Faxai in disorder, while others remain scattered, vulnerable, and hunted across the Caul's hinterlands. Despite pleas from Faxai's leaders, the Great Houses continue withdrawing soldiers, further sapping the city's strength. While local Realm authorities recruit outcastes, Immaculates, mortal mercenaries, and zealots to rebuild their ranks, they still feel the loss keenly.

Despite the Realm's lurch toward civil war, there's no guarantee that the invaders' weakness will last. Should House Peleps pursue its dreams of a Western empire, its

leaders may seek to secure the Caul for themselves, and the full force of its navy and legions is as powerful as anything the Empress ever dispatched to the continent. Should the Mouth of Peace call for a holy crusade in an effort to unite the disjointed dynasty, martial orders and zealots will flood the continent in unheard-of numbers. And who knows what other exigencies might arise in the civil war's chaos?

REALM LEADERSHIP IN THE CAUL

Harmoniously Guided Strategos **Cathak Nejara Rin** — a former legionary general renowned for cautious, pragmatic leadership — finds herself besieged even within Faxai's walls. The Empress appointed her head of Realm military operations beyond the satrapy's boundaries, but the Great Houses withdraw troops and materiel with every departing ship, leaving her forces and supplies spread thin.

The garrison commander and the hyparch both undermine Rin's authority, seeking to steal the auxiliaries' and martial orders' support from her. So she fights on two fronts — if she falters on the field, the crusaders will be easy prey for the Lunars, but if her authority crumbles, the remnants of Realm order may be likewise doomed.

Rin is, in many ways, a commander without an army. Traditionally she oversaw the Imperial legions in the Caul, but with the legions withdrawn, she must rely on a patchwork of Caulborn auxiliaries, foreign janissaries, and mercenaries. She looks the other way as her officers recruit deserters from the Imperial legions, including several outcastes, as well as the occasional defrocked monk, criminal Dynast, or other renegades; she needs all the help she can get against enemies without and within. Rin relies on the satrap not only to keep her forces well-supplied, but also to ensure that V'neef garrison officers reject any orders by the garrison commander to detain or harm her.

Most Serene Hyparch **Mnemon Torala** is Rin's counterpart, tasked by the Empress with overseeing the Caul's martial orders and liaising with the Immaculate Order. Wielding her personal magnetism and centuries of political experience, she's bent many of the Caul's Immaculates and martial orders to her purposes. Even Ledaal Deja may eventually fall into line should Torala let Deja's dreams of a vicious counterattack come to life. That the satrap and strategos — not to mention various outcaste mystics and esoteric martial orders — doubt her spiritual authority frustrates her.

A woman of great faith, Torala believes that order, stability, and dedication to Immaculate teachings will lead the Realm forces to victory. She studies *The Thousand Correct Actions of the Upright Soldier* for both guidance

and comfort, and recommends those serving under her do the same.

Torala values Deja's strategic gifts and religious zeal, but grows ever more concerned about the garrison commander's ambition and borderline heresy. She quietly undermines her to maintain the balance of power, knowing that Deja will — if she discovers it — take this as a personal betrayal.

Satrap **V'neef Lanusa** must balance her house's efforts to keep House Peleps from seizing control of Faxai's shipping routes with the crusade's needs and the more mundane needs of Faxai's stomachs. Her patrician background gives her a firm grounding in practical concerns, and combined with her time in Faxai-on-the-Caul, a genuine concern for the lives of both Caulborn and pilgrims. Still, House Peleps' intrigues may weaken her ability to keep Faxai in supplies, especially if an enterprising Lunar can increase the already-dangerous friction between the houses.

Attempting to keep the power struggles among the Realm's other leaders from tipping over into open warfare, Lanusa worries about Deja's increasing sway over the V'neef garrison, but as yet has no blatant evidence of treachery. Deja and Torala both encourage her to arrest Rin on various pretexts, or otherwise undermine the strategos' power. Lanusa fears that attempting to detain Deja will trigger exactly the sort of mutiny she seeks to avoid; all while knowing if she waits too long, she may not have enough loyalists left to deal with her. While Lanusa has thus far found ways to remain above the fray — relying on a small corps of reliable officers, such as steadfast Cynis Rowan and longtime veteran Tereya Umvari — Deja's popularity with the garrison's V'neef troops may soon force Lanusa to choose a side.

Locked into an uneasy alliance with Rin, Lanusa and the strategos both maintain a pragmatic interest in restraining Deja and Torala from usurping their authority. Both regard the other two leaders' excessive religious zeal with alarm. But should Houses Cathak and V'neef find themselves at odds (such as if Cathak allies with Peleps, per the "War in the West" scenario in **Heirs to the Shogunate**), Lanusa and Rin must follow suit to retain their houses' support.

Garrison leader **Ledaal Deja** views achieving Dragon-Blooded supremacy over the Caul as her holy duty. A devout follower of the Immaculate Philosophy, she believes that dying in service of reclaiming the holy Caul will unite her soul — and the souls of her loyal troops — with the Dragons. A charismatic presence on battlefield and parade ground, she finds ever more supporters among the V'neef garrison, martial orders,

and strategos' own troops. Her garrison protects the population of Faxai as necessary components of the crusade, but she'd rather see every resident martyred than let the city fall.

Deja views Torala as a valuable ally. Not only does she respect the hyparch's influence over the martial orders, she admires the older Torala's piety and grace, deferring to her on spiritual matters, and seeking her advice. Nonetheless, she deems the hyparch insufficiently driven to pursue victory at all costs, and intends to seize control of the martial orders if Torala fails to follow her lead.

Meanwhile, Deja hopes to convince Lanusa of the urgency and righteousness of reclaiming the shrine cities, urging her to join her in prayer or meetings with garrison officers, though she hopes to gain sufficient power that the satrap's approval becomes unnecessary. That Lanusa has thus far dismissed Deja's various requests to have Rin detained frustrates the garrison commander — if the satrap continues refusing her, Deja intends to act without her.

An admiral of the Water Fleet, **Peleps Merena** oversees naval warfare against Silver Pact and allied Lintha forces in the Caul's waters. Well-respected by her crew, her house, and her peers at sea, her star has risen steadily since the Empress' disappearance. Rooting the Lintha out of Asura — and defeating the likes of Fia-Shaw — would be another feather in her cap. Her spies have brought word of the treasures stored in the Lintha Grandmother's holdfast (p. 211). Claiming such wealth would surely help Peleps in building its Western Empire, and secure enough votes to earn Merena a seat on the House's Admiralty Board.

Merena's Merchant Fleet counterpart, **V'neef Kinir**, not only must worry about Lintha pirates attacking his ships, but also Peleps' actions in the region. He keeps a steady correspondence with the satrap and V'neef, and while he'd offer his squadron's aid to Merena's fleet in defending Faxai or the shipping lanes, he's spent time — and no small amount of resources — on building a good rapport with Caulborn sailors and mercenary captains. Should skirmishes break out between the Imperial Navy and the Merchant Fleet, Kinir intends to win. While he recognizes that successes will increase his prospects for a good marriage, his ambitions go far beyond — command over all of V'neef's Western operations would be an excellent start.

The Martial Orders

Martial orders are formalized militias, often formed at the behest of an Immaculate abbot or archimandrite in response to an immediate threat. While many orders dissolve or move to another region where their services

are needed after the initial threat is dealt with, the Caul's orders are among the longest-standing — their fight has continued for centuries, with no end in sight.

The **Sword-Saints of the Divine Tempest** are among the Caul's oldest martial orders. Their members strive for perfection, drilling for hours when they're not on the march. The Sword-Saints' leaders are Dynasts — a point of pride for the order, and a source of tension with other Caul-based orders.

The Sword-Saints currently stand leaderless, their last commander and her deputy killed during the Lunars' recent offensive. Since then, the order's officers have fought bloody — and sometimes deadly — duels for the title of the order's sovereign. Though no one has yet been acclaimed leader, the seasoned veteran Cathak Udal, the devious tactician Sesus Nemoia Nivar, and the charismatic duelist-diplomat Tepet Mora stand closest to the top.

The Penitent Raitons historically traveled the length and breadth of the Caul, escorting pilgrims and other foreign travelers, and evangelizing to the Caulborn. With the Pact controlling all but Faxai, they now focus on proselytizing within the city, sniffing out Pact infiltrators and conducting small-scale raids against enemy forces. Led by the soft-spoken monk Unbroken Branch, the Raitons stress resilience and tenacity over perfection — a philosophy causing friction with the Sword-Saints.

The Keepers of the Amber Tabernacle, housed in their eponymous Immaculate temple in Faxai, traditionally protected the five shrines and escorted pilgrims and caravans along the pilgrimage road. Today they focus on guarding Faxai from invasion, aiding the garrison, and joining sorties against Pact assaults. They answer to the stern archimandrite Sesus Garit, who oversees the Earth shrine and the Tabernacle; her martial arts mastery makes her a terrifying threat, but her responsibilities and asceticisms afford little time to act directly.

Keepers that retreated to Faxai when their shrine cities were taken have largely fallen into Ledaal Deja's orbit, drawn by her call for righteous retaliation against the Pact. Some Keepers chafe at being consolidated into Faxai's branch of the order; Deja's eagerness to retake the Caul resonates with their desire to regain control of their shrines. This includes Amon Taelen and Falling Sparrow, the surviving abbots of Sekima's and Melilune's shrines, who've begun contesting Garit's leadership.

CHANGES IN THE MARTIAL ORDERS

The recent conflict has struck a severe blow to the martial orders' numbers, as it has to the Realm's other forces. In

CHANGE ON THE WIND

Many invaders — from Blessed Isle and Threshold alike — fully cleave to the Realm's cause. Faxai-on-the-Caul teems with pious Immaculate adherents, believers in the Empress's legacy, and loyal followers of Dynast leaders who'd see the past order restored.

And yet in the land of shrines and miracles, other paths open alongside the pilgrimage way. Alongside the threat of Lunar victory stands that of Dragon-Blooded heresy. Outcaste and heterodox Dragon-Blooded and mortal alike engage in quiet debate, questioning the staid beliefs of the Perfected Hierarchy. Many who still patrol Faxai's walls would see a new order arise in place of the old.

addition to the Sword-Saints' slain leaders, the Keepers of the Amber Tabernacle mourn the loss of the abbots of Garianghis' and Houshou's temples — one killed in the fighting, the other feared captured by Skathra Venomchild. However, where few legionnaires travel to the Caul to replace those Cathak Nejara Rin lost to fighting or recall, the martial orders find many eager recruits among Faxai's population. Their numbers haven't quite recovered, and new soldiers have yet to acquire their predecessors' skill and discipline, but their ranks swell where the legions' and the garrison's falter.

NOTEWORTHY MARTIAL ORDER MEMBERS

The son of a naval officer and a merchant, **Japor Palar** was born and raised in Faxai. The Air Aspect joined the Penitent Raitons early in his career, and has served there longer than most of his peers. He completed the pilgrimage the last time the Dragon-Blooded held all five shrine cities, an achievement that earned him the respect of the Zeryesh Caulborn clan.

Peleps Hoa of the Amber Tabernacle takes to the war with gusto that's unseemly for an Immaculate monk, but who'd censure him at the front of battle? Hoa feels something greater calling to him from the Caul itself. The sacred lands are more important than any of the Dynastic politics in play, and even Hoa's life as an Immaculate fades away when he considers a future amongst the shrine cities upon blessed earth.

After soldiers under her command died in an ambush in Juche, **Nellens Tregane** resigned from the legions and journeyed to the Caul where she pledged her service to the Sword-Saints. No longer a talonlord, the endless drills and marches bring her comfort and

clarity. Tregane has no illusions that she'll ever lead the Order — she never Exalted. However, she takes new recruits under her wing and does her best to live up to the *Thousand Correct Actions*.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY REALM FIGURES

A wandering mercenary captain from a Dreaming Sea kingdom, the outcaste warrior **Sedulous Axe** has battled the god-rulers of Prasad, driven off raiders from the Seven Storms Brotherhood, and crossed swords with a Fair Folk prince. His prodigious skill and charismatic leadership have drawn several marriage offers from cadet houses; he's refused them all, reluctant to be pulled into — and restricted by — the Dynastic intrigues of his fellow Princes of the Earth.

Sedulous Axe and his mercenary company, the Jade Wardens, defended Faxai's northwestern wall during the last Lunar assault, and he personally dealt Sha'a Oka a blow that would have killed any lesser being. His popularity among the crusaders has drawn attention — for good or ill — from Realm leaders in Faxai.

The sorcerer-mystic **Tadeen Jhan**, who hails from the Zeryesh clan, claims to have first learned sorcery from a long-dead witch in the memory of Sekima. Since then, they've immersed themselves in holy waters, crawled through dark and rotting innards of unseen trees, and swallowed embers of crawling wildfires far from the orthodox mysteries of the shrine cities. Each time they survived and changed, becoming more inextricably linked to some obscure emanation of the Caul's Essence.

Jhan serves the Realm in large part to raise their people's standing among the invaders — a decision worth reconsidering with the Pact ascendant. Their knowledge of the sacred continent would be valuable to Dragon-Blooded and Lunar generals alike.

REALM FRACTURE LINES

The rifts between the four Realm leaders run deeper than between the four Pact generals. With no Empress to keep them in line, a breakdown seems both more likely and more severe. Lunar characters might attempt to make all the leaders fall into infighting, or push for one to rise above the others — forcing them to further deplete their resources amid the struggle, or hoping to take advantage of their particular temperament and shortcomings.

The satrap frequently calls upon individual leaders to deliver reports and discuss strategies. They gather in council to discuss direct threats to Faxai; such meetings are fraught with disagreements about troop deployment and resource distribution. Likewise, when they cross paths at occasional galas hosted by local Dynasts or the city's puppet prince, their civility is strained at best.

The friction carries over into Faxai's fighting forces as well. Members of martial orders follow their commanders' leads, but many debate whether the hyparch's strategies are bold enough. Troops serving under Deja or Rin fight as one on the ramparts, then argue bitterly in barracks and wineshops over whether their skills would be better put to use out on the pilgrimage road.

Faxaians

Faxai's native citizens have conflicting opinions on the Realm and its representatives. For centuries, they've been under the Realm's thumb, forced to pay exorbitant tribute, vulnerable to the Silver Pact's raids, their own traditions stamped out or proscribed by the Immaculates' decree. However, some are proud to be a valued part of the mighty Realm despite their tribulations.

Faxai is led by the puppet prince **Mayavin Utterdepth**, who shuns intrigue and dares not stand up to the satrap or other Realm leaders. She avoids the Dynasts outside official functions, sequestering herself away to paint and consider philosophy — she might well be able to leverage her position to help her people, but it's safer to be forgotten. To some residents, her inaction makes her an extension of Realm oppression. To others, she's a symbol of Faxaian culture and pride. It's a coinflip whether an insurrection would oust her along with the satrap or grant her full monarchic authority, and removing her at a sufficiently stressful moment could inflame the public.

Serevar Cloudspinner — a reclusive, misanthropic antiquities dealer — is rumored to be the heir to the Caulborn royal family the Realm wiped out long ago. They have a small number of supporters in Faxai, but are rightfully deeply protective of their secret. While they'd like to see the Realm driven out, they'd want assurances that they'd be more than a figurehead if restored to power. Serevar would be willing to deal with the Silver Pact, if the right offer were made.

Merchants and Sailors

Merchants depend on the Caul not only for its strategic placement along Western shipping lanes, but for its riches and its demand for imported supplies. Alongside the Merchant Fleet — which bears tribute from Faxai back to the Blessed Isle — most Great Houses have some financial stake in the Caul. Despite withdrawing forces to the Blessed Isle, house matriarchs don't want to lose lucrative business. Ambitious patrician and peasant merchants hope to parlay wealth earned on the Caul into higher stations back home.

Guild enterprises maintain a presence in the continent's few ports. The Bitter Rose Company in Faxai imports luxuries so Dynasts might experience the comforts of home. Merchant prince Vesar Pol operates primarily out of Asura, brokering deals between Lintha and parties interested in their spoils. In Kama, the eccentric Guild factor Myriad Swan offers backing to wealthy families, merchant captains, and pirate lords attempting to maintain the city's independence.

The Denzik city-ship (**Exalted**, p. 104) visits the Caul twice a year. Residents row out to experience its top-deck markets and entertainments, while merchants in longships carry goods to shore. The city-ship stops at Faxai — and sometimes Kama, depending on winds and currents — trading with Realm and Pact alike.

The Tya maintain chapterhouses in both Faxai and Kama. Neutral in the war between the Realm and the Pact, they normally refuse commissions that would imply taking a side. Their artisans won't make arms for either faction's armies; their sailors don't serve on privateer vessels; their mercenaries pass up contracts in the war. Any intelligence they gather they use to keep the Tya themselves safe, rather than tip the scales in either direction.

NOTEWORTHY MERCHANTS

The Realm peasant merchant **Egret** imports wine and oils from his family's business in Tuchara. He does a healthy trade with Dynasts hosting salons and crusaders looking to celebrate their victories or drink to fallen friends with a taste of home. Despite the lucrative business, a bad growing season and storms that wrecked two of his ships have put him deeply in debt to creditors on the Blessed Isle. House Ledaal spymasters pay Egret well to send reports on events in the Caul and convey occasional messages to Deja. He grows resentful that they refuse to extend credit to cover his new debts, but knows the house can ruin his family's business in Tuchara should he rebel.

For three years, **Pilnara the Glove** has shipped arrowheads, breastplates, boots, grain, and other provisions in bulk to Faxai and Kama. Her origins are uncertain, though well-traveled folk place her accent in the River Province. After feeling out other merchants' and shopkeepers' loyalties, she quietly offers to purchase information on Realm supply shortfalls, troop movements, and the like, ostensibly in search of greater profit. But she's offered to wipe out Egret's debt if he passes along information about his Ledaal masters' assignments. Whether she's an agent of a rival Great House, a Guild faction, the Western Trade Alliance, pirates such as the Bloodthirsty (**Adversaries of the Righteous**, p. 168) or the Lintha, or even the Silver Pact remains unclear.

The Guild-backed procurer **Weleir Tan** leads expeditions to the Caul's interior to acquire rare or hard-to-source materials for clients throughout the West. He hunts strange beasts, preserving pelts, bone, blood, sinew, and the like, and negotiates with Caulborn artisans along the route for goods to export. Two Lunars, the battle-sorcerer Grom and the lorekeeper Voice-of-Borvo, frequently accompany him, pitting their strength against bandits and beasts alike. While sorcerers and craftspersons across the Caul have purchased precious materials and components from him, some Lunars object to Tan's ventures into spaces they consider sacred.

Pirates and Privateers

Between its placement along Western shipping lanes and its countless hidden coves and tiny coastal towns, the Caul provides opportunities for smugglers and pirates. Most such operations are small-scale: the local Lintha guard their interests jealously, forcing captains who sail too close to Asura to share their profits or forfeit their ships. However, the Caul is vast, and the Lintha can't patrol all its surrounding waters. A clever crew and swift ship can make a tidy profit, if they're savvy.

THE LINTHA

Asura's distance from Bluehaven affords it significant independence. While captains can't rely on reinforcements from other septs against Realm ships, local families find themselves free to pursue their own ambitions.

Fia-Shaw holds significant influence in Asura, particularly among her fellow Haquen, but she doesn't rule. While some captains serve her out of loyalty, she must woo the rest into expeditions through favors, opportunities for profit and bloodshed, charm, intimidation, and calls to Lintha pride. She must also deal with political machinations. Uniting or cowing the port's factions would both free Fia-Shaw to pursue more vigorous action in the war, and allow the Pact to unleash a unified Lintha terror the Realm is unprepared for.

The Haquen share Asura with the Ulgo, an aggressively piratical sept unrecognized in Bluehaven, and to a lesser extent with the Sennong and Angsana. The Sennong make an excellent profit from the vessels traveling the Caul's shipping lanes. Fierce brawlers, many also join Lunar operations when there's a chance for bloody glory. Having heard that the Lunars view the Caul as their sibling, Angsana historians — associating this with their own island-sibling, the dying Lintha Ng Oroo — search for anything on the Caul that might help them heal their sacred sister. Meanwhile, many in the Cult of Dukantha — led by **Lintha Ng Hut Isetha**, a proud and zealous

exile — reject cooperation with the Lunar Exalted, and would see Fia-Shaw ousted or killed.

Those who follow the scarred and decorated captain **Lintha Ulgo Skies Afire with Hate** consider the entire war a distraction from the Lintha's rightful business as peerless scourge of the oceans, while those who cleave to **Lintha Angsana Uskik** — a charismatic spiritual leader — mutter darkly about ritual and practical obligations to the Sukba and other Caulborn clans that the war has pushed aside. Quietly, some even support the soft-spoken elder **Lintha Haquen Tearing Through Godflesh Like Fangs Through Silk**'s desire to stay true to secret marriages and pacts sealed with outcaste and Dynastic lineages.

The Caulborn

The Caulborn have inhabited the continent since it returned from the mists. They carved villages out of its wilderness and claimed ancient, abandoned cities for their own. Each clan has its own sacred rituals, proscriptions, traditions, and dialect. Most Caulborn are wary of both the Realm and the Silver Pact: both press Caulborn into service, steal their resources, and make no amends when their bloody battles churn up a clan's ancestral lands.

Some Caulborn nonetheless treat with Dragon-Blooded or Lunar scouts, acting as guides and emissaries. Outsiders who embrace the Caul's mystical nature, protect its sacred places, or complete the pilgrimage are the most likely to earn a Caulborn clan's respect. Many Caulborn are beastfolk, although this doesn't guarantee they'll work with the Silver Pact.

NOTEWORTHY CAULBORN

Slow Laughter's Grandson has grown old guiding pilgrims and Lunars across the Caul. Well-respected by many clans along the pilgrimage way, he steers pilgrims and generals away from Caulborn holdings, and fears for his brethren still in Faxai. Lunars or Dragon-Blooded who convince him they can save Caulborn lives and holy places would obtain excellent knowledge of hidden ways into and out of every shrine city — including Faxai.

Leechfolk swamp-witch **Clouded Eyes My Daughter** serves as spiritual guide to her fellow Zeryesh witches, draining the disease-riddled black blood that gathers in their veins when they curse trespassers and enemies. Her inhuman appearance and unsavory habits make few Dynasts wish to treat with her, and give even some Lunars pause. However, she's more willing than her clanmates to bargain with outsiders, and offers knowledge and occult power to those who'll pay in blood.

Amber-eyed **Blazing Wind** descends from snakefolk and raitonfolk that once lived in the prehuman ruins of a Dragon King city. Though not Caulborn by birth, their patient and fair-minded disposition has helped them to be accepted by several Caulborn clans. They offer their services as a liaison between Lunars and clan chieftains, operating from a hidden redoubt near Melilune.

Regions of the Caul

Few places on the Caul are held entirely uncontested. Sealed pots of exotic frogfolk venoms lie cached within bowshot of hidden Realm ammunition stockpiles; secret trading camps operate in the shadow of abandoned outcaste dueling grounds; hidden paths curve startlingly close to one another. Silver Pact forces ambush Realm patrols one day only to find themselves surrounded in unfamiliar territory the next. Caulborn guides provide invaluable insight to their charges, but such aid is intermittent and undependable. Sha'a Oka himself cannot demand it, while Lunars who try to coerce or overawe the Caulborn may well drive them into the Realm's arms.

The **eastern Caul's** marshes and open woodlands shelter Caulborn peoples who've long been under the Realm's thumb. With the legions withdrawn, a new balance of power has yet to be established; Caulborn leaders debate the risks and rewards of turning against their imperial patrons when Lunar victory remains uncertain.

The **northern Caul's** forests, savannahs, and grasslands shelter numerous other Caulborn peoples, most of whom are Lunar allies or independent. Mammoths, great cats, antelope, and similar wildlife are prevalent here. Western merchants, hunters, and herbalists, operating out of Kama to avoid Realm entanglements, can be found throughout the area.

Tyrant lizards, claw striders, and other perilous beasts roam the **southwestern Caul's** swamps and jungles. Hunters travel here to test themselves against the mighty creatures, and sell their hides, claws, and teeth to crafters who make sought-after armor and weapons from them.

The **Ghost-Hand Mountains** dominate the heart of the island continent. Caulborn clans herd sheep and cattle on the lower slopes, and goats and yak on the upper; eagles make their aeries higher still. The Stendra Pass is a crucial holding for the Ninga hawkfolk; their control of it allows supplies to flow freely to Lunar forces, while denying the Dragon-Blooded the same.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information on the Caul, the shrine cities, and other noteworthy locations and inhabitants can be found on pp. 180-190 of **The Realm** and pp. 99-106 of **Lunars**.

Asura

The Lintha fastness of Asura resists Realm naval probes and shore landings; ceaseless mists and ship-murdering rocks break most attempts even before the Lintha engage directly. Jagged terrain and obscure, slowly shifting pathways make land-based assault equally difficult. Admiral Peleps Merena regards the entire area as an infrangible strongpoint, at least without major investment.

A pair of fortresses — high-turreted Greater Gull and squat Lesser Gull, each bristling with siege weaponry and commanding one end of a harbor-chain — guard the entrance to Salt-Stung Harbor, its waters teeming with sharks half-tamed by Fia-Shaw. Within stands Asura proper, its wharves full of pirate vessels, its twisting streets lined with warehouses, wineshops, gambling dens, and bordellos. Each sept maintains a fortified compound for full-blooded kin; cousins dwell outside in flophouses.

Grandmother Lintha Haquen Agesai's residence, a pale, rounded palace-fort dubbed Grandmother's Holdfast, sits atop a rocky promontory overlooking the harbor. Caves below it store her treasures, guarded by her many sons. The Cult of Dukantha maintains several temples throughout Asura, its priests ensuring that followers carry out the Great Mother's will. The cult's sorcerers don't lend their strength to Fia-Shaw's operations, but call up storms and monsters to protect Asura if Realm ships come circling.

The Fogcutter Lights are no mere harbor lamps, but a marvel of sorcery — a school of luminous, winged spirit-fish that guides allied ships through the mists to safely dock in Asura's harbor, while luring invaders to wreck on jagged rocks. The Ulgo sept commands the Lights, a secret they lord over their fellow Asurans.

Faxai

Faxai-on-the-Caul is the first shrine city Dragon-Blooded visit on their pilgrimage. It's the only port on the route; the Realm can supply and reinforce it by sea, allowing its forces to hold out where other shrine cities fell.

In this city packed tightly with martial orders, garrison troops, Dynastic retinues, mercenaries, foreign merchants, and regular citizens, it's not only surprisingly easy for a new arrival or Lunar spy to lose themselves in this human maze of defenders, but also supremely perilous. Soldiers drill throughout the city; Immaculates lead prayers and perform rites on every corner. Both holy site and teeming port, the Walled City never sleeps.

Within a day's travel of Faxai, Pact forces avoid prolonged engagement. Invader forces seem contained within the hieroglyph-scarred walls, but can deploy with startling speed. Soldiers, outcaste heroes, seasoned officers, and Immaculate monks on familiar ground must be fought carefully. Garrison units barrack by Faxai's gates, allowing quick responses to Pact maneuvers.

In the Temple of Sundered Leaves, one of the city's largest Immaculate temples, monks lead soldiers, penitents, and pilgrims in prayer day and night. The Keepers of the Amber Tabernacle maintain their eponymous chapter-house close to the Earth Shrine; having granted refuge to brethren from other shrine cities, the Tabernacle's rooms overflow with devotees. Five Dragons Boulevard, stretching from Faxai's inland gates to the sea, accommodates dozens of other temples. Religious processions frequently clog the street; travelers must watch from the sides or wait in teahouses until they pass, or seek alternate routes. In the harbor, the House of the Rootless Tree (**Dragon-Blooded**, p. 72) extends over the water, a V'neef stronghold packed with weapons and supplies.

Kama

While this port city on the Caul's northeast coast once bowed to the Realm, its Imperial garrison fled in tatters after the Black Lion's last decisive strike. Now independent, the city's elders contend with merchant interests, pirate captains, Realm agents, and others for control over the port's future.

Before gaining independence, Kama's ruling families maintained small household militias. A Realm garrison discouraged their growth lest the families contemplate rebellion. Now, those already meager forces — depleted by the Black Lion's raids — have been stretched thin as the families assert control over the city. Merchants dependent on the port offer armed vessels for naval defense; Guild factors finance privateers and mercenaries for a cut of Kama's future revenue. Crime bosses muster legbreakers to defend the city by land, while citizens swell the ranks of family militias.

Kama's citizens are united in their hostility toward the Caul's warring powers. The Realm levied heavy taxes under the guise of "protecting" the city, then abandoned

NEARBY LOCALES

Once a thriving trade city in its own right, the city of Emvor now lies in ruins to Kama's north. Centuries ago, silver and gems from the Ashen Hills traveled up the Sweetwater River to Emvor, until Pact forces swept in and torched the city. Though no shadowland nor ghosts linger here, Caulborn mystics speak of a hungry presence in Emvor, and scavengers from Kama have disappeared without trace.

A trio of island fortresses sit abandoned off Kama's coast. Once the strongholds for Kama's fleet, their ramparts and docks were destroyed over the years by the Imperial Navy and the Lintha. **Shrike's Nest** is haunted by malevolent fae. Pirates and smugglers moor alongside **Goldstone's** remaining pillars to strike deals for stolen goods, while lovers from feuding families brave the rough seas around **Storm's Eye** to defy their elders and meet on its ramparts.

it when Pact forces overwhelmed the garrison. Neither do they care for the Pact. Whenever Kama and the surrounding Caulborn tribes competed for land and resources, the Lunars backed the Caulborn. When the city expanded plantations and settlements, bloody raids razed those expansions and killed many citizens.

The former Realm garrison fort stands mostly intact, though scarred by the Pact's assault. The ruling families have laid claim to it in the Realm's absence. Though the retreating garrison left few weapons and supplies, it still serves as a useful stronghold and a place to house and train newly recruited soldiers.

The walled market called Brine sits just beyond the dockyards, bustling with merchants selling oilskin coats and knives with elaborately carved whalebone hilts. Fishers hawk cod and halibut straight from their nets. Past the market, the ruling families' tower-houses overlook the harbor where militia members stand guard, preventing thieves from climbing their walls.

Logistics

The Realm invaders know the war's tide has turned against them. Their supplies are limited. Pact forces excel in harassing and exhausting garrison troops; at best, capture means they'll be ransomed back to Faxai. More likely, however, they'll be enslaved or killed. Their scouts must remain evasive and elusive; sortieing troops know they lack reliable options for retreat or surrender.

Still, Realm scouts range across the Caul, probing for weaknesses.

But the Pact also depends on supplies from across and outside the Caul. Realm forces attack depots and supply trains behind Pact lines, confiscating what they can and destroying the rest. They sabotage Lunar-held fortresses and bridges, preventing goods and reinforcements from moving. Dynastic forces raid villages that support the Lunars — whether that support means military aid or merely trade, allowing access to nearby resources, or offering shelter. Many Caulborn peoples must decide whether offering the Pact aid now is worth their fields being set afire later, should the Realm learn of their kindness.

Dynastic scouts listen for news of key Pact sites, especially hidden Morovath, knowing that a strike against the Black Lion's stronghold would do much for morale in Faxai. They pass along information about crucial fortresses and other strategic holdings, in hopes that the strategos' raiders will stymie Lunar operations.

Realm geomancers weigh in on which vulnerable locations may be attacked and which mustn't be disturbed. Damaging a demesne might stop Third Daughter of the Leaves from deploying a sorcerous attack, but if it threatens the Caul's geomancy, the saboteurs must find another way.

Some Dragon-Blooded set their sights on Feng-Yi, the Final City. Taking it would be a major coup for any crusader to seize its tumbledown stones; such a feat would hearten those in Faxai, and draw more support from the Blessed Isle. For the Lunars, every stone of the ruined city is sacred. Though Feng-Yi holds little strategic value — no fortresses stand tall above the forests, no river flows through it allowing ships to deliver troops and supplies — the Pact must patrol it to keep it out of Dragon-Blooded hands.

Morovath

In a hidden valley where the Caul's jungle meets the Ghost-Hand Mountains, the ever-changing city of Morovath forms the heart of Sha'a Oka's domain. Though diminished from its First Age glory — for all its enchanted sheen, entire districts remain overgrown and empty — it shelters lionfolk, Caulborn clans, and Lunars, including short-term visitors.

Sha'a Oka's generals meet in the Palace of the Moon's Light to confer on strategy. Smiths and armorers work ceaselessly to support the war, while troops drill in temple courtyards. Sorcerous wards whose runes and anchors shift like Luna themselves protect the city,

preventing Dragon-Blooded scouts from discovering its whereabouts.

The Black Lion maintains no personal residence. Lionfolk officers take turns welcoming Sha'a Oka and his entourage to their manors; this maintains his personal connections and grants prestige to his hosts — and inconveniences any Dragon-Blooded assassin who might find their way to Morovath.

NoteWorthy Strategic Locales

A line of ancient, storied fortresses called **the Four Fangs** stand in an arc outside Faxai, each a day's march from the city. For centuries, they were under Realm control, allowing the Dynasts to spot incoming Lunar attacks early on, and prepare the city's defenses. The Pact has seized three — Thorncatch, the Whistling Bridge, and Smoldering Garnet — and uses them for reconnaissance and to restrict enemy movement by land. But the fourth, Relanda's Labyrinth, remains in Realm hands. This elaborate three-dimensional maze of canals, tunnels, bridges, and towers forms a fortified waypoint northwest of Faxai, where it facilitates Realm raids behind Pact lines and opens the way to Garianghis and Hoshou.

The Hawkstone stands on a high crag, its sightlines overlooking both the pilgrimage road and the strategic Stendra Pass. Established by Ninga hawkfolk, it's nigh-inaccessible without flight, and was a thorn in the Realm's side for centuries. When crusaders seized it twenty years ago, rather than garrison it themselves, a sorcerer filled it with bound demons and occult traps. Reclaiming it for the Ninga would provide a significant tactical edge.

The road from Houshou to Kama crosses the turbulent Barren River canyon at **the Emerald Viaduct**. This ancient manse comprises a pair of domelike structures atop opposing cliffs, each formed of a fig grove's interwoven branches, connected by a slender, delicate bridge of living roots. It remains standing where other bridges have been torn down because of its significance to the Caul's geomancy. Though a key river crossing, it's too narrow and fragile for troops to cross quickly, making it an ideal ambush spot.

North of the Caul, the supply depot called **The Barnacle** takes up most of a rocky islet along a major trade lane. Realm vessels stop here before continuing on to points farther West, and the Imperial Navy uses its shipyard for repairs. It's a convenient fallback and rendezvous point — not too far from the Caul, but beyond immediate Pact reach. Should enterprising Lunars destroy it, that would disrupt Realm supply lines to the Caul

GEOMANCY OF THE CAUL

Both sides so venerate the Caul that actively manipulating or disrupting its demesnes and dragon lines, such as by raising new manses or tearing down the few ancient ones that linger, is sacrilege. The Caulborn warn against such tampering. To shape the Essence of primal Dragon-Blooded creation, Luna's gifts, and Gaia's presence courts disaster to body and soul — its history is filled with Dynastic sorcerer-savants frozen in stone; bold shamans left twisted husks; or sorcerer-lords known only by empty spaces in records, their very existence unraveled.

Still, loci of power stand untouched by human artifice — places of change and testing, microcosms of the pilgrimage, living locations imbued with some distilled echo of Luna or Gaia. Explorers and mystics speak of mazes of colorless fire, pools of silken water, groves of infinite trees dripping with moonlight at midday.

Realm geomancers name them elemental demesnes of singular power, transcendent paths to the Elemental Dragons themselves. Silver Pact mystics swear they're sacral marks left from Luna's touch on the world. The Caulborn silently note such phrases describe the same places, leading Dynast sorcerers there mere hours after a Lunar scout's visit.

and cause broader delays in shipping times to Western Realm holdings such as Wavecrest.

NoteWorthy Occult Locales

Overgrown for centuries, a path branches off the pilgrimage road just before Garianghis, marked by a broken, mossy stele whose glyphs have long since worn away. The path fades after a few miles, but rumors speak of another city at its terminus, **Arguroii** — once a shrine city of sorts, now abandoned and near-forgotten.

Ropes hung with warding talismans sway gently amid the Fathomless Jungle, warning travelers away from **the Well of the Black Moon**. Some savants say the Well shelters — or imprisons — dreams and nightmares from before time, and poses unimaginable peril to trespassers. Only Third Daughter and Tadeen Jhan are known to have returned whole from the Well, an experience neither will speak of.

Amid the eastern marshes stands **the Morning Dancers**: a ring of mossy statues, each said to depict the



goddess Eiala Rising-from-Dream — lost since the Caul vanished — in a different pose. A numinous aura lingers, whether because Eiala was once worshiped here, perished here, or somehow lies bound within the stones. Similar circles stand elsewhere upon the continent, each depicting a different lost spirit.

A Possible Future

The War for the Caul may take a thousand different paths, depending on players' decisions and the Storyteller's needs. Player characters might involve themselves at their shahan-yas' direction or for personal reasons. They can dive right into the final battle for Faxai, or spend years exploring the Caul and working their way up the ranks. They could visit only briefly, or remain until the bitter end. Whatever the players' involvement, the Storyteller should ensure their characters have the opportunity to appear at key events or meaningfully influence those events through their actions.

The following timeline starts after the conquest of the four shrine cities, proceeds through the Pact's war council and ensuing campaign to seize Faxai, and explores potential complications and reverses in the battle's aftermath. Storytellers can use, change, rearrange, or ignore the timeline's elements at their discretion. For

example, missions need not be strictly siloed off by the stage they're listed in. Realm patrols (p. 216) can appear at any stage of the war, and Stage Four Realm counterattacks will undoubtedly be interspersed with Stage Three Lunar assaults, though the specifics may change as a result. Feel free to mix and match missions between stages to fit the story's needs.

Prelude: Joining the Fray

During the first session (or prelude sessions before the story proper), introduce the players to the Caul's characters and conflicts. Help players get a feel for what their characters think and feel about the Caul, the war, their shahan-yas, and other relevant Storyteller characters.

Whether the player characters come as a favor for their shahan-ya or to serve their own agendas, the war for the Caul should hold personal stakes for them. Do they strive to earn glory, favors, or wealth? Are they devoted to pursuing the pilgrimage or protecting the sacred Caul? Do they burn for vengeance — against a specific Dynast, the Realm as a whole, or a Lunar rival? Are they dedicated to protecting Caulborn kin? Did an old friend go missing while infiltrating Faxai, or is a rival jockeying to become the Black Lion's newest general?

Be sure to help connect player characters with specific Lunars and other Storyteller characters on the Caul. Players whose characters have been there a while should work with the Storyteller to develop details of their extant relationships and recent activities. Newly arrived characters can play out meetings with shah-an-yas and other locals.

Stage One: Opening Maneuvers

Here the Storyteller sets the stage for the chronicle, introducing the Caul's characters and conflicts. Player characters have opportunities to gather information that supports their strategies in council and paves the way toward personal goals.

Silver Pact forces have paused their campaign while Sha'a Oka recovers from grave wounds suffered in his last battle. His generals busy themselves rallying and reorganizing depleted units, maintaining supply lines, and negotiating with local leaders eager to return home after a victory. A sizable fraction of their troop strength trickles away despite their best efforts.

Taking advantage of this respite, Realm strategos Cathak Nejara Rin dispatches scouts to track Pact movements, recruit Caulborn tribes, and negotiate with spirits. Satrap V'neef Lanusa, aiming to make Faxai a Merchant Fleet bastion, commands soldiers and allied Caulborn to construct naval facilities to accommodate the Fleet and associated troops and supplies. Garrison commander Ledaal Deja sees to Faxai's defense, consulting with geomancers over safe construction of new fortifications in and around the city. Hyparch Mnemon Torala directs the martial orders to keep the peace within the teeming city and sends patrols to rebuff Lunar raids from Garianghis, to rally scattered survivors of earlier battles, and on dangerous rescue missions to retrieve war prisoners.

The Pact enacts countermeasures. Third Daughter spies on Realm activity via sorcery, shapeshifting students, and uplifted turtlewolves. Skathra captures enemy patrols and sends their severed heads back to Faxai. Fia-Shaw keeps watch for Imperial Navy and Merchant Fleet activity while daring Lintha squadrons raid the Realm's new dockyards. Sandswept Garda-Empress' hawkfolk reconnoiter from above, hunt enemy scouts, and prepare to defend the strategic pass of Stendra in the northwestern mountains. Stalks-the-Reeds leads Sha'a Oka's troops in his stead, raiding the fortification being constructed around Faxai.

The Lunar generals act independently, but share information and coordinate major offensives in council. While they agree the invaders have become more active,

BORROWING MERITS

Player characters associated with a Pact general can call upon some measure of that general's resources. For instance, Sandswept Garda-Empress offers command over a small group of hawkfolk for reconnaissance or raiding; Fia-Shaw loans ships; Third Daughter invokes useful sorceries; Skathra reveals the location of hidden supply caches or secret routes.

Storytellers may reflect this relationship by allowing players to gain an additional dot or two in the Backing, Command, Followers, or Resources Merits while serving under that general. The character also gains a Minor Tie of loyalty to that general. The price of such assets is following the general's strategies and directives. These shouldn't be stifling, but should occasionally demand a choice; rejecting the general's instructions to pursue a personal goal may result in losing access to those assets and suffering the general's antipathy.

most doubt that major reinforcements will arrive while the Realm remains in turmoil.

The invaders aren't dissuaded by the Pact's countermeasures. Instead, they redouble their efforts while petitioning the Blessed Isle for reinforcements.

PLAYER INVOLVEMENT

This stage offers initial opportunities for player characters to test themselves against Realm forces, gather intelligence, and ingratiate themselves with other Lunars and the Caulborn.

Various Storyteller characters may solicit player characters' aid. This provides hooks to involve the Circle in all manner of scenes and conflicts. The examples below aren't exhaustive, and can be swapped around as appropriate to match other petitioners' desires — or pursued by player characters independently to serve individual agendas.

Near Faxai, they might gather information on a military order's operations, or monitor the harbor for a particular ship's arrival. They could be tasked with getting a missive to a Pact member operating inside the city, or helping smuggle an important object — or person — out of it. Sorcerers scout the area surrounding Faxai for the Terrestrials' workings, while Lunar lorekeepers might wish to get close to the city's hieroglyph-covered walls to glean ancient wisdom from their scarred surfaces.

The characters can travel to any of the shrine cities and reach out to the elders in charge. If they follow the pilgrimage road, they encounter fewer enemy patrols but could run into individual spies or the Caul's own mystical forces, such as forgotten magic, strange geomantic features, and ancient spirits.

Fia-Shaw focuses on naval forces under her command and on negotiating with outside forces for support. She sends adherents to scout enemy fleet movements, raid supply convoys, destroy naval facilities, escort Lintha and pirate vessels, and seek support from Guild and independent merchants.

Garda-Empress focuses on reconnaissance and lightning raids. She sends adherents to intercept Realm patrols, spy behind enemy lines, sabotage key facilities, and assassinate strategic targets.

Skathra Venomchild leads direct assaults and unexpected maneuvers, intent on breaking the enemy's will to fight. They send their adherents to make terror assaults, intercept patrols, destroy forts, and sow chaos and fear among the invaders' ranks.

Third Daughter of the Leaves unleashes terrible beasts and obscure sorceries against the Realm. She sends adherents to negotiate with spirits, assassinate Immaculate monks and Realm sorcerers, obtain rare reagents, and carry out those duties she sees in her dreams.

Sha'a Oka consults primarily with his four generals, only working directly with fellow mystics. On rare occasions, he'll train an adherent with incredible talent or whose shahan-ya he owes a debt. Otherwise he remains aloof from other Pact members, especially in the war's early stages while he's still recuperating. He expects adherents to openly battle Realm forces, guard the Caul's sacred places, and protect Caulborn whose clans aid his efforts.

Other Caul-based Lunars and their allies might attempt to involve the player characters in their personal agendas — whether plots against the Realm, or their own separate aims — some of which run counter to the generals' plans. The Pact's unified stance against the invaders doesn't preclude enmity between Lunars and their allies on the Caul; some drag the characters into their feuds. For example, Nalika Stormtalon might give the player characters orders to assassinate a Realm officer whom her mother, Sandswept Garda-Empress, needs alive. Tarin Six-Skins could send a group to seize a Realm supply cache in a rival Pact member's dominion, denying resources to both the Dragon-Blooded and their Lunar adversary. The Full Moon warrior Trail of

Sorrow might gather a force to attack a Realm encampment to free a captive for whom another general was arranging a hostage trade.

The characters' shahan-yas may have their own goals for their adherents on the Caul, largely unrelated to the continent's battles. They could send them as emissaries to a spirit court, ask them to infiltrate a specific Dynast's inner circle, or require them to report to another Lunar to whom they owe a favor.

First and foremost, player characters visit the Caul with their own goals in mind. Opportunities abound for Lunars to achieve glory on the battlefield and prove themselves as leaders. The continent's mystic places offer characters opportunity to further their spiritual understanding or perform sorcerous workings. In its cities, they can establish connections with merchants, mercenaries, and Guild factors that might later provide useful goods or services back in their home dominions.

REALM PATROLS

Inadvertently or deliberately, player characters will likely cross paths with Realm patrols — whether to clear the way for a larger Pact force, to undermine Realm reconnaissance, as a feint to draw Realm troops away from an offensive elsewhere, et cetera. Show these patrols' effects on their surroundings, such as seizing supplies from Caulborn villages or forcing residents to serve as guides. If player characters actively hunt down these patrols, the garrison and martial orders take notice and lay ambushes.

Tracking, infiltrating, or interrogating patrols can provide useful information. For example, an Immaculate devotee could reveal the Mouth of Peace's pressure on the Dynasty to reclaim the Caul; an outcaste recruit could tell the characters that Hyparch Torala has replenished her forces with Threshold mercenaries; a Caulborn warrior could speak of tribes swearing themselves to the invaders to fight the monstrous Lunars preying upon their people.

Represent a small patrol with a Size 1 unit of battle-ready troops or medium cavalry (**Exalted**, p. 496) with normal or elite Drill led by a mortal champion (**Exalted**, p. 497). For more significant patrols, use a size 1 unit of each or a single Size 2 unit, led by a young Dragon-Blood (**Exalted**, p. 541).

Reconnaissance patrols typically retreat or scatter when faced with significant opposition, aiming to get home alive with their findings. Patrols and pickets screening a larger force may stand their ground to fulfill their role. Escort patrols — perhaps bringing a Dynastic sorcerer to a demesne, accompanying a spy, or guiding routed

ADJUSTING OPPOSITION

Traits provided for enemies in the War for the Caul start at a baseline; the Storyteller should tweak them upward as appropriate to the situation or to provide additional challenge for players who desire it. Improved Realm morale could increase a unit's Drill; infantry may be split into melee and ranged battle groups; additional mortal or Dragon-Blooded officers can be rolled into battle; summoned demons and elementals might be attached to a force; a powerful Dragon-Blooded hero might have significantly higher dice pools and extra Charms.

But don't overdo it! Keep changes within reason — a patrol won't have a thousand troops, nor will it be led by half a dozen Dragon-Blooded. If the player characters are too strong for some encounters, that's okay! Just skip it (**Exalted**, p. 212) and move on to the aftermath of their victory.

soldiers or refugees back to Faxai — may split up, one force whisking their charges away while the other buys time.

Realm patrols employ tactics such as forming shield walls to protect their charges or prevent the enemy from advancing; creating smoke screens to conceal their movements; or falling back to defensive positions where they might hold their ground while awaiting reinforcements and preparing counterattacks. Some patrols feign retreat, drawing enemies toward waiting troops. Though they won't harm geomantic elements of the pilgrimage road, whether natural features or ancient structures and roadmarks, they'll freely destroy modern shelters, fortifications, and waystations; these are often built on pilings to avoid troubling the continent's holy ground.

As the war presses on, patrols may grow bolder or more cautious in response to recent events. Storytellers can represent this by adjusting the battle group's Magnitude, or modifying the Difficulty of a rout check.

Realm officers know well that Lunars may come wearing stolen faces as spies, saboteurs, and assassins, and they take countermeasures. While a Lunar might steal the shape of a promising young officer, her peers won't simply let her through checkpoints because they recognize her. Officials employ sophisticated codes and ciphers with written orders. Important missives are magically sealed. Martial orders change passwords regularly; some even teach soldiers fake passwords they can divulge if captured and interrogated.

ENEMY CIVILIANS

Pact forces stationed along the pilgrimage road and other land routes out of Faxai intercept not only patrols going to and from the city, but also supply trains heading to the Four Fangs, daring merchants, traveling Caulborn, and refugees seeking safety. Player characters have opportunities to seize supplies for the war effort, and perhaps attempt to recruit prisoners to join the Pact's cause. Most will refuse, presenting a moral dilemma: free them — allowing them to supplement Faxai's labor force and perhaps bring back actionable intelligence to the hyparch — or enslave or kill them?

Refugees may be escorted by a Realm patrol (see above); supply trains always are. Merchants and other civilian travelers may have guards, typically a Size 1 battle group of battle-ready troops or grizzled mercenaries (**Exalted**, pp. 496, 497) of variable Drill. While many civilians are noncombatants (**Exalted**, p. 208), a significant number may be armed and ready to fight if their lives are on the line; represent these as a militia (**Exalted**, p. 496) battle group with poor Drill. Realm spies, Immaculate missionaries, officers from routed units, and the like may conceal themselves among refugee groups as well.

Military escorts typically attempt to tie up Pact forces, buying time for civilians to flee.

NAVAL ENCOUNTERS

Aside from stumbling across patrol squadrons, Lunars at sea target supply convoys, troop transports, recon vessels, cutters bearing sealed orders, merchants trading at Realm ports, or the like. Characters might join Garda-Empress' hawkfolk in patrolling the coastal skies, or watch beneath the waves with Fia-Shaw. Victorious player characters can capture or destroy ships and supplies, interrogate spies, steal faces, and gather intelligence on Realm activities. Tensions between Peleps and V'neef provide an opportunity for Silver Pact operatives to exacerbate the houses' already-strained relations, which carry over to the Imperial Navy and Merchant Fleet.

Enemy ships typically carry a full complement of marines; use medium infantry or Lintha reaver traits (**Exalted**, pp. 496, 497). Squadrons or strategically important ships are often escorted by summoned spirits like tidesmares or agatae (**Exalted**, pp. 519, 523). Some may carry a weather sorcerer; use traits for Cynis Megara or Sesus Eshuvar (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, pp. 184, 197).

The Imperial Navy and Merchant Fleet often rely on safety in numbers. Captains on heavier vessels engage Pact squadrons to buy time for faster ships — those carrying urgent orders or important passengers — to escape.



Smaller squadrons or ships traveling alone might fly false flags or repaint their hulls to disguise their origins and allegiance.

ESPIONAGE

While the Realm carefully protects key figures and infrastructure, that leaves significant scope for Lunars to target less significant people and assets. Characters can sneak into Faxai, Kama, military camps, Imperial Navy squadrons, or the like to gather rumors, sabotage outposts, or poison supplies. Lesser officers and civil officials can be spied on, persuaded of new courses of action — or assassinated. Characters can observe troop movements, identify high-ranking officers, assess tension between Realm leaders, and evaluate military discipline. They can intercept orders and alter them, or forge new ones altogether, sowing confusion on the battlefield.

For lower-ranking officers, use young Dynast traits (**Exalted**, p. 541), or traits from characters like Ledaal Kebok Coren (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, p. 186). Higher-ranking officers use experienced Dragon-Blooded traits (**Exalted**, p. 544) or traits from characters like Tepet Ejava (**Dragon-Blooded**, p. 357), Cathak Setod, Kingfisher Swift, or Saloy Hin (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, pp. 180, 216, 220). For notable administrators and

investigators, see characters like Amon Mora, Ledaal Kes, Ragara Benoru, or Sesus Nagezzer (**Dragon-Blooded**, pp. 341, 348, 353, 355)

In Faxai, Pact spies and saboteurs fuel discord among already-tense opposing factions. Assassins pick off strategic targets such as quartermasters and civil administrators, and even target Dragon-Blooded leaders. Fights break out between the Sword-Saints and other martial orders, fueled by rumors that Lunar operatives plant. Poisoned water supplies overwhelm houses of healing with the sick. When a grain store is torched, the strategos must scramble to redistribute already-thin resources and decide who goes hungry — the troops who need their strength to rebuff Lunar assaults, or the city's civilians?

Meanwhile, the Realm enacts counterespionage measures, including attempts to lure in and ensnare Pact agents. Some are nonlethal, such as exchanging a captured agent for a Dynast the Lunars are holding in Garianghis, or letting them go after planting a hypnotic suggestion for later. Realm leaders also send their own spies into Lunar strongholds, posing as mortals in the Pact's service. Characters might receive word of such moles in the ranks, and attempt to discover their identities and the secrets they've learned.

MIND CONTROL

Should a player character be captured and subject to mind-altering magic, discuss it with the player first. Confirm whether they're willing to pursue that plot thread, and if so, how they want it to play out — including ways the character can reverse the effects or subvert the sorcerer's intent. Remember the rules regarding unacceptable influence (**Exalted**, p. 220) and follow safety rules (**Crucible of Legend**, p. 22) at your table. Plan ahead for other options in case the player opts out, and take a break to rethink if the player changes their mind during play.

GATHERING ALLIES

The Caul is an entire continent, and not all of its inhabitants claim sides in the war. Player characters can seek allies among unaffiliated Caulborn peoples, merchants, pirates, gods, elementals, Fair Folk, or the like.

These scenes might play out in a series of shorter vignettes, as characters perform smaller tasks to earn a Caulborn clan's respect or an audience with a merchant prince. They may offer elementals protection from Realm forces encroaching on their territory, help a clan repair a broken-down work of occult engineering, offer services as negotiators and sages, and so on.

Characters stand to gain support in the form of supplies and troops, access to raw materials and sorcerous reagents, or passage through lands previously off-limits to Pact forces. They can also obtain useful intelligence on Realm troop movements, shifting clan allegiances, natural disasters, and other relevant local events. Pirates might grant Pact vessels safe passage, or agree to let Lunar captains shelter in their coves. A Fair Folk noble might offer hobgoblin servants as guides through Wyld areas.

Lunars can encounter Realm envoys on similar missions, demanding competition for resources. They might assassinate a lone emissary on the road; encountering one already making a good impression, they may sabotage his image or outdebate him in front of influential contacts. Other situations might result in open battle, either to drive away Dynastic forces or prove the Pact's superiority on the field.

RESCUE FROM THE WYLD HUNT

An Immaculate official, such as Peleps Hoa (p. 207), declares a Wyld Hunt against a Lunar spy who's obtained important information about an approaching Realm

armada — ship numbers, troops carried, and military cargo. This Lunar might even be a player character or someone they know. If the Storyteller doesn't have someone specific in mind, she may default to Kem Dahaleth, a rootless Lunar with a lion spirit shape who, seeking a people to protect, has come to the Caul hoping Sha'a Oka will prove a worthy liege.

The Wyld Hunt's initiator wishes to prevent the information from getting back to the Black Lion, and is supported by a Wyld Hunt consisting of a Size 1-2 unit of elite troops (**Exalted**, p. 497) with elite Drill and one or more additional shikari; base the number and power level of the shikari on the fight's intended difficulty. For shikari traits, use some combination of Immaculate of Air/Earth/Fire or experienced Dragon-Blooded traits (**Exalted**, pp. 541-544), or traits from characters like Cynis Cogen, Ragara Benoru (**Dragon-Blooded**, pp. 347, 353), Peleps Deled, Peleps Najah, Righteous River, and Yushoto Mathar (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, pp. 190, 193, 197, 208).

Consequences vary depending on the characters involved. For instance, if player characters capture Peleps Hoa, they learn he's renowned for his devotion to the Caul, to which he feels a deep spiritual bond. He may consider peaceful resolutions with Lunars that allow him to live his life upon the sacred continent, especially if they minimize harm to his comrades in the Amber Tabernacle. He has information about Ledaal Deja's fortification projects, the locations and stratagems of several military units, and which tribes are currently in diplomatic negotiations with the Realm.

Stage Two: Calling the Council

After the player characters grow familiar with the Caul and establish themselves among its Pact members, Sha'a Oka calls for a council (**Lunars**, p. 29) to share information and plan strategy for the next stage of the war. All Lunars known to be on the Caul — along with key non-Lunar allies — receive a summons to Morovath. Characters may reject the summons to continue pursuing their own agendas, though this limits their ability to sway fellow Pact members' opinions and to influence the generals' strategies and plans.

Characters in contact with their shahan-yas, or who've established a rapport with a particular general, should have the opportunity to communicate with those Lunars beforehand to ensure their goals for the council align. A shahan-ya might want to present her own case, or have advice or instructions for when her adherents should voice their opinions.

At Stalks-the-Reeds' direction, the Kongar lionfolk offer grand hospitality to all guests, both to burnish Sha'a

Oka's image among his guests and to avoid offending those most accustomed to drama or luxury. They offer sumptuous lodgings, delicacies from across the Caul and beyond, and entertainment that would impress even some Princes of the Earth. In the days leading up to the council proper, military parades show off the troops' discipline; contests of wits and games of might allow fighters to display their prowess; and troupes reenact visiting luminaries' deeds on the stage.

BEFORE THE COUNCIL

While they wait for the council to begin, characters get a deeper glimpse into intra-Pact conflicts. There's opportunity for social maneuvering as participants trickle into Morovath. Possibilities include:

- Private conferences with other Lunars to better understand their personalities and goals, and to persuade or bribe them to support player characters' strategies or undermine their rivals.
- Mediating between Pact members who hold old grudges, either as neutral parties or seeking an outcome that favors their own goals. Alternatively, another Lunar might request their aid in defeating or humiliating a rival.
- A Storyteller character challenges a player character, demanding redress for a slight.
- Trading favors with other Pact members, leveraging resources and information or offering military support in exchange for something of value.
- Fraternization and romance aimed at deepening connections with fellow Lunars, whether sincerely or as part of some scheme.

Use traits for Sazay Shadow-Dancer (p. 141) or Hata Mor (Lunars, p. 344) for more socially focused Lunars. For characters looking to challenge the characters in a fight, try Tegama Asarkon (p. 151) or Tula the Reaver (p. 174).

DURING THE COUNCIL

As the shahan-yas decide on a course of action, player characters can volunteer to take charge of specific missions, passionately present their own plans, or recruit others to their cause. The Storyteller should address prior incidents and set the stage for potential events in Stages 3-5, both in these scenes and out of character.

Aside from discussing Faxai, the council attendees consider specific battle plans, such as debating whether to bypass or assault remaining Realm strongholds beyond the Walled City. Pact forces rely on mobility; some leaders favor striking in many places to divide the Realm's

ABSENT FRIENDS

Some player characters might miss the council or the gatherings beforehand because they're off on other missions. Spies might be embedded in Faxai, or have objectives requiring their presence far from Morovath. The Caul is huge; it might not be practical — or even possible — to attend the council. Other characters might simply not be sociable, or have other reasons for not attending.

Since the council itself might take a full session or longer, rather than the players sitting out, offer them the role of additional non-player characters in various scenes. These might be proxies sent in the player character's stead, or non-player characters provided by the Storyteller with a set of objectives to accomplish — whether comedic beastfolk attendants, other player characters' Lunar rivals, or even Sha'a Oka and his generals.

attention and demoralize its troops, while others propose assaulting a single target with overwhelming force. Timing is likewise contentious — is it better to seize the initiative, or might it be wiser to wait and give Realm leaders more opportunity to turn against each other or withdraw additional forces to the Blessed Isle?

Alliances and enemies among third parties factor into the Pact's plans. Which Caulborn clans can they depend on, and which aid the Dragon-Blooded? What territory has opened up to the Pact, and what's off-limits? How does this affect troop movements? Can they make inroads in Kama? What other outreach might yield useful allegiances?

THE LUNAR GENERALS' PLANS

Once the council begins, each general in attendance addresses their peers. Other prominent Lunars, their adherents, and non-Lunar guests are also welcome to speak. This section discusses each of the four generals' intentions and strategies, and some of the missions they propose. Note that a particular general's attendance isn't required — indeed, player characters might actively forestall a political opponent's arrival. Guidance is provided for how each general's presence or absence might affect the council's outcome.

Player characters who attend the council may speak if they wish. They can take a general's side, facilitate discussion and disagreements, or propose missions of their own. Their prior achievements on the Caul and elsewhere might earn one general's support or another's enmity.

KEEP THE COUNCIL MOVING

While the occasional short speech can be dramatic, prolonged Storyteller-character monologues are usually tedious. It's better to sum up their arguments out of character. Once each general delineates their position and the floor opens to discussion, that's the time to slip back into character.

If multiple generals or other Storyteller characters enter debate, instead of running them all yourself (and talking to yourself at the table), ask players to volunteer to run some non-player characters on your behalf. Prep either by discussing this with players in advance, or providing brief write-ups summarizing the generals' attitudes and goals.

Should player characters strike out on their own without the council's support, they can still affect the war's outcome and partake in later stages of the scenario, but without additional backing. If they want no part in the conflict, the Silver Pact mostly ignores them, but the Realm doesn't distinguish them from active Lunar combatants. If the characters create a third contesting faction, perhaps primarily backed by Caulborn or allied with someone like Fallen Ember — an Infernal sorcerer-king operating out of the northwestern Caul — then both the Pact and the Realm may well become their enemies.

Third Daughter of the Leaves is actively contesting the invaders in the wilderness surrounding Garianghis. Garianghis' proximity to Faxai makes it a likely first target for a Realm counteroffensive. She advocates for striking first; she's seen their fortification projects and believes that delay will only make a major offensive against Faxai more difficult. She proposes such an offensive in the immediate future — with or without the Black Lion at its head.

- If Third Daughter attends, she offers Garianghis as a staging ground for the assault. From there, sorcerers can craft workings against the Realm forces. Given her city's proximity to Faxai, she makes every effort to be present for the council. If Sha'a Oka remains indisposed, her impassioned speech can incite other Lunars to press the assault without him.
- If Third Daughter is absent, the council might delay an attack on Faxai until the Black Lion recovers further. She might be embroiled in battle if Realm forces have pressed an attack on Garianghis. A time-sensitive ritual might also

prevent her from attending, if the council coincides with a particular astronomical event or another essential aspect of a working requires her vigilance. Her proxy, the charismatic bandit queen Green Eyes Red Wolf, makes the case for a strike on the Realm in her stead.

Skathra Venomchild has held back from larger offensives, having only dealt with invaders traveling close to Houshou. They're convinced the best tactical decision is to await Sha'a Oka's return to the battlefield, and it angers them if the council insinuates otherwise. The plans they propose support further weakening the Realm's forces in the meantime: winnowing away their holdings outside of Faxai, infiltrating a martial order to sow discord among its ranks, cutting off supply lines, and so on.

Skathra offers advice on which spirits to contact, such as Fear-and-Lust Devourer, a monstrous anglerfish-spider that hides in the fog of the Caul, with a glowing lure that looks like a beautiful androgynous human. They can offer directions to mystical artifacts such as the Heartwell, a fountain that reveals visions of the continent's history to those that offer blood to its waters. They also welcome anyone who wishes to join them on lightning raids and sabotage strikes against outlying Realm forces.

- If Skathra attends, they argue with Third Daughter (or anyone who speaks in her stead), insisting that only Sha'a Oka can lead the Pact to ultimate victory. They support Lunars who recommend delaying the final assault, insisting there's more work to be done in grinding down Realm resistance and breaking the enemy's will. They're otherwise indifferent to attending the council, only making the journey if not entangled in other business.
- Skathra might shun the council if the other generals offend them, or disregard the council to take action elsewhere if Sha'a Oka has sufficiently recovered from his wounds. In the latter case, Skathra might send a player character adherent to vote for the Black Lion's proposals in their stead.

Sandswept Garda-Empress has a good view of the Realm's efforts from her seat in Sekima and from soaring through the sky. She favors a renewed push against the Realm's forces, especially now while their numbers are lessened and their leaders at odds. While Third Daughter favors a direct strike, Garda-Empress prefers to lure the enemy out of the safety of Faxai's walls. In the field, the Realm is more likely to overextend, giving Pact forces the advantage. She offers her hawkfolk's support

on military maneuvers, and weighs in with strategic information on other council members' proposals.

- If Garda-Empress attends, she supports pressing the attack sooner rather than later, though her strategies diverge from Third Daughter's. She's the general most likely to attend, knowing her eye for strategy and logistics will be essential to the Pact's efforts.
- If Garda-Empress is absent, she sends a lieutenant or asks one of the player characters to speak in her stead. She might be away on a reconnaissance mission, or defending against a Dragon-Blooded attack on the Stendra Pass.

Lintha Haquen Fia-Shaw Flowers Unbending in the Storm spends more time at sea and in Asura than in Melilune, which she's entrusted to her student Vidatha Riverfisher. She requests help coordinating sea-based attacks: harrying merchant ships headed for Faxai, luring Imperial Navy ships into traps, sabotaging Realm coastal fortifications. She also advocates reaching out to other nearby Pact luminaries for aid, though she stops short of invoking Leviathan by name.

- If Fia-Shaw attends, she acts as liaison to Asura's Lintha septs, explaining what they can bring to the war effort, and what demands they have for the Pact. Should negotiations grow tense, Fia-Shaw is one of those who attempts to smooth things over and keep talks open. She largely avoids advocating for any particular strategy herself, preferring to appear neutral and approachable.
- If Fia-Shaw is absent, her adherent Vidatha Riverfisher attends in her stead, maintaining the same neutrality, albeit with less tact. Fia-Shaw might be at sea on a scouting mission, leading sia-ka against Realm vessels, or even in Sunken Luthe persuading other Lunars to help on the Caul. If she's kidnapped or hasn't returned from a naval engagement, Vidatha asks for help finding or rescuing her.

Sha'a Oka himself, now mostly recovered from his injuries, oversees the council. Stalks-the-Reeds, his lionfolk general, generally speaks in his stead as part of his mystique, and receives the same respect as his master from most Pact members. The Black Lion himself only speaks to pronounce judgment, whether to finalize the army's strategies or to settle other matters brought before the council. Sha'a Oka favors attacking Faxai now. Delaying may give the Dynasts a chance to fall to in-fighting, but it also means they might unite around a cause or bring in

GETTING ON THE SAME PAGE

The Storyteller should discuss upcoming events out of character to help players decide what their characters might want to do. This makes players at the table aware of their options, even if their characters aren't. It's easy to miss details during spirited discussions or over the course of several sessions; reviewing out of character helps ensure everyone's interacting with the story and taking advantage of cool opportunities.

reinforcements. His final strategy might be altered by the player characters' actions and arguments. Without their involvement, he moves for an assault on Faxai in a matter of weeks; this gives player characters time to muster troops and engage in a handful of preparatory missions.

COUNCIL OUTCOMES

Without player intervention, the council ultimately backs Sha'a Oka's agenda to assault Faxai, and hashes out a plan to weaken the Realm's forces beforehand. Though specifics vary based on player characters' influence, the plan includes the following:

- Assassination of key figures to disrupt Realm military and logistical readiness.
- Coordinated attacks on strategic Realm holdings throughout the Caul, intended to keep various outposts engaged in battle and unable to send reinforcements.
- Naval assaults intended to weaken the Imperial Fleet's coastal holdings, destroy supply lines, and discourage non-Realm vessels from putting in at Faxai.
- Feigning withdrawal — either through pulling troops back, or "losing" battles against Realm sorties — to draw Faxai's forces into a trap.

BRIDGES TOO FAR

While the generals consider some risky approaches and brutal or inhumane tactics, others they reject — not from squeamishness, but because of potential negative repercussions, especially while their forces are stretched thin. Player characters or other young Lunars might raise some or all of these ideas in council, however.

- The Sibyl of the Tilting Stone is an oracle whose predictions are dependable, but often accompanied by additional uncomfortable truths — about petitioners, their situations, or secrets they prefer

to keep hidden. Consulting the sibyl in the past has led to rifts between even the staunchest of allies.

- Fair Folk factions such as the bellicose Court of the Slumbering Prince, whose smiths work day and night crafting gossamer armor, and the Cat's-Eye Bastion — whose felid cataphracts ride Wyld-twisted tigers into battle — would happily treat with the Pact, but their aid comes with a hefty price. That may be souls to feed upon, a demand for magical supplies or artifacts, or for the Lunars to cede control of some sacred place such as the Well of the Black Moon.
- The behemoth Bonemantle was imprisoned long ago and pinned beneath the earth near the ruined city of Tania's Gaze. Kept quiescent by ancient sorceries, Third Daughter of the Leaves knows the secret to freeing it, but even the mightiest sorcerer can only control the behemoth for so long. Unleashing it and directing it to attack Faxai is easy; burying it again afterwards is much harder, its original means of imprisonment now long forgotten.

Stage Three: Pact Escalation

This stage addresses major maneuvers enacted by the player characters and their allies against Realm forces, discussing a range of scenes and encounters within specific theaters. As with Stage One, these provide a toolkit of options for the Storyteller to pick and choose from to encompass the players' plans.

Not all of these operations will be attempted, let alone succeed. Some result in Lunar lives lost and plans foiled. Remember that invaders are alert for Pact activity, and when the Lunars ramp up their attacks, the Princes of the Earth respond with insightful preparation, tactical brilliance, and their own supernatural might.

ATTACK ON FAXAI'S DOCKS

Faxai's port is the invaders' best avenue for resupply and reinforcements. Fia-Shaw organizes an attack on the port, seeking to damage the docks as much as possible. Lunars wearing sailors' stolen faces sabotage ships. What cargo they can't transfer to allies in sleek, swift boats, they destroy. Sorcerers evoke storms and bargain with elementals, battering ships with wind and wave, or driving them onto rocks. A Lintha fleet engages any vessels that escape the harbor and, if victorious, blockades the port.

The Realm guards the port fiercely. An Imperial Navy squadron patrols the coastal waters at all times, responding swiftly — alerted by beacon towers, Infalible

THE REALM CIVIL WAR

Even if Lunar characters care little for who claims the Scarlet Throne, the Great Houses' maneuvers affect the Dragon-Blooded on Faxai. Characters might use this to their advantage, offering Storytellers opportunities to adjust the story's pace.

Some Lunars push to attack before V'neef or Peleps forces can establish a beachhead on the Caul. Others would rather wait until the Great Houses' infighting reduces the invaders' numbers further. Characters might use stolen faces to persuade Dynasts to shift their forces from the Caul into the fray elsewhere; alternatively, the tide of battle might turn when Great House refugees from the civil war seek haven in Faxai.

Messenger, Wind-Carried Words Technique, or the like — should Faxai come under naval attack. Watchtowers line the harbor entrance, archers ready to target enemy crews. The Sword-Saints maintain a barracks just beyond the docks, its soldiers tasked with defending the harbor on a moment's notice.

WINNOWING REALM LEADERSHIP

Lunars may attempt to remove Cathak Nejara Rin, Ledaal Deja, Mnemon Torala, or other key Realm leaders — whether by assassination, kidnapping, blackmailing them into leaving their posts, or the like. But Realm leaders — wary of such threats — take steps to protect themselves. Most potential targets rarely leave Faxai, only traveling elsewhere under heavy escort. Sneaking into the city is risky enough; getting close to heavily guarded enemy officials is deeply perilous, though far from impossible for Luna's Chosen.

Important figures always have aides, guards, and reinforcements close at hand and often employ various other forms of support, such as trained animals, bound spirits, traps, code phrases to confirm identities, and so forth. Players should discuss what outcome their characters hope to achieve: is it more important to kill the target, or to spread fear and confusion? Do they prioritize their escape, or are they willing to risk capture or death?

The Storyteller might divide the plot to assassinate an important Realm figure into three acts: gathering intelligence, the strike, and the escape. Adjust the length or difficulty of each phase depending on your story's needs and player interests: is this a quick attack done under time constraints, or will they sacrifice other plans to take the time to get it right? The intelligence-gathering might only take a brief scene — or even be handled

off-screen with a single die roll — to determine where the target will be at a certain time, or when their guard detail is at its thinnest. Characters that have time to plot and plan might instead do so over a series of sessions, gaining access to salons, attending festivals or feasts, and the like.

- If Peleps Merena or V'neef Kinir is removed, the Water Fleet's other leaders jockey for command. Fia-Shaw takes advantage of the temporary distraction, launching attacks on ships and Imperial Navy or Merchant Fleet holdings to add to the disarray. Mercenary captains attempt to renegotiate terms with Kinir's replacement; Merchant Fleet relationships with Caulborn clans deteriorate as the goodwill she'd earned dissipates. If only one admiral is removed, the other jumps on opportunities to gain advantages for their House and lobbies for command of both fleets. Should both be taken out simultaneously, Lunar and Lintha forces can strike a severe blow to Realm supply lines and defenses, if they can act swiftly enough.
- Without V'neef Lanusa, food supplies grow even more unreliable as her carefully orchestrated distribution plans fall apart. Her loyalists struggle to

fulfill their duties; her successor replaces many of them with political appointees. Riots over supplies and politics further tax the city's protectors. Without Lanusa protecting Rin, Deja and Torala push for the strategos's arrest.

- Without Rin, Deja and Torala compete for military command. Deja's zealous attitude helps maintain morale, but instead of focusing on defense, she moves to attack Garianghis. While Torala opposes sacrificing soldiers in a direct assault, she believes that letting Deja attempt and fail could bring the garrison commander into line.
- Without Deja, Rin withdraws most forces behind Faxai's fortifications. She grows increasingly paranoid and refuses to meet anyone alone, fearing they're Lunars in disguise. Sensing her paranoia, her troops begin to question her leadership, causing many to turn to Torala.
- Without Torala, the monks and martial orders under her command split between Deja and Rin, with the former — popular among them for her pious speeches and her perceived closeness with Torala — taking the lion's share. Without the



hyparch to counsel caution, Deja breaks ranks with Rin to march on Garianghis.

Removing multiple Realm leaders in quick succession inflicts a major setback on the Realm. Morale diminishes sharply; successors unready for their roles find themselves prone to overthinking and mistakes. The new leadership must establish a new equilibrium between them; this may go either way, from unexpected unity to assassination or fighting in the streets. This offers opportunity for other figures in Faxai to assert power. For instance, inspirational figures like Sedulous Axe may attract martial orders and garrison troops to form independent warbands. Alternatively, the city's civilian government may bargain for additional authority and independence, perhaps through threats of cutting off supplies or offers of marriage into Dynastic households or the royal line.

BREAKING COASTAL OUTPOSTS

The Realm historically stationed ships and soldiers at several fortified outposts along the Caul's coastline and on offshore islands. Most fell under Imperial Navy jurisdiction, though the Merchant Fleet also maintained a few separate bases after its transfer from House Peleps to House V'neef. For now, the Imperial Navy and Merchant Fleet sail united against Lintha and Lunar forces — especially as both have withdrawn much of their forces to other fronts, giving the Lintha dominance in the Caul's waters — but the tension between them grows with every battle. As the Realm civil war heats up, it's only a matter of time until shots are fired between Peleps and V'neef.

But while some Pact members would gladly wait for the two navies to fight one another, until that point they remain a thorn in the Pact's side and an obstacle to subduing Faxai. Sha'a Oka and his generals hope that by eliminating these bases, the Lintha can dominate the surrounding waters, shutting out anything short of a major Imperial Navy offensive. Such a blockade would cut off Faxai from shipborne communications, supplies, reinforcements, and escape routes.

For now, Lunars take advantage of this tension, not counting on intra-Dynastic hostilities doing their work for them. On land, Pact tricksters infiltrate and cause chaos in coastal outposts, while warriors lead lightning-quick raids to destroy ships and naval facilities. At sea, Fia-Shaw's crews harry nearby shipping lanes, forcing ships toward rocky reefs or into ambushes. Allied pirates, privateers, and mercenaries patrol the coast, driving Realm-allied ships out of coves and smaller harbors, or capturing merchant ships bound for or leaving Faxai and pressing their crews into service.

Noteworthy naval outposts include:

- **Zhekin's Holdfast**, a walled fortress-town on an islet south of Faxai.
- **Raitonwatch**, cut ages ago into cliff walls overlooking a rocky cove on the Caul's eastern coast.
- **The House of Steel Wings**, an ancient fortress-manse along the Moro river estuary on the Caul's northern coast.

Asura's Lintha and other Pact naval forces can't match the full force of the Imperial Navy's Western Fleet, so they concentrate on ensuring that they never need to meet it all at once. Espionage and reconnaissance warn them of major enemy movements, which they attempt to avoid via planning, speed, and occult aid. Conversely, they target smaller squadrons whenever possible, and raid supply convoys headed to Realm holdings. Still, they must be wary, lest overconfidence lead them into the Imperial Navy's own traps; they can ill-afford significant losses.

RECLAIMING THE HAWKSTONE

The Hawkstone is an ancient mountaintop fortress, all but inaccessible from below. Once used by the Ninga hawkfolk as a base for reconnaissance and raids on the shrine cities, Realm forces captured it decades ago, but as its inaccessibility made it all but useless to them and its geomantic significance forbade destroying it, a Dynastic sorcerer riddled it with occult defenses to punish Pact efforts to reclaim it.

A Size 1 battle group of agata (**Exalted**, p. 523) flocks around the fortress, attacking anyone not escorted by an anima-flaring Dragon-Blood. Within, sorcerous traps include mazes of ever-shifting hallways, flocks of living blades, or poisonous fogs. Represent the fortress' occult guardians using automaton (**Exalted**, p. 500) or war ghost (**Exalted**, p. 504) traits, as well as summoned spirits such as vaktri (**Exalted**, p. 520).

SEIZING RELANDA'S LABYRINTH

While the Pact controls three of the Four Fangs outside Faxai, the fourth — Relanda's Labyrinth — remains in Realm hands. A fortified waypoint northwest of Faxai, it facilitates Realm raids behind Pact lines and opens the way to Garianghis and Hoshou.

Sprawling along the shore of Lake Vigilant, this ancient fortress presents a high-impenetrable labyrinth of gates and courtyards. Innumerable lookout towers rise throughout, riddled with defensive slits bristling with archers. It's also a stopover for supply caravans, civilian traders, and military patrols and sorties.

STORY SEED: THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

Silver Pact operatives often target those Realm sorcerers who oversee Faxai's magical defenses. The combination of those losses and Tadeen Jhan's extensive experience has placed the Caul-born sorcerer among the leadership responsible for overseeing the sorcerous workings used on the Realm's fortifications.

Sharing power with an outcaste is a point of contention for Jhan's Dynast counterparts, who worry that Jhan's loyalties lie more with the Caul than the Realm. But the Realm's sorcerers already stand divided. The cautious Air Aspect Ledaal Catala Vinath, who followed her mentor from the Heptagram to the Caul and still grieves his loss, commands the city's magical defenses under Deja's authority, but chafes under both Deja's aggressive stance and her peers' perception of her as a political appointee. Meanwhile, the legion veteran Fire Aspect Raima Sun-Eye, Rin's chief sorcerer and himself an outcaste, struggles with the Caul's various Dynastic sorcerers' class sensibilities and Great House political scheming.

The players are tasked to gain information about the nature of the workings by locating Jhan or either of their apprentices. A player with knowledge of sorcery could attempt to befriend their students to learn more about the sorcery they use, or they could attempt to capture Jhan directly.

The latest workings are mostly finished on Faxai's walls, gates, and outlying fortifications. As long as they're in effect, magical effects are woven into the stone, such as making sections of the walls swallow those who come too close, emit flames or lightning meant to harm attackers, or inspire the morale of garrison soldiers upon the battlements. Sorcerous glyphs scattered across the walls can be manipulated by a sorcerer in order to disable or distort a section of the wall. However, some of these glyphs are trapped or have spirits bound to their defense.

Jhan has spent a long time on the Caul, and they've hidden mystical weapons and sorcerous workings in many places on the continent. While they wouldn't reveal them freely, they value their own freedom to explore the Caul more than their loyalty to the Realm. This includes traps meant for the Lunars but that can be turned against the Realm.

Characters targeting Relanda's Labyrinth might want to capture or assassinate some Realm worthy passing through; poison or destroy its supplies; or attack the fortress, whether by siege or frontal assault. But they're advised not to raze its walls or towers; its geomancy is ancient and sacred.

The retired dragonlord Nellens Sanim commands the Labyrinth; she's said to be as cryptic and devious as its architecture. Her wing of troops — largely Caulborn auxiliaries and retired legionnaires — are currently outnumbered by Keepers of the Amber Tabernacle who retreated here from Garianghis. Exact troop numbers fluctuate depending on who or what is passing through.

COMMUNION WITH SPIRIT COURTS

The Caul contains spirits old and new, and the Silver Pact and the Realm compete for their favor. While some spirits ally with one of the factions, others regard both unfavorably, seeing the destruction their war has caused. Player characters may negotiate with neutral spirits or challenge spirits allied with the Realm.

Truths Between Whispers, the spectral necromancer-captain of an eerie ghost ship, sells arms to Asura in exchange for pirated loot and the Caul's treasures. The ghost-savant craves the continent's occult secrets and offers sizable bargains for such knowledge. Some Lunars worry that Truth Between Whispers might abuse such knowledge, others that he may bypass the Lintha blockade of Faxai to supply the enemy. But weapons are always welcome in time of war.

She Who Hides in the Swamp is an ancient goddess worshiped by witches and shamans, taking the form of either a beautiful siren with an ugly heart, or an ugly hag with a beautiful heart. She's always stayed neutral in the war but may offer sorcerous or divine blessings to those who visit her. She demands strange gifts from her petitioners.

The fiery salamander Striking Cinder Serpent resides within the magma pools of Haroku Mountain. The Ransuri, a neutral tribe, protect and worship it. Lunars who earn its favor by withstanding the Pyre of Houshou may call for it to summon fire and brimstone upon their enemies.

Stage Four: Rising Opposition

Events in this stage represent possible Realm actions against the Pact. Storytellers might use them to show the Realm's response to player characters' actions, as complications impeding Pact plans, as opportunities for the characters to gain a general's trust or favor, or to fill

other story needs. The characters' plans, decisions, successes, and failures can all affect these events, making them easier or harder, and more or less likely to occur.

The Pact's successes to this point may help the Realm factions set their differences aside and work together. They won't always present a united front, or become suddenly immune to infighting and sabotage — those fault lines still exist, and Lunars exploit them adeptly. It's easier to turn uneasy allies against one another than members of a single faction. But Realm leaders will generally wait to stab one another in the back until the Pact threat eases.

GARIANGHIS BESIEGED

If other missions draw Pact forces elsewhere, Realm leaders seize the window of opportunity to attack Garianghis. Alternatively, outrage over some Lunar operation — a popular Immaculate's assassination, penitents dying from poisoned food, desecrating a temple, word of a terrible sorcerous working brewing in the Wood Shrine — might lead any of those leaders to declare a Wyld Hunt against Third Daughter.

The exact nature of the attacking force depends on its backers. A joint arrangement includes garrison troops, martial orders, Immaculate monks, and outcaste heroes. If only one or two leaders supports the venture, most or all forces not under their authority remain in Faxai.

Player characters may use false faces to sow conflict among Realm leaders in the run-up; convey intelligence to Third Daughter and other generals; harass the Realm force on the march; or join the fray at Garianghis' gates. Alternatively, they might quietly support the attack by withholding information from the Pact or providing it to the invaders, whether from rivalry with Third Daughter's camp or ruthless willingness to see the Realm overextend itself before the assault on Faxai.

If the Realm decisively reclaims Garianghis, the invaders' morale surges, while a boost in popularity cements the authority of the leader responsible. A pyrrhic victory or a defeat diminishes troop numbers and lowers morale. It also damages the responsible leader's reputation, shifting many of their units' loyalty to their rivals; as with victory, this may leave the Realm forces more united.

THE FOUR FANGS BESIEGED

For centuries, the Four Fangs (p, 213) helped guard Faxai against attack. If the Realm leaders set aside their differences long enough to coordinate, they sortie to seize one or more of the three fortresses currently in Pact hands. As long as their communications aren't compromised, they feint for one while attacking

another, greatly increasing their odds of retaking their target. If the Realm reclaims these fortresses, capturing Faxai becomes much more difficult.

Upon learning of the impending assault — whether by gathering intelligence in Faxai or reconnoitering in the field — player characters may race against time to inform the fortress' commanders, infiltrate the raiders to disrupt them with false orders, support — or lead! — a fortress' defenses, or direct a counterattack in the field.

KAMA BREAKOUT

Realm forces attempt to retake Kama by sea and use it as a beachhead for maneuvering behind Pact lines. They claim the island fortress of Storm's Eye off the coast as a staging ground, and use knowledge and resources from the Realm's long period of control over the city to their advantage, such as information on hidden coves, weak points in the garrison fort's defenses, or local contacts still loyal to the Realm operating within the city.

If the Pact successfully seized the port in the previous stage, they may have ships from their fleet in place to respond to the Realm's attack. With a strong enough naval presence and assistance from Asura's Lintha, the Lunars might not only rebuff the Realm's attack, but also damage or even commandeer a portion of the Imperial Fleet.

If the Pact failed to take Kama, or has treated Kama's people poorly, the city's residents may sabotage Pact efforts, even to the point of aiding the Dragon-Blooded however they are able — calling in favors from privateers and allying with crime bosses, negotiating with nearby Caulborn clans, etc.

THE ROGUE WING

A small force of legionary soldiers, Comara's Wing, went rogue four years ago — rejecting the order for all legions to return to the Blessed Isle — to reclaim their unit standard, which was lost in battle in the deep woods and seized by the Yazi Caulborn clan. Yazi warriors coat their weapons' tips in poisons; only the clan's foragers know where to find the plants from which the poisons are derived — or those plants which serve as antidotes. Sheltered by the hyparch, the wing has scouted and battled across the northern Caul ever since, renewing their dwindling numbers by recruiting among Caulborn and foreigners alike.

Having finally tracked down the lost standard, the wing has been raiding and harassing the Yazi, aiming to reclaim the standard in battle. If the Lunars have procured the clan's support, its leader calls in the favor, asking for help.

Through infiltration or interrogation, the wing's outcaste officers may yield useful information on the Realm forces' current status. One or more might fetch a ransom from one of the Realm leaders, or be exchanged for a captured Lunar.

If the player characters earned the clan's ire — by failing to protect them, working under a general who's treated them cruelly, seized their food, pressed their people into service, etc. — the Caulborn will oppose them as fiercely as they fight the talon.

If the wing regains its standard, it — and its Dragon-Blooded officers — will rejoin the main Realm force, appearing in later battles.

CAULBORN UPRISING

Realm provocateurs seek alliance with Caulborn tribes deep in the interior, aiming to direct them against Pact forces with the support of a cadre of Dragon-Blooded officers and experienced Realm troops. If the player characters' previous actions in the area and their dealings with the Caulborn have earned the tribes' trust, local leaders lend less credence to the Realm's arguments. Caulborn who've suffered indifference, disrespect, or violence from the player characters or their allies will be more eager to cooperate with the Realm.

If the player characters interrupt negotiations, the Caulborn may challenge both sides to perform some task, promising support to the victor — though this may also be a hidden test of character. Characters that assassinate the provocateurs' leader or otherwise behave dishonorably may lose the clan's support even if they win the challenge.

Represent a typical group of provocateurs as a Size 2 unit of battle-ready troops (**Exalted**, p. 496) with elite Drill, led by an experienced Dragon-Blooded (**Exalted**, p. 544). For the Caulborn themselves, use a Size 3 unit with nomadic horse-archer traits (**Exalted**, p. 496), unmounted, with normal Drill, led by a mortal champion (**Exalted**, p. 497).

SPIRIT UPRISING

Immaculate monks visit Caul spirit courts to persuade, bribe, and intimidate gods and elementals into opposing the Pact. Spirits who the player characters and their allies have successfully bargained with and impressed take their commitments seriously, resisting the monks' enticements. Those who feel poorly treated or disrespected by the Lunars show much more interest in the monks' offers.

The Caul has many spirit courts. Examples include:

The Laughing Seal Court meets in moonlit tide pools along the Pebbled Coast, on the Caul's eastern shores.

Its maritime spirits can track or attack ships at sea for an ally. The court's leader, the sly strategist Uvaron-of-the-Mists, meddles with currents for those who've earned her favor, delaying enemy reinforcements or carrying them off course, or creating swift currents for allies. Other members include the storm mother Lormos-Esk and the bloodthirsty Ashen Crow, a patron god of pirates.

The Court of Charoite Shards dwells in caves beneath the Ghost-Hand mountains. These subterranean spirits can sense marching armies' footfalls, giving allies an idea of the enemy's numbers and speed. They might also collapse or raise fortifications outside of the shrine cities. Leaders include the stolid Elquith the Just, a god of caverns; the inquisitive earth elemental Bright-Eyes Irodi; and the vaktri elder Cyfar, who is slow to trust outsiders.

The rat-faced god Nimbletail presides over the rodent court of Abundant Graces. The court can send mice to reconnoiter for allies, harass enemy troops, denude fields, and spoil food stores. Nimbletail delights in clever plans and bold schemes; his worshipers bring him word of the various generals and the battles they fought, which he pores over with a critical eye. He's been on the Caul for centuries, and enjoys regaling his audience with tales from skirmishes fought long ago. His closest advisors are the reserved mole-headed god T'sera, the Queen of Burrows, and the cold and calculating disease spirit Ruinous Flea, who share an uneasy alliance.

BATTLE FOR ASURA

The Realm readies an assault on Asura, aiming to drive the Pact out of the Caul's waters and allow safe resupply of Faxai by sea.

This begins with scouting missions. Some are overt: swift ships that stay well away from patrolling vessels, gathering information via spyglass or airborne familiars. Others are stealthier: Caulborn operatives sent into Asura, or spying via sorcerous means. A band of Penitent Raitons have been entrenched in the broken lands outside Asura for weeks, charting the mutable terrain's current state and readying for the assault. An outcaste Lintha captain actually serves the All-Seeing Eye, operating under a false name.

The attack plan is threefold. Realm ships laden with marines attack the harbor as small bands of troops move in by land. Meanwhile, agents in Asura attempt to assassinate leaders, burn ships, release the harbor chain, and otherwise sabotage the port's defenses. Lastly, a wave of summoned spirits infiltrates Asura from underwater and by air — many of them, such as agatae and tide-mares, carrying Dragon-Blooded champions or teams

THE SOLAR CIRCLE

As an optional complication, a Solar Circle forms in Kama, its members opposed to both sides in the war. The Caulborn general Paral Tidesinger resents Realm and Pact alike for their callous treatment of her people. The merchant prince Lyr Unnan and the pirate queen Kalonice Stormwind have both suffered hefty losses to their business interests, thanks to the Imperial Navy and the Lintha; they're trusted by the city's elders and its crime bosses, who call upon their aid when the war comes to Kama.

Storytellers might use this Circle to provide an extra obstacle for the player characters to contend with, or provide a problematic potential ally. Whatever the Solars' future plans — whether to make Kama an imperial capital, lead a revolution among the Caulborn, or sweep all rival fleets from the Southwestern seas — they'll eventually find themselves at odds with the Pact.

of elite troops — to ensure that the sabotage plan goes forward even if all of the Realm's spies are caught.

Player characters might spy on the Realm fleet, gathering intelligence on their ships' capabilities, captains' strengths and weaknesses, and attack plans. They can intercept and interrogate Realm scouts outside Asura. To catch and thwart Realm agents in the Lintha fortress-port, they might implement counterintelligence measures.

Once battle begins, characters might join the crews of Pact ships or command their own. Those with aquatic forms can harry Realm vessels from the waves while land-based Lunars defend the city from enemy infantry.

Player characters with an axe to grind against Fia-Shaw, the Lintha, or pirates in general might undermine Asura's defense. (But quietly; getting caught would sully their reputations, inflame Pact factionalism, and perhaps draw violent reprisal from Fia-Shaw's supporters.)

If the Pact learns of the attack early enough, Sha'a Oka times the battle for Faxai to coincide with it; with the Imperial Navy's resources dedicated to Asura, Faxai becomes vulnerable by sea. But pulling Asura's fleet and troops away to fight in and around Faxai leaves Asura itself vulnerable. While the Black Lion considers sacrificing Asura an acceptable loss, Fia-Shaw doesn't; such a maneuver causes a rift between them.

Stage Five: The Battle of Faxai

Sha'a Oka attacks on every flank and utilizes every known weakness. He won't risk desecrating Faxai's sacred geomancy with siege weapons, but Garda-Empress' hawkfolk and Third Daughter's winged spirits can bypass its walls while the main mass of troops scales them with ladders, towers, and — for many beastfolk — claws. The Lintha, if available, engage Realm shore-defense fleets. Third Daughter's turtlewolves swim in beneath the harbor's waters and rampage among the docks.

But the Realm stands ready to defend the shrine city. Archers line the walls to shoot hawkfolk out of the sky. Soldiers guard every gate and patrol the streets for infiltrators and insurrectionists. Siege engines watch the harbor; triremes prowl the surrounding waters. Spirits and sorceries obstruct the Pact's occult efforts. And above all, the Dragon-Blooded themselves defend Faxai with righteous zeal.

PREPARATIONS

In the days and hours before the assault, Pact forces finalize preparations. Player characters may infiltrate Faxai to gain vital last-minute intelligence, sabotage key infrastructure, and assassinate military leaders to throw troops into disarray or popular civilian figures to hurt

FINAL PREPARATIONS

The characters' prior successes, failures, and preparations should influence the assault on Faxai. Mechanically, Storytellers can represent this by adjusting relevant forces' traits or dice pools — eg, increase Size or Drill for an allied battle group the characters helped, add a mortal champion they recruited, or similarly penalize Realm forces they've undermined. For operations where the characters failed or Realm forces thwarted them, grant bonuses to enemy battle groups or decrease the Size or Drill of a Pact-led force. The Storyteller may change an extended action's goal number or interval, or add bonuses or penalties to Strategic Maneuvers, to account for player characters' prior preparations.

Lastly, previous character interactions can add depth to the current story. Point out Storyteller characters on the battlefield whom players might want to protect, who they love to hate, or who they've befriended but must fight against. Intimacies toward player characters can drive Realm champions to target or avoid them; allied Pact heroes may come to their aid, while those they've antagonized might turn their back in a moment of need.

the city's morale. With a population already primed for unrest, characters stir up dissent, riots, or rebellions the city's leaders need to subdue.

Characters outside Faxai review and refine strategies, assemble troops and ships, and lead forces to their positions. Sorcerers gather final reagents for workings and prepare rituals. Messengers carry instructions to other Lunar leaders.

THE ASSAULT

The assault comprises several simultaneous operations. As with the council in Stage Two, the Storyteller might want to give players an out-of-character rundown of the upcoming battle's major set pieces (see "Getting on the Same Page," p. 222). Each player should choose one to dedicate her character to. This may put all the characters in the same combat scene, or spread everyone out over several different ones. The Storyteller may wish to have this conversation with her players at the end of the session before the assault on Faxai takes place (or at a convenient time between sessions), giving her time to prepare if a player proposes a set piece or other activity that she hadn't anticipated.

As the battle begins, Sha'a Oka boldly leads his army along the pilgrimage road into the teeth of the Realm's defense, confident in both his own strength and in the weaknesses his people have seeded among the enemy. Player characters might serve as officers and champions in a general's force; lead their own smaller force of Caulborn allies, foreign followers, or younger Lunars under their command; or fight solo as a terrifying god-monster. They might join the vanguard clashing with the Sword-Saints at Faxai's gates, or range out to flank enemy forces in the field — or to prevent the Pact's forces from being flanked themselves.

Garda-Empress and her hawkfolk soar above the city, conducting an aerial assault. Player characters can pick off archers on Faxai's walls or serve as lookouts, watching the battle and relaying vital information among generals. They can pour oil on key structures for archers to set aflame or drop stones to smash siege engines.

Fia-Shaw and the Lintha fleet advance on Faxai's harbor. Characters sailing with her might engage Imperial Navy squadrons at sea or assault the harbor defenses to lead marines onto the docks. Sorcerers stir up favorable winds for Pact vessels or summon elementals to smash holes in Imperial hulls. Some characters swim with Fia-Shaw's siaka, waiting for sailors to fall overboard.

Third Daughter of the Leaves unleashes a spate of sorcerous attacks from Garianghis. Player characters joining her might deploy their own spells and workings,

unleashing monsters and curses on enemy troops. Non-sorcerers defend their allies from Realm forces sent to stop the workings.

Skathra Venomchild appears within Faxai itself, sowing chaos in its streets. Characters alongside them destroy food stores and burn ledgers, or set fire to barracks and warehouses. They can steal officers' faces and issue conflicting orders, or assassinate key figures. They might send word to Lunar generals of the martial orders' movements and planned countermeasures. They can guide hawkfolk to targets, or infiltrate harborside strongholds and sabotage coastal defenses.

Regardless of which operation they join, characters find opportunities to spy on the enemy and intercept and alter orders. They might capture or kill important figures. Some might persuade troops to surrender, or even change sides. Others incite riots amid civilian populations or cause disillusioned soldiers to mutiny.

Should Lunar victory seem imminent, Lunars who can deliver favorable terms for surrender may be able to suborn Lanusa in return for the bloodless takeover of Faxai, or failing that, guaranteeing the V'neef garrison's safe conduct away from the Caul. The satrap would never yield the holy land lightly, but there are other battles for the Dynasty's youngest house to fight. If her standing in the city is weak, however, she may find herself unable to fulfill her promises; many soldiers might defect to Deja's or Rin's banner to defend the holy continent.

If Rin is certain the Caul is doomed, she's the most likely candidate to convince the martial orders and garrison to stand down. If the garrison commander and hyparch don't — or can't — intervene, this might save the sacred city much destruction and bloodshed in the event of a Lunar victory.

If Torala senses the battle is lost, her priority becomes helping citizens evacuate and covering their escape. Deja fights until the Lunars retreat or she dies in battle, whichever comes first, and urges her officers to do the same.

THE AFTERMATH

If the Lunars win, there's much to keep player characters busy in the immediate aftermath. They might hunt down fleeing troops and ships, preventing surviving forces from rallying. Pockets of resistance need quelling. They might weigh in on decisions regarding prisoners: what should be done about politically important captives, or those highly regarded among their troops — will captives' allies attempt to rescue them? Would they fetch a ransom? What about noncombatant citizens who survived — do the characters argue for letting



them leave the Caul? Are they turned out of the city to fend for themselves in the wilderness? Could any be persuaded to join the Pact?

These actions might depend on the extent of the Pact's victory. A decisive win leaves the Pact with more personnel to attend to troubles that flare up. A pyrrhic victory stretches them thin, without enough soldiers or ships to chase down escapees — potentially letting someone formidable get away. There are repairs to be made, wounds to tend to, and mouths to feed. If the Realm's leadership fled, they might have left intelligence and resources behind. Or perhaps they set fire to the garrison and the satrap's palace before escaping, leaving the Lunars to extinguish the blaze.

If the Realm wins, Faxai remains in the invaders' hands. A decisive Realm victory pushes the Pact back at least as far back as Garianghis. A pyrrhic one leaves the Dynasts in much the same place as they began, holding onto Faxai by their fingernails, only with a greatly reduced military and even fewer resources to spread among the people.

In the wake of a Realm victory, player characters might lead allies to safety or distract Realm patrols from

FAXAI STANDOFF

Realm leaders may threaten to destroy the Earth Shrine if the Lunars press the attack. If the Lunars back down, the Realm uses the pause to gather its forces in Faxai, while Lunar infiltrators attempt to seize the shrine so they can safely resume the siege. If the Lunars succeed quickly enough, the assault on Faxai proceeds; if they take too long, the Realm breaks the siege and renews its own offensive.

chasing those attempting to flee. They may plan missions to rescue captured Pact members or shore up defenses in Pact holdings in case the invaders press the attack. The wounded need tending; supplies must be replenished.

Stage Six: The Lion Disappears

Should the Pact forces win, Sha'a Oka declares his intention to enter the Earth Shrine immediately, aiming to pursue the pilgrimage with all haste before Realm forces can recover and retaliate. Debate is fierce, but the Black Lion is difficult to dissuade; the pilgrimage is his ultimate goal, with the war merely a means to an end.

After a grand festival where the Lunars offer magnificent sacrifices to Luna and flare their animas to wash the city in their goddess' Essence, Sha'a Oka and similarly inclined peers — including Skathra Venomchild — descend into the shrine. Whether and when they exit the shrine depends on the Storyteller's needs. Following are some possible approaches to various elements of this stage:

- Pilgrims typically emerge from the shrine within hours or days. But Sha'a Oka (and some or all key non-player characters) that join him remain below the earth for weeks, or even months. Without his leadership, his generals disperse to address their own priorities. Fia-Shaw returns to Asura or seeks Leviathan's counsel in Sunken Luth; Third Daughter returns to Garianghis to pursue her sorceries; Sandswept Garda-Empress, receiving word of a raid on Sekima, withdraws her forces to protect her people.
- Upon being found worthy by the shrine, Sha'a Oka sets out on the pilgrimage immediately, completing it in a matter of days. Once he steps through the gates of Feng-Yi, he's never seen again. Some believe he's achieved union with Gaia, or the Caul. Others say he's traveled back to the day the Caul first emerged from the mists, to relive the campaign over and over again. His generals disperse as above, though their authority is undermined by those who believe the Black Lion will return as a messiah to lead the Lunar Host.
- Sha'a Oka completes the pilgrimage and returns from Feng-Yi. He doesn't speak of what he saw, leaving the truth for others who also embark on the deeply spiritual journey. He attempts to resume command of the war effort, but other than the loyal Skathra, his generals part ways with him, feeling free to pursue their own agendas with Faxai captured. Third Daughter devotes herself to her sorcery. Asura and the Lintha require Fia-Shaw's attention. Sandswept Garda-Empress believes herself as capable a leader as Sha'a Oka himself — perhaps moreso.
- Sha'a Oka dies in battle, or suffers grievous occult injuries from which he can't recover. His generals vie for control of the Caul's forces. Other Lunars, less invested in the continent's fate, drift back toward obligations in the Threshold and their home dominions. The reduction in Pact forces gives the Realm opportunity to retaliate.

Alternatively, should the assault on Faxai fail, Sha'a Oka perishes in battle along with one or more of his generals.

THE LION DOESN'T SLEEP

If the story demands, the Storyteller should bypass Stages Six and Seven. Should player characters' efforts give the Lunar forces an overwhelming advantage, even the Black Lion's disappearance won't impede their dominance of the Caul. Alternatively, victorious Lunar elders may postpone their pursuit of the pilgrimage, whether of their own volition or through the player characters' persuasion. Ultimately, this is a matter of scenario pacing; if the Storyteller and players have no interest in further obstacles to a Lunar victory, they should advance to the endgame.

The Pact forces fall back in disarray, disheartened to have faltered at the edge of total victory. Their surviving leaders can't agree on a path forward without Sha'a Oka to unify them.

Whether the Pact wins or loses the battle for Faxai, should player characters remain on the Caul, they find themselves in an important role. It falls to them to unify surviving Moon-Touched captains, dissuade Lunar crusaders from abandoning the Caul, and — should they so desire — take on new positions of authority to fill the gaps left by Sha'a Oka and other missing Lunar leaders.

While the scenario follows the same general track either way, key differences can meaningfully affect play down the line. A Realm victory leaves Pact forces weaker and in a more precarious situation, but with a clearer chain of command. After a Pact victory, the Lunars command the Caul, retain more troops, and maintain higher morale, but divisions among the generals and the prospect of Sha'a Oka's return impairs the Lunar generals' ability to coordinate and leaves them wary of initiating new plans and stratagems in his absence.

Stage Seven: The Dragon Regains Its Footing

Whether the Lunars fail to take Faxai or lose their leadership — either to the Earth Shrine or political divisiveness — Realm forces see an opportunity that might not come again, and seize the initiative to counterattack. Suddenly the Pact's victory doesn't look quite so decisive, and holding the Caul may prove more perilous than taking it.

The specifics of the Realm counterstrike depend on what's come before. If the Lunars seized Faxai, they're largely facing remnant forces — naval forces based in

the ruins of Asura, survivors hiding in Faxai's walls, scattered survivors and isolated camps on the mainland. Belated Realm reinforcements may arrive from overseas, whether detachments from an expansionist House Peleps hoping to quell Anathema intervention in their sphere of influence, martial orders fleeing the chaos of civil war, or rogue legionary forces led by Realm outcasts seeking to carve out their own dominion.

If the Lunars failed to take Faxai, its garrison rallies, most likely supplemented by reinforcements as noted above. This leaves them more numerous, better organized, and well entrenched in Faxai. However, they're also more subject to infighting. Their victory can give false confidence to factional leaders, who deem matters sufficiently under control that they can afford to squabble for dominance.

Storytelling the Aftermath

Following are some guidelines and story ideas for different types of endings and what might come next for the player characters.

Decisive Lunar Victory

Silver Pact forces unseat the Dragon-Blooded with minimal losses, affording them complete control of the Caul. With the Realm and Immaculate Order too distracted by civil war to renew the campaign, the Lunars are free to establish their own order on the primal continent — including completing the pilgrimage, which opens the gates to Feng-Yi for Lunar supplicants. What lies beyond those gates is up to you. Perhaps it's Gaia's resting place; a timeless shrine that binds a Lunar's body and soul to the Caul's sacred soil; simply an empty reminder of a bygone age; or something else entirely.

This leaves player characters free to choose their own direction. They may explore the Caul's mysteries, or leave it behind to join other Silver Pact ventures elsewhere. Lastly, many of the Black Lion's army wish to take the war to the enemy: assembling an invasion fleet on the Caul, whether to battle a nascent Western Peleps empire or assault the Blessed Isle itself, can support an entirely new chain of stories.

Pyrrhic Lunar Victory

The Silver Pact drives the Realm forces from the Caul, but at great cost. Many Lunars perish, along with countless beastfolk, Caulborn, and other allies.

In this endgame, there's still much to do on the Caul, and the Lunars can't rest on their laurels. There's no prospect of taking the war to the enemy. Instead, the Caul's defenses must be reinforced lest the Dragon-Blooded renew their assault, while lingering Realm elements pose a meaningful threat in the interior. Other powers — spirit courts, a powerful Exigent champion and her Caulborn army, or the like — may challenge the Pact's authority over the sacred continent. Without strong leadership, embittered leaders and peoples withdraw to their own dominions, leaving the Caul vulnerable.

Pyrrhic Realm Victory

The Realm rebuffs the Pact assault on Faxai, and may even push along the pilgrimage road to capture Garianghis or another city. The Imperial Fleet breaks through Asura's defenses at last, driving the Lintha out to sea. Such victories come at a high price, however: martial orders suffer heavy losses, retreating Pact forces destroy supply lines, and several Dragon-Blooded leaders perish in battle.

While the Realm awaits reinforcements and supplies, the retreating Pact forces have time to regroup. Better able to traverse the Caul than the invaders, they have an opportunity to assemble, plan, and make retaliatory strikes.

Decisive Realm Victory

Realm forces not only drive the Lunars out of Faxai, they sweep across the entire Caul. The Black Lion and one or more of his generals — perhaps all of them — die or are captured, leaving Pact forces reeling. Word of the victory invigorates the Great Houses' interest, resulting in an additional surge in Realm personnel and resources. For the first time, Lunars need to defend Morovath itself.

Third-Party Victory

Some third party takes advantage of the Pact-Realm war to claim a dominant position on the Caul. This might be an empire-building Solar Circle, a Deathlord and her Abyssals wielding the war's bloodshed to open a shadowland in defiance of the mystical continent's nature, a Fair Folk court dredging nightmare behemoths from Garianghis' dream, or a coalition of spirit and Caulborn revolutionaries rejecting Realm and Pact oppression alike.

The Caul Unmoored

The Caul vanishes from Creation as it did in the Contagion's wake. This could result from destroying a shrine or otherwise tampering with the Caul's geomancy; Third Daughter's nightmare magic gone awry; some grand working by the Sidereals to rid themselves of Sha'a Oka's coterie; a Lunar effort to remove the Caul to a place safe from the Realm; or the like.

Whatever the purpose and proximate cause for its disappearance, give player characters opportunities to intervene — albeit at the cost of opportunities to undermine the Realm. If it's Lunar work, they hear about it

from allies, and may encourage or dissuade the effort, possibly supporting or opposing it directly. If caused by outside forces, they stumble on clues while pursuing other leads, and can follow up and put a stop to it.

Should the Caul vanish — whether because player characters helped make it happen, or failed in efforts to oppose it — consider what happens next. Are they left behind in the Great Western Ocean as the Caul disappears beneath them? Do they join the Caul in some cryptic, timeless dream-realm where they have weird adventures as they try to reconnect the Caul to Creation? Or is there no sense of intervening time when they reappear with the Caul years, decades, or even centuries later, to a Creation that's moved on without them?

Appendix

Lunar Exalted Intro Sheet

The Lunar Exalted

Divine warriors, tricksters, and witches, the shapeshifting **Lunar Exalted** walk the boundaries between civilization and wilderness, humanity and monstrosity. Apex predators anointed by the many-faced moon goddess **Luna**, they rage against their ancient enemies, the hereditary elemental heroes known as **Dragon-Blooded**, pursuing a long, slow war that's lasted over a thousand years.

Each Lunar begins as **Casteless**, but most choose one of three **Castes** to channel their supernatural strengths. **Full Moons** are warriors and warlords possessed of immense physical abilities that render them deadly in battle. **Changing Moons** are socialites, diplomats, and spies, who command unearthly gifts for charm and manipulation. **No Moons** are loremasters, strategists, and sorcerers, gifted with inhuman brilliance and occult talents.

The Silver Pact

Most Lunars belong to **the Silver Pact**, a mutual aid society spread across the world called **Creation**. Pact members recruit young Lunars, provide the **moonsilver tattoos** that fix their Caste, and offer protection, training, and direction.

Silver Pact leaders, called **shahan-yas**, offer guidance, tutelage, and political patronage to their **adherents**. Some such relationships are close, with adherents living alongside their shahan-yas; others live far away, visiting only intermittently to converse, study, and offer their services.

Local shahan-yas and their adherents gather in **councils** to make decisions, discuss current events, socialize, and debate. One shahan-ya hosts the gathering, offering lavish hospitality to her guests and their retinues.

Exalted Adversaries

For centuries, the Lunars have warred with **the Scarlet Realm**, a mighty empire spilling outward from **the**

Blessed Isle at Creation's heart to encompass hundreds of client states called **satrapies**. Founded by the seemingly immortal **Scarlet Empress**, it's ruled by the ten **Great Houses of the Scarlet Dynasty**, an aristocracy headed by the Dragon-Blooded.

The Realm's state religion, the **Immaculate Order**, believes that Lunar Exalted — who they call **Anathema** — inevitably go mad with power and must be destroyed. Under their aegis, Dragon-Blooded who learn of a nearby Lunar organize a military force called **Wyld Hunt** to track her down.

Other imperial Dragon-Blooded powers also conduct Wyld Hunts. **Lookshy**, in the East, is a hegemonic city-state ruled by a Dragon-Blooded military. **Prasad**, a satrapy-turned-empire in the Southeast, expands along the wondrous **Dreaming Sea**. The Silver Pact wars against these states as it does against the Realm.

Celestial heroes sent by Heaven to oversee destiny, the **Sidereals Exalted** are also longtime foes of the Silver Pact. After overthrowing the lost **First Age** in accordance with prophecy, they helped establish the Realm centuries ago, and today support the Wyld Hunt from behind false identities. Though a few claim sympathy with the Pact's aims, there's too much bad blood and treachery between them; encounters almost always end in conflict.

A World in Crisis

Five years ago, the Scarlet Empress vanished. At the same time, the **Solar Exalted** — reincarnating god-champions sealed away for an age, also deemed Anathema — returned to the world, renewing the **Solar Bond**: a soul-deep connection that most Lunars feel toward a single Solar, established across millennia of past lives. These events have rocked Dragon-Blooded hegemony and sent the Realm spiraling toward civil disorder. Many shahan-yas see this as time to go on the offensive in their long war.

Shapeshifting

Changing forms is every Lunar's birthright. Each has a **spirit shape** — an animal form representing her inner nature. They may also take other animal and human forms, typically through the **sacred hunt** — ritually hunting and killing their target to taste his heart's blood. Some develop alternative, nonlethal methods.

Each Lunar has a **Tell**: a distinctive physical feature that appears in all of her forms. The Tell conceals itself from onlookers' minds, but those few who spot it may see through the Lunar's transformations to discern her identity.

Note-worthy Shahan-yas

Leviathan guards the sunken city of Luthe as a titanic orca, slowly rousing from his centuries-long slumber to drive the Realm's navy out of the West. **Sha'a Oka**, the Black Lion, directs the campaign against Dragon-Blooded pilgrims on the sacred continent of the Caul. **Tayan Silver-Crowned** rules as autarch over the Shadow Fang Vanguard, a Silver Pact splinter faction with a strict military hierarchy.

Amatha Kinslayer employs her experience as a scion of the Scarlet Dynasty to sow havoc among the Southern satrapies, stealing faces and rousing insurrections. **Golden-Leaf Liseli** wields vast wealth as a weapon, whether by crashing economies, bribing officials, or hiring mercenaries and assassins. **Ma-Ha-Suchi**, a tired and jaded warlord, has rallied his forces anew in the wake of the Empress' disappearance, seeking to make real his vision of a unified Lunar Realm.

Feather Drenched in the Blood of the Fallen, Tayan's own shahan-ya, takes few students in her ancient vendetta against the mysterious Sidereal Exalted. **Raksi**, renowned as a monstrous, self-indulgent sorceress-queen, rules an empire from the Eastern jungle-city of Mahalanka. **Rukhsara-Who-Remembers** commands great respect despite her youth, having inherited millennia of wisdom and secrets from her previous incarnation.

Asymmetrical Warfare

The Silver Pact is committed to a long, grinding war of attrition against the Realm and all other Dragon-Blooded polities that uphold the Wyld Hunt. Rather than confront their enemies in open battle, they rely primarily on raiding, sabotage, assassination, and similar tactics to slowly bleed their enemies with minimal risk to the Lunars themselves.

As part of this campaign, many Lunars establish **dominions** — societies they wield as weapons against the Realm. Some rule their dominions as princes and warlords; others manipulate them from the shadows. Those established near the Realm's satrapies eventually fall beneath its legions, taking their toll in blood. More distant dominions can grow into mighty powers, ready to be mobilized in the current time of tumult.

Magic of Creation

The Lunar Exalted draw upon animal and shapeshifting themes to enhance their skills; such techniques have many names in Creation, but are called **Charms** on your character sheet. Lunars often wield **artifacts** — near-unbreakable tools of supernatural power — and can awaken unique magics called **Evocations** from them. Some control **demesnes** or **manses**, unique places of power, and bear **hearthstones** that confer the blessings of such sites. Some own such relics outright; others hold them on loan from their shahan-yas.

With specialized training, characters may be initiated into **sorcery** or learn powerful **martial arts**. Supernatural creatures and rare mortals may learn sorcery, allowing them to cast spells — strange miracles with unique effects. Though mortals may learn martial arts, only supernatural beings like Lunars can perfect those styles to superhuman levels.

Other supernatural powers exist in Creation. Strange and surreal places called **Wyld** regions corrupt and transform the people and animals that linger there, and are inhabited by unnatural beasts called **behemoths** and beautiful soul-eating tricksters called **the Fair Folk**. Significant death and destruction can transform a place into a **shadowland**, where undead roam freely and travelers may wander into **the Underworld**, the land of ghosts. Ancient ruins of the First Age contain artifacts, histories, and world-changing wonders lost to time, and fetch amazing prices for explorers who retrieve them.



In the forests of the Northeast, the Lunars under Tayan Silver-Crowned's command assault the Realm's far-flung satrapies. On the slopes of Mount Namas, two esteemed shahan-yas bitterly debate their course of action toward the expanding Prasadi empire. The elder Sublime Danger combs the Scavenger Lands for worthwhile opponents. And on the Caul, Sha'a Oka and his generals gather their forces, determined to drive the Dragon-Blooded from the last of the shrine cities.

Many-Faced Strangers details life among the Shadow Fang Vanguard, an authoritarian organization that split from — and occasionally finds its goals at odds with — the Silver Pact; describes Mount Namas and the expanding rift between its Lunar caretakers; expands upon the storied hero Sublime Danger; and introduces several gods and spirit courts of Luna. This book also contains new Lunar Charms, artifacts, and Quick Characters. Finally, it outlines the War for the Caul, including a playable scenario.

EXALTED

THIRD EDITION

