

MAGISTER



WRITING, LAYOUT & ART

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is the last surviving member of the Strelai — an ancient order of mystics that imprisoned the demons who cast the worlds into the sky.

*The Magister has secretly trained a young apprentice, **Kai Tuvari**, in the occult art of Sorcery, because Kai's blood is bound to the essence which lights the sky-star and gives life to the worlds. Only the discipline of Sorcery can control this power.*

*HOWEVER—Magister Lor is not the only one with a secret apprentice. The demon **Setarra**, imprisoned in the essence crystal which powers Lor's sanctum, has visited **Kel Tuvari** (Kai's twin) in dreams, whispering dark promises and extracting dire oaths. Magister Lor chose not to train Kel as a child — the power in Kel's blood was too dark and dangerous to ever draw out safely. But Setarra had other plans.*

EVEN NOW Kel has crept down to the lowest level of the sanctum and completed the ritual to release Setarra from her crystal prison. The demon emerges, singing the song to summon the great Leviathans from the lower depths.

WILL THE MAGISTER STOP THE LEVIATHANS FROM DRAGGING THE CRYSTAL INTO DEPTHS? WILL SETARRA FREE THE REST OF THE DEMONS FROM THEIR PRISON?

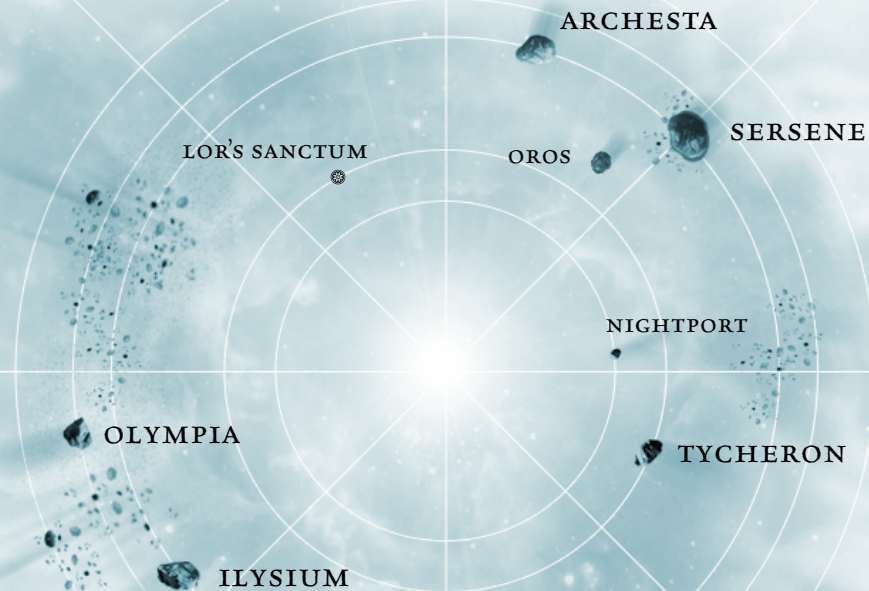
WILL THE TWINS TURN ON EACH OTHER, OR BETRAY THEIR MASTERS?

WHY WERE THE DEMONS IMPRISONED? DOES ANYONE REMEMBER? CAN ENEMIES CHANGE THEIR BELIEFS, OR ARE DUTY AND VENGEANCE THE ONLY WAYS?



THE EMPIRE

Floating worlds circling a shining star



ADRIFT IN THE BLUE

The worlds of the Empire float in a sky of breathable gases circling a small, cold star. Scholars believe that the star is made from pure Essence—the strange energy that is said to create life. This “solar system” is much smaller than you might think—it takes about twelve weeks to cross from one side to the other on a triple-masted sky ship. The smaller worlds of the Empire are so closely positioned that it takes only a day or two to travel from one to another.

THE LOWER DEPTHS

The heavier gases form a dense layer of vapor below the “sky.” This fog is corrosive —people need to wear gas-masks to breathe and most airship hulls will start to decay after a single exposure. Pirates and other criminals sometimes use the lower depths to evade Imperial patrols and launch raids from hiding. Unfortunately, the depths are home to sky squid and other monstrous things....

NAMES IN THE EMPIRE

MALE: Abel, Artemis, August, Eli, Giovanni, Ivan, Jack, Jefferson, Jonas, Leo, Logan, Malachi, Mario, Micah, Nahum, Noah, Orleance, Oscar, Samuel, Silas, Victor, Vlad, Wester.

FEMALE: Alice, Ardent, Ashlyn, Caess, Clare, Elena, Eveline, Fiona, Grace, Hannah, Hazel, Hester, Isabel, Krista, Jezebel, Leah, Lucile, Lydia, Seraphina, Sonya, Sophie, Veronica, Violet.

SURNAMES: Bell, Bowen, Brogan, Canter, Carson, Comber, Cross, Harwood, Hellyers, Hollas, Hunter, Kalra, Keel, Moreau, Morgan, Porter, Pickett, Quinn, Sidhu, Soto, Strangford, Templeton, Vakharia, Walker, Winter, Wright.

NOBLE HOUSES: Blackbird, Dunvil, Rowan, Silversea, Snow, Tyrconnell, Whitethorn.

ARCHESTA

Site of the Imperial Academy of Natural Philosophy. The greatest minds in the Empire study esoteric arts in the alabaster halls and on the lush green lawns of the campus.

ILYSIUM

The capitol world of the Empire, home to the great noble houses. Ilysium is rich and decadent, attended by servants, slaves, and the elite bodyguards of the nobility.

NIGHTPORT

Unlike other worlds, Nightport does not rotate, which means one face is always in darkness. It is on this side that pirates and smugglers have built a hidden port city in which to carry out their nefarious dealings. This hive of scum and villainy is a dangerous place, but almost anything may be bought or sold there, including secrets.

OLYMPIA

The staging world of the Imperial Sky Fleet. From here, expeditions are launched into the colonial expanse and all across the Wild Blue. Olympia is also home to the finest brewers and distillers in the Empire.

TYCHERON

A rocky, forboding world surrounded by dense gray clouds. Imperial mining operations are attended by a few small settlements which scrape out a meager existence.

SERSENE

A world of dark forests, rich fields, snowy mountains, and vast lakes. Sersene supports many massive farms which provide food and animal products to the rest of the Empire.

MAGISTER LOR

The last guardian of an ancient sanctum where demons of old are bound in a crystal prison

MYSTIC

4

DEMON HUNTER

WISE

Insight — [Thoughts], or [Feelings] — Intentions — Educated
Arts — History — Occult — Demon Lore — [Negotiation]

SORCERER

Mastery — Attack, Defend, Create, Control, or Sense — Fire, Storm, [Essence], Push, or Pull — Rituals — vs. [Demons]

KEYS

THE KEY OF BALANCE: You are a guardian of Balance. What must be, must be. It matters not how we feel about it. Turn this key when you put Balance above all other concerns. **BUYOFF:** Act out of fear, anger, compassion, or love.

THE KEY OF DUTY: You must bind all free demons. Turn this key when you act to fulfill your duty. **BUYOFF:** Allow a demon to be free.

THE KEY OF THE MENTOR: You are Kai's mentor in the ways of Sorcery. Turn this key when you remind your apprentice of their training, spout ancient wisdom, or reprimand them for a shortcoming or failure. **BUYOFF:** Let your apprentice go.

ITEMS: Strelai robes — Star-metal sword — Library of occult books, artefacts, and ritual materials.

INJURED

DRAINED

INCAPACITATED

DEAD

ANGRY

ILL

SWAYED

OVERWHELMED

ROLLING THE DICE

When you try to overcome an obstacle, you roll a pool of dice. Take a die if the action falls under one of your **identities** (Mystic or Demon Hunter). Add another die for **each trait** under that identity that applies (Wise, Sorcerer). Then choose one of those traits and add **+1 die for each of its tags** that apply (like *Insight*—Intentions, etc.). If a tag is in *italics*, it counts for **+2 dice**. If a tag is shown as a **list** (with commas) choose one tag from within that list—you can't apply them all at once. **Tags in [brackets] are not available** until you unlock them with experience.

Finally, spend any number of dice from your **pool** to add dice to your roll.

Roll all the dice. Each **even number** is a **hit**. The more hits you roll, the better your character performs.

If you do well enough to pass the obstacle, discard all the dice you rolled (including any pool dice you used). Don't worry, you can get your pool dice back.

If you don't pass, you don't yet achieve your goal. But, you get to keep the pool dice you rolled and **add another die to your pool**. The GM will escalate the danger of the situation and probably inflict a **condition**. You might be able to try again.

PC vs. PC: If you contend with other another PC, you both roll and compare your outcome levels. Based on the situation, the GM determines if both parties achieve their outcomes as rolled (they happen in **parallel**, like in a race), or if the actions interfere with each other (they're **perpendicular**, like a wrestling match). If they interfere, the outcome for the winner is equal to the difference of the rolls. So, a Superb (4) roll vs. a Fair (1) roll would result in a Great (3) outcome for the winner.

Helping: If your character is in a position to help another character, you can give them a die from your pool. Say what your character does to help. The outcome of the roll affects both of you.

POOL VETERAN

Athletic — Tough — Commander — Strategy — Pilot — Tracker — vs. [Demons] or [Creatures]

WARRIOR

Mastery — *Blade*, or Empty Hand — Attack, Defend, or Maneuver — [Merciless] — vs. [Demons]

SPECIAL ABILITIES

STRELAI: You can channel Essence to cast spells using your Sorcerer trait. You know the secret rituals to summon, command, and bind demons, but have never had to use them. In your hands, star-metal blazes with arcane energy and can cut through anything.

MASTER AND APPRENTICE: When you and your apprentice act in unison, with aligned purpose, you each get +1d to your rolls.

CONDITIONS

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a **condition** on your character: **Injured**, **Drained**, etc. A condition might impede your performance (-1 or -2 outcome level) or may restrict your choice of action (you can't be reasonable if you're angry). **NOTE:** The "dead" condition just means "presumed dead" unless you say otherwise. **Magister Lor suffers an ailment and begins with the ILL condition.**

KEYS & EXPERIENCE

When you turn a Key, **take an experience point** token (XP) and **give** a token to another player if their character was involved. (Each key can be turned once per scene).

If you go into danger because of your key, you get 2 XP. When you have accumulated 5 XP, you earn an **advance**. You can spend an advance on one of the following:

- ❖ Unlock one of the bracketed [Tags] on one of your traits.
- ❖ Increase your maximum **Pool** size by one (and add a die right now). Your pool size can not increase beyond 7.
- ❖ Add a new **Key** (you can never have the same key twice).
- ❖ Add a new **Special Ability** (if you have the means to).

You can save advances and spend them at any time, even during an action.

Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you have the *option* of replacing the Key with a new one and earning **one advance**.

REFRESH

You can restore your pool back to full dice by playing a **refreshment scene** with another character. You may also remove a **condition** and regain the use of your **special abilities**. Each player asks the other a question about their character. Say how the answers are revealed in the scene, either explicitly in conversation or subtly. Refreshment scenes can be flashbacks, too.

KAI TUVARI

A young adult whose blood is connected to the essence of the stars. Apprenticed from childhood to Magister Lor.

GIFTED

6

APPRENTICE

ATTUNED

Awareness — *Willpower* — Educated — Arts — History — Demon Lore — [*Arcane Sight*] — [*Dream Travel*]

SORCERER

[Attack], Defend, Create, [Control] — Fire, [Storm], Light, [Dark], Push, Pull, or [Shatter] — Rituals — vs. [Demons]

POOL ADEPT

Athletic — Acrobat — [Tough] — Stealth — Medicine — Treatment — [*Healer*] — [*Heroic*]

WARRIOR

Blade or Empty Hand — Attack, Defend, or Maneuver — [Expertise] — vs. [Demons]

KEYS

THE KEY OF THE TWIN: You are Kel's twin sibling. Turn this key when you put Kel's well-being above other concerns. **BUYOFF:** Allow Kel to suffer.

THE KEY OF DUTY: You must bind all free demons. Turn this key when you act to fulfill your duty. **BUYOFF:** Allow a demon to be free.

THE KEY OF THE APPRENTICE: You are Magister Lor's apprentice in the ways of Sorcery. Turn this key when you place the Magister's commands or values above other concerns. **BUYOFF:** Become a Magister or leave Lor's service.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

TOUCHED BY THE LIGHT: There is a radiance in you, like the light of the sky star. Any creature of darkness suffers terrible agony when they touch you. Your focused will may drive them off (with your Attuned trait).

ESSENCE BLOODED: Once per refresh, you can re-roll all your odd dice.

ITEMS: Strelai robes — Star-metal sword — Belt pouches with medicinal items for the Magister's ailment and other treatments.

INJURED



DRAINED



INCAPACITATED



DEAD



ANGRY



AFRAID



SWAYED



DOMINATED



ROLLING THE DICE

When you try to overcome an obstacle, you roll a pool of dice. Take a die if the action falls under one of your **identities** (Gifted or Apprentice). Add another die for **each trait** under that identity that applies (Adept, Warrior). Then choose one of those traits and add **+1 die for each of its tags** that apply (like Athletic—Acrobat, etc.). If a tag is in *italics*, it counts for **+2 dice**. If a tag is shown as a **list** (with commas) choose one tag from within that list—you can't apply them all at once. **Tags in [brackets] are not available** until you unlock them with experience.

Finally, spend any number of dice from your **pool** to add dice to your roll.

Roll all the dice. Each **even number** is a **hit**. The more hits you roll, the better your character performs.

If you do well enough to pass the obstacle, discard all the dice you rolled (including any pool dice you used). Don't worry, you can get your pool dice back.

If you don't pass, you don't yet achieve your goal. But, you get to keep the pool dice you rolled and **add another die to your pool**. The GM will escalate the danger of the situation and probably inflict a **condition**. You might be able to try again.

PC vs. PC: If you contend with other another PC, you both roll and compare your outcome levels. Based on the situation, the GM determines if both parties achieve their outcomes as rolled (they happen in **parallel**, like in a race), or if the actions interfere with each other (they're **perpendicular**, like a wrestling match). If they interfere, the outcome for the winner is equal to the difference of the rolls. So, a Superb (4) roll vs. a Fair (1) roll would result in a Great (3) outcome for the winner.

Helping: If your character is in a position to help another character, you can give them a die from your pool. Say what your character does to help. The outcome of the roll affects both of you.

HITS	OUTCOME
0	BAD / WEAK
1	FAIR
2	GOOD
3	GREAT
4	SUPERB
5	INCREDIBLE
6	EPIC

CONDITIONS

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a **condition** on your character: **Injured**, **Drained**, etc. A condition might impede your performance (-1 or -2 outcome level) or may restrict your choice of action (you can't be reasonable if you're angry). **NOTE:** The "dead" condition just means "presumed dead" unless you say otherwise.

KEYS & EXPERIENCE

When you turn a Key, **take an experience point** token (XP) and **give** a token to another player if their character was involved. (Each key can be turned once per scene).

If you go into danger because of your key, you get 2 XP. When you have accumulated 5 XP, you earn an **advance**. You can spend an advance on one of the following:

- ❖ Unlock one of the bracketed [**Tags**] on one of your traits.
- ❖ Increase your maximum **Pool** size by one (and add a die right now). Your pool size can not increase beyond 8.
- ❖ Add a new **Key** (you can never have the same key twice).
- ❖ Add a new **Special Ability** (if you have the means to).

You can save advances and spend them at any time, even during an action.

Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you have the **option** of replacing the Key with a new one and earning **one advance**.

REFRESH

You can restore your pool back to full dice by playing a **refreshment scene** with another character. You may also remove a **condition** and regain the use of your **special abilities**. Each player asks the other a question about their character. Say how the answers are revealed in the scene, either explicitly in conversation or subtly.

Refreshment scenes can be flashbacks, too.

KEL TUVARI

A young adult touched by darkness. Bound by secret oath to the demon Setarra.

GIFTED

6

OUTCAST

DARING

Athletic — *Reckless* — Pilot — Stunts — [Sky Combat] — [Evasion] — [Inspiring]

ATTUNED

Arcane Sight — Dream Travel — *Nullify*, [Attack], [Defend], or [Control] — Void, Sorcery, [Essence], or [Demonic]

KEYS

THE KEY OF THE TWIN: You are Kai's twin sibling. Turn this key when you put Kai's well-being above other concerns. BUYOFF: Allow Kai to suffer.

THE KEY OF DEMONIC OATH: You have sworn a demonic oath to help Setarra free herself and her kind from the crystal prison. BUYOFF: Defy the oath and suffer the torment that results.

THE KEY OF THE OUTCAST: Without a mentor, you were forced to grow up on your own, among outcasts. Turn this key when your defensive and suspicious nature causes a problem for you. BUYOFF: Accept fidelity with a mentor, loved one, or organization.

ITEMS: Traveler's garb — Glider cloak — Breathing mask — Dagger — Small airship

INJURED

DRAINED

INCAPACITATED

DEAD

ANGRY

AFRAID

SWAYED

DOMINATED

ROLLING THE DICE

When you try to overcome an obstacle, you roll a pool of dice. Take a die if the action falls under one of your **identities** (Gifted or Outcast). Add another die for **each trait** under that identity that applies (Daring, Attuned). Then choose one of those traits and add **+1 die for each of its tags** that apply (like *Athletic*—*Reckless*, etc.). If a tag is in *italics*, it counts for **+2 dice**. If a tag is shown as a **list** (with commas) choose one tag from within that list—you can't apply them all at once. **Tags in [brackets] are not available** until you unlock them with experience.

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POOL EXPERIENCED

Traveler — Cultures or Languages — Underworld — Pirates — Revolutionaries — Educated — [Occult] — [Demon Lore]

SURVIVOR

Fighter — [Blade] or [Fists] — Stealth — Fearless — Underdog — Tough — Scavenger — [Brutal]

SPECIAL ABILITIES

TOUCHED BY THE VOID: There is a darkness in you, like the void which is said to lie beyond the sky. You can nullify arcane energy and sorcery (with your Attuned trait). You may become a conduit for the consuming void.

VOID BLOODED: Once per refresh, you can force another character who is visible to you to re-roll their even dice.

CONDITIONS

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a **condition** on your character: **Injured**, **Drained**, etc. A condition might impede your performance (-1 or -2 outcome level) or may restrict your choice of action (you can't be reasonable if you're angry). **NOTE:** The "dead" condition just means "presumed dead" unless you say otherwise.

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- ❖ Unlock one of the bracketed [Tags] on one of your traits.
- ❖ Increase your maximum **Pool** size by one (and add a die right now). Your pool size can not increase beyond 8.
- ❖ Add a new **Key** (you can never have the same key twice).
- ❖ Add a new **Special Ability** (if you have the means to).

You can save advances and spend them at any time, even during an action.

Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you have the **option** of replacing the Key with a new one and earning **one advance**.

REFRESH

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Refreshment scenes can be flashbacks, too.

SETARRA

An ancient demon, released from long imprisonment, seeking vengeance and freedom

RUTHLESS

8

SEA DEMON

CUNNING

Deception — Manipulation — Education — History — Occult — Arcane Lore — Lost Mysteries — Stealth — [Human Guise]

TERRIBLE

Demonic Gaze — Intimidate — [Terrify] — Willpower — [Resist] — [Hypnotize]

KEYS

THE KEY OF VENGEANCE: You will make those suffer who bound you and your kind in the crystal prison. Turn this key when you lay your vengeance upon those who deserve it. **BUYOFF:** Forgive them.

THE KEY OF THE LIBERATOR: You will release any bound demon you find. Turn this key when you attempt to do so. **BUYOFF:** Leave a demon imprisoned.

THE KEY OF SERVITUDE: You are a demon, sworn by arcane oaths to obey when under the sway of sorcery. Turn this key when you submit to the magical command of a sorcerer. **BUYOFF:** Defy a sorcerer's will.

Large, black shark-eyes. Razor claws and teeth. Black, wet scales. A hideous beauty.

INJURED

DRAINED

DRIVEN OFF

HINDERED

BOUND

FURIOUS

SWAYED

OVERWHELMED

ROLLING THE DICE

When you try to overcome an obstacle, you roll a pool of dice. Take a die if the action falls under one of your **identities** (Ruthless or Sea Demon). Add another die for **each trait** under that identity that applies (Cunning, Terrible). Then choose one of those traits and add **+1 die for each of its tags** that apply (like Deception—Manipulation, etc.). If a tag is in *italics*, it counts for **+2 dice**. If a tag is shown as a **list** (with commas) choose one tag from within that list—you can't apply them all at once. **Tags in [brackets] are not available** until you unlock them with experience.

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HITS	OUTCOME
0	BAD / WEAK
1	FAIR
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6	EPIC

POOL ARCANE

Power — Leech — Summon, or Control — Water, Storm, Cloud, Leviathans, or [Essence]

MONSTROUS

Demonic — Strength — Speed — Razor Claws, or Crushing Grip — vs. Sorcerers or [Demons]

SPECIAL ABILITIES

SEA DEMON: You are immortal. You cannot be killed or destroyed. You may be injured by magic or star metal. You may be bound by ritual magic and controlled by the commands of a sorcerer. You were made in the ancient sea and know the song to call leviathans — the greater demons of the lower depths.

LEECH ESSENCE: Once per scene, you may steal life essence from up to four humans you can see. They may attempt to resist or avoid your power if they have the means. If you overcome them, you steal one of their pool dice (this can take you over your maximum). If they have none to give, they become **drained**.

CONDITIONS

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a **condition** on your character: **Injured**, **Drained**, etc. A condition might impede your performance (-1 or -2 outcome level) or may restrict your choice of action (you can't be reasonable if you're angry). **NOTE:** The "dead" condition just means "presumed dead" unless you say otherwise.

KEYS & EXPERIENCE

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If you go into danger because of your key, you get 2 XP. When you have accumulated 5 XP, you earn an **advance**. You can spend an advance on one of the following:

- ❖ Unlock one of the bracketed [**Tags**] on one of your traits.
- ❖ Increase your maximum **Pool** size by one (and add a die right now). Your pool size can not increase beyond 10.
- ❖ Add a new **Key** (you can never have the same key twice).
- ❖ Add a new **Special Ability** (if you have the means to).

You can save advances and spend them at any time, even during an action.

Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you have the **option** of replacing the Key with a new one and earning **one advance**.

REFRESH

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Refreshment scenes can be flashbacks, too.

MAGISTER LOR'S SANCTUM



Kel's Airship

RELATIVE SIZE
COMPARISON

Leviathan



RUNNING THE GAME

Tips, tricks, and advice for the GM

GETTING STARTED

Read the opening passage to set up the situation. Then hand out the character sheets and help everyone pick who they want to play.

This Chapter is designed as a single-location, one-shot session. All the PCs are pointed at each other in ways to spark immediate conflict between them. As the GM, you won't need to introduce any new characters into the action (except for the Leviathans Setarra has summoned to take the crystal prison and help them escape).

If you have two players, consider the following options for PCs:

- ❖ **MAGISTER LOR** and **KAI**. The session will be about master and apprentice, dealing with Kel's apparent betrayal and the threat of unbound demons. The GM plays Setarra and Kel, and pushes hard on everyone's keys.
- ❖ **MAGISTER LOR** and **SETARRA**. The Strelai and demon face off, with the twins as NPCs caught in the middle. Do the masters care about their apprentices, or are they driven only by their hatred and duty?
- ❖ **KAI** and **KEL**. Twin siblings on opposite sides of an ancient conflict. Will they team up or stay true to their masters? The GM plays Lor and Setarra — and be open to their key buyoffs. Maybe things can be different.

If you have three players, consider the following:

- ❖ **MAGISTER LOR** as the NPC. They're powerful and dedicated to their duty. Start by having Lor endanger Kel as soon as possible, either as retribution for what they did, or as collateral damage in the showdown with Setarra.
- ❖ **SETARRA** as the NPC. They're powerful and ruthless! You might start by tossing Kel aside like they're nothing — they served their purpose. Or, be fiercely loyal to Kel, the one who freed you, and allow no other to drive a wedge between you.

SAY YES, LOOK FOR THE OBSTACLES

By default, characters can accomplish anything covered by their traits.

They're competent and effective people, in other words. It's no fun to call for a roll when there's no interesting obstacle or danger in the way. Just say yes to the action, listen, and ask questions as usual. But also, be on the look out for the opportunity to create obstacles as the action develops. Because you're asking leading questions and listening closely, they'll be all over the place, so it won't be too hard to spot them.

Obstacles can be other characters, situations (explosions, falling, chases, escapes) or anything else you can imagine.

If a character tries something not covered by their traits, that's an obstacle right there: lack of experience and training. Lots of fun things can go wrong when you don't know what you're doing! Also, players will sometimes try things they're bad at so they can fail and add dice to their pool. It's a fine move for them and it gives you the chance to create more trouble, so everyone wins.

CONDITIONS

A condition constrains what the player should say about their character. It's a cue to tell the GM and players to pay attention to that thing and use it as material for the developing fiction. Gaming is just us saying stuff to each other, right? So you're like, "What do I say now?" and you look down and go, "Oh, I'm angry. Right. No, in fact I won't listen to reason!"

For the GM, the conditions can create opportunities or give permissions. "You're Injured, right? The Leviathans can smell the essence in your blood. They swarm right at you, ignoring the others." Sometimes a condition will become an Obstacle in its own right, calling for a roll to deal with it.

LISTEN & ASK QUESTIONS, DON'T PLAN

When you're the GM, don't try to "direct" the action or plan out what will happen. Instead, ask questions—lots and lots and make them pointed toward the things you're interested in. Like, say Magister Lor threatens Kel, So I ask Kai's player, "How do you react when your master threatens your twin? Is that okay with you?" And then, when it's totally not okay, "What do you say? What do you do?" and then "Kel, what are you doing? The Magister is distracted by Kai, do you want to seize the opportunity to attack them or what?" A few more leading questions like that and everyone is yelling at each other and rolling dice to impose their will.

Also ask questions like:

"When you say you 'create fire' what's that like? Does a spinning fireball just appear in the air, or what?"

"You can probably tear that apart with your crazy demon strength, huh?"

"That sounds like a bold plan. What's the first step?"

"The two of you have a quiet moment here in the library. What do you say to each other?"

"Do you know anything about Leviathans? What are they like? Has anyone ever seen a real one before this?"

Keep that going at a steady pace and the game flies along pretty well.

Part of the job of the GM is *listening* to what the players say, catching it, turning it around, and seeing if there's anything else to be done with it.

The GM's jobs: listen and reincorporate, play NPCs with gusto, look for interesting obstacles, impose conditions as events warrant (especially when a roll goes badly), call for refreshment scenes (especially flashbacks).

OPENING POSITIONS

The game will go very differently depending on the starting locations of the characters. If all of them are standing on the windswept platform below the sanctum as Setarra emerges from the crystal, singing the song to summon the leviathans, the session will probably be pretty short. Everyone is right there, it's a big showdown, and the action explodes right out of the gate.

On the other hand, if Kel has slipped unnoticed down to the crystal and performed the ritual in secret, then maybe Setarra emerges while Lor and Kai are fast asleep in the sanctum above. Maybe Kai wakes from a nightmare / premonition of Kel's ritual and runs to warn her master. Maybe Lor wakes up when the first leviathan shakes the sanctum in its tentacled grip. In this case, the characters are more separated, and the action will build over several scenes.

Think about the opening positions and the amount of time the real people have to play the chapter. If you're running a short demo or convention game, maybe start everyone close together, with the action already in motion. If you have a longer window for play, go for a more separated opening.

LONG-TERM PLAY

You might find that this one-shot naturally leads into further adventures with some or all of these characters. That's great! Add these options for advancement as you play the long-term series:

- ❖ Add a new **Trait** (if you have a teacher or have learned by doing).
- ❖ Add a new [locked] **Tag** that you're in the process of learning.
- ❖ Create your **Character** anew if you've taken on a new identity or role. Keep the same number of identities, traits, and tags, retaining any that you carry forward into your new life and changing the rest.

DEDICATED TO CAMEO WOOD AND PAUL TEVIS

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