

MIRACLES^{OF THE} DIVINE FLAME



A SOURCEBOOK FOR

EXALTED
THIRD EDITION

MIRACLES^{OF} THE DIVINE FLAME



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Introduction

That day I shall always recollect with grief; with reverence also, for the gods so willed it.

— Virgil, the Aeneid

With the return of the Solar Exalted, the Unconquered Sun looks once more upon Creation and answers the prayers of the gods as they call for succor. The flames of Exigence burn bright once more, and the Chosen of the little gods return to Creation in numbers not seen since the First Age. The Torchbearer kindles a flame of knowledge handed down to successive enlightened champions. The Immaculate Order presses Exalts like the Foxbinder into service and declares dissenters like the mysterious Essential Silence Anathema. On the high seas of the West, the fractious God-Admirals of Cabochon clash with one another and with the monstrous Reaver, Chosen of Siakal. In the great temple-city of Great Forks, more Exigents gather than anywhere else in Creation, drawn by the will of their patrons or the company of their own kind.

For the rules necessary to play an Exigent, for more details about designing your own Exigents, and for further setting information about Great Forks, you'll need access to **Exigents: Out of the Ashes**. The book you're now reading, **Miracles of the Divine Flame**, is a companion volume funded through Indiegogo. It offers additional patrons and famous Exigents, a more detailed guide to the streets of Great Forks, new artifacts wielded by current and historical Exigent characters, and additional Charms for those Exigents that appear in *Out of the Ashes*. It also contains nine new design seeds for new Exigents and groups, ready to play or develop further. Thank you to everyone who made this book possible by backing the Exigents Indiegogo campaign!

This Book at a Glance

Chapter One: Bearers of the Spark introduces many more ideas for potential Exigent patrons and a rundown of their themes and character. It also discusses several more notable Exigents, with some suggestions on how their powers could work and how you can start homebrewing them for your own use. It also details more information on the city of Great Forks, a detailed rundown

of its districts and the many characters who can be encountered therein. Along with the original chapter in *Out of the Ashes*, it should contain everything you need to run a game in this iconic Exigents locale.

Chapter Two: Champions of the Terrestrial Host contains four new design seeds for Terrestrial play. The Foxbinder is the companion and custodian of Shifune, a mysterious trickster-fox. The God-Admirals of Cabochon dwindle in number but remain mighty religious heroes on the Western seas. Thousand Venoms Mistress is a consummate assassin and a true believer in the cause of her patron goddess. The Torchbearer is the eighth in a line of scholar-heroes who kindle the light of knowledge bequeathed by a long-dead god.

Chapter Three: Champions of the Celestial Host contains five new design seeds for Celestial play. The Bleak Warden, Chosen of Seals, possesses power over wards, shadows, and a strange prison at the heart of Creation. Essential Silence, Chosen of Mysteries Unveiled, is a former Immaculate inquisitor, now rogue and traveling Creation in pursuit of answers. Nurlissa, Chosen of Masks, uses mystical masked personas for her unique Charms. The Reaver, Chosen of Siakal, is a notorious former pirate out of retirement with the power of Exaltation and more bloodthirsty than ever. Willow Specter, Chosen of the Dice, is the luckiest man alive, out to play Creation for everything it's worth.

Chapter Five: Kindling the Fire supplies a wealth of new Charms for the four Exigents from *Out of the Ashes*; Strawmaiden Janest, Pakpao the Puppeteer, The Architects, and the Sovereigns of Uluru, expanding on their amazing feats. It also offers six backer-chosen artifacts wielded by historical or contemporary Exigents or associated with notable patrons like Aurora. These include Cloudhammer, one of the favored weapons of Kerlei the Chain, and the curse-breaking devil-caster Benediction.

The priestess and her god bowed before the storm raging around them. Morning light struggled to reach the roiling seas through the churning clouds and driving winds that propelled the ship forward, but the crew sang prayer-shanties with joyful abandon. For the storm was their captain's divinity made manifest, and all the seas her temple.

Parjukewa the Revelator stood with the priestess and god on the aft-castle in a spotless dry circle. "I expect we'll make it to your island by midday. I thank you again for your aid in crushing those Immaculates." She spit, cursing their heathen faith.

Kiss of Frost, the god of gentle snowfalls, smiled an ice-sculpture smile. His tattered snowflake vestments made a tinkling sound as he laid a blue hand on his emaciated priestess, Atarangi. "The gratitude is ours. I thought we'd never escape their dungeon."

The priestess pressed into him, making a pleased noise. "'Improper conduct'. Pfah."

Perhaps Parjukewa would have smiled for once, had her sharp eyes not then spotted rough fins breaching the water. Dozens of them.

She had enough time to bellow, "Brace!" before the ship lurched violently to one side. Sailors screamed; one fell off the ship, swallowed in enormous jaws.

Lightning flashed, illuminating a hulking figure on the prow, smiling a shark's smile. Fear surrounded him like a cloak, suffocating and paralyzing the crew.

"What have we here? Dead men... and the quavering godling of the hour. My mistress Siakal heard you were freed, Kiss of Frost, and she remembers what you did. I'd tell you I'm doing this for the old lady, but, really, this is just for me. Teon Saj, at your service."

Teon Saj, the Reaver, locked eyes with Parjukewa, taking in the older woman's tall figure and intense glare. "You look like fun. And easy to agitate." He bent down to rip up the ship's figurehead and hurled it at a crewman, caving his chest in.

Parjukewa roared like thunder. "Witness, my faithful, a miracle of violence."

She vaulted the railing and flew towards Teon. He leaped to meet her. Explosive energy swirled from her glowing fist while he swung with a vicious clawed uppercut trailing blood-shot cobalt.

Their fists met like thunder, once, twice, thirteen times. Each threw a deafening shockwave, and on the fourteenth, Parjukewa clipped his temple. But the Reaver's skin sharpened, cutting her hand. She recoiled, and Teon kicked her so hard she flew back into a mast with a dangerous crack, then sank to the ground.

Teon let out an ugly laugh. "Come on, auntie, that all you got?"

Parjukewa's head swam, but she shook it to clear the fog. Her knee was screaming. But so was something else inside her, her Essence boiling furiously, and abruptly she rose, as if lifted on rising tides.

"Not even close." She spat blood. Her crew cheered.

Time lost meaning shortly thereafter. The world was rain and blood, the churn of the deck and rising of their animas. The Reaver fought like a rabid animal with a butcher's cruelty. Parjukewa assumed a shape of destruction, pouring herself out into a caged typhoon. The air around them roared in a vortex, shaking the deck.

But from his growing grin, Teon knew, and she knew, and everyone watching knew, that he was going to win. He was stronger, and Parjukewa's attention was divided between protecting her ship from the sharks and her crew from the Reaver.

She, and everyone else aboard, was going to die.

The priestess and her god both bowed before the storm raging around them. The god kissed her head; mouthed an apology.

He prayed for deliverance and was answered with a spark of salvation.





Chapter One

Bearer of the Spark

Any of the countless gods of Creation and Heaven could beseech the Unconquered Sun for the gift of Exaltation, and his favor, once granted, can be traded or stolen, allowing even the most iniquitous of gods opportunity to kindle the fire of Exigence. This chapter contains a roster of possible patrons and notable Exigents who you might use as NPCs or homebrew as player characters.

Divine Patrons

Arung, Dog of the Unbroken Earth

The Contagion saw an unprecedented contraction of mortal society; as countless millions died, a largely tamed Creation slowly went feral as there were no hands to work it. These were good centuries for Arung, a Dog of the Unbroken Earth (**Exalted**, pp. 511-512) in the rocky hills of the near Eastern Threshold, whose role it was to restore cultivated land to its wild state. Alas, these good times are ending — rebels from nearby Jiara have begun digging into Arung's mountains, seeking iron for weapons and slowly eroding its wild nature. He seeks a Champion to fight back, and one who can stand up to the inevitable Immaculates who will follow.

One difficulty remains: to empower a Champion, Arung must choose a mortal. Rare is the human who will turn her back completely upon civilization; even nomadic peoples cultivate the land in their own way. Before he sacrifices himself in the name of preserving his little patch of wilderness, Arung must be certain his Champion will be as devoted to the cause as he is.

THEMES

A Chosen of the Unbroken Earth would be, in a way, the opposite of an Architect. They would draw power from wild places and have powers to spread that wilderness further. However, in urban areas, they would find these powers diminished.

Arung's Chosen could possess powerful magic for communicating with and commanding wild beasts and plants, accelerating the deterioration of structures, facilitating the growth of wild plant life, un-domesticating animals, and the like.

Arung's bond with the mountains might allow for Charms for controlling rockslides, un-smelting metals to destroy weapons, and so on. It's possible that Arung could survive in a diminished, animalistic form and serve his Chosen as a familiar, similar to Shifune with the Foxbinder (p. 38).

Ennu Resplendent-in-Silver

The Abhari have many Prophets, but the wise fear Ennu Resplendent-in-Silver (**The Realm**, p. 154) most of all, for he sees into the hearts of mortals and gleans their deepest desires. So armed, Ennu tests the faithful with terrible bargains, promising worldly pleasure and gain in exchange for spiritual impoverishment. It's said he does this not from spite, but to give the faithful a means to demonstrate their virtue — those who pass his test, he often welcomes into his mystery cult. Were he to grant an Exigence, he would test that soul harder than any other, such that only the most virtuous might win that prize.

THEMES

"Wealth is no virtue," says the *Atzal Shekinta*, "but it paves virtue's road." This, more than any other passage, is Ennu's watchword. The Abhari believe he's most concerned with ensuring that wealth serves virtue's purpose for it — charity and sacrifice — and ensuring that the faithful are not swayed by greed. His Chosen would very likely inherit Ennu's capacity for and facility with temptation, their Charms gilding honeyed words and casting their actions in a positive light, rewarding the righteous and punishing avarice.

Secrets are no less Ennu's purview, and his Chosen might well make unsurpassed scholars, holding libraries

of information in their heads, their razor wits unearthing knowledge lost for centuries.

As a patron of those who work the seas, from fishers to merchants, Ennu's Chosen might also gain power over the sea and its bounty; they might call up fair winds, becalm their foes, or be as at home beneath the waves as upon them.

First Flint, Tutelary God of Leila

It was chance that brought First Flint (**Lunars**, p. 88) to greatness. After the razing of Eskaridam, the Bloody Hand wandered through the desert from oasis to oasis for uncounted years until he found Leila Pryama butting heads with a Realm merchant who'd been separated from his caravan. A few whispered words later, Pryama was standing over a corpse, bloodied knife in hand. Sating the hunger of centuries was one thing, but when Pryama began to celebrate the murder he'd just committed — well, First Flint wasn't going to let such an opportunity go.

First Flint hooked the Leila first with promises of restored grandeur, then with what small blessings he could conjure; worship flowed to him, and before long, he had displaced the old tutelary gods of the Leila and assumed primacy within the clan's prayers. The Leila became a force of bloody nature, their murderous and indiscriminate style of warfare unnerving even their fellow Eskari. Though the Unconquered Sun would surely not condone such abuses of power, First Flint might seek an illicit spark as the culmination of his work; the ultimate act of murderous inspiration.

THEMES

Were First Flint to sacrifice himself on the pyre of the Exigence, it would be to leave an Exalted war leader for Leila. A Chosen of Murder might draw strength from killing, from blood, from sacrifice. Bloody Hands excel at inspiring murder rather than committing it, but their Chosen would both inspire and be inspired by the act, a terrible force of carnage.

The Chosen of a Bloody Hand would excel at more than mindless slaughter, of course. They might inherit the Bloody Hand's propensity for stalking prey, lurking in shadows, and emerging to make a single, perfect kill. They might, too, learn to turn their hands to killing other, more intangible things, like hopes and dreams.

As an influential tutelary god, First Flint's Chosen in particular might become a great general, for what is an army but a machine for killing on a grand scale? They might draw life and health from those they murder, inspire worshipful sacrifices, or apply their murderous impulses to the domains of politics and leadership.

Hamoji, Volcano God of Wavecrest

The god Hamoji (**Exalted**, pp. 103-104) shares his name with the volcano that is his portfolio, and both are famously temperamental, touched by the pique of the Wyld. Dwelling within the middlemarches that cover his volcanic namesake, Hamoji reigns over many lesser volcano-gods and spirits in Wavecrest. When in the throes of Wyld-mania, nothing but sacrifice can calm his raucous spirit. He might seek the Exigence as a response to his subordinate Ash on the Wind creating his own Exigent champion (**Adversaries of the Righteous**, p. 163) or as part of a bid to cleanse himself and his volcano of its Wyld invaders or the interlopers of the Realm. He might even do so in response to some great sacrifice, meeting it in kind.

THEMES

Hamoji's Chosen would have Charms that offer explosive but short-lived power — fleeting feats of tremendous strength, overwhelming strikes, and temperamental outbursts that rout hardened soldiers. Like Ash on the Wind's champion, Odara, his Chosen's magic might wax and wane with their anima or — with Hamoji's influence — with their own temperamental moods.

As a god of sacrifice and propriety, Hamoji might impart upon his Chosen a keen insight into what price people might pay for safety and fertility and the ability to sanctify a sacrifice in exchange for good fortune.

Hamoji's Chosen might inherit a measure of their patron's Wyld corruption. This might allow them to melt solid matter by applying the Wyld's dreamlike un-rules, summon geysers of hallucinogenic smoke, or birth fae servants from magma pits.

Handsome Ashav

In the Second Age, and especially in the fringes of the ever-expanding Empire of Prasad, there is always a war being fought somewhere. How fortunate for Handsome Ashav (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, p. 71), the Patron God of Camp Followers! Inextricably bound to the Empire by virtue of his place in one of Clan Akatha's spirit courts, he is rarely found in Kamthahar but is instead out among his beloved legions, and most especially the Crimson-Tailed Banner Legion. An army cannot function without camp followers — the greater horde of porters, cooks, healers, sex workers, and dozens of other professions essential to the work of warfare — and it's among them that Ashav makes his home and whom he is most concerned with.

Though he may seem a smooth operator to the mortals he charms into sharing his cot, Ashav is not a canny politician.

FROM CONCEPT TO CHARACTER

The themes of Divine Patrons are key to developing a concept for an Exigent, but Exigents don't always gain power 1:1 with their patron's purview. They can develop in ways the patron might not expect, especially once they start developing the extent of their powers on their own terms.

Take, for example, a hypothetical Chosen of Ashav who isn't especially inclined to combat or violence. Their charms would still be attuned to conflict, but that conflict might take the form of organizing spontaneous protests or making connections through sheer bravado. Consider a Charm that reinforces mutual Intimacies or grants bonuses for mutual intimacies even where they might not normally apply. Exigent Charms, after all, are informed by the patron's personality and themes, but also the personality of the Chosen and the nature and circumstances of their relationship.

One of Ashav's Chosen who does choose violence would be frighteningly good at it, both in terms of personal and organized group violence. They would be a rabble-rouser extraordinaire, the bane of any local authority should they choose to become such, and any would-be heroes sent to put them down would be hard-pressed to do so.

He doesn't care for schemes, preferring to face his problems head-on with maximum force — and, if possible, once the fisticuffs are over, to laugh about it and have a drink with the problem afterward. What problems he can't solve using such methods, he delegates as much as possible. Hence, perhaps, the desire for an Exigent Champion.

The Chosen of the little gods are no strangers to Prasad, with several well-established in Clan Akatha and more as the Age of Sorrows continues. Ashav might pick one favored among his God-Blooded children as his champion (he certainly has no shortage of children to choose from), but he's an impulsive sort and might just as easily make such a momentous decision by his gut, Exalting a stranger after a good fight or night of revelry.

THEMES

Ashav is a war god by nature — without a legion on the march, there are no camp followers, after all. Any champion of Ashav would likely reflect this, their magic fueled by and functioning best in the context of conflict, violent or otherwise.

While Ashav is not known for fighting in the van, his Chosen would nevertheless inherit no small degree of martial supremacy, with Charms geared towards organizing impromptu units from noncombatants and protecting them from better-armed opponents. Ashav's Chosen might have Charms to empower their improvised or unskilled attacks; piercing armor with thrown rocks or wielding a cooking pot as a formidable weapon. Away from the battlefield, their Charms might let them build strong bonds through disorderly carousing, organize spontaneous logistics networks to support their battle groups, and even arrange for covert martial arts training. Ashav could also mentor his Chosen in martial arts.

Jade Eagle, God of the Sacred Valley

Of the nine patron deities of Skandhar-Bhal, Jade Eagle (**Lunars**, pp. 70-71) is the most prone to wanderlust, absenting his temples for weeks at a time. He flies throughout the valley's surroundings on wings of pale and lustrous green, hunting would-be invaders and sanctifying the corpses of those unfortunates who succumb to the bitter cold with his rites of sky-burial, calling the local raptors to flense the flesh from the body in order to free the spirit. As the valley's farthest-ranging deity, he might petition for an Exigent to fight off an invader more powerful than himself, willing to risk his immortality in defense of his people; alternatively, he might do so to reward or uplift an exceptional outsider, granting them the prestige society denies them.

THEMES

As a winged warrior-god, Jade Eagle dominates his foes with aerial stunts, swooping dives, and keen-eyed strikes. His Chosen would likely share these proclivities, with Charms to grant themselves wings, enhance aerial rushes, and detect weak points or other vulnerabilities, as well as influence Charms to cow air elementals and other sky-spirits.

Jade Eagle is a psychopomp to the people of Skandhar-Bhal, guiding the dead to their next incarnation and granting peace to hungry ghosts through sky-burial. His Chosen might have Charms to communicate with and exorcise the dead, unmake zombies in a spray of scouring wind, or comfort the living in the aftermath of loss.

Among the gods of Skandhar-Bhal, Jade Eagle is a patron to outsiders and misfits, accepting them into his priesthood. Jade Eagle's Chosen might manifest this with influence Charms that prevent others from taking offense at breaches of decorum, encourage characters to break societal norms, or beckon and strengthen outsiders to their side.

Kahlkos of the Ocher Shore

In the wake of the Empress' disappearance, the Realm's negotiations with the salt gods (**The Realm**, p. 64) have broken down. In a small bay south of Bittern, that breakdown has come in the form of House Peleps' governor, who has bribed Immaculate monks to sideline Kahlkos's ritual days and to use force to secure her acquiescence to a pitifully low salt rate. Sensing weakness, other small gods have claimed parts of her territory, further diminishing her income — the Immaculates ensure she can take no action against them.

But salt gods are a proud lot who not only carry grudges but will devote themselves to seeing vengeance fulfilled. In Kahlkos' case, her only real hope is to seek an Exigence and empower a champion who can humiliate the Immaculates, her rival gods, and even House Peleps as she has been humiliated by them.

THEMES

Salt is an essential mineral for daily life: it's used in preservation, purification, and even to ward off the dead. Kahlkos's Chosen might have the power to abjure ghosts, create wards against the dead, or preserve objects (especially perishables) against spoilage or wear. They could also reverse those effects, removing all barriers to rot and collapse — mortals cannot drink salt water, and a tainted well is useless.

Because salt is so economically vital, these powers could extend into realms of bureaucracy and finance — a Salt Exigent could taint an organization's wealth, making it unpalatable or unusable, or conversely provide sound investments.

As a bay salt goddess, Kahlkos might bestow tidal influence and some measure of control or empowerment from salt water itself. Her magic might assume the ebb and flow of the tides, slow and regular but overwhelmingly powerful.

Resplendent Twin, the Shining Heeled, Queen of Reflections

Once the goddess of heliographs, Resplendent Twin (**Adversaries of the Righteous**, pp. 108-110) was usurped by a former subordinate and now dwells in the Scavenger Lands as an unofficial patron to messengers and merchants. She longs for wealth, worship, and prestige and seeks reinstatement to high heavenly office — though she refuses any rank lesser than her original. Callous and cunning, she might seek a spark of Exigence for the prestige of an Exigent champion, to

outmaneuver a rival, or to create a capable agent for her many schemes.

THEMES

While no longer the true goddess of heliographs, Resplendent Twin's Essence is forever shaped by that lost post. Her Chosen might share that power, able to communicate effortlessly through luminous sigils, move swiftly as a flashed message, wield rays of light as their arrows, or communicate over long distances.

If her Chosen inherits her wiles and ambition, they might have powerful Charms to acquire sycophants and hangers-on, insinuate themselves into social situations, or steal a rival's social prestige. This might include magic that allows her to retroactively reveal elements of her unfurling schemes.

As the Exigent of a mirror-goddess, Resplendent Twin's Chosen could share her ability to scry through reflective surfaces or mimic the appearance, behaviors, and desires of others. They might even be able to manifest their own reflections to aid them in battle, serve as emissaries, or offer counsel from many perspectives.

Twines-the-Heart, Forbidden Goddess of Silk

In the high desert of the western Summer Mountains, Twines-the-Heart rules a Wyld-tainted empire. A canny socialite, weaver, and negotiator, her strange appetites drove her to bargain with the raksha Host of Shaded Dreams for power to dominate the Leshuhn Oasis-Cities as god-queen. Her silkworms mutated into nightmarish weaver-servitors, spinning garments of poetry and dreams. She bargained further for graces to stitch into her very being; in return, her merchant-worshippers and priests assisted the Host in sinking the Oasis-Cities into the bordermarches. For this most dire of crimes, Heaven struck her from its rolls. Now she gorges on the worship and dreams of her followers, whose champions participate in soul-threatening games of cunning and combat with the raksha cataphracts of the Host. One of Twines-the-Heart's beloved champions might inherit her stolen flame of Exigence to defend the Leshuhn from rival Wyld invaders or heavenly reprisals.

THEMES

As Exigent of a silk goddess, Twines-the-Heart's champion would excel in fashion and weaving. Her champion could animate textiles into mutant silkworms, derive insight from outfits, trends, and commerce, or weave cloth into hardened weapons and armor.

As a beloved champion, Heart's Chosen might be a noble cataphract, serving their lady with unswerving dedication; commanding fae in battle; questing against adversaries to win favors from them.

Twines-the-Heart's power is eerie and Wyld-tainted. Her Chosen might develop Wyld mutations; derive power from tokens, dreams, or memories claimed from others; weave silken fae and trap Wyld magics in living tapestries and knots to release later.

Verumipra, Ambassador to the Cursed City; Warden of Exiles

There have been many envoys between Heaven and Hell, but none have served so long or so well as soft-spoken Verumipra (**Sidereals**, p. 84), who has thus far proven incorruptible to both Yu-Shan's politics and Malfeas' infernal appeal. He plies his mission dutifully and with grace, earning him odd popularity in the demon city — enough to make informants, spies, and agents out of several notable demonic potentates. He might seek the Exigence to counter a celestial rival or address an overwhelming emergency in Hell, like the rise of the Infernal Exalted.

THEMES

Verumipra's Chosen might share their patron's eloquence, with Charms to adapt to unfamiliar social situations, entreat others for aid, or bring aggrieved parties to the bargaining table. They might also share some of the diplomatic prerogatives of an Eclipse Caste, entitled to receive hospitality from strangers, enemies, and infernal powers.

As an emissary between Yu-Shan and Malfeas, Verumipra's Chosen might draw upon both or transform one into the other. Their Charms might allow them to radiate a bubble of Yu-Shan's grandeur or Malfeas' perilous climes, bind gods and demons to their promises, or travel to and from those wondrous realms.

Famed as he is for incorruptibility, Verumipra's Chosen might draw power from their convictions, easily seeing through bribery and deception. Those who attempt to manipulate them might even find their intrigues conspicuously exposed, with the Chosen gaining profound insight into the schemes of those who attempt to entangle them.

Other Patrons

Insatiable curiosity drives **the Desert Noon**, one of the Court of Seasons' fifteen co-rulers, to kindle an Exigent.

This peripatetic summer-goddess's Chosen might draw upon her purview to endure harsh environments, radiate blinding daylight, or hasten plant growth, and upon her personality to winkle out secrets, cling tenaciously to impulsive decisions, or guarantee safe passage and hospitality. In battle, he might wreath his fist in monsoon winds or overheat enemy armor as if in the noonday sun.

The dream fly **Eluti Witherwing**, weary of observing mortals' nightmares, might petition for an Exigent to uplift rather than harm. Their Chosen's powers would include causing hallucinations; spreading terror, entering dreaming minds to communicate, influence, or probe for secrets; shaping phantasmagoric monsters from dreamstuff; and manifesting a dream fly's wings and claws. Eluti's protective impulse could manifest as Charms to defend others, heal the sick, and inspire hope.

The forbidden god **Five Days Darkness**, born of the Unconquered Sun's shadow, could steal a spark of Exigence, for he desires a champion to help him dominate the calendar gods and, eventually, win his divine father's love by usurping his throne. His illicit Chosen might control shadows for concealment, scrying, travel, or crafting panoply and familiars. She'd also manipulate others by playing off vanity and greed while herself gaining strength when acting in service to selfish ambitions.

Kaudisim of the Gull, a minor constellation-god secretly worshipped among the Varang, covertly feeds information to the Wyld Hunt; he bears scars from a First Age Solar prince's malice, and may seek an Exigence to hunt down that Solar's reincarnation. From the Gull, his Chosen might draw Charms for navigation, commanding winds and birds, breezy charm, swift movement, thrown blades, evasion, and augury. From Kaudisim's ancient grudge come Charms for obstinacy, tracking, and vengeance.

After millennia of ardently recording the deeds of the Exalted, **Lytek**, Scribe of Exaltation, may finally kindle one of his own. His Chosen might write with inhuman speed and eloquence; enthrall crowds with heroic narratives; or overawe foes with gambits involving flamboyant athleticism, dazzling swordplay, and trick-shot archery. She inspires both herself and others to pursue grandiose goals with stunning skill and unshakable Intimacies and has a knack for unlocking fellow Exalts' potential.

Madame Marthesine, Goddess of Lost Things, wanders Creation's ruined places; mortals seek her to barter for forgotten secrets. The Chosen of the Lost

could access Marthesine's nigh-bottomless sack of lost things to borrow weapons, tools, and treasures; cache valuables; enter concealment; or crush foes beneath an avalanche of unremembered detritus. Other Charms might let her metaphorically become "lost" for stealth and evasion purposes; entangle others in perilous bargains; and comb minds for long-buried memories.

Ring-Tailed Karaxi, mighty among Scavenger Lands harvest gods, may seek a champion to gain the upper hand in her alliance with the Grass Spider assassins. Alongside rice-harvest magic, her Chosen's Charms might support stealth, deception, pain endurance, unexpected attacks, bullying and slaying spirits, and training martial artists and killers. He could gain the Mastery Keyword with martial arts that use scythes or staves as form weapons.

When the dryad **Sakuren-Zeryo's** blossoming cherry tree was burned along with the Seven-Tier Palace, he petitioned the Unconquered Sun for an avenger. His purview might offer his Chosen heartwood's resilience, tree roots' inescapable grip or stone-cracking strength, and falling petals' effortless evasion or enthralling scent. His centuries of observing courtiers in the palace gardens could inspire Charms for courtly graces, regal bearing, and both perceiving and perpetrating intrigues.

Silver Cerement, patron of Sijan's Mortician's Order, and **Sad-Eyed Esri**, psychopomp overseeing the encircling Black Chase, could empower a Chosen of Shadowlands to guard Sijan from Abyssal schemes. Their patchwork Chosen's magic might enforce oaths and peaceful negotiations; calm, bargain with, or banish unquiet dead; offer anonymity in the guise of a funerist, ghost, or zombie; conjure werelights to guide or bewilder; or cause the earth to swallow foes into the grave. She learns necromancy (**Abyssals**, pp. 328-357) rather than sorcery. Her black jade reaper daiklave ignores armor and flesh to chill the blood and scar the soul. Under stress she falls comatose, her lower soul emerging to fulfill her aims in bloody and brutal fashion.

Together, **the Three Mothers of the Chante-Sa** may choose patchwork Exigents so that their people can protect themselves without relying on their "Undying Uncle," the Lunar elder Ma-Ha-Suchi. From Gap'Inan, the cave-dwelling Hungry Mother, they gain subterranean magic — power over crawling things, earth, darkness, and the dead. From Chuwe'Inan, the flower-wreathed Lavish Mother, comes forest magic — hunting, medicine, poisons, and controlling vegetation. And from Mahni-Inan, the mud-cloaked River Mother, comes river-town magic — navigation, commanding water, crafting, and bargaining. But the goddesses'

clashing natures emerge as their Chosen sleep, erupting into Creation as shambling nightmare-beasts of mud, vines, and worms.

The forbidden god **Ye-Nir-Ro-Ve-Yan**, a supporter of the prehuman gigantes since before the Divine Revolution, might empower an illicit Exigent to help guard the gigantes against the Dreaming Sea's rising human empires. His Chosen could perform prodigious feats of strength, resilience, and intellect; befuddle others with cryptic gigante theorems; and dominate the minds of beasts and mortals alike. This Exigent's Exaltation resides within a soulgem embedded in her brow, which binds her to the god's will — though over time, she might overcome this influence.

Notable Exigents

Akaya Moda, the White Shroud Killer

For a price, and if one knows the secret ways to contact them, the Gallows Dogs will kill whosoever one names — but when one names a Dragon-Blooded Dynast, there are precious few who can do the job. The wise Dynast, then, is wary of the mist, for it may well house the White Shroud Killer.

BOILING HOT VENGEANCE

The Darcet Bath in the highlands of Pangu Prefecture was not a well-known hot spring, nor was it particularly sacred — but, tended as it was by Darcet, the spring's god, it was known among an enlightened few for the singular purity of its waters. Darcet was not a powerful god, but he had been given the task of maintaining the hot springs at the very dawn of history, and he had performed his task with exceptional dedication for millennia.

And then Cynis Etano heard a rumor of the Bath and thought it a marvelous locale for a particularly sordid soiree. For ten days and ten nights, Darcet watched helplessly; at the end of it all, his spring had been befouled with liquor, drugs of all kinds, and even blood. Its legendary purity, maintained for thousands of years, was despoiled. With incandescent rage boiling in his veins and with a favor owed by no less a personage than the Unconquered Sun himself, who, in some ancient time, once bathed in Darcet's spring, he petitioned for and received an Exigence.

Enter Akaya Moda (**The Realm**, p. 29), a humble daughter of a humble patrician family who were bound by debt to Cynis Etano's household. The cruel Dynast



had used that debt as a cudgel to demand favors of Moda's family for three generations. It was no great task for Darcet to entice Moda into accepting his Exigence. Vengeance upon the Dynasts who had ruined his spring was the only price he asked in exchange for every dreg of his humble divinity.

No one who attended that party had a particularly easy death; Etano himself was discovered boiled from the inside-out. Yet the Dynast's death only freed Moda's family from the most onerous of the consequences of their debt, and her abilities could do little to directly affect that. It took her nearly a year of fruitless attempts, but she finally contacted the Gallows Dogs, the mercenary killers whose existence seemed to be half-myth when she started out. In her, they found a weapon that could serve their purposes; in them, she found her family's financial salvation.

DEATH IN THE FOG

In a better world, Darcet's Exaltation would never have been a weapon — and, indeed, his association with purification does shine through, here and there. Moda feels a certain compulsion to cleanliness and prefers to do her killing without spilling blood or working with poisons.

She leaves the corpses of her victims where they fall, for she will not handle them, and she eats like an Immaculate ascetic. She spends almost nothing of her blood money on herself, instead entrusting it to a cousin in Chanos Prefecture to launder it. Thus far, most of it has made its way to servicing the family's debts, but that cousin has grown wealthy indeed from their “finder's fee.”

While the Gallows Dogs are not a sociable group, their greatest killers do enjoy a kind of clandestine community. They leave messages for one another in the particulars of their kills, a private language of circumstance and calling cards. Lately though, one of her fellows, Gnarled Oak, has been fixated upon her, leaving signs that a Gallows Dog would easily read: “Unholy. Unwanted. Unwelcome.” Moda worries less for herself and more that Oak has learned her true identity — and that of her family.

THE HOT SPRING'S SOURCE

The Chosen of the Spring is a paradox, possessed of great powers of purification but forever tainted by blood. Darcet's rage and Moda's own desperation and frustration have greatly informed the nature of the Exaltation. Moda can:

- Exhale steam in vast quantities, either to shroud an area in thick fog or to scald enemies.
- Boil water or water-based liquids at a glance. The more “tainted” the liquid, the more effort it requires. This includes, with a modicum of effort and physical contact, the blood in a target’s veins.
- Purify substances or people of poisons or unwanted contamination by “sweating” it out of them; the poison can be collected and reused.

Necessary Sinner Ko, The Dread Assessor

The Dread Assessor is the elusive and menacing Chosen of Taxation, a reckoner of accounts who always takes his due.

HISTORY

Necessary Sinner Ko grew up in the Blessed Isle’s fields, toiling much and reaping little reward. When he was still scarcely more than a child, a peasant uprising with the backing of an outcaste veteran swept across his home prefecture, crucifying a dozen Imperial tax collectors. Kept far from the fray by his family, the young Ko snuck out one night to gawp at the crucified corpses.

It was there that he met Kethera of the Alizarin Ledger, with her eyes of jade and flowing hair of paper scrip. The goddess wept, for the ringing of coins in coffers is as prayer to her. She spoke to the child of her sorrow and of the power she held—a spark of Exigence, claimed as payment for a long-ago debt. Ko, innocent and awestruck, was all too easily guiled by her honeyed words. The goddess turned her new Chosen against his fellow villagers, putting an end to the uprising by poisoning its Dragon-Blooded hero and fomenting dissent in his absence.

Kethera had much more in mind for her Dread Assessor, having seen great potential hidden beneath Ko’s youthful callowness, but her plans were cut short by the Immaculate Order. The goddess faced no censure for creating the Exigent, for she had protected the Perfected Hierarchy from disruption, but they demanded Ko be given over to the Order’s service. The next few years of his life were spent as an assassin, spy, and shikari, though he remembers little of that time clearly — only an escape after a doomed Wyld Hunt saw his Immaculate handlers slain by a Solar Anathema.

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

Fleeing beyond the Realm’s reach, Ko went east, eventually finding his way to Jibei, the capital of Vaneha. He’s found patronage from the weaponsmiths of Clan Uema, who

employ him to cleanly resolve outstanding debts, negotiate lines of credit, and root out fraud and embezzlement. His status as a foreigner still leaves him as an outsider in the eyes of many, and he owes no loyalty to his newfound home — though this hasn’t kept him from becoming entangled with certain members of his patron clan.

Vaneha is as much a prison as it is a home for Ko. The Immaculate Order has declared him Anathema, and Lookshy wouldn’t stand in the way of a Wyld Hunt, making much of the Scavenger Lands potentially unsafe. Kethera, too, seeks her prodigal Chosen, hoping to tempt him back to her service—but if he won’t come willingly, the goddess of taxation has no compunctions against coercion. Ko has cultivated his Vanehan alliances as a bulwark against these two threats, seeing wealth as the best path to power — and through power, freedom.

THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND

The Dread Assessor is skilled in recognizing things of value and appropriating them for himself, as every tax collector should be. He can collect more than just money, taking his due in motes, Initiative, or more. He can also prey on debts, whether owed to himself or another. His Charms might let him:

- Recognize the most valuable thing out of everything he can see. His appraisal can be based either on a given market’s prevailing rates or one that a specific individual sees as most valuable.
- Sense what debts someone owes and her Intimacies to her creditors.
- Leverage someone’s debts against them as though they were Intimacies when threatening financial hardship or offering freedom from the debt.
- Vanish among ostentatious displays of wealth, like a palatial estate, pleasure barge, or lavish banquet.
- Increase the mote cost of one of an enemy’s Charms or powers and gain the extra motes he pays.
- Claim something as his own with a Larceny roll to steal it. While its former owner may be incensed, she’ll recognize it as the Assessor’s property by law.

Quiet Solace, Chosen of Disease

Where sickness and death walk, so too walks the Quiet Solace. A master of disease, they can cure or spread it

as they will, but eventually, they are destined to fall to it themselves.

THE SOLE SURVIVOR

The memory of the Great Contagion, the plague that cut down nine in ten across Creation centuries ago, lives on in rituals of handwashing, water-boiling, and wound-dressing — but there is another legacy of the Contagion, an Exigence that has slipped from dying hand to dying hand across the centuries. Her name lost to time, a lone God of Disease who saw her purview run amok and knew she too was sick with the dread illness, stole an Exigence and burned her life upon its pyre in hopes of empowering a champion that might cure the Contagion.

Maybe she succeeded — maybe that's the only reason it didn't kill everyone and everything.

But the Exigence didn't die with its first holder; it passed to another when that unnamed progenitor fell to the Contagion in turn. The new Quiet Solace rose from their sickbed to carry on the work, now immune to the Contagion that slew their predecessor. In time, the Contagion abated — but the new Quiet Solace fell to simple cholera. So it went down the centuries until the burden came to Valas Sichara, a Southern physician who weathered a terrible shadow-plague spread by the hungry dead. He still bears the scars of that plague writ across his skin and mind; he wakes from prophetic nightmares and divines meaning from the rashes and welts they leave on his body, driving him to seek out ostensibly incurable illnesses and to extirpate them.

THE QUIET SOLACE SYNDROME

The Exigence of the Quiet Solace is a shepherd of illness, culling those sicknesses that overstep their bounds and become plague. Few realize the pull of the Exigence in their lives since all carriers of the infectious Exigence are survivors of disease themselves, and it feels natural to be called to help others threatened by the same fate. The fact that they are now seemingly immune to disease makes them ideal for the task — they are, however, uniquely vulnerable to a single malady, one that will inevitably kill them once they contract it. A survivor of that same outbreak will inherit their Exaltation.

Each Quiet Solace is different, influenced by the disease that gave them their power as well as who they were prior to infection. Some throw themselves into service to the sick and suffering, becoming legendary physicians; others hunt down mystical illnesses trapped in forgotten places, consuming them and integrating the sickness into their powers; still others employ their powers of contagion to make ideas spread like wildfire.

Valas Sichara has yet to choose which of these paths he will walk.

PANDEMIC'S HEARTBEAT

The Quiet Solace Syndrome draws its power in part from the disease that felled the previous Quiet Solace; for Sichara, the shadow-plague and the twisted hallucinations it causes have amplified the Exaltation's already-esoteric nature. His expression of the Exigence tends towards the surreal, hallucinations and visions trickling out of his perception and into the eyes and ears of others, influencing them in subtle ways from which Sichara divines deeper meaning.

Regardless of individual influences, all carriers of the Quiet Solace Syndrome can:

- Diagnose and cure mysterious and incurable illnesses, even without advanced medical tools or alchemical preparations.
- Inflare or cause illnesses; the Quiet Solace can even absorb illnesses into an internal reservoir, expending them through an appropriate vector to infect others.
- Transmute one illness into another or merge illnesses to create new and unique strains, including magical diseases at high Essence.
- Apply principles of viral transmission to words, emotions, or even physical attacks — striking one foe to similarly injure each other foe the target touches.

Tezelyke Eszter, Chosen of Mirages

The tale is a heroic one: seeking a vision of Falcon Dream, Tezelyke Eszter (**Lunars**, p. 89) rode out into the wilderness too fast. Her steed was bitten by a venomous snake and quickly perished, leaving her far from civilization. For five times five days, she dwelt on the edge of the desert, quenching her thirst with cactus cuttings, until she beheld a vision of towers in the desert, Old Eskaridam, risen again! For her steadfast faith, Falcon Dream himself appeared before her and made his sign upon her that she might lead his people home. Most of the tale is even true.

It wasn't the long-lost city father of Eskaridam Tezelyke Eszter found in the desert, but Hafatun, god of mirages, who made common cause with the young hero, for both wished to see the Realm defeated and humiliated. His reasons have little to do with the Eskari — his dream-seeker cult in Oonai-of-the-Mirrors was broken

by Immaculate Monks, his followers killed, enslaved, or scattered to the winds. To him, the Eskari are little more than an arrow pointed at the Realm, one he means to loose as soon as he is assured of a kill.

Hafatun's physical form was consumed by the fire of Exigence, but he lingers as a vision in Eszter's mind. His experience in managing his old cult has helped Eszter bolster her natural charisma and galvanize the revanchist Eskari, but his constant demands to go forth and make war on the Realm have begun to grate — Eszter is no fool, and she has no intention of riding to war until she and her people are prepared. So far, she has convinced Hafatun she's acting in earnest, but conflict between the two may brew in the future as the god's desire for revenge conflicts with his Exalt's loyalty to her people.

THE VISION OF OLD ESKARIDAM

Eszter is the first Chosen of the Mirage, but she won't be the last. When Eszter perishes (of old age if she's fortunate and in battle if she's not), the reborn vision of Old Eskaridam will likely fade like her namesake — but the Exaltation will live on, drifting on currents of Essence until it finds a new dream, and a new dreamer, to empower.

Until that day, Old Eskaridam yet looms on the horizon in the hearts of many Eskari, though there's still a significant contingent of traditionalists who see Eszter as a charlatan. Her own Matriarch, Tezelyke Morikhaad, is one of her fiercest opponents, charged by the gyula to bring her firebrand kinswoman to heel. She's loath to stoop to violence against her kin, but she can only stymie Eszter's popularity for so long with words; for now, she puts her faith in Vilyat, tutelary deity of the Tezelyke and god of Old Eskaridam's courtrooms and tombs. His traditionalist followers grow strident in the face of revanchist opposition, and Vilyat himself is furious at his loss of worship.

Eszter's revanchist followers are, sometimes, a problem unto themselves — not because they disagree with her, but because Eszter's own mirage-fueled magics have whipped them up into a frenzy. Her distant cousin, Riszkyła, has become a focal point for those revanchists who would advance Eszter's strategy faster than she herself would. Her message is a simple one: "Falcon Dream is with us, so what are we waiting for?" She has no patience for Eszter's dream of uniting the Eskari under her banner — Riszkyła would leave the doubters behind and let them follow the trail of greatness she and her cousin would blaze, begging for scraps.

BEYOND REFRACTION

Eszter's power lies in mirages — in other words, in things seen that aren't there. She's become a champion of illusion

and misdirection, and consequently, her greatest power lies not in her own hands but in what she can convince others of. This makes her a dangerous prophet and leader, regardless of her cultural context: put her anywhere in Creation, and she'd find that niche and fill it at once. Wrapped in a heat haze, Eszter is rarely seen for what she truly is, but that doesn't matter to her so long as her own vision is fulfilled.

The Chosen of Mirages can:

- Create images of virtually anything. These images are always immaterial and cannot be interacted with. Discerning observers who see them up close may be able to spot inconsistencies in shadow and lighting.
- Inspire powerful emotion and devotion, however fleeting. Those influenced by the Chosen of Mirages often find that when they make concrete steps toward achieving their new goal, the passion begins to fade unless actively reinforced.
- Physically blur her own form to the point of incomprehensibility and even intangibility. In combat, Eszter's strikes are nigh-unreadable, her sword hidden in a fata-morgana-like chain of reflections; when she seeks to veil her identity, there are few who can pierce her camouflage; and wheresoever she wishes to go, only the tightest of seals can keep her out.

IGNITING THE SPARK

The easiest way to make your own Exigent is to adapt Charms that have already been written to your needs. Let's try to adapt a few Charms for an Essence-based Eszter designed for Terrestrial play by drawing on references to other Terrestrial Exalts.

Many Terrestrial Exalts have conditions under which their Charms become stronger; Dragon-Bloods have Aura, Architects have the Metropolis keyword, and so on. To adapt Charms more easily from these sets, let's give Eszter something similar: a Vision, the goal that the mirage-memory of Hafatun is spurring his Chosen to fulfill. This could work similarly to the Ideal of the Dream-Souled (**Exigents**, p. 340). There can be differences; it could be a Tie instead of a Principle, like The Realm: (Hatred). Maybe Eszter doesn't need to share this Intimacy at Defining level for Hafatun to spur her toward it. She still suffers Limit gain for acting against it, however, with Limit Breaks representing her being tormented by her intangible patron for her inaction and neglect.

Now that we've established a circumstance under which Eszter's Charms are stronger, we can look through some Charm sets and see what fits.

Defensive: Eszter's defensive Charms use displacement, mirage, and evasion to avoid attacks. The Foxbinder uses similar tactics, so **Whisker-from-Danger Stance**, **Myriad-Mirror Defense**, **Shroud of the Evening Moon**, and **Masque of the Possible** (p. 42) can all be readily adapted as Eszter Charms. God-Admiral defenses like **Turbid Waters Tenacity** or **Salt-Spray Defense** (p. 67), reframed as mirage-based defenses, also fit.

For other defensive Charms, consider Evasion-based versions of Dragon-Blooded Melee's defenses. Reframing **Blinding Spark Distraction** (Dragon-Blooded, p. 225) to be based on Eszter's ability to confound attackers with mirages is a good place to start.

Influence: Eszter's powers and charisma inspire her followers to fervor, much as the God-Admirals do; **Ecstatic Devotee Invitation**, **Together to the Horizon**, **Romance of the Mariner**, and **Blue Saga Ripples** (p. 61) are all suitable to adapt as her influence Charms, changing the Apotheosis keyword to an upgrade when she is working towards her Vision as required. Architect Appearance Charms like **Heart-Bearing Sculpture Stance** and **Monument-Unveiling Flourish** (Exigents pp. 230-231) could reflect the use of mirages in her influence.

For other Influence Charms, the Dream-Souled social set (Exigents, pp. 349-354) is a perfect fit, simply replace the Ideal conditions with Eszter's Vision.

Mirage: The Foxbinder's whole Illusion set (pp. 45-57) works well for Eszter's Mirage Charms. In place of Shifune's Teamwork effects, she could get bonus dice or double 9s from following her Vision. If you prefer to give Eszter a mirage-based anima power like the Dream-Souled Sculptor of Figments, she could use **Delerium Weaver Meditation** (Exigents, p. 342) instead of the Foxbinder's **Waking Figment Conjunction**. **Face-Changing Glamour** and **Dragon-or-Hero Insinuation** from the Dream-Souled Illusion and Transformation set (Exigents, pp. 343-344) also fit.

For other Mirage Charms, consider Dragon-Blooded Performance Charms like **Hidden Petal Aria**, **Immolating Passion Alleluia**, **Mesmerizing Siren Call**, and **Epoch Memory Saga**. (Dragon-Blooded pp. 235-239)

Offensive: Eszter's offensive Charms use her mirages to cloak her movements and deliver deadly, unexpected

attacks. **Arrow-Guiding Thread** (Exigents, p. 185) from the Puppeteer's set is a good place to start; its power to alter ranges could reflect Eszter displacing her image rather than using threads. **Blinding Spark Throw** and **Smoke Burst Eruption** (Dragon-Blooded, pp. 275-276) fit her style; instead of sparks and smoke, these Charms could represent Eszter conjuring mirages in combat to befuddle her opponents. Likewise, **Fire Incites Water to a Riot of Clouds** (Dragon-Blooded, pp. 228-229) is a good choice for a more advanced Charm. In each case, references to being in or expending Aura can be replaced with conditions requiring that Eszter be fighting for her Vision.

For other Offensive Charms, consider the fast-paced, precise style of Architect Dexterity, or Sovereign War Charms like **Radiant Beacon Strike** or **Seven-Sword Onslaught** (Exigents, pp. 329-331).

Great Forks Revisited

Great Forks, Decadence, City of Ten Thousand Temples! A metropolis of the gods in Creation, a place at once hallowed and profane. More gods and their champions congregate here than in any other city of Creation. This section contains additional information on the districts of Great Forks, detailing their locales and denizens for use in your games.

Overview

The Hill of Hollyhocks, tallest of Great Forks' many hills, stands at the city's center — spiritually, politically, historically, and geographically. From the pinnacle of the Sublime Lotus, palace-temple of the thearchs, and the lesser temple district of Holymaze beneath, Great Forks spreads out in all directions like a sacred tapestry.

Eastward, laborers and apprentices flock to the streets of Kerin's Gate district, where soldiers, smiths, and war-priests mingle with farmers and merchants hauling produce from the rich Yellow River's banks. To the southeast, the hum of industry rises from the Beehive district's shops and ateliers. Beyond Beehive rises Wolf Hill with its patrician koruphai estates; the land continues climbing in that direction to wooded highlands beyond the city walls.

Southward, elegant learning-temples gleam amid Violet Meadow's verdant grounds; past that lies further greenery — the open parkland of Spinner's Field, Harvest Gate's tree-lined markets, and farmlands along the Rolling River's east bank. To the southwest, on craggy cliffs above the Rolling River, lies the Urns, the city

cemetery, home to a thousand mausoleums and Great Forks' ill-favored ancestor cult.

To the west, abutting Holymaze on the Hill of Hollyhocks's slopes, stands the imposing government district of Colonnade, with its teeming bureaucrats and its temples to secular power. Beyond lies Little Yu-Shan, the raucous entertainment district home to many of Great Forks' god-bloods and other not-quite-mortal denizens. Northwest, the impoverished lowland sweep of the Marshes contrasts with the Hill of Hollyhocks's wealth.

To the north, down the steep incline called the Thousandfold Stair, thrives Quayside — Great Forks' connection to the constant, vibrant traffic of the Yellow River, bringing trade and travelers to the city. From the Hill's peaks, one can spot the sacred islet of Godswind at the river's midpoint; the far shore is visible on the clearest days.

Beehive

A city as cosmopolitan as Great Forks has many disparate needs. Thousands of merchants compete to fill each market niche; many do so in the Beehive. In this district, tents and stalls clustered in the wide city boulevards form a tangled maze of narrow avenues; sellers and shoppers alike depart only at nightfall when city ordinances demand the streets be cleared. When dawn breaks, crowds throng back to Beehive, and tents and stalls sprout again like dandelions.

These stalls deal primarily in agricultural products and simple goods delivered via river trade, hauled before dawn to the labyrinthine network of businesses and workhouses that border the Marshes by troupes of slaves and prepared for market. Fresh rice and vegetables, spices, opium, fabrics, candles, and the hundred other sundries that provide the city's lifeblood can all be found here.

Beehive's permanent edifices are largely occupied by other merchants and artisans — bookbinders, jewelers, smiths, tailors, butchers, and carpenters; the ropemakers and hashish-sellers of Hemp Street; the workhouses, smoldering kilns, and painters' ateliers of Potter's Road. A few non-mercantile businesses thrive here too, like the Greenglass, among Great Forks' few secular theatres, attended heavily by the city's handful of Fair Folk artisans.

While many such businesses can be found elsewhere in the city, they're most heavily concentrated in Beehive, taking advantage of its regular foot traffic. With Nexus

only a few days' travel away by river, the Guild has a strong presence among merchants here, who struggle constantly against regulations by the Prosperous Markets Commission targeted to stymie their encroaching control.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Aside from the shopfronts to be expected from a major city's market district, Great Forks sports more unusual ones. The **Whisper Fine**, for example, trades in hedge magic; hastily wrought amulets, herbal folk remedies, and tourist souvenirs line its dusty shelves. It's an open secret that the Whisper deals in more authentic magics at the right price; an off-the-books catalog of down-on-their-luck godlings, God-Bloods, and other magical beings can be commissioned to offer blessings for a fixed fee, a questionably legal practice under the Prosperous Markets Commission's trade guidelines.

For an even more unusual example, the **Nine Horizons Menagerie** exclusively caters to deities looking to source exotic creatures and substances for their sanctums and temples. Its owner, the wealthy koruphai merchant Skorutho Azed, sources his wares among monster-hunters, scavenger lords, and mercenaries throughout the Scavenger Lands, the better to fulfill his client's exotic requests. He's drawn upon many favors to cover up the recent escape of a dangerous Wyld beast that possesses dream-inducing venom.

Overlooking a small hillock where the district begins its slope down towards Oldmarsh, the **Mas-Anak** is one of Great Forks' oldest and most prominent booksellers. The three-story building is home to five generations of Sadghu (p. 84) scribes, antiquarians, bookbinders, and students, who form the core of the city's small Cradlefolk community. The Mas-Anak functions as a semi-official library and school for the Cradlefolk and selected friends among their neighbors in Beehive and Oldmarsh. The community's elders are discreetly searching for mercenary troubleshooters to secure a rare tome badly wanted by a powerful client in Holymaze.

PROMINENT FIGURES

The workshop of **Ularmin**, a small but well-appointed smithy in the less-traveled part of the artisan's quarter, appears unassuming. But despite her humble tools and shy demeanor, this small, pale woman is renowned for her mystical knack for binding up a client's emotions into the things she creates, and she's grown fantastically wealthy for an independent artisan. For the right price, she produces daggers filled with hate-venom, armor buoyed by hope, and jewelry tinged with love. Ularmin's success means she has enough silver stashed away to retire several times over. She can afford to choose

clients carefully; she wants to make something that'll be remembered.

Near the district's center is a small but well-tended garden. None dare hop over its low walls to take a shortcut, for it's the garden of **Kan Ru Zan**. Once highly placed in the Hierarchy of Function, the ancient god left Heaven long ago under mysterious circumstances and now cares for little but tending their small, incredibly productive patch of earth: a botanical garden resplendent with flowers and aromatic herbs that give rich fragrance to the market district all year round. Some enterprising traders have been known to turn a deal with Kan Ru Zan by offering them rare seeds or cuttings of plants they've never seen before, but none trifle with them. They're protected in retirement by powerful friends in Heaven; on the rare occasions they complain, the city's authorities listen.

City Parks

COPPICE

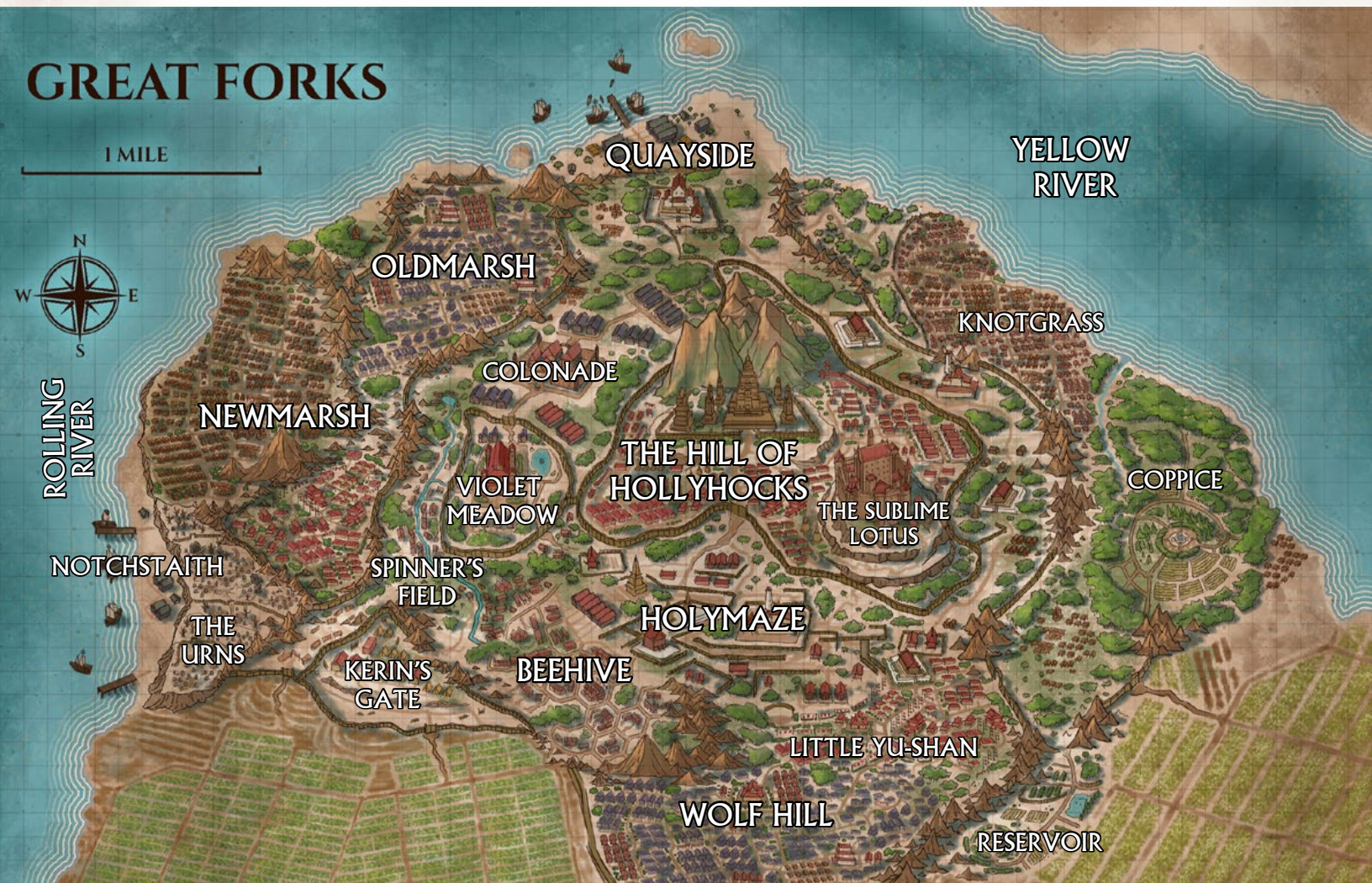
This rugged slice of highland was set aside at Great Forks' founding for future growth; it remains largely untenanted. Coppicers gathering firewood keep it clear of trees and brush, leaving some fields thick with

saplings while clearing others down to stumps. A few scattered structures rise here — largely businesses that work with coppicers, such as wickerworkers and charcoal-burners, or that no one wants to live near, such as the tanneries whose reek suffuses the district. A small rivulet, called the Red, carries tannery waste down into Knotgrass (p. 29).

Coppice residents include the hulking coppicer **Platon**, who protects his fellows' livelihood by driving off trespassing wood-gatherers with threats and vicious thrashings; **Melis**, a gossip old scavenger who mends locals' tools and knows most of their secrets; and the **Cordwainer**, a gnarled and diminutive Fair Folk artisan who trades his miraculous leatherwork for memories and ambitions. A new arrival, the Lookshyan merchant **Teresu Marin**, has inexplicably bought up a worthless-seeming swath of rocky ground along the Red. Rumor suggests that she's an outcast, sorcerer, or spy.

RESERVOIR

While Great Forks gets much of its fresh water from wells, cisterns, and the rivers, a reservoir situated above Coppice on a ridge at the city's southeastern edge supplies running water to fountains, bathhouses, and wealthy estates. A fang of soldiers in the Chuckling Tower guards against tampering with the water supply



— and, more prosaically, fishes out dead animals to ward off disease.

Certain gods of water, health, and purity — such as the high-spirited bath godling **Shining Spring** or the misanthropic healer-god **Imhir the Pearl** — hold the reservoir sacred. Their priests lead processions around it and perform rituals beside its waters. Over the last few weeks, a handful of worshipers have vanished during processions without any of their fellows noticing until after they were gone. Suspicion has fallen on certain water elementals known to frolic in the reservoir, but no culprit has been named.

SPINNER'S FIELD

The Commission of Flourishing Grandeur maintains a flock of sheep to trim and fertilize this green-brown expanse of common parkland. Temples schedule sections of the field for festivals, sporting matches, and theater. Otherwise, common folk are free to entertain themselves here among the fields and groves. People otherwise unable to find work or lodgings encamp on the margins. The Arrows sometimes patrol through this tent community, called the Warren, to disperse members and confiscate property.

If the vagrants have a leader, it's **Old Tanuki**. Sold into slavery as a child by her famine-stricken village, she scrimped through the decades to pay for her own manumission but had nothing left to sustain herself once free. She leads her fellows in arbitrating disputes and group decision-making and passes along countless tricks to scrounge food and goods from parks and streets. Lately her mind wanders, and her mood shifts erratically; she fears this might make her fail the community in a crisis.

Other noteworthy residents include **Fallen Sky**, a one-time priest of Shunanto (p. 30), shunned after sinking into psychotic delusions of godhood, whose rants inspire awe and pity, and **Ninefinger Phirun**, an impulsive adolescent God-Blooded runaway who supports himself with fortune-telling and false promises of his divine mother's blessings.

The young Lunar thief **Rakki** is presently the Warren's biggest concern. The Changing Moon is being sheltered by the vagrant community after his latest impulsive theft, but they know that they could face worse than the Arrows' cudgels for doing so; Great Forks's authorities won't stand in the way of a Wyld Hunt if evidence of an Anathema is discovered. He wants to find a way to repay their kindness but might just end up bringing more trouble.

Colonnade

The government district of Colonnade, on the Hill of Hollyhocks's western slopes, is named for the pillars that line its borders and ostensibly demarcate the boundary between ecclesiastical work and secular administration. There's nevertheless a great deal of overlap between the two; while gods are forbidden from holding office, some ministerial seats — even those offering great prestige and power — are effectively held by gods through proxies, and demand for ministers and functionaries to fill the city's bureaucracy is often met by educated priests, allowing gods further influence. Mortals govern Great Forks, but the gods always make their presence known.

Several government schools have been established in Colonnade's lower reaches, at least in part to meet the bureaucracy's constant and growing need for capable clerks and scribes. As the Grand Mythopoeia presents knowledge as a divine gift to be shared, tuition is officially waived for all non-slave youths. In practice, it's mostly mesoi children who receive a full course of education here; koruphai parents can afford private tutoring, while poorer families can't afford to lose a prospective student's labor. To fill the bureaucracy's requirements, its offices' lowest rungs are often staffed by literate debt slaves.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Colonnade is home to Great Forks' only holding facility for criminals, the **Hall of Itopra**, Hierarch of Incarceration — more commonly known to the citizenry as the Cellar. This squat temple's understory houses criminals awaiting trial, watched over by lash-wielding priests until their jurors are selected and their viveka (**Exigents**, pp. 37–38) is assigned. It's a harsh place — dark, poorly ventilated, and often overcrowded. The Cellar's tenants are mostly lakkoï or slaves; wealthier citizens can generally afford bond or can find (or bribe) an official to vouch for their good behavior when they run afoul of a law-cult.

At the border of the district, under the shadow of the Hill of Hollyhocks, stands the tree-encircled tholos of the **Vivekeion**, where gods present themselves to an agent of the Commission on Unquestionable Justice as potential vivekas. In theory, only the wisest, most objective gods serve as judges. In practice, powerful deities have other priorities, leaving minor godlings to jockey noisily for the opportunity to earn repute for wit or wisdom, exert power over mortals, or simply receive a jury's ritual prayer.

Concentrated on the northern edge of the district lie a dozen buildings housing foreign diplomats. The

Lookshyan embassy **Fort Shellen** is perhaps the most imposing: a fortified, purpose-built structure whose famously stoic soldiers rotate through guard duty. Much of the attention it receives comes from nearby food carts that cater to staff with incredibly spicy Lookshyan street food, a popular meeting ground for junior officials from the rest of Colonnade during break time. The Lookshyan ambassador to Great Forks, retired Water Aspect officer Sirel Akrita, takes appointments here; she's been entertaining a steady stream of Triune League officials.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Retired to what was widely considered a sinecure rewarding forty years of good service in Ji-Zhen's Arrows, **Amon Notul** instead surprised his supporters by making his seat on the Consistory of Presbyters (**Exigents**, p. 40) an increasingly contentious political issue. A fervent believer in the sanctity of divine personages as well as a charismatic firebrand, Amon's rhetoric in the Consistory's thrice-yearly judgments has led to a significant uptick in harsh sentencing, which in turn has made the Consistory increasingly unpopular among mortals. Amon's stridency is driven not only by contempt for the criminal element but also by calculated ambition to further assert Great Forks' dominance over the Triune League by inflaming relations with its subordinate members and using the resulting conflict to revitalize Great Forks' weakened military. He hopes that his brutal judgments of defendants from Fallen Petal might incite the already-turbulent city to outright sedition and to respond by inciting holy war for the first time in centuries.

Urdane of Osiard is one of Great Forks' most prominent abolitionists, a philosopher and essayist whose merchant family has afforded him a life of leisure and wealth. He frequently hosts parties and galas featuring formal debates or readings of political essays. Though in his fifty years of life, he's never ventured beyond the Triune League, he harbors a fascination for all things foreign and frequently seeks the company of prominent foreigners, scions of strange gods, and Exigents, a habit responsible for all manner of unexpected political connections. Though a genuine believer in his cause, Urdane approaches slavery as an intellectual question more than a moral one; he considers Great Forks' civil governance a strong model that doesn't need profound reform. He counts many prominent slaveholders as personal friends and frequent party guests, earning him the ire of fellow abolitionists who see this as moral cowardice.

THE HILL OF HOLLYHOCKS

This broad rise near the city's center dominates the skyline. Hundreds of grand temples jostle for attention,

their bas-relief facades painted in vivid colors, the streets between them strung with banners, paper lanterns, and wind chimes. Local worshipers and visiting pilgrims alike throng from temple to temple; processions move through the streets at every hour, worshipers' torches and candles turning the night streets into rivers of light. Plazas overflow with festivals; deafening music flows from drums and flutes; rich aromas of street food and incense permeate the air. Only in the predawn hours does revelry give way to troops of urban slaves scrubbing the streets clean.

Temples on the Hill attempt to outdo one another by organizing grandiose rituals, processions, and theatrical productions. They display fabulous objets d'art and throw lavish feasts. This largesse, aimed at increasing the temple's prestige, rarely extends to the poor. Priesthoods may also offer private rites and inner mysteries to their faithful, charging sizable fees for these services.

Moreso than Holymaze's lesser shrines, many Hollyhock temples restrict access to those who make offerings or sacrifices. Individual sites may enact additional restrictions according to the god's creed or whim. For instance, the temple of Fenya, god of Guild cant, only admits Guild members, while Ji-Zhen's temple bars anyone convicted in Great Forks' courts from participating in its inner mysteries.

Wealthy temples have bought up land over the centuries, crowding out second-tier divinities who've since relocated to other neighborhoods. But a handful of lesser temples cling tenaciously to the Hill alongside a few government buildings, koruphai estates, and unusual businesses such as the Temple of the Reverent Whisper (**Dragon-Blooded**, pp. 131-132, **Heirs to the Shogunate**, pp. 119-120) and the hired mourners of Torncloak House.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

The sprawling stepped pyramid of the **Sublime Lotus**, the thearchs' sanctum-palace, dominates the Hill. Their original temple forms a vestibule at one corner; sprawling wings devoted to the thearchs splay out from the other three, each with its own distinct architectural style mirroring its divine resident's purview and proclivities. Brilliantly colored bas-reliefs outside depict the Grand Mythopoiea's history. Within, congregation halls and icon-lined corridors resound with music, song, and endless tales woven by a rota of priests. Stern doorkeepers only admit those with legitimate business to see the thearchs themselves. What counts as legitimate business is determined largely by political influence, personal relationships, or bribery.

Scaffolding wreathes the charred walls of the **Temple of the Emperor Stag**, destroyed months ago by arsonists believed to be Immaculate saboteurs. Political talks have stalled repairs; as Censor of the Scavenger Lands, the Stag turns a blind eye to the city's corruption, and his priests demand a larger temple in exchange for his continued forbearance, an ultimatum rejected by adjoining temples' priesthoods. Civil service leaders intercede on both sides, whether fearing the Stag's withdrawal or resisting his priesthood's overreach. They've yet to break the deadlock.

Other noteworthy temples include the **Temple of Araz Who-Feeds-Us-All**, a granary-tabernacle that offers rice to the poor on feast days in exchange for prayer and whose monks brew excellent rice wine; the **Temple of Ji-Zhen**, the Scavenger Lands' god of sanctioned punishments, whose armory-stupa houses its reputedly incorruptible and remorseless Arrows; and the **Temple of Resplendent Twin (Adversaries of the Righteous**, p. 108), its interior bedecked with gleaming lamps and mirrors donated by wealthy mercantile patrons.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Talespinner's high priest, the far-traveled merchant **Seven-Stars Orlathe**, is on a diplomatic tour of the Triune League — and of her family's vineyards, mines, and other rural assets — to reaffirm old alliances and to purge rivals from Talespinner's outlying temples. Without her mediation, her two peers bicker over the city's future. **Ciade (Exigents**, p. 39), Dreamweaver's high priest, embraces an aggressive diplomatic posture, strengthening ties with Lookshy and the Guild and reaffirming military commitments to the Confederation of Rivers. Dayshield's high priest, the elderly Veh scholar **Harial Caruveni**, instead holds an isolationist stance, prioritizing Great Forks's security, stability, and self-sufficiency. Each broadcasts their views in ecclesiastical homilies and at social gatherings to influence civil service leaders.

Brilliant, erudite, wealthy, and charming, Talespinner's son **Garland-of-Spring** holds outsized influence on the Hill. Officially, this proud young man is a high-ranking priest in his divine parent's temple. Unofficially, he's befriended the city's wealthiest koruphai and its most prominent gods, priests, artists, and intellectuals. And in truth, he's the most recent reincarnation of **Cevis Gandharva**, founder of the Forest Witches (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, pp. 88–105), working to draw Great Forks and the Triune League into the Witches' sphere of influence.

NOTEWORTHY RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

For the five days of Calibration, most mortal laws are suspended. Materialized spirits roam the streets with impunity; the Arrows withdraw to their temples for mystery rites. Citizens remain indoors to overindulge in food, drink, and cannabis. Traditionally, servants and even slaves wine and dine alongside their masters.

Nyselaia, a festival honoring the gods of celestial bodies and earthly laws, marks the end of Calibration and a return to safety and normal life. Lesser criminals draw lots, with the lucky winner's sentence commuted; women clad in gold to represent the Sun's charioteer run through the city chased by children, with a successful capture bringing good fortune. Nyselaia is also sacred to gods of chance; bettors throng gambling dens as they reopen after Calibration.

The Three Banners Festival commemorates the city's founding. Worshipers draw lots to play the thearchs and other key figures in processions and sacred theater. At sunset, descendants of the three refugee peoples host banquets with kin to reaffirm their lineage. Once a solemn occasion for vows of citizenship and unity, it's now a raucous, festive occasion for drink, dance, and song.

At the weeklong Scythe-and-Flail Festival celebrating the rice harvest, priests carry gods of grain, fertility, weather, and the like through the city on palanquins to shower blessings on the faithful. Locals pay respects before Araz Who-Feeds-Us-All's temple, eat fragrant herbed rice cooked in wine, applaud the traditional rice-threshing dance performed by Ring-Tailed Karaxi's acolytes, and seek new lovers at night in the city's parks.

Alongside suborning and gathering favors from the city's elites, Garland-of-Spring's covert activities include funding the White Flames revolutionary society (p. 28) and the Company of Messengers' Gates-of-Paradise Temple, forging ties with martial gods and mortal leaders in neighboring Fallen Petal and Kleithe and encouraging the smoldering animosity between the thearchs' high priests. Orlathe's absence provides further opportunity to influence Talespinner's priesthood. When the Time of Tumult brings chaos to Great Forks, his Witches mean to destroy any who'd oppose them, leaving the city's leadership too fearful to oppose their rule in all but name.

Holymaze

In the shadow of the Hill of Hollyhocks lies Holymaze. This temple district encircles its more prestigious sibling, its inner fringes climbing the hill's lowest slopes. True to its name, Holymaze is a warren of side avenues and tight spaces. A few broad, winding roads connect its three major plazas; they're often congested with worshippers or one of the Grand Mythopoeia's packed calendar of festivals and rituals. Consequently, getting around in Holymaze can pose no small difficulty. A multitude of guides, palanquin bearers, and bodyguards do brisk business catering to pilgrims and tourists.

Visitors will likely need these guides because even moreso than the Hill of Hollyhocks above, Holymaze's colorful procession of temples never stays the same for long; space comes at a premium in Great Forks's temple district, and Holymaze is too cramped to accommodate new deities without displacing old ones. Scarcely a month goes by without some unlucky god of waning popularity being ousted from their place of worship to make way for a rising star. This displacement happens most actively in the lower streets at the district's fringes, where gods barely worthy of official placement cling to every scrap of worship they can muster to stave off ambitious spirits waiting to take their place.

Most lesser religious festivals are confined here. Some are little more than excuses to have a good time, such as the raucous Festival of Fallen Fruit in honor of Iphira, Goddess of Fermented Apples, which occasionally spills out from Holymaze into surrounding districts. Others, like the Veiled Sky Salutation, barely rise above the city's background noise — some may take the worship of Tewacsar, God of Temperate Rainfall, more seriously, but most simply leave their umbrella at home on his festival day and allow themselves to be rained upon as an act of reverence.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

In Holymaze's upper plaza stands the **Five-Hands Pagoda**, Great Forks' official temple of the Immaculate Faith. The temple's abbot, the elderly Air Aspect Fleeting Zephyr, has served here for over one hundred and fifty years, developing a reputation as an unimpeachable arbiter in disputes between her divine neighbors. The Immaculates are disliked, but they're disliked equally; many thorny disputes between immortals have been settled on the Pagoda's neutral ground. Whether they like it or not, the monks here respect that their mission is to cater to those who see the truth, not to convert those who don't. This tolerant attitude doesn't extend to heretical Immaculate offshoots such as the Dragonsong Order, a local syncretization of Immaculate doctrine

with the Grand Mythopoeia that frames the Perfected Hierarchy as narrative necessity and the Anathema as ink spilled on the world-story's words.

Once, Great Forks was a wilderness — but those trees are gone now, felled to make way for the city. Tenaus, God of the Twinrivers Wood, once held a place on the Hill of Hollyhocks for this sacrifice, but even gods can have short memories. His dwindling cult now holds mournful nighttime rituals at the **Temple of Unforgotten Roots**, centrally placed in Holymaze's lower plaza. Its great oaken doors are closed by day as his priests support themselves as coppicers, colliers, gardeners and game-wardens in city parks. Tenaus lives in fear that one day, even this last bit of dignity will be stripped from him. As his cult shrinks yearly alongside the city's greenery, soon even Holymaze could be beyond his grasp. He prepares to take drastic action against his despised neighbors should they attempt to force him out.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Morei-Arethi, the alluring, mauve-skinned Veh god of a now-extinct Dreaming Sea orchid, garners wealth and prestige by offering his companionship and sexual services to rich koruphai for exorbitant fees. He basks in the resulting celebrity, donning avant-garde couture to attend festivals and fêtes, offering gracious hospitality to noteworthy foreigners, and ingratiating himself to political figures and talented artists. As one of Dreamweaver's oldest and dearest friends, Morei-Arethi visits the Sublime Lotus often for tea, both to catch up on the old days and to lobby for favored clients' interests.

An exile from far northern Firanjh, the priestess **Llyriana of the Starlight Snowfield** stands out from a crowd with glistening white hair, dark blue robes, and a calm, soothing demeanor. She came to Great Forks with her god White Crown, riding in an altar-chariot and bearing stories of bloody warfare and torched temples. Her melancholy tales of snow-kissed lands and beautiful auroras have gathered a following of adorers and patrons more interested in her than her deity.

Great Forks doesn't want for established weather gods, and White Crown has struggled to establish a following. In Holymaze's cutthroat environment, this puts him at risk of losing his temple and home. As Llyriana familiarizes herself with Great Forks' customs, her god has come to rely far more on her social graces than she does on his patronage, an inverted relationship White Crown has grown to resent. Whether her faith endures this and their possible destitution or she's successfully poached by a stronger cult, her tale isn't uncommon to immigrant residents.

Kerin's Gate

At the largest of the city's three gates, lines of farmers, merchants, and travelers file into Great Forks beneath the sculpted visage of Warlord Kerin of the Second Alliance, a hero of the wars against the Realm seven centuries ago. Beneath her stern gaze, soldiers in gleaming parade armor check cargoes for contraband and collect tolls, tasks they're far better suited for than battle.

Beyond the gate, avenues lined with hostelries, wine-shops, and temples to martial gods fan out across the district. From a dozen side streets emanate the clanging of metalsmiths, chatter from tenements, and laughter from tiny restaurants and gaming halls frequented by residents, soldiers, and travelers. Barracks teem with undisciplined soldiers chatting, drinking, playing dice, or occasionally harassing passing foreigners out of boredom.

Centuries without outside threats have left Great Forks' troops lax about actual defense; most believe the city invincible, as foreigners won't even attempt to attack. Officers — all koruphai or mesoi scions who've purchased commissions, most of them young and inexperienced — focus on formation practice for military parades, which they regularly lead through the district on horseback amid music and pageantry.

Several militant temples in Kerin's Gate mount their own processions, each attempting to outshine the others in their volunteer soldiers' brilliant livery and personal beauty. These temples' congregations see constant turnover, as few in Great Forks have much interest in war gods other than mercenaries or the current month's crop of volunteer soldiers. Some smaller temples are led by mercenaries in all but name, with lay worshipers orating, performing rites, and speaking with gods in place of their nominal koruphe priests.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Barracks encircle **the Blue Arsenal**, the ancient fortress storing the garrison's weapons, wherein troops withdraw during riot or revolt. It's fallen into disrepair since the Battle of Mishaka. Thickets and ivy overrun the grounds. Inside, emergency grain stores have become rats' nests, and armories of once-fine equipment have deteriorated past usability — metal rusted beneath leaky roofs, leather and cloth rat-gnawed, and wood rotted away. Enterprising soldiers quietly salvage remnants for illicit trade, though the gear remains on the books. Others use the Arsenal's inner chambers for private assignations or to store stolen goods.

Only a few Kerin's Gate temples thrive after Mishaka decimated their priesthoods and congregations. **The House of Shields**, dedicated to Dayshield-as-Defender, gleams brighter than any, its martial friezes freshly painted and gilded. Folk from all walks of life visit to pray for the city's safety and to hear the high priest, the goddess's daughter Wisdom's Shining Promise (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, p. 41). Other successful temples include the fortress-temple of Sunipa, Eastern God of War, to which followers from failing war-god temples have gravitated; the squat, sullen sanctuary of Red Rope, God of Military Law, whose handful of Arrows show little regard for the Grand Mythopoeia's proscription against violence; and the whitewashed temple to Thousand-Tears Chirhava, God of the Widowed, which was so overcrowded after Mishaka that congregations spilled out onto the streets.

But many temples recovered poorly, if at all. The horse-god Hiparkes's temple now stables visitors' mounts alongside the god's sacred steeds for a fee. The domed temple of Eagle-Claims-the-Crown, God of Glory, has been converted to a theater, its innermost sanctum reduced to a dressing room. And ironically, Amoth City-Smiter's shrine is a rotted-out shell, its koruphe land-owner-priest unwilling to renovate the empty structure.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Iarathes the Younger, titular head of Great Forks' army, has little interest in strategy, tactics, or leadership. When not discussing philosophy with Violet Meadow faculty or attending parties and festivals, she sells officers' commissions to her peers and arranges for the army to purchase provisions and parade finery from business ventures owned by her family and clients. Each year, she throws a welcome banquet for the Commission of Kingdoms and Nations to maintain support for her lucrative position.

Rangale Shere, high priest of Sunipa, inherited the role when his parents died at Mishaka. Young and callow, he struggled with administrative duties until he married **Ankhe of Melevhil**, a blunt, assertive soldier of fortune. Swept up in her ambitions, he takes his cues from her, both in his personal life and in politics. They spend lavishly on galas, inviting more foreign merchants and mercenary captains than is customary. Shere has also flouted tradition by elevating many of Ankhe's former confederates to the temple's priesthood. Should occasion arise, the couple could conceivably gather a mercenary force more effective than the city garrison.

Senthilides, the grizzled guard commander for Kerin's Gate, still bears physical and emotional scars from Mishaka. He uses religion to cope. A fervent believer in the Grand Mythopoeia and Creation-as-Story, he's

thrown himself into the commander's role with gusto, seeking virtue by hamming up every public interaction like an amateur actor on stage. Bored locals often loiter near the gate to watch the show. Off duty, he composes and practices witty lines with which to engage visitors, shops for gaudy scarves and hats, and drinks to excess.

Little Yu-Shan

Despite being named for Heaven, this is Great Forks's most decadent, irreverent district. Music spills from theaters, laughter from wineshops, howls of victory and despair from gambling halls, and moans from massage parlors, opium dens, and brothels. People flock to pungent food carts as they would to shrines in Holymaze. Less-frequented establishments lie tucked away in odd corners, from erotic bookshops to cabinets of curiosities. Everywhere, folk from every walk of life mingle freely, from gods and koruphai, to foreigners and slaves.

There's no better place in Great Forks to find the strange and unusual. Spirit artisans craft idiosyncratic wares; merchants and scavenger lords from across the East quietly seek purchasers for rarities; divine smugglers trading in Yu-Shan treasures and keepsakes come to bargain. Beastmasters exhibit trained oddities from foreign realms; God-Blooded actors and musicians offer sublime performances; wood elemental chefs provide sustenance from their own flesh. Some businesses cater especially to divine needs and desires, offering services and pleasures that mortals would find inimical, imperceptible, or bizarre.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Accessible sanctums are especially prevalent here. Natives know which arches and doorways lead to hidden realms. Visitors risk getting lost in these places, many of which interweave into an otherworldly labyrinth of alleyways, grand halls, gardens, and caves. This ephemeral underside of Little Yu-Shan, dubbed **the Heronry** after the city's ancient foe, is inhabited almost entirely by spirits, not all of whom welcome human visitors.

As the Grand Mythopoeia views high-stakes gambling as corrosive to social order, the Commission of Prosperous Markets restricts legal gambling with bets exceeding one dinar to **the Temple of the Dice**, a glittering domed casino dedicated to Plentimon, God of Gambling. So well-established is the Temple that most Great Forks businesses accept its ivory betting tokens as currency. Bouncers at its gilded portals admit only those wearing porcelain half-masks and cochineal-dyed scarves, limited by sumptuary laws to the koruphai. As much social club as gambling house, the Temple's side

rooms play host to all manner of private games, political gatherings, and romantic rendezvous.

Patrons visit **the Pagoda of Wine and Whispers** not for its rich, greasy food and fine wines but for its wealth of schemes and secrets. Its proprietor, the faceless god Breathless Ruisti, is a heavenly exile of mysterious origin. His presence veils the Pagoda's velvet-draped booths in eavesdropper-thwarting silence, making the restaurant seemingly ideal for negotiations and shady dealings. Ruisti takes payment in information rather than coin or credit, yet remains fabulously wealthy from selling the occasional juicy fact overheard from patrons who didn't pay extra to keep their discussion private from him.

PROMINENT FIGURES

The so-called "**Four Sedge Queens**" hold unofficial authority in Little Yu-Shan. The district's many illicit gambling houses report to **Spinning-Coin Beseth**, the well-connected gambling deity who runs the Temple of the Dice and claims to be Plentimon's wife. The ascetic Wood Aspect outcaste **Seventh Wren** controls the main smuggling channel from Heaven through contacts among Heaven's Dragons. **Whitevine of Querestar**, a glamorous elderly Guild factor, profits greatly as the narcotics supplier for the district's drug dens. And countless families and spirits owe favors to **Chantrea Niko**, a centuries-old ghost and the city's most notorious fence and fixer, who holds influence over most of Little Yu-Shan's shrine-gangs.

The White Flames, a loose society of nonconformists and freethinkers, meets at the Haunch to discuss their displeasure with Great Forks' current state. They agree on the need for change but little else. Their ranks include **Third Aoide**, a minor god of music obsessed with restoring the city's long-abolished monarchy; **Rasuna Diomene**, a priestess and daughter of Resplendent Twin, who writes priggish tracts calling for God-Blooded rule; and **Pylas of Kleithe**, a radical abolitionist seeking to foment a bloody slave revolt. Despite seemingly insurmountable differences, they've gone from literary correspondence and armchair debate to sketching out possible plans for insurrection. Each believes that the group's mysterious new financial backer supports their ambitions over those of their fellows.

Once a small-town merchant's daughter-turned-costumer at Ji-Zhen's temple, **Flowing Veil** rose to acclaim as one of Great Forks' most celebrated dramaturses. Her satirical plays, though steeped in the Grand Mythopoeia's imagery, mercilessly lampoon venal commissioners, greedy koruphai, self-absorbed gods, and arrogant Exalted. In her

EXIGENTS OF GREAT FORKS

More Exigents reside in Great Forks than perhaps any other city in Creation, some Exalted by its multitude of gods, others come seeking allies or peers among their own kind. The Thousand Venoms Mistress (p. 69) and Nurlissa, Chosen of Masks (p. 134) are among their number. Here are a few more Exigent residents of the City of Ten Thousand Temples:

White Rose, the Architect of Kleithe, resides at their city's embassy in Colonnade, but can be found at parties and diplomatic functions throughout the city, attempting to strengthen Kleithe's position in the Triune League. They are renowned for their beauty and the sharpness of both their mind and their tongue.

Choral Sword Bryar, Chosen of Song, is newly arrived in Great Forks, fresh from adventures saving his distant home city of Oqu from fae corsairs. The rabbitfolk swordsman revels in his newfound celebrity and draws attention with public performances of his enchanting music even as the city's elite plot how best to use him for their own ends.

Khudukha White-Crown, Chosen of Frost, was Exalted almost a century ago among a now-extinct Northern people. He names himself the reincarnation of Osh, his long-deceased patron, and has secured himself a small temple at the base of Holymaze. He threatens harsh winters if he is not granted rich sacrifices, a practice that rankles his divine neighbors and worries city officials. He would likely have been forced into exile already had he not pledged to the thearchs to come to the city's defense in its time of need.

latest work, *The Silverwights*, the comic foil criticizes the very notion of class divisions with incisive, crowd-pleasing arguments. Several violent disagreements have broken out among playgoers since its opening. Veil fears Ji-Zhen will withdraw his patronage; she presses on, both to uphold her convictions and to earn her wife and children the koruphe status that she mocks in her work.

The Marshes

Where wetlands once thrived along the Yellow River's banks, centuries of reclamation with fill and levees have replaced shrubs and sedges with a jumble of tenements, homes, and shops. A labyrinth of alleyways behind them encompasses animal pens, vegetable gardens,

junkheaps, and the like. The district's propensity for flooding every few years, accompanied by disease outbreaks, makes tenancy undesirable. Residents are thus largely lakkoi, slaves, and foreigners.

Petty godlings, unable to establish cults and priesthoods elsewhere in Great Forks, often slink down into the Marshes. There they proselytize largely beneath the Arrows' notice, setting themselves up as a tenement's patron spirit or joining a shrine-gang (**Exigents**, p. 32–33). Meanwhile, powerful divinities occasionally visit incognito to toy with mortals with few repercussions. Locals show especial wariness and deference around unknown spirits.

This outsized district encompasses numerous smaller communities. **Oldmarsh**, largely settled before the district became a slum, is the most heterogeneous; a handful of down-at-heel mesoi villas, having sold off their lands piecemeal over the centuries, stand among rundown homes and shops. In **Newmarsh**, thousands of lakkoi and slaves crowd into six-story insulae amid streets packed with pedestrian traffic, cheap street food, and impromptu ball games. The destitute lodge in boggy, sodden **Knotgrass**, where they suffer from mosquitoes, rotting foundations, and intermittent flooding and cholera.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Shrines lie scattered throughout the district. Folk paint their faces with ocher at the **Sixfold Shrine**, dedicated to the Golden Stars, six sibling season-gods who visit Great Forks during their cycle of Ascending Fire; those who survive the spirits' months-long jealous infatuations are favored with gifts sufficient to start a life elsewhere. Petitioners pour out libations to Lady Midnight (**Adversaries of the Righteous**, p. 50–52) at her pale shrine to gain foreknowledge of danger. Rabszolga, God of Slaves, receives countless offerings at several small shrines from those under his aegis, hoping for good fortune and better treatment.

Weeds and debris encircle the blackened walls of "**the Charcoal**," a cluster of Newmarsh tenements burned out in a fire months ago. Despite a few desultory efforts at reconstruction, most remain unrepaired, allowing impoverished lakkoi to move in while landowners ponder how best to rebuild. Multiple shrine-gangs compete for the squatters' worship — petty godlings offering quirky blessings, flighty minor elementals giving warmth on cold nights, and ghosts of the fire's victims. All know their tenancy is short-lived, though some angrily talk of repelling the owners' hired muscle by force when the time comes.

The guardian spirit Niduma Remembers-Glory brought **Gray Embers**, a First Age memorial to dead Exigents, centuries ago as Great Forks' reputation grew. This stone pedestal, heaped with eternally smoldering cinders and tucked away in a weedy backlot accessible only through a tortuous refuse-strewn alley, sees occasional pilgrims venerating the dead with incense and flowers, and would-be heroes wishing for luck in winning the Exigence. Niduma offers such petitioners the Gray Embers' mysterious blessing and bids that they remember her ancient vigil if they ever attain their goal.

PROMINENT FIGURES

The mesos bureaucrat **Nyssa Arathes** struggles to support her family and maintain their crumbling manor in Oldmarsh. With their assets reduced to a single decrepit Newmarsh tenement, she solicits bribes from koruphe patrons in order to keep her household — which once held a seat on the Voul, the city's long-defunct ruling council — from joining the lakkoi. She isn't proud of this, but would gladly do worse to maintain the family's standing.

After decades spent as a slave tutor in a koruphe priest's household, **Triese of Taigh Phor** was freed in their owner's will. They eke out a living in a Newmarsh tenement as a freelance teacher, scribe, advocate, and god-talker. Hundreds of locals owe them favors or gratitude. Triese retains contacts with their former master's children and slaves, through whom they act as a go-between for Marshes lakkoi seeking patronage or Wolf Hill koruphai soliciting illicit or unsavory services.

Residents stand aside respectfully when the apothecary dubbed "**the Witch of Knotgrass**" hobbles by on his gnarled ebony walking stick. Buyers come from across the city to purchase his medicines or to buy amulets warding off disease and evil magic. Gossips whisper that he also offers curses and poisons to midnight visitors in exchange for rich offerings to a forbidden god.

Quayside

The song of Quayside begins early in the morning: first, the river fishers chattering prayers to little gods of the current for good fortune; then, the creak of barges arriving early to meet the morning rush of goods to market, and the songs of enslaved stevedores as they work in a human chain to offload goods. When fishers return with their catch, the fishmongers take up their part of the noise, and the smell adds a kind of clamor of its own on summer's hottest days.

If Beehive is the heart of Great Forks' mercantile prosperity, Quayside is the mouth. Most of Great Forks' trade

enters and leaves via this district, with only trade to the immediate southeast taking overland routes and south-bound trade passing through Notchstaithe, the smaller dockside district along the foot of the cliffs overlooking the Rolling River.

Foreigners most often arrive through Quayside on the barges flowing steadily down the Yellow River, and many establishments here cater specifically to relieving them of their coin. Quayside's streets are among the most cosmopolitan in an already-cosmopolitan city — one can find carts and stalls slinging cuisines from as far away as Paragon or Whitewall (few of them authentic), guides offering translations of all but the most obscure foreign dialects and a veritable ocean of so-called local delicacies and tourist wares for half the price offered in Beehive.

For all that Great Forks' lifeblood flows through Quayside, precious little of it stays here. It's a district of foreigners, working lakkoi, and slaves put to some of the most backbreaking labor in the city. Travelers from across the Scavenger Lands can be found in dockside pubs, taverns, and brothels. The Arrows are out in force here, keeping order among sailors and outsiders ignorant of Great Forks' law and generally harassing anyone they feel isn't giving them an appropriate amount of respect.

A regular sight in the district are the ochre-mantled priests of Shunanto, the mighty god of the Yellow River, who descend from their palace-temple on the Hill of Hollyhocks to bless ships, fisherfolk, and any work or passage that takes place on the Yellow. Their splendid shrine-skiffs are easily identified by their elaborately embroidered sails as they approach passing river traffic to offer blessings and solicit donations.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

A jewel in the rough of Quayside, **Passions Drowning** occupies a riverside islet accessible by bridge, situated at the foot of the Thousandfold Stair that reaches up to Holymaze to the south. A far cry from the rough riverside brothels elsewhere in Quayside, this ostentatious marble pleasure house is a personal project of its owner, the hedonistic Cynis Asuria. The exiled Dynast's talent for training her courtesans in culture and seduction has attracted Passions Drowning much acclaim and the patronage of some of many important gods, priests, and city officials. Asuria's talent for training her proteges in spycraft and blackmail is less well known.

None know how the **Calinti Lady** came to be moored in Quayside without the dockmasters noticing. If she had a crew, they're long gone, either abandoning the

sprint trader on the river or vanishing into the city after its arrival, taking her manifest with them. So far, no one has claimed the vessel. After an investigation by excise officials found sealed chests bound with prayer-strip wards in her hold, every river sailor in Quayside regards the ship as deeply cursed and will have nothing to do with it.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Solemn Anchor is the Ministrant of Auspicious Welcoming, a prominent position in Shunanto's priesthood. Although the Ministrant's sole official task is recording the names of any who arrive in Great Forks by ship, in practice, this grants Solemn Anchor considerable power and wealth by letting him refuse entry or make a trespasser (and therefore a criminal) of anyone who fails to meet his approval. An imposing man draped in the ochre mantle of Shunanto's priesthood, his elemental heritage is visible in his sea-green skin and crocodile teeth. Good-natured and cheerfully corrupt, he's happy to accept a bribe in money or kind but is nonetheless known to instead require odd jobs and strange favors as his price for entry. He's built a considerable network of influence among dockworkers; many of those he initially shook down for money end up finding gainful work through him. As such, he enjoys widespread popularity among dockworkers, including many he's personally extorted.

None know the identity of the **Bloodstained Crow**. To date, seven mortals have died at their hand, found in the morning with multiple stab wounds and surrounded by black feathers. The deaths always occur near cargo from which one valuable item has been stolen, whether a Shogunate jade idol or a chest of saffron. No obvious common thread links thefts or victims. Is the Crow taking these items as mementos of their crimes? Are the deaths merely unlucky casualties who chanced upon the Crow mid-robbery? None know, but the murders have increased tensions in Quayside, prompting a flurry of suspicion and hasty accusations. If the murderer isn't found soon — or a suitable scapegoat provided in their stead — mob violence against those deemed likely culprits, such as the ill-liked military veteran **Sapphire Daughter** or the loanshark **Tono Hanuk**, is likely.

The Urns

Along the cliffs overlooking the Rolling River, down the long stretch of the White Road and in the Crooked Hill's myriad fissures, the Urns patiently keeps Great Forks's dead. While many prefer cremation and scattering of their ashes upon the rivers, Great Forks is a cosmopolitan city, and many traditions reject such rituals. Traditionalist

Mileti and Veh, for example, prefer to inter their ashes, so the district is lined with rows of polished stone shrines in which families honor their ancestors held in the brightly glazed urns that gave the funerary district its name. The wealthiest dead are brought here only temporarily, prepared by Sijanese morticians in preparation for the journey by barge to the River of Tears, to receive their bespoke final rites in Sijan itself.

Behind these shrines, the dead are buried intact, graves marked by clustered steles carved in a dozen different styles, some old enough that damp river air has long since worn away the detail. Here and there, especially atop Crooked Hill, rise towers where those who prefer sky burial lay out their dead for raitons and vultures to pick clean, and where the remaining bones are powdered, mixed with grain, and scattered for smaller birds to feast upon. Following the battle of Mishaka, the White Road's pale stone memorial posts, dedicated to wartime dead, have swelled in number to crowd out some older cemeteries.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Most gods don't care for the dead or the competition for prayer they represent. The **White Nettle Lodge**, based in a drafty funerary temple in the Urns, a syncretic ancestor cult incorporating multiple cultures's funereal practices under its auspices, and has a reputation for well-coordinated political activism. It advocates for ghosts as best it can, replacing damaged or destroyed shrines and lobbying for greater recognition of the dead within the Grand Mythopoeia. The Lodge's Veilkeepers defend the Urns and important ancestral sites outside the funerary district, sometimes clashing with the Arrows during crackdowns on unlicensed ancestor cults and ancestral shrines.

Tucked away behind a hillock, the **House of Peaceful Somnolence** is home to the Immaculate Excavators of Noble Repose, more commonly called the Diggers — an esoteric Pasiapite order originating with traveling monks who buried wartime dead in regions where firewood for cremations had grown scarce. They attend to burials for Immaculate faithful who opt for nontraditional death rites. Diggers are also trained exorcists; they patrol the Urns by night against malevolent wraiths, hungry ghosts, and graverobbers.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Hadum and Herun, a pair of lion dogs assigned by Heaven to defend an ancient road torn up during Great Forks's construction, have transferred their vigil to a quiet corner of the Urns where many of their road's cobblestones were reused. They appreciate company, even that of ghosts and mourners. Over the years, they've

amassed impressive knowledge of Great Forks through their conversations; they sometimes accept gifts from savants and historians to give lectures on local history.

The weathered ghost of **Maraja Galanda**, one of Great Forks's final princes, holds court over the mausoleum-shrines of Crooked Hill. Here, among the wraiths of ancient nobility, she decries the modern city's decadence and regales guests with self-serving reinterpretations of her dynasty's reign, painting it as an era of just rulership undone by foreigners' corrupt plots. Over the years, she's amassed a small, dedicated following among dissidents and revolutionaries who seek to overthrow Great Forks' bureaucratic government and reestablish its principality — if only they can find a living Maraja heir.

Violet Meadow

Great Forks' bureaucracy maintains and funds this famous learning institution, welcoming the Scavenger Lands' best and brightest to study and teach. It constitutes a district unto itself, with hundreds of staff and thousands of attendees. Within its encircling walls, pillared marble structures lie scattered among fragrant gardens, deep clear pools, and orchards of blossoming fruit trees that shade students and scholars alike. Students hurry from long, low dormitories to visit lecture pavilions, libraries, shrines, and scriptoriums or cluster around famed educators emerging from hedgegirt townhouses.

Students choose their own curriculum for higher education, ranging from lessons and problem-solving in theology, law, mathematics, history, and rhetoric to hands-on training in archery, craftsmanship, medicine, alchemy, and the occult. Some students focus on a single topic of interest. Others — particularly aristocratic and mercantile heirs — seek a broader education, typically lasting five to eight years.

Violet Meadow doesn't charge tuition, but in practice, there's a major divide between poorer students, who attend evening classes of hundreds after work, and students from affluent backgrounds, whose "donations" to their instructors earn them daytime study at teachers' homes where they network with fellow scions of wealth and power. Few educators offer private tutelage based on money alone, however. Each has their own standards, rejecting those they deem untalented, stubbornly ignorant, or insufficiently philomathic. An ever-changing roster of guest instructors offers presentations and seminars on diverse topics. Some of the more notable guests include Sesshou ma Rakida, a rebel Vanehan aristocrat fearful of assassins, who teaches ethics and the natural

sciences, and the outcaste mercenary Six Crimson Streams, who peppers her lessons in spear work and military theory with horrific wartime anecdotes.

A few students stand out from the pack. **Amilar Tebal** pursues a comprehensive education while her Lookshyan mother investigates urban ruins in Dead Laris; proud, prickly, and newly Exalted, she's become prone to bluster, brawls, and brief torrid trysts. **Sophiara Akynthos**, pompous God-Blooded heir to a politically dominant koruphai family, surrounds himself with sycophants who bully those who've attracted his disdain. Far-traveled mercenary **Gulamal the Mouse** studies martial arts and history, seeking secret techniques to better pursue her trade. **Talesniffer**, a huraka (**Hundred Devils Night Parade**, p. 94) of peculiarly sociable disposition, studies music and augury; though peaceable, the 10-foot-tall, bearlike blue air elemental has little understanding of mortal affairs and is easily misled into destructive acts.

A council of preceptors — koruphai teacher-priests named by the Commission of Shrines and Temples — oversees the school. They liaise with other commissions, accept educators and head librarians, set policy, and adjudicate disputes. Most conflicts and crimes on Meadow grounds are resolved by preceptors without ever coming before the Arrows or the courts.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

Residents say that in the early days of Great Forks, a divinity of knowledge or wisdom — their identity varies with the telling — danced in the **Seeker's Lawn**, and violets sprang up from their footsteps. If true, the flowers are long gone, but this greensward dotted with flowering ash groves remains a favorite of students and scholars. It's a place for daytime athletic events, twilight picnics, nighttime stargazing, and predawn liaisons.

The **Cariath Archives** are famous throughout the Threshold as a repository for writings old and new, from First Age fragments to modern literature and treatises, overseen by a small army of librarians and scribes. Students have free access to most texts in this grand pillared hall; outsiders must pay research fees. Certain documents — especially ancient lore and sorcerous grimoires — reside in sealed underground vaults with restricted access. These reputedly include a fragmentary list of command codes for First Age automata, sealed records from the first Great Forks princes' negotiations with the Seventh Legion, the private journal of the assassin Godknife, and a copy of the legendary infernal text called *The Broken-Winged Crane*. Students whisper of a sealed flask containing a spirit of smoky green flame, rumored to grant the gift of Exigency to whoever frees it — or, alternately, to devour its rescuer's soul.

Students of athletics and combat train at the **Dawnspear Ring**, gymnasium-temple to Artha-Palaj, goddess of a long-defunct martial arts school. A broad courtyard encircling the temple offers scope to practice calisthenics, horsemanship, archery, and the like. All Meadow students are welcome to train here, and educators often hold unstructured classes and informal lectures. But those receiving instruction from the god and her priest-gymnasiarchs must live in the temple and follow monastic rule for the duration. Their creed demands constant vigilance; students face sudden attacks, mind games, and other nonlethal threats during their stay.

PROMINENT FIGURES

Agatna Gray-Sandal, dominie of Violet Meadow and high priest of Talespinner-as-Teacher, holds the Meadow's council of preceptors in the palm of her hand. Stout and far-traveled, she wields easy charm and an arsenal of apt anecdotes to sway listeners. Passionate in her faith, she encourages interest in foreign customs and innovations while emphasizing Immaculacy's political threat and the spiritual peril of the Anathema. She walks a fine line in welcoming Seventh Legion students while discouraging positive portrayals of the Immaculate Faith.

Diamond-in-the-Pearl, disgraced former secretary to the God of Hair Ornaments, teaches fashion and vernacular. Most of his students are fellow spirits who must interact with mortals but have little interest in them; many take his course but once, thereafter presenting themselves with garb and speech outdated by years or decades. Diamond himself loves human pastimes; in his off hours, he carouses at koruphai galas and Marshes dive bars, consults for jewelers and clothiers in Beehive, and gambles away treasures in Little Yu-Shan — often incurring debts that others call in later for favors.

Stolen Requiem is a peculiar sight even in such a place as the Violet Meadow, a Blood Aspect Liminal Exalt. Born from doomed experiments by a specter who sought resurrection through possessing a perfect living body, his awakening made him useless to his creator, who cast him out. Having inherited much of his maker's knowledge of medicine, herbalism, and occult lore, Stolen Requiem eventually found his way here in hope of earning a living and a reputation by passing on his knowledge. To his misfortune, he found that people were much more interested in the fighting skills evident in his battle-scarred body and reluctantly offers instruction in hand-to-hand combat. A sullen, withdrawn individual with poor social skills, Stolen Requiem finds little success in winning the friends and fame he'd hoped for after the rejection that marked his first moments. Still, the few students who seek his teaching in lore rather

than fighting give him hope of someday being known as the scholar he wishes to be.

Wolf Hill

To the south of the Hill of Hollyhocks, beyond the sprawling markets of Beehive, lies Wolf Hill, so named for the den of monstrous wolves who supposedly once called it home. Behind its iron-barred and well-guarded gates, most of Great Forks' koruphai dwell in a city within a city, filled with luxury forbidden to most. The guards of the Wolf Hill Gatewatch, paid for by a coalition of wealthy residents, deny entry to any without an invitation or a generous bribe.

The grandest estates near the hill's summit, palatial in size and opulence, are carefully screened from one another by tall stands of trees or hedgerows to give the impression that they alone occupy the peak. Below them, the district's lower reaches are a patchwork of comfortable walled villas and parks, their exterior spaces given over to statuary, ornamental gardens, and other artistic attempts to one-up the neighbors.

No such glamour and wealth, of course, could exist without labor. While Wolf Hill isn't as densely populated as other parts of the city, it holds the dubious distinction of having the highest ratio of slaves to free citizens of any district. Behind the walls of magnificent parlors and in cellars beneath elegant dining rooms live slaves, sometimes dozens on a single estate.

NOTEWORTHY LOCALES

The only temple that officially exists in Wolf Hill is the **Fane of Endless Valor**, a small sanctuary of the Arrows of Ji-Zhen's Justice; all others are officially forbidden, part of city ordinance set down to prevent Holymaze's temple sprawl from disturbing the Hill's wealthy residents. This temple mainly exists to support private guards in the event of riot or disturbance at the gates. They're infrequently called upon for any other sort of crime, and appointment here is generally seen as a sinecure or a place to keep connected but incompetent Arrows out of harm's way.

For decades now, the **Azure Garden** has been the favored place for Wolf Hill's monied youth to hold illicit parties and secret celebrations. A private park presided over by the wood elemental Honeydew, herself hostess to the gatherings, Azure Garden's main purpose is an open secret within the district, and many older koruphai deliberately overlook their children's attendance of these parties as their parents did before them. But the excesses, affairs, indulgences, and heresies of these

GREAT FORKS TIMELINE

REALM YEAR	EVENT		
1	The Great Contagion ends.		dynastic rule. Her aristocratic supporters form the Voul, an advisory and judicial council.
11	The Black Heron establishes herself in the Field of Endless Raitons.	317-321	Intou-Great Forks War. Great Forks annexes nearby Intou-ruled city-states, including Melevhil and Kleithe.
88	To oppose Realm invasion, a Second Alliance of Scavenger Lands polities assembles under the auspices of General Nefvarin Gilshalos, Warlord Kerin, Dictatrix Alix Brightsword, the funerist Aldis Nerin, Garil of the Horselords, and other heroic figures.	335-352	Led by Fallen Petal's sacred mercenaries, Great Forks' vassal states break away in a series of wars and rebellions.
95	Scavenger Lands states establish the League of Many Rivers for mutual defense.	350	Samarin Kerai overthrows the Iris Dynasty; she takes the regnal name Maraja the First.
216	The Houtholan people flee the Silver River basin's rampant epidemics.	355	Prince Maraja establishes the Seven Commissions to handle bureaucratic matters.
229	The Veh people, facing religious persecution at the hands of Prasad's Pure Way, begin migrating northward.	404	The Solar Anathema Yanazios leads a bloody slave revolt that sets half of Great Forks ablaze before she's slain by a Circle of Exigents; the battle destroys several city blocks.
265	Laris and Velen Administrative Districts' conflict over water rights flares into a decades-long war that devastates the southeastern Scavenger Lands.	416-418	Trade War between the Realm and the Guild sees a migration boom to Great Forks from those fleeing embargoed Realm satrapies.
275	The Mileti people flee the Laris-Velen wars.	424-441	Great Forks takes in refugees from Vaneha's conquest of the eastern Scavenger Lands, settling them in the developing Marshes.
278	Great Forks founded by divinely guided Houtholan, Mileti, and Veh refugees. Agreement for the city's throne to cycle between the three peoples; Daranais of Caelon elected prince for a seven-year term.	438	Triune League established as a defensive alliance against potential Vanehan aggression.
282	The thearchs expel the Black Heron from the Field of Endless Raitons.	441-474	Vanehan empire dissolves into civil war. The Seventh Legion annexes key Vanehan cities; the Triune League mobilizes against potential Lookshyan assault
289-299	Exiled from Great Forks, the prophet-warlord Yesta conquers much of the Hundred Kingdoms. Her empire dwindles after her death, finally collapsing in RY 316.	460	Prince Maraja Calliane dies without issue. The Voul claims princely authority over Great Forks.
313	Prince Iris Andrio refuses to abdicate at her term's end. After a week-long civil war, the city submits to her	481-501	Vaneha conquers the southern Hundred Kingdoms.

REALM YEAR	EVENT		
557	Great Forks diplomats are instrumental in establishing the Confederation of Rivers, successor to the League of Many Rivers.	637	Iselsi-sponsored invasion of the Scavenger Lands fails spectacularly.
		669	The Voul, having withered to a purely ceremonial body, is finally dissolved.
564	The first Forest Witch proselytes from the Company of Messengers arrive in Great Forks.	732	The notorious assassin dubbed “the Godknife” flees when she’s revealed as a Solar Anathema.
570	Execution of Starling of Osiard, a popular street preacher, leads to widespread riots. The Voul hands over judicial authority to the newly established Council of Unquestionable Justice. Capital punishment banned in Great Forks.	750-754	The River Province rebuffs invasion from Thorns; Great Forks’ army is decimated in the final battle at Mishaka.
		764	Great Forks celebrates after undead forces sack Thorns.
		768	The present day.

gatherings would be impossible without the enslaved workforce providing food, cleaning, and entertainment.

While most guests don’t even register the slaves’ presence, a few are all too aware of how much their downcast eyes see and take it upon themselves to ensure the slaves’ silence — sometimes with bribery, much more often with threats or outright violence. Recently, a slave who saw too much was found strangled near the Garden, a breach of even the paltry legal protections afforded their class. So far, no koruphe has been inconvenienced by the Arrows’ cursory investigation, but there are rumblings that city authorities mean to appoint an outside investigator.

PROMINENT FIGURES

The outcaste sorcerer **Crycanimechi** purchased a prominent mansion in Wolf Hill some years ago under suspicious circumstances. Now bound demons of a

dozen kinds prowl the stately courtyard, strange lights shine from the arched windows at night, and the locals have begun avoiding the streets the mansion borders on whenever possible. Despite how much Crycanimechi perturbs their neighbors, no one has yet dared to try to oust him by law or force, for even gods know better than to provoke an irascible sorcerer.

Though temples are forbidden in Wolf Hill, gods are citizens, and some divine residents are known to invite neighbors for galas and soirees that are mystery-cult rituals in all but name. **Reliot of Silver Descending**, or the Archminister of the Sacred Way (as some know him in private), is perhaps the best-known of these. This god of inherited wealth finds eager worshippers among young aristocratic scions, and many in Wolf Hill owe their favorable inheritance to his blessing. His network of connections and favors among the koruphai has made him one of the city’s most powerful political fixers.

Tamako was getting used to fire.

She didn't *want* to get used to it, but it seemed an occupational hazard of the Chosen. Chance or the providence of the Dragons had delivered her into the path of a dozen spirits of flame in the past year, and now she balanced atop the tile roof of a pagoda, daring to steal another glance at the Anathema on the streets below. He was a strapping man and impressively quick with a flame piece. She might have found him handsome, if not for the heavy burn scars and the golden disc that blazed on his forehead. What was the name for this caste? The Blasphemous?

"What was your name again?" Shifune asked the man, tipping his nose over the lip of the roof only to draw it back an instant before it could be singed by a blast of golden flame. "The Golden Eye's Hollow?"

"I am the Gold and Iron Halo," the man said, firedust flowing through his fingers and into his flamepiece with preternatural grace. "And I'd be happy to let you leave, just as soon as you recant your Immaculate lies."

"He wants us to recant our Immaculate lies," Shifune preened with a lazy stretch. "I'm *more* than happy to do that on our behalf."

"Behave yourself," Tamako said, swatting at the fox-god's wagging tail half-heartedly. "He's putting on a show. I could say that Pasiap abducted the Empress and Mela invented pneumonia and still get burned for my troubles."

"Oh, but I *do* love a show," Shifune said and smiled that impossibly wide and toothsome smile. It wasn't the kind of smile that belonged on a fox's face, and despite her familiarity, she was far less used to it than to fire.

"Well then, let's give him one."

They leaped from the roof as one, Shifune to the left and Tamako to the right. As expected, he shot for Tamako, seeing Shifune as little more than a pet, but she weaved around it even as she fell, borrowing some of her partner's famed agility. He landed with a bit less dignity than he might have liked, but she made it to the ground without being set ablaze. A net win.

They closed from opposite paths of attack even as he drew his second flame piece. He was a deadly shot. Yellow-orange flame roared forth, too quick for Tamako to dodge. She burned — yelling in agonized theatrics. The Solar approached with a victor's swagger, reloading his weapons again. The flames lingered and curled and danced, filling his senses. She was suffering, he didn't like that, and... people didn't burn like that. They didn't scream like that. He swiped at her with the butt of his weapon, and the flames evaporated, leaving Shifune there, smiling up at him as he groomed a paw. In rage, the Solar took aim and shot again, loosing flame hot enough to make the cobbles beneath the fox glow red-hot.

Shifune padded out of the smoldering circle and shivered as his body rematerialized. How nice to be immaterial again, if only for a moment. Tamako struck the Solar from behind with a fist wreathed in foxfire. The Gold and Iron Halo swung his fist, ablaze with anima, but the fox and his Foxbinder swapped places again, and a blow that might have hit Tamako square sailed well over Shifune's head. He smiled again, that all-too-human smile, and the Solar balked just long enough for Tamako to sweep his legs out from underneath him.

"That was fighting dirty," Shifune told his Chosen, voice thick with false scandal as he batted the Halo's flame pieces away from where they had fallen. "Truly, it is a god's greatest pride to see his virtues reflected in his Chosen."





Chapter Two

Champions of the Terrestrial Host

The majority of the Exigents are peers to the Dragon-Blooded in power. This chapter contains four Terrestrial-level design seeds: the Foxbinder, the God-Admirals of Cabochon, the Thousand Venoms Mistress and the Torchbearer. These design seeds are playable as written but contain Charm concept sidebars intended to inspire you to expand them with homebrew and make them your own.

The Foxbinder of Shifune

The Foxbinder is the latest in a line of monks with the dubious honor of being the Chosen of Wicked-Grin Shifune, a devious fox-trickster who is her patron, companion, and prisoner.

Tamako the Foxbinder

The wise, stoic Foxbinder, servant of the Perfected Hierarchy, humbly stewarding the unhale power of Exigence, and the mendacious devil Wicked-Grin Shifune, forever seeking escape from his duty through lies and trickery. These two have long since become a fixture of culture throughout the Blessed Isle. They appear in Immaculate-approved morality plays, raucous farces, and bedtime stories. The young monk Tamako knew them all but never expected to become the next Foxbinder herself.

When Tamako entered the Order to escape an arranged marriage, she had hoped only for an assignment to somewhere pleasant, where she could live out her life seeking fulfillment, doing good work in the Order's name, and having a little time to herself to explore. That changed when she passed the trials and showed the necessary aptitudes to inherit Shifune's collar and his spark of Exigence. She relishes her new role as Foxbinder, which, if nothing else, brings her a life of excitement.

At the Order's behest, Tamako wields her gifts in service of the Wyld Hunt, traveling the Blessed Isle and beyond. She knows that her cause is a righteous one, for she has seen firsthand the carnage that the Anathema are capable of. She is curious and compassionate and does her best to ease the troubles of those in need, even bending the strict rules of conduct imposed by her superiors to do so. She enjoys Shifune's company, though she keeps it a secret from all but him; his stories and antics bring her more joy than any of the luxuries of her upbringing. Their partnership is not without its tribulations, as the fox can never resist a good prank.

FOXBINDERS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN

If things had turned out differently, Tamako might never have become the Foxbinder.

If Tamako had never run away to join the Immaculate Order, the Foxbinder may have been Mnemon Karak. The ambitious monk would try to use the Foxbinder's powers to advance the position of his Great House and secure his grandmother's ascension to the Scarlet Throne, only to be thwarted by Shifune every step of the way.

If Shifune escaped the Order, the Foxbinder may have been Song of Life's Summer. The clever bandit and her fox companion would become legend for daring thefts and overthrowing petty tyrants, hunted all the while as Anathema. The pair would feed into one another's worst impulses in their desire for glory and chaos, respectively.

If Shifune was never given to the Immaculate Order, the Foxbinder may have been Righteous Owl. The god-blooded agent of the Bureau of Heaven would spend their time tirelessly rooting out corruption and conspiracy in the Celestial Bureaucracy, with the paroled Shifune helping and hindering as he pleases.

Shifune the Skythief, Vanguard of Heaven

In the early years of the Realm, the trickster spirit Wicked-Grin Shifune was entrusted to the custody of the Immaculate Order, bound to his own flame of Exigence. Since that time, many have borne that Exigence in the Order's service, holding Shifune's shackles as Foxbinders. When asked what he did to earn his unique punishment from the Unconquered Sun, Shifune regales all with his profane exploits. He tells of how he stole Gaia's first dance at the Carnival of Meeting from a furious Luna and how he urinated upon the throne of the Most High. He tells of how he cheated at the Games of Divinity and thereby plunged the sky of Heaven into utter darkness for a whole terrifying day. Who can say if these tales are true? Heaven is forbidden to speak of his past, and Shifune's own account changes with the telling.

What is known is that Shifune's sentence of forced Exigence was an opportunity for the Bronze Faction to recruit a useful Exalt into the ranks of the Immaculate Order. Far more than his diminishment and the loss of his fraudulent station, Shifune resents the dull centuries he has languished at the mercy of dour monks. Tamako is different; he can make her laugh, and he hasn't managed to make a Foxbinder so much as crack a smile in a hundred years. Their rapport gives him hope that he may one day return to Heaven to mete out a justice of his own.

The Monk and the Fox

Tamako stands at a crossroads. Her leniency towards her prisoner will surely not escape the notice of her Immaculate overseers for long. If she can appease them, her talents could see her lauded as a hero of the Realm in its battle against the Anathema. In the company of the Dragon-Blooded, she and Shifune could play an important role in navigating the perils of the forthcoming civil war with wit and guile.

If Tamako were to instead go rogue, the Order would surely declare her Anathema and go to great lengths to execute her and remand Shifune to the custody of a more loyal Foxbinder. Worse, powerful gods may see an independent Foxbinder as an opportunity to exact revenge on Shifune for humiliations inflicted in centuries past. Wherever the pair go, chaos will surely follow.

PLAY THE FOXBINDER IF YOU WANT:

- to play a character with a companion to be her foil.

- to engage in teamwork with a powerful familiar.
- to navigate the demands of responsibility and the call of freedom.
- to enjoy the occasional prank at your own expense.

Traits

The Foxbinder is an Essence-based Exalt intended for Terrestrial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Dodge, Integrity, and Investigation are her favored Abilities.

ANIMA

The Foxbinder's anima flickers with a deep orange radiance chased with shadows and winking pinpricks of yellows and greens. Her iconic anima resolves into a shifting mosaic of red, orange and black, showing iconic representations of Shifune's many lost forms, a mantle of dancing fox tails, or a fox skull bound in gleaming moonsilver chains.

ANIMA EFFECTS

The Foxbinder can spend one mote on one of the following minor effects:

- Discern Shifune's location relative to her own.
- Display the Foxbinder's Seal on the back of her left hand. This sigil glows with the flickering orange light of her anima and is recognizable to most gods as the sign of one who holds Shifune in legitimate custody. Aside from its location, it functions much like a Caste mark.

Heart-Sheltering Sutra (—; Permanent): When a magical effect that would harm, deceive, or control Tamako targets her Resolve, she can always raise her Resolve with applicable Principles even against effects that would not normally allow her to do so. If she successfully resists, she becomes aware of the nature of the magic used against her.

Loosen the Leash (5m; Reflexive): Tamako can invoke the Foxbinder's Seal to loosen Shifune's binding and restore a fragment of his power, adding (higher of Essence or 3) dice to one of his actions or half that much rounded up to a static value. This power is free at bonfire anima.

Soul of Duty (—; Reflexive): Once per day, when the Foxbinder takes a nonextended social or mental action to uphold a Principle, she adds (Intimacy) non-Charisma bonus dice to the roll. She can instead grant Shifune this benefit when he performs a task that upholds one of her Principles at her direction.

WICKED-GRIN SHIFUNE

Shifune's default form is a black and orange fox with a too-wide smile and seven digits on his front paws.

Essence: 1; Willpower: 8; Join Battle: 9 dice

Personal Notes: 20

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x2/-4x1/Incap.

Actions: Causing Havoc: 8 dice; Crime: 9 dice; Persuasion: 7 dice; Read Intentions: 8 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing); Senses: 8 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing); Stealth: 9 dice; Tracking: 7 dice (see Keen Nose and Hearing); Trickery: 9 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 4, Guile 6

Combat

Attack (Bite/Punch): 10 dice (Damage 3L, 10L against enemies his size or smaller)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (6 dice to control, Can only grapple enemies of his size or smaller. Can't throw or slam grappled enemies.)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 5 (see Tiny Creature); Parry: 4

Soak/Hardness: 6/2

Intimacies

Defining Principle: "Chaos is a tool for humbling the proud."

Major Principle: "I just want to have fun."

Major Tie: Heaven (Resentment)

Minor Tie: The Immaculate Order (Boredom)

Minor Tie: Tamako (Amusement)

Merits

Foxbinder's Leash: Shifune is always considered the Foxbinder's familiar. When the Foxbinder's Essence increases, Shifune's increases to match it, and his

mote pool increases by five. If she dies, his Essence returns to one.

Keen Nose and Hearing: Double 9s on scent-and-hearing-based Read Intentions, Senses, and Tracking rolls.

Night Vision: Shifune can see in dim conditions as though in broad daylight and reduces 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 him. When Shifune loses this Merit he deals full damage against all enemies with his bite/punch attack and can grapple enemies normally.

Silver-Banded Soul: In all his forms, Shifune wears a bejeweled moonsilver collar that cannot be removed. This collar is owned by the Foxbinder and is bound to her Exaltation. Should Shifune die, he will reform at midnight near the Foxbinder. Bound as he is, he can survive even magic that could normally kill or permanently diminish spirits, though it takes him painful weeks to reform, and he may be profoundly changed by the experience. If the Foxbinder and Shifune are both killed, his death is permanent.

Wicked-Grin Enigma: Shifune treats any influence that would compel him to tell the truth as unacceptable.

Miscellaneous Charms

Clothed with Humanity (5m; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): Shifune assumes a human form, a smiling, androgynous young man clad in orange and black, and loses the Tiny Creature Merit. His traits remain the same. He may revert to his fox form reflexively at no cost.

Hurry Home (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): Shifune emerges from a hiding place near the Foxbinder.

MARTIAL ARTS

The Foxbinder is restricted by the Terrestrial keyword but can surpass it by learning Master Fox's Lesson (p. 48). She can freely combine her Martial Arts and Foxbinder Charms.

MERITS

The Foxbinder gains Shifune as a Familiar. He also qualifies as a Flaw (**Exalted**, p. 167), granting her an Expression Bonus when his actions significantly impede, endanger, or harm her.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

The Foxbinder is capable of initiating into the Terrestrial Circle of sorcery.

EVOCATIONS

The Foxbinder is neutral with moonsilver and orichalcum, (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 16) and dissonant with all other materials.

The Great Curse

The Foxbinder's Great Curse manifests through a ten-point Limit Track (**Exigents** p. 52), entering a Limit Break at 10. She rolls to gain Limit when she acts against a Major or Defining Intimacy. She also rolls three dice and gains Limit equal to her successes after a scene in which Shifune successfully antagonizes her or convinces her to allow him a degree of freedom or autonomy that he abuses. Tamako loses one Limit for accomplishing a legendary social goal. Her Limit resets at a Limit Break's end.

When Tamako reaches Limit 10, she enters Limit Break, and her role as Foxbinder is temporarily compromised by a lapse in control. Examples include:

FOLLOW THE DANCING FOX

The Foxbinder becomes dangerously sympathetic to Shifune's wishes. She will act in accordance with his chaotic whims and schemes, rationalizing that the results will be worth it. For his part, Shifune uses the opportunity to make as much trouble as possible before she comes to her senses, leading the Foxbinder into traps, spreading embarrassing lies, stealing important objects, and so on. Tamako's Principles are suppressed for the duration.

Duration: Session. This ends if Tamako realizes how violating one of her Major or Defining Principles has brought harm to others.

HARDEN THE DUTIFUL HEART

Tamako fully commits to her role as Shifune's warden. She will harshly punish him even for the most minor transgressions out of a sense of duty or fear of compromising her authority. For his part, Shifune will respond to this attitude with cajoling, mockery, and resentment. He might try to abandon the Foxbinder temporarily or otherwise make trouble for her. Tamako's positive Ties to Shifune are suppressed for the duration.

Duration: Session.

Longevity and Death

The Foxbinder's Exaltation slows her aging but does not significantly prolong her lifespan; she will live around a century at most. Should Shifune truly come to care for her, he may contrive some means to prolong her life further.

Charms

The Foxbinder has Essence-Based Charms, many of which focus on acting in concert with Shifune, enhancing him, or returning some of his divine power to perform magical feats like possession or shapeshifting. She can also draw on Shifune's power to enhance her senses or mobility or to create convincing illusions.

EXCELLENCIES

The Foxbinder can purchase Excellencies for each of the Attributes. She receives two for free at character creation; Excellencies beyond these must be purchased separately. The maximum number of dice she can add depends on the type of action she takes: (Dexterity) for physical actions, (Charisma) for social actions, and (Wits) for mental actions. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. She can add up to (Attribute + 1) dice on actions stunted to include Shifune's assistance. If she has used her Loosen the Leash anima power during the scene, this increases to (Attribute + Essence, maximum 10). Static values like Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half her dice cap, rounded down. Unlike Exalted with Attribute-based Charms, the Foxbinder can't use the Strength Excellency to bolster damage rolls or the Stamina Excellency to increase her soak.

NEW KEYWORDS

Reliant: Reliant Charms require Shifune's presence and can only be used if he is nearby. If a Charm has the Shared and Reliant keywords, Shifune can only use it in the Foxbinder's presence.

Shared: When the Foxbinder learns a Shared Charm, that Charm can be used by Shifune as well, as though it were one of his Charms. Shifune uses some Charms differently from Tamako, as described in the Charm text.

Teamwork: Teamwork Charms have an additional effect when performed with Shifune's assistance.

Defensive**STRIFE-WEATHERING TECHNIQUE**

Cost: 1m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Teamwork, Uniform

Duration: Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

The Foxbinder must be prepared to deal with all sorts of trouble.

The Foxbinder ignores one point of Defense penalty. Against an enemy with lower Initiative than her, she ignores (Essence) points of penalty. This can't negate penalties from surprise attacks.

Teamwork: If Shifune is within close range, Tamako ignores (Essence +1) points of penalty when defending against attacks by enemies whose Initiative is lower than hers or Shifune's.

FOX-FUR MANTLE DEFENSE**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Dual, Teamwork**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Shifting orange-and-black Essence swirls around the Foxbinder and briefly solidifies to rob an attack of its force.

Tamako adds (higher of Dodge or Larceny) armored soak or gains (Essence) Hardness against an attack.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, Tamako reduces the cost of this Charm each time she uses it in a scene, to a maximum discount of her current Anima level.

Teamwork: Tamako can use this Charm on Shifune's behalf if he is within close range.

WARDEN-AND-TRICKSTER AGILITY**Cost:** 4m (+2i); **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Shared, Uniform**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Strife-Weathering Technique

Tamako and Shifune swap positions with deft coordination, protecting each other from attack.

When an ally within close range is attacked, Tamako or Shifune can reflexively make a Defend Other action.

When Tamako or Shifune use this Charm to defend the other, they can pay a surcharge of two Initiative to extend the duration to one scene. They can still only defend one another this way when they are within close range.

WHISKER-FROM-ANGER STANCE**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Uniform**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Strife-Weathering Technique

Drawing on foxlike agility and Shifune's penchant for misdirection, Tamako narrowly avoids an attack.

If Tamako successfully dodges an attack, she suffers no onslaught. If the attack successes equal her Evasion, she dodges the attack, and her attacker suffers the onslaught instead.

MYRIAD MIRROR DEFENSE**Cost:** 2m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Perilous, Uniform**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Fox-Fur Mantle Defense

The Foxbinder briefly surrounds herself with ephemeral, illusionary replicas, concealing her exact location and harmlessly diverting her enemy's attack.

When Tamako uses her Evasion against an attack, her attacker must reroll successes equal to 1s on the attack roll, to a maximum of her Essence. If she is unarmored, this Charm can be used after the attack roll.

SHROUD OF THE EVENING MOON**Cost:** 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Perilous, Uniform**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Myriad Mirror Defense

The Foxbinder enhances her cloak of illusion until it seems more real than she is, and her foes strike where she is not.

Tamako gains a point of Initiative every time she dodges an attack. If her Initiative is higher than her attacker's, she can force her attacker to reroll successes equal to 1s and 2s on the attack roll using Myriad Mirror Defense. For each rerolled die that fails, she reduces the post-soak **withering** or raw **decisive** damage of a successful attack by one.

MASQUE OF THE POSSIBLE**Cost:** 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Perilous**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Shroud of the Evening Moon

With her final defense, Tamako draws on Shifune's power of trickery to hoodwink reality itself and phases briefly out of existence at the instant of attack.

When hit by a **decisive** attack, Tamako rolls her Initiative with (Essence) automatic successes, subtracting a point of raw damage for each success. She then resets to base. If she takes no damage, she counts as having dodged and gains the Initiative that the attacker loses after resetting.

Familiar

EMPEROR FOX STATURE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Reliant

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Shifune claims to once have been large enough to jump between mountains and snap birds from the sky.

At the Foxbinder's touch, Shifune grows into an enormous version of his fox form, tall as Tamako at his shoulder. He gains a +2 bonus to soak and the **withering** damage of his attacks. He is also large enough for Tamako to ride him and grants a (higher of Essence or 3) Speed bonus. He loses the Tiny Creature Merit.

LAUGHING TRINKET GUISE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Reliant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Shifune recovers a few of his less impressive lost forms.

Tamako transforms Shifune into a piece of equipment sized for personal use, such as a fox fur cloak, a pair of orange sandals, or a set of bright ivory lockpicks. He can't be transformed into weapons or armor. This item counts as exceptional equipment for actions that align with one of Shifune's dice pools.

Shifune can't take physical actions in this form, but he can speak and is aware of his surroundings; he will occasionally sniff the air or open an eye on the surface of the object to look around. He counts as being present as normal for the purposes of Reliant and Teamwork Charms.

At Essence 2+, Tamako can make this transformation Indefinite. However, Shifune is able to end the Charm

DEFENSE CHARMS CONCEPTS

Ox-Body Technique (Essence 1): Tamako's Ox-Body Techniques also grant a -0 health level to Shifune.

Stumbling Fool Defense (Essence 2; Strife-Weathering Technique): Counterattack after a successful dodge to move the attacker or knock him prone.

Impossible Escape Technique (Essence 3; Shroud of the Evening Moon): The Foxbinder reveals she has withdrawn and left an illusion replica in her place. Can be used in combat to defend against an attack.

False Wound Reverie (Essence 3; Impossible Escape Technique): Tamako conceals her wounds from everyone, including herself, temporarily ignoring wound penalties.

after a scene and will typically transform back and act at his leisure if he is left unattended.

PRAYER FOR THE FOX-GOD

Cost: 1m (+10m, 1wp); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Shifune is no longer ranked among the roll of divinity, but there is one who can still offer prayer to him.

Tamako offers a prayer to the Foxbinder's Seal, communicating silently with Shifune wherever he is, even in other realms of existence. He can respond if he wishes. While this Charm is active, she can also pay a one-Will-power surcharge on any Teamwork Charm to gain its benefits while Shifune is not present, summoning a phantom image of him to act as his proxy.

The Foxbinder can compel Shifune to appear by paying the cost of his Hurry Home Charm.

EPHEMERAL DIVINITY VEIL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Reliant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

With a flare of Essence, Tamako returns Shifune's ability to dematerialize, if only for an instant.

FAMILIAR CHARM CONCEPTS

Leaping Trickster Spirit (Essence 1; Emperor Fox Stature): Tamako directs Shifune to jump a range band while she is riding him. A repurchase lets them travel long distances by jumping.

Many-Fox Mitosis (Essence 2; Trickster Menagerie Style): Shifune removes a body part, like a tooth or an ear, and transforms it into a duplicate with a single health level.

The Fox that Leapt Over the Moon (Essence 4; Leaping Trickster Spirit x2): With the Foxbinder on his back, Shifune leaps into the sky to carry her to Heaven, Hell, or stranger places still.

Star-Swallowing Fox Titan (Essence 5; Emperor Fox Stature): Temporarily grant Shifune Legendary Size.

After Shifune has been hit by an attack, he briefly dematerializes to allow it to phase through him. He reduces the raw damage of a **decisive** attack or post-soak damage of a **withering** attack by his Evasion.

This defense does not function against attacks that can hit dematerialized targets.

TRICKSTER-MENAGERIE STYLE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Reliant

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Once a master shapeshifter, Shifune can regain some of his prowess with the Foxbinder's supervision.

Tamako transforms Shifune into an animal form. Upon learning this Charm, she may choose three animals suitable for use as a one-dot Familiar and may choose which to transform Shifune into when she uses this Charm. She can learn additional forms for three experience points or one bonus point each. Whatever his form, Shifune keeps his orange, red, and black coloration and moonsilver collar.

In an animal form, Shifune uses the animal's attacks, Defenses, soak, movement and Merits, and keeps his other traits. He can use the animal's Action dice pools in addition to his own.

At Essence 3+, Shifune gains an additional form that would be suitable for a two-dot familiar, and Tamako

can spend experience to unlock further similarly powerful forms.

UNWIND THE SILVER CHAIN

Cost: 1wp (+1 Limit); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Prayer for the Fox-God

The Foxbinder draws on her connection with Shifune, awakening a new wellspring of power through their teamwork.

Meditating for an hour on the Foxbinder's Seal, Tamako rolls (Essence + (Integrity, Investigation or Larceny)), banking a pool of bonus motes equal to her successes. These motes can only be spent on Reliant Charms, or Teamwork Charms that would benefit from Shifune's participation.

The Foxbinder can choose to tap into her feelings for Shifune when using this Charm, doubling 9s on the roll and adding non-Charm dice equal to the intensity of her strongest positive Intimacy towards him. Shifune gains an equal amount of motes, which he can use on any of his Charms. However, Tamako gains a point of Limit.

Reset: Once per day.

FOX-AS-FANG TRANSFORMATION

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Laughing Trinket Guise

Though many of Shifune's forms have been lost forever, new legends may yet be forged with Tamako's partnership.

Upon learning this Charm, The Foxbinder selects a type of artifact weapon. She can pay a five-mote, five-Initiative, one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Laughing Trinket Guise to transform Shifune into this weapon. Its design always incorporates the moonsilver of Shifune's collar and features a hearthstone socket containing one of Shifune's eyes. In this form, Shifune can use his Shared Charms to enhance attacks or defenses made with him. The Foxbinder is resonant with it.

Tamako can repurchase this Charm any number of times to awaken Evocations for her weapon or to create additional weapon forms for Shifune. A weapon's evocations are based on Shifune and Tamako's personalities, their relationship, and their Intimacies for one another.

BOTTOMLESS TROVE GULLET**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Reliant**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** Laughing Trinket Guise, Trickster-Menagerie Style*Shifune can be irritating, but he has his uses.*

At the Foxbinder's direction, Shifune swallows an object no larger than his current form. He can regurgitate it unharmed and unmarred on command. He can hold additional objects while this Charm is active, but their total size must be no greater than his current form. If he changes to a smaller form, he regurgitates anything he can't hold.

Should Shifune be directed to hold food in this way, he will simply eat it.

HUNDRED-HANDED TRICKSTER ARSENAL**Cost:** 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Prayer for the Fox-God, Trickster-Menagerie Style*Like all good tricksters, Shifune is quick to learn.*

Tamako can train Shifune to unlock a latent special ability or Merit (**Exalted** p. 554) for any of the forms he has unlocked with Trickster-Menagerie Style with a week's work.

At Essence 3, she can train him to use magical abilities at a cost of two experience points each. Shifune pays the cost of magical abilities from his own mote pool. He can spend a one-Willpower surcharge to use any magical ability he knows in his fox form.

Illusion**WAKING FIGMENT CONJURATION****Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Shared, Teamwork**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** None*The conjuring of illusions is among the signature powers bestowed on the Foxbinder by Shifune, and it pleases him to see her use it for mischief.*

Tamako summons an illusionary image no larger than a person, rolling (Manipulation + [Larceny, Performance or Stealth]). Shifune instead rolls his Trickery. The image has no substance but can be moved, worn, or carried by the Foxbinder or Shifune as appropriate. A nontrivial observer can roll (Perception + Awareness) to realize that the image is fake. Characters who fail can't roll again unless circumstances give them some new reason to suspect the illusion's falsity. At bonfire anima, Tamako waives this Charm's Willpower cost.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, she can pay a five-mote surcharge to conjure images as large as a tyrant lizard or small building. Alternatively, she can conjure multiple smaller images, like a small group of people or furnishings for a room.

Teamwork: Shifune can reflexively pay the cost of the Charm as well when Tamako uses it nearby, waiving the Willpower cost. If he does, they can both roll and use the best result. If Shifune rolls higher, he adds some fanciful details that Tamako did not intend.

INK-SMUDGING SUBTLETY APPROACH**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Shared, Teamwork**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None*Sometimes a lie needs just a grain of truth. Sometimes, it needs a little more deceit instead.*

When someone in Tamako's vicinity attempts to make a roll that would unravel a lie she or Shifune have told in the scene, she subtly shrouds the evidence in illusion, imposing a -2 dice penalty on the attempt. She can penalize any roll that could benefit from subtle visual alterations; she can make one of her illusions seem momentarily more convincing, obscure the flaws in a corroded relic she is attempting to sell, or obscure the text of a reference book a savant is checking to rebuke her claims.

Teamwork: When Tamako uses this Charm to conceal a lie Shifune has told using Honest Face, Wicked Grin (p. 50), the penalty increases to (higher of Essence or 3.)

AUTHORITY-DREDGING CONTRIVANCE**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Waking Figment Conjunction
Shifune opened many of the barred doors of Heaven

simply by showing the gods the paperwork they wanted to see.

The Foxbinder can use Waking Figment Conjunction to create an illusionary token that can convince an individual that she has authority or legitimate access she lacks. She can produce an illusionary badge of authority, invitation, signed paperwork, signet ring, or other token that the target would recognize as a reasonable justification for their presence or activities. She can instinctively create such a token even if she has no knowledge of what kind of ruse would be effective. If the Charm's roll exceeds the target's Resolve, he is convinced that her authority is genuine. This conviction functions as a Major Intimacy when exploited.

If the Storyteller judges that no token could possibly justify the presence or activities of the pair, the Charm automatically fails; no paperwork will assuage the anger of a satrap when Shifune is caught devouring his birthday feast.

THE FOX DISGUISE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Waking Figment Conjunction

When the need for subterfuge arises, Tamako shrouds herself in layers of illusion.

Tamako can use the activation roll of Waking Figment Conjunction to disguise herself or a willing ally. The disguise requires no tools and takes effect instantly. As long as she stunts using even the simplest and crudest props, she suffers no penalties for changing body type or

imitating an individual. If she has repurchased Waking Figment Conjunction, she can disguise up to (Essence) characters with a single roll, paying four motes for each after the first.

Teamwork: If Shifune is transformed into an accessory using Laughing Trinket Guise (p. 43), his exceptional equipment bonus is upgraded to an automatic success on the roll. As long as he is worn by the disguised person, being transformed doesn't stop him from enhancing the disguise with the Teamwork effect of Waking Figment Conjunction or protecting it with Ink-Smudging Subtlety Approach if he knows it.

HIDDEN TRUTH TECHNIQUE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Waking Figment Conjunction

Having gotten the hang of making false things appear, Tamako moves on to making true things vanish.

Rather than conjuring an image with Waking Figment Conjunction, Tamako renders something invisible. Concealing herself or another character allows them to enter stealth reflexively using the successes rolled by the Charm. Hiding an object allows Tamako to conceal evidence instantly, though this concealment only lasts for the duration of the Charm. If she has repurchased Waking Figment Conjunction, she can conceal up to (Essence) characters with a single roll, paying four motes for each after the first.

INFINITE FOXFIRE PHANTASMAGORIA

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Waking Figment Conjunction (x2), Ink-Smudging Subtlety Approach

Under Shifune's guidance, Tamako masters the art of illusions.

Tamako's anima explodes into a kaleidoscope of light and color, resolving into ever-shifting illusions, conjuring fleeting images as she wishes within long range. While the Charm is active, she:

- Adds a non-Charm success on Larceny, Stealth and Performance rolls, and on the roll of Waking Figment Conjunction.

OTHER ILLUSION CHARMS

Broken Mirror Simulacrum (Essence 2; Waking Figment Conjunction): Tamako conjures multiple illusions of herself or Shifune.

False Figure Trick (Essence 3; Broken Mirror Simulacrum): Tamako swaps places with one of her illusionary copies in the scene, allows Shifune to do the same, or swaps places with Shifune and disguises each as the other.

Face-Changing Bedlam (Essence 4; The Fox Disguise): Use The Fox Disguise against unwilling targets, sowing confusion as enemies and allies swap appearances.

- Can use Waking Figment Conjunction reflexively once per round and waives its Willpower cost.
- Can use Ink-Smudging Subtlety Approach to oppose any roll made within long range that relies on sight, including attacks.

Mobility

BORROWED FLEETNESS TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: Reliant
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

Tamako briefly appropriates some of Shifune's famed agility, to his chagrin.

Tamako rerolls 5s and 6s until they fail to appear on a movement roll.

After using this Charm, Shifune rerolls 7s and 8s until they fail to appear on movement rolls. This penalty persists until the end of the scene or until he fails a movement roll.

COMPANION-MATCHING STRIDE

Cost: 1i; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: Perilous, Reliant, Shared
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

Tamako and Shifune have learned that it is best to stay together.

When Shifune moves to short range from Tamako, she can use this Charm to immediately make a reflexive move action to move towards him, reflexively disengaging if necessary. Shifune can do the same when Tamako moves. This uses their reflexive move for the turn.

The cost of this Charm is waived if either Tamako or Shifune are protecting the other with a defend other action.

SILVER-CHAINED LEASH

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 2
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: Teamwork
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Companion-Matching Stride

The spiritual chains that bind Shifune have other practical purposes.

MOBILITY CHARM CONCEPTS

Fox Nips the Heels (Essence 2; Companion-Matching Stride): Shifune harries or distracts Tamako's rival during an opposed movement roll, inflicting a penalty.

Hundred-Chain Tether (Essence 3; Silver-Chained Leash) Tamako presses the Foxbinder's Seal onto a surface, which sprouts hundreds of silver chains she can use to traverse the terrain.

Tamako can extend a magical chain from the Foxbinder's Seal to swing horizontally or vertically across a range band without a roll.

Teamwork: When Tamako moves, Shifune can reflexively follow her as per Companion-Matching Stride without a roll; she either carries him or extends another chain to drag him along.

Offensive

FLASHING FANG TECHNIQUE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: Shared, Teamwork, Uniform
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

With a sudden burst of speed, Tamako and Shifune are upon the foe.

The Foxbinder adds (lower of Dexterity or Wits) Initiative to determine when she acts, or five for Shifune. If either makes an attack before their target can act on their first turn, it becomes a surprise attack.

Teamwork: If the Foxbinder and Shifune both use this Charm and attack the same target before he can act, the second attack is always a surprise attack.

SEVEN-VEILED FIST

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: Shared, Withering-only
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

The Foxbinder and Shifune attack shrouded in flickering illusions, distracting their foes from vital strikes.

If the Foxbinder or Shifune's target suffered no onslaught before the attack, he takes an additional point of onslaught. If he was already suffering onslaught, the penalty applies to his soak.

DANCING PAW DISTRACTION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dependent, Dual, Shared

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Seven-Veiled Fist

Shifune is, above all, extremely distracting.

Shifune or Tamako can transfer up to (higher of Essence or 3) Initiative gained from a successful **withering** attack to the other.

Alternatively, they can transfer this amount of additional Initiative on a successful distract gambit and gain a bonus success on its Initiative roll.

BLINDING FOXFIRE ATTACK

Cost: 5m (+1wp); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Teamwork

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Seven-Veiled Fist

Tamako draws in the eerie light of her anima and hurls a scintillating ball of flame and shadow.

Tamako's anima must be at Burning or higher to use this Charm. She makes an unarmed attack against a target

within short range. With an appropriate stunt, she can also perform gambits that could benefit from burning or illusion with the foxfire.

If an opponent is crashed, takes **decisive** damage or is subject to a successful gambit, he is blinded for three rounds. He may spend two Initiative and a miscellaneous action to make a (Wits + Integrity) roll at Difficulty 3 to restore his sight early.

Teamwork: Tamako can spend a one Willpower surcharge to channel her attack through Shifune if he is within close range of her or her target. The flame burns more intensely, adding (Wits) **withering** damage or doubling 10s on a **decisive** damage roll or gambit Initiative roll. The difficulty to recover becomes (higher of 3 or Essence).

MASTER FOX'S LESSON

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Teamwork

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: One Martial Arts Form

Some say Shifune was once a master of the martial arts. True or not, he makes for an unconventional but effective teacher.

While she is using a Martial Arts Form Charm, Tamako ignores the Terrestrial keyword on Charms of that style.

Teamwork: When Tamako enters a Form, her Essence 1 Charms of that style with an Instant duration gain the Shared keyword. Shifune cannot use these Charms in a shape other than his base fox and human forms. He is restricted by the Terrestrial keyword.

OFFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Foxbinder's Reproach (Essence 1): Strike dematerialized spirits, with bonus damage against spirits who have tried to deceive.

Cloud-Painting Brush Technique (Essence 3; **Blinding Foxfire Attack**): Shifune's tail becomes hundreds of feet long, allowing him to make ranged tail attacks and more powerful foxfire blasts.

Gloaming Foxfire Technique (Essence 3; **Seven-Veiled Fist**): Hurl a ball of eerie foxfire that entrances rather than burns.

Curse of the Foxbinder (Essence 4; **Silver-Chained Leash**): Strike an enemy with the Foxbinder's Seal to tether or bind them with silver chains. This can force a spirit to materialize.

FANG-AND-FIST STRIKE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dependent, Dual, Shared

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dancing Paw Distraction

The Foxbinder and Shifune fight with deadly coordination despite their differences.

After Tamako or Shifune crash a target with a **withering** attack or make a successful distract gambit, the other can make a reflexive **decisive** attack against the same target. They can move to close range with the target to do so, reflexively disengaging if necessary, which counts as their movement action for next turn. The attacker pays the cost of the Charm.

SECOND SHADOW REPRISAL**Cost:** 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Clash, Decisive-only, Dependent, Shared**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Fang-and-Fist Strike

Shifune and the Foxbinder may have their quarrels, but they always have each other's back in moments of peril.

While the Foxbinder and Shifune are at close range with each other, each can clash a close ranged attack against the other with a distract gambit that benefits the other. If the attacker attempted a **decisive** attack and lost the clash, the Initiative lost is granted to the beneficiary of a successful distract gambit.

This does not count as their attack for the round if the gambit is successful.

Possession**HOST-FILCHING HOODWINK****Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Reliant**Duration:** One day**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Shifune's power of possession was stripped from him for his crimes, but he is permitted to regain it under the Foxbinder's parole.

When Shifune touches or makes eye contact with an animal, Tamako can roll (Manipulation + [Awareness or Larceny]) against its Resolve. On a success, Shifune vanishes, possessing the target. He is not aware of the target's thoughts but can use all of their senses. He can use his Trickery pool to attempt to influence the target, and their Intimacies never modify their Resolve against him. He can also read his host's intentions, inflicting the -2 Guile penalty for being unaware of him. The host only becomes aware of Shifune's presence in their mind if he botches a roll opposing his host; they otherwise rationalize his influence as their own desires. Shifune materializes next to Tamako when this Charm ends.

At Essence 2+, Shifune can possess mortals. At Essence 3+, he can possess anyone.

SECOND SPIRIT DEFENSE**Cost:** 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Reliant**PLAYING THE FOX**

Some effects, like Host-Filching Hoodwink, can require playing Shifune without direct input from Tamako. Players should discuss with their Storyteller whether they want to play Shifune themselves or leave his actions up to the Storyteller. The intention is that when acting independently, he should act as Tamako's player wants him to; he is her Familiar, after all.

Of course, what Tamako's player and Tamako herself want Shifune to do might not be the same; the trouble he can cause her is part of the fun.

Duration: One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Host-Filching Hoodwink

When her judgment is compromised, Shifune leaps to Tamako's defense, though not in a way that she might have desired.

If a Psyche effect (**Exalted**, p. 253) would cause Tamako to act against one of her Intimacies, she may instead use this Charm to allow Shifune to immediately possess her. Shifune vanishes and gains complete control of Tamako for the duration, leaving Tamako a passenger in her own body. Shifune can't use Tamako's anima powers but can use her traits and any Charms that lack the Reliant keyword. His Intimacies temporarily replace Tamako's.

Shifune will target the character responsible for the Psyche effect, attempting to defeat, humiliate, or otherwise best his opponent in a manner that most amuses him. If the Storyteller judges that he has done so, the Psyche effect is broken. Shifune will then act as he pleases for the remainder of the scene.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by upholding a Tie towards Shifune.

POSSESSION CHARM CONCEPTS

Fox Catches Tongue (Essence 2; Host-Filching Hoodwink): Shifune uses a Psyche effect to force his host to say something. It is more effective on animals.

Smiling Devil Bargain (Essence 4; Host-Filching Hoodwink): Shifune makes a bargain with a target that allows him to possess them at a future time.



FIERCE TRICKSTER FUSION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Reliant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Second Spirit Defense

Though it goes against her role as Foxbinder, Tamako can choose to allow Shifune to possess her and coinhabit her body, combining their powers.

Shifune vanishes, possessing Tamako's body. For the duration, she gains all of Shifune's Intimacies in addition to her own, and her personality and appearance become a fusion of the two. She gains the following benefits:

- She can use Shifune's Willpower and mote pools to activate her own Charms.
- She gains Teamwork benefits as though Shifune were present, and he always counts as assisting for the purposes of her excellency.
- When she makes a non-attack action that matches one of Shifune's action pools, she adds a non-Charms success.

- If she isn't crashed, she gains one Initiative every turn from Shifune's encouragement.

When the Charm ends, Tamako can choose one of her Intimacies, and Shifune gains it at Minor level. Tamako likewise gains one of Shifune's Intimacies.

Trickery and Influence

HONEST FACE, WICKED GRIN

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Shared

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

One tells the truth, and the other lies.

Tamako doubles 9s to persuade a target of something that is true and negates (Essence) points of penalties for implausible claims. Shifune gains the same benefit for claims that are not true.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, Tamako can instead use this Charm to instill or bargain with a target honestly, while Shifune does so under false pretenses.

ORDER-AND-CHAOS MUSE**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Shared**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Honest Face, Wicked Grin

The Foxbinder is known to be an upstanding citizen, though her companion often undoes her good work.

Tamako makes a special read intentions roll against a character to determine what would be required to persuade them to refrain from a specific crime, offense or other misdeed. If it is possible to persuade the character, Tamako learns the Intimacy that she must target if she is to succeed, and she gains (higher of Essence or 3) bonus dice on her next attempt to do so. If it is not possible, she learns the strongest Intimacy that would make the target resist her persuasion instead.

Shifune can use this Charm to learn how to persuade his target to commit misdeeds instead, gaining the same bonus.

VENGEFUL WOLF PLACATION**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Order-and-Chaos Muse

Tamako does her best to keep the peace, even as Shifune grins behind her back.

The Foxbinder doubles 9s on an inspire, instill, or persuade roll to promote cooperation, peace, or non-violence, ignoring the normal penalty for group influence. Targeted individuals cannot use negative Intimacies towards Shifune to raise their Resolve.

FOX-IN-THE-COUNTING-HOUSE METHOD**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Reliant**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Order-and-Chaos Muse

The Foxbinder unleashes Shifune on a hapless bureaucracy, leaving no ledger intact and no inkwell unturned.

After a scene of Shifune inflicting havoc on an organization, Tamako rolls ([Manipulation or Wits] + Larceny) with double 9s with a difficulty of the higher of the Essence or Bureaucracy of the project leader. A successful roll doubles the time taken to complete their

TRICKERY AND INFLUENCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Seven-Fingered Pilfering (Essence 2): Shifune pickpockets a target or performs some other covert activity while Tamako keeps them distracted.

The Fox and the Piper Fair (Essence 2; Order-and-Chaos Muse): Tamako and Shifune perform together, inspiring the audience with an emotion that is difficult to resist.

Divinity-Conning Practice (Essence 3; Seven-Fingered Pilfering): By outwitting a god, Tamako can teach Shifune one of their Eclipse Charms.

current project, with each extra success increasing the multiplier by one, to a maximum of Tamako's Essence.

Reset: Once per story per organization.

Senses and Scrutiny**FOX'S STOLEN SENSE****Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Having taken so much of Shifune's power, Tamako borrows his keen sense of smell too.

The Foxbinder doubles 9s on any roll that could benefit from an exceptional sense of smell. This includes Awareness rolls to detect a character or contest a disguise, Socialize rolls to read intentions, Investigation rolls to profile characters and case a scene, Medicine rolls to diagnose and Survival tracking rolls. After using this Charm, Shifune loses his Keen Nose and Hearing merit for the rest of the scene.

At Essence 2, Tamako can choose to enhance her hearing instead.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, Tamako can pay a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to extend the duration to one scene, enhancing both smell and hearing.

PERIL-SENSING VIGILANCE**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Teamwork

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fox's Stolen Sense

It is Tamako's role to oppose those who live by deception.

When a concealed enemy or another peril, such as a trap, is within short range of Tamako, she can roll (Perception + Awareness) with a non-Charm bonus die to detect it. If the repurchased Fox's Stolen Sense is active, she can use this Charm within medium range instead.

If Tamako knows Scent of Familiar Incense, she can use this Charm to oppose the (Dexterity + Stealth) of a dematerialized spirit within range, becoming aware of the spirit's presence on a success.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, Tamako can choose to use this roll as a Join Battle roll after detecting a hidden enemy.

Teamwork: If Shifune is nearby, Tamako can reroll a failed attempt using his Senses pool with a non-Charm bonus die. On a success, Shifune notices the threat and Tamako does not.

SCENT OF FAMILIAR INCENSE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Shared

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Being familiar with iniquitous gods, Tamako knows how to keep her wits about her.

Tamako can smell the presence of dematerialized spirits. If she has magic that allows her to physically interact with spirits, she reduces the penalty for attacking them from -3 to -1.

INQUIRY BENEATH SUSPICION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Teamwork

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fox's Stolen Sense

Shifune delights in exacting ironic justice on those in power, and the Foxbinder is likewise attentive to their wrongdoing.

The Foxbinder profiles or reads the intentions of a character, requiring only a moment of observation.

If the target has an Intimacy representing authority over Tamako, or a feeling of disdain or dismissiveness towards her, the strongest such Intimacy penalizes the target's Guile as though it were his Resolve. On a success, Tamako learns whatever Intimacy penalized the target's Guile in addition to the other results.

Teamwork: If Shifune is nearby, relevant Intimacies towards Shifune can also penalize Guile and be revealed. If the target has relevant Intimacies towards both of them, both Intimacies penalize his Guile and are revealed.

WARDEN OF THE UNCANNY

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Teamwork

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fox's Stolen Sense

Magic leaves its mark on the world, and the Foxbinder is tasked with seeking it out.

When Tamako makes an opposed roll against a disguise, to track an individual, to locate him in concealment, or to contest the concealing of evidence, she ignores (Essence) points of penalty caused by her opponent's magic and can reroll a failed die for every two successes on her opponent's roll, to a maximum of (Perception) rerolled dice.

Using this Charm, Tamako can contest a character whose concealment would otherwise be perfect, such as a Solar using Trackless Passage (**Exalted** p. 230). She can even attempt to detect a character by smell if they use magic that conceals their scent entirely, though this imposes a -3 dice penalty.

Teamwork: If Shifune assists, Tamako also adds a non-Charm success against opponents who use magic to enhance their roll.

SIGN OF SUBTLE TRICKERY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Inquiry Beneath Suspicion

No liar is quite so accomplished as Shifune, so Tamako finds lesser liars easy to sniff out.

The Foxbinder can reflexively roll to profile a character when he makes a statement, adding (Essence) non-Charm bonus dice. A successful roll reveals whether that character was attempting to be deceptive or misleading

with his statement. It doesn't reveal what parts of the statement are untrue.

Once she has caught a character lying, Tamako waives the Willpower cost of any subsequent activations against that character in the same scene.

This Charm does not function on Shifune.

WHISPERS OF HIDDEN INTENT

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Inquiry Beneath Suspicion

The Foxbinder is well aware when those around her are planning mischief.

Tamako makes a single read intentions roll against all characters she can perceive. She may either attempt to determine each of their intentions in the current scene, or she can attempt to identify their Intimacies on a single topic. Even if her roll fails to overcome a character's Guile, she doesn't need to reset her read intentions action before attempting it against him again in the same scene.

SINCERITY BEYOND DECEIT

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Sign of Subtle Trickery

Having identified a liar, Tamako extracts the truth.

The Foxbinder rolls (Charisma + [Integrity or Investigation]) against the Resolve of a character that she knows has lied to her during the scene. On a success, she can ask one question, and the target is compelled to tell her what he believes to be the truth, with no omissions or evasions. If this would oppose one of his Defining Intimacies, he may pay a point of Willpower to give an answer that is cryptic, half-true, or incomplete. If a character doesn't know enough to answer Tamako, the cost of this Charm is refunded.

When demanding the truth of something Tamako detected a character lying about using Sign of Subtle Trickery in the same scene, the Willpower cost is waived.

SENSES AND SCRUTINY CHARM CONCEPTS

Air-of-Mischief Sense (Essence 2; Peril-Sensing Vigilance): Tamako can use Peril-Sensing Vigilance to read the intentions of a nearby character that intends to oppose one of her Principles during the scene.

Tranquil Spirit Denial (Essence 3; Whispers of Hidden Intent): Tamako can spend motes instead of Willpower to refuse influence from a character she has read the intentions of during the scene.

Pinning the Trickster's Tongue (Essence 4; Tranquil Spirit Denial): Tamako can render a character unable to speak to her further after she refuses their influence with Tranquil Spirit Denial.

The God-Admirals of Cabochon

The God-Admirals of Cabochon are fearsome nautical heroes, explorers and conquerors; the patchwork Chosen of a long-dead pantheon of Western gods.

Beneath a Storm-Filled Sky

A sea at storm, hiding benthic horrors beneath gnashing waves. A dream of distant shores upon strange islands and alien realms. The sublime thrill of clashing with worthy equals and impossible enemies. The sweetness of conquering the world, if only for a moment.

Thus stirs the heart of the God-Admirals, legendary mariners of the far West. Possessed of fickle and

SIDEBAR: VISIRIMA

Awe-imposing as they are, the God-Admirals invite worship wherever they go. The religion of Spindrift is Visirīma; its adherents Visirīæta. Visirīæta worship the dead gods as martyrs and God-Admirals as twice-born divinities, pilgrimaging to holy Cabochon and sailing with — or in the wake of — their favored God-Admiral. They're pious and martial, taught how to fight, sail, and declaim prayer as they come of age.

Concentrated in the West, they can be found across Creation wherever God-Admirals sail.

EXAMPLE GOD-ADMIRALS

Thought vanquished a century past by the Wyld Hunt, sailors whisper that Sebantu the Tiger Amok, first God-Admiral to kin-slay, has returned. Mightiest among his peers, the lightning-scarred sorcerer-warlord seeks revenge on the Realm, and his name is invoked in fearful prayer. From a border-march-isle, he leads a fleet of changeling sailors to raid on gossamer ships.

Betok the Empty-Handed spins unconcernedly in fortune's winds, gaining and losing treasure with the same cheerful nonchalance. Quick to borrow and incur debts, the roguish voyager quests at a debtor's insistence for the Dahlia's Fragrance — an ill-defined legend of a place. Prior debtors chase them across Creation as they go.

Parjukewa the Revelator grows her cult through conflict with esteemed spirits and Immaculate monks. As a mortal, she was a loyal companion to a God-Admiral. Her dutiful inheritance of his Exaltation strains her mind, pushing her to greater risks. Her crew fear her for her terrible caprices and increasingly erratic behavior, uncomprehending of her torment.

tempestuous Essence, they're driven by their patchwork Exaltations to best impossible challenges, deriving joy and power from their cyclical struggles.

New God-Admirals are Chosen at the moment of death to a suitable successor among her followers or in the vicinity of holy Cabochon. Occasionally, a worthy rival or witness to her death Exalts instead. The total number stays the same.

Unless another God-Admiral kills her and takes her power.

At the Edge of Things

Stretching towards the Pole of Water in hundreds of far-flung isles lies the Spindrift Archipelago. In RY 482, its vast Baluren Isles were invaded by Lacuna's mighty armies. The Balurenji's six highest gods petitioned the Sun for Exigence to create a champion. But their shared Essences were as disharmonious as they were strong; they burned as they gave birth to a whole host of tempestuous heroes that day in the place that would become known as Cabochon.

The God-Admirals carved an empire out of Spindrift and the Neck, delegating rulership's boredom to their priest-noble descendants. It expanded until RY 600, when the first God-Admiral slew another, discovering that in doing so, he took the slain Chosen's power. A brutal civil war ensued; the host tore itself apart, and Cabochon's empire receded back to Spindrift.

Now, all but a few of the dozen remaining God-Admirals have scattered to the winds. The survivors mistrust each other, intent on killing for power or counting the days until they'll be forced to fight their siblings.

Patrons

The God-Admirals' patrons numbered six, gods venerated above all others by the Balurenji.

Cloud's-Breath Yjekung, a monsoon god who watered crops, gave life and called forth weather, boon and bane. Their many hands carried branches and grasses that dripped with dew and conjured storms.

The Churning One, an oceanic god of destruction who stirred the seas to wrath, shattering ships of enemies and allowing followers to endure.

Hungry Black Jade, an inauspicious god of the fear of drowning. He favored the form of a sea-monster pulling victims under, or sometimes an alluring anglerfish luring victims to their deaths.

Aryad Crashing-Wave, a god of naval raiding. Clad in crimson rayskin, Aryad delighted in war, their clanging swords and shields terrifying their foes.

Tajaya of the Perch, a sagacious cormorant-spirit, whose acolytes performed austerities and meditation and learned philosophy and sea-lore from him.

Unfurling Shore, a god of drifters associated with exploration and far-traveling sea-life such as belugas and sea turtles.

God-Admirals and Other Exalted

Singular individuals, the God-Admirals all have their own enemies and allies. The Realm views them as strange Anathema for their blasphemous religion, though they occasionally ally against common enemies. Skullstone persecutes Visirima, citing ideas of twice-birth antithetical to the Sable Order, inciting its death-knights to clash with God-Admirals. Individual Lunars such as Leviathan bargain with some for relics to maintain Luthe's magics, while Wings of Ivory resents their

chaotic ways and Cabochon's proximity to Eldaj.

PLAY A GOD-ADMIRAL IF YOU WANT:

- to enjoy struggling towards grand goals and be rewarded for them.
- to be a god-king of the sea and everything upon and under it.
- to be spurred to conflict, exploration, and conquest by a patchwork nature.
- to hunt and be hunted by your own kind for power and out of self-defense.

Traits

God-Admirals are Attribute-based Exigents intended for Terrestrial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Appearance, Charisma, Perception, and Strength are their Favored Attributes.

ANIMA

A God-Admiral's anima banner ripples like a distant storm or the churning ocean, billowing around their shoulders like a ribbon, cloak or flag. Its dark hues are shot through with contrasting vivid colors, such as coral pink, sea green, violet, and azure. Their iconic animas might depict monstrous sea creatures rising from the deep, enormous sails billowing in the wind, distant shores on the horizon, the shadow of a great bird illuminated by lightning, or a phantom armada seen through heavy rain.

ANIMA EFFECTS

God-Admirals can spend one mote to perform one of the following minor effects:

- Sense the direction of the nearest ocean, river, or other large body of water.
- Sense the direction and approximate distance of the nearest God-Admiral or Cabochon.

Through the End of the World (5m, Reflexive): For the rest of the scene, the God-Admiral adds (Essence /2, rounded up) non-Charisma dice on Sail rolls as well as any water-or-weather related Survival rolls. She also ignores penalties from bad weather, opposing wind and currents, or similar environmental penalties. This power becomes free at bonfire anima.

A Sea of Kings (—, Permanent): The God-Admiral senses the presence and general direction of fellow God-Admirals within (Essence x 50) miles. When a

God-Admiral within range experiences extreme distress — such as the loss of a great treasure, experiencing a sorcerous curse, the Realm putting a bounty on their head — or lethal danger, the God-Admiral is alerted with a vision. This doesn't provide specific information: the God-Admiral has a general understanding of the nature of the problem, its urgency, and the God-Admiral's emotional state and directions to their current whereabouts. Should one of their number die, the God-Admiral feels it viscerally. Worshipers of the God-Admiral within range experience similar visions about her own circumstances.

Heart's Hidden Thunder (—, Reflexive): Once per day, the God-Admiral may enhance a fear-based influence roll or a roll to inspire courage, or one that encourages acting on an Intimacy of bravery, adding (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charisma dice.

MARTIAL ARTS

God-Admirals are restricted by the Terrestrial keyword when using Martial Arts. **They can't enhance their Martial Arts attacks with both native Charms and Martial Arts Charms.** Excellencies are exempt from this, as are Charms with the Versatile keyword. This doesn't apply to Charms that are permanent or provide ongoing benefits, nor does it apply to any actions other than attacking.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

God-Admirals are capable of initiating into the Terrestrial Circle of sorcery.

EVOCATIONS

God-Admirals are resonant with all Artifact ships. With other artifacts, they're neutral with blue and black jade and dissonant with all other materials. They can develop resonance with black and blue jade using Storm-Jade Synchronization (p. 62).

The Great Curse

A God-Admiral's Great Curse manifests through a ten-point Limit Track (**Exigents**, p. 52), entering a Limit Break at 10. She rolls to gain Limit when acting against a Major or Defining Intimacy (**Exalted** p. 134). She also rolls three dice and gains Limit equal to her successes when she forgoes an opportunity to pursue her current Apotheosis goal or runs from fighting another God-Admiral, or when she lets challenges to her prowess go unanswered. She loses three Limit for achieving an Apotheosis goal and resets her track at a Limit Break's end.

When God-Admirals reach Limit 10, they enter Limit Break and succumb to their patchwork nature's turmoil. Examples include:

VANQUISHED RIVAL'S VENGEANCE

An echo of one of her slain siblings screams out within the God-Admiral. She's infected with emotions and memories of dead God-Admirals, her victims or predecessors. For the duration, she is overcome with self-loathing and conflicting desires. The Storyteller can declare one of the God-Admiral's significant rolls to automatically fail or botch if it was already a failure, as her Essence sabotages itself.

Duration: Session. This ends early if the Storyteller imposes a failure or botch.

NAUGHT BUT THE HORIZON

The God-Admiral cares only for her own progress. She must act to advance her Apotheosis goal whenever she has the opportunity, prioritizing it over any other objectives. For the duration any positive Intimacies she has are suppressed, except if it's the one supporting the Apotheosis goal.

Duration: Session. This ends if the God-Admiral realizes she has directly or indirectly harmed a character she has a positive Major or Defining Intimacy towards or accomplishes her Apotheosis goal.

Longevity and Death

God-Admirals normally live approximately two centuries, but for every one of their siblings they kill, their lifespan is extended proportionate to how powerful the murdered God-Admiral was — an extra decade for the newly Chosen, extending up to a century for the mightiest. When a God-Admiral is slain, their Exaltation passes to a worthy mortal among their followers or in and around Cabochon unless they were slain by one of their peers. Then the Exaltation is consumed, and the entire host is diminished.

Charms

God-Admiral Charms evince their nature as terrifying conquerors, far-ranging wanderers, and holy ascetics, informed by each of their late patron gods. They only have Charms for Appearance, Charisma, Perception, and Strength, though their Charms encompass the full range of Exalted competency.

EXCELLENCIES

God-Admirals can purchase Excellencies for each Attribute. They receive two for free at character creation;

Excellencies beyond these must be purchased separately. The maximum number of dice God-Admirals can add depends on the type of action they take: (Strength) for physical actions, (Appearance or Charisma) for social actions, and (Perception) for mental actions. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. Static values like Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half their dice cap, rounded down. The Strength Excellency can add dice to Strength-based **withering** damage before soak, while the Stamina Excellency can raise soak at a rate of one mote per damage die or point of soak, maximum ([Attribute]/2, rounded down). These limits only apply to Excellencies, not to other magic that adds damage or soak. Players must declare these Excellencies before rolling.

On actions that uphold the God-Admiral's current Apotheosis goal, her maximum number of dice is increased to (Attribute + Essence, maximum 10), or half that value for soak or damage.

APOTHEOSIS

It is the nature of the God-Admirals to seek immense challenges to overcome. Once per story, they may declare an **Apotheosis goal**, choosing a significant personal challenge to overcome that upholds, advances, or expresses a Defining Intimacy. Only one can be achieved per story.

A God-Admiral with an Intimacy of hatred for the Realm could choose an Apotheosis goal of liberating a satrapy; one with an Intimacy expressing love of hidden treasures may dedicate herself to discovering the fabled trove of the sea-witch Pherenyx; one with an Intimacy of loyalty to her Circlemate may choose to aid her in her personal quests through a similarly grand adventure.

Examples include:

- Hunting down and defeating a foe who is significantly mightier than the God-Admiral, lethally or non-lethally, over the course of a story.
- Accomplishing a legendary social goal (**Exalted**, p. 134) via conquest, inspiration, or intimidation.
- Making a narratively significant journey or discovery that advances her or her Circle's goals.

On success, the God-Admiral chooses one Charm to permanently enhance with the Apotheosis Keyword. If a God-Admiral kills one of her fellow God-Admirals and consumes her Essence, the process is greatly accelerated. Doing so grants (target's Essence + 1) Apotheosis Charms, plus any Apotheosis Charms that the slain God-Admiral had which the God-Admiral possesses

or qualifies for. This doesn't count against the once-per-story limit.

A God-Admiral must pick a new Apotheosis goal at the start of the next story or if the current one is rendered unfulfillable.

God-Admirals may unlock Apotheosis Charm functions during character creation for one bonus point per Charm.

NEW KEYWORD

Apotheosis: Charms with this keyword can be enhanced to unlock additional functions and upgrades whenever the God-Admiral meets an Apotheosis goal.

Appearance

BLOOD-AND-GLORY EXHORTATION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Conquest is sweet, and those who fight under a God-Admiral will drink deep of it.

The God-Admiral can make a command action with ([Appearance or Charisma] + [Performance, Presence, Sail, or War]), rerolling 6s until they cease to appear. If the battle group comprises sailors under her command — her crew — this Charm's cost is discounted by one mote.

ECSTATIC DEVOTEE INVITATION

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A magnetic presence, those who hear the God-Admiral's words are helplessly compelled to her side to sail, fight, and worship.

The God-Admiral adds (higher of Essence or 3) bonus dice and rolls an additional non-Charm die for each 10 on an influence roll to recruit crew members, followers, troops, or worshipers. This includes persuade, bargain, and threaten rolls to convince recruits to join, as well as instill and inspire rolls to create Intimacies or emotions that support the God-Admiral's recruitment.

LAST ONE STANDING

The last God-Admiral will have power beyond any of her dead siblings. She upgrades to Celestial play: gaining Celestial traits, all Apotheosis Charm functions, free Excellencies for all Attributes (refunding those she paid for) at 3+, an increased dice cap of (Attribute + Ability); Resonance with blue and black jade; freedom from Terrestrial restrictions in Martial Arts; and Celestial Sorcery.

Games seeking to upgrade God-Admirals to Celestial level can start with the player character being the last of her kind; exactly how this happened should be incorporated into the character's backstory.

Rather than ameliorating their tumultuous Essence, the sole survivor's patchwork nature would become magnified, intensifying their patchwork traits.

IN YOUR CAPTAIN'S LEE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral stays weather's wrath from her claimed followers, like the Churning One before her.

The God-Admiral reduces environmental penalties by -(Essence) for herself and allies within close range, or (higher of Essence or 3) if they're wind or water-based. At bonfire, this extends to short range.

SEVEN-SEAS SCOURGE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Ecstatic Devotee Invitation

In every corner of the ocean, the dread God-Admiral's name is whispered with respect and fear.

The God-Admiral gains the following benefits:

- The God-Admiral appears to all as a fearsome naval raider and conqueror. She can take advantage of this impression with social influence as though it is a Minor Intimacy.

- She adds (Appearance/2, round up) dice on Join Battle and influence rolls that are in line with this impression while at port or on a ship.

- If the God-Admiral wins Join Battle while in port or aboard a ship, she gains a bonus point of Initiative.

Apotheosis: This Charm becomes Permanent.

AS ATOP THE AFTCASTLE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Seven-Seas Scourge

Wind stirs around the God-Admiral, and the world seems to recede as she commands the attention of all who see her like a captain does her sailors in a storm.

The God-Admiral gains a bonus dot of Appearance, which can raise her Appearance above 5. If she's in a port, by the ocean or a large body of water such as a vast lake, or aboard a ship, she rerolls one failed die on Appearance-based rolls leveraging her intimidating presentation; in martial contexts, she rerolls two dice.

This Charm's cost is reduced by two motes if Seven-Seas Scourge is active.

BOW, O STORM

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: In Your Captain's Lee

As Cloud's-Breath Yjekung brought monsoons to sustain the Balurenj and break their enemies, when the God-Admiral speaks to the sky, it answers the familiar call and bends to her authority.

The God-Admiral rolls (Appearance + ([Performance, Presence, Sail, or War])) to bring or clear a storm over the course of an hour. The difficulty of the roll depends on how drastic a change she wishes to make: creating a light rain or creating or stilling light winds is difficulty 1; strengthening heavy rain to a thunderstorm or dissipating a storm might be difficulty 2–3. Creating a thunderstorm out of nowhere or diminishing a hurricane to a severe storm is difficulty 5+. If successful, the changes take place over a matter of minutes or hours, depending on how extensive they are. The weather can extend up

to (Appearance + extra successes) miles from where the God-Admiral uses it. It lasts until at least the end of this Charm's duration.

The God-Admiral may suffer a penalty for creating unseasonable weather or weather that doesn't naturally occur in that region.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, this can create extreme natural disasters like hurricanes, tsunamis, or tornadoes if local conditions are already such that it's likely one could form naturally; such rolls are at difficulty 6+.

HEAVENLY AUTHORITY COMMAND

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Blood-and-Glory Exhortation

Leading from the front, the God-Admiral spurs her sailors and soldiers on with divine inspiration.

The God-Admiral can flurry a command or Sail action with any Attribute with another action, although not an attack. If she flurries either with an influence roll, neither action suffers flurry penalties, nor does her Defense.

SIXFOLD DIVINE ADMIRALTY

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Appearance 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Seven-Seas Scourge, Ecstatic Devotee Invitation

Radiant with baleful energy as she is, the God-Admiral's soldiers can imagine nothing more terrifying than her.

The God-Admiral doubles 9s on a rally action, courage-based inspire roll, or a roll to intimidate based on her power and divinity.

Apotheosis: Against characters or battle groups with an Intimacy of loyalty or fear to the God-Admiral, she adds (Intimacy) non-Charm dice.

YOUR GOD AND CAPTAIN TRUE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 4, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dread Admiral's Aura

Behold: the labors of the God-Admiral! See her works and know you shall have no other god before her.

The God-Admiral treats a successful feat of demolition, a Sail-based roll to overcome a significant hazard, or any roll that accomplishes a legendary social goal or Apotheosis goal as an instill roll to create or strengthen a Tie of loyalty, reverence, or fear toward herself, targeting all witnesses and ignoring the multiple target penalty. Characters whose Intimacies are being strengthened suffer a -1 penalty to their Resolve.

If the first time in a session her roll succeeds by 3+ successes and she creates or strengthens an Intimacy, the God-Admiral gains a point of Willpower.

TOGETHER TO THE HORIZON

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Seven-Seas Scourge, Heavenly Authority Command

Buoyed by the belief of those who sail with her, there is no battle the God-Admiral cannot win.

While the God-Admiral leads a battle group consisting of her worshipers or crew, its Drill increases by one step, and it gains Might 1. If they're assisting her in pursuing her current Apotheosis goal, she gains (Essence) bonus dice on rolls to command them.

BOIL, SEA AND SKY!

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Together To the Horizon or Bow, O Storm (x2)

Shouting challenge to the wind and waves, the God-Admiral bids the weather prove its might to her by harrying her foes and bolstering her allies.

The God-Admiral can use this Charm when entering naval combat or leading a battle group of her crew into a fight under weather she's created, either with Bow, O Storm or similar magic like Beckoning That Which Stirs the Sky (**Dragon-Blooded**, p. 310). She rolls (Appearance + [Occult, Performance, Presence, Sail, or War]); enemies whose Resolve is overcome by this suffer a -1 penalty to their Resolve and on attacks made against her and her allies, increasing to -3 if they're swimming, partially submerged or flying; allies gain (Essence) Resolve.

APPEARANCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Beloved Companion Glorification (Essence 1; Ecstatic Devotee Invitation): The God-Admiral marks a favored lieutenant on her crew, making him recognizable to all as a subordinate who speaks with her sanction and authority, granting him a Sail specialty that applies on rolls to follow her orders.

Life-Renewing Deluge (Essence 2; Bow, O Storm): Rains summoned by the God-Admiral can sustain her followers to go for days without eating or drinking.

Wreathed In Storm and Fury (Essence 3; As Atop the Aftcastle): The God-Admiral dons a mantle of divine terror that enhances threaten actions. Environmental penalties from storms apply to the Resolve of her targets.

Devout Acolyte Ascension (Essence 3; Beloved Companion Glorification): Upgrade Beloved Companion Glorification by imparting a portion of the God-Admiral's tempestuous divinity to him, allowing authority over her worshipers and granting him visions from the A Sea of Kings anima power that sometimes overwhelm him.

If the God-Admiral wins Join Battle and activates this Charm, enemy battle groups must immediately roll to resist rout.

BETWEEN SALVATION AND DESTRUCTION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Boil, Sea and Sky!

Summoning the fullest extent of her power, the God-Admiral crashes omen-weather upon her enemies. Doom bears down upon them; whether they survive is their choice.

After five hours of uninterrupted, unbroken meditation within weather she's created, the God-Admiral makes a special intimidation roll against all characters in an area the size of a large city within (Essence) miles, rolling (Appearance + [Occult, Performance, Presence, Sail, or War]) and ignoring the penalty for mass influence. The weather becomes a destructive natural disaster headed their way: gales resounding like horns, a tsunami bearing bloated inhuman corpses, a gale of screaming lightning spirits.

Characters understand that if they cry mercy or otherwise surrender to this weather, it will pass them by without harming them, their homes, or the terrain immediately around them. If they submit in this manner, they gain a Defining Intimacy of fearful reverence towards the God-Admiral. Generals, political leaders, and the like can surrender on behalf of their followers.

If they refuse, the intimidation roll counts as a feat of demolition, ignoring Strength minimums. The Storyteller determines how much damage this inflicts on mundane scenery and trivial opponents, up to uncountable damage, as well as any secondary effects of the weather, such as flooding. Affected battle groups must roll to resist rout at difficulty 4; affected ships suffer (Appearance) dice of Hull damage.

The feat of destruction lingers as an influence roll toward other people who see the aftermath for the first time, instilling an Intimacy of fearful reverence to her. This lingers for one story. Non-Exalted cannot spend Willpower to resist unless their Essence is higher than hers.

Reset: Once per story or year, whichever is longer.

Charisma

BENTHIC VISAGE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Those who look upon the God-Admiral may as well scrutinize the depths from a ship's railing.

The God-Admiral gains +2 Guile. This is non-Charm against characters with an Intimacy of fear towards her or whom she's intimidated this scene, or when on a ship.

CONVICTION BEYOND DOUBT

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

None may gainsay the God-Admiral from pursuing her hopes and dreams.

Upon declaring an Apotheosis goal, the God-Admiral gains +2 Resolve against any influence that would dissuade her from pursuing it or would weaken or alter any associated Intimacies.

ROMANCE OF THE MARINER

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral embodies the awe and wonder of tall tales of the sea.

The God-Admiral doubles 9s on an inspire or instill roll with any Attribute while telling (true or false) tales of her deeds to convince someone to chase their dreams or impart a Tie towards her. She ignores one point of penalty from implausible claims.

KRAKEN-CHARMING GRIN

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Romance of the Mariner

Tajaya of the Perch and Unfurling Shore were friend to the ocean's beasts, who well recognize the late gods' echo in their Chosen.

The God-Admiral calls an aquatic or semi-aquatic animal to her side, such as an electric eel, a gull, or an orca. It arrives with preternatural speed — in the same scene unless the Storyteller deems this implausible. If no members of that species are nearby, the Storyteller may have a similar animal answer instead. Regardless, the animal must be one that would qualify as a one or two dot familiar.

Once the animal arrives, the God-Admiral may instruct it to carry out one inconvenient or serious task (**Exalted**, p. 216) without needing an influence roll. Depending on how it's treated, the animal may remain with the God-Admiral or retreat into the wild after completing the task.

Apotheosis: The God-Admiral may pay an additional Willpower to call an animal that qualifies as a three-dot familiar (**Exalted**, p. 161), rolling (Charisma + [Presence or Sail]) roll against its Resolve. These mighty animals can only be given an inconvenient task without rolling influence.

RUNNING AGAINST THE TIDE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Setbacks only motivate the God-Admiral to rise to greater heights, throwing herself again and again into her labors.

During a scene in which she has failed a consequential roll, the God-Admiral can reroll one failed die on another roll using a different Attribute. If her failed roll was in pursuit of upholding an Intimacy, she can reroll (Intimacy) dice. The first time in a day, these rerolls transform a failure into a success. She gains one Willpower, which can raise her above her permanent Willpower.

Reset: Once per scene.

VESSEL OF LEGENDS

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Romance of the Mariner

No sailor of legend is complete without her worthy ship.

The God-Admiral chooses an emotion appropriate to the deeds accomplished in her nautical adventures, such as awe at how she sailed across the Great Western Ocean in a trireme, fear from how she vanquished a mighty sea monster, or wonder at how she discovered a hidden Wyld-island in a bordermarch. Other characters within long range of her ship add +1 Resolve against influence opposed to that emotion but suffer -1 Resolve against influence that aligns with it.

If the emotions align with her current Apotheosis goal, she may leverage that impression as though it were a Minor Intimacy.

BLUE SAGA RIPPLES

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: (Essence + Charisma) days

Prerequisite Charms: Vessel of Legends

Those who bask in the God-Admiral's presence are compelled to propagate tales of her deeds, spreading them like ripples from a stone into still water.

The God-Admiral makes a wordless (Charisma + [Performance, Presence or Sail]) to inspire an emotion, ignoring any penalty for non-verbal communication. If this emotion upholds one of her Intimacies, she adds (Intimacy) non-Charms dice. The first time an individual

CHARISMA CHARM CONCEPTS

Fickle Winds Heart (Essence 1; Conviction Beyond Doubt): Abandon a current Apotheosis goal and adopt another.

Trading Fire for Water (Essence 2; Running Against the Tide): Perform a dramatic edit to aid in escaping one situation at the cost of ending up in one equally tricky.

Instructive Cruelty Demonstration (Essence 2; Blue Saga Ripples, Soul-Carving Conquest): Inflict a crippling injury which doubles as an instill roll to create ties of fear and hatred in witnesses.

Undying, Undaunted (Essence 3; Running Against the Tide x2): Gain Hardness and soak and add dice to attacks when fighting for an Intimacy.

Tribute in Might Measured (Essence 3; Soul-Carving Conquest): Temporarily learn the Eclipse Charms of defeated characters, or permanently if that achieves an Apotheosis goal.

Lord of the Blue World (Essence 4; Tribute in Might Measured): Compel a nautical or storm spirit forced to submit with Soul-Carving Conquest to perform a task on the God-Admiral's behalf.

For All the Adventures to Come (Essence 5; Crush of the Deep, Undying, Undaunted): Clash a spell, Psyche or shaping effect, or decisive attack with a blast of storm-filled Essence.

sees her while this Charm is active, they are subject to its influence; her menacing aura inspires fear, or her heroic bearing inspires hope.

Apotheosis: This Charm can make an instill roll to create an Intimacy towards her based on her reputation and deeds instead of an inspire roll.

SOUL-CARVING CONQUEST

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Conviction Beyond Doubt

To conquer in truth is to define the souls of others; knowing this, the God-admiral flenses her enemies of that which makes them resist her.

If the God-Admiral's attack roll exceeds her opponent's Resolve, she can erode an enemy's Intimacy of a level equal to the amount of **decisive** damage inflicted, reducing it by one step on success. The Intimacy must be one that motivates him to fight or otherwise resist the God-Admiral.

Characters incapacitated with this Charm automatically gain a Minor Tie of fear or worship towards the God-Admiral or strengthen a Minor one that already exists.

CYCLONE SOUL ERUPTION

Cost: 7m, 2i; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Apotheosis, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Soul-Carving Conquest

The God-Admiral stokes then unleashes the roiling tempest within herself, unleashing a blast of spirit-wind screaming in disharmonious chorus.

The God-Admiral rolls (Charisma + [Integrity or Presence]) against all characters within close range, opposing their ([Stamina or Strength] + Athletics). On success, they're knocked back one range band and left prone and must roll again against her roll at -2 penalty to approach her again. They also suffer this penalty on their next attack against her before the end of the scene.

Apotheosis: For the rest of the scene, close range around the God-Admiral counts as difficult terrain as her soul's wind whips. This ends if she is crashed.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by incapacitating a noteworthy enemy.

STORM-JADE SYNCHRONIZATION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Blue Saga Ripples, Soul-Carving Conquest

The God-Admiral concentrates the storm of her soul until it roils in harmony with the Essence of her panoply.

When the God-Admiral attunes to a black or blue jade artifact, she may use this Charm to become resonant with it.

This Charm ends if the God-Admiral fails an Apotheosis goal and cannot be used again for the duration of the story.

Apotheosis: The God-Admiral permanently becomes resonant with black and blue jade. She can use this Charm to become neutral with artifacts of other materials.

CRUSH OF THE DEEP

Cost: 10m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cyclone Soul Eruption

Blood leaking from her eyes, nose, and ears, the God-Admiral subjects another to the terrible weight of her divinity, trapping her under the weight of Hungry Black Jade's domain.

The God-Admiral makes a special (Charisma + [Integrity or Presence]) roll against the Resolve of a character within medium range. On success, her foe is knocked prone and begins suffocating (**Exalted**, p. 232). Characters that can breathe water still suffocate, the air pressed out of their lungs by the pressure.

The difficulty of rising from prone while suffocating increases to 6. The effect can be ended by succeeding on an extended roll, attempted on the target's turn with (Stamina + Resistance) at difficulty 5, or 3 if he takes no other non-reflexive actions on his turn. The terminus is until asphyxiation, and the goal number is equal to the influence roll's successes. Characters not in crash can pay five Initiative, one Willpower to resist this effect.

Apotheosis: The force of the God-Admiral's will weighs on everything within close range of the target, counting as a feat of demolition on all adjacent objects and flinging all adjacent characters one range band back.

Perception

OCEAN-GOD PROVIDENCE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Perception 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

A living divinity ruling over the seas and horizon, the God-Admiral is never more than a breeze away from her worshippers.

When the God-Admiral meditates, she gains the following benefits:

- When mortal worshipers pray to the God-Admiral through means like sacrificing to the waters or leaving messages in bottles, enduring austerities in meditation, constructing model ships and burning them, or ritually emulating their legends, the God-Admiral hears these prayers in their entirety.

- For five motes, she can manifest some type of subtle response to her worshiper communicating it was received: a vision, a voice on the wind, a face in the clouds, etc. This can convey social influence but can't be enhanced by magic except for Ecstatic Devotee Invitation (p. 57).

- She can detect when someone prays to another God-Admiral within range of her A Sea of Kings anima power. At the Storyteller's discretion, she can glean further information about these prayers.

FAR-SEEING MARINER EYES

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral's sharp eyes see clearly through weather, water, and darkness.

The God-Admiral ignores (higher of Essence or 3) points of penalty on a vision-based Perception roll with any Ability. If the penalty is based on inclement weather or being underwater, she negates it entirely and adds a non-Charm success.

With a Perception 3 repurchase, she can use this Charm to enhance ranged attacks. With a two-mote surcharge, she can add dice from aiming at medium and long range normally.

READY THE THUNDERBOLTS

Cost: 2m, 1i; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Far-Seeing Mariner Eyes (x2)

Eyes unwavering, the God-Admiral prepares to unleash death upon the foe.

The God-Admiral can reflexively ready a ranged weapon or reload a weapon with the loading tag. If she spends her action aiming, the Initiative cost of this Charm is waived, and it loses the Perilous keyword.

SEA'S WHISPERS AND GODS' ECHOES

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

A twice-born divinity of the ocean, the God-Admiral is canny to the sea's secrets and her late patrons' hazy memories.

The God-Admiral can introduce facts about waterways she's familiar with or topics related to her late patrons' purviews with ([Intelligence or Perception] + [Lore or Sail]). She doesn't need an applicable Lore background, but if she has one, she adds a die. This includes facts about weather, naval warfare, migratory ocean animals, trade routes and the commerce conducted along them, sea monsters and spirits, nearby islands and ports, and similar.

Apotheosis: The God-Admiral can draw upon experiences of her Apotheosis quests as though they are Lore backgrounds. If she's slain another God-Admiral, she can draw on his memories and experiences instead, experiencing them in a rush.

SOLITARY CLOUD DISCERNMENT

Cost: 4m (+3m); **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Versatile

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral spies a spirit's numinous Essence as one might a lone cloud against a clear sky, her eyes shining with aquamarine lightning.

The God-Admiral can see dematerialized spirits out to short range, though she can't hear them.

With a repurchase, while this Charm is active, she may pay three motes reflexively to allow an attack to hit a spirit as if it were material.

With a final Perception 4, Essence 3 repurchase, she may spend one Willpower to render spirits visible to her allies.

WANDERER MAKES DO

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Pilot

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The god Unfurling Shore did not believe in being lost, nor in anywhere being inhospitable; his God-Admirals believe likewise.

The God-Admiral doubles 9s on a Sail roll with any Attribute or a Survival roll to navigate, forage, find shelter, or resist a marine hazard.

MEASURING THE HEART'S WINDS

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

With a seasoned mariner's canny eye, the God-Admiral discerns the hopes and dreams of others.

The God-Admiral makes a special read intentions roll against a character to determine what his greatest ambitions and hopes are. He suffers -2 Resolve against influence from her to convince him to pursue these goals.

If this Charm is used on another God-Admiral, she also automatically discerns his current Apotheosis goal, experiencing his hopes in a disorienting rush.

RIGGING-AND-ROWER DOMINION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

As Aryad Crashing-Wave led the Balurenji to countless victories with ferocious cunning, so too does the God-Admiral direct her loyal crew.

The God-Admiral gains one additional Momentum on a successful naval stratagem, or (Essence) additional Momentum for a positioning stratagem. She adds a non-Charm success on a Strategic Maneuver roll made with any Attribute.

HORIZON-CHASING SOUL

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One story

Prerequisite Charms: Far-Seeing Mariner Eyes, Wanderer Makes Do

The God-Admiral's eyes flash like sunlight on water as she sees through coming trials to the far horizon she sails for.



The God-Admiral spends a scene surveying the winds, divining entrails for omens, or meditating before a coming journey. She gains the following benefits on this journey:

- She reduces the cost of Wanderer Makes Do by one mote. If she uses it while aboard a ship, she reduces the cost by two motes.
- She gains the Direction Sense Merit (**Exalted**, p. 160) and can expand its use to include anywhere she's sailed to before. If she already has that Merit, she instead adds a non-Charms die to rolls that involve navigation or ascertaining her whereabouts.
- Any ship she captains gains +1 Speed.
- She adds (Perception/2, round up) dice to sight-based Perception rolls.

Reset: Once per journey.

AS FLOTSAM ADRIFT

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Wanderer Makes Do

Spun in chance's winds across waste and waves, the God-Admiral lets the world decide her destination.

The God-Admiral may activate this Charm after spending at least a day wandering aimlessly. She rolls one die, unmodified. On success, she finds something beneficial to help her on her current journey, such as encountering a wise stranger, discovering a secret route into where she's headed, or unearthing a horde of treasure. On failure, she still does but it's dangerous or guarded: the stranger is a rapacious lorelai, the treasure is cursed, the secret route is guarded by monsters and traps.

Her encounter may confer her up to 3 temporary Merit dots, but she always loses them by story's end or if she uses this Charm again.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by accomplishing a major character or story goal through sailing, adventure, or discovery.

EVERY-SEA ODYSSEY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Apotheosis, Pilot

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Horizon-Chasing Soul, Wave-Tossed Wanderer

All the waters of every world are the God-Admiral's to explore, and all its sights hers to see.

The God-Admiral can sail in waters that no ship was meant for: knee-deep lagoons, the acid sea of Kimbery, and rocky streams all yield under her bow. If sailing here would normally damage her ship, it becomes immune to damage from that source, though other environmental hazards could still harm it. This also allows her to sail on ice or sand as if her ship were an ice- or sandship, as well as moving environmental hazards such as landslides or avalanches.

With a repurchase, she can sail up waterfalls or across mist, fog, or other vapors, rising to the top of them. She can't rise higher than long range above the water in such vapors.

With an additional Essence 3 repurchase, she can sail underwater as though she were on the surface, holding a pocket of air aboard her ship for the Charm's duration. She can sail on land in rainstorms severe enough to impose a visual penalty.

Apotheosis: With Essence 5, the God-Admiral may pay a seven-mote surcharge to make her ship fly.

SHIP-CONSCRIPTING COMMAND

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Pilot

PERCEPTION CHARM CONCEPTS

Feathered Sky Divination (Essence 2; Horizon-Chasing Soul): Divine future weather or hardships from the flight or organs of birds.

Sea-Stranded Sailor Malediction (Essence 2): Curse someone with magical dehydration and sunstroke.

Omen-Bird Oversight (Essence 3; Every-Sea Odyssey): Bless a vessel of worshipers or companions with protections at sea.

On A Red Morning (Essence 4; Omen-Bird Oversight, Sea-Stranded Sailor Malediction): Curse an entire ship to being stuck and spoiling its food and water.

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Rigging-and-Rower Dominion, Wanderer Makes Do

Forgoing a crew entirely, the God-Admiral orders a ship to sail itself, rigging snapping and rudders creaking to her will.

The God-Admiral ignores penalties on Sail rolls or similar piloting rolls from poorly trained or insufficient crew, and she can take actions that would normally be impossible without sufficient crew.

If she uses this Charm while having a crew anyway, the ship comes alive to aid them in sailing itself. The God-Admiral adds a +2 bonus to her sail rolls, as if her crew's average Sail score was 4+. If the average was already 4+, the bonus increases to +3.

Should enemies attack on the ship, the God-Admiral may commit four motes, one Willpower to have her ship harry her enemies, becoming difficult terrain for them.

SHIP-AND-SOUL UNION

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Every-Sea Odyssey (x2)

Through its many adventures with the God-Admiral, her ship's legend grows to equal her own.

The God-Admiral can use this Charm to transform a mundane ship that she's sailed for one story or longer and used in accomplishing an Apotheosis goal, transforming it into an Artifact with attendant traits.

This Charm may be repurchased any number of times, each repurchase adding an Evocation to the ship. These Evocations draw their themes and function from the God-Admiral's personality, anima, and her and the ship's accomplishments.

Apotheosis: Once the God-Admiral has transformed her vessel into an Artifact ship, she may indefinitely commit five motes, one Willpower to grant any mundane ship Artifact statistics, able to access the previously awakened Evocations.

ECHOES OF FAR HORIZONS

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ocean-God Providence, Seas' Whispers and Gods' Echoes, Measuring the Heart's Winds

Already possessing flashes of dead gods' memories, the God-Admiral relives the experiences of another.

The God-Admiral makes a special read intentions roll with double 9s, requiring only a few seconds. Success reveals what his goal in this scene is, as well as the highest rated of his Intimacies that are directly relevant to what he's doing in this scene; the God-Admiral experiences a brief vision of one of her target's relevant experiences related to the Intimacy that informs this goal. If she leverages the revealed Intimacy to persuade or inspire the character in the same scene, she doubles 9s.

This Charm is free when used on other God-Admirals.

Strength

HULL-SPLINTERING BLOW

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral strikes like the battering ram of a ship, shattering bones like so much wood.

The God-Admiral adds (Strength/2, round up) Overwhelming to a **withering** attack or adds that many attack roll extra successes as dice to a **decisive** attack's damage. If this is a smash attack, or she moved into close range and attacked on the same turn, she also adds that many dice of **withering** raw damage and doubles 10s on her **decisive** damage roll.

With Strength 3, non-ranged attacks gain the Smashing tag (**Exalted**, p. 586), as do ranged attacks made from close range.

IRONWOOD HULL BULWARK

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral's skin becomes rough and knotted, taking on the consistency of a great ship's impenetrable hull.

The God-Admiral adds (Resolve or Strength) soak or gains that much Hardness.

If her attacker has an Intimacy of fear towards her, she reduces the cost by the strength of that Intimacy.

BATTERING WAVE IMPACT

Cost: 1m (+2m); **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Heir to the Churning One's wrath, the God-Admiral crashes upon her foes like a mighty wave.

The God-Admiral ignores the Defense penalty of smash attacks. She may further spend a two-mote surcharge to ignore Defense bonuses from cover and full defenses with a smash attack or to smash through full cover by punching a hole through it, though the enemy receives +3 non-Charms Defense.

HEAVING DECK DISRUPTION

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Battering Wave Impact

The God-Admiral's blows leave her opponent disoriented, as if aboard a wave-tossed ship.

If the God-Admiral's attack hits, it inflicts an additional point of onslaught penalty. If she deals enough **withering** damage to lower a foe's Initiative from a rating higher than her own to lower than her own, or 3+ **decisive** damage, his onslaught doesn't refresh on his next turn.

Apotheosis: If this Charm's secondary effect is activated with a smash attack, the God-Admiral can knock him back and prone. If she crashes an enemy or deals 5+ **decisive** damage, she can knock him back two range bands.

TURBID WATERS TENACITY

Cost: 1i, +1m per point of penalty; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Apotheosis, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The God-Admiral defends herself with all the rolling ferocity of the sea at storm.

STRENGTH CHARM CONCEPTS

Sea Spider Plunge (Essence 2; Swashbuckling Rigger Avaunt): Enhance an attack after moving to close range; more effective if dropping or swinging from above.

Wrathful Sky Cascade (Essence 2; Heaving Deck Disruption): Make a decisive attack on multiple enemies using chain lightning.

Boundless Tempest Step (Essence 3; Sea Spider Plunge, Becoming the Monsoon): Move instantly as a bolt of lightning and make an attack. More effective when using Becoming the Monsoon and attacking with Wrathful Sky Cascade.

World-Rending Century Storm (Essence 5; Seven-Wind Exhalation, Sky-Clad Desolation Avatar): Breathe an enormous storm-filled shockwave that can crush buildings and sink fleets.

The God-Admiral can block lethal damage barehanded and ignores up to (lower of Essence or 3) in penalties to her Defense, paying one mote per point of penalty. This Charm can't negate penalties from surprise attacks.

With Essence 2, the God-Admiral may pay a three-mote surcharge after successfully defending to reverse an attack's onslaught penalty onto her attacker.

Apotheosis: This Charm loses the Perilous Keyword and Initiative cost.

SALT SPRAY DEFENSE

Cost: 2i; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Apotheosis, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Turbid Waters Tenacity

The God-Admiral buffets her enemies with a sharp gust of sea wind to guard herself against attack.

The God-Admiral imposes a -2 penalty on an attack roll against her and can defend against an attack whose successes equal her Defense.

With a Strength 4, Essence 2 repurchase, she can pay a one-mote surcharge to use this Charm on any roll against her from an enemy she can see within long range or against an attack against an ally or battle group under her command within short range of her.

Apotheosis: The God-Admiral can pay two motes instead of the normal cost of this Charm and ignores the Perilous keyword when doing so.

SWASHBUCKLING RIGGER AVAUNT

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Swinging ropes and sodden decks offer no impediment to the God-Admiral.

The God-Admiral can use a reflexive move action to move one range band in any direction. If any roll is necessary for this movement, she makes it reflexively and adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice.

The God-Admiral can also use this Charm to enhance her movement along ropes, ships' decks, wreckage, or other nautical hazards. She ignores difficult terrain from these.

BECOMING THE MONSOON

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Battering Wave Impact, Ironwood Hull Bulwark

The God-Admiral pours out the tempest of her soul, shedding her skin for a form of howling winds and rains, blasted jetsam, and flashing lightning echoed by the sound of horns.

The God-Admiral gains the following benefits:

- She gains a bonus dot of Strength, increasing her effective Strength to determine what feats of strength she can perform as well as adding one bonus die on Strength-based rolls and to **withering** damage rolls.
- Her dice cap for using the Strength and Stamina Excellencies to add raw dice of **withering** damage or soak raises to (Attribute), not counting bonus dots.
- She adds (Strength) dice on rolls to resist being restrained or to break out of restraints.
- She imposes a -2 penalty on ranged attacks against her, arrows and bolts passing harmlessly through her elemental form.

HURRICANE-FLUNG REFUGE DESTRUCTION

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Heaving Deck Disruption

Granite walls and storm-cellars offer no protection from a God-Admiral, blowing away like twigs in a howling gale.

When the God-Admiral makes an attack, she reflexively attempts a feat of demolition to destroy cover an opponent is benefitting from or a structure within close range of him. This is rolled before the damage roll. Success exposes characters within short range to a one-time environmental hazard, with Difficulty (Strength) and damage (Essence, maximum 5). If this destroys the target's cover or deals any damage, he loses (her Essence) Hardness or soak against the God-Admiral's attack; smash attacks increase this to (Strength).

With an Essence 3 repurchase, characters who take damage are knocked prone.

SEVEN-WIND EXHALATION

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Apotheosis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hurricane-Flung Refuge Destruction (x2)

Swelling her chest with a mighty breath, the God-Admiral exhales air with the force of a roaring gale to carry away obstacles in her path.

The God-Admiral rolls a special (Stamina + [Athletics or Resistance]) feat of strength against an object or structure within close range. Success also blows away any smoke, fog, poisonous gas, or the like. This can also blow out or away appropriate non-magical environmental hazards — putting out fires or dispersing acidic mist — if the roll exceeds the difficulty to resist.

Apotheosis: The God-Admiral can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when using this Charm to blow out magical hazards and environmental effects, such as Rain of Doom (**Exalted**, p. 483) if her roll beats the Essence of its originator.

SKY-CLAD DESOLATION AVATAR

Cost: —(7m); **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 4

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Becoming the Monsoon

The God-Admiral is become destruction itself, swelling in size to become an all-scouring tempest.

The God-Admiral may pay a seven-mote surcharge when activating Becoming the Monsoon to gain the following benefits:

- She can make close range attacks out to short range and extends the maximum range of her ranged attacks by one range band, maximum long.
- She gains +2 Evasion against attacks not enhanced by magic capable of striking the dematerialized.
- She reduces the cost of Seven-Wind Exhalation by 3m and adds (Essence) non-Charms dice to its roll.
- Her **withering** attacks inflict another level of automatic damage, and she increases her base Initiative when resetting by +1.

Thousand Venoms Mistress

Broken Sky is the Chosen of Toxins, the illicit Exigent and personal assassin of the poison-goddess Whirling-Lady Koro-Bana.

Whirling Lady Koro-Bana, Goddess of Self-Made Widows

Praise be to Koro-Bana, she whose guidance has freed a thousand wives and loosened the strings of a thousand inheritances! Her mystery cult teaches that she was born a mortal to a forbidden couple who had trusted in Maiden Tea and was adopted by Gentle Pherula (*Sidereals*, p. 42), who is worshiped by those who fear childbearing, as a gesture of kindness and apology.

Elevated to godhood millennia ago, Koro-Bana held a minor office as Goddess of the Violently Bereaved but grew over time into a patron to widows of all kinds — only, after a while, she began to think that there were many who would be better off as widow or widower, but who could not see it yet and needed a little advice, a little teaching. In the tumult of the Age of Sorrows, where divine positions came into violent flux, she began exploring the science of poison that would come to define her. She had a new purpose — to become the Goddess of Emancipation through Murder.

Her enthusiasm in dealing death as a corrective for injustice and recompense for the personal ambitions

POISON LIBRARY

Thousand Venoms Mistress may burn the template for poisons into her flesh, the better to reproduce them later. Her poison library consists of the toxin granted by her One with Venom anima power, plus up to (Essence) non-magical poisons. To add a toxin to her poison library, she must ingest it, clearing another toxin from her body if necessary. Certain Charms then allow her to reproduce the poisons thus stored; other Charms may also expand her poison library's capacity, as well as the kind of toxins it may contain.

of her worshippers eventually drew Immaculate attention, and she had to flee from her homeland into the Scavenger Lands. Though her power remains great, she has been stewing in bitterness and resentment; the task she once saw as just and liberatory has been twisted into cynicism and lust for power. With her sickly sweet smile and poisoned tongue, Koro-Bana began scheming in the spirit courts of the Scavenger Lands with no motive but her personal advancement.

When she sought Exigence from the Unconquered Sun, her pleas of need and desperation were seen as lies disguising naked ambition. Twice as bitter yet undeterred, Koro-Bana searched for a god who had won the spark legitimately, eventually finding one in the teahouses of Great Forks. The toast she shared with him was poisoned; his spark of Exigence, the price for her antidote. Just as agonizing was the process of pouring her venom into the flame, but she bears any pain gladly for her ambitions.

A Life Well Lived

Broken Sky settled into old age with the satisfaction of the just. She did not fear for her next life, for she had spent this one helping many who were deserving and slaying many who were not. But when her goddess called on her, she found that she did not in the least mind the thought of plying her trade as poisoner and assassin for a few centuries more.

In Exigence scoured and in agony renewed, strength returned to her limbs, clear vision to her eyes, though she bears marks of her true age in her lined eyes and gray-streaked hair. How bright the sky and how beautiful the night! How sweet the smile of her children, and how soothing the death rattle of a Guild Prince! Now Exalted, she can at last taste the nightshade's fruit and savor the adder's bite, and she is drunk on them.

In Great Forks, the Chosen of Venoms partakes of the softest silks, the sweetest liquors, and the most expensive tobaccos; she chooses only her fellow Chosen as dalliances, for they have the strength to thwart the hundred knives that hound her at every step. Already a score and one bounty hunters have come in search of the growing prize on her head; she finds no joy in their death, leaving them paralyzed and helpless when she can, while relishing the game of it all.

PLAY THE THOUSAND VENOMS

MISTRESS IF YOU WANT

- to weave through social intrigue and a life of crime.
- to explore a personal relationship between patron goddess and Exigent.
- to explore how far good ends can be pursued through ruthless means.
- to solve all kinds of problems with poison.

& Toxic Relationship

Broken Sky is a devoted servant of her goddess — and, problematically, of her professed ideals. Though she is no ascetic and enjoys the creature comforts granted by her murder-for-hire, she remains loyal both to the Whirling Lady and to the ideals of Emancipation through Murder as an ethos. But unbeknownst to her, Koro-Bana has grown jaded towards the mission she once pursued, her bitterness leading it to see her purview as little more than an excuse for power-mongering — though she hides it well. Eventually, this disagreement must come out and lead to a reckoning.

Will Broken Sky remind Koro-Bana of what she once stood for and stoke the dim embers of her old idealism, will the Whirling Lady erode her Chosen's principles until she's as jaded as her patron, or will this inevitable strain lead to a toxic and spiteful breakup and enmity between goddess and Chosen?

Traits

Thousand Venoms Mistress is an Attribute-based Exigent intended for Terrestrial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Intelligence, Stamina, Manipulation, and Perception are her Favored Attributes.

ANIMA

Thousand Venoms Mistress' anima is harsh and intoxicating, the air growing hazy with distortion and thick with smells like blood, smoke, or acid. Its colors tend

towards leaf-green or bruise-purple. As it grows into power, it manifests visions such as vast maws with dripping fangs or venomous creatures like snakes, spiders, and centipedes.

ANIMA EFFECTS

One with Venom (Permanent (1m)): Thousand Venoms Mistress is immune to all poisons and possesses the Poisoned Body Merit (**Exalted**, p. 166) at two dots, except the duration of its venom is (Essence + Stamina). She may suppress its effects for one scene by spending one mote. Additionally, she possesses a poison library (see below).

Burns More than Flesh (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Thousand Venoms Mistress adds (Essence) non-Charms dice to a social influence roll to deceive, degrade positive Ties, or instill negative Ties towards characters other than herself. This power is free at bonfire anima.

The Kiss of Death (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant): Once per day, the Chosen of Venoms may treat a poison generated by her anima powers or Charms as having traits identical to Yozi Venom for a single instance of exposure. The poison shimmers with the lights of her anima and burns with acrid smoke, increasing the difficulty of slipping it into food or drink by 2.

MARTIAL ARTS

Thousand Venoms Mistress is restricted by the Terrestrial keyword. She can freely combine her Martial Arts and Thousand Venoms Mistress Charms.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

Thousand Venoms Mistress can initiate into the Emerald Circle of Sorcery or the Ivory Circle of Necromancy, but not both.

EVOCATIONS

The Chosen of Toxins is neutral with green jade and soulsteel and dissonant with all other materials.

The Great Curse

Thousand Venoms Mistress' Great Curse manifests as a ten-point Limit Track (**Exigents**, p. 52), entering a Limit Break at 10. She rolls to gain Limit when she acts against a Major or Defining Intimacy. She also rolls three dice and gains Limit equal to her successes when she deliberately foregoes an opportunity to hurt, sabotage, or deceive a character who stands in the way of her plans. Broken Sky loses one Limit for accomplishing a legendary social goal (**Exalted**, p. 134). Her Limit resets at a Limit Break's end.

When Thousand Venom Mistresses reaches Limit 10, she enters Limit Break and is overcome by her own toxic nature, filling her with morbid compulsions and intrusive thoughts. Examples include:

WHY DO YOU CARE?

The Mistress overfocuses on every flaw in every relationship she has and obsesses over her self-perception as someone who brings harm to others. She is compelled to drive others away, either violently or by subtly sabotaging their relationship while being drawn to those she hates. For the duration, her positive Ties are considered negative with an appropriately twisted context, while her negative Ties change to a context of “Morbid Attraction.”

Duration: Session. This ends if Thousand Venoms Mistress causes significant harm to someone to whom she bears a positive Major or Defining Tie.

THE PERFECT CRIME

The Chosen of Venoms is consumed wholly by her obsession with the art. She decides to do all in her power to kill a character with whom she has a negative Major or Defining Tie or who otherwise stands in the way of her plans, and to do so in a way that is sophisticated to the point of overcomplication while leaving her free of blame or legal consequences.

Duration: Session. This ends if the Chosen of Toxins sees that her plans have brought harm to one she holds a positive Major or Defining Tie towards without her initially noticing it.

Longevity and Death

The Mistress has a lifespan of several centuries. When she dies, Whirling Lady Koro-Bana may distill her remains into a poison that will carry her Exaltation to one who can survive it.

Charms

The Charms of Thousand Venoms Mistress deal in poisons literal and metaphorical, and in the general concept of toxicity. Many of them produce magical poisons or toxic drugs to give herself advantages, but she also deals in the poisoning of beliefs or relationships and other toxic behavior. She has Attribute Charms for Intelligence, Perception, Stamina, and Manipulation.

EXCELLENCIES

Thousand Venoms Mistress can purchase Excellencies for each of the Attributes. She receives two for free at

character creation; Excellencies beyond these must be purchased separately. The maximum number of dice she can add depends on the type of action she takes: (Stamina + specialty) for physical actions, (Manipulation + specialty) for social actions, and ([Intelligence or Perception] + specialty) for mental actions. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. Static values like Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half her dice cap, rounded down. The Strength xcellency can add dice to Strength-based **withering** damage before soak, while the Stamina Excellency can raise soak at a rate of one mote per damage die or point of soak, maximum ([Attribute + Specialty]/2, rounded down). These limits only apply to Excellencies, not to other magic that adds damage or soak. Players must declare these Excellencies before rolling.

NEW KEYWORD

Toxicology: Toxicology Charms each utilize a magical poison. Thousand Venoms Mistress can reflexively commit the cost of these Charms to add a dose of this poison to her poison library until she ends the commitment or uses it.

Stamina

SUPREME POISONMAKER ALCHEMY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Thousand Venoms Mistress may crush poppies into opium with her bare hands or eat nightshade to bleed its poison.

As long as the Mistress has access to the necessary ingredients to brew a poison or drug, she may attempt a basic crafting project, using (Stamina + Craft or Medicine), to instantly complete a single dose without requiring tools or a workshop. She may instead suffer one die of lethal damage and attempt the same project to synthesize and extract one dose of a toxin contained within her poison library directly out of her blood. If she creates a toxin she added to her poison library with the Toxicology keyword, she must maintain the commitment until she uses the dose, or it will denature and become useless.

NERVE-SILENCING SPORES

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Until end of next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Supreme Poisonmaker Alchemy

STAMINA CHARM CONCEPTS

Envenomed Flesh Fortification (Essence 1, Ox-Body Technique): Each purchase of Ox-Body Technique grants two dots of Mutation, which can be spent on a limited list, including Venomous, Claws, or Pheromones (Lunars, p.121). These mutations are naturally Subtle.

Kiss of Melting Flesh (Essence 2, Supreme Poisonmaker Alchemy): Gain the ability to add acids to the poison library. Acids do not have poison traits but instead deal decisive damage on contact and are most useful against objects and the environment.

Elusive Remembrance of Youth (Essence 3, A Dram of Sleep): Create a "rejuvenating elixir" which grants a youthful appearance and cures infirmities but does not actually reduce age and eventually wears off.

Flame-Spitter's Inhalation (Essence 3, Kiss of Melting Flesh): Create a flammable toxin that can be drunk and spit back, either as a spray of mild poison or, if an open flame is available, as a dragon-like gout of flame capable of striking multiple enemies.

Pickled Corpse Contingency (Essence 4, A Dram of Sleep, Snake-Eater's Blessing): Preserve harvested limbs or internal organs into a special solution that keeps them indefinitely ready for implantation into the Mistress or a patient, repairing crippling injuries.

Releasing and breathing soporific spores, the Mistress numbs her own flesh to pain and injury.

Thousand Venoms Mistress gains +5 Soak but suffers a -1 mobility penalty as if she were wearing armor. Broken Sky gains additional soak against attacks from a poisoned enemy equal to his highest poison penalty.

With a Stamina 4, Essence 3 repurchase, she can spend a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to enhance the duration of this Charm to one scene. Its soak bonus to +8, and it grants Hardness 7. Furthermore, Broken Sky ignores one point of wound penalty. This bonus does not stack with armor but does not count as armor for the purposes of Charms, spells, and Martial Arts. Her pain receptors are dulled for the duration, and she suffers a -3 penalty to detect anything by touch.

NIGHTSHADE'S DEADLY CARESS

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Supreme Poisonmaker Alchemy

Poisons that dwell within the Chosen of Toxin's body may be coaxed out of her skin, spreading with only a touch.

Broken Sky may use this Charm to cause a person she makes skin contact with to roll for exposure against a toxin stored in her poison library. In combat, exposing a victim to that contact toxin is a Difficulty 1 unarmed gambit.

With an Essence 2+ repurchase, the Mistress may pay an additional one-Willpower surcharge to delay the toxin's effects up to an hour after exposure.

BOUNTIFUL LOTUS-FEEDING BODY

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Supreme Poisonmaker Alchemy

Only the dose makes the poison; by refining her internal alchemy, the Chosen of Toxins may produce a wide variety of distillates either helpful or entertaining, albeit potentially harmful.

This Charm expands its prerequisite, allowing the Exalt to use it to craft, or add to her poison library, any product that could be covered by Medicine or Craft (Brewing or Alchemy), with a Difficulty of the product's Resources rating and producing one dose. She might crush a handful of grapes into wine or use the memory of the flavor of maiden tea to brew the drug from her blood.

She may store an additional (Stamina) substances that lack a damage rating in her poison library.

BRASS STOMACH, LIQUID HEART

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Nerve-Silencing Spores

Having refined her body into an alchemical cauldron, Thousand Venoms Mistress may consume the poisons within her as fuel to transmute her internal organs and survive deadly blows.

The Chosen of Toxins may respond to a source of **decisive** damage before it is rolled, burning away one toxin stored in her Poison Library. She applies the toxin's penalty to the damage roll, if any; if the source inflicts unrolled damage, she instead negates damage equal to half the toxin's penalty, rounded up.

If Broken Sky knows A Dram of Sleep, she may use it to reflexively fake her death, suffering an obviously fatal injury that does not actually strike her vital organs.

THE BURN THAT CURES

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Toxicology

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Supreme Poisonmaker
Alchemy

Disease and impurity are but imperfections that may be burned with the proper brew, poison killing poison faster than it can kill the body.

Having successfully diagnosed a disease or poison that a victim is suffering from, Thousand Venoms Mistress prepares a single dose of pale brand, a dreadful purgative, for herself or another. If the one who drinks it has a disease, they must endure horrifying, limb-wrenching agony for a full day; until the next sunrise, or the sunrise after next if drunk at night, they suffer a -5 crippling penalty. When the penalty abates, they may roll the Mistress's (Stamina + Medicine) pool, ignoring any penalty, against the Morbidity of any diagnosed disease they are suffering from, where failure does not intensify symptoms. If poisoned, they instead make this roll immediately, each success reducing the duration of any poison by one interval, though the purgative still inflicts a -5 penalty until the next sunrise.

If pale brand is used against an unwilling target (e.g., if she creates a dose through the Toxicology keyword and uses it in combat), it has a Duration of five hours and a -5 penalty but deals no damage. It is only effective if the target is diseased or already poisoned.

A DRAM OF SLEEP

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Toxicology

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Bountiful Lotus-Feeding Body

Some who have come for the poison-mistress have found her lying dead by her own hand to avoid their hunt; yet, strangely, she ever seems to reappear again.

Thousand Venoms Mistress brews a special poison that can only affect her or a willing or helpless target. Upon consumption, the drinker immediately falls into a death-like torpor. Mundane examination identifies her as a recent or well-preserved corpse; magical examinations must roll against the Mistress's (Stamina + Medicine or Stealth) and suffer a penalty equal (higher of her Essence or 3), with any Charms spent to enhance the roll gaining the Mute keyword. A character in torpor is not aware of their surroundings and awakens either at a previously established time, when she hears a specified keyword, or when someone takes action against her corpse that would threaten her life.

Using this poison through the Toxicology keyword can change its vector, but it can still only affect willing or helpless targets.

SNAKE-EATER'S BLESSING

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bountiful Lotus Body

Burning away mortal frailties, Thousand Venoms Mistress brings herself closer to her goddess by drinking poison to transcend her flesh.

The Chosen of Venoms may prepare a special poison with Damage: 1B/day, Duration: 10 days, Penalty: -0, and Vector: Ingestion, to which she is not immune. For as long as she is suffering from this poison, she need not eat or drink and suffers no penalties from starvation or dehydration.

The Mistress can purchase the following upgrades to this Charm for three experience points or one bonus point each:

- Increase the damage by +1B/day in order to forgo sleep as well as food and drink.
- Reduce the poison's intervals to hours to instead allow the user to ignore the need for air.
- Add the Toxicology keyword to the Charm, allowing the Mistress to share her sacrament with others. She cannot negate the damage with Haze's Kiss (p. 75)

She can choose which of these upgrades to apply when she uses the Charm.

QUICKENING ELIXIR**Cost:** 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** The Burn That Cures

The Chosen of Toxins creates a special toxin that overrides her body's instinctive self-imposed limitations, pushing herself past her limits with painful power.

Thousand Venoms Mistress creates and swallows a special poison that ignores her immunity with special properties; it has Damage 2i/Round (L in Crash), a duration of "One scene" which she does not roll to reduce, and has no penalty; instead it grants her a bonus of (lower of Stamina or Essence) dice to attack and movement rolls, as well as to **withering** damage rolls, and applies an equivalent penalty to mental actions as well as a -1 penalty to her Defense. She may terminate this poison's effect early by taking a miscellaneous action to violently purge herself.

LANCE OF ULTIMATE SPITE**Cost:** 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 4**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-only**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** The Burn that Cures

The Chosen of Toxins distills all her hatred towards her enemy into a conceptual poison tailored to their very soul and shapes that ultimate venom into a spear of Essence.

Broken Sky makes a special decisive attack using Archery, Awareness or Thrown against an enemy within medium range towards whom she has a negative Tie, gaining non-Charm dice equal to the intensity of the Intimacy. The damage roll doubles 10s, and if successful, the victim is exposed to a special version of her Poisoned Body toxin, with base damage and penalty equal to the intensity of her Intimacy and duration increased by the same amount. This doesn't reveal her position if she's currently concealed.

A successful attack automatically reduces the intensity of the Intimacy by one step after calculating these effects; if this causes the Intimacy to go below Minor, it disappears; she loses interest in her victim and is content in leaving him to his fate, live or die. She may still defend herself if attacked.

HATE BEYOND WORLDS**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 5**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-only**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Lance of Ultimate Spite

Reaching far beyond what even Koro-Bana could have imagined, the Chosen of Venoms brings a poison made of the distilled hatred of those before the gods screaming into the world.

This Charm may only be used while the Mistress is at Initiative 15+. Every character within medium range must immediately roll for exposure to Yozi Venom (**Exalted**, p. 234). Characters who fail to resist may choose to take a crippling injury (**Exalted**, p. 201) worth 5 Health levels to negate the poison, reflecting melted limbs, burned nerves, hollowed-out bones, and similar gruesome fates. Thousand Venoms Mistress resets to base Initiative, +1 Initiative for each affected nontrivial character, maximum of (Essence) additional Initiative.

Though this Charm is instant, its dramatic effects continue for the rest of the scene. Architecture melts down or breaks, iron corrodes into dust, wood burns into heatless smoke, and trivial characters caught in the effect die horribly. Even the magical materials show cosmetic pitting and discoloration. Brass is the only material left unaffected.

Intelligence**WAYS OF THE ASSASSIN WELL-LIVED****Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Intelligence 1, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Broken Sky has learned much over a lifetime of death-dealing, and her knowledge can find surprising applications.

Thousand Venoms Mistress can use Medicine or Craft specialties as Lore backgrounds to challenge or introduce facts, substituting the appropriate Ability for Lore when she does.

THOUSAND VENOMS EXPERTISE**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Mute**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Mind sharpened to an acid-etched edge, the Chosen of Toxins knows death and her trade intimately.

The Mistress doubles 9s on a roll to study or craft a drug or poison, to conceal evidence of a crime, to diagnose a patient, or to autopsy a corpse.

HAZE'S KISS

Cost: 3m (+1wp); **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A mistress of a thousand venoms knows how to curate their properties to her exact specifications so that her poisons will not kill when subtlety would do better.

This Charm enhances an action to create or apply a dose of poison, treating its damage rating as 0 after all factors but increasing its duration interval to minutes if it was lower. If the target enters combat, adrenaline clears the fog away, and the effect terminates.

With Essence 2+ this Charm may narrow the poison's penalty so that it applies only to social, mental, or physical actions, inducing aphasia, foggy-mindedness, or clumsiness. Such a poison requires him to succeed at a (Perception + Integrity) roll at difficulty of (her Intelligence) to recognize that he is suffering from any adverse effect at all, and attempts to diagnose the poison are increased by her Intelligence.

When Broken Sky adds a toxin to her poison library by consuming it or through the Toxicology keyword she can use this Charm to modify its traits accordingly.

BRASS LEGION'S DOOM

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Venoms Expertise

Iron to rust. Bones to dust. Stone to dirt. With the right poison, everything dies.

This Charm enhances a poison as the Mistress is creating or applying it, allowing it to affect automata, the undead, and other beings intrinsically immune to poison. Charms produced from her poison library enjoy this benefit at no cost.

MIND-KINDLING HEAT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Haze's Kiss

In the face of exhaustion or despair, Thousand Venoms Mistress excites her brain into single-minded focus on a unique interest.

This Charm may be used in response to Broken Sky spending or losing her last point of temporary Willpower. She immediately gains the Obsession derangement at Major intensity focusing on a topic she can perceive or which is relevant to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies. She gains a special pool of (higher of Essence

INTELLIGENCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Doubt-and-Spite Overcorrection (Essence 1): Defend against influence that seeks to lower negative Ties by forming or increasing a negative Tie to the person making the influence.

Hydra's Den Technique (Essence 2; Thousand Venoms Expertise): Apply a poison from the poison library to an object to target the next person who interacts with it in a specific way.

Vitriolic Homunculus Invocation (Essence 2; Terrestrial Circle Sorcery, Summon Elemental or First Circle Demon): Summon a demon or elemental that is naturally aspected towards poison, drugs, or acid, or twist a water or wood elemental into toxic themes to serve as a permanently bound Familiar.

Draught of Hate's Remembrance (Essence 2; Haze's Kiss): Distill one of her negative Intimacies as a drug; consuming it allows Broken Sky to reassert it to its previous intensity if it is ever reduced.

Plague-Bearing Elephant Gift (Essence 3; Hydra's Den Technique): Imbue an object with intangible poison, which triggers only when it is touched by a specific target.

Deadly Puzzle-Box Logic (Essence 3; Plague-Bearing Elephant Gift): Conceal evidence of a crime, or any other secret, behind some kind of riddle or puzzle. Solving it reveals the evidence but also exposes the investigator to one of Broken Sky's poisons.

Fateful Nemesis Duel (Essence 4; Draught of Hate's Remembrance): Enshrine a Major or Defining negative Tie which can't be reduced, and gain Enmity whenever thwarting the nemesis's plans or being thwarted by them; Enmity can be spent as successes on rolls to oppose the Nemesis but also causes increased Limit gain over time.

or 3) Willpower, which replenishes by one point at the start of each scene in which she's actively pursuing her Obsession; this Willpower can only be spent to activate Charms, add successes, or resist social influence in ways that directly further pursuit of that obsession.

POISONED NATRON EMBALMING

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Brass Legion's Doom

Many cultures treat dead bodies as unclean; Thousand Venoms Mistress is all too happy to demonstrate why.

The Mistress may 'prepare' a corpse over the course of a few minutes in order to rig it with a poison-delivering mechanism; this may be disguised as part of a normal embalming process or autopsy. She may rig the corpse discreetly or explosively. If discreetly, the first (Essence) people to come into physical contact with the corpse must roll for exposure to the toxin, but the effects only declare themselves a few minutes after exposure. If explosively, she rolls (Intelligence + Larceny or Medicine) and notes the successes. The corpse will explode either at a specific appointed time or with a miscellaneous action from the Chosen of Venoms, exposing everyone within short range of it to the toxin unless they can beat the user's successes with their own (Dexterity + Dodge).

This Charm may explicitly be used while preparing bodies for raising as undead. Discreet zombies expose targets to poison with their first successful **decisive** attack in a fight. Explosive zombies can be rigged to trigger when incapacitated in addition to the normal options. They are incapacitated by the explosion.

TO GODS AS TO MORTALS

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Aggravated

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Brass Legion's Doom

Distilling the very essence of her own finite lifespan into the ultimate toxin, Koro-Bana's Chosen offers the mighty a chance to taste the thrill of mortality.

This Charm enhances a poison as the Mistress is creating or applying it. If this poison would deal bashing or lethal damage, it instead deals aggravated damage to spirits. A spirit that dies from the damage inflicted by this poison sees his Essence consumed as if by acid and dies true death.

IN THE THRONE ROOM WITH A POISONED CUP

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: (Essence) days or until the crime is completed.

Prerequisite Charms: Mind-Kindling Heat

Thousand Venoms Mistress is her goddess's most perfect assassin, a woman for whom death has become not merely a trade, but an art unto itself. Naming her next victim, she dedicates herself wholly to bringing about their most beautiful demise.

This Charm aids in performing a murder. The user must name their target, then spend an hour planning out the crime and taking preparatory steps — getting to know her victim, studying entrances to their palace, bribing guards, impersonating a waiter, and other such means. At the end of the day, she rolls (Intelligence + Larceny), adding the value of her Intimacy towards her target as non-Charm dice, if she has one. She banks all rolled successes.

Banked successes may be spent on any non-combat roll that is taken in direct furtherance of the planned murder, whether that's picking a door's lock or seducing a guard away from her post. Additionally, she may spend banked successes to gain the following effects:

1 Success: Retroactively leave her calling card, mark, or sign in a dramatic location.

3 Successes: Retroactively erase any physical evidence of her presence in the past scene.

5 Successes: Retroactively reveals that a character she's encountered during this scene was exposed to one of her poisons; the victim rolls immediately against exposure.

Reset: Once per story.

MEMORIES ARE THE BITTEREST DRAUGHT

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Mind-Kindling Heat, Thousand Venoms Expertise

Distilling her own memories into a painful brew, the Mistress banishes them from her mind for the kind nepenthe to hold until she needs them again.

Broken Sky may excise memories of any degree of precision up to a complete scene from her mind — she

might forget the past twenty minutes entirely or merely the instant she slipped nightshade into a satrap's drink during a gala. Intimacies directly stemming from events are considered one step lower while the memories are excised but are not entirely suppressed — the Mistress may still remember longing after banishing a night's passion from her mind. She remembers using this Charm, but not what memories she targeted, and is capable of drawing inferences as to which memories she has suppressed: If she suspects herself of suppressing memories of a murder, claims of her innocence may register as half-truths to relevant magic. Best not to pry too much into her own secrets.

These memories become a special draught. If Broken Sky drinks it, she immediately regains all associated memories. If another character drinks it, they are subjected to Thousand Venoms Mistress's Poisoned Body toxin, then experience her memories in a flash from her perspective. If the draught is spilled and its contents lost, the memories are lost forever.

Manipulation

AGONIZED PREY INSIGHT

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Those who've tasted the Mistress' toxins find their inner hearts unveiled to her in their febrile stumbling.

When the Chosen of Venoms makes a read intentions roll against a target who's been poisoned in the past (Essence + 2) days, the target suffers the poison's penalty to his Guile. If she poisoned him herself or has the poison in her poison library, the window increases to (Essence + 5) days.

If her roll succeeds by at least three extra successes, she also intuits which part of the experience was the most agonizing, which she can use as exceptional equipment for threats against him.

HIDDEN HEART APPROACH

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Manipulation 1, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Well-practiced in deception, the Mistress allows others to glimpse her heart only at its most polished.

The Mistress ignores up to (Manipulation/2, round up) points of penalties to her Guile. Once per scene, when a character fails to overcome her Guile on a read intentions roll, she may reveal one of her Intimacies, but twist its meaning to present it in the best possible light — a Tie to a hated enemy instead becomes a respectful business rivalry, while a Principle to avenge all slights against her becomes a hard-nosed belief in justice and fair play.

FALSE HEMLOCK DIAGNOSIS

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Psyche

Duration: (Essence) days

Prerequisite Charms: Hidden Heart Approach

With cunning words and insinuation, the Mistress may invent a poison where none actually exists, convincing her victim of his dread fate.

The Mistress makes a (Manipulation + Medicine) roll with (Essence/2) bonus successes to convince a target that they've been poisoned. On success, her target is convinced that he's suffering from physical symptoms of the poison, suffering a -1 penalty from these imagined toxins.

With Medicine 4+, she may also use this Charm to issue false diagnoses for mundane diseases.

Repurchase at Manipulation 4, Essence 2 inflicts the Paranoia Flaw (**Exalted**, p. 169) for the duration at Minor Intensity. Once per scene, she can attempt to inflame it with an instill roll, increasing its strength to Major for the duration.

Repurchase at Manipulation 5, Essence 3 extends the Charm's duration to indefinite.

CRIMSON POPPY KISS

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: False Hemlock Diagnosis

The Mistress may send others into opium ecstasy, offering a fleeting and addictive reprieve from pain.

With a touch, the Mistress reduces a target's penalties from wounds, poison, diseases, and similar pain by (higher of Essence or 3) for the rest of the scene. The target must make a difficulty 3 (Wits + Integrity) roll or else gain the Addiction Flaw (**Exalted**, p. 167) at Minor

Intensity for a week, drawing him to either consume pain-relieving drugs or remain in the Mistress' presence. This counts as being poisoned for Agonized Prey Insight.

At Essence 2, the Mistress may reflexively activate this Charm on her own behalf but gains the Addiction Flaw at Major Intensity.

POISONED WORDS PERIL

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: None

MANIPULATION CHARM CONCEPTS

Fever-Stricken Façade (Essence 2; False Hemlock Diagnosis): Convince poisoned characters to conceal their diagnosis. With **Cult-Corroding Venom**, convince members not to address the organization's problems.

Trustworthy Physician Ruse (Essence 2; Crimson Poppy Kiss): Characters who receive medical advice (including False Hemlock Diagnosis) or treatment (including Crimson Poppy Kiss) from the Mistress develop a Major Intimacy of trust towards her, which they can't degrade for the story.

Dreadful Serpent Whisper (Essence 3; Poisoned Words Peril): Convey a poison from the poison library through social influence that beats a target's Resolve.

Patient Zero Deception (Essence 3; False Hemlock Diagnosis): Use False Hemlock Diagnosis as a Psyche effect to change a target's memories about the onset and progression of a real or imagined poison.

Clogged Silver Arteries (Essence 3; Cult-Corroding Venom): A poisoned organization increases the Resources cost of projects and risks financial ruin on failure.

Manifold Venom Mists (Essence 3; Wretched Miasma Insinuation x2): Inflict a poison from the library instead of turn-back miasma.

Rotten Corpse Reputation (Essence 4; Cult-Corroding Venom): Inflict the effects of Poisoned Words Peril on the leaders of a poisoned organization.

Spreading a miasma of invisible scorn, the Thousand Venoms Mistress may poison someone's words, causing others to see them in the worst light.

The Mistress rolls (Manipulation + [Presence or Socialize]) against the Resolve of a target at close range. On success, he rerolls up to (higher of her Essence or 3) successful dice, starting with 7s and moving up, on instill and inspire rolls to connect with others, put them at ease, or earn their trust. This counts as being poisoned.

Repurchase at Essence 2 also poisons the character's ability to seek help and make deals, applying the penalty to persuade or bargain rolls. If he fails such a roll, the targets worsen a Tie towards him, as per a threaten roll.

SCORPION COURTIER CARESS

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Agonized Prey Insight

With a poisonous touch, the Mistress makes her deceptions all the harder to resist.

If the Mistress incorporates touch into an instill roll to degrade a positive Intimacy or an inspire roll to create negative feelings, she doubles 9s. At Essence 2, if the touch is particularly intimate — whether a deceptive hug or a traitor's kiss — she doubles 8s.

CULT-CORRODING VENOM

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Poisoned Words Peril (x2)

Spreading metaphorical and literal toxins in equal measure, the Chosen of Venoms poisons an organization through its membership.

The Mistress must spend at least (10 – Essence) days personally interacting with the organization's members, spreading rumors and dosing key targets with minor poisons. Afterward, she rolls ([Manipulation or Wits] + Bureaucracy) against difficulty 4, which increases +1 each if the organization is particularly large or geographically distributed, on guard for sabotage, or led by characters with supernatural bureaucratic skill.

Success destroys the groups' efficiency, multiplying the time required to plan projects and muster resources by (higher of Essence or 3) for the rest of the story or until

the leadership either identifies the Mistress' involvement or completes a significant project to bring affairs back in order.

Backer: Mr Peter E Mabbott

HONEYED ACONITE RUMOR

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Poisoned Words Peril

When the Thousand Venoms Mistress drips poisonous words into unwitting ears, they seize upon them, eager to spread that poison themselves.

After making a successful instill roll to worsen her target's feelings about a specific character, the Mistress may treat her roll as if it was also a persuade action to convince the target to spread these rumors further. If she degraded a positive Intimacy, she treats the persuade action as if it had been supported by the Intimacy's original intensity — it hurts all the more when heroes fall from their pedestals.

FEVERED REVERIE EXHALATION

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Crimson Poppy Kiss

With a sigh of delirious Essence, the Mistress subjects her victim to powerful hallucinations.

The Mistress makes a (Manipulation + [Presence, Socialize, or Brawl]) roll against the higher of a target's Evasion or Resolve within close range. Success stokes a hallucinatory fever in the target; for the next (Essence) hours, he suffers a -1 penalty to his Resolve and Guile and treats failed Perception-based rolls as if they were botches, subjecting him to nonsensical visions. This counts as being poisoned and doesn't affect characters who don't need to breathe.

Repurchase allows the Mistress to specify something that the target can't notice in the throes of his delirium, inflicting a -(higher of Essence or 3) penalty on all relevant rolls. Attempts to convince him of the truth are penalized as if these hallucinations were a Major Intimacy.

LOOKS THAT KILL

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hidden Heart Approach

As a fool attempts to discern the truth of the Mistress's thoughts, they learn there is no place more toxic than her mind.

When Thousand Venoms Mistress successfully asserts her Guile against an action that would oppose it, the initiator suffers exposure to a toxin from her poison library. The victim can take no more than one health level of damage from this unless he used magic that intrudes upon her mind — reading her thoughts, entering her dreams — in which case he suffers the full effect of the poison. She needn't be aware of the observer to use this Charm, though its use creates a tingling sensation of being observed.

PERFECTION IN SUBTLETY

Cost: 3m+, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Hidden Heart Approach

With an assassin's utmost caution, the Mistress scrubs her mortal flesh clean of the imperfections that might see her caught.

The Mistress may spend three motes each to make herself utterly undetectable by one of the following means: hearing, smell, and taste, or touch and heat. Mundane attempts to track, locate, or identify her by that sense automatically fail, and magical attempts subtract one success for every 1 on the roll to a maximum of (higher of Essence or 3).

SHADOW-CLAD ANONYMITY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Perfection in Subtlety

Assassin, infiltrator, provocateur — the Thousand Venoms Mistress knows how to keep her identity shrouded in mystery.

The Mistress gains +2 Guile against read intentions, case scene, and profile character rolls that would implicate her in a crime. She may activate this Charm to retroactively reveal the precautions she has taken to conceal her identity, methods, and motive, whether purposefully hiding her scent under rotting perfume or leaving artfully ambiguous wounds that could have

come from a spear as easily as a dagger. If the target fails to overcome her Guile, she may either intuit his identity or make a (Wits + Larceny) roll against his Resolve to have him fall for a red herring or false lead.

THAT DREADED VENOM, TRUTH

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-Only, Toxicology

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fevered Reverie Exhalation

Though the Thousand Venoms Mistress is heir to many subtle toxins, few are as sharp or destructive as absolute truth.

The Mistress may lace an attack with a dose of a delicate poison known as absolute candor. This special poison has Damage 2B/minute, Duration (Essence + 1) minutes, and a -3 penalty, but only endangers the target when they lie, penalizing Guile and deception-based influence and inflicting damage for each minute that they attempt to deceive others. Outside of combat, this can be delivered with a few seconds of skin contact.

Repurchase at Essence 3 extends the duration to (Essence x 5) minutes and grants the Mistress one non-Charmed success to figure out which statements were lies based on subtle pain cues.

WRETCHED MIASMA INSINUATION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One week

Prerequisite Charms: Poisoned Words Peril (x2)

Wreathing a location in toxic rumors, the Mistress warns others against it.

The Mistress rolls (Manipulation + Socialize) to brand a location as toxic over the course of a few hours of gossip. This begins at difficulty 3 for something like a private home but increases by +1 for each of the following: The location is as large as a palace; it's public; it's often frequented; and it's owned by a spirit, Exalt, or another supernaturally powerful character who doesn't consent to this magic.

On success, rolls to convince others to visit are penalized as if they had a Major Intimacy of disgust, dread, or avoidance of the location. Trivial characters never visit unless under duress. The Mistress may waive these penalties for her own influence, luring others into her traps.

Repurchase at Essence 3 makes this envenomation all the more literal: Targets who attempt to approach must spend one Willpower or else suffer a poison known as turn-back miasma (Damage 1L/hour, penalty -1) while within. Spending Willpower inures a character to this effect for a week.

PERILOUS COLOR ALLURE

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Scorpion Courtier Caress

The Mistress' countenance becomes as vibrantly colored as a poison frog or monarch butterfly's wings — a deadly allure that always means to beware.

The Mistress grants herself a bonus dot of Appearance, to a maximum of 6. Her Guile suffers a -2 penalty against attempts to determine if she's dangerous — and in what ways.

ALONE IN YOUR ANGUISH

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Fevered Reverie Exhalation

Layering poison upon poison like folded steel, the Mistress delivers a dose of bewildering Essence that clouds her victim's mind and words.

When she applies a poison to a character, they must make a separate (Stamina + Resistance) roll against her Essence or else be utterly unable to communicate the symptoms of the first poison by speech, writing, or any other means. This increases the difficulty to diagnose and treat the poison by +3, and inspires feelings of fear and isolation that can be leveraged as a Major Intimacy.

Perception

BENDING BEFORE DARK INTENTIONS

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

With senses attuned to deadly Essence, the Mistress may dodge and weave away from those with murder in their hearts or poison in their blood.

The Mistress can dodge an attack with successes equal to her Evasion. Against targets suffering from poison, this Charm reduces its cost by one mote.

CLEAR-EYED KILLER METHOD

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Smoke, shade, and thronging clouds cannot hide the Mistress' victims from her duty.

The Mistress doubles 9s and ignores up to (Essence/2) points of penalties on a Perception-based roll. When tracking or identifying a character whom she has resolved to kill, the penalty reduction increases by one.

EAGER TO STING

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

With deft hands and quick wits, the Chosen of Venom's weapons are always at hand.

The Mistress rerolls 6s until they fail to appear on Join Battle and reflexively readies a weapon. She gains an additional non-Charm bonus die if the weapon possesses the Concealable, Poisonable, or Flexible tag.

Repurchase at Perception 3 allows the Mistress to reflexively envenom a weapon with the Poisonable tag when using this Charm. If she knows Supreme Poisonmaker Alchemy, she may use her Join Battle roll to immediately distill a poison from her blood onto the weapon.

PATIENT PREDATOR DEFENSE

Cost: 2m, 1i; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bending Before Dark Intentions

Graceful as she is, the Mistress is at her slipperiest when she seems still.



The Mistress ignores up to (Essence/2, round up) penalties to her Defense. If she didn't take a movement action on her previous turn, she may pay a two-mote surcharge to increase this to (higher of Essence or 3).

SECRET VENOM BAPTISM

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Eager to Sting

Poison slides across the Thousand Venoms Mistress' weapons and seeps into its contours and Essence.

The Mistress reflexively poisons a weapon, even one that lacks the Poisonable tag. The weapon may remain envenomed without complication while the Charm is active; the poison never drips, fades, or loses potency until delivered by an attack, and attempts to detect the weapon's toxic nature suffer a -2 penalty. When used on a weapon that already has the Poisonable tag, she may apply two doses worth of the poison, allowing her to strike without having to envenom it again.

PERCEPTION CHARM CONCEPTS

Swift as Cyanide (Essence 1; Eager to Sting): Gain +1 Evasion against poisoned targets and double their poison penalty when contesting movement actions.

Red Perfume of Murder (Essence 1; Blood-and-Sweat Recognition): Use a profile character action to smell whether a character has killed others or harbors violent intentions. With repurchase, sense whether anyone in the scene wants to harm or kill them.

Precision Becomes Poison (Essence 2; Utmost Assassin Precision): Attacks that benefit from Patient Predator Defense count the target as being poisoned for the Mistress' Charms, even if he's not.

Vicious Efficiency Trance (Essence 2; Patient Predator Defense): If the Mistress didn't move on her previous turn, she increases her place in the Initiative order and gains (Perception) bonus dice on attacks against those she goes before.

Hidden Anemone Dance (Essence 3; Insidious Jellyfish Tendril): Spread multiple tendrils out to close range, poisoning multiple targets at once. With repurchase, leave behind invisible hazards that poison anyone who passes through.

SUBTLE SCENT DISCERNMENT

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Of all her senses, the Thousand Venoms Mistress' smell is keenest.

The Mistress adds a non-Charm success on a Perception-based roll that benefits from her sense of smell, allowing her to notice scents normally beyond human detection. When detecting poisons, she adds two non-Charm successes instead.

Repurchase at Perception 4, Essence 2 allows her to commit four motes to benefit from this Charm for the rest of the scene.

BLOOD-AND-SWEAT RECOGNITION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Subtle Scent Discernment

No matter how they disguise themselves or cover their tracks, the Thousand Venoms Mistress pursues her contracts through muck and shadow.

The Mistress rerolls up to (higher of Essence or three) failed dice on a Perception roll to track or contest the disguise of a character she's been within short range of before or whom she has successfully profiled with at least one piece of physical evidence containing his scent. This allows her to track characters using Traceless Passage (**Exalted**, p. 412) or similar magic.

UTMOST ASSASSIN PRECISION

Cost: -(2m); **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Brute strength is a poor replacement for a wound delivered at just the right spot.

When using light weapons, poisoned weapons, or benefitting from an aim action, the Mistress may use Perception instead of Strength when calculating damage. She may spend two motes to apply this effect to any attack that wouldn't normally qualify.

METICULOUS NEEDLE PERFECTION**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Eager to Sting

Waiting for the perfect moment to strike, the Mistress magnifies a poison's potency as it lingers on her needle.

When delivering a poison as part of an attack that benefitted from an aim action, the target suffers a -(higher of Essence or 3) penalty to their (Stamina + Resistance) roll.

SENSE-SHARPENING ANGUISH**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Clear-Eyed Killer Method, Subtle Scent Discernment

The Thousand Venoms Mistress may flood her veins with a perilous toxin that clarifies her senses.

The Mistress rerolls 6s until they fail to appear on Perception-based rolls and reduces the cost of Clear-Eyed Killer Method and Subtle Scent Discernment by one mote each. At the end of the scene, she suffers a -1 penalty to Perception rolls until she's had a few minutes rest to recover from the toxin.

She may pay a one lethal damage surcharge to strengthen this clarifying toxin, rerolling 5s until they fail to appear.

INSIDIOUS JELLYFISH TENDRIL**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-Only**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Meticulous Needle Perfection, Secret Venom Baptism

The Thousand Venoms Mistress spreads a thin tendril of Essence to deliver her venoms from afar.

The Mistress may make a difficulty 3 (Perception + [Stealth or Larceny]) poisoning gambit against the Defense of a target within short range. If her anima banner is dim, she treats this as a surprise attack. Success allows her to expose him to a contact or inhaled poison she has at hand or in her poison library.

RATTLE-SHAKING FEINT**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Counterattack, Perilous, Uniform**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Patient Predator Defense, Secret Venom Baptism

When enemies come close for the kill, the Chosen of Venoms may reward them with a venomous caress or a breath of deadly vapor.

After her Defense is overcome by an attack at close range, the Mistress may counter with a difficulty 3 (Perception + [Stealth or Resistance]) poisoning gambit that doesn't count as her attack for the turn. If successful, she may expose the attacker to a contact or inhaled poison she has on hand or in her poison library. If he fails his first roll to resist it, his attack loses (higher of Essence or 3) damage.

With an Essence 4+ repurchase, this Charm's counter-attack may instead be applied to every character within short range, friend or foe. Thousand Venoms Mistress resets to base after resolving the attack.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by spending an entire round with no enemies within close range.

STANCE-BREAKING AGONIES**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Subtle Venoms Baptism

Quickening her poisons with a whisper of cruel Essence, the Mistress turns one blow into two.

When attacking a poisoned target, the Mistress inflicts her onslaught penalty before comparing her successes to the target's Defense. On success, she inflicts an additional point of onslaught penalty after her attack.

TOXIC ALCHEMY METAMORPHOSIS**Cost:** 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One day**Prerequisite Charms:** Secret Venom Baptism

With the dark genius of a master alchemist, the Mistress may alter her poisons on a fundamental level.

The Mistress changes the vector of a single dose of poison on her person or in her poison library, allowing it to be delivered through some other means — damage, inhalation, ingestion, touch, etc. She may activate this Charm as if it was Supplemental when using a Simple Charm that creates a poison effect, such as Crimson Poppy Kiss, to change its vector as well.

LIGHTNING SERPENT CONCENTRATION

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Rattle-Shaking Feint, Stance-Breaking Agonies

Quickening her muscles with toxic Essence, the Mistress enhances her reflexes to inhuman levels, trading future pain for present performance.

The Mistress rolls (Perception + [Athletics or Resistance]) with (Essence) non-Charms bonus dice, banking successes until the end of the scene. She may spend these successes reflexively for the following benefits for one success each:

- Reduce the cost of Bending Before Dark Intentions or Patient Predator Defense by two motes to a minimum of 0.
- Gain (Essence/2, round up) non-Charms dice on a combat movement roll.
- Reduce the Difficulty of Rattle-Shaking Feint's Gambit to 1.
- Reduce her onslaught penalty by one instead of increasing it after successfully dodging an attack.

At the end of the scene, she rolls (Stamina + Resistance) against the number of successes she spent in total; if she fails, she suffers one level of bashing damage for every point she failed by.

Reset: Once per scene.

The Torchbearer

The Torchbearer is the latest in a line of brilliant scholar-heroes, wielding the Exigence of a long-dead god and the light of knowledge against the forces of darkness and ignorance.

Deeds Written in Fire

In RY 270, the armies of Medo's Touman Prince burned Cradle to the ground, igniting a spark that has illuminated the darkness of history for five centuries. The Torchbearers have accomplished many legendary deeds across their incarnations. The First Torchbearer inspired the young Aakehta Heron-Heart — a Haslan culture hero — to dedicate himself to learning; he went on to found Icehome's famed university, the Eleven Rings. The Fourth evaporated the miasma of poisoned Lake Gnelvak to unearth the ancient research-manse lost beneath, allowing the Gnelvaki to recover the wisdom of their ancestors. Nozifo Isiman, the Eighth, was declared Anathema by the Immaculate Order for preserving and disseminating the satrapy of Aster's old scripture-epics, keeping the spirit of resistance alive long enough for the Asterfolk to win their freedom.

Over the centuries Torchbearers have made many enemies, both individually and as a whole. The mind-infecting Epistemophages who consume precious memories and discoveries still fear and hate the Torchbearer's light. Lookshy's Gens Karal bears the Torchbearers a grudge for a humiliation of one of its scions in public debate, while Guild factor Mstislav Lene resents Nozifo Isiman for exposing his company's abuses of the peasantry to Vaneha's Sword Prince. Dread necromancer Rib Flower hunts Torchbearers wherever they go, obsessed with vengeance for some long-forgotten clash with the First Torchbearer.

But they have friends, too. Dispossessed fire spirits of the court called the Hearth Untended have long provided intelligence to the Torchbearer in exchange for protection from mightier spirits. The surviving Keepers of Kandara's Great Library call the Torchbearers friend owing to a long-ago collaboration in restoring a wing. Most of all, the far-flung Sadghu are forever the Torchbearer's allies.

The Sadghu

Though Cradle fell, many of her people escaped, guided by the Torchbearer's light. The descendants of these refugees — known as the Sadghu, or exonymously as Cradlefolk — are scattered across the North, with some as far-flung as Carnelian, Gentian, or Iscomay.

The urban-dwelling Sadghu deal in knowledge to secure their safety and prosperity; they're scribes, bookbinders, peddlers, and alchemists, maintaining a culture of letters and extensive familial networks between tightly-knit communities. Sadghu advisors, officials, and savants are

sought by princes and bureaucracies, such as Zrahun Amovad, advisor to the prince of Plenilune; yet for these reasons, they're distrusted and envied, largely sticking to their own quarters. They're recognizable by orange eyes, elaborate body-writing, and colorful tight-waisted jackets of satin or wool.

Sadghu culture is highly eristic, literate, and focused on hospitality. Children learn reading by transcribing parable-poems and sacred rhetorical conundrums. Esoteric scrolls, codices and manuscripts spirited from Cradle are kept as holy relics, where they honor wizened ancestors and Ogen-Moin. Hospitality to the stranger is the highest obligation. After all — did not the Torchbearer guide the Sadghu from ashen Cradle, and could she not be any stranger?

Sadghu folklore is rife with Torchbearer stories, depicting the reciprocal relationship between Exalt and people. Each is bound and privileged to help the other as heirs to Ogen-Moin and debtors of salvation. Whenever a Torchbearer encounters a community of Sadghu, the musaf-aki — governing councils composed of educated elders — host a feast in their honor, where each might hear the other.

Nozifo Isiman

The Eighth and current Torchbearer, Nozifo Isiman (**Exigents**, p. 24), is renowned for her wit, fiery passion, and unorthodox methods of research and teaching. Approaching sixty, Nozifo has no plans on dying soon but has begun considering settling down and finding a potential successor — just in case. For this Time of Tumult, she wants someone who possesses the necessary curiosity, morality, and gumption to endure any hardship and remain unbroken. She tests potential candidates with riddles, lectures, and requests to wash her feet.

Although Nozifo wants to adequately train her successor before passing on the mantle, she will sacrifice herself for her student if need be. If it comes down to it and she's dying with no successor, she'll pass it on to anyone compatible with the Exaltation, hoping to her last that the Ninth proves worthy.

PLAY THE TORCHBEARER IF YOU WANT:

- to discover, preserve, and spread knowledge for all Creation.
- to solve problems with scholarship, fire, and revealing light.

- to stand strong against ignorance and inherited enemies.
- to uphold a legacy of heroism.

Traits

The Torchbearer is an Ability-based Exigent intended for Terrestrial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Her Torchbearer Abilities are Awareness, Integrity, Linguistics, Lore and Resistance. She can choose five Favored Abilities.

ANIMA

The Torchbearer's anima gleams with pale flame. Within might dance hues of soft yellows, warm reds, or unearthly pastels, contrasted by the black of ink and the rustle of parchment. Her iconic anima might depict a vast library shelved with endless tomes, an enormous iron lantern bearing brilliant flame, a figure holding a candle at night, or wavering outlines of previous bearers of the Torchbearer's mantle.

The anima of the Torchbearer is always visible even at Dim level as a tiny candleflame that floats near her. She can conceal it in a lantern, candle or other conventional light source.

ANIMA EFFECTS

The Torchbearer can spend one mote to perform one of the following minor effects:

- Manipulate her flame, lighting a candle or sparking a fire, or create a lantern from Essence to conceal it within. These manipulations never carry mechanical effects but provide minor utility and can be incorporated into stunts.
- Sense the direction and approximate distance and location of any library or archive of knowledge within (Essence x 10) miles.

Shrouded in Pale Fire (—/5m; Reflexive): The flame of the Torchbearer burns over her skin. When not concealing her flame in a lantern, enemies who hit her with unarmed or natural attacks suffer (Essence) dice of unsoakable **withering** damage, or **decisive** in crash. When her flame is in a lantern, she can reflexively spend five motes on her turn to cast a pool of revealing light out to short range until the scene ends, mitigating visual penalties from any source. At bonfire, both powers are available and free.

Living Archive Genius (2m, Reflexive): The Torchbearer adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on a Lore roll or any roll to remember or understand

anything she's learned or read, or gains half that much non-Charm Resolve (round up) against any effect that seeks to alter her memory or convince her something she has proof of is incorrect.

Student of All the World (Permanent): Once per day, when the Torchbearer upholds an Intimacy by teaching another or learning from them, she gains an additional point of Willpower and may raise her anima to bonfire.

MARTIAL ARTS

The Torchbearer is restricted by the Terrestrial keyword when using Martial Arts. **She can't enhance her Martial Arts attacks with both Torchbearer Charms and Martial Arts Charms.** Excellencies are exempt from this, as are Charms with the Versatile keyword. This doesn't apply to Charms that are permanent or provide ongoing benefits, nor does it apply to any actions other than attacking.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

The Torchbearer is capable of initiating into the Terrestrial Circle of sorcery. She has limited access to the Celestial Circle through Ardent Enlightenment (p. 96).

EVOCATIONS

The Torchbearer is neutral with red jade and orichalcum and dissonant with all other materials.

The Great Curse

The Torchbearers' Great Curse consumes her like a candle lit from both ends. She's driven to control, discover, preserve, record, or impart knowledge or push herself too far in pursuit of her goals. Torchbearers don't have a Limit track or experience Limit Break. While the Great Curse still influences her behavior, its manifestations are determined solely by her player. Roleplaying the Great Curse grants a Role Bonus (**Exalted**, p. 177).

Some example manifestations of the Torchbearer's Great Curse include:

- She ignores her limitations and pursues her scholarly work at the expense of her needs and health.
- She disregards relationships and attachments that would impede her progress.
- She can see only the flaws, weaknesses, and ignorance of others, disdaining the world.

- She refuses to trust others and thinks them ignorant, insists on forcibly educating them or fixing their problems regardless of their wishes.
- She leverages flaws in people, societies, or institutions to demonstrate their weaknesses.

LONGEVITY AND DEATH

Torchbearers can live up to three centuries, ceasing to age around their first century. When they pass on their Exaltation they die; if they die without passing it on, their light goes out for good.

Character Advancement

The Torchbearer uses Terrestrial advancement rules.

Charms

Torchbearer Charms evince their nature as legendary scholar-heroes bearing Ogen-Moin's fire, gathering knowledge, banishing the dark, and illuminating minds. They have Ability Charms for Awareness, Integrity, Linguistics, Lore, and Resistance.

EXCELLENCIES

The Torchbearer has Excellencies for all twenty-five Abilities. She must purchase individual Excellencies for each Ability beyond the five free Excellencies she receives at character creation. She may add up to (Ability + Anima) dice to rolls. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. Static values such as Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half her dice cap, rounded down.

NEW KEYWORD

Illumination: Charms with the Illumination Keyword can be enhanced with an Excellency as if the Torchbearer's anima were at bonfire regardless of its actual level.

Awareness

SCHOLAR'S-EYE SCRUTINY

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Awareness 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Torchbearer patiently studies new faces, deducing their education in the hunch of a shoulder or scars on a finger.

The Torchbearer doubles 9s on a read intentions or profile character roll. On success, she also discerns one of her target's Lore backgrounds or his primary area of expertise if he lacks one, deducing it from small details of his bearing, appearance, or manner of speaking.

AWASH IN TORCHLIGHT

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Awareness 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Concentrating her lantern's flame, the Torchbearer shines a beam of light onto spirits, illuminating them to the naked eye.

The Torchbearer can sense the presence of spirits within short range. If she attacks spirits with appropriate magic she suffers a -1 penalty. While at bonfire anima, she can see spirits by the light of her lantern and waives this penalty.

With a Perception 4, Essence 3 repurchase she may spend one Willpower to render spirits visible to her allies while she is at bonfire and can see them.

BLADE-GUIDING LIGHT

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Awareness 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Illumination, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Raising her lantern of Essence, the Torchbearer shines light upon an enemy to reveal flaws in his defense.

The Torchbearer rolls ([Intelligence or Perception] + Awareness) against the Resolve of an enemy within short range. Success imposes a -1 penalty to his soak or Hardness. Every two extra successes increases this penalty by one, maximum (higher of Essence or 3).

Attacks stunted to describe exploiting this weakness add bonus dice equal to the penalty. The enemy can end this Charm early by establishing concealment to hide from the light, successfully taking cover with a roll that exceeds the Torchbearer's, or crashing or incapacitating the Torchbearer.

THE TRUTH OF FIRE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Awareness 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

AWARENESS CHARM CONCEPTS

Bobbing Wisp Spectacle (Essence 1): Allows the lantern to float, either by the Torchbearer's side or sent temporarily floating away from her to draw the attention of others. A repurchase allows her to glide while holding it.

Cracked Facade Illumination (Essence 2; Blade-Guiding Light): Upgrades Blade-Guiding Light for use against structures, reducing the minimum Strength required to destroy it.

Inner Fires Extinguished (Essence 3; Blade-Guiding Light): Perform a special gambit on a crashed enemy, deactivating one of his ongoing Charms. Alternatively, spend three levels of anima to do so on a non-crashed enemy.

Aloft To Study the Heavens (Essence 4; Bobbing Wisp Spectacle x2): The Torchbearer envelops herself within her own anima when at bonfire to rise, up to long range above the ground, paying motes every hour or Initiative every round she's flying. If she falls below bonfire, this Charm ends. While flying somewhere to study or learn, she can fly up to extreme range above ground and increases her travel speed dramatically.

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Fire aids the Torchbearer in her pursuit of the truth, revealing lies in firelight.

Attempts to trick, mislead, or lie to the Torchbearer from characters illuminated by firelight, including the Torchbearer's anima, suffer a -2 penalty, and characters have their Guile penalized by an equal amount. Fire elementals or other fiery spirits increase this to -3.

BANISH EVERY SHADOW

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Illumination

Duration: One round

Prerequisite Charms: Blade-Guiding Light

Darkness yields before the brilliance of the Torchbearer's light.

This Charm must be used at the start of the round. The Torchbearer imposes an (Awareness/2, round up) penalty against attempts to establish concealment within

short range. If her anima is at burning or higher, she reduces her Defnse penalty from surprise attacks by one.

With an Essence 3, Awareness 5 repurchase, she can pay a four-mote, one-Willpower surcharge while using this Charm to roll (Perception + Awareness) with (Essence) successes against the concealment roll of every character within medium range. On a success, they are illuminated and visible to all.

GLINT OF REVELATION

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Awareness 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Illumination

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Scholar's-Eye Scrutiny

Holding aloft her lantern, the Torchbearer's light reveals things desired and ways forward.

The Torchbearer makes a case scene or profile character roll with (Perception + [Awareness or Investigation]), adding (Anima) dice.

Success on a case scene roll illuminates the best path towards accomplishing the Torchbearer's current goals, casting it in a soft glow; this could be used to find a specific tome relevant to her research in a library, a hidden trapdoor into a dungeon, or which of three paths will get her to her destination faster. Success on a profile character roll instead reveals the thing within medium range that the target most desires. If there is no physical object, instead, the character who possesses what (or is who) he most desires is illuminated.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, she can complete both rolls in a matter of seconds.

BURNING EYES VANTAGE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: The Truth of Fire

The dance of flame yields its secrets to the Torchbearer, offering its eyes for her to study the world around her.

The Torchbearer can sense the presence of any flames within (higher of Essence or 3) range bands. While looking into a fire (including her own lantern), the Torchbearer may displace her awareness into another flame within range, perceiving the world as though she were there. This doesn't extend to beings made from flame, such as fire elementals. She's incapable of taking

physical actions while she does so and ends the Charm if she's attacked, takes damage, or is otherwise disrupted. She adds a non-Charm die on Perception-based rolls made through this vantage but suffers a -2 penalty on any Awareness rolls made around her body while staring into fire.

FALSEHOODS ARE TINDER

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Awareness 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Illumination

Prerequisite Charms: Scholar's-Eye Scrutiny, The Truth of Fire

Pulsing pale light, the Torchbearer's torch illuminates lies and deceptions, making their perpetrators feel the heat of her flame.

While at glowing anima or higher, the Torchbearer rolls read intentions against all characters she's interacted with this scene. Against characters whose Guile she beats, if they lied to her or in her presence this scene, have misrepresented or are misrepresenting themselves, they begin emitting wisps of smoke, imposing a -3 penalty on Stealth and Larceny rolls and on the successes of any current disguise for the rest of the scene. The Torchbearer also immediately discerns why they lied and any relevant Intimacy motivating it.

MEMORIES CAST IN FIRE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Burning Eyes Vantage, Falsehoods Are Tinder

The Torchbearer's lantern radiates the light of her memory, painting over the world around her with rippling, heatless images of flame.

To use this Charm, the Torchbearer must remain at glowing anima or higher and be engaged in a slow, continuous activity — meditating, writing, reading, etc. As long as she continues to do so, she can manifest phantasmal imagery out to medium range and project her memories into the world. Very old or muddled memories may require an (Intelligence + [Awareness or Integrity]) roll. 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 Torchbearer and others can make Awareness and

Investigation rolls to find things that the Torchbearer didn't consciously recognize before.

If the Torchbearer knows Glint of Revelation, she can use it to glean information from her memories, waiving the Willpower cost.

ASHEN SECRET INFERNO

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Illumination

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Glint of Revelation, Falsehoods Are Tinder

A wave of rippling fire unleashes from the Torchbearer's lantern, burning away only that which obscures the secrets she seeks.

The Torchbearer rolls a special ([Intelligence or Perception] + Awareness) feat of strength to burn away any material or element between her and something she knows is obscured or buried within, doubling 8s and treating her Strength as (Awareness + Essence). This destroys physical material like stone and wood and burns away water, gasses, or even mundane flame, but never harms characters or receptacles of knowledge; the Torchbearer could burn away an occult library vault and leave the books within intact. The destruction extends up to (Essence/2) range bands in any direction.

Reset: Once per story.

Integrity

UNDIMMED BY DECEPTION

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Integrity 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The steadfast Torchbearer does not falter against dark words and creeping falsehoods.

The Torchbearer ignores one point of penalty against her Resolve. Against lies and manipulation, this increases to (half Integrity, round up).

WISDOM IN DECORUM

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Integrity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

INTEGRITY CHARM CONCEPTS

Honest Oath Intuition (Essence 1): Intuit how to solemnize a contract or promise based on a character's background.

Thousand Ceremonies Foresight (Essence 2; Hundredfold Nomad Rites): Retroactively reveal that you have exceptional equipment for a cultural or social ritual.

Unheeded by the Haughty (Essence 3; Dimmed Brilliance Disposition): Become practically undetectable to characters who think they're better or smarter than the Torchbearer.

Extinguished Flame Trance (Essence 4; Lantern-of-Generations Embodiment): Design a persona based on a previous Torchbearer, gaining their Intimacies and redistributing (Essence) dots of Abilities.

Eight lifetimes of scholarly meandering have left the Torchbearer well-acquainted with the rites of many peoples.

The Torchbearer may reroll up to (Integrity/2, round up) failed dice on a Socialize or Bureaucracy roll to navigate the customs and etiquette of a mortal culture. If she still fails, she may commit this Charm's cost for the rest of the story to intuit how and why it is considered a breach, gaining an appropriate cultural specialty in that Ability.

Repurchase at Integrity 4 allows the Torchbearer to use this Charm on Occult rolls to understand the cultures and rites of spirits or Performance rolls to propitiate them with prayer.

SILENCE IN THE LIBRARY

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Bright as she shines, the Torchbearer is still accustomed to subtlety and silence, proceeding with measured caution.

The Torchbearer rerolls up to (higher of Essence or 3) failed dice on a Stealth or Larceny roll if she hasn't moved since her last turn.

Repurchase at Integrity 4, Essence 2 allows the Torchbearer to pay a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one scene.

DIMMED BRILLIANCE DISPOSITION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Silence in the Library

When it serves her to dim her light, the Torchbearer may retreat into the shroud of humility.

The Torchbearer rerolls 6s until they fail to appear on a roll with any Ability to disguise or convince others that she is a humble or anonymous figure. When she presents herself as an intellectual laborer — a minor scholar, junior secretary, assistant scribe, or the like — she rerolls 5s, too.

HUNDREDFOLD NOMAD RITES

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Illuminated

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Wisdom in Decorum

In their wanderings, the Torchbearers have been welcomed into hundreds of cultures across Creation, celebrating their many rituals.

The Torchbearer rerolls 6s until they fail to appear on social influence with any Ability to instill or uphold the traditions, mores, and customs of a character's home culture or the most prominent culture in the current scene. If she has a Lore background or a Speciality in any Ability relevant to that culture, she also rerolls 5s.

FLICKERING CANDLE REVELATION

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Integrity 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Undimmed by Deception

Shadows dance under the Torchbearer's light, revealing the insidious purpose of those who cast them.

When the Torchbearer successfully applies her Resolve against influence meant to manipulate or deceive her, she may roll a reflexively roll read intentions with ([Wits or Perception] + Integrity) to understand his motivation or purposes for the deception. She gains one non-Charm bonus die for every point by which her Resolve exceeds his roll to a maximum of (anima, minimum 1).

CLEAR-HEADED REBUTTAL

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Integrity 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Illuminated

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Flickering Candle Revelation

When faced with falsehood and perfidy, the Torchbearer is a beacon calling all to reason.

The Torchbearer makes an ([Intelligence or Wits] + Integrity) roll in response to social influence based on lies or deception before it is applied to Resolve. Every three successes or a fraction thereof grants +1 non-Charm Resolve to characters who can hear the Torchbearer's refutation to a maximum of (higher of Essence or 3).

Repurchase at Essence 3 allows the Torchbearer to spend a six-mote surcharge to activate this Charm in response to shaping effects that would change a target's mind, memory, or soul, granting its non-Charm bonus to the appropriate Defense. Against effects that require the target to roll, she grants one non-Charm success per three successes or fraction thereof instead.

Reset: Once per scene.

STRANGE LANDS SAVVY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Integrity 4, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Hundredfold Nomad Rites

There are many worlds to explore, and the Torchbearer's many lives have studied a fraction of their countless spirits.

The Torchbearer may apply Hundredfold Nomad Rites to the customs of spirits. Once per story, when she deals with spirits, she may gain an additional relevant Lore background — the history of a spirit court, Yu-Shan's laws, the fashions of Stygia, and the like.

Once per story, if she knows Clear-Headed Rebuttal and uses it against a spirit whom she knows to be lying about his office, nature, or identity, she gains a free full Excellency to unveil his deceptions or convince others of the truth.

CURSE-BREAKING ANALYSIS

Cost: 10m; **Mins:** Integrity 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Illuminated

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Strange Lands Savvy, Clear-Headed Rebuttal (x2)

Drawing on lifetimes of experience, the Torchbearer reveals the nature and providence of fell magics.

The Torchbearer rolls (Intelligence + Integrity) to identify a curse — a Psyche, Fate, Shaping effect, or other unwanted lingering magic affecting a person or place. This is usually difficulty 3, increasing by one for each of the following that applies: the curse comes from an unknown source, its creator has Guile 5 or higher, or the magic is either impossibly old or an entirely new creation. Success not only identifies the effect and its working but provides a clue about how the Torchbearer could learn more — a lead on a useful tome, hints about a counterworking, or similar.

EIGHT MINDS MEMORIAL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hundredfold Nomad Rites

Reaching back into eight lifetimes of passion, the Torchbearer rekindles a lost spark.

When she enters a Decision Point, the Torchbearer may gain a Major Intimacy that compels her to refuse the influence based on one of her previous incarnations, working with the Storyteller to devise an appropriate Intimacy. The Torchbearer may not voluntarily weaken or degrade that Intimacy for the rest of the story.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by learning something significant about a previous Torchbearer.

LANTERN-OF-GENERATIONS EMBODIMENT

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Eight Minds Memorial

Within the Torchbearer's soul, the Essence of her predecessors yet smolders and can be stoked to blazing.

The Torchbearer can activate Eight Minds Memorial at any time to gain an Intimacy.

When she does so, she can choose to awaken her anima to iconic level, showing shared imagery of the past Torchbearer she invoked alongside her own. She gains (Essence) temporary specialties based on the past

LINGUISTICS CHARM CONCEPTS

Amanuensis' Hand (Essence 1): Copy the handwriting of any character whose handwriting the Torchbearer has seen or whom she's profiled.

Spilled Ink Graphology (Essence 1): Examine handwriting to receive insight into the writer.

Burning Eisegesis Override (Essence 2; Salient Quotation Technique): Persuade someone that their interpretation of what they just read is incorrect in favor of the Torchbearer's version, regardless of how implausible it is. Contradictory evidence won't sway them from this interpretation unless they enter a Decision Point and spend Willpower.

Wafting Cinders Animation (Essence 2): Animate mundane objects with wisps of flame to perform simple tasks.

Burning Paper Storm Technique (Essence 3; Wafting Cinders Animation): Animate many objects at once to attack someone.

Torchbearer's affinities, and adds three bonus dice on all rolls that uphold her new Intimacy for the remainder of the scene.

Linguistics

BLANK PAGE VISAGE

Cost: —(3m); **Mins:** Linguistics 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Torchbearer makes her features as unreadable as an empty book.

The Torchbearer can calculate Guile with (Intelligence + Linguistics). For three motes, she reflexively gains +2 Guile for an instant. Against characters who can't read or who have Principles expressing close-mindedness or disregard for learning, this increases to +3. If both are true, this bonus becomes non-Charm.

MIDNIGHT SCRIBE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Long nights and large workloads will never impede the Torchbearer.

The Torchbearer increases the speed at which she reads and writes, able to read a page of text in a second and longer texts in one to ten minutes. She can complete a page-long letter in seconds or copy out a large book in a few hours. If she's reading something with a code or deceptive message, she doubles 9s on rolls to decipher it.

This can contest magical codes or ciphers like Letter-Within-A-Letter Technique (**Exalted**, p. 323).

SALIENT QUOTATION TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Linguistics 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Torchbearer never fumbles for words, possessing the perfect formulation for every situation.

The Torchbearer doubles 9s on a persuade, bargain, or inspire roll with any Ability that incorporates a relevant quotation, aphorism, adage, or proverb. If the quote is relevant to one of her Lore backgrounds or specialties, she adds an automatic success.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, she can pay a one-Will-power surcharge to also treat this as an instill roll to impart the quote as a Minor Principle.

QUILL-TONGUE TECHNIQUE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Torchbearer is a diligent student of all languages, eagerly expanding her understanding.

The Torchbearer can understand a spoken language that she has spent at least a week studying. She can also read unfamiliar written languages with only an hour's study. If she has studied a written language, she waives the time required to study its spoken form.

With Linguistics 4, Essence 2, the Torchbearer may speak and write in the chosen language. She is still unfamiliar with its nuances, imposing a -3 success penalty on any social influence rolls, until she has studied it for at least a month.

MOTH-GATHERING RADIANCE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Linguistics 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Salient Quotation Technique

As a lit flame entices insects, so too does the Torchbearer's learned nature entice those who see her.

The Torchbearer gains the following benefits:

- She may reflexively make her erudition known to all who see her. Anyone who can perceive her becomes intuitively aware of her Lore backgrounds and regards the Torchbearer as the perfect expert to consult on matters involving them. She can leverage this belief as though it is a Minor Tie.
- She treats Intimacies valuing knowledgeability, politeness, or sophistication as positive Intimacies towards her. Any Resolve penalty inflicted by positive Ties to the Torchbearer is increased by one.
- Attempts to challenge a fact she's introduced (**Exalted**, p. 238) suffer a -3 penalty.

GAFFE-CORRECTING PARAPHRASE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Illumination, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Salient Quotation Technique

The Torchbearer elucidates her allies' intentions, clarifying them to those who would misunderstand.

When an ally fails an influence roll with any Ability, the Torchbearer can use this Charm to immediately attempt the same influence for him without suffering the penalties for retrying social actions (**Exalted**, pp. 222-223). This new roll doesn't benefit from magic used to enhance the first roll but can be enhanced by her own Charms. To use this Charm, the Torchbearer must notice her ally's influence and must be able to speak to all targets so she can elucidate what he meant.

Reset: Once per scene.

INTERMINABLE LECTURE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None



Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Moth-Gathering Radiance

Launching into a rambling exposition full of minutia and recursion, the Torchbearer numbs her audience's minds.

So long as the Torchbearer doesn't stop speaking, non-allied characters that can hear her suffer a -3 penalty to any Perception- or Wits-based rolls made against characters other than her or to hear anything. Enemies who can't hear her are unaffected.

Characters can resist this by entering a Decision Point and citing an Intimacy that equals or exceeds the intensity of any positive Ties they have to the Torchbearer or any other Intimacies that would predispose them to listen to the Torchbearer.

After one minute or round subject to this Charm, affected characters suffer a -1 Resolve penalty against the Torchbearer's influence rolls.

EDICTS WRIT IN FLAME

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Written-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Moth-Gathering Radiance, Interminable Lecture

The Torchbearer inscribes the fire of her soul's truths upon the world, penning a burning truth into being around her in vast glyphs of flame.

The Torchbearer imposes one of her Major or Defining Principles on the scene, which appears in burning letters all around her, manifesting flame-images of script, quotations, and stories that support it. Everyone in the scene who is literate in any language understands the Principle. Anyone who acts or tries to act against the Principle suffers a penalty equal to the intensity of the Principle (e.g., attempting to attack the Torchbearer's allies while the Torchbearer is imposing a Major Principle of I Shall Protect My Friends suffers a -3 penalty on attacks).

A character that seriously transgresses against the imposed Principle (e.g., dealing **decisive** damage to a protected character, stealing when a Principle of generosity is being imposed) suffers a one-time environmental Hazard of (Essence) Difficulty and 5L damage as he is seared by the burning words. This hazard can trigger against one character per round in combat.

Lore

ASH-TO-PAPER TRICK

Cost: 1m+; **Mins:** Lore 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Torchbearer entrusts her belongings to the fire, for all flame is connected, and what has been lost may be restored.

The Torchbearer feeds an object into a fire large enough to engulf the object, causing the object to vanish. She may use this Charm again at a later time to reach into an appropriately-sized flame and withdraw any object previously vanished with this Charm. She may use her own ever-burning flame for objects small enough to place in a handheld lantern, and she suffers no harm for reaching into other flames.

The cost of this Charm varies according to an object's size and nature. Mundane objects as large as a one-handed sword cost one mote, while mundane objects up to the size of the Torchbearer's own body cost two motes. The Torchbearer can't store any artifact or hearthstone attuned by another character.

If the Torchbearer dies with any objects still hidden by this Charm, her successor intuitively finds this and may retrieve those objects with this Charm.

GLIMPSE OF WONDER

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Lore 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Illumination

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The light of learning flows from the Torchbearer's words.

The Torchbearer makes a roll to instill a target with an Intimacy toward learning, or toward herself as a teacher, with ([Charisma or Intelligence] + Lore). She suffers no penalty for having multiple targets. Characters can't bolster their Resolve with Intimacies of close-mindedness, apathy, or laziness. If her influence exploits a target's Major or Defining Intimacy, it costs an additional Willpower to resist.

DEVIL-SEARING INTENSITY

Cost: 1m (+1-4m); **Mins:** Lore 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Versatile

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Torchbearer wreathes her attack with translucent flame that scours spiritual Essence.

This Charm enhances an attack made with any Ability, allowing it to strike immaterial entities. If the Torchbearer can't perceive her target, her attack suffers a -3 penalty. If she crashes or incapacitates a spirit, her anima increases by one level.

With a Lore 3+ repurchase, the Torchbearer may pay a one-mote surcharge to enhance her attack's damage against a spirit. An enhanced **withering** attack adds (higher of 3 or Essence) damage dice, while an enhanced **decisive** attack inflicts an additional level of damage if it inflicts any damage at all.

With a second repurchase at Lore 4+, Essence 2+, the Torchbearer may pay a three-mote surcharge to render her **decisive** attack's damage aggravated against a spirit. She gains (spirit's Essence, maximum 5) motes if her attack incapacitates a spirit. Once per story, when she incapacitates a spirit with this effect, she may gain a new Lore background based on the spirit's purview.

LORE CHARM CONCEPTS

Jade Lantern Kindling (Essence 1; Ash to Paper Trick): Stores the Torchbearer's flame in an attuned artifact rather than her lantern, allowing unique evocations.

Demon-Bane Flame (Essence 2; Devil-Searing Intensity): Burns away a spirit's immateriality, rendering it solid with a touch or decisive attack.

Spark of Fulsome Health (Essence 3; Torch of Erudition): Infuses an ally with flame, granting him new power, enhanced hardiness, and temporary health levels.

Builder of Minds (Essence 3; Jade Lantern Kindling, Spirit of Discovery): Inspire a community or organization to work feverishly toward creating an artifact of the Torchbearer's design.

Library of Limitless Light (Essence 5; Torch of Erudition x2): Summons a vast library archive of every work the Torchbearers have ever studied and draws forth knowledge to help solve a pressing dilemma.

FEEDING THE FLAME**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Illumination**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

The accumulation of knowledge refines the Torchbearer's flame, making it ever brighter.

After studying a topic for an hour, whether through reading or consulting experts, the Torchbearer may introduce a fact based on that topic as if it were one of her Lore backgrounds. If the topic is already one of her Lore backgrounds, she adds a non-Charm automatic success to her roll.

At Essence 2+, the Torchbearer may study a topic by meditating upon the experiences of a past bearer of her Exaltation.

TERRESTRIAL CIRCLE SORCERY**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Any Four Lore Charms

The Torchbearer's mind blazes with the secrets of sorcery.

The Torchbearer may use Terrestrial Circle sorcery. She learns one Terrestrial spell — her control spell — and one shaping ritual for free.

CANDESCENT BOLT**Cost:** 4m (+1-3a); **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Dual, Illumination**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Feeding the Flame

The Torchbearer focuses her flame into a roiling ball, then flings the screaming sphere at her foe.

This is a **withering** or **decisive** attack rolled with (Dexterity + [Archery or Thrown]) against an enemy within short range, which can be enhanced with appropriate Charms. The attack's damage and accuracy ratings match a light artifact thrown weapon (**Exalted**, p. 597), adding (Essence) to **withering** damage instead of (Strength).

The Torchbearer may spend anima to enhance her attack, choosing one of the following for each level of anima spent:

- Increase the attack's maximum range by one band. This effect stacks, to a maximum of long range.
- Add two dice of damage to a **withering** attack or one die of damage to a **decisive** attack. This effect stacks.
- The attack knocks the opponent back one range band on hit.

With an Essence 2+ repurchase, the Torchbearer may burn up her own life to empower her attack. For each anima she would spend enhancing her attack, she may instead take one level of lethal damage. She still can't exceed three enhancements this way.

LANTERN-LODGING TRICK**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Illumination, Mute**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** Ash-to-Paper Trick

Where fire spreads, so does the word of the Torchbearer.

The Torchbearer touches an implement or container for flame (such as a lantern, torch, or brazier) for a few seconds, then rolls (Wits + Stealth) to conceal herself. On success, she becomes an ever-burning flame appropriately sized for her container. Characters with superhuman senses may notice her presence if they overcome her Stealth successes, but she otherwise has no physical presence and can't take physical actions. She may still perceive her surroundings normally, and she may communicate as a voice emanating from the flame. In addition, she may use Ash-to-Paper Trick without cost, allowing her to change her own equipment and to vanish or reproduce objects fed into her flame.

If her anima exceeds the illumination her flame would normally provide, other characters automatically notice her presence in the flame. If anything douses the flame that is the Torchbearer, she suffers one level of lethal damage, and this Charm ends.

SMOKE-SCENTED WHISPER**Cost:** 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Lore 4, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Mute**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Glimpse of Wonder

Rumor spreads like flame, and the smell of smoke reaches the highest echelons.

After spending an hour with members of a community or organization, the Torchbearer makes a persuade, instill, or threaten roll against any specific member of the group, specified by name or official role. This influence reaches the specified group member in the form of rumors passed through the ranks, though depending on the size and scope of the group, the influence may take hours, days, or weeks to reach its target.

If the Torchbearer's influence fails to overcome her target's Resolve, he may roll (Wits + Bureaucracy) against her Guile to intuit the source of the rumor.

ARCANE BRILLIANCE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Lore 5, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Terrestrial Circle Sorcery

As her flame intensifies, so does the Torchbearer's inspiration.

Whenever the Torchbearer's anima increases by one level, she gains three sorcerous motes. These sorcerous motes last for the scene or until used. She can gain a maximum of nine sorcerous motes per scene this way.

FLAGRANT WISP REVISION

Cost: 5m, 1i, 1lh; **Mins:** Lore 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One turn

Prerequisite Charms: Lantern-Lodging Trick

The Torchbearer sears away her own body for the short-lived freedom of flame.

On her turn, the Torchbearer dissipates into wisps of flame. During this time, she ignores all difficult terrain and nonmagical bindings, and may pass through any opening through which flame might slip. She also doubles 9s on all movement-based rolls and attempts to escape grapples, magically enhanced bindings, and other forms of physical entanglement.

TORCH OF ERUDITION

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Lore 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Glimpse of Wonder, Feeding the Flame

It is the Torchbearer's nature to spread knowledge and to grow wiser in the bargain.

The Torchbearer tutors a single character, allowing her student to gain a specialty or a single Attribute or Ability dot, going into experience debt if necessary. She can only teach Specialties she knows and can only teach Abilities and Attributes to a maximum of her own, but she can teach Specialties and Abilities she doesn't know as long as she has an appropriately stocked library or expert to assist her teaching. Training time is divided by her (Essence + Intelligence). A Storyteller character can only gain an Attribute or Ability from this Charm once per story.

Once per story, when using this Charm, the Torchbearer may gain a new Lore background, either from her own teaching materials or from memories of Torchbearers past.

A repurchase at Essence 3 allows the Torchbearer to train up to (Essence) students simultaneously. As long as she teaches at least one other, she can make herself one of these students as she learns in the process of teaching.

ARDENT ENLIGHTENMENT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Lore 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Illumination

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Terrestrial Circle Sorcery, any Five Terrestrial Circle Spells

Blazing with inspiration, the Torchbearer glimpses beyond the mysteries of terrestrial sorcery.

Whenever the Torchbearer casts a spell relevant to themes of light, knowledge, flame, communication, and legacy, she may apply the Illumination keyword to her shaping rolls and any rolls required to direct the spell (e.g., attack rolls, influence rolls). She may also apply the Illumination keyword to her extended rolls to enact a sorcerous working based on such themes.

In addition, she may learn Celestial Circle spells that call upon the above themes. She learns one Celestial spell — her control spell — and one shaping ritual for free. However, she must pay one anima in addition to the usual sorcerous mote cost of any Celestial spell she casts, and she counts as a Terrestrial Circle sorcerer for the purposes of completing sorcerous workings outside her themes. She can't counter Celestial spells that she doesn't know.

SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Lore 5, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Illumination**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Torch of Erudition

The Torchbearer sets a spark of curiosity that blazes through a community.

This Charm targets an organization or community that's localized enough for the Torchbearer to interact with most members over the course of a day. After spending a day lecturing or providing expertise to the target group (e.g., providing medical treatment, training combatants, directing a building project, etc.), the Torchbearer rolls ([Charisma or Intelligence] + Lore), she instills a positive Intimacy toward knowledge or a negative Intimacy toward ignorance (her choice) in all group members whose Resolve she overcomes.

If she instills the bulk of a group with this Charm, then she gains (Essence, maximum 5) temporary Merit dots while interacting with that group for the rest of the story. She may place temporary dots in any of the following Merits: Allies, Backing, Contacts, and Cult.

Resistance**TIRELESS MIDNIGHT LABORS****Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Resistance 1, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One day**Prerequisite Charms:** None

For the Torchbearer, what greater respite could there be than study?

The Torchbearer may treat research, writing, and similar intellectual labor as restful for the purposes of recovering Essence and healing. She needs no sleep while doing so, and if she spends the entire period in study, she recovers Willpower as if she slept.

Repurchase at Resistance 3 allows the Torchbearer to ignore up to (Resistance/2) penalties from poison, disease, hunger, or thirst while engaged in intellectual labor. If her studies are focused on the poison or disease she is suffering from, she also reduces its difficulty to resist by one. If she makes a significant discovery it counts as a nourishing meal and resets her hunger and thirst penalties.

RESISTANCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Meticulous Blueprint Revision (Essence 1): Reroll (higher of Essence or 3) failed dice each interval after spending twice the usual time to plan a Craft project.

Thousand-Hour Brawling Feint (Essence 3; Burning Strike Memento): After a successful attack, levy fatigue penalties as if the target had been fighting for hours.

Epiphany Becomes Euphoria (Essence 4; Phoenix Ember Renewal): Once per story, a major scholarly accomplishment restores one Willpower and allows a free use of Phoenix Ember Renewal.

Holy Beacon Binding (Essence 5; Wax-and-Wick Salvation): Permanently seal spirits associated with fire in a candle, lamp, or torch; it counts as a Fire hearthstone, and anyone in its radiance recovers Essence as if in a demesne.

HARD KNOCKS CURRICULUM**Cost:** 2m, 1i; **Mins:** Resistance 2, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Uniform, Versatile**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

The Second Torchbearer was a pugilist-sage who knew that some lessons are best learned in the language of broken noses.

When attacked by or attacking an enemy who has successfully attacked her previously during this scene, the Torchbearer ignores up to (Resistance/2, round up) penalties to her Defense or on an attack with any Ability.

LESSONS IN DEFEAT**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Resistance 3, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Hard Knocks Curriculum

There is no failure for the Torchbearer, only feedback — and the opportunity for a refined approach in the future.

The Torchbearer rerolls one die on a roll with any Ability outside of combat, so long as she has a relevant specialty or Lore background. If she had a significant failure with that Ability during this story, she counts the failure as a Lore background and rerolls up to (higher of Essence or 3) dice instead.

WHAT PERIL MAY TEACH**Cost:** 6m; **Mins:** Resistance 3, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One day**Prerequisite Charms:** None

With experimentation and experience, the Torchbearer may learn the secrets of storm, quake, and blizzard alike.

After her first roll against a natural environmental hazard or an hour of focused study about one, the Torchbearer gains a specialty in it for both Resistance and Survival. When this specialty applies, she reduces the damage of an appropriate hazard by one.

Repurchase at Resistance 4 allows the Torchbearer to extend these benefits to any allies within short range. If her anima is burning or higher, this increases to medium range.

FLAME-SAGE RAIMENT**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Resistance 4, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Robing herself in the flame of her Exaltation, the Torchbearer offers assailants a lesson scribed in flame and scars.

The Torchbearer may activate this Charm when touched or after damage is rolled against her from an attack at close range. The target suffers a one-time environmental hazard with Difficulty (higher of Essence or 3) and Damage 2.

Repurchase at Essence 2 allows the Torchbearer to increase the hazard's damage by one die at glowing anima. At burning anima, she also increases its difficulty by one to a maximum of five. At bonfire anima, she ignores this Charm's reset restriction.

Reset: Once per round.**BURNING STRIKE MEMENTO****Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Resistance 5, Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Uniform, Versatile**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Hard Knocks Curriculum, Flame-Sage Raiment

Wreathing fist or blade in burning Essence, the Torchbearer's attack leaves mail scalding and softened.

This Charm supplements an attack at close range with any Ability, allowing the Torchbearer to reduce the target's soak by (higher of Essence or 3) until the start of his next turn.

THOUSAND BLOWS CHRONICLE**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Resistance 4, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Hard Knocks Curriculum

Remembering the lessons of thousands of combat manuals, the Torchbearer offers sharp critique.

The Torchbearer may make a (Wits + Combat Ability) roll against the Guile of a character who has attacked her in the current scene, using the same Ability as the attack. Success allows her to introduce a fact about the character's fighting style, including a vulnerability or opportunity. Anyone who can hear her lesson may re-roll up to (her Combat Ability/2, round up) dice on their next attack roll against him.

Characters using Charms from particularly obscure Martial Arts increase their Guile for this purpose by +2. Sidereal Martial Arts increase it by +3 instead, unless the Torchbearer has a Lore background relevant to the themes of the style.

CLAD-IN-FIRE APOCRYPHA**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Resistance 5, Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Flame-Sage Raiment

The Torchbearer manipulates the flaming shroud of her office to punish foes with ever-increasing finesse.

The Torchbearer gains one of the following benefits for Flame-Sage Raiment, which she may activate by paying the listed surcharge. She may purchase or devise additional benefits for three experience each.

- **Burn the Wrathful Hand (3m):** She may activate Flame-Sage Raiment after her Defense is overcome but before damage is rolled. If her enemy suffers any damage as a result, he loses one success for each 1 on his damage roll to a maximum of (Essence).

- **Jumping Cinders Retribution (2m+):** She may use Flame-Sage Raiment against ranged attacks for two motes per range band, up to (anima) range bands.

- **Lingering Ember Shawl (1m, 1wp):** Flame-Sage Raiment's duration becomes one round, but applications after the first reduce their damage by one. She may pay the cost of any benefits from this Charm to apply them to an instance of Flame-Sage Raiment.

- **Stoked by Soulfire (1a+):** Gain one die of damage for every level of anima spent; this anima is not expended until after damage is rolled. If she spends at least two levels of anima, the difficulty increases by one.

GENTLE THE CONFLAGRATION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: What Peril May Teach

Robing herself in a blaze of pale blue, the Torchbearer becomes durant to the perils of heat and cold.

The Torchbearer reduces the difficulty of fire-based environmental hazards by higher of (Essence or 3). Those based on heat and cold are instead reduced by half that, rounding up. If she knows What Peril May Teach's repurchase, allies within range also gain the benefits of this Charm.

At Essence 3, the Torchbearer may apply the full (Essence) reduction to all mundane natural hazards and magical hazards based on fire, and half that to all other magical hazards.

PHOENIX EMBER RENEWAL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Clad-in-Fire Apocrypha

Reforging herself in the crucible of her anima, the Torchbearer knits her flesh together.

The Torchbearer heals one level of bashing or lethal damage for five motes each, to a maximum of (Anima + 1).

Reset: Once per day, unless reset by overcoming Initiative Crash and building back to Initiative 10+.

WAX-AND-WICK SALVATION

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Resistance 5, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Gentle the Conflagration

Wrapping storms and wildfire in her pale radiance, the Torchbearer binds them into an ever-burning candle.

The Torchbearer rolls (Wits + Resistance) against the difficulty of an environmental hazard. Success captures and condenses the hazard out to long range, forming it into an ever-burning torch, lamp, candle, or similar source of illumination. For larger hazards, the affected area becomes an eye in the storm; the hazard doesn't damage anyone within, though it may rage beyond.

Every day that the hazard is bound, the Torchbearer may reduce its difficulty by one; if this reduces it to zero, the flame gutters out. Otherwise, extinguishing the flame or ending this Charm causes it to spread out at its current strength, starting at close range and expanding by one range band per round.

The office was silent save for the soft scratch of brush on paper, distant crashing waves and the cry of gulls. Guildmistress Silver Lily crossed out yet another character on the ledger and sighed.

"It's not so bad, my lady," said Crane, her accountant. "Every business of this size has losses."

"This is the second shipment this month!" she snapped, setting down the brush in its pot. "This is unacceptable. Rusten, what do you have to say for yourself?"

Rusten, the guard captain, shook her head. "I have no excuses, guildmistress. The pirates took the ship unawares. I know not how they discerned our route. We're lucky only two of my mercenaries died."

Silver Lily leaned back in her chair and closed her eyes. "Crane, how much does this set us back?"

"I would need to go over the figures, lady, but somewhere in the region of —"

"Eighteen talents, two dirhams, and seventeen dinars, plus the four dirhams used to bribe the crew," said a new voice.

Silver Lily's eyes snapped open, and she sat up straight in her chair. The stranger wore a monk's robe, but his face was oddly blurred around its edges, even as the air around him seemed more solid, sharper, with brighter colors.

"Who are you!? How did you get in here?"

"Essential Silence. Through the door," he indicated the open door behind him, and the confused guards looking at each other beyond. "Those are not very interesting questions, I'm sure you can think of a better one."

Rusten reached for her sword but didn't draw. The world around the stranger sharpened further. He became impossible to look upon yet equally impossible to ignore.

Silver Lily narrowed her eyes. "What do you mean by 'bribe the crew?'"

Essential Silence gave a small smile. "That is a better question. There were no pirates. The two mercenaries that were killed were the ones who refused the bribe to divert the cargo to the secret berth Crane maintains on White Cerith, where it is redistributed to his smuggler associates."

Crane broke out of his trance. "My lady, this is preposterous! Why would I possibly commit such a —"

"Another good question. He's doing this because he's being blackmailed by your enemy, the outcaste Velik, whose real name is Iselsi Yallan. You will find evidence of all of this in Crane's private quarters, in the locked strongbox under the third floorboard from the west side of the room. The key is in the upper left pocket of his robes."

Crane made a strangled noise.

"How can you possibly claim to know all this?" asked Silver Lily.

"I have deduced it. Now, if you'll excuse me, a Wyld Hunt will arrive looking for me in about four hours, and I really must be elsewhere. It was a pleasure to make your acquaintance, guildmistress," he gave a shallow bow, then turned to leave. "Oh, and Captain Rusten, your missing locket was not stolen. The servant just knocked it down the back of your dress table while dusting. It's still there."

Rusten's face reddened. Essential Silence departed. Nobody could think to stop him.

For a short while there was only the distant crashing waves and the cry of gulls, and then the magic of the man's presence seemed to pass.

"Can any of you tell me who that was?"

Rusten, Crane, and the door guards all shook their heads. They couldn't even think of the name he had given them.

"What do we do now, lady?" asked Crane.

"Well, Crane, to start with, I think you should turn out your upper left pocket."





Chapter Three:

Champions of the Celestial Host

A rare few of the Exigents rival the Celestial Exalted in power. This chapter contains five Celestial-level design seeds: the Bleak Warden, Essential Silence, Nurlissa, the Reaver, and Willow Specter. These design seeds are playable as written but contain Charm concept sidebars intended to inspire you to expand them with homebrew and make them your own.

The Bleak Warden, Chosen of the seals

The Bleak Warden is Omron Kanthu, the young Chosen of The-Darkness-That-Binds and the reluctant assistant to that merciless jailor-god in policing a nameless prison built to house the enemies of Heaven.

A Bleak Duty

Exaltation has fulfilled Omron Kanthu's wish to rise above his street-urchin origins. Completing The-Darkness-That-Binds's seal of trials granted him power but also bound him to the maintenance of the nameless prison. The luxury and wonder of traveling Creation and beyond as guest to princes, dynasts, and gods reminds him of the freedom and comfort denied to those he keeps bound. He has seen the destruction escaped prisoners wreak but wonders how many of those still bound in darkness are victims, driven to their crimes out of circumstance, as he was not so long ago.

Omron struggles to rise to the expectations of his patron's singular focus and cannot bring himself to match the god's sometimes zealous cruelty. There are secrets of the prison even Omron doesn't know, for it is a vast and ancient place, and none but The-Darkness-That-Binds know its origin or the true extent of its winding caverns.

The reclusive god never reveals this knowledge, not even to his Chosen.

Play the Bleak Warden if you want:

- to enforce Heaven's laws while questioning the nature of Heaven's justice in Creation.
- to serve a demanding divine patron of singular focus.
- to explore the dichotomy between the opportunities and duties of Exaltation.
- to wield the powers of darkness and the esoteric seals of the nameless prison.

The Nameless Prison and The-Darkness-That-Binds

The nameless prison drifts beyond Creation, anchored by the stabilizing Essence of the Elemental Pole of Earth and the will and power of its patron god. The lightless winding corridors lead to seemingly endless cells somehow perfectly suited to house inmates banished to the dark in spaces just small enough to feel restrictive. The prison's Essence sustains the prisoners in place of food and drink but leaves an echo of hunger and thirst. Those who cannot see in utter darkness or produce their own light must learn to negotiate their space by touch and memory; their only companion, the distorted echoes of their fellows in the distance. Even death offers no escape, for the prison holds their souls, whether as ghosts or spirits who slowly reform in the dark. From the earliest days of the First Age, the Exalted Host and Heaven consigned convicts to the darkness and obscurity, and the prison slowly grew to accommodate their number.

The-Darkness-That-Binds has given much of himself to the prison over the centuries. While he has some contacts in Heaven, particularly within the Division of Secrets and Bureau of Heaven, his unforgiving role as warden means he has little opportunity to establish influence. Before Omron's Exaltation, The-Darkness-That-Binds struggled to maintain the wards and seals of the now overcrowded prison, and many prisoners escaped. While almost doting with Omron and polite to his guests, the god pushes the Bleak Warden to pursue escapees relentlessly.

Though most comfortable as a mass of formless shadow, he can pull himself into the form of an androgynous figure to better interact with his Chosen or other guests of the nameless prison. In his rare moments of leisure, he enjoys music, especially complex composition verging on discordance.

Creation's Most Wanted

While The-Darkness-That-Binds desires to recapture all the escaped prisoners from the nameless prison, several of the most dangerous are now the focus of the Bleak Warden's search.

Lady Rylean once turned the Exalted Host against her rival Fair Folk. The campaign brought ruin to the Exalted, the Fair Folk, and all those caught in between, scarring Creation's borders in the process. Bound by oaths not to destroy her, the Exalted instead consigned her to the nameless prison. Changed by her long imprisonment, she now obsessively pursues the freedom of others as the self-styled **Marchioness of the Unbinding**, reserving her wrath and hunger for jailors, judges, and slavers. She both fears and pities the Bleak Warden, recognizing that his power chains him to the prison she hates.

The bloodthirsty daiklave **Glorious Acclimation**, the last in a long line of thinking blades forged by a nameless First Age smith, hungers for worthy combat. The sword reaches out in thoughts and dreams, promising glory to those who feed its gleaming edge with violence. In the hands of an Exalted master, the blade's urgings can be controlled, but in the hands of lesser wielders, the blade's thirst rules, leading only to a tragedy of bloodshed as the sword passes from wielder to wielder. Omron chases stories of bloody vendettas, hoping to catch up to the blade before the next poor fool with a grudge unleashes the daiklave chasing promises of vengeance and glory, or worse, for the blade to fall into the hands of an Exalt whose proclivities match the blade's own bloody tastes.

OMRON AND THE PRISON

The prison can serve as a refuge for the Bleak Warden and his allies, presenting opportunities for interactions with The-Darkness-That-Binds and stories interacting with prisoners or foiling prison breaks, whether caused by the prison's failing wards or outside forces. Though it is anchored to the Pole of Earth, there are many hidden entrances to the prison throughout Creation in deep caves and crevices, like the one Omron found near Riven Quay, and Omron can travel to and from the prison using his anima powers.

The nameless prison is a manse, which Omron is permitted to attune to. The-Darkness-That-Binds holds its hearthstone.

Once part of his House's heretical inner circle, **Jurul Ajada** betrayed his mother to seek clemency from the Empress once the success of Ledaal's crusade against their House became inevitable. The Empress spared his life and condemned him to forgotten solitude in the nameless prison. Now free but denied vengeance by the Empress's disappearance, he is bent on tearing down her legacy, fanning the flames of conflict within the Realm to ensure the Dynasty rips itself apart. He has sustained his long life in the prison with mutagenic sorceries and honed his occult mastery to a fearsome degree.

Not an escapee but a rare new addition to the roll of Heaven's foes, **The Scion of the Tear-Drowned Bayou** is a young Deathknight who employs horrifying necromancy in an escalating campaign of revenge against the sorcerer-prince who once enslaved and experimented on her. The-Darkness-that-Binds demands that she be imprisoned, though even he does not know from what lofty office of Yu-Shan the order came. Omron is conflicted; while her magics and bloodlust are clearly terrible and his patron's wishes are clear, he feels a kinship for the Deathknight as a youthful Exalt Chosen to wield dark power and hopes he can reason with her.

Traits

The Bleak Warden is an Essence-based Exalt intended for Celestial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Occult, Presence, and Stealth are his favored Abilities.

ANIMA

The Bleak Warden's anima banner expands as an absence of light, casting him as a looming shadow. Subtle runes of Old Realm and indecipherable sigil-script



glimmer iridescent in the darkness. Omron's iconic anima could be a whirling mass of shadows, manacles and chains; the arcane lines of Omron's solution to the seal of trials; or a halo of many black-feathered wings.

ANIMA EFFECTS

Omron can spend one mote to perform one of the following minor effects:

- Discern the direction to the nearest entrance to the nameless prison or the Elemental Pole of Earth.
- See even in total darkness for the rest of the scene.

Additionally, Omron possesses the following anima powers:

Arcane Seal Kenning (5m; Simple; Instant): Omron has an intuitive understanding of seals, whether mundane or magical. With a touch, he understands the working of any mundane lock, seal, or knot and can open it if he chooses. Alternatively, he may roll ([Perception or Wits] + [Awareness, Investigation, or Occult]) against a difficulty of (creator's Essence) to understand supernatural seals. Success reveals what power created it and how it might be opened. At bonfire, this power is free.

Eye of Judgement: (3m; Simple; Instant) The Bleak Warden makes a read intentions roll with (higher of Essence or 3) bonus dice. Success reveals whether the character harbors guilt. Even on a failure, he learns if she is an escapee from the nameless prison or has received official sanction from Yu-Shan, even if she is not aware of such sanction.

Warden of the Nameless Prison (1wp; Simple; Instant or Until next sunrise): Omron can open a portal to the nameless prison while in darkness. The portal appears as an unnaturally dark shadow that lingers until the next sunrise. Omron, his Circlemates, and up to (Essence) others he invites may pass through the portal in either direction as long as it remains. The Bleak Warden can use this power to open a portal over a willing, incapacitated or fully restrained character to send them to an appropriate cell in the nameless prison. Within the nameless prison, Omron can use this power to open a portal to any of the nameless prison's entrances for free.

MARTIAL ARTS

The Bleak Warden is not restricted by the Terrestrial keyword but does not have access to the Mastery keyword. **When he makes a Martial Arts attack, he can enhance it with Bleak Warden Charms or Martial**

Arts Charms, but not both, with the exception of Excellencies and Versatile Charms. This doesn't apply to Charms that are permanent or provide ongoing benefits, nor to actions other than attacking.

SORCERY

The Bleak Warden can initiate into Terrestrial and Celestial Circle sorcery or into Ivory and Shadow Circle necromancy, but not both.

EVOCATIONS

The Bleak Warden is resonant with soulsteel and white jade. He is neutral with starmetal and dissonant with all other magical materials. At the Storyteller's discretion, his affinity for wards and seals may grant him resonance with similarly themed artifacts regardless of material.

GREAT CURSE

The Bleak Warden's Great Curse manifests through a ten-point Limit Track (**Exigents**, p. 52), entering a Limit Break at 10. He rolls to gain Limit when he acts against a Major or Defining Intimacy. He rolls three dice and gains Limit equal to his successes after a scene in which he acts against The-Darkness-that-Binds' Defining Principle of "my purpose is to contain the enemies of Heaven and the Exalted Host." He also rolls one die at the end of a scene in which he rejects influence that would support this Principle.

The Bleak Warden can lose one Limit once per story by describing a stunt maintaining the wards and seals of the nameless prison or pursuing his prisoners with the ruthlessness that his patron demands. When he successfully confines an enemy of Heaven, he rolls (prisoner's Essence) and removes a point of Limit for each success.

Omron's Limit represents his personal dissonance with his role as Bleak Warden and the ties between his power and the nameless prison itself. When he reaches Limit 10, he enters Limit Break as he suffers a crisis of duty or lapse of control. His Limit resets at a Limit Break's end. Examples include:

THE CURSE OF DUTY

Overwhelmed by the thanklessness and injustice of his task, Omron cannot bring himself to pursue his duty as Bleak Warden. He loses interest in pursuing the nameless prison's inmates and will indulge in interests that gratify him personally. Any non-selfish Principles and Ties he has to The-Darkness-That-Binds are suppressed for the duration.

Duration: Session, unless the subject of one of his Ties is threatened by one that he should be hunting.

THE SUNDERED SEAL

A momentary lapse on Omron's part leads to disastrous consequences for the nameless prison. An intruder enters the prison, a prisoner escapes or betrays his trust at an important moment, or some other peril befalls the prison. Whatever the specifics, Omron is responsible in small or large part due to some error or ill-fated decision he made, and the consequences are his to deal with.

Duration: Instant.

Longevity and Death

The-Darkness-That-Binds promises that Exaltation will make the Bleak Warden timeless and immortal despite the streaks of grey hair prematurely marking Omron beyond his youth. Should the Bleak Warden die, the spark of Exaltation will return to the nameless prison of The-Darkness-That-Binds, to await a new mortal capable of unlocking its seal of trials.

Charms

The Bleak Warden wields the seals that ward the nameless prison, including those beyond even his patron's grasp. He also embodies his patron's nature as a being of formless darkness, an implacable pursuer of Creation's foes, and a heartless gaoler.

EXCELLENCIES

The Bleak Warden doesn't have formalized Excellencies; he can add dice to any (Attribute + Ability) roll or increase any static value for which he has an applicable Ability at 3+, paying one mote per die. He may add up to (Attribute + Ability) dice to rolls. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. Static values such as Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half this dice cap, rounded down.

CHARM CONCEPTS

Darkness: Many of Omron's Charms have upgraded effects in darkened areas. Within the nameless prison and when his anima is at bonfire level, he always enjoys these benefits.

Guilt: A guilty character is one who is aware that they have transgressed a bond of trust, law, or taboo. Such transgressions elicit guilt even if the offender believes she is justified, so long as she is aware of the offense. Charms that leverage guilt-like Intimacies treat guilt as the same level as the most relevant Intimacy or Minor if the target has not violated any of her Intimacies. Heaven's enemies are always considered guilty.

JUST TAKE THEM, REVISITED

Some Charms like Monkey Leap Technique are simple enough that almost any Exalt can take them. Others are too specialized for most but have themes that work well for more than one Exalt. Umbral Shadow Charms (Exigents, p. 382–385) are a good example of this, as they fit in with other shadow-themed Celestial-tier Exalts. Faithless Shadow Betrayal just needs some small changes to its name and flavor to fit in as a Bleak Warden Charm.

Darkness

GUILTY SHADOW CONSCRIPTION

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Reborn in darkness, the Bleak Warden finds that shadows are his to command.

Omron rolls ([Charisma or Manipulation] + [Occult, Presence, or Stealth]) as a unique influence roll against the Resolve of a character within medium range. Success animates her shadow, causing her to lose (Essence) Initiative and inflicting a –1 penalty on all actions she takes that scene as her shadow works against her.

HARBORING SHADOWS

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

As the Bleak Warden conceals himself, the shadows reach out to shroud him.

Omron doubles 9s on a Stealth roll and ignores (Stealth/2) points of penalty to his roll. In darkness, he melds into the shadows; he can conceal himself even with no place to hide, doubles 8s and ignores (Stealth) points of penalty.

With a repurchase, the Bleak Warden can use this Charm reflexively on behalf of allies within close range.

BURNING SHADE UNSEEN

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Harboring Shadows

The Bleak Warden's power is one with the darkness.

Omron can conceal his anima when he enters stealth; it does not penalize his Stealth rolls or render them impossible at bonfire, instead granting him bonus dice equal to its current level. He can choose to ignore the Mute keyword on any of his Charms.

At Essence 3+, the first time in the scene he rolls Stealth at bonfire anima, he adds a full free excellency.

NONE SHALL ESCAPE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

At the Bleak Warden's gesture, shadowy obstacles of dark Essence hem in his opponents, blocking their escape.

When making an opposed movement roll, the Bleak Warden summons dark fragments of the nameless prison to impede his opponent. This inflicts a –3 dice penalty, and any 1s on her roll subtract successes. In darkness, 2s also subtract successes.

VOICE OF THE FOREBODING DARK

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Shadows loom dark around the Bleak Warden, emphasizing his dire words.

The Bleak Warden gains 8s on a threaten action or an instill roll to inspire fear or create or strengthen an intimacy of fear. A target whose Resolve is overcome suffers a –3 penalty on actions opposing Omron for the remainder of the scene unless they spend a point of Willpower.

In darkness, if the Bleak Warden is concealed, the social influence will not reveal his location.

TENEBOUS RETREAT

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Mute, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Harboring Shadows

When all other defenses fail, the Bleak Warden retreats into the embracing dark.

After suffering any levels of **decisive** damage from an attack or losing five or more points of Initiative from a **withering** attack, Omron may use this Charm to reflexively roll to enter concealment, subject to the usual penalties to Stealth in combat. This Charm requires darkness.

UNCANNY WITNESS METHOD

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Guilty Shadow Conscription

Omron casts a sigil of truth into his target's shadow, forcing it to speak what its master will not.

The penalty from Guilty Shadow Conscription now applies to the target's Guile against Omron's read intentions; the shadow will constantly speak in a whispering voice that only Omron can hear, a jumbled susurrus of her surface thoughts. He can read intentions with (Perception + [Awareness, Occult or Socialize]) to determine what she is currently thinking, what intimacy she is currently acting on (if any), or to determine if she is lying.

Once he's caught a character lying, Omron can test her statements without needing to roll for the rest of the scene.

DRAWING THE BLACK VEIL

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Burning Shade Unseen, None Shall Escape

A veil of darkness rises from the Bleak Warden, consuming all light.

Omron creates a pool of darkness that resists lighting. The effect expands out to short range from his location or to medium range if his anima banner is at the burning level or higher. The darkness dampens all light sources other than anima banners within the affected area. Such lights are not extinguished but no longer provide illumination except as an ill-defined point. Anima banners

DARKNESS CHARM CONCEPTS

Endless Troves Beshadowed (Essence 1): Commit a mote to banish an object to the nameless prison or recall such objects reflexively. Repurchase to commit three motes to store larger objects.

Midnight Rider Spirit (Essence 2, Burning Shade Unseen): Summons forth a steed of inky blackness.

Formless Shadow Body (Essence 4; Tenebrous Retreat): Adopt an incorporeal shadow form, able to pass through the tiniest gaps but unable to make attacks. Requires magic that allows attacks against dematerialized spirits to strike.

continue to glow, illuminating their Exalted and still visible at a distance, but do not light past close range within the darkness. Characters without the ability to see in darkness suffer a -3 penalty to actions relying on sight as if blinded. In darkness, waive the Willpower cost of this Charm.

Defensive

INSTANT BARRIER INVOCATION

Cost: 6m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Omron manifests the shimmering Essence barriers of the nameless prison to defend himself from harm.

The Bleak Warden adds (Integrity or Occult) armored soak and gains the same amount of Hardness. The barrier inflicts a -2 penalty on opposed movement rolls and ranged attacks against him.

While this Charm is active, Omron can focus on strengthening the wards as a special take cover action which succeeds without a roll. This counts as heavy cover against ranged attacks and light cover against close range attacks. He maintains this cover until he moves.

DEFLECTING SEAL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Instant Barrier Invocation

The Bleak Warden manifests a seal to deflect the force behind his enemies' attacks.

Omron rolls (higher of Essence or 3) dice, with successes on the roll subtracting from successes on the attack roll. If Instant Barrier Invocation is active he waives the Initiative cost.

WARD OF THE GAOLKEEPER

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Deflecting Seal

The Bleak Warden summons fragments of the prison to deflect blows meant for his allies.

The Bleak Warden reflexively takes a defend other action. If he has Instant Barrier Invocation active, she enjoys its benefits, including the cover bonus when he takes cover using it. His protection lasts for this Charm's duration, but the ward must remain within close range to receive it.

This Charm ends if Omron uses a defend other action on another character.

BALEFUL ENERGIES BOUND

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Essence Barrier Invocation

Omron traces a seal around himself, storing harm for later use.

The Bleak Warden rolls ([Intelligence, Stamina] + [Resistance or Occult]) with (Essence) bonus dice to resist an elemental hazard. On a success, he traps the hazard within his seals; rockslides vanish, sorcerous flames are extinguished, and acid baths are drained. Very large hazards like forest fires are extinguished out to medium range.

When Omron ends the commitment to this Charm, the hazard is released in a sudden burst, inflicting a one-time environmental hazard with the original damage and difficulty against all characters within short range. This burst carries any secondary characteristics of the original hazard — for example, a bonfire ignites flammable objects.

At Essence 2, the duration is extended to indefinite.

FINAL GATE SANCTION

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Deflecting Seal

The Bleak Warden casts attacks against him into the immortal wards and seals of the nameless prison.

Omron rolls his Initiative with (Essence) automatic successes and gains Hardness equal to his successes against a **decisive** attack. This stacks with Hardness from armor or other Charms. If he takes damage from the attack, he must roll (Essence) dice and gain that much Limit.

Alternatively, Omron can use this Charm to perfectly defend against a source of uncountable damage, rendering him immune to recurring sources for a scene. This does not risk Limit.

Reset: Once per scene unless taking no damage from a decisive attack of 12+ Initiative that hits him.

SEAL OF REFLECTION

Cost: 7m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Dual, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Deflecting Seal, Impossible Essence Defenses

DEFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Explosive Barrier Backlash (Essence 2; Instant Barrier Invocation): End Instant Barrier Invocation to counterattack with a wave of concussive force.

Curtain Wall Conjunction (Essence 2, Instant Barrier Invocation): Summon a wall of Essence durable as steel extending three range bands or encircling an area within short range. At Essence 3, the wall extends up to five range bands or encircles an area within medium range.

Momentum-Redirecting Ward (Essence 3, Baleful Energies Bound): Contain failed movement actions made against Omron with Baleful Energies Bound as though they are hazards.

Omron interposes the seal of reflection against an attack, absorbing its power and redirecting it.

The Bleak Warden reflexively clashes a withering or decisive attack with an attack of the same type, rolling ([Stamina or Perception] + Combat Ability) in place of his normal pool, with an Accuracy bonus of (Essence) on a **withering** clash. His attack has a raw damage equal to his opponent's **withering** damage or (half her Initiative) of her **decisive** attack. If his **decisive** clash is successful, Omron does not reset to base, but his attacker loses Initiative equal to his damage successes.

With an Essence 4 repurchase, Omron may direct the reflected attack against another target within short range instead of the original attacker. Omron declares the new target before the clash roll, and the target may respond with defensive Charms as normal. Compare Omron's clash roll against the incoming attack and the Defense of his target.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by landing a **decisive** attack with 10+ Initiative.

Offensive

MIGHT UNSHACKLED

Cost: 1m per die; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Versatile

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Drawing upon the spiritual weight of the nameless prison, Omron strengthens the force of his blows.

The Bleak Warden adds up to (higher of Essence or 3) dice of post-soak damage to a **withering** attack or attack roll extra successes as damage dice on a **decisive** attack, paying one mote per die. In darkness, he may reroll up to (Essence/2, round up) 1s on a damage roll.

His unarmed attacks enhanced with this Charm deal lethal damage.

SUPPRESSING SHADOW BLAST

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Bleak Warden invokes the forces of the nameless prison's barriers, battering his foes with concussive Essence.

Omron makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack with a wave of shimmering Essence, rolling (Dexterity + [Archery, Occult or Thrown]) against an enemy within medium range. Omron must aim to attack enemies at medium range. It has the following traits:

- The Accuracy of an artifact Thrown weapon: Close +5; Short +4; Medium +3; Long +0; Extreme -2.

- Damage (10 + Essence) B or L. The Bleak Warden doesn't add his Strength to its raw **withering** damage.

- Overwhelming (Essence + 1).

- In darkness, a **withering** attack against a guilty target gains (Intimacy) bonus damage. If **decisive** attack deals damage, she suffers a -(Intimacy) penalty to combat movement or other mobility based rolls to escape the Bleak Warden on her next turn.

BINDING DARKNESS BLOW

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Might Unshackled

As the Bleak Warden fights, binding shadows grasp at his foe.

Upon crashing an opponent, the target suffers a penalty of -2 on all physical actions until she leaves crash. Against further attacks from Omron, this penalty applies to her Defense.

GRASPING UMBRAL CHAINS

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: One grapple

Prerequisite Charms: Binding Shadows Blow

Chains of dark Essence arise from the shadows, binding Omron's foes.

The Bleak Warden makes a special grapple gambit against a target within medium range, rolling ([Dexterity or Wits] + [Brawl, Melee or Occult]) on the attack and control rolls. The chains hold the target in place; Omron does not suffer the normal penalties for maintaining a grapple. He may make a miscellaneous action on his

turn to perform normal grapple actions through the chains.

If this Charm is used against a spirit materialized with Spirit-Anchoring Chains (p. 111), extend the duration of the materialization until the end of the grapple.

IMMANENT PRESENCE STRIKE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Might Unshackled

The Bleak Warden strikes with the inevitability of a shadow racing to consume a snuffed light.

When the Bleak Warden adds a full excellency to a **withering** attack roll, the attack becomes unblockable, and he gains (Essence) Overwhelming. In darkness, the attack may also gain the Piercing tag.

CRUSHING JUDGEMENT

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Immanent Presence Strike, Suppressing Shadow Blast

The Bleak Warden infuses an attack with a concussive force of harsh judgment.

The Bleak Warden can use this Charm after making a **decisive** attack roll from close range. As long as he deals damage, he knocks his target prone. If he deals at least three damage, he can push his victim one range band

in any direction or two range bands with five or more levels of damage. He can reroll one failed damage die for every success, to a maximum of (Essence).

The Bleak Warden may use this Charm on attacks generated with Suppressing Shadow Blast regardless of the range of the target. Such attacks can't knock enemies beyond medium range.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by drawing on the wards of the nameless prison and rolling three dice for Limit.

INSURMOUNTABLE ESSENCE WAVE

Cost: (+4m); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Crushing Judgement

A wave of shimmering Essence explodes outward as the Bleak Warden strikes his foe.

When Omron hits a foe with Crushing Judgement, he may pay a four-mote surcharge to release a surge of Essence. After the damage roll but before his Initiative resets, he makes a special unblockable **decisive** attack against all other characters within short range of the target's original position, rolling ([Stamina or Intelligence] + [higher of Essence or 3]) compared against the defense of each character. On a hit, he rolls (successes on the original damage roll + Essence) dice of **decisive** damage. Against battle groups, this damage roll gains double 7s.

In darkness, the Bleak Warden gains a point of Initiative for each non-trivial foe damaged by the attack, to a maximum of (Essence) which he gains after his Initiative resets.

Reset: Once per scene.

Mysticism

ECHOES OF IMPRISONED KNOWLEDGE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Casting his mind into the echoing void of the nameless prison, the Bleak Warden grasps knowledge from its inmate's thoughts.

OFFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Fleeting Freedom Denied (Essence 2; Suppressing Shadow Blast): Make a reflexive attack when an enemy moves away or attempts to withdraw, which can use Suppressing Shadow Blast.

Waiting Fetters Embrace (Essence 3; Grasping Umbral Chains): Reflexively use Grasping Umbral Chains on a target when they are knocked prone or crashed.

Twining Essence Serpent (Essence 3; Grasping Umbral Chains): Ensnare and lock down a limb using a special gambit during a Grasping Umbral Chains grapple.

The Bleak Warden can roll ([Intelligence, Manipulation, or Wits] + [Lore or Occult]) to introduce a fact with an automatic success and can count Occult specialties as though they are Lore backgrounds.

Once per story, Omron can introduce a fact without a Lore background to describe an expert on a particular subject who is incarcerated in the nameless prison. For the remainder of the story, Omron is able to mentally confer with this expert and introduce facts as though the Lore background were his own, but he must roll one Limit when doing so. Introducing the expert does not count towards the once per scene limit on introducing a fact.

SPIRIT-REACHING DISCIPLINE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

His eyes attuned to the dark, Omron perceives spiritual shadows on the physical world.

Omron can see immaterial spirits.

With a repurchase, he may pay a three-mote surcharge to physically interact with spirits as well, including attacks, though he becomes material to the spirits in turn.

SPIRIT-IMPRISONING STRIKE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Aggravated, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Spirit-Reaching Discipline (x2)

Omron's blows rend the immaterial stuff of spirits, weighing them down until they sink into the darkness of the nameless prison.

The Bleak Warden's attack against a spirit deals aggravated damage. A spirit that suffers damage from such an attack suffers an additional mobility penalty of (Omron's Essence) which lasts until Omron is crashed or until the spirit moves to long range or further from him. The spirit cannot use teleportation magic, such as Hurry Home, while it suffers this penalty. A spirit that loses its final health level to an attack empowered by this Charm is deposited in a cell in the nameless prison instead of being destroyed.

An Essence 2 repurchase allows Omron to use this Charm against Fair Folk and other beings of the Wyld.

SPIRIT-ANCHORING CHAINS

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Spirit Imprisoning Strike

Manacles of dark Essence anchor a spirit to its material form.

The Bleak Warden may activate this Charm when hitting an immaterial spirit with an attack. As long as he deals any damage, the spirit becomes material for (Omron's Essence) turns.

THE NAMELESS PRISONERS

The nameless prison houses the enemies of Heaven, and they are many. The prisoners number hundreds, perhaps thousands; forbidden gods, demons, behemoths, cataclysmic elementals, raksha princes, malevolent artifacts, and stranger beings. A handful of Exalts and sorcerers are among their number, as well as the ghosts of a few luckless mortals locked away for forgotten trespasses against the gods. Whether or not their imprisonment is just, all are dangerous individuals in their own way.

The Bleak Warden's player should work with their Storyteller to come up with interesting prisoners to use in conjunction with Charms like Bound Devil's Parole. While not all prisoners will have Eclipse Charms by default, consider designing new Eclipse Charms based on the unique abilities and properties of interesting prisoners encountered during your story for Omron to learn through Forbidden Techniques Seized. Here are a few examples:

From Qenak-Shines-Like-Pure-Snow, forbidden god of sudden snowfalls, Omron can learn to summon snowstorms, suppress Intimacies by freezing hearts, or summon a frozen ghost from a primordial afterlife.

From the raksha cataphract Yasharath of the Singing Sword, Omron can learn how to use his voice to wield a sword, animate painted minions with poetry, or fly on a song.

From the nephwrack-queen The Saint of the Ashen Tower, Omron can learn to command all kinds of nocturnal flying animals, command the corpses of the recently slain, or foretell a coming disaster that will destroy an individual.

BOUND DEVIL'S PAROLE**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** Echoes of Imprisoned Knowledge

The Bleak Warden calls forth one of the inmates of the nameless prison to serve him.

Omron rolls ([Intelligence or Wits] + [Integrity or Occult]) to summon one of the nameless prison's inmates. Each three successes on the roll grants him one point of temporary Merits that he can spend on one of Allies, Artifact, Mentor or Retainer. He can choose to add up to (Essence) successes to the roll, but if he does so, the Storyteller chooses which prisoner answers his call.

Whether a given inmate is an Ally, Mentor, or Retainer depends on the service Omron requires of them and their willingness to perform it. Artifacts summoned with this Charm are always intelligent and of a dangerous or accursed nature. Inmates are rarely well disposed to the Bleak Warden but are instinctively aware that their reprieve from the endless darkness is temporary and that Omron has the power to send them back when he wishes. This advantage can be used as though it is a Major Intimacy in negotiations with a summoned inmate. Most are amenable to bargaining favors for small leniencies from their captor's Chosen,

like a favorite food delivered to their cells or a supervised period of release. Others will use the opportunity to betray Omron subtly or overtly in revenge for their imprisonment regardless of consequences. Some serve willingly, especially when asked to perform tasks they want to do anyway.

When he ends this Charm, Omron must roll ([Intelligence or Wits] + [Integrity or Occult]) against (inmate's Merit rating +1), sending them back to the nameless prison on a success. If he fails, the prisoner is free. He can fail this roll voluntarily, but The-Darkness-That-Binds will be aware if he does so.

Using this Charm causes the Bleak Warden to gain one point of Limit. If he fails to send the prisoner back to the prison when the Charm ends, he also rolls (their Merit rating) dice for Limit.

Reset: Once per story unless reset by sending a new inmate to the nameless prison.

FORBIDDEN TECHNIQUES SEIZED**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Spirit Imprisoning Strike

The Bleak Warden seizes power from inmates of the nameless prison.

The Bleak Warden may learn Eclipse Charms from the nameless prison's inmates. He learns one Eclipse Charm for free when he purchases this Charm and must pay eight experience points for each subsequent Eclipse Charm.

NINE-DEVIL SEAL UNBOUND**Cost:** 15m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Decisive-only**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Forbidden Techniques Seized, Spirit Anchoring Chains

Coruscating with power, the Bleak Warden reaches into the nameless prison's depths to unleash a fraction of the terrible wrath contained therein.

To use this Charm, Omron must have Initiative 15+. He releases a burst of power, rolling ([Intelligence or Perception] + Occult) as an undodgeable **decisive** attack, either radiating outward to medium range or in a line one range band wide out to long range, targeting

MYSTICISM CHARM CONCEPTS

Bound Spirit Penance (Essence 2; Spirit Imprisoning Strike): Turn an imprisoned Essence 1–2 spirit into a familiar.

Supernal Seal Master (Essence 2; Terrestrial Circle Sorcery or Ivory Circle Necromancy): Count as initiated into the next highest circle of sorcery or necromancy for countermagic or workings for any effects related to seals.

Fount of Bound Essence (Essence 2, Supernal Seal Master): Draw sorcerous or necromantic motes from the Essence of prisoners.

Confiscated Spirit Body (Essence 3, Secret Techniques Seized): Undergo a physical transformation, gaining dots of physical attributes and mutations to embody a prisoner. Repurchase to pick different configurations.

all characters in that area. Omron divides his Initiative, rounding up, among all characters hit by the attack, and adds (Essence) to each, ignoring Hardness. Battle groups and trivial opponents instead suffer (his full Initiative + Essence) damage, without counting against the total of divided Initiative. As long as at least one enemy fails his roll, this resets the Bleak Warden to base Initiative.

Additionally, the Charm carries one of the following effects depending on which cell the Bleak Warden taps into, chosen when Omron learns the Charm:

Earth's-Bane Fury: The ground quakes and trembles. Any characters hit by the attack are knocked prone. Omron rolls ([Strength or Resistance] + [Integrity or Lore]) adding (Essence) successes as a feat of destruction against all structures in the target area, ignoring Strength minimums.

Death of Warmth: Shards of ice materialize in the air, and metal chills, becoming painful to the touch. Characters wearing predominantly metal armor suffer an additional one-time hazard on their following turn at difficulty 3, damage 4B. For the rest of the scene, reduce the difficulty by one for rolls to break metal weapons, armor, and other objects caught in the affected area. Artifacts are not affected by the chill.

Keening of the Unshaped Mind: A psychic scream echoes discordantly with unnatural vibrations. Any battle groups must roll to rout, increasing the difficulty by (Omron's Essence/2, round up) Omron rolls ([Charisma or Intelligence] + [Integrity or Presence]) against the Resolve of all characters in the affected area. On a success, targets suffer a -5 penalty to all actions until the end of their next turn. This is a Psyche effect.

The Bleak Warden may purchase additional options for three experience each. Omron's player should work with the Storyteller to develop additional options based on prisoners of Essence 4 or higher.

Using this Charm causes the Bleak Warden to roll three dice for Limit.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by capturing a Prisoner with Essence 4+.

Seal

BY DUTY BOUND

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Invoking the seal of his office, the Bleak Warden denies all entreaties to turn from his duty.

The Bleak Warden gains +2 Resolve against any influence that would dissuade him from his chosen course of action. Against influence that would oppose his duties to the nameless prison, the bonus is non-Charm, and 1s on rolls against his Resolve subtract successes. If he acts against his duty while this Charm is active or accepts an influence opposed by his duty, he rolls one die for Limit.

EVERY SEAL SANCTIFIED

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Bleak Warden reinforces mundane barriers with mystic wards.

Omron infuses a door, window, lock, knot, or other mundane seal with divine might. Opening or breaking such a seal requires a roll with difficulty (Omron's Essence +3) or increases the difficulty by (Omron's Essence) if that would be higher. Omron may specify a particular individual or type of individual who may bypass the seal. Omron is aware when the seal is open, whether by force or the intended opener, which ends the Charm.

PASSION-BINDING BAN

Cost: 3m per Intimacy; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

With a moment of inward reflection, Omron mentally traces the seal of passions and deadens his heartstrings to a particular pull.

Omron temporarily removes an Intimacy so it cannot be leveraged but is also not available to bolster Resolve or be used in a decision point. This Charm can be stacked up to (Essence) times to suppress multiple Intimacies.

An Essence 3 repurchase allows the Bleak Warden to pay a one-mote-per-Intimacy surcharge to seal the Intimacies of another willing character.

EVERY DOOR BARRED

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Every Seal Sanctified

Invoking the greater seal of closing, Omron denies all paths to and from a location.

The Bleak Warden enchants all the entryways of a single building within two range bands with the effects of Every Seal Sanctified. His allies or other specified characters may pass through the sealed entryways at his discretion. Omron is aware of any breached entry, which remains open but does not weaken the seals over other entryways.

The range extends to a maximum of three range bands at Essence 3 and four at Essence 5.

An Essence 3 Repurchase prevents spirits from dematerializing voluntarily and prevents teleportation abilities within the warded area unless that character's Essence is greater than Omron's. Omron may waive these restrictions for any character.

SENSATION-DENYING SEAL

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Passion-Binding Ban

Omron temporarily seals his pain away in the depths of the nameless prison.

The Bleak Warden reduces all wound penalties by (Essence/2, round up). He may pay a two-mote surcharge to use this Charm on an ally with a touch as a miscellaneous action.

SORROWFUL PARIAH SANCTION

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Passion-Binding Ban

With a whirl of dark sigil-script, the Bleak Warden's sanction seals social ties and mutes even the strongest alliances.

The Bleak Warden rolls ([Charisma or Intelligence] + [Integrity or Occult]) against his target's Resolve. On a success, he marks her as a pariah, sealing her social ties: anyone she interacts with is treated as having a Minor Tie of aversion toward her, and any positive Intimacies are treated as one degree weaker.

ANY ROOM A CELL

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Every Door Barred

Inverting the seal of closing, the Bleak Warden bars passage to his quarry.

With a simple touch, the Bleak Warden seals a character into a location with clearly defined physical boundaries, whether a room, a building, a walled compound, district, or city. Omron rolls ([Intelligence or Wits] + [Integrity, Lore, or Occult]) with (Essence/2, round up) automatic successes against the Resolve of a target he is able to touch. In combat, this requires a difficulty 1 gambit, which may be performed unarmed, with a weapon, or through an attack using Suppressing Shadow Blast. Outside of combat, this may require a contested roll if the target is avoiding Omron's touch. On a success, the binding seals hold the target within the space. A character motivated to leave by a Major or Defining Intimacy can spend one Willpower to roll ([Intelligence or Wits] + [Integrity or Occult]) against Omron's Charm roll successes to break free. If she fails, she can't try again until an hour after the next sunset. The affected character cannot dematerialize or use magic to teleport without first escaping the effect.

SEAL CHARM CONCEPTS

Seal of Isolation (Essence 3; Every Door Barred): Invoke the Seal of Isolation to push any characters within close range one range band away. Repurchase at Essence 4 to extend range to medium.

Sense-Closing Attack (Essence 3; Sensation-Denying Seal): Use Sensation-Denying Seal offensively to render an enemy insensate, blind or deaf.

Legend-Binding Seal (Essence 3; Sense-Closing Attack): Seal an enemy to cancel or forbid use of a Charm or seal an artifact to do the same with an Evocation.

Seal of Displacement (Essence 4, Seal of Isolation): Place a sigil that Omron can transport himself to later. He can place it on a target with a gambit and make a surprise attack against her immediately after transporting himself.

This Charm always ends at the beginning of Calibration, or after one day if used during Calibration. Omron is aware if the target leaves the confining area.

ENDLESS OUBLIETTE

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Sorrowful Pariah Sanction

The Bleak Warden inflicts a vision of the nameless prison – plunging her mind into an eon lost in darkness.

The Bleak Warden imposes the experience of the nameless prison on his target. He makes a special threaten roll with ([Manipulation or Wits] + [Integrity, Presence, or Occult]) against a target's Resolve penalized by their guilt. If the Bleak Warden succeeds, the target experiences a vision of imprisonment in the darkness of the nameless prison. A character who feels guilt forms a Principle related to her guilt at Major level, which Omron learns. This simultaneously counts as a roll to inspire the target to fear or despair based on her experience, which requires an additional point of Willpower to resist.

If Omron successfully uses this Charm against a character who is not guilty, it fails and he gains one point of Limit.

Reset: Once per character per story.

MIND-CLEANSING SIGIL

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Sensation-Denying Seal

Omron invokes a secret seal that represents himself to expel unnatural influences.

After an hour spent in meditation, Omron chooses a Psyche effect, Shaping effect, or ongoing sorcerous effect he suffers from, rolling ([Intelligence or Stamina] + [Integrity, Lore or Occult]) opposing the character responsible for that effect, who uses whatever dice pool best fits the effect's nature. If no such character exists, the Storyteller sets an appropriate difficulty. Success ends the effect. On failure, Omron may instead choose to bind the effect within the nameless prison, ending the effect but rolling three dice for Limit or (source's Essence) dice if higher.

Reset: Once per story unless reset by imprisoning the enemy who afflicted him with such an effect. Even if reset, this Charm can't be used more than once against the same effect.

ACTION DENIED

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Psyche

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Any Room A Cell, Sorrowful Pariah Sanction

Invoking the seal of denial, the Bleak Warden imposes the arbitrary tyranny of the prison on a subject of his ire.

Omron rolls ([Manipulation or Wits] + [Presence or Occult]) against a target's Resolve, penalized by their guilt. On a success, Omron dictates a specific action forbidden to the character, creating a mental block against the prohibited action. The prohibition may not create the circumstances of an unacceptable influence, and the Charm ends immediately if this is attempted. If the command is obviously dangerous or would cause the violation of one of her Defining Intimacies, she may spend a point of Willpower to resist the compulsion for a round. In combat, the command may forbid attacks against a specific character (e.g., she may not attack Omron's horse) or forbid a specific type of attack (e.g., she may not fire her bow), but cannot forbid attacks in general and cannot forbid defenses.

Scrutiny and Sensory

BLESSING OF THE SIGHTLESS DARK

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Bleak Warden's mark flares briefly with unlight and allows others to see through the darkness.

Omron marks the forehead of a willing character with an Essence infused sigil that becomes invisible to mundane sight. The marked character can see normally, even in total darkness, negating any penalties. If the Warden chooses, the sigil also marks her as his ally, and the defenses of the nameless prison will recognize her as such. If the recipient is blind, she benefits from this Charm by gaining vision in darkness and treating partial or full lighting as darkness for visual penalties. The Bleak Warden gains an automatic success on any

read intentions actions to ascertain a marked character's guilt.

The Bleak Warden may stack this benefit to up to (Essence x 3) characters. Each three characters so blessed require a single committed mote.

EVIDENCE-UNRAVELLING GAZE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Interpreting the clues of a crime scene and tracing a quarry is yet another puzzle for the Bleak Warden to solve.

On a profile or case scene roll, the Bleak Warden gains double 8s. He may substitute Intelligence or Wits for Perception on such rolls.

At Essence 2, Omron completes the action with a few moments of observation.

GUILT-READING INTUITION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Omron senses become refined to the many flavors of guilt and anguish.

SENSORY AND SCRUTINY CHARM CONCEPTS

Ever-Watchful Warden's Vigilance (Essence 1): Become aware when a case scene or profile character roll could lead to recapturing an escaped prisoner or guilty character. Become aware whenever a prisoner breaks free from a cell in the nameless prison.

Guilt by Association (Essence 2, **Guilt Raising Scrutiny**): Inspire a feeling of guilt in a character based on the actions of another character she has a positive Tie towards. At Essence 3, also leverage the actions of a prominent leader of the target's community.

Remorseful Confession (Essence 3, **Guilt Reading Insight**): Inflict a Psyche effect that forces the target to confess their guilt to those she wronged.

When Omron uses his Eye of Judgement anima power on a guilty character, he can determine additional information. For every two extra successes, Omron may ask one of the following questions:

- Is the character aware of having broken the law or a local taboo?
- Is the character guilty of a personal betrayal?
- Is the character's guilt recent?
- Which of the character's Intimacies is most closely tied to her guilt?

SIGIL-SCRIBED PANOPTICON

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Blessing of the Sightless Dark

The Bleak Warden scribes the panoptic seal, which flares like an unlidded eye of dark fire, then vanishes to mundane sight while remaining ever vigilant.

Omron marks an object or surface with a seal that serves as an observation point. With a moment of concentration, he may observe through one such sigil as if present. He can stack this Charm in up to (Essence) locations. Characters that benefit from Blessing of the Sightless Dark always count as having a sigil at their location.

The Bleak Warden gains an automatic success on any rolls to contest another character's attempts to go unobserved in a location marked by the sigil. Within the nameless prison, he can use this Charm to observe any chamber he has visited before without cost.

An Essence 2 repurchase allows Omron to specify a condition in which the sigil will call out to him, such as an object being disturbed or the appearance of a person with particular visible traits.

WEIGHT OF INIQUITY

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Guilt-Reading Intuition

The Bleak Warden kindles lingering guilt into choking fear.

Omron may increase the Resolve penalty to leverage an Intimacy of guilt or guilt related to an Intimacy by one. Alternatively, he may leverage guilt as an Intimacy of fear toward him.

IMPLACABLE JUSTICAR PURSUIT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Evidence Unravelling Gaze

Binding in the nameless prison marks a being's fate, and the Bleak Warden can follow the ripples of Heaven's disturbed plans.

The Bleak Warden gains (Essence) dice on a tracking roll and reduces any penalties to a tracking roll by his Essence. This Charm can even contend perfect track-covering effects such as Traceless Passage. Against escapees of the nameless prison, the dice are non-Charm.

DARKENED EYE OF HEAVEN

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Implacable Justicar Pursuit

Like a shadow, the Bleak Warden will always follow.

The Bleak Warden meditates in darkness for an hour and focuses on an individual whose name he knows that he wants to find. Unless the character has spent the whole day prior illuminated by a light source or is protected from scrying, he immediately learns her location, and he can track her there from where he is presently. Implacable Justicar Method adds successes rather than dice when following this trail.

As an unavoidable consequence of using this Charm, for the next five days, the target will receive prophetic dreams and omens that take shape as she looks into deep shadows, forewarning her of the Bleak Warden's attention.

Essential Silence, Chosen of Mysteries

Essential Silence is the elusive and fearless Chosen of Silken Vesper, an inquisitive detective endlessly searching for the next mystery to unravel.

A Mysterious Stranger

Who leads the largest smuggling ring in the satrapy? How did the Realm garrisons discover the rebels' hideout? Whatever happened to the mayor's estranged daughter? And what threat ties these questions together?

If anyone can find out, Essential Silence can.

It's in the Exigent's nature to seek out enigmas, to ponder the unknowable, and to reveal or conceal the truth as his conscience demands. Though he was once a monk and inquisitor of the Immaculate Order, his curiosity has driven him to heresy, and his power has earned him the designation of Anathema. He travels in the guise of an unremarkable monk, unearthing conspiracies wherever he goes.

Play the Chosen of Mysteries if you want:

- to delve into earthly conspiracies and spiritual mysteries.
- to master Creation through knowledge and observation.
- to pass beneath notice until you're ready to reveal the truth.
- to be a riddle others can never truly solve.

WHO IS ESSENTIAL SILENCE?

By default, Essential Silence is a faithful monk driven to rebel against the Order by adherence to its ideals, but this is not the only Chosen of Mysteries that could have existed.

Essential Silence might have been an unassuming clerk or academic who encountered Silken Vesper's riddle accidentally. Pressed into service by the Immaculate Order as an unsanctioned Exigent, his curiosity inevitably led him to investigate the order's mysterious leadership.

Or perhaps Essential Silence was Silken Vesper's own god-blooded grandson, an initiate to mysteries understood by few in Creation. He joined the Immaculate Order to raise his grandparent's standing in the prayer calendar but grew disillusioned with the profane work of an inquisitor. He seeks to reform the order by empowering gods to negotiate with the monkhood.

Silken Vesper, Auditor of Unearthly Revelation

The patron of Essential Silence is a celestial god tasked with monitoring and documenting every divinely granted vision in Creation. Silken Vesper receives scattered prayer from would-be oracles and seers, and they have a spot in the Immaculate prayer calendar thanks to their assistance in locating Solar and Lunar Exalted.

When the Unconquered Sun started granting visions to the gods themselves once more, Silken Vesper's curiosity drove them to study the flame of Exigence and then to use it. They bartered with an unemployed god for the flame, then tied it to a riddle, which they shared with the Immaculate Order's leadership in hopes of Exalting a mortal monk. Secretly, they also disseminated the riddle among their worshipers across Creation.

Silken Vesper is a vain creature with a coy demeanor and six arms like unfurling rolls of parchment, made sickly by the strain of creating an Exalt. Worship eases the pains of their frail health, but the longer Essential Silence runs free as Anathema, the less prayer Silken Vesper receives from the Immaculate Order. As they grow more desperate, the god may have to choose between their comfortable lifestyle and their curiosity about Essential Silence's development.

What Is Known

Essential Silence was once a mortal monk, dedicated and faithful. He alone solved Silken Vesper's riddle, proving himself worthy of both Exaltation and an inquisitor's duties. He excelled equally at investigating corruption and protecting the Immaculate Order's secrets.

Yet as Essential Silence carried out his duties, he inevitably questioned their purpose and an awful certainty crystallized within him: the Order as a whole had become too fractured and venal to shepherd humankind. Believing that a better path must be found, he delved obsessively into esoteric texts, questioned his orders, and even investigated his own superiors. In the end, the Immaculate Order declared him Anathema, and he fled. Now he wanders Creation, driven equally by his restless curiosity and his belief in a more perfect order.

Traits

Essential Silence is an Ability-based Exigent intended for Celestial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Investigation, Lore, Occult, Socialize, and Stealth are his Mysterious Abilities. He can choose five favored Abilities.

ANIMA

Essential Silence's anima is colorless and soundless but no less overwhelming, as it brings every sensation around him into exquisite focus. In the light of his anima, grass is greener, voices are clearer, and mixed flavors become a disparate harmony. His iconic anima might depict countless eyes, swirling veils, spiderwebs, coded runes, or cats, foxes, mice, and other animals known for their curiosity.

ANIMA EFFECTS

Essential Silence possesses the following anima powers:

Wisdom Means Unknowing (1wp, Reflexive; Instant): Once per scene, Essential Silence's player may state a goal Essential Silence wishes to achieve. The Storyteller should reveal a question that will help Essential Silence achieve this goal if he can find the question's answer.

Dauntless Curiosity (Permanent): Essential Silence adds +2 as a non-Charms bonus to his Resolve against threaten attempts and other influence based on fear or horror.

Vivid Countenance (5m, Reflexive; Instant): Essential Silence sharpens his presence, making it painful to look directly at him. Opponents who rely on vision to target him with attacks suffer a -2 penalty. At iconic/bonfire anima, Essential Silence may activate this power without cost.

MARTIAL ARTS

Essential Silence neither benefits from the Mastery keyword nor suffers the limitations of the Terrestrial keyword, though he can attain limited access to Mastery effects through Enigmatic Apotheosis (p. 126). He can freely combine his Martial Arts and Chosen of Mystery Charms.

MERITS

Essential Silence gains the Eidetic Memory Merit for free at character creation.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

Essential Silence is capable of initiating into Celestial Circle sorcery and Shadow Circle necromancy.

EVOCATIONS

Essential Silence is resonant with orichalcum, neutral with starmetal and adamant, and dissonant with other materials. He might also be resonant with other artifacts heavily associated with mysteries or secrets, like Calumny (**Dragon-Blooded**, p. 316).

THE GREAT CURSE

Essential Silence's Great Curse manifests through a ten-point Limit Track (**Exigents**, p. 52). He rolls to gain Limit when he acts against a Major or Defining Intimacy. Once per scene, when Essential Silence or someone he cares about suffers significant consequences from a threat he overlooked or didn't know about, he rolls three dice and gains Limit equal to his successes. Essential Silence loses one Limit for accomplishing a legendary social goal (**Exalted**, p. 134). His Limit resets at a Limit Break's end.

When Essential Silence reaches Limit 10, he enters Limit Break and suffers a compulsion related to mysteries. Examples include:

RUTHLESS CURIOSITY

Essential Silence discards all fear of consequences in order to solve a mystery that's on his mind. He ignores laws and the privacy of others and doesn't care if he gets caught if it means he gets what he wants, potentially souring relationships and endangering himself and allies in the process.

Duration: Session. This ends early if his actions violate a Defining Principle or the subject of a Major or Defining Tie.

SENSELESS OBFUSCATION

Essential Silence becomes needlessly secretive and obtuse. When he must communicate, he relies on hints, riddles, and thought-provoking questions. He suffers a -3 penalty on any attempts at social influence.

Duration: Session. This ends early if his secrecy causes him to suffer a significant failure or a setback to an important goal.

Longevity and Death

Essential Silence has a lifespan of hundreds of years. His apparent age is hard to guess and will remain unclear until he is near death. As he is dying, he can speak a riddle that will pass his Exaltation on to whoever solves it first.

Charms

Essential Silence's Charms are powerful and subtle, revealing hidden truths and shrouding the obvious in a veil of mystery. He is, above all, a consummate detective, and even his non-investigative Charms tend to focus on learning, utilizing, and obscuring secrets.

Excellencies

Although Essential Silence has Charms in Investigation, Lore, Occult, Socialize, and Stealth, he can learn Excellencies for any Ability. He may pay one mote per die to add dice to an (Attribute + Ability) roll or pay two motes per point to raise static values such as Evasion, Parry, Resolve, and Guile.

Essential Silence's dice cap is (Attribute + [most relevant of Investigation, Lore, Occult, Socialize, or Stealth]). For example, he might enhance an attack roll by stunting knowledge of his opponent's weaknesses (Investigation), knowledge of martial tactics (Lore), or underhanded strategies (Stealth). When in doubt, the Storyteller should lean toward simply using the highest value.

Essential Silence automatically gains an Excellency for any of his Favored Abilities with at least one dot at no cost. Others must be purchased like any other Charm.

LUCIDITY

Essential Silence has a unique resource called Lucidity. He starts each story with zero Lucidity and can have up to five Lucidity at a time. He gains one Lucidity whenever he makes progress toward solving a mystery, usually by casing a scene, profiling characters, reading intentions, and introducing or challenging facts. He can only gain Lucidity from a specific mystery once per scene. If he made progress through an action on which he rolled five or more extra successes, he gains two Lucidity instead of one.

Many of Essential Silence's Charms have additional effects when he spends Lucidity. In addition, whenever he uses an Excellency, Essential Silence may spend any number of Lucidity to reduce the Excellency's mote cost by an equal amount to a minimum of zero motes.

Charm Concept: Mysteries

Several of Essential Silence's Charms interact with mysteries; any question for which Essential Silence seeks an answer. Examples include solving a puzzle, finding a criminal, studying the construction of a manse, finding a flaw in an enemy's defenses, or simply learning a friend's favorite food. Minor mysteries can be solved in a scene or two at most, Major mysteries span one or more sessions, and Defining mysteries require a story or more to solve.

Universal Charms

ENIGMA SENSE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: None

Mysteries call out to their Chosen, begging to be solved.

Whenever Essential Silence encounters a scene relevant to a mystery he's already pursuing or to a new mystery the Storyteller wants to draw his attention to, he becomes aware that he's in the presence of mystery.

Whenever he realizes he's in the presence of mystery, Essential Silence may spend one Lucidity to receive a hint from the Storyteller about how to pursue the mystery. For instance, the Storyteller might call attention to an out-of-place object, suggest a relevant Lore background, describe the feeling of being watched by unseen eyes, suggest a character is keeping secrets, or point out a location Essential Silence could infiltrate.

UNHEALTHY FIXATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: None

With obsession comes a powerful clarity of purpose.

Whenever Essential Silence gains Limit, he gains an equal amount of Lucidity. When Essential Silence suffers Limit Break, he gains 4 Lucidity in addition to any Lucidity gained from Limit.

UNCANNY INSIGHT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

As his obsession grows, Creation bends to Essential Silence's demands.

When using his Investigation, Lore, Occult, Socialize, or Stealth Excellency, Essential Silence may activate this Charm to gain 1 Limit. He then reduces the cost of his Excellency by (Limit) to a minimum of zero motes.

Reset: Once per scene.

Investigation

DIFFUSE AWARENESS TRICK

Cost: 3m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Investigation 3, Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

The Chosen of Mysteries unfocuses his attention, allowing him to see Creation for what it is.

Essential Silence makes an Awareness roll twice and takes the higher result. He also ignores penalties from wounds, intoxication, and sleep on this roll. If he rolls Awareness to oppose a disguise or detect a hidden threat, he only needs to pay the cost of other Charms that enhance the roll once.

If Essential Silence detects a concealed or disguised character with his Awareness roll, he may spend 1 Lucidity to learn a relevant fact about them as if he'd succeeded at a profile character action.

DISTRACTION-BANISHING FOCUS

Cost: 3m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Investigation 2, Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

To tease open a mystery, one must shut out all else.

When casing a scene or profiling a character, Essential Silence doubles 9s and ignores all penalties from injury, deprivation, and distraction. If he stunts ignoring important distractions like conversations and trespassing laws, Essential Silence may spend one Lucidity when rolling to gain an additional clue toward a relevant mystery if he succeeds.

With an Essence 2+ repurchase, Essential Silence may pay a three-mote surcharge to double 8s.

ABSOLUTE PERSPICACITY

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Investigation 3, Essence 1
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: None
Duration: Indefinite
Prerequisite Charms: Distraction-Banishing Focus

Nothing will stand between Essential Silence and his answers.

When activating this Charm, choose a specific mystery Essential Silence wants to solve. He adds (Investigation/2, rounded up) to his Resolve against any influence that might distract him or sway him from pursuing the mystery. He may spend Lucidity instead of Willpower to resist such influence. Once per scene, he may suppress one of his Intimacies that competes with the chosen mystery, so it can't penalize his Resolve or cause him to roll Limit for the rest of the scene.

If Essential Silence ends this Charm before solving the chosen mystery, he gains 2 Limit.

DIAMANTINE BODY MEDITATION

Cost: —(+3m); **Mins:** Investigation 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Absolute Perspicacity

In pursuit of mystery, Essential Silence can't be stopped.

This Charm permanently enhances its prerequisite. For a three-mote surcharge, while Absolute Perspicacity is active, Essential Silence adds (Investigation) to his natural soak or (Investigation + Essence) if he's unarmored. He can also reflexively spend any amount of Lucidity to increase his soak for an instant, increasing soak by 2 for each Lucidity spent.

At Essence 2, this Charm also grants (Perception) Hardness.

SUSPECT-ACCOUNTING EFFICIENCY

Cost: 2m per target; **Mins:** Investigation 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Distraction-Banishing Focus

With an organized mind, no number of suspects is too daunting.

Essential Silence profiles multiple characters with a single roll. For the purposes of counting extra successes, he uses the highest Guile among his targets.

FIVE LENSES

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Distraction-Banishing Focus, Diffuse Awareness Trick

INVESTIGATION CHARM CONCEPTS

Dearly-Savored Revelation (Essence 1, Distraction-Banishing Focus): Gain Willpower and social bonuses by explaining a mystery's solution to his audience.

Loquacious Locality Style (Essence 2, Five Lenses): Ask questions of a location about things that occurred there.

Tools Don't Lie (Essence 2, Five lenses): Profile a character by inspecting her belongings.

Fault-Inspecting Eye (Essence 3, Truth Entails Unseeing): Profile a character to detect her greatest weaknesses.

The Chosen of Mysteries engages multiple senses to gain a clearer picture of the scene.

Essential Silence completes a case scene or profile character action in one minute. He can ignore blindness penalties by stunting the use of at least two other senses (e.g., getting close enough to smell his target and listening to his accent).

If Essential Silence stunts the use of multiple senses, he can spend one Lucidity to case a scene or profile a character instantly.

REVELATION THROUGH PERIL

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: [Any two Investigation Charms]

Nothing focuses the mind like danger.

Whenever Essential Silence pierces another character's stealth or disguise or wins Join Battle, he gains one Lucidity. If he rolls at least five more successes than his highest-rolling opponent, he gains two Lucidity instead.

LUCENT RECALL

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Investigation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One hour

Prerequisite Charms: Noise-Banishing Focus

Wherever Essential Silence has been, clues await him in memory.



After an hour of meditation, Essential Silence mentally transports himself into the memory of a place he visited or a person he met, no matter how briefly. This allows him to perform a case scene or profile character action retroactively.

While mentally transported into the past, Essential Silence can use Charms like Enigma Sense to discern details about his situation at that time.

NESTED QUESTION METHOD

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lucent Recall

Through memory-activating queries, Essential Silence recreates a scene from a witness' description.

To use this Charm, Essential Silence needs a witness who is nominally willing to answer questions about a scene she was present for. After fifteen minutes of questioning, Essential Silence rolls (Wits + Investigation) to case the scene or profile a character his witness describes, exactly as if he were present in the scene

himself. He may uncover details his witness did not consciously notice but not details she couldn't possibly perceive. If Essential Silence's roll equals or exceeds the witness' Guile, he also recognizes any inconsistencies in the witness' recounting and can tell what she tried to conceal from him.

Essential Silence may also activate Five Lenses to shorten his interrogation as if it were a case scene action.

DOGGED INQUIRY APPROACH

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Investigation 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Nested Question Method

Essential Silence's incisive questions wear down even the most secretive.

After a scene speaking with a character about an ongoing mystery, Essential Silence can use his Wisdom Means Unknowing anima power to reveal how to get the character to reveal a specific piece of knowledge. The Storyteller's answer can potentially involve dramatic edits about things Essential Silence discovered in prior investigations that reveal inconsistencies in the

character's testimony, insights he can use to persuade her of his trustworthiness, or knowledge of misdeeds he can use to pressure her. Alternatively, she might misspeak or otherwise accidentally reveal a thread of information he can follow.

If Essential Silence uses the knowledge the Storyteller revealed to persuade the character to reveal the information, it counts as a Major Intimacy supporting his influence. If she resists in a Decision Point, he learns what Intimacy she used to resist.

If the character does not possess the knowledge Essential Silence seeks, the cost of this Charm is refunded, and its use is reset.

Reset: Once per story.

Backer: Bryant Paul Devillier

UNBOUNDED MIND

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: [Any five Investigation Charms]

When one discards preconceived understanding, he paradoxically understands more.

Essential Silence's maximum Lucidity increases to (5 + Essence). While in Limit Break, his maximum Lucidity becomes (10 + Essence). When his Limit Break ends and his maximum Lucidity decreases, Essential Silence keeps any excess until it's spent.

INCORRUPTIBLE AUDITOR

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: [Any five Investigation Charms]

The only pleasure that matters is the pursuit of understanding.

The Resolve bonus described in the Dauntless Curiosity anima power also applies to bribes, seduction, and attempts to inspire emotion.

TRUTH ENTAILS UNSEEING

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Five Lenses, Absolute Perspicacity

While physical details may change, identity remains.

This Charm enhances an attempt to profile a character or sense motives. If Essential Silence succeeds, then he will always recognize that character in the future, even if her appearance changes drastically. If he encounters her in a disguise, inhuman shape, resplendent destiny, or identity-concealing illusion, he may immediately roll (Perception + Investigation) against her Guile to recognize her. If this Charm opposes other magic, Essential Silence adds (Essence) non-Charm bonus successes on the roll-off and ignores any penalties.

Lore

CANNY DISMANTLER GRASP

Cost: 4m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

With proper leverage and the right knowledge, anything can be broken.

When attempting a destructive feat of strength, Essential Silence adds Intelligence non-Charm dice and doubles 9s.

If the object Essential Silence is attempting to destroy falls under one of his Craft Abilities, he may spend one Lucidity to add his Intelligence and Strength together to qualify for that feat of destruction.

CONSTRUCTIVE INGENUITY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Lore 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Each mystery solved is a new seed of inspiration planted.

When Essential Silence solves a mystery, he earns crafting experience as if he completed a crafting project. For a Minor mystery, he earns two silver points per basic objective. For a Major mystery, he earns one gold point and two silver points per basic objective. For a defining mystery, he earns two white points and two gold points per basic objective.

LORE CHARM CONCEPTS

Clarifying Dialogue (Essence 2; Health-Fortifying Superstition): Treat Derangements and Psyche effects in his patient through mind-focusing debate or discussion.

Depth-Drawing Caress (Essence 3; Constructive Ingenuity, Curious Fingertips): Meditate with an attuned artifact to unlock multiple Evocations, spending either normal experience points or white points.

Riddlesome Instructor Method (Essence 2; Canny Student): Teach students Abilities, Attributes, Martial Arts Charms, and spells quickly through the lens of a Lore background.

Plumbing the Vast Unknown (Essence 4; Thought-Provoking Explication): Introduce a fact without a relevant Lore background, drawing insight from the very substance of unknowability.

SAGACITY-DOLING MANNER

Cost: 3m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Lore 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

To share knowledge is to control it.

Essential Silence doubles 9s when introducing a fact. If he stunts explaining his fact to another character, he may spend one Lucidity to have his roll double as an attempt to persuade that character.

SCENT OF KNOWLEDGE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Creation's greatest mysteries hide in others' minds.

This Charm enhances an attempt to profile a character or sense her motives. Success lets his player ask the Storyteller one of the following questions, plus an additional question for every 3 extra successes.

- What is the rating of one of her specific Abilities, Mental Attributes, or related quick character dice pools?

- What Lore backgrounds does she possess?

- What level of initiation does she have into the mysteries of sorcery and necromancy?

- Does she have any Principles related to mysteries or pursuit of knowledge?

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

Reset: Once per scene.

HEALTH-FORTIFYING SUPERSTITION

Cost: 5m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

The body's inner workings are truly unknowable.

This Charm enhances an attempt to diagnose a target. If his roll succeeds, then Essential Silence may provide health advice that doubles his target's natural healing rate and doubles 9s on rolls to resist disease and poison. Essential Silence may "advise" himself through monologue or dialogue with another character.

By spending one Lucidity while advising his target, Essential Silence may introduce a superstition, spiritual healing practice, or ban to further enhance his target's health. As long as the target follows Essential Silence's advice, her healing increases to (higher of 3 or Essential Silence's Essence rating) times normal her normal rate.

RELENTLESS INSIGHT EVOLUTION

Cost: 1 Lucidity; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Sagacity-Doling Manner

With each mystery solved, Essential Silence's knowledge base grows.

Essential Silence doubles 9s when introducing a fact related to a mystery. Once per story, he can gain a new Lore background after solving a Major or Defining mystery based on what he learned.

THOUGHT-PROVOKING EXPLICATION

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Sagacity-Doling Manner*An ounce of knowledge drives inspiration.*

Upon successfully introducing a fact, Essential Silence accumulates a pool of bonus dice equal to his extra successes on the roll, up to a maximum of ten dice. He may spend any number of bonus dice to add them to any action that exploits his introduced fact, including actions taken by allies.

CANNY STUDENT**Cost:** 3m, 1 Lucidity; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One story**Prerequisite Charms:** Relentless Insight Evolution*Essential Silence collects esoteric sources of knowledge as easily as breathing.*

After investigating a specific Lore background for an hour, Essential Silence gains a temporary Lore specialty in that background. With an appropriate stunt, he may apply this specialty to actions taken with any Ability.

Reading about a topic is too distant for this Charm; Essential Silence must personally study a phenomenon, perform experiments, or quiz an expert in order to learn what he needs.

CURIOUS FINGERTIPS**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Lore 3, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Scent of Knowledge*Closed books and sealed envelopes are mysteries too easily-solved to deserve Essential Silence's time.*

This Charm allows Essential Silence to read a letter or other written work of similar length with a touch, gleaning its contents like a whisper in his mind. If he's attempting to determine whether a work is forged or not, this Charm grants him an automatic success on his roll.

He may also use this Charm to speed up a search through weighty tomes, stacks of letters, and shelves full of books. For every hour he would normally spend reading such works in detail, he needs only one minute. If he wants to quickly search a large collection for

specific information, he may roll (Wits + Linguistics) at a difficulty set by the Storyteller. On a success, he finds what he's looking for instantly.

CODE-BREAKING EYE**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Lore 4, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Mute**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Curious Fingertips*Secret messages call out to Essential Silence, games meant just for him.*

Whenever Essential Silence is faced with a cipher or secret communication, such as Letter-Within-a-Letter Technique, he may use this Charm to attempt to solve it instantly. If the cipher isn't enhanced by magic, Essential Silence automatically solves it. Against magical ciphers and secret communication, Essential Silence doubles 8s on any roll to pierce the concealment.

REJUVENATING FOCUS**Cost:** 5m + 1 Willpower or Lucidity per health level;**Mins:** Lore 4, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One hour**Prerequisite Charms:** Health-Fortifying Superstition*Body and mind are inseparable.*

Essential Silence spends an hour meditating and rolls (Intelligence + Medicine) at difficulty 3 to heal himself. If he succeeds, he may heal up to (1 + extra successes) bashing or lethal health levels by spending one Willpower or one Lucidity for each restored health level. Essential Silence may use this Charm on another character by guiding them through the meditation, though they must spend their own Willpower to fuel the healing.

HAZE-BANISHING EYE**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Lore 5, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** [Any five Lore Charms]*Concealment itself draws the eye of the Chosen of Mysteries.*

Whenever Essential Silence encounters an illusion or perfect concealment effect, he senses it and may activate this Charm to see through the effect, rolling (Perception

+ Lore) with a full excellency and ignoring all penalties. If there's no opposed roll, the difficulty is the Essence rating of the entity that created the concealment effect.

At Essence 3+, as long as Essential Silence's anima is at the Glowing level or higher, other characters within short range of him can see through illusions and concealment effects that he's pierced with this Charm.

ILLUSION OF INJURY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Lore 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Rejuvenating Focus

Any rumors of Essential Silence's death should be discarded.

This Charm enhances its prerequisite. Essential Silence may use Rejuvenating Focus on himself in a single combat action, allowing all its healing to occur in an instant. He may even do so while incapacitated. If he succeeds, he reveals that his injuries were not as serious as they originally appeared.

Reset: Once per story unless reset by solving a Major or Defining mystery associated with the one who injured him.

TURN FROM BEYOND

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Illusion of Injury

With a touch, Essential Silence calls an incapacitated ally back from that final mystery.

Essential Silence touches a target and heals one level of damage of any kind. Essential Silence then rolls (Willpower), healing additional bashing or lethal levels of damage equal to his successes. He may spend Lucidity to grant bonus dice on the roll, one-to-one.

At Essence 4+, Essential Silence may use this Charm by speaking to his target instead of touching her.

Reset: Once per story.

Occult

BALEFUL INTIMATION

Cost: 4m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Occult 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Chosen of Mysteries bears the thrill of divine terror in every utterance.

Essential Silence doubles 9s when rolling to threaten a target or instill an intimacy based on fear or awe. If his influence exploits an Intimacy based on fear of the unknown or the supernatural, he doubles 8s, and he can spend one Lucidity to raise the cost to resist by one Willpower.

DREADFUL INQUISITOR APPREHENSION

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Baleful Intimation

The merest hint of the Chosen of Mysteries' attention fills lesser minds with terror.

Whenever Essential Silence pierces a target's stealth or disguise, or succeeds at tracking a target, he may activate this Charm to instill in the target a Tie of terror towards him, using the successes of his previous roll. Essential Silence's attention alone communicates this terror, ignoring distance and any penalties for communicating without words. If the target doesn't know who or what Essential Silence is, the terror seems nameless and without cause until she meets him.

ENIGMATIC APOTHEOSIS

Cost: —(1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Occult 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Neither of Creation nor of Heaven, Essential Silence walks his own path of martial enlightenment.

When using a Martial Arts Charm, Essential Silence may spend one Lucidity to access that Charm's Mastery effects for the Charm's duration.

Additionally, Essential Silence can treat scenes spent observing or fighting characters using Martial Arts as weeks of training time spent towards learning that style or its Charms.

GAZE UPON THE UNSEEN

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute
Duration: One scene
Prerequisite Charms: None

Essential Silence attunes his senses to the hidden world of spirits.

Essential Silence can perceive (but not touch) dematerialized entities.

With an Occult 2 repurchase, Essential Silence may pay a three-mote surcharge when activating this Charm to make himself tangible to dematerialized entities. This allows him to physically interact with them and them with him.

With a second repurchase at Occult 3, Essence 2, Essential Silence automatically senses when a dematerialized entity enters his sensory range, allowing him to activate Gaze Upon the Unseen if necessary.

MEDITATION UPON ABSENCE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Occult 3, Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: Dual
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Gaze Upon the Unseen (x2)

Essential Silence's touch carries the final mystery that all spirits fear.

This Charm can enhance attacks made by other Abilities. A **withering** attack against a spirit causes the spirit to lose (Essence) Initiative if it deals damage. Essential Silence doesn't receive this Initiative.

A **decisive** attack deals aggravated damage against a spirit, and permanently destroys any spirit it slays. When Essential Silence destroys a spirit with this effect, he gains up to (spirit's Essence) Lucidity.

TERRESTRIAL CIRCLE SORCERY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Occult 3, Essence 1
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: [Any four Occult Charms]

Essential Silence opens his eyes to the mysteries of sorcery.

The Chosen of Mysteries can use Terrestrial Circle sorcery. He learns one Terrestrial spell — his control spell — and one shaping ritual for free.

OCCULT CHARM CONCEPTS

Captivating Suggestion (Essence 1): Bargain with information or inspire or instill curiosity by exploiting Intimacies based on fascination or pursuit of knowledge.

Mysterious Origin Revelation (Essence 3; Meditation Upon Absence): Reveal a supernatural cause to a character's problem.

Ineffable Riddle Trick (Essence 3; Caging Inquiry Style): Stuns a target into inaction with an unanswerable question.

Murk-Clearing Scrutiny (Essence 3; Mysterious Origin Revelation): Through close study, reveal the nature and function of a supernatural phenomenon or artifact.

PRETERNATURAL ATTUNEMENT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Occult 4, Essence 1
Type: Permanent
Keywords: None
Duration: Permanent
Prerequisite Charms: Terrestrial Circle Sorcery

Essential Silence refines his mind through assiduous practice of sorcerous patterns.

The first time in any session Essential Silence casts a spell or completes a sorcerous working, he gains one Lucidity. If the spell he casts is his control spell, or if he uses his control spell as a Means to aid his sorcerous working, he gains an additional two Lucidity instead.

CAGING INQUIRY STYLE

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Occult 3, Essence 2
Type: Simple
Keywords: None
Duration: One scene
Prerequisite Charms: Scent of Reverence

Essential Silence's clever questions manifest as chains that can confine the divine.

Essential Silence asks a question of one spirit who can hear him. If Essential Silence's Essence is higher than the spirit's, she becomes stuck in place, unable to take move actions until she answers the question both correctly and honestly. If she is unable or unwilling to do so, or if there is no correct answer, she is trapped until the Charm expires.

RAVEL

Essence: 1; Willpower: 1; Join Battle: N/A

Health Levels: -0x4/Incap.

Actions: Investigation: 7 dice (see Unknowable Riddle); Social Influence: 6 dice; Flight: 9 dice; Senses: 8 dice (see Unknowable Riddle); Stealth: 10 dice.

Appearance 2, Resolve 2, Guile 5

Intimacies

Defining Tie: Essential Silence (Loyalty)

Defining Principle: I must unravel my mystery.

Minor Tie: Puzzles (Curiosity).

Merits

Immaterial: Ravel is naturally immaterial and cannot materialize, but Essential Silence can see and hear them.

Non-Combatant: The Ravel will not defend itself or otherwise act in combat, even if it would be destroyed.

Unknowable Riddle: A Ravel will tirelessly seek out the answer to its mystery, doubling 9s on its senses and investigation pools on rolls to do so, and report any interesting finds back to Essential Silence. It will follow Essential Silence's instructions on how best to approach its objective (including staying by his side and acting as an assistant), but it will treat any instruction to desist or delay it from its mystery as unacceptable.

If Essential Silence's Essence is equal to or lower than the spirit's, he must roll (Manipulation + Occult) against the spirit's Resolve to impose this effect, and the spirit may spend Willpower to satisfy the Charm with a cryptic answer or half-truth. Such spirits are only trapped for a number of turns equal to the extra successes on Essential Silence's roll. If his question is relevant to the spirit's nature, duties, or natural home (e.g., asking a demon about Malfeas), the spirit's Resolve lowers by two against this effect.

PUZZLE-KNOT COMPANION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Caging Inquiry Style

Essential Silence weaves tangles threads of Essence and unsolved mystery into a spirit companion.

Essential Silence creates a minor mystery spirit, a Ravel. This odd creature appears to be a floating, fist-sized knot of shifting geometric shapes and fraying strands, and no two look exactly alike. It is made from a specific mystery, and its purpose is to solve that mystery (e.g., "What is that man's name?" "Where is the wrackstaff Gnomon hidden?"). After it has discovered its answer and reported it to Essential Silence, it unspools itself with a delicate chiming sound and vanishes, ending the Charm. Essential Silence can have up to (Essence) Ravels active at any one time.

UNTARNISHED RECALL

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Gaze Upon the Unseen

Essential Silence's memory cannot be pinned down or contained.

The Resolve bonus described in the Dauntless Curiosity power also applies against magic that would alter, conceal, remove, or reveal Essential Silence's memories or that would keep him from revealing information.

EPICURE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Occult 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Terrestrial Circle Sorcery

The very enlightenment of rival sorcerers rightfully belongs to the Chosen of Mysteries.

Whenever Essential Silence successfully attacks a character with sorcerous motes, he may steal up to (Essence) sorcerous motes from his attack's target.

Socialize

CRYPTIC SMILE

Cost: 1m (+1 Lucidity per Guile); **Mins:** Socialize 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Chosen of Mysteries gives away only what he means to.

Essential Silence's can increase his Guile by +1 against a roll from another character, and he doesn't suffer a Guile penalty from not knowing he's being observed. He can further increase his Guile by spending any amount of Lucidity at a rate of one Lucidity per point of Guile.

PROVOCATEUR'S INSIGHT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Socialize 3, Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

One may read people like books, but it's more effective to play them like instruments.

Essential Silence reads a target's intentions, and learns an Intimacy she wants to keep secret on a success in addition to the normal results. If he stunts by asking his target a thought-provoking question or riddle, he adds a non-Charms success to his roll.

COMPREHENSION OVERWHELMING

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Socialize 3, Essence 1
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: Perilous
Duration: Until Essential Silence sleeps
Prerequisite Charms: Provocateur's Insight

The eye of the Chosen of Mysteries does not easily sway.

When Essential Silence successfully profiles a character or reads her intentions, he marks that character as under his observation. Essential Silence adds an automatic success to all Investigation and Awareness rolls against that character, including Join Battle. He may have multiple iterations of this Charm active, marking multiple characters. Its effects don't stack.

With an Essence 2+ repurchase, Essential Silence can activate this Charm to mark any character who fails to overcome his Guile or Resolve.

With a second repurchase at Essence 4+, Essential Silence can activate this Charm to mark any character who fails to overcome his Evasion or Parry.

HUNDRED-CUE COGNIZANCE

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Socialize 3, Essence 1
Type: Simple
Keywords: Mute
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Provocateur's Insight

To understand a web of motivations, one must pay attention to multiple vibrations.

Essential Silence reads the intentions of any number of characters present with a single roll, revealing all of their intentions in the scene or their feelings on a single topic.

INTENTION PRECEDES COMMUNICATION

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Socialize 4, Essence 1
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: Mute
Duration: Indefinite
Prerequisite Charms: None

To understand a person, one must realize that some details are irrelevant.

Upon successfully reading a character's intentions, Essential Silence may activate this Charm to perfectly understand that character's spoken and written communications regardless of what language she speaks.

LEVERS OF INSIGHT

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Socialize 4, Essence 1
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: Mute
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Comprehension Overwhelming

The Chosen of Mysteries exploits his knowledge to dig further and further.

When Essential Silence profiles a character marked by Comprehension Overwhelming or reads her intentions, her Guile lowers by two against him. If Essential Silence overcomes his target's Guile after using this Charm, he may spend one Lucidity to keep Comprehension Overwhelming active. Otherwise, it ends.

Essential Silence can repurchase this Charm up to three times, each offering one of the following additional functions to use against a character marked with Comprehension Overwhelming.

- **Aggression-Stalling Prediction:** Essential Silence inflicts a -3 penalty on an attack against him or a join battle roll.
- **Eight Horizons Sense:** Essential Silence adds (Perception) successes on rolls to locate or track the target and ignores (Essence) points of penalty.
- **Hastening Foresight:** Essential Silence can choose to act immediately before a marked target in the turn order.

SOCIALIZE CHARM CONCEPTS

Shared Inquisition Spirit (Essence 1): Deputize a target as an investigator, bestowing her with curiosity and investigative prowess.

Confessor's Mien (Essence 2; Provocateur's Insight): After reading a target's intentions, she is compelled to reveal more about her intentions (e.g., confessing her crimes, admitting she's being blackmailed, or bragging about her master plan).

Inner Echo Revelation (Essence 3; Confessor's Mien): Ask a question aloud and hear his target's thoughts in response.

Knowledge Is Influence (Essence 3; Levers of Insight): Enhances a persuade, threaten, or bargain attempt by exploiting knowledge gained from a successful profile character or read intentions action.

In each case, Comprehension Overwhelming ends unless he spends one Lucidity.

UNVEILING MISSIVE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Written-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Provocateur's Insight

Essential Silence writes the essence of a question into a letter, granting him the answer from afar.

Essential Silence writes a letter or other message addressed to a specific target, such as "Tepet Arada," "the Tri-Kahn's attempted murderer," or "the next person who reads this letter." If his target reads the letter, then the next time he sleeps, Essential Silence may roll to read her intentions, glimpsing his target in dreams.

EVERY-NATION INQUISITOR

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Socialize 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Intention Precedes Communication

Curiosity unites all people.

When Essential Silence asks a question it is perfectly comprehensible to all people regardless of language. Essential Silence

to ignore social penalties for relying on body language and allows characters who can't normally read to read his written question. Essential Silence may also perfectly understand any direct answers to his question, regardless of language.

UNKNOWN FEAR INCARNATE

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Cryptic Smile

The Chosen of Mysteries sees through those who perceive him.

The penalty described in the Vivid Countenance power also applies to attempts to influence Essential Silence and to Guile against his read intentions rolls.

TENACIOUS CURIOSITY

Cost: 1 Limit; **Mins:** Socialize 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: [Any five Socialize Charms]

Essential Silence simply can't surrender a mystery just out of reach.

After seeing the result of his read intentions roll, Essential Silence can reroll it. He applies any magic that applied to his original roll but must use the second result.

BLANK SLATE APPROACH

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Socialize 4, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unknown Fear Incarnate

To be wise is to know nothing at all.

Essential Silence negates a read intentions action that beats his Guile. The negated read intentions action doesn't succeed — a void of absolute mystery swallows Essential Silence's thoughts, leaving no intentions to read. However, the read intentions action does not fail either, so it can be retried in the same scene.

Reset: Once per session.

OPPOSITION WITHOUT FORCE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Levers of Insight (Aggression-Stalling Prediction), Hastening Foresight

The Chosen of Mysteries defies the logic of action and reaction, countering force with its absence.

Essential Silence clashes an attack made against him, rolling (Wits + [Brawl, Melee, or Martial Arts]). If he wins, his attacker loses (Essential Silence's Essence, maximum 5) Initiative, which Essential Silence does not receive. This does not deal further damage or reset him to base, but inflicts the normal penalties of losing a clash..

If his attacker is marked with Comprehension Overwhelming, Essential Silence can activate Aggression-Stalling Prediction without cost during the clash.

OAK GREET'S AXE

Cost: 5m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Socialize 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Opposition Without Force

With an eerie economy of motion, Essential Silence halts the mightiest blows.

Essential Silence applies his Parry (calculated with Brawl, Melee, or Martial Arts) against an unblockable **decisive** attack or reduces the raw damage of a **decisive** attack by his Parry, to a minimum of 0. He may do both at once by spending one Lucidity.

{tealth

MOVEMENT WITHOUT INTENT

Cost: 1m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Stealth 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Chosen of Mysteries keeps moving, never allowing himself to become predictable.

Essential Silence gains +1 Evasion. Against attackers of lower Initiative, he can dodge attacks that equal his Evasion.

If he spends one Lucidity, Essential Silence can use this Charm after an attack is rolled.

WEATHERED PILGRIM'S PREPAREDNESS

Cost: 1m+; **Mins:** Stealth 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Essential Silence must be prepared if he is to see all the mysteries of Creation for himself.

Essential Silence infuses a pocket, bag, or other container with mystery. This costs one mote for a pocket, two motes for a bag small enough for him to carry comfortably, and three motes for any larger container.

Essential Silence may store any number of items in an infused container as long as each of those items could reasonably fit entirely in the container. Items weigh nothing while in an infused container. He can place attuned artifacts in a container that's too small as long as he can fit the artifact through the container's opening — a daiklave won't fit in a pocket, but it might fit in a wide-mouthed satchel.

Nonmagical attempts to pick Essential Silence's mystery-infused pockets automatically fail.

UNASSUMING TRAVELER POSTURE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

To seem unremarkable is to be free.

Observers do not notice Essential Silence unless his presence, behavior, or appearance threatens one of their Major or Defining Intimacies, their safety, or their belongings. Even then, they must roll (Wits + Integrity) against Essential Silence's Guile to notice him. If Essential Silence acts in a way that overtly reveals his presence — such as shouting, rolling Join Battle, or failing to pick someone's pocket — this Charm ends immediately.

CLUE-POCKETING INSTINCT

Cost: 5m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Stealth 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Essential Silence's pockets are the safest place for any clue.

STEALTH CHARM CONCEPTS

Infiltrator's Intuition (Essence 1): Essential Silence automatically knows whenever he's being observed.

Attention-Thieving Secret (Essence 2; Diversity of Position): Reveal a startling piece of information, resulting in a distracting commotion that penalizes observers' Awareness rolls.

Arbiter of Obscurity (Essence 3; Shroud of Memory): Blot a mystery from Creation's memory, concealing all evidence and confusing witnesses.

Gift of Anonymity (Essence 4; Shroud of Memory): Question a target's identity with such intensity that she can't remember anything about herself or her past.

When rolling to pick pockets, pick a lock, or cheat at a game, Essential Silence rolls twice and takes the higher result.

If his roll could reasonably provide him access to a place or clue directly relevant to a mystery he's currently investigating, he may spend one Lucidity to apply his roll against observers' Resolve as well. If his roll overcomes an observer's Resolve, she will overlook the deception even if she spots it, reasoning that Essential Silence must have a good reason for it. An affected observer may resist this influence after one minute by spending one Willpower.

DEBATABLE LOCATION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Essential Silence's very presence is uncertain.

When Essential Silence rolls to establish stealth or disguise himself, he can reroll (Stealth) dice. Characters with Resolve lower than his successes suffer a -2 penalty on rolls to detect him.

At Essence 3, Essential Silence may pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to reroll all failed dice on his roll.

DOUBTFUL PRESENCE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Psyche

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Unassuming Traveler Posture

Those who meet the Chosen of Mysteries keep the encounter hidden in their minds.

Essential Silence shrouds himself in secrecy, rolling (Manipulation + Stealth). An observer may interact with Essential Silence normally, but if his roll overcomes her Resolve, then in the future she will refuse to say anything about Essential Silence's presence or actions in that scene. If Essential Silence did anything during the scene to oppose or threaten an observer's Major or Defining Intimacies, she may spend one Willpower at the end of the scene to resist this Charm's influence. If she doesn't resist it, then any later attempt to convince her to speak about his presence in the scene goes to a Decision Point.

UNLIKELY FOOTHOLD PRACTICES

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Stealth 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Debatable Location

Where others see sheer surfaces, the Chosen of Mysteries sees minuscule footholds.

Essential Silence may stand, walk, or run across any solid surface at least as sturdy as a rope, including sheer vertical surfaces. He may stand in place between activations of this Charm, having found a stable foothold.

DRY OFFICIAL'S ATTIRE

Cost: 5m (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Stealth 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Clue-Pocketing Instinct

Essential Silence can fit in anywhere, anytime.

Essential Silence can fully disguise himself in one minute.

If his disguise is as a nonspecific member of a professional or official position, he may spend one Lucidity to disguise himself in a single action.

THIEF OF LUCIDITY

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Doubtful Presence

The Chosen of Mysteries steals away certainty itself.

Whenever Essential Silence successfully hides from all observers present in a scene, picks the pocket of a significant opponent, or spends an entire scene disguised without having his disguise pierced, he gains one Lucidity. If he overcomes an opposed Awareness roll by five successes or more, he gains an additional point of Lucidity.

DIVERSITY OF POSITION

Cost: 2m+; **Mins:** Stealth 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Movement Without Intent

The Chosen of Mysteries only pretends to have a single location.

After Essential Silence crashes or incapacitates an opponent, he reflexively moves one range band. He doesn't need to disengage if embattled. This costs two motes the first time it's used in a scene, but its cost increases cumulatively by one mote each additional time it's used in the scene.

OBLIQUE AGENT MANNER

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Dry Official's Attire

The Chosen of Mysteries eschews identity, becoming his position.

When acting in an official capacity (whether real or disguised), Essential Silence's Appearance increases by one, even if this increases it past five. He adds a point of Guile against observers whose Resolve is lower than his improved Appearance or who have any Intimacies indicating deference to his assumed position.

VEIL-CUTTING ADVENT

Cost: 1 Lucidity; **Mins:** Stealth 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Doubtful Presence

The unknown is always dangerous.

When making a surprise attack or ambush, Essential Silence's Excellency gains the Mute keyword. If his attack succeeds, he adds three dice of post-soak **withering** or **decisive** damage.

REVELATION OF ABSENCE

Cost: 3m, 3i; **Mins:** Stealth 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Movement Without Rhythm, Debatable Location

The Chosen of Mysteries allows himself to be glimpsed as a courtesy.

After dodging an attack, Essential Silence can reflexively roll to enter concealment, subject to the usual penalties for stealth in combat.

SHROUD OF MEMORY

Cost: 6m, 1wp (+1 Lucidity); **Mins:** Stealth 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Doubtful Presence

With a distracting question, Essential Silence renders part of a person's own life a mystery.

After asking a question, Essential Silence rolls (Manipulation + Larceny). If he overcomes his target's Resolve, she forgets the preceding scene or up to an hour of real time. For each two extra successes on his roll, Essential Silence may conceal an additional scene or hour. Once his target's attention is called to the missing memory, she may reclaim the memory through a Decision Point that calls upon a Defining Intimacy.

Essential Silence may spend a point of Lucidity to declare exceptions to the concealed memory. For instance, if he makes a server forget that she saw him fight in her teahouse, he can declare that she still remembers that he complimented her tea.

GAZE-WARDING PRESENCE

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: [Any five Stealth Charms]

The incurious ought not to look upon the Chosen of Mysteries.

The penalty described in the Vivid Countenance anima power also applies to Awareness rolls to detect Essential Silence or pierce his disguise. In addition, Essential Silence may apply the Mute keyword to the Vivid Countenance power if he wishes.

MYSTERIOUS INFILTRATION METHOD

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stealth 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One hour

Prerequisite Charms: Diversity of Position, Doubtful Presence, Clue-Pocketing Instinct

Any place that lives in Essential Silence's memory is his to visit again.

After spending a minute in meditation contemplating a room or other location where he successfully used the case scene action in the current story, within one mile of his current location, Essential Silence rolls (Intelligence + Stealth). The difficulty of this roll begins at 1, and increases by 1 for every mundane impediment to reaching that place (a locked door, armed guards, unclear location), and increases by 2 for every supernatural impediment to reaching that place (the door is magically sealed, the armed guards are spirits, the room floats in the sky). If Essential Silence succeeds, he transports himself directly into that room.

With an Essence 3+ repurchase, Essential Silence may bring along up to (Essence x2) guests.

SAFETY IN NOWHERE

Cost: 5m, (2i+); **Mins:** Stealth 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Revelation of Absence

Essential Silence shrouds his body in uncertainty, so none might say if they struck anything at all.

This Charm allows Essential Silence to apply his Evasion against undodgeable attacks. If he is hit, he can negate any levels of **decisive** damage he suffers at a cost of two Initiative each.

Alternatively, he may evade a source of environmental damage flawlessly. If he evades a source of uncountable, recurring damage, he's immune to that effect for the rest of the scene.

BAFFLING PASSAGE

Cost: 12m; **Mins:** Stealth 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Mysterious Infiltration Method

How does Essential Silence end up in such strange places? There is no sense in asking.

As long as he isn't being observed, Essential Silence may instantly pass through any locked door, barred window, sewer grate, or other entrance he can touch, no matter how small. If any magic would oppose his passage, he rolls (Wits + Larceny). If he rolls successes equal to or greater than the Essence rating of the magic's originator or wins an opposed roll, his passage still succeeds.

The Chosen of Masks

The Chosen of Masks is Nurlissa, an enterprising orphan who is a fugitive from her controlling patron, Shalrina, goddess of faces.

CHOOSING HERSELF

The Red-Eyed Demon carouses and brawls in the streets, the masked menace of the Harlotry in Nexus. The enigmatic Gallows Saint sails down the Yanaze by day in funereal garb and the River Acheron by night, bringing compassion and final rest to the unquiet dead. A faceless peddler wanders the roads of the Hundred Kingdoms, selling festival masks to the gullible. A young woman weary from life and travel arrives in Great Forks and buys a home, a modest apartment over a shopfront. Each of these mysterious figures wears a mask, and each is the same woman. She is the wandering Chosen of Masks, who shares her name, Nurlissa, with those few she trusts.

Once, there was a girl who had nothing save her face and a goddess who had many faces but lacked a champion. The two made a trade: Nurlissa, the hungry girl, would give up Herself so Shalrina, the goddess of faces, would grant her Exaltation. For a time, this partnership worked well enough, but Shalrina was possessive and demanding of her champion and eventually drove her away. Now Nurlissa seeks to settle down in Great Forks and pursues the wealth of experience that life had denied her.

Nurlissa is secretive by nature and wary of the reprisals promised by her patron, but she cannot resist the pull of adventure. She brawls and carouses as the Red-Eyed Demon, dances with the wealthy and glamorous as the Doe Courtesan and acts as a guide to the unquiet dead as the Gallows Saint. As Herself, she simply enjoys a life free of poverty, reveling in the normalcy of gossiping in local teahouses and bartering at market, at least until adventure calls her away again.



Play the Chosen of Masks if you want:

- to wear countless false faces and immerse yourself in their identities.
- to live for yourself rather than your patron.
- to use an eclectic variety of powers for every occasion.
- to be the righteous one behind the mask.

THE PEDDLER AND THE PAUPER

Shalrina feels some warmth for Nurlissa, seeing in the scrappy orphan a self-reliance and will that reminds the goddess of faces of her younger self as a struggling bureaucrat in Yu-Shan. Regardless of this affection, she fully intends to return Nurlissa to the fold and punish her for reneging on their bargain.

First, she will draw on her significant network of connections and favors owed to bring pressure to bear against her wayward champion, seeking to persuade her to return, coerce her by making her life difficult, or simply kidnap her. Second, she will seek out those who knew Nurlissa in her mortal life, twisting them into weapons with her wealth and ruinous bargains, sending

them to break her champion's heart with new faces and old promises. When all else fails, Shalrina will turn to her one acquaintance who is truly Nurlissa's match, calling on a favor long-owed by the Solar revolutionary Mirror Flag.

DESIGNING NEW MASKS

Nurlissa's masks give her unprecedented freedom for designers and players. Each mask is a Charm set unto itself with its own narrative themes and mechanical gimmicks. In return, they also tend to be more tightly focused than other Charm sets — no one mask will give Nurlissa access to all the tools a Chosen might need. Designing new masks is more like designing a martial art than a new type of Exalt, focusing on a self-contained experience with interlocked Charms.

While a mask may explore many different themes, Nurlissa's own are always present — identity, persona, and performance. The Red-Eyed Demon isn't just a monster, he's a bombastic, theatrical show-off; the Gallows Saint isn't just an exorcist, he's bound up in ritual and ceremony.

Traits

Nurlissa is an Ability-based Exalt intended for Celestial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). When selecting Charms, Nurlissa gains The Mask of Exaltation and Becoming Herself Again for free. She may also select three additional Charms with the Mask keyword. The Abilities of her five starting masks are her Masked Abilities, and she can choose five Favored Abilities.

MASKS AND PERSONAS

Nurlissa traded her face for the Mask of Exaltation, becoming the Chosen of Masks in the process and developing a mystical affinity for the identities found in masks. Certain special masks, imbued with magic at the hands of the gods or born from famed and venerated legends are greater masks, which Nurlissa may form a bond with to awaken their persona, allowing her to attune to the mask's spirit and inhabit its role when worn. Each greater mask has a Principle associated with it that reflects the core of its identity. Nurlissa can only use a greater mask's Charms while wearing that mask. She may always use Charms that possess the Innate keyword, regardless of the mask she wears. Changing greater masks is an unrolled miscellaneous action that can be flurried.

Although she can only wear one greater mask at a time, Nurlissa can wear other kinds of masks on top of them, including lesser masks created with her Charms and artifact masks like The Emerald Visage of Amírul (p. 208).

ANIMA

Nurlissa's anima illuminates her against an inky darkness shot through with the colors of the mask she currently wears. As her anima climbs, her worn mask becomes limned in glowing light. At bonfire anima, an enormous simulacrum of her mask emerges from the darkness behind her, watching her with a baleful gaze and manifesting phantasmagorical imagery of its themes and persona.

She can spend a mote to discern the location of any of her greater masks, and if she is in the presence of any masks she has made or worn.

ANIMA EFFECTS

Nurlissa possesses the following anima powers:

Never Without a Mask (1m; Reflexive; Instant): Nurlissa may banish any mask in her possession besides the greater mask she currently wears Elsewhere. She may spend a mote again to recall any number of banished masks she can carry to hand.

Possession of Self (5m; Reflexive; Instant): Nurlissa asserts her identity, reducing the Willpower cost to resist social influence by one. Alternatively, she may activate a single Charm from Herself aside from Becoming Herself Again, regardless of the greater mask she's wearing.

Always Someone Else (—; Permanent): No matter the mask she wears, Nurlissa immerses herself in its persona. She gains +2 Guile against attempts to read her intentions or profile her if it would reveal her true identity.

MARTIAL ARTS

Nurlissa isn't restricted by the Terrestrial keyword. While wearing an appropriate greater mask, she may access the Mastery keyword. She can freely combine her Martial Arts and Greater Mask Charms.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

Nurlissa may initiate into Terrestrial Circle sorcery and Ivory Circle necromancy. While wearing an appropriate greater mask, she may learn a Charm to access Celestial Circle sorcery or Shadow Circle Necromancy.

EVOCATIONS

Nurlissa is resonant with artifact masks. With other artifacts, she is dissonant with all materials. She may gain resonance with a single magical material based on her greater mask while she wears it.

GREAT CURSE

Nurlissa's Great Curse manifests through a ten-point Limit Track (**Exigents**, p. 52), entering a Limit Break at 10. She rolls to gain Limit when she acts against a Major or Defining Intimacy. She also rolls three dice and gains Limit equal to her successes the first time in a scene she's addressed as someone other than the mask she currently wears or suffers a setback due to her mortal identity. Nurlissa loses one Limit for accomplishing a legendary social goal (**Exalted**, p. 134). Her Limit resets at a Limit Break's end.

When Nurlissa reaches Limit 10, she enters Limit Break, caught in the friction between herself and her masks. Examples include:

LOST IN THE MASQUERADE

Nurlissa loses her identity in one of her personas, believing herself to be the mask and nothing else. Each manifests differently: As the Red-Eyed Demon she revels in debauchery and violence, antagonizing enemies and indulging her vices; in Exaltation she becomes Shalrina, emulating her two-faced demeanor as she offers uneven trades to the desperate and unwitting while cruelly punishing those who regret their bargains.

While lost in her persona, she no longer recognizes the name Nurlissa and cannot use her Possession of Self anima power. She cannot remove her mask.

Duration: Session. This ends if a character Nurlissa possesses a Major or Defining Tie towards convinces her that she is Nurlissa, or after a scene in which she causes harm to one of her Defining Intimacies and realizes what she's done.

CAST AWAY THE FALSE FACE

Fearing what her masks ask of her and what they take every time she dons them, Nurlissa casts them aside to be herself and nothing else. She abandons whatever greater mask she currently wears and dons Herself instead, unable and unwilling to wear any other masks. While doing so, she attempts to lead a mundane life and avoids using her Exalted magic.

Duration: Session. This ends if Nurlissa is persuaded to take up one of her masks again to solve a crisis, which is treated as a life-altering task.

Longevity and Death

The personas that dwell in each of Nurlissa's masks are timeless; if she were to wear any of them indefinitely, she would be immortal. However, donning Herself restores her mortality, causing her to age as she did before the masks. As Herself, she will live a mortal lifetime. This is why Shalrina kept the mask in her vaults, to prevent Nurlissa from choosing her mortal life over service.

Upon her death, Exaltation will persist. Should Shalrina reclaim the mask, she will be able to offer its power to another in exchange for all that they are.

Charms

Nurlissa's Charm trees are each focused on the themes of one of her masks. Each has its own persona and approach; the Gallows Saint is a psychopomp figure of theatrical ghost stories with powers over the dead, while Herself represents the comfortable mortal life she never had. These personas give her Charms great versatility and scope, but because she can typically only use the Charms of the mask she is currently wearing, she is limited in using the extent of her powers in each situation.

EXCELLENCIES

Nurlissa has no formal Excellency; she can add up to (Attribute) dice to any (Attribute + Ability) roll. While wearing a greater mask, she can add (Attribute + Mask Ability) to any roll that aligns with the greater mask's

Principle. Her dice cap is (Attribute + Mask Ability) on all Abilities. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. Static values such as Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half this dice cap, rounded down.

NEW KEYWORDS

Innate: Nurlissa may internalize certain Charms from her many masks, allowing her to wield them regardless of the mask she wears. Nurlissa may always use a Charm with the Innate keyword.

Mask: Nurlissa's greater masks grant access to a portfolio of Charms she may develop associated with their persona. She cannot use the Charms she's learned in the signature mask's associated tree unless she is using the appropriate Mask Charm.

MASKS AND CRAFTING

Many of Nurlissa's Charms require her to prepare a plain mask, which is typically made of wood, cloth, metal, or ceramic. Creating a mask is a difficulty 2 basic project with (Dexterity + Craft [Masks]) that takes a few hours. Elaborate masks, masks carved to resemble faces, and enchanted masks are instead a difficulty 4 major project that takes several days.

Exaltation

Exaltation is the first mask Nurlissa wore, given in exchange for her own face. Carved from black jade, it resembles Shalrina's true countenance, with cool dark eyes and a too-wide smile. Exaltation is associated with Craft (Masks) and grants resonance with black jade. Its Principle is: Everyone wears a mask, and all masks are mine by right.

THE MASK OF EXALTATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Craft 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mask (Exaltation)

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Donning Shalrina's countenance, Nurlissa embraces Exaltation, becoming the image of her patron goddess.

When wearing the Mask of Exaltation, the Chosen of Masks embodies her patron's nature. She doubles 9s on rolls to craft masks, mask-related accessories, and on bargain rolls to trade in masks, and masks she crafts always count as exceptional equipment. She also doubles 9s on read intentions, provided she can see her target's face. If he wears a mask, it does not interfere with this effect.

SAMPLE MASK THAUMATURGY RITUAL

God-Messenger Visage (••): The ritualist crafts a lacquered fox mask as a major project with difficulty 4 using Craft (Masks). Wearers of the fox masks are welcomed in spirit courts as messengers so long as they claim legitimate business.

SECRET OF THE SMILING ARTISAN

Cost: —; **Mins:** Craft 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Innate

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: The Mask of Exaltation

When asked for the secret inspiration behind her artistry, the Chosen of Masks wears Shalrina's smile.

The Chosen gains craft points as if she'd completed a basic project when she:

- Upholds her mask's Principle or one of its other Major or Defining Intimacies.

EXALTATION CHARM CONCEPTS

Self-in-Persona Concealment (Essence 1; Hidden Depths Exploration): Transfer one of the Chosen's Intimacies to the mask's persona.

Trust the Smiling Trader (Essence 1; The Mask of Exaltation): The Chosen's proclivity for wearing masks is never seen as strange or inappropriate, and she suffers no social penalties for doing so. She marks herself as an outsider or traveler, but she is not treated with suspicion.

Face-Sealing Malediction (Craft 4, Essence 2; Behind the World's Face): Curse a mask to seal onto someone's face, inflicting a negative effect, potentially including suffocation or starvation.

Mask-Maker's Secret Workshop (Craft 4, Essence 2; Secret of the Smiling Artisan): Create a secret lair that can only be discovered under conditions the Chosen specifies.

Legend-Body Manifestation (Craft 5, Essence 4; False Identity Incarnation): Incarnate a greater mask. It can intelligently reason and act independently by gathering a body of shadowy matter from the Chosen's anima.

- Uncovers someone's compromising secrets or some evidence of their identity.

- Creates a lesser mask using one of her Charms.

- Succeeds at a bargain to trade in masks, identities, or secrets.

HIDDEN DEPTHS EXPLORATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Craft 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Innate

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: The Mask of Exaltation

The Chosen of Masks dredges up personhood from the hidden depths of her masks' personas.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Chosen's player may design a set of Minor and Major Intimacies for each of her mask's personas. These are typically related to the mask's Principle or Intimacies she has gained while wearing the mask. Examples may include additional Principles, Ties to general phenomena like alcohol for the Red-Eyed Demon or ghosts for the Gallows Saint, Ties to people who've befriended the Chosen while she wore a given mask, and so on. These Intimacies may contradict her own.

Once per scene, the Chosen of Masks can use her mask's Excellency on an action that upholds one of these Intimacies rather than the mask's Defining Intimacy.

READING THE LINES

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Craft 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: The Mask of Exaltation

The Chosen of Masks reads the problems and history of a person in the crow's feet around his eyes and the stress lines on his brow.

So long as she can see the target's face, the Chosen doubles 9s when profiling him and can do so in a handful of seconds. In addition to the typical benefits of success, she receives insight into a problem that plagues him and adds (Craft) bonus dice on her next social influence roll that exploits this information.

REVEALING THE NEW GUISE

Cost: 2m (+3m); **Mins:** Craft 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Innate

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: The Mask of Exaltation

With a performer's flourish, the Chosen removes her mask, revealing another hidden behind it.

The Chosen of Masks can remove her greater mask reflexively, revealing a different greater mask beneath it. She may reveal a mask she banished Elsewhere with her anima power.

In addition, she may supplement her anima power with this Charm to banish a panoply including her outfit or armor, a weapon, and accessories Elsewhere alongside a particular mask. She may activate this Charm again with a three-mote surcharge to recall her mask and panoply together, reflexively equipping and readying the associated equipment.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by upholding her current mask's Principle.

MAKER OF FALSE FACES

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Secret of the Smiling Artisan

The Chosen fashions identities as she fashions masks, making them one and the same.

The Chosen of Masks may craft a lesser mask imbued with a false identity as a major project. The false face resembles no living person's but appears remarkably life-like. When worn, it grants a single non-Charm success on a disguise roll and inflicts a -3 penalty on attempts to pierce the disguise or discern the wearer's true identity. The wearer also gains a Minor Principle of her choosing while wearing the false face.

ARTISAN-AND-MASQUER SPIRIT

Cost: 3m, 1wp, 1sxp per die; **Mins:** Craft 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Secret of the Smiling Artisan

The Chosen's artistry reaches new heights when joined to her persona's passion.

The Chosen of Masks adds up to (Essence) non-Charm dice on a Craft project at the cost of one silver point each. If she is crafting a mask or supporting an Intimacy belonging to a mask's persona, she doubles the limit and adds two non-Charm dice per silver point.

With a Craft 5, Essence 3 repurchase, The Chosen can reroll failed dice on a Craft roll that supports one of her Intimacies equal to the strength of that Intimacy.

SYMPATHETIC FACE ENTREATY

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Innate

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Reading the Lines

Conversing with the Chosen, her target can't help but see his likeness in her mask.

If the Chosen of Masks' social influence with any Ability exploits an Intimacy similar to one possessed by her current greater mask, it counts as one step stronger for penalizing his Resolve. It may also penalize his Guile when appropriate. On success, the target also learns that the Chosen possesses the sympathetic Intimacy.

Once per day, when strengthening such an Intimacy in another character, she gains one Willpower.

BEHIND THE WORLD'S FACE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Craft 4, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Secret of the Smiling Artisan

The Chosen of Masks looks into the face of the world and ponders the esoteric secrets behind its eyes.

The Chosen gains the Thaumaturgist Merit. She may learn up to five dots worth of thaumaturgical rituals for no experience point cost, although she must still have access to a tutor for them. If the rituals involve crafting an enchanted object or a mask, she may learn it just by studying the ritual's product. She treats any masks produced by thaumaturgical rituals as lesser masks for her magic.

SIGHT-BEHIND-EYES MEDITATION

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Craft 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Reading the Lines

Each of the masks the Chosen has made shares a connection with her. To see what they see, she needs only to close her eyes to look through theirs.

HERSELF CHARM CONCEPTS

Savvy-is-Survival Meditation (Essence 1; Becoming Herself Again): Sense supernatural trouble threatening Nurlissa or the community she is hiding in to survive it — or thwart it.

Humble Heart Replenishment (Essence 1; Becoming Herself Again): Restores Willpower and lowers Limit by performing simple everyday activities like housework, shopping, or talking with mortal friends.

Masque of Mundanity (Essence 2; Hiding the True Face): Nurlissa conceals herself in everyday life, becoming difficult to detect provided she doesn't do anything unusual.

A Life Unburdened (Essence 3; Humble Heart Replenishment): Spend time immersed in mortal life and gain several temporary Merits representing good fortune and new friends.

The Chosen of Masks may meditate to look through the eyes of any mask she has ever made. If worn by another, she must roll (Perception + Craft) against their Resolve to use their senses. On success, they are unaware that she spies through their sight. Failure still allows her to look through the mask but inflicts the sensation of being watched on the wearer, which may prompt them to remove it. As a miscellaneous action, the Chosen may change her perspective to another mask she's made.

A face the Chosen has granted to another character via Face-Trader's Charm is a valid target for this effect.

FACE-TRADER'S CHARM

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Shaping (Body)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Maker of False Faces

Shalrina's most ancient and storied art is the trade of faces and identities. With this Charm, the Chosen takes up her business.

The Chosen of Masks can cleanly remove a face from a willing, helpless, or recently dead target. The target is left faceless, their visage a smooth expanse of flesh devoid of features. They are able to see, hear, and speak as normal, but their identity has been stolen; nobody is able to recognize them as their true selves, even if they provide other evidence of their identity. Over time, a

character so cursed slowly loses their will and volition, eventually eroding their Intimacies into nothing and becoming a motiveless, faceless husk.

A replacement can forestall this curse; a mask created with Maker of False Faces merges seamlessly with the faceless visage and effectively becomes his new face. Curse-breaking magic like Destiny-Manifesting Method (**Exalted**, pp. 304–305) or the Evocations of Benediction (p. 204) can restore the character's original face.

The Chosen can use faces claimed with this Charm with Maker of False Faces to create masks that perfectly replicate the stolen identity, negating penalties for disguising the wearer as the face's original owner. The wearer gains one of the original owner's Defining Intimacies at Minor level, rather than a Principle.

FALSE IDENTITY INCARNATION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Behind the World's Face

The Chosen imbues a mask with a semblance of life, allowing it to see without eyes and speak without a voice.

The Chosen of Masks may imbue a lesser mask with a semblance of intelligence, creating an incarnate mask. Effectively an automaton, it can observe the world around it, communicate in a language she knows, and can accept simple instructions. She can have up to (Essence) such masks. She can spend two white experience points to end her commitment and make the incarnation permanent. Permanent incarnate masks do not count toward her total of (Essence) masks.

The Chosen may place an incarnate mask on a corpse to create an intelligent zombie (**Exalted**, pp. 502–503) or on a puppet to create an animated puppet (**Exigents**, p. 175). It cannot act while worn by an intelligent character, but will remember everything it sees.

Herself

Herself is Nurlissa's original face, returned to her as a mask. When placed over the void behind her masks, Nurlissa may open her own eyes and speak through her own mouth once more. But this too is a persona; the features of Herself are warm and lively, far moreso than they were before she wore any other mask. Herself is associated with Integrity and gives resonance with no material. Its Principle is: Though I wear many masks, I will never forget myself.

BECOMING HERSELF AGAIN**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Integrity 1, Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** Mask (Herself)**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Wearing Herself, Nurlissa hides within her once-familiar mortal nature, becoming just another face forgotten in the crowd.

While wearing Herself, Nurlissa can't be recognized as the Chosen of Masks unless witnessed donning the mask or if she discloses her identity. Her observers suffer a -3 penalty on any roll to identify her, read her intentions, or pierce any disguise she wears, so long as she isn't disguised as a specific person. Characters who have only seen her in passing can't recall any identifying features about her.

To any magic that could detect her nature as one of the Exalted (such as Measure the Wind, **Exalted**, p. 409), Nurlissa appears to be mortal. All such magic short of Eye of the Unconquered Sun and similar effects fail to reveal her true nature.

In becoming Herself again, Nurlissa finds the determination that once helped her survive her harrowing life before the masks. She ignores (greater of Essence or 3) penalties from deprivation or wound penalties on all rolls, so long as she is acting for her personal survival or in service of one of her Defining Principles.

HIDING THE TRUE FACE**Cost:** 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Integrity 3, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Becoming Herself Again

Even when Nurlissa's face does not seem to be hidden by a mask, it is.

When a character successfully reads Nurlissa's intentions, she can instead provide erroneous information based on one of her greater mask personas; if a guard reads her intentions to find out why she has crashed a prince's gala, she can call on the Red-Eyed Demon to reveal that she wants to drink his fine wine, rather than her true purpose. After using this Charm, Nurlissa gains the Defining Principle of the mask she called on at Minor intensity for the rest of the scene.

FALLING SIDEWAYS

Creative stunts can potentially allow characters to mitigate or avoid falling damage (**Exalted**, p. 232). This is true for falling damage from effects like Foes Like Falling Stars, not just regular falls.

ONE BEFORE ALL**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Integrity 3, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Becoming Herself Again

In this harsh world, one has to rely on Herself.

When faced with influence that would exploit a Tie towards another person or group, Nurlissa can temporarily suppress that Tie. For the remainder of the scene, the Intimacy is removed and cannot be detected, penalize her Resolve, or affect her decision-making. After the scene, the Tie returns at Minor intensity. If it was previously stronger, it returns to its original strength at the end of the current story unless it was weakened to nothing before then.

INDOMITABLE SELF**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Integrity 5, Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** One Before All

Even when she seems beaten, Nurlissa finds new strength in Herself.

Nurlissa gains +1 Resolve when applying Herself's Defining Principle. Once per story, when her Resolve is beaten, she can immediately refill her Willpower track before spending Willpower to resist unwanted influence.

ONLY A MASK**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Integrity 5, Essence 3**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** Hiding the True Face

Floating before her face, another of Nurlissa's masks takes a curse's burden on itself.



When faced with a mind-altering Psyche effect or debilitating curse, Nurlissa diverts it into one of her other greater masks. The mask persona, rather than Herself, suffers the effect, which is held in abeyance until Nurlissa next wears it. Changing to other masks does not disrupt the commitment to this Charm.

She cannot end commitment to this Charm until she puts on the mask and suffers the effect, or else cleanses the mask of the curse as a superior repair project that takes one month. If she chooses to don the mask and suffers an effect that is no longer applicable (e.g., a Solar used Hypnotic Tongue Technique to tell her to attack a character who is no longer present), then she immediately fills her Limit Track instead.

Red-Eyed Demon

The Red-Eyed Demon is a grotesque mask of ebony and vermillion lacquer — a sneering visage with three sweeping horns, a rictus grin, and eyes of polished carnelian. It imprisons the spirit of an ogre-knight trapped first within an ebony tree by Immaculate grandmasters for his fathomless vices and then bound into its mask by Shalrina. It is associated with Athletics and gives

resonance with red jade. Its Principle is: I do not submit to my unworthy lessers.

DONNING THE RED-EYED DEMON

Cost: —; **Mins:** Athletics 1, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mask (Red-Eyed Demon)

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

In the Red-Eyed Demon's form, Nurlissa becomes a hulking ogre, eyes ablaze with fury and body swelling with borrowed might.

The Red-Eyed Demon possesses the Hideous Merit (**Exalted**, p. 162). He also gains (Essence + 5) monstrosity points which he may divide among the following.

- Increase his armored soak by 1 (1 point each, up to Essence times).
- Gain a non-Charm bonus die on feats of strength and demolition (1 point each, up to Essence times).

- Grant his natural attacks the balanced, chopping, disarming, flexible, piercing, reaching, or smashing tag (1 point each).
- Gain (Essence/2, round up) dice on threaten rolls (2 points).
- Gain +1 Resolve against fear-based influence (1 point each, up to Essence times).
- Gain a bonus dot of Strength, to a maximum of 6 (4 points).

He may reallocate her monstrosity points by spending an hour feasting, drinking, or otherwise indulging in vices.

Effects that grant the Demon additional monstrosity points can never more than double his original limit.

BLOOD-WINE REPAST

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Athletics 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Red-Eyed Demon

The Demon revels in shedding blood as every blow swells his strength.

The Red-Eyed Demon gains one monstrosity point after a successful **withering** or **decisive** attack or two monstrosity points after a **decisive** attack that takes a target to a -2 wound penalty or lower. He may immediately invest these points; they disappear at the end of the scene. If he already reached his monstrosity limit, he gains them as Initiative instead after his attack is resolved.

DEVIL-FETING SINNER'S BANQUET

Cost: 1+m; **Mins:** Athletics 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Blood-Wine Repast

With flowing wine, raw flesh, and raucous entertainment, the Demon gorges himself in preparation for battle.

After a scene spent being lavishly celebrated and entertained or indulging vices with abandon, The Red-Eyed Demon may gain and invest one bonus monstrosity point for each mote he commits, up to (Essence).

LIQUOR-AND-FEVER ENDURANCE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Athletics 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

RED-EYED DEMON CHARM CONCEPTS

Hero-Humbling Mockery (Essence 1): Mock a character with social influence, inflicting penalties to her rolls while the audience laughs.

Fleeting Trickster Largesse (Essence 1; Blazing Ogre-Flame Carousal): Conjure temporary luxury goods that disappear after a random interval.

Night Parade Invitation (Essence 3; Blazing Ogre-Flame Carousal): Spirits inspired by Blazing Ogre-Flame Carousal are compelled to manifest for the scene at a discount.

Gift of the Goblin's Guise (Essence 4; Ogre-and-Goblin Schemes): Grant someone the benefits of Lesser Fiend Apprenticeship permanently.

Ten Storey Sinner (Essence 5; any fifteen Red-Eyed Demon Charms): Grow to Legendary Size.

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Red-Eyed Demon

The Red-Eyed Demon has endured wretched pain in his debauches; what is one more dose of arsenic, one more deadly pox?

The Demon doubles 9s on Resistance rolls and negates (higher of Essence or 3) points of penalties from poison, disease, or overindulgence on any Ability.

IRON HIDE DEFLECTION

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Withering-Only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Liquor-and-Fever Endurance

The Red-Eyed Demon's resilient flesh is unbreakable, easily deflecting cutting and piercing weapons.

The Demon gains (higher of Essence or 3) natural soak against a **withering** attack. Against weapons with the Lethal tag, this bonus increases by one and reduces post-soak damage by one (minimum 1).

DEVASTATING OGRE SHOUT

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Red-Eyed Demon

Drawing in a deep breath, the Red-Eyed Demon lets loose a scream of pure destruction.

The Demon makes a special ([Strength, Stamina, or Charisma] + Athletics) feat of demolition against an object within short range, doubling 8s and treating his effective Strength as (the highest of the three Attributes + 2) when determining what feats he can attempt.

Repurchase at Athletics 5, Essence 2 increases the Charm's range to medium and grants feats at close range one non-Charm success. At Essence 3, this increases to long range, and feats at short range gain the bonus success as well.

FOES LIKE FALLING STARS

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Red-Eyed Demon

The Red-Eyed Demon strikes his foes with meteoric strength.

The Demon makes a smash attack, waiving the Initiative cost. If his weapon already had the Smashing tag, his attack gains one non-Charm success on the attack roll. If he deals enough damage to increase the target's wound penalty, the target is knocked back an additional range band, to a maximum of long range from him; if she strikes a hard surface, she suffers damage as if falling from short range.

LAUGHING AT TRIVIALITIES

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Athletics 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Iron Hide Deflection

When lesser blows fail to harm the Red-Eyed Demon, his dark and mirthful laughter unnerves even seasoned soldiers.

When the Demon's soak reduces a **withering** attack to its Overwhelming value or his Hardness prevents a **decisive** attack, he ignores the attack's onslaught penalty and steals one Initiative from his attacker. If an attack's damage dice show no successes, he steals two Initiative instead.

BLAZING OGRE-FLAME CAROUSAL

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Athletics 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Red-Eyed Demon's ogre-flames light the sky like paper lanterns, calling all to join his festivities.

The Demon doubles 8s on an inspire roll with any Ability to create feelings of raucous abandon, overindulgence, recklessness, or rebelliousness and waives penalties for influencing multiple characters or lacking a common language. Inspired characters suffer a -1 penalty to Guile for the rest of the scene or -2 if they already have an Intimacy that supports the emotion. This Charm briefly illuminates the Demon as brightly as a burning anima.

IRON-SINEW DEMON THEWS

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Foes Like Falling Stars

The Demon's legs swell with diabolical might to cross any span or vault any foe.

The Red-Eyed Demon reflexively jumps one range band in any direction as his movement action for the turn. If he then attacks a target at close range with Foes Like Falling Stars and knocks her against a hard surface, she further increases her effective fall damage by one range band, using his own momentum in the blow.

LESSER FIEND APPRENTICESHIP

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Devil-Feting Sinner's Banquet

The Red-Eyed Demon may forge a lesser mask to house the spirit of his apprentice — a lover of chaos known as the Goblin Squire.

The Demon conjures a lesser mask for a character, which they may reflexively don by committing three motes. While wearing it, they gain the benefits of Donning the Red-Eyed Demon, building their own form with (Nurlissa's Essence + 1) monstrosity points.

While worn and for a day after removing it, the wearer gains a Major Intimacy towards causing chaos that cannot be removed. The Chosen may commit the mote cost if the lesser mask is granted to a mortal character.

OGRE-AND-GOBLIN SCHEMES

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Lesser Fiend Apprenticeship

The Demon and his squire are partners in crime, goading one another to greater and more audacious feats.

While within close range of the beneficiary of Lesser Fiend Apprenticeship, the Red-Eyed Demon and the Goblin Squire both gain the following benefits:

- Either may take their turn immediately after the other at the same place in the Initiative ranking, regardless of their actual place in the turn order.
- Each increases their Strength by two to determine what feats of strength or demolition they're capable of and roll an additional die for every 10 on the roll, up to (higher of their Intimacies towards one another).
- Once per scene, each may communicate a minute's worth of plans and information to their partner with nothing more than a look.

DEVIL DEMANDS THE STAGE

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Athletics 4, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Devastating Ogre Shout, Laughing at Trivialities

The Demon interrupts his lessers with outrage or derision, forcing them into silence.

The Red-Eyed Demon contests a social influence roll with a blood-curdling scream or raucous laugh, rolling (Stamina + Athletics) with (Performance/2, round up) bonus dice. If he overcomes the other social influence, all other characters who can hear him are deafened to it, ignoring its effects. In delicate social situations, this is likely to sour opinions about the Demon, as per a threaten action.

Repurchase at Athletics 5, Essence 3 allows the Chosen to pay a four mote, one anima surcharge to curse his target as a Shaping (Body) effect; she cannot speak for the rest of the scene; her voice is a copy of the Chosen's mad laughter or scream. A target with Essence equal to or greater than the Demon can pay two Willpower to break free.

GALLOWES SAINT CHARM CONCEPTS

Dead Tongues Wag Alike (Essence 1; Donning the Gallows Saint): Speak with the dead even without a shared language. Repurchase to speak in oblique metaphors that can only be interpreted by the intended audience.

Canny Sage Observations (Essence 1; Bitter Scent of Regret): Instantly case a scene, doubling 9s for murders or crimes committed by the undead.

Kindness in the Shadows (Essence 1; Myrrh-and-Wine Mysteries): Perform inconvenient tasks as prayers to a ghost, strengthening Intimacies towards the Saint.

Dolorous Omen Armor (Essence 2; Hospitality for the Forsaken): Penalize attacks motivated by heated emotions and levy misfortunes on attackers.

Utmost Ruin Admonition (Essence 3; Enigmatic Ceremony Mien): Counsel a target against a particular course of action, cursing them to misfortune if they follow through.

Those Last Unspoken Words (Essence 4; Ancestral Memoriam Trance): Perfectly intuit what a dead character's advice would be as an influence roll, costing up to three Willpower to resist.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by successfully making an influence roll against those assembled based on charm, poise, cunning, or deception.

Gallows Saint

The Gallows Saint is a Sijanese funeral mask of ivory and porcelain, worn in life by the exorcist-sage Smiles-at-the-Void and now imbued with a fraction of her spirit — a tragic figure attempting to atone for a youth spent in bloodshed through fifty years of guiding the dead with a stern but gentle heart. It is associated with Occult and gives resonance with soulsteel. Its Principle is: What's kind may be harsh, but never unfair.

DONNING THE GALLOWES SAINT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Occult 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mask (Gallows Saint)

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Placing the ivory mask upon her face, Nurlissa becomes the wraithsome Gallows Saint, whose perfume is incense-smoke and myrrh.

The Gallows Saint gains +1 Resolve against attempts to persuade, bargain, or threaten from a course of action that resonates with one of her Major or Defining Principles; this bonus is non-Charm against the dead. She counts as undead for the purposes of beneficial magic and reduces environmental penalties in shadowlands and the Underworld by (Essence).

GHOST-WIND INTUITION

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Gallows Saint

It is the Gallows Saint's prerogative to glimpse beyond the world's veil.

The Saint can see dematerialized ghosts. Other dematerialized characters are visible as smoky silhouettes, inflicting a -1 penalty on rolls to identify or track them.

She may unconsciously activate this Charm when a ghost comes within long range, sensing the shift in spiritual pressure. This provides (Occult) bonus dice to detect a ghostly ambush, even if the ghosts are materialized or using possession.

GRIM ETIQUETTE ELUCIDATION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Gallows Saint

With patient tutelage, the Gallows Saint may lead others to proper conduct, either in death or in preparation for it.

The Saint doubles 9s on an instill roll to create or strengthen a Principle about duty, piety, or etiquette and gains one non-Charm success if it reflects a previously introduced fact about a local custom or belief. Undead characters cannot cite personal Intimacies against her or groups she represents to resist, nor may the living when she creates or strengthens a Principle about how the dead should be treated.

BITTER SCENT OF REGRET

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Occult 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Gallows Saint

The Saint is well-acquainted with tragedy and senses its terrible weight upon those she meets.

The Gallows Saint may reroll up to (higher of Essence or 3) dice on a read intentions roll; if successful, she also intuits a brief vision of one of the target's greatest tragedies or regrets — when it happened and what it felt like. For the rest of the scene, she may treat that information as exceptional equipment for influence that capitalizes on it.

MYRRH-AND-WINE MYSTERIES

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Grim Etiquette Elucidation

In a thousand-thousand ways are Creation's dead honored, and the Gallows Saint knows them all.

The Gallows Saint doubles 9s on rolls to introduce facts about categories of ghosts and their natures, funeral rites, afterlives, or local customs related to the dead, needing no Lore background to do so.

HOSPITALITY FOR THE FORSAKEN

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Occult 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Grim Etiquette Elocution

Where the heroic Gallows Saint treads, she always finds at least some welcome.

The Gallows Saint gains (Essence/2, round up) bonus successes on influence rolls with any Ability to ask earnestly for help and hospitality. If the target has any Intimacies towards cultural obligations, the dead in general, or particular dead characters that would be beneficial, they apply as if she was their subject.

Those who turn her away without some modest gift or effort suffer (her Essence) misfortunes of the Storyteller's discretion, each inflicting a -2 penalty to a meaningful roll or creating a distraction they must address — a minor illness among employees, a delayed message or shipment, or the like. If the Saint knows Ivory Circle Necromancy, she may instead gain (her Essence) necromantic motes that last until the end of the story, which she may spend on spells to punish, teach, or otherwise correct the offender.

ENIGMATIC CEREMONY MIEN**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Occult 5, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** Grim Etiquette Elucidation

None may know the Gallows Saint's heart, for smiles and tears alike are hidden behind her visage of unmoving ivory.

The Gallows Saint gains (Essence/2, round up) Guile, with an additional +1 Guile against the dead. She may use her Guile in lieu of her Appearance for determining bonuses on instill and persuade rolls, maximum 5. At Essence 3, this maximum increases to 6.

GHOST-PILGRIM MEANDERING**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Occult 3, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** Bitter Scent of Regret

The Gallows Saint may pass through the world as subtly as the softest breath.

The Saint produces no unintentional sound, inflicting a -2 penalty on characters who rely on hearing to detect her approach. Characters cannot perceive any identifying features about her appearance, voice, or magic beyond her seemingly ghostly nature; those motivated by an Intimacy may spend one Willpower to resist, becoming immune to this effect for the rest of the story, though they still suffer the penalty to detect her via hearing.

This Charm is free while she travels without giving her name, carrying substantial possessions, living off hospitality, or scavenging her food. Ending this Charm as part of an influence roll meant to frighten or surprise grants (Occult/2, round up) non-Charm bonus dice.

SHADOW SANCTUM INVITATION**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Occult 4, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** (Essence) days**Prerequisite Charms:** Hospitality for the Forsaken

The Gallows Saint may hollow out a space within herself for the roosting dead.

DOE COURTESAN CHARM CONCEPTS

Tangled Sleeves Trick (Essence 1; Endless Silken Wardrobe): Entangle a target within their clothes, increasing mobility penalties—especially for ornate outfits.

Fragile Teardrop Glamour (Essence 1; Donning the Doe Courtesan): Apply fatigue, wound, poison, or disease penalties as a bonus on influence.

Unapproachable Beauty (Essence 1; Donning the Doe Courtesan): Opposed movement rolls against the Courtesan lose successes for each 1 rolled, or each 2 if their Appearance is lower than hers.

Velvet Grasp Technique (Essence 2; All Eyes Redirection): Double 9s on influence to ask someone for a gift or favor; if he refuses, others perceive him as especially miserly or heartless.

The Saint makes a ([Social Attribute] + Occult) roll against the Resolve of an immaterial ghost character with Essence up to (higher of her Essence or 3), even one currently possessing a host. Success draws the dead character into her shadow until released. While absorbed, it must spend a one Willpower surcharge to use any powers that would allow it to interact with the physical world. It may speak in whispers audible only to those within close range and does not share any of the Saint's senses. It and its possessions are immune to the effects of sunlight while within the shadow.

LORD OF BEASTS CHARM CONCEPTS

Beast-Friend Blessing (Essence 1; Donning the Lord of Beasts): Mark someone as an ally to a species of animal, letting them communicate.

Beast-Foe Inquisition (Essence 1; Beast-Friend Blessing): Sense whether someone has mistreated animals and gain bonuses to punish their transgressions.

Wild Hearts as One (Essence 2; Lord-and-Vassal Tactics): Fuse with an animal familiar, gaining Merits and sharing Intimacies.

King Among Lions (Essence 3; Lord-and-Vassal Tactics): Issue commands to all animals of a particular species within several miles.

Repurchase at Occult 3, Essence 3 allows the Saint to draw upon a single Eclipse Charm from the absorbed character for which she meets the prerequisites. Doing so creates a Minor Tie of gratitude to the character, which cannot be degraded until she performs some small act to honor or repay it.

ANCESTRAL MEMORIAM TRANCE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One story

Prerequisite Charms: Bitter Scent of Regret

Hallowing herself, the Gallows Saint becomes a living memorial to the dead, carrying their passions beyond death.

After an hour spent communing at a dead character's grave, speaking with loved ones, considering their belongings, or otherwise investigating them, the Saint may make a profile character action with (Essence) bonus successes. Success not only reveals the broad strokes of the character's history, personality, and ambitions but allows her to take up his mantle:

- She gains a Defining Intimacy related to his motivation or goals, which counts as one of the Gallows Saint's Mask Principles.
- She may reflexively take on his appearance for two motes, though he is always conspicuously dead, with an eerie glow, seemingly ruined flesh, and so on. Transforming back is free.
- Once per session, when a task upholds his Defining Intimacy, she gains (Essence + 1) bonus dice.

WANDERING PHANTOM SHROUD

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Occult 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Ghost-Pilgrim Wandering

The Gallows Saint walks in the liminal space between the physical and the immaterial.

The Saint becomes immaterial. She remains visible and still needs to breathe but may walk on water and vapor as if solid ground. If she chooses to sink beneath the ground for an entire scene, she continues to fall for a full day before emerging from the ground in the Underworld in a location of the Storyteller's choice.

Doe Courtesan

The Doe Courtesan's mask is a delicately featured visage of silvery wood inlaid with nacre; a froth of pale rainbow silk may be drawn across it like a veil or swept back like luxurious hair. It was crafted by the Fair Folk bargainer Seizes-the-Breath, who traded seven legions of raksha soldiers for a queen's beautiful face. The queen's ghost still frets with remorse at her bargain, sending agents to retrieve any word of it. It is associated with Socialize and gives resonance with moonsilver. Its Principle is: Shows of force are beneath me.

DONNING THE DOE COURTESAN

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Socialize 1, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mask (Doe Courtesan)

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

While wearing the Doe Courtesan's form, Nurlissa moves with perfect poise like a poem given form.

The Courtesan adds (Socialize/2, round up) dice to dance-based Performance rolls, attempts to move gracefully or quietly, and read intentions actions. At her choice, she may exert no effective weight, allowing her to walk across paper banners or stand atop a windborne kite.

ENDLESS SILKEN WARDROBE

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Socialize 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Doe Courtesan

With a twirl of her gown, the Doe Courtesan may robe herself in ever-shifting silk.

The Courtesan may transform her clothing into almost any outfit imaginable, allowing her to double 9s on a disguise roll. Attempting to use this Charm to don unfashionable clothing — drab colors, rough materials, or unflattering cuts — instead inflicts a -1 penalty but can still be done instantly.

ALL EYES REDIRECTION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Doe Courtesan

The Doe Courtesan understands that sometimes, attention is a weapon — and at other times, a liability.

If she pays for this Charm with any peripheral motes, the Courtesan redirects attention to herself, doubling 9s on a roll with any Ability to convince others of her high rank or great beauty. If using this Charm causes her anima to increase, she adds one non-Charm die to her roll.

If she pays for this Charm with only personal motes, she may instead choose to double 9s on rolls to avoid detection or convince others that she's beneath their notice.

Lord of Beasts

The Lord of Beasts is a mask carved from the skull of some nameless creature long extinct, its eye sockets fitted with lenses of thin, smoky quartz. Rattling talismans of teeth and talons hang from its antlers, which echo on the wind like a far-away stampede. It was once a treasure of the Kiwa, a shaman-lineage from one of the Linowan's cousin-cultures, traded to Shalrina for her protection in the days following the Great Contagion. It is associated with Survival, and gives resonance with green jade. Its Principle is: I am king and steward of all the beasts of Creation.

DONNING THE LORD OF BEASTS

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Survival 1, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mask (Lord of Beasts)

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Placing the bone mask upon her face, Nurlissa seems to move with a bestial grace that animals recognize as proof of her fellowship.

The Lord of Beasts may communicate with natural animals without penalty, though this does not allow them to understand concepts that are more complex or abstract than normal. Natural animals are treated as having a Minor Tie of respect for the Lord and will not attack him unless compelled by magic or endangered by him first.

BEAST-BECKONING SUMMONS

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Survival 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Donning the Lord of Beasts

The Lord of Beasts whistles his call, amplified by the masks' bones like wind through a flute.

The Lord calls to a specific animal or type of animal within (Essence x 10) miles, which rushes to his presence fast enough to arrive within the scene unless the Storyteller deems it implausible. Against unwilling targets, he rolls (Charisma + Performance) against its Resolve. This Charm cannot separate a familiar from its master.

LORD-AND-VASSAL TACTICS

Cost: —(1i); **Mins:** Survival 4, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Beast-Beckoning Summons

When the Lord fights alongside his pack, his strength is shared among the whole.

While within short range, the Lord of Beasts may use an Excellency on behalf of an allied animal, spending up to (lower of their Intimacies towards each other) motes. In combat, doing so costs a one-Initiative surcharge.

The Reaver, Chosen of Slaughter

The Reaver is Teon Saj, an infamous former pirate now out of retirement as the illicit Exigent of Siakal, the Western Goddess of Battle, Slaughter, and Sharks.

Teon Saj

In Azure, there is a minor port named Paleharbor; in Paleharbor, there is a counting house; and in that counting house, there is a clerk who was once a monster. To all the world, Teon Saj is senior secretary to the magistrate, a looming man built like a lion but carrying himself like a leashed dog. Twenty years ago, he was Redgrasp — a privateer whom other pirate-kings spoke of with fear and superstition. He cut down Azure's enemies by the thousand in grotesque spectacles of gore until his zeal became a political inconvenience for a new First Sea Lord. A distasteful reminder of his predecessor, the new ruler arranged Redgrasp's exile to Paleharbor as the price not just for his own stay of execution but to protect the lives of his four siblings and their families.

Teon Saj was not entirely defeated. He took solace as a petty prince of crime, arranging the thieves, thugs, and smugglers of Paleharbor into a formidable network. He found leisure in games of blackmail, extortion, and arson. Twenty years of exile sharpened Teon's mind and allowed dreams of bloody, screaming freedom to ferment in his heart.

Siakal

Siakal (**Adversaries of the Righteous**, p. 110) is as powerful as she is ruthless. While she revels in wholesale slaughter wherever she finds it, she is not some mindless berserker rushing headlong into empty violence. Instead, rivals find her a canny and patient foe, eager to seize upon opportunities but keen-eyed enough to avoid all but the subtlest trap. While a puissant celestial god in her own right, she reserves special enmity for the Ocean Father, who rivals her for prestige and influence in the West.

She has long petitioned the Sun for the spark of Exigence, making a dozen sincere entreaties: That she needs a champion to bring wayward Western gods to heel, that Fair Folk raiders and Dragon-Blooded pirates bedevil many islands and archipelagoes, that the West needs her Chosen as it needs her. She has never merited a response. To secure her Exigent, she instead hunted a lesser god named Vermillion Cowrie and tore the waiting spark from his spiritual corpus with violence enough to rupture his immortality. It has cost her considerable time and effort to cover up this crime, straining the goodwill of several high-ranking contacts in her pocket for previous favors rendered.

She held that spark for years, waiting for just the right moment to employ it. Though confident that she could survive the price Exaltation would take from her, her greater concern was in selecting just the right Chosen — someone who could bring a surfeit of carnage to the West without too much goading or direction. Patience proved her half right: The Exaltation took surprisingly little from her Essence but left her with a champion who was not what she imagined.

When the Fair Folk of the Sea Gallows Coterie arrived in Paleharbor, it was as if a hungry storm swallowed the port. Blades of coral cut down hundreds, and garottes of thick seaweed silenced screaming prayers. Into that carnage stepped grey-skinned Siakal, who offered Teon Saj her Exaltation. In his first frenzied throes of Essence fever, the newborn Reaver made the harbor's water violet with fae blood.

Relationships

Teon's partnership with Siakal is a contentious one. It becomes more and more clear that she expected a pet monster and has instead received a champion with ambition and cunning to match his lust for revenge. They bring out the worst in one another, each pushing the other to extend their reach farther and farther in a game of one-upmanship. They value and hate one another, a

OTHER CHOICES OF SIAKAL

Rather than Teon Saj, Siakal may have picked a different Chosen, but none would be quite what she expected:

Exalted in the hold of a Realm slave ship, Bua-Ten would pursue a bloody-handed revolutionary campaign against the Realm's westward expansion while upholding Siakal as a goddess of liberation and Western revanchism.

With the power of Exaltation, the intrepid Tya corsair Irirangi Ironjaws would pursue freebooting adventure on the high seas, battling monsters and plundering treasure ships, uncaring of Siakal's demands for greater violence.

Though formerly a loyal priestess of Siakal, Dark-Eyed Keahi would reconsider her opinions of her patron after her Exaltation, seeking allies to help free herself of the goddess' control after being commanded towards one too many campaigns of slaughter.

rivalry that will either blossom or metastasize as the Reaver's power grows.

The Reaver finds both faithful allies and bitter rivals in Siakal's worshippers. The cultists of the Finreefs honor him as their god's Chosen, but many among its priesthood brood bitterly that they were overlooked. By custom and ego, he is obliged to accept any challenge they offer; none have yet bested Teon Saj, but many have eagerly cheered for his defeat in trial by combat, debate, or cunning.

Play the Reaver if you want:

- to wreak bloody vengeance upon those who wrong you.
- to pit your wits against a patron who needs you but dislikes you.
- to see what bitterness and power will push you to accomplish.
- to leave a swath of devastation in your wake.

Traits

The Reaver is an Essence-based Exigent intended for Celestial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Athletics, Sail and War are his favored Abilities.

ANIMA

The Reaver's anima is a sea-blue so deep that it can be mistaken for black, flecked with sea foam froth and shot through with veins of bloody crimson. As it brightens, it swells like the tide, and blood comes to predominate. His iconic anima might depict a gigantic siaka, a typhoon of blades and fangs, gore-soaked echoes of every life he's taken, or similar displays of gruesome strength and viciousness.

ANIMA EFFECTS

The Reaver possesses the following anima powers:

Inexorable Shark Pursuit (3m; Supplemental; Instant): The Reaver may add (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on a roll to track, pursue, or intimidate someone and waives his wound penalties.

Prey's Heart Vivisection (5m; Reflexive; Instant): The Reaver reads a foe's intentions with (Essence/2) non-Charms successes to determine what she fears or things that she might fear to lose, doubling her wound penalty to her Guile. This power is free at bonfire anima.

Blood Begets Slaughter (10m; Reflexive; Instant): Once per day after dealing at least three levels of damage to a non-trivial foe with a **decisive** attack, Teon can roll Join Battle after resetting to base Initiative, adding (foe's Essence) non-Charms bonus dice.

MARTIAL ARTS

The Reaver is not restricted by the Terrestrial keyword, nor does he benefit from the Mastery keyword. **When he makes a Martial Arts attack, he can enhance it with Reaver Charms or Martial Arts Charms, but not both**, with the exception of Excellencies and Versatile Charms. This doesn't apply to Charms that are permanent or provide ongoing benefits nor to actions other than attacking.

MERITS

The Reaver is physically changed by his Exaltation; he possesses the one-dot Fangs mutation and three-dot Gills mutation, both with Subtlety (**Exalted**, pp. 165–166) for free at character creation.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

The Reaver can initiate into the Terrestrial Circle of sorcery and the Shadow Circle of necromancy.

EVOCATIONS

The Reaver is resonant with black jade and artifacts primarily composed of trophies from the dead, such as the Tusk of Glaech-Ma (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 46) or

Spring Razor (**Exalted**, p. 619). He is neutral with all other materials.

GREAT CURSE

The Reaver's Great Curse manifests as a ten-point Limit Track. He gains Limit under the following circumstances:

- Once per scene, when he refuses to answer blatant defiance, disrespect, or a challenge with a demonstration of strength, he rolls one die, gaining Limit equal to his successes. If he has a negative Tie towards an individual who would provoke this, he rolls (Intensity) dice instead.
- Once per scene, when he restrains himself from acting on a Major Intimacy based on hunger, envy, desire, or anger, he rolls two dice, gaining Limit equal to his successes, or three dice for a Defining Intimacy.
- When the Reaver is captured, defeated, or suffers a crippling injury, he rolls three dice, gaining Limit equal to the successes.

When the Reaver reaches Limit 10, he enters Limit Break. His Limit resets at a Limit Break's end. Sample Limit Breaks include:

SINGULAR VENGEANCE

The Reaver is compelled to pursue bloody revenge against a character who has wronged him in this story. Given a clear opportunity, he will attack without mercy, but this is not a mindless fugue — he can bring his full cunning to bear and is compelled to pull strings, call in favors, and otherwise muster his resources to utterly ruin the target of his hatred.

Duration: Session. This ends if the Reaver's vengeance leads directly to significant harm to a character to whom he has a positive Major or Defining Intimacy.

BLOODSTAINED REMORSE

The Reaver is overcome by visions of all those he's killed or ruined. In his melancholia, he flees from violence and cannot stand the sight of his own image. If confronted with a true accusation about his actions, he admits it freely without hesitation, attempting to make amends with grand, self-destructive gestures.

Duration: Session. This ends if the Reaver receives a scene of comfort and counsel from a character with whom he has a positive Intimacy, forming a Major Tie of regret for one of his recent actions.

DEFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Meat Shield Practice (Essence 2; Wave-Swimmer Stance): Use an enemy as a shield during a grapple, diverting an attack from a second enemy to his victim.

Violence-Meets-Violence Counter (Essence 3; Like Striking Water): After being struck by a successful decisive attack, make a counterattack that uses the attacker's own Initiative to calculate damage (but resets Teon's Initiative and not the attacker as normal if he succeeds), as his own bloodlust rises to meet the intensity of his foe's own.

Draw the Line (Essence 3; Infinite Pressure Tide-wall): Draw a line in blood across the ground (whether a straight one or a circle), challenging all opponents to cross it to face the Reaver, gaining considerable Defense and soak bonuses against all ranged attacks from beyond the line.

Longevity and Death

Siakal thought her Chosen would live no more than a century, but instead his lifespan seems to grow with every life he takes — potentially forever. His Exaltation will die with him.

Charms

The Reaver's Charms draw on Siakal's love for slaughter, the feeding frenzies of sharks, and an instinct for swift and bloody violence. While he excels on the battlefield, the Reaver can turn this same ruthlessness to social interactions — dominating foes, ruining financial rivals, and spreading ecstatic fear among his worshippers.

EXCELLENCIES

The Reaver has no formal Excellency; he can add dice to any (Attribute + Ability) roll or increase any static value for which he has an applicable Ability at 3+ or Attribute at 5, paying one mote per die. He may add up to (Attribute + 1) dice to rolls. Actions against other characters increase this limit by two, or four if the action is motivated by a negative Major or Defining Intimacy. Static values such as Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half this dice cap, rounded down.

NEW KEYWORD

Feeding: A Feeding Charm includes a health level as part of its cost, but the Reaver does not have to bear that cost himself. Any time he inflicts lethal damage or

empties a battle group's Magnitude track, he waives the health level cost of Feeding Charms until the end of his next turn.

Defensive

WAR-SWIMMER STANCE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Reaver instinctively reads the tide of battle and moves to deny foes every advantage.

Teon ignores all onslaught penalties to his Defense and halves all other penalties, rounded down.

LIKE STRIKING WATER

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Reaver's spiritual pressure impedes attackers as though they are underwater, making the most precise strikes miss by inches.

Up to (Essence) 1s on an opponent's attack roll are subtracted from her successes. Teon defends against the attack if its successes equal his Defense.

SWORD-CRUSHING ONSLAUGHT

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Like Striking Water

Unbalanced by his unceasing attacks, Teon's enemies struggle to deliver more than glancing blows in the rare openings he leaves them.

This Charm increases the Reaver's soak against an attack by (enemy's onslaught penalty + 3), to a maximum bonus of +6 soak. The attack reduces post-soak damage by the attacker's wound penalty, minimum one.

IRON LIKE STRAW

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite: Sword-Crushing Onslaught

The Reaver's teeth treat swords and spears like so many twigs to snap.

Teon clashes an attack from close range with a (Strength + Athletics or Brawl) **decisive** attack. Against weapons, this attack must be a disarm gambit; against unarmed attacks, it deals one automatic level of damage which ignores Hardness and does not reset the user to base Initiative.

INFINITE PRESSURE TIDEWALL

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Sword-Crushing Onslaught

Seizing on an enemy's imbalance and fatigue, the Reaver deflects a fatal attack with a surge of spiritual pressure as solid as iron.

The final damage of a **decisive** attack is reduced by (Stamina + enemy's wound penalty). This Charm must be declared before the attack is rolled.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by inflicting a crippling injury on a nontrivial opponent.

Mysticism and Desecration

SHATTERED IDOLS RAMPAGE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Sacrifice is destruction, and so the Reaver may praise or cow spirits in his every act of mayhem.

The Reaver doubles 9s on a feat of demolition. If used to destroy something precious to a spirit, he adds +2 to his Strength when determining what feats he may perform, or (Intimacy +1) if he has a negative Tie to the spirit. If successful, it is also treated as a roll to inspire feelings of dread, terror, or insecurity in the spirit.

PRAYERS WRIT IN SCARLET

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Shattered Idols Rampage

When blood is spilled in their names, Siakal and the Reaver alike are there to receive their tithe.

The Reaver makes a (Perception + Occult) roll to sense the general disposition of his worship, whether through the Cult Merit or informal practices — including those who pray to never meet his wrath. For every three successes or fraction thereof, he may ask one of the following questions:

- Where is my worship currently vulnerable, and what threatens it?

- Where does my worship offer me an opportunity I haven't noticed yet?

- How can I best spread a new practice or belief among my worshippers?

If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer prepared, the Reaver's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

The Reaver instantly knows when he meets someone who has performed an act of worship in his name, so long as it counted as at least an inconvenient task.

Reset: Once per scene.

SHAKE THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

MYSTICISM AND DESECRATION CHARM CONCEPTS

Strange Horizon Predator (Essence 1): Resist Wyld corruption so long as any authority in the Wyld is resisted.

Ichor Must be Spilt (Essence 1): Attack a dematerialized enemy. Repurchase to force her to materialize.

Anointment in Blood (Essence 3; Prayers Writ in Scarlet): Mark a select few warriors as Siakal's Champions, granting them shark-related mutations that increase their strength, speed, and ferocity, as well as allowing them amphibious actions.

Return to the Slaughter (Essence 3; Shadow Circle Necromancy): Drop blood into water to summon a battle group of frenzied Drowned (Hundred Devils Night Parade, pp. 59-60)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Shattered Idols Rampage, Adamantine Jaw Technique

Embracing the all-consumptive symbolism of the siaka, the Reaver makes himself into a force of absolute destruction, tearing a Realm flagship into splinters or grinding a jade statue into dust.

This Charm enhances a feat of demolition aimed at a singular object or piece of infrastructure — a thirty-foot tall statue, the temple of a rival god, or a trireme would all qualify. Double Strength to determine if the user qualifies for the feat and reroll 5s and 6s on the roll until they no longer appear. Success ensures the complete destruction of the target within a minute. This Charm cannot destroy what is explicitly indestructible, but even Artifacts may be dismantled and orichalcum molten to slag in the pressure of the Reaver's grasp.

Repeated uses of this Charm, such as to lay waste to an entire palatial complex or destroy an entire fleet

in its drydocks, waive the Willpower cost for further activations.

Offensive

FRENZIED ONSLAUGHT

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform, Versatile

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Sensing the weakness of a foe under attack, the Reaver presses them with relentless assaults.

Onslaught penalty from the Reaver's attack doesn't reset on his target's next turn. Multiple uses of this Charm can stack up to (Essence + 1) onslaught, but onslaught resets as normal if the Reaver fails to attack his target for one round. The Reaver can use this Charm on behalf of an allied battle group attacking at close range after he commands them to do so, which counts as an attack from the Reaver for this purpose.

ARMOR-TEARING HUNGER

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Prerequisite: Frenzied Onslaught

Driven to heights of bloodlust, the Reaver tears through carapace and armor alike to get at his foe's succulent flesh.

The Reaver's attack ignores natural soak equal to the target's onslaught penalty or doubles 10s on a **decisive** damage roll. The attack can be Piercing or can ignore the defense penalty of a Piercing attack if it already has the Piercing tag.

SIAKAL'S REVEL

Cost: 5m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keyword: Feeding

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite: None

Teeth growing, muscles bulging, Siakal's Chosen partakes of the same frenzy that blesses her children.

The Reaver gains a Minor Principle of "I care for nothing but the present slaughter." Each time one of the following happens in the scene, that Intimacy grows by one step to a maximum of Defining:

- The first time he crashes an enemy.

OFFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Wave-Cutting Fins (Essence 2; Frenzied Onslaught): Teon grows steel-sharp fins out of his forearm that serve as paired Brawl weapons.

Essence-Devouring Berserker (Essence 2; Siakal's Revel): Absorb motes based on the enemy's wound penalty after a successful decisive attack.

Crimson Wake Terror (Essence 2; Siakal's Revel): Blood sprayed across the battlefield causes enemies who fail to resist fear-based influence actions to treat the Reaver's surroundings as difficult terrain.

Grim Trophy Acquisition (Essence 3; My Blade Thirsts): Force an enemy to accept a crippling injury claiming the lost organ, and gain a minor magical power based on its nature, such as seeing an enemy's memory from their eye.

Devour the Weak (Essence 3; Strike the Father with the Son): Take a bite out of a grappled foe and consume the flesh, regaining some lost health from decisive savaging attacks.

Death's Crimson Daughters (Essence 4; Crimson Wake Terror): Follow up a decisive attack that dealt 5+ damage to one target with a second area-of-effect decisive attack as the victim's blood turns to flying blades before resetting to base Initiative.

- The first time an enemy's wound penalty increases.
- The first time a non-trivial foe is incapacitated.

The Reaver adds that Intimacy's rating to his effective Strength for calculating **withering** damage and determining what feats of strength he can attempt, to his soak, and to movement rolls made to rush or contest a disengage action.

When that Charm ends, the Intimacy decreases by one step, then fades at the end of the session.

MY BLADE THIRSTS

Cost: 1m per die; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Siakal's Revel

Teeth growing along the edge of an axe, a sword writhing like a living predator, phantasmal jaws wreathing a fist — the Reaver's blows come alive for the hunt.

On a **decisive** attack, the Reaver adds up to (target's wound penalty + 1) extra successes as dice of damage, paying one mote each.

RIVER-RUNS-RED PURSUIT

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Siakal's Revel

Excited by the fear in a fleeing foe's eyes, the Reaver closes in with gleeful bloodlust.

After crashing an opponent with a wound penalty or successfully opposing her disengage roll, Teon can make a reflexive **decisive** attack against her. He adds his opponent's wound penalty to his Initiative when he resets.

STRIKE THE FATHER WITH THE SON

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: River-Runs-Red Pursuit

Leveraging a foe as a weapon, the Reaver swings soldiers into their own ranks to topple over armies.

SCRUTINY CHARM CONCEPTS

Killer's Kinship Appraisal (Essence 1): Use read intention actions to appraise how many deaths are attributable to another character.

Red Ledgers, Bloody Waters (Essence 1; Bleeding Margin Extortion): Identify a character or business' financial vulnerabilities.

Bleeding Carp Innuendo (Essence 2; Bleeding Margin Extortion): Curse a target to be perceived as an imminent failure or risky venture.

Blood-Slaked Monstrosity (Essence 3; Hunger Beyond Satiation): Serving the Reaver temporarily abates the effects of Hunger Beyond Satiation.

Supreme Hunter's Sense (Essence 3): Gain a sixth sense that detects the flow of life-Essence within living beings, identifying their presence without needing to see or hear them.

Seized Assets Retribution (Essence 4; My Fair Cut): When betrayed, everyone recognizes the traitor's property as rightfully belonging to the Reaver.

When the Reaver savages a grappled foe, he may strike another enemy with the victim. He makes the savage attack and a reflexive attack another target within **close** range. If the savage is **withering**, he makes a **withering** reflexive attack against the second target with the grappled foe as an improvised heavy weapon (Accuracy +0, Damage +11, Defense -1), Overwhelming (Strength), and the Brawl and Smashing tags. This second **withering** attack doesn't grant Initiative. On a **decisive** savage, he makes a **decisive** reflexive attack against the second target; if successful, he splits his Initiative evenly between both foes, rounding up and adding (lower of Essence or Strength) damage to each. If he misses, he resolves the savage attack against the grappled target normally.

With an Essence 4 repurchase, this Charm can make a throw/slam attack with a one-Willpower surcharge, adding its **withering** damage bonus to both targets or adding its **decisive** bonus to Initiative before halving it.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by incapacitating a grappled foe with a throw/slam attack.

TIDAL WAVE REBUKE

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: My Blade Thirsts

The Reaver calls upon the wrath of the sea as a rushing wave that topples his foes.

The user makes a **withering** attack against all opponents within a ninety-degree arc out to short range. Instead of its normal damage, the attack rolls (Strength) unsoakable dice of damage against each enemy, including any bonus from Siakal's Revel. Damaged enemies are knocked back one range band and fall prone. The user only gains Initiative from the enemy who lost the highest amount.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by incapacitating a nontrivial foe.

SAWSHARK'S TOOTH

Cost: 5m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Feeding

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Call to the Feast

In the diminishment of Exigence, Siakal lost ownership of Rostrum, the Sawshark's Tooth, one of her oldest and most favored weapons. Her Chosen now holds the right to this jagged, saw-like daiklave wrought from the remains of the first shark.

The Reaver summons Rostrum, a shark-ivory daiklave to which he is automatically attuned at no extra cost. As its serrated edge tears hideous gouges in its foes' flesh; it inspires primal terror; all enemies are treated as having a Minor Tie of Fear towards Rostrum, and its **decisive** attacks increase any wound penalty they inflict by one. At the end of the scene, the daiklave returns to Siakal's hoard.

Teon can unlock Evocations for Rostrum; it deals in gruesome and repulsive violence, predatory instincts, turning fear into an advantage, and the sea as a crushing, dark, hostile environment.

THE FLOOR HAS TEETH

Cost: 8m, 3i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Iron Like Straw

At the Reaver's call, a ghostly siaka's head emerges from the ground or walls, engulfing and viciously tearing apart his foe.

To use this Charm, the Reaver must have Initiative 12+. He makes an unblockable **decisive** attack against an enemy within medium range, ignoring environmental penalties, poor visual conditions, and even full cover. A character struck by this attack may commit to taking the highest possible level of crippling injury (**Exalted**, p. 201) for its damage; if they don't, the Reaver adds extra successes on the attack plus (Strength) as dice to the damage roll. Foes slain are devoured utterly, leaving behind only a splatter of blood. Against enemies swimming or submerged in water, this is a surprise attack.

Reset: Once per scene.

LEGION-KILLING MAELSTROM

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Tidal Wave Rebuke

Possessed of singular killing intent, the Reaver slaughters armies and bystanders alike.

The Reaver gains a devastating action at the start of each of his turns, which may be used to reflexively make an attack against either an enemy battle group or all trivial opponents within his weapon's range. This doesn't count as his combat action for the round. Alternatively, he may use his devastating action to reflexively invoke a Simple Charm that creates an attack, like Tidal Wave Rebuke. This Charm ends at the end of his turn if he didn't spend at least ten motes.

Repurchase at Essence 5 allows the Reaver to use his devastating action against enemies with the Legendary Size Merit, ignoring its benefits as if he possessed the Merit himself.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by entering and resolving a Limit Break.

THIS WORLD HUNGERS

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Feeding

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: The Floor Has Teeth

Dedicating the battlefield to slaughter, the Reaver warps the world around him in a nightmare space of twisted geometries and muffled darkness, where every tree or rock writhes and crawls with growing teeth.

Upon using this Charm, the Reaver makes a (Charisma + [Performance or Presence] + Essence) roll as a terror-based inspire action. Affected characters must attempt to disengage and flee the battle.

For the remainder of the scene, Teon's surroundings out to medium range are considered difficult terrain for all other characters. Any character, friend or foe, who suffers knockdown, fails a withdraw or disengage roll, or ends their turn in Initiative Crash suffers (Essence) dice of lethal damage, once per turn maximum.

Characters who are incapacitated while in this Charm's area of effect are consumed utterly — rendered as sacrifices unto Siakal.

Reset: Once per story.

Scrutiny

LINGERING VIOLENCE DELECTION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The bouquet of battle lingers in the air like blood in the water.

The Reaver doubles 9s on rolls to track or identify targets who have a wound penalty, who have a Tie of fear towards him, or whom he has successfully attacked in the past (Essence) days. If all three conditions are true, he doubles 8s. This can be defeated by magic that conceals scent.

BLEEDING MARGIN EXTORTION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lingering Violence Delection
For all that Teon Saj languished as a clerk, he also cultivated an appreciation for ruthless finance, seeing the bloodshed in bankruptcy.

The Reaver makes a read intentions roll against a target with (Perception + [Bureaucracy or Socialize]), gaining (Perception/2, round up) non-Charm dice. Success reveals the lowest possible price the target would accept for a given good or service, or similar — the meagerest bribe, the least incentive. The Reaver may leverage this knowledge as a Minor Intimacy for bargain rolls, but doing so always sours the target's opinion of him as per a threaten action.

SHARKS AND SIAKA

Sharks use the statistics for a siaka (Hundred Devils Night Parade, p. 187), with the following changes:

- Reduce their Health Levels to -0x2/-1x4/-2x4/-4x4/Incap.
- Reduce their Feats of Strength pool to 8 dice
- Reduce their bite damage to 14 dice.
- Reduce their Soak to 8 and their Hardness to 2.
- Remove the Overwhelming Might Special Ability and the Legendary Size Merit.

HEART-EXPLOITING ELOQUENCE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bleeding Margin Extortion

Once the Reaver seizes hold of a foe's heartstrings, he may savage them at his leisure.

The Reaver doubles 9s on bargain, threaten, and persuade rolls that leverage a known positive Tie, leaving a subtle implication of violence. If the object of that Tie is present in the scene and vulnerable to the Reaver — not under direct, formidable protection — he doubles 8s.

HUNGER BEYOND SATIATION

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: One story

Prerequisite Charms: Bleeding Margin Extortion

The beast within the Reaver cannot be sated, and neither can those who succumb to his words.

The Reaver doubles 9s on an inspire roll to create feelings of hunger, envy, or desire in a single target. On success, they are also afflicted with the Obsession Flaw (**Exalted**, p. 169) at Minor Intensity, focused on any opportunity to fulfill that desire — for food, wine, worship, fear, and the like. If he succeeds by three or more successes, it begins at Major Intensity instead.

Once per story, if the Reaver leverages an Obsession created by this Charm to goad a target into a serious or

SHARK CHARM CONCEPTS

Body of the Ever-Hale Hunter (Essence 2; Skin-Tearing Shagreen): Teon gains immunity to non-magical sickness and improved resistance to poison and magical sickness, along with further slowed ageing.

Gull-Seizing Instinct (Essence 2; Chariot of Tides): Jump up to long range in pursuit of a flying opponent or pursue them through the air using Chariot of Tides.

Hidden Predator Approach (Essence 3; Sky-Treading Fogshark Approach): Gain partial invisibility and suppress noise while continuously moving, whether in or out of combat.

Salvage the Sunken Heart (Essence 2, Ocean Strider's Instinct): Identify and bring forward Intimacies related to craving kindness or companionship to break hostilities, helping Teon in pursuing deception and deceit.

One Among the Shoal (Essence 2; Skin-Tearing Shagreen): Take on the form of a shark indefinitely. Repurchase at Essence 4 to take on a monstrous Legendary Size form while within water, including being treated as a ship-scale actor in naval combat.

Kin to the Shark-Queen (Essence 4, Sovereign Sea-Steed's Summon): Summon a shark-god subordinate of Siakal or one of her Shark Avatar allies to request a boon.

life-changing task to sate it, he loses a point of Limit or regains a point of temporary Willpower.

MY FAIR CUT

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One story

Prerequisite Charms: Bleeding Margin Extortion, Lingering Violence Delectation

As none dare steal from what Siakal is due, her Chosen knows when he is shortchanged — and empowered to seek recompense.

The Reaver may unconsciously activate this Charm when a character betrays a deal with him, rolling (Perception + [Awareness or Bureaucracy]) against her

Resolve to intuit her identity, distance, and direction. He doubles 8s when using Lingering Violence Delectation against her, and until he accepts suitable amends or exacts revenge, he increases the Overwhelming value of **withering** attacks against her by (Essence/2, round up) or doubles 10s on **decisive** damage rolls.

Shark

ADAMANTINE JAW TECHNIQUE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

With teeth harder than iron, the Reaver snaps swords as easily as twigs.

The Reaver adds (higher of Essence or 3) to his Strength to determine if he qualifies for a feat of demolition that could be done through a bite — snapping a sword in two, tearing open a chest. If successful, the feat is accomplished instantly.

CHARIOT OF TIDES

Cost: 3m, (+1a); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Reaver summons a whirlpool to lift him into the air and carry him to his prey.

Drawing from a nearby body of water or spending an anima level to create his own, the Reaver ignores the effects of non-magical difficult terrain on a single action. Alternatively, he may cross an open chasm or move one range band into the air without a roll as long as he ends his movement on solid ground.

With an Essence 2+ repurchase, the user may pay a three motes surcharge to extend the effects of this Charm until he is Crashed. He enjoys the benefits of mounted combat until the Charm ends.

SHARK-QUEEN'S MARQUE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None



The predators of the deep are the Reaver's allies; they obey him as they would obey his mistress.

Natural aquatic predators are treated as having a Minor Tie of fear and awe towards the Reaver and will not attack unless provoked by magic. For sharks and siaka, it is instead a Major Tie of camaraderie. He may communicate with sharks and siaka without a shared language, though their minds are simple and memories short.

Repurchase at Essence 2 expands this Minor Tie to sailors, fishermen, seafaring merchants, and other mortals who depend upon the sea for their livelihood. At Essence 3, this includes water-spirits and un-Exalted characters who resonate with the Essence of the ocean.

SIAKA'S BOTTOMLESS GULLET

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Adamantine Jaw Technique

Whether cleaning up a murder scene or biting through a ship's mast to leave it stranded ashore, Siaka's Chosen's hunger finds many uses.

The Chosen of Slaughter may spend from a few seconds to a couple of minutes to devour any unprotected, non-Artifact item or set of items totaling up to a ton of material, leaving no trace remaining. This may require a feat of demolition.

SKY-TREADING CLOUDSHARK STANCE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Trailing briny mist with every step, the Reaver moves with alacrity belying his brute strength.

The user may move over fragile surfaces without breaking them or leaving footprints, gaining (Essence) non-Charm dice on rolls to climb or navigate difficult terrain, and may run or walk on the surface of water, only sinking when he wishes.

An Essence 2+ repurchase expands this Charm's capabilities, allowing the Reaver to move across truly insubstantial things like chimney smoke or a mist bank, as well as to swim through mist, rain, or clouds.

SEA-SHADOW ALACRITY**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

It is the Reaver's right to shroud himself in shadow and rumor, a predator hidden in wait.

The Reaver reflexively moves one range band in the water and rolls (Dexterity + Stealth) with double 9s to establish concealment. This may be used to dive into the water or swim one range band while underwater and doesn't count as the Reaver's movement action.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by spending a round in concealment from all enemies.

SKIN-TEARING SHAGREEN**Cost:** —(+5m); **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** None

As the power of Siakal's Chosen grows, he takes upon himself the marks of his mistress.

The Reaver's skin takes on a grey tint and a leathery, abrasive texture, granting him the Unnatural Hide Merit at a rating of (Essence). By reflexively committing five motes for the rest of the scene, his skin becomes as cutting as siaka's teeth, causing one die of lethal damage to any opponent that strikes him barehanded, increasing to (lower of Essence or 3) if she starts her turn grappling him. His unarmed attacks deal lethal damage.

CALL TO THE FEAST**Cost:** 5m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Feeding**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Spilling blood into the water, the Reaver calls Siakal's favored beasts out of the deep.

On the Reaver's next turn after using this Charm, a shark emerges out of a nearby source of water. In combat, it immediately rolls Join Battle and seeks to devour the Reaver's foes. Outside of combat, it obeys orders and can follow simple instructions. At Essence 3+, this Charm may instead summon a Size (Essence -2) battle group of sharks or a single siaka.

OCEAN-STRIDER'S INSTINCT**Cost:** —(+3m); **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** None

There is more to Siakal's children than hunger and the frenzy of blood, but the goddess has bent every instinct to that purpose — even the wanderlust that may lie in her Chosen's soul.

As long as he is at sea, Siakal's Chosen can perfectly orient himself from the currents and stars, knowing his location within Creation and doubling 9s on Sail or sea-based Survival rolls, and may introduce facts about the sea and its wildlife using Survival or Sail without a Lore background.

For three motes, this Charm may additionally enhance a Stratagem roll in Naval Combat, doubling 9s. On a successful Positioning roll, he gains one additional Momentum.

RIPLING EARTHEN SHADOW**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Until next turn**Prerequisite Charms:** Sea-Shadow Alacrity

Whether lying in wait or seeking escape, the Reaver is not limited to the watery depths — he may dive even into the depths of the earth.

The Reaver may swim through stone, soil, and other rough or unworked earth as if it were water. If he doesn't emerge on his next turn, he must reactivate this Charm, waiving its Willpower cost, or else be ejected to the nearest open point and knocked prone. While submerged, he appears as a ripple in the earth when he moves and enjoys full cover against attacks unless an enemy uses a feat of strength, gambit, or appropriate stunt to create an opening.

Repurchase at Essence 4 allows the Reaver to swim through metal, wood, tile, and other solid materials. This is always destructive, leaving behind obvious trails where he passes through. Only magically durable materials may resist his passage.

SPRAY THE BLOODMIST**Cost:** 4m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Feeding

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

With a flourish, the Reaver binds blood and water and spreads them into a bank of red-tinged mist.

Thick, blood-tinged mist spreads out to short range of the Reaver, imposing a -2 visual penalty to other characters. With Call to the Feast, sharks and siaka ignore those penalties and may be summoned out of and swim within that mist as if it were water.

SLEEPLESS PREDATOR NATURE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Taking on the nature of the shark, which rests but never truly sleeps, the Reaver trades the respite of dream for the safety of constant vigilance.

The Reaver no longer needs — nor is able to — sleep. Instead, while engaging in physical labor or traveling towards a destination, he may enter a half-awake dissociative state in which he retains full awareness of his surroundings but may not dedicate effort to social or mental tasks. Such time is treated as rest for all purposes, including natural healing and recovering Willpower once per day.

BLOOD-DIMMED TIDE CONCEALMENT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Spray the Bloodmist

Tearing his foe apart, the Reaver disappears within a mist of blood spray.

Upon incapacitating an opponent or inflicting a crippling injury, the Chosen of Slaughter may reflexively roll to enter concealment. If no cover is available, he may still do so, but he comes out of concealment at the end of his next turn. Spray the Bloodmist always counts as cover for this purpose and reduces the cost of this Charm by one mote.

SOVEREIGN SEA-STEED'S SUMMON

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Until reaching destination

Prerequisite Charms: Call to the Feast

Letting out a resonant call, the Reaver summons one of Siakal's most blessed children to carry him across oceans.

Teon summons a manifestation of Siakal, an enormous spirit siaka. The beast is willing to carry the user along with a Size 1 group of people to one destination across the water. As a mount, the spirit siaka has a +5 Speed bonus and may travel by sea at a speed of (50 + [Essence x10]) miles per hour, requiring no sleep but taking a couple of hours each day to hunt and feed. Siakal's manifestation considers itself a peer to her Chosen, and above fighting his battles for him; it will not aid him in combat and will vanish if seriously injured.

Terror

CONFIDENCE IN CONFLICT

Cost: 1m per Guile or Resolve; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

While ready for violence or circled by his allies, the Reaver's smile is one of predatory self-assurance.

The Reaver can add one Resolve and Guile for one mote each for each of the following:

- He has a readied weapon or is armored.
- He has support from at least one other ally as strong as himself.
- He is resisting influence from a character with a wound penalty.

If he fits at least two of these criteria, he may successfully apply his Resolve or Guile even against influence that equals it.

GRINNING MONSTER MIEN

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Transforming his flesh, the Reaver takes on a monstrous mien like his patron's.

The Reaver rerolls up to (Presence/2, round up) failed dice on any fear-based influence and threaten rolls. He

TERROR CHARM CONCEPTS

Death Has Come Ashore (Essence 1; Frenzied Gore Regalia): Upon arriving at a new location or dramatically removing a disguise, roll to spread rumors and nightmares of Teon's exploits.

Wretched Nightmare Smile (Essence 2; Muscle-Enervating Terror): Make a threaten roll that doesn't happen until the target sleeps; they don't attribute it to the Reaver directly.

Heart of Sharpened Flint (Essence 3; What Lesser Terror Dares?): Once per scene, gain special motes equal to a failed influence roll, which can be spent on Terror Charms.

Slay the Captain, Cow the Crew (Essence 3; Death Has Come Ashore): When frightening a character, their subordinates gain a similar Tie of fear, even those not in the scene.

Presence is Violence (Essence 4; Heart-Wracking Carnage): Teon's presence becomes an environmental hazard, dealing damage to those who fear him.

may grant himself the Hideous Merit (**Exalted**, p. 162); if he already has it, he can reroll an additional die.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, Teon can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to make a particularly grotesque spectacle as his flesh rearranges itself and rows of razor-sharp teeth burst through his impossibly wide smile. He makes a reflexive roll to threaten, rerolling up to (Presence) failed dice instead.

FRENZIED GORE REGALIA

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Grinning Monster Mien

Blood and bone are the cerements of the Reaver, and a butcher's blade the symbol of his holy office.

The Reaver gains one bonus dot of Appearance (to a maximum of 6) for the purpose of a threaten roll if he fulfills one of the following:

- He is armed, with at least three dots in his weapon's applicable Ability.
- He is suffering from at least a -1 wound penalty.

- He is dressed conspicuously for slaughter — a sword-tattered coat, blood-stained hands, etc.

For each additional criterion beyond the first, he also gains one non-Charm die.

MUSCLE-ENERVATING TERROR

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Grinning Monster Mien

With a chilling scream, a haunting laugh, or murderous silence, the Reaver saps strength from those who recoil in fear.

While making a fear-based instill or inspire roll or a threaten roll, the Reaver doubles 9s, ignoring penalties for multiple targets or lacking a shared language.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, Teon can spend a one-Willpower surcharge to apply this influence to a character that would normally be immune to fear, such as mindless dead and automata.

NONE MAY FLEE ON TREMBLING LEGS

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Muscle-Enervating Terror

Those who face the Reaver's majesty find their legs buckling beneath them when he approaches.

After a successful fear-based instill or inspire roll or a threaten roll with any Ability, the target treats all movement as difficult terrain while within close range of the Reaver. Rolls to withdraw at that range subtract up to (Essence) successes for each 1 rolled, starting with 7s and moving up.

Repurchase at Essence 2 allows the Reaver to commit a further two motes to extend the effects of this Charm out to short range.

SWEET SCENT OF DREAD

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None May Flee on Trembling Legs

Fear quickens in the heart, giving off a lovely stench as powerful and recognizable as spilt blood.

The Reaver treats characters with a Major Tie of fear towards him as if they have a -1 wound penalty for the purposes of his other Charms or -2 for a Defining Tie.

WHAT LESSER TERROR DARES?

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Confidence in Conflict

So frightful is the Reaver that other monsters balk, and lesser fears touch not his unchained heart.

The Reaver gains +2 Resolve against fear-based influence and may spend motes instead of Willpower to resist successful fear-based influence or threaten rolls at a rate of five motes per Willpower.

HEART-WRACKING CARNAGE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Frenzied Gore Regalia

Blood trickles from the eyes of those who behold the Reaver, their minds and hearts shredded with fear.

The Reaver increases the cost to resist an intimidate roll of any sort against a single target by one Willpower. The target may choose to roll (Reaver's Essence) dice of lethal damage instead, bypassing Hardness; they always suffer at least a single level, even if all dice fail.

Repurchase at Essence 4 allows the Reaver to pay a three mote, one Willpower surcharge to make this Charm compatible with influence rolls with multiple targets.

MENACING HOSTAGE FEINT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Frenzied Gore Regalia

Those who open their hearts to others only make the Reaver's job easier — the chains of love and loyalty make bleeding hearts all the more literal.

The Reaver penalizes his target's Defense by the (Intensity) of a known positive Tie that is present and vulnerable to the Reaver — unprotected allies and friends, members of a group to whom they are loyal, and so forth. If the Reaver is in Initiative Crash, a successful **withering** attack with this Charm allows him to steal an additional (Intensity + 1) Initiative.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by following through on a threat against the subject of a threatened Intimacy.

SWORD-RUSTING COWARDICE CURSE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Muscle-Enervating Terror

A wave of Essence rushes from the triumphant Reaver, rusting blades and shattering staves as if jetsam on the rocks.

After a successful threaten roll of any sort, the Reaver makes an undodgeable (Social Attribute + Presence) disarm gambit against all affected characters within short range. Success shatters mundane weapons; magical weapons are instead weighted down with spiritual rust, reducing their Accuracy by one and their Damage by (Essence) until they are cleaned or honed as a miscellaneous action.

Warfare and Slaughter

SCATTER THE SHOAL

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Chosen of Slaughter's every move disrupts and terrifies weaker enemies, making discipline and drilling impossible to maintain.

This Charm enhances an attack targeting a battle group, treating the group's Drill as if it were Poor (it does not enjoy a Drill bonus to Defense, and rout and rally rolls made in response to the attack have +1 Difficulty). If Drill was already Poor, the group suffers -1 Defense.

LEAD-BY-SLAUGHTER EXAMPLE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

WARFARE AND SLAUGHTER CHARM CONCEPTS

Soul-Drowning Tide (Essence 2; Scatter the Shoal): A Charisma-based threaten roll reduces a battle group's Might as the Reaver's spiritual pressure literally smothers their supernatural potency.

Painting the Altar Red (Essence 3; Glutton-at-the-Banquet Stance): Successfully destroying a battle group allows Teon to make a social influence roll with non-Charisma successes based on the death toll towards any being capable of hearing prayers.

The Meaning of Decimation (Essence 3; Sharing the Siaka's Gift): Follow up a defeat or failed warfare action with brutal, ritualistic punishment, sacrificing a number of soldiers but permanently increasing the Drill of the survivors and granting them a powerful morale bonus.

Hurricane-Baiting Tactics (Essence 4; Siakal's Banquet): Gain a new Stratagem that brings about inclement weather to impair an enemy army, up to outright natural disasters when enacted at sea.

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Spurring all under his command into a frenzy, the sight of the Reaver's carnage is all that his subordinates need to show them what needs to be done.

This Charm allows the user to flurry an order action (**Exalted**, p. 209). If the order is a command to attack and the Reaver is within close range of the target, the order roll doubles 9s. This order may target a single allied shark or siaka as if it were a battle group.

At Essence 2+, if the Reaver's command targets a foe with a wound penalty, he ignores flurry penalties on both actions. The battle group must attack that same target if able.

GLUTTON-AT-THE-BANQUET STANCE

Cost: 6m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Feeding

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Scatter the Shoal

The Reaver slips between his foes like a shark in a school of lesser fish, disregarding their numbers as he eats freely.

Battle groups do not add their Size to their attack rolls against the Reaver, and he does not treat moving through them as difficult terrain. Any time he depletes a battle group's Magnitude track, he rolls (Size before reduction) and gains that much Initiative. Once per day, after destroying or routing a battle group that started the scene at Size 3+, the Reaver can reset his Blood Begets Slaughter anima power.

PUP-EATS-PUP HATCHERY

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lead-by-Slaughter Example

The Reaver teaches brutal lessons in self-reliance to would-be-warriors. There are no friends or battle-mates among Siakal's children, only the bloodbath.

The user spends a week training a battle group of up to size (higher of Essence or 3). Completing the training increases the battle group's drill to average if it was lower. Additionally, its members gain +2 dice on all attack rolls and +1 dot of Willpower but suffer -1 Defense.

SIAKAL'S BANQUET

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lead-by-Slaughter Example

With deep knowledge of Creation's oceans and mastery of strange mists, the Reaver corners his enemies exactly where he wants them.

This Charm enhances a Strategic Maneuver roll. In addition to his planned stratagem, the user may always plan for the Back to the Sea stratagem as an extra effect; as long as he meets the threshold requirements for both stratagems, they apply. When fighting next to shorelines or large bodies of water, Back to the Sea has a Stratagem threshold of 0 — it always applies as long as the Reaver beats his opponent's roll.

This Charm may be used during a boarding action in Naval Combat. In addition to the normal benefits of the selected boarding stratagem, the enemies are affected by the Demoralize stratagem (**Exalted**, p. 212). The effects of the normal Back to the Sea stratagem are increased; slaughter actions leave no survivors, all of whom fall into the water being devoured by Siakal's children. Siakal considers such offerings sacrifices and looks favorably upon any prayer that accompanies them.

SHARING THE SIAKA'S GIFT**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Pup-Eats-Pup Hatchery

Crushing secret algae with the blood of strange beasts, the Reaver prepares a brew that will induce warriors into a berserk frenzy.

The user spends at least an hour inducting a battle group of Size up to (higher of Essence or 3) into a secret ritual. The next time the battle group fights, it is treated as having +1 Might, a Major Principle of “I have no fear,” and doubles 9s on rout checks. These benefits are lost if not used within a week.

ENDLESS BLOODY BUFFET**Cost:** 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Perilous**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Pup-Eats-Pup Hatchery

Like Siakal's children, the Reaver's soldiers feed on the slaughter, emboldened by victory.

When an allied battle group inflicts **decisive** damage on a nontrivial opponent or empties an enemy battle group's Magnitude track, the Reaver reflexively makes a rally for numbers roll, gaining (enemy's Essence or enemy battle group's Size) non-Charm dice.

Willow Specter, Chosen of the Dice

Willow Specter is the Exigent of Plentimon of the Dice, a legendary gambler who won his Exaltation and now seeks the challenge of even greater games.

A WINNING STREAK

Willow Specter has come far for a Nexus street urchin. He knew no school but the gambling hall, keeping himself fed by playing the odds and hustling unwary marks. He came to be a mainstay of the House of Golden Pips' highest-stakes games, dicing with criminal kingpins and Guild factors for their fortunes. He had long since won enough to secure a comfortable life, but gambling was more than just a way to keep himself housed and fed. The streets of Nexus had taught him that life was ugly, unfair, and all too short — why not make the most of what little time he has left? The dice loved him, and he loved them, willing to risk it all just for the thrill of it.

OTHER ROLLS OF THE DICE

Willow Specter is only one potential character concept for the Chosen of the Dice. Other examples include:

Twelvefinger Zheng, the gambler-king of Wu-Ji-an, a feared enforcer for the Benevolent Society of Hellraisers, one of the city's infamous Thirteen Schools.

Three-Pipes Guyeng, an infernalist and sybarite, allied with the demonic patrons of far-off Dajaz (Exalted, p. 100).

A thrill-seeking monster hunter from Whitewall, Okun the Wolf has become unwisely entangled with the Fair Folk that menace the city.

Pressed into the Immaculate Order's service, Lucky Aster, Chosen of the Dice, becomes a terror to Anathema and to any monks foolish enough to dice with her.

Gamblers across Creation pray to Plentimon of the Dice for fortune and prosperity. Always fond of a worthy opponent, the god took interest in Willow Specter, offering him the chance to play against the God of Gamblers. After a day and night of games and wagers, Plentimon proposed one last gamble, staking a spark of Exigence he'd won long ago against the mortal's eternal servitude. As the final roll was made, the dice favored Willow Specter. True to his word, the shocked deity called upon the divine flame, proclaiming Willow Specter the king of gamblers and Exalting him as Chosen of the Dice.

Willow Specter now lives beyond his wildest dreams of avarice, clad in bespoke finery from the Scavenger Lands' finest ateliers and glinting jewelry won from scavenger princes, pirates, and queens. He maintains lavish apartments in Nexus' Cinnabar District, occasionally scattering handfuls of silver coins to the street urchins passing below or inviting them up to share in sumptuous feasts.

Much of Willow Specter's time is still devoted to his favorite pastime. He also maintains a discreet sideline as a troubleshooter, enforcer, and assassin for anyone who can pay his exorbitant fee. He's not in it for the money, but the thrill — he offers steep discounts for interesting clients or exciting jobs, sometimes even working for free. He often works as a bodyguard for Factor Nimah Fel, a ruthless merchant who's made many enemies within the Guild. Willow Specter has little love for the odious Guildsman but enjoys the opportunity to thwart the many attempts on his life.

While Willow Specter still lives in Nexus, he often travels the Scavenger Lands, whether visiting the gambling halls of Great Forks or carrying out intrigues in Lookshy at a client's behest. He delights in learning unfamiliar games, playing Gateway with visiting Dynasts or the knucklebone dice games of nomadic shepherds.

Willow Specter comes across as confident and carefree, almost to the point of foolishness. While he's a daredevil at heart, he's not quite as blithe as he seems. Hard-won experience has taught him that every winning streak eventually ends, and he knows that his untroubled life of thrills and fortune can't go on forever. But while a part of him dreads it, Willow Specter isn't one to waver when the chips are down.

Play Willow Specter if you want:

- to be a master gambler.
- to overcome the greatest of obstacles and enemies with nothing more than your incredible luck.
- to lead a life of thrill-seeking adventure.
- to seek out great wealth and part others from their own.

Plentimon of the Dice

Plentimon, god of gamblers and gambling, is rarely found in his heavenly abode, taking his thrills in Creation instead. His silhouette is that of a man, but his appearance is utterly inhuman — he is a void given shape, a deep darkness filled with countless glowing flecks of gold and silver.

Much of Plentimon's time is spent at Diving Sea Snake Casino, the greatest gambling house in the Coral Archipelago, where he is both proprietor and player. His casino offers countless forms of gambling, from dice and cards to the most exotic and extreme of games. Almost anything can be wagered here — with Plentimon's blessing, players may stake memories, longevity, or even souls. Those foolish enough to gamble with the god himself can win incredible rewards and blessings — though none so great as Willow Specter — if they're willing to play for the highest of stakes. Those who can't or won't pay off their gambling debts suffer misfortunes ranging from indentured servitude to fatal cases of bad luck.

When away from his casino, Plentimon travels the world in search of gamblers and gaming halls, whether in disguise or his full divine splendor. He always offers

a fair game, though he has no compunctions against evening the odds if his opponents make use of their own supernatural power. Not all of his worldly dealings are strictly legal under heavenly law, but his amiable manner and the generous lines of credit he extends to gods visiting his casino have kept him out of trouble thus far.

Plentimon expects nothing from his Chosen — Willow Specter won his Exaltation fairly, and the God of Gamblers never reneges on a wager. By the same token, he offers no charity to his Chosen. If Willow Specter seeks his patron's aid or advice, he'll have to gamble for it just like anything else.

Traits

Willow Specter is an Essence-based Exalted intended for Celestial play (**Exigents**, p. 46). Dodge, Larceny, and Socialize are his favored Abilities.

ANIMA

Willow Specter's anima banner resembles his divine patron's visage: a jet-black aura flecked with splashes of gold and silver. His iconic anima might depict a cascade of black dice with gold and silver pips, a hoard of heaped-up coins and treasures, a playing card whose symbolism reflects his personality, or similar imagery.

ANIMA EFFECTS

Willow Specter possesses the following anima powers:

Fortune's Fool (0m or 3m; Reflexive; Instant): Willow Specter can invoke this power for free before an (Attribute + Ability) roll to set aside the die that rolls the highest number, removing it (and any successes from it) from the roll and adding it to the fortune pool. Alternatively, he can spend three motes to add a die from the fortune pool to an (Attribute + Ability) roll or static value, as a non-Charisma bonus. Each successful die adds +1 to that value or +2 for 10s.

Lord of All Games (Permanent): While playing an unfamiliar game, Willow Specter halves any penalties he suffers due to his lack of knowledge. This also applies on penalties to social rolls for lacking familiarity with the game's social context. Once he's finished a game — or two rounds of a multiple round game — he fully understands it, ignoring such penalties entirely. He adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charisma dice on rolls to play games once he's familiar with them.

Plentimon's Warrant (10m, 1wp [5m]; Simple; Instant): Willow Specter sanctifies a game to the God of Chance, briefly flaring his anima even if it's dim. Disrupting or interfering with the game costs one Willpower or two

Willpower for hostile or violent action. Any player who cheats or reneges on a wager — even Willow Specter — is cursed with incredible bad luck, comparable to breaking an Eclipse oath (**Exalted**, p. 176). Willow Specter need not be a player in the game, though this effect ends if he stops observing the game. He can't use this power in combat.

THE FORTUNE POOL

The Fortune's Fool anima power lets Willow Specter remove dice from his rolls and save them for later, storing those dice in the fortune pool. (You don't have to physically set aside the dice — you can just write down their result).

These dice can then be added to subsequent rolls with Fortune's Fool or certain Charms. When determining how many successes the roll receives, that die is included as if it had been rolled with the rest. **This doesn't count as a bonus from Charms.** Added dice are also included in the roll for the purposes of effects that care about rolling specific numbers, like doubling 9s or three-of-a-kinds.

Example: Willow Specter rolls (Manipulation + Presence) to bluff a faerie prince and uses Fortune's Fool to add a banked 10. The only successful dice he rolls are a 7, an 8, and a 9, as well as the 10 from the fortune pool, for a total of five successes.

If an action fails or succeeds as a result of dice being moved to or from the fortune pool, some implausible coincidence occurs that causes that result: a thrown knife ricochets off a passing pigeon's beak; every sentence of an eloquent speech is drowned out by a clap of thunder.

Up to (higher of Essence or 3) dice can be stored in the fortune pool at a time. Once the limit is reached, Willow Specter can remove stored dice to make room for more.

Many of Willow Specter's Charms involve the fortune pool, either increasing its power or expanding the ways in which he can use it.

MARTIAL ARTS

Willow Specter isn't restricted by the Terrestrial keyword but doesn't gain Mastery effects. He can freely combine his Martial Arts and Chosen of Dice Charms.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

Willow Specter can initiate into sorcery's Celestial Circle and necromancy's Ivory Circle.

EVOCATIONS

Willow Specter is resonant with starmetal and neutral with all other materials.

THE GREAT CURSE

Willow Specter's Great Curse exacerbates the worst of his daredevil nature, driving him to foolhardiness and recklessness: taking unnecessary risks that endanger himself or others, wagering things that he can't afford to lose, spending vast sums wastefully, gambling to the point of neglecting important responsibilities, and so on.

Roleplaying the Great Curse grants a Role Bonus (**Exalted**, p. 177). However, while the Great Curse may cause complications for Willow Specter and his Circlemates, it shouldn't ruin other players' fun out-of-character. If a dramatic moment caused by the Great Curse isn't something that the entire group can appreciate, it doesn't award this bonus.

Longevity and Death

Willow Specter's Exaltation extended his life beyond its mortal span, but it's unclear by how much — as with many of Plentimon's blessings, it's a gamble. It's unlikely his Exaltation will endure past his death.

Charms

Willow Specter's Charms revolve around luck, games, and risk-taking, whether he's playing cards or fighting for his life. Many of his Charms use the fortune pool as a resource or expand on how he can use them.

GAMES IN PLAY

Playing games of skill is typically an opposed roll, with each player using whatever dice pool best fits their approach to the game. Cards, dice, and other staples of illegal gambling can always use (Wits + Larceny), while Gateway and other strategy games can always use (Intelligence + War). A single roll can cover multiple rounds of play.

Cheating is typically a separate opposed roll — usually the cheater's (Dexterity + Larceny) against the target's (Perception + Awareness). Success typically adds 1 to 3 dice to the cheater's roll or inflicts a -1 to -3 penalty on opponents, depending on what exactly the cheater is doing.

Games of chance can be resolved by flipping a coin or rolling a single die to see if it's odd or even. Cheating replaces the coin flip with the opposed roll to catch the deception.

DEFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Aegis of Happy Coincidence (Essence 2; Unbroken Streak Defense): Defend other with a stroke of luck, using Willow Specter's (Essence) instead of Parry, which can be increased further by expending fortune dice.

Peril-Trumping Play (Essence 3; Death-Discarding Tactic): After a decisive damage roll against him, use successful dice from the fortune pool to reroll all damage dice that rolled those numbers. If he expends a 7, an 8, a 9, and a 10, he avoids all damage from the attack.

Excellencies

Willow Specter doesn't have formalized Excellencies; he can add dice to any (Attribute + Ability) roll or increase any static value for which he has an applicable Ability at 3+, paying one mote per die. He may add up to (Attribute + Ability) dice to rolls. Automatic successes count as two dice towards this limit. Static values such as Evasion or Resolve can be raised by half this dice cap, rounded down.

Defensive

CLOSE SHAVE SURVIVAL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Few arrows are lucky enough to graze the Chosen of the Dice, let alone strike true.

Willow Specter subtracts (higher of Essence or 3) from the post-soak damage of a **withering** attack against him, or one die from the raw damage of a **decisive** attack. He can expend a successful die from the fortune pool to increase this penalty by -1 or -2 for a 10. This Charm can also be used to negate damage from environmental hazards, falling, and other sources of damage.

With a repurchase, Willow Specter can pay a one-mote surcharge to use this Charm after an attack roll but before the damage roll. It can also be declared after the roll of non-attack sources of damage, if applicable (e.g., failing a Resistance roll).

NEAR MISS EVASION

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Willow Specter's artless stumbling carries him out of harm's way, confounding his foes.

Willow Specter gains +1 Defense against an attack. If he successfully defends against it, he may bank the highest die on the attack roll in the fortune pool.

ILL FORTUNE REPRISAL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Counterattack, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Near Miss Evasion

Those who test their luck against Plentimon's Chosen shouldn't be surprised when it runs out.

If Willow Specter successfully defends against an attack from close range, he makes a **decisive** counterattack with (Wits + Larceny). If he used Fortune's Fool to enhance his Defense, he also adds that bonus on the attack roll, though he can't use it a second time to enhance the roll.

This counterattack doesn't involve any overt action by Willow Specter — its damage is caused by a bizarre coincidence. It doesn't break concealment if he uses it while hidden.

If Willow Specter knows Odds-and-Ends Roulette, it enhances the use of Fortune's Fool on this Charm's attack roll as though it is made with an improvised weapon.

An Essence 3 repurchase increases this Charm's range to medium.

BLIND LUCK SIDESTEP

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Near Miss Evasion

Bad luck finds no purchase on Plentimon's Chosen, rebuked by the master gambler's swagger.

Willow Specter halves any penalties to his Defense,

rounded down, except for penalties from surprise attacks. If his attacker rolls any 1s, he negates the penalties entirely instead of halving them.

UNBROKEN STREAK DEFENSE

Cost: —(+1i); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Blind Luck Sidestep

Trusting in his luck to hold a moment more, the Chosen of the Dice walks unscathed across the battlefield.

When the Chosen of Dice uses Fortune's Fool to enhance his Defense, he can pay a one-Initiative surcharge to retain that bonus until his next turn. This bonus is only non-Charm against the initial attack, counting as a Charm bonus against subsequent attacks.

UNLUCKY ASSASSIN'S FROWN

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Blind Luck Sidestep

Plentimon's Chosen evades a would-be assassin without even realizing she's there, distracted by a passing butterfly or kneeling to tie an undone sandal.

Willow Specter negates a surprise attack's Defense penalty. Against an ambush, his Defense is set to 2, and he can expend any number of dice from his fortune pool to raise it higher, up to a maximum of his base Defense.

Either way, a successful defense results from pure chance. Willow Specter remains unaware of his attacker, though she still loses concealment against other characters. He suffers no onslaught penalty against an attack he avoids.

FUMBLING FOE ASSURANCE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Dice Tricks (Lucky Number), Near Miss Evasion

Even the most experienced assassins stumble over their own feet as they pursue the Chosen of the Dice.

Willow Specter can use this Charm after an attack roll against him, causing up to (Essence) 1s on the attack roll

to subtract successes from it. If he has a 1 in the fortune pool, he may inflict it on the attack roll.

UNTOUCHABLE LUCK APPROACH

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Unbroken Streak Defense

The vagaries of the battlefield yield to Willow Specter's good fortune, making his survival a sure thing.

Willow Specter ignores one point of penalty to his Defense from any source. He reduces the cost of Blind Luck Sidestep and Fumbling Foe Assurance by one mote. He also waives Unbroken Streak Defense's Initiative surcharge, removing the Perilous keyword from that Charm.

MISPLACED BLADE MISFORTUNE

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Ill Fortune Reprisal

Willow Specter's foes rarely escape with their dignity intact.

When Willow Specter uses Ill Fortune Reprisal, he can pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to clash with it instead of making a counterattack.

STUMBLING FOOL GRACE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unbroken Streak Defense

Plentimon's Chosen makes a virtue of folly, emerging unscathed from perils that would be fatal to the cautious or the wise.

Willow Specter perfectly defends against a **decisive** attack or other source of **decisive** damage but suffers a misfortune in turn, chosen by the Storyteller. He might trip and fall prone, drop his weapon, lose sight of a concealed enemy whose Stealth he'd previously beaten, etc.

Stumbling Fool Grace lets Willow Specter block unblockable attacks and dodge undodgeable ones but can't defend against ambushes, as usual. Against recurring sources of uncountable damage, Willow Specter is rendered immune for the scene.

Reset: Once per scene. No reset is required against uncountable damage.

Fortune

ALWAYS DOUBLE DOWN

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

No matter how high the stakes, Plentimon's Chosen can always raise them higher.

Upon learning this Charm, choose two of the following upgrades, each of which allows Willow Specter to add a second die from his fortune pool using Fortune's Fool on a particular roll or static value. He can't add two 10s, unless the opposed character is playing some sort of game or contest with him or under a specific circumstance mentioned in each upgrade.

Cheaters Ever Prosper: Willow Specter can add two dice on a Larceny or Stealth roll. He can add two 10s if all opposing rolls suffer at least a -2 penalty.

Headless Daredevil Excitement: Willow Specter can add two dice to a Join Battle roll. He can add two 10s if any of his enemies are in concealment, regardless of whether he's aware of them.

Impeccable Poker Face: Willow Specter can add two dice to enhance his Guile or Resolve. He can add two 10s if he faces a Psyche effect, Shaping effect, or sorcerous curse or if the opposed roll would catch him in a lie or undermine a disguise.

Impossible Shot Assurance: Willow Specter can add two dice on a **withering** attack. He can add two 10s if his target's Initiative is at its base value — usually 3 — or lower.

Roaming Gambler Ways: Willow Specter can add two dice on a movement action or in a race or similar contest. He can add two 10s if his roll is unopposed or if the only characters opposing it are crashed or trivial.

Spot the Marked Card: Willow Specter can add two dice on a Perception-based Awareness, Investigation, Socialize, or Survival roll. He can add two 10s if he's rolling to detect a hidden danger.

Well-Spoken Scoundrel Eloquence: Willow Specter can add two dice to enhance a bargain, persuade, or

instill roll. He can add two 10s on influence that aligns with one of his Major or Defining Intimacies.

Additional options can be purchased for three experience points or one bonus point.

CUNNING DICE TRICKS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

A gambler's wiles are illimitable, bringing good fortune to every roll.

Upon learning this Charm, choose two of the following upgrades to Fortune's Fool.

Lucky Number: Instead of setting aside the highest die, Willow Specter can choose a number before rolling and set aside all dice that roll the chosen number. He only has to add one of them to the fortune pool unless he wants to set aside more.

Change Your Luck (Prerequisites: Lucky Number): When Willow Specter uses Lucky Number to add one or more unsuccessful dice to the fortune pool, he may reroll one of them before either leaving it in the fortune pool or returning it to the current dice pool.

Neverending Streak: The fortune pool can hold an additional die. This option can be purchased up to (Essence) times.

Overflowing Jackpot: When Willow Specter uses Fortune's Fool to set aside dice and rolls at least three successful dice that show the same number, he can add an extra 7 to the fortune pool.

Spinning Die Settles: When using Fortune's Fool to set aside dice, Willow Specter can pay a three-mote surcharge to use it after the roll.

Underhanded Prowess: Fortune's Fool gains the Mute keyword.

Additional options can be purchased for three experience points or one bonus point.

MAKE YOUR OWN LUCK

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Dice Tricks

The Chosen of Dice's good fortune is beyond any plausible explanation.

Willow Specter's player may spend a successful die from the fortune pool to make a dramatic edit to the scene, representing his uncanny luck. Examples include winning a fair game of chance, discovering a useful item, a helpful character arriving, or finding a hidden passageway while fleeing pursuers. The Storyteller can veto dramatic edits that stretch credulity or feel out of place but should propose a narrower version of that edit that still provides a significant advantage.

If the Chosen of Dice spends a 10 to use this Charm, he waives its Willpower cost.

Reset: Once per day.

RISK IS REWARD

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Dice Tricks

Never settling for a sure thing, Plentimon's Chosen embraces risk at every opportunity.

Willow Specter converts all automatic successes added to a (Attribute + Ability) roll into bonus dice, with each success becoming two dice. If the successes were a non-Charm bonus, the dice are as well. This applies to successes from adding fortune dice; the original results of the added dice are replaced by the new rolls.

Alternatively, instead of using a static value, Willow Specter can roll the relevant dice pool — e.g., (Wits + Integrity) for Resolve. Each +1 bonus to the static value is converted to two bonus dice, as above, while each point of penalty subtracts two dice. If he beats the opposed roll, he can use Fortune's Fool after the roll to bank his highest die without subtracting its successes.

SNAKE EYES BITE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Shaping (Fate)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Dice Tricks

Those who incur Willow Specter's wrath suffer streaks of terrible misfortune.

FORTUNE CHARM CONCEPTS

Luck Rubs Off (Essence 2; Luck Comes Due): Add a die from the fortune pool onto an ally's roll. If that ally rolls at least three successful dice that show the same number, Willow Specter doesn't lose the added die.

Stolen Fortune Shakedown (Essence 2; Snake Eyes Bite): Steal the highest die from a failed attack and add it to the fortune pool. If the enemy rolls at least two 1s, Willow Specter can use this Charm even if the roll succeeds.

Willow Specter curses someone with bad luck, rolling ([Charisma, Manipulation, or Wits] + Larceny) against the Resolve of a character within medium range as he warns her of misfortune to come. If successful, the victim is at risk of bad luck whenever she makes a roll — the Storyteller can invoke the curse to force her to reroll her highest successful die.

The curse ends once it's triggered (higher of Essence or 3) times during the scene. The Storyteller should only invoke the curse when it's beneficial to Willow Specter or serves his aims in using this Charm.

Willow Specter can expend an unsuccessful die from the fortune pool when he uses this Charm. If he does, the cursed character replaces his highest success with that die's result instead of rerolling it.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, Willow Specter can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to affect all rolls the target makes in the scene or for the following day if he rolls five or more extra successes.

Special activation rules: If Willow Specter catches someone cheating at a game, he can use this Charm reflexively, adding (Essence) automatic successes on the roll. He need not be playing in the game to do so.

FORTUITOUS ACQUAINTANCE TRICK

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Make Your Own Luck

The Chosen of the Dice always seems to know just the right person for any job.

Willow Specter can use Make Your Own Luck to retroactively reveal that he's fortuitously made the



acquaintance of someone nearby. He can specify a profession or expertise possessed by that character — a blacksmith, someone with combat prowess, a savant with a certain Lore background, etc. — as well as the general nature of their relationship. The Storyteller invents the other details of this character.

The introduced character has at least a positive Minor Tie toward Willow Specter, with a context chosen by the Storyteller. If Willow Specter spent a 10 from the fortune pool, he can ask her to perform an inconvenient task (**Exalted**, p. 216) without needing to make an influence roll or leverage an Intimacy.

Reset: Once per story.

LUCK COMES DUE

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Risk is Reward

Should Plentimon's Chosen find himself on a losing streak, he can always change his fortune.

Reroll all dice in the fortune pool. Willow Specter gains one mote for each failure that's rerolled into a success. As long as at least one die is rerolled into a 10, he also gains one Willpower.

Reset: Once per day, unless reset by emptying the fortune pool and then filling it completely. With Essence 3, this becomes once per scene.

LOADED DICE METHOD

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Luck Comes Due

Leaving everything and nothing to chance, Plentimon's Chosen makes the most unlikely victories inevitable.

Instead of making a nonextended (Attribute + Ability) roll, Willow Specter empties his fortune pool, using all successful dice from it as his roll. Any failed dice in the pool are rerolled once to determine if they add successes. Bonus dice and automatic successes still apply normally.

If Willow Specter uses this Charm while his fortune pool is full, he adds (Essence) successes as well.

Backer: Kris Baxter

STACKED DECK SYNCHRONICITY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Make Your Own Luck

Capricious fortune is shameless in playing favorites.

This Charm lets Willow Specter specialize in certain kinds of dramatic edits. Upon purchasing this Charm, his player chooses two of the categories of dramatic edits below. When he uses Make Your Own Luck to make such an edit, he reduces its cost by two motes, and its reset becomes once per scene.

- Winning games of chance.
- Finding useful items.
- Finding shortcuts or hidden routes.
- Being mistaken for someone else.
- Picking the correct option at random when presented with multiple possibilities.

Additional options can be purchased for three experience points or one bonus point.

NEXT ROUND EXCITEMENT

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Loaded Dice Method

The Chosen of the Dice's luck never runs out.

Willow Specter rolls (Wits + Larceny) and can then set aside any of these dice in the fortune pool. After doing so, he gains motes equal to the roll's remaining successes, maximum (higher of Essence or 3). In combat, he can gain Initiative instead of motes.

Reset: Once per day.

RAGS-TO-RICHES ASCENSION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fortuitous Acquaintance Trick, Stacked Deck Synchronicity

Chance events and happy accidents drop allies, riches, and influence into Willow Specter's lap.

Willow Specter rolls (Wits + [Larceny, Presence, or Socialize]). Every three successes he rolls lets him gain one dot of the Allies, Backing, Contacts, Influence, Followers, Mentor, Resources, or Retainers Merits. If he adds dice from the fortune pool to this roll, their successes are doubled.

Characters represented by these Merits don't automatically gain positive Ties toward Willow Specter, but they have reasons of their own to work with him in whatever capacity the Merit entails. Willow Specter can't recruit specific characters with this Charm or choose the source of his Backing or Influence; he must take what fortune gives him.

At the end of the story, the Merits are lost as the recruited characters return to their lives unless the Storyteller deems that Willow Specter's actions qualify to retain them long term as Story Merits (**Exalted**, p. 158).

Reset: Once per story.

LUCKIEST MAN ALIVE

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Next Round Excitement

Luck bends the world to Willow Specter's will and whim, making his desires a sure thing.

Willow Specter empties his fortune pool, then fills it with 10s.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by expending all 10s from the fortune pool and then filling it entirely with 10s.

Gambling

LAUGHING ROGUE LEGERDEMAIN

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Who could doubt Willow Specter's honest smile?

GAMBLING CHARM CONCEPTS

Unsleeping Casino Endeavor (Essence 1; Risk-Courting Renewal): Go without sleep or sustenance by devoting time to playing games of chance.

Unexpected Spectacle Distraction (Essence 2; Laughing Rogue Legerdemain): Roll Stealth to enter concealment even without an adequate hiding space thanks to an opportune distraction.

Empty-Handed Sleuth Misfortune (Essence 3; Laughing Rogue Legerdemain): Make a retroactive conceal evidence roll to oppose an investigation, adding all successful dice in the fortune pool to the roll. If successful, the evidence is destroyed by chance events before it can be discovered.

Miracle-Wagering Mastery (Essence 3; Impossible Wager Approach): Use Impossible Wager Approach to wager Eclipse Charms, Martial Arts, spells, and similar magic.

When the Chosen of Dice is caught cheating, he reflexively makes a special (Manipulation + [Larceny or Presence]) instill roll to explain it away. Affected characters accept his excuse, no matter how feeble, but gain a Minor Tie of suspicion toward him. This influence can't be resisted.

With Essence 2, Willow Specter can pay a three-mote surcharge to use this Charm when caught in a lie or when his disguise is exposed. Characters with knowledge that directly contradict his explanation or who have an opposing Intimacy can pay one Willpower to resist.

Reset: Once per game, social event, or similar interaction.

RISK-COURTING RENEWAL

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Willow Specter's spirit is renewed by the thrill of dice and cards.

When Willow Specter succeeds on a roll to play or cheat in a game, he gains motes equal to his 9s and 10s. He likewise

gains motes from read intentions and influence rolls made against fellow players. If he used Fortune's Fool to add dice, each success from those dice also grants an additional mote. Willow Specter can't gain more than five motes per roll. These motes are lost if not spent by the end of the game.

PLAYING THE PLAYER

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Risk-Courting Renewal

Those bested by Plentimon's Chosen may find the greatest loss is to their ego.

When Willow Specter beats someone in a game, he rolls (Wits + Larceny), banking a pool of non-Charm dice equal to his successes. If he adds dice from the fortune pool to this roll, their successes are doubled. He can add up to (higher of Essence or 3) banked dice on the following rolls against that character:

- Rolls to play or cheat in games against him. The added dice are converted to non-Charm successes on such rolls.
- Influence rolls that target only that character.
- Instill rolls to turn other's opinions against that character.
- Read intentions rolls.
- Larceny rolls to steal from him.

Reset: Once per day.

BLAME CAST AWRY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Laughing Rogue Legerdemain
The Chosen of Dice courts fortune's favor with the audacity of his lies, blaming his rivals for the cards up his sleeve.

When Willow Specter uses Laughing Rogue Legerdemain, affected characters no longer gain a Tie of suspicion toward him — instead, they gain that Tie for anyone who accused him. This influence can be resisted, but if targets have a negative Tie toward the accuser, resisting this influence requires entering a Decision Point and citing another Intimacy of equal or

greater intensity. Characters who resist form a negative Tie towards Willow Specter as normal.

FINDING THE FICKLE FUTURE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Playing the Player

The future may be uncertain, but a master gambler always knows how to read the odds.

Willow Specter predicts someone's future by rolling dice, drawing cards from a deck, or similar divinations that employ a game's accouterments, spending at least a scene doing so. His subject must be present, and a willing participant, or else Willow Specter must have played a game against him previously in the current session.

Willow Specter asks a single question about the target's near future and rolls (Intelligence + [Larceny or Occult]). He can add an additional die on the roll with Fortune's Fool, and bonus dice banked with Playing the Player can be spent on this roll. The difficulty depends on how far into the future the question reaches: difficulty 1 for a day, difficulty 3 for a week, or difficulty 5 for a month. He can't ask questions that go any further than that.

If successful, the Storyteller should answer Willow Specter's question based on what the Storyteller thinks is most likely to occur. For every three extra successes, Willow Specter may ask an additional question related to the Storyteller's answer.

Special activation rules: Willow Specter may use Playing the Player together with this Charm to bank his extra successes on the roll rather than using them for questions. He can allocate his extra successes between questions and banked dice however he wishes.

Reset: This Charm can only be used to predict a character's future once per story unless subsequent developments render the Storyteller's answers incorrect.

Backer: David Alan Smith

IMPOSSIBLE WAGER APPROACH

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Playing the Player

At Willow Specter's table, all wagers are possible.

Willow Specter allows a player in a game to wager one of the following abstracts, which takes form as a jet gambling chip, flecked with gold and silver:

- Memories.
- Intimacies.
- Social status or official positions, as represented by the Backing or Influence Merit. (The character doesn't need to formally have that Merit as long as their status qualifies for it).
- Years of one's lifespan. This can also include the gambler's youth, aging him for each year she loses and restoring youth to whoever claims it.
- Souls. Such wagers are of little practical value to most, though they're coveted by creatures who feed on souls, necromancers seeking to conduct unwise experiments, and the like. Note that few things can survive losing their souls.

The character making the wager doesn't lose the quality immediately. Only once the game ends is it stripped from her and imbued into the chip, letting whoever holds it claim that quality for themselves. If a game is interrupted and never reaches its end, the chip dissolves, and no transfer occurs.

With Essence 3, this Charm's duration becomes one game, facilitating any number of wagers made during it.

At the Storyteller's discretion, Willow Specter might be able to stake his Exaltation to a mortal gambler at the cost of his life.

MIDNIGHT CROSSROADS JUDGMENT

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Willow Specter walks the world unseen, passing judgment on those who'd cheat Plentimon's justice.

Willow Specter adds the Mute keyword to Plentimon's Warrant (p. 166) and can use it without flaring his anima. He can still choose to do so, which lowers its cost by five motes while at dim anima.

ARBITER OF FALLEN DICE**Cost:** —(+5m); **Mins:** Essence 4**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Midnight Crossroads Judgment*Willow Specter watches over every card drawn, every roll of the die.*

Willow Specter can pay a five-mote surcharge to extend the duration of Plentimon's Warrant to Indefinite. He can apply its effects to any game he observes, including multiple games at a time. He can choose to flare his anima whenever he does so.

ULTIMATE STAKES ESCALATION**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Shaping (Fate)**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Arbiter of Fallen Dice, Impossible Wager Approach*The Chosen of the Dice gambles with demons, death, and the deep blue sea, wagering the world against its salvation.*

Willow Specter can convince his enemies or competitors to resolve a conflict through gambling instead of the usual means: wars, trade disputes, and even romantic rivalries can be decided by a throw of the dice. This is a ([Charisma, Manipulation, or Wits] + Larceny or Presence) persuade roll. He can use Fortune's Fool to add up to (Essence) dice from his fortune pool. If the opposing force is a group, Willow Specter need only make this roll against its leader or its most powerful member.

If this roll succeeds, the target must enter a Decision Point to resist, calling upon a negative Tie towards Willow Specter or an Intimacy reflecting a dislike of gambling, games or chance that is equal or greater than whatever Intimacy motivates her to pursue what she would win. If she agrees to Willow Specter's terms, she faces him in a game of his choice. Neither she nor anyone else on her side can take any steps related to their original plan of action until the game is concluded. If the challenged enemy wins the game, this obstacle is cleared away, allowing her to resume her original approach. However, if she loses, she and everyone on her side must abide by this defeat, abandoning their course of action for at least the rest of the story.

A foe unwilling to accept Willow Specter's victory may do so by spending five Willpower if she cites a Defining

Intimacy in a Decision Point or has conclusive evidence that Willow Specter cheated. If the challenged enemy resists with Willpower, all her subordinates are freed.

Even if Willow Specter's enemies resist, fortune frowns on their efforts. If they initiate hostilities against him in the same session, they don't make Join Battle rolls. Instead, they begin combat crashed at Initiative 0. Willow Specter receives only one Initiative Break from this, no matter how many enemies are crashed.

Alternatively, this Charm can be used to "gamble" with natural forces and unnatural calamities, bringing an end to all manner of dangers. It's typically a ([Manipulation or Wits] + Larceny) roll against a difficulty of 5–10, set by the Storyteller based on the scope and severity of the threat in question. Success wins a reprieve of some kind from the threat, which lasts until at least the end of the story. Examples include:

- Large-scale environmental hazards, harsh climate, and natural disasters. Success might divert a hurricane from its course to spare a city or mitigate a harsh winter for a village.
- Bordermarches, shadowlands, and similar otherworldly incursions. Success can permanently revert up to (Essence x 10) square miles of corrupted land to Creation or seal a portal or similar intrusion shut for at least a story.
- Sorcerous workings and similar ongoing magics that operate independently of their user, like a Sidereal prophecy or a Solar's Order-Confering Action (**Exalted**, p. 289). Success can permanently negate weaker magic, like a Terrestrial Circle working, while more powerful effects are suppressed for at least a story.

Willow Specter's player and the Storyteller should work together to determine the specifics of how this works. There are limits to what can be gambled with — this Charm can't be used if the participants can't resolve the issue or if the Storyteller feels that it is too abstract or expansive to meaningfully engage with (e.g., "the transience of all things" or "the Realm").

Reset: Once per story.**Gaile and Resolve****CARDS HELD CLOSE****Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cunning Dice Tricks (Lucky Number)

The Chosen of Dice keeps his heart well hidden from snooping eyes, giving nothing away.

Up to (Essence) 1s on a roll against Willow Specter's Guile subtract successes. If he has a 1 in the fortune pool, he may inflict it on the roll.

FORTUNE-FAVORED BRAVADO

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Confidence comes easy to those blessed with good fortune.

Willow Specter can use this Charm after his Resolve is beaten by influence, letting him use the fortune pool to resist it. He can expend a 10 or two other successful dice in place of one Willpower.

MYSTERIOUS GAMBLER GUISE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Fortune conspires to shroud Willow Specter's true motives from even the most sustained scrutiny.

When Willow Specter uses Fortune's Fool to enhance his Guile, he can commit its mote cost to retain that bonus for one day. However, this bonus is only non-Charm against the initial roll, counting as a Charm bonus against subsequent rolls.

PRECARIOUS FOOL PRETENSE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Cards Held Close

The Chosen of Dice seems little more than a grinning fool, his riches ripe for the taking.

When someone fails to read Willow Specter's intentions, he can use this Charm. The opposing character believes she succeeded, receiving a result that makes him seem foolish, overconfident, or an easy mark

GUILE CHARM CONCEPTS

Mien of Starry Mystery (Essence 1; Mysterious Gambler Guise): Willow Specter's visage dissolves into swirling darkness, filled with starry flecks of gold. This conceals his identity and impedes rolls against his Guile.

Blithe Fool Caprice (Essence 3; Fortune-Favored Bravado): Expend fortune dice instead of citing an Intimacy in a Decision Point.

Accursed Treasure Wager (Essence 3; Blithe Fool Caprice): Break free from a Psyche effect, Shaping effect, or sorcerous curse by winning a game against the character who used it, turning that effect back on her.

— Willow Specter's choice. If she rolled any 1s, Willow Specter waives the Willpower cost.

UNWAVERING GAMBLER'S HONOR

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Fortune-Favored Bravado

Willow Specter lives by a code. It's not a great code, but he lives by it.

Willow Specter treats any social influence that would cause him to refrain from gambling or renege on a wager as unacceptable unless it's supported by one of his Defining Intimacies. Even then, he ignores that Intimacy's Resolve penalty.

Influence

KING OF GAMBLERS

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Willow Specter wears his triumph over Plentimon like a crown, proclaiming himself a gambler-king who dices with gods and devils.

The Chosen of Dice makes his prowess as a gambler plain to all who see him. They count as having a Minor Tie of fascination toward him, though its emotional context may vary for characters whose Intimacies

suggest certain views on gamblers. Fellow gamblers and aficionados of games themselves treat this as a Major Tie of respect or a Minor Tie if they have an opposed Intimacy or specific reason to feel otherwise.

GOLDEN MIRROR SCRUTINY

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: King of Gamblers

Willow Specter has the good fortune to know his friends from his foes.

While using King of Gamblers, Willow Specter can automatically identify the emotional context of the Tie it imposes on a given character. He adds (Charisma or Manipulation) dice on read intentions rolls to discern Intimacies relevant to the nature of the Tie imposed.

WINNING SMILE APPROACH

Cost: —(+2m); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

INFLUENCE CHARM CONCEPTS

Disarming Wink Approach (Essence 1; Winning Smile Approach): Characters with a positive Tie toward Willow Specter imposed by King of Gamblers suffer a penalty on Perception rolls opposing his Larceny rolls or to notice covert actions taken by anyone else.

Thoughtless Words Roulette (Essence 2; Enticing Card-Sharp Attitude): Willow Specter blurts out whatever someone is expecting him to say, whether it's a secret society's password, a romantic proposition, or a challenge to a duel.

Surprisingly Sound Argument (Essence 3; Enticing Card-Sharp Attitude): After rolling at least one each of a 7, an 8, a 9, and a 10 on an influence roll, Willow Specter can use this Charm to increase the cost to resist by one Willpower.

Infinite Avarice Affliction (Essence 4; Double-or-Nothing Temptation): Enhance Rivalry-Stoking Remark or Double-or-Nothing Temptation to inflict an Obsession that doesn't fade over time, requiring the target to spend Willpower to do so.

Prerequisite Charms: King of Gamblers

Luck has an allure of its own.

Willow Specter can pay a two-mote surcharge when he uses King of Gamblers to gain a bonus dot of Appearance, which can raise it above 5. He can opt to change the default context of the imposed Tie from fascination to desire for characters whose sexual orientation is compatible with him.

ENTICING CARD-SHARP ATTITUDE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: King of Gamblers

Willow Specter is well-acquainted with the passions and desires that bring a gambler to the table.

When Willow Specter makes a bargain, instill, or persuade roll, characters with applicable Intimacies involving greed, competitiveness, pride, or corruption treat those Intimacies as one step stronger against his influence. Such characters can't use Intimacies involving discipline, self-restraint, or humility to bolster their Resolve or in a Decision Point against the influence.

RIVALRY-STOKING REMARK

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Enticing Card-Sharp Attitude

Willow Specter surrounds himself with worthy rivals, making his own star shine all the brighter—and making the pot even bigger.

Willow Specter makes a (Social Attribute + [Presence or Socialize]) instill roll against a single character to create or strengthen an Intimacy related to competitiveness or desire for competition. This can't instill Ties unless they're toward Willow Specter.

If successful, the Intimacy also counts as an Obsession (**Exalted**, p. 169), preventing it from being eroded normally. This lasts (8 – target's base Resolve) days, but this duration resets if the victim fails a Willpower roll against the Obsession.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, Willow Specter may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm against multiple characters, ignoring the penalty for doing so.

Reset: Once per scene.

DOUBLE-OR-NOTHING TEMPTATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Rivalry-Stoking Remark

The lure of riches has been the ruin of many gamblers.

When the Chosen of Dice uses Rivalry-Stoking Remark, he can instill Ties related to greed or desire for wealth. The Intimacy must involve the kind of wealth that his target could conceivably obtain by gambling with the Chosen of the Dice.

Mobility

GRACEFUL CRANE STANCE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Willow Specter might not be graceful, but happenstance keeps him on his feet.

Willow Specter gains perfect balance, automatically succeeding on rolls related to it. He can stand and run on surfaces that would normally be too narrow or too weak to support him without needing to roll. These feats don't appear to be the result of his skill or conscious efforts — he's just too lucky to fall.

UNEXPECTED SHORTCUT APPROACH

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Graceful Crane Stance

The Chosen of Dice always gets where he's going, even if it's by a route he didn't quite expect.

A lucky coincidence lets Willow Specter move through one range band of mundane, difficult terrain unimpeded or cross a gap no more than one range band wide. A sheer cliff wall might have natural handholds, or a board might fall to create a bridge between two rooftops. Typically, these coincidences have lasting effects, allowing both allies and enemies to make use of them.

MOBILITY CHARM CONCEPTS

Ace on the Wind (Essence 2; Unexpected Shortcut Approach): Willow Specter is moved up to two range bands in any direction by a chance event. A strong wind might blow him off his feet, or a ship's swinging boom might knock him overboard to land on a passing whale.

With an Essence 4 repurchase Willow Specter can move through magical difficult terrain, stumbling through grasping ghost hands or accidentally finding a gap in a mystical cutting web.

Offensive

UNHAPPY COINCIDENCE ATTACK

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Few things are more dangerous than misfortune.

Willow Specter can use Fortune's Fool to add dice from the fortune pool to damage rolls and to the Initiative rolls of gambits, after the attack hits but before damage is rolled. If this incapacitates an enemy, it's not the attack itself that fells her, but an unfortunate coincidence immediately afterward.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, Willow Specter can pay a one-mote surcharge when he uses Fortune's Fool to add a die to both an attack roll and damage roll (or Initiative roll, for a gambit).

ODDS-AND-ENDS ROULETTE

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform, Versatile

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Swinging with reckless abandon, Willow Specter makes good use of whatever weapon he's lucked into.

Willow Specter waives the Initiative cost to attack with improvised weapons. He can stunt to use objects that wouldn't normally be suitable as weapons, like a paper fan or a handful of thrown dice.

OFFENSIVE CHARM CONCEPTS

Revel in Mayhem (Essence 1; **Make Your Own Luck**, **Unhappy Coincidence Attack**): Use **Make Your Own Luck** reflexively, making a custom gambit to represent fortuitous coincidences.

Stroke of Misfortune (Essence 1; **Unhappy Coincidence Attack**): Reflexively make a decisive attack. Instead of using Willow Specter's Initiative for the damage roll, he empties the fortune pool, rerolling all failed dice once, and uses those successes for damage.

Death by Misadventure (Essence 2; **Unhappy Coincidence Attack**): Double 10s on a decisive damage roll. If Willow Specter rolls at least one each of a 7, an 8, a 9, and a 10, he also doubles 9s.

Fallen Anvil Mishap (Essence 2; **Revel in Mayhem**): An enemy's bad luck imperils her, subjecting her to a one-time environmental hazard from unlikely and unexpected dangers.

Fistful of Aces (Essence 2; **Stroke of Misfortune**): Make multiple decisive attacks, with the option to spend a fortune die to add its successes to the number of attacks.

Fortune-Favored Audacity (Essence 3; **Revel in Mayhem**): Increase **Revel in Mayhem**'s duration to one scene, letting Willow Specter reveal a new stroke of luck each round at a progressively lower Initiative cost.

When Willow Specter uses **Fortune's Fool** on an attack with an improvised weapon, he adds a non-Charms die for each die added on the attack roll or two dice for 10s.

THOUSAND ROUNDS TENACITY

Cost: —(+2m); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: **Unhappy Coincidence Attack** (x2)

Willow Specter's luck never lets up in battle.

When Willow Specter adds a die from the fortune pool to a **decisive** attack roll, he can pay a two-mote surcharge to also add that die's successes to his base Initiative after resetting if the attack hits.

UNDERDOG BARES HIS TEETH

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: **Thousand Rounds Tenacity**

When the stakes are at their highest, Plentimon's Chosen turns the tables.

To use this Charm, Willow Specter must have 6+ successes' worth of dice banked in the fortune pool. He empties the fortune pool, rerolling all failures once, and then rolls **Join Battle**, adding the fortune pool's successes on the roll. He can't enhance this roll with other magic.

Reset: Once per scene.

Senses and Scrutiny

FLASHED HAND REVEAL

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

No matter how close his opponents keep their cards to their chests, Willow Specter reads them like open books.

The **Chosen of Dice** adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on a read intentions roll. For every three extra successes, he learns an additional Intimacy related to what the roll revealed. If the target doesn't have that many Intimacies, Willow Specter's player may ask related questions instead. If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer in mind for a question, Willow Specter's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

If Willow Specter uses this while playing a game with his target, he can ask an additional question if he succeeds.

CARDS-ON-THE-TABLE ATTITUDE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: **Flashed Hand Reveal**

Plentimon's Chosen never misses a trick.

After hearing a character make a statement, Willow Specter reflexively makes a read intentions roll against him. If he uses this Charm against someone playing a

SENSES AND SCRUTINY CHARM CONCEPTS

Eye of Plentimon (Essence 1; Spot the Marked Card): Willow Specter fills his eyes with darkness and starry flecks of gold. His vision is unimpeded by darkness, and he adds bonus dice on vision-based Perception rolls. His mysterious gaze also lends this bonus to any Appearance rolls he makes against characters close enough to see his eyes.

Happenstance Deduction Manner (Essence 1; Spot the Marked Card): Willow Specter completes a case scene roll instantly, chancing upon a piece of evidence if he succeeds. If he rolls at least three successful dice that show the same number, he discovers an additional clue if the roll succeeds.

Assassin's Lost Sandal (Essence 2; Eye of Plentimon): When an enemy rolls at least two 1s on a Larceny or Stealth roll, Willow Specter steals the highest die from the roll and adds it to the fortune pool. If this causes the roll to fail, it takes the form of coincidental misfortune exposing that character's subterfuge.

Miser's Vault Revealed (Essence 2; Counting Scattered Coins): Use Counting Scattered Coins to determine how someone came by their wealth.

Tantalizing Rumor Insight (Essence 3; Cards-on-the-Table Attitude): While gambling, carousing, or otherwise interacting with locals, coincidentally overhear useful information about a local person, group, place, or event.

game with him, he adds (Essence) non-Charm successes. Success reveals whether the speaker is lying or which parts are false if it's a half-truth.

If Willow Specter uncovers a lie in an influence roll against him, any dice added on the roll with Fortune's Fool also increase his Resolve against the influence. If he does, he can't use Fortune's Fool again to enhance Resolve.

Once Willow Specter's uncovered a character's deception with this Charm, he doesn't need to roll when using it against her for the rest of the scene. This can still be opposed by applicable magic, in which case Willow Specter rolls as above for the opposed roll.

COUNTING SCATTERED COINS

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Spot the Marked Card

Plentimon's Chosen can sense the invisible aura of wealth that clings to the prosperous.

A successful profile character or read intentions roll also reveals the extent of his target's wealth. The Storyteller can communicate this with descriptive phrases or Resources ratings. If the target's in a disguise that's inconsistent with her true wealth, Willow Specter's roll must beat her disguise successes to see the truth.

Strawmaiden Janest crashed through the front of the temple, scythe-tip dragging sparks from the courtyard floor. Rain, wind, and mist dragged after her. Though the hurricane had driven the city folk into their homes, it did no harm to her. Indeed, she rode a piece of it torn from the sky like a war-chariot.

She needed it. A dozen bronze statues of wrathful divinities had wrested themselves from their wall mounts to chase after her, and it was all she could do to keep them at bay with her scythe's reach... All while keeping a nervous eye on the animated mummy of the old abbot and the tiny, smiling woman whose strings controlled all these puppets.

She'd only wanted to talk. This was why she hated the city.

The mummy came at her with a flaming fist she barely dodged, burning Essence turning the rain of her storm-chariot to a wall of steam. He immediately followed with a leaping kick — even as an undead marionette, the abbot retained his Immaculate skill, it seemed. She needed a change of approach.

As one of the bronze divinities lunged at her, she slipped Final Season's blade past its leg and pulled it in, grabbed its ankle in one firm hand, and, with a sharp exhalation, hurled the thousand-pound statue into the abbot's flank.

"Sorry!" Janest said as the old mummy shattered — deathless skill he may have had, but he was brittle as any corpse. She thought she might have seen a smile of relief on his lips.

"You oafish bumpkin!" Pakpao the Puppeteer cried. "That was my favorite puppet! Do you have any idea how hard I worked to get to that old man's corpse? That's weeks of labor you just wasted!"

Pakpao was unarmed and unarmored, but not to be underestimated. Janest could see them now — those invisible strings of Essence connecting Pakpao's fingers to the swarm of scrolls, candelabras, thuribles, and other sundries she'd ripped from the temple and which she was now hurling at Janest like so many missiles. Half were scattered by the storm around Janest, but enough remained to force her to dodge right into the waiting arms of the remaining statues.

It was like fighting an army and its Exalted commander all at once. No wonder the Puppeteer had managed to secretly take over half the city. Janest banked right in her storm-chariot, dodging a puppet's spear and taking off its head with a stroke of her scythe, but she was getting nowhere.

Fine, then. If she had to make her presence known to all, she might as well make it known. Janest's personal hurricane scattered, and the Strawmaiden lightly touched the ground, raising her scythe high and opening her arms.

A great wind blew from behind her, carrying autumn leaves and the smell of fresh-cut wheat.

The courtyard began to rumble, forcing the puppets back; wheat stalks poked up between the stones, a ripe field growing from under century-old paving. A great emerald-and-orange light engulfed Janest, and she stood tall.

And taller. And taller.

Pakpao gasped. Taller than the houses, the giant leaned down, plucked a hapless bronze statue out of the newborn field, and contemplated it for a moment; then she smirked and flicked her finger, hurling it into the river outside the courtyard walls.

"Ready to surrender?" Janest asked the tiny woman, now standing in her shadow and glaring angrily.

The Puppeteer said nothing, but she gave a smirk of her own. The ground trembled.

Two city blocks away, the jade-plated statue of the Scarlet Empress that had loomed over the city since Janest's arrival began to stride towards the temple.

"Ah," Janest said, her expression turning dour, "we're going to be here a while."



Chapter Four:

Kindling the Fire

As the Chosen of little gods return to Creation in numbers, a few will reach peaks of power not seen from them since the First Age. This chapter contains additional Charms for Strawmaiden Janest, the Puppeteer, the Architects and the Sovereigns of Uluiru, focusing on miraculous high-Essence Charms.

Strawmaiden Janest

Athletics

WATCHFUL EARLYBIRD DEFENSE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Athletics 4, Essence 2
Type: Reflexive
Keywords: Uniform
Duration: One round
Prerequisite Charms: Whispering Wind Grace

When she has the lead, Janest moves with grace and foresight to dodge the blows of layabouts and lazybones.

Janest reduces penalties to her Defense by (higher of Essence or 3) against foes with Initiative lower than her own. When she successfully defends against an attack from a foe with Initiative three or more beneath her own, they suffer the onslaught penalty instead of her.

DEBRIS-STREWN BATTLEFIELD

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Athletics 5, Essence 3
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Earth-Turning Upheaval

Broken pillars and overturned carts become effortless bulwarks, protection left in the Strawmaiden's wake.

After a feat of strength or demolition, Janest leaves enough debris to create light cover for up to (Strength + 1) characters at a point within short range or heavy

cover for half that number rounded up. If used with Earth-Turning Upheaval, Janest may create pieces of cover at any points within that range.

MOUNTAINS-INTO-RUBBLE TACTIC

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Athletics 4, Essence 3
Type: Supplemental
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Inspiring Folk-Hero Prowess

The Strawmaiden locks eyes with enemy soldiers as she crushes mountains into pebbles so they may know that they are next to be broken.

Janest may make a Strategic Maneuver roll (**Exalted**, p. 211) using (Strength + Athletics) with (War/2, round up) bonus successes. If she succeeds, she may enact the Demoralized or Fortifications stratagems, representing a dramatic show of personal strength to frighten enemies or cover the battlefield in strategic debris.

REAPER RAISES THE SCYTHE

Cost: 1a, 1wp; **Mins:** Athletics 5, Essence 5
Type: Simple
Keywords: None
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: World-Borne Champion Resurgence

Raising her scythe high, Janest lets the Essence of the world collect like dew upon its blade.

Janest rolls (Initiative + Essence), banking successes as a pool of special peripheral motes that can only be spent on offensive Charms. She gains one non-Charms die for every three of these motes that she spends on a single attack. Unspent motes are lost at the end of the scene.

Targets who can perceive her treat her Initiative roll as an inspire action to bring hope to her allies and fear of

death to her enemies.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by being reduced to her -4 health levels.

Awareness

HEARTH CINDER SCENT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Awareness 3, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Temper-Measuring Greeting

The Strawmaiden may glimpse fond memories of home even in the hearts of villains.

Janest rerolls 6s until they fail to appear on a read intentions action to figure out a character's positive Intimacies of love, loyalty, or belonging. Even if he lacks such an Intimacy, she intuitively knows something about the character's origin or community on a success — recognizing an accent, remembering a local custom, or the like — which she can leverage as exceptional equipment for making a good first impression.

EARTHEN MEMORY RETROSPECTIVE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Watchful Harvest Guardian

Flower, tree, and grain alike speak to the Strawmaiden, unfurling tales of long ago.

Janest makes a (Wits + Awareness) roll to sift through visions of the past in a field. This counts as a case scene roll without a need for physical evidence, revealing memories of any particularly important events that took place there within the past (Essence x 10) years, or (Essence x 20) if doing so unveils the crimes of an enemy of the community. If the Storyteller has no particular past events in mind for the region, they should seek ideas from the players.

She can use this Charm in places of lesser vegetation, even as little as a single flower, but suffers up to a -5 penalty at the Storyteller's discretion and cannot glimpse beyond when the plant first grew there.

Repurchase at Essence 5 allows Janest to search for memories up to (Essence x 10) or (Essence x 20) in any area of significant vegetation and up to (Essence x 100) years old in a field.

LOCUST-ANTICIPATING PROPHECY

Cost: —(+15m); **Mins:** Awareness 5, Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Watchful Harvest Guardian

Wanderer though she may be, Janest leaves a piece of herself everywhere she goes — and so she is forever present.

Janest intuitively knows when significant danger faces a community where members hold a positive Intimacy towards her; troublemakers who wish to do so in secret must beat her Awareness with a Stealth- or Larceny-based roll to avoid her notice. She may pay a fifteen-mote surcharge to use Harvest Walker to travel up to (Essence x 50) miles towards it in response to the danger, bringing willing Circlemates with her.

Repurchase at Essence 5 allows Janest to use this Charm's Harvest Walker effect to return to a community anywhere in Creation once per story, either in response to a threat or with the express intent to perform some good deed.

Presence

HONEST WORDS ACCORD

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Presence 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Simple and Resounding Honesty

The Strawmaiden is a north star to those around her, pointing them toward the simplicity of truth.

Janest adds an automatic success and doubles 9s on a persuade roll to encourage others to tell the truth or bargain rolls where she barter in good faith. If she hasn't rolled Manipulation in the current story, she doubles 8s instead. If she succeeds by three or more successes beyond the target's Resolve, they also treat it as an inspire roll to encourage forthright dealings.

Janest can pay a one Willpower surcharge to use this Charm on behalf of an ally, lending them her air of earnestness.

MERRY GRASSHOPPER WINK

Cost: —; **Mins:** Presence 4, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Harvest Celebrant's Appeal

With a smile, a wink, a cajoling whistle, Janest may convince even dutiful bureaucrats that there is more to life than work.

Janest may apply Harvest Celebrant's Appeal to a bargain roll to convince an official to let her off or take things easy, or on Bureaucracy-based rolls to slow progress on a project. If she succeeds, her target creates or strengthens a Tie towards a hobby or other passion, which Janest becomes aware of.

BARE-HEARTED AVOWAL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fieldhand Clarion

With an impassioned plea, Janest shares her heart with those who listen to her words.

Janest may reveal one of her Major or Defining Intimacies to a character facing a Decision Point, allowing him to use it as if it were his own to resist influence based on fear, hate, or betrayal. If he is compelled to act by a Psyche effect that can be resisted with Willpower, Janest reduces the cost to do so by one. If she knows No Time for Idle Dreaming, she may also activate it on his behalf.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by completing a significant act that affirms or strengthens the Intimacy used.

DUTY RIGHTLY REMEMBERED

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Covenant of Wheat and Honey

When the Strawmaiden appeals to custom and ritual, none may deny the truth of her words — or the bonds of community.

Whenever a character partakes of a meal blessed by Soul-Nourishing Fare, they must spend two Willpower or else form a positive Major Intimacy towards their own community, a neighboring community, or a local social norm of Janest's choosing. If they already have an appropriate Intimacy, she may strengthen it instead; if it is already Defining, it cannot be degraded or altered by magic for the rest of the story.

WITHERED HEARTS BLOOM ANEW

Cost: 5m, 3a; **Mins:** Presence 5, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Simple Soul Entreaty

Janest's words resurrect lost feelings of love, home, and duty, no matter how much they may have wilted.

Janest makes a Presence-based instill action, rolling an additional die for every 10. On success, she and the target are submerged into vivid memory of happier times — a point in his life when he has a positive Defining Intimacy that he has since lost. Janest intuitively finds its full context and history from these visions. The target must pay two Willpower in a Decision Point to cite some other Defining Intimacy that compels him to abandon these feelings once more, or else develop the Defining Intimacy again.

The Intimacy revealed by this Charm is always one that is emotionally relevant to the current situation. If the Storyteller doesn't have specific ideas, they should work with the players to come up with a satisfying glimpse into the character's past. Groups should exercise caution when reviving Intimacies that were lost due to betrayal or abuse; this Charm isn't a way to force people to excuse mistreatment and shouldn't be invoked in ways that players find upsetting.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by Janest building an Intimacy from Minor to Defining.

Resistance**ONE BREATH ENDURANCE**

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Resistance 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: (Resistance) hours

Prerequisite Charms: None

Drawing in a single great breath, Janest needs no other air to survive.

The Strawmaiden can hold her breath for the duration of the Charm with no ill effects but cannot speak. She may release her held breath as a miscellaneous action to make a (Stamina + Resistance) roll against the Defense of a character within short range; success knocks him prone or moves him back one range band at Janest's discretion. At Resistance 3, Essence 2, this Charm's duration increases to (Resistance) days.

If she knows Tornado-Taming Method (**Exigents**, p. 160), she may activate this Charm when taming a wind-based hazard to breathe it in; both Charms become Indefinite in duration, though the hazard remains dormant within her. When she finally releases it with a breath, the hazard takes effect around her per usual for Tornado-Taming Method.

GIFT-MENDING MERCY

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Resistance 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One project

Prerequisite Charms: Hundred Winters Workmanship

Rusted swords and broken bowls tell Janest what they need, if she will be their hands.

The Strawmaiden may roll (Perception + Resistance) to repair a mundane object without the required Craft or materials and rerolls up to (Essence) failed dice, though doing so doubles the time required for each interval. Such repairs always leave some obvious but cosmetic sign — fissures welded with anima-colored metal, stitches that sprout embroidered flowers, and so on. If she possesses the necessary Craft, she may reroll up to (Essence + 3) failed dice on the roll.

At Essence 3, Janest may pay a five mote, one Willpower surcharge to apply this Charm to magical constructs like artifacts and manses with a rating no greater than her Essence.

LITTLE HYMNS, LASTING GLORY

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Hundred Winters Workmanship

With small acts of prayer and praise, the Strawmaiden and her followers may strengthen their homes and treasures against eternity.

When the Strawmaiden creates mundane objects with Hundred Winters Workmanship, she increases her Stamina by (Essence) for determining durability bonuses. She also intuitively a ritual that replaces the object's normal maintenance with small prayers and sacrifices; so long as they are conducted, the object will never age, tarnish, or spoil. She may instruct others in these rituals with one hour's teaching.

MOTHER-AND-MAIDEN DANCE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Resistance 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Harvest Wind Deflection, Blood-Pumping Enthusiasm

Janest and her ward move in perfect coordination and cannot be parted.

While in close range of someone protected by Others Before Self, both Janest and her ward gain +1 Defense and reflexively move alongside the other whenever they take a movement action or are moved as a result of knockback or similar effects.

Janest may activate Blood-Pumping Enthusiasm after successfully defending her ward from a non-trivial character and treats a round where he went undamaged as satisfying that Charm's reset condition.

Survival

WORLD SMOOTHS THE WAY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene or one journey

Prerequisite Charms: None

The world straightens its skirts in preparation for Janest's arrival, untangling knotted brambles and packing snow firm beneath her feet.

Janest ignores difficult terrain from natural features, as do characters who follow in her footsteps within the same scene.

Repurchase at Survival 4, Essence 2 allows Janest to spend a one Willpower surcharge to apply this effect to difficult terrain from magical sources as well.

QUICK-AS-PASSION MANEUVER

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Survival 5, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: One action or one interval

Prerequisite Charms: Sister to Aurochs

The Strawmaiden needs no spur or whip to hasten her mount, only words of affirmation.

Janest may add (Intimacy towards her mount) non-Charm dice to a mounted movement action or interval of a race and doubles 9s or 8s if her Tie to it is Defining.

WOOD-WISE MEDITATION**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Survival 4, Essence 3**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Hundred Herbs Pharmacopeia, Terrestrial Circle Sorcery*The world whispers its secret lore without jealousy; the Strawmaiden need only learn to listen.*

Janest can roll (Perception + [Occult or Survival]) to make an introduce fact roll on magical matters natural to Creation's environment — magical flora and fauna, geomancy, elementals, and other nature spirits. She gains the benefits of Earth's Attendant Genius, and if she gets at least three extra successes, intuitively the distance and direction to the nearest example.

SACRED SOIL RECLAMATION**Cost:** 20m, 1wp; **Mins:** Survival 5, Essence 4**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Wood-Wise Meditation*It is Janest's joy to find community for mortals and monsters alike, bringing them into harmony.*

Janest rolls ([Charisma or Wits] + Survival) against the Essence of a willing or defeated demon, fae, ghost, or similar supernatural target from beyond Creation. This difficulty may increase based on the community's general sentiments towards them — minor superstitions might increase it by one, while hatred equal to a Defining Intimacy could increase it by up to four, especially if the target has endangered the community in the past. Success forms a supernatural truce, granting the community and target reciprocal Major Ties of neighborly obligation; the target's Tie cannot be removed without magic intended to break curses. While they remain welcome, the target ignores penalties or dangers from being inside Creation, treating it as their native realm.

After (the spirit's Essence) years, the target becomes a spirit of Creation, no longer a creature of darkness or enemy of fate, with their Charms and other powers changing to reflect this transformation. At the end of each story, a spirit that has helped their community thrive in difficult or dangerous circumstances or acted to strengthen or affirm a Defining Intimacy to the community or its members counts the story as a full year.

The Puppeteer

Crafting Charms

CUNNING ARTISAN'S CRAFT**Cost:** 4m, 1wp, 1sp per die; **Mins:** Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Supplemental**Prerequisite Charms:** Careful Stitch Method*Pakpao's devious creativity may find expression in many arts, luring the unwary with sumptuous gifts.*

The Puppeteer adds up to (Essence) non-Charms dice on a Craft roll or (Essence + 1) if the project is meant as part of a bribe, scheme, or deception. Silver points spent on this Charm count towards the cost to complete a major project. When crafting puppets, Pakpao may spend up to (higher of Essence or 3) gold points as well, adding a non-Charms success for each.

MANY MEDIUMS EXPERIMENTATION**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Careful Stitch Method*Puppetry is practiced in a thousand forms across Creation, and so the Puppeteer's genius must encompass many arts.*

Upon purchasing this Charm, for each dot she has in a Craft Ability, she gains a dot that she may place in another Craft Ability that's even tangentially related to forms of puppetry — sewing costumes, metalwork for shadow puppets, and so on. This Craft's rating must be equal or lower before adding these dots. When she purchases a Craft dot with experience, she receives an additional dot she may assign to any remotely puppetry-related Craft Ability with an equal or lower rating.

INSPIRATION IN EXECUTION**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 2**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Ceaseless Pursuit of Perfection*In art and deception alike, the Puppeteer's mind ignites when she tests her cunning against worthy foes and unruly audiences.*

The Puppeteer gains craft points for meeting basic objectives as if she'd completed a basic project (**Exalted**, p. 240) when she successfully:

- Impresses, shames, or deceives a significant character with one of her performances using puppets, props, or scripts of her own invention.
- Impersonates another character in a difficult or dangerous situation using costumes she crafted.
- Introduces a fact about culture, fashion, or art related to one of her Craft abilities.

Repurchase at Essence 3 allows the Puppeteer to instead gain craft points as if completing a major project once per session, so long as her action would count as a serious or life-changing task.

TENFOLD EXPERT EXPEDIENCE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Maker's Many Limbs, Ceaseless Pursuit of Perfection (x2)

Binding her own mind together with skilled consultants, Pakpao speeds her work beyond the sum of its parts.

Pakpao multiplies her speed when constructing a superior project by (Essence/2, round up), so long as she has at least ten experts in her employ with a relevant Craft at 4+. Projects to devise artifacts and manses require at least half the experts to have Occult 4+ as well. Spirits, Exalts, and other supernatural consultants act as (their Essence) consultants towards resonant artifacts and manses.

Consultants normally need offer only an hour of collaboration a week; if they spend at least eight hours a day working with the Puppeteer and have been trained through Agent-Priming Indocctrination, she increases her speed multiplier by one.

Defensive

MOTHER SPIDER'S MERCY

Cost: —(+2m); **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bone-Bending Puppetry Trick, Spider-and-Frog Companionship

Whether rescuing a lackey who hasn't yet outlived his usefulness or securing her beloved, Pakpao jealously guards what is hers.

Pakpao may pay a two-mote surcharge to activate Bone-Bending Puppetry Trick on behalf of an ally within short range. If she knows Lengthening Strings Concentration, its range increase applies to this Charm as well.

When used to protect a target to whom she has a Major or Defining positive Tie, she ignores the Perilous tag and doesn't count her first use in this way towards having to reset this Charm.

Endurance and Healing Charms

IMMORTAL GOD-MANNEQUIN

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Living Puppet Reconstruction (x5), Iterations of the Self, Vital Organ Rearrangement

Reborn in porcelain and wood, the Puppeteer's now-immortal body is hardened against mortal frailties and perfected beyond mortal limits.

Pakpao becomes immune to all mundane poisons and diseases; against magical equivalents, her bonus dice from Living Puppet Reconstruction become bonus successes instead.

When using Iterations of the Self, she may commit five motes to grant herself a bonus dot of Strength or Appearance up to a maximum of 6.

When she falls into a torpor through Vital Organ Rearrangement, her soul is anchored to even a single fragment of her body. She cannot die unless every part of it is destroyed; constructing a new vessel incorporating the old fragments is a superior project.

Gaile Charms

SILENT VIBRATION COMMUNION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Puppeteer's Subtle Sigh, Dreaming Marionette Trance

The string that connects the Puppeteer to her agents is a conduit for secret communiques, spirit speaking to spirit.

The Puppeteer may enter a trance to communicate with an ally or character working on her behalf within (Essence x 100) miles, speaking with him telepathically for as long as she remains in meditation. She may share his senses if he allows. Magic that reveals dematerialized characters can detect the string that connects Pakpao to her agent; identifying her specifically requires a (Wits + Awareness) roll against her Guile.

At Essence 5, Pakpao may use this Charm to contact an enemy or rival instead, usually requiring a (Manipulation + Socialize) roll against his Resolve. He may spend one Willpower to immunize himself against this Charm for the rest of the story, breaking communication instantly.

Influence Charms

FLY-TO-SPIDER ALCHEMY

Cost: 20m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Talented Understudy Technique, Insidious Whispering Spider

Wrapping a foe's mind in a cocoon of lies, the Puppeteer constructs a false persona to inhabit his body.

Pakpao touches a willing or restrained target and rolls (Manipulation + Socialize) against the higher of his (Resolve or temporary Willpower). Success forces him into a torpor for five hours, during which she whispers lies into his mind about who he is. After (his permanent Essence) such sessions, this false persona takes control of his body, with memories and Intimacies of the Puppeteer's choosing.

The target may resist a use of this Charm by spending one Willpower and succeeding on a (temporary Willpower) roll; if he resists (Pakpao's Essence) times, he becomes completely immune to this Charm. Orders that would require him to betray one of his original Major or Defining Intimacies give him this same opportunity, as do attempts to overturn this influence by other characters — though these attempts are always penalized as if by a Defining Intimacy towards Pakpao.

Pakpao may use this Charm on a brainwashed target in a later story to reduce his total of successful resistance rolls by one.

Reset: Once per story; additional uses of this Charm on a single character don't count towards this limit.

Knowledge Charms

SECT-AND-CELL TRIBULATIONS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Agent-Priming Indoctrination

The Puppeteer may devise training regimes that forge tightly knit cells of agents loyal to her mission and to one another.

Pakpao may use Agent-Priming Indoctrination to train up to (Intelligence + Essence) characters at once, who also gain a Minor Tie of loyalty to one another. She may confer one of the following benefits as part of her training for which she meets the required minimums; subsequent uses of Agent-Priming Indoctrination may provide an additional benefit each:

- **Eight-Legged Spider Tactics (War 5):** When fighting as a battle group, the agents increase their Drill by one step. If they already have elite Drill, they gain perfect morale instead.
- **Loyalty Among Thieves (Larceny 5):** The agents treat cooperation with one another as exceptional equipment for infiltration, sabotage, and heists.
- **Cosigned Forgery Technique (Bureaucracy 5):** So long as at least one agent is accepted as a member of an organization, his fellows reroll (Intimacy towards him) failed dice on non-combat rolls dealing with that organization.

Mobility Charms

SPIDER-AND-DANDELION WALTZ

Cost: —(+3m); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Tightened String Abseil

The puppet does not fall to the stage unless the puppeteer wishes, and nor does she.

Pakpao can pay a three-mote surcharge to extend the duration of Tightened String Abseil to one scene. While this is active, she may spend two motes to completely

arrest her fall for a round, though she cannot move horizontally while doing so.

VAULTING FROM THE MOON

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Anchored to the Sky, Lengthening Strings Concentration

From her vantage point on high, the Puppeteer may descend upon the world like the hand of a child selecting her toys.

Pakpao reflexively dives to a point within long range horizontally, so long as she is currently at least (that distance + 1) range bands above it. This counts as her movement action. If she makes an attack upon landing, she may roll (Dexterity + Athletics) against the target's (Perception + Awareness) to render it a surprise attack from sheer speed. If she was previously undetected and she beats the roll by at least (5 - [range bands descended]) successes, it becomes an ambush.

Reset: Once per scene.

Offensive

PERFECT SHADOW STRIKE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Arrow-Guiding Thread, Unseen Strike Precision

When she attacks from the shadows, the Puppeteer's strikes defy distance.

When the Puppeteer could make a surprise attack, she can make it out to medium range if her weapon range permits it. This doesn't require an aim action, and a Thrown weapon is returned to her hand immediately.

SHADOW WEB SUFFOCATION

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Trapdoor Shadow Binding

Wrapped within her pitiless shadow, Pakpao crushes the breath from her foe, leaving nothing behind but a puppet.

The Puppeteer may use this Charm to savage a character caught in her shadow through Trapdoor Shadow Binding, rolling as if unarmed using (Wits + Brawl) with (Essence) bonus dice. This can only be used for **withering** attacks unless the target is in Initiative Crash. If the target is slain by this attack, she may choose to have her shadow devour the corpse utterly or eject it.

If she knows Corpse-Puppet Reanimation, the corpse is animated for the remainder of the scene for free.

If she has purchased Living Puppet Reconstruction at least three times, she may eject not the corpse, but a perfect puppet replica constructed from wood, porcelain, and other fitting materials.

Mysticism Charms

SOUL-BINDING SPIRIT NOOSE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: God-Binding Strings

When Pakpao binds spirits to her will, she seals their surrender with tokens of submission — silken collars, bracelets, and the like — which they cannot remove.

Pakpao rolls (Intelligence + Occult) against the Resolve of a spirit with an Intimacy of submission or obedience towards her and Essence equal to or less than her own to bind it. While in effect, she can sense the target's distance, direction, and general condition, and he cannot materialize or dematerialize without her permission. She may give or withdraw it at any time, but this doesn't give him any particular way to communicate his need. His Intimacy of submission or obedience cannot be diminished below Minor level, and he gains +2 Resolve against any influence that would countermand the Puppeteer's orders or subvert Intimacies towards her.

The target may spend one Willpower to ignore the effects of this binding for one scene. Another character can attempt to remove the binding, requiring a difficulty 5 feat of demolition requiring Strength greater than the Puppeteer's Essence, and she is alerted to it instantly. Destroying the binding ends the Charm.

If she knows Silent Vibration Communion, she reduces its cost when communicating with bound spirits by three motes. Pakpao can have up to (Essence) bound spirits at a time.

Resolve Charms

WORDS-AS-WEBS AMBUSH

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unflinching Cast Approach

With nothing more than a brief rebuttal, the Puppeteer may reveal that her foe has played into her hands, caught within his own argument.

The Puppeteer may make a (Manipulation + [Socialize or Integrity]) roll against a foe's influence before it is compared to Resolve. If successful, she grants herself and any who can hear her +3 Resolve against it; anyone who resists the influence as a result of this bonus may gain or strengthen a negative Intimacy to the target as if he had attempted a threaten roll.

Reset: Once per day, unless reset by publicly shaming a non-trivial enemy or discovering a piece of significant leverage against them.

Scrutiny Charms

CLOTH-OF-EMPIRE CONTEMPLATION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Tangled Web Meditation

Spreading her attention across thousands of heartstrings, the Puppeteer may glimpse the tapestry of cities and kingdoms.

The Puppeteer spends five days infiltrating a group, observing its members, exchanging information with her agents, or constructing intricate mental models. At the end, she may roll ([Perception or Intelligence] + [Awareness or Socialize]) against a difficulty set by the group's size — 5 for a city-state, 7 for a kingdom, up to 9 for a large empire.

Success allows her to pose a theoretical scenario and understand how the population would react, including likely reactions from significant powers or subgroups. Each two extra successes or fraction thereof allows her to tweak her scenario after each answer, posing a slight change and understanding how it might unfold.

When she explains her plan as part of a stunt to convince others to go along with it, it provides her a non-Charm success.

Sensory Charms

SCORN-SEEKING EPIPHANY

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Whisper-Intercepting Wire

Invisible threads of enmity connect all the hearts of the world, and it is the Puppeteer's prerogative to be witness to their guilt and malice.

Pakpao ignores one point of penalty on a roll to track a character, to identify him in disguise, or detect him in concealment. If she has a negative Tie towards him or an organization he represents, she reduces her penalties by (Intimacy + 1) instead.

Repurchase at Essence 3 allows Pakpao to apply this Charm to profile character rolls as well. If this causes her to succeed against a target to whom she has a Major or Defining negative Tie, she discovers an additional piece of evidence that points towards his current intentions towards her specifically.

THREADS LIKE SEARCHING HANDS

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Scorn-Seeking Epiphany

The Puppeteer spins webs of invisible Essence wherever she goes, sensing interlopers in its subtle vibrations.

Pakpao's sense of touch extends to medium range, allowing her to feel texture, vibration, and movement from anything that's not behind full cover. She may roll (Perception + Awareness) to identify hidden targets within range, rerolling all failed dice once; anyone detected becomes entangled.

Reset: Once per scene.

Sorcery Charms

SPELLS LIKE WOVEN SILK

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** Cobweb Palace Majesty, Terrestrial Circle Sorcery*As sorcery weaves the world, so too may the Puppeteer weave the cloth of sorcery herself.*

Pakpao may use this Charm when casting a spell within an area she has claimed with The Spider in Her Web (**Exigents**, p. 183), causing it to manifest as a matrix of invisible strands out to medium range instead, which can only be perceived with magic that detects dematerialized things. When she ends her commitment to this Charm, the spell is cast from a point within that area of her choosing; if it is meant to affect her, she must be within that area.

Once per story, while in an area claimed by The Spider in Her Web, she may retroactively reveal that she has prepared a partially-completed spell-matrix, reflexively rolling (Intelligence + Occult) and gathering sorcerous motes equal to her successes from the stray threads of half-worked spells.

The Architect

Appearance

SECURITY IN ANONYMITY

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 5**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Indefinite**Prerequisite Charms:** A Face in the Crowd*Wreathed in the mystique of city throngs, the Architect's face, voice, and identity are wreathed in ambiguity and shadow.*

The Architect makes an (Appearance + Stealth) disguise roll to conceal her identity entirely. Mundane attempts to track or identify her fail as she leaves no physical evidence of her passing; magical attempts suffer an (Essence) penalty. This disguise applies even to her anima banner — while it still reveals her status as an Exalt, its iconography, color, and nature are too vague for on-lookers to identify if she's even an Architect. She always counts as appropriately disguised for the Metropolis effect of A Face in the Crowd.

Metropolis: While in a city, attempts to scry on the Architect require a (Perception + Awareness) roll

against her disguise roll; failure returns nothing but bustling murmurs and the commotion of crowds.

Charisma

CITY'S HEARTBEAT METRONOME

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** Metropolis**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None*The Architect taps into the city's rhythm, allowing it to feed her own.*

The Architect rerolls 6s on any Charisma-based a musical performance. She waives the cost of Crowd-Pleasing Cadence if she knows it.

Metropolis: If she's playing a style of music or an instrument native to the city or the city's culture, she rerolls 5s as well.

SUSURRUS TEMPO AMBIANCE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** None**Duration:** One scene**Prerequisite Charms:** City's Heartbeat Metronome*The city itself is an instrument in the hands of the right musician. The Architect creates music from the clamor of the city by guiding the subtle actions that make up its soundscape.*

The Architect rolls (Charisma + Performance) inspire or instill roll as part of a musical performance. The music continues for the remainder of the scene without her input; doors slam to the beat, stray dogs howl the chorus, and so on. She gains (higher of Essence or 3) bonus dice if she makes another Performance roll that the music could support within the same scene.

HOME'S HEARTFIRE PAEAN

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 2**Type:** Simple**Keywords:** Metropolis**Duration:** One day**Prerequisite Charms:** City's Heartbeat Metronome*The Architect composes a song charged with the Essence of the city and turns it loose, creating an anthem that resonates with its denizens.*



The song the Architect creates with this Charm becomes powerfully catchy, and anyone who hears it gains the Minor Principle “I should hum/sing/play this song.” Anyone performing it, regardless of their skill, counts the song as exceptional equipment to actions taken for the city’s benefit to anyone who can hear the performance.

Metropolis: If a character has a Tie of patriotism or duty to the city, he increases it by one step if he can hear

this song; if he possesses a Defining Tie, it cannot be diminished.

PILLAR-RAISING ADULATION

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Towering Skyline Travelogue, Clarion Voice Technique



Those who receive an Architect's adulation are marked out as exemplars of civic spirit.

After a few hours of acclaim, the Architect rolls (Charisma + [Presence, Performance, Socialize, or Bureaucracy]) to name a character as a pillar of his community, group, or organization. This is difficulty 3 for small communities of a few thousand, increasing to 4 for communities of tens of thousands or 5 for entire cities. On success, anyone with a positive Intimacy

towards that group applies it to the character and perceives him as an especially noble exemplar of that group, fit for leadership and emulation. The character is also known by his positive reputation throughout the community, which he can leverage as a Minor Intimacy towards its members.

GLORIOUS FESTIVAL SANCTION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Labor-Empowering Campaign, Pillar-Raising Adulation

The rites and festivities of the city affirm its values, invigorating participants with civic pride.

The Architect sanctifies a celebration, ritual, or other community activity, rolling (Charisma + [Performance or Socialize]) against the Resolve of all present. Those overcome are filled with the urge to participate in good faith and cannot interrupt or sabotage the event without entering a Decision Point and citing a Major or Defining Intimacy that compels them to do so. At the event's conclusion, participants develop or strengthen an Intimacy relevant to the event's purpose or local social norms.

If the Architect uses Villain-Abjuring Covenant against characters who interrupt the festivities, she waives that Charm's Willpower cost and grants (Essence) bonus dice on its roll. While targets tarry at the event, participants treat their Tie of contempt towards them as Major instead of Minor.

PIGEON-FLOCKING RONDO

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Home's Hearthfire Paeon, Susurrus Tempo Ambiance

When you have a song in your heart, there's no room for fear.

The Architect's performance draws on and strengthens the Intimacies of those who hear it, allowing them to reroll an action taken during her performance that supports one of their Major or Defining Intimacies. They must use the second result. If the subsequent roll garners two successes more than the original roll or greater, the Architect receives a refund of four motes.

If the Architect is leading a battle group, this Charm always allows that battle group to reroll failed rout checks even when she isn't performing.

MAKING THE PAVING STONES DANCE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Metropolis

Duration: One performance

Prerequisite Charms: Heart-Swaying Architecture, Pigeon-Flocking Rondo

The Architect becomes not merely the guardian of the city but its conductor — it and its people dance to her tune, perfectly choreographed.

The Architect makes a (Charisma + Performance) inspire action that costs an additional point of Willpower to resist. For the duration of her performance, everyone in earshot who does not resist becomes a part of her performance, with swords swinging according to her rhythm and speech flowing to match her cadence. Every action is musically charged with a theme of the Architect's inspire action. In addition to the usual penalties and bonuses to Resolve for social influence, the emotions created by the inspire action also affect other actions; static traits like Evasion and Parry behave as Resolve does, so meaningful or emotionally charged attacks may gain bonuses or suffer penalties. On rolled actions, the emotions add three bonus dice or a -3 penalty.

At Essence 5, treat the emotions created by the inspire action as Defining instead of Major, and the bonus or penalty on rolled actions increases to 4.

Metropolis: If the Architect possesses Uncertain Avenue Distraction or Ascending Causeway Stride, she may use them without charge while this Charm is active. The city itself responds to the song, increasing or decreasing penalties from the environment and the difficulty of hazards and other physical challenges like climbing by one as appropriate.

Reset: Once per story, unless the Architect meaningfully expands the reach of her city, whether physically, economically, socially, or culturally.

WORDS SHATTER WALLS

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Metropolis

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Clarion Voice Technique, Bustling Plaza Interlocution

The Architect demolishes the walls between languages, allowing words and ideas to flow back and forth between them freely.

Until the next sunrise, language is no barrier to communication within one mile of the Architect. This allows social influence as normal, and even the most complex of ideas can be easily related between people who would otherwise be totally incapable of communication beyond vague gestures.

Following exposure to other languages through this Charm, a character may purchase the Language Merit for those languages immediately, going into Experience debt if necessary. Cities exposed to this Charm, especially repeatedly, tend to develop a polyglot character, which may give rise to new trade pidgins or even full languages.

Metropolis: The Charm's effect extends to cover the entire city.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by the Architect learning a new language herself.

Dexterity

WEAVING ALLEYWAY EVASION

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Until her next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Baffling Detour Defense, Balustrade Runner Stride

So long as she remains in motion, the Architect flits around and slips beneath waiting blades.

If the Architect moved at least one range band on her last turn, she gains +1 Evasion and reduces penalties to her Defense by one. While this Charm is active, she ignores the reset condition of Baffling Detour Defense.

HISSING TOMCAT FEINT

Cost: 6m, 2i; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Withering-Only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rat Strikes Snake

Like a cornered cat, the Architect makes a frightening show against any who intrude upon her personal space.

The Architect may make a **withering** attack roll against a target who comes into close range, which doesn't

count as her attack for the turn. This attack can deal a maximum of (Essence) withering damage. If she hits, she ignores all penalties to her Defense against attacks from the target until the start of his next turn and reduces any onslaught penalty he inflicts on her by one.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by spending a full round with no enemies within close range.

Intelligence

CITY-SANCTIFYING OBEISANCE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Metropolis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Door of the City Unseen, Shrine-Tender's Banishing Chant

Wayward divinities may be brought in line by the Architect, sentenced to community service.

When the Architect incapacitates a god, she may force it to serve either the nearest city or her home city. It reforms there at some point within the next month and gains a Defining Intimacy of loyal service to that city, which lasts for a year.

Repurchase at Essence 5 allows the Architect to trap a spirit when she incapacitates it inside a city, sealing it within a building, monument, or other urban feature. So long as it stands, the spirit is sealed within and only dimly aware of its surroundings, unable to interact with anyone other than the Architect.

Metropolis: Within a city's borders, this Charm may be used on any type of spirit, not just gods.

Reset: Once per story.

CIVIC LEGION METHOD

Cost: 12m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Keystone (Wits) Metropolis

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Golem-Raising Invocation, Rampart-Rearing Meditation

In a time of crisis, the city can respond with a will of its own.

The Architect creates golems as per Golem-Raising Invocation, producing many at once as a large-scale project (**Exalted**, p. 243), comprising a battle group of up to Size 3. In battle, golems have average Drill and

Might 1. The Architect can't have a battle group of golems and individuals created with Golem-Raising Invocation at the same time.

Metropolis: Golem battle groups have elite Drill in cities. If the city is faced with a crisis like an invasion or a disaster that requires mass repairs or rescues, the Architect can create golems instantly without a craft project, shaping them from the substance of the city in its time of need.

Keystone: An Architect with Wits as a Foundation Attribute may learn this as a Wits Charm.

Perception

RANK-EVALUATING INSIGHT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Metropolis, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Shrine Tender's Subtle Eye

As Wun-Ja brings order to the City Fathers, so too may her Architects glimpse Heaven's plan for urban harmony.

The Architect doubles 9s on a read intentions roll against a spirit; success also reveals whether the spirit has any official business or rank relevant to cities in the eyes of Heaven and what those responsibilities entail.

Metropolis: In a city, if the Architect beats the spirit's Guile by three or more successes, she also intuits the city's general rumors about that spirit's conduct within the city — not their actual history, but the city's general beliefs about them.

WHISPERED PLEA ESPIAL

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Metropolis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rank-Evaluating Insight

Prayer condenses like fog, and a patient Architect may read its ebb and flow just like backstreet gossip.

The Architect may make a (Perception + Occult) roll after an hour of meditation, allowing her to overhear local prayers — generally those offered within (Essence) miles, some of which may be current and others lingering from previous petitioners. For every three successes, she intuits a useful lead about local worship and spirits, though these come from generalities rather

than specifics — she senses discontent with a particular aqueduct-god but not the individual complaints.

At Essence 4, the Architect may specify a god with a city-related portfolio, eavesdropping on any recent significant prayers to him and intuiting the general identity of the petitioners.

Metropolis: This Charm's range extends to the city's borders.

Manipulation

LONESOME CITIZEN ATTITUDE

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Metropolis

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: As Seen by Others' Eyes

The city connects, but also conceals — within its throngs, even the mighty may become anonymous.

The Architect may instinctively activate this Charm in response to a profile character roll or similar attempt to investigate her identity, history, or relationships. Doing so increases the difficulty by (Essence/2, round up). If the roll still succeeds, any leads are especially vague — even long-time contacts remember her only dimly, and evidence is mostly hearsay and conjecture. She waives the Willpower cost for additional uses of this Charm by a particular investigator during the same story.

Metropolis: If the investigating character is within the same city, the Architect intuitively where he's conducting his investigation.

FALSE FELLOWSHIP DECEPTION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 4

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Password-and-Handshake Intuition

Lies spread like wildfire in the tinder of a credulous city, spurred on by hazy memories of what never was.

The Architect may use Password-and-Handshake Intuition to fabricate a false identity of her design as a member of the organization instead of simply insinuating herself, applying its Guile bonus to rolls to disguise or pass herself off as this cover. Characters with Resolve lower than her Essence have vague memories of her at events and functions, and evidence such as paperwork

exists confirming her false identity's membership for up to (Essence x 2) years.

Stamina

FIST-BREAKING FACADE

Cost: —(+3m, 2i); **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Brick-and-Mortar Ablation

Those who strike the Architect find her solid as stone and are more likely to break themselves than her.

When using Brick-and-Mortar Ablation, the Architect may pay a three-mote, two initiative surcharge to roll (Stamina) with (Hardness) non-Charm bonus dice. Each success removes an additional success of damage and raises her cap from Brick-and-Mortar Ablation to (Essence + Stamina). If this reduces the attack's damage to zero, the attacker suffers a level of bashing damage that ignores Hardness if their attack was from close range.

STYLITE SPIRIT MEDITATION

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: The City Endures, Stolen Moments Catnap

Rooted to the foundations, the city becomes as the earth, eternal and all-enduring. So, too, does the city's champion.

The Architect chooses a spot and spiritually roots herself. So long as she remains within short range of that spot, she no longer requires food, water, or sleep. If she chooses to sleep, she enters a trance during which her natural healing rate is multiplied by 10. Rousing herself from this trance in response to her environment requires a Wits + Awareness roll.

At Essence 4 and higher, the Architect does not age while she remains in this trance.

INVIOLENT SENTINEL VIGOR

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: (Essence) days

Prerequisite Charms: Passage-Barring Tactic, Stolen Moments Catnap

There is no portcullis more durable than the Architect's watchful presence.

While the Architect defends a chokepoint such as a bridge, wall, or passage, she needs no food, water, or sleep. If she has an Intimacy towards the place or people she is defending, she adds (Intensity) to her armored soak and may treat the Intimacy as one level higher when citing it in a Decision Point to resist influence that would force her to yield.

Metropolis: The Architect may use this Charm while defending an entire city or major section thereof from attack, siege, unrest, or other active threats.

CITY-BORNE BEHEMOTH

Cost: (+10m); **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 5

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Junkyard Colossus Technique

The Architect draws in the detritus of the city and becomes its mightiest champion, able to wrestle down even the most monstrous invaders.

The Architect can spend a ten-mote surcharge when using Junkyard Colossus Technique in a city, drawing in enough material to grow to Legendary Size. In this form, she adds her Stamina to her Strength for the purposes of feats of strength and doubles the Soak and Hardness added by Living Wall Fortification.

However, the Architect suffers a -4 penalty on any physical rolls made against any target that's human sized or smaller and on any Awareness rolls to detect such a target. The duration of the Charm is also reduced to one scene.

Reset: Once per story unless a city the Architect is in is threatened by an enemy of Legendary Size.

The Sovereigns of Ulairu

Craft

ATOP A CRYSTAL STEED

Cost: —; **Mins:** Craft 3, Essence 2

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Bejeweled Retainer Eidolon

Only a mount of her own making will suffice for the Sovereign.

This Charm upgrades Bejeweled Retainer Eidolon, allowing the Sovereign to manifest an eidolon steed. It has a +4 speed bonus and counts as an animal for the purposes of magic like Prince-Among-Beasts Coronation. The Sovereign gains +1 non-Charm Defense against Unhorse gambits while riding the eidolon and increases their Initiative cost by 1.

If the Sovereign knows Emerald Eidolon Awakening, she gains access to another benefit:

Lucent Warhorse Majesty: The eidolon's combat movement pool increases to 12 dice. For six experience points or three bonus points each, the Sovereign may enhance the eidolon with the latent abilities of a mundane animal suitable for a mount or imbue it with (higher of Essence or 3) mutations that modify its shape; it's incapable of granting mutations like Boundless Endurance or Venomous. As with Emerald Eidolon Awakening, the Sovereign can preserve (Essence) Eidolon steeds when creating a battle group with Bejeweled Eidolon Retainer (**Exigents**, p. 293).

PATH-OF-LIGHT ASCENT

Cost: 4m, 1wp (+4i per round); **Mins:** Craft 5, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Fireglass Promenade Unfurling

Spiraling stairways of crystalline light flare to life beneath the Sovereign's feet as she ascends through the air.

The Sovereign moves over thin air, forming steps of fireglass to support her. She can move vertically, but going upward counts as difficult terrain, often requiring her to move as if on a spiraling stairway. These steps linger until the end of the Sovereign's next turn, allowing others to follow or pursue her.

In combat, each round after the first that she maintains this Charm, she must pay four Initiative to remain in the air.

Integrity

BROKEN DIAMOND MIRROR

Cost: 3m, 3i, 1wp, 3a; **Mins:** Integrity 5, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Counterattack, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Burn For Me

At the moment of injury, the Sovereign's prismatic soul reflects her opponent's blow back onto him, shattering into mineralized shards of burning flesh that strike him in turn.

The Sovereign can use this Charm after she's been hit and damaged by a **decisive** attack. Before the attacker resets to base, she counterattacks with a (Wits + Integrity) **decisive** attack, ignoring wound penalties. All Charms that the attacker used to enhance his original attack also apply to this counterattack at no additional cost. If it hits, it uses the attacker's Initiative to determine damage. He then resets to base. The Sovereign's Initiative is not reset.

The Sovereign may use Burn For Me as a Supplemental Charm to enhance this attack.

Reset: Once per day, unless reset by incapacitating a non-trivial opponent with this Charm or who's under the effect of Burn For Me.

Performance

GLIDING OVER ALL

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Sovereign glides gracefully away from those things that would trouble her.

The Sovereign adds a non-Charm success on a roll for a movement action with any Ability. She also adds (Anima) dice on a roll to disengage or withdraw and ignores that many points of penalty from difficult terrain (**Exalted**, p. 199).

SKY-DANCING SPONTANEITY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Gliding Over All

Moving as a rainbow across the heavens, the Sovereign seeks better footing from which to perform.

As long as the Sovereign maintains constant movement, she can run up walls and other vertical surfaces, even upside-down along a ceiling. However, she cannot disengage or withdraw with this movement. If she ends her movement somewhere she couldn't normally stand

and then fails to renew this Charm on her next turn, she falls and suffers damage normally.

EARTH-DEFYING ARIA

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Performance 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One round

Prerequisite Charms: Sky-Dancing Spontaneity

Singing a single note of a purity that makes the world lighter, the Sovereign floats through the air with unearthly grace.

The Sovereign slows her descent while falling, descending only one range band that round instead of immediately plummeting to the ground. She may move one range band horizontally in the air, which doesn't count as her move action. Range bands she glides through with this Charm don't count towards falling damage.

Moving through the air counts as her reflexive move action unless she uses another Performance Charm.

LACHRYMOSE SAPPHIRE PROVOCATION

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Polished Pearl Debut

The profundity of the Sovereign's artistry overwhelms her audience, moving them to tears and rattling their souls.

After concluding a performance, the Sovereign rolls ([Intelligence or Manipulation] + Performance) to inspire discomfort, sorrow, or anger in those who first see it. These feelings are never directed at the Sovereign. Affected characters contemplate the profundity of what they've witnessed; they simultaneously treat the inspire roll as an instill roll to convey a Minor Principle reflecting their understanding of the work's meaning, or to weaken an opposing Principle. This may not always align with the Sovereign's intent, yet it never contradicts it.

LOST IN THE LIGHT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Performance 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Sovereign takes refuge in her own anima, partially dissolving into motes of light.

The Sovereign rolls to establish concealment with (Dexterity + [Performance or Stealth]), rerolling 6s until they cease to appear and reducing the penalty from glowing anima to -1. She may attempt to enter concealment at burning with -3 penalty or -5 for bonfire or higher. If she's within close range of fireglass cover or all opponents who can see her are suffering from vision penalties, she rerolls 5s also.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, she can expend any amount of anima when using this Charm, adding a success per level of anima spent and reducing penalties to the new level.

SWALLOWED FIRE RESTRAINT

Cost: 2m per level of anima, 1wp; **Mins:** Performance 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute, Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Lost in the Light

The Sovereign contains her burning radiance within her chest, leaking light through her skin like molten crystal.

The Sovereign can activate this Charm when she would gain a level of anima to trap it in her chest — it counts as regular anima but doesn't penalize Stealth rolls. It requires rolling (Perception + Awareness) at difficulty (6 - anima) to notice. Taking 3+ levels of **decisive** damage, entering Limit Break, or reaching transcendent anima ends this Charm as the light rushes out of the Sovereign's body.

If the Sovereign uses this Charm multiple times in a scene, she waives the Willpower cost after the first. While underground she can hold her anima indefinitely even if she would normally be forced to release it, but releases it upon reaching the surface.

SERENADING THE SLUMBERING EARTH

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Far-Wandering Anthem

As if rousing a sleeping lover, the Sovereign sings to the stony depths, stirring the earth that it might grant safe passage for its beloved.

The Sovereign creates, opens, or reveals an underground tunnel that extends for (Essence/2, round up) range bands. These tunnels either existed previously or

were created by the Sovereign; if there were any tunnels or underground structures already within that range, then they connect to the network.

Enemies who pursue her into them suffer a -3 penalty on all Awareness, Athletics, Survival and Dodge rolls while inside, as the earth defends the Sovereign. Any earth elementals in these tunnels automatically have a negative Minor Tie towards the Sovereign's enemies.

The tunnels seal themselves once the Sovereign leaves but remain hidden, detectable with a difficulty 4 (Perception + Awareness) roll. The Sovereign can reopen tunnels previously accessed with this Charm for five motes, waiving the Willpower cost.

Reset: Once per day.

Socialize

PRINCE-AMONG-BEASTS CORONATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Socialize 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

A Sovereign's loyal companion inherits its master's grace and dignity.

The Sovereign treats animal familiars as subordinates. If she knows Blessing of the Vasty Deep, she can use it on her familiars, not counting them against the limit. Doing so allows her to communicate complex commands to the familiar and for it to convey her intention and instructions to other people through body language.

BRAZEN RUBY AUDACITY

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: By Her Leave

What the Sovereign can't get through grace, she will cow her inferiors into giving her through fear, consequences be damned.

The Sovereign can use this Charm when a bargain or persuade roll fails, immediately rolling to threaten the target with (Anima) non-Charm bonus dice to achieve the same outcome. This requires entering a Decision Point and citing an Intimacy that defies the Sovereign's wishes.

UNJUST AUTHORITY REJECTION**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Socialize 3, Essence 1**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

Recognizing no ruler but herself, the Sovereign disregards laws she disagrees with.

When the Sovereign is caught breaking a formal law, rule, or regulation that's officially imposed by a political leader, governing body, or an analogous authority, she makes a special (Appearance + Socialize) instill roll against all who witnessed it, ignoring multiple target penalties. Examples include attempting to steal from someone, refusing to bow for a prince, or trespassing. A character whose Resolve is beaten won't care about the crime and won't tell his superiors about it. He can't form negative Ties toward the Sovereign or weaken positive Ties to her based on her crime.

A character who was directly harmed or inconvenienced by the Sovereign's act or who has an Intimacy opposed to it may pay one Willpower to resist this influence.

SHADOW-QUEEN'S COURT**Cost:** —(+1m); **Mins:** Socialize 3, Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Blessing of the Vasty Deep

A lady need not dirty her hands with base criminality; she has servants to do it for her.

When the Sovereign uses Blessing of the Vasty Deep, she may pay a one-mote surcharge to grant characters the following benefits:

- He rerolls 6s until they cease to appear on Stealth and Larceny rolls to carry out the Sovereign's orders or serve her.
- He gains +2 Guile against rolls that would reveal information that would incriminate or disadvantage the Sovereign.
- He gains +1 Resolve against influence that leverages or would require him to recognize the authority of any person, group, or law over the Sovereign.

LAST AND HIGHEST HONOR**Cost:** 3wp, 3a; **Mins:** Socialize 5, Essence 4**Type:** Reflexive**Keywords:** Decisive-only, Perilous**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** Debts Called Due, Seven Fortunes Sinecure

A vassal must be willing to give his life for his liege if necessary; the Sovereign simply spends what is hers to use.

The Sovereign can use this Charm after an attack roll against her or other roll to resist damage. If she would take damage that would incapacitate her, she speaks the name of a mortal subordinate within long range that she has a Major or Defining Positive Tie towards, or who is currently affected by Blessing of the Vasty Deep, Sworn Upon the Soul, Debts Called Due or Seven Fortunes Sinecure. She reduces the damage by (Intimacy + subordinate's health levels). A few seconds later, that person is consumed in a prismatic conflagration. If she would still be incapacitated after this reduction, she is left on her last -4 health level instead.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by suffering Limit Break.

War**MOUNTAIN-SHAKING PRIDE****Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** War 2, Essence 1**Type:** Supplemental**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Instant**Prerequisite Charms:** None

The Sovereign draws power from herself, turning dignity and self-regard into strength.

The Sovereign adds +2 to her effective Strength to determine if she can attempt a feat of strength and adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice. If this upholds or advances a Major or Defining Intimacy of pride or self-confidence, these dice become non-Charm.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, the Sovereign can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to increase the Strength bonus to (Anima).

RAINBOW FIRE BARDING**Cost:** —(2m); **Mins:** War 3, Essence 1**Type:** Permanent**Keywords:** None**Duration:** Permanent**Prerequisite Charms:** Radiant Warrior Raiment

Girding her steed in auroral glory, the Sovereign and her mount are beyond the reach of mere mortals.

The Sovereign can pay a two-mote surcharge when activating Radiant Warrior Raiment to provide her mount +1 Resolve and matching mundane armor, which appears when hers does.

While benefiting from this Charm, her mount adds ([Appearance or Strength]/2, round down) dice to its **withering** attack's raw damage. It also becomes immune to damaging effects from the Sovereign, such as the Agony Cataclysmic or Flayed Soul Malediction (**Exigents**, pp. 287-288, 310-311).

PROCESSION OF TWO

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rainbow Fire Barding

To stand in the path of a Sovereign at ride is to try and catch a comet.

The Sovereign adds ([Appearance or Wits]/2, round up) dice on a mounted movement action, and ignores that many points of environmental penalties, including from difficult terrain. Success on a rush or disengage awards both her and her mount one Initiative, and rolls opposing her mounted movement actions suffer a -(Anima) penalty.

BENT LIGHT BLUR

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Brilliant Diamond Edge or Midnight Flame Vigil

Light warps and smears around the Sovereign like a cloak, trailing her as she moves.

The Sovereign doubles 9s on a Join Battle roll. If she wins Join Battle, she gains an additional level of anima.

UNSET OPAL PLOY

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** War 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unfurling Aurora Banner

Through a trick of the light, the Sovereign and her soldiers appear to be in two places at once, disorienting enemies before striking with blades real and illusory.

The Sovereign makes a Strategic Maneuver roll, selecting two potential stratagems to enact, the first of which must be the Ambush stratagem. She may allocate her extra successes to the Ambush stratagem, and if she rolls enough to meet both their thresholds, may enact them simultaneously.

BATTLEFIELD STATUARY DESOLATION

Cost: 8m, 3a, 1wp; **Mins:** War 5, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Shaping (Body)

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Shattered Prism-Sword Wall

A rippling aurora erupts in the sky, burning vengefully before the Sovereign calls it down to earth in a fiery crash. Enemies caught in its radiance scream, burn, then shine as flesh becomes lucent fireglass.

The Sovereign makes an unblockable **decisive** attack against all enemies within short range. She divides her Initiative evenly among each hit enemy, round up to determine damage, and adds (Anima) to each. Battle groups and trivial enemies instead suffer (Initiative + Anima) dice of damage, which doesn't count against her Initiative when allocating it to determine the damage rolled against other enemies.

Characters who suffer enough damage to increase their wound penalties suffer an additional -2 penalty to all physical actions and gain +2 soak as their bodies are partially transmuted to fireglass. This is a Shaping (Body) effect.

Attempts to remove, reverse, or heal transmuted body parts are made at a difficulty equal to that of shattering it (**Exigents**, p. 288). Characters killed by this Charm transmute into statues of pure fireglass.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by defeating a significant enemy in such a way that upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy.

Panoply of the Thousand Flames

The artifacts wielded by the Exigents are as strange and varied as they are. This section contains six new artifacts associated with Exigents or their patrons; the curse-breaking devil-caster Benediction, the sanctified dire chain Cloudhammer, the monstrous Emerald Visage of Amirul, the playful moonsilver artifact Zōyi's Delight, and two treasures sacred to lost Aurora, the war sleigh Reverie at Midnight and the peerless Scintillating Raiment.

Benediction

(Orichalcum Devil-Caster, Artifact . . .)

There is a name for those gods who betray the domain of their office: the faithless, who break the trust of the Celestial Bureaucracy and the King of Heaven in whose name they serve. Most break faith for personal gain, but Princess Lightning — a celestial goddess of calamitous curses — suborned her office for compassion, thwarting Heaven's plans for destined curses that might have ruined lives. She was cast from Yu-Shan to Creation in official disgrace, but the Unconquered Sun saw merit enough in her intentions to bestow upon her a spark of Exigence before her exile. With it, she raised up the Cursebreaker — her champion and lover. Exaltation cost her immortality, and she lived and died after fifty years of travelling together as wandering exorcists and problem-solvers, leaving behind nothing save for the orichalcum devil-caster that had long been the Cursebreaker's badge of office.

Benediction is a weapon of absolution used by the Cursebreaker to bring justice to wicked sorcerers, raksha illusionists, grim specters, and venal gods. Its flames burn in shades of white, gold, and rose, and those bathed in them may find hated magicks washed away or selfish blessings turned to wretched burdens. It had a hearthstone slot once upon a time, but it is now set with one of Princess Lightning's eyes, plucked willingly from her head and transmuted into a vermillion pearl as part of a cursebreaking rite.

The devil-caster figures prominently in the mythology of several Southern cultures, where its wielders have carried on the Cursebreaker's legacy. Its flames brought an end to exiled princes of Ysy, the Dragon-Blooded sorceress Simendor Lysat, and the nephwrack Eleven Agonies Screamed Unto Perfection.

Backer: Michael Maitan

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+12 DMG, OVW 4)

Accuracy: Close +1, Short +5, Medium +3, Long +1, Extreme -1

Tags: Lethal, Archery (Short), Flame, One-Handed, Mounted, Slow

Hearthstone Slots: 0

Era: The False Peace of Ember

CURSES

Benediction's Evocations are especially effective against curses and those who wield them. For these purposes, a curse is any Charm or other magical effect that creates significantly hostile effects that last more than a scene. Unwanted Psyche, Shaping, and Fate effects always count as curses.

EVOCATIONS OF BENEDICTION

A wielder who isn't dissonant with orichalcum awakens Warlock-Hunting Omen automatically at no cost.

WARLOCK-HUNTING OMEN

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Benediction quivers at the wielder's hip in the presence of curse-speakers, eager to be drawn.

The wielder can make a special (Perception + Occult) read intentions roll against a character's Guile to determine if he has intentionally cursed a target within the past (Essence) weeks. For every two successes over his Resolve, the wielder intuits something about the character's curses, their intentions in using them, or possible countermagic.

Repurchase at Essence 2 allows the wielder to activate this Evocation unconsciously in response to a surprise attack from a curse-using assailant; defeating the higher of the character's Guile or applicable Stealth roll makes her aware of the attack and grants her +1 Defense or Resolve against it.

Dissonant: Characters dissonant with orichalcum can't awaken this Evocation's repurchase.

RIGHTEOUS HUNGER BLAZE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-Only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Warlock-Hunting Omen

Benediction's flames burn hot and hungry, giving the wicked no quarter.

When attacking a character who has either used a curse in this scene or whom the wielder has identified with Warlock-Hunting Omen, the wielder extends Benediction's range to medium without needing an aim action and reduces the benefits of heavy cover to light or light cover to none. If she overcomes the target's Defense, her weapon automatically reloads with fire-dust conjured from her raw, righteous intent.

Resonant: The wielder may pay a one Willpower surcharge to ignore the benefits of heavy or full cover.

SPELLS CURL LIKE BURNING PAPER

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Warlock-Hunting Omen

Seven dozen vile sorcerers found their end at Benediction's fire, all their spells stripped away by the cleansing kiss of flame.

Upon attacking a character under the effects of a spell, the wielder counts **decisive** damage she deals as successes towards distorting the spell, or half that rounded up for withering attacks. Against environmental spells or enchantments on allies, she may roll (Perception + Archery) as a miscellaneous action against difficulty 3 for First Circle spells, 4 for Second Circle, or 5 for Third Circle, applying extra successes towards distorting it, bathing it in harmless rose flame.

If the wielder is initiated into sorcery, she rolls an additional (highest Circle) dice for distortion after an attack supplemented by this Evocation or any other attempt to distort a spell.

The wielder can also roll to distort non-spell curses on an ally or the environment. Rolling higher than the Essence of the curse's creator ends a curse immediately if its duration is less than a day or else suppresses it for a scene. This can create a safe path through large scale environmental curses, like the serpent-wall of Sibri (**Adversaries of the Righteous**, pp. 122-125).

Resonant: If the wielder's Essence is higher than that of the curse's originator, she adds two to her extra successes for distorting a spell, and can end a non-sorcerous curse regardless of its duration.

EYE-OF-LIGHTNING JUDGMENT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-Only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Princess Lightning's crystal eye shines in judgment at the moment of an attack, offering a mercy for those who recant their wickedness.

After a successful attack against a target who has used a curse in this scene or whom the wielder has identified with Warlock-Hunting Omen but before damage is rolled, the target may accept a Major Intimacy reflecting feelings of regret or remorse for his use of curses. If he does so, he reduces the attack's damage by three dice. If he refuses, the attack deals an additional (Essence/2) level of aggravated damage.

FINAL TRIBULATION FLAME

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Eye-of-Lightning Judgment

Benediction's flames coruscate with pale lightning, piercing defensive spells.

Against a target who's used a curse this scene or identified with Warlock-Hunting Omen, the wielder adds (higher of wielder or target's Essence) non-Charisma dice to the attack roll and ignores any benefits to the target's soak, Hardness, or Defense from First Circle and Second Circle spells.

Resonant: At Essence 5, the attack ignores benefits from Third Circle spells.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by suffering defeat or significant setback at the hands of a curse-wielding enemy.

Dissonant: Characters dissonant with Benediction are limited to ignoring First Circle Spells.

Cloudhammer (White Jade Dire Chain, Artifact . . .)

Kerlei of the Chain is an Exigent offered rare and lofty acclaim among the Immaculate Order for her dutiful service in the name of her patron, Zhiëka, god of righteous imprisonment. Her panoply is famed, including a dozen treasures claimed from illicit Exigents and cleansed, reforged, or otherwise turned to the Order's purposes. Among her favorites of this panoply is a dire chain of Malfean iron links, weighted on either side by



inscribed slabs of sanctified white jade and wrapped with silk talismans for purification and penance. These slabs grant the chain extraordinary force in its attacks and negate its formerly infernal nature.

This is Holds-Down-the-Heavens, known more commonly by monks and outlaws as the Cloudhammer. Once the weapon of the patchwork Exigent and diabolist known as the Crowfoot King, it was used to rain down avalanches on foes and innocents alike. Purged of his influence, it is now a tool to bring airborne devils

to the ground and foes of every kind to their knees in search of mercy.

While Kerlei is protective of her weapons, she is well-inclined to lend them to Dragon-Blooded monks and other Exigents in service to the Immaculate Order. Recently, Cloudhammer was lost during a failed Wyld Hunt. It is yet unknown whether an Anathema has claimed it or if it remains discarded on some lost battlefield, but Kerlei ardently seeks its return.



Backer: Benjamin Bowley-Bryant

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+3 ACC, +12 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 4)

Tags: Bashing, Flexible, Grappling, Martial Arts, Smashing, Reaching

Hearthstone Slots: 2

Era: Reign of the Crowfoot King

EVOCATIONS OF CLOUDHAMMER

When used to make a successful smash attack, the wielder regains the Initiative spent in the attempt. Resonant wielders may wield Cloudhammer with Brawl, finding that the reformed devil-chain moves intuitively in their grasp.

LAY LOW THE SOARING DEVIL

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dissonant, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Cloudhammer lengthens briefly in search of those who terrorize from on high, bringing them back down to earth.

The wielder may make an attack against a target within short range who is above them — whether flying, perched atop a building, or from some other vantage. If successful, the target falls one range band toward the ground, taking falling damage if they strike a hard surface. If used as part of a smashing attack, the target falls an extra range band.

At Essence 3, this attack's range increases to medium. At Essence 4, this increases to long range but requires an aim action.

Resonant: Resonant wielders treat their Essence as one higher when determining the maximum range of their attacks.

Dissonant: This Evocation's range may not extend beyond medium.

WING-BREAKING BLOW

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Lay Low the Soaring Devil

Cloudhammer bears its foes to the ground, whether on broken wings or battered spells — all they can hope for is the earth's mercy or the chance to limp away.

After a successful smash attack, the target treats flying as difficult terrain until the end of their next turn and increases her Mobility penalty while airborne by one.

Repurchase at Essence 2 applies this Evocation's effects to any attempts at vertical movement — leaping up,

climbing a ladder, or even walking over walls through magic. While under this effect, the target's weight is multiplied many times over, making it difficult to balance, rise from prone, swim, or walk on fragile surfaces. The difficulty of any associated rolls are increased by (higher of wielder's Essence or 3).

Resonant: Waive this Evocation's Willpower cost when used against enemies who've already suffered its effects in this scene.

THUNDER SPLITS THE MOUNTAIN

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Lay Low the Soaring Devil

Wheeling down with the weight of one of Cloudhammer's jade slabs, the chain strikes with stone-cleaving momentum.

The wielder ignores up to (Strength) armored soak on a withering attack or transforms up to (Strength/2, round up) 10s on a decisive attack roll into bonus damage dice. On a smash attack at close range, inflicting any damage allows the wielder to either knock back the target two range bands or knock them back and prone at once.

CRUSHING JUDGMENT IMPACT

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-Only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Wing-Breaking Blow, Thunder Splits the Mountain

Cloudhammer's white jade slabs grow all the heavier with the weight of their foe's leaden sins.

If the wielder incorporates one of the target's known Principles as part of a stunt to shame or distract them, she adds (Intimacy) damage dice to a **decisive** attack. If the target has defied the wielder's legitimate authority in the past day, this bonus increases by one.

THOUSAND TETHERS IMPRESSION

Cost: (+4m); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dissonant, Shaping (Body)

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Wing-Breaking Blow

Those struck by the Cloudhammer find their skin branded with talismanic markings — ancient bindings used

by Kerlei to rehabilitate the chain, now meant to ward against any possibility of escape.

When the wielder successfully strikes a target with Wing-Breaking Blow, she may commit four motes to extend its duration to one day as a Shaping (Body) effect. The target's flight speed is effectively halved, and the wielder automatically senses his distance and direction from her. At Essence 4, she may extend the duration up to one week or one year at Essence 5.

This effect may be broken by magic that removes Shaping effects or curses, such as Destiny Manifesting Method (**Exalted**, p. 304).

Dissonant: This Evocation cannot be awakened by characters dissonant with Cloudhammer.

The Emerald Visage of Amíruł (Orichalcum Devil Mask, Artifact)

In the Divine Revolution, the witch-goddess Amíruł joined Han-Tha, the Eater of the Dead in battenning her Essence on the flesh of slain spirits and Exalted champions. She hungered for battle as she hungered for Essence and loved nothing of the world until she met her match against the Solar Nine Days Falling, who gave her the first taste of death. Able to restore herself on what she had gorged, she defected to the side of the gods and fought beside her lover from then on.

When the revolution was won, and the Exalted set out to survey their new world, Amíruł was ill-favored among the gods and humanity for her previous habits. Before Heaven's laws were firmed, Amíruł was slain by a god-killing weapon in retaliation for those she'd devoured during the revolution. Wild in grief, Nine Days Falling sought a means to restore Amíruł's Essence as she had once done before but found nothing in Creation that could restore her sundered self.

In a green flash before sunrise, Ligier, finest of hell's smiths, appeared before the grieving Solar. Moved by the violence and hunger of their love, he'd fashioned a grand funeral mask in honor of fallen Amíruł and bid Nine Days Falling to complete it by quenching it in the traitorous Essence of her killers. Although Ligier promised no such thing, the Exalt came to believe that her visage, a gift from the once-great masters of the gods, might hold the key to her impossible resurrection.

The masked Nine Days Falling became scourge of the gods, feeding the mask's hunger on their Essence while rebuking the Exalted with hell-taught sorceries. Eventually declared an enemy of Creation by the first

Deliberative, he fell in battle at the Hexmanse, though his infamous mask disappeared from his possession. Presumed lost to Hell, it has not been seen in Creation since.

The Emerald Visage of Amíru is a funeral mask forged by Hell's finest smith. It bears the witch-goddess's curved horns upon its brow, her wide mouth of sharpened teeth, long serpentine tongue, and sunken eyes, all lovingly cast in verdigris-encrusted orichalcum and studded in emerald buds of hungering flowers from the Demon City's fetid swamps.

Backer: Rob Sansone

Attunement: 2m

Era: Crisis of Wild Divinities

EVOCATIONS OF THE EMERALD VISAGE OF AMÍRU

The Emerald Visage of Amíru is exceptional equipment for rolls to intimidate, track, or summon spirits. If the target is a god or demon, the wielder doubles 9s. Resonant wearers awaken, Adopting the Emerald Visage at no cost.

ADOPTING THE EMERALD VISAGE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: None

The Emerald Visage awakens a yawning hunger in its wearer that sharpens her senses and whets her appetite for Essence.

While wearing the Emerald Visage, the Exalt may see and touch immaterial gods or demons and gains (Essence) automatic successes to sense or track them.

An echo of desperate hunger washes over the Exalt upon activation, giving her the urge to devour gods and other hostile spirits as a Defining Principle that cannot be altered or diminished while her motes remain committed or until the end of the day after she ends commitment. Gods intuitively sense the Emerald Visage's hunger and dread it, treats them as if they possessed a Minor Tie of fear to the Exalt.

Resonant: If the wearer injures a spirit, the automatic successes to sense or track him become non-Charm.

TASTE THE ESSENCE OF DIVINITY

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

Type: Supplemental

NURLISSA AND ARTIFACT MASKS

The Chosen of Masks can choose to treat attuned artifact masks as lesser or greater masks (p.136) for the purposes of her other Charms. If she wishes, she can treat Evocations that grant personas and Intimacies like Adopting the Emerald Visage or Becoming Midnight's Childe (**Heirs to the Shogunate**, p.156-157) as though they had the Mask keyword and can choose a Defining Intimacy imposed by them to interact with her Excellency. If she knows Revealing the New Guise, this benefit extends to identity-changing armor artifacts like Sozen, the Cataphract of Keys (Arms of the Chosen, p. 105-107).

Nurlissa can potentially create new Evocations to further develop the artifact's mask persona, blurring the line between Evocation and Charm until she creates a true greater mask.

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Adopting the Emerald Visage

The Emerald Visage jaw unhinges to reveal a maw of blossoming, serrated teeth.

Supplementing an unarmed decisive attack to bite a spirit, the wielder doubles 10s on the damage roll and inflicts a crippling penalty on all movement actions the victim takes equal to the levels of damage dealt. If she causes the spirit's wound penalty to increase, she steals (Essence) motes from its pool and rolls a single die, healing non-aggravated damage equal to successes.

If she incapacitates a spirit, she devours a portion of his Essence, doubling her stolen motes and rolling an additional die to heal. A spirit slain under this effect may potentially reform but loses a permanent dot of Essence in the process. The loss reduces access to its Charms based on Essence minimums and its mote pool accordingly. Spirits reduced to Essence 0 are permanently destroyed.

DRINK THE BLOOD OF SPELLS

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: Taste the Essence of Divinity

The Emerald Visage's devours the Essence of magic, following its bleed to the source.

Encountering a spirit Charm's ongoing effects, the Exalt rolls (Stamina + Occult) opposed by (spirit's Resolve ×2 or an appropriate dice pool), feeding its Essence into her mask's open maw. Success temporarily suspends the magic's effects: blessings and curses cease to function until the Exalt ends her commitment or is Incapacitated. If the spirit committed motes to the suspended effect, it may not end commitment while so affected. So long as she's devoured the magic, she gains double 8s on rolls to track or sense its creator.

If the Exalt is initiated into sorcery, she may also disrupt spells in this fashion, treating the roll as a successful distortion.

DEVOUR THE ENTRAILS OF GODHOOD

Cost: —(+3m, 1wp); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Aggravated

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Drink the Blood of Spells

Visions of a spirit's Essence fill the wearer's eyes like entrails strung above the cooking fire. When the Emerald Visage closes its jaws around a spirit's Essence, she savors newfound power.

Upgrades Taste the Essence of Divinity, adding (spirit's Essence) to the damage roll and inflicting aggravated damage. Roll an additional die to heal non-aggravated damage if the spirit is slain by the attack, it's permanently destroyed — devoured wholesale by the Emerald Visage.

If she commits three motes and one Willpower upon devouring a spirit, she gains one of the spirit's Eclipse Charms if she meets its Essence minimum for as long as she maintains commitment. She may incur experience debt to permanently learn the Charm and waives the experience cost the first time she does so.

Reverie at Midnight (Adamant War Sleigh, Artifact • • • •)

Reverie at Midnight is a war sleigh of sleek pearlescent material, with runners of polished adamant that shed rainbow stardust wherever they pass. Its origin is storied and enigmatic; some claim it to be the legendary sleigh of fallen Aurora, the Lord of Delights; others say it was a gift crafted by him for a beloved retainer, or a replica assembled by the prayerwright-forger False Incense.

Whatever its origin, its history is more concrete: It has been the conveyance of the brother-gods Iun and Orax

for more than a millennium. Once loyal to the Division of Battles, these martial deities abandoned their posts in protest for Heaven's unwillingness to intervene in Creation. Fair-minded Orax delivers justice for those oppressed by tyrannical lords, while nimble, twenty-fingered Iun bestows wonders and gifts upon the needy. As their interference draws ever greater scrutiny from Yu-Shan and the Immaculate Order alike, the two might grant Reverie to an Exalt who could carry on their legacy and do honor by the sleigh's legend.

Backer: AG Godofsky

Attunement: 3m

Hearthstone Slots: 2

Era: Before the Revolution

EVOCATIONS OF REVERIE AT MIDNIGHT

Reverie can carry up to four passengers, who gain the benefits of mounted combat (**Exalted**, p. 202) based on the animal drawing the sleigh, as well as granting light cover. Upon attunement, the owner automatically awakens Dream-Skimming Tread for free.

DREAM-SKIMMING TREAD

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: One day

Prerequisites: None

In a flash of auroral light, the sleigh's beast becomes something out of a beautiful dream.

This Evocation transforms the animal drawing the sleigh, allowing it to pull it effortlessly. It gains Appearance 5 and can pull the sleigh over any solid surface without trouble, from hard city cobbles to shifting sand. At Essence 2, it can run over water, mist, and clouds and descends safely at one range band per turn if it leaps from such a vantage. At Essence 3, it may fly at night, trailing rainbow sparks in its wake; by Essence 4, it may fly by day as well.

Dissonant: The owner treats her Essence as one lower for determining the mount's capabilities.

SWIFT-AS-JUSTICE CONCENTRATION

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: One journey or one round

Prerequisites: Dream-Skimming Tread

Spurring its mount on with passionate need, Reverie hastens its movement to meet the demands of the just.

The owner cites an Intimacy that pushes them to hurry into action, increasing their speed by (Intensity × 10) miles per hour. In combat, this instead increases the mount's Speed Bonus by (Intensity) for one round. Each Intimacy can only be used once per day.

Resonant: Outside of combat, the owner may spend a one Willpower surcharge to double the boosted speed.

SECRET CORNUCOPIA SUCCOR

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Dream-Skimming Tred

Twenty-fingered Iun learned to draw forth a thousand wondrous things from Reverie, the better to bring delight to the deserving.

The owner may dematerialize a person-sized object or smaller, concealing it within Reverie's nimbus of mystical energies. Attempts to detect the item require magic capable of detecting dematerialized things and suffers a -(owner's Essence) penalty to discern particulars from this dazzling ambiance. She may activate this Evocation to retrieve a stored object and may have up to (Essence × 3) such objects stored at once. Objects stored in this manner do not age or degrade while stored, protecting perishables from spoiling.

Repurchase at Essence 3 allows the wielder to store up to (Essence) tons of mundane objects within, in addition to (Essence × 3) non-mundane objects.

GIFTS BEGET GENIUS

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Secret Cornucopia Succor

As Aurora brought joy to the world, so too may Reverie's owner understand that wonder renews itself in each act of giving.

The owner gains craft points for meeting basic objectives as though she'd completed a basic project (**Exalted**, p. 240) when she successfully does any of the following:

- Offers a significant or meaningful gift to a character that she has personally created or procured.

- Performs an act of charity or mercy that qualifies as at least an inconvenient task.

- Once per scene, when she provides someone with goods stored using Secret Cornucopia Succor.

If she succeeds with 3+ extra successes, she gains the usual three silver point bonus per objective fulfilled.

OTHERWORLDLY SKIES SOJOURN

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

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Swift-as-Justice Concentration

Inheriting a touch of Aurora's own wanderlust, Reverie at Midnight may spirit its owner away from the world.

At night, the owner may pay a four mote, one Willpower surcharge to invoke a relevant Defining Intimacy with Swift-as-Justice Concentration to travel to another realm of existence such as the Underworld, Malfeas, or Yu-Shan, or return to Creation. She arrives after eight hours of travel in an ambiguous midnight sky or five days when traveling to or from Malfeas.

Reverie's owner has the legal right to use this Charm to access Yu-Shan; even powerful censors cannot harass her unless she commits another offense. No magic enforces this save the Unconquered Sun's tacit recognition of ancient Incarnae accords.

Dissonant: Characters dissonant with adamant can use this only once per story. This limit does not apply to journeys to return to Creation.

The Scintillating Raiment (Orichalcum and Adamant Silk Armor, Artifact •••••)

Countless were the wonders lost to the Divine Revolution — the Adularescent Spire, from which one could leap into the heavens; the Colossus in Lacrimosa, which wept tears of healing honey; the Symphonium Arboreal, where wind sang through intertwined branches. Among those lost delights was the Illumined Court, a garden of infinite beauty tended by the lost Incarna Aurora. There, he and his children grew impossible flowers of living light, fit to stir even immortal souls to wonder. As she watched it burn in the Revolution, the artisan Paradise Hymn committed its every detail to memory, memorializing it in the Scintillating Raiment.

The Raiment itself is a gown of seven-colored silks stitched with orichalcum and beaded with delicate adamant. Its hems burn with auroral flame, and it flutters with every movement as if floating in some imagined air current. Like so many treasures associated with Aurora, it has gathered a tangled mythology that not even Yu-Shan's sages can fully unpick. Paradise Hymn is attested to variously as one of Aurora's children or a Solar besotted with love for one of them.

The gown is a seemingly willful and mischievous artifact that disappears from Yu-Shan's quartermasters once every few centuries, setting itself in the path of whichever hero it deigns to be its next wearer. It is particularly fond of romantics and dreamers, delivering itself unto them by strange happenstance, whether discovered at the bottom of a dead relative's possessions or gifted to them by a fae courtier with rainbow-ringed eyes. It abides with them for a time, lending them its gifts and imbuing them with a measure of the Illumined Court's fabled grace, then slips from them to await its next owner.

Backer: Michael L Brewer

Attunement: 4m

Type: Light (Soak +5, Hardness 4, Mobility Penalty -0)

Tags: Silent

Hearthstone Slots: 0

Era: The Last Embers of the Revolution

EVOCATIONS OF THE SCINTILLATING RAIMENT

The Scintillating Raiment doesn't count as armor for determining compatibility with Martial Arts. Due to the Auroral Essence inherent to its making, Sovereigns are Resonant with it.

GLORY BLOSSOMS WHERE HE TREADS

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: None

Pleasure-gardens of woven light bloom in the wearer's wake, lingering but briefly.

The wearer is surrounded by an illusion that sheds light as if a glowing anima (**Exalted**, p. 175) and provides light cover to anyone within close range of the wearer.

If she moves, she leaves behind trails of glowing foliage that linger until the end of her next turn, providing that same bonus.

Repurchase at Essence 2 allows the wearer to spread this effect out to short range while her anima is burning or higher.

BEAUTY TURNS THE WAYWARD SWORD

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Glory Blossoms Where He Treads

Flowers and vines of light and skyfire dazzle a would-be assailant, drawing his attack off course.

If the wearer's Appearance is higher than the attacker's Resolve, she gains a non-Charisma +1 bonus to her Defense and up to (Appearance/2, round up) 1s on the attack roll subtract successes.

GRANDEUR OF THE ILLUMINED COURT

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: None

The Scintillating Raiment glows with a gentle light, casting its wearer as the embodiment of joy.

The wearer gains a bonus dot of Appearance to a maximum of 6 for influence rolls meant to create or draw upon feelings of joy, to convince others to partake in merriment and delight, or when determining Appearance for Beauty Turns the Wayward Sword. She gains the bonus for having higher Appearance than a target's Resolve (**Exalted**, p. 218) on inspire rolls to create feelings of happiness, fulfillment, or openness.

Dissonant: The wearer's maximum Appearance is 5 with the bonus dot. If her Appearance is already 5, she gains a bonus die to suitable influence rolls made with Appearance.

PETALS RISE LIKE FLOATING LANTERNS

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Glory Blossoms Where He Treads

A constellation of luminous petals wafts gently into the

air, circling and swaying as calling those who watch them to join the festivities.

The wearer fills the area up to medium range with mesmerizing petals. She may leverage their beauty as if it was a Minor Intimacy to convince others to put aside hostilities or take their leisure, so long as she and her allies do nothing to physically endanger them. Characters within the illusion suffer -2 to Guile against effects that would discern positive Ties to other characters present or Intimacies based on joy or love.

OUT OF SPLENDOR, PERFECT BLISS

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Petals Rise Like Floating Lanterns

The Raiment sends forth a pulse of gentle skyfire that fills all those who behold it with a moment of ecstasy.

The wearer makes an (Appearance + Presence) inspire roll against everyone who can see her to create feelings of joy, peace, or inspiration. Anyone whose Resolve is overcome treats these emotions as a Defining Intimacy for the rest of the scene unless they spend one Willpower and cite a Major or Defining Intimacy based on rage, violence, or personal hate to resist. Characters who accept the influence reduce their penalties from wounds, poison, disease, fatigue, and other pain by (the wearer's Appearance/2, round up) until the end of the scene.

Reset: Once per session, unless reset by offering succor to a significant antagonist or opponent.

REMEMBRANCE IS A PATIENT LOVE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Out of Splendor, Perfect Bliss

Crafted from memory of what once was, the Raiment's wearer may clothe themselves in beautiful reminiscence of loves present and past.

The wearer rolls (Appearance + Presence) against a target's Resolve, adding (Essence/2, round up) non-Charm bonus dice. On success, she takes on the spiritual seeming of someone to whom the target has had a positive Defining Tie of the Storyteller's choice. If the target's Tie has been lost, degraded, or embittered, he must spend two points of Willpower, or else it returns

to full strength for the rest of the scene. This Intimacy penalizes his Resolve against influence from the wearer based on joy, forgiveness, hope, or reconciliation.

Zôyi's Delight (Moonsilver Devil-Breaking Rod, Artifact . . .)

Once there was a humble fisherman who threw back every tiny fish he found with a prayer. This earned the fondness of the trickster god of school fish, Zôyi Many-Move-As-One. When pirates raided the fisherman's village, Zôyi, protective of the fisherman, forged a shifting relic from moonlight sunken in ocean shallows to defend him. Possessed of its creator's love for mischief, the tool vanished after defending the fisherman, beginning a centuries-long streak of trickery in the hands of those who draw its interest.

Thieves, courtiers, sailors, tricksters, and more have found uses for Zôyi's Delight across Creation. The Advocate of Lies humiliated an Immaculate abbot by impersonating her and reveling wildly, while gentlewoman thief Nagar Minh used it to pilfer House Kúi-Dien treasures and scatter them across Huang Hei's bay. Merchant prince White Fox lost an entire year's harvest from the drug-addled Grand Amanuta, the artifact having set the cargo barge ablaze.

Once perfectly unfixed in form, at some point, Zôyi's Delight was cursed by a raksha its wielder conned, which has left it unable to transform into other shapes for more than a moment. It was last rumored to be seen in the hands of a Tya trawler working in the Wavecrest Archipelago. Who knows if it's found a new wielder to be entertained by since?

Zôyi's Delight appears as a soup ladle of rippling silver, with shadows of fishes in black and blue darting across its surface. All of its forms bear this color scheme. It wiggles like a fish when excited, especially when fishing or engaged in trickery as a fishing rod, harpoon, lock-pick, etc.

Backer: Mr. Miracle

Attunement: 5m

Type: Light (+5 ACC, +10 DMG, +0 DEF, OVW 3)

Tags: Bashing, Concealable, Melee

Hearthstone Slot(s): 2

Era: Disputed

EVOCATIONS OF ZÔYI'S DELIGHT

Zôyi's Delight counts as exceptional equipment for Craft (Cooking). For one mote, it can reflexively transform into exceptional equipment for Larceny rolls or Survival rolls involving fish, after which it immediately changes back.

As long as the wielder isn't dissonant with moonsilver, she can also spend a mote to reflexively transform it into a wrackstaff (**Exalted**, p. 596) for a scene, losing the Concealable tag as it elongates.

A SCHOOL OF CRIMINALS

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

As small fish must swim together, so must tricksters and crooks cooperate to perform their capers.

This Evocation can be used when attempting a Larceny or Stealth roll or any Athletics roll to force entry. Zôyi's Delight assists its wielder in such a roll if she stunts using it directly (e.g., breaking a lock with a strike), allowing her to reroll (higher of Essence or 3) failures. Even if she doesn't use Zôyi's Delight directly, the artifact can animate to assist her, causing a loud noise somewhere within short range to distract guards, shrinking to the size of a guppy to turn a lock's tumblers, or morphing into a hammer to swing itself into a window. In this case, she can reroll (lower of Essence or 3) failures and flurry the action without penalty.

Awakening: If the wielder isn't dissonant with moonsilver, she awakens this Evocation at no cost upon first attuning to Zôyi's Delight.

PANOPLY OF ONE

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

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: A School of Criminals

Zôyi's Delight shudders, then pops up like a breaching fish, shivering with joy as it pretends to be another object of power.

After a scene spent observing another artifact or after profiling its wielder and rolling higher than both his Guile and his artifact's Merit rating, Zôyi's Delight can transform into a copy of that artifact. The replica is convincing; anyone examining the transformed artifact

closely can roll against a difficulty of the wielder's (Manipulation + Essence) to determine the difference. The replica can't use any of the original artifact's Evocations but can manifest cosmetic supernatural phenomena that evoke the artifact, such as a blue jade daiklave crackling with lightning.

If the owner is disguised as the wielder of the artifact, attempts to see through her disguise suffer a -3 penalty.

Dissonant: The difficulty to uncover the replica is (higher of Manipulation or Essence).

DARTING FISH STRIKE

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

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Zôyi's Delight stretches around an enemy's defenses to strike them where they least expect it.

Attacks enhanced with this Evocation gain the Disarming and Flexible tags. The wielder of Zôyi's Delight ignores the Defense bonus from cover, the effects of defend other actions, and adds (Essence) dice to a distract gambit's attack and Initiative rolls. Characters behind full cover can be attacked if there is any way to reach them, but they gain a +3 cover bonus.

Resonant: The bonus dice are added to the attack and Initiative roll of any non-damaging gambit.

ELUSIVE FISH CAPRICE

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

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: A School of Criminals

Scooping boiling water from nowhere, the wielder throws down an obscuring cloud of curling steam containing disoriented fishes.

The wielder unleashes a concealing cloud of steam, rolling ([Dexterity or Intelligence] + [Dodge, Larceny or Stealth]). She can treat this as a disengage roll or a roll to enter concealment, vanishing in a puff of vapor. Success also steals a point of Initiative from an enemy.

The steam lingers until the wielder's next turn out to close range, imposing a -2 penalty to visual-based rolls within for (Essence) rounds, and treats the higher of

the concealment or disengage roll as a conceal evidence roll.

With an Essence 3 repurchase, the radius of the cloud increases to short range. Instead of counting as a disengage or concealment roll, she can count it as a conceal evidence roll; the evidence is scoured away save for a few flopping fish, which quickly transform back into vapor.

Dissonant: The wielder doesn't gain the stolen point of Initiative.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by stealing something noteworthy from a significant character or otherwise advantaging herself or her allies through trickery.

FRENZIED SHOAL FLIGHT

Cost: —(3m); **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Elusive Fish Caprice (x2)

Illusory school fish made of mischief and brume swim through the mist, harrying the wielder's enemy to protect one of their own.

The wielder can spend a three-mote surcharge when using Elusive Fish Caprice. The mist spreads to medium range, and she can reflexively attempt one of the following gambits using her activation roll in addition to one

of the actions of Elusive Fish Caprice. These gambits target everyone within the cloud, but she needs only roll Initiative and pay the listed cost once:

Carp Finds the Treasure (3): Jewel-scaled carps race through the cloud and slap weapons from hands. The wielder makes a disarm gambit against all enemies within the cloud.

Minnows Cloud Reef (2): Minnows flit everywhere, obstructing vision and movement. Affected enemies increase their visual penalties to -(Essence) and suffer a -2 penalty on movement rolls within the cloud.

Piranha Frenzy Sailor (4): Swarming piranhas bite down on the unfortunate targets, imposing a -2 penalty to Defense and all physical actions within the cloud.

Tuna Batters Siaka (3): Enormous tuna barrel through the mist and smash into characters. Affected characters are knocked back one range band and left prone. They must roll to rise from prone at difficulty (Essence) as long as the mist persists.

When the mist fades, any remaining fish evaporate into nothing.

Further gambits can be created, costing three experience points each.

Resonant: The wielder may combine two effects into a single gambit, combining their difficulties.



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