

LAWYERS OF THE HUNT



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THE HUNT



RULES FOR PLAYING HUNTERS

A decorative border surrounds the page. At the top and bottom are horizontal lines with a series of small triangles pointing downwards. The vertical sides are solid black lines. At the top-left and top-right corners, there are stylized masks with wide, open mouths. At the bottom-left and bottom-right corners, there are small circular symbols resembling gears or wheels.

Laws of **THE HUNT**

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Laws of **THE HUNT**

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BLOOD ON THE TRACKS: A CAUTIONARY TALE

It always pisses me off when I see Victor licking the evidence. I know he's a ghoul and he needs his fix, but even so, it creeps the hell out of me.

Vic looks up from the bloody footprint, grinning like a bastard. "This is good stuff, Lou. This guy's powerful. Closer to Caine than anyone I've ever met."

"That's great, Vic," I reply, my annoyance coloring my tone. It's raining like hell, meaning that whatever other footprints there had been have long since washed away. All we've got is the one on the porch that Vic's just finished licking clean.

The cops haven't been here yet, which means there's actual evidence to look at, but the setup still sucks. We've got three corpses torn to shreds inside, one bloody footprint out here and not much else to go on. So, of course, Vic is ecstatic about the whole thing.

"Come on, Lou, this is great! We're on the trail of a real heavy-hitter here — and he's wounded! We take this guy down, we've done something kickass." He's literally hopping in his excitement now. Apparently, he thinks it's something wonderful that we're on the trail of an immensely powerful immortal homicidal maniac, as opposed to just the run-of-the-mill immortal homicidal maniacs we usually go after.


Fan-flippin'-tastic.

"Right. Powerful. I'll ask for its autograph before we stake it. Anything else you can tell me?"

Vic pouts. "It's Gangrel, I think. Look at the footprint — you see those marks toward the front of the sole? Those are holes where claws ripped through the rubber — this guy's getting all beastly and yeasty on us. That means he's not too thoroughly in control of himself, though that might be a result of whatever it was that hurt him. Honestly, there shouldn't have been any of his blood in the footprint unless he'd gotten cut as well. Hmm. We can probably expect more killings, not to mention some competition for this guy's hide."

"Oh?"

"Yeah, the other fangdaddies are going to be trying to put him down at the same time we are. They don't like it when one of theirs gets out of control."



I nod like I understand. Vic knows the vampires far better than I ever will. After all, he'd nearly become one, as I understood it. All I know how to do is find them and kill them. We make a good team — he wants revenge but has no idea about how to get it, while I know how to hunt, but don't know my prey.

Don't ask how we met; you'd never believe the story anyway.

"So," I ask him, "is there anything else?"

He shakes his head. "Not here, no."

"Any leads?"

"Depends how you feel about hunches," he says. Then, dropping into a parody of Marty Feldman's character in *Young Frankenstein* and limping off into the rain, he says, "C'mon, maaahster."

I sit at the end of the bar nursing a Macallan's 18 while Vic gossips with the undead in the corner. Occasionally one of the vampires looks in my direction and I get an itchy feeling along the side of my neck. Vic and I came in separately and had not spoken — we had not so much as looked at each other, in fact — so the vampires wouldn't know we were connected. Even so, I'm nervous. If one of the bloodsuckers in the corner knows, if one of them even suspects, I'll be dead and Vic would be back where he started in no time flat. "Bound," he calls it. I'm less politically correct. He'd been a slave.

The meeting in the corner breaks up. The three vampires — one woman and two men — melt into the crowd. I take a mental picture of each so we can come back for them later. Vic stomps out the door back into the rain, not giving me a second glance, and I can hear the roar of his Yamaha faintly as he heads off to the rendezvous point. I've been on him for months to drive something that offers a bit more cover, but he's married to the bike. It's going to get him killed some day, but he doesn't want to hear that.

Precisely 10 minutes after Vic leaves, I finish my drink, slide a five across the counter to the bartender and walk out. My '79 Chevy Caprice Classic (supercharged engine, shatterproof windows, steel chassis — more than once I'd pancaked a vampire who thought I'd actually *stop* for him) is sitting down the block where I parked it, glistening under one of the few working streetlamps in the neighborhood. I walk down to it unharmed and make the standard check of the locks and back seat for unpleasant surprises — the story about the hunter who gets in his car only to find a vampire sitting in the back seat has *got* to be urban legend, but it serves its purpose. Huddling against the rain (why does it *always* rain when I go hunting?), I open the door, touch the crucifix hanging from the rearview once for luck and climb in.

The roar of a motorcycle is my first clue something's wrong. I can hear the noise even over the slam of my door and the rumbling cough of my car's engine. It's Vic's motorcycle roaring up the street, tires skirling on the wet asphalt, and I should *not* be hearing it right now. He peels past at 70 with no one following him — at least no one I can see. Trouble.

Naturally, I peel out after him, like an idiot.

Vic slows down, once, when he sees I'm behind him, then makes sure I can tail him. Once or twice I try to pull up next to him to see what the hell is up, but he just floors it and leaves me a comfortable half-block back. So I settle in behind him, pelting across town on the slick streets, running lights with only the roar of the engines and the whisper of the tires in my ears. We see no other traffic; we see no police. The city is a big, empty playground for us. It's just me and Vic, one after the other, as the tenements and warehouses speed past.

Eventually we hit the riverfront district, but Vic doesn't slow down a bit. Even here, in the neighborhood where there's always something going on, nothing's going on. No traffic. No sign of life.



And even less when Vic takes his Yamaha off the end of Pier 43.

I slam on the brakes and skid to within about 15 feet of the end of the pier. Even in the rain, I can smell the burnt rubber of my tires and Vic's exhaust. There's no sign of Vic, no movement out in the dark waters of the Delaware. He's just gone.

I sit there for a moment with the rain steaming off the hood, and I shake my head. And for caution's sake, I also reach inside my coat for the pistol I keep in my shoulder-holster.

"Ghouls shouldn't get uppity," says the voice I've been expecting for miles. I can see my passenger in the rearview now — one of the punks who'd been talking with Vic at the bar. He looks about 20 (not that that means much), with the greasy hair and black leather jacket that are practically a uniform for the low-grade vampires in this town. I can hear his jacket creak as he leans forward to hiss all dramatically in my ear.

"And neither should dumb-ass mortals who think they're hot stuff. I'm not gonna leave enough of you to fill the ashtray, you know that?"

His breath is lousy. The undead always have lousy dental hygiene habits. I don't guess they care, but it's a pain for the rest of us.

"Good to know," I say without turning around. "So why'd you off Vic like that?"

"Vic? Was that the ghoul? He might have been some trouble to handle, so I had Grandpa ride his mind."

"Grandpa?"

"The guy your friend was asking after. We call him Grandpa, because he's older than dirt and twice as cranky as that. And he got a hell of a kick out of having your buddy lead you into a trap."

"I never would have guessed. But I'm a piece of cake to take out, right? Just a human being." I turn my head toward him ever so slowly. Like I thought, he isn't even looking at me — he's looking at his own face in the rearview mirror. He has to look *cool* while he's terrifying me; he has to know that he's the baddest of the bad in this car.

As if I care.

"So why are you telling me this?" I finish turning and slowly lift the gun under my coat. The idiot in the back seat never notices, lost in his own bad self in the mirror. I bet he was thrilled when he first found out that that stuff about vampires not having a reflection was just a bunch of folklore.

"Because it doesn't matter, sucker. You're dead." He tips his head forward, and I pull the trigger six times.

The recoil damn near snaps my wrist. The bullets tear through my coat and the headrest, and they catch Stupid square in the side of his face. The front half of his head more or less explodes, and he falls back in his seat with a noise that would have been a scream if he'd had anything resembling lips. I floor it and drop the gun, opening the car door with my left hand at the same time. As the Caprice's nose reaches the end of the pier, I'm out the door and rolling.

In the movies, cars explode when you abandon them. Mine just hits the water with a big splash and sinks with a noise like a frog suffering from gas. I watch the spot where it goes under with very little satisfaction. The river's dredged deep enough there for the big tankers, so even if I haven't managed to kill Stupid, he isn't going to be coming up for a long time.

I have other problems besides Stupid, though. I've got no car, no gun, no partner and a big-ass hole in my raincoat. Plus, there's "Grandpa." Can't forget him, now, can I?

Damn.

It's time to start walking.





CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

Each of the **Mind's Eye Theatre** books describes a supernatural creature, be it vampires in **Laws of the Night**, werewolves in **Laws of the Wild**, wraiths in **Oblivion** or changelings in **The Shining Host**. These denizens of the World of Darkness don't exist in a vacuum, however. The throngs of humanity surround them, and sometimes every attempt to keep humanity unaware of them fails. Before **Laws of the Hunt**, such exposure wasn't particularly dangerous to supernatural beings, and it could be dismissed easily. Now, however, there are consequences most dire....

This book provides rules for playing humans who hunt supernatural creatures. **Laws of the Hunt** explains how to incorporate mortal hunters into existing World of Darkness chronicles, and it provides rules for running a chronicle from the hunter point of view.

This book contains **Mind's Eye Theatre** rules for a variety of hunters, be they religious fanatics, government agents, scholars or independents, as well as special powers available only to mortal characters. Additionally, material from **Antagonists** is revised and updated, and entirely new material is included! Of course, hunters need a quarry, and the other **Mind's Eye Theatre** games prove invaluable resources, whether hunting vampires, ghosts or even stranger beings.

More source material on hunters can be found in the **Year of the Hunter** releases.

THE ONLY RULES THAT MATTER

Here are the framework rules for **Mind's Eye Theatre** that must always be obeyed. These are common sense stipulations outside the game mechanics that keep everyone — other players, yourself, strangers in the area and authorities — safe in and happy with your game.

These rules are designed to limit the opportunities anyone has to destroy the fun of your game. They're not intended to interfere with play or your enjoyment; they're here to make sure that you play sensibly and safely.

#1 – IT'S ONLY A GAME

This guideline is the most important by far. If a character is killed, if a plot falls apart, if a rival wins the day — it's still only a game. Don't take things too seriously; that spoils not only your fun, but everyone else's as well. Both triumphs and tragedies make for a good story.

Leave the game behind when it ends. Playing **Mind's Eye Theatre** is a lot of fun; spending time talking about the game is great. Sometimes, however, the game must be put aside in favor of real life. Don't call the person who plays your agent's partner at sunrise just because it's safe to talk without the threat of vampires eavesdropping. Don't get mad at that same partner for being unavailable because the player has an exam that night. Make sure to maintain perspective.

#2 – NO TOUCHING

Never actually have physical contact with other players, no matter how careful you are or how harmless you think it is. Accidents happen, and someone could get hurt. Rely on the rules to cover physical logistics. Remember that different people have different ideas of invasion of personal space. **Mind's Eye Theatre** is not about making anyone uncomfortable.

#3 – NO STUNTS

Never climb, jump, run, leap or otherwise do anything dangerous during a game. Keep the *action* in your live action low key. If you can imagine that you're staking a vampire, you can certainly imagine that you're leaping from rooftop to rooftop. So what if you bungee jump regularly in real life? In this game, you have other people to worry about.

#4 – NO WEAPONS

Fake and real weapons of any sort are absolutely forbidden. Not even obviously fake or silly toy weapons are allowed. Such props give other people the wrong impression about what you are doing, and they can be mistaken for real weapons. Use item cards to represent weapons instead.

#5 – NO DRUGS OR DRINKING

This one is a real no-brainer. Drugs and alcohol do not inspire peak performance. They reduce your ability to think and react, meaning that, among other things, your roleplaying ability is impaired. Players impaired by drugs or alcohol are a danger to



other players and to the game as a whole. There's nothing wrong with *playing* a character who's drunk or stoned, but actually bringing such stuff to a game is in bad taste at best — illegal at worst. Don't do it.

#6 – BE MINDFUL OF OTHERS

Remember, not everyone you see, or who sees you, is playing the game. A game can be unnerving or even frightening to passersby. Be considerate of “mundanes” in your vicinity, and if you are in a public area, make sure that your actions do not disturb or alarm anyone. The game rules are designed so that mortal combat can occur between characters while the players speak calmly to one another and play Rock-Paper-Scissors. If anyone from outside the game asks what's going on, drop out of character and explain politely.

#7 – THE RULES ARE FLEXIBLE

Feel free to ignore or adjust any of the following rules in this book if it will make your game better. We at White Wolf call this “The Golden Rule.” If some rule in this book (beyond the first eight listed here) doesn't work for your group of players, change it. Just be consistent and fair. Nobody likes rules that change every week, nor do they like “no-win” scenarios that favor a certain player. If your troupe finds a new way to handle, say, True Faith, that works better for you than the one in this book, go for it.

#8 – HAVE FUN

Not, “Win.” In fact, winning has very little meaning in any **Mind's Eye Theatre** game.

Not, “Go out and kill everyone else.” That's not really fun for anyone on the receiving end, and it can actually bring the game to a premature end.

Just have fun. The live-action experience is not about achieving superiority over the other players; it's about the journey and what happens along the way.

WHAT IS STORYTELLING?

From the early days of skalds and shamans to those of modern actors and playwrights, storytellers have sparked the imaginations of countless cultures. Through stories, we share our beliefs, myths and legends. With the advent of live-action games such as this one, storytelling returns to its roots as an interactive experience in which everyone is a contributing participant. Through this game, the tales of Van Helsing and Kolchak, Odysseus and Enkidu stand beside the stories of each player. In telling these stories, we recount the timeless lessons of myth.

WHAT IS MIND'S EYE THEATRE?

Mind's Eye Theatre takes storytelling a step further in bringing the tale to life for the players. Like the actors in a movie, the participants take on the roles of people caught up in drama. Instead of focusing on “winning” with dice rolls and game pieces, this game centers on the enjoyment of creating a story and acting out the parts. No board limits your imagination. Instead, you discover your own motivations and develop your own legend. By interacting with the other players and responding to the events of the story, you describe a larger world in which your actions paint on the canvas of imagination. It's theater without a script, where the outcome of the drama remains unknown until the end of the play.



CHARACTER

A **Mind's Eye Theatre** character is the role you assume for the course of the game. As a hunter, a human driven to confront the supernatural, your character in **Laws of the Hunt** is an outwardly normal individual thrust into a world beyond the ken of most mere mortals. From there, the rest is up to you — whether your hunter is insightful, aggressive or vengeful; sorcerer, true believer or government agent; a member of any specific minority, ethnicity or society. Your imagination and the guidelines in this book are the only limits to your character.

Once you enter the game, you become your character. Your speech and actions are the words and deeds of your persona. Through your conduct, you drive the story wherever you touch it. At the same time, the events of the story direct your responses as they play on the strengths and frailties of your role.

A three-dimensional character — one who is more than just numbers on a piece of paper — makes the game rewarding. Yet as a player, you have a responsibility beyond simply portraying the character you have created. You should consider how you contribute to the story as a whole. Remember your role in making it interesting and fun for the other players as well as yourself. If you respect the strengths and ideas of their characters, they will do the same for you.

Ultimately, characters are the true motivating factors of a story. Events take place because they impact the characters, and the characters, in turn, react and shape their tale. Dive into your role and bring the story to life!

NARRATORS

Narrators are like the stagehands in a play — they propel the story by adjudicating rules, describing scenes and taking on the parts of antagonists and extras in the story. With a ratio of about one Narrator for every 10 players, you should be able to keep a smooth game flow. More experienced players can even move the game along without the assistance of Narrators. When a question regarding rules or setting comes up, a Narrator fills in to keep the game in motion.

THE STORYTELLER

Every game must have a Storyteller who serves as the ultimate authority and final judge. The Storyteller creates the basic “framework” elements of the plot, making sure that the story has layers of intrigue, interesting hooks and narrative flow. He then turns the players loose to see what happens. With the aid of Narrators, the Storyteller immerses the players in the larger tale.

The Storyteller must be watchful during the game to make sure that the story works out well, that all of the players have something to do and that they are abiding by the rules. Since the Storyteller is the guide to the game and the final court of disputes and settings, all game events rest on her final authority. The Storyteller also makes sure that the game is safe and fun by making sure that the players don't engage in excessive behavior, yet still contribute to the flow of the story.

Storytelling is at once the most demanding and most rewarding job in a **Mind's Eye Theatre** game. The Storyteller must coordinate all of the elements of an enthralling tale and make sure that everyone has a good time. However, the satisfaction that comes from a group of enthusiastic players and a well-told story can't be matched.

SCENERY, COSTUMING AND PROPS

A stimulating locale, appropriate character clothing and interesting props can go a long way toward bringing the story — and the Gothic-Punk World of Darkness in which it is set — to life. However, the Storyteller has final say over what is permitted in the game. As with all things, the props and costumes should not exceed the bounds of safety and good taste. Weapons, offensive shirts and questionable substances can really ruin the evening when legal entanglements emerge or tempers flare. Still, a few well-chosen articles can serve to illuminate a point just as well; a simple white collar can denote an Inquisitor, a book a scholar, a pair of shades and a cellular phone a government agent.

A WORLD OF DARKNESS

Imagine waking up in a world where the shadows are darker, the threats are more ominous and the seedy side of society is more oppressive. The same bands play on the radio, but their followers are violent and obsessive. Social unrest, crime and revolution are the order of the day. Murder hardly makes the headlines in the local paper. Glitzy superstars leading lives of false glamour populate the club of the month while the homeless cluster in garbage-ridden slums only a few blocks away. This is the World of Darkness — our own world, but more sinister, just on the edge of hysteria, madness and self-destruction.

Nightclubs with eerie architecture pulse to grinding music. Towering skyscrapers, imposing cathedrals and blood-darkened streets loom and coil about the cities at night. Oppressive art and raw, bleeding violence intersect in a Gothic-Punk world. It's a world where vampires are stylish predators and werewolves are feral terrorists. In many ways, it's a world where the average human feels lost and helpless. Everyone is predator or prey.

THE YEAR OF THE HUNTER

White Wolf publishes a full line of books about mortal hunters, including *The Inquisition*, *Project Twilight*, *Halls of the Arcanum*, *The Quick and the Dead*, *The Hunters Hunted* and *The Autumn People*. These books provide the basis for much of *Laws of the Hunt*, though they are not necessary for play. However, an interested player can find more information about his character and the game world in these resources.

TAKING BACK THE NIGHT

In a world overrun with corruption, vice and villainy, most people are relegated to dead-end jobs and squalid, fearful lives. Shadowy figures control mortal society through invisible influence and supernatural power. Only a rare few ever pull back the curtain to reveal the hidden players. Armed with wits and courage, the most talented (and foolhardy) mortals decide to fight for their own lives and the destiny of humanity. They take up arms as hunters.



The road of the hunter is a short and dangerous one, with few rewards. Even with modern technology at their disposal, some would say that most hunters lead doomed lives. The powers of the supernatural are simply too potent for most lone humans to withstand. Still, some individuals feel the driving need to counter the creatures that prey on humanity, hidden beings using entire generations of mortals as tools. More often than not, these loners fall to the very beings they hunt, defeated by ignorance and human frailty.

Still, whenever a vampire leaves traces of its feeding, or a werewolf destroys a human's life, another hunter takes up the mantle. Over time, the few survivors band together to form organizations devoted to the study and destruction of supernatural entities. The Inquisition, forged in the flames of the Dark Ages, still hunts the undead in a hidden war of faith. The Arcanum, a scholarly society from the Renaissance, compiles vast tomes of supernatural knowledge that contain more information than any other resource in the world. Ghost-hunters and witch-slayers band together in small groups or loose affiliations to provide the force that few supernatural creatures can defeat: a united front that fights for a cause.

Mortal hunters are not without their special resources, either. Though many rely on technology, training and dedication, a few possess powers of their own with which to stalk their paranormal quarry. Billed "Numinae" by scholars of such matters, these powers give hunters their own supernatural weapons in battle. Sorcery, the practice of ritual magic, provides an edge for the intellectual and insightful hunter. Psychic Phenomena gift some otherwise ordinary humans with the power to read thoughts or move objects with their minds. And burning Faith, dedication to the Eternal, fuels the symbols and ceremonies of the devoutly religious.

THE ASSOCIATIONS

While some hunters work alone, and others partner with a circle of trusted allies, a few join societies dedicated to the hunter's craft. These associations are manifold, with different motives and methods of operation. For a hunter in need of the wisdom of experience or the assistance of numbers, an organization provides the means to continue the vengery.

Associations rarely cooperate, simply because they often have disparate goals. Scholarly groups such as the Arcanum seek only to observe and learn, while more active groups such as the Society of Leopold take a direct hand in stalking and slaying supernatural entities. Enigmatic government agencies catalog or capture these entities at the whims of their hidden superiors, and clandestine groups of hunters with stranger motives engage in investigations away from the rest of hunter "society." Naturally, relations between such dissimilar groups are tenuous at best. Still, the hunter's war is ultimately the war of humanity against the Other, and mortals fill the important roles of ally, mentor and friend.

Given the cool relations between hunter associations, it's no wonder that many paranormal beings manage to remain two steps ahead of them. Speculation and information may be flawed or useless, and resources may be scant due to group politics. Groups rarely share their assets — knowledge, faith, equipment — with other groups. Security in a hunter association is tenuous at best. However, when all of the chips are down and disaster seems imminent, truly dedicated hunters persevere, pull together and show the world what "mere mortals" can do.



THE HUNTED

Many are the creatures that stalk the nightmares of hunters. They seek to move unseen through mortal society, alternately using humans as prey, tools or companions. Each has a particular style of operation, and cunning hunters soon discover the means of identifying and defeating them — or they die trying.

VAMPIRES

Vampires, perhaps the most ubiquitous foes of hunters, sustain themselves on the blood of the living. Cursed with undeath and eternal hunger, they stalk the night in pale human guises, playing political games that span generations. Humans are pawns in the games of truly old vampires, in unfathomable contests that provide the only entertainment for beings jaded by centuries of nocturnal existence.

Capable of rapid healing and mind control, and possessed of incredible physical prowess, vampires are formidable opponents indeed. Vampire hunters must arm themselves with fire and Faith to have any hope of victory. Even the Society of Leopold — the modern arm of the Inquisition — finds these creatures dangerous in the extreme. Worse still, many vampires subtly manipulate hunters into cunning plots, unleashing the unwitting assassins on the undead's own enemies. Rare indeed is the hunter who makes a practice of stalking vampires and manages to survive longer than a year.

Laws of the Night contains complete information regarding these dark predators.

WEREWOLVES

Werewolves seem like normal humans or wolves, but they change shape freely through a range of forms between the two. Stalking the wilderness and tracts of unspoiled land between cities, werewolves exhibit powerful ties to the natural world. Their shamanistic practices allow them to call on spirits for aid and to enter the spirit world. Possessed of formidable natural weaponry and a speed and strength born of feral rage, a werewolf is a terrifying combination of spiritual entity and marauding killer.

Hunters who make a career of stalking werewolves are fewer even than those who fight vampires. Not only is the wolf-man form of a werewolf far more powerful than any human, but instinctive terror overrides all but the most strong-willed mortal when a werewolf brings its full rage to bear. Silver provides the only consistent defense, as many a now-deceased hunter has discovered on trying other folk-wards against the shapeshifters.

Laws of the Wild contains complete information on werewolves.

MAGES

More human than human, mages manipulate reality itself through force of will. Whether by chanted ritual, martial arts mastery, exotic rites or extremely advanced technology, mages focus arcane energies to create limitless varieties of effects. Lightning bolts, stalking minions and plasma rifles are the ends faced by unwary hunters. Moving unnoticed through human society, mages play the odds and bend fortune to their favor. Few hunters can detect mages, and fewer still can mount effective strategies against them. When confronted directly, mages bring incredible "coincidence" to the fore, expertly vanishing (and sometimes leaving behind unpleasant surprises) while leaving hunters bewildered by their foul luck.

WRAITHS

The restless dead sometimes remain in contact with the living world when unfinished business or unresolved passion calls more fiercely than the grave. Trapped in a shadow existence in a plane of grayness and death, wraiths rarely manage to affect the living world, but some master arcane powers that allow them to manifest ghostly images, hauntings, cold zones, poltergeist lights and disconcerting noises. Worse still, wraiths are sometimes capable of possessing humans and reaching into the living world directly, while remaining safely on the spirit plane. Because the spirits of the dead exist in a world apart from the living, they are difficult to affect directly. Studious hunters may learn Sorcery capable of binding or banishing wraiths, and some few have a talent for seeing and hearing ghosts. Better still, a knowledgeable hunter can track down the objects and people to which a wraith had connections in life, and find out why they continue to compel the wraith beyond death.

Oblivion for **Mind's Eye Theatre** contains complete information regarding wraiths.

CHANGELINGS

Long ago, when the world was filled with wonder, faeries and creatures of dream inhabited the Earth alongside humans. Now, in a modern age of science and mundane life, the powers of dream and imagination are forced into a half-existence. Changelings survive by clothing faerie spirits in human bodies, and they strive to bring wonder to a banal world.

Few hunters actively persecute the fae, partly because changelings usually resemble normal humans, and partly because the fae do not often take an inimical stance against humanity. Still, some changelings delight in tormenting mortals, and some hunters find the thought of alien spirits in human flesh sacrilegious. For any hunter of changelings, iron and unbelief are the most potent implements with which to fight the fae.

Complete information regarding changelings can be found in **The Shining Host**.

LEXICON

Both hunter organizations and **Mind's Eye Theatre** call for a special vocabulary, so some common terms follow:

- **Ability:** The skills, talents and knowledge a character possesses.
- **Arcanum, The:** A scholarly organization dedicated to collecting knowledge about the supernatural.
- **Attributes:** The measure of a character's basic Physical, Social and Mental statistics. Measured with Traits.
- **Auto-da-fé:** The "act of faith," a call of judgment against a supernatural creature by the Society of Leopold. Generally, a prelude to a full hunt.
- **Benandanti, The:** A loose organization of mortals with the ability to enter the Shadowlands, the realm of the dead.
- **Bidding:** Part of the mechanism of challenges. The risking of Traits in order to win a challenge.
- **Cenacle:** A group of Inquisitors.



- **Cenaculum:** Local headquarters of the Inquisition. A meeting place and safe haven for such hunters.
- **Challenge:** The system by which conflicts between characters are resolved through the bidding of Traits and the use of “Rock-Paper-Scissors.”
- **Chapter House:** A stronghold and library of the Arcanum.
- **Health:** A measure of physical damage and vitality. Used to determine how much injury a hunter has sustained.
- **Hedge Magic:** See Sorcery.
- **Humanity:** The essential qualities of mortal vibrancy that set humans apart from supernatural creatures. Measured in Traits.
- **Influences:** The measure of how much control a character has over assorted social institutions. Measured with Traits.
- **Numina:** A special paranormal ability — True Faith, Sorcery, or Psychic Phenomena — possessed by an otherwise normal human.
- **Project Twilight:** A special government program devoted to investigating paranormal phenomena and capturing supernatural creatures.
- **Psychic Phenomena:** Term for a class of not-wholly-understood powers that functions as an extension of the mind, allowing a human to expand awareness and capabilities. Includes mind reading (telepathy), remote sensing (clairvoyance) and remote manipulation (telekinesis).
- **Relic:** An artifact of True Faith imbued with holy power, usually due to its association with a saint.
- **Society of Leopold, The:** The modern successor of the Inquisition. A secret arm of the Church dedicated to fighting the supernatural.
- **Sorcery:** Ritual magic as practiced by mortals. Different from, and more limited than, the True Magick woven by mages.
- **Theurgy:** Divinely empowered “white magic.”
- **Trait:** An adjective used to describe a hunter character.
- **True Faith:** That rare quality of belief in and acceptance of one’s ordained place in the universe, generally as part of the plan of a higher being.
- **Willpower:** The measure of a hunter’s conviction and perseverance. Measured in Traits.





CHAPTER TWO: CHARACTER CREATION

Creating a mortal character is nothing less than building an entire persona. From goals and history to personal capabilities, you need to determine various aspects of your character's personality and background. By selecting Traits to describe your character, you help define the role that you'll play.

• STEP ONE: INSPIRATION

— Choose Concept, Nature and Demeanor, Motivation and Association (if any)

• STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

— Prioritize the three categories Physical, Social, Mental (6/4/3)

— Choose Physical Traits

— Choose Social Traits

— Choose Mental Traits

• STEP THREE: ADVANTAGES

— Choose three Abilities

— Assign Abilities from Association (if any)

— Choose one Influence

• STEP FOUR: FINISHING TOUCHES

— Record Willpower and Humanity Traits

— Choose Negative Traits, if any

— Purchase Merits and Flaws, if any

— Spend Free Traits (5, or 7 for independents)

• STEP FIVE: SPARK OF LIFE



STEP ONE: INSPIRATION

Before you start writing anything down, take a moment to think about your hunter. What kind of character do you want to play? Would he be a physical, rough-and-tumble person, or more of an introspective intellectual?

Don't feel that you have to limit your choices in any way. Given the right circumstances, anyone can find himself thrown into the role of the hunter, be it due to curiosity, revenge or even just for the thrills.

One way to make certain that your character is more than two-dimensional is to come up with not just one, but two separate motivational forces in his life. What is important to him besides hunting down the supernatural horrors of the night? What did your normal, everyday run-of-the-mill character do before his eyes opened to the secret horrors of the World of Darkness?

Imagine a math teacher who loves the precise diligence of model trains. Or a business executive who fell just short of making it into the major leagues and now watches his son play shortstop every Sunday afternoon after church. Or the sheriff of a small town who trims bonsai trees. Any of these characters has the potential to become a hunter, given the right impetus.

NATURE AND Demeanor

At this point, you should choose personality Archetypes that suit your character's disposition and image.

Your character's Nature is the most dominant aspect of her true personality. While Nature describes who your character really is, your Nature is not necessarily the only Archetype that applies. As we said above, people have many desires and motivations, and what you want the world to believe about you isn't always the truth.

Once you've chosen a Nature for your character, you should also choose a Demeanor, which is the face your character shows the world. Your Demeanor does not need to be different from your Nature, but having a dramatically different Nature and Demeanor creates an exciting and dynamic personality to roleplay.

In game terms, Nature and Demeanor help to outline the behaviors of characters. A character will tend to act in a manner compatible with her Demeanor, while attempting to fulfill the goals of her Nature. In some cases, if a character demonstrates his Nature in an exemplary fashion (a Caregiver rushes into a burning house to save a child, for instance, or a Bravo intimidates a powerful supernatural creature), the Storyteller or Narrator may choose to award the player by refreshing a Willpower or Humanity Trait to the character.

However, insight into a character's Nature allows others to manipulate the character by playing on his beliefs and goals. If you know someone's Nature, you may use it in a bid just like a Negative Trait, as long as the situation is appropriate to the action. For example, you may use the Judge Nature when trying to convince a hunter to help you slay a murderous enemy, but you cannot bid the Child Nature to use psychic powers more effectively on the target.

ARCHITECT

You want to forge something lasting. You gain satisfaction by building something for the future that will endure. Whether organizing a new hunter group or writing a scholarly book on the supernatural, you want to leave something behind before you're gone.



BRAVO

Life is tough all over, especially if you're just a mortal trying to survive in a world of supernatural predators. It's dog-eat-dog, and you intend to do the eating. Security and respect come only with power and the ability to back up your decrees. You are merciless to the supernatural creatures that prey on humanity and anyone else who gets in the way of your quest.

CAREGIVER

In this dark world, only people who care can make a real difference. You want to help others and alleviate suffering. You resolve problems and bring stability, so that people have an island of calm in a world of turmoil.

CHILD

Although you may not physically be a child, you still have the mentality of one. You find it difficult to provide for yourself, and the world is complex and bewildering to you. Some see you as innocent, while others perceive you as dependent.

CONFORMIST

You adapt to any situation by following someone else's lead. Although some would say that you have no spine, you're just as brave as any other hunter; you just do your job best when you're following orders or fitting in. You keep your group together with your stability and your enthusiasm for getting the job done by the book.

CONNIVER

Why do all the work when you can get someone else to do it for you? Better still, why expose yourself to unnecessary risk? You prefer to devise cunning plans to get what you want. Even your enemies become your unwitting pawns as you play them against one another.

DEVIANT

For whatever reason, you just don't fit in with the rest of your society. You have your own code of morals and beliefs, and it just doesn't mesh with the status quo. Although this code can get you in trouble, you have a tendency to look at things from a different perspective, and your unorthodox methods still get results.

DIRECTOR

You naturally take the lead in any situation. Delegating authority and organizing a group are both second nature to you. You neatly divide things into sides — those with you, and those against you — and damned if you're going to let your side lose. You may not be a natural leader, but it's certainly the role that you prefer to play.

FANATIC

Whether on a quest to destroy all vampires, to discover the secrets of the magical world or just to get a really good cup of coffee, you have some belief or agenda that consumes your every waking hour. You spend all of your energies toward accomplishing the goals of your espoused virtues. Your cause is everything, and nothing will get in your way.

GALLANT

You live the high life with flair and style. Getting attention is your chief desire, and you act flamboyantly and wildly to do so. You are shameless in your quest for fulfillment. Roguish and extroverted, you undertake the most amazing feats just for the attention and a rousing good time.

HEDONIST

Hunters just wanna have fun, and that's your big motivation. Fulfilling all of your needs and desires consumes much of your time, but for a hunter, the adrenaline rush of stalking a supernatural predator beats all. When you're not exercising your skills on the hunt, you turn to other sorts of recreation, legal or otherwise. Ultimately, life's a big party, so you'd better feel the burn as much as possible before it all burns down.

JESTER

You dislike misery and suffering, so much so that you can't take any situation seriously. You're always ready with a joke or wisecrack. In lighter situations, you're humorous and witty; when things get dark, you can be annoying. Your wit is your shield against the horrors of the world.

JUDGE

In any two sides, there are three stories: the story of the first side, the story of the second side and the truth. You want to find the truth, and you need to bring justice and reconciliation to everyone. You seek to finish confrontations, mend arguments and punish the wicked through disputation, diplomacy or outright gunplay.

LONER

Nobody can really touch you, because you're all alone, even in a crowd. Whether you simply drive people away by dint of personality, or actively seek to keep to yourself, you have few reasons to associate with others and fewer friends. You may not understand people at all, or perhaps you think you understand them too well. Regardless, you simply avoid contact, getting things done without letting others get in the way.

MARTYR

A willingness to give of yourself, even to death, fills you with purpose. Not everyone can be a martyr, but somebody needs to make sacrifices for the greater good, and you're willing to do so. You fight the good fight even when you're going to lose, because the good of all people rests on your shoulders.

REBEL

You just don't hold with authority. People who try to tell you what to do get on your nerves. Supernaturals that try to control people are even worse. You're a maverick, constantly doing things your own way, sometimes just to spite your superiors.

SURVIVOR

You've seen a lot and lived through it all. Whether shot, stabbed, poisoned, frozen or just harangued, nothing puts you down; you just get up and keep going. When the chips are down, you pull out your best and gear up.



TRADITIONALIST

Supernatural creatures are beings of myth and legend. It's only appropriate to fight them with the wisdom of such tales. You believe that the old ways are the best, and you resist change. You try to get others to follow your example of upholding tradition. Even when things start breaking down, you are reluctant to change because change is an unknown, and the new paradigm could easily be worse.

VISIONARY

You have keen insight, which gives you a great vision for the future. Your vision may include anything from discovering a way to redeem vampires to uniting all of humanity in the quest to oust the paranormal, but this vision separates you from others and gives you uncommon wisdom. Through your personal foresight, you see new paths and ideas that others can't envision.

MOTIVATION

After you've chosen Nature and Demeanor, it's time to decide exactly why your character wants to hunt down the evil denizens of the supernatural world. Your character's Motivation is the answer to that question. Motivation is strongly influenced by the character's personality and history. Perhaps you hunt for Revenge because a vampire killed your wife. Or maybe you're just a Hedonist who lives for the thrill of the hunt. Delve into what drives your character to confront powers beyond mortal compare.

Different motives drive different hunters. Separate from personality and job-description, Motivation describes why a hunter goes out and stalks supernatural creatures. Ultimately, your Motivation determines the type of goals you assign to yourself. A hunter motivated by Curiosity is likely to study the supernatural, whereas a Hatred-oriented hunter probably tries to kill paranormal creatures.

COMPASSION

A hunter driven by compassion seeks his prey not to destroy an evil, but to release a tortured soul. Whether he believes that supernatural creatures are under the control of some demonic entity or just victims of a terrible disease, he seeks to grant them release. Such hunters may not wish to kill their targets at all, but only seek to imprison them where they can do no harm until a cure for lycanthropy or vampirism can be found.

CONTROL

Perhaps supernatural creatures aren't in control of themselves or even aware of their actions. A hunter who believes this supposition might seek to capture his prey in an attempt to bring them under control or use them in some way. A hunter who understands that some are more powerful than others might hunt down the weaker creatures and attempt to harness them as stalking horses in order to find the stronger ones.

CURIOSITY

A hunter, particularly one new to the profession, might not be certain yet that supernatural creatures truly do exist. She might be more interested in studying them than simply slaughtering them. Either way, such a hunter seeks definite proof of the existence and capabilities of vampires, werewolves and ghosts, although when it comes down to it, survival might make combat a necessity.

DUTY

Not all Motivations are selfish ones. Some hunters do what they do because they feel they are the only ones who can. A hunter driven by duty knows that vampires are dangerous, but cannot help but hunt them down. After all, if he doesn't, who will? Because he knows about the threat of the supernatural, he feels compelled to do something about it.

FEAR

If these creatures are out there, who's to say they won't someday come after you? Better to be prepared to fight them — even to the point of actively going after them — than to lie awake every night, wondering if every noise is caused by something that seeks your blood.

FUN

Who says that tracking bears in the woods and leopards in the jungle is the only excitement a hunter can dream of? There are things out there that fancy themselves the kings of the world, and your hunter is out there to show them different. It doesn't matter what they are, or what they can do. With enough preparation (and caliber), it doesn't mean anything but more thrill for your kill.

HATRED

For whatever reason, a hunter has discovered that vampires, werewolves and other monsters exist. He abhors them, and he seeks to rid the world of their menace. This sort of hunter is extremely driven, and is unlikely to see that such creatures could ever accomplish anything good. Extreme religious fanaticism or just plain spite at creatures that claim to be “better than human” could drive a hunter to this level of antipathy.

INSANITY

For whatever reason a hunter began his career, it has become so twisted that all that remains is obsession. Such a hunter has made it her only goal in life, and nothing else matters beyond tracking down the evils she knows are out there. She might do it more out of habit than anything else, and little else in life holds any meaning for her any longer.

POWER

Some hunters can become dangerously fascinated by their prey. They might know of the power a vampire's blood gives to a mortal or even desire the immortality of undeath. Such a hunter's goal might be to capture a werewolf and force it to bite her so that she too can know the thrill of running under the moon.

RECOGNITION

There are hunters who don't even care about what they do at all; they do it merely to be successful at something. Whether the next monster is the one that gets her a promotion or merely validates her talents, nothing matters except the satisfaction of a job well done.

REVENGE

Vengeance is one of the most common motives for hunting down vampires. A vampire steals a life from the world every time it feeds, and if one of those lives meant something to your hunter, she's got a new goal in life. Revenge-driven hunters often begin their careers by seeking out a single vampire, but once they've discovered that more of these loathsome creatures exist, they continue the crusade, blindly striking back at the source of their original injuries.



ASSOCIATION

Most hunters belong to an organization of some sort, working in association with like-minded individuals. At this point, you decide whether your character belongs to such an organization. Optionally, your hunter could be independent, traveling the lonely road of a hunter without allies.

Membership in an organization has certain benefits, mostly due to the resources available to the group. However, an affiliated hunter must pay attention to the demands and politics of his order, while an independent can pretty much do as he pleases.

Hunter Associations promote groups of individuals with resources, information and assistance. While a lone hunter is easy prey for a single vampire or werewolf, a group of hunters united by a common goal are a force with which to be reckoned. A hunter's Association often determines her hunting style and beliefs about specific supernatural entities. Religious hunters, for instance, are more likely to stalk and destroy without remorse, while a scholarly hunter could use Sorcery to entrap a creature and gather information about it.

There are three main approaches to hunting the supernatural, and thus three classes of hunter groups, each with particular organizations that espouse different methods to hunting. A character may also be independent, operating outside the bailiwick of any particular organization.

Joining a particular organization carries with it certain benefits, but also some drawbacks. Members often garner specialized Abilities and training, and they have some amount of special backing. Of course, these organizations demand some return from their members, so affiliated hunters must fulfill certain obligations. Independents, by contrast, have no particular obligations, but also do not have the benefits of a group of like-minded people giving advice and support.

THE INQUISITION

Formed in the harrowing days of the Dark Ages, the Inquisition carries out a holy mandate, seeking out and destroying the perceived menace of supernatural creatures. Even lay members of the organization believe that they carry on the fight of "right" and "wrong," and that they take on an endless task to promote the greater good of humanity. Unlike religiously motivated independent hunters, the Inquisitors work under the aegis of an overarching church organization, which protects and promotes their activities.

Advantage: Inquisitors live the tenets of their faith, and as such, have the capability to develop their inner strength through practice. While most characters must rely on Storyteller discretion to improve their True Faith ratings, Inquisitors may expend earned Experience Traits to raise their True Faith. Each additional Faith Trait costs three Experience Traits.

Disadvantage: To maintain Faith (and the approval of superiors), members of the Inquisition must refrain from using methods that endanger their Humanity or religious standing. Inquisitors must always be careful to avoid hurting innocents when battling demons. Members of the Inquisition must maintain at least four Humanity Traits, and any deed that requires a Humanity check also requires some form of penance, even if the Humanity Trait is not lost. Additionally, the Inquisitor's superiors may call for an investigation, or declare a need for penance, if the Inquisitor commits an act proscribed by the doctrines of the Church.

Character Suggestions: Members of the Inquisition often have Social Attributes as primary, and common Abilities include *Leadership*, *Meditation* (through prayer) and *Melee*. Inquisitors frequently have the Numina of True Faith, and some study Theurgy.

THE SOCIETY OF LEOPOLD

Formed in A.D. 1231 by Leopold of Murnau, with the consent of Pope Gregory IX, the Society served as a secret arm of the Catholic Church's Inquisition. Though changing times forced the Society to avoid scrutiny as it continued the Inquisition against supernatural creatures, the Society slowly grew in size and dedication, eventually becoming a potent organization with hidden bases in much of Europe and the Americas. Even racked by internal dissent and philosophical debate, the Society managed to remain dedicated to its original cause—the destruction of all supernatural creatures—even into the modern day. By 1998, the ascension to Inquisitor-General of Ingrid Bauer (nicknamed “the Original Iron Maiden” for her incredible ruthlessness) has forged the Society's modern Inquisitors into terrifying fanatical warriors, trained with swords and willing to use torture in their quest.

Hunters within the Society of Leopold exist to root out and destroy all supernatural creatures, based on the belief that such creatures are willing or unwitting minions of the Devil. The Society is organized into small groups called “cenacles,” which answer to the local Provincial, and ultimately to the Inquisitor-General in Rome. A cenacle consists of a small group of Inquisitors, generally operating out of a central location (the Cenaculum). These cenacles share society resources and training, operating locally to watch for supernatural influence and stop it. When the Society deems it appropriate, it issues an *auto-da-fé* (act of faith), in which the cenacle gathers to undertake a holy mission of purification. Ultimately, all cenacles answer to the Inquisitor-General, the supreme director of the Society.

There are several sects within the Society of Leopold. Each subdivision espouses a particular approach to combating the supernatural menace, and plays a specific role in the Society's mission. Beyond these subdivisions, various philosophical sects espouse the views of different hunters with regards to the ultimate aims of the Society. Many, though not all, Inquisitors claim membership in a particular sect. Membership in a subdivision is by no means mandatory, and indeed, the Society is formed primarily of Inquisitors whose primary duty is the hunt rather than any other internal Society function. The smaller sects, by contrast, rarely claim any overt membership, as they are not “officially recognized” by the Inquisition.

Abilities and Background: Members of the Society of Leopold all gain one Ability Trait of *Theology* to reflect their religious upbringing, as well as one *Church Influence* Trait because of their contacts within the Church. These Traits come at no additional cost to the Inquisitor, and they are granted during character creation; later recruits to the Society can purchase these Traits normally, but do not get them free.

THE CONDOTIERRI

This militaristic group is more concerned with protecting the Society than with directly pursuing its goals. The Condotierri are not Inquisitors *per se*, but serve as Cenaculum guards and bodyguards. The group is directed by a Condotierre-General, who answers to the Inquisitor-General directly. When assigned to a specific cenacle, the senior-ranking Condotierre usually concedes to the senior Inquisitor, unless the Condotierre has reason to believe that the safety of the Society is at stake.



Condotieri often learn Abilities that help them in the defense of a Cenaculum, such as *Firearms*, *Investigation* and *Melee*.

THE OFFICE OF THE CENSOR

The Office of the Censor serves as an internal watchdog for the Inquisition. Censors investigate, observe and document the operations of the Society itself. They primarily seek to keep the Society pure and stamp out any potential threats, whether spiritual or intellectual. These monitors remain active to ensure that no Inquisitor becomes tainted by the infernal creatures with whom she deals. If a Censor visits a cenacle, she must be made privy to all records, and she may request access to any of the members for questioning, interviews or opinions. Thus, the Censors perform the important task of policing the Society's own members, rooting out corruption and destroying outside influences on the Society.

It is with the Censors that all practitioners of Theurgy, the Inquisition's own heavenly brand of magic, must register. The study of magic is not a very reputable pastime in the Society, where all believe magic to be more or less of the Devil, and its practitioners come under careful scrutiny. Failure to cooperate with a Censorial investigation of Theurgy is not automatically grounds for a tribunal, but the weight of suspicion quickly drives such independents out of the Society — assuming that they aren't hunted first for heresy.

Censorial monitors often learn the *Occult* Ability, so as to recognize possible corruption, and to develop their knowledge of *Theology* as well.

GLADIUS DEI

The Gladius Dei, or Sword of God, includes in its folds the most highly respected and the shortest-lived of the Society's members. These Inquisitors are hand-picked by the Inquisitor-General to perform the most sacred and dangerous missions. Members of Gladius Dei function as shock troops for the Society. When a mission is too dangerous or critical to be entrusted to regular Inquisitors, the Gladius Dei is assigned. Naturally, the nature of most such missions leads to an appalling attrition rate, but when the Society uncovers a powerful threat that must be dealt with — location of a vampire elder, for instance, or the rescue of an important Society member held by a strong cabal of supernatural creatures — the members of the Gladius Dei charge into the fray. No *auto-da-fé* has ever failed when the Gladius Dei was employed to take it on.

Usually, Gladius Dei members come from older cenacles, and they assemble as a group only when called on. They are rare within the Society, due both to attrition and to the rigorous training necessary. Not every cenacle has one on hand.

Gladius Dei members usually have a great deal of Ability in *Firearms*, *Melee*, *Security* and *Investigation*; most also have some Abilities from their days prior to induction within the ranks of the (suicidally) blessed.

THE ORDER OF SAINT JOAN

With roots going back almost as far as the Inquisition itself, this female collective of vampire hunters is passionate, vicious in battle and entirely inspired by God. The Order is nearly autonomous, recognizing the authority of the Society of Leopold, but maintaining its own hierarchy. Members of this Order often hold membership in a Society cenacle, but they never rise to high rank, as their loyalties ultimately lie with their Order's own Abbess. Like their patron, the visionary Jeanne Roulet, they are loyal warriors of God above all else.

The Order of Saint Joan does not recruit; rather, it waits for some sign to indicate a potential new member. Young women who experience divine visions, or who take up the crusade on their own, are often approached for membership; some few even discover the existence of the Order on their own and ask to join. A large number of members in the Order have strong True Faith, and the Order considers acts of faith signs of potential sisters.

St. Joan's devotees usually have some level of *Melee* Ability, as they often take the fight directly to vampires and their ilk. The Ability of *Performance* is also encouraged; the Order persuades its members to undertake dance, gymnastics, and other activities that serve both as physical conditioning and as artistic expression, in order to temper their zeal.

OTHER SECTS

Several smaller sects exist within the Society of Leopold, and they are separated more by their ideological differences than any particular task within it. These sects are not officially recognized within the Society, but they espouse different means of undertaking the Society's mission. Many Inquisitors, even while not claiming membership in any given sect, remain sympathetic to the views of one sect or another.

Brethren of Albertus

Following in the footsteps of their icon, Albertus Magnus, the Brethren of Albertus hold the belief that they must prepare themselves properly in order to combat the evil magic practiced by the minions of the Devil. The Albertines engage in the study and practice of Theurgy (magic stemming from the Divine).

All Albertines are required to register with the Office of the Censor as a matter of course. Most other Inquisitors view the Albertines with a suspicious eye, believing that Theurgy is simply an inviting deception designed to lure the Albertines into the practice of darker magics. Certainly, individual Albertines have become the targets of other Inquisitors after adopting sympathetic views toward other supernaturals, but the Brethren's unparalleled skills in containing spirits and healing the injured still supports their continued survival in the Society.

Albertines often study *Occult* and *Theology* Abilities in order to develop their Theurgy. A few Albertines have some *Lore* knowledge as a result of their constant scrutiny of the supernatural world.

Children of Lazarus

This group believes that the greatest possible sin is to violate the sanctity of Christ's miracles. They maintain that only Jesus was able to rise beyond death, and all creatures who claim to do so — vampires, most notably — are purveyors of the greatest sin. They strive to bring Final Death to such heretics, defending the teachings of Christ as the only true resurrection.

This, the largest sect within the Inquisition, is obsessively concerned with the destruction of vampires. Although other supernatural creatures are still considered threats, vampires form the greatest peril to the divine word, according to the Children.

Children of Lazarus usually improve their *Melee* skills, so as to combat vampires with swords, stakes, torches and other weapons that are more effective than simple bullets when fighting undead. Some few Children have *Vampire Lore* as a result of their constant fight.

Fathers of the Good Death

This assembly of ordained priests follows the doctrine that vampires are essentially evil spirits from the time before the Flood, who have taken over the bodies of the innocent to cause the moral decay of society. The Fathers believe that these creatures



breed sin by actively destroying the religious ethics, individual codes of honor and spiritual love of their prey. The Fathers combine the spread of faith with exorcism and the hunting of supernatural entities in order to defend the innocent.

This sect focuses primarily on tracking and destroying pre-Flood spirits. Of course, the difficulty in doing so keeps their membership small and their missions scarce. Additionally, the limited success of their methods leads many to question their capabilities. Still, the Fathers have no lack of zeal, no matter how inaccurate their beliefs may be.

Fathers of the Good Death often study *Occult Ability*, and especially *Spirit Lore*, to discover more information about their spiritual quarry. *History* is another common Ability, centering mostly around ancient biblical studies.

The Florentines

The Florentines work in a manner far different from that of the rest of their organization. They believe in saving the souls of the damned, not destroying them. They work to aid supernatural creatures in order to rescue them from their mighty, wicked master and show them the true path to God, enlightenment and eventually, eternal peace. The non-traditional beliefs of this sect, also known as the Florentine Heresy, have led to persecution within the Inquisition in the past, so most modern Florentines hide their true ethical beliefs as best they can. Few Florentines know for certain how many others share their views, because those who do are rarely open about it. Several Inquisitors lean toward this sect and have, in recent years, begun to question the methods of their predecessors.

Florentines must be crafty in order to survive within the Society, and as such, many develop *Subterfuge*, both to convince others (including fellow Inquisitors and supernatural creatures) of the rightness of their cause and to successfully hide themselves from discovery. The Florentines also have significant *Occult* knowledge, the better to counter the Devil's arguments with their own.

Order of Saint Peter

Ever faithful to their ideal, Saint Peter, who defeated Simon Magus centuries ago in Rome, these Inquisitors work to root out mages, witches and all others who utilize demonic gifts. The Order makes no distinction between true magick, hedge magic and Infernalism, but believes them all to result from traffic with the Devil. Naturally, this antagonism to magical power places the Order at odds with the Albertines.

Members of the Order use *Investigation* to hunt down witches and mages, recognizing the signs of magic use through their *Occult Ability*. However, most members of the Order refuse to study the *Occult Ability* beyond a cursory level; they seek enough information to hunt and destroy mages without corrupting their own souls with heretical knowledge.

Sisterhood of Saint Claire

Claire was a 13th century nun who believed that one must live in absolute poverty in order to enjoy the riches of the Lord. Her sect within the Inquisition is composed of those who take vows of poverty in order to enjoy the gifts of healing and spirituality. They refuse all personal possessions and material comforts, with the exception of that which is given them by the Society to prepare for missions. They are excellent at accelerating the healing of wounds (whether mortally or magically inflicted) by the power of prayer, devotion and laying on of hands.

Members of this sect commonly possess True Faith, and many study the divine healing arts of Theurgy. Obviously, the *Medicine Ability* is common among the Sisterhood.

Sons of Tertullian

This extremely orthodox sect subscribes to the theory that all who denounce God must be possessed. They pursue wraiths with the same ardor that the Children of Lazarus pursue vampires. To the Sons, faith is a natural state, and only evil spirits — the ghosts across the Shroud — can cause humans to exhibit disbelief. The Sons further espouse the view that these evil spirits masquerade as the dead in order to lull victims into complacency, and that these spirits are responsible for many of the powers of other supernatural entities. Thus, the Sons fanatically pursue and destroy wraiths as the supposed architects of most, if not all, supernatural evils.

Sons of Tertullian use the *Investigation Ability* to track down ghostly occurrences, and may even develop a modicum of *Wraith Lore* as an adjunct to their wraithly hunting.

Sect of Saint James

This sub-cult of the Sons of Tertullian combats wraiths on their own ground — that of the Underworld. Each member of this cult eventually commits a religious suicide with a weapon of his own fashioning and construction, in order to transport himself over to the Shadowlands. Each suicide then proceeds to destroy as many wraiths as he can before he is destroyed himself.

Naturally, the extreme views of this subsect (combined with the constant attrition of ritual suicides) make the sect quite small and well hidden.

Members of the Sect of Saint James garner Abilities similar to those of the parent Sons of Tertullian, but of course they also develop their *Melee Ability* so that they can destroy more wraiths once they commit suicide.

NON-CATHOLIC INQUISITORS

Though religious differences keep these groups separated and sometimes even opposed, they do share the goal of eradicating supernatural threats for the safety of their members' spiritual well-being. Some groups outside of the Society of Leopold have been known to ally against common targets. Doctrinal disputes prevent too much cooperation, but given the shortage of trained hunters, many will pool their resources informally to track difficult adversaries, worrying about differences of faith later.

THE SOCIETY OF SAINT GEORGE

This Anglican group, operating primarily in England, retains much of the structure of its Catholic forebears, in spite of doctrinal differences. Following the model of Saint George, they are “dragon-slayers,” hunters who enter battle directly against agents of the supernatural. Although they revile the Society of Leopold as “misguided,” they keep their own organization, which structurally mirrors the Society of Leopold. Members of the Society of Saint George follow an idealized code of English knighthood; all recruits undergo an Ordeal, and swear an oath to serve God and the Society in the protection of mankind.

Members of the Society of Saint George are warriors first and foremost; they all develop their *Melee* and *Dodge Abilities*, preferring traditional hand-to-hand combat with the creatures of darkness.



IKHWAN AL-SAFA

The Brethren of Purity, a Muslim group, is a serious rival to the Society of Leopold in Muslim countries. Their “Red Scimitar” emblem is rapidly becoming well-known to supernatural creatures in the Middle East. Combining pragmatic training with fanatical religious devotion, the Ikhwan al-Safa presents a formidable threat. Their strict and conservative interpretations of the Koran lead them to hunt all manner of supernatural entities, but also give the group a decidedly insular bent: Members are as likely to target other religious organizations as they are to hunt paranormal creatures, seeing no distinction between these “many and varied faces of Shaitan.” Still, the Brethren call on the use of their own particular Theurgy, magically binding jinn to service, and consider many of the magical arts of alchemy and astrology to be “natural sciences” and well within their acceptable purview.

Ikhwan al-Safa trains its members in *Melee*, with the ubiquitous scimitar that serves as their symbol. Members also commonly learn *Security*, so that they can defeat modern technological security measures when stalking their prey.

AKRITAI

This collection of Eastern Orthodox witch-hunters is both an ally and competitor of the Society of Leopold. The Akritai have no formal structure, unlike the Society of Leopold. Instead, they work in small groups with only loose ties to one another. Many of the witch-hunters in eastern Europe, from Greece to Russia, are counted as Akritai, and there is much frustration in the Society over the failure to recruit the Akritai as a whole. The most prominent Akritai is currently believed to be the Exarch of the Greek division, an Orthodox monk who lives cloistered on Mount Athos.

Because the Akritai work in small groups outside of any hierarchy, they often study more scholarly pursuits like *Occult* and *History*, answering only to their own consciences (and knowledge) when engaged in the hunt.

THE JUDGES

These Jewish hunters have sworn to protect their communities from the children of Lilith and other demons. The Judges use the trappings of Judaic tradition, including the Torah, the Talmud, and an ancillary collection of writings and notes from previous Judges, to determine their agenda. Both Reform and Orthodox followers of Judaism are found in this group; Kabbalists, Rabbis and even insightful and well-trained laypersons fulfill the Judges’ goals.

The Judges have their own interpretations of Scripture and theological wisdom, and not all of it meshes with that of the Society of Leopold. As a result, the Judges engage in slightly different practices, leaving mages unmolested, yet zealously hunting true Infernalists and vampires. Additionally, although small and disorganized, the Judges are a very cooperative society; there is little schism over dogma, and so they are remarkably effective in bringing the most appropriate forces to bear in a hunt.

Judges typically have *Occult* and *Theology* Abilities beyond the usual cursory knowledge possessed by most Inquisitors. Some have combat training, but the more scholarly among this society tend to leave the actual hunting to more qualified members of the community, simply dispensing advice and information.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Over the course of normal investigations, law enforcement groups and government agencies occasionally stumble across supernatural creatures or their influence. Tracking down such creatures not because they are evil, but because they are breaking the law, hunters affiliated with law enforcement can be methodical, organized and extremely difficult to escape.

It is important to remember that most governmental agencies do not believe in the supernatural, and hunters are frequently questioned — even suspected of insanity — by their associates and superiors. Still, an FBI agent determined to avenge himself on a vampiric enemy, or a local police officer trying to get to the bottom of a mysterious series of disappearances in a “haunted” house, makes a daunting foe. Unlike Inquisitors, governmental hunters are likely to pursue their course with rigorously rational vigor, and they are rarely hampered by old folk tales or legends that confuse the issue — they learn everything the hard way, instead.

Several agencies have distinct branches devoted to supernatural troubles, and even a local police force can have a detective or two who knows far more than he should. In general, such hunters operate in secrecy, though it’s not unknown for a government hunter to take matters into his own hands when chasing a particularly hated quarry.

Advantage: Members of a governmental organization are generally well-trained, equipped to deal with many situations and have the general acceptance of the public. All government agents are able to call on assistance with a minimum of fuss, and their government contacts can gather a great deal of information easily. Government agents only spend one Experience Trait for each new Influence Trait purchased, instead of the usual three.

Disadvantage: Paperwork is the bane of many investigator’s lives, and no exceptions are made for hunters. They are expected to answer to their superiors, and to provide full explanations for their actions in the line of duty. Rules and regulations must be followed, or the hunter may find his backing yanked and his badge removed. And if he knows too much, he may be considered a security leak...

Character Suggestions: Agents usually have Physical Attributes as Primary, and common Abilities are *Investigation*, *Firearms*, *Law*, *Melee* and *Brawl*. Agents rarely possess any special Numinae; at most, some agents exhibit Psychic Phenomena, which are often dismissed as “hunches” or “luck.”

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Within the FBI, the Special Affairs Department (or SAD) officially exists to investigate “bizarre occult-style crimes.” Unofficially, they are aware of the existence of vampires, lycanthropes, witches, ghosts and fairies, though they don’t necessarily know much about them beyond what is contained in folk tales. Many SAD reports simply go into “unsolved cases” files. The upper echelons of the FBI rarely accept a supernatural explanation for a crime.

SAD’s funding is low, and its available agents are few. The government feels little need to continue to support an agency that produces limited reliable leads and few solved cases. Consequently, many SAD agents are forced to rely on their own abilities, and they develop unorthodox but effective methods for prosecuting supernatural crime.



Outside of SAD, normal FBI agents do occasionally run across supernatural cases. Most of the time, such cases are chalked up to bizarre but explainable phenomena. A few make their way to SAD, but some cases are solved by the diligent efforts of FBI agents who discover that the occult world is far more real than they ever imagined.

Abilities and Background: FBI agents automatically gain the Ability Traits of *Investigation* and *Firearms* due to their training.

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

Ostensibly a giant information-sifting agency, the NSA is responsible for the collection and analysis of intelligence. The NSA collates and sifts information in an attempt to preserve national security. From time to time, the NSA comes across patterns of information that point to the presence of unusual influence (possibly as a result of supernatural activity). In such cases, the NSA usually makes a simple note and leaves the file alone, but cases which involve national security have agents dispatched for investigation. In these cases, the information-gathering and pattern-matching training of the agents leads to quick discovery for unwitting supernatural creatures, and the NSA uses the same method to deal with such phenomena as it does with any other threat to national security — elimination.

Some supernatural creatures (especially vampires) actually attempt to control the NSA directly, but the agency's superior information-gathering techniques, combined with the development of technology designed to neutralize the influence of supernatural entities, has made such infiltration increasingly difficult. At present, the NSA is a very real threat to other supernatural creatures, because it has the information and the wherewithal to discover and destroy all manner of paranormals.

Abilities and Background: NSA agents automatically gain the *Computer* and *Investigation* Ability Traits from their training.

CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

While it may sound unusual, this agency has turned up some startling facts about the spread of AIDS and other blood-related viruses. Examination of these facts led to the theory among a small faction of researchers that vampires do indeed exist, and are a most unusual vector by which these diseases are spread. CDC researchers have significant medical influence and training, which allows them to isolate supernatural creatures through unusual means — by tracking injuries and diseases that could be associated with patterns of paranormal activity. With national influence and the welfare of billions of people at stake, the doctors of the CDC are intelligent, motivated and very, very good at what they do.

Whether they hunt the vampires to stop the spread of disease, or to obtain blood samples from which they might find a cure of some sort, CDC researchers are a potent threat to the vampiric Masquerade. Some researchers may seek to capture supernatural entities, so as to study their “medical condition,” and perhaps even attempt a cure. Others see paranormal beings as a threat to humanity, and arrange matters to bring other government agencies to bear against those monsters.

Abilities and Background: CDC researchers automatically gain the Ability Traits of *Investigation* and *Medicine* as part of their training.



DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Not necessarily aware of the existence of supernatural creatures, this agency works to prevent and regulate the spread of narcotics, something that many such creatures take an active interest in. Obviously, the DEA may stumble across the activities of Setites, Wyrms-corrupted cartels or other supernaturals with their fingers in the drug pie. When such clashes occur, the agency doesn't usually take any "official" stance — but agents may well have to dispatch the vampires (or worse) that use the drug trade for income and influence.

DEA agents must deal with the dregs of humanity as a matter of course, and thus are more inured towards the horror and atrocity endemic in the supernatural world. A little conflict with superiors over the supernatural elements of a case could cause a jaded DEA agent to continue the hunt covertly. On the flip side, individuals with a vested interest in the drug trade may well take action to try to neutralize or subvert DEA agents, earning the enmity of the more dedicated among the agency.

Abilities and Background: DEA agents gain the Ability Traits of *Firearms* and *Streetwise* as part of their training.

LOCAL POLICE

If it could somehow be assembled, the information possessed by local police forces about the supernatural would exceed that of any other group. Unfortunately, local agencies don't share information about unusual and paranormal crimes; indeed, most agencies have only scant local information, hoarded by one or two quiet officers who categorize the "unsolvable" cases and, as often as not, know nothing about the supernatural. Could this information be brought to bear, the local police agencies would have a wealth of supernatural information — but the constant stigma of crackpots, combined with the influence of other supernatural creatures who use the police departments to destroy evidence of their existence, serves only to further fragment and distort what information is available.

Supernaturals strive to control local police departments, and in working to establish that control, they often leave clues about their existence. Indeed, it's not uncommon to discover a cop on the payroll of a vampire, or somehow related to a werewolf. As often as not, though, other officers may keep an eye out for cops "on the take" and work around them — or at least conceal case files and information.

Crimes linked in some way to the supernatural are not that uncommon, as vampires manipulate and feed from mortals, werewolves slaughter Wyrms-tainted foes, changelings attract the wrong sort of attention and wraiths seek to preserve their fetters and haunts. All of these activities can draw the attention of the local police and lead to an investigation by a sharp officer who recognizes the signs of supernatural involvement.

Abilities and Background: Police officers gain the Ability Traits of *Firearms* and *Investigation* as part of their training.

SCHOLARLY INSTITUTIONS

Sometimes the danger from a hunter comes not to the creatures of the night themselves, but to the secrecy they attempt to maintain. Hunters who seek knowledge have the potential to do more damage to the continued existence of vampires and other creatures than the most well-armed fanatic bent on the destruction of the paranormal. As scholarly groups gather tidbits of data, slowly sifting fact from fancy, they gain the most valuable prize in the war against the supernatural: Truth. Though



such societies rarely act as actual “hunters,” they have the knowledge necessary to understand and defeat creatures of the supernatural, should study give way to conflict.

The pursuit of knowledge is not often a solitary one, and like other hunters, scholars of the occult also gather to pool their resources and share their findings. The groupings usually share common goals or powers. Regardless of their own capabilities, though, academic societies are dangerous primarily because of the sheer wealth of knowledge that they can bring to bear, and the fact that they are much more accepting of the veracity of supernatural knowledge — and willing to trade it with other scholars.

Advantage: Members of scholarly groups are generally well informed about their prey. If it suits the Storyteller’s chronicle, scholarly hunters may begin play with one of the following Ability Traits: *Vampire Lore*, *Werewolf Lore*, *Mage Lore*, *Wraith Lore*, or *Faerie Lore* though the knowledge in question must still be purchased as normal during character creation. Scholars may also acquire such Ability Traits more easily than others during a chronicle by consulting the organization’s extensive library.

Disadvantage: A hunter who doesn’t accomplish anything of note is not supported by his fellows. This axiom translates to mean publish or perish. Without tangible results adding to the institution’s body of knowledge, and a regular schedule of papers, seminars and books, scholarly hunters are discarded in favor of more promising students. Additionally, scholarly groups tend to employ secrecy as their only protection, and they are unlikely to volunteer any information to outsiders, even if it jeopardizes their chance at having allies.

Character Suggestions: Scholarly hunters usually have Mental Traits as their primary Attributes, and common Abilities include *Investigation*, *Lore*, *Occult* and *Science*. They frequently possess Numinae, especially Sorcery. Many scholars joined institutions as a means to learning or developing their own Numina. Others come to investigate the supernatural world after having their eyes opened by a paranormal experience.

THE ARCANUM

Originally founded in the late 19th Century as a secret society of occultists, the Arcanum has grown into a collection of scholars, all interested in various aspects of the supernatural, with Chapter Houses on every continent.

Existing primarily to observe and learn, the Arcanum investigates all instances of unusual activity, and members firmly believe in the existence of otherworldly creatures. Seeking to catalogue and classify the wonders they find, without drawing any attention to themselves, scholars of the Arcanum tread a deadly path. In nearly every case, supernatural creatures value their secrecy as much as, if not more than, their lives. To spy on them can prove to be a most dangerous mission.

Subgroups exist within the Arcanum, different Colleges and Branches, devoted to the study of particular phenomena, be it vampires, psychic powers, ley lines, werewolves or alien abductions.

The typical Arcanist is a dedicated researcher who leads a fairly normal academic life, but also engages in bizarre and supernatural research on the side. With first-hand knowledge of various Numinae and extensive files on just about every type of supernatural creature in the World of Darkness, the Arcanum can be a dangerous opponent indeed — except that its members almost never take any involvement. Instead, Arcanists simply record and catalogue, sitting back and watching like impartial reporters. Indeed, the Arcanum seems to place a greater value on information than on human life, as evidenced when the recent destruction of a Chapter House was heralded with more horror over the loss of irreplaceable documents than over the deaths of several members.

Abilities and Background: Arcanum members gain one free Ability Trait of *Occult* during character creation, as well as one free *Occult* or *University Influence* Trait.

THE BENANDANTI

This very specific organization targets wraiths, whom it believes are hapless spirits unable to move on after death. Beyond this understanding, the Benandanti all have one important thing in common: They are born with their cauls intact and trained by a sponsor Benandante, which gives them the ability to see spirits, and ultimately to leave their bodies and affect wraiths in the spirit world.

The Benandanti would not be a threat to wraiths except for some truly unfortunate interpretations of their ties to the mortal world. By discovering and destroying those things that hold wraiths back, the Benandanti believe that they allow the poor ghosts release, when instead they are condemning wraiths to Oblivion. Worse still, some Benandanti believe that ghosts are malevolent and dangerous spirits, and they go out of their way to trick and destroy wraiths.

With its roots in a Gypsy family, the Benandanti is now only a loosely connected society. A Benandante will watch her friends and family for infants born with their cauls intact, and then Unhood said infants in a ceremony that ensures their potential to see wraiths. After a stringent twenty-year apprenticeship, the child is considered to be another Benandante. Few Benandanti know of one another outside this apprenticeship relationship, since they adopted a policy of secrecy to protect themselves centuries ago, after being perceived as witches by the Inquisition. This fragmentation means that the Benandanti are really just individuals sharing a common power, instead of a truly unified organization.

Despite the disparate nature of their society, the Benandanti do have some common rituals and practices. *Novizio* (novices) are instructed by *sapienza* (mentors) in the dangers and ways of the Underworld. Using their cauls, the Benandanti can perform mystical feats that bring them power over the lands of the dead. Additionally, the Benandanti are rightly feared among wraiths for their fennel swords, precious artifacts of unique magical power that have spiritual as well as material components. The Benandanti carry these weapons with them in the Underworld, where the fennel swords are capable of sending offending wraiths to Oblivion.

Abilities and Background: Benandanti have the mystical ability to separate their souls from their bodies and walk in the Shadowlands. (See the Numina section of Chapter Three for details.) Due to the fractious nature of their “society,” all Benandanti gain the Ability Trait of *Brawl* — some of their fistfights during meetings are quite ferocious. Benandanti also gain one level of *Wraith Lore* due to their travels in the Underworld, but additional levels must be learned the hard way.

THE DANNATI

The Damnation Theorists believe that wraiths are evil spirits of the damned who must be destroyed both for their own sakes, and for the sake of the living. Swayed by the acts of Spectres and perhaps by personal experiences with other wraiths and spirits, the Dannati actively engage in spiritual manipulation to destroy wraiths. Most Dannati are smart enough to realize that a direct campaign against wraiths would be foolish, and so instead arrange for events to destroy Fetters, spread erroneous information that leads wraiths to Oblivion and otherwise make nuisances of themselves in the Underworld.



THE REDENTORI

The Redeemers believe that wraiths are merely souls who do not understand that they are dead, and they maintain that the role of the Benandanti is to encourage them to move beyond the afterlife. The Redentori do so by destroying the material attachments (Fetters) of the wraiths in an attempt to help them move on. The Redentori are still cautious, though, realizing that not all wraiths are peaceful or friendly. Even so, they are more apt to try to help wraiths in general, although their lack of understanding of wraithly existence often leads to some embarrassing and potentially dangerous situations. More than one Redentori has found himself on the receiving end of an angry wraith after trying to help, only to discover that his actions further jeopardized the wraith's tenuous fight to uphold some passion or goal beyond death.

ALTERNATE ENERGY GROUP PARANORMAL RESEARCH WING

The PRW, a splinter division of the AEG, consists of radical scientists who study the industrial uses of psychic energies and other supernatural phenomenon, for the lofty purpose of solving the world's energy crisis. Unfortunately, although the PRW has discovered "ectoplasmic converter engines" that are capable of liquidating spiritual matter into inert energy, they have yet to find any way to harness the resulting energy. Still, this doesn't stop the PRW from trying, and many unfortunate spirits have been liquidated as the PRW furthers its attempts to understand spirit energy.

Sponsored by multinational corporate conglomerates, the PRW requests that each of its associates sign a non-disclosure agreement, for the protection of their patrons. Since the PRW's more questionable activities (such as liquidating the supposed spirits of the dead) have drawn negative attention and some repercussions, many of the PRW's more promising experiments are now conducted in secrecy. Although the AEG publicly denounces the activities of the PRW, large sums of money still make their way to the PRW's coffers, and some strange technologies, like chaotic scanners, have resulted from its research (see Chapter Four).

Members of this group use the scientific method to approach their investigations, and are far more likely to experiment on anything they find than to kill it. Still, the "experiments" of PRW scientists can be dangerous indeed to unwitting supernatural creatures. Additionally, the information gathered by the PRW has alerted select individuals in the federal government to the existence of the supernatural, and continued successful experimentation could very well lead to a full-blown exposure of various paranormal creatures. Needless to say, the vampires and werewolves of the world would be less than happy with such a development, and so dealings with the PRW are extremely cautious and circumspect.

Abilities and Background: The scientists of the PRW are all highly trained professionals, and they gain one level of *Science Ability* in addition to any other skills that they may study. PRW members also gain one free *Influence Trait of Politics or University*, as a by-product of their research connections.

THE ORPHIC CIRCLE

This group is unusual because it boasts a number of supernatural members. Formed to study the true nature of death and the afterlife, it has gained the participation of such supernatural creatures as necromantic vampires, death mages and some wraiths, as well as that of ordinary mortals. All members of the Circle are

seekers of knowledge. The Circle draws from the tradition of Orpheus, who supposedly returned from the Underworld with a set of scrolls of necronomic lore. Members seek out knowledge of life and death in order to gain power over existence itself.

From the outside, the Orphic Circle seems very much like a cult, and its practices are based on the ancient cult of Dionysus. Its members engage in annual orgiastic rites as well as the study of the Shadowlands and the Underworld. It is also organized like a cult, with an Outer Circle consisting of most of the membership, and an Inner Circle, called the Ebon Bench, which consists of the nine priests and priestesses who lead the Orphics. At any given time, the Circle holds 300 members. Membership is for life (or, rather, duration of existence), with vacant positions filled by appointments from the Kerberos, a ten-member council that screens potential applicants.

On entering into the Orphics, a member is required to swear a mystically binding oath of secrecy. Naturally, expatriates are dealt with harshly (and finally); the Circle is always willing to have another wraith on which to experiment. The range of influence wielded by the Circle's supernatural members is impressive; a neophyte Orphic may well become envious of the powers of the vampiric or magickally-inclined superiors in the Circle.

Abilities and Background: Mortal members of the Orphic Circle always have one free level of *Occult* Ability because of their close ties to other supernatural creatures. Similarly, this information and influence translates into one free *Occult* Influence Trait.

THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

This collection of spiritualists and scientific minds was formed in 1882, to investigate all matter of unusual psychic powers. However, much to SPR's detriment, many of the natural abilities of creatures such as vampires, werewolves, wraiths and changelings closely resemble these powers, and so such scholars may run afoul of them. In general, the SPR does not acknowledge the existence of such creatures, but many individual researchers have had personal experiences that state differently. Some SPR researchers even specifically study the interaction of psychic powers with other forms of supernatural phenomena. A few scientists theorize that supernatural creatures are actually extreme expressions of specific psychic powers, and they engage in systematic hunts for information to test such theories.

The SPR contains several branches, each of which studies different aspects of psychic phenomena. Although often dismissed as harmless, their unusual psychic powers make them quite unpredictable. Each branch of the SPR approaches psychic phenomena from a different angle, and these diverse insights into the nature of the supernatural mean that SPR affiliates often draw startling connections between scattered clues.

Abilities and Background: SPR members gain one free Trait of *Science* and one Trait of *Occult* because of their concentration on a scientific approach to supernatural phenomena. Many are actual senior researchers and university professors with a great deal of experience in parapsychology and occult lore. Others are simple individuals with mundane lives, who take a common-sense approach to the unusual.

CENTER FOR PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

This offshoot concerns itself with the investigation of extrasensory perception, such as *Telepathy*, *Clairvoyance* and *Telekinesis*. Associated with some respected universities, the CPR consists of scientific and skeptical minds, who attempt to disprove claims of the supernatural as much as prove them. From time to time, the



CPR finds cases that can't be easily disproved, and it keeps files on psychic phenomena that defy rational explanation. Overall, the CPR is useful to the Society for Psychical Research because it manages to weed out spurious information while drawing extremely scientifically precise conclusions about seemingly inexplicable events.

CPR members are hunters inasmuch as they are drawn to supernatural events in an attempt to develop rational explanations. Of course, once a CPR member discovers a paranormal event or creature that he can't debunk, the chase is on as the scientist tries to get to the bottom of things! If the chase leads to a real paranormal creature, the scholar is likely to revise his thinking to come up with a suitable explanation. Coming up with said explanation may well require special research, and some scientists will go to great lengths to test their unwitting subjects.

Most CPR scientists have a great deal of *Science Ability* due to their formal training. Some develop significant *Investigation* skills as well.

COLLEGE OF PSYCHIC LEARNING

This branch of the Society for Psychical Research, composed mainly of women, dedicates itself to the instruction of psychic abilities to its members. If not for the partial successes of the College, it would have been dismissed by SPR for fakery and charlatanism long ago.

The CPL sometimes loans its members out to local police, for help with missing persons and other cases. The SPR finds the public relations useful, but finds the CPL's use of unproven psychic powers in the public view to be frustrating. The SPR would rather devote time and energy to hard research in psychic powers, instead of using unreliable and unproven talents to garner media attention, since such attention backfires when the talents in question fail. However, the members of the CPL would probably continue in their practices even without the support of the SPR; many feel a duty to use their psychic gifts for the benefit of humanity.

Naturally, CPL members are not often hunters in the strict sense, but a missing persons case can easily draw a psychic into a confrontation with any manner of supernatural creature. Additionally, psychically powerful humans make desirable pawns for vampires and other creatures, as their talents enable them to deal with a wider range of situations. The fact that CPL members use or watch psychic powers regularly simply adds to their willingness to accept other supernatural phenomena, as well.

CPL members often possess some level of sensory Numina, such as *Telepathy* or *Clairvoyance*. Aside from this common ground, though, they come from a wide and diverse set of backgrounds — factory workers, housewives, business professionals and circus gypsies all find their way into the CPL.

INDEPENDENTS

Not truly an organization per se, but worthy of more detailed mention, are independent hunters. There are always those who choose to follow their own paths. A ghoul whose original vampire master dies might hunt vampires purely for the strength of their vitae. A private investigator may be hired to look into the disappearance of a girl who has just gone through her First Change into a werewolf. A normal accountant might seek to understand why he is haunted by visions of his dead wife, so that he can move on with his life. A worried housewife whose teenage son spends too much time with a group of very strange people might spy on a fey and disturbing party. Any sort of hunter who doesn't fall under the previous categories is considered an independent.

Many hunters go it alone, not because they don't agree with the methods of other groups, but simply because they don't yet know of their existence. An independent may well join the Arcanum or the Society of Leopold after his actions bring him to the notice of the appropriate organization. Of course, the hunter in question would have to be willing to take on the burdens of the organization, but would in turn gain access to the organization's special materials and additional training.

Advantage: Independent hunters gain seven Free Traits instead of five, to reflect their eclectic experience. These Traits may be used as desired during character creation.

Disadvantage: Independent hunters don't have any organization on which to call. Thus, a hunter who finds himself outmatched is on his own. Additionally, independents must be careful to conceal their activities, or risk censure, arrest or even commitment for insanity.

STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

Attributes describe a character's intrinsic qualities. By delineating the qualities an individual possesses, Attributes define the character's appearance and capabilities. Adjectives fill the role of Attributes, each noting some aspect of the character. You call on your character's Attributes to perform tasks and to judge relative success in feats of natural ability.

CHOOSING ATTRIBUTES

There are three groups of Attributes: Physical, Social and Mental. Your first step is to prioritize these three categories. Is your character a hulking brute with lightning-fast reflexes, a debonair and seductive hero or a criminal mastermind who misses nothing? You must decide which category is most important to define your vision of your character's strengths and weaknesses.

CATEGORIES OF ATTRIBUTES

Physical Attributes describe your character's physical strength, dexterity and stamina — in essence, the capabilities of her body.

Social Attributes describe your character's charisma, manipulative skill and appearance — the force of his personality.

Mental Attributes represent your character's perceptiveness, intelligence, and wits — the capabilities of her mind.

Choose which category is primary to your character, then choose which ones are secondary and tertiary. After you've chosen the order of the three Attribute categories, you can select specific Traits from each category to flesh out your character.

When prioritizing your Attributes, keep your initial character concept firmly in mind. A timid Arcanum scholar is unlikely to have many Physical Traits, while a belligerent and bigoted Inquisitor won't have a primary Social category. Use the overall picture of your character to decide on the categories.

CHOOSING TRAITS

Once you've selected the order for your Attribute Traits, you need to choose the adjectives themselves. A primarily Physical hunter might choose the Traits *Quick* and *Lithe* to represent acrobatic ability, or *Brawny* and *Ferocious* to show his aptitude for hammering wooden stakes. These adjectives serve to bring your character even more vividly to life, and they make it easier to remember Traits in the pressure of roleplaying.



In your primary Attribute category, you choose six Traits. In your secondary category, you choose four. In your weakest category, you choose only three. Thus, you receive a total of 13 Attribute Traits. You can take the same Trait more than once, if you wish, reflecting greater concentration in a specific area.

Traits allow you to describe your character with words rather than just numbers; there's a profound difference between a character with three Mental Traits and a character who is *Alert*, *Attentive* and *Disciplined*.

During the course of a game, players use Attributes to perform various tasks. Generally, players will find ways to use their Attributes to undertake a variety of different actions, which is well and good. However, not all Attributes are suited to every action. If you're driving a stake into the heart of a vampire, for instance, the *Resilient* Physical Trait isn't really appropriate. Similarly, the *Seductive* Social Trait won't help an Inquisitor whip a mob into a frenzy.

Furthermore, most challenges only involve Traits from one particular category—you can't defend against a vampire's majestic aura with Physical Traits, for instance. Generally, both parties will use the same category when resolving a Challenge, unless a special power notes otherwise.

If you wish to use an "inappropriate" Trait in a bid, you may do so if all parties involved agree. Novice players may wish to allow any Trait to be used, to simplify play. However, you'll find that play moves more smoothly and enjoyably when you use the Traits appropriate to the action described.

PHYSICAL TRAITS

Athletic

You have conditioned yourself to respond well in full-body movements, especially in competitive events. You're equally proficient at scaling manor walls and swinging a heavy mallet at a stake.

Uses: Competitions, duels, running, acrobatics and grappling.

Brawny

Bulky and muscular. You're built like the Terminator.

Uses: Punching, kicking or grappling in combat when your goal is to inflict damage. Power lifting. All feats of strength.

Brutal

You are capable of taking nearly any action in order to survive.

Uses: Fighting an obviously superior enemy.

Dexterous

Generally adroit and skillful when using your hands. Two knives are better than one.

Uses: Weapon-oriented combat (*Melee*), picking pockets, acrobatics.

Enduring

Persistent and sturdy against physical opposition. Okay, so maybe bullets don't bounce off, but you sure can roll with the punches.

Uses: When your survival is at stake, this is a good Trait to risk as a second, or successive, bid.

Energetic

You have a powerful force of spirit, and a strong internal drive that propels you. In physical situations, you draw on a deep reservoir of enthusiasm and zeal.

Uses: Combat, running.

Ferocious

In possession of intensity and extreme physical determination. You're as ornery as a werewolf and twice as loyal to your cause.

Uses: Any time that you intend to do serious harm. When angry.

Graceful

Controlled and balanced in the motion and use of your entire body.

Uses: Defense in combat. Whenever you might lose your balance (stepping on a patch of ice, fighting on four-inch-thick rafters).

Lithe

Characterized by flexibility and suppleness. (You really bend over backwards for your job!)

Uses: Acrobatics, gymnastics, dodging and dancing.

Nimble

Light and skillful; able to make agile movements. You can sidestep attacking werewolves with alacrity and dodge the clutches of angry vampires.

Uses: Dodging, jumping, rolling, acrobatics and hand-to-hand combat.

Quick

You're known for your fast reaction time. You might even get the next clip into the gun before the empty one hits the ground.

Uses: Defending against a surprise attack, running, dodging and attacking.

Resilient

Able to recover quickly from bodily harm. Neither snow nor sleet nor rain will stop you.

Uses: Resisting adverse environments. Defending against damage in an attack.

Robust

Resistant to physical harm and damage. You've got the long-distance hiking thing down.

Uses: Defending against damage in an attack. Endurance-related actions that could take place over a period of time.

Rugged

Hardy, rough and healthy. Able to shrug off wounds and pain to continue struggling.

Uses: When resisting damage, or any challenge that you enter while injured.

Stalwart

Physically strong and uncompromising against opposition.

Uses: Resisting damage, or when standing your ground against overwhelming odds or a superior foe.

Steady

More than simply physically dependable; controlled, unfaltering and balanced. You can keep a wooden stake lined up perfectly with a vampire's heart, even in the middle of a rough-and-tumble brawl.

Uses: Weapon attacks. Fighting in exotic locations. Piloting ships over difficult waters.

Tenacious

Physically resolute through force of will. You often prolong physical confrontations, even when it might not be wise to do so. Pain is your friend!

Uses: Second or subsequent Physical Challenge.



Tireless

You have a runner's stamina — you are less taxed by physical efforts than ordinary people. You just keep hunting and hunting and hunting....

Uses: Any endurance-related challenge. Second or subsequent Physical Challenge with the same foe or foes.

Tough

You have a harsh, aggressive attitude, and you will not submit. Six-inch claw marks? Just a scratch.

Uses: Whenever you're wounded or winded.

Vigorous

You are powerful, intense and resistant to harm. Even bleeding from a few gunshot wounds, you don't slow down.

Uses: Combat and athletic challenges when you're on the defensive.

Wiry

Tight and streamlined, yet still muscular. You've got the build of a dancer or gymnast.

Uses: Punching, kicking or grappling in combat. Acrobatic movements. Endurance lifting.

NEGATIVE PHYSICAL TRAITS

Clumsy

Lacking physical coordination, balance and grace. You are prone to stumbling and dropping objects.

Cowardly

In threatening situations, saving your own neck is all that is important. You might even flee when you have the upper hand, just out of habit.

Decrepit

You move and act as if you are old and infirm. You recover from physical damage slowly, are unable to apply full muscular strength and tire easily.

Delicate

Frail and weak in structure; you are easily damaged by physical harm.

Docile

You lack physical persistence and tend to submit rather than fight long battles.

Flabby

Your muscles are underdeveloped. You cannot apply your strength well against resistance.

Lame

You are disabled in one or more limbs. The handicap can be as obvious as a missing leg or as subtle as a dysfunctional arm.

Lethargic

Slow and drowsy. You suffer from a serious lack of energy or motivation.

Puny

You are weak. This weakness could come from diminutive size or just substandard strength.

Sickly

Weak and feeble. Your body responds to physical stress as if it is in the throes of a debilitating illness.

SOCIAL TRAITS

Alluring

You have an attractive and appealing presence that inspires desire.

Uses: Seduction. Convincing others.

Beguiling

Your skill at deception and illusion is infamous. You can twist perceptions and lead people to believe what suits you. A must-have for the enigmatic sorcerer type.

Uses: Tricking others. Lying under duress.

Charismatic

You possess a talent for inspiration and motivation.

Uses: In a situation involving leadership or the achievement of leadership.

Charming

Your speech and actions make you appear attractive and appealing to others.

Uses: Convincing or persuading.

Commanding

Your delivery of orders and suggestions is impressive. You could run a military operation or order around government flunkies (assuming you have the proper knowledge).

Uses: When you are seen as a leader.

Compassionate

Your feelings of care or pity for others run deep, and your human kindness shines through, even in light of the terrible actions you must undertake.

Uses: Defending the weak or downtrodden. Defeating major obstacles while pursuing an altruistic end.

Dignified

Something about your posture and body carriage appears honorable and aesthetically pleasing. You carry yourself well.

Uses: Defending against Social Challenges, or when being made to look foolish.

Diplomatic

Tactful, careful and thoughtful in speech and deed. Few are displeased with what you say or do.

Uses: Very important in intrigue and leadership situations.

Elegant

Refined and tasteful. Even though you don't need money to be *Elegant*, you exude an air of richness and high society.

Uses: High society celebrations. Defending against Social Challenges.

Eloquent

You speak in an interesting and convincing manner. You're capable of giving inspiring speeches, sermons and blessings.

Uses: Convincing others. Swaying emotions. Public speaking.

Empathetic

Able to identify and understand the emotions and moods of people with whom you come in contact. You can measure truth and feel passions.



Uses: Gauging the feelings of others. Not useful in defense against Social Disciplines.

Expressive

Able to articulate thoughts in interesting, significant and meaningful ways. You can actually get out more than just "big-hairy-huge-fangs!"

Uses: Acting or performing. Any social situation in which you want someone to understand your meaning.

Friendly

Able to fit in with everyone you meet. Even after a short conversation, most find it difficult to dislike you.

Uses: Convincing others.

Genial

Cordial, warm and pleasant. You are pleasing to be around. Possessed of the manners of a kind priest or scholar.

Uses: Mingling at gatherings. Generally used in a second or later Social Challenge with someone.

Gorgeous

Beautiful or handsome. You were born with a face and body that is good-looking to most people you meet. There aren't many supermodel hunters, but hey, is that a stake or are you happy to see me?

Uses: Attracting attention.

Ingratiating

Able to gain the favor of people who know you.

Uses: Dealing with superiors. Defending against social and emotional powers.

Intimidating

Your presence is awesome and frightening.

Uses: Attempting to cow opponents. Inspiring common fear. Ordering others.

Magnetic

People feel drawn to you; those around you are interested in your speech and actions.

Uses: Seduction. Keeping someone near you.

Persuasive

Able to propose believable, convincing and correct arguments and requests. Useful for debate, and to get those silver bullets requisitioned.

Uses: Persuading or convincing others.

Seductive

Able to entice and tempt. You can use your good looks and your body to get what you want from others.

Uses: Subterfuge and seduction.

Witty

Intelligently humorous. You've always got a joke or one-liner, even in the middle of a bloody hunt.

Uses: At celebrations. Entertaining someone. Goaded or insulting someone.



NEGATIVE SOCIAL TRAITS

Bestial

Physically, you seem somewhat less than human. Maybe you have clawlike fingernails, heavy body hair or are not timid about your bodily functions.

Callous

You are unfeeling, uncaring and insensitive to the suffering of others. Your heart is a frozen stone.

Condescending

You just can't help it; your contempt for others is impossible to hide.

Dull

Those with whom you speak usually find you boring and uninteresting. Conversing with you is a chore. You do not present yourself well to others.

Naïve

You lack the air of worldliness, sophistication or maturity that most carry.

Obnoxious

You are annoying or unappealing in speech, action or appearance.

Repugnant

Your appearance disgusts everyone around you. Needless to say, you make a terrible first impression with strangers.

Shy

You are timid, bashful, reserved and socially hesitant.

Tactless

You are unable to do or say things that others find appropriate to the social situation.

Untrustworthy

You are rumored or perceived to be unreliable (whether you are or not).

MENTAL TRAITS

Alert

Mentally prepared for danger and able to react quickly when it occurs. The instant a werewolf starts to change shape, you notice it.

Uses: Preventing surprise attacks. Defending against mental attacks.

Attentive

You pay attention to everyday occurrences around you. When something extraordinary happens, you are usually ready for it.

Uses: Preventing surprise attacks. Noticing hidden foes. Preventing mind control, by noticing it before the adversary can enact the power.

Calm

Able to withstand an extraordinary level of disturbance without becoming agitated or upset. A wellspring of self-control.

Uses: Resisting commands that provoke violence. Whenever a mental attack might upset you. Primarily for defense.

Clever

Quick-witted and resourceful. You think well on your feet.

Uses: Tricking someone, using Sorcery.



Creative

Your ideas are original and imaginative, implying an ability to produce unusual solutions to your difficulties. You can create artistic pieces. A requirement for any true artist.

Uses: Creating anything. Solving puzzles.

Cunning

Crafty and sly, possessing a great deal of ingenuity. You can actually make a stake-throwing trap.

Uses: Tricking others. Sorcery.

Dedicated

You give yourself over totally to your beliefs. Your devotion to a cause is unparalleled.

Uses: Useful in any Mental Challenge when your beliefs are at stake. Defense against memory-altering powers.

Determined

When it comes to mental endeavors, you are fully committed. Whether investigating or hunting, once you start, you don't stop.

Uses: Staredowns. Useful in a normal Mental Challenge.

Discerning

Discriminating; able to pick out details, subtleties and idiosyncrasies. You have clarity of vision. You note ghosts out of the corner of your eye.

Uses: Noticing the unusual. Psychic Phenomena.

Disciplined

Your mind is structured and controlled. This rigidity gives you an edge in battles of will.

Uses: Staredowns, Sorcery, defending against mental powers.

Insightful

You need only look at a situation to gain an understanding of it.

Uses: Investigating (but not defending against it). Psychic Phenomena.

Intuitive

Knowledge and understanding somehow come to you without conscious reasoning, as if by instinct. Your gut tells you right and wrong.

Uses: Psychic Phenomena. Understanding people.

Knowledgeable

You know copious and detailed information about a wide variety of topics. This represents "book-learning."

Uses: Remembering information your character might know. Sorcery.

Observant

Your depth of vision grants you the power to look at something and notice the important aspects of it.

Uses: Picking up on subtleties that others might overlook.

Patient

Tolerant, persevering and steadfast. Waiting for that vampire to return to his haven is no trouble for you.

Uses: Staredowns or other mental battles after another Trait has been bid.

Rational

You believe in logic, reason, sanity and sobriety. You are capable of categorizing and analyzing even the most blatantly supernatural events.

Uses: Defending against emotion-oriented mental attacks. Not used as an initial bid.

Reflective

You have internal wellsprings of knowledge, and you consider many sides of a conundrum.

Uses: Meditation. Remembering information. Defending against most mental attacks.

Shrewd

Astute and artful, able to keep your wits about you and accomplish mental feats with efficiency and finesse.

Uses: Defending against mental powers. Solving tricks and puzzles.

Vigilant

Watchful. Your attention misses little; you pick out the telltale signs of the supernatural everywhere.

Uses: Defending against investigation, *Forgetful Mind* and *Command*. More appropriate for mental defense than for attack.

Wily

Sly and full of guile. You can trick and deceive easily.

Uses: Tricking others. Lying under duress. Sorting through confusion.

Wise

Possessed of an overall understanding of the workings of the world.

Uses: Giving advice. Defending against mind control.

NEGATIVE MENTAL TRAITS

Forgetful

You have trouble remembering even important things.

Gullible

Easily deceived, duped or fooled.

Ignorant

Uneducated or misinformed, never seeming to know anything.

Impatient

Restless, anxious and generally intolerant of delays. You want everything to go your way. Now.

Oblivious

Unaware and unmindful. You'd be lucky if you noticed a herd of cattle headed straight toward you.

Predictable

Because you lack originality or intelligence, even strangers can easily figure out what you intend to do next. Not a very good Trait for chess players.

Shortsighted

Lacking foresight. You rarely look beyond the superficial; details of perception are usually lost on you.

Submissive

Spineless. You relent and surrender at any cost rather than stand up for yourself.



Violent

Extremely lacking in self-control. You fly into rages at the slightest provocation, and frenzy is always close to the surface. This is a Mental Trait because it represents mental instability.

Witless

Lacking the ability to process information quickly. Foolish and slow to act when threatened.

STEP THREE: ADVANTAGES

Advantages cover who and what you know. You may be skilled with guns, connected to people in the Church or able to call on stores of supernatural information. Any such benefit falls into this category.

CHOOSING ABILITIES

Whereas Attributes describe what your character is like, Abilities describe what your character knows or has been trained to do. You choose three Abilities, and like Attributes, you may choose the same one more than once to reflect greater skill or training in that area.

Abilities represent your character's skills and training. With Abilities, your character performs tasks that would otherwise be impossible. In game play, you can use your Abilities to perform specific functions that require training (such as researching Sorcery with the *Occult* Ability) or to retest a lost challenge due to your superior training (such as using *Brawl* to discard the initial failed results of an attempt to punch a vampire).

Some Abilities, such as *Performance*, *Linguistics*, *Lore* and *Science*, must be further specified. For example, a character who takes *Performance* might be skilled at acting, but not know anything about dancing, and a character with *Vampire Lore* still knows nothing about werewolves, except perhaps that vampires fear them and call them "Lupines".

ANIMAL KEN

You have practiced long and hard to develop the ability to interact and cooperate with animals. Given time and access to an animal, you may train it to perform simple tasks (i.e., fetch, guard, attack, etc.). When the command is given, the animal must make a Mental Challenge to understand and carry out the order. The difficulty of the test is based on the level of domestication of the animal as well as on the complexity of the task required. You may also attempt to calm an injured, attacking or frightened animal by defeating it in a Social Challenge.

ARCHERY

You have studied the difficult skill of using a bow or crossbow. You can care for weapons of this type and identify the quality of various bows and arrows. When firing a bow, you can choose to use your Mental Traits to attack instead of testing with Physical Traits. You may also use this Ability for retests when firing a bow. Also, wooden bolts and arrows are quite effective in staking vampires through the heart.

BLINDFIGHTING

You've trained to accommodate yourself to low-light conditions, or perhaps you just have naturally good night vision. Whatever the case, you can compensate for darkened conditions through the use of your other senses. *Blindfighting* allows you to mitigate the two-Trait penalty for taking actions in darkness; each level of Ability removes one penalty Trait. Additionally, you can expend a Trait of *Blindfighting* when in total darkness to avoid having to retest after a successful challenge. (See Chapter Four for complete details about the effects of darkness.)

BRAWL

You are adept at using your body as a weapon. This includes any form of unarmed combat, from dirty in-fighting to highly stylized martial arts. You may use *Brawl* in coordination with claws, teeth and other types of natural weaponry. In this manner, even a character who is stripped bare makes a formidable foe.

BUREAUCRACY

Each day, the world becomes increasingly burdened with a staggering amount of complexity, paperwork and red tape. You have the power to navigate this system and use it to your benefit. You can appropriate licenses, manipulate contractual agreements to your advantage and recover, alter or destroy an organization's files. *Bureaucracy* often requires a Mental or Social Challenge, depending on the type of roleplaying the character performs, or as the Storyteller sees fit. Difficulty depends on such factors as security, accessibility of the information or the cooperation of the target.

COMPUTER

An information superhighway exists with electron asphalt, silicon off-ramps and fiberoptic expressways. You have learned to use computers to your advantage. You can infiltrate systems, swap data, steal secrets and access records. A Mental Challenge is required to accomplish these and other similar acts, with the difficulty based on system security and accessibility, equipment, time and rarity of the information. Failure can lead to investigation by normal and sometimes supernatural agencies that operate in the computer sphere.

CRAFTS

This Ability imparts knowledge of master artisan techniques — woodworking, leatherwork, glassblowing, weaving, gem cutting, etc. You must take a separate Ability Trait for each different trade you practice. You can make functional objects from various substances. The quality of these objects depends on time devoted to their creation, materials available and the difficulty of the task in question.

DEMOLITION

You know how to blow things up. More specifically, you've trained in the use of various explosives, such as C-4, dynamite and possibly white phosphorous. When setting an explosive, you have a decent chance of arming the device without blowing your own arm off. You can also try to disarm explosives with a Static Mental Challenge; the difficulty equals the total number of Mental Traits from the individual who set the explosive. If you do not possess this Ability, you cannot use or disarm explosives at all. Similarly, *Demolition* does not help you to aim a thrown bomb or grenade, it simply allows you to build, arm and disarm explosive devices.



DODGE

You've learned to anticipate danger and to use cover to your advantage. When you're attacked, you duck, weave and evade blows that would normally strike slower or less alert combatants. (You may only use your *Dodge* Ability as a retest against any attempt to grab, strike or injure you physically.)

DRIVE

Most adults have at least some familiarity with modern vehicles, but this Ability goes beyond the basics. You are an adept driver capable of tailing and avoiding tails, avoiding collisions and using your vehicle as a weapon. These actions often require a Physical or Mental Challenge. Factors influencing difficulty could include vehicle type, road conditions and the sort of stunt desired.

EMPATHY

Sensitivity to moods and emotions is second nature to you. Your natural ability to read others lets you guess at their motives, and gives you some insight into human behavior. Though you may not be able to read minds or auras, you can usually make a good determination of someone's general state of mind. *Empathy* can be used with a Social Test to determine an individual's particular general mood (angry, happy, introspective, etc.), although *Subterfuge* may counter this capability. You may also use the *Empathy* Ability for retests with the Psychic Phenomenon of *Telepathy*.

FINANCE

Money talks, and you are fluent in its language. You can follow money trails, perform and verify accounting tasks and understand such concepts as investment, buyouts and the like. The difficulty for the Mental Challenge necessary to perform these tasks depends on the precautions that the subject takes, the amount of money in question and the availability of information. You are capable of taking care of your own money, and you have \$250 per level of this Ability to spend freely during each game session.

FIREARMS

You are familiar with a range of guns and projectile weapons. The most common use of this Ability is in combat, but a Storyteller can allow you to attempt a Mental Challenge to perform other functions. You not only understand how to operate firearms, but you can also care for them, repair them and possibly even make minor alterations. With the *Firearms* Ability, you may choose to use Mental Traits instead of Physical Traits during a challenge in which you are using a firearm.

HISTORY

You've a body of knowledge regarding places and events outside of your specific experience. Whether seeking information about the Edo period of Japan or the habits of the ancient Greeks, you can dig up or remember all manner of recorded history. Using *History*, you can trace the course of civilizations and important events, and perhaps speculate as to their importance in the occult world. Characters with several levels of *History* may well get glimpses into the hidden influences of the supernatural on the course of the past. *History* is often used in conjunction with a Mental Challenge, with a difficulty determined by the Storyteller based on the obscurity, complexity and thoroughness of the information a character desires.

INTIMIDATION

You scare people. A lot. Whether by cracking your knuckles and making threatening gestures, or just mentioning your upstate cousin whose middle name is “the” (as in “Vinnie the Shark,” “Tommy the Mallet,” and so on), you know how to secure cooperation through coercion. When persuasion fails, you can often get the... uncooperative... to see the benefits of compliance.

Note that this Ability isn't the same as the *Torture* Ability. Using *Torture* lets you get something by hurting someone. *Intimidation* lets you get something by *threatening* to hurt someone.

INVESTIGATION

You possess the learned skills of a diligent investigator. You know how to locate evidence and perform basic analysis. With sufficient expertise, you can conduct a proper criminal investigation, deduce a criminal's *modus operandus* and reconstruct a crime scene. By succeeding at a Mental Challenge, you can tell if a person is carrying a concealed weapon or object. When dealing with plots, you may also request a Mental Challenge against a Storyteller to see if you have overlooked any clues. The Storyteller should not let use of this Ability substitute for your own thinking, but can offer clues when you are stumped.

LAW

This is a measure of how well you understand the legal system in which you are entangled. You can use the *Law* Ability to write up binding contracts, defend clients and know the rights of all parties involved in a dispute. The difficulty of the Mental Challenges necessary to accomplish these tasks depends on factors like the precedents for and severity of the crime, not to mention legal complexity of the subject or legal action desired.

LEADERSHIP

You have the gift of influencing and inspiring others — a function of confidence, bearing and a profound understanding of what motivates others. After defeating a subject in a Social Challenge, you may use this Ability to cause him to perform a reasonable task for you. Subjects must first be under your command or serving as your subordinates. Examples include a chief of police and his officers, or a teacher and her students. These requests may not endanger the subject or violate the subject's Nature.

LINGUISTICS

You have received tutelage in one or more languages other than your native tongue. These languages are typically common national languages or local dialects, but they can vary to encompass dead or forgotten tongues. You must specify the language when you choose the *Linguistics* Ability, and you may not change it. Each level can represent an individual language, or, if assigned to the same language more than once, a particular fluency with that single language. This skill allows you and anyone who also knows the language to speak relatively privately. Furthermore, you can translate written text in one of the languages you know. Translation may or may not require a Mental Challenge, depending on the clarity of the text.



LORE

You have gained some inside knowledge about a type of supernatural creature, such as vampires, werewolves, wraiths or changelings. You know what is true and what is folklore concerning their strengths and weaknesses. You even have some knowledge of their society including any divisions within it. You must specify what creature type this *Lore* concerns at character creation. Having it more than once allows knowledge of more than one type of creature, or more in-depth knowledge of a particular supernatural entity. Specific types of *Lore* include, but are not limited to, *Vampire Lore*, *Werewolf Lore*, *Wraith Lore*, *Faerie Lore*, *Spirit Lore* and *Infernal Lore*.

A character does not need to take a *Lore* Ability for knowledge that she could reasonably have due to personal capabilities. Thus, any vampire other than the rankest neonate does not need *Vampire Lore* in order to know that sunlight is dangerous and that blood is necessary for survival. Similarly, a werewolf who has already undergone a Rite of Passage knows the names of the various changing forms, auspices and tribes without *Werewolf Lore*. This is not an excuse to come up with reasons why your character should have *Lore* Abilities for free; it simply indicates that vampires, werewolves and the like have no need to study *Lore* that relates to their own species, unless they desire particularly esoteric knowledge. Mortals generally have to learn supernatural *Lore* the hard way.

MEDICINE

This Ability represents your skill at treating the injuries, diseases and various ailments that humans are all subject to. With a Mental Challenge, you can aid a patient to a more certain recovery from a wound, or ease his pain. The severity and nature of the damage, equipment at your disposal and any assistance or distractions influences the difficulty of the challenge. Other uses of this Ability include forensic information, diagnosis and pharmaceutical knowledge. Of course, knowledge of healing also implies a knowledge of what is harmful to the human body as well.

MEDITATION

You are able to center your thoughts, calm your emotions, control your mind and relax your body. This is a very personal Ability for which you develop your own technique. It is useful for reaching the state of mind necessary for using Psychic Phenomenon and for regaining True Faith Traits. A Storyteller may allow a character to regain Willpower or True Faith Traits by meditating out of play for some time (generally an hour) and making a Simple Test for each level of *Meditation* Ability, with each success or tie returning the Willpower or Faith Trait. The *Meditation* Traits used would be expended in such an exercise.

MELEE

You possess a degree of training or experience in armed combat. You are proficient in the use of a variety of weapons, from broken bottles to swords. You are also able to care for your weapon properly, preventing rust and damage. You may use the *Melee* Ability for retests in conjunction with armed combat, and to defend against hand-to-hand or thrown weapon attacks when armed.



OCCULT

This Ability is a catch-all dealing with local folklore, arcane texts, ancient legends and most other forms of supernatural facts and hearsay. This understanding of the more sinister side of the world includes knowledge of curses, rituals, *voudou*, fortune telling, magic and mysticism, and it contains much that is only speculation and fantasy. The *Occult* Ability is often used with retests for *Sorcery*, as a skilled occultist casts spells and rituals with a greater degree of success.

A NOTE ON THE OCCULT ABILITY

Unlike *Occult*, specific *Lore* Abilities reflect *reliable* knowledge about a particular supernatural creature and its society. The *Occult* Ability, on the other hand, reveals information based as much in folklore as in reality, such as the fact that werewolves can abide neither silver nor wolfsbane, and that vampires die from both sunlight and a stake through the heart.

It can be easy for players of this game to forget just how little their characters might know about the supernatural, and this difference between *Occult* and *Lore* does much to help remind them. In short, the *Occult* Ability is rarely as effective or precise as a specific *Lore*, but does give general information about a wide variety of topics.

PERFORMANCE

You have the gift to make your own original creations and/or express those creations to your peers. A *Mental Challenge* determines the genius of your creativity, and a *Social Challenge* determines the power with which you convey it. When you take the skill, you must declare your specialty, some examples of which include dancing, painting, poetry, composing music or playing a single type of instrument.

REPAIR

You possess a working understanding of what makes things tick, covering everything from advanced electronics to shoring up a sagging beam. With time, tools and supplies, you can fix or slightly alter most of the trappings of modern society. This knowledge also allows you to excel at sabotage. Using this Ability usually calls for a *Mental Challenge*, the difficulty of which depends on such factors as the item's complexity, tools and supplies available, extent of damage and time spent on the repairs.

SCIENCE

You have a degree of factual and practical expertise in a single field of the true sciences, such as biology, physics or chemistry. This Ability measures not only theoretical knowledge but also how well you can put it to practical use. You may identify properties of your field, perform experiments, fabricate items, bring about results and access information a player could not normally utilize. All but the most trivial uses of this Ability require a *Mental Challenge*. The difficulty depends on resources available (equipment, data and so on), complexity of the task and time allocated to it. You must choose a specific field of study.



SCROUNGE

Scrounge enables you to produce items through connections, wits and ingenuity. Many individuals who lack the wealth to purchase the things they desire or need develop this Ability instead. Materials acquired with *Scrounge* aren't always brand new, are rarely exactly right and often require some time to acquire, but this Ability can sometimes work where *Finance* or outright theft fails. A Mental or Social Challenge is necessary to use *Scrounge*. Some factors that influence the difficulty of the challenge include the rarity and value of an item and local supply and demand.

SECURITY

You have a degree of experienced knowledge of the variety of ways people defend and protect things. Not only can you counter existing security, such as locks, alarms and guards, but you can also determine the best way to secure items and areas. Other uses include breaking-and-entering, infiltration, safecracking and lockpicking. Almost all applications of the *Security* Ability require a Mental Challenge determined by the complexity of the task, the thoroughness of the defenses, your equipment and the length of time required.

STREETWISE

You have a feel for the street. You know how to uncover its secrets, how to survive out there and how to use the network of personalities it houses. You can get information on events on the streets, deal with gangs and the homeless and survive (if somewhat squalidly) without an apparent income. Some uses of *Streetwise* require a Social Challenge that is influenced by such things as the composition of the local street community and the current environment on the street.

STEALTH

You are able to sneak about or hide without being seen or heard. With appropriate cover and care, you can conceal yourself from detection if you only move when nobody can see you or remain unmoving and behind partial cover while within someone's visual range. A Mental Challenge is required to remain unnoticed by another person. *Stealth* can be very useful when engaged in a hunt, both for stalking and escaping.

SUBTERFUGE

Subterfuge is an art of deception and intrigue that relies on a social backdrop to work. When participating in a social setting or conversation with a subject, you can attempt to draw information out of him through trickery and careful probing. A successful use of *Subterfuge* can reveal information such as one's name, nationality, Negative Traits, friends and enemies. The first requirement is that you get the target to say something dealing with the desired knowledge, perhaps by entering a conversation about foreign culture to find out a character's nationality. If you can accomplish this, then you may propose your true question and initiate a Social Challenge. If you win, your target must forfeit the information. To use the Ability again, you must once again lure him into a conversation. Furthermore, *Subterfuge* may not reveal more than one Negative Trait per session, and it may be used to defend against others with *Subterfuge*. If successful in a defense with *Subterfuge*, you could even let slip false information.

Conversely, you may also use the *Subterfuge* Ability to conceal information or lie without detection.



SURVIVAL

You have the knowledge and training to find food, water and shelter in a variety of wilderness settings. Each Mental or Physical Challenge allows you to provide yourself or another living creature with the bare necessities for one day. You can also use this Ability to track someone in a wilderness setting; the Narrator sets the nature and difficulty of this challenge. Important factors in a *Survival* challenge are abundance or scarcity of resources, time of the year, equipment and the type of wilderness.

THEOLOGY

The texts and works of various religions are well-known to you, and you recognize rituals and observances from a variety of faiths, even if you do not practice them yourself. With a successful Mental Challenge, you may recognize the trappings of a given religion, and identify the faith in question. You may also discern the purpose of a specific ritual if you watch it. *Theology* is also used for retests with Theurgy, as you perform the rites of your white magic in a fashion pleasing to the Divine. However, *Theology* cannot be used in conjunction with tests of True Faith, as inner devotion, not outward knowledge or ceremony, drives the strength of True Faith.

THROWING

You've spent a lot of time as either a hard-core survivalist with a throwing ax, a wannabe ninja with shurikens, or you just spent far too much free time playing baseball. You have the techniques of throwing down pat, and you can hit your targets with ease almost every time. While most people don't even know how to hold a throwing knife, you're a virtuoso with any sort of thrown weapon, from a spear to a rock. You can use Mental Traits instead of Physical Traits when throwing a weapon, and you may use this Ability to retest with thrown objects.

TORTURE

You're practiced in the methods of inflicting pain. With some tools and some time, you can extract information and cooperation from a properly restrained subject, all without doing permanent harm (should you so desire). You can make a Social Challenge against your victim's Physical Traits in order to garner valuable information or secrets, given enough time. You may choose whether to actually inflict damage with your ministrations; characters without this Ability who engage in torture always injure the victim during the course of the questioning, due to lack of finesse. Use of the *Torture* Ability generally takes about half an hour to elicit the answers to any one question in any detail (or to make the attempt), though individuals with a high degree of Willpower may resist longer — spending a Willpower Trait allows the victim to automatically win one of the *Torture* challenges. The use of *Torture* is a very good way for a hunter to lose Humanity with extreme rapidity.

CHOOSING INFLUENCE

Friends in the workplace, contacts on the street and mutual allies in a field of business all provide small amounts of influence in mortal civilization. With Influence, a hunter gathers information about, and sometimes exerts control over, a particular area of society.

Your hunter only has one area of Influence, but you can select from a number of different areas. Additionally, you may garner further Influence, as you cement your control over a particular area or gather new contacts.



Influence is the method by which a character can exert control over the daily affairs of normal mortal society. It may take the form of contacts, allies, or direct control over the appropriate agency. The Influences that follow represent a fair selection of mortal institutions, but some characters with a wide reach may possess higher levels of Influence, as described in **Laws of the Night** and **Laws of Elysium**.

USING INFLUENCE

To use Influence, you should explain to the Narrator what sort of effect you wish to create with your Influence. The Narrator then decides the Trait cost, the time involved (both real and in-game) and any tests required to achieve the Influence effect. Influence Traits used this way are temporarily considered to have been expended and are not recovered until the next session. The effects of using Influence can be instantaneous and brief, or slow to manifest and permanent, depending on the nature of the manipulation and the degree of power the character wields.

The difficulty of a task is set by a Narrator, and it equals the number of Influence Traits that must be expended to accomplish the task. A given chore's difficulty can be subject to sudden change, depending on circumstance. The suggested guideline listed along with each area of Influence can change dramatically between chronicles or even between sessions. After all, you may not be the only person attempting to Influence something.

Sometimes a Narrator will require a challenge of some sort to represent the uncertainty or added difficulty involved when exercising Influence. Some uses of Influence may not actually cost Influence Traits to use, but rather require that the character simply possess a certain level of the Influence in question.

In practice, the use of Influence is never instantaneous and rarely expedient. While a character may be able to, say, condemn any building in the city, it will not be torn down that night. For sake of game flow, a Narrator may allow trivial uses of Influence to only take half an hour. Major manipulations, on the other hand, can become the center of ongoing plots requiring several sessions to bring to fruition.

The guidelines below by no means limit the number of Influence Traits that can be spent at one time or the degree of change a character may bring about. They are merely an advisory measure to help Narrators adjudicate the costs of certain actions.

Actions followed by an asterisk (*) are ones that can generally be accomplished without expending an Influence Trait.

LOANING INFLUENCE

Characters can trade Influences with each other much like exchanging possessions. These trades may be permanent or temporary. In the case of permanent trades, the old owner erases the Trait from his sheet and turns over the appropriate Influence card (if your chronicle uses these) to the new owner. The new owner then records her newly acquired Influence Trait on her character sheet. Temporary trades of Influence occur when someone is merely doing a favor or loaning her Influence to someone else. In this case, the owner does not erase the Trait, but instead makes a note that it is no longer in her possession. The holder of the Influence Trait may use it immediately or hold onto to it until she feels she needs it. However, the original owner of the Influence Trait may not regain the Trait until the current holder expends or voluntarily returns

it. Some chronicles dictate that the Trait reverts to its original owner after a certain time. A good rule of thumb is to say that one month is the maximum duration of any loan of Influence. If your chronicle's sessions are scheduled less frequently than once a month, the Narrator(s) should probably expand this window of opportunity. Any exchange of Influence Traits requires the presence and assistance of a Narrator.

CONFLICTING INFLUENCES

Sometimes characters may wish to try to counteract the Influence of other characters. In such cases, it generally costs one Trait per Trait being countered. The character willing to expend the most Influence Traits (assuming she has them to spend) achieves her goal. All Traits used in this sort of conflict are considered expended.

BUREAUCRACY

The organizational aspects of local, state or even federal government fall within the character's sphere of control. She can bend and twist the tangle of rules and regulations that seem necessary to run our society as she sees fit. The character may have contacts or allies among government clerks, supervisors, utility workers, road crews, surveyors and numerous other civil servants. Imagine the horror a vampire feels when his estate is audited....

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Trace utility bills*
2	Fake a birth certificate or driver's license Disconnect a residence's utilities Close a small road or park Get public aid (\$250)
3	Fake a death certificate, passport or green card Close a public school for a single day Turn a single utility on a block on or off Shut down a minor business on a violation
4	Initiate a phone tap Initiate a department-wide investigation Fake land deeds
5	Start, stop or alter a city-wide program or policy Shut down a big business on a violation Rezone areas Obliterate records of a person on a city and county level

CHURCH

Not even churches are without politics and intrigue on which an opportunistic person may capitalize. *Church* Influence usually only applies to mainstream faiths. Sometimes other practices fall under the *Occult* Influence. Contacts and allies affected by *Church* Influence include: ministers, bishops, priests, activists, evangelists, witch-hunters, nuns and various church members and assistants. Obviously, this Influence is of great use in tracking down faithful allies for the hunt.



Cost	Desired Effect
1	Identify most secular members of a given faith in the local area Pass as a member of the clergy* Peruse general church records (baptism, marriage, burial, etc.)
2	Identify higher church members Track regular members Suspend lay members
3	Open or close a single church Find the average church-associated hunter Dip into the collection plate (\$250) Access to private information and archives of a church
4	Discredit or suspend high-level members Manipulate regional branches
5	Organize major protests Access ancient church lore and knowledge

ESPIONAGE

The shadow world of intelligence teems with secrets, and a character with *Espionage* Influence is versed in this covert community. This Influence can be used to gain spying data and equipment. Characters with the right *Espionage* contacts can also get detailed information about people and training in obscure or restricted abilities. Contacts and allies in the undercover world include intelligence agents, analysts, political liaisons, covert operatives, classified researchers and military COINTELPROs. *Espionage* grants access to all sorts of hidden information and specialized gear, which can be invaluable in tracking and hunting supernatural creatures.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Know about various agencies* Arrange a tour of a facility Know the names of some public intelligence employees*
2	Get someone's police records Arrange a "black mark" on someone's federal records Know some of the less-than-public intelligence employees*
3	Get copies of an investigation report Get bureau information about procedures and policies Access minor espionage equipment, handguns, or petty cash (\$250) Perform minor alterations to federal records
4	Sell minor intelligence secrets to foreign powers (and raise \$5,000 if you avoid execution) Know some of the secret intelligence employees* Access Secret files or equipment Clean up federal records or arrange to put someone on a Wanted list
5	Access Top Secret files or equipment Arrange a "sanction" Know rumors about projects beyond Top Secret clearance*

FINANCE

The world teems with the trappings of affluence and stories of the rich and famous. Those with the *Finance* Influence speak the language of money and know where to find capital. They have a degree of access to banks, megacorporations and the truly wealthy citizens of the world. Such characters also have a wide variety of servants to draw on, such as CEOs, bankers, corporate yes-men, financiers, bank tellers, stock brokers and loan agents. *Finance* is a wonderful means of backing one's hunting career with capital and equipment.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Earn money through a steady source of income Learn about major transactions and financial events Raise capital (\$1,000) Learn about general economic trends*
2	Trace an unsecured small account Raise capital to purchase a small business (single, small store)
3	Purchase a large business (a few small branches or a single large store or service)
4	Manipulate local banking (delay deposits, some credit rating alterations) Ruin a small business
5	Control an aspect of city-wide banking (shut off ATMs, arrange a bank "holiday") Ruin a large business Purchase a major company

HEALTH

In our modern world, a myriad of organizations and resources exists to deal with every mortal ache and ill, at least in theory. The network of health agencies, hospitals, asylums and medical groups is subject to exploitation by someone with *Health* Influence. Nurses, doctors, specialists, lab workers, therapists, counselors and pharmacists are just a few of the workers within the health field. Hunters use *Health* to get medical assistance, and to bring special resources (CDC investigations and quarantines) against supernatural prey.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Access a person's health records* Fake vaccination records and the like Use public functions of health centers at your leisure
2	Access to some medical research records Have minor lab work done Get a copy of coroner's report
3	Instigate minor quarantines Corrupt results of tests or inspections Alter medical records



- | | |
|---|--|
| 4 | Acquire a body
Completely rewrite medical records
Abuse grants for personal use (\$250)
Have minor medical research performed on a subject
Institute large-scale quarantines |
| 5 | Shut down businesses for "health code violations"
Have special research projects performed
Have people institutionalized or released |

HIGH SOCIETY

A clique exists of people, who, by virtue of birth, possessions, talent or quirks of fate, hold themselves above the great unwashed masses. *High Society* allows the character to direct and use the energies and actions of this exceptional mass of talents. Among the ranks of the elite, one can find dilettantes, the old rich, movie and rock stars, artists of all sorts, wannabes, fashion models and trend-setters. *High Society Influence* is of use primarily in gathering information on (or watching for supernatural tampering in) lofty mortal circles.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Learn what is trendy* Obtain "hard to get" tickets for shows Learn about concerts, shows or plays well before they are made public
2	Track most celebrities and luminaries Be a local voice in the entertainment field "Borrow" idle cash from rich friends (\$1,000)
3	Crush promising careers Hobnob well above your station*
4	Minor celebrity status
5	Get a brief appearance on a talk show that's not about to be canceled Ruin a new club, gallery, festival or other posh gathering

INDUSTRY

The dark world of the Gothic-Punk milieu is built by pumping and grinding machinery and the toil of endless laborers. A character with the *Industry Influence* has her fingers in this pie. "Industry" is composed of union workers, foremen, engineers, contractors, construction workers and manual laborers. The careful use of *Industry* gives a character some income, as well as contacts in business projects that can trace the movements of paranormal investors and CEOs.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Learn about industrial projects and movements*
2	Have minor projects performed Dip into union funds or embezzle petty cash (\$500) Arrange small accidents or sabotage
3	Organize minor strikes Appropriate machinery for a short time
4	Close down a small plant Revitalize a small plant
5	Manipulate large local industry



LEGAL

There are those who quietly tip the scales, even in the courts, law schools, law firms and justice bureaus. Inhabiting these halls are lawyers, judges, bailiffs, clerks, district attorneys and ambulance chasers. Uses of *Legal Influence* include issuing subpoenas against prey and harassing targets with lawsuits, not to mention dismissing legal actions against the hunter (especially when dealing with “collateral damage” incidental to the chase).

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Get free representation for minor cases
2	Avoid bail for some charges Have minor charges dropped
3	Manipulate legal procedures (minor wills and contracts, court dates) Access public or court funds (\$250) Get representation in most court cases
4	Issue subpoenas Tie up court cases Have most legal charges dropped Cancel or arrange parole
5	Close down all but the most serious investigations Have deportation proceedings held against someone

MEDIA

The media serves as the eyes and ears of the world. While few in this day and age doubt that the news is not corrupted, many would be surprised at who closes these eyes and covers these ears from time to time. The media entity is composed of station directions, editors, reporters, anchors, camera people, photographers and radio personalities. The careful use of *Media Influence* allows a hunter to spread his message and to watch for strange stories that might point to supernatural activity.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Learn about breaking stories early* Submit small articles (within reason)
2	Suppress (but not stop) small articles or reports Get hold of investigative reporting information
3	Initiate news investigations and reports Get project funding and waste it (\$250) Access media production resources Ground stories and projects
4	Broadcast fake stories (local only)

MILITARY

The uncontrolled use of *Military Influence* can have an unbalancing effect on a game. **Storytellers should not hesitate to restrict or prohibit the use of this Influence.**

Nations and organizations around the world make use of force as a final and ultimate resort. Standing armies, rebel factions, fanatical terrorist organizations — all make use of the strategy and operations that define the military. *Military Influence* gives a character some insight into the movements of these sorts of organizations, and



a few well-placed contacts on the inside. Exerting the proper sorts of *Military Influence* enables a character to gather useful information, to direct military actions and to acquire specialized military hardware. Contacts and allies among the military include survivalists, gun nuts, supply officers, military engineers and researchers, enlisted flunkies and actual soldiers of various ranks. A character can use *Military Influence* to get accurate information on sellers of special weapons and armor, and to “borrow” heavy, expensive or restricted equipment.

Note that some uses of *Military Influence* allow a character to access heavy military weapons or armor. In any case where the character “borrows” such equipment, the equipment must be returned at the end of the session or during downtime. After all, the quartermasters of the military keep faithful records of the equipment in their charge, and they don’t favor releasing such gear to civilians. Failure to return the gear will certainly draw the ire of the military; the character loses his *Military Influence* and draws the attention of a special task force designed to capture or kill the offender and recover the missing equipment. If a character wants to arrange a “black market” of stolen military goods... well, that’s in the hands of the Storyteller.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Know about local military operations* Dig up some minor weapons on the gray market (knives, pistols) Meet some local paramilitary individuals (survivalists, gun magazine publishers, psychopathic killers)
2	Know about special military hardware* Reprimand a local military individual Figure out which mail-orders and suppliers have “the real deal” (and get access to rifles, specialized ammunition and some body armor)
3	Get information about military ops that aren’t public knowledge Figure out who really runs things in local military groups Access minor military equipment (communication headsets, extra ammunition, uniforms) or petty cash (\$250)
4	Alter or create a service record “Borrow” a military weapon or piece of squad gear (assault rifle, submachine gun, sniper rifle, heavy body armor, hum-vee) Arrange for a small military operation
5	Learn about secret military squads Arrange or clear a court-martial “Borrow” heavy military gear (machine gun, combat engineering explosives, flamethrower)

OCCULT

Most people are curious about the supernatural world and the various groups and beliefs that make up the occult subculture, but few consider it anything but a hoax, a diversion or a curiosity. This misconception could not be farther from the truth. The occult community contains cult leaders, alternative religious groups, charlatans, would-be occultists and New Agers. Perhaps one of the most important Influences for a hunter, *Occult* provides access to the information so necessary in the pursuit of his craft.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Contact and make use of common occult groups and their practices Know some of the more visible occult figures*
2	Know and contact some of the more obscure occult figures* Access resources for most rituals and rites
3	Know the general vicinity of certain supernatural entities (Kindred, Garou, wraiths, etc.) and possibly contact them Can access vital or very rare material components Milk impressionable wannabes for bucks (\$250) Access occult tomes and writings Research a Basic Sorcery ritual
4	Research an Intermediate Sorcery ritual
5	Access minor magic items Unearth an Advanced Sorcery ritual Study means of developing new Numinæ

POLICE

"To protect and serve" is a popular motto among the chosen enforcers of the law. But these days, everyone can have reason to doubt the law's ability to enact justice. Perhaps they should wonder whom the law defends, whom it serves and why. The *Police* Influence encompasses the likes of beat cops, desk jockeys, prison guards, special divisions (such as SWAT and homicide), detectives and various clerical positions. Needless to say, many government hunters have some sway here, and there are great advantages in having friends on the force — from evading arrest to bringing charges against suspected supernaturals.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Learn police procedures* Hear police information and rumors Avoid traffic tickets
2	Have license plates checked Avoid minor violations (first conviction) Get "inside information"
3	Get copies of an investigation report Have police hassle, detain or harass someone Find bureau secrets
4	Access confiscated weapons or contraband Have some serious charges dropped Start an investigation Get money, either from the evidence room or as an appropriation (\$1,000)
5	Institute major investigations Arrange setups Instigate bureau investigations Have officers fired



POLITICS

Nothing ever gets done for straightforward reasons any more. It's all who knows who and what favors can get paid off in the process. In other words, it's politics as usual, and there's a whole class of people who thrive in this world of favors and policy flacks. Some of these individuals include statesmen, pollsters, activists, party members, lobbyists, candidates and politicians themselves. Since many supernatural creatures attempt to control mortal society, *Politics* gives a hunter the chance to track their influence, destroy their minions and wreck their plans.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Minor lobbying Identify real platforms of politicians and parties* Be in the know*
2	Meet small-time politicians Garner inside information on processes, laws and the like Use a slush fund or fund-raiser (\$1,000)
3	Sway or alter political projects (local parks, renovations, small construction)
4	Enact minor legislation Dash careers of minor politicians
5	Get your candidate in a minor office Enact encompassing legislature

STREET

Disenchanted, disenfranchised and ignored by their "betters," a whole collective of humanity has made its own culture and lifestyle to deal with the harsh lot life has dealt out. Gang members, the homeless, street performers, petty criminals, prostitutes and the forgotten all reside in the dark alleys and slums. *Street Influence* gives a hunter an "ear to the ground" and access to some hard-to-get resources.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Has an ear open for the word on the street Identify most gangs and know their turfs and habits
2	Live mostly without fear on the underside of society Keep a contact or two in most aspects of street life Access small-time contraband
3	Get insight on other areas of Influence Arrange some services from street people or gangs Get pistols or uncommon melee weapons
4	Mobilize groups of homeless Panhandle or hold a "collection" (\$250) Get hold of a shotgun, rifle or SMG Have a word in almost all aspects of gang operations
5	Control a single medium-sized gang Arrange impressive protests by street people



TRANSPORTATION

The world is in constant motion, its prosperity relying heavily on the fact that people and productions fly, float or roll to and from every corner of the planet. Without the means to perform this monumental task, our "small" world would become a daunting orb with large, isolated stretches. The forces that bridge these expanses include cab and bus drivers, pilots, air traffic controllers, travel firms, sea captains, conductors, border guards and untold others. Fleeing prey can be caught with control of *Transportation*, while a proper hunter can use this Influence to his own tactical advantage by choosing the ground on which he fights.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Know what goes where, when and why Travel locally quickly and freely*
2	Track an unwary target if he uses public transportation Arrange passage safe (or at least concealed) from mundane threats (robbery, terrorism, etc.)
3	Seriously hamper an individual's ability to travel Avoid most supernatural dangers when traveling (such as werewolves)
4	Temporarily shut down one form of transportation (bus lines, ships, planes, trains, etc.) Route money your way (\$500)
5	Reroute major modes of travel Smuggle with impunity

UNDERWORLD

Even in the most cosmopolitan of ages, society has found certain needs and services too questionable to accept. In every age, some organized effort has stepped in to provide for this demand, regardless of the risks. Among this often ruthless and dangerous crowd are the likes of hit-men, Mafia, Yakuza, bookies, fences and launderers. Though many hunters find working with these elements distasteful, eventually almost everyone deals with *Underworld* Influence to gather necessary weapons and materials.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Locate minor contraband (knives, small-time drugs, petty gambling, scalped tickets)
2	Obtain pistols, serious drugs, stolen cars Hire muscle to rough someone up Fence minor loot Prove that crime pays (and score \$1,000)
3	Obtain a rifle, shotgun or SMG Arrange a minor "hit" Know someone in "the Family"
4	Make white collar crime connections
5	Arrange gangland assassinations Hire a demolition man or firebug Supply local drug needs



UNIVERSITY

In an age when the quest for learning and knowledge begins in schools, colleges and universities, information becomes currency. *University Influence* represents a certain degree of control and perhaps involvement in these institutions. In this sphere of Influence, one finds the teachers, professors, deans, students of all ages and levels, Greek orders and many young and impressionable minds. The research material available through *University Influence* should never be overlooked, and many scholarly societies have hidden members ensconced in the academic community.

Cost	Desired Effect
1	Know layout and policy of local schools* Have access to low-level university resources Get records up to the high school level
2	Know a contact or two with useful knowledge or skills Have minor access to facilities Fake high school records Obtain college records
3	Call in faculty favors Cancel a class Fix grades Discredit a student
4	Organize student protests and rallies Discredit faculty members Acquire money through a grant (\$1,000)
5	Falsify an undergraduate degree

STEP FOUR: FINISHING TOUCHES

The last pieces of character creation come together here, including Willpower, Humanity Traits, Derangements, Merits and Flaws.

WILLPOWER

Willpower measures a hunter's drive and fortitude. Hunters begin with one Willpower Trait, but they may purchase additional Traits with Experience Traits.

Willpower gives a character the extra strength to overcome obstacles and to succeed where others would surrender and fail. Willpower Traits can be used for almost anything that the player deems important.

- You can spend a Willpower Trait to replenish all your lost Traits in one category: Physical, Social or Mental. You may refresh each given category once in any game session.

- You can spend a Willpower Trait to ignore the effects of any wounds, up to and including Incapacitated, for the duration of one challenge.

- Expending one Willpower Trait allows you to negate the effects of any one Mental or Social Challenge. In such a case, you effectively gain a retest against the offending power, ignoring the results of the initial challenge.



Laws of the Hunt

- You may spend a Willpower Trait to resist the urges of a Derangement for 10 minutes.
- You can expend a Willpower Trait to make a test for a challenge that would normally require the use of an Ability. For example, if you are trying to break into a vampire's haven but you don't have the *Security* Ability, you can expend a Willpower Trait to call for a test to notice the haven's safeguards — a task that would normally be outside of your experience.

• Some specific powers require the expenditure of Willpower Traits to function. Also, at the Storyteller's discretion, you may be required to spend a Willpower Trait to attempt something particularly difficult or obviously dangerous.

Once a Willpower Trait has been spent, it is gone until the end of the story. At this time, the character regains all Willpower used during the course of the story.

A Storyteller may also award the recovery of a Willpower Trait when a character experiences something that reaffirms his self-confidence, such as accomplishing a task in line with his Nature. Lenient Storytellers may also grant partial recovery of Willpower during the course of particularly length games. Thus, if a game runs for several consecutive days (at a convention, for instance), the Storyteller may rule that you regain a Trait of Willpower after each full period of sleep.

HUMANITY

All humans have a fundamental wellspring of life and nature that provides a uniquely mortal perspective. Pick four Humanity Traits that represent the best aspects of your character's personality even if you keep them hidden. Describe what's fundamentally good about your hunter, whether he actually behaves in such a fashion or keeps his virtues under wraps. After all, even the most brutal mortal keeps a tenuous tie to humanity.

HUMANITY TRAITS

Benevolent, Charitable, Chivalrous, Fair, Generous, Giving, Gracious, Helpful, Honorable, Humane, Innocent, Kind, Liberal, Loyal, Merciful, Moral, Naïve, Pious, Sympathetic, Warm

HUMANITY

Humanity separates mortals from the rest of the supernatural world at large. Humanity is the mortal's connection to the fundamental forces of life. Through Humanity, people are connected to one another and to their surroundings. Therefore, characters with many Humanity Traits are very much "in touch" with themselves and their environments; individuals with little Humanity are cold and distant.

Most mortals have four Humanity Traits. Particularly caring or insightful mortals may have more, possessing up to eight Traits. Conversely, no mortal can ever fall permanently to zero Humanity Traits. There is always a spark of humanity at the core of any mortal's being.



The modern world often derides Humanity as dangerous and worthless. Nice guys finish last, after all. Just getting by in the World of Darkness requires some degree of callousness and a willingness to do whatever is necessary to survive. Yet still, many people hold on tight to their Humanity. The habits of compassion and honor die hard. In a world gone mad with killers and manipulators, Humanity — the power of fundamental integrity — may actually be the best defense.

USING HUMANITY

Humanity Traits serve many purposes. As a measure of character and inner strength, Humanity Traits give mortals exceptional endurance when threatened.

POWERING NUMINAE

Humanity Traits are often temporarily expended to power Numinae. By drawing on her connection to the world around her, a human taps into powerful forces. Similarly, dedication to principles of humane behavior can grant a strength of character and resolve that allows a human to exert her faith in the fundamental nature of existence.

RELIEF OF DERANGEMENTS

Early in each game, a player may expend one Humanity Trait to temporarily relieve her character of a Derangement. A Storyteller should note this expenditure of Humanity, which lasts for the duration of the evening's game. The player should ideally use this capability at the beginning of the session. It's inappropriate to suddenly decide to use Humanity to avoid a Derangement after the Derangement becomes a problem in play.

Using Humanity to fight a Derangement should be played out. Whether a character confides in a trusted friend about his constant battle to work through a Derangement, prays vociferously for strength or displays the St. Christopher medal his mother gave him on her death bed, he should perform some in-game action to demonstrate the expenditure of this very important Trait.

THREATS TO LIFE AND LIMB

Humanity Traits can also be used when a character's "fight or flight" instinct is triggered. In a survival situation, a player can spend a Humanity Trait to be up one Trait for a challenge. Alternately, the player can use the Humanity Trait in place of another Trait, drawing on reserves of inner strength to persevere. This only works in life-threatening situations.

LOSING HUMANITY

Humanity is a precious thing, and it is all too hard to hold onto while living the life of a hunter. Contact with the supernatural tends to distance a character from the benefits of everyday life.

Whenever a mortal commits a base or inhumane deed, he jeopardizes his Humanity. From accidentally killing an innocent in the cleansing fire which destroys a vampire, to torturing a werewolf to find out who its associates are, acts of outrageous or unnecessary cruelty and other immoral acts can all lead to the erosion of a mortal's Humanity.



Depending on the number of Humanity Traits the character has, some actions may be deemed acceptable, while others are definitely depraved. A character with seven Humanity Traits might shy at breaking and entering, whereas one with only three Humanity Traits wouldn't hold back at roughing up someone for information. Whenever a situation or session concludes in which a character has committed a deed worthy of a loss of Humanity, the Storyteller should engage in a Simple Test with the player. If the player loses the test, the character loses a permanent Humanity Trait. The Storyteller should feel free to choose the Trait to be lost, making it as appropriate to the situation as possible.

At the Storyteller's discretion, characters of particularly low Humanity may be awarded Negative Traits (the Negative Social Trait of *Callousness* seems quite appropriate), or even Derangements, to reflect the growing disconnection with their humane side. These Traits can be assigned even if the characters succeed in the test to avoid losing a Humanity Trait. Humans who fail a test while only possessing one remaining Humanity Trait automatically gain some sort of Negative Trait or Derangement, at the Storyteller's discretion; the fundamental connection to Humanity can never be lost, but the character will spiral into madness. No Free Traits or Experience Traits accompany the gain of such Negative Traits or Derangements.

The following chart shows the least sin that will cause a temporary loss of Humanity in a character with the corresponding number of Humanity Traits. (For example, a character with four Humanity Traits would be horrified if he accidentally killed someone, but likely would not bat an eyelash at punching someone in the face. A person with eight Humanity Traits, on the other hand, would head straight for his Father Confessor for accidentally running over a pedestrian's foot.)

HIERARCHY OF SINS

Eight Humanity	Accidentally inflicting injury
Seven Humanity	Purposefully inflicting injury
Six Humanity	Theft and robbery
Five Humanity	Unreasonable destruction
Four Humanity	Accidental killing
Three Humanity	Premeditated murder
Two Humanity	Mass murder, torture
One Humanity	Gross perversion and acts of great evil

Remember, losing Humanity is a terrible thing. This sort of erosion of a mortal's soul profoundly affects the character's personality. Characters who lose Humanity tend to be cynical, jaded and vicious. The loss of even one Trait has a noticeable effect on long-established behavior patterns.

REGAINING HUMANITY

Regaining Humanity Traits is a function of how the Traits were used or lost. Humanity spent to power Numinae, save a loved one, counteract a fear or face a life-threatening situation is regained in time (in other words, all Traits spent this way return by the next event). Mortals in a hurry or in desperate need can also expend a Willpower Trait to replace a Humanity Trait.



Humanity Traits lost permanently can only be regained through extraordinary penance, decreed by a Storyteller and roleplayed out over a series of sessions. The character must show remorse for the actions that caused him to lose Humanity, and even then, Humanity should not be returned lightly.

Reaffirming a connection to your inner childlike innocence, performing charitable works (and not just for the possibility of regaining Humanity!) or being sympathetic to the problems of others are just some examples of the kind of behavior that might merit a gain of Humanity. Of course, the cost in Experience Traits must still be paid. The same applies to actually improving one's Humanity. The character must experience a fundamental connection to her own inner strength and to the mass of humanity around her.

Storytellers may note characters who are constantly losing and regaining Humanity Traits. If this situation becomes chronic, the Storyteller may declare that the character has become jaded, and may no longer attempt to regain Humanity Traits that have been lost permanently.

NUMINAE

Numinae, supernatural powers possessed by mortals, allow hunters to even the playing field a bit when contesting with vampires, werewolves and their ilk. With Numinae, a mortal can cast minor spells, use psychic powers or call on divine assistance.

Numinae include True Faith, which represents a belief in and connection to a higher power; Psychic Phenomena, powers of the mind; and Sorcery, the ability to use minor magic. Each Numina has a set of associated powers, and Psychic Phenomena and Sorcery are divided into different categories of capabilities. Psychic Phenomena include the powers of *Clairvoyance*, *Pyrokinesis*, *Telekinesis* and *Telepathy*. Sorcery includes the magical paths of *Conjuration*, *Cursing*, *Enchantment*, *Ephemera*, *Healing*, *Herbalism*, and *Summoning*, *Binding* and *Warding*. True Faith, on the other hand, manifests varying powers based on the religion of the individual in question. Numinae are fully described in Chapter Three.

NEGATIVE TRAITS

By specifying certain weaknesses, you can gain extra Traits to strengthen your character in other areas. These Negative Traits can be used against you in a challenge though, as they represent your character's shortcomings. However, they can be appropriate to describe a hunter's natural flaws. Furthermore, each Negative Trait that you take grants you an additional positive Trait anywhere else. You can take up to five Negative Traits in any combination that seems to describe your character, though you don't have to take any.

Each Negative Trait adds to your pool of Free Traits, for later use in selecting additional powers and Traits. Thus, if you take the Negative Trait *Docile*, you can gain an additional positive Trait like *Diplomatic* or Ability such as *Firearms*. Additionally, you can combine these Traits to purchase more expensive Merits and Numinae, as shown under "Free Traits."

Negative Traits are listed with the other Attribute Traits.



DERANGEMENTS

Derangements represent insanity and mental instability. You may choose to take one Derangement, if you desire, which counts as two Negative Traits. If you do choose to take a Derangement, you are limited to no more than three additional Negative Traits (since you can only take a total of five).

Under extreme pressure, the human mind tends to crack, attempting to let off steam by giving way. Hunters, who operate in a high-adrenaline occupation 24 hours a day, are particularly susceptible to mental trauma and instability. Such problems are represented by Derangements, which may activate under times of stress to cause mental problems for the character.

You can opt to start with one Derangement. A Derangement counts as two Negative Traits, but it can be quite dangerous if you run into a few vampires while in the midst of a panic attack. Conversely, hunters under great stress may suffer from Derangements at the discretion of the Storyteller. Any hunter who loses her last permanent Humanity Trait immediately gains a Derangement, as she spirals into inhuman insanity. The final Humanity Trait is retained (as it's impossible for a human to fully lose touch with her human nature) but the Storyteller assigns an appropriate new Derangement.

Expenditure of Willpower can curb the effects of a Derangement, but the Derangements always come back to haunt the character. Only prolonged use of Willpower can stave off Derangements permanently. A character who has spent seven to 15 Willpower Traits in resisting Derangements may manage to overcome the handicap, at the Storyteller's discretion.

AMNESIA

In highly traumatic situations, you sometimes forget who and even what you are. You may simply forget the memory of a single situation, or you may forget everything about your identity, including your current mission. When events and situations that remind you of your lost memories present themselves, those memories may return, sometimes violently.

COMPULSIVE LYING

You were in New York with a friend once — the name isn't important — and you managed to convince this car dealer (he was pretty hard up to make a sale) to sell you his brand-new Dodge Viper for, like, a thousand dollars. What a great deal! He didn't even charge tax or have you go through the whole paperwork of registering it or anything. He did all that himself. Oh, you want to see the car? Well, it's in the shop right now being repainted. It was this nasty shade of lime green. You say Vipers don't come in green? Well, this one was a special edition, signed by the president of the company. What was his name? Well, the signature wasn't very legible — you know how big businessmen are.

When you are being pressured about something, this Derangement can be triggered and you must spend Willpower not to lie outrageously.

DELUSIONAL

When things get particularly hard to deal with, you often revert to someone you can trust to do a better job than you would. Somebody efficient; somebody stalwart.

Delusional identities arise from feelings of complete hopelessness and despair, and they reflect your deepest terrors. In moments of stress or fear, your real personality



will retreat, and a replacement identity (but with the same Traits, etc.), constructed from your ideas of what competence is, will take its place. This other self can be a fictional, historical or composite character.

Alternately, your delusions may take the form of misinterpretation of the situation at hand, to make it seem more comfortable and acceptable to you.

DIPSOMANIA

You are possessed by the urge to drink yourself into an absolute stupor when the going gets tough (or even mildly irritating). Such a Derangement can destroy any trust others may place in you. This weakness, should it become known, could be used very effectively against you as a weapon. If the Derangement comes over you at an event, you will immediately be affected by the Negative Mental Trait *Witless*.

Happy drunk or not, you are unsightly in this state. You stagger about, weave as you walk and say all the wrong things. You know you are stronger and more effective while drunk, however, and you turn to it as a crutch to help you out.

HEBREPHRENIA

The horror of the World of Darkness unveiled has shattered your perceptions of everything you once held as logical and real. This mental trauma has plunged you into a state of mind where you maintain your sanity by clinging to the idea that everything is going on in your head. Everyone you know is but a character in the little play world your mind has created. Those around you get pretty mad when you are rude with them, but it doesn't matter because they aren't even real. Who cares if a figment of your imagination gets annoyed, anyway?

HYPOCHONDRIA

You have noticed that when you get even the slightest bit stressed you begin to get sick. The sickness is usually just a headache or upset stomach, but sometimes it gets much worse. If, at any time during an event you become upset about anything, you will begin to think you are coming down with something. In all probability you are quite healthy, but you need some kind of excuse to get sympathy from those about you. When you begin to get "sick" from all the stress, you will effectively be down by one Physical Trait for the rest of the event or until your "attack" passes.

INTELLECTUALIZATION

You have recoiled from the horror of your situation, and you protect yourself by feeling nothing. You insulate yourself in a world of logic and intellectual vigor where emotions have no place. By isolating your incompatible needs and thoughts into separate compartments, you avoid losing control. However, the pressure inevitably mounts, and the dam eventually bursts during a stressful situation.

MANIC-DEPRESSION

You sink into deep and fitful depressions, showing no interest in anything that used to capture your imagination. You view the world as flat and gray, holding nothing of value for you. You cannot rouse yourself to do anything, though you will go along with others rather than expend the energy to resist. Conversely, occasional fits of great energy grab hold of you, and you will work for hours or even days on your projects. During this time you resist even the need to sleep as you burn up all your resources on your schemes.



MASOCHISM

Sometimes things will go wrong, dreadfully so, and deep in your heart, you know it's your fault. Since nobody else may necessarily know that it's all your fault, you have to work out a way of keeping yourself in line. Sometimes you do this by getting in harmful situations or by hanging about people and creatures who dislike you. You deserve their abuse, after all.

You even tend to injure yourself physically, but never to a degree that most people would notice. You don't want anybody to know what a terrible person you are. If a problem comes up and you get blamed, even falsely, you apologize profusely and offer yourself up to the mercy of your accuser. Even if you're not responsible for it this time, odds are it's just karma catching up with you for all of your other crimes.

MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

You possess a number of different personalities, and you change Nature and Demeanor in times of great personal stress. Thus you behave in radically different ways at different times. Naturally this causes others to distrust you, as they're never quite sure who they're talking to. Your current personality persists until either you change personality again during a stressful situation or you expend a Willpower Trait to return to your "basic" personality.

OBSESSION

When a new person enters your life or you are faced with a dramatic situation, you can sometimes become obsessed with that person or some fetish associated with the situation. This Derangement gives you a sort of perverse ambition toward which you direct all your energy. If you are directly thwarted in your obsession, you may react violently.

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSION

You are obsessed with keeping track of things, maintaining exhaustive records and keeping everything in its place. Unless absolute order is maintained in your life, everything will dissolve into chaos.

PANZAISM

Since your induction to the ways and world of the supernatural, you have become completely detached. When this Derangement is at its mildest, you have some trouble with the idea of the world at large being real. You seem to be halfway out of your body, in a way.

When the Derangement is at its worst, however, things get really interesting. When thus afflicted, you realize that nothing is real. Nothing. You are nothing. Everything is unreal. You can't affect it and it can't affect you because there is nothing there. When everything seems to be going wrong, you wrap yourself up in this idea and don't come out until things are a little more to your liking.

PARANOIA

When someone threatens or stubbornly opposes you, you become convinced that the person is after you. You become obsessed with those you believe to be your enemies, and you make all kinds of mad preparations to protect yourself. During bouts of this Derangement, you trust no one and hold even your closest friends under suspicion.



PERFECTION

When nothing seems to be going right, you can become obsessed with perfection. Everything must be just so, and you use all your energy to prevent anything from going wrong. You focus all your attention on keeping everything about you in perfect, unaltered order.

POWER-MADNESS

You can become so obsessed with power and dominance that you lose all control of yourself. When your ambitions are thwarted, you sometimes become enraged and attack those who oppose you. In general, you seek total and absolute control over everything and everyone around you.

QUIXOTISM

This Derangement is the opposite of *Panzaism*. You believe absolutely in everything you see or hear. Yes, there are faeries. That guy with all the hair, he's a werewolf. This pendant came from Atlantis. You'll be out challenging windmills to personal combat, at least metaphorically. You most likely came from a perfectly mundane background where nothing out of the ordinary happened. Now that you've been initiated into the true nature of the World of Darkness, you've taken everything to the farthest reaches of your imagination. When stress overtakes you, you are down two Mental Traits.

REGRESSION

In times of stress, when much is being demanded of you, you can become childlike, retreating to a less mature aspect of yourself. At such times you find it difficult to do anything for yourself, and without the aid of others, you are quite helpless.

SADISM

You tend to revert to cruelty when under pressure. Nothing relieves your stress like causing people pain. Physical pain isn't all you excel in, though — sometimes mental scarring can last much longer than a mere physical wound. Whenever confronted with something that profoundly bothers you, you must either spend a Willpower Trait or find some way of taking out your anger on someone immediately.

MERITS AND FLAWS

Merits and Flaws represent special advantages and disadvantages that extend beyond mundane capabilities. By taking Merits or Flaws, you mark your character as unique, with rare powers or resources beyond those available to most normal humans. Merits grant special powers and benefits, and they can only be taken by expending available Traits. Conversely, Flaws mark hindrances or special disadvantages and give you additional Traits with which to flesh out your character.

You do not have to take any Merits or Flaws, and your Storyteller may choose to limit certain ones or forbid them entirely. However, a few well-chosen Merits and Flaws can round out a hunter, defining why he specializes in a particular Ability or giving him notable powers.

You may select up to five Traits' worth of Flaws for your character; you gain additional Free Traits equal to the value of the chosen Flaws. Merits, on the other hand, cost Free Traits to acquire; you may take any amount of Merits, subject to the limit of the Traits that you have available. If you wish (and if your Storyteller approves), you may take more than five Traits worth of Flaws to represent a particularly disturbed or crippled character, but you cannot gain more than five Free Traits regardless of the total number



of Flaws taken. In some cases, the Storyteller may restrict the purchase of Merits and Flaws — or ban their use outright — so be sure to ask first.

Merits and Flaws are unusual advantages and disadvantages that go a long way toward creating a three-dimensional character. Many of them will be familiar because they have always been available to supernatural creatures, but there are some new ones specifically for mortal characters.

Merits are advantageous to a character, and they have a Trait cost associated with them. Flaws are disadvantageous, and therefore, bestow a number of additional Free Traits. Players can only choose Merits and Flaws at character creation, and those chosen should fit in with the concept of the character. Over the course of a chronicle, and with the Storyteller's approval, a character may develop a Merit or overcome a Flaw due to something monumental that happens in a story. To do so costs double the Merit or Flaw's normal cost in Experience Traits.

APTITUDES

These Merits and Flaws deal with your abilities and natural talents.

ABILITY APTITUDE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a natural affinity for a particular non combat-related Ability. You are two Traits up on all tests directly related to that Ability.

AMBIDEXTROUS (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have no penalty for doing things with your "off" hand. You can fight with two weapons, simply risking one additional Trait with each attack (normally, someone attacking with two weapons would risk one additional Trait for his primary hand, and two additional Traits for his secondary hand). Furthermore, you suffer no penalties when performing tasks with either hand; most people must risk an additional Trait whenever using the wrong hand.

PITIALE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

There is something about you that causes others to take care of you as if you were a child. Some Natures will not be affected by this Merit, and some Demeanors may pretend they are not. You need to decide what it is about you that attracts such pity, and how you feel about it. When someone has challenged you with intent to do you harm, you are one Trait up in your own defense.

DAREDEVIL (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You are good at taking risks, and you aren't too bad at surviving them, either. You are one Trait up on any challenge in which you try something particularly dangerous. This Merit only applies to combat if you are obviously outmatched, but wade in anyway.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES (5 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a large pool of miscellaneous talents, skills and knowledge obtained through your extensive travels, the jobs you've held or too much time spent watching public television. You may invoke Abilities which you do not normally possess, though you must risk an additional Trait to do so. For instance, you could expend a Mental Trait to try to pick a lock with *Security*, even if you don't possess that Ability; you still need to make any associated tests (such as a further Challenge to actually pick the lock) normally. Of course, you may choose to expend a Willpower Trait to attempt an unknown Ability, as usual.

**ILLITERATE (1 TRAIT FLAW)**

You are unable to read or write. This Flaw is a cause of endless frustration when trying to perform research about supernatural quarry.

INEPT (5 TRAIT FLAW)

You are not attuned to your natural aptitudes. You start the game with no Ability Traits or Influences. Furthermore, you cannot raise any Ability or Influence above one level until you've overcome this Flaw.

AWARENESS

These Merits and Flaws deal with your perception.

ACUTE SENSE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have an exceptionally sharp sense (choose from hearing, vision, smell or taste). You are two Traits up on all perception challenges related to that sense.

HARD OF HEARING (1 TRAIT FLAW)

Your hearing is defective. You are two Traits down on hearing challenges. You may not take the Merit: *Acute Sense (Hearing)*.

IMPAIRED SIGHT (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You are severely nearsighted or farsighted, and you require corrective lenses. Without your glasses, you are one Trait down on sight-related challenges. You may not take the Merit: *Acute Sense (Vision)* if you take this Flaw.

ONE EYE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You are missing one eye, determined randomly or chosen. You have no peripheral vision on your blind side, and are two Traits down on any test requiring depth-perception, such as firing a gun. You may choose to cover one eye while you are playing.

WEAK SENSE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

One of your senses is defective, though not totally absent. In all challenges relating to this sense, you are automatically down two Traits. Such damage is not correctable; glasses won't help weak sight in this case, nor will a hearing aid overcome weak hearing. Rather, you suffer from an incurable deficiency, such as severe astigmatism or tinnitus. Obviously, you may not have a sense that is simultaneously acute and weak.

DEAF (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You cannot hear sound, and you must relent on challenges related to hearing. You should get your Storyteller's approval before choosing this Flaw, as it can be difficult to roleplay if you are not truly deaf.

BLIND (6 TRAIT FLAW)

You have no sense of vision, and you must relent on challenges related to sight. You should roleplay this Flaw to the best of your ability, but not to a point where it endangers anyone's safety.



MENTAL

These Merits and Flaws deal with the capabilities of your mind.

COMMON SENSE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a great deal of everyday wisdom and practicality. Whenever you are about to make a blunder that goes against better judgment, a Narrator will alert you to your potential mistake. This Merit is excellent for novice players.

TIME SENSE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You are always aware of the time, even when you've been sleeping or underground. You can estimate the current time to a minute or two and follow the calendar in your head with exacting precision. Furthermore, you resist any powers that disorient your time sense (such as the changeling Art of *Chronos*) with two additional Traits. This Merit is excellent for judging sunrise and sunset, of course, and therefore ideal for hunting vampires.

EIDETIC MEMORY (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You are two Traits up on all memory-related challenges, as you can remember anything you see or hear with perfect clarity. Although supernatural befuddlement can still cloud your memory, you're likely to become quite suspicious if someone draws attention to your clouded mind, simply because you're used to remembering everything. At any time, you may ask a Narrator for information regarding something you wish to recall, and the Narrator is obliged to inform you appropriately (although you may be required to make a Simple Test for complex or lengthy dissertations).

IRON WILL (4 TRAIT MERIT)

When your mind is set, nothing can thwart you from your goals. You are extremely resistant to powers that affect your mind or emotions, such as the vampiric Discipline of *Dominate*. Whenever magical means are used to control your mind, you may expend a Trait of Willpower to automatically resist (instead of simply gaining a retest). If you do not have any remaining Willpower Traits, or if you are unaware of the attempt and thus unable to actively resist, you are still two Traits up in the challenge.

CONFUSED (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You are often confused, and the world seems to be a very disoriented and twisted place. Sometimes you are simply unable to make sense of things. You need to roleplay this behavior all the time to a small degree, but your confusion becomes especially strong whenever you are surround by excessive stimuli (such as a number of people all talking at once, or the noise in a loud nightclub). You are two Traits down on all challenges in such situations. You may spend a Willpower Trait to override the effects of your confusion, but only for a scene.

ABSENT-MINDED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

Though you do not forget such things as Abilities, you do forget names, addresses and what you ate for breakfast. In order to remember anything other than your own name, address and phone number during stressful situations, you must win a Static Mental Challenge (the Storyteller will determine the difficulty) or spend a Willpower Trait.



WEAK-WILLED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You are highly susceptible to the control of others, and are two Traits down in all challenges where you are commanded or intimidated. You can only use your Willpower when survival is at stake or it is appropriate to your Nature. Furthermore, your will is not strong enough to use any form of hedge magic. You cannot learn to use Sorcery or Theurgy of any sort.

PHYSICAL

These Merits and Flaws deal with your health and physical body.

DOUBLE-JOINTED (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You are unusually supple. You are one Trait up on all Physical Challenges requiring body flexibility, such as clambering up a chimney or reaching into a tiny space to get back your dropped crucifix.

LIGHT SLEEPER (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You can awaken instantly at any sign of trouble or danger, and you do so without any sleepiness or hesitation. While most mortals are two Traits down on all tests for a turn after awakening, you wake up automatically at anything amiss and suffer no penalties for drowsiness. You get by quite well on four hours of sleep per night, a significant advantage when hunting vampires in the evenings while holding a day job.

RESEMBLE VAMPIRE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You are naturally pale and thin, and you physically resemble a vampire to some degree. While you obviously don't have fangs and you still have a heartbeat, your basic physical appearance is indistinguishable from one of the undead. You can move easily among vampires without too much fear of recognition — though you had best be prepared for some initial misunderstandings on the part of other hunters.

POISONOUS BLOOD (3 TRAIT MERIT)

For whatever reason, your blood is poisonous to vampires. Although you suffer injury normally when a vampire drinks your blood, the vampire gains no nourishment from the fluid, and he suffers one Health Level of damage for each Trait of blood he consumes. Unfortunately, vampires cannot tell that your blood is poisonous until it is ingested, so this does not protect you from initial attack, but it does mean that vampires are unlikely to feed on you again later.

HUGE SIZE (4 TRAIT MERIT)

You are abnormally large in size, possibly over seven feet tall and 400 pounds in weight. You have one extra Health Level, making you able to suffer more harm before you are incapacitated. You should represent this Merit with bulky padding and heavy boots if you are not actually of tremendous size.

DEEP SLEEPER (1 TRAIT FLAW)

When you sleep, it is very difficult to awaken you. If you are awakened unexpectedly, you are disoriented, leaving you two Traits down for all challenges during the following hour. Furthermore, the Storyteller may require you to make a Simple Test to wake up in the first place when danger or mishap threatens.

DISFIGURED (2 TRAIT FLAW)

A hideous disfigurement makes you ugly and easy to remember. You may never have any *Alluring*, *Gorgeous* or *Seductive Social Traits*. If your true appearance is visible, you are two Traits down on any Social Challenge (except *Intimidation*) that you initiate.

AGING (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You are not as spry as you used to be, and you are beginning to feel the weight of your years. You automatically lose one of your Physical Traits, and your maximum Physical Traits are one less than other mortals. You may take this Flaw once per decade above 40 years of age.

DEFORMITY (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have some sort of deformity — a misshapen limb, a hunchback or whatever — which affects your interactions with others and may inconvenience you physically. You are one Trait down on all tests of a physical nature, and two Traits down on all challenges related to physical appearance.

HEMOPHILIAC (3 TRAIT FLAW)

When you are injured, you do not naturally stop bleeding. Cuts continue to bleed and bruises worsen through internal injury. Once you are physically wounded, you suffer an additional Health Level of damage every 10 minutes until someone helps you and makes a successful Mental Challenge (with a difficulty of six Traits) using the *Medical Ability*. Vampires who feed from you discover that, strangely, they cannot close the wound with a lick.

ONE ARM (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have only one arm, determined randomly or chosen at character creation. You have become used to using your remaining hand, so you suffer no off-hand penalty. However, you are down two Traits on challenges where two hands would normally be required.

PARTIALLY CRIPPLED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

Your legs are injured or otherwise prevented from working effectively. You are down three Traits in all challenges relating to movement. You may need assistance in walking, such as a pair of crutches or a wheelchair.

POTENT BLOOD (3 TRAIT FLAW)

Your blood is especially nourishing and desirable to vampires. Your blood is worth twice as many Blood Traits as a normal mortal's, so a vampire who drinks one of your Blood Traits gains two instead (although you still suffer only one Health Level of damage). Vampires have names for people like you — "Slurpee," "Cornucopia" or simply "Mine!"

You cannot have the Merit: *Lifegiver* in addition to this Flaw.

MUTE (4 TRAIT FLAW)

Your vocal apparatus does not function, and you cannot speak at all. You can communicate through other means, typically writing or signing. Obviously, this deficiency makes it impossible for you to call on Sorcery or other powers requiring speech.



PSYCHOLOGICAL

These Merits and Flaws deal with aspects of your personality.

CODE OF HONOR (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a personal code of ethics to which you strictly adhere. You can automatically resist most temptations that would bring you into conflict with your code. When battling supernatural persuasion that would make you violate your code, you are considered to have two extra Traits in challenges. You must construct your own personal code of honor in as much detail as you can, outlining the general rules of conduct by which you abide, and this code must be approved by the Storyteller.

HIGHER PURPOSE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a goal that drives and directs you in everything. You do not concern yourself with petty matters and casual concerns because your higher purpose is everything to you. Though the purpose may sometimes force you to behave contrary to your survival instinct, it can also grant you great personal strength. You have two extra Traits in challenges that have anything to do with this higher purpose. Be sure to discuss your idea for a higher purpose with the Storyteller.

This Merit can be a common one for hunters, since they frequently hold to the lofty ideal of ridding the world of supernatural menace, but your Storyteller should not allow it to be abused.

If you have the Flaw: *Driving Goal*, you cannot take this Merit.

ANACHRONISM (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You are an older hunter, who has never taken the time to fully understand the wonders of the modern age. You do not think to use a computer to aid your record keeping, nor search the Internet for information. You are one Trait down in challenges involving modern technology such as computers.

COMPULSION (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a psychological compulsion that causes you a number of different problems. Your compulsion may be for cleanliness, perfection, bragging, stealing, gambling, exaggeration or just talking too much. You may temporarily avoid your compulsion for one scene by spending a Willpower Trait.

DARK SECRET (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have some sort of secret that, if uncovered, would embarrass you immensely and make you a pariah in your society. Perhaps you secretly wish to become an unholy vampire, or maybe an innocent was killed during one of your hunts, and you are wanted by the police. While it weighs on your mind at all times, it will only surface occasionally in stories — lest it begin to lose impact.

INTOLERANCE (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an unreasoning dislike of a certain thing, and at the Storyteller's discretion you may have one less Trait in any challenge dealing with the object of your intolerance. It may be an animal, a class of people, a color, a situation, or just about anything at all. Some dislikes may be too trivial to be reflected here — a dislike of pomegranates or tissue paper, for instance, will have little effect on play in most chronicles. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on what you can pick to dislike.

ISOLATED UPBRINGING (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You were born and raised by a particularly peculiar set of parents, and you rarely ventured into the outside world. Perhaps your father was an Inquisitor who hoped to shield you from the sins of mankind and prepare you for your task as God's hammer, or maybe you were raised in a Chapter House of the Arcanum, where you spent all of your time among books. Whatever the reason, you are ill at ease in the mundane world, and you often fail to understand the customs of everyday life. You are automatically one Trait down on all Social Challenges with people from outside of your corner of reality.

NIGHTMARES (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You experience horrendous nightmares every time you sleep, and memories of them haunt you during your waking hours. Sometimes the nightmares are so bad that you have one less Trait on all your challenges for the next day (Narrator's discretion). Some of the nightmares may be so intense that you mistake them for reality.

OVERCONFIDENT (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an exaggerated and unshakable opinion of your own worth, and you never hesitate to trust your abilities — even in situations where you risk defeat. Because your abilities may not be enough, such overconfidence can be very dangerous. When you do fail, you quickly find someone or something else to blame. If you are convincing enough, you can infect others with your overconfidence.

PHOBIA, MILD (1 TRAIT FLAW)

An overpowering fear of something causes you to instinctively and illogically avoid it. You must expend a Mental Trait if you wish to remain in the vicinity of the object of your fear.

SHY (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You are distinctly ill at ease when dealing with people, and you try to avoid social situations whenever possible. You have one less Trait on all challenges concerned with social dealings. You are also one additional Trait down on all challenges in which you are the center of attention for a large group of people (over 10). These two effects are cumulative for social dealings in which all attention is focused on you, such as making a speech.

SOFT-HEARTED (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You cannot stand to watch others suffer — not necessarily because you care about what happens to them, but simply because you dislike the intensity of emotion. If you are the direct cause of suffering and you witness it, you will experience days of nausea and nights of sleepless grief. You avoid situations where you might have to witness suffering, and you will do anything you can to protect others from it. Whenever you must witness suffering, you are one Trait down on all challenges for the remainder of the scene.

SPEECH IMPEDIMENT (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a stammer or some other speech impediment that hampers verbal communication. You should roleplay this impediment most of the time, though not to the point of offensiveness or parody.



LOW SELF-IMAGE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You lack self-confidence. You are two Traits down in situations where you don't expect to succeed (at the Narrator's discretion, though the penalty might be limited to one Trait if you help by pointing out when this Flaw might affect you). At the Narrator's option, you may be required to expend a Willpower Trait in order to attempt things that require strong belief in yourself.

VENGEANCE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a score to settle. You are obsessed with wreaking vengeance on an individual (or perhaps an entire group), and you make revenge your first priority in all situations. The need for vengeance can only be overcome by spending a Willpower Trait, and even then it subsides only temporarily.

ADDICTED TO VAMPIRIC VITAE (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You are addicted to the rush and power of vampire blood. You will do anything to feed your craving; likely, this need is one of your primary reasons for hunting. Addiction to vampire blood is unlike any other addiction; it is powerful and subtle beyond belief, and only long therapy and support from your closest friends may ever cure you of this desire.

DRIVING GOAL (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a personal goal, which sometimes compels and directs you in startling ways. The goal is always limitless in depth, and you can never truly achieve it. It could be to eradicate all vampires, or to discover a cure for lycanthropy. Because you must work toward your goal throughout the chronicle, your single-minded devotion will get you into trouble and may jeopardize other goals. You may avoid your driving goal for one scene by spending a Mental Trait, and for one session by spending a Willpower Trait.

If you have the Merit: *Higher Purpose*, you cannot take this Flaw.

HATRED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an unreasoning hatred of a certain thing. This hate is total and largely uncontrollable. You may hate a species of animal, a class of person, a color, a situation ("ARRRGHHH! I HATE SAYING HAIL MARYS!") — anything. You constantly pursue opportunities to harm the hated object or to gain power over it, so much so that your reasoning is clouded. The Storyteller may impose a Trait penalty in dealings with the object of your hatred, due to your disgust and divided attention, or he may direct you to undertake certain courses of action.

PHOBIA, SEVERE (3 TRAIT FLAW)

An overpowering fear of something causes you to instinctively and illogically flee from it, even to the point of endangering yourself. You must expend a Willpower Trait if you wish to remain in the vicinity of the object of your fear.

SOCIETY

These Merits and Flaws describe aspects of your character's interaction with normal human society and the hunter groups.

ECCLESIASTICAL RANK (1-3 TRAIT MERIT)

You are a vested priest in a recognized church hierarchy (such as the Roman Catholic church), with all of the implied social benefits. Although this Merit does not grant any special supernatural power or knowledge in and of itself, you may call on your church for advice, and you are often granted some deference and leeway by people who respect your vocation. The number of Traits in this Merit determine your relative standing. One Trait would indicate a local priest, while three Traits might indicate that you are an influential bishop. Although this Merit does not automatically imply influence within the church, you can certainly ask for information or aid through normal job channels.

ARCANE HERITAGE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

Whether you have a witch in your family or a grandfather with startlingly faerie-like eyes, your particular family line is considered gifted with a touch of the supernatural by those who dabble in such things. Although this touch may draw negative attention from groups such as the Inquisition, you gain a great deal of prestige from more studious organizations such as the Arcanum. This heritage may be a strong part of your motivation as a hunter, as you could decide to destroy paranormal creatures so as to redeem yourself, or perhaps just study the supernatural to unlock your own potential.

LICENSE TO KILL (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have been given special dispensation to "sanction" those whose interests run counter to your government. Sometimes you are assigned to a pre-chosen target, but more often you are given a good deal of discretion in choosing your hits. Most government agencies do not issue this authority (it is exceptionally rare in the FBI) and those that do are careful to monitor for abuse (since assassination is technically illegal in the US). The agency will do whatever is necessary to cover your tracks, although there are penalties for a job done sloppily.

Despite the name, this is not an actual "license" to kill. You can, in theory, be held accountable by the legal system, though this is a rare occurrence. Instead, your agency simply affords you the leeway to use lethal force at your own discretion, and makes an effort to conceal your activities and protect you from repercussions.

Obviously, only active members of government agencies ever get this sort of leeway. An Inquisitor may kill people in the line of duty, but he won't have the backing of shadowy government organizations.

REPUTATION (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You are well-regarded in your particular society, and are one Trait up on all challenges with other members. You should decide what it is about you that they respect: Did you kill a vampire single-handedly, or do you have a flawless record on solving paranormal murder cases? An independent hunter may well have a reputation among other hunters simply as a skilled loner.

RESEARCH GRANT (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You've secured a prestigious award that gives you funding and access to exclusive information. You typically gain \$1,000 per month, which you may use in any fashion you desire, though you should nominally show some level of successful research. Additionally, you have access to special libraries and research materials that would otherwise be difficult to secure. Combined with the right kinds of Influence, this Merit can make all the difference in researching Numinae or other arcane lore.

**TOP-SECRET ACCESS (2 TRAIT MERIT)**

Whether due to your research credentials or your government clearance, you have a source of highly valuable information. Your contact is both reliable and discreet, giving you access to secrets that most people don't know about. This information is not always available or complete (make a Simple Test, in which a win indicates complete information, a tie indicates partial information and a loss indicates no information). Still, your source has ears in the Pentagon, the NSA or whatever circles you move in, and you've established a means of safe contact. Obviously, possession of this sort of information can be highly dangerous if you're not careful.

DOUBLE-IDENTITY (3 TRAIT MERIT)

Through your espionage contacts, you've managed to assign a secondary identity for yourself, one which seems perfectly legal and has all manner of documentation to back it up. You've established this identity in secret, so you can easily use it as a last-ditch escape if things ever get out of hand. This Merit is most appropriate to government agents, but just about anyone with the right contacts and precautions could forge an identity.

BLACKMAILED (1 OR 2 TRAIT FLAW)

Someone's got dirt on you, and he's not afraid to use it. Whether an individual or an organization holds your dirty laundry, you're stuck with the results: Your blackmailer demands your money, your cooperation or your organization's secrets. For one Trait, you suffer from a rather embarrassing secret that might cost you your job and your organizational position. For two Traits, you harbor a dangerous secret that could very well be the death of you if the blackmailer gets it out. Obviously, your antagonist is too smart to make it easy for you to kill him. You'll need to go through a good bit of clever roleplaying to overcome this Flaw.

REBEL (1-3 TRAIT FLAW)

You're seen as a rebel, a maverick and a loose cannon within your society. Although you may well get results, you are scorned or hated for your methods. You may or may not also have the Flaw: *Notoriety*, but that Flaw is more a function of a bad reputation due to events associated with you, unjustly or not. This Flaw indicates that your practices and techniques are seen as questionable (at best) by your own hunter group. The value of this Flaw increases the difficulty of all interactions with the hierarchy of your organization, making it hard for you to get aid or backing.

SUPERNATURAL ENEMY (1-5 TRAIT FLAW)

Due to an incident in your past, you have an enemy who is a vampire, werewolf or other such supernatural creature. It will not be a constant threat, but will appear to bedevil you and your companions. The more powerful the enemy, or the more frequent its appearance, the more powerful the Flaw. You must determine who your foe is (although the Storyteller will create it) and how you became enemies.

DANGEROUS SECRET (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You are privy to some sort of highly secret information that puts your life in jeopardy. Perhaps you've discovered that the archbishop in your area is actually an Infernalist, but nobody will believe you and the archbishop could easily bring the weight of the Inquisition down on you. Maybe you've found a secret government conspiracy to



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work with vampires, but you can't tell anyone without risking arrest and execution. Worse still, the source of your information isn't exactly reliable, and your knowledge doesn't do you any real good. You may be in a position to do something about what you've learned, but it will certainly endanger you and your position if you take any action.

NOTORIETY (2 TRAIT FLAW)

Something you've done pegs you as a liability to other hunters, who tend to avoid you. You have a bad reputation among your own society, and independent hunters tend to be wary of you. Perhaps too many of your friends have been killed in the course of your hunts, or maybe you just have so much zeal that you make people sick. Work with your Storyteller to determine the nature of your notoriety.

SECRET FRIENDSHIP (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You maintain a secret relationship with a denizen of the World of Darkness, a vampire, werewolf or other supernatural entity. Knowledge of this relationship would not only destroy your reputation among hunters, it would place you on their hit list. Worse still, members of the particular supernatural community would likely consider you a grave threat, and take steps to eliminate you if your friendship is discovered. You must always cover up any activities that deal with this friendship and you are paranoid that your secret is always on the verge of discovery.

HUNTED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have become the target of another hunter. Whether he seeks you because he knows of your unusual Numina or has made a false assumption about your association with the supernatural, you must be careful wherever you go, lest you fall victim to another like yourself.

SUPERNATURAL

These Merits and Flaws concern the way you interact with supernatural aspects of the game. Because they should be rare and unusual and can possibly change the flavor of a chronicle, the Storyteller may restrict them, or only permit one per character.

FAERIE BLOOD (1-5 TRAIT MERIT)

You must take the Merit: *Kinain* before you take this Merit. You possess a strong amount of faerie blood, which affords you some of the powers of the changelings. For each Trait that you place in this Merit, you may take one Merit or Flaw normally reserved for changelings. Additionally, you have one Trait of Glamour, just like a changeling, and the potential to gain more; each additional permanent Trait of Glamour costs you three Traits (Free or Experience), though you can never have more permanent Traits of Glamour than the number of Traits spent on this Merit. Although you may use your Glamour like a faerie, you can only replenish Glamour by creating art or receiving a token from a changeling. Still, you can learn the Basic Arts and Realms of faerie magic, giving you the ability to cast minor enchantments. Arts cost six Traits to learn, while Realms cost four. You also add the level of this Merit to the number of days that an enchantment lasts on you. With one Trait in this Merit, you can be enchanted for eight days at a cost of only one Glamour Trait (seven days for being kinain, plus one day for one level of *Faerie Blood*).

You can find more information about Glamour, Arts and Realms in *The Shining Host*.

**MAGICAL ITEM (1-3 TRAIT MERIT)**

You possess an item of some supernatural power, be it a relic, fetish, talisman or treasure. Its powers are up to the Storyteller, and you may not even be fully aware of them.

LOYALTY (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You are sworn and devoted to some group or cause. This Merit works similarly to *True Love*, but the object may be an organization or ideal.

SHIVERS (1 TRAIT MERIT)

Although you can't actually see or hear ghosts, you get a creepy feeling whenever wraiths are around. Whenever a wraith enters the room, you may automatically make a Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty of six (no Traits are risked). If you succeed, you are aware of the presence of the ghost.

TRUE LOVE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have discovered, but may have lost (at least temporarily), a true love. This love provides joy in a torrid existence. If this loved one is in mortal danger, you may use a Humanity Trait as a bonus Trait. Similarly, you may use a Humanity Trait in the place of a regular Trait during your initial bid if your true love is at risk. A Humanity Trait used in this way is gone regardless of the outcome of the challenge. Your true love may be a hindrance, and require aid (or even rescue) from time to time.

BURNING AURA (2 TRAIT MERIT)

Even if you do not have True Faith, you have the brilliant aura of a person of power. Those able to sense auras will give you a wide berth, as you seem to display potent spiritual powers. Even people who cannot detect your aura find something about you compelling. You may not take this Merit in conjunction with the Merit: *Pale Aura*.

DANGER SENSE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a sixth sense that warns you of danger. When you are in a perilous situation where you could potentially be surprised, you have two extra seconds (for a total of four) in which to react.

MAGIC RESISTANCE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have an inherent resistance to Thaumaturgy, hedge magic, true magick, Garou rituals and other forms of magic. You are two Traits up in challenges relating to resisting all such spells and rituals, whether you wish them to affect you or not. You may never learn to use such magics, however.

MEDIUM (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You possess the natural affinity to sense and hear wraiths. Though you cannot see them, you feel their presence and are able to speak with them when they are in the vicinity, though they may choose not to listen to you. You may even be able to summon them to your presence through pleading and cajoling. They will not simply aid you, or give you free advice — they will always want something in return.

OCCULT LIBRARY (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You possess a collection of rare and occult books that includes tidbits of correct knowledge concerning the supernatural. You are not necessarily familiar with the contents of the volumes of knowledge (that is a function of having the *Occult Ability*), but in time of need, your library can be an invaluable source for research.

PALE AURA (2 TRAIT MERIT)

By some quirk of supernatural chance, your aura is pale and indistinct like a vampire's, lacking the vibrant colors of life. Individuals capable of reading your aura automatically assume that you are a vampire (or that you're similarly strange, if they're unfamiliar with the phenomenon of pale vampiric auras), unless they succeed in a follow-up Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty of 10 Traits. You may not take this Merit in conjunction with the Merit: *Burning Aura*.

SOOTHING VOICE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

Your voice is calm and soothing, almost entrancing. You are two Traits up on any challenge that directly involves the use of your voice (be it for singing, preaching, leadership, etc.).

GHOSTSIGHT (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You can see beyond the barrier that separates the land of the dead from the world of the living, but only with effort. By succeeding in a Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty of seven Traits, you can see wraiths and even (dimly) the lands of the Underworld, for the remainder of the scene.

KINAIN (3 TRAIT MERIT)

Though not a changeling, you have fae blood running through your veins, literally. Being kinain makes it easier for you to walk in the Dream as if you were fae yourself. While this product of your heritage may expose you to chimerical attack, it also opens you to a new and wondrous world. Although you do not necessarily have access to the powers of the fae, you are more in tune with their world, and they find it easier to affect you. Conversely, you are more likely to remember your encounters with them.

Kinain, as slightly supernatural entities, have a maximum of nine Traits in all abilities, instead of the usual human maximum of eight Traits. You are related to one of the types of faerie races, and you may even share some of their abilities. You do not necessarily have the ability to use changeling Arts (unless you have the additional Merit: *Faerie Blood*), but you are more easily accepted into Kithain society. You have only five Banality Traits, giving you a much wider opportunity to explore faerie society, as changelings are more likely to associate with you and you are less susceptible to the amnesiac effects of the Mists. Similarly, you are easily enchanted; any changeling can enchant you by simply expending a Trait of Glamour (without the need for a token), and you remain enchanted for a full week.

If you are playing kinain in a predominantly changeling game, the Storyteller may choose to waive the cost of this Merit, to encourage play of intermediaries between human and changeling society.

More information about changelings and their capabilities can be found in *The Shining Host*.



KINFOLK (3 TRAIT MERIT)

By some quirk of fate, you are kin to one the Changing Breeds. The Changing Blood has not stirred in you, but it has left its mark. Though you may not understand why, you are immune to the Delirium (the madness inspired by viewing a werewolf in the full rage of his Crinos form). This doesn't mean that you know sensitive secrets, or that you can wander around the shapechangers' holy sites without retribution, but you have a certain edge among them that no normal mortal can match.

As partial supernaturals, Kinfolk have a Trait maximum of nine Traits in each of the Physical, Social and Mental categories, instead of the normal mortal limit of eight Traits. All Kinfolk are considered related to one of the tribes, and they are likely to have close ties to at least one Garou of that tribe. Additionally, Kinfolk may learn Basic homid or tribe Gifts that do not require Gnosis or Rage, at a cost of six Traits (whether Free or Experience Traits), or eight Traits for Gifts of a tribe other than the one to which you are related.

In a predominantly Garou game, the Storyteller may choose to waive the cost of this Merit, encouraging the interaction of mortal relatives with the Garou.

More information about Garou Gifts and tribes exists in **Laws of the Wild**.

LUCK (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You were born lucky, and have always found that the odds are in your favor. You gain three retests per story that you may use on any failed tests. You cannot make more than one retest on any single challenge.

PSYCHIC/SORCEROUS AWARENESS (3/4 TRAIT MERIT)

You are automatically aware whenever magic or psychic power is used within 10 feet of you. The use of Garou Gifts, vampiric Disciplines or even hedge magic causes a distinct tingle to run up your spine if you have *Sorcerous Awareness*; with *Psychic Awareness*, you notice various phenomena and certain supernatural powers that mimic psychic abilities, like vampiric *Auspex*. Furthermore, you may make a Mental Challenge (with a static difficulty of eight Traits) in order to discern what effect was used and who used it (assuming that you have enough *Lore* Abilities to be able to tell a vampire Discipline from, say, a changeling Art).

SYMBOL INDEPENDENCE (3 TRAIT MERIT)

The use of True Faith against a supernatural creature typically requires the use of a holy symbol. However, you are free from this restriction, and you may use your Faith unfettered by any such psychological or religious crutch.

UNBONDABLE (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You are immune to being Blood Bound. No matter how much blood you drink from vampires, you will never be Bound to them.

DESTINY (4 TRAIT MERIT)

A great destiny lies ahead of you, though you may not yet realize it. Your destiny will become more and more apparent as the chronicle proceeds. The Storyteller will decide your destiny, though you may make suggestions. Because this Merit tends to transform a character into a main protagonist, you must have your Storyteller's permission to choose it.

EASY CONSORT (4 TRAIT MERIT)

Wraiths and other spirits find it easier to possess you than other mortals. Although this Merit can be disadvantageous at times, it means that you are a natural channel for beings from the other worlds. As such, they may choose to barter with you for the favor of borrowing your body. All tests to possess you have a two Trait bonus; furthermore, you retain full awareness of all events while your body is ridden.

ECUMENIST (4 TRAIT MERIT)

Although you are steadfast in your own faith, you recognize the workings of the Holy Spirit in other religions. Usually, when using True Faith, you must use a holy symbol from your own religious tradition. With this Merit, you see the divine spark at the core of religions beyond your own. You are able to make use of their religious icons and holy ground when confronting the supernatural.

GHOUL (5 TRAIT MERIT)

At some point, a vampire fed you some of her potent vitae, possibly bonding you into service. Somehow you broke free, but the blood's force has granted you some of your mistress' power. Your aging has stopped, and you have the *Potence* Discipline at the Basic level of *Might*, giving you a free retest on any strength-related Physical Challenge. This Merit does not come without cost, however. You must continue to feed on vampire blood once per month, or you will regain your mortality and lose all the benefits of being a ghoul.

Ghouls, as supernatural entities, may have up to nine Traits in any category (unlike most mortals, who are limited to eight). Additionally, a ghoul may learn the vampiric Disciplines that are natural to her vampire mentor. For players with **Laws of the Night**, the ghoul begins with one Basic Discipline from her domitor's clan (in addition to the automatic level of *Potence*), and the ghoul can learn the other Basic levels of her domitor's clan Disciplines, at a cost of six Experience Traits each. Particularly powerful domitors give their ghouls the ability to learn greater Disciplines; ghoul servants sustained by a vampire of the seventh or sixth generation may learn Intermediate Disciplines (at a cost of 12 Traits each), while ghouls of vampires of lower generations may learn Advanced Disciplines (at the incredible cost of 18 Traits each).

POWERFUL GHOULS

Some Storytellers may feel that limiting ghouls to Basic Disciplines is too constraining for normal troupes. After all, since most troupes won't have many elder Kindred around, giving an Intermediate Discipline to a ghoul of a ninth-generation vampire seems like a reasonable way to keep the dichotomy between elders and neonates without adding in seventh or sixth generation vampire powerhouses.

If this idea appeals to you, you may wish to use the following alternate dispersion for ghoulish Discipline limitations:

Domitor of eleventh or weaker generation: Basic Disciplines

Domitor of eighth to tenth generation: Intermediate Disciplines

Domitor of seventh or stronger generation: Advanced Disciplines

Ghouls should never have access to Master-level Disciplines — some powers are reserved for the elders alone.



If you are playing a mortal ghoul in a predominantly vampiric game, the Storyteller may choose to waive the cost of this Merit. After all, any vampire can simply turn you into a ghoul by feeding you one Trait of her blood.

See **Liber des Goules** and **Laws of the Night** for more complete rules.

GNOSIS (5-7 TRAIT MERIT)

You must take the Merit: *Kinfolk* in order to have this Merit. In addition to your blood ties to the Garou, you have a small measure of spiritual awareness as well. You are tied to the powers of life and Gaia much like your changing cousins. You have one to three Traits of Gnosis, depending on the number of Traits spent on this Merit (one Gnosis for five Traits, two Gnosis for six Traits, and three Gnosis for seven Traits). You can use this Gnosis to use werewolf Gifts and assist in Rites, just like a Garou. Having this Merit allows you to learn a greater selection of Gifts (since you can use the ones that require Gnosis), and accords you a great deal of respect among the shapechangers. Furthermore, if a vampire attempts to Embrace you, you may make one simple test for each Trait of Gnosis that you possess. If you succeed in any of the tests, you die quickly and peacefully without becoming a vampire. If you tie any of the tests without any wins, you die slowly and painfully, but still do not become a vampire. Only if you lose all of the tests do you join the ranks of the undead.

You may not raise your Gnosis with later Experience Traits; any Gnosis that you possess during character creation is the limit of your spiritual capability, forever. However, if you expend a permanent Gnosis Trait in the course of a Gift or ritual, you may use Experience Traits to regain that Gnosis Trait later.

See **Laws of the Wild** for an in-depth explanation of Gnosis and the Gifts that it powers.

CLEAR SIGHTED (5 TRAIT MERIT)

You are unusually sensitive to the use of supernatural powers of illusion, trickery and disguise, and can see through them to the heart of the matter. With a successful Mental Challenge, you can see through *Unseen Presence*, *Mask of 1000 Faces*, *Blur of the Milky Eye*, *Blissful Ignorance*, *Chimerstry* and the like. When engaging multiple opponents at once, you need only risk one Mental Trait to attempt to perceive all of them; make a single test against everyone simultaneously, resolving ties as normal, but if you lose any of the challenges you only lose the one Mental Trait that you bid.

LIFEGIVER (5 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a particularly strong life-force, such that you heal rapidly and even extend your healing abilities to others. Whenever you suffer non-aggravated damage, you heal it faster than the normal time. Furthermore, if you are uninjured, then anyone under your care heals at this advanced rate as well (assuming that your subject is capable of natural healing, that is).

As an aside, though, your blood is especially potent to vampires, and you have the added bonus of healing quickly. You automatically have the Flaw: *Potent Blood*, but you gain no additional Traits for it.

SPEAKER WITH THE DEAD (5 TRAIT MERIT)

Your sight extends beyond the Shroud of the spirit world and into the lands of the dead. You see and hear the Underworld at all times; to you, life is an existence stumbling through two simultaneous half-worlds, one of solid, bright matter, the other of decaying grayish detritus. In addition, you can see and hear wraiths and other beings within the lands of the dead. Obviously, you are a target for those ghosts who wish to

contact the living world, and malevolent spectres may hound you and attempt to drive you insane. However, your intimate knowledge of the deadlands affords you the opportunity to gain *Wraith Lore* without a mentor, and you have a clear advantage when using Sorcery or Psychic Phenomena that interact with the dead.

MYSTERIOUS GUARDIAN (6 TRAIT MERIT)

Someone or something watches over you, protecting you from harm and aiding you on random occasions. The Storyteller will decide why (and by what) you are being watched over, as well as what else having such a guardian entails.

FIST OF GOD (7 TRAIT MERIT)

Through natural devotion, intense training or some other mystical means, you have forged a supernatural ability to strike and injure paranormal creatures. Perhaps you've developed an incredible martial arts technique, or maybe your handgun was once blessed by an extremely devout priest. Whatever the reason, your "Witch-Hammer" strike inflicts aggravated damage against supernatural creatures. However, the Fist only functions with one particular weapon — your gun, your sword, your body, whatever. Furthermore, this Merit only functions (though it cannot be lost) if you have at least four permanent Humanity Traits.

TRUE FAITH (7 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a deep-seated faith in and love for some higher divine power. You begin the game with one Trait of True Faith. Your belief provides you with an inner strength and comfort that continues to support you when all else fails. The effect of Faith varies from person to person, and from religion to religion. More details can be found in the Numinae section of Chapter Three.

CURSED (1 TO 5 TRAIT FLAW)

You have been cursed by someone or something with supernatural or magical powers. This curse is specific and detailed, cannot be dispelled without extreme effort and can even be life-threatening. Some examples include:

- If you pass on a secret, your betrayal will later harm you in some way. (1 Trait)
- You stutter uncontrollably when trying to say something important. (2 Traits)
- Tools break or malfunction when you attempt to use them. (3 Traits)
- You are doomed to make enemies of those whom you love. (4 Traits)
- All of your accomplishments will inevitably become somehow tainted. (5 Traits)

OFFENSIVE TO ANIMALS (1 TRAIT FLAW)

For some reason, animals cringe from your touch and are uneasy in your presence. Perhaps it is because you have been tainted by your dealings with the infernal or perhaps they just dislike your smell. For whatever reason, animals are jittery around you. You are one Trait down on challenges involving animals.

MAGIC SUSCEPTIBILITY (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You are particularly susceptible to Thaumaturgy, hedge magic, true magick, Garou rituals and other forms of magic. You are two Traits down in challenges relating to resisting all such spells and rituals, and they have twice the normal effect on you. You may never learn to use such magics, however, as you could never prevent them from slipping out of control.



SPECTRE MEAT (3 TRAIT FLAW)

While most Spectres (wraiths that have fallen into the clutches of darkness and insanity) cannot perceive the living lands, you stick out to their perceptions. Spectres can see you, and they're likely to do all sorts of nasty things to you, just out of general maliciousness. See **Oblivion** for more details about Spectres. Storytellers may disallow this Flaw if their games do not include much interaction with wraiths and Spectres.

WYRM-TAINTED (4 TRAIT FLAW)

For some reason, you have the stink of the Wyrms about you. This may be because you willingly serve It, or it may just be hereditary and beyond your control. In any case, Garou can often sense this about you. Most of them will kill first and ask questions later.

(Note: The degree of Wyrms-taint represented by this Flaw is too severe for a simple Rite of Cleansing to purge. As opposed to mere incidental corruption resulting from being in the vicinity of Wyrms-tainted or Wyrms-serving entities, this taint has seeped into every aspect of your character's life whether he realizes it or not.)

DARK FATE (5 TRAIT FLAW)

A terrible doom lies ahead of you. This inevitable demise will become more and more apparent as the chronicle proceeds, and you will often have nightmares about it. Unless you buy off the Flaw before it is too late, your character will be dead within the year, though you may attempt to accomplish something of good first. The Storyteller will decide your fate, though you may make suggestions. You must have your Storyteller's permission to choose this Flaw.

FREE TRAITS

Mortal hunters, unlike their prey, do not automatically get any special supernatural powers. However, they do receive one advantage over the hunted. Mortal characters' players receive five Free Traits (or seven, for independent mortals) with which they may improve their characters' Traits or purchase Numinae. These Free Traits can be expended in any way the Storyteller allows.

Numinae — the special powers of True Faith, Sorcery and Psychic Phenomena — are described in Chapter Three.

The chart lists the Free Trait costs for various improvements.

FREE TRAIT COSTS

Attribute Trait	1
Ability Trait	1
Willpower Trait	3
Humanity Trait	2
Merit	Merit Trait cost
Basic Numina (Sorcery or Psychic Phenomena)	3
Influence Trait	1



STEP FIVE: SPARK OF LIFE

At this point, your character is nearly complete. Now is the time to flesh out final attachments, history and the quirks of the character's personality.

- **Background Story** — Decide how your hunter lived and grew up before becoming embroiled in the world of the supernatural. Your character was a normal person once, with ambitions, desires and foibles. Think about the education that the character had and the jobs that she may have held. After all, the hunter's upbringing heavily influences her hunting style, beliefs and methods.

- **Appearance** — Use a few props and trappings (barring any weaponry, of course) to show the style of your hunter. A novice Christian priest may have the typical black shirt with white collar, while a more sensible and experienced hunter could wear an all-concealing trench coat over baggy, versatile clothing. Do you drape yourself with crucifixes? Do you carry a notebook to record observations and reference your findings? Your outward appearance projects your character's concept to other players, so be sure to have the right image for the persona.

- **Equipment** — The traditional hunter carries a wooden stake and a silver cross, but many hunters still have possessions from their former lives. Cellular phones, beat-up old cars, pistols, money, body armor, hiking gear, an apartment... talk to your Storyteller about the tools and possessions of your hunter, and settle on a few that are likely. Your Storyteller can issue cards to represent the things you have on hand.

- **Quirks** — Each person is unique, and the strange little personal details of your hunter help to bring that uniqueness to the fore. A small quirk might be a tendency to say "Amen" to every comment by fellow hunters, rubbing a lucky coin or never looking into the eyes of a person with whom you're speaking. Write down a few lines of notes regarding the personal foibles of your character, and work these quirks into play.

SAMPLE CHARACTER CREATION

Michael would like to play a hunter and discover the supernatural world from a mortal perspective. First, he thinks about a concept for the character, and decides that he would like to play a police officer who has stumbled onto vampires over the course of a normal investigation. He chooses the name Adam Walkerton, and decides that a seemingly ordinary missing person case took a strange turn when Officer Walkerton caught the attention of the vampire responsible for the disappearance. She caught him and toyed with him, but was careless in removing his memories of the incident. When the case was dismissed by his superiors and Walkerton was reassigned, he realized that the vampire must have some sort of sway over the police department. He is determined to figure it out and see her exposed.

INSPIRATION

Michael decides that the Nature of Architect and the Demeanor of Judge would suit Walkerton best. He has an idealist view of what he wants the police force to be like, but comes across as a fairly typical law enforcement officer. His Motivation is one of Duty, to the police force and to society in general. Obviously, he is associated with a governmental agency, the local police department.



ATTRIBUTES

Michael ranks Physical, Mental and Social Traits in that order, feeling that Adam is a sharp cop who can end up being a bit gruff with people.

Michael chooses the Physical Traits of *Athletic*, *Athletic*, *Stalwart* and *Brutal*, because these seem to him to encompass the physical nature of being a cop. He adds *Resilient* and *Tenacious*, figuring that Walkerton doesn't let much stop him from reaching his goals.

Next, Michael chooses Mental Traits. Walkerton is trained to notice details, so Michael gives him *Observant* and *Vigilant*, as well as *Dedicated*, which reflect his approach to crime-solving and his loyalty to the police force. He rounds it off with *Cunning* because Adam has a few plans of his own.

Lastly, Michael picks three Social Traits for Walkerton. He has the bearing and attitude of a cop, so *Intimidating* and *Commanding* seem appropriate. He adds *Genial*, since Walkerton is a good guy at heart.

ABILITIES

For Abilities, Adam automatically starts with *Firearms* and *Investigation* at no cost, since he is a government agent. Michael decides that Walkerton's training also includes *Brawl* and *Law*. He's had to fill out a lot of reports (and work around a lot of red tape), so *Bureaucracy* seems natural.

ADVANTAGES

As a mortal, Walkerton begins with one Willpower Trait and four Humanity Traits. For Humanity, Michael picks *Honorable*, *Loyal*, *Loyal* and *Naïve*, to reflect his approach to being a police officer, and his intentions to single-handedly root out corruption in the police department.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Michael now has five Free Traits to spend on Walkerton. He thinks that Walkerton's life has been completely normal up to the point where he ran into vampires, and he decides against having a Numina power. He spends two Traits on the Social Traits of *Charismatic* and *Elegant*, since Walkerton's a pretty well-rounded guy who looks good in uniform. He puts one Free Trait toward *Police Influence*, since Walkerton's got a buddy or two who can do him favors from time to time. Lastly, Michael tacks on a level of *Legal Influence* (because Adam knows a couple of attorneys from the DA's office) and the Ability Trait *Drive* (from all of that offensive driving in a squad car).

Because he thinks it fits Walkerton's character, Michael chooses the Negative Mental Trait of *Predictable*. Walkerton's behavior and motivations are easy to anticipate, once you know him. Walkerton also has an "only a cop can understand another cop" attitude that makes him somewhat *Condescending* towards ordinary civilians, so Michael chooses the appropriate Negative Social Trait. Michael also gives Walkerton the Flaw: *Overconfident*, since he's got a pretty high opinion of himself. He also takes the Flaw: *Supernatural Enemy*, at only one Trait, to reflect the original vampire who didn't finish covering her tracks. These Flaws give Michael four more Free Traits, which he puts towards the Merit: *Iron Will*, since Walkerton is devoted to being a police officer, and has already shown resistance to vampiric mind control.

CHARACTER DETAILS

To bring Walkerton fully to life, Michael decides that Adam has a girlfriend, from whom he keeps the existence of vampires a secret, fearing for her safety. Walkerton is a devoted police officer, and puts in a lot of overtime, which doesn't leave him a lot of time for hobbies. He spends what little spare time he has in the library learning about vampires, but right now Walkerton operates strictly on popular movie vampire lore, which could lead him into trouble. Michael envisions Walkerton as a gruff but well-meaning individual, who isn't ready to admit his belief in vampires to anyone just yet.

EXPERIENCE

We learn by doing. Hunters who survive on the road of their dangerous craft must develop their skills and innate powers to their fullest potential or risk death and enslavement. Learning from mistakes is just as important (if not more so) as studying one's successes. As such, all characters learn and grow through the process of experience.

By participating in games, you gain Experience Traits for your character, which may then be expended to improve his capabilities. In general, you gain one Experience Trait for each game session in which you take part; the Storyteller may award additional Traits for exceptional roleplaying, if your hunter does something particularly courageous or if he learns something significant. However, a character should never gain more than three or four Experience Traits from any one session of play.

USING EXPERIENCE

Once a character earns Experience Traits, these Traits may be spent to purchase new Traits or to improve existing ones. Different Attributes, Abilities and Numinae have different Experience Trait costs for improvement, as shown in the following table:

- **New Attribute Trait** — One Experience Trait.
- **New Ability Trait** — One Experience Trait.
- **New Humanity Trait** — Two Experience Traits.
- **New Willpower Trait** — Three Experience Traits.
- **New Influence Trait** — Three Experience Traits, except for government agents, who need spend only one per Influence Trait.
- **New Numina** — Three Experience Traits for Basic Numinae, six for Intermediate Numinae and nine for Advanced Numinae. True Faith may not be improved with Experience Traits, except by Inquisitors.
- **New Sorcery Ritual** — Two Experience Traits for a Basic ritual, four for an Intermediate ritual and six for an Advanced ritual. (A sorcerer automatically gains one ritual of the appropriate type at no cost for each level of Sorcery learned.)
- **Remove Negative Trait** — Two Experience Traits per trait to be removed.
- **Purchase Merit** — Twice the Merit's Trait cost, with Storyteller approval.
- **Remove Flaw** — Twice the Flaw's Trait value, with Storyteller approval.



TRAIT LIMITS

Hunters are only human, and humans have their limits. Although hunters improve with experience, there are maximum limits to which any hunter may aspire. As a result, the following table shows the maximum number of Traits a hunter may possess in any given category. For instance, a normal mortal hunter may not possess more than eight Traits in any given Attribute category; thus, you cannot buy additional Physical Traits when you have eight Physical Traits, though you might still be able to improve your Mental Traits.

Some hunters manage to expand their limits beyond normal human capabilities, if only slightly. Any partially Awakened hunter has a higher maximum for Attribute Traits, as indicated. Partially Awakened hunters include ghouls, kinain, Kinfolk and any hunter with an Intermediate level of any Numina.

MORTAL TRAIT LIMITS

Trait Category	Maximum Traits
Attribute Traits	8 (9 for partially Awakened mortals)
Willpower Traits	3
Humanity Traits	8
Faith Traits	8
Influence Traits	Total of Physical, Social, and Mental Traits





CHAPTER THREE: NUMINAE AND POWERS

While the denizens of the supernatural world possess their own special magical abilities, most mortals lack any sort of supernatural talent. However, a rare few mortals develop their own unusual abilities, called “Numinae”. Numinae are the secret weapons of many hunters and the bane of a hunted creature’s existence. With a tenuous connection to the supernatural, a hunter may call on his own distinctly human powers to gain an edge in battling the paranormal.

There are three types of Numinae: True Faith, Psychic Phenomena and Sorcery. Numinae are rare among mortals, and they are even more so among other supernatural creatures. Psychic powers, for instance, stem from the intrinsic connection of humanity with life, and as such, they do not occur in paranormal creatures. Similarly, the special powers of the other supernatural races stem from their specific natures, so the special gifts of mortal Numinae are generally barred to them. Of course, supernatural creatures can develop their own similar powers; vampires with *Auspex*, for instance, can emulate many of the abilities of a telepathic human. However, Numinae in general are powered by the fundamental nature of the human wielder, and are exceedingly rare outside of mortal society.

Developing Numinae is a difficult and frustrating task. Few people have the will and the innate talent to advance their unique abilities. Only constant practice and the pursuit of rare edification can promote the development of Numinae. Indeed, the building blocks of Numinae are the very lifestyles of the practitioners; one cannot exhibit Faith without serving as a living example of spiritual devotion, nor can magical or psychic powers improve without a dedicated search for their underlying hidden processes.

People with Numinae usually have only one talent, and they focus their efforts on it rather than diversifying. Storytellers may even rule that those with one sort of Numina cannot learn another sort. They may say that having True Faith precludes knowledge of Psychic Phenomena and Sorcery, for example. Certainly, the practice and dedication required to master even one sort of Numina all but rules out the rise of other equally study-intensive capabilities.

TRUE FAITH

True Faith is belief in a power, entity, consciousness — or sometimes even a purpose — that is greater than one's self. True Faith is not limited to any particular religion; anyone of any belief can have it. This sort of deep-seated faith is extremely rare, and it is not necessarily limited to mortals, though it is even more infrequent among vampires and other supernatural entities. Only people of unquestionable character — the truly compassionate, caring, selfless and courageous — even have a chance of exhibiting True Faith.

True Faith must be purchased as a Merit, which gives a starting character one Faith Trait. Faith is a powerful tool for a hunter, since it has many practical uses against the supernatural.

True Faith gives the wielder the power to accomplish miracles. It is based on a strong belief in a specific deity or religion on whom the character may call to strengthen his will. It is not the character who is turning evil away, it is his force of belief. Thus, the miraculous powers of Faith best serve the ideals of the individual's

WEREWOLVES: TRUE FAITH IN GAIA

It is possible for a character, most likely a Garou Kinfolk, to possess True Faith in Gaia. Such Faith functions as described normally; the powers of Faith do not always depend on the forms of Faith. However, a character blessed with this type of Faith does have a couple of additional advantages.

First, the character may use the *Pacify* power of True Faith with only one Trait of Faith, but only on Garou. Gaia brings peace between her peoples.

Secondly, the character may expend Faith Traits to restore Gnosis Traits to any character with Gnosis. If the character is not restoring her own Gnosis, she must make a Static Challenge pitting her Faith versus the target's Willpower. Success expends a Trait of Faith and restores a Trait of Gnosis; failure expends the Faith Trait without any effect.

So why doesn't every Garou have True Faith in Gaia? To some degree, they do. Gaia is the source of Garou Gnosis and spirituality. However, a character with True Faith has gone above and beyond the normal connection to Gaia. Such a character lives the very precepts of life and compassion espoused by Gaia — not an easy thing for a creature of Rage. Garou with this sort of True Faith are few and far between, simply because the nature of their quest — which calls for killing and destruction — simply does not mesh with the holistic peace of Gaia, no matter how well-intentioned it is. A Storyteller may choose to bar any Garou from True Faith in Gaia if the Garou possesses more than two or three Rage Traits, ruling that the werewolf is simply too bestial and warlike to completely embrace Gaia's peace and bounty.



beliefs, instead of personal motivations. Where belief intersects with need, the possessor of True Faith exhibits the full power of religious conviction.

People who possess True Faith do not have to be saccharine in demeanor; they must only practice their ethics. Most involve kindness, fairness, helpfulness and a strong sense of right and wrong. In general, True Faith promotes a strong sense of community and selflessness. Still, it is not unheard of for bearers of Faith to also evidence prejudice or even ruthless devotion to their cause.

Most games will see little or no use of Faith. An average mortal is lucky to possess one Trait in Faith; the considerably-above-average mortal is extraordinary to possess three. A Faith of five Traits indicates a true saint. An individual's Faith is obvious in her mannerisms and bearing with even a few minutes of casual conversation, as it is the wellspring of her lifestyle. Very few possess the conviction to think and act according to the precepts of Faith at all times, so living examples of True Faith are rare indeed.

STRENGTHENING FAITH

Advancement in one's True Faith rating must be earned before it can be purchased, and Faith's effects (other than those stated below) are largely the Storyteller's option. Only constant dedication to, and sacrifice for, one's beliefs merits advancement in Faith. Similarly, as Faith is so strongly tied to these beliefs, the powers of Faith often follow the patterns of the believer — the miracles of a Christian may well be different from those of a Buddhist or Taoist. Ultimately, Faith is its own end. One does not pursue Faith to gain the power of miracles, but rather gathers these powers as a by-product of wholehearted devotion to the tenets of Faith.

IMPROVING TRUE FAITH: BY THE NUMBERS

Some Storytellers may find the task of constantly monitoring the Faithful to be onerous or burdensome; certainly, in a game of dozens of people, including multiple hunters with True Faith, deciding when each of them improves in Faith can be a trying exercise.

In such circumstances, the Storyteller is advised to simply keep a running tally of "Faith Improvement." In each session in which a given character upholds the tenets of his Faith, award one Faith Improvement Trait. Once the accumulated Faith Improvement Traits equal 10 times the character's total number of regular Faith Traits, remove all of the Improvement Traits and grant an additional Faith Trait. Conversely, if the character undertakes activities that run counter to her Faith, remove all of the Faith Improvement Traits immediately.

Using this system, it's a fairly simple matter to track the Faith of characters, and to allow them to slowly improve their True Faith. Similarly, the Storyteller can vary the multiple in order to make it easier or more difficult to improve Faith, though 10 times the character's Faith rating is recommended for most long-running games. (Just make sure that all characters use the same multiplier, in the interests of fairness). Additionally, using this system means that characters of great Faith take longer to improve and have less room for error (since one misstep sets them back at the beginning of the long road of improvement). Of course, Inquisitors will find it easier to use Experience Traits to improve their Faith — which is just fine for these scions of the Church.

REGAINING FAITH

Lost or spent Faith Traits are difficult to regain, because they are so meaningful. The character must undergo a spiritual religious experience, such as participation in a mass or a confession. The character needs to reaffirm the strength of his spiritual commitment. Simply going through the motions of ritual isn't enough; the character must plumb profound personal insights in order to strengthen his Faith once again. This introspection is a good opportunity for roleplaying as the player explores the depth of the character's Faith. Similarly, the Storyteller can rule that a deeply moving experience — participating in a cathartic confession and affirmation session with colleagues, witnessing to new converts, meditating and praying intensely at a retreat — may bestow the strength of Faith once more.

CRISIS OF FAITH

Anytime a character loses a challenge in which she uses True Faith, she is left with a question of Faith. She is down one Trait on all Social Challenges for the remainder of the session, and she may not invoke her Faith until the Storyteller rules that she has resolved the crisis. At the very least, the character should spend half an hour engaged in prayer in a place of solitude away from the concerns of the mundane world (that is, out of play). Similarly, experiences that reaffirm Faith (as noted previously) may serve to renew the character's convictions.

HOLY SYMBOLS

A holy symbol is an object used to represent the influence of the deity invoked by those with True Faith. Most wielders of True Faith channel that Faith through their holy symbols, by raising them up to ward off evil, or holding them in prayer. Crucifixes are most commonly associated with True Faith, but the faithful of other religions may use prayer wheels, mandalas, statuettes or other iconic trappings. The faith symbolized by an object empowers the holder.

When wielded by someone with True Faith, a holy symbol of the appropriate religion grants additional Traits and some defensive capabilities. The wielder must call out “In the name of ____” (or a similarly appropriate paean of faith) when channeling his Faith through a symbol. The bearer of the holy symbol gains the additional Social Trait *Intimidating* when using a holy symbol to repel the undead or ward against other supernatural effects. The holy symbol also gains the Physical Traits *Burning* and *Searing*, and inflicts a level of aggravated damage if used to physically strike a supernatural creature. Furthermore, when blessed by a priest of the appropriate faith (who must expend a Humanity Trait to empower the blessing), the holy symbol gains the additional Physical Trait of *Blinding*, *Branding*, *Cleansing*, *Purging* or *Purifying*.

RELICS

Relics are pieces of saints' bodies or belongings that have somehow been preserved and imbued with holy energy over the centuries. True relics, as opposed to frauds passed off by con-men, are rare, though even a fake relic can gain power if enough people believe in its sanctity. Indeed, although there are enough “splinters of the True Cross” to make up a small forest, one clergyman noted that this abundance is yet another miracle!

Relics can be as large as an altar or as small as a splinter of bone; however, physical size is no measure of the relic's true power. Any container that houses a relic is known as a reliquary. Reliquaries are designed to protect their contents, though they often have decorative forms as well as functional designs. Most relics are too fragile to be



moved and therefore are rendered useless to most hunters. Relics may, however, possess as many holy Traits as the Storyteller wishes to suit the story. A sliver from the True Cross would probably wield a maximum of five Traits, while Saint Aloysius Gonzaga's alms bowl might only possess one or two. A supernatural entity touched by a relic may suffer one level of aggravated damage for each holy Trait possessed by the relic in question, although the Storyteller may rule cases where a particular relic does not affect certain individuals. Due to the amount of damage that a relic can inflict, it is recommended that no relic in play possess more than three Traits. A relic's holy Traits are never lost, unless the relic itself is somehow defiled or damaged.

At the Storyteller's discretion, certain relics might possess miraculous powers in addition to their natural holiness. These relics should have a special card indicating the abilities available to a user with the appropriate True Faith. In general, using such rare abilities calls on the Faith of the wielder, but grants special benefits beyond the reach of "normal" miracles. Truly potent relics possess powers that always function. A sip from the Holy Grail might cure all ills for anyone, while St. Vitus' heel could grant the additional Physical Traits *Nimble* and *Graceful* to someone who expends a Trait of Faith (since St. Vitus was the patron of epileptics and of dance).

HOLY GROUND

Holy Ground is a place of sanctity where the faithful congregate and perform the rituals of their religion. A Storyteller may establish certain areas within the chronicle's setting as Holy Ground. These locations carry their own Faith, and they bolster the Faith of others through the long dedication of the devoted. Ultimately, the Faith itself is more important than its outward forms; mysterious, secluded locations where many faithful gather often will possess a more powerful Faith than impressive, exorbitant locales that cater to marginally devoted laypersons.

Being present on Holy Ground will allow a character who already has True Faith to boost her own Faith by the site's Faith rating. A cathedral attended by hypocrites may have no Faith at all, while a hill by a deep pond where a dedicated congregation has met twice a week for the last 30 years may have a Faith of two or three. Sites of great devotion like the Vatican could possess five or even six Faith Traits. When a person with True Faith stands on such Holy Ground, she adds the site's Faith Traits to her own total, allowing for greater miracles.

Holy Ground is not something that should be common or created as an emergency escape. It should be established at the beginning of the game for those who would know of its existence and left anonymous for those who would not. As Holy Ground rarely surfaces in public, visible locations, it may take some effort to discover a site of true reverence. However, Holy Ground is not limited to Christian sites; such places might also include sacred groves, synagogues, mosques or sites of pilgrimages (such as Canterbury or Jerusalem).

When a site is activated by a possessor of True Faith, no vampire may travel across the site (unless invited in) without spending Mental Traits equal to the site's Faith rating, or a single Willpower Trait. Even then, the location's Faith Traits add to the total for the faithful when warding off any sort of supernatural creature. If a user of True Faith successfully wards against a paranormal entity while on Holy Ground of the appropriate religion, the creature must immediately leave the site — only the expenditure of a Willpower Trait allows the character to remain, traveling up to 50 feet or staying for 10 minutes (whichever comes first).



USES OF FAITH

ONE TRAIT OF FAITH

Regaining Willpower

For every hour of meditation and prayer that you sit alone communicating with no one, you either gain one additional temporary Willpower Trait which lasts 12 hours, or you regain one Willpower Trait previously lost.

A mortal possessing three Traits of Faith would be required to spend three hours in meditation, prayer or reflection in order to re-acquire three Willpower Traits. Conversely, a mortal possessing one Trait of Faith would only be able to concentrate for one hour because of the limit to his practice and his dedication, so he could acquire or restore only one Willpower Trait in any given 24 hour period.

In the case of a long game (one lasting over consecutive nights or a regular chronicle game), these meditation hours may take place during the day or when the game is not in session, as long as the 24-hour time limit is observed. In a short four- to six-hour game, the Storyteller may feel free to shorten the meditation periods required, as long as she keeps in mind that Willpower Traits are not easily regained and should not be tossed around carelessly.

Repel Vampires

By brandishing a holy symbol, speaking the phrase “In the name of ___” and engaging in a Social Challenge, you may drive off vampires. If you win the challenge, the vampire must flee the scene. Even if you lose, the vampire must back off a few feet and cower before taking action. The vampire may not initiate any actions — whether using Traits or activating Disciplines — for the entire turn after the use of Faith (although she may defend normally). A vampire may only resist this use of Faith by attempting to overbid with Willpower; if the vampire possesses twice as many Willpower Traits as you, then she remains unaffected. Of course, all vampires attempting to overbid like this must declare their Willpower Traits first, before you, and those who fail automatically lose the challenge, fleeing the scene and losing the Willpower Traits risked.

You may engage in as many simultaneous Social Challenges as you have Faith Traits, if there is more than one creature to be repelled. In this case, you make one challenge against all of the targeted characters; the outcome is determined as described previously. For example, if a hunter with two Faith Traits engages two vampires and attempts to repel them, she makes a single test against both vampires. If the hunter throws Scissors while one vampire throws Rock and the other Paper, then the first vampire would recoil, stunned, while the second vampire would flee the scene.

Infernalists and servants of demonic evil suffer even worse from True Faith. Such agents of dark powers automatically flee, regardless of the results of the Social Challenge. Of course, there is no way to distinguish such results from the normal flight of other creatures.

Creatures who are able to remain in the presence of the mortal may use Disciplines, Gifts or ranged weapons against her if they desire. Of course, they risk further uses of Faith from the dangerous hunter.

Substitute for Willpower

Willpower and Faith are complimentary energies in a character's personality. Willpower is a belief in your own capabilities while Faith is reliance on a power greater than yourself. A Faith Trait may substitute for a Willpower Trait in any circumstance for which Willpower is called. Of course, the reverse does not hold — Willpower is insufficient to power Faith. Furthermore, this substitution is only possible when you are out of Willpower Traits.



TWO TRAITS OF FAITH

Holy Resistance

With sufficient Faith, you are defended by Heaven against the powers of the supernatural. By expending one Trait of Faith, you are rendered immune to the mind-influencing powers of various creatures. The vampiric Discipline of *Dominare* simply does not affect you, nor would the wraith Arcanos of *Puppetry*. However, you can still be affected by powers that influence emotions; you have no special resistance to *Presence*. You only resist powers that directly attempt to control you in this fashion. This resistance lasts for the duration of the scene, and it is only effective against the power that it is specifically used to defend against — you cannot simply expend a Faith Trait and declare immunity to *Dominare*; you must spend the Trait after a vampire uses the *Dominare* Discipline on you, at which point you are rendered immune to that particular vampire's use of *Dominare* for the rest of the scene.

Faith Healing

By spending a Trait of Faith, you may heal one Health Level of damage to a person that you find worthy of saving. You must engage in a Simple Test in order to successfully heal the target; failure indicates that the target is not healed and the Faith Trait is expended, while success or a tie heals the subject.

THREE TRAITS OF FAITH

Pacify

By spending a Trait of Faith and entering into a Social Challenge, you may quell the Beast within a supernatural creature. Doing so will bring a vampire or werewolf out of a Frenzy, or calm a creature who is agitated. If a character with True Faith uses this power on a werewolf who is not in Frenzy, then the werewolf cannot spend any Rage Traits for the remainder of the scene.

FOUR TRAITS OF FAITH

Holy Invulnerability

Your power of Faith is so strong that you are completely immune to the mental influences of any of the supernatural, as long as you call on the divine for protection. By expending a Faith Trait, you are rendered completely immune to any use of a mind or emotion influencing power for the remainder of the scene. Thus, if a vampire uses the *Presence* Discipline on you, you need only spend a Faith Trait to be rendered immune to all of that vampire's uses of *Presence* for the rest of the scene. This invulnerability is fully effective against powers that manipulate emotions, in addition to direct mind-controlling powers; thus, you have a defense against the wraith Arcanos of *Keening* in addition to *Puppetry*, and you can defend against vampiric *Presence* as well as *Dominare*.

FIVE TRAITS OF FAITH

Blessing

You may leave lasting and potent blessings on objects or people. The most common use of this aspect of True Faith is in the creation of holy symbols or weapons.

To create a blessed item, you must spend a Faith Trait and spend half an hour in prayer with the item. You may bestow one of the following Bonus Traits to the item: *Burning*, *Searing*, *Blinding*, *Branding*, *Purging*, *Cleansing* and *Purifying*. To injure a target in combat, the wielder of the holy item may bid its Trait in the Physical Challenge. If he succeeds, he

deals one Health Level of aggravated damage to the supernatural creature just by touching the item to it. If he fails, the item loses its blessing. Bidding a normal Physical Trait means that the weapon is being used as a normal weapon, and causes normal damage.

Using a blessed holy symbol in repelling creatures adds the Trait of *Intimidating* to the wielder's Social Challenge, so that all who try to resist fleeing must bid two Traits.

Blessing another person is a very ceremonial event, and the blessing gives that person one retest that may be used up in any single challenge.

Only one blessing can be conferred per session, and it should not be done casually. An item or person can only have one blessing on it at a time.

SIX TRAITS OF FAITH

Miracle

The strongest tool in the hands of the Faithful is the power of miracles. Performing a miracle requires the permanent expenditure of a Faith Trait, and a Static Social Challenge of difficulty determined by a Storyteller or Narrator. A Narrator must be present for this application of True Faith.

Nearly anything within the framework of your religion can be accomplished; curing AIDS in a person, creating Holy Ground, changing someone's Nature, resisting a supernatural power, bringing a vampire to Golconda, causing a wraith to achieve Transcendence, ignoring a source of damage or cleansing someone of Wyrmtaint are all possibilities, depending on the nature of your Faith.

Such miracles are not performed lightly, and they can be profound experiences to those who witness them.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

Psychic abilities typically develop instinctively during childhood and must somehow survive the turmoil of adolescence. Most folks who wish to develop their "sixth sense" in any way have to do so consciously, through constant practice and insight. In the World of Darkness, few possess these exceptional abilities. If a character is so lucky, she probably possesses only one psychic power. Inexplicable and unique to mortals, psychic powers are a subconscious ability to effect the surrounding world simply through thought.

Psychic abilities are separated into different Phenomena. Though it is possible to develop multiple areas of psychic aptitude with exceptional study and practice, most individuals are incapable of more than the most rudimentary psychic abilities — and improvement in one area of development comes at the expense of others, so a multi-disciplinary psychic rarely achieves levels of significant ability in any area.

Developing psychic abilities is exhausting and frustrating. Trial and error forces those who practice such skills to question their faith in themselves and in the paranormal. Younger individuals actually have an easier time developing their psychic abilities; children and adolescents are more likely to externalize their failures, keeping the necessary self-confidence and will to continue improving their powers. Failure and disappointment are injurious to the delicate growth of psychic power, since a psychic must have consummate self-assurance to use her abilities.

Psychic powers must be selected during character creation. Furthermore, improvement in psychic abilities comes only with the Storyteller's approval, since the character must have a great deal of practical experience, practice and confidence to develop.



Purchasing completely new areas of power should come only as part of a story, and an instructor or key awakening event should be required. Even then, new powers should not suddenly spring into existence in the middle of play; a character may find a tutor or undergo an experience that unlocks her latent potential, but actually developing that potential into a useful form takes time and practice. Expanding one's mind is neither quick nor easy.

Psychic Phenomena are not instant-access powers. Concentration is required for the duration of the effect, and some sort of focus may be needed as well. It's possible to activate multiple powers, or to perform other tasks while concentrating, but each psychic power active causes the user to suffer a two-Trait penalty on all other challenges. Furthermore, significant distractions — injury, emotional turbulence, confusion — may cause a power to fail utterly. In such cases, make a new concentration challenge as if re-activating the power, with the additional two Trait concentration penalty. This test simply checks the psychic's level of focus on the power, and as such, does not require any expenditure of Traits. Thus, if you are attempting to telekinetically lift a stack of crates when you are suddenly body-slammed, the Narrator may call for a new test, without risking Traits, to see if you maintain the proper concentration.

Psychic Phenomena typically require a Static Mental Challenge against a difficulty of seven Traits or require a challenge against the target's Mental Traits, depending on the Effect. Additionally, activating (but not maintaining) a psychic power requires the expenditure of a Humanity Trait, as the psychic delves into the wellsprings of her ties to life and the universe. Of course, some of the power descriptions specify different challenges or costs; in such cases, use the difficulties and tests described therein.

CLAIRVOYANCE

A character with *Clairvoyance* may see, hear or otherwise perceive information from situations in which she is not present. Extending perception in this way is taxing and difficult; using *Clairvoyance* powers generally requires some preparation and a great deal of concentration. No matter how advanced the clairvoyant is, she is merely an observer and may not affect the events she witnesses in any way short of calling on some other power (like *Telekinesis*). A clairvoyant's visions usually last only for a short time, and the clairvoyant may end a vision at will — the character is not “trapped in a vision” for the full duration of the power. However, doing so automatically terminates the use of the power, and the character must retest and re-activate the power normally to continue the vision.

Clairvoyance is a tricky Numina in a **Mind's Eye Theatre** setting because it involves using a character's senses at range. Mechanically, it is easiest if the character in question goes to the actual site of whatever she wish to perceive. *Clairvoyance* is magically undetectable and also immune to detection by the vampiric Discipline *Auspex*. However, while the clairvoyant is extending her senses, she is unable to sense her actual physical surroundings normally. All senses extended by the clairvoyant are unusable by her physical body; thus, a clairvoyant who extends her sight and hearing to a remote location cannot see or hear anything around her actual physical location, though she could still feel. Clairvoyants who have sufficient skill to extend multiple senses may choose which senses they wish to use; a powerful clairvoyant may choose only to extend the sense of touch, for instance.

Clairvoyance only extends the normal senses of the character; it does not necessarily enhance those senses in any fashion. A character cannot read a letter inside of an envelope, because the inside of the envelope is dark. Conversely, physical handicaps are no limit to *Clairvoyance*; a normally blind character may use *Clairvoyance* without penalty or hindrance.

Using *Clairvoyance* requires a Static Mental Challenge. The difficulty is based on the clairvoyant's familiarity with the target area, person or item. *Clairvoyance* powers require the expenditure of one Humanity Trait.

CLAIRVOYANCE DIFFICULTIES

Familiarity	Difficulty
very familiar	4
known to the psychic	6
completely unknown	8

BASIC

Secret Glimpses

With absolute concentration, you can briefly extend your senses a short distance, to see something occurring outside of your normal perceptions. The visions gathered by this power are hazy and sometimes misinterpreted, especially since you cannot actually hear what's happening; furthermore, your range is limited to nearby areas (any place to which you could physically walk in 20 seconds is a good guideline).

No sound accompanies this vision, which lasts for up to two minutes. At this most basic level of power, preparation requires 10 minutes of concentration or meditation, undisturbed while sitting or lying down in a dark or dimly lit space. You must also maintain complete concentration for the entire duration of the vision; performing other tasks is impossible, and any interruption automatically ruins the effect.

Whispers of the Hidden

You can expand your senses to significant distances with some effort. This power allows you to see distant locations, and you can sometimes hear what's happening as well. Your control is still tenuous, though, and your extrasensory vision lasts only two minutes. Your range is significant; you can see events happening anywhere within your town.

You must spend five minutes in concentration or meditation before expanding your senses in this fashion. Again, performing other tasks is impossible, and any break in concentration automatically interrupts the power. However, you can sometimes hear what's happening in addition to seeing events; make a Static Mental Challenge with the same difficulty as the initial activation test (no Traits are risked), with success indicating that you can hear events as well as seeing what's happening. Since the words and sounds conveyed by this power are hazy at best, asking participants to speak in a stage (fairly loud) whisper is a good approximation.

INTERMEDIATE

Sense of Beyond

At this stage of development, you may combine the sensations of sight and sound, and you can extend the duration of your visions. All of your extrasensory visions automatically include sight and sound, and you can sometimes actually feel objects at the location.

By concentrating for only three minutes, you can send your awareness out for up to 10 minutes. Furthermore, at this stage of development, all difficulties for using your powers are reduced by one Trait; thus, sensing a completely unknown location now has a difficulty of only seven Traits. Additionally, by making a follow-up Static Mental Challenge against the same difficulty as the power's activation, you may feel things at



the remote location. Of course, you still cannot exert any sort of force or influence, but you could (for instance) feel the texture on an item or determine whether something is hot or cold, without actually suffering injury.

At this level of development, you can sometimes use other powers while sensing an area remotely. You cannot actually split your consciousness, so you could not use *Astral Projection*, but you can invoke other psychic powers while using your point of reference — thus, you could use *Telekinesis* to lift an object at a remote location, subject to your ability to see it there with *Clairvoyance*. Maintaining split concentration like this is taxing, and you suffer the usual two-Trait penalty on all tests engaged while using your *Clairvoyance*. If you are injured or disturbed while projecting your senses, you may choose to return your awareness to your own body or try to make a Static Mental Challenge (no Traits risked, difficulty equal to the power's activation difficulty) in order to keep your concentration on the remote location.

Hauntings of the Mind's Eye

The expansion of your clairvoyant awareness lets you project your senses easily to nearly any location that you can imagine. Your senses include sight, hearing and touch, and you are capable of fairly extended feats of extrasensory perception.

You need only concentrate for one minute to use your awareness, and you can maintain your vision for 20 minutes. You can use other powers at the location of your senses, subject to the usual two-Trait penalty on additional challenges. You may make a Static Mental Challenge (no Traits risked, difficulty equal to the power's activation difficulty) in order to maintain your concentration if your body is injured or disturbed, or you may simply choose to return your awareness to your body in such circumstances.

ADVANCED

Cosmic Awareness

You have fully opened your mind to your unusual perceptions, and can now enter a vision after only a few moments of peace. Your remote sensing includes full visual, auditory and tactile information. Your range of vision is effectively unlimited; any place in the world is open to your senses, unless specifically warded from supernatural sight. Functionally, the Storyteller may choose to limit your use of this capability, simply due to the difficulty of describing events around the world.

You can hold any extrasensory vision of *Clairvoyance* for up to half an hour. The difficulty of sensing remote locations is reduced by two Traits (replacing the improvement from the Intermediate level of *Clairvoyance*), so you can now sense unknown locations with a difficulty of only six Traits. You can utilize other powers at a distance, subject to the normal penalties, and you can hold your concentration even when injured or disturbed, as long as you make the appropriate test. Activating your power takes only a moment of concentration.

At the Storyteller's discretion, you may receive visions without initiating them, and experience a vision of something the Storyteller wishes you to see. These flashes of unexpected sight can be disturbing indeed, especially when they come in the midst of other important matters.

PSYCHOMETRY

Psychometry reads the emotional resonance from objects. By touching something, the psychic may receive impressions about a subject's recent history, and the people and events that happened around it or to it. The impressions take the form of visions or the emotions involved, and they can be very stressful to the psychometrist. Skin contact is required, usually with the hands.

The psychic must reach a state of strong concentration to use *Psychometry*. Extremely overwhelming or traumatic emotions and visions may induce temporary Derangements in the character, at the Storyteller's discretion. Any conscious use of *Psychometry* requires the expenditure of a Humanity Trait.

BASIC

Emotional Connection

You may gain impressions of strong emotions tied to objects simply by handling them carefully. The context of the emotion is not necessarily evident, but the feelings wash over you and give some idea of what has happened to the item in question. You might sense that a knife was used in a despairing way, but would not know that it was used in a suicide. You may sometimes get flashes of names and faces if the events are particularly strong.

The emotions sensed with this power do not have to be recent, especially if the object has not been associated with any other strong emotion recently. An example would be a lost but treasured heirloom on display in a museum for a decade. Conversely, an object that has traded hands many times and been the subject of much emotional turmoil might well give off a befuddling mix of emotions and feelings.

Flashback

After handling an object, you receive a vision of events that recently happened concerning it. You cannot sense emotions directly, but you can guess based on the vision. The object must have been centrally involved in the event. You see these visions in the form of short visual images replaying the events in question. Often, the point of view is that of the object in question; if unwary, you may find yourself in the role of a murder weapon.

Use of *Flashback* on fresh corpses usually gives an indication of how they died. In some cases, a Static Mental Challenge (six trait difficulty) may be appropriate to see if you can make out the details of the event from the brief and distorted pictures presented.

INTERMEDIATE

Time and Place

You have learned to focus your sense of emotions beyond simple objects and small locations. You must still be in, and physically touching, the area in question, but you can receive emotionally charged visions of events that recently took place in that location. Your *Psychometry* now includes one other sense (of the Storyteller's choice), so you might feel skin giving way as a knife plunges through flesh, or smell the acrid stench of gunpowder from a shooting.

The visions invoked by this power are emotionally intense and often disturbing. You may be influenced by the emotions of the event in question; roleplay the emotions described by the Narrator or Storyteller for the remainder of the scene.

The Hidden Menagerie

Your ability to sense emotions and events from objects and locations has progressed to the point of sensitivity even to happenings long past (within the last month) or with only limited emotional potency. Additionally, all of your visions and sensations from *Psychometry* now possess components for all five senses.

You can be unwittingly drawn into events of extreme intensity when using this power. Witnessing particularly horrific acts (especially when experienced through your own point of view) may call for a Simple Test to avoid acquiring a Derangement.



ADVANCED

Touch the Soul

By touching the skin of another person and concentrating deeply, you can receive a vision of something that emotionally concerns the individual. This sort of insight can be unreliable and difficult to interpret. For example, touching a murderer while he is being questioned might lead to a vision of the moment at which he decided to commit the murder, not the actual deed itself. When used on objects and locations, you gain clear insight into scenes that took place, complete with all five senses; when sensing emotional currents in people, you must make a Mental Challenge against the target to gain useful information.

At this level of sensitivity, you will occasionally suffer spontaneous visions or sensations when touching emotionally charged objects. The Storyteller or Narrator may at any time declare that you gather “vibes” from a given object without conscious activation of this power. Such spontaneous sensing is unreliable, but does not require the expenditure of a Humanity Trait.

PYROKINESIS

Note: You should never actually use fire to represent this power. This is not live-action *Beavis and Butt-head*.

Psychics use this phenomenon to agitate molecules to such a degree that fire results. *Pyrokinesis* can only start fires; the psychic cannot extinguish fires or exert any control over flame. Pyrokinetically started fires are indistinguishable from normal fires, and they last until they burn out or are put out by normal means.

To use *Pyrokinesis*, the psychic must spend a Humanity Trait, and then win a Static Mental Challenge (against a difficulty of six Traits, or the target’s Physical Traits, if another person is the target or is holding the object the psychic wishes to ignite).

The maximum range of *Pyrokinesis* is 10 paces.





BASIC

Candleflame

With concentration, you create a tiny, lighter-sized flame to provide light. The fire can grow, if there is sufficient fuel, but it starts very small. It provides only a flickering light, and is not very hot. The flame can easily be put out before it does significant damage.

Fan the Flame

You can encourage an already existing fire to grow in size, even if the fuel is not very combustible. A dying fire could be brought back to life and a barbecue kept lit in the rain. You can also increase the size of fires created by your own use of this power; tiny fires like that provided by *Candlelight* grow into small flames capable of inflicting one Health Level of aggravated damage, while larger flames blaze even more furiously. The fire in question simply flares up for a moment (one turn), dying back to normal in the next turn unless the power is maintained (at the usual cost).

INTERMEDIATE

Combustion

You can start a fire about the size of a campfire, provided that you have a large enough source of flammable materials. This fire will cause one Health Level of aggravated damage to anyone it reaches. You can even set a person's clothes alight or ignite more stubborn materials, although such fires don't last unless maintained with further uses of *Pyrokinesis* (or more mundane means, like gasoline).

Bonfire

Your incendiary abilities allow you to set large and otherwise inflammable targets alight and call a brief flash of flame into existence without a flammable target. Objects up to the size of a small car can easily be ignited, and they continue to burn unless completely unsuitable as fuel. Flash-fires cause one Health Level of aggravated damage to the unfortunate target, and sustained flames cause similar damage to those even partially engulfed.

ADVANCED

Conflagration

The fire created at this level of mastery is truly a fearsome thing, instantly coming into existence wherever there is sufficient fuel. Unsupported fires still go out, but the air itself can be agitated into a seething mass of burning oxygen, if only briefly. Such a fire causes two Health Levels of aggravated damage to anyone it reaches.

TELEKINESIS

Telekinesis allows the character to project his will and move objects with the power of thought. The player must expend a Humanity Trait in order to employ this power, and he must engage in a Static Mental Test against a difficulty of five Traits if he uses the power on an inanimate object that isn't in anyone's possession. If the character seeks to affect another person (take an object from the subject, throw something at him, move him, etc.), then the telekinetic must engage in a Mental Challenge against the target, who resists with Physical Traits.

To first pick up an object, it must be within the character's line of sight. It does not have to remain within the character's line of sight once he has lifted it, however. Manipulation with *Telekinesis* lasts for the duration of the Scene, unless the character decides to prematurely terminate the use of the power.



BASIC

Nudge

You have learned to manipulate small nearby objects (eggs, drinking glasses, books; anything under three pounds), but without much skill or force. You can only accomplish minor things like turning the next page of a book, flicking a light switch, lifting something off a table or pressing a button.

Only one item at a time can be manipulated with this power. The amount of force exerted by this power is minimal; you cannot use it to attack, and manipulated objects move slowly and imprecisely. Manipulated objects can easily be snatched away by anyone willing to make the effort. At this most basic level of skill, you need to gesture physically in the fashion of the telekinetic force; you are one Trait down on the test if you do not make an appropriate gesture.

Fling

You may repel something or attract it, though with little control over its speed. The objects so affected must still be small and light, and are they easily dodged. You can only affect objects in this way within the same room.

Only one item at a time can be manipulated with this power. Furthermore, you cannot exert enough force to move an object weighing more than 10 pounds. Again, gesturing helps, and failing to gesture causes you to suffer a one-Trait penalty on appropriate tests.

INTERMEDIATE

Phantom Arm

At this degree of mastery, you can move heavy items with a good degree of control. You can also move items in another room, as long as you can still see the target (through a window, for instance, or by using *Clairvoyance*). Your control is not particularly fine, but you can easily throw items about and even injure people.

The object of this power must still be less than 100 pounds in weight, but you can manipulate it just as though you were handling it physically, although you control is no better than if you were wearing mittens. If you fling a heavy object at someone, you can inflict a single Health Level of normal damage from the impact. Similarly, you can guide and hurl *weapons* accurately enough to inflict normal damage with them. You still need to make gestures appropriate to your actions, and failing to gesture imposes a one-Trait penalty on your telekinetic test.

Hidden Forces

Your mental strength is prodigious; you can manipulate heavy objects, even lifting people, and you can manipulate multiple objects at once. You can manipulate targets up to a block away as long as they are within your line of sight. Although you don't have quite enough control to undo a complicated knot (for instance), you can affect things as if you were working on them while wearing gloves.

You can affect objects up to 200 pounds in weight at this level of power. Weapons and heavy objects can be used to inflict one Health Level of damage when thrown or swung at someone, and you can even pick a person up and smash him against nearby surfaces for similar damage. With concentration, you can lift yourself and achieve a limited sort of flight. You can affect multiple objects now, with a two-Trait penalty for each new object after the first. At this level of power, you no longer need to gesture in order to direct your powers.

ADVANCED**Psychic Levitation**

You have thoroughly mastered the power to project mental force. Your control is good enough to perform delicate manipulations, such as undoing a zipper, loading a gun or pouring champagne, though the difficulty might be increased for particularly tricky tasks. You can manipulate multiple objects with concentration, and you need not gesture to affect your targets.

You can affect something weighing up to 300 pounds with this power. Heavy or pointy objects will do one Health Level of damage when thrown telekinetically. Alternately, you may simply pick someone up with mental force and batter him mercilessly. When affecting multiple objects, the normal penalty for splitting concentration is applied; test separately for each subject, with a two-Trait penalty for each additional object after the first. Once this power is activated, though, no further expenditures are required to acquire new targets.

TELEPATHY

Insidious and almost undetectable, *Telepathy* allows a character to sense the emotions and thoughts of nearby individuals. The telepath's player must expend a Humanity Trait and then win a Mental Challenge against the target after the character undergoes a period of intense concentration. If the telepath is blind, she must hear or touch people to read their minds.

This ability can affect animals, but their thoughts are not terribly sophisticated or different from their emotions.

BASIC**Emotional Contact**

You may perceive another's emotional state. This perception is not visual as in the vampiric power *Aura Perception*. Rather, you sense a wash of feelings similar to the ones that the target is experiencing. On winning the Mental Challenge, you may request that the other player explain his character's current emotional state. The subject should not explain why he feels a particular emotion, only that he is experiencing it. You must be able to see your target in order to use this level of contact.

The Unspoken Heart

You may "hear" a phrase uttered only in the mind of your target. This power requires relative silence to work, but makes you privy to those comments that people think, but generally choose not to vocalize. After winning the Mental Challenge, you may ask the target, "What did you leave unspoken just now?" and the other player must answer truthfully. However, you can only use this power on an individual you can see.

Typically, one cannot glean useful information by using this power. Any thought that the target is actively attempting to conceal will remain hidden. Most often, the psychic will "hear" such comments as "Idiot," "What an ugly dress," or even "Brick wall, brick wall, brick wall...."

INTERMEDIATE**Psychic Link**

You are now capable of establishing a telepathic rapport that allows you to glean small bits of information from your target. With a successful contact, you can immediately ask your target one simple question, which the player must answer



truthfully. Such questions may include, but are not limited to, examples such as “Was the last thing you said truthful?” or “What nature of creature are you?” You still need to see your target, and you are still limited to one target at a time.

This power can be used for one-way communication, with the target mentally thinking the sentences he wishes you to “hear.”

Mind Probe

Reaching deep into the consciousness of your subject, you can gather deep memories and hidden information. In addition to the normal questions that you may ask with your telepathic powers, you can ask the subject to describe any scene in her memory. You may even notice if someone's memories have been tampered with or altered; you can make a second Mental Challenge to try to uncover the hidden memories in such cases. You no longer need to directly see a person, either — you can read the thoughts of an individual in an adjacent room, although you will need a description if you are not familiar with the subject.

ADVANCED

Secrets Revealed

At this degree of mastery, you have learned to fully read the surface thoughts of nearly anyone. You can now split your concentration to read multiple minds, and you can even gather second-hand information, such as reading the mind of a character using *Clairvoyance* and seeing the image that the character views. Reading multiple minds counts as multiple tasks, so you still suffer a two-Trait penalty on all tasks for each contact kept after the first, but you can read minds at any distance, subject to your knowledge of the individual subject. You can even use other senses, such as *Clairvoyance*, to detect a subject and then use *Telepathy* to scan his mind.

SORCERY

The art of magic that is accessible to regular mortals (those who do not fall into the realm of mages or Infernalists) is considered Sorcery. It is low magic and requires some kind of ritual or focus to work. Sorcery is the sort of magic used to give a Gypsy a good name or a bad reputation, that can bring forth a good lover or hex a bad one. Some call it wise lore; others believe it is divinely inspired and refer to it as “Theurgy”. Whatever it is called, it is the sort of magic that most people don't believe in.

Sorcery is separated into different paths, each one accomplishing distinctly different effects. It is possible to study and even master more than one path, although doing so is difficult and time-consuming. Mortals can pick up these paths through other hunters, diaries, occult tomes or any other reasonable means. In addition, most paths have rituals. Rituals are the actual effects that are cast, while the basic level of ability in the path simply indicates the range of power available to the sorcerer.

Most rituals cost one Mental Trait, and they often require some sort of test to determine whether they are successful or not. Some rituals state otherwise, and they may require the expenditure of Humanity Traits in addition to or instead of Mental Traits. All Basic rituals take 10 minutes, Intermediate rituals require 20 minutes and all Advanced rituals take at least 30 minutes to perform, unless stated differently. Storytellers who are running particularly short games may choose to alter these times to suit the needs of their plots.



CONJURATION

Sorcerers with this path are apparently able to create things out of thin air. What *Conjuration* really entails is the preparation of an object beforehand. Then, the conjurer can summon the prepared item (or person if he is powerful enough) to him instantly whenever he desires it. When the ritual is performed, a triggering word is set into the object, and the object is teleported directly to any *empty* space the caster desires on the utterance of that word (within the range of his conjuring ability). Alternately, the caster may design a ritual to move or animate an object in a specific way, allowing for limited telekinetic manipulation.

To prepare the item, a Humanity Trait must be spent, and a Static Mental Challenge (against a difficulty dependent on the object) is required. Retrieving the object requires another Static Mental Challenge (against a difficulty of seven Traits). Using a *Conjuration* effect requires only a single action. Preparing the object in the first place requires the standard casting time.

It can be extremely difficult to prepare unwilling animals or people, since they won't stay put for the lengthy ritual. *Conjuration* doesn't cause an item to become magical; the object has only its own normal properties. Only one object at a time may be conjured.

A wizard may have a number of prepared items ready equal to his number of permanent Humanity Traits. A prop or card for each item should be left with a Narrator, so that it is handy when it is conjured.

CONJURING RITUALS

Levitate Object (Basic)

This ritual allows you to levitate a prepared object. You must have a separate ritual for each type of object. You can lift and move the object about, as long as it is within your conjuring range and power level.

Manipulate Object (Basic)

Simple levitation is one thing; getting a rope to knot and unknot itself is another thing entirely. Manipulations let the caster telekinetically affect the conjured object in a simple fashion. Thus, the Manipulate Lock ritual could be used to open or close a simple lock, while the Manipulate Computer ritual might allow the conjurer to turn a computer on or off.

Teleport Object (Basic)

This ritual prepares an object for snatching or teleportation. When conjured, the object is immediately teleported to any location within your range of conjuration. Again, you must learn a separate ritual for each type of object or creature, so Teleport Rabbit does not substitute for Teleport Lovely Assistant.

BASIC

The Conjurer's Touch

You can nudge a tiny, simple object with a small amount of conjured force. Although you cannot actually manipulate or teleport the object, you can cause it to move slightly, so you can push a prepared button or possibly drag a prepared key across a table. You can only use this power on objects within 10 feet; the object can be easily stopped by anyone who wishes to grab it.



Conjure the Simple Form

This ritual is performed on a simple object — anything without moving or electronic parts. A glass of water, coin, knife or bullet would be acceptable, but a gun would not. Individual plants may be conjured, but not animals or people. The conjurer can call the object from up to 15 feet away, either moving it slowly or teleporting it.

INTERMEDIATE

Conjure the Complex Form

You have learned to conjure more difficult items, with moving parts or which are composed of other items. You can prepare and conjure large and complex inanimate objects such as staves, clocks or televisions, as long as the object is no larger than a chair and weighs less than 200 pounds. Even very simple creatures such as snails and ants are within your conjuring power. You can move the object via levitation or snatch it from thin air at a distance of up to 25 feet.

The Conjurer's Grasp

With this level of *Conjuring*, you can affect inanimate objects up to the size of steamer trunks, with a weight up to 300 pounds. Additionally, you can prepare and conjure creatures up to 50 pounds in weight, up to the level of a rabbit, bird or large lizard. You can levitate or snatch the object from a distance of up to 50 feet.

ADVANCED

Conjure the Living Form

You may now conjure complex items with many parts, or those which are very large. This includes bookcases, laptops, video cameras and human beings. Cognizant subjects — humans, among others — must be willing or unconscious, and this form of conjuration is extremely disorienting; a conjured individual is stunned and unable to act for one complete turn (or 15 seconds, if not in combat time). You can manipulate objects up to 60 feet away with this power, affecting anything up to human size. With the proper ritual, you can even cause yourself to levitate.

CURSING

One of the oldest known forms of magic, a curse is intended to cause trouble or harm to someone who has offended the wizard. The wizard decides what effect he wants his curse to have (within his ability), then spends one turn per level building up his malice and ill will. Once the cursing energy is ready, the caster discharges it in some cathartic fashion (a scream, a dance, etc.). At this point, the player spends a Humanity Trait and engages in a Social Challenge with the target of his ire. If the caster succeeds, the Storyteller determines exactly what form the curse takes or how it unfolds. Curses are rarely instantaneous; they usually occur almost coincidentally whenever circumstances allow. They subtly nudge things or people already in motion toward fulfilling the caster's desire toward the target, and may take weeks or even months to be realized.

Rituals are not used for *Cursing*. The caster simply builds up the necessary energy and releases it at the victim immediately.

No victim can suffer from the effects of more than one curse at a time. If multiple curses are cast on the subject, then only the strongest one takes effect.

Supernatural creatures may be cursed, but can resist the effect by expending a Willpower Trait, though they must be made aware of the curse in order to do so.



BASIC

Curse of Inconvenience

The caster can inflict a brief inconvenience (dropping something, saying something stupid, breaking a treasured object) or a minor injury or illness which does no lasting harm (cutting oneself, slamming a finger in a door, getting a migraine) at this level.

The effect will usually be over within the same game session. Your curse generally does not cause any damage or loss of Traits, but it is certainly inconvenient.

Curse of Trouble

Your victim will certainly suffer some sort of setback in the near future. Although far from debilitating, it will annoy the subject and may lead to injury or potential long-term problems.

In one challenge in the same or next game session, the cursed individual suffers a two-Trait penalty on one challenge, as decided by the Storyteller.

INTERMEDIATE

Curse of Misfortune

At this level of ability, you may cause serious injury or illness (gunshot wound, broken leg, influenza), though it will not kill, or a misfortune that has lasting effects (broken friendship, political incident, house burned down). The subject of the curse will probably suffer some sort of unavoidable injury or trouble in the next game session.

The effect will last until it is recovered from, though recovery is always possible. In game terms, the victim is automatically forced to retest one otherwise victorious challenge later in the current game session, though the Storyteller chooses the test in question.

Curse of Disaster

Lasting, but not fatal, injury follows the cursed individual around. Painful and inconvenient events seem to crop up all of the time, and the side effects of such problems may very well cause the victim long-term grief.

For the remainder of the current game session, the victim suffers a two-Trait penalty on all challenges.

ADVANCED

Great Curse

This curse causes either a lasting, debilitating illness (stroke, heart attack, Alzheimer's) or a terrible calamity (family murdered, all material wealth lost, object of country-wide manhunt). Nothing goes right, and even some close friends or relatives of the victim may suffer from the curse.

For the remainder of the current game session, the cursed individual is automatically forced to take one retest on all successful challenges. Thus, the cursed person is much more likely to fail in any sort of task.

Alternately, this power can bestow some permanent effects. See the Flaw: *Cursed* for some additional ideas. If a permanent curse is invoked, the caster's player must spend the Humanity Trait permanently.



DIVINATION

The art of fortune-telling allows its practitioners to uncover clues, discover personal information and make general predictions based on the process of asking a specific question. The discovery of information through this method requires a certain amount of natural or cultivated psychic sensitivity to tap into the higher consciousness of the querent (the person for whom the character is doing the reading), to invoke one's own higher self or to somehow tap into a force of higher energy.

The combination of psychological interpretive skills and psychic openness allows a few gifted mortals to perceive the truth through divination. The character must choose a method of divination to practice (Tarot cards, I Ching, tea leaves, dice-throwing, runes, crystal ball, opening the Bible to a random passage), reflective of the style appropriate to the character. Typically, *Divination* requires 10 minutes of concentration and study, although certain powers require different amounts of time. Each level of *Divination* has its own rituals, as described in the individual powers.

The future can be a very difficult thing to predict in a game, so Storytellers should limit this power to discovering information about the present or the past.

If possible, it enhances the roleplaying if a Narrator can be the only one to witness the challenge, and give the appropriate answer to the psychic based on the outcome. Most psychics are convinced their answers are correct until proven wrong, and no one else really knows for sure.

The information at a diviner's disposal is very much a matter of asking the right questions, and Narrators may feel free to use their discretion in answering exactly the question posed, rather than volunteering unrelated facts.

Each use of *Divination* requires the expenditure of at least one Humanity Trait.

BASIC

Fortune-telling

You have only a limited knowledge of the art of divination, and have only learned to acquire basic knowledge. You may discover the answer to a simple yes-or-no question. This question might be about yourself or about a querent participating in the divination. Examples range from, "Does the querent's sister hate him?" to, "Does he know anything about the disappearance of my husband?" to even, "Is he a vampire?" Alternately, you can get a sense of a person's general fortunes, allowing you to tell if the individual is laboring under some sort of curse or blessing.

Fortune-telling rituals include Tarot reading, casting I Ching, or using a Ouija board.

Dowsing

Using the proper tools and forms, you can find hidden or lost materials or even people. You can get a "pull" in the general direction of an object for which you search. Using a map, you can get a long-range direction that indicates an area of the map.

You need to engage in a Simple Test after spending your Humanity Trait on this power. *Dowsing* then lets you get a general sense of direction to the object of your search. Note that you must use the proper ritual; different objects and people require different rituals.

Dowsing rituals usually use some sort of pointer or focus, like using a pronged stick to find water.



INTERMEDIATE

Augury

You get a general feeling for the outcome of a single future event. By casting your *Augury*, you gain some insight into the direction that the future will take, and you may be able to alter the course of events with your knowledge. You might sense that an arranged meeting is actually a trap or that a particular business meeting looks promising.

By expending one Humanity Trait and entering a divinatory trance, you can discern the general course of future events. Because you are prepared for what's coming, you have the ability to anticipate the general flow of the setting, and in the next scene you gain one retest on any one challenge. This benefit may be applied to multiple challenges by expending additional Humanity Traits at the time of the *Augury*. If you enter a trance and expend three Humanity Traits, you can retest on any three tests of your choice in the next scene. However, you may not make more than one retest with this power on any given challenge.

Augury rituals resemble *Fortune-telling* rituals but are more complicated. An *Augury* ritual might be reading patterns of tea leaves or staring into flames.

Premonitions

Brief flashes of insight warn you of danger. Though uncontrolled, these visions allow you to react quickly in times of crisis, protecting you from injury almost like a psychic premonition. You need not take any preparation time to gain these visions; *Premonition* functions automatically whenever you are in danger.

You may expend one Humanity Trait any time that you are surprised in order to negate the surprise advantage of your opponent; your *Premonitions* give you a flash of warning, granting a few seconds of leeway.

Premonitions do not require rituals.

ADVANCED

Vision-Quest

You receive visions of future events when engaging in *Divination*. The vision shows a brief snippet of future events, about 15 seconds in duration for each Humanity Trait expended (including the initial Trait spent to activate the *Divination*). Thus, if you spend a Humanity Trait to activate the *Divination* and then expend two additional Humanity Traits, the *Vision-Quest* will show about 45 seconds of the future. You may specify the subject of the vision as yourself or someone you know, but you have no control over what events you foresee. Furthermore, the vision is often unclear or jumpy, and it is easy to misinterpret the events. As the vision is not necessarily linear, your point of view may jump from event to event, even out of chronological order.

In game terms, once you have successfully undertaken a *Vision-Quest*, you may, at some later point in the game, declare that you are experiencing the events of your vision. You then automatically win all ties on one test, with no retests allowed, for each Humanity Trait expended at the time of the vision. Invoking this power on a particular challenge may be done even after Traits are compared, and causes you to win the tie and immediately end the challenge (no further retests are made). For example, you could get into a gunfight and then declare that you foresaw these events, allowing you to win a tie on a *Firearms* Challenge and then another one later in the same scene on a *Brawl* Challenge while trying to tackle a fleeing opponent.



Only one *Vision-Quest* at a time may be active. You cannot undertake a new *Vision-Quest* until the events of the previous quest have come to pass.

Vision-Quest rituals are difficult ordeals that tap into higher consciousness through elaborate ceremony. Examples include the ritual use of peyote or engaging in a meditative trance. A *Vision-Quest* generally takes several hours of time to complete, though the Storyteller may shorten the time for ease of play.

ENCHANTMENT

This path taps into magical energies to imbue a specially constructed object with minor powers. It allows a wizard to transform natural ingredients and objects into minor talismans with real power. *Enchantment* demands a certain investment of time, effort and material. Only the right ingredients will do! Talismans and artifacts take one day per level to concoct, and each is good for a single use. They are meant to be created between sessions, but a few such objects could be prepared ahead of time for a single-shot game. This flexibility gives the Storyteller and the player time to agree on what is being created.

Victims of the darker variety of *Enchantment* — that is, those subjected to powers cast by an object — are allowed to resist the effect by initiating either a Mental or Physical Challenge against the wizard. To successfully create an item, the wizard must spend a Humanity Trait and make a Static Mental Test (against a difficulty of eight Traits). An unsuccessful talisman may have no effect or an unexpected effect determined by the Storyteller.

The wizard is considered two Traits up on the *Enchantment* challenge if it is an item she has made before. Additionally, an enchanter may gain a one-Trait bonus if she actually builds a prop to represent the object in question (as long as she adheres to the No-Weapons policy).

Each type of enchanted object requires its own ritual. The basic powers of *Enchantment* are theoretical knowledge, indicating the limits of the enchanter's possible capabilities. Actually making a talisman requires that the wizard possess the proper ritual to imbue the object in question. Furthermore, activating a talisman usually requires that certain conditions be met. More potent talismans usually have more stringent conditions. A simple talisman may just grant one temporary Negative Trait or require a minor action; powerful talismans might function only during eclipses, when bathed with blood or under other onerous circumstances.

BASIC

Minor Talisman

You can create objects and dusts which perform very minor effects as long as the subject stays within the bounds of the talisman's limitations. A minor talisman can add one Trait to certain exacting tests or conditions. Thus, an enchanted ribbon might be able to grant one bonus Physical Trait when attempting to leap across a chasm, but only if the wearer has it about his feet (gaining the Negative Trait *Clumsy*), or a special type of incense that awakens the user immediately from slumber if threatened but has an overpowering scent and dark smoke (giving the Negative Trait *Oblivious*). In general, these talismans have minor effects, either adding a single Trait for a challenge or simulating a one-Trait Merit for a single task.



Charms and Ornaments

With practice, it's possible to develop talismans that grant longer-lasting effects than most minor objects. Such a talisman might be an amulet that grants a retest against one magical effect, or perhaps a knife that inflicts two Health Levels of damage with its first strike in any given battle. These talismans usually grant one Trait for a scene, or allow the use of a particular one- or two-Trait Merit for a single challenge.

INTERMEDIATE

Potent Talisman

You can now make talismans that confer minor supernatural powers (such as one use of any of the Basic Psychic Phenomena) or an oil to rub onto a weapon so that it inflicts aggravated damage on its next strike. The item performs a clearly unusual function, and onlookers may be mystified at the object's powers. In general, assume that these talismans add one Trait for a scene or two Traits for a challenge if specifically designed to augment an Attribute, or they can allow one use of an Ability or Basic power that is otherwise denied to the user.

Amulets and Periapts

Talismans created with this level of ability defy the bounds of the mundane world. Such a talisman duplicates many minor magical effects or performs mundane tasks quickly and simply. A set of enchanted glasses might allow the wearer to see the invisible, while magical gloves could bestow superior gripping and climbing strength. These talismans tend to add two Traits while worn or three Traits for a scene, and they may bestow Basic powers of various natures for a limited duration.

ADVANCED

Superior Talisman

These are the magical items of legend — flying brooms, magic daggers, protective amulets and other impossible (or at least improbable) magical items. These items allow the user to defy conventional reality for a scene. With such a talisman, a user may gain three to four Physical, Social or Mental Traits, or he may heal or inflict one Health Level of damage. A magic sword might always inflict two Health Levels of damage, or a special hairpin could grant three additional Social Traits to the wearer.

At this stage, you can create items that bestow powers resembling Basic or Intermediate vampiric Disciplines, werewolf Gifts or other powers. These items can only bestow a single use or limited duration, rather than the complete effects of the power. As always, work closely with a Storyteller to determine the exact effects of the item and the powers that it does (and does not) possess.

EPHEMERA

This path allows a sorcerer to open herself to spirit channels. The nature of the spirits she contacts depends on the rituals the wizard knows. This path does not differentiate between types of spirits; breaching the Gauntlet to speak with nature spirits is as difficult as the rending the Shroud to contact wraiths. Note that even the wizard herself might not realize which spirits she deals with. Amateur wizards frequently get themselves in trouble this way, opening themselves to Banes or worse.

Spirits, however, have minds of their own. If they have some reason to mislead, possess or abuse the magician, they may try. Others are simply mischievous, and they may lead the wizard into games for their own amusement.



Ephemera differs from the Merit: *Medium* in that it requires lengthy rituals to function, though *Ephemera* can functionally accomplish more. Mediums, on the other hand, do not need to put their personal energies into the task of contacting spirits, but are limited to dealing with spirits that are at hand. Many ephemerists are also mediums.

Performing any *Ephemera* ritual requires the expenditure of a Humanity Trait and a successful Social Challenge against the spirit in question, unless otherwise noted. Rituals that do not directly target a particular spirit are instead cast with a Static Challenge, versus a difficulty based on the sorcerer's *Ephemera* skill — more powerful sorcerers can cast their effects more easily.

Sorcerers may combine their efforts when working against particularly powerful spirits. In such a case, each additional sorcerer can add one Willpower Trait to the pool of Traits when engaging in challenges to control or banish a targeted spirit. In this fashion, an experienced sorcerer (with several Willpower Traits) can call on the aid of multiple colleagues, in order to have a chance to bind or repel very powerful spirits. As with any group effort, no more than five sorcerers may contribute to any one challenge (the primary caster and four assistants).

If the wizard is in possession of a wraith's fetter, she is considered to have two additional Traits for any challenge against that wraith.

Since *Ephemera* deals so heavily with spirits, the Storyteller should have the appropriate resources on hand. See **Laws of the Wild** for information about nature spirits, and **Oblivion** for statistics on wraiths.

EPHEMERA RITUALS

Banishment/Forbiddance (Basic)

Wraiths can be pushed out of an area through the use of Forbiddance. Similarly, nature spirits can be forced away with Banishment. The ephemerist must make a Social Challenge against the wraith or spirit, as usual; success indicates that the target is banished from the room or area (when in doubt, assume that the spirit must stay at least 10 feet away from the area where the sorcerer cast the Banishment or Forbiddance).

Call Spirit (Basic)

These rituals allow you to summon ghosts (wraiths) and nature spirits (naturae). Successful use of the Call Wraith ritual means that *something* comes in response to your call. You must specify the type of ritual that you know as either Call Wraith or Call Naturae; only spirits of the appropriate type respond. Remember that this ritual does not grant any ability to control what you summon.

Seal/Warding (Basic)

Warding protects an area from wraiths, while a Seal protects a location from nature spirits. Setting up a spiritual ward requires that the ephemerist delineate the protected area with some sort of special material or ceremony, be it a painted sigil, sea salt or a simple prayer. The sorcerer must then expend a Willpower Trait. Once a Ward or Seal is enacted, no spirit of the appropriate type can enter the area for a week.

See Spirit (Basic)

An ephemerist normally can't see the spirits with which she deals, unless she possesses the appropriate Merits. These rituals allow you to make spirits visible, so that you can tell what you're dealing with. Note that the ability to see a spirit does not translate into the ability to recognize it; a wraith or nature spirit might take an altered form to hide its true identity, and this ritual does not grant any ability to see through such masks. See Wraith and See Naturae must be learned separately.



Command Spirit (Intermediate)

This powerful ritual, which only functions on nature spirits, allows the ephemerist to demand service from the subject. The ephemerist must best the targeted spirit in a Social Challenge, and then must have more Willpower Traits than the spirit. If the power succeeds, the ephemerist can give the spirit a single command, which must be obeyed (for the rest of the session). Indiscriminate use of this power tends to give an ephemerist many spiritual enemies, since most spirits dislike being commanded in this fashion. Greater spirits may intervene if their lesser servitors are distracted too often.

Deny the Veil (Intermediate)

A powerful ephemerist can actually see beyond the curtain of the living world, extending sight (and perhaps other senses) into the spirit realms or the lands of the dead. Each of the spirit worlds requires a different ritual; Deny the Spirit Veil allows the ephemerist to see into the natural spirit world (also called the Umbra), while Deny the Restless Veil grants vision into the Shadowlands, the decaying reflection of reality that is haunted by wraiths. This ritual lasts for the duration of the scene. Sensation into one of the other worlds by means of this magic does not preclude the ephemerist's use of senses in the material world. That is, an ephemerist using this ritual to see into the Shadowlands can still see in the living world as well.

Dolor (Intermediate)

The use of Dolor allows an ephemerist to strike an unruly or uncooperative spirit, inflicting spiritual damage directly. Such an attack requires a Mental (not Social) Challenge against the target spirit. Success indicates that the spirit suffers one level of damage. Of course, it's always a good idea to make sure that you can defend yourself from the counterattack of a given spirit if you decide to use this means of "persuasion."

Gossip (Intermediate)

By means of the spiritual "gossiping" rituals, an ephemerist spreads word among various spirits known to her. As always, the ritual must be separately researched for use with wraiths or naturae. In either case, the ephemerist may choose to send a short (one sentence) message to any spirits known to her that are of the appropriate type. Whether or not the spirits respond to this message in any fashion is, of course, up to the spirits in question.

Grasp Wraith (Intermediate)

A specialized spiritual ritual can cause the ephemerist to become a focal point for a wraith. This ritual causes the ephemerist to become a Fetter for the wraith for a period of a week. In general, the wraith will try to protect the ephemerist, and it may wait nearby just in case matters get out of hand. See **Oblivion** for more information about wraiths and Fetters in **Mind's Eye Theatre**.

Distant Call (Advanced)

With a successful Social Challenge, you can call a spirit from the far realms of existence. Most ephemerists deal only with wraiths in the Shadowlands which mirror the living world, or with nature spirits in the Penumbra that likewise reflects the mortal realm. This power allows the medium to send a call out to a spirit that has passed into farther realms (such as a wraith in the Tempest, or a spirit in the Deep Umbra), although there is no guarantee that the spirit will answer the summons. Still, if the ephemerist has dealt favorably with the spirit in the past, then the spirit is likely to respond, if only out of curiosity.



BASIC

Seance

You open yourself to nearby spirits and can even get the attention of spirits with which you are familiar. What the spirits do is up to them, though a successful Social Challenge makes them more predisposed to obeying you. You still need the appropriate rituals to communicate with the spirits, of course, though in general, wraiths are aware of you even if you don't notice them.

You also feel the presence of spirits just as if you possessed the Merit: *Shivers*. At this level, you can only use rituals to call wraiths, or to Ward areas or to expel wraiths with Forbiddance. You have no control over what (or whom), exactly, you summon. Your difficulty for all Static Challenges of *Ephemera* is nine Traits, so it may take some real work for you to accomplish anything.

Communion

An ephemerist at this basic level of development has a rudimentary capability for communication with spirits of all types. Although you must rely on cajoling and compromise to gain favors from spirits, you are at least capable of seeing and calling on a wide range of spirit entities.

You can use the additional Basic rituals of See Spirit and Call Spirit, even affecting naturae at this level. You can learn Seal and Banishment so as to defend against nature spirits, as well. Still, your difficulty for Static Challenges of *Ephemera* is eight Traits, meaning that although your abilities are theoretically expansive, they are unreliable.

INTERMEDIATE

Spirit Influence

Your mediumship talents are well-developed, and when you call, something almost always comes. You can now injure spirits that cause you trouble, and your calling rituals can now target specific spirits by name, instead of randomly attracting entities.

You can learn and use the rituals of Dolor and Gossip at this level of power, in addition to all of the Basic rituals. Your difficulty for any Static Challenge of *Ephemera* is seven Traits.

Spirit Vision

Powerful in spirit, you are capable of compelling the obedience out of the spirits that you summon; you can even see across the wall between the material and spirit worlds. Spirits know your name, and they may even try to contact you for favors or advice when you don't call on them directly.

At this level of power, you can learn the rituals of Grasp Wraith, Command Spirit, and Deny the Veil, in addition to all of the other Basic and Intermediate rituals. Your difficulty for all Static Challenges of *Ephemera* is only six Traits.

ADVANCED

Pierce the Veil

No spirit is beyond the reach of your power. Although you must be cautious in your dealings with particularly powerful spirits, you can send out messages to spirits far beyond the mortal realms. Weaker spirits may aid you simply to curry favor, but hostile spirits are more likely to hunt you down, seeing you as a danger.

All rituals of *Ephemera* are available to you at this level. Your difficulty for Static Challenges of *Ephemera* is five Traits. You have truly mastered your craft.



HEALING

This path allows a magician to quell pain or even heal small injuries or illnesses. Such healing is not an instant cure-all; it takes a long time to treat an illness or injury, and longer still for the patient to heal completely. (See Chapter Four for details on accelerated healing.) Magical healers often have a strong sense of duty and compassion, and the traumas of the World of Darkness can use up such people long before their time. Each ailment treated costs one Humanity Trait and one Willpower Trait to affect. This path cannot heal aggravated wounds.

HEALING RITUALS

Break Infections (Basic)

Separate from diseases, infections are conditions that result when an injury becomes inflamed. Secondary infections claim the lives of most people with untreated injuries, and without this ritual, infection may well set in if the healer doesn't manage to repair other injuries rapidly enough.

Cure Diseases (Basic)

A healer who specializes in curing disease can mitigate fevers and fight back the symptoms of disease. Particularly powerful healers can even cure dangerous diseases with a great deal of work. The healer's level of power determines what severity of diseases may be cured.

Heal Open Wounds (Basic)

These forms of ritual let the healer deal with damage in the form of surface injury: Cuts, gunshots and abrasions all fall into this category.

Repair Internal Trauma (Basic)

Internal injuries, sprains and broken bones fall under the purview of this ritual. The healer doesn't necessarily have to see the injury in order to cure it, and most such injuries require a great deal of time to heal due to their severity, but the healer's abilities can often help people injured in falls or collisions.

Treat Chronic Ailments (Basic)

"Chronic ailments" include asthma, arthritis and diabetes. With this ritual, the healer can banish pain or fatigue resulting from such problems, or even cure them with sufficient effort.

BASIC

Soothing Touch

At this level of mastery, you have learned how to ease pains and treat infections and diseases. Using a *Soothing Touch* on an appropriate injury alleviates pain, so that the individual no longer suffers any wound penalties from the damage (up to the Wounded Health Level) for the remainder of the scene. You cannot actually speed the healing of injury, but you can keep the subject from suffering through the process.

Minor Healing

You can treat any minor injury from a sprain to a flu with the appropriate rituals, healing in less than the normal time. In game terms, your character can cause an individual to heal from the Bruised Health Level at an accelerated rate. You must use the appropriate ritual to speed the healing process; the Heal Open Wounds ritual will not speed the healing of damage from a broken bone, for instance.



INTERMEDIATE

Restoration

With the right rituals, you can take care of fairly serious wounds and nasty colds or fairly dangerous diseases like pneumonia. You can speed up the healing rate of any injury up to the Wounded Health Level with the right rituals. Additionally, you can immediately bring an Incapacitated character to consciousness, and even help her hobble about, although she still suffers the normal penalties from the injuries.

Major Healing

Chronic diseases are not beyond your care, although healing them takes hours or weeks. Broken bones and severe trauma heal much faster than normal, and your touch banishes all but the worst pain. You can speed the healing of any wounds up to the Incapacitated level, as long as you have the proper rituals; such wounds heal at a greatly accelerated rate.

ADVANCED

Cure All

With effort, you can hold back deadly conditions — AIDS, cancer, meningitis, stroke — though it takes a lot out of you and requires weeks of treatment. These diseases are sent into remission, or their traumatic effects are lessened. Broken bones and major trauma heal after only one to three weeks of care, and infection poses no risk as long as you are on the job.

To permanently cure deadly conditions, such as cancer, meningitis and even AIDS, requires the expenditure of a permanent Willpower Trait, and usually necessitates weeks of care and treatment. As always, you must possess the appropriate rituals, so AIDS can only be cured if you know the Cure Diseases ritual. You accelerate the rate of healing for anyone under your care, at any level of injury, although you can't bring back the dead.

HERBALISM

This path relies on the power inherent in elements and nature. By using the proper ingredients, the sorcerer can brew potions, elixirs and salves with a variety of amazing effects. Although *Herbalism* takes time and effort, the caster can often stockpile potions for later use, much like the objects created with *Enchantment*.

Herbalism rituals take the form of recipes that describe how to make potions with certain effects. The effective level of the ritual is based on the power of the potion; a potion that requires Intermediate *Herbalism* to brew uses an Intermediate ritual.

Brewing a potion requires a Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty dependent on the complexity of the brew. Potions take some time to create; as a general guideline, assume one week for Basic elixirs, two weeks for Intermediate elixirs, and one month for Advanced elixirs. The success test should not be made until the brewing time is completed. Victims of malefic potions may make a Physical Challenge in order to resist or throw off the effects of the potions. Each potion should have its maker's number of Mental Traits recorded for this test.

BASIC

Poultices and Brews

You can make herbal remedies that would never be considered magical. Your potions can banish mild headaches and your salves can remove rashes. Although weak, your potions can be used for a variety of effects if you are creative; you can duplicate just about anything that could be done with over-the-counter medicines and chemicals. Your elixirs take some time (three turns/one minute) to take effect. These *Poultices and Brews* have a creation difficulty of four Traits.

Minor Elixirs

Although potions and elixirs created with this level of ability seem far from magical, their effects are certainly remarkable. Your “home remedies” can banish hangovers, your potions can avert or ensure pregnancy and alter moods and your salves can attract or repel insects or animals. Much of the material created with these elixirs borders on the extraordinary. Your potions can duplicate anything that strong medicines would accomplish, but with slightly greater efficiency. *Minor Elixirs* have a creation difficulty of five Traits.

INTERMEDIATE

Potent Concoctions

Your herbal brews have reached a level of potency that is clearly unusual, even noticeably supernatural. You can make potions that knock people unconscious, induce rapid healing, allow people subjected to deadly poisons to survive and place people in hypnotic moods. All of your potions now take effect quite quickly (within one turn/15 seconds). *Potent Concoctions* have a creation difficulty of six Traits.

Major Elixirs

Elixirs and brews of this level create unusual effects indeed. Your potions can add one or two Traits for a scene, heal a Health Level of damage or numb pain so that the drinker suffers no penalties from wounds. *Major Elixirs* have a creation difficulty of seven Traits.

ADVANCED

Legendary Elixirs

The stuff of magical stories and tales — aphrodisiacs, instantly fatal poisons and the like fall under this category. Although all of the effects of these concoctions remain subtle, you can certainly grant two or three additional Traits with your elixirs or allow a drinker access to a particular Basic supernatural power for a scene. *Legendary Elixirs* have a creation difficulty of eight Traits.

SUMMONING, BINDING AND WARDING

Probably the most dangerous path of Sorcery, *Summoning, Binding and Warding* allows a sorcerer to call and control creatures. Anything from small animals to supernatural creatures may be subjected to this path. Naturally, the sorcerer had better be prepared to back up his powers, as any bound creature that gets loose is likely to take out its ire on its antagonist. Because of this danger, some sorcerers refuse to use *Binding*, and instead simply *Summon* creatures and barter for services.

There are as many forms of *Summoning, Binding and Warding* as there are styles of magic. Some of these spells are cast as prayers; others are done as elaborate ritual ceremonies, while some sorcerers cast these magics with pagan blood rites. Regardless, the effects are similar.

Rituals for *Summoning, Binding and Warding* come in variable levels of difficulty. A ritual's effective level is defined by the type of creature affected. Weak sorcerers can only affect small animals, and the rituals used to do so are Basic. Extremely powerful sorcerers, on the other hand, can even affect major supernatural beings, though they must use Advanced rituals to do so. Refer to the individual levels of the path for descriptions of what creatures may be affected; these listings also indicate the level of



ritual necessary. Thus, a Summon Vampire ritual is Advanced because vampires can only be affected by Advanced levels of this path, while a Bind Rats ritual is Basic. Each type of creature requires a separate set of rituals. Needless to say, competent *Summoning*, *Binding* and *Warding* of multiple types of creatures is difficult indeed.

SUMMONING, BINDING AND WARDING RITUALS

Dismissal (Variable)

A Dismissal ritual attempts to force a creature away. The caster must make a Mental Challenge against the target; success indicates that the target is compelled to leave in peace. Nothing prevents the target from seeking a later vengeance, but for the duration of the scene, the target must leave without attacking (although all bets are off if the creature is attacked while exiting). A Dismissal ritual cannot be used after a Major Binding ritual — get it right or suffer.

Minor Binding (Variable)

A Minor Binding is used to demand one task of a servant creature. The sorcerer expends a Humanity Trait and engages in a Social Challenge with the target creature. If the sorcerer wins, then the target must fulfill one command for the wizard; if the sorcerer fails, then the target is free to do as it pleases. Commands should be spelled out as clearly as possible. After all, the victim will certainly look for a way to escape the letter of the clause and to wreak vengeance on the wizard who would dare to compel it.

Storytellers may wish to restrict the commands from a Minor Binding to duties that can be carried out in the course of the evening's play. Thus, a Minor Binding to "seek out the *Anexhexeton*, which has been lost for 600 years" would fail unless the subject could definitively recover the item within the evening's play.

Major Binding (Variable)

This form of control pits the sorcerer into an extended challenge with the opponent. The sorcerer must first spend a Humanity Trait to engage in the spell. The players make a series of Social Challenges, attempting to accumulate successes. When one side has gathered a number of successful tests equal to the opponent's permanent Willpower, the ritual is complete. If the sorcerer succeeds in the Major Binding, then he compels the subject to servitude until some contractual event, specified by the caster, comes to pass. If the sorcerer fails, the subject of the ritual will doubtless take out its frustrations on the would-be wizard.

The Storyteller may wish to restrict the conditions for use of Major Binding; casting this ritual on another player's character and then setting lengthy conditions ("after a year and a day") can grate on the nerves of the victimized player, creating bad feelings. It is recommended that Major Bindings only be usable on Narrator characters, and even then, the conditions for escaping servitude should be ones that can be met during the course of play (even if not in the same session).

Summoning (Variable)

Summoning rituals are complex spells designed to draw a creature into the caster's presence. The caster must make a successful Social Challenge in order to summon a target. If the ritual succeeds, then the target makes haste to arrive at the wizard's location, although it does so under its own power — a summoned creature does not suddenly appear out of the air (unless that is within its powers). A ritual of this sort can only summon a creature at a distance of one mile for each permanent Willpower Trait the caster possesses.



Warding (Variable)

Wise summoners protect themselves by means of Warding. Successfully cast wards prevent the affected creatures from approaching the sorcerer. The sorcerer must make a Mental Challenge with a difficulty determined by the nature of the creature affected (see the individual path levels). If the Warding ritual is successful, then the creature may not come within three paces of the caster or even touch the caster. All supernatural powers used by the creature against the sorcerer — *Dominate*, *Blur of the Milky Eye* and so on — are muted; the sorcerer gains a Trait bonus on all challenges against these powers, as described in the individual power levels.

BASIC

Invoke Vermin

You can call small swarms of vermin with this power. Rats, bats, birds and insects are the limits of your magic. Each ritual that you cast affects three creatures of the appropriate type, so a few castings of a Summoning ritual can quickly call a small horde. Your Warding has a one-Trait defensive strength, making you one Trait up on all challenges when defending against mystical powers of your summoned creatures. Summoning rituals for vermin have a five-Trait difficulty.

Invoke Mammals

You can summon and control higher mammals and large animals with your magic, compelling obedience with the proper rituals. Each ritual can affect two creatures of the appropriate type, so you can easily garner multiple dolphins, dogs, wolves and the like. All of your Warding now has a two-Trait defensive strength, and your Summoning rituals for creatures of this type have a six-Trait difficulty.

INTERMEDIATE

Invoke Mankind

Your rituals affect true humans, beings capable of thought and independent action, at this level. You cannot affect supernatural humans — ghouls, powerful sorcerers and the like are still outside of your expertise. You can only affect one target at a time, and you need some sort of physical connection to the target — a bit of hair or some other personal effect. All of your Warding rituals have a three-Trait defensive strength, and Summoning for humans has a seven-Trait difficulty.

Invoke the Touched

Expanding on your ability to bind and defend against humans, you can now hedge out or command those humans who have been touched by the supernatural. Ghouls, Kinfolk, kinain, familiars and others are within your range of power. You can only affect one of these targets at a time, and you must use some sort of physical connection, just as with humans. Your Warding rituals have a four-Trait defensive strength, and Summoning for those touched by the strange has an eight-Trait difficulty.

ADVANCED

Invoke the Supernatural

Vampires, werewolves and faeries — all are within your power. You can even affect mages and some types of earth-bound monsters. You still need a focus that ties into the being in question, such as blood or a bit of fur. Still, your mighty magics can compel the most dangerous of the supernatural world. Your Warding grants five defensive Traits. Summoning a true supernatural creature is extremely taxing, with a difficulty of nine Traits.



THEURGY

When members of the Society of Leopold possess any Numina beyond True Faith, they refer to it as the art of *Theurgy*. For its advocates, it is merely another manner of invoking the aid of Heaven, a sanctioned variant of magic. For its detractors, it is still magic, and thus it is evil. The rituals are performed in a Christian manner, invoking the name(s) of God, the Savior, Mary or various saints and angels.

Theurgists have different names for each Numina path, which are referred to as ways. Most of these forms of *Theurgy* are functionally equivalent to the other Numinae previously listed.

THEURGIC WAY	EQUIVALENT NUMINA
<i>Via Ignis</i> , the Way of Holy Fire	(see text)
<i>Via Medicamenti</i> , the Way of Remedy	Healing
<i>Via Genoriam</i> , the Dark Path	Ephemera (spirit)
<i>Via Necromantiae</i> , Necromancy	Ephemera (wraith)
<i>Via Oraculi</i> , the Way of Prophecy	Divination

VIA IGNIS, THE WAY OF HOLY FIRE

The Inquisition calls on God's fire to punish the wicked, summon searing flames to light the way in darkness and burn the faithless.

The *Via Ignis* is functionally similar to *Pyrokinesis*, and that Numina should be used, with a few changes kept in mind:

- The *Via Ignis* is limited to touch range and to objects that the Inquisitor holds. The Inquisitor can cause his own hands to be wreathed in flame, or he can make a weapon burst into flames. Missile weapons cannot carry the Holy Flame; the Inquisitor must strike in hand-to-hand combat.
- *Via Ignis*, when used in combat, adds one *Burning Trait* at the Basic level, a second *Burning Trait* at the Intermediate level and a total of three *Burning Traits* at the Advanced level.
- The Inquisitor must still buy rituals for each type of weapon to be affected by *Via Ignis*. Thus, casting Holy Fire over a sword requires a different ritual than invoking Holy Fire around one's fist. Each of these rituals is considered Basic.
- God's Fire allows the Inquisitor to inflict aggravated damage when using the Basic levels. The Intermediate levels inflict a level of aggravated damage in addition to any damage from the weapon. The Advanced level scores an amazing two levels of aggravated damage in addition to the weapon's normal damage.

BENANDANTI RITUALS

With special training and the use of rituals passed on through the ages, an individual born with a caul may learn the Benandanti way, developing the power to see into and even travel within the Shadowlands. Though risky in the extreme, this form of travel into the twilight realm of the dead promises the rewards of great knowledge.

Benandanti have the potential to learn special rituals tied to their particular powers. In general, any Benandante character can use the special rituals detailed below, since the Benandanti pass their knowledge through families and bestow special training to children born with cauls. Thus, any Benandante of moderate age will certainly know how to perform all of the special powers of the Benandanti.

UNHOODING

The Unhooding is a ritual that marks the beginning of life for a Benandante. Generally, this ritual is performed by a blood-relative of a child born with a caul. The *sapienza*, an older and more experienced Benandante, removes the caul before it dries and works special magics into it with this ritual. Once the Unhooding is performed successfully, the caul may be used by the fledgling Benandante to perform the powers of Ekstasis.

The Unhooding ritual takes several hours to perform. Typically, the Benandante performing the ritual removes the caul from the infant, then takes it to a safe place to perform the ritual. Although this ritual is of limited utility in game play, it is necessary when creating new Benandanti. A child who was not Unhooded cannot use the powers of the Benandanti. On the other hand, once the ritual is successfully performed, it is permanent.

EYELIDDING

By passing your caul in front of his face, you can attempt to see into the Underworld. You must pass the prop representing your caul across your eyes, and then expend a Willpower Trait. After you do so, you are able to peer into the Underworld from your current position. Thus, if you are standing in an old building and you perform this ritual, you can see the decaying and crumbling counterpart of that building in the Shadowlands, as well as any wraiths that may be in the area.

Performing Eyelidding takes only a moment (a single turn), and the power lasts for the duration of a scene.

EKSTASIS

True Ekstasis may only be performed between dusk and dawn. You must first possess the powers of *Ephemera* (see Sorcery), and you must assume a dreamlike trance. You must then perform a Mental Challenge with a difficulty of eight Traits, using your caul as a focus — the ritual of Ekstasis cannot be performed without a caul.

Should you succeed in performing this ritual, your body remains motionless while your spirit projects into the Shadowlands. There, you travel the world of the dead and interact with wraiths, although you are not actually made of plasm and are therefore immune to many wraith powers such as *Moliate* and *Usury*. Similarly, powers designed specifically to affect wraiths, including the vampiric Discipline of *Necromancy* and the Sorcery path of *Ephemera*, cannot control you; you are a living spirit in the sunlit lands.

After appearing in the Shadowlands, you must immediately make a Mental Challenge to orient yourself. The difficulty for this challenge is six Traits. You must make a similar challenge to return to your point of origin when leaving if you move from the spot where you enter. If you fail on either of these challenges, you are trapped in the Shadowlands, and you must find some other means of egress. Typically, the Storyteller will fashion some alternate way of leaving, although it is difficult and dangerous to find such a path.



The ties between the Shadowlands and the lands of the living are strongest at night. If daylight arrives at the location of your physical body while you are in the Shadowlands, your exit is compromised. You must find a new exit, as described previously.

In spirit form, you can travel to the deeper parts of the Shadowlands, including such dread areas as the Labyrinth and the Tempest. Beware of getting lost, though. A small hospice full of comatose Benandanti awaits for those overconfident enough to surpass their abilities.

For detailed information regarding the Shadowlands, see **Oblivion**.

FORGING THE FENNEL SWORD

A fennel sword is a powerful talisman that the Benandanti use for protection in the Underworld. Built during Ekstasis in the Shadowlands, the fennel swords have the ability to strike and injure wraiths, traveling in spiritual form with their masters in the spirit plane.

The sword is created by harvesting fennel from soil which has been seeded with your caul in a Haunt (a place frequented by ghosts). The fennel must be harvested at dawn of midsummer and wrapped in the caul, then kept cold and away from sunlight. You then perform meditation for the entire day, returning to the site of the plot in the evening. Here, the spirit of a deceased Benandante must be summoned as a guide (most likely by using *Ephemera*), and you enter Ekstasis, as detailed previously, while your head rests on the bushel of fennel. You take your caul and fennel (which appears in the spirit world as well) and follow the spirit guide to a special forge, where you must build a sword from *ferro spettrale*, a spirit-iron kept in safekeeping at the forge. You must answer a series of questions put to you by the guide; failure indicates that the spirit-guide destroys your caul, stranding you in the Underworld, while success allows you to proceed with the forging.

The sword must be built from *ferro spettrale* combined with the spiritual fennel. This task is a series of Physical Challenges with a difficulty of six Traits, using the *Crafts* Ability. You must accumulate five successful challenges in order to finish the sword; failure on any challenge indicates that the sword is flawed, and work must begin anew (even growing and harvesting new fennel). When the sword is ready, it must be named and plunged into a Nihil to cool; it is then empowered for a year. Each month on the new moon after the first year, the sword must be plunged once more into a Nihil so as to restore its powers, or else it must be reforged.

Once the spirit weapon is built, you can forge an actual, physical weapon around it in the material world, which requires the same Physical Challenge as forging the ghost-blade. The two become inextricably joined, and the physical sword is as magical a weapon as the spiritual one.

See Chapter Four for information regarding the special powers of fennel swords. Naturally, the forging and naming of a fennel sword is a powerful event, and Storytellers should take advantage of the plot possibilities in constructing a story for such rituals.





CHAPTER FOUR: SYSTEMS AND RULES

TIME

The clock ticks inexorably onward, especially in live-action games. Time that passes in the real world also generally passes in play, so once the sun has set, hunters had best be wary of vampires.

To distinguish specific events in the game, **Mind's Eye Theatre** calls on certain conventions. Some events require that time effectively be halted in the game while Narrators or Storytellers resolve issues. Other actions require that the game jump from a particular game time to a different section of game time. As long as the Narrators and Storytellers keep track of continuity and make sure that the players are aware of any discrepancies, the game will flow smoothly.

TURNS

When characters start getting involved in complex and detailed actions that involve many challenges, it's time to start using turns. A turn lasts about four seconds of game time. In any given turn, each character may take one action (although some special powers allow characters to act more than once in a turn). Some actions take multiple turns to complete, like repairing a piece of delicate equipment. Other actions, like speaking a short sentence, do not use up a character's turn at all. Once everyone has taken an action, play proceeds to the next game turn.

In some cases, a character's action may be interrupted, or the character will be forced to respond to events before taking his normal action. In such a case, the character can defend himself, but taking any other action — counterattacking, running away, activating a special power — uses up his available action for the turn. Thus, if a character intends to punch an enemy but someone else attacks him first and he decides to punch



back, he uses up his action immediately when counterattacking and can't strike his original target later in the turn (unless some special ability gives him extra actions).

If a power affects a character for up to 15 seconds, it is assumed to work for four turns when turn-based time is in effect. In normal roleplaying, such powers simply work for their allotted periods of time.

DOWNTIME

Between games, a Narrator or Storyteller may decide to pick up some "downtime." In this time, players submit proposals for activities that their characters attempt to accomplish that are not generally roleplayed. Characters can use Influence, engage in lengthy study or research and resolve actions that are lengthy or ill-suited to live roleplaying.

The best way to handle downtime is to have the players submit their ideas and requests to the Storyteller in written format. Then, the Storyteller can go over the various actions between games. At the next game session, the Storyteller may announce the results of the actions to the players, or simply provide short written summaries detailing the outcomes.

CHALLENGES

Any time something happens in the game where the outcome is in doubt, or when an event cannot be handled through pure roleplaying, a challenge is required. Challenges resolve the outcome of fights, unreliable powers and instances where a player wishes to attempt a task for which the character is suited but the player is not.

USING TRAITS

The Attribute Traits of a character define her limits and capabilities. Entering a challenge often requires the expenditure of one or more Traits. Familiarize yourself with the Traits listed in Chapter Two; aside from describing a character, such Traits also delineate what a character can do.

INITIAL BID

The challenge begins when a player declares the use of a particular Trait associated with an action or condition. The defender must either relent, or bid a Trait in order to respond.

The Traits used in the challenge should correspond to the type of test involved. That is, a player should use Physical Traits if her character is attacking with a rapier and Social Traits when attempting to convince another character of something. In most cases, both parties will use the same type of Traits. Experienced players may allow for a little more flexibility, but this flexibility should only be allowed with the consent of all parties involved.

Once the Traits are bid, the players proceed to a test. If the defender relents, she does not risk a Trait, but automatically suffers the effects described by the terms of the challenge. Similarly, if the defender does not have an appropriate Trait, she must automatically relent, losing the challenge immediately. If both parties bid sufficient Traits, they proceed to a test, in which the winner achieves his goals while the loser suffers the effects and temporarily loses the Trait he bid.



TESTING

Once players risk Traits to attempt a challenge, they proceed to a test. By testing, they determine a random outcome, influenced by the capabilities of their characters. The parties involved play Rock-Paper-Scissors to resolve the outcome. In such a test, either one party will win or the participants will tie.

If one player wins, the loser suffers the conditions of the test (gets stabbed, is convinced of a lie, etc.) and temporarily loses the Trait he bid. In the case of a tie, check the total number of Traits each participant has; the player whose character still has the most Traits wins the challenge. Remember to use the current number of Traits, as a character who has suffered several recent losses will have temporarily lost some Traits. Flaws or special circumstances also lower the number of Traits available to a character; use the adjusted total Traits to resolve the tie.

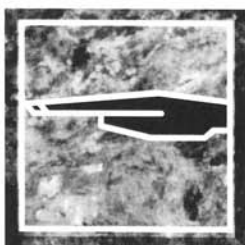
You may lie about the number of Traits that you possess in a tie, though you may only declare fewer Traits than you actually have. Doing so allows you to conceal your true capabilities, but remember that you risk losing the challenge if you don't use enough Traits.

The challenger always declares Traits first in resolving a tie. If both players declare the exact same number of Traits, then the defender wins, but both parties lose the Traits they bid.

Example of Play: Agent Spencer has caught up to a particularly vicious vampire, who decided not to freeze when ordered. Being a suspicious sort, Agent Spencer decides to fire on the recalcitrant suspect with his service revolver ("I *Quickly* take aim and fire several rounds from my revolver at your retreating back!"). The vampire, Eddie the Brujah, simply wants to avoid this pesky mortal, and he bids a Trait to keep going ("I'm too *Tough* for a couple of slugs to slow me down."). The two players proceed to a test, and both of them throw Paper. Agent Spencer has a total of seven Physical Traits available, but Eddie only has six. Eddie loses his *Tough* Trait and also suffers a wound from the bullets. Doubtless, the damage to the leather jacket will annoy the vampire sufficiently to cause him to stay and fight. Agent Spencer had better have more bullets.

ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS

If, for some strange reason, you are unfamiliar with the game of Rock-Paper-Scissors, you might want to consider re-examining your childhood. To play, you choose one of three hand signs to indicate a selection: Rock is a closed fist, Scissors is a hand with the first two fingers extended and spread apart and Paper is a flat and open hand. Compare your symbol with your opponent's to determine the victor. Rock crushes Scissors, Scissors cut Paper and Paper covers Rock. Identical signs indicate a tie.





ADJUDICATION

When the result of a challenge is in doubt, call on the services of a Narrator for assistance. It's best to remain in character while looking for a Narrator. Try not to interrupt the flow of the game. Since time marches inexorably onward, it's bad form to hold up a scene for 15 minutes while looking for a Narrator to get a concrete ruling. Often, it's simpler just to go with the story, and let improvisation guide the way.

When a character fails a particular Mental or Social Test, the character generally can't attempt the same test against the same person for at least five minutes (and time spent arguing with a Narrator doesn't count). Some powers specify differently, but assume that this rule holds true if not otherwise noted. Thus, a psychic who tries to use *Telekinesis* to lift an object, but fails the Static Mental Challenge, must wait for five minutes before trying to lift the object again. Similarly, if an agent attempts to convince someone to help him (with a Social Challenge) but fails, the agent must wait for five minutes before attempting to convince the person again in the same way.

COMPLICATIONS

Naturally, quite a few additional situations can complicate matters during a challenge. Although the flow of the story is always important, some fairly common adjuncts to the normal challenge procedure follow.

NEGATIVE TRAITS

If you have deduced an opponent's Negative Trait, you may bid that Trait in addition to your own. This means that your opponent must risk an additional Trait before the test. If you are wrong about your opponent's Negative Trait, you must risk an additional Trait of your own. You may work as many Negative Traits as desired into your test, but be careful, because you must cover your bets if your opponent doesn't have the Traits that you call.

If an additional Trait is not available, you may still test, but if you win your opponent does not lose the Trait he risked. If multiple Negative Traits are brought into play and you cannot match them, your opponent gains that many bonus Traits in the event of a tie, making resolution in his favor much more likely.

Example of Play: Agent Spencer now has an enraged vampire charging at him. Fumbling to reload his revolver, he is attacked by the bare-handed Cainite ("I *Ferociously* grab you by the throat and heave you into the air!"). Spencer tries to backpedal, buying time to reload ("I *Nimblely* step back and out of your reach."). Spencer's player has been shadowing this Brujah vampire for some time, though, and suspects that the vampire is still a little bit damaged from an old war wound acquired during his mortal days ("Your old injuries make you too *Decrepit* to catch me."). Spencer's investigations are accurate; the Brujah does indeed possess the Negative Trait *Decrepit*, and Eddie's player must now risk an additional Trait if he still wishes to grapple with the FBI agent.

OVERBIDDING

Overbidding allows a supremely experienced and competent hunter to crush more feeble prey. After all, Sullivan Dane with his eight Mental Traits should far outmatch a department store clerk with three. Overbidding lets a confident character recoup against an initial loss to a less-powerful opponent.



Using Overbids

Once you've resolved a test, the loser has the option of calling for an overbid. In order to do so, the loser must risk an additional Trait. Then, both parties reveal their number of Traits, starting with the player who called for the overbid. If the initial loser has at least twice as many Traits as his opponent, then he may make a new challenge, the results of which supersede the previous challenge.

Should your overbid fail, you still lose the challenge and you also lose the additional Trait risked. If the overbid is successful, then the overbidder loses the Trait he risked in the first challenge but not the Trait for the overbid, while the opponent loses the Trait he bid initially. Additionally, a successful overbid turns the tables on the initial challenge, and the results of the overbid count instead. Note that an overbid can only be called immediately after losing a challenge. You cannot lose a challenge, spend an hour continuing play, then call for an overbid to reverse the previous effects.

Example of Play: Agent Spencer manages to back away from the enraged vampire assaulting him, so Eddie changes his attack. Eddie's player declares that his character is using the *Presence* power of *Dread Gaze*, in order to make the FBI agent fear him ("I am too *Commanding* for you to resist my wrath — bow down in terror!"). Spencer, naturally, tries to resist with his FBI composure ("Your unholy powers can't affect someone as naturally *Charismatic* as me."). The two test, and Eddie loses. However, the Brujah vampire is quite socially adept, and the player suspects that the FBI agent is not so well-developed. Eddie's player risks an additional Trait and calls for an overbid ("I am too *Intimidating* for any mere mortal to resist!"). Spencer's player doesn't need to risk another Trait, so they make a second test. They tie, and a revelation of Traits shows that Eddie has eight Social Traits while Spencer only has three. Spencer is affected by the power. The FBI agent drops his gun and flees in terror, in addition to losing his initial Trait of *Charismatic*. Eddie loses his initial Trait of *Commanding* as well, but he wins the final challenge.

STATIC CHALLENGES

A Static Challenge involves only one player, who tests against a Narrator or the Storyteller. Static Challenges come into play when a character tries to use his Abilities to affect some object or event. A researcher uses a Static Mental Challenge in conjunction with the *Linguistics* Ability, for instance, to interpret a book written in a strange language, while a Static Physical Challenge with the *Security* Ability might be required to bypass an electronic lock. The difficulty of the challenge is a set number of Traits, to which the character compares his Trait total in the case of a tie. You can overbid normally in a Static Challenge, but the Narrator may call for an overbid if a particularly recalcitrant object resists your efforts.

In some cases, a Storyteller may simply leave a note on an object, detailing its Traits in case of a common test. This note should have the effective number of Traits associated with the object and a comment about any required Abilities.

Use of some special powers, like *Psychic Phenomena*, may require a Static Challenge. In this case, the player is not necessarily testing against an object or event, but rather is making a test to see if he can successfully activate the power at all. The individual power descriptions (in Chapter Three) tell the Trait difficulties involved in using such powers.

SIMPLE TESTS

A Simple Test is a challenge in which no Traits are risked. Generally, the player makes a quick Rock-Paper-Scissors test (which succeeds if the character wins or ties) with another individual. Some Simple Tests require a win (no ties) to succeed; these exceptions are noted in the specific rules.

RETESTS

Certain Traits grant retests. A retest allows the player to ignore the first results of a challenge and test again for a new result. Retests are most commonly gained through the use of Abilities. In general, expending an Ability Trait in an appropriate situation allows one retest.

Multiple retests can be made on a given challenge, but only if they come from different sources. Thus, it's legal to retest a *Firearms* challenge once with the *Firearms* Ability and then again with the Merit: *Luck*, but two levels of *Firearms* could not be used to gain multiple retests on the same challenge.

Retests can be canceled by an opponent who is able to match the conditions of the retest. Thus, if a player uses *Melee* to retest when striking with a sword, the opponent can also expend a level of *Melee* (provided he has that Ability, of course) in order to cancel the retest and force the attacker to accept the results of the original test. Alternately, the opponent could wait to see if the retest succeeds, and then call for an additional retest with his own *Melee* Ability. This tactic holds the Ability in reserve, but risks losing on the successive retest if the attacker succeeds on his first retest.

Example of Play: Eddie the vampire tries to put Agent Spencer into an arm lock (“I *Brutally* yank your arm around behind you.”), while the good agent scrambles to escape (“I *Quickly* evade your grasp and stagger back out of your reach.”) The two perform a test, and Eddie loses. However, Eddie is an exceptional close-combat fighter (“I am too skilled in a *Brawl* to let you get away so easily!”), and he calls for a retest. The two test again, and this time Eddie wins. Spencer winds up in a nasty crunch.

Spencer counters Eddie's attack by firing his gun point-blank into Eddie's gut (“With *Determination*, I shoot you in the stomach.”). Eddie tries to absorb the damage

WHY DON'T ABILITIES ADD TO TRAITS?

Since Abilities reflect greater aptitude for particular areas of skill, it makes sense for them to add to Trait pools when determining the results of challenges. Losing Abilities, however — forgetting how to do something once you've done it — doesn't make much sense.

Abilities grant retests instead of additional Traits as a means of separating them mechanically from Attributes. Otherwise, Abilities would really be no different from Attributes. Additionally, the system of retests allows for some flexibility in the outcome of challenges. A highly skilled character is much more likely to succeed in challenges, even when he tests against a character with better Attributes. Ultimately, this system makes Abilities and Attributes different enough to represent highly different capabilities.



again (“I’m too *Relentless* for that to slow me down!”), and the two perform a new test. Spencer loses, and calls for a retest with *Firearms* (“My FBI training in *Firearms* is too good for me to miss at that range!”). Eddie immediately cancels the test with *Dodge* (“I *Dodge* and weave so quickly that your training doesn’t help!”) and no retest is performed. Spencer misses Eddie, and he very likely loses his head.

RELENTING

At any point before the test, either player may acquiesce and accept defeat in the challenge. Though you automatically lose the challenge, you do not lose the Trait you risked. If the challenge is not particularly important (or if you think that losing would be fun to roleplay), relenting enables you to save your Traits, as well as making the game run more smoothly.

BONUS TRAITS

Weapons and some special abilities can give a character the edge in a test. You add the bonus Traits to your total number of Traits to determine ties when using a special Ability. Thus, if you have the Merit: *Ability Aptitude (Computers)*, you have two additional Traits when determining the results of ties in that area.

ORDER OF CHALLENGES

Since multiple challenges may be happening simultaneously in any given fight, the Narrator will need to know who attacks first and acts last. The system for determining this order is quite simple. Each person involved in a given game turn checks the number of current Traits appropriate to the action being attempted. Thus, a character trying to stake a vampire would use Physical Traits to determine speed, while a character casting a spell would probably use Mental Traits, even if the spell only requires a Static Mental Challenge. If an action does not require any sort of Trait challenge, then it occurs last in the turn. Characters with equal numbers of Traits should be assumed to go “simultaneously,” although for resolution purposes the Narrator will need to simply choose one to act first.

Sometimes, a character with a high number of Traits will attack a character with fewer Traits, who will decide to strike back. In this case, the character with fewer Traits resolves his action in the same test with the faster character, but in doing so, he loses the ability to take any other aggressive action for the turn — he uses up his one action with the counterattack.

Example of Play: Eddie, the angry vampire, attempts to strike Agent Spencer again. Unfortunately for Eddie, Officer Walkerton has just arrived on the scene, and he is charging to attack Eddie from behind in an attempt to pull him away from Spencer. Eddie has six Physical Traits left; Officer Walkerton has eight (he’s been working out since character creation). Officer Walkerton leaps at Eddie (“I *Ferociously* grab you from behind and toss you off Spencer!”), while Eddie counters with a nasty backhand (“I *Quickly* swing my fist around and crush you before you can get a grip on my jacket.”). They perform a test, and Walkerton loses; he suffers one level of damage from Eddie’s attack and fails to move the Brujah. However, now that Eddie has attacked, he can no longer throttle Spencer — he’s already taken his action. Spencer’s player declares for his action that he’s crawling away, and Eddie can’t stop him because he’s too busy with Walkerton.



THE MOB SCENE

Note: The rules for mass combat here are slightly different from previously published versions in *Mind's Eye Theatre*. Familiarize yourself with the appropriate changes.

Hunters tend to work in groups, and their supernatural victims often do the same. Since large gatherings may well come into conflict, a quick system of resolution is necessary for large battles. These rules are helpful in resolving situations where many people attack one, or when one individual uses a power on several adversaries.

First, decide who is challenging whom. The easiest way to do so is to count to three, with everyone pointing to the person being victimized at the end of the count. If there are no cases of multiple people attacking one individual, then you can resolve all of the challenges normally.

Deal with groups from largest to smallest first, just for ease of play. Each attacker in a group bids an appropriate Trait or Traits for the challenge. The group can include up to five individuals; group dynamics prohibit assaulting an individual with a larger force (although the Storyteller or Narrator may make an exception for particularly large or small targets).

Next, the defender must bid enough Traits to counter every attacker in the group. If the defender does not have enough Traits, then he must relent to some or all of the attackers, although he can choose to whom he relents. Resolve the effects of such attacks normally; the defender may well fall before the rest of the group can attack.

Finally, the defender and attackers engage in one simultaneous test. The defender then compares his challenge against each of the individual attackers' challenges, applying the appropriate results. Thus, if a defender throws Rock and his attackers throw Rock, Paper and Scissors, the defender is considered to have tied the first attacker (resolved like any other tie), lost to the second attacker and defeated the third attacker. The defender and attackers lose the Traits bid in any given loss. If the defender in the previous example had bid one Trait against each attacker, he would have lost a Trait for the one challenge he lost, and an additional Trait if he had lost the tie as well.

Once the tests have been made, they are resolved in the normal order of actions and initiative. A defender may lose Traits due to the first few attackers and then lose a tie to an attacker later in the same mob challenge. That's all right — the first attackers "softened up" the defender. However, unless the defender has a special power allowing him to take multiple actions, he can only choose to affect one of the attackers, and it must be one who has lost a challenge. If none of the attackers lose, then the defender simply suffers the results of their actions.

When the defender in a mob scene uses Abilities or other tactics to gain retests, each attacker's challenge is treated as a separate test. Thus, a defender needs (for example) five *Brawl* Abilities in order to retest against five separate opponents in unarmed combat.

Obviously, it pays to avoid engaging multiple opponents.



HEALTH

Hunting the supernatural is a dangerous occupation, and someone is bound to get hurt along the way. Health Levels track the amount of damage that a character sustains and represent the penalties and problems of injury.

A character begins Healthy, but various effects — combat, hostile magic, bad luck — cause injury. In general, most combat challenges result in one Health Level of damage, though some particularly vicious attacks inflict more. When the character sustains one level of damage, move to the next level on the Health Level chart. Thus, a Healthy character who suffers a level of damage becomes Bruised, and another level of damage would cause the character to become Wounded. All penalties from injury are cumulative. Thus, a Wounded character suffers the penalties of being Bruised, as well.

- **Bruised** — A Bruised character has only suffered a small amount of injury. At this level, the character is possibly scraped up a bit, or he may be suffering from a flesh wound or two. A Bruised character suffers slightly from injury and fatigue, and must risk an additional Trait in any challenge. Thus, entering any challenge — even defending — requires the expenditure of at least two Traits.

- **Wounded** — At this level of injury, the character suffers from fairly significant damage. The character may have a couple of nasty bullet wounds, substantial burns or blunt trauma. A Wounded character automatically loses all ties, regardless of Traits; if the character has a power that normally allows him to win all ties, then ties are resolved normally by Traits. Worse still, if the character has fewer Traits than his opponent, his enemy gets a free additional test. This additional test is not a retest, but an actual extra action (although powers which grant multiple actions do not multiply this follow-up challenge — it's one test and one test only).

- **Incapacitated** — An Incapacitated character is out of the picture. He may be suffering from major internal injuries, or perhaps he's been horribly mauled by the claws of an enemy. An Incapacitated character is completely unconscious for 10 minutes after receiving the incapacitating injury, and he cannot move or enter challenges even after regaining consciousness. An Incapacitated character can do little more than speak quietly. Without some sort of supernatural aid, the character can do nothing else until at least one Health Level has healed.

- **Mortally Wounded** — Bleeding profusely and suffering from shock, a Mortally Wounded individual has little time left. Mortally Wounded characters do not regain consciousness normally. Instead, the character loses a Physical Trait every 10 minutes. Once the character runs out of Physical Traits, he dies. Only the assistance of someone with the *Medicine* Ability can halt this inexorable loss, and the character will not even begin to heal unless he is treated by magic or full hospital resources.

HEALING

Unlike their supernatural foes, mortals heal slowly, and they may suffer debilitating and lasting effects from injuries. Although some types of magic speed healing, mortals generally need bed rest or even hospital care to survive the effects of serious injury.

Some powers, such as the werewolf Gift *Mother's Touch*, heal wounds instantly. Obviously, these powers are of great assistance to mortals. Other capabilities, such as the Sorcery path of *Healing*, simply accelerate the speed of natural recovery. Either way, the mortal will definitely wish to avail himself of whatever services are available in healing quickly. A bed-ridden cripple can hardly defend himself from vampires, after all.

RECOVERY

With proper care and rest, it takes one day to heal from Bruised to Healthy, a week to heal from Wounded to Bruised and a month to heal from Incapacitated to Wounded. Characters heal from Mortally Wounded at the Storyteller's discretion, and they will recover with a new Negative Physical Trait (such as *Decrepit*, *Delicate*, *Lame* or *Sickly*). A mortal must heal through each level of injury separately; a Wounded character needs to spend a week healing to Bruised, and then another day healing to Healthy.

Characters recover from wounds between sessions or stories. If a magical power (such as the Sorcery path of *Healing*) is used to speed recovery, the character heals at the next faster rate — thus, a Wounded character would heal to Bruised in a day with accelerated healing. A Bruised character heals after 10 minutes of rest if accelerated healing is used. (Note: Accelerated healing methods are not cumulative. An Incapacitated character treated by someone with *Healing* and the *Medicine* Ability heals no faster than if one or the other was used.)

DISEASE AND INFECTION

Mortals, frail creatures that they are, must cope with the possibilities of disease and infection. It's difficult to fight the unliving when you've got a nasty case of the flu, and as if supernatural claws weren't bad enough, there's always the possibility of those lovely suppurating wounds.

Of course, disease and infection are fairly incidental to play, but they can provide a new and looming threat for mortals. Additionally, incorporating disease and infection gives all the more reason for hunters to study *Healing* and *Medicine* and provides some interesting story possibilities for CDC hunters.

DISEASES

Characters generally catch diseases through exposure to tainted material and unsanitary conditions. Since hunters spend a lot of their time wandering through graveyards and crawling in sewers, disease is a very real danger.

Mortal characters should only need to worry about disease if the Storyteller decides to make an issue of it. There are no hard-and-fast rules for getting sick; a Storyteller might have each player make a Static Physical Challenge to avoid disease after wandering through a particularly nasty and refuse-strewn location, or after coming into contact with virulent foes. (Animated rotting corpses, diseased monstrosities and leprous street dwellers are all staples of horror fiction, after all).

Once a character is diseased, the Storyteller should determine the disease's severity. Minor diseases like colds are nothing more than a nuisance, but more serious afflictions can threaten a hunter's life.



Mild Diseases

A mild disease is uncomfortable but not completely incapacitating. Mild diseases typically cause the character to suffer from the Negative Traits of *Sickly*, *Repugnant* and *Oblivious*. Mild diseases last for about a week, although a skilled healer can rid the character of the symptoms in a day (by using *Healing* or *Medicine*). Mild diseases might include a nasty cold, a sinus infection or a mild flu.

Serious Diseases

Serious diseases carry the risk of permanent damage, but they are usually surmountable with rest and some medication. A hunter suffering from a serious disease may well be completely incapacitated by the symptoms, and he is likely to have a great deal of difficulty even with everyday activities. Serious diseases afflict a character with the same Negative Traits as mild diseases, and they cause the character to lose one Health Level while suffering from the disease. Thus, a normal mortal suffering from a serious disease is automatically at least Bruised for the duration of the disease. Serious diseases generally last for a month, though a skilled healer can clear up the symptoms with a week of care and rest. A serious disease that is untreated — that is, if the character survives without the assistance of a skilled healer — generally leaves the character with a Negative Physical Trait such as *Lame* or *Decrepit*, though some may cause scarring that makes the character *Repugnant*. Furthermore, a character who suffers from a serious disease and remains untreated must win or tie a Simple Test to avoid death. Pneumonia, smallpox and malaria are examples of serious diseases.

Deadly Diseases

Deadly diseases are generally fatal if untreated, and they may even kill a character who has medical assistance. Deadly diseases are completely incapacitating; a hunter suffering from a deadly disease cannot enter challenges at all for the duration of the disease. Without medical assistance, characters with deadly diseases recover only at the Storyteller's discretion. Characters who are treated with magical remedies or medical assistance might recover after a full month of rest and care. In either case, a Simple Test is required for each month in which the character suffers from the disease; if the test is tied or failed, the character dies. Deadly diseases include typhoid fever, hepatitis and Ebola Zaire.

INFECTIONS

Hunters are in a dangerous line of work, and they are likely to suffer injury from their prey. Worse still, a hunter often can't risk going to a hospital; too many awkward questions could easily lead to arrest or commitment in a mental facility. As a result, hunters often have to rest at home and take their chances with wound recovery. Combined with the wide variety of often dangerous or dirty environments in which hunters fight, infection of wounds is a constant threat.

A hunter risks infection any time he suffers a wound in a particularly filthy environment and doesn't subsequently receive treatment. A Storyteller may (but does not have to) call for a Simple Test, with failure indicating that a wound has become infected.

An infected wound does not heal normally. Instead, at the end of any period of healing time, the player must make another Simple Test. Success indicates that the infection has cleared up and the hunter can continue to heal normally (although the wound does not actually heal at this time); failure means that the infection worsens and the character suffers another Health Level of damage. The infection continues,

and the character must test again once the requisite time has passed. For instance, if a hunter suffers one wound, dropping to the Bruised Health Level, and subsequently receives an infection, the player must test after a day. Failure would cause the character to suffer another level of injury, dropping to the Wounded Health Level, while success would mean that the infection has cleared up so the character can heal normally. This system simulates the fact that a bad infection takes a while to get much worse, but that a nasty infection also takes a while to heal.

A character who does not get rest automatically suffers degradation from infected wounds. Thus, if a hunter suffers a from Bruised wound and gets infected, he automatically drops to the Wounded Health Level after a day if he does not rest.

Proper treatment can help to clear up infections. Medical attention from a character with the *Medicine* Ability or the appropriate *Healing* powers can defeat infection without a test once the character has rested for the requisite amount of time. Thus, a hunter at the Wounded Health Level must rest for a week before his infection clears up, but under medical care, no test is necessary; the infection heals automatically.

Accelerated healing does not speed the rate at which infections heal, it simply assures eventual healing. A Wounded character with an infection must therefore rest for a full week to clear up an infection, even if magical or skilled healing is used.

COMBAT

Seeing as how hunters tend to go out of their way to stalk and destroy their supernatural opponents, combat is practically an inevitability. Combat runs under the usual system for challenges, with only a few simple modifications.

Combat proceeds with tests, just like any other sort of challenge. However, special weapons and equipment can substantially affect the course of the battle, as may environmental conditions. Combat should always be conducted in turns unless you agree to simply role-play out the results; using turns gives every participant a fair chance to take actions.

The usual form of combat is as a series of Physical Challenges, with the winner injuring the loser. However, such is not always the case; one combatant may choose to injure the defender, while the defender may simply wish to escape. You can do just about anything: A combat challenge's results could range from simply striking or grappling an enemy to throwing someone out of a window (through narrative description, of course, not actual defenestration).

SURPRISE

If a player does not respond within three seconds of receiving a challenge, then the character is considered surprised. Such a character is distracted or otherwise doesn't notice what's going on, and he has a harder time responding. Surprise is only legal if the player could normally hear the challenger; sneaking around whispering challenges and then declaring surprise is unfair and illegal.

A surprised character may only defend against a given challenge. The attacker may strike normally, of course, but the defender can neither counterstrike nor escape as a result of the test; he merely staves off harm. Furthermore, the attacker in a surprise challenge may immediately follow up with a normal action; the defender does not have the opportunity to perform another action, although he handles his second action normally.



Once a surprise action has been resolved, combat continues normally, and the defender may attack, escape, use special powers or otherwise respond within his capabilities.

COVER

Obviously, hand-to-hand combat can only occur when combatants are within arms' reach of each other. Firearms combat can occur at distances, as long as the opponents can see one another and successfully fire an appropriate weapon across the intervening distance. Someone out of range or completely behind cover cannot be hit. An attacker must move to a position where he can see and reach his opponent if he wishes to attack someone completely under cover. Conversely, a character hiding behind cover cannot fire through that obstruction. If you're crouching behind a brick wall, you can't shoot your opponent through the wall any more than he can shoot you through the same.

If a combatant has partial cover, he can claim one Trait of cover when resolving ties and overbids. Cover of this nature also counts if a character ducks for safety then pops up to shoot the opponent. The enemy can still counterattack, but the return fire is slightly more difficult. At the option of a Narrator, some significant cover may be worth two additional Traits; if a character ducks behind a car and only her head and hands are exposed, her cover is worth significantly more Traits than if she is standing behind a tree.

DARKNESS

When night falls, the vampires come out, and so do the people who hunt them. Unfortunately, darkness makes battle difficult at best. Characters without proper means of seeing, whether supernatural or mundane, suffer problems when fighting or performing precision tasks in the dark.

Partial darkness, such as fighting on a dim night, imposes a two-Trait penalty to all actions. Of course, if both parties are in the dark, this penalty doesn't matter, but if one character can see well and the other only has dim outlines to go by, the character with better vision has a clear advantage. This penalty applies to ties and overbids, but it does not force a character to risk additional Traits. A character with *Acute Sense (Vision)* or *Acute Sense (Hearing)* suffers only a one-Trait penalty in challenges in partial darkness. Additionally, each level of the *Blindfighting* Ability allows a character to nullify one Trait of this penalty, so two levels of *Blindfighting* completely remove the penalty for fighting in darkness.

Total darkness occurs when a character is in a pitch-black environment, like an enclosed cellar without a light source. Because of the complete inability to sense his surroundings, the character suffers a two-Trait penalty to all challenges, and must automatically retest any successful challenge once. Again, if two characters are battling in pitch blackness, these penalties will cancel out, but if one character has a means of seeing in the darkness, then his opponent will be at a severe disadvantage. A character with *Acute Sense (Hearing)* can track his opponent by sound, and he suffers only a one-Trait penalty in total darkness, although he is still forced to take a retest on all successful challenges. *Acute Sense (Vision)* is of no help in this situation. The *Blindfighting* Ability removes the Trait penalty as described for partial darkness, but additionally the character may use *Blindfighting* to negate the retests called for in the event of a successful challenge.



EQUIPMENT

No hunter survives long without the tools of his trade. Proper preparation is essential to a successful hunt, and the right equipment is necessary to even stand a chance of fighting the supernatural. Hunters can even the odds against their supernatural foes by using a wide variety of weapons, armor and special gear — much of which is unavailable through normal channels or simply incomprehensible to supernatural creatures who aren't grounded in the modern world.

WEAPONS

No real weapons are ever allowed in Mind's Eye Theatre games.

Weapons improve the capabilities of a combatant, granting additional Traits and allowing an attacker to use different maneuvers. Each weapon should be represented with a simple card, which details the capabilities of the weapon in question. Weapons typically inflict a single Health Level of damage, although in actuality the damage is determined by mutual agreement — a character getting shot in the head at point-blank range may immediately drop to Incapacitated if the attack is successful, simply due to the brutal nature of the damage. Actual weapons or non-functional props should never be used; there are simply too many possible accidents and legal entanglements.

Weapons grant bonus Traits to their wielders. Most weapons grant anywhere from one to three Traits, and they have some sort of Negative Trait that serves as a drawback to the item in question. When striking with a weapon, you cannot bid the weapon's Traits, but you may add them to your total number of Traits when comparing for a tie or an overbid.

Opponents may use the Negative Traits of a weapon against you just like other Negative Traits. If you're using a pistol, the opponent may call out the Negative Trait *Loud*, forcing you to bid an additional Trait for your shot. Conversely, if an opponent calls out an incorrect Negative Trait, then he must expend an additional Trait to defend. You can ignore the penalties of Negative Traits if you take the proper time to set up your attack; a silencer, for instance, could muffle your pistol and eliminate the Negative Trait *Loud*. Keep in mind that the Negative Traits of a weapon may represent more trouble than the simple description provided by the Trait; using a gun in an empty lot does not mitigate the *Loud* Trait, for example, because the gun's noise and recoil are still disorienting.

CONCEALABILITY

Each weapon has a concealability rating. If you do not have sufficient cover or clothing to conceal your weapon, then you must display the weapon card prominently, either by pinning it to your shirt or holding it in your hand. This indicates to all onlookers that you are actually holding the weapon or that you have it slung over your back or shoulder. If you have sufficient concealment to hide the weapon, you may simply put the appropriate card into your pocket, drawing it when desired.

AVAILABILITY

Getting a hold of a weapon may take some serious torque. Although anyone can buy a butcher knife or a baseball bat, a fully automatic assault rifle or a combat shotgun is another matter entirely. Some weapons are available to anyone with the money and the time. Most firearms require some sort of registration, but getting it typically isn't



a problem for a mortal without a criminal record. Generally, a character will want to use Influence to acquire more dangerous weapons. *Espionage*, *Police*, *Street* and *Underworld* are the most useful types of Influence for acquiring otherwise illicit weapons. Alternately, a Storyteller may assign weapons to a character (police officers and government agents in particular usually have pistols, and most Inquisitors own swords) or build a story specifically around the quest to acquire rare and special weapons or ammunition.

Just because an item is readily available doesn't necessarily mean that a character can automatically get it, of course. Objects cost money to acquire. When a question of finances arises, the Storyteller, Narrator or player can simply look up the cost of a similar publicly available item. Characters will need to have the *Finance* Ability or some sort of money-raising Influence in order to raise the funds necessary for the purchase. Purchasing equipment in this fashion is best handled in downtime, but an interesting story could easily revolve around a black market purchase gone awry.

Note also that some heavy military gear is too valuable to be "acquired" through the channels of regular Influence. Fully automatic weapons and heavy body armor are carefully tracked by military records. Thus, a character using *Military* Influence to acquire high-end equipment may only be able to get a "loan," as noted in the availability description. If a character fails to return a loaned item at the end of the game session, then the character loses all *Military* Influence and may even suffer the misfortune of having an investigative group of military police assigned to track him down.

SPECIAL WEAPON CAPABILITIES

Some weapons possess special capabilities, allowing the attacker to inflict extra damage or strike multiple opponents. (Such powers are noted under the weapon descriptions.) A capsule description of each special ability follows for easy reference, since many weapons possess similar abilities.

Armor-Piercing

Special rounds, generally Teflon-coated, penetrate armor with ease. Although armor-piercing rounds don't cause extra damage to the target, they do ignore any defenses from armor. Armor-piercing rounds are particularly difficult to acquire, and legal inquiries often follow their use.

Destroy Shield

Though shields are rare in the modern age, some Inquisitors still use them while fighting with swords against vampires and other monsters. A weapon capable of destroying shields can automatically penetrate a shield and render it useless after the shield absorbs a certain number of blows, regardless of the strength and size of the shield. The weapon only inflicts damage on the shield if the shield actually blocks the attack — if a character with an ax, for instance, manages to hit a shielded target without being blocked by the shield, the shield does not suffer from the attack.

Fully Automatic

A firearm capable of fully automatic fire can empty dozens of rounds into a single target at close range. This attack automatically inflicts an additional Health Level of damage due to the sheer volume of fire it lays down. However, after emptying the clip with fully automatic fire, the attacker must spend one action to reload the weapon before it may be used again.



High-Caliber

Firearms of particularly high caliber can inflict crippling injuries with only a few shots. When a high-caliber weapon successfully strikes a target, the shooter should immediately perform a Simple Test. A win indicates that the target suffers one additional Health Level of damage from the shot.

Incendiary

Burning weapons cause aggravated damage to just about any target. Some weapons, such as molotov cocktails and flame-throwers, simply use streams or explosions of flame; others, like incendiary rounds, burn the target with a superheated round of ammunition.

Mass-Trauma

Certain attacks are so powerful that they inflict massive damage on the target, literally tearing away chunks of flesh. Such weapons score two Health Levels of damage when used appropriately.

Speed

Fast weapons can be used to “pre-empt” an opponent’s attack, allowing the character with the speedier weapon to strike and resolve his challenge first. The character must have the *Melee Ability*, and he must actually attack with the weapon or otherwise use it actively (parrying, disarming, etc.) in order to gain this benefit. Fast weapons only gain a pre-emptive strike against opponents in hand-to-hand combat — your rapier won’t help you much if that archer with the crossbow is still 50 feet away.

Since many attacks are handled simultaneously, with both parties testing at once and the winner scoring a hit, this particular power is not always very useful. However, if the Storyteller opts to have each attacker test individually (attacker striking defender, then defender counterstriking), this ability puts fast weapons on the offensive, allowing the wielder of the weapon to strike and possibly injure his opponent before the opponent can strike back.

Spray

The weapon can strike multiple targets at once, as noted under the weapon’s special parameters. The shooter makes one test against all of the targets simultaneously. Each target who fails the test suffers the effects of the weapon, while each target who succeeds avoids the weapon’s damage. The shooter risks only the Traits necessary for one challenge against the entire group, and he loses only those Traits if any of the defenders win the test.

Staking

Staking weapons paralyze vampires when a successful blow penetrates one’s heart. The attacker must win or tie two successive Simple Tests in order to successfully stake the vampire.

BIDDING TRAITS WITH WEAPONS

When bidding Traits in battle with a weapon, you usually use Physical Traits against your opponent’s Physical Traits. However, you may make ranged attacks with Mental Traits by using the appropriate Ability: You can use *Archery* to use a bow or crossbow and *Firearms* to use a gun. In such a case, you will use your Mental Traits (plus any bonuses from the weapon) against your opponent’s Physical Traits. If both participants are using ranged weapons and have the appropriate Abilities, then both parties use Mental Traits.



MELEE WEAPONS

• **Knife/Dagger** — With a six- to twelve-inch-long blade, either single- or double-edged, a knife is a common and easily concealable weapon.

Bonus Traits: 1

Negative Trait: *Short*

Concealability: *Sleeve*

Availability: *Any*

• **Broken bottle** — Most common in bar brawls and similar altercations, a shattered glass bottle is a simple improvised weapon.

Bonus Traits: 1

Negative Trait: *Fragile*

Concealability: *Pocket*

Availability: *Any*

• **Club** — Clubs include anything from chair legs, to tree limbs, to the truncheons used by the local police. Nunchaku and other bludgeoning martial arts weapons also fall into this category.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Concealability: *Short cloak*

Availability: *Any*

• **Wooden stake** — Sharpened at one end and perfect for making Kindred shish-kebabs.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Concealability: *Jacket*

Availability: *Any*

Special Ability: *Staking*: A wooden stake can pierce the heart of a vampire (thus paralyzing the creature) if the attacker successfully wins or ties two successive Simple Tests after striking.

• **Shortsword** — With a blade length of 18 to 24 inches, a shortsword is a light stabbing and thrusting weapon with surprising quickness. This includes anything from a scutum or gladius to a Japanese ninja-to or a Tai Chi sword.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Short*

Concealability: *Jacket*

Special Abilities: *Speed*: In close combat against any weapon with the Negative Traits of *Slow*, *Clumsy* or *Heavy*, the user gains the option to pre-empt the opponent's attacks and strike first in any turn, as long as he has the *Melee* Ability.

• **Broadsword** — A typical broadsword has a two-and-a-half- to three-and-a-half-foot-long blade, is single- or double-edged and is made of tempered steel. A true broadsword is a heavy chopping weapon with a chisel-like edge made for penetrating metal armor. Replica broadswords are available more cheaply, but they are certainly less effective. Broadwords are a favored weapon of Inquisitors, since they seem to be more effective against vampires than mere bullets.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Heavy*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Any. A sword is quite conspicuous, however, and having one will attract police attention.

- **Greatsword** — The six- to-seven-foot-long blades of the late Middle Ages were designed to chop through heavy armor, pike squares and human flesh. A greatsword requires two hands to use, and it is a slow and awkward weapon, but its strikes are exceedingly dangerous.

Bonus Traits: 5

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Slow, Clumsy*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any. Greatswords, like other large medieval weapons, draw police attention.

- **Fencing blade** — Any fencing weapon with a light blade from two to six feet long falls into this category, although technically they could be divided as katanas, schlagers, foils, epees, rapiers and sabers. Fencing weapons are fast and light, excellent for use against slow opponents, but have a difficult time chopping or scoring deep cuts.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Fragile*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Any. A fencing foil tends to draw less police attention than an ornamental saber, especially if the fencer is carrying fencing gear.

Special Ability: *Speed*: In close combat against any weapon with the Negative Traits of *Slow, Clumsy* or *Heavy*, the fencer gains the option to pre-empt the opponent's attacks and strike first in any turn, as long as he has the *Melee* Ability.

- **Spear** — Though spears pretty much went out with the end of the Dark Ages, they are quite useful for fighting vampires, as most spears have a wooden shaft. A spear takes some practice to use, but it is excellent for keeping an opponent at range. Spears usually range anywhere from six to eight feet in length, and they require two hands for fully effective use.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any. Like a sword, a spear is quite conspicuous and tends to draw police attention.

Special Ability: *Staking*: A spear can be used to stake a vampire through the heart, if the attacker wins or ties on two Simple Tests after attacking.

- **Staff** — The traditional quarterstaff is six to eight feet long, blunt and as thick as a man's fist. Quarterstaves are excellent for defense and for holding an opponent at bay. Trained staff-wielders are reputedly more dangerous than swordsmen. Although staves are uncommon as weapons in the modern day, many martial artists still use them.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Heavy*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any



- **Hatchet** — Primarily of use for chopping wood, hatchets serve as useful improvisational weapons and excellent tools. A hatchet is a must for decapitating fallen opponents, and it also helps when breaking through locked doors.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Heavy*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Any

Special Ability: *Destroy Shield*: Hatchets render shields useless after three blows.

- **Ax** — A long ax carries significant force behind its blows, but is generally heavy and unwieldy. Most modern axes are made for chopping wood, though a less clumsy battle ax can be had from specialty sources at a rather steep price.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Heavy, Clumsy* for wood axes

Concealability: None

Availability: Any

Special Ability: *Destroy Shield*: Axes render shields useless after three blows.

- **Benandanti fennel sword** — The Benandanti use mystical ghost-blades forged out of spirit iron and fennel. In the material world, these “swords” usually take the form of elaborately crafted artistic pieces; in the Underworld, though, these blades are deadly broadswords capable of destroying spectres. In all cases, the physical and spiritual components of the sword are mystically linked. Whenever the Benandante enters Ekstasis while his sword is with his body, the spiritual sword automatically appears with his soul.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Fragile*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Fennel swords must be made individually by Benandanti.

Special Abilities: Fennel swords inflict aggravated damage against Oblivion-tainted targets in the Underworld, when used there. A Benandante cannot swing his weapon around in the physical world to injure a spectre, but once he enters Ekstasis, the weapon can destroy spectres across the Shroud. Additionally, the physical manifestation of the fennel sword can banish wraiths and Spectres, just like the *Ephemera* power of *Forbiddance*. A fennel sword is mystically tied to its creator, and if the sword is ever destroyed, the Benandante loses a permanent Willpower Trait. If an individual ever discovers the sword's Name, then the creature may use that Name to power rituals focused against the Benandante in lieu of any other special components. Lastly, since the materials of manufacture weaken fennel swords in the material world, any fennel sword actually used to strike a physical creature or object (not in the Underworld) requires an immediate Simple Test. The sword survives if the player wins the test, but it shatters on a tie or failure.

- **Sword of St. James** — Each Sword of St. James is a painstakingly crafted unique weapon of forbidding beauty. These swords are specifically designed to assist their creators in the destruction of wraiths, eventually crossing the Shroud with their masters in a ritual suicide. A Sword of St. James often resembles a heavy broadsword, with unique features dependent on the creator's personality.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Heavy*

Concealability: Trench Coat



Availability: Each Sword of St. James is individually crafted by a member of the Sect.

Special Abilities: A Sword of St. James suffers the Negative Trait of *Clumsy* when it is not wielded by its creator. Anyone with less than three Traits of Faith, other than the sword's creator, becomes violently nauseous and incapacitated when picking up the sword. The victim suffers a seizure for a turn and automatically drops the weapon. Any wraith attempting to use such a weapon (even through *Puppetry*) must immediately check for Catharsis (see *Oblivion*).

MISSILE WEAPONS

• **Short bow** — Short bows are typically used for hunting and sport archery. A short bow has limited range and power.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Fragile*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Any

Special Abilities: *Armor-Piercing:* Chain armor does not protect against arrows.

Staking: Arrows can be used to stake a vampire, with two successful (win or tie) Simple Tests after hitting.

• **Compound bow** — A modern compound bow uses an elaborate pulley system to generate greater pull and thus a stronger arrow shot. Compound bows are fairly expensive, but they can be found in the arsenal of many wilderness survivalists and hunters.

Bonus Traits: 5

Negative Trait: *Fragile, Heavy*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Any

Special Abilities: *Armor-Piercing:* Chain armor does not protect against arrows.

Staking: Arrows can be used to stake a vampire, with two successful (win or tie) Simple Tests after hitting. *Destroy Shield:* The power of a compound bow is truly frightening, and a single hit will render a shield useless.

• **Long bow** — Rare in the modern age, a true long bow is six or seven feet tall, with a correspondingly powerful draw. A long bow's range is quite impressive.

Bonus Traits: 6

Negative Traits: *Fragile, Clumsy, Heavy*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any

Special Abilities: *Armor-Piercing:* Chain armor does not protect against arrows.

Staking: Arrows can be used to stake a vampire, with two successful (win or tie) Simple Tests after hitting. *Destroy Shield:* One good shot from a longbow will penetrate a shield, rendering it useless.

• **Crossbow** — A crossbow uses a powerful action to propel a short bolt with tremendous power. Since crossbows fire in straight lines, they have limited range due to drop-off, but they are incredibly effective within that range. Old-style crossbows take an action to cock or crank and reload for each shot, but modern crossbows can be cocked with a simple breaking action that does not require extra time.



Bonus Traits: 4

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Slow*

Concealability: Trench Coat

Availability: Any

Special Abilities: *Armor-Piercing*: Chain armor does not protect against bolts. *Staking*: Bolts can be used to stake a vampire, with two successful (win or tie) Simple Tests after hitting. *Destroy Shield*. The most powerful weapon of its type (short of a ballista, that is), a heavy crossbow can render a shield useless in one shot.

THROWN WEAPONS

• **Throwing knife** — Built with a specially balanced blade and handle, a throwing knife is effective at short ranges, primarily as a surprise weapon. However, throwing knives, like most thrown weapons, are difficult to aim.

Bonus Traits: 1

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Concealability: Pocket

Availability: Any

• **Throwing hatchet** — Such a hatchet is a rarity these days. Most hatchets are not designed for throwing, however, modern composite-steel hatchets are specially designed for balance and ease of hurling. Like knives, hatchets are difficult to throw accurately.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Concealability: Jacket

Availability: Any

• **Molotov cocktail** — An old bottle filled with gasoline or alcohol and stuffed with a rag becomes a dangerous weapon when lit on fire. The bottle breaks on impact, spreading flaming liquid all over the target.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Fragile*

Availability: Any

Special Ability: *Incendiary*: Molotov cocktails inflict fire damage. *Spray*: A Molotov cocktail splashes when it strikes, and it automatically tests to hit anyone within a pace of the designated target, whether friend or foe.

• **Shuriken** — The standard “Japanese ninja star” typically comes in the form of a six- or eight-pointed star. They are usually thrown in rapid succession, as individual stars inflict little damage. Some shuriken come in the form of needle-like darts. Most people have little idea of how to throw shuriken properly.

Bonus Traits: 1

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Concealability: Pocket

Availability: Any

FIREARMS

• **Pistol** — This category includes small- and medium-caliber handguns, such as police revolvers, Saturday Night Specials, 9mm, .22 or .357 automatics.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: Pocket

Availability: Any if registered; *Espionage 3, Military 1, Police 4, Street 3 or Underworld 2* otherwise. Note that most government agents and police officers will automatically be issued a service sidearm.

• **Heavy pistol** — The true monsters of the handgun range are pieces like the .454 Cassull and the .50 Desert Eagle. These tremendous pistols use high-caliber rounds that inflict massive damage on the target.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Loud, Heavy*

Concealability: Jacket

Availability: Any if registered; *Military 2, Police 4, Street 4 or Underworld 3* if unregistered

Special Ability: *High-Caliber*: Heavy pistols allow a Simple Test on a successful hit. A win on this test indicates that the shot inflicts an extra Health Level of damage.

• **Rifle** — Favored by outdoorsmen and snipers, a rifle has excellent range and often uses longer rounds that inflict more damage than a pistol's bullets.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any if registered; *Military 2, Police 4, Street 4 or Underworld 3* otherwise.

• **Sniper rifle** — Sniper rifles are generally bolt-action, high-caliber rifles with incredible accuracy at extreme ranges. A sniper rifle can easily eliminate an opponent with one carefully placed shot at a distance of over a mile. Since a sniper rifle usually has a manual action, the shooter must spend one action to reload the chamber of the weapon before firing again after each attack.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: None

Availability: *Espionage 5, Military 4, Police 4 or Underworld 3*

Special Ability: *High-Caliber*: Make a simple test for an additional level of damage. Also, most sniper rifles (including any rifle acquired with the proper Influence) will have a suppresser and a high-magnification scope (treat the same as a laser sight).

• **Shotgun** — A shotgun fires a spray of pellets or a large, powerful slug. With pellets, the shotgun tears out holes in close-range targets, and may hit several people at greater distances. Typical shotguns include 10 and 12 gauge Mossbergs and Ithacas. A shotgun may require a manual action, in which case it must be broken open and reloaded by hand after firing (requiring one action), or it may hold several rounds that are advanced into the chamber with a pumping action.



Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any if registered. *Military* 3, *Police* 4, *Street* 4 or *Underworld* 3 is required otherwise.

Special Abilities: *Spray*: The shotgun can affect up to three targets if they are standing within a pace of one another and are at least 20 feet from the shooter. The shotgun must be loaded with pellets to get this effect. *Mass-Trauma*: A shotgun fired at a single target within two feet inflicts two Health Levels of damage, whether using shot or slugs.

• **Submachine gun** — Firing multiple small rounds at once, a submachine gun can hit several targets with a spray. Submachine guns are fairly compact, and they use only pistol-caliber ammunition. Submachine guns are typically sold commercially in single-shot versions, but use of the *Repair* Ability can convert a submachine gun back into a fully automatic weapon.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: *Jacket*

Availability: Any if registered and non-automatic. A character needs *Military* 3 (loan), *Police* 4, *Street* 4 or *Underworld* 3 otherwise.

Special Abilities: *Spray*: The submachine gun can affect up to five targets if they are standing within three paces of one another and are at least 10 feet from the shooter. *Fully Automatic*: The submachine gun inflicts two Health Levels of damage if its user fires its entire clip at a target within five feet.

• **Assault rifle** — Made strictly for military use, assault rifles use mid-sized rounds with high velocity and a high fire rate. Commercially available assault rifles are generally modified for single fire, but use of the *Repair* Ability can convert them back to automatic fire.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: None

Availability: Any if registered and non-automatic; *Military* 4 (loan) or *Underworld* 5 otherwise.

Special Abilities: *Spray*: An assault rifle can be used to hit up to five targets within three paces of one another at a distance of 10 feet or more. *Fully Automatic*: Emptying the clip of an assault rifle into a target within five feet inflicts two Health Levels of damage.

• **Combat shotgun** — Used exclusively by the military, combat shotguns fire a tremendous volume of high-density spray. A combat shotgun can tear a man in half at close range.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: None

Availability: Only soldiers in military units use combat shotguns, and a character must make “special arrangements” to acquire one (i.e., *Military* 5 for the loan and a sizable cash bribe as well). Combat shotguns are illegal. Any character even seen with a combat shotgun — even a government agent — had better expect a full-scale national manhunt. In truth, characters are more likely to be on the receiving ends of these weapons, as military troops may intervene in particularly nasty cases.

Special Ability: *Spray*: A combat shotgun can strike up to five targets within three paces of one another as long as they are at least 10 feet distant. This capability is only applicable when using shot. ***Mass-Trauma***: Combat shotguns inflict an extra Health Level of damage when fired at a single target no more than five feet away. ***Fully Automatic***: A combat shotgun can be unloaded into a single adjacent target within five feet, scoring an extra Health Level of damage on top of the damage from the massive blow-through. Yes, this does mean that a combat shotgun can inflict three Health Levels of damage in one attack.

- **Spike-thrower** — This heavily modified shotgun actually fires wooden bolts or even small molotov rounds! Based on a design from a Hungarian uprising in 1956, these shotguns must all be specially modified by an individual with the *Repair* Ability. There are very few of these shotguns in existence, and each one is hand-crafted by its owner or a close friend. Obviously, possession of such a strangely modified weapon will bring on all sorts of legal problems.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Trait: *Loud*

Concealability: None

Availability: Each spike-thrower must be individually crafted from a shotgun.

Special Abilities: *Staking*: A spike-thrower can launch wooden bolts that are capable of staking vampires with two successful consecutive (win or tie) Simple Tests. ***Incendiary***: A spike-thrower can fire Molotov cocktails, substituting its Bonus and Negative Traits.

AMMUNITION

- **Armor-piercing rounds** — Typically hardened and Teflon-coated or otherwise designed to slip through armor, these bullets completely ignore the benefits of body armor. Armor-piercing rounds can only be obtained for normal pistols.

Availability: *Military* 2, *Police* 4 or *Underworld* 3.

Special Ability: *Armor-Piercing*: Pistols using armor-piercing ammunition ignore armor.

- **Dragonsbreath rounds** — Dragonsbreath shells allow a shotgun to shoot a blast of flame. A dragonsbreath round fires flames out to a range of 20 feet, inflicting a single level of fire damage on a target. Dragonsbreath rounds tend to degrade the barrels of the shotguns in which they are used. Each time a character fires a dragonsbreath round from a shotgun, the shotgun loses one Bonus Trait. When the shotgun runs out of Bonus Traits, it is heavily damaged and completely useless. The *Repair* Ability can retool a shotgun before it is destroyed, but this kind of work requires a gunsmith's shop and a great deal of time — it's not something done in the middle of combat.

Availability: *Military* 1, *Police* 4 or *Underworld* 4

Special Ability: *Incendiary*: Dragonsbreath rounds inflict aggravated fire damage.

- **Silver bullets** — Silver nitrate rounds are sometimes issued in covert government operations where Special Affairs agents expect to encounter werewolves. Silver bullets are quite difficult to manufacture, as the softness of



the metal means that the bullets deform when fired unless specially alloyed. Probably the most ubiquitous alloy is the silver nitrate round, which is not only a fairly solid silver bullet, but also poisonous. Silver bullets can be made for any sort of pistol, rifle or automatic weapon — even shotguns!

Availability: *Espionage 4*

ACCESSORIES

- **Laser sight** — A laser sight improves the accuracy of a weapon by highlighting the target with a small pinpoint of reflected light. The sniper can easily line up a more accurate shot, given proper time spent aligning the sight.

Availability: *Espionage 3, Military 1, Police 4 or Underworld 3*

Special Ability: A laser sight grants one additional Bonus Trait to any firearm other than a shotgun, as long as the shooter spends a full turn aiming.

- **Suppresser** — Suppressers mute the flash and bang from a firearm. Although completely “silencing” a pistol is impossible without using special subsonic ammunition and gas venting refits, the suppresser lowers the firing sound to a dull thud and gets rid of most of the muzzle flare. A suppresser also cuts down on the general disorientation of gunfire and lowers recoil, since the bullet moves at a slower speed.

Availability: *Espionage 3, Military 1, Police 4 or Underworld 3*

Special Ability: A suppresser removes the *Loud Negative Trait* from a properly fitted firearm. Suppressers can be had for pistols and sniper rifles. Using a suppresser lowers the accuracy and velocity of the bullets, so any weapon fitted with a suppresser loses one of its Bonus Traits.

- **Starlight scope** — An active light enhancement assembly powered by a small battery allows the starlight scope to show a clearer picture of a target at night. Although the images can be difficult to make out since they are monochromatic, using a starlight scope is certainly better than firing at indistinct and fuzzy outlines.

Availability: *Espionage 3, Military 3 or Underworld 4*

Special Ability: When fitted to a rifle, sniper rifle or assault rifle, a starlight scope can be used to negate the penalty Traits from partial darkness. However, the shooter must take a full turn to aim the weapon in order to gain this benefit.

ARMOR

Some characters use armor to defend themselves against enemy attacks. This is a wise move, considering that mortal hunters are particularly vulnerable to injury. Armor comes in several grades: Ancient vampires or traditionalistic Inquisitors may use medieval chain, while government agents and soldiers are more likely to use modern body armor.

Armor protects the character by stopping damage. Each type of armor absorbs a certain amount of damage before it is rendered useless. When a character is struck, simply subtract the levels of damage from the armor first, before applying wounds to the character.

Players with armor should prominently wear a card indicating the armor type. After all, it's not really possible to conceal a full suit of chain mail. Similarly, players with shields should hold a card in the appropriate hand signifying the shield.

ANTIQUE ARMOR

- **Leather** — Hardened leather armor, or significant layers of soft leather, can be worn over most vital parts of the body to absorb some blows.

Health Levels: 1

Availability: Any

- **Chain mail** — Most forms of medium-weight metal armor fall into this category, including scale and brigandine. Chain mail is quite rare in the modern age, although some fantasy re-creationists and Inquisitors still keep a suit around.

Health Levels: 2

Negative Trait: *Heavy*

Availability: Any. Chain mail must generally be custom made at a cost of \$500 or more.

- **Plate mail** — Plate mail armor (overlapping metal plates with chain reinforcement) is the sort of armor people envision when they think of traditional knights in the Dark Ages.

Health Levels: 3

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Clumsy*

Availability: Any. Plate mail must generally be custom-ordered at a cost of around \$3,000 or more.

MODERN ARMOR

- **Ballistic vest** — Woven from tough fibers, a ballistic vest is designed primarily to stop fragmentation, although it's also useful in stopping light handgun rounds.

Health Levels: 2

Negative Traits: *Heavy*

Availability: *Espionage 3, Military 2, Police 4 or Underworld 3.*

- **Reinforced vest** — For dangerous assignments, soldiers or police officers sometimes use a ballistic vest with special ceramic plates inserted in the chest and back. Though it makes moving difficult, this type of vest offers protection against small arms of many kinds, up to light rifles.

Health Levels: 3

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Clumsy*

Availability: *Military 4, Police 5 or Underworld 4.*

SHIELDS

- **Small shield** — A target shield, anywhere from one to two feet across, can be easily worn on the arm. Such a shield helps to intercept melee attacks. Against melee weapons, missile weapons or thrown weapons (but not firearms), the shield forces the attacker to make a Simple Test; the attacker must win or tie to actually strike the user of the shield.

Bonus Traits: 1 (when used to bash)

Negative Trait: *Heavy*

Availability: Any



- **Large shield** — Tower shields and round shields, covering most of the body, fall into this category. Though large shields are difficult to maneuver, they stop most attacks. An attacker must win (not tie) a Simple Test in order to strike a character protected by a large shield in melee combat. Thrown or missile weapons can also be blocked with large shields, but not firearms.

Bonus Traits: 1 (when used to bash)

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Clumsy*

Availability: Any

- **Riot shield** — Lexan or other ballistic plastics are used to make riot shields, which protect against a wide variety of attacks. Riot shields are transparent, so that the user can see through the shield itself. Riot shields protect against guns, melee weapons, thrown weapons and even fists. Attackers must win a Simple Test in order to actually strike a character using a riot shield.

Bonus Traits: 1 (when used to bash)

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Clumsy*

Availability: *Police 4*. Riot shields are conspicuous and will draw police attention.

FIELD GEAR

Government agents use a wide variety of equipment in the field. Since much of their gear has special capabilities, each piece of special equipment is detailed here. Although specialized equipment can go a long way toward leveling the field when fighting supernatural creatures, much of the highly advanced gear is restricted, and only authorized agents can gain access to such materials.

Other hunters also use arcane or religious artifacts in order to power their spells or focus their Faith. Such materials can be exceedingly difficult to acquire, since many occultists and churches do not part with their valued relics easily.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

- **First aid kit** — A simple first aid kit contains bandages, a few painkillers and emergency instructions. By following the instructions, a character can “field stabilize” a Mortally Wounded individual, so that the individual no longer loses Traits due to the mortal wounds. Stabilizing a character takes two turns of uninterrupted activity. This piece of equipment is a lifesaver when hunters are a long way from medical assistance, or when they can’t risk hospital help. A character can use the first aid kit to stabilize a character without using the *Medicine* Ability; *Medicine* lets the medic stabilize a character with improvised tools.

Availability: Any

- **Medical doctor’s kit** — A medical doctor can perform basic field surgery with a small assortment of tools, local anesthetics and a lot of luck. Use of a medical doctor’s kit immediately revives an Incapacitated character, although it doesn’t heal any Health Levels. A medical doctor’s kit can also be used to stabilize a Mortally Wounded character, just like a first aid kit. Unfortunately, a medical doctor’s full kit is fairly cumbersome to carry. The character must prominently display the card for the kit, and suffers from the Negative Trait: *Clumsy* in all Physical Challenges while carrying the kit.

Negative Trait: *Clumsy*

Availability: *Health 2*

- **Coffee** — Bitter juice of the gods. No hunter living the night life should have to do without. Black, always black.

Negative Trait: *Wired*

Availability: *Any*

Special Ability: You have to ask? Shame on you.

OCCULT TRAPPINGS

- **Common ritual materials** — Tarot cards, copies of the I Ching or simple teacups and special tea leaves all fall into this category. These materials are readily available at a local bookstore, tea shop or other similar location. Basic Sorcery rituals usually require materials of this nature.

Availability: *Any*

- **Uncommon ritual materials** — Specially carved bones or elaborately worked patterns fall into this category of ritual materials. Keep in mind that materials this elaborate are not necessary for *all* rituals. Generally, Intermediate rituals will require these sorts of materials. See the individual Sorcery descriptions in Chapter Three for details.

Availability: *Occult 2*

- **Rare ritual materials** — Unique icons, special sets of statues and tools, individually inlaid metal and stone carvings — such are the rarest tools of occult lore, and they are generally quite difficult to acquire. A sorcerer needs good contacts to even find such materials, and buying them often involves an exchange of knowledge or favors, rather than simple monetary compensation.

Availability: *Occult 4*

RELIGIOUS ICONS

- **Holy symbol** — A holy symbol is a necessity for focusing True Faith. Holy symbols take various forms depending on the Faith of the wielder, from ornate crucifixes to elaborate prayer wheels to colorful dream-catchers. A true holy symbol is more than an icon; it is an object that focuses the power of the Divine in the hands of a true servant of Heaven.

Availability: *Church 1*

Special Ability: A character must use a holy symbol to focus the powers of True Faith, unless he has the Merit: *Symbol Independence*.

- **Holy water** — Properly blessed and consecrated holy water can purify and wash away taint, and it also serves as a potent weapon against the unliving. Some faiths use incense or wafers with similar capabilities.

Availability: *Church 3*

Special Abilities: Holy water that is sanctified with True Faith (see Chapter Three) inflicts aggravated damage on vampires. Additionally, truly blessed holy water used to cleanse a wound automatically negates any chance of infection.

- **Oil of St. George** — This rare and potent oil generally comes in ornamented flasks of delicate construction. When lit, the oil bursts into flames that do not harm the faithful.

Availability: *Church 5*

Special Ability: Fire from the Oil of St. George burns normally for aggravated wounds, but any fire resulting from the Oil causes no damage to any character with True Faith.



SECURITY DEVICES

- **Physical lock** — From a simple padlock to an intricate combination sequence lock, these devices are used on all manner of doors, containers and restraints.

Availability: Any

Special Ability: Picking a lock requires the use of the *Security* Ability, generally in conjunction with a Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty of five Traits. Particularly tough locks may have a higher difficulty.

- **Electronic lock** — Whether using a specially designed magnetic card or a keypad with a numeric combination, an electronic lock is far more difficult to circumvent than a simple physical lock.

Availability: Any, though installing an electronic lock is fairly expensive (at least \$250 per lock).

Special Ability: Bypassing an electronic lock requires a Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty of five or more Traits, using the *Science* or *Security* Ability.

- **Electronic alarm** — An electronic alarm attaches to windows, doors and other points of entry or egress, and it signals when one has been breached. An alarm can be set to go off whenever someone opens a door without using a proper key or when anyone passes through a certain restricted area. Some sensors can even go off whenever an individual passes through an area without carrying a special identification card. The alarm may be audible, scaring off burglars, or it may be silent, simply signaling local police or other agencies.

Availability: Any, though installing an electronic alarm in a small building is fairly expensive (at least \$1,000).

Special Ability: Bypassing an electronic alarm requires a Static Mental Challenge with a difficulty of five or more Traits, using the *Science* or *Security* Ability. This test is separate from any test to pick a lock. The character can disable the alarm at a specific entry point, or disable the entire alarm by reaching the main junction box (which generally requires penetrating the complex in question).

- **Sensor** — Internal sensors trigger an electronic alarm whenever someone is in a restricted area. Sensors can be turned on and off with proper codes, so that they are not triggered by authorized personnel. A motion sensor goes off if anything larger than a tennis ball moves within its area. Heat sensors detect changes in a room's temperature, and they trigger if the room temperature changes dramatically (such as it would from the entry of a person). Pressure sensors, installed in floors (and sometimes other locations), trigger an alarm if the weight on them changes by anything more than a few pounds.

Availability: Any, though installing sensors requires that the building have an electronic alarm, and is also quite expensive (\$5,000 for a small building).

Special Ability: Characters can defeat sensors with the *Science* or *Security* Ability, generally at a difficulty of five or more Traits. Disarming sensors is separate from disarming a lock or alarm. The character must be able to reach the sensor mechanism, which may mean pulling up part of the floor, disabling a camera and so on. Since it's easier to reach most sensor terminals than to reach the main alarm box, this method is an alternate way to avoid detection during intrusion activities.



SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT

- **Night vision goggles** — By amplifying existing light and filtering it through a green monitor, night vision goggles give the wearer a better view of the world in the dark. However, since the information processed by the goggles is rarely of a quality approaching normal vision, the wearer may have some difficulty picking out individual targets.

Negative Trait: *Oblivious*

Availability: *Espionage 3, Military 3 or Police 4*

Special Ability: Night vision goggles negate the penalty for fighting in partial darkness, but since they rely on existing light, they are of no help in total darkness.

- **Infrared goggles** — Infrared goggles work by translating heat sources into images, allowing the wearer to spot heat sources like people. Infrared goggles cannot necessarily pick out walls or other features that may be the same temperature as the air. The patterns produced by infrared goggles are rarely clear, and they often miss scenery details that don't give off heat (like furniture or vampires).

Negative Trait: *Oblivious*

Availability: *Espionage 3, Military 3 or Police 4*

Special Ability: Infrared goggles negate all darkness penalties, even in total darkness, as long as the target gives off heat. Vampires can be detected by the fact that they don't radiate heat, but only if the wearer is aware that the vampire is there — a vampire won't show up at all on infrared unless standing out against a much hotter or colder background temperature.

- **Chaoscopic scanner** — The “stochastic entropy engine” is one of the technological marvels of the NSA, first designed and implemented by the Paranormal Research Wing. The chaoscope detects patterns of entropy (or its absence), allowing the user to actually see the negative energies that surround some supernatural creatures. However, these items are highly classified, expensive and largely immobile. Getting one of these items into the field is nearly impossible, since the NSA has no desire to let these delicate and expensive items out of sight. Bringing a supernatural creature to the chaoscope is another problem entirely.

Availability: *Espionage 5 or University 5*

Special Ability: The chaoscope allows the user to view the energies of the Underworld, rendering wraiths and the landscape of the dead visible. Vampires' dark auras give them away as well.

- **Directional microphone** — Special microphones designed to filter out sound can overhear conversations or exchanges at a reasonable distance. Laser microphones, which detect the vibrations on glass made by sound, are even more accurate. Of course, such surveillance generally breaks several ordinances, but if you're hunting vampires, local laws may not be your biggest concern....

Availability: *Espionage 3, Police 3 or Underworld 3*

Special Ability: Using a directional microphone allows a character to overhear a conversation in another room or up to 20 feet away. For ease of play, it's usually best to let the player actually move to the location of the conversation (see the *Clairvoyance* Numina in Chapter Three for ideas on remote sensing).

- **Tempest receiver** — Computer screens use a charged electron gun to make images on a phosphor-laden monitor. The pattern of the electron gun generates an electromagnetic field, and this field can be read and interpreted with the proper



equipment. A Tempest receiver can read computer or television screens up to 20 feet away, as long as they're on. Some military and intelligence computers use special electromagnetic Tempest shielding to prevent this sort of eavesdropping.

Availability: *Espionage 4, Military 3*

Special Ability: Tempest data readers allow a player to gather information from an active computer at a range of up to 20 feet. The player should probably be allowed to eavesdrop on the narration of the computer events.

- **Phone tap** — Simple phone taps allow an eavesdropper to listen in on any conversation that takes place over a given phone line. Placing a phone tap requires a warrant (generally through the use of *Legal Influence*). Information obtained through an illegally placed phone tap is inadmissible, and it may lead to charges being dropped if an arrest resulted from it.

Availability: *Espionage 3, Police 3 or Underworld 3*

- **High-definition camera** — Used for long-range, high-quality photography, a high-definition camera takes digital pictures with incredible resolution. Although a special computer is required to see these images, the camera's pictures can be easily altered or enhanced, picking out details of faraway objects.

Availability: *Espionage 3, Media 4 or Military 3*

- **Kirlian camera** — By photographing "Kirlian energies," a Kirlian camera takes pictures of auras. Kirlian cameras use a special high-frequency electronic process to capture pictures of spirit energy. A Kirlian camera can actually photograph wraiths, although the pictures are often fuzzy or indistinct. Kirlian cameras can also capture the auras of individuals on film, which may give clues as to the supernatural nature of a creature.

Availability: *Espionage 4 or University 4*

- **Phased motion detector** — This small hand-held unit senses the motion and activity of physical objects or creatures within about 10 feet of the holder. This information is displayed on a small screen, allowing the holder to notice otherwise hidden individuals as long as they are moving.

Availability: *Espionage 4 or University 4*

Special Ability: The phased motion detector allows the user one chance to test against a creature using a supernatural power of concealment. Thus, a hunter could test against a vampire using the *Obfuscate* Discipline, or a Garou using the Gift of *Blissful Ignorance*.





CHAPTER FIVE: STORYTELLING

This chapter contains guidelines for the Storyteller on inserting mortal hunter characters into existing chronicles, or for running a chronicle from the mortals' point of view.

THEMES AND MOODS

Theme and mood can be very fluid in a game where the players have so much impact on the story, and unusual settings can be very difficult to convey. However, some ideas move to the forefront in a hunter-oriented game.

PARANOIA

This theme works on two levels. With hunters around, vampires seek to protect the Masquerade and werewolves work to maintain the Veil. Such is as it should be, since both ideals are a major part of each society's respective goals, though both are frequently neglected in a game where everyone already knows what everyone else is.

From the other perspective, hunters are after the hidden creatures, the ones that walk as men but are really devils, the ones that have supernatural powers to cloud thoughts and lead good men astray. Hunters may have to examine everyone they meet, wondering if they are more than they seem, and if they are acting of their own volition.

FEAR

Most supernatural creatures fear discovery by mortals since such a discovery makes them criminals among their own kind, even if they don't feel threatened by one or two coming after them. When they find out just how capable a hunter can be, however, their opinions change. Even the strongest vampire must sleep during the daytime.

For their part, hunters are certain that their deadly and terrifying prey has no compunction about killing them. Just the knowledge that the other is out there should put some unease in the players' hearts.

INNOCENCE

Much of the antagonism between hunters and their prey arises from simple misunderstanding. Many hunters have some very wrong notions about the motivations of vampires and werewolves, assuming them to be agents of the Devil or unthinking monsters. Most supernatural creatures consider ordinary hunters to be inferior upstarts who are in way over their heads.

An encounter between these two attitudes can lead to some very interesting reconciliations. Who's to say that the hunter won't discover that the vampire he sought to kill has sworn an oath not to take a human life, no matter how hungry it becomes?

Character growth, from enlightenment and the rethinking of motivations, is a necessary aspect of a healthy chronicle.

HUNTER STYLES

The typical hunter is a human. Some possess extraordinary abilities, but all are mortal nonetheless. Without exceptional care, most mortal hunters quickly find the tables turned, and once surprise is lost, it's only a matter of time before the supernatural creatures of the world marshal their forces to swat the would-be slayer nuisance. The hunter takes on a world far beyond his level of power, surviving by wits and luck alone.

This stereotype isn't necessarily true for all games, though. Storytellers can easily adjust the power level of mortal characters to make for more dynamic or more terrifying stories. Former Navy SEALs are more likely to survive a violent confrontation — even if the opponents are vampires — while busloads of school-children tend to lack even the most basic capabilities for self-defense.

VICTIMS – AREN'T WE ALL?

A game of Victims makes for an interesting evening's pastime, but rarely lasts more than one session. In a Victim game, the mortals are completely unsuspecting and unprepared to cope with the supernatural world. Some supernatural agency sets about stalking and killing the mortals, in a gruesome but hidden fashion.

Characters built as victims should be less competent than other mortals. After all, the mortals built with the normal character creation system are considered to be exceptional scholars, government agents or church members (or, at the very least, adequate). Build victims by removing one Trait from each Attribute category (5/3/2), and giving them only one Ability. Victims off the street have no Willpower Traits. Give them three Free Traits and no special affiliations, then watch the slaughter begin.

The quintessential Victims game is one in which one player is a vampire or werewolf, hidden among the other players, but nobody knows who it is. The supernatural character then sets about messily killing off the other players, one at a time. The only hope the victims have is to discover who the vampire is and escape or fight. Of course, a fight may result in the deaths of all of the remaining victims, but they can't escape until they know who the culprit is (since, otherwise, the vampire would just go with them and they would die somewhere else).



This template is also suited for the common person on the street. Though less powerful than their supernatural adversaries, hunters are still above average. The masses of humanity are largely powerless to do anything more complex than hold a day job.

JUST SOME GUY

Many hunters start as mortals whose lives are turned upside-down by the incursion of the supernatural world. Spurred on by insatiable curiosity or a burning need for vengeance, the mortal sets out determined to discover the truth about the hidden world. These characters may be lawyers, supermarket clerks, postal officials, high school students — just about anyone can take on the hunter's role after experiencing a profound change. These mortals usually don't have any special powers or strange abilities. They are the typical humans, heading out into the great unknown with a stick and a potato.

When building Just Some Guy chronicles, use the normal characteristics for independents, but avoid supernatural Merits, Flaws and Numinae. These people are regular folks thrust into an irregular world. Pay close attention to the types of Abilities that you purchase though. A supermarket clerk is unlikely to have any *Firearms* Ability, while a sanitation engineer probably has little grasp of *Occult* knowledge.

These games are excellent for small groups, where a few normal people suffer through a key event in the first game that catalyzes them to work together to uncover the mysteries of the supernatural. In the course of the game, these fledgling hunters can discover more about the world around them and develop the Abilities that they need to survive. Some may even be approached by specific hunter organizations once they show the proper aptitude.

LOOSE CANNONS

Though many of the hunter organizations have a wide range of members, some individuals discover that they don't really fit in with their parent association. An Inquisitor who develops a sudden case of Florentine Heresy or a Paranormal Researcher working with an ectoplasmic converter engine may find that his activities have become a little strange, even for a hunter.

In a Loose Cannons game, the hunters are individuals who, for some reason, no longer fit with their organizations. Build them as members of the appropriate associations, but give them some reasons to work independently. These sorts of hunters run a dangerous game. They have no backup if things go wrong, and they may suffer censure or even execution if their parent organizations find out about their sidelines.

Loose cannons fit well into existing supernatural games. Give one or two players the opportunity to play mortals with a little knowledge and some different powers. The supernatural creatures will be more likely to cut some sort of deal with the individual. Conversely, the hunter is likely to move very carefully and avoid antagonizing anyone until he can gather allies to protect himself.

ORGANIZED HUNTING

The Society of Leopold regularly conducts witch-hunts, and the Arcanum regularly sends its members out to gather research material. Government agents are almost perpetually on duty, serving the interests of the country. Characters who work directly for these groups can pool their talents and resources for protection and information, making them potentially much more dangerous to the supernatural.

Organized hunters should be built with the usual affiliation rules; these hunters are considered trusted and somewhat experienced members of their respective organizations. In general, you'll want to have all of the players belong to the same organization, so that they have a reason to work together, though a large game might allow for groups from multiple affiliations.

Large, existing supernatural games cater well to Organized Hunting. Adding a small group of mortals who work together stirs the pot, keeping the supernaturals on their toes. At the same time, the mortals can protect themselves and advance their own aims with enough teamwork. A fairly small group of mortals can easily fend off a few supernaturals at a time without taking over the game.

BEST OF THE BEST

To throw a change of pace at some complacent supernatural characters, try putting a couple of extremely competent hunters into a game. With their own capabilities augmented by equipment and experience, these sorts of mortals can truly terrify supernatural opponents, especially once the opposition realizes that the "mere mortal" is more talented and powerful than he seems! These sorts of characters are the legendary hunters who have all of the incredible skills necessary to undertake a one-man crusade — people like Sullivan Dane (Inquisitor, True Faith 8) or Benjamin Holmscroft (Arcanum scholar, immortal).

Give some mortals a few extra points, and they can easily stand toe-to-toe with novice supernaturals. Add one Attribute Trait in each category (7/5/3) and two Ability Traits (for a total of five), and build the rest of the mortal normally. Delta Force troops, high-level government intelligence officials, Gladius Dei Inquisitors and powerful sorcerers all fall into this category. With the right powers and equipment, they're capable of matching — and sometimes beating — just about any opponent.

The Best of the Best should really be put only into games where one or two "super" mortals can help to add a splash of tension. Tossing in an exceptional hunter is a good way to warn players that their supernatural characters are getting out of control.

RUNNING A HUNTERS GAME

A game with only mortal hunters for characters will be, by necessity, small and personal, with a heavy ratio of Narrators to players. Mortals who know the truth about the supernatural are rare, perhaps even more so than the creatures they seek to destroy.

SMALL GAMES

With a small troupe, it's important that the characters be willing to work together. While hunters from the same association have a reason to work together, it's entirely feasible that characters from different organizations have met over the course of their missions, and now act in concert for mutual aid and protection. A chronicle for a small troupe can follow the characters as they discover, track down and neutralize creatures according to their own personal desires.

This sort of game is very Storyteller-intensive, since the Storyteller must define the associations that the hunters belong to, as well as populate the chronicle with enough adversaries to keep the hunters busy. Narrators take on the roles of vampires and other assorted supernatural nasties.



LARGE GAMES

With a larger troupe, intrigue and politicking for power become stronger elements, and the actual hunt takes an almost secondary role. Perhaps the characters encompass all the tiers of hunters within the city, from the head of a cenacle and his assistants, to the agent in charge of a special task force, to the educated psychic and her lowliest occult students, to the stray independents.

This stratification allows for interaction within each association, as well as friendships, alliances and disagreements across the boundaries. Hunters can have very different ideas of what needs to be done, as well as how to accomplish it, and arguing over an approach makes for just as much fun as the hunt itself.

Narrators still have to take on the task of playing the prey, but actual encounters with the supernatural happen less frequently.

INCORPORATING HUNTERS INTO AN EXISTING GAME

As adversaries in a game centered around one or more supernatural creatures, mortal hunters are best used as characters in the capable hands of a Narrator, or by players the Storyteller can trust to pull it off.

NPC HUNTERS

If a hunter is an NPC, the Storyteller can increase his power level to match the existing characters, so that he actually poses a real threat to them. The players should be encouraged to be creative in dealing with such a threat, so that they don't simply Blood Bond the hunter, or kill him. Discrediting the hunter works very well indeed.

PC HUNTERS

If a hunter is a PC, the player should create him as a normal starting character, using the creation rules provided. He will probably want to start off slow, learning about his foes, garnering allies against them and fortifying himself for the battle to come.

This role can be very challenging for a player. After all, he won't likely be invited to the vampires' ball or to hang around the caern for the next werewolf moot. He has to slowly become aware that vampires meet at a certain spot, and he then must track a likely target on the way out.

Having a small group of hunters can also work well, giving the players mutual support and other characters to interact with while they work to locate a target.

MAINTAINING A BALANCE

The framework of each *Mind's Eye Theatre* game is a delicate meshing of manipulation, intrigue and cooperation between vampire clans, werewolf packs or changeling courts. Introducing an element whose primary goal is to completely eliminate the others can make a game suddenly bloodthirsty, which is usually not the desire of the Storyteller.

The primary goal of adding hunters should be to keep the supernatural players on their toes. Now they have to worry about displaying vampiric strength, or shifting to wolf form in public view, for fear that someone is watching for just that sort of invitation with intent to kill.

The ideal balance to strike would be for the two sides to end up circling one another, neither willing or ready to make a final strike. After all, a player whose character is killed in a conflict between hunters and the supernatural will always return as another character. Neither side can truly eliminate the other.

TOO MUCH EQUIPMENT!

Mortal hunters rely on equipment quite a bit. That's fine — they must, to keep up with supernatural creatures. The section on Equipment in Chapter Four caters to this reliance.

However, some games may see an overabundance of equipment, especially weapons. When every hunter is walking around with a combat shotgun and heavy body armor, there's a serious balance problem at work.

The thing to keep in mind is that the Storyteller controls all access to equipment. Players cannot simply write up cards for any piece of equipment they desire, even if their characters have the appropriate types of Influence. Instead, each player should consult with the Storyteller before the game, to determine what sorts of equipment he can lay his hands on. The Storyteller may want to make his own equipment cards so that only characters with "legal" cards can use equipment.

Furthermore, it's a simple matter to get rid of excess gear. Anything that's powerful has attendant restrictions. Crazy vampire-hunters wandering the streets don't carry combat shotguns. Furthermore, federal authorities have little trouble tracking the public use of incendiary weapons. A character using illegal or dangerous equipment may quickly find herself wanted by the government in addition to being hunted by supernatural creatures. The character may have to choose between ditching the gear or facing arrest and a trial (which almost certainly takes the character out of play).

Remember, too, that even readily available equipment — gear marked as "Availability: Any" — might not be so easily acquired. Sure, you can mail-order dragonsbreath rounds from a paramilitary catalog, and anyone can go into a gun store and get them. However, using such weapons ups the stakes considerably. Vampires who ignore more "mundane" hunters may team up to annihilate the dangerous hunter who shows up with heavy weapons. Similarly, any supernatural creature with a modicum of *Police*, *Street* or *Transportation* Influence may well learn of the hunter's requisition of special weapons, and take steps with Influence to stop the delivery. In a world of paranoid vampire ancients, how many mortal hunters are actually going to get their hands on incendiary weapons, even if such devices are simply ordered through the mail? The Storyteller can easily control access to "common" devices by deciding that some element of supernatural society already manipulates that market — or, better still, that said market is hotly contested by supernatural Influence brokers, and that nobody can get their hands on the weapons that the Storyteller doesn't want in the game.



TOO-WIMPY MORTALS!

With their low Trait maximums and limited powers, mortals are fragile when compared to supernatural creatures. In fact, mortals are downright wimpy. They break easily and they have no quick way of healing or bolstering their limited powers.

This is the whole idea of playing a mortal — you're someone at odds with a hostile world, surrounded by supposedly more powerful enemies, yet determined to win through sheer *chutzpah*. If mortal characters are dying left and right, then the mortals are probably not being played well. A hunter must be careful and clever in order to survive.

Furthermore, independents rarely have an easy time of it. Playing an independent hunter is perhaps the most challenging role of all. Small groups of hunters can isolate their opponents and gang up to combine their abilities, but an independent must face off alone against superior opponents. Without allies, the hunter must be crafty indeed. And, of course, every hunter risks death with every encounter. This risk is simply something that must be accepted — you don't don the mantle of a hunter without accepting the fact that it may well kill you.

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences are what hunters are all about. After all, if a supernatural creature hadn't been careless at some point, the hunter wouldn't be on the case in the first place. Having hunters take an interest in your character can be consequence enough for shortsightedness.

Storytellers shouldn't be afraid to show hunters the consequences of their actions, either. When a hunter drives a stake through a vampire's heart, it's an act of murder as far as any witnesses are concerned. Hunters have to take as much care not to be noticed as vampires, werewolves and wraiths do — perhaps even more. After all, they are still a part of human society, and they can be easily tracked down to pay the piper.

CROSSOVERS

Since hunters stalk and slay various forms of supernatural prey, crossovers are inevitable. After all, a hunters game without a few vampires, werewolves or wraiths is really just a game of mortals standing around without anyone to hunt.

Of course, crossovers like this cause all sorts of headaches for Storytellers, because of the clash of various rules. Thus, this section should help to clarify some common (and not-so-common) occurrences.

When in doubt, use the rules from the most recent **Mind's Eye Theatre** book. For instance, the rules in this book should supersede the Kinfolk rules in **Laws of the Wild**.

EQUIPMENT CROSSOVERS

Hunters have access to a lot of special equipment that's never before been described for **Mind's Eye Theatre**. They need it! Of course, some vampires will immediately want to get their hands on combat shotguns, too.



First, remember the Influence necessary to score a particular item. Always enforce this rule, and remember that just using the Influence may not be enough. The Influence simply indicates that it may be possible to get the item.

Secondly, consider keeping some of the more powerful or esoteric pieces of equipment out of the hands of supernatural characters. A combat shotgun helps to even the odds for a hunter, but in the hands of a vampire, it's overpowering. Remember that really unusual gear draws a lot of attention, and that sort of attention is the last thing that most supernaturals want. A vampire trying to get a sniper rifle is going to have to dodge some intense investigations from legal authorities, and though it may be possible, the prince of the city may simply rule that going through that sort of scrutiny is a threat to the Masquerade. You can easily outweigh the benefits of rare equipment with the problems that it creates for the owner.

POWER INTERACTIONS

In general, supernatural creatures can't use Numinae. That's that. Psychic Phenomena are the province of mortals alone, and Sorcery is usually not as effective as the natural powers of a given creature.

There are some exceptions, though. Most supernatural creatures could conceivably have True Faith, although the cost is high and the Merit is exceedingly rare.

Also, a few types of creatures besides mortals actually study Sorcery. The Uktena werewolves and the Bastet are the primary keepers of Sorcery among supernaturals, but some revenants also practice this form of magic. Such creatures must pay an extra 33% for each level of Sorcery — so Basic levels cost four Experience Traits, Intermediate levels cost eight and Advanced Levels cost 12 Traits. Whenever such a creature is called on to spend a Humanity Trait to power Sorcery, though, he must spend a Willpower Trait instead.

Vampires cannot use Sorcery at all; they must be content with Thaumaturgy. Similarly, wraiths cannot use Sorcery, as they have neither bodies nor the connection to the appropriate energies. Mages have their own forms of magick which are much more powerful, while changelings use their own Arts and Realms. Sorcery is generally too structured for the creative and chaotic fae.

Mortals can sometimes learn the abilities of supernatural creatures. See the Merits of *Ghoul*, *Kinfolk* and *Kinain* in Chapter Two for information.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Some powers have special effects that must be explicitly considered for crossovers. Also, varying characters do not always directly reflect the statistics of various games.

Blood Traits: A mortal has three Blood Traits. Vampires can drink this blood normally. Each Trait a vampire drinks inflicts two Health Levels of damage on the mortal. Giovanni vampires inflict an extra level of damage with their draining, so only two Traits of blood drain would kill a mortal. A mortal bitten by a vampire for purposes of blood drain is immediately helpless, unless he spends a Willpower Trait to act. This phenomenon is known as the Kiss. Additionally, a vampire can close any wound left by his bite or claws, simply by licking it. Ghouls who lose all of their blood may survive; make a Simple Test, and if the ghoul wins (no ties or losses), then the character stays Mortally Wounded instead of dying immediately.



Rage Traits: Mortals, even Kinfolk, do not possess Rage Traits.

Delirium: Instead of using the Delirium chart presented in **Laws of the Wild**, extrapolate based on the mortal's Willpower and Mental Traits. After all, mortals can't have more than three Willpower Traits. Any character who is partially Awakened (a ghoul, Kinfolk or kinain, or with the Intermediate level of any Numina) is immune to the Delirium. For the chart, add twice the character's number of Willpower Traits to his Mental Traits, and subtract three. Thus, a character with one Willpower Trait and three Mental Traits uses the "2" column on the Delirium chart, while a character with three Willpower Traits and eight Mental Traits uses the "10+" column of the chart.

Banality Traits: Most mortals are considered to have anywhere from five to eight Banality Traits, as determined by the Storyteller. See **The Shining Host** for details.

VAMPIRIC DISCIPLINES

Animalism: Characters affected by *Song of Serenity* cannot use Sorcery or Psychic Phenomena, since they no longer have the necessary strength of will to do so.

Auspex: This Discipline cannot detect the use of Psychic Phenomena, unless the character actually uses *Telepathy* to read the mind of the psychic and realize what's happening. *Aura Perception* will detect the use of Sorcery; the sorcerer's aura sparkles with gold while he uses magic. Similarly, characters with True Faith have a "marked" aura in some form — burning, wrapped in glowing green or similarly startling.

Celerity: A pre-empt gained by equipment can negate a pre-empt from *Celerity*.

Chimerstry: Illusions conjured with this Discipline are fully manifested to such remote senses as *Clairvoyance*. The exception is *Horrid Reality*, which is only visible to its specific target.

Dominate: Mortals can spend Willpower to resist this Discipline, but this expenditure only grants a single retest, not immunity.

Fortitude: Aggravated wounds caused by True Faith are exceedingly painful; if a vampire suffers aggravated injury due to a blessed weapon, relic or holy water, then the *Fortitude* Discipline does not negate wound penalties from the injury. Mark such injuries specially for vampires. However, *Fortitude* may still be used to reduce such injuries from aggravated to normal levels of damage.

Necromancy: Since Benandanti are living souls projected into the Underworld, *Necromancy* cannot control or summon them during Ekstasis. However, a Benandante who is not in Ekstasis could be affected with *Soul Stealing* normally, and then commanded with *Compel*.

Obtenebration: The unnatural darkness evoked by this power mutes sounds as well as extinguishing lights. Natural lights (flashlights and lamps) cannot penetrate this darkness. Furthermore, *Obtenebration* generates total darkness conditions, and neither the Merit: *Acute Sense (Hearing)* nor the Merit: *Acute Sense (Sight)* is of any use. Even infrared goggles and night vision goggles are useless. Only the vampire generating the darkness sees through it without suffering penalties.

Obfuscate: A concealed vampire or ghoul remains hidden from remote senses such as *Clairvoyance*, unless the hunter additionally has some means of seeing through *Obfuscate* normally (like the Merit: *Clear Sighted*).

Potence: If a character wins all ties as a result of *Potence*, while a hunter has a power that wins all ties, then ties must be resolved normally.

Presence: As with *Dominate*, a Willpower Trait allows a mortal one retest against this power, but it does not grant automatic immunity.

Protean: A vampire in mist form does not trigger motion sensors or pressure sensors. Rituals of *Summoning*, *Binding* and *Warding* must be designed to function on a vampire, even if the vampire is in wolf or bat form, in order to have any effect. (That is, a Summon Bat ritual will not summon a vampire in bat form.)

Quietus: The *Silence of Death* power negates the Negative Trait: *Loud*.

Thaumaturgy: Sorcery and *Thaumaturgy* are both considered magic, and they interact as such. *Thaumaturgy* rituals that protect against magic will keep out Sorcery but not Psychic Phenomena. Psychic Phenomena will be warded by any *Thaumaturgy* effect that specifically wards against that sort of manifestation, as long as the *Thaumaturgy* power is not specifically geared against magic. Thus, a ritual designed to keep out magical scrying would prevent sorcerous *Divination* but not psychic *Clairvoyance*, while a power that shields against any exertion of force would work equally well against both sorcerous *Conjuration* and psychic *Telekinesis*. Also, the *Cauldron of Blood* power automatically reduces a mortal to Mortally Wounded if a single point of blood is boiled — more than that, and the mortal is instantly killed.

Vicissitude: The effects of this Discipline on mortals — specifically *Fleshcraft* and *Bonecraft* — are permanent. Even the Sorcery path of *Healing* cannot repair such mutilations.

GAROU GIFTS

Spirit Ward: A *Spirit Ward* keeps out Benandanti in Ekstasis, but not *Clairvoyance*.

Curse of Hatred: Since mortals do not have Rage Traits, this Gift's removal of a Rage Trait has no effect on a hunter.

Wither Limb: Because this Gift withers a limb as an aggravated injury, its effects may not be countered with the Sorcery path of *Healing*.

Scent of Sight: This Gift negates all penalties for darkness.

Scent of the True Form: Sorcerers, Benandanti and kinain are difficult to detect, just like mages, ghouls and Kinfolk; they win all ties against this Gift. Note that unless the Garou possesses the appropriate *Lore* Abilities, he may simply note that the target "smells odd" without exactly knowing the subject's true nature.

Name the Spirit: This Gift detects Benandanti, but not *Clairvoyance*.

Blur of the Milky Eye: Use of this Gift conceals the Garou from remote perceptions like *Clairvoyance* unless the hunter possesses some ability to see through the Gift (such as the Merit: *Clear Sighted*).

Open Seal: Since *Conjuring* does not actually enchant an object, a prepared lock is not considered "magical."

Blissful Ignorance: See *Blur of the Milky Eye*. Note that this Gift negates the assistance of technological devices, including a phased motion detector (see Chapter Four).

Spirit Speech: The Garou can communicate with Benandanti in Ekstasis.

Command Spirit: This Gift has no effect on Benandanti in Ekstasis.

Exorcism: This Gift has no effect on Benandanti in Ekstasis.

Pulse of the Invisible: See *Oblivion* for *Mind's Eye Theatre*. A special similar Gift called *Drumbeat of the Shadow* must be used to see the Underworld; thus, *Pulse* cannot detect Benandanti in Ekstasis, but *Drumbeat* can.



Spirit Drain: No effect on Benandanti in Ekstasis, even the altered form of the Gift that works on wraiths (see *Oblivion*).

Malleable Spirit: Benandanti in Ekstasis cannot be reshaped with this Gift.

Spirit Vessel: Since Benandanti in Ekstasis are not Umbral, this Gift does not affect them.

Call to Duty: The *Call to Duty* summons Umbral spirits, not Benandanti. A spirit already bound by *Ephemera* might not answer, depending on the whims of the sorcerer.

Geas: Attempting to compel a creature controlled with *Summoning*, *Binding* and *Warding* fails if the subject's commands conflict with the Geas.

Mindspeak: The *Telepathy* Numina can be used to eavesdrop on this Gift, just like vampiric *Telepathy*.

Body Wrack: The use of sorcerous *Healing* combats this Gift if the healer has the necessary rituals to quell pain. To do so requires *Advanced Healing*.

Spirit Friend: No effect on Benandanti in Ekstasis.

Faerie Kin: This Gift affects kinain who have the Merit: *Faerie Blood* (see Chapter Two).

Control Simple Machine and *Control Complex Machine*: If these Gifts are used on an object that is being manipulated with *Conjuring*, then the two participants engage in a Mental Challenge to see who takes control.

Obedience: If this Gift is used on a character controlled with *Summoning*, *Binding* and *Warding*, the Garou must challenge the sorcerer for control instead of challenging the target of the Gift.

Summon Talisman: If a conjurer attempts to teleport a prepared object at the same time that the user of this Gift calls for it, the two must engage in a Mental Challenge to determine who actually gets the item.

Mindblock: This Gift does not block the Numina of *Telepathy* when used simply to gather information. This Gift does block the Sorcery path of *Summoning*, *Binding* and *Warding*, though.

Sense Magic: Use of this Gift does not detect Psychic Phenomena or True Faith, but does sense Sorcery.

Summon the Restless Shade: This power can guide a lost Benandante back to her body, if it is used at the site of the Benandante's supine form.

WRAITH ARCANOI

Argos: The *Argos* power of *Oubliette* does have the power to cast Benandanti into the Tempest or freeze them in place.

Castigate: None of this Arcanos' powers function on Benandanti in Ekstasis.

Embody: A wraith using *Embody* generally exists as solidified spirit energy, and as such, many powers such as sorcerous *Healing* do not function on the wraith's form. A wraith using *Embody* to actually take a physical form does make a visible target for *Telepathy*, *Telekinesis* and *Pyrokinesis*, though. A wraith who uses *Embody* to manifest cannot be contacted later with *Telepathy* while in the Underworld; the Numina only functions on the wraith while it is in the material world. Furthermore, using *Telepathy* on a wraith is unsettling at best. The Narrator should secretly make a Simple Test with the wraith to determine if the psychic contacts the wraith's Shadow instead of its Psyche (or vice versa for Spectres).

Fatalism: Wraiths cannot learn this Arcanos by studying with mortals possessing the Sorcery path of *Divination*. Similarly, wraiths cannot teach *Divination* to mortals through this Arcanos. The two powers, while similar in effect, have different methods.

Flux: Using the *Puppet Theatre* art on objects controlled with *Conjuring* requires the wraith to engage in a Mental Challenge with the controlling sorcerer.

Inhabit: A wraith using *Inhabit* must make a Mental Challenge against a sorcerer who uses *Conjuring* to control a Shellridden object. *Psychometry* immediately senses the presence of the wraith in an object.

Intimation: Although *Intimation* can change what a character wants, it cannot break the compulsions of *Ephemera* or *Summoning, Binding and Warding*. *Intimation* could be used to change the desires of the sorcerer, though.

Keening: Since this Arcanos affects emotions, a mortal using True Faith to resist must have at least four Faith Traits, not two. The shockwaves created by *Crescendo* are powerful enough to injure a Benandante in Ekstasis.

Mnemosynis: Use of this Arcanos on mortal targets requires that the wraith extend his reach beyond the Shroud in some fashion, either by using *Embody* or another similar Arcanos, or by being Risen. Conversely, *Mnemosynis* can be used on a Benandante in the Underworld.

Moliate: This Arcanos cannot affect Benandanti in the Underworld, as Benandanti in Ekstasis are not technically made of plasm.

Outrage: As with any other object that is being controlled, the wraith must make a Physical Challenge against a character using *Conjuring* to manipulate a given object. *Outrage* is fully effective on pesky Benandanti.

Pandemonium: When a wraith manifests strange effects across the Shroud, *Psychometry* can gain insight into the wraith's emotional state if used in the area.

Phantasm: Mortals typically have no defense against this Arcanos. A Benandante pulled out of his body through *Agon* is a dreaming spirit just like anyone else, but a Benandante already in Ekstasis cannot be affected by *Agon*.

Puppetry: A wraith can easily Skinride the empty body of a Benandante in Ekstasis. Most Benandante use *Ephemera* to set up wards against this sort of abuse.

Usury: A Benandante can lose (or gain) Health Levels from this Arcanos, but other functions have no effect on the non-wraith.

Fascinate: This Risen Arcanos is limited to the same functions as *Intimation*, although obviously the Risen exists in the material world.

Contaminate: This Dark Arcanos does not affect Benandanti, as they do not have active Shadows. Of course, once the Benandante in question dies, all bets are off....

Larceny: This Dark Arcanos is fully effective at destroying Benandanti during Ekstasis. Worse still, a Spectre could *Embody* and then use *Larceny* on the Benandante's unguarded body. Yet another reason to set up powerful wards before entering Ekstasis.

Shroud-Rending: Use of this Dark Arcanos is generally necessary for a Spectre to perceive the Skinlands, but a character with the Flaw: *Spectre Meat* (see Chapter Two) shows up visibly to all Spectres regardless of the use or lack of this power.



CHANGELING ARTS

Chicanery: Concealment granted with this Art cannot be penetrated with simple *Clairvoyance*. However, buried memories can sometimes be rediscovered with *Telepathy* (see Chapter Three).

Chronos: If a changeling uses *Chronos* to “undo” a scene in which a character with *Divination* already used expendable powers, the character with *Divination* regains the spent powers. Thus, a character who used *Divination* to gain a retest and then used that retest would regain the retest if a changeling used *Chronos*.

Dream Craft: Enchanted mortals and kinain may be taken into the Dreaming with this Art. Of course, if the individual suddenly disappears, others who are not enchanted will attempt to rationalize the disappearance away, as a result of the Mists (see *The Shining Host*).

Legerdemain: Forces exerted by this power can be contested with *Telekinesis* or *Conjuring*. Objects or creatures created by this power are fully affected by Sorcery designed against their normal counterparts; a created bat would be subject to the *Summoning*, *Binding and Warding* ritual Ward Against Bats, for instance.

Naming: This Art can be used to discover a mortal’s True Name, but a partially Awakened mortal (ghoul, kinain, Kinfolk, or possessed of any Intermediate Numina) is aware of the power’s use, just like a supernatural creature. Changing a subject’s form with this Art may make the subject resistant to or susceptible to different powers of Sorcery; *Summon Dog* is just as effective on a cat that is transformed into a dog with *Naming* as it is on a regular dog.

Primal: A changeling using *Elder-Form* is still considered a changeling for purposes of the effects of Sorcery. Thus, *Summon Dragon* has no effect on a changeling in dragon form, while *Summon Faerie* still works.

Pyretics: Fire created with this Art can be affected by *Pyrokinesis* and fanned if it is real, but chimerical fire cannot be so affected even if the psychic is enchanted.

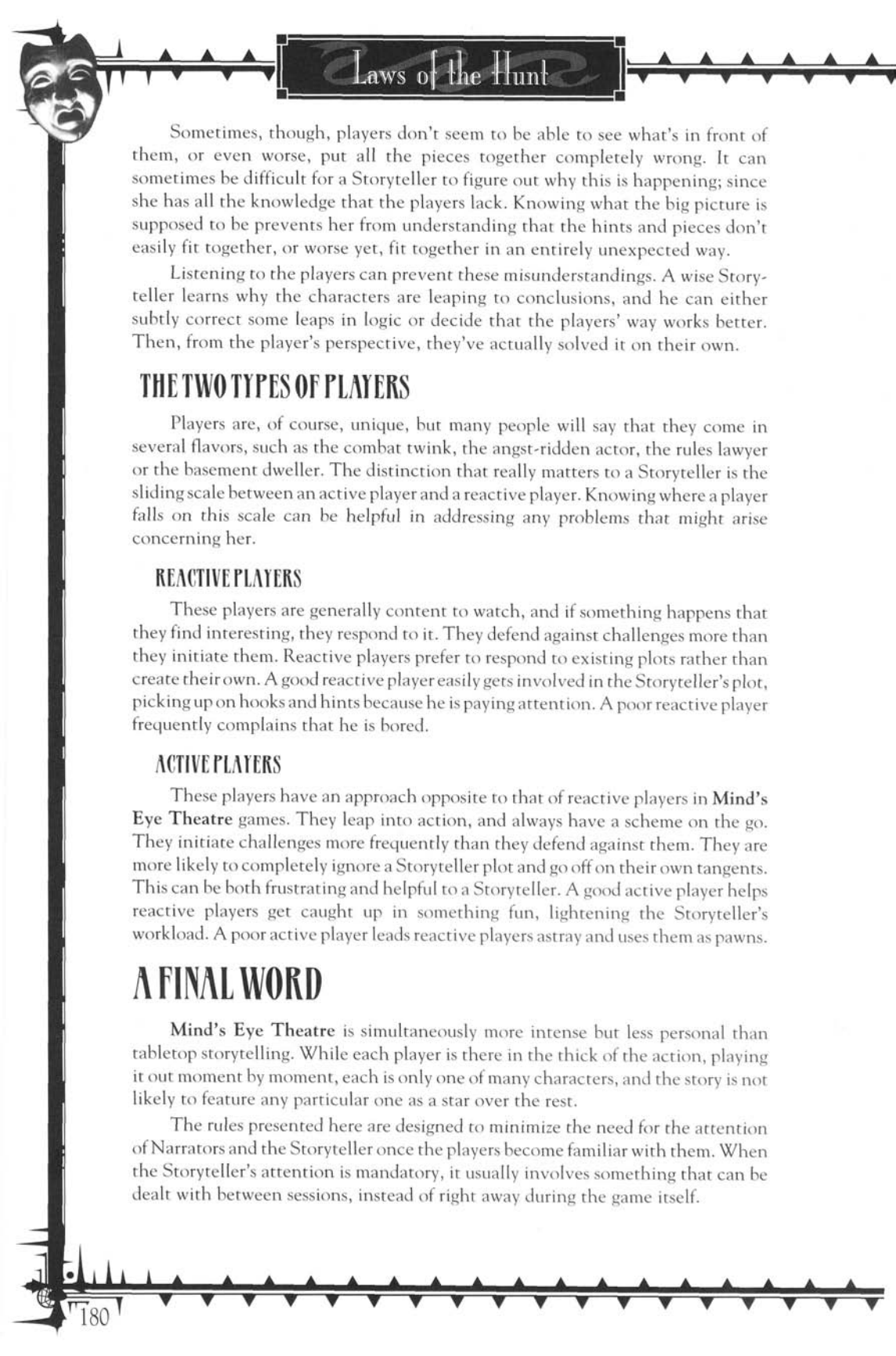
Soothsay: Sorcery that protects against scrying magic (such as a Ward versus Faeries) can prevent the use of this power on the sorcerer.

Sovereign: The *Dictum* power can be resisted as a mental command by a character with two Traits of Faith; *Grandeur* is emotional, and a character must have four Traits of Faith in order to resist it with True Faith.

GENERAL ADVICE

Good Storytelling takes open-mindedness, a sense of fair play, organization, absolute familiarity with the game rules and above all, the ability to improvise. The best stories are often the ones spawned from player-generated ideas. Characters will have their own goals, and if these goals lead them astray from a plot the Storyteller had in mind, it’s okay as long as the players are having fun. Of course, the plot they are neglecting could fester and grow more serious due to their inattention....

The players create the story just as much as the Storyteller does, and the Storyteller should try to avoid stepping on their toes or railroading them back to where he thinks they should be. A player using his imagination should be encouraged, and in return, he may bring out aspects of the game that the Storyteller never even considered.



Sometimes, though, players don't seem to be able to see what's in front of them, or even worse, put all the pieces together completely wrong. It can sometimes be difficult for a Storyteller to figure out why this is happening; since she has all the knowledge that the players lack. Knowing what the big picture is supposed to be prevents her from understanding that the hints and pieces don't easily fit together, or worse yet, fit together in an entirely unexpected way.

Listening to the players can prevent these misunderstandings. A wise Storyteller learns why the characters are leaping to conclusions, and he can either subtly correct some leaps in logic or decide that the players' way works better. Then, from the player's perspective, they've actually solved it on their own.

THE TWO TYPES OF PLAYERS

Players are, of course, unique, but many people will say that they come in several flavors, such as the combat twink, the angst-ridden actor, the rules lawyer or the basement dweller. The distinction that really matters to a Storyteller is the sliding scale between an active player and a reactive player. Knowing where a player falls on this scale can be helpful in addressing any problems that might arise concerning her.

REACTIVE PLAYERS

These players are generally content to watch, and if something happens that they find interesting, they respond to it. They defend against challenges more than they initiate them. Reactive players prefer to respond to existing plots rather than create their own. A good reactive player easily gets involved in the Storyteller's plot, picking up on hooks and hints because he is paying attention. A poor reactive player frequently complains that he is bored.

ACTIVE PLAYERS

These players have an approach opposite to that of reactive players in **Mind's Eye Theatre** games. They leap into action, and always have a scheme on the go. They initiate challenges more frequently than they defend against them. They are more likely to completely ignore a Storyteller plot and go off on their own tangents. This can be both frustrating and helpful to a Storyteller. A good active player helps reactive players get caught up in something fun, lightening the Storyteller's workload. A poor active player leads reactive players astray and uses them as pawns.

A FINAL WORD

Mind's Eye Theatre is simultaneously more intense but less personal than tabletop storytelling. While each player is there in the thick of the action, playing it out moment by moment, each is only one of many characters, and the story is not likely to feature any particular one as a star over the rest.

The rules presented here are designed to minimize the need for the attention of Narrators and the Storyteller once the players become familiar with them. When the Storyteller's attention is mandatory, it usually involves something that can be dealt with between sessions, instead of right away during the game itself.



The most significant change from the original tabletop rules is the elimination of foreseeing the future from mortal Numinae. In a **Mind's Eye Theatre** game, the future is in the hands of the players, and the Storyteller probably can't predict it any better than they can.

These hunter rules only begin to scratch the surface. The tabletop sourcebooks they are adapted from contain much more depth and detail than **Laws of the Hunt** can hope to encompass. For story concepts, Storytellers are encouraged to turn to the ideas developed in **The Hunters Hunted**, **The Inquisition**, **Project Twilight**, **Halls of the Arcanum**, **The Quick and the Dead**, **The Autumn People**, **Mediums: Speakers with the Dead** and **World of Darkness: Sorcerer**.

EVOLUTION OF MIND'S EYE THEATRE

The **Mind's Eye Theatre** game system undergoes constant evolution and revision, and as such, its rules tend to change as players, Narrators and Storytellers discover newer and better ways to handle situations. This evolution is no great surprise — every game system goes through steps of development — but with **Mind's Eye Theatre**, the feedback is immediate (and often extensive) when a particular rule doesn't work well.

The simple result of this constant evolution is that each successive **Mind's Eye Theatre** book tends to have some new and different ways of dealing with situations. In cases where rules conflict, the rules presented in the newest book should be used, unless they are specifically designed for a case relevant only to the new book. By way of example...

- Ghouls, who were treated in detail in **Liber des Goules**, never had an assigned number of Trait maxima, Experience Trait expenditures, or Discipline limitations. The rules for the Merit: *Ghoul* (see Chapter Two) should take precedence here. However, the other rules in the **Liber des Goules** still apply.

- Garou Kinfolk received only cursory treatment in **Laws of the Wild**. The rules in this book, on the other hand, provide a much more detailed system for building mortals, and werewolf troupes may wish to use the rules in here.

- *Military and Espionage* Influence have never before been presented in a **Mind's Eye Theatre** product. However, that doesn't mean that they're limited just to mortals. A Storyteller who feels comfortable with these Influences should certainly allow other characters access to them.

Of course, all of this development is superseded by the so-called "Golden Rule": The Storyteller has the final say for any given game. If you prefer the earlier rules for a particular occurrence, then by all means, use them. Just be sure that all of your players know what your game uses.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

VISION

ABILITIES

MERITS

FLAWS

HUMANITY TRAITS

WILLPOWER



FAITH



INFLUENCES

DERANGEMENTS

NEGATIVE TRAITS

MENTAL TRAITS

SOCIAL TRAITS

PHYSICAL TRAITS

Laws of THE HUNT

PLAYER _____

CHARACTER _____

CHRONICLE _____

NATURE _____

DEMEANOR _____

CONCEPT _____

MOTIVATION _____

ASSOCIATION _____

BASE _____

EXPERIENCE _____

AGE _____

Mind's Eye Theatre JOURNAL

BECAUSE THE MIND'S EYE NEVER BLINKS

Get ready for a new way to stay on top of your game. In February of 1999, White Wolf will bring you the first issue of a quarterly publication for Mind's Eye Theatre. This Journal is designed to round out your MET knowledge by bringing you the latest in in-character and game mechanic information. Some of the regular features and one-shot articles in the first issue will include:

- International Continuity — Updates official revisions in World of Darkness continuity beginning with changes introduced in the new edition of Vampire: The Masquerade.
- State of the Game —Recent news, and insights into the gears of the live-action mechanism.
- Ramping Up — The basics of setting up a completely new game, and the pitfalls of a MET game that's not properly prepared.
- Enochian Mysticism — Revisions of the Nagaraja Discipline of Nihilistics.
- Wyld West: Frontier Felines — MET Bastet, and the tribal advantages and disadvantages of the Pumonca.
- Long Night: Combination Disciplines — Translation notes for live-action play.
- Q&A and Rules Clarification.

*And updates on major conventions
scheduled to feature live-action games.*

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