

GAMES OF DIVINITY



A Compendium of the Divine for

EXALTED



GAMES
OF
DIVINITY

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To Brian Schoner, father of the light implosion bow, for that and other unpublished additions to the Second Age that appeared in *Savage Seas*.



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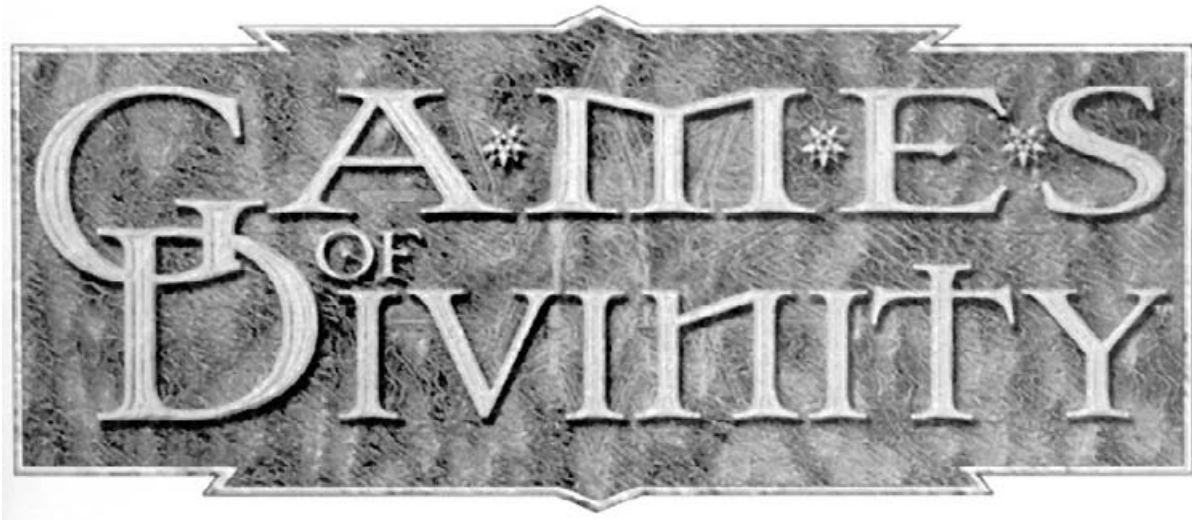


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INTRODUCTION



Natheless between Pegana and the Earth flutter ten thousand thousand prayers that beat their wings against the face of Death, and never for one of them hast the hand of the striker been stayed, nor yet have tarried the feet of the Relentless One. Utter thy prayer! It may accomplish where failed ten thousand thousand.

— Lord Dunsany, ‘The Gods of Pegana’

The world of **Exalted** is a-crawl with gods, elementals and other spirit beings. Though they once obeyed the spiritual order due to the influence of the Celestial Incarna and from fear of the Exalted, the orderly time of the First Age is long past. The Celestial Exalted are scattered and forgotten, and the Celestial Incarna are hopelessly enraptured by the Games of Divinity. These games, an amusement of the gods seized from the Primordials, now form the center of all society in the heavenly city of Yu-Shan, and absorb far more of the Income’s time than the dull matter of Creation.

Now, only the dullest or most stolidly loyal of the gods still uphold the natural order. The greedy and the self-advancing have long abandoned their thankless posts and now seek to gain stature as masters of Creation or lords of men. These dishonest gods and disreputable elemental lords accept tribute, wage war amongst one another and otherwise neglect their station in favor of their own personal betterment. In

cities such as Great Forks and Whitehall, gods rule the nations of men as their lords.

Only on the Blessed Isle do the gods keep to their places, for there the Bronze Faction Sidereals work secretly and the Exalted monks of the Immaculate Order work openly to enforce the natural order as it was in the time before the Great Contagion. In other places, men offer as much as they are able to the gods. Some do so to seek favor, but most offer prayer in the hope of averting divine anger. In places where the dominant god is greedy or where there are many gods who walk among men demanding tribute, entire societies are impoverished by the spirits’ need for offerings and ritual propitiations. Indeed, there are many who say that those who dwell in the Scavenger Lands are no better off than those who are subject to the Realm, for though the denizens of these free lands escape the burdensome imperial taxes, the offerings they must give to the divinities are equally painful.



With the disappearance of the Empress and the reappearance of the Solar Exalted, the world of gods has been thrown into as much disarray as the world of men. Many spirits fear they will be punished for the misdeeds of the past few centuries, while other fear they will be framed and punished for the rests' misdeeds. A few hope desperately that the return of the Solars will result in the reform of the decaying Celestial Bureaucracy, while many divinities seek to harness the power of the Solar Exalted to serve their own ends. Whatever will be, there are a number of struggles erupting between the gods as they seek to position themselves to reap the whirlwind and profit from the upcoming time of tumult.

A CELESTIAL HISTORY

In the beginning, there were the Primordials, alone in the churning chaos of unshaped Essence. From their thoughts and will sprang all of Creation. They created the world and all things in it, the seasons and the stars, the sun and the moon and the great cycle of life. Yet, these things would not maintain themselves, and so, the Primordials created the Incarna and the hosts of lesser spirits to maintain Creation and perform a host of more menial tasks. The Primordials did not give birth to the gods as women give birth to their children, but created them wholly from the Essence. The Primordials charged their offspring with the maintenance of Creation and left it in their charge, while they played among themselves the Games of Divinity, which are not for men to know or understand. In time, the gods became discontent with their lot as keepers of the world, tenders of time and the heavens and churls of the Primordials. They said to one another, "Let us overthrow the Primordials and take their place, and then, we will take our leisure and play the Games of Divinity."

And all the gods said that this was good, but yet, they could not lift a hand against the Primordials, for they had foreseen the ambitions of the gods and forged their divine souls with great geasa upon them, that they could not work the undoing of their creators. The geasa included the stars and planets and moons, the turnings of the seasons and all things divine. Yet, the titans had underestimated mortal life, for their consciousness could not comprehend the dangers inherent in men and the heroes they might become.

The Unconquered Sun said to the rest of the gods, "Let us take men and give them the favor of the gods and use them as our champions against the Primordials, that we might overthrow them and play for ourselves the Games of Divinity." The other gods assented to

this, and they went among men and touched them, making heroes of them.

The Unconquered Sun was first among the gods, and so, his champions were the foremost among those the gods Exalted. Gaia would create no soldiers, but her consort Luna created warriors to fight beside the Unconquered Sun's heroes, mighty in battle and as many-faced and clever as Luna herself. The gods of the other planets were mighty but not especially inclined to warfare and hunting. Between themselves, they made the Sidereal, who were wise and mighty seers and weavers of spells but few in number and weaker in battle than the Solar and Lunar Exalted.

The Unconquered Sun and the rest of the gods looked on this and were pleased, for they knew that treachery begets treachery. By dividing the powers of the gods among many different heroes, men would be kept weak and unable to plot against the gods even as the gods at that moment plotted against their sires, the Primordials.

The weakest among the gods, the Elemental Dragons and the lesser spirits of the earth and the elements, could not make heroes as mighty as the Celestial gods could. Instead, they made among themselves soldiers, to serve as the armies of the heroes. They were not as powerful as the heroes created by the Celestial gods, but they could multiply, in the manner of the creatures of the earth, to make good their losses in battle. This was unlike the heroes of the Celestial gods, whose might was too great to pass through the blood. The heroes of the Celestial gods were not born, but Exalted after birth, usually after a heroic deed drew the attention of the gods. When the Celestial Exalted died, their heroic spirits would pass to others, and they would be reborn after a time. Yet, they could make no dynasties.

The Unconquered Sun and the clever among the gods looked upon this and were again pleased, knowing that without the strength of blood ties, the dynasties of the Exalted would forever be weak.

Of the war, we will not speak overmuch. Though it began in ambush, it did not end quickly. Much of the world was laid waste, and many were the horrors unleashed. Many — Exalted, Primordial and god alike — were destroyed. Even Creation itself changed. Prior to that time, things had either lived deathless existences or possessed spirits that were as fine ash in the wind, returning immediately to the Essence flows upon destruction. Yet, the world could not dissolve the spirits of the murdered Primordials, for it was less than they were, and so, a new place was born, the Underworld, a place of dark seas and drear expanses, for the souls of the slain Primordials to dwell in. They descended into this new realm and laid down in tombs at the cornerstone of the world, dreaming

the cold dreams of that which cannot die but is slain. After that time, the souls of all dead things gravitated to that dark land.

Not all the Primordials were slain. Some surrendered, and Gaia implored the Unconquered Sun and the rest of the gods to stay their hands. Those Primordials who surrendered were cast into the prison of Malfeas, a hellish realm of poison and toil, and they were made to swear oaths on their own names that they would never set foot within Creation again. These are today known as the Demon Princes, or Yozis, trapped forever outside our world and forever thirsting for vengeance. It is said by adepts of the black arts that the Yozis exchange sendings with their dead brothers and sisters as they lie sleeping in their tombs. One would imagine that the conversation turns often to the undoing of the gods, yet the world still stands, and the heavens continue on their appointed course, so perhaps it is they plot in vain.

In addition to Gaia, another Primordial had aided the gods in their rebellion. A tinker and trickster, it was named Autochthon, and it had shown the gods the secrets of smithing weapons that could slay the Primordials and taught the Exalted the many secret powers of jade and lunar silver and planetary steel and orichalc. The gods invited him to live with them in their court as a wonder-worker, but Autochthon could not abide that. He knew he would forever be a galling reminder of the gods' treachery and that they would inevitably slay him for it. So Autochthon took himself beyond the edges of Creation and made himself a workshop there, and he has never been seen again.

After the war, the Celestial Incarna were not eager to meddle in the affairs of the world. They had been burdened by its administration for countless epochs and had no desire to partake further of its governance. They set administrators on the cycles of the seasons and the stars and played among themselves the Games of Divinity. The lesser gods and spirits of Earth itself were largely content to watch sleepily over that which was their demesne, now secure against the depredations of lustful or whimsical Primordials. Rather than oversee the world, they gave it into the hands of their Exalted soldiers as a mustering-out gift, a reward for loyal service in the long war against the Primordials.

Only the Unconquered Sun still meddled in the affairs of the world, for he looked fondly upon his heroes. He lent his wisdom to the Solar Exalted in their governance, and for millennia, the world knew peace under their benevolent rule. It was a golden age, when a congress of sorcerer-kings called the Solar Deliberative ruled a world of marvels and grandeur with the guidance of the stars and the wisdom of the Unconquered Sun himself.



伊邪諾伊邪美



Yet, as the Primordials had died, they had coughed out curses against their murderers. Though they had intended them for the gods, the gods had wrapped themselves in wards against such death shouts, and it was the hands of the Exalted that were red with blood. As time went by, the dying curses of the Primordials took root and, in due season, blossomed and bore fruit.

The Exalted grew proud and eccentric, prone to fits of temper and self-indulgence. Once, they had been semi-divine beings sprung from men. Now, they were simply men with vast powers and short tempers. They grew indolent and prideful, and their Realm became corrupt. In time, the priests of the Realm, who had once conveyed the words of the Unconquered Sun, began to speak for their patron, using his name to justify the most outrageous of excesses. Again, like roots in stone, the death curse of the Primordials worked its way into the cracks of the Realm and split their world apart.

The Unconquered Sun, disgusted with the hubris of his followers and blind in his own hubris to the workings of the curse, turned his back on the Realm. The dreams of his priests became merely dreams, and the portents they had once witnessed were now merely odd coincidence. Their rule faltered, and there was unrest and banditry. The rich committed great injustices against the poor, and the natural order was offended by a thousand decadences.

Thus were sewn the seeds of the destruction of the Old Realm and the end of the Golden Age.

LEXICON

Celestial Incarna: The seven great divinities of the Heavens; the Five Maidens, Luna and the Unconquered Sun. The primordial Gaia is often counted among these beings as well, increasing their numbers to eight, but this more a grouping of convenience than an effective taxonomy. Savants of theological matters count Gaia as a being of an entirely different sort.

demon: The most numerous of the inhabitants of Malfeas, the prison-kingdom of the Yozi. Demons of the greater sorts are the divided souls of the demon princes, while those of the lesser sort are the creations or offspring of the greater demons.

Demon Prince: A term more commonly used to describe the Yozi.

elemental: Elementals are the semi-spontaneous offspring of natural forces. Elementals are responsible for the maintenance of the natural world and carrying out its ongoing processes. They regulate the winds, the fires, the shakings of the earth and (in conjunction with Luna) the tides of the sea.

Five Elemental Dragons: The five children of Gaia, who protect their mother and who brought all

gods and elementals to heel in the chaotic days after the Primordial War. They are, in theory, the rulers of the terrestrial sphere, but for all their might, they issue few edicts and are so vast that they show little interest in Creation. It may be that the Terrestrial Exalted followers of the Immaculate Philosophy really do join them when they become spiritually advanced, for the Terrestrials partake of the same nature, but if such is the case, the Five Elemental Dragons say little of it.

Five Maidens: The five goddesses who spin out the destiny and fate off all those things that are spoken of in the stars. Few even of the Exalted realize that there are many things that are not spoken of within the firmament of Creation.

Games of Divinity: A game invented or created by the Primordials. The Games of Divinity are explicitly not the use of humans as pawns (though there are many gods who do play such games), but are, in fact, something greater and more mysterious.

little god: A god not of the Celestial Incarna. Even the least gods are prideful beings and resent being referred to in the diminutive or reminded of their low station. All but savants, the Exalted and followers of the Immaculate Order simply call these beings “gods.”

sanctum: The retreats of the gods. Sanctums are small realities that all gods of more than trifling power possess. It is in these places that the little gods relax and retreat from the cares of their station.

spirit: A term used by some savants for those gods not of the Celestial Order. In common usage, it is just a synonym for god.

Yozi: One of the Primordials defeated by the Exalted in the Primordial War but not slain. These beings were made to swear oaths on their own names and incarcerated in the prison-kingdom of Malfeas.

Yu-Shan: The greatest city ever built, the Heavenly City of Yu-Shan is the abode of the Celestial Incarna, the home of the Games of Divinity, and also the dwelling place of all those Little Gods who represent universal principals. Yu-Shan was once the abode of the Primordials in the days before the Primordial War, and today has fallen into a state of decay, as the gods ignore its maintenance to instead play the Games of Divinity.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is divided into three chapters, one for each different type of spirit being. It concludes with a brief appendix of spirit Charms that expand and elaborate on those sample powers provided on pages 290-293 of *Exalted*.

Chapter One: Gods details the gods, those beings who manage and monitor the state of the natural world.

Chapter Two: Elementals details those more primal spirits, the elementals, who are responsible for the maintenance and execution of natural phenomena.

Chapter Three: Demons details the hellish realm of Malfestas, the Yozis who are its masters and its foundation and the countless demons who make up its populace.

Appendix: Spirit Charms describes the new Charms referred to by the text of this book and provides guidelines for their use by Eclipse Caste Exalted as well.

OTHER DIVINITIES

This book is not the only one in the **Exalted** line that features gods and demons. The following are gods, demons and elementals that have appeared elsewhere. This section only lists those beings that appear with full statistics, so although Hiparkes, the horse-god of the Marukani, is mentioned in **Scavenger Sons**, he doesn't appear on this list because he's only mentioned in passing. This book also does not include beings from the main **Exalted** book or from the adventure "Spirit Exiles of the Western Ocean," which appeared in the adventure collection **Time of Tumult**. **ESC** is short for **Exalted Storyteller's Companion**, the book that comes bundled with the Storyteller's screen.

GODS

Bashixun, Lord of the Surf. God of the shoreline and shoreline fishermen. Appears as a fisherman, a man in chitin-like plate armor or a deadly crustacean monster. **Savage Seas**, p. 110.

City Father/Mother. The guardian god of a single city or large town. **ESC**, p. 61.

Dolphin Spirit. Playful but cruel ocean spirits that can assume the form of men. **Savage Seas**, p. 111.

Golden Stars. One of the god-ensembles of the Court of the Seasons. The Golden Stars appears as six sisters robed in gold and hold sway during Ascending Fire. **ESC**, p. 64.

Kireeki, Huntress of the Waves. Goddess of non-shark oceanic predators. Appears as an orca with long octopid tentacles. **Savage Seas**, p. 110.

Life Tree. Strange gods who make pacts of fertility with men in exchange for offerings. **ESC**, p. 62.

Siren. Cruel and murderous stalkers of seas and lakes. Some have mermaid's tails; none can survive for long out of water. **ESC**, p. 67.

Storm Mother. Cruel minor goddesses of ocean storms. They loathe red-haired women and are ap-

peased by the sacrifice of cats, crows or babies. **ESC**, p. 66.

White Terrors. One of the god-ensembles of the Court of the Seasons. The White Terrors appear as numerous small monkey-cats, whose touch or gaze can inflict eternal chills. These spirits hold sway during Descending Water. **ESC**, p. 64.

Zhuziao, Lord of the Deep Waters, Master of the Dark Depths. God of the dark oceanic depths and the things that lie there. Appears as a vast, many-armed octopid. **Savage Seas**, p. 109.

ELEMENTALS

Artisan. Slender and fragile woodcarvers forbidden to work the flesh of living trees. **ESC**, p. 71.

Fire Butterfly. Narcissistic, vain and capricious fire sprites. **ESC**, p. 69.

Naresh, Arbiter of Northern Storms, Lesser Elemental Dragon of Water. Appears as an ever-shifting gray-blue dragon. **Savage Seas**, p. 108.

Serpent-and-Egg. Malevolent earth elementals who cause disasters when they swallow their eggs at the behest of sorcerers. Used by the foolish as a guide to eternal life. **ESC**, p. 72.

Undertow. The elementals of swift, deep ocean currents. They know many secrets and think only in terms of subterfuge. **ESC**, p. 70.

Water Child. Voyeuristic seers who take the form of dead children and who can share their visions. **ESC**, p. 70.

Wind Maker. Elemental creators of the winds with the shapes of eagles. Praying to them drives mortals slowly mad. **ESC**, p. 71.

DEMONS

Anuhle, Demon of the First Circle. Spider creatures of many colors and breeds, all deadly. **ESC**, p. 73.

Bisclavaret, Demon of the First Circle. Autistic wild-wandering stalkers of men. Offspring of Mara. **ESC**, p. 73.

Esitrufa, Demon of the First Circle. A noxious cloud of gas that can drive men mad. **Savage Seas**, p. 112.

Mara, Demon of the Second Circle. A wild-wandering maiden who teaches sorcerers and kills by swallowing the souls of those she convinces to lie with her. **ESC**, p. 74.

Sondok, Demon of the Second Circle. A powerful warrior who can teach swordsmanship and is often used as a guardian by Celestial sorcerers. **ESC**, p. 75.







CHAPTER ONE GODS



When the Primordials created the world and its gods millennia ago, every god was given a strict and carefully defined place in the Celestial Bureaucracy. Under the highest Celestial deities, there were the local gods who looked after the network of roads in a particular region, the spirit of all three-hulled ships, or Krinmy, the Mother of All Harbors. The silver-footed Maiden of Travel held dominion over the Duke of Wagons, the Shogun of Roads and the Sail Maiden. In this manner, the ways of power stretched down until they reached the least gods of all — the spiritual representative of a single dirt path or an aging fishing skiff. All of the gods, from the smallest spirit to the greatest Celestial deity, acted as the divine representatives and spiritual avatars of their assigned domains.

A similar order continued once the gods overthrew the Primordials. As a reward for their service in the war against the Primordials, the gods gave the Exalted dominion over mortals and the physical world. To avoid conflict with the Exalts, all gods, from the greatest Celestial deity down to the least local spirit, were held to a heavenly order that mandated that their most important functions were to serve as the spiritual representative and record keeper of the affairs of their particular domain. While most spirits are equipped with potent Charms, the Unconquered Sun and the other Celestials determined that the only way to avoid chaos and dissolution as god battled Exalt was for the spirits to avoid entanglements in the mortal world. Manipulating

their domain or interfering with mortals who sought to affect or visit their domain were both strictly prohibited.

For example, if a small god noticed a problem with its road or harbor, it was to report the problem to its superiors, who would then duly inform the Exalted. The Celestial Exalted, informed of such a problem, would pass these reports to the Terrestrial governors of the area, who would see that their subject mortals performed the needed upkeep and propitiation, be it patching roads and repairing bridges or making prayers and offerings at shrines and spiritually significant trees.

Eventually, however, certain gods found that some diversions, entertainments and status games could easily become more important than keeping track of their domains. As the Celestials and the Incarna became increasingly caught up in their own political machinations and ever-more obsessed with the supernally addictive Games of Divinity, the only check on the misbehavior of rogue gods were the Celestial Exalted and the censors — gods charged with investigating deviations from the Celestial Order. During the early days of the Old Realm, only mad or renegade spirits ever dared to exceed their duties, and the censors or the Celestial Exalted quickly put them in their place.

The Celestial Order first began to seriously decay when the Solar Exalted were murdered. This event shook the heavenly city of Yu-Shan to its very core. In a matter



of months, the Solar Exalted were dead, the Lunar Exalted had fled to the edges of the world, and the Sidereal Exalted had vanished, leaving the world in the custodianship of the Terrestrial Exalted. While the little gods had respected and feared the formidable powers of the Celestial Exalted, the gods of in the Celestial hierarchy and many local spirits refused to acknowledge the authority of the traitorous Dragon-Blooded.

Although the most powerful of the Celestial gods refused to be distracted from their intrigues and entertainments by this crisis, the censors initially disciplined gods who violated the heavenly order. However, as the number of offenders increased, the most diligent censors despaired of ever stemming the tide of rebellion and abandoned their posts, while those with a baser nature began to take bribes to overlook such offenses.

As the First Realm collapsed, an increasing number of gods were suddenly free to do as they wished. Many spirits took a more active role in the affairs of the mortal world, while others abandoned their domains and sought brighter futures elsewhere or lost themselves in a multitude of pleasures. During the last days of the Dragon-Blooded Shogunate, gods of all sorts began to meddle in the affairs of mortals. Some did so from a concern that the Dragon-Blooded could not be trusted to keep humanity safe. Others saw opportunities to expand their power and influence because the Dragon-Blooded were unable to stop them.

The Great Contagion and the cataclysmic end of the First Age confirmed many gods' opinion that the Dragon-Blooded were weak and unworthy rulers. As the Threshold collapsed from internal chaos and incursions by the Wyld, gods openly walked Creation, driving back the Wyld, gathering great hordes of desperate mortal worshipers or simply protecting their domains.

Today, some Sidereals and Lunars still see to spiritual matters in their domains, but most cannot be bothered. With the Celestial Incarna lost in the Games of Divinity and the Celestial Exalted weakened and concerned only with their own affairs, many gods have become lost in excesses of power. In these dark modern days, the only force for righteousness in the Celestial Order are censors. Alas, most of these censors have abandoned their thankless posts. Those few who remain active are like the dragon Fakharu, accepting bribes in return for overlooking even the most egregious offences.

In the Threshold, many spirits already view their personal domains as a place or type of creature that is completely under their control. The most obvious examples are the rulers of the cities of Great Forks and Whitehall. Instead of merely acting as the spiritual avatars and representatives of these cities, these gods have become the cities' temporal rulers. While the ancient compacts the gods made with each other and

with humanity strictly forbids such behavior, it is far from uncommon. Roads, fields and rivers throughout Creation have spirits that work to maintain their charges. In the Threshold, these gods create shrines or commission or force others to build temples to them. Everyone who wishes to travel through or otherwise use the spirit's domain must make the appropriate offerings. While few spirits will risk their lives or waste their time hunting down and slaying every trespasser who attempts to avoid paying tribute, most are happy to use their Charms to harass or even slay those who offend them. Solitary travelers who attempt to evade such tolls sometimes meet a singularly dreadful fate if they do not possess powerful magical protections. Most little gods prefer to make vivid examples of easily disposed of trespassers to hunting down everyone who refuses to provide the requisite offerings. However, anyone who attempts to do serious harm to a spirit's domain is risking her life unless she has made a deal with the spirit's superior or is able to match the spirit in battle.

Until recently, the Scarlet Empress' powers and the supernatural martial arts of the Immaculate Order forced the spirits of the Blessed Isle to obey the ancient heavenly order. Many small gods work in minor ways to attract offerings from the peasants and other lesser folk. However, the gods receive no worship or lavish offerings out of season in any land controlled by the Realm.

The recent disappearance of the Scarlet Empress has called this order into question. Although none have yet attempted to openly defy the lands' Dragon-Blooded rulers, many spirits in the Realm now wonder if they might now be able to demand bountiful offerings and substantial tribute from the residents of the Blessed Isle. Only the formidable power of the monks of the Immaculate Order and the Dragon-Blooded Host has so far prevented the local gods from attempting to assert themselves on the Blessed Isle as they do elsewhere.

THE CELESTIAL HIERARCHY

The old ways are long gone — many gods now interfere with the physical world in profound ways, and some now control entirely different domains. However, the skeleton of the old hierarchy remains, for although it is carefully cloaked in ritual, formality and tradition, this hierarchy is based upon power. Some gods have dominion over all roads in a certain nation, while others must make due with a single rustic path. The primary difference between these spirits is that the first is considerably more powerful than the second. Celestials such as Luna and the Unconquered Sun are far more powerful than any other spirits. Therefore, they are in charge, and the decay of formal divine institutions will hardly change that. While trickery, political machinations and cleverness can substitute for some degree of power, the weaker gods never

THE GAMES OF DIVINITY

A letter from the God-Blood Floating Topaz to his Exalted lover

Today was my first day back in my mother's shining citadel. She was quite pleased with the speed at which I obtained the enchanted soulsteel scepter from the outskirts of Thorns. With its protection, so long as she remains in her palace, she need not fear the wrath of any but the greatest dragons. As a reward, she has promised to allow me to remain here until spring. She also provided me with the greatest prize imaginable—she gave me a taste of her memory of the one time she was allowed to play the wondrous Games of Divinity. I only learned of them a short while ago. Mother told me those ancients known as the Primordials created the games. When the gods defeated their predecessors aeons ago, the greatest gods gained possession of these games. Since that time, the Celestial Incarna have played them in the sacred city of Yu-Shan. I had heard rumors of divine games before, but they normally involved manipulating the lives and destinies of mortals. The reality is both very different and far more wonderful.

Mother once did a great service for the Maiden of Battle and was allowed to play a single turn at this game. This alone is a great honor only accorded a rare few. It happened many centuries ago, but her memory remains as clear as newly frozen ice. The games lie in the center of the Yu-Shan's jade palace. The vast courtyard of this palace is entirely devoted to their play. With few exceptions, only the greatest gods play, while their most powerful inferiors are allowed to witness the games. Rank determines how close one can stand to the gleaming boards. When mother is permitted to attend, she is always placed in the first three rows. The boards gleam and shine like polished glass, and my still-mortal senses cannot resolve any details. Just being close to the boards is ecstasy, and the brief instant of play she shared with me was beyond anything I am capable of describing. Playing this game is to know all knowledge and wisdom, to taste the finest wine, to love the sweetest-limbed youth and to feel the fierce joy that comes from watching the life drain from the person you are dueling, all wrapped up in one overwhelming experience.

Mother tells me that anyone with mortal blood who even touches the game boards is soul-burned into a mindless husk. Part of me wonders if touching them would be worth the price, but I have another option. If I continue to serve mother well, she will share more of her memories with me. With luck, she will also eventually transform me completely into one of the gods. At that point, I can perhaps help you to become as me. My love, nothing in even your greatest magics or your finest drugs compares with this pleasure. I will have it, and then, I will find some way to share it with you.

control large domains, and (with the exception of victims of divine punishments) powerful spirits are never the gods of minor matters. The only sure exception to this hierarchy of power is that all gods of the Celestial Court are accorded more respect than gods with a purely local domain. As a result, some of the lesser Celestial gods have a status that is out of proportion to their actual power.

THE CELESTIAL COURT

Above all of the other spirit courts lies the Celestial Court. In the heavenly metropolis of Yu-Shan, the Unconquered Sun, Luna, the five planetary Maidens and a vast host of courtiers and retainers dwell in luxurious splendor. In ages past, they lay at the center of a vast and orderly empire—every spirit paid obeisance to its local spirit court, and every spirit court obeyed the wishes of the Celestial Court. Today, this grand hierarchy has broken down.

Now, the politics of the gods are not only complex and subtle, they are also highly unpredictable. Many gods who claim to obey the edicts of the Celestial Court often ignore its commands. When coerced by the threats or promises of one of the leaders of the local spirit court,

almost any spirit can be convinced to ignore some of the laws of Heaven. The Celestial censors and judges who used to travel the world searching for problems and correcting errors have grown lax, decadent and vastly corrupt. As a result, while the appropriate reports are sometimes filed with the greatest gods, most of these accounts are simply lies and tales of fancy created by censors too lazy to search the world for corruption that they are either unable or unwilling to correct.

To make matters worse, the Celestial gods often do little more than stamp these reports without reading them. Doing anything more strenuous takes valuable time away from the endlessly seductive Games of Divinity. While a few members of the Celestial Court attempt to uphold the responsibilities of their office, they can do little to stem the tide of error and misdeed. As a result, spirits outside the Celestial Court now regard it as dangerously erratic. The heinous crimes of one spirit may be completely ignored, while an otherwise blameless small god may be severely punished for using improper decor in its sanctum simply because it could not afford to pay the proper bribe. Gods may openly commit major or minor





offenses for centuries before an overworked censor finally notices and punishes them. Except for those gods ambitious enough to attempt to gain direct access to the Games of Divinity or the other advantages that life in glorious Yu-Shan offers, local spirits now do their best to avoid all contact with the Celestial Court.

The Celestial Court remains in the holy city of Yu-Shan, a great and immaterial sanctum (see p. 16) originally created by the Primordials. Yu-Shan is quite simply the largest city ever created. At night, the lights of Yu-Shan stretch out further than the eye can see. In the long-lost days of the First Realm, Yu-Shan bustled with swift messengers and was regularly visited by hundreds of Exalted and many thousands of mortals who simply wished to see this wonder. Today, only the Sidereals come, and even their visits are infrequent. Once, vast ranks of servants of all sorts served in the jade pleasure dome in the center of the city. Here, the Celestial gods heard petitions and played the Games of Divinity. While the gods still weave their endless stratagems, only the most naive spirits come to petition — the rest know that all they will receive are platitudes and empty promises of aid.

Sacred Yu-Shan itself has also fallen upon dark times. Although this exquisite metropolis remains the most wondrous city ever conceived, some of the neighborhoods where the lesser Celestial gods once lived have been deserted for centuries — the littlest spirits now mindlessly prowl those empty streets, waiting for commands that never come. In other places, new spirits have moved into Yu-Shan. Some interlopers have torn down exquisite local buildings to create duplicates of their own sanctums. While Yu-Shan has of course been spared the worst of the brigands and thieves who infest almost all mortal cities, lies and false promises are now as common as wind in the Western islands. Also, since the greatest gods now rarely leave their jade pleasure dome, unwary lesser spirits sometimes find themselves at the mercy of powerful and rapacious gods who think nothing of soulforging minor gods into trinkets for their pleasure.

In the absence of a strong central authority, a complex web of overlapping and often contradictory systems of power and authority has appeared. Atantti, the Southern Lord of Water, may control the pools in every well and oasis in the Southland, but the Rentava, Lady of the Emerald Oasis, has dominion over all parts of every oasis, including their water. While this situation is normally harmonious, should Atantti and Rentava quarrel, the individual guardians of oasis pools must choose who they will obey. Since making the wrong choice can result in the small god becoming the spirit guardian of a lineage of congenitally diseased inchworms for the next several centuries or even being soulforged into a diverting bauble, this choice is often a difficult one. Lesser spirits do their best to either rush to the support of the likely winner or simply avoid the attentions of both of their rulers.

THE SPIRIT COURTS

Local spirits are organized into elaborate and complex courts. The higher-ranking gods are supposed to keep track of the lesser spirits under them, with the Five Elemental Dragons towering over all the other spirits of the Terrestrial sphere — and most of the Celestials as well. The rulers of well-run courts constantly check on the welfare and actions of their charges and employ deputies who write a nearly endless series of reports. These deputies regularly visit every god in the region, receiving reports of changes in the status of various spirits, the activities of mortals that related to the gods' domain and every other activity that could possibly affect the heavenly order. In times long past, the various major gods would read these reports and write their own reports that would be passed up to their own superiors in the Celestial Court, until, finally, the Unconquered Sun himself received reports from all of the greatest gods.

Today, these reports are only seen by the few gods who still bother to read them. Those courts that are not overrun with corruption, bribery and dereliction of duty have often become obsessed with maintaining the proper forms. All reports must be filled out perfectly. A single error in the calligraphy of a list detailing the conditions of all the court's spirits can result in the scribe being exiled from the court and sent to become the spirit of a peasant's new garden path for a few decades. Scribes who commit more serious offenses (such as forgetting to refer to the leader of the court by the entire list of appropriate honorifics) are sometimes forged into a particularly ornate brush to be used by the court's next scribe.

Most rulers of the spirit courts have little time to read any reports. Those that do are sometimes confronted with partially or wholly fictitious reports composed by deputies who are lazy, bribable or simply unwilling to report anything that might cause their masters to become angry.

Being the deputy of a spirit court was once a position second only to that of censor in its honor and responsibility. Now, it is merely an excellent way to gain wealth and power. While spirits know that reports made by these deputies are ignored, many of the more rebellious gods are unwilling to risk a damning report that might temporarily stir a lazy Celestial deity into action. Instead, they continue bribing the deputies to report that nothing is out of the ordinary. In many spirit courts, this extortion is now a regular part of existence.

REBELLION AND FACTIONALIZATION

Before the collapse of the Old Realm, the distinction between Celestial and local deities was abundantly clear. The gods of universal phenomena such as storms, war, darkness, cities and lost things were Celestial gods who lived in Yu-Shan and held sway over all manner of regional spirits. Many Celestial gods were grand and

powerful, such as the Unconquered Sun or the Maiden of Battle. However, some were lesser spirits, such as the Lady of Masks or the Queen of Frogs. Neither were powerful spirits, but they held rank as Celestial gods by virtue of the fact that their domains were universal in scope.

However, the regional spirit courts possessed a parallel hierarchy that often includes spirits more powerful than the lesser Celestial gods. The only difference was the fact that all of these spirits had domains that were purely local in extent. While the local spirit courts included minute gods of individual trees, houses or garden plots, they also included impressive beings of great local power, such as Arilak, the rainforest goddess of the Southeast; Jer-To-Fan, god of the Yanaze River; or Chel-hu, the Lord of the Blessed Isle. Despite their power, such spirits were expected to always defer to the Celestial gods — certainly the Five Elemental Dragons are more powerful than any beings other than the Celestial Incarna, yet the Dragons are often seen as inferior to many Celestials. Regardless of their power or the extent of their domain, local gods could not dwell in Yu-Shan, and even the mightiest could not gain more than fleeting access to the Games of Divinity. Although many of these local gods rankled under the domination of Celestial spirits who were sometimes greatly inferior in power, nothing could be done — the laws of Heaven were ancient and immutable and enforced by the might of the Celestial Incarna.

The fall of the First Realm and the disappearance of the Celestial Exalted changed all of this. Without the Celestial Exalted to administer matters and ultimately keep the gods in contact with the mortal world, many of the greatest of the Celestial gods lost touch with everything outside the bounds of Yu-Shan. Most spent even more time playing the Games of Divinity, while the heavenly order slowly crumbled around them. In response to this chaos, some of the most powerful of the local gods simply moved into Yu-Shan after defeating such sporadic opposition as existed. Grala, Mistress of the Endless Hunt was once merely the goddess of Eastern hunting beasts. Many centuries ago, she used trickery to capture Tleny, the previous Celestial god of the endless hunt and bribed a powerful spirit to soulforge Tleny into a jade hunting whistle of great magical power. With Tleny gone, Grala took his domain as her own. Today, many gods have forgotten that there ever was another hunting god.

Without support from the greater gods, a number of the less powerful Celestial gods fled or were driven out of Yu-Shan. Madame Marthesine of the Lost abandoned Yu-Shan because she became disgusted with the chaotic and increasingly violent politics, while Shalrina, the Daimyo of Faces, was actively driven out of Yu-Shan when her faction fell from power in the Celestial Court. Other Celestial gods grew weary of the increasing isolation of the Celestial gods and abandoned their domain to become local gods. Siakal used to be the god of battlefield slaughter and butchery, holding her office at the behest of the Maiden of Battle.





When the Maiden of Battle ceased to take an active roll in Celestial politics, Siakal found it easier and more expedient to simply become the god of Western warfare. Today, the distinction between Celestial and local spirit is somewhat less obvious because the more powerful local spirits usually no longer defer to the wishes and commands of any but the most powerful Celestial gods. Also, now that most of the censors are either corrupt or absent, rebellious gods sometimes even change their domains. For instance, the three rulers of Great Forks left their previous domains behind and took on the joint rule of this city.

PUNISHMENTS

In times past, spirits who violated the sacred order of Creation were punished by the censors or, occasionally, even by the high Celestial Incarna themselves. The censors dealt with minor offenses such as insulting a superior or refusing to perform an assigned task by removing a portion of the spirit's domain and giving it to another, by denying the god access to the Games of Divinity or with similar rebukes. Spirits guilty of more serious offenses such as interfering with the mortal world or interfering with the domains of their superiors were often bound to a particular spot and limited in the use of their powers until they learned the error of their ways.

Spirits who attempted to overthrow the divine hierarchy or directly interfere with the domains of spirits of equal or greater power and authority were deemed to be dangerous rebels and paid the ultimate price. Depending upon the needs and desires of their judges, such spirits were either greatly reduced in power and given the domain of a least god, such as the spirit of a bush or other inconsequential object, or were eaten by the Elemental Dragons. Some even had their very Essences smelted into new forms by the fires of Heaven. These soulforged gods were used to create powerful enchanted objects — particularly powerful spirits could be shaped into objects as great as large magical buildings. In the First Realm, such rebellious gods sometimes became the palaces of the Exalted, while today, they are invariably added on to the sanctums of the more powerful spirits.

SANCTUMS

Unlike elementals, the small gods are naturally intangible. While they can materialize to interact with the physical world, most spend the majority of their time drifting immaterially though the world. The least gods normally spend this time resting and dreaming inside the house, forge or garden that they have dominion over. However, more powerful gods, by their very existence, create spiritual sanctuaries where they can retire from the troubles of the physical world. These sanctums are immaterial dwellings carved out of Elsewhere by the god's Essence. The more powerful the spirit, the larger the sanctum. Unusually powerful tree and road spirits normally must make due with a single relative Spartan room or, at most, a small but well-appointed hut. In

contrast, the Northern god of hunting or a powerful forest spirit might both live in vast palaces complete with garden mazes and elaborate colonnades.

All of these spiritual citadels serve their owners as both retreats from the cares of the world and as places where these spirits can entertain their allies and hold the grand courts where they play at politics. Although some of the spirits choose to spend most of their time in the physical world, every god can visit these sanctums. The only limitation is that spirits cannot enter the sanctum of a god with a higher permanent Essence without permission. Inside their own sanctums, spirits are safe from their inferiors. Since it is a trivial matter for gods to carry along physical objects when they dematerialize or enter their sanctums, most spirits decorate their sanctums with the choicest offerings they receive and with various trinkets and magics they have otherwise obtained in the mortal world. Spirits can create their sanctums anywhere within their domain. However, the best sanctums are those located within Demesnes. Such sanctums are far more magical than others and possess the same innate magical features as Manses (see *Exalted*, p. 145, and *The Book of Three Circles*, pp. 106-107). Since such locations are in great demand, only the more powerful spirits own such sanctums. Sanctums built on Demesnes also generate Hearthstones. Some brave and clever mortals and Exalts can obtain invitations to a spirit's sanctum. Being invited into a spirit's sanctum is a great honor and most spirits will only offer an invitation to someone who they either completely trust or need a favor from so badly that they are willing to feign such trust.

As with everything else, the difference between even the greatest of the small gods and the Celestines and Incarna is vast. The Celestial gods do not live in spiritual mansions or even ethereal palaces. Instead, they inhabit the hidden city of Yu-Shan. This vast metropolis was created aeons ago by the ancient Primordials before they were destroyed or displaced by the gods. Located in a vast space carved from Elsewhere by the progenitors of the gods, Yu-Shan is almost as large as the Blessed Isle and filled with all manner of ancient magics and priceless artifacts. In the Celestial City, there are polychromatic fire fountains and a vast network of quicksilver canals that carry travelers to any destination inside this opulent realm. And at the heart of Yu-Shan, in a mile-wide pleasure dome of moonstone, jade, chalcedony and orichalcum lie the fabled Games of Divinity. Here, for endless millennia, the greatest of the gods have experienced the joys of playing this quintessentially rapturous entertainment.

RELATIONS WITH MORTALS

According to the ancient order, humans and spirits should interact as little as possible. Except for the highest gods occasionally granting minor prayers, spirits were only supposed to observe mortals. Many of the gods composed long reports and even grand lyrical epics on the activities

ENTERING AND LEAVING SANCTUMS

A spirit cannot enter a sanctum merely by dematerializing. It must also be able to pass through the sanctum's magical doorway into Elsewhere. These entrances are normally, marked by doorways, cave mouths, arches made of crossed tree branches or similar openings in the physical world. Sanctums are always tied to particular features of the mortal world. In almost all cases, the doorway to a sanctum is always in the same place, although a few spirits possess sanctums that are tied to mobile objects such as a traveler's pack.

To enter a sanctum, a spirit must either have the owner's permission or have an Essence score at least equal to that of the owner. Spirits and anyone who knows the Dematerialize Charm (see *Exalted*, p. 295) can attempt to enter a sanctum either from the physical world or while they are dematerialized. While in the physical world, the spirit must either know the location of the door to the sanctum or must use a Charm such as Measure the Wind to find the doorway. Immaterial spirits can clearly see the doorways of all nearby sanctums. Any spirit or other being with the Materialize or Dematerialize Charm can escort a number of mortals or Exalts equal to its Essence score into a sanctum. All such transport is purely voluntary on the spirit's part. Holding an enchanted blade to a spirit's throat and attempting to force it to take you to its sanctum will normally result in the spirit passing into the sanctum and leaving its enemy behind. Such dematerialization can be a simple way of easily escaping from harm. It is impossible to use the Dematerialize or Materialize Charms inside a sanctum. However, spirits can utilize either of these Charms as they pass through the doorway of the sanctum, allowing them to leave it immaterially or else walk directly from the sanctum into the physical world — whichever they choose.

Exalted can also attempt to enter a sanctum on their own. Eclipse Exalted can use the Dematerialize Charm, and others can use the spell Open the Spirit Door (see p. 49) to walk into a sanctum. However, the Exalts must still face any defenses the sanctum possesses.



Exalted



of mortals, but direct interference was strictly forbidden. The only time spirits and mortals were supposed to come into direct contact with one another was during festivals such as the Carnival of Meeting, where mortals honored and paid homage to the gods that invisibly surrounded them. However, even in the glorious days of the First Age, the rules forbidding contact between spirits and mortals were sometimes broken. The abundance of mortals with some small fraction of divine blood in their ancestry is proof that some forms of interaction between gods and mortals have always been relatively common.

Spirits are generally in charge of their interactions with mortals. Depending upon the particular spirit, mortals can be clever prey, loyal subjects, entertaining lovers or minor annoyances. Most gods can slay mortals or bend them to their will with little effort and even less personal danger — to them, mortals are often simply useful tools. However, mortals can also be troublesome and disruptive. Gods who care passionately about the welfare of their domain have several choices when dealing with mortals. Most wilderness gods view mortals as intrinsically disruptive. Some, such as the Green-Beards, hunt down all mortals who intrude upon their domains, while others are like the Grandfather Tree of Farhold and use bribes, threats or potent magics to bind a group of mortals and entrust them with protecting the spirit's domain against intruders.

Gods of human domains such as roads, hearths or cities tend to have somewhat better relations with humanity. The powerful spirits who rule cities such as Whitehall or Great Forks have abandoned their previous way of life and now reside in palaces, surrounded by mortal advisors, courtiers and petitioners. Most spirits are loathe to trade the peaceful luxury of their sanctums for the bustle of mortal life, but this sort of direct contact with mortals does allow these spirits far greater access to wealth and power. It also provides a large pool of mortals who will willingly serve them and pray to them.

Many spirits have found that mortals make useful sources of income. Small shrines or, occasionally, lavish temples mark many roads, harbors, fields and even buildings. Any mortal who wishes to cross a certain bridge or dock a boat in a spirit-controlled harbor must pay the appropriate tribute. In most cases, this tribute is fairly light — a prayer or a small offering. However, spirits with particularly valuable domains, such as a spirit who controls the only bridge over a wide and swift river, can often charge what they wish. The only real limit on these prices is the fact that they must be kept low enough that the locals are not encouraged to flee the area or somehow arrange for an Exalt, God-Blood or other spirit to discipline or depose the current inhabitant of the domain. These tolls can take almost any form and are often highly eccentric. The spirit of the Saldisay Straits near Wavecrest demands an offering of at least one child's toy and a few drops of blood from every

passenger who rides upon a boat attempting to pass there. The goddess of the largest ruby mine near Gem asks that a single candle scented with rare and expensive herbs be burned in her honor while poets speak verses honoring her name every week that the mines are worked.

While such esoteric treasures and services are sufficient for many spirits, others have become far worldlier and now ask for coins, gems or other valuables. A few even request slaves to serve them or sacrifices of animals or humans. Like all prayers and offerings, these sacrifices give the spirits Essence, but they also sate such small gods' inhuman hungers for blood and death. Spirits who have had centuries of experience with mortals have learned to set relatively fair prices. Malvila, goddess of the Red Hill Bridge over the Maruto River in the Scavenger Lands, asks only that travelers on foot leave only a single copper coin, while anyone with riding animals, beasts of burden or wagons must pay one additional coin per beast or wagon. As a result, Malvila has a steady source of income from the frequent traffic over this bridge.

In contrast, Hebinak is the guardian spirit of the ancient city of Tamar-Lak, located in the central deserts of the South. No one lives in the rubble and ruins that now make up this vanished metropolis. However, the Scavenger Lords are all eager to mount expeditions here to attempt to retrieve the city's remaining valuables. Although clouds of predatory bats and packs of Wyld barbarians infest these ruins, the bravest tomb robbers continue to come to Tamar-Lak. Hebinak obtains a hefty fee from each expedition, asking for a tithe of anything found there — as well as a single well-made talisman or other minor magical item from every individual entering the ruins as part of an expedition.

Many mortals are profoundly ignorant of the workings of the spirit courts. As a result, mortals often believe that the small gods only inhabit those sites where spirits actively solicit bribes and payments. Few realize that for every greedy or usurious spirit, there are many others that perform their duties without any need for payment or recognition. Unfortunately, as an increasing number of spirits depart from the old ways, the number of spirit shrines in the Threshold continues to grow.

This pattern is only broken on the Blessed Isle and in other places where the Immaculates hold unquestioned sway. Since the cult of the Immaculate Dragons forbids worship of the small gods, spirits in the Realm are typically quite discreet. Although most spirits in the Realm benefit from the offerings made to them by the Dragon-Blooded and the Immaculate monks, all know that they could have far more if the populace worshiped them directly. With the exception of a few small gods who have actually embraced the Immaculate Philosophy, the spirits in the Realm hope to now overthrow the Immaculates and rule here as they do the Threshold.

Today, the mortal inhabitants of the Blessed Isle continue to have only minor interactions with the gods. Although the Immaculate monks know many potent Charms against spirits, the Realm's immunity may change with the disappearance of the Scarlet Empress, but for now, the spirit courts in the Realm mostly uphold the ancient Celestial Order.

RELATIONS WITH THE CELESTIAL AND TERRESTRIAL EXALTED

The Exalted and the small gods all serve the same masters, the Unconquered Sun and the other Celestines. Long ago, the gods and the Exalted worked together in peaceful harmony. As the direct servants of the highest Celestial gods, the rare and powerful Celestial Exalted had a status equal to important spirit lords, honored censors and other important functionaries. Although the Dragon-Blooded were accorded no such respect, they were acknowledged to be the equal of many minor spirits and were deferred to by all of the least gods.

Needless to say, those days are long past. Today, many gods see the Dragon-Blooded as nothing more than a more dangerous and longer-lived form of mortal. Others attempt to keep to the old ways, but only the outcaste Dragon-Blooded of the Threshold are willing to openly work with the gods. The Dragon-Blooded of the Realm grant the gods the prescribed offerings, but refuse to become involved in Celestial affairs or to help the spirits dominate humanity. These Dragon-Blooded may respect some spirits and fear others, but they bow before none of the small gods. As a result, most gods no longer have any use for the Dragon-Blooded.

Before the return of the Solar Exalted, most spirits rarely thought of the vanished Celestial Exalted — those that did were mostly grateful that these powerful beings were now either dead or living out in the regions where the Wyld touches Creation. The idea of having to interact with the living representatives of the Unconquered Sun worries spirits who have long flaunted tradition and ignored the laws of Heaven. However, the recent reappearance of the mighty Solar Exalted has caused others among the gods to consider ways in which these newly returned beings might be of use. The knowledge that the newly returned Solar Exalted are often profoundly ignorant of the ways of Heaven has led some gods to consider using the Solar Exalted as pawns in their eternal games of power and status.

RELATIONS WITH THE FAIR FOLK AND THE ABYSSAL EXALTED

While some gods may not acknowledge the newly returned Solar Exalted as their allies, they all know their enemies. As incarnations of Creation, all of the gods regard the Fair Folk as bitter foes. Some spirits actively work against the fey, while others flee at the Fair Folk's approach or attempt to hide from these living representatives of the Wyld. Some greedy or desperate spirits are

occasionally willing to work with members of the Fair Folk — most commonly with those faeries who have decided to take up long-term residence in the mortal world. However, even in these cases, friendship or trust between spirits and the fey is in extremely short supply.

Relations with the Abyssal Exalted are more complex — few gods trust these representatives of the Malfeasans. However, most pragmatic spirits realize that the shadowlands are here to stay. Such spirits are willing to make limited alliances with amenable Deathlords and useful members of the Abyssal Exalted. Most spirits take care to avoid helping the Deathlords expand their domains, but some little gods are willing to work with these dark beings if they can find common interests, while other gods have become touched by darkness when shadowlands swept over their domains.

THE CARNIVAL OF MEETING

Every year on the evening of the third day of Calibration, the Celestial lords of the heavenly city of Yu-Shan open a small portion of it to mortals and Exalts. For a single night, from sunset to sunrise, a select group of mortals and Exalted may visit the open portion of Yu-Shan. These mortals may sample some of the many delicacies of Heaven, dally with all manner of spirits and participate in the intricate and sometimes deadly politics of this ancient city for a short while.

During the First Age, this carnival was open to all Exalted and distinguished mortals who wished to attend. Today, the Carnival of Meeting is mostly a legend, and few who have heard of it have any idea of how one could go there. For some, attendance is a matter of chance — sometimes, in ruins of First Realm cities, a great archway festooned with garlands and banners written in Old Realm suddenly appears. Guards at the gate theoretically screen out the unworthy, but some guards can be bribed, and their decisions are often highly eccentric. Since these entrances now rarely appear in the same location twice and the astrological calculations required to discover their locations are largely forgotten, mortals who stumble upon an entrance to the Carnival are rarely able to find another one the next year.

However, some visitors are invited to attend. Most receive a dream the night before to go to an isolated spot where a gateway to the Carnival awaits. Others are personally visited by minor spirits who ask them to attend. There are no hard and fast rules for who will receive such invitations. Often, members of the Exalted, especially the Celestial, Exalted, are invited, as are a number of the God-Blooded. However, skilled entertainers, devout worshipers of certain spirit cults and, occasionally, people with unusual forms of insanity or freakish deformities are also invited.

This carnival was impressive during the Old Realm, and it is an indescribable wonder for anyone from the Second Age of Man. Thousands of gods and many hundreds of humans and Exalts dance, dine, play music or seduce one another in a vast plaza adorned with fountains of golden sparks, drifting clouds of glowing





multicolored mist and great pools of enchanted water that mortals can breath without harm. Most foods and entertainments are free. The rest can be had for the price of a story, a performance or some other entertainment. A stirring song, a well told tale or an amusing duel can grant a mortal everything from an amulet that will allow him to fly like a bird for the remainder of the Carnival to having a spiritual diviner foretell some event in his future with infallible accuracy.

The rules for attending this event are complex and dangerous. Everyone in attendance is forbidden from harming or enslaving anyone else there. Bitter enemies sometimes find themselves at this party, but anyone who breaks the peace of the Carnival is escorted away by the guardians of the Carnival and never seen again. While it is possible to plan a discreet assassination at this event, it must be performed carefully enough that no one there will notice who is responsible, and that is discreet indeed. As an example, on one occasion, a victim was given a slow-acting poison whose symptoms didn't develop until the Carnival was over.

While it was originally a chance for gods and mortals to learn about one another, the gods hold the Carnival today because they are bored. Mortals who act in an entertaining or unusual manner are highly prized. The most impressive occasionally receive rewards ranging from minor enchantments to uses of the Endowment Charm to a dream stone that contains a dream of the Games of Divinity had by someone who actually played it. The Carnival only encompasses a dozen blocks of Yu-Shan. The palace, the Games of Divinity and the rest of the city are all inaccessible to the visitors of this carnival. Obsidian pillars covered with glowing electric blue runes mark all exits from the Carnival district. No visitor, from the lowliest mortal to the most powerful Solar Exalted can pass through beyond these runic barriers. However, these wards do not hinder the movements of the native inhabitants of Yu-Shan. A god can escort mortals though these barriers, but only if the god is willing. If force or magic is used to coerce the god into taking someone beyond these barriers, the god passes safely though, leaving the mortal or Exalt behind.

Only the foolish or the powerful accompany gods into the rest of Yu-Shan. Outside the bounds of the Carnival, the Carnival peace is void, and mortals can be killed, enslaved or soulforged at the whims of the gods. Often, mortals who are enticed into leaving the relative safety of the Carnival are never seen again or reappear years or decades later when their captors tire of their servants or toys. While the Exalted are far safer than ordinary mortals from such forms of abduction, the more powerful gods can still enslave them. However, some Exalted seeking glory or information make deals with minor gods to obtain safe passage into the other portions of Yu-Shan. No mortal or Exalted can ever gain admittance to the jade palace, for fear

they might disrupt the Games of Divinity. Anyone who attempts to do so risks the personal wrath of both Luna and the Unconquered Sun.

When sunrise comes and the Carnival ends, every visitor is deposited back to the exact location where they entered the Carnival. They may take with them anything they have been given, but any items they attempt to steal will remain in Yu-Shan. Those who attempt to steal items of great value will also find that they also remain in Yu-Shan once the Carnival ends. Mortals who are outside the boundaries of the Carnival do not automatically return home and must find their own way out of Yu-Shan.

Even for mortals who remain within the Carnival grounds, sunrise can be fraught with danger. A spirit who has unsuccessfully attempted to persuade a mortal to remain with it as a lover, servant or entertainer may secretly plant precious items on the mortal and then claim that the mortal is departing with a gift she did not properly pay for. As a result, the mortal find herself remaining in the Carnival when all others have departed. Depending upon the honesty and wisdom of the Carnival guardian overseeing this dispute, the mortal may be able to plead innocence and retain the item as payment for her trouble. Unfortunately, if the greedy god wins the favor of the guardian though clever words or bribes, the mortal may end up having to act as the god's servant for several weeks or years.

GREATER GODS

Each of the beings listed here is a unique individual of great power that has dominion over a single aspect of the world.

GREATER SPIRITS OF HUMANITY

Spirits of humanity are gods whose domain is related to some trait, activity or item that is strongly associated with humanity, such as warfare, masks or calligraphy. These spirits tend to take an active interest in mortals and Exalts, and a good number of them are at least willing to make profitable deals with mortals.

ATTACKING SPIRITS

Divine armor is an actual part of the materialized god. While it can be taken off and the god thus made vulnerable, attacks that ignore or bypass the god's armor have no effect. This constitutes a form of perfect defense, and no effect can bypass this additional soak. In addition, powerful spirits are completely immune to minor damage. If a spirit with a soak of 20 or more is struck by a blow that does less than half its soak (round down), then its soak completely blocks the blow, and the attack causes no damage.

SPIRIT TRAITS

All of the spirits listed below have a full set of Traits. For greater spirits such as Ahlat or Siakal, these Traits represent the spirit's actual Traits. However, for lesser spirits such as hoarders or road spirits, these Traits are merely the Traits an average representative of that type of spirit might possess. All statistics are suggestions and may be changed at the Storyteller's discretion.

AHLAT, THE SOUTHERN GOD OF WAR AND CATTLE

Description: Ahlat has dominion over warfare and cattle in the South and the Southeast. He is worshiped in much of the South, especially in Chiaroscuro and Gem. However, the center of his worship is in the warlike kingdom of Harborhead, where the elite female warriors of the Royal Guard are all pledged to him as his virgin brides.

Ahlat is the patron of warriors. All male warriors who follow him are considered to be his sons, while female warriors can proclaim themselves either his daughters or his brides. His sons and daughters can pray to him, as mortals pray to any god — on occasion, their prayers are even answered. However, Ahlat grants greater favor to his virgin brides. Any of his brides who have never slept with a man can ask his favor in their next battle. In return for sacrificing a prize bull to him, add one die to all of their Melee or Archery rolls for the next battle, as well as reduce the difficulty of all Valor and Willpower rolls to resist fear by 2 (to a minimum of 1). However, if the bride does not fight bravely, if she surrenders or flees the battle, Ahlat strikes her down. She will fall unconscious for a full day, and when she awakes, her permanent Willpower is forever after reduced by one point. Those who ask his favor and then betray their comrades or disobey direct orders instead bleed to death the next time they are wounded — no known magic or medicine can stop this bleeding.

After particularly impressive battles, Ahlat sometimes sends out his spirit aurochs to consume the bodies of exceptionally brave fallen warriors. In the act of devouring them, these aurochs consume the warriors' memories. When these bulls return to the celestial kraal, Ahlat's servants gather these memories by harvesting hair from these bulls' long manes. Each set of memories is woven into another tassel to adorn Ahlat's fearsome red and black cape. On occasion, his aurochs make mistakes and also consume part of the memories of seriously injured warriors.

Mortals and Exalts sometimes pray to him, asking for the tassel of a particular fallen warrior. On rare occasions, Ahlat will grant these requests, but only if the petitioner is

VISITING YU-SHAN

In addition to visiting during the Carnival of Meeting, there are other ways to enter the Celestial City. Any spirit with an Essence of 3 or more can carry mortals between Yu-Shan and the mortal world. Anyone trapped in Yu-Shan once the Carnival of Meeting ends must seek a powerful spirit to return them to the physical world. While many spirits are willing to take anyone to or from Yu-Shan, they will demand a price for this service. Without aid from the spirit, the only way to enter Yu-Shan is through the use of various rare enchanted items or the Terrestrial Circle spell *Open the Spirit Door*.

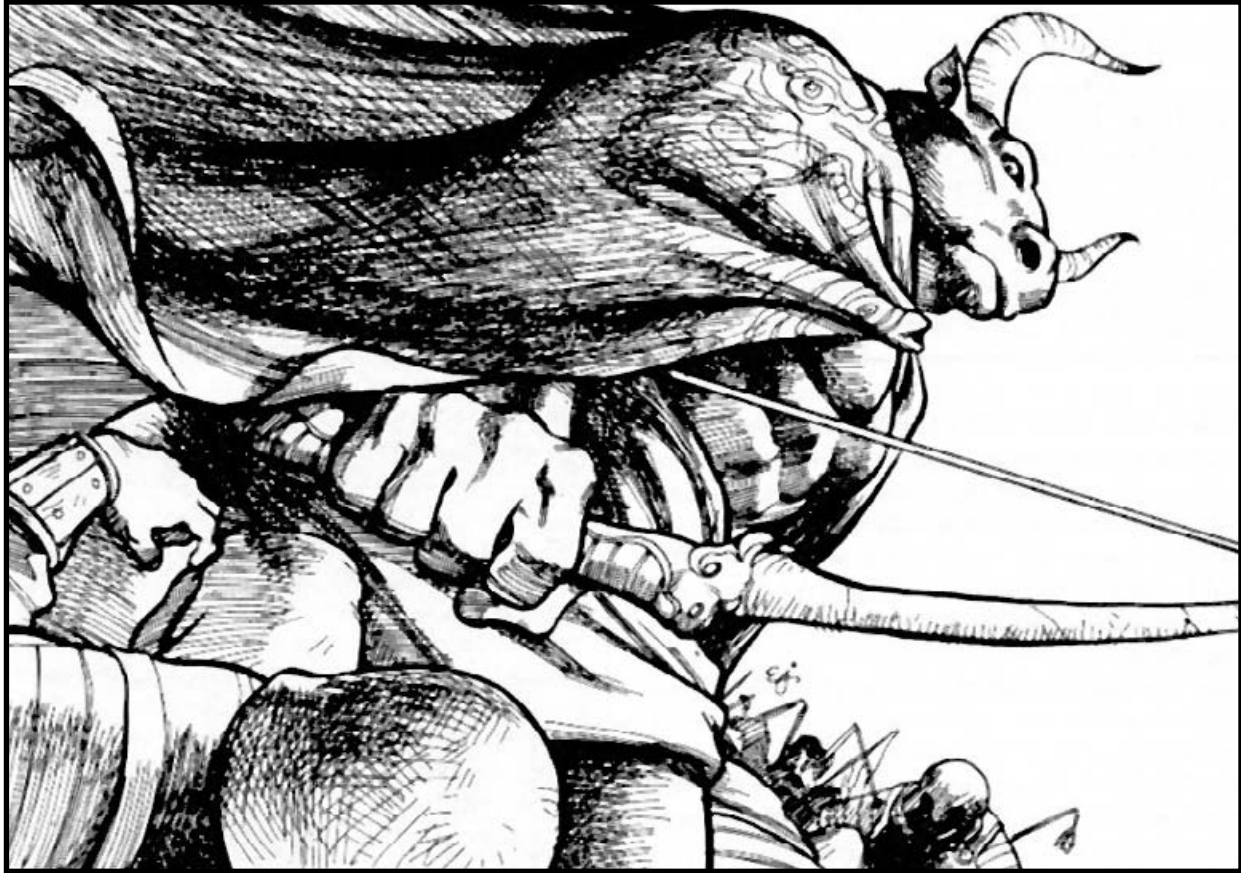
When using any of these methods, Yu-Shan can only be entered from one of the various ancient shrines to the Celestial gods. Shrines that are intact enough to serve as gateways to Yu-Shan can be found in Chiaroscuro, Lookshy, Nexus, Chanta, Icehome, Rathess, Gem, Gethamane, Crystal, Abalone, Denandsor, Rathess and the Imperial City, as well as in the ruins of some of the larger abandoned First Age cities.

Regardless of how they travel there, anyone attempting to enter Yu-Shan must pass the celestial lions who guard it (see p. 33). The celestial lions who guard Yu-Shan cannot be bribed. However, they will allow in members of the Eclipse Caste and those who travel with them. Similarly, anyone accompanied by one of the Celestial gods will be allowed to pass unhindered. Any Exalt who claims to come on a mission that concerns the Celestial Court will at least be given an audience with some minor functionary.

willing to undertake a deed of exceptional bravery. This task often involves stealing cattle from a heavily armed opponent and sacrificing all of these cattle to Ahlat. In all such cases, Ahlat sends the petitioner a dream that tells him what he needs to do to obtain the tassel. If the petitioner succeeds, the tassel will be in his hand one morning when he awakes. By holding it, the petitioner can gain access to all of the memories of the particular dead warrior. However, if the petitioner fails, Ahlat takes the warrior's highest combat Ability (which can include Dodge or Athletics), reducing it to 0 (it can be raised again normally).

Unlike many war gods, Ahlat mostly keeps the old ways. He answers prayers but almost never takes an active interest in mortal wars, unless another god is involved. However, he will help his followers if the magics or the servants of a rival war god aid their opponents. The rivalry between Ahlat and Siakal is particularly fierce. Ahlat often





sends his war aurochs to help fight pirates who have Siakal's aid in raiding Southern shores.

Ahlat always appears as a tall, extremely muscular man with dark skin and the head of a black bull. He wears nothing but a short kilt and a long black and red cloak adorned with fearsome patterns and thousands of tiny tassels. He carries a spear made of blood red metal and jet-black wood and a bow made from gold and lion bone.

Sanctum: Ahlat and the other four regional war gods live in the Celestial City of Yu-Shan. Ahlat lives in a vast golden mansion, with a huge feast-hall for his followers and spirit aurochs, decorated with the memorabilia of the countless battles he's won.

Nature: Paragon

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 7, Stamina 10, Charisma 7, Manipulation 5, Appearance 6, Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 7, Athletics 5, Awareness 6, Brawl 7, Dodge 7, Endurance 5, Linguistics 5 (Native: Old Realm; Firetongue, High Realm, Low Realm, Riverspeak, Southern Barbarian Tongue), Lore 4, Melee 7, Occult 4, Performance 7, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Allies 5 (War Aurochs), Cult 5, Followers 5 (Various Servants and Warriors), Influence 3

Charms: All listed Charms

Cost To Materialize: 60

Base Initiative: 13

Attack:

Spear (Bloodspike): Speed 26 Accuracy 20 Damage 27L Defense 20

Lion-Bone Bow (Glad-of-War): Accuracy 20 Damage 18L* (Rate 2 Range 1 mile)

*Ahlat typically uses broadhead arrows, but carries and will use arrows of all types.

Dodge Pool: 14 **Soak:** 35L/35B (Tasseled cloak, 30L/25B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/4/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 7

Essence Pool: 118

Other Notes: Anyone wounded by Ahlat's spear Bloodspike (including all Exalted) bleeds heavily. Victims lose one lethal health level every other round to bleeding, until their wounds are bandaged.

Ahlat's bow has a range *increment* of one mile (roughly 1,800 yards), meaning he can shoot it out to three miles at -4 dice. His tasseled cloak acts as potent armor. Also, the courage of the thousands of warriors whose memories are in its tassels causes the players of any characters who attempt to attack Ahlat to make a Valor roll at difficulty 1 for their



deal or tell him that the deal is only acceptable if she can make up the difference in value. Only the foolish accept this deal without first asking what she will also take. She has been known to take everything from eyesight, memories and points of permanent Essence to treasured possession such as enchanted items, Manses and familiars. The payment does not vanish immediately — instead, the petitioner will simply notice that it is missing sometime within the next few days.

Madame Marthesine's horde of lost things is truly vast, and many suspect that she could reveal all of the priceless secrets of the First Realm. Unfortunately, for even one of them, she would ask for something equally priceless in return, such as all of the petitioner's memories and senses. Anything lost in a bargain to Lady Marthesine is gone forever — the only way to ever get it back is to make another bargain with her. She can also find lost people, but if they are dead, all she can do is find their ghosts.

Marthesine appears to be a slender old woman with light-brown skin, an old tattered gray cloak and long white hair, carrying a large, bulging sack. All of her collection of lost things lie inside this bag. Anyone attempting to steal from this sack finds that they cannot remove anything they place inside it. Those who foolishly stick their hand inside must either cut off the hand or pay Marthesine to get it back. The only other solution is to follow it in, and none who have entered her sack have ever returned.

Sanctum: Marthesine has a portable sanctum, her bag. When she is materialized, it appears to be a large sack, but on those rare occasions that she chooses to dematerialize, the sack also vanishes, and she enters an enormous decaying palace that is packed full of all of the lost items, places and knowledge in the world. Spells for entering sanctums work, but anyone who removes anything from her sanctum pays her price, whether they agree to do so or not. The few Exalted thieves who have left her sanctum with stolen treasure soon find themselves bereft of their sanity or something similarly precious.

Nature: Conniver

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2, Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 6, Dodge 4, Investigation 5, Larceny 5, Linguistics 6 (Native: Old Realm; Forest-tongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue, Sky tongue), Lore 7, Melee 4, Occult 5, Presence 4, Socialize 3, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Cult 2, Followers 5 (Hoarders), Influence 2

Charms: All listed Charms

Cost To Materialize: 60

Base Initiative: 10

Attack:

Divine Knife (Forgetfulness): Speed 13 Accuracy 11 Damage 7L Defense 11

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 20L/22L (Spirit cloak, 18L/18B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 117

Other Notes: None

PLENTIMON OF THE DICE, GOD OF GAMBLING

Description: Plentimon is the god of gambling and gamblers. He loves to watch mortals risk their fortunes on the toss of dice or the turn of a card so much that he has chosen to live in the mortal world. Most of the year, he manages the Diving Sea Snake Casino. This casino is located in Mantaville and is the largest and most prosperous gambling house in the Coral Archipelago.

The Diving Sea Snake offers almost every form of gambling known from the extreme, such as life drinking, where participants each select a one glass of fine wine from a large tray of glasses, knowing that one drink on the tray contains a deadly poison, to all manner of games involving cards and dice. This gambling house also offers generous credit to anyone Plentimon deems eligible. However, he treats failure to pay these debts as a personal affront to his honor. Those who do not pay after the first warning soon die in horrific and unlikely accidents. After the individual is dead, Plentimon sends people to collect all of her possessions.

Plentimon also offers extremely high-stakes gambling. For many games, he is merely a broker — allowing the desperate to gamble with the Fair Folk, offering their souls and sanity in return for the chance to receive permanent glammers or the promise of one the Fair Folk using its power to bend the will of a rival or a potential lover. However, the truly foolish can also gamble with Plentimon himself. Like all of the games in his casino, those he personally plays are always fair. Plentimon never tampers with chance, but he does ask a stiff price. Winners can gain anything from a minor blessing of luck to transformation into one of the God-Blooded, depending on how much was bet. Low-betting losers normally must work in the casino for nothing more than food, shelter and tips until the debt is paid. Those who bet higher stakes may be sold to the Fair Folk or simply have all manner of horrific curses inflicted on them to forever mark them as people luck did not favor. Anyone who cannot pay a monetary debt to Plentimon can always play such a high-stakes game with him. If she wins, her debt is cancelled — if she loses, Plentimon always finds some unpleasant use for her.

Plentimon manages the Diving Sea Snake for three seasons every year. In the winter, he abandons the rain-drenched city of Mantaville and uses his Charms to transport himself around the world. During this time, he visits gambling houses all across Creation. Sometimes, he goes in disguise and gains vast wealth by bankrupting the house.



Plentimon

Other times, he travels in his divine splendor. In his natural state, he is always dressed in jeweled and gilded finery befitting a king, but his face and hands appear to be made of millions of tiny glowing flecks of silver and gold floating in a jet-black human-shaped void. On all such occasions, he will play honestly for incredibly high stakes and will dispense good luck to some of those who ask him for aid, but for every person he grants good luck, he inflicts equally bad luck on another petitioner. Even the Exalted sometimes come seeking his prophecies or blessings. He never bargains for such services, but occasionally, he will play a game with one of the Exalted. If she wins, he grants her petition, if he wins, he either asks an exceedingly difficult service of her or curses her, depending upon his needs and desires. Plentimon is easily offended and curses anyone who offends his dignity or who argues with the terms he offers.

Sanctum: Because of his high status and universal power, Plentimon is eligible to live in the Celestial City of Yu-Shan. However, he has given up that great honor and prefers to live among humanity. He almost never abandons his material form except when faced with great danger. Plentimon is considered something of a rogue god by the Celestial bureaucrats, but they are either too lazy or too caught up in court politics or the Games of Divinity to attempt to rein him in.

Nature: Thrillseeker

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5, Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 5, Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 5, Endurance 2, Larceny 5, Linguistics 4 (Native: Old Realm; Guild Cant, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue), Lore 4, MartialArts4 (Withering Touch +2), Occult 4, Performance 7, Presence 7, Resistance 2, Socialize 5, Survival 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Cult 5, Followers 5 (Casino Workers), Influence 3, Resources 5

Charms: All listed Charms

Cost To Materialize: 70

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Withering Touch: Speed 15 Accuracy 14 Damage 15L* Defense 12

*Roll one 10-sided die, and add the result to this base number before soak is applied each time Plentimon successfully attacks. Extrasuccesses add to Plentimon's attacks as normal.

Dodge Pool: 11 **Soak:** 14L/17B (Spirit finery, 12L/12B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 122

Other Notes: None



SHALRINA, DAIMYO OF FACES

Description: Shalrina is a greater goddess who has forsaken sacred Yu-Shan and now works in a small mask shop in Nexus. Few realize she is actually a powerful spirit, but the true nature of her business is known to many of the wealthy and the desperate. To most customers, she simply sells all manner of exquisitely made masks. In addition to ordinary masks made for the parties of the wealthy, she sometimes displays enchanted masks ranging from ones that will make the wearers look younger or more attractive to the occasional Linowan magical mask (*Scavenger Sons*, p. 26). For a higher fee, she can even attune a Linowan mask to the wearer. Shalrina also sometimes deals in great rarities such as the unique gossamer masks made by the Fair Folk and magical ivory masks designed to be worn by the Terrestrial Exalted (*The Book of Three Circles*, p. 93). Her prices are fair, but she never bargains — anyone who offends her will find himself forever unable to enter her shop or even to remember its exact location.

In Shalrina's back room, more exotic deals are sometimes made. If two willing people come to her seeking new faces, she can exchange them. She can either exchange the appearance of each individual for that of the other, keeping all of their other Attributes and Abilities the same, or she can literally place each person's mind and spirit into the body of the other (in the second type of transformation, each individual retains all of her Mental Attributes, her Abilities, her Virtues, her Willpower and her Charisma and Manipulation scores). Some use these methods to escape from awkward political entanglements or promises that they now regret. Unfortunately, finding someone willing to take on a vendetta by the Lintha Family is far from easy.

Shalrina keeps a list of those who wish to change their identities and matches people up with those willing to take on their lives. Since many who come to her are quite wealthy, there are always people so poor that they are willing to risk death to gain wealth. Also, since all of those who change faces retain their minds, skills and, often, their physical prowess, problems that are difficult for some are easy for others. While a pampered aristocrat may be no match for the assassins sent after him, a skilled duelist who is fleeing a disastrous marriage may have little trouble with hired killers. Also, some are willing to accept blindness, lameness or middle age in return for great wealth, while others are always willing to give up their riches in exchange for the chance to walk or to be young again. The only thing Shalrina cannot do is to bestow Exaltation. Exalts who switch identities remain Exalted, and a mortal who takes on an Exalt's identity does not suddenly become Exalted (although everyone may think him so). Shalrina's price is always the same. She takes half of all wealth and half of all enchanted items that each client possesses and also pledges all of her clients to

someday do her a single favor. On occasion, she has mindless bodies waiting for clients, but she always asks three favors for the use of such an empty husk.

Those who simply wish to disappear as fast as possible can use another method. Shalrina can take someone's face and bestow a small portion of it upon a corpse or a magical construct designed to look like the person's corpse. The individual loses all beauty and all color from his eyes and hair. His face becomes bland, forgettable and mildly unattractive. This person also now has an Appearance of 1 that can never be improved without making another deal with Shalrina. The only consolation for such unfortunates is that they are exceptionally easy to overlook (reduce the difficulty of all Stealth tests by 1, to a minimum of 1). This transformation also increases the difficulty of Awareness rolls to recognize them by 2. As with every other special client, Shalrina asks half of their wealth and a favor. In this state, even their own kin will not recognize them.

Most of the Celestial Court ignores Shalrina, thinking she has abandoned their lofty ranks to become a lowly shopkeeper. Unknown to them, she still plays court politics, but she always uses mortal proxies. She may ask one client to say a certain prayer at a temple. Another who is a skilled thief could be asked to steal a treasure from a god's shrine. Shalrina might even give the thief a talisman to allow her to dematerialize once and another that serves as a magical key to another god's sanctum, so the thief can steal something from this sanctum. Exalted clients naturally are asked for more challenging favors. These requests can include everything from raids on a sanctum to capturing, threatening, aiding or even slaying a specific spirit. Shalrina takes the faces of any who refuse these requests and then gives them a chance to fully redeem themselves by performing two favors for her. Any who refuse a second time are never seen again. She takes their deepest face, their identity. Their now soulless bodies become the corpses she uses when faking someone's death.

Shalrina can take the form of anyone who has ever entered her shop. Most of the time, she appears as a young, attractive woman with dark-brown hair who wears the latest fashions. Anyone who threatens her or attempts to steal from her shop is turned into a mindless husk waiting for the mind of one of her clients.

Sanctum: Shalrina's sanctum is her shop. When she dematerializes, she appears in a sanctum that exactly resembles her material shop. There is only one difference between the material shop and the sanctum. She stores her most precious masks, her most powerful magics and the mirrors in which she keeps the faces she has taken in her immaterial sanctum.

Nature: Conniver

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 7, Stamina 5, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 6, Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Bureaucracy 6, Craft (Mask Making) 6, Dodge 4, Investigation 3, Larceny 4, Linguistics 4 (Native: Old Realm; Forest-tongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Riverspeak), Lore 5, Occult 5, Socialize 2

Backgrounds: Allies 5 (those who owe her favors), Artifact 5 (many items), Contacts 5, Cult 4, Influence 1, Resources 4

Charms: Banish, Camouflage, Confusion, Creation of Perfection, Details, Form Match, Hoodwink, Hurry Home, Instill Obedience, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Memory Mirror, Memory Sponge, Memory Transference, Paralyze, Portal, Shapechange, Steal Sustenance, Stillness, Sustenance, Transport

Cost To Materialize: 50

Base Initiative: 12

Attack:

Mind-Draining Touch: Speed 15 Accuracy 12 Damage 12B* Defense 12

The player of anyone with an Essence lower than Shalrina's who is struck by the Mind-Draining Touch must make a Willpower roll with a difficulty equal to Shalrina's Conviction. If the roll fails, she may Reflexively use her power (see "Other Notes," below) to remove the target's personality, but she must use it at that instant.

Dodge Pool: 11 **Soak:** 20L/20B (Mask of protection, 18L/15B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 103

Other Notes: For a cost of 10 motes and 1 Willpower, Shalrina can either permanently exchange two people's faces, switch two people's minds between bodies or remove someone's identity. She must touch a target to do so, and this Charm doesn't work on beings with an Essence higher than or equal to Shalrina's unless they are willing to allow the Charm to work.

VANILETH, SHOGUN OF ARTIFICIAL FLIGHT

Description: Far to the North, in a minute valley hidden between two huge and jagged mountains in the Blue Peak Range peaks lies the crystal palace of Vanileth. During the glorious days of the First Realm, Vanileth had a great and powerful domain. He lived in a crystal tower in the Celestial City of Yu-Shan. During the Contagion and the disasters that followed, humanity lost the secret of constructing flying chariots and Vanileth's domain was reduced to a tiny fraction of its former state. As a result, he was asked to leave Yu-Shan and knows that he will likely never again even see the boards of the Games of Divinity.

After the loss of so many of the ancient magics, Vanileth turned his back on spells and Charms that allow their casters to fly and is now obsessed with all forms of flying mechanisms and artifacts. To this end, he has let it

be known that any mortal or Exalt who can reach his home solely through the use of some form of flying machine will be richly rewarded. Conversely, anyone who attempts to invade his castle using Charms, spells or similar means will be attacked by his hordes of clockwork birds.

Their wings of razor-sharp glass cut invaders to the bone. The bodies of several dozen would-be intruders lie frozen as they fell in the glacier at the foot of the two mountains that shelter his castle. The clockwork birds swoop down and strip the bodies of all magic and wealth shortly after they fall. All of these goods now lie in Vanileth's great treasury, where they rest beside more than a dozen First Realm flying vehicles and enchanted artifacts.

Successfully reaching Vanileth's castle is exceedingly difficult, and any rolls to operate air vehicles are made at +4 difficulty because of the extremely treacherous winds, frigid temperatures and jagged peaks. In most of the North, "going to meet Vanileth" is an expression

meaning to set out on a hopeless and potentially fatal journey. Anyone who successfully reaches his mountaintop eyrie will receive special instruction on how to pilot a single type of flying vehicle (-1 difficulty on all rolls to control or operate the vehicle: use Ride for gliders and Sail for air boats). Anyone who also constructs or works on these vehicles will be also given advice on how to construct an improved version of whatever vehicle they create (-1 difficulty on any Crafts rolls to design or construct a single type of flying vehicle). The best gliders in the North are made by craft guilds started by some of the very few people who survived visiting Vanileth's mountaintop abode. A few of their construction secrets continue to be passed down to their apprentices.

Individuals who are extremely polite and show a genuine interest in Vanileth's somewhat absent-minded rambling about various ancient curiosities are sometimes given minor enchantments. These may be foldable gliders that can easily fit in a pack, broaches that will prevent their wearers from ever suffering injury from falls or crashes or possibly one of his clockwork birds as a companion. On one occasion, a visitor became his lover and devoted companion for a season. He gave this young man a wonderfully intricate ornithopter powered by enchanted springs. Unfortunately, Vanileth is constantly creating new and untried mechanisms. Some are grand wonders based on ancient designs. Others are dangerous inventions that bond themselves permanently into the flesh of their users or suddenly fail thousands of feet above the ground.

The Haslanti are preparing to attempt the first successful air boat visit to Vanileth's stronghold. Several previous expeditions have already ended in disaster — the current plan is to have the air boat hover far above the stronghold and lower people down on a long cable. The Haslanti are seeking brave and competent people to attempt this descent.





Vanileth was once able to assume the form of an awesomely beautiful man with great white wings. However, he has forgotten how in his centuries of solitude. Today, all that remains of that form are a number of statues in his eyrie. Instead, Vanileth appears as a great cluster of constantly moving wings. All of these wings are white. There are bird wings, mechanical ornithopter wings, glider wings and a myriad of insect wings. All of these wings are white. He speaks in a sweet voice but is rarely direct in his conversation and is unused to talking with anyone but himself and his mechanical birds.

Sanctum: Vanileth's sanctum is a great palace of crystal and silver. It is partially material and can be seen by anyone. However, it can only be entered by the powerful or those who are admitted by Vanileth. It consists of a score of vast rooms with ceilings more than five yards high, wherein Vanileth swoops and hovers. The interior is decorated all in white, with furniture of ivory and with fixtures and plates of solid platinum.

Nature: Visionary

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 8, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4, Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Archery 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 2, Craft (Fine Metalwork) 5, Craft (Flying Machines) 5, Dodge 5, Investigation 3, Linguistics 3 (Native: Old Realm; High Realm, Low Realm, Skytongue), Lore 5, Martial Arts 4, Melee 3, Occult 4, Presence 2, Socialize 2, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Artifact 5 (Many Flying Enchantments), Cult 1, Followers 4 (Clockwork Birds), Influence 2
Charms: Affinity Element Control (Air), Confusion, Creation of Perfection, Hoodwink, Host of Spirits, Inhuman Prowess, Landscape Travel, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Sense Domain, Weather Control, Words of Power
Cost To Materialize: 45

Base Initiative: 13

Attack:

Blade-Wing Attack: Speed 19 Accuracy 15 Damage 12L Defense 24

Dodge Pool: 13 **Soak:** 17L/23B (Iron-hardfeathers, 15L/18B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 88

Other Notes: None

BURNING FEATHER, LADY OF INTOXICANTS

Description: Burning Feather's domain consists of all forms of intoxicants, euphorics, narcotics and hallucinogens. Widely known as the White Lady because of the arctic white of her hair, robes and featureless eyes, she can appear wherever intoxicants are consumed in quantity,

from the smoke-filled hashish houses of Great Forks to the finest hospitals of the Realm, where physicians use distilled opium to relieve the suffering of their patients. Despite the prohibitions of the Order of the Immaculate Dragons, mortals sometimes worship her even in the Realm. She only answers the prayers of the intoxicated, but if the proper ritual is backed by deep emotion, she will occasionally grant the request of someone who wishes to have a particularly intense or mind-expanding experience.

Other petitioners ask for exceedingly rare intoxicants such as the pollen of ice ferns or the hallucinatory venom of the great rasp spiders. Those who are truly dedicated to their quest for a particular new sensation sometimes receive visions from Burning Feather. She directs them to perform some task, after which, they will receive their reward. She tests the resolve and endurance of many, asking them to remain intoxicated for a week or more or to perform some difficult or important action, such as giving an important speech while under the influence of a powerful drug such as opium. On some occasions, she speaks through the mouths of her petitioners or act through their bodies, enabling her to take actions that would otherwise be noticed by the local spirit courts. Alternately, she requests that a petitioner perform some action for her. She may persuade a servant to slip a drug into his mistress's wine or a sherbet seller to recite a snippet of poetry to a prince when he stops to purchase a refreshment.

Burning Feather uses these requests to advance various goals such as defeating her Celestial rivals or preventing nobles from enacting laws forbidding various intoxicants and, therefore, depriving her of worshipers. She sometimes asks exceedingly fair petitioners to dally with her or even to become her lover for a week or, occasionally, a season. Few remember the details of these encounters, but those who lay with her often go mad, and most become forever celibate because mortal love cannot compare to her exotic joys.

Some seek her help in intoxicating others. While the price for such requests is higher, she occasionally grants them. Burning Feather is most likely to accede to such petitions if the petitioner is an individual of power and note who can provide useful services.

Sanctum: Unlike most Celestial gods, Burning Feather keeps a sanctum in Great Forks as well as a modest but baroque palace in Yu-Shan. Every report of her sanctum differs. Although the details vary greatly, visitors agree that her sanctum is extremely large and lavish, with many connected rooms, long winding corridors, elaborate tapestries and confused and shifting lighting. Everyone who enters her sanctum becomes instantly intoxicated with some strong drug. Although sturdy mortals and Exalts can still function, all experience at least a +1 increase in difficulty to all actions.

Nature: Hedonist

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 2, Brawl 3 (Clinch +2), Dodge 3, Endurance 5 Linguistics 3 (Native: Old Realm; Guild Cant, High Realm, Riverspeak), Lore 4, Medicine 5, Occult 3, Performance 4, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Socialize 5, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Cult 5, Followers 4, Influence 2

Charms: Dreambane, Dreamscape, Dreamspeak, Element Infusion, Element Kiss, Element Touch, Harrow the Mind, Hoodwink, Hurry Home, Instill Obedience, Lend Authority, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Possession, Sense Domain, Stoke the Flame, Worldly Illusion

Cost To Materialize: 55

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Poison Kiss: Speed 11 Accuracy 8 Damage 18L Defense 24
Clinch: Speed 8 Accuracy 9 Damage 4B

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 13L/17B (Spirit robes, 9L/9B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1 A2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 106

Other Notes: By spending 3 motes of Essence, Burning Feather can cause anyone within arms reach of her whose Essence is not higher than her own to experience powerful and uncontrolled hallucinations for a full scene. The hallucinations increase the difficulty of all actions by +2. The target can have this attack applied to him repeatedly with cumulative effect, up to a number of times equal to Burning Feather's Essence.

GREATER SPIRITS OF THE WILDERNESS

Most wilderness spirits have little interest in humanity, and some take great pleasure in hunting down and slaying mortals who dare to trespass on their precious domains. Fortunately for the race of man, some wilderness spirits have learned that mortals can be useful, and occasionally even entertaining. However, wise mortals avoid all wilderness spirits.

ARILAK, CALTIA AND JORST: THE THREE

FOREST RULERS OF THE EAST

Description: Above all of the tree and animal spirits, the forest walkers and the river lords, the great woodlands of the East are ruled by a trio of powerful gods. Arilak the Unseen holds dominion over all of the jungles and tropical forests in the East and Southeast, Caltia the Eternal commands the East and Northeast's evergreen woods, and Golden-Eyed Jorst controls the entire East where deciduous trees hold sway.

Rivals, lover and allies, these three spirits are continually locked in an endless cycle of alliances and disagreements. Caltia and Jorst's jealous rivalry is played out daily in a far more serious and lethal fashion in the endless struggle between the Linowan and the Haltan. Neither people know their fighting has its origin in the affections of spirits, and at this point, few would care. Arilak involves herself less in these struggles, but the other two continually court her favor. All three gods live in great immaterial mansions far in the East, with entrances just before the earth drops away to endless trees.

Unlike the other two, Arilak never leaves her rainforest mansion — anyone who wishes to see her must journey there. Since it is surrounded by hundreds of miles of dangerous jungles filled with an abundance of tyrant lizards, enormous serpents and rapacious packs of hatra and wolf spiders, as well as a host of predatory minor gods, only gods and the bravest Exalts normally reach her doorstep. Even there, the danger is not over. She is widely known as the most dangerous of the three forest rulers. While she will politely receive visitors who comport themselves well, she will slay without warning anyone who offends her or who behaves in a rude or uncouth fashion. However, those who impress her with interesting stories, daring exploits and impeccable behavior can easily walk away with samples of the rarest jungle plants or a tame and impeccably trained jungle beast. She sometimes even swears a minor god or a lesser wood elemental into the service of those who truly please her.

While there are many stories regarding her true appearance, most describe Arilak to be a slender and lovely woman more than six feet tall and covered with green-gold scales, with a vaguely draconic caste to her appearance. She is said to always dress in heavy robes that constantly shift in color and to have long claws tipped with an exceptionally deadly poison (treat as arrow frog venom, see **Exalted**, p. 243).

Toward the Northeast, Caltia the Eternal rules the evergreens. Caltia is the most approachable of these three gods. She spends little time in her Manse — she constantly travels her evergreen forests. In the summer, Caltia rides in her wooden chariot drawn by great elk, while, in the winter, she uses a sleigh of ice and ivory drawn by four great white wolves. Caltia regularly appears in mortal cities and towns located in evergreen forests. “She visits both Chanta and Greyfalls at least once a decade. Being inclined to spectacle, she arrives in a mortal settlement at the head of a parade of various animals and spirits. This horde would almost certainly attack any city that refused her entry — consequently, no town in recorded history has been unwise enough to refuse her. Instead, her arrival always signals a festival. In accordance with her tastes, strong drink and potent intoxicants are served, and there are many contests of martial skill. Caltia spends her time drinking, gambling





and admiring attractive warriors — combatants who especially impress her with their skill or their beauty sometimes earns some small reward and may end up as her companion for a day or two. At the end of a few days, she tires of the festival and departs without warning. On occasion, she takes her most recent lover with her — these unfortunates are never seen again.

Meeting Caltia in the wilderness is far more dangerous than encountering her in a city. She is a superlative huntress and instantly decides if anyone she meets is a hunter or her prey. On rare occasions, she shares a fire or a meal with an exceptionally brave hunter, but she pursues all who show any fear or hesitancy at her approach until her wolves rend them or they manage to leave the evergreen woods. She greatly enjoys dining on the flesh of those who run from her and attempts to scare anyone she meets in the wilderness in order to cause them to flee (anyone who fails a Valor roll when they meet her in the wilderness flees). Caltia always appears as a muscular, heavily built woman with deep green hair and skin like polished ivory. She normally dresses as a hunter and is always armed with a huge bow and a pair of great knives.

Golden-Eyed Jorst rules the deciduous woods that cover much of the East. Like his woods, Jorst sleeps all winter. During this time, his palace is devoid of all signs of life, and no being less powerful than one of the highest Celestial gods can enter it. However, during the summer months, he never sleeps. Part of the time, he travels his forests alone, disguised as an undistinguished mortal traveler. Those who offer him proper hospitality can find themselves blessed with long lives, excellent health or spirits to act as their servants. However, threats or lack of hospitality are swiftly punished. Hordes of Green-Beards and similar spirits rush from the forest and rend the offenders limb from limb.

In the summer, when Jorst is in his mansion, it hosts a vast and endless party. Spirits, Fair Folk and any mortals or Exalts who can find their way to his doors are welcomed. Since his palace is located in the deepest woods, far from any settlement, only the brave or the desperate normally find their way here. Impolite or hostile guests are forced to leave, but all others can stay until Jorst decides to journey forth again. While he almost never grants boons during these celebrations, many visitors have found that his parties are the perfect opportunity to meet other spirits and to make deals with all manner of creatures. Many visitors are overjoyed to find that, while at Jorst's party, they never need to sleep and can ingest vast amounts of intoxicants without harmful or unpleasant side effects. Unfortunately, this protection ends once they leave his mansion. The player of any human or Exalt who has indulged beyond mortal limits must make a Stamina + Endurance roll. Success means mere exhaustion, failure means a character collapses and permanently loses a point of Stamina. Anyone whose player botches this roll dies the second she steps foot outside of Jorst's

mansion. Jorst is a tall, well-built man with green skin, fronds of oak and maple leaves for hair and great lidless eyes like pools of molten gold.

Sanctum: Arilak dwells always in her rainforest palace. Caltia the Eternal lives on the road, traveling from settlement to settlement and camping and hunting in the wilderness between them. Golden-Eyed Jorst wanders sometimes in the woods alone and sometimes in his mansion hosting great feasts, and every winter, he sleeps Elsewhere until the coming of the spring awakens him.

Nature: Survivor (*Arilak*) Bravo (*Caltia*) and Hedonist (*Jorst*)

Attributes (all): Strength 12, Dexterity 7, Stamina 8, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5, Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Virtues:

Arilak: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Caltia: Compassion 3, Conviction 2, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Jorst: Compassion 4, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 2

Abilities (all): Archery 5, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 3, Linguistics 5 (Native: Old Realm; Forest-tongue, High Realm, Riverspeak, Barbarian Tongues), Lore 5, Melee 5, Occult 5, Performance 4, Presence 4, Resistance 3, Socialize 4, Stealth 3, Survival 5

Backgrounds (all): Allies 5, Contacts 5, Cult 5, Followers (many minor spirits) 5, Influence 5, Resources 5

Charms (all): All listed Charms

Cost To Materialize (all): 55

Base Initiative (all): 11

Attack:

Arilak:

Claws: Speed 13 Accuracy 15 Damage 17L (+ poison equal to arrow frog venom) Defense 14

Caltia:

Long Knives: Speed 15 Accuracy 15 Damage 17L Defense 14 (two attacks or parries a round w/o penalty)

Bow: Accuracy 16 Damage 18L (Broadhead Arrow) (Rate 2 Range 350)

Jorst:

Natural Selection Glance*: Speed 11 Accuracy 12 Damage 22L Defense 0

*Natural Selection Glance cannot be dodged, only parried.

Dodge Pool (all): 12 **Soak (all):** 28L/32B (Spirit garments, 24L/24B)

Willpower (all): 7 **Health Levels (all):** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence (all): 6 **Essence Pool (all):** 103

Other Notes: Caltia carries a pair of knives the length of a man's forearm that are enchanted so that the wielder may make up to two attacks, two parries or one attack and one parry per turn without suffering any penalties for multiple actions. Her bow is equal to a powerbow of perfect accuracy (*Caste Book Dawn*, p. 80), and she thus suffers no environmental penalties for range, damage or poor visibility.

GRALA, MISTRESS OF THE ENDLESS HUNT

Description: Grala is the Maiden of the Hunt and the sister of Caltia the Eternal. Grala soars above the tundra and runs through the forests pursuing all manner of game, including humans. She is the incarnate spirit of hunting and pursuit, and for the past few centuries, she has been the patron of hunters. The best way to win her favor is to verbally dedicate the hunting of a difficult prey to her and then to successfully kill it. A successful hunt may bring good fortune or similar minor boons. If the hunt fails, the hunters may face weeks of ill luck, especially at hunting.

Hunters who wish to have more specific and extensive favors from Grala have several options. They can dedicate the hunt of a particularly rare and dangerous creature, such as a Fair Folk cataphract or one of the Abyssal Exalted. Alternately, truly accomplished hunters can visit a shrine dedicated to her, bedecked in trophies from their most impressive kills and offer their services to Grala in return for a single favor. Such services typically involve being asked to hunt down a particular creature. This target is normally either a rival spirit that Grala finds troubling but is unwilling to dispose of directly or one of the dead or the Fair Folk who threatens local hunting in some region. Such hunts are extremely difficult, but the rewards are equally great. Grala can provide magical weapons, hunting charms or the secret weakness of any individual. Unfortunately, failing at these hunts results in Grala killing or maiming the hunter.

Successfully performing a particularly impressive hunt can even persuade her to set her hounds on someone. On rare occasions, she will even grant the hunter the service of one of her hounds. Grala occasionally receives sacrifices and worship from assassins who consider their profession to be the hunting of men. Grala always appears as either an enormous hawk with a golden head, gilded claws and jet-black wings or a tall woman with taloned hands and feet who is covered in black and gold feathers. In her hands, she bears a long spear enchanted with powerful magics and a jade hunting whistle that can both call her hounds and strike fear into any living beings who hear it (succeed in a difficulty 3 Valor roll or characters flee in blind terror for a scene). She carries a brace of javelins upon her back.

Sanctum: Grala lives in the Celestial City of Yu-Shan, in a vast palace made of polished bone. It is decorated with the skins and heads of all manner of dangerous prey animals—everything inside is made from the skin or bones of some dangerous or impressive creature.

Nature: Thrillseeker

Attributes: Strength 10, Dexterity 6, Stamina 10, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 4





Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Craft (Traps) 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 5, Linguistics 3 (Native: Old Realm; Forest-tongue, High Realm, Eastern Barbarian Tongue), Lore 4, Medicine 3, Melee 5, Occult 4, Presence 4, Resistance 5, Stealth 5, Survival 5, Thrown 5

Backgrounds: Cult 5, Follower 5 (Hounds), Influence 3

Charms: Benefaction, Camouflage, Donning Spiritual Armor, Essence Bite, Hurry Home, Imprecation, Instill Obedience, Largess, Malediction, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Portal, Principle of Motion, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Tiny Damnation, Tiny Gift, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 60

Base Initiative: 11

Attack:

Claws: Speed 15 Accuracy 13 Damage 18L Defense 14
Spear (Eversharp): Speed 23 Accuracy 17 Damage 28L Defense 16

Javelin, Held: Speed 14 Accuracy 14 Damage 16L Defense 12
Javelin, Thrown: Speed 11 Accuracy 15 Damage 16L (Rate 3 Range 100)

Dodge Pool: 11 **Soak:** 30L/30B (Ebon feathers, 25L/20B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 122

Other Notes: Grala's spear is called Eversharp, and its edge cannot be dulled or nicked by use or misuse.

MAMMOTH AVATAR

Description: While the spirits associated with most individual animals and many gods of entire herds are still content to keep to their assigned duties, the animal avatars now take a far more active roll in the health and well-being of the animals they represent. This is especially true of the avatars of large and powerful wild animals such as mammoths, tyrant lizards, hybroc and river dragons. The avatars of these species now work to protect their animal populations.

For most of these avatars, this generally means helping to organize the animals to destroy groups of humans who hunt them too successfully. However, the Mammoth Avatar has taken a very different course. While she is content to have many of her charges live in small herds that wander the icy Northern wastes, she has also made alliances with several groups of humans who live in the Far North. In addition to working closely with the icewalker tribes, she has also made pacts with the Haslanti League. She allows these groups to cull the weak, the sick and the old from her herds in return for protecting these herds from various dangers such as the ravages of the Wyld barbarians and the fierce Northern winters. Accepting that some of her charges must fall to predators, she has decided that making deals with some predators for protec-

tion from the rest makes more sense than trying to shield her children from all harm.

The avatar herself almost never appears to mere mortals — instead, she has lieutenants as wise as men and capable of speech. These mammoths will talk to the greatest shamans and warriors or to anyone who performs a feat sufficient to impress the avatar or her lieutenants. In return for helping defeat some foe of the herds or saving any of her kind from needless death or pain, the avatar empowers her lieutenants to grant petitioners the location of a cache of ancient ivory or, on rare occasions, a single ivory weapon filled with potent magic. The most skilled and devoted petitioners are sometimes granted a man-wise mammoth as a companion. The Mammoth Avatar takes the form of a huge female mammoth with tusks of shining gold and long, silk-smooth reddish fur.

Sanctum: The Mammoth Avatar dwells in a great open hall in the Far North. Made entirely of the bones, ivory and skins of long dead mammoths, her sanctum is defended against all intruders by both loyal mammoths and powerful spirits. The skull of each mammoth can tell stories of everything that it saw and heard in life. On occasion, she lets mortals query these skulls. Some have found both treasure and lost cities by asking the right questions.

Nature: Survivor

Attributes: Strength 18, Dexterity 7, Stamina 10, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5, Perception 6, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Endurance 5, Linguistics 5 (Native: Old Realm; Forest-tongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Low Realm, Skytongue), Lore 5, Occult 5, Performance 5, Presence 7, Resistance 5, Socialize 5, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Allies 4 (Mammoth Lieutenants), Cult 4, Followers 5 (Mortals and Mammoths), Influence 2

Charms: All listed Charms

Cost To Materialize: 60

Base Initiative: 12

Attack:

Gore: Speed 18 Accuracy 15 Damage 18L Defense 14
Trample: Speed 12 Accuracy 12 Damage 26L Defense 0

Dodge Pool: 12 **Soak:** 27L/30B (Tough hide, 22L/20B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 116

Other Notes: The Mammoth Avatar's shed fur and the fur of her lieutenants can be woven into long, exceptionally warm coats that protect their wearers from all cold, including Frozen Fog (Scavenger Sons, p. 18) and are heavy enough to protect against injury as well as a chain shirt. A chip of ivory from one of her dead lieutenants' tusks can be

carved into an amulet that gives the bearer's player two extra dice to use for all rolls to control or ride mammoths. The Mammoth Avatar occasionally allows her closest allies to gather such fur or to take a small piece of ivory from the mammoth graveyard.

GREATER GUARDIAN SPIRITS

Guardian spirits are assigned to guard or protect various important sites by the Celestial gods.

CELESTIAL LION

Description: To guard the sacred gates of Yu-Shan and to protect other especially holy or important sites, the gods employ the services of the fierce celestial lions. While lion dogs (see p. 45) are relatively weak guardians who protect many sites in the mortal world, celestial lions are great and holy gods who guard both Yu-Shan and the sanctums of the greatest regional gods. A few celestial lions also guard locations in the mortal world, but they are only found in the most ancient and important places. Some guard the most sacred tombs in Sijan, and there is one guarding a seemingly empty palace in Nexus. No one ever goes in or out of this viridian-walled mansion in the Firewinder District, but it survived the twisting of the Wyld to emerge unscathed, and it continues to look as pristine and perfect as when it was constructed in the days of the First Realm.

Celestial lions are utterly incorruptible — they cannot be bribed to shirk or ignore their duty. However, like most Celestial gods, when they abandon tradition and the Celestial path, they become either glorious or terrible beyond all words. Celestial lions who now guard only decaying ruins or who have been too often ignored and insulted by gods now intent upon status and other base concerns often abandon their posts in disgust and seek other destinies. One is now the tyrant of the Southern town of Golden Spire, a few work as guards for powerful mortal queens and princes, and some offer their services as brave and dedicated mercenaries. Willing to work for mortals, Exalts or the gods, these celestial lions never break a contract and are relentless and terrible warriors. Ronin lions who are honorable and good will only serve righteous masters — others have grown cynical and will work for any who will pay their price. These fallen lions will commit truly heinous deeds without a second thought. Celestial lions all appear to be identical. They are heavy-bodied lions that stand three yards high at the shoulder and appear to be made of mirror-polished orichalcum. They are all extremely proud and will devour anyone who does not offer them the proper respect.

Sanctum: Celestial lions have no sanctums. Those that are off duty for a time use their Charms to travel to Yu-Shan, where they have humble but adequate mansions.



Nature: Paragon

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 6, Stamina 10, Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Dodge 5, Endurance 5, Linguistics 5, Lore 5, Martial Arts 5, Occult 5, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Socialize 3, Stealth 3, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Influence 2

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Essence Bite, Hoodwink, Host of Spirits, Instill Obedience, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 55

Base Initiative: 11

Attack:

Claw: Speed 17 Accuracy 20 Damage 18L Defense 18

Bite: Speed 14 Accuracy 14 Damage 24L Defense 11

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 30L/30B (Orichalcum hide, 25L/20B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 102

Other Notes: None

LESSER SPIRITS

Lesser spirits are rarely unique. In most cases, there are hundreds or thousands of each variety of lesser spirit listed here.



LESSER SPIRITS OF HUMANITY

WAR AUROCHS OF AHLAT

Description: These fierce spirits are the loyal servants of the war god Ahlat. Legend says that warriors who die in battle fighting for Ahlat's glory are reincarnated as war aurochs. There is no evidence for these beliefs, but warriors continue to take comfort in the belief that, after they die, they will live forever in Ahlat's gilded halls. In addition to going out on battlefields to honor fallen warriors by eating their bodies and collecting their memories, the war aurochs fight Ahlat's battles. On rare occasions, Ahlat also sends one or more of his war aurochs to aid others in their battles. While he mostly sends them to aid other spirits, he can sometimes be convinced to aid brave Exalted and even mortal warriors. War aurochs are unforgiving and will only fight alongside warriors who are extremely brave. These spirits cut down cowardly allies who flee battle or who are unwilling to risk their lives.

The war aurochs appear as either vast aurochs with featureless blood-red eyes, black coats and gleaming golden hooves and horns or as hugely muscular, dark-skinned men and women with bull heads and great golden hooves for feet. When in humanoid form, they are always armed with finely made golden spears, bullhide shields and bows.

Sanctum: War aurochs dwell with Ahlat in his golden palace in the sacred city of Yu-Shan.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 5, Athletics 1, Brawl 5, Dodge 2, Endurance 4, Linguistics 1, Melee 5, Occult 1, Resistance 4, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Backgrounds: Allies 3 (Fellow War Aurochs), Backing 5 (Ahlat), Influence 1

Suggested Charms: Memory Mirror, Inhuman Prowess, Materialize, Principle of Motion, Shapechange (humanoid to aurochs only), Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Gore: Speed 8 Accuracy 9 Damage 15L Defense 9

Spear: Speed 13 Accuracy 11 Damage 13L Defense 9

Composite Bow: Accuracy 12 Damage 13L (Broadhead) (Rate 2 Range 400)

Dodge Pool: 5 — **Soak:** 13L/14B (Spirit breastplate, tough hide and aurochs hide shield. Breastplate 7L/5B, tough hide, 3L/3B, all incoming attacks difficulty +2)

Willpower: 7 — **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 — **Essence Pool:** 59

Other Notes: The bows and spears of the war aurochs can only be used by the Celestial Exalted; they will not serve the hands of mortals, God-Blooded, Fair Folk or Terrestrial Exalted. The war aurochs will brave any danger to retrieve the war-gear of a fallen comrade.

CHILD OF SIAKAL

Description: The servants of the Western war god all take the form of rapacious, ever-hungry siaka. When given sufficient sacrifices, they will happily use their Charms to slow ships and allow them to become easy prey for a their allies' forces. As long as Siakal has asked them to help, the only price they ask is the right to devour any enemies who fall overboard. Unfortunately, they also have a tendency to attack anyone who falls in the water, regardless of the individual's allegiance — like mortal sharks, when they are surrounded by blood and death, they are often overcome with a feeding frenzy.

The children of Siakal appear as particularly large and menacing siaka. In addition to their Charms, the most frightening thing about these monstrosities is that they fight with intelligence as well as wild ferocity, biting through rudders and oars and even jumping up to rend exposed bowmen.

Sanctum: Most of the children of Siakal dwell with her in her bloody pool in Yu-Shan. Those that have no sanctum roam the seas continually searching for prey.

Attributes: Strength 13, Dexterity 3, Stamina 10, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 2, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Endurance 5, Linguistics 1, Occult 1, Presence 4, Resistance 5, Stealth 3, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Allies 1 (Other Children of Siakal), Influence 1

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control (Water), Essence Bite, Materialize, Paralyze, Principle of Motion, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 21

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Bite: Speed 7 Accuracy 9 Damage 19L Defense 6

Dodge Pool: 7 — **Soak:** 17L/20B (Tough hide, 12L/10B)

Willpower: 7 — **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 — **Essence Pool:** 64

Other Notes: The tough hides of the children of Siakal — can be tanned and formed into lightweight buff jackets. This armor can be worn by anyone.

SPIRIT SHARK HIDE BUFF JACKETS (RESOURCES ●●●)

Name	Soak (L/B)	Mobility Penalty	Fatigue
Shark Hide Buff Jacket	8/8	-0	1

HOARDER

Description: Hoarders are the servants of Madame Marthesine. Originally charged with keeping track of lost items, many now help certain items become lost. They are particularly attracted to large collections of all sorts. Many wealthy and careful mortals invest in talismans that prevent hoarders and similar spirits from entering their dwellings — all Guild wagons are so protected. Sometimes, individuals do not think that their collection merits such relatively expensive protection, while others do not notice that their talismans have been damaged or stolen. In such cases, hoarders enter unprotected areas and will remove some portion of the collection or other interesting items that strike their fancy. While they rarely take more than one item in five, most collectors are horrified at even such relatively minor losses.

Hoarders are not particularly tempted by nearly identical items such as seeds of grain or coins — they are most interested in large number of similar but not identical items, such as collections of swords, tea cups, potted

flowers or snowflakes. Hoarders eventually take their acquisitions to Marthesine, where these items join her vast store of lost things. Once Marthesine has an item, the only way to retrieve it is to bargain with her.

However, hoarders are exceedingly greedy and keep their newly acquired items in their sanctums, giving the older loot to Marthesine only when their sanctums are so full that they cannot hold further acquisitions. A number of magically inclined mortals and Exalted make use of hoarders' greed and limited intelligence.

Anyone with three or more dots in Occult can set out bait that nearby hoarders will almost certainly investigate within a few days. Performing this baiting ritual has a Resources cost of ●● and involves setting out a large number of small trinkets in various intricate patterns. A large room or other undisturbed open space is required. If the creator's player makes an Intelligence + Occult roll of difficulty 2, this assemblage attracts one or more hoarders within the next three days (the better the roll, the faster the hoarders arrive). Since hoarders are solitary creatures,





performing this ritual near a collection that has been recently pilfered will almost certainly attract the same hoarder. At this point, the sorcerer can attempt to catch the hoarder. However, hoarders are extremely wary and astoundingly quick. Wise mortals and Exalts instead attempt to bargain with hoarders. Offering the hoarder beads and similar trinkets, as well as a few rare items, can often persuade it to part with some of the items it took, especially if the other option is to gain nothing and have to fight the people who laid the trap.

Some clever or greedy individuals perform this ritual to obtain items that were stolen from others. Unfortunately, regularly dealing with hoarders in this fashion can often annoy them, and anyone who attempts to trade valuables for trinkets too often can awaken one day to find that all of their own valuables are gone. Also, hoarders will never describe the contents of their hoard for fear it will be stolen. Bargains for their most recently acquired items can obtain nearly anything, including valuable Old Realm artifacts. However, such finds are incredibly rare — in almost all cases, the bargainer gains something relatively useless such as several bits of folded paper from a child's origami collection. Often, the best way to make money from the transaction is to attempt to find the worthless item's previous owner and sell the missing goods back to them. Also, those who threaten hoarders are given the most dangerous, unreliable or difficult to control artifacts in a hoarder's collection.

Hoarders appear to be bent and wrinkled people no more than four feet tall. While they initially look extremely aged, closer observation reveals that they appear to be relatively young but covered with thousand of fine wrinkles. They also have highly exaggerated features, somewhat oversized hands and feet and bright protruding eyes. Hoarders wear loose clothing with dozens of pockets and pouches, where they carry some portion of their precious collection of items.

Sanctum: Hoarders place their sanctums in deserted alleys, dark and hidden forest glens and in other similar isolated and lonely places. The interiors of their cramped sanctums have a ramshackle appearance, with boards propping up walls and great leaning piles of clutter. Often, the only open spaces in these sanctums are narrow paths between these piles. Their precious collections are always prominently displayed but rarely well cared for. Even the most precious items are merely added to the large piles that cover the floor.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 5, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 2, Valor 2

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 2, Larceny 5, Lore 2, Occult 1, Resistance 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Allies 1 (Fellow Hoarder), Backing 1 (Marthesine)

Suggested Charms: Cunning Thief, Hoodwink, Hurry Home, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Paralyze, Principle of Motion, Stillness

Cost To Materialize: 25

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Claw: Speed 12 Accuracy 9 Damage 5L Defense 8

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 5L/8B (Gnarled skin, 4L/5B)

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 48

Other Notes: None

BIRD OF VANILETH

Description: Vanileth, the Shogun of Artificial Flight, has as his constant companions many dozens of spirits who appear as clockwork birds made of silver and adamant. Although they can take the form of any bird that flies well, most appear as raptors or crows. These birds regularly leave Vanileth's mountain and travel in immaterial form to observe the various efforts of mortals and Exalts who are building or using gliders, air boats or other flying devices. Exalts who use Charms such as Spirit-Detecting Glance are often surprised to see one of these creatures hovering around a Haslanti air boat factory or a battlefield where one side is using a flying artifact to spy on its enemy's movements.

These birds act as Vanileth's eyes and ears. He can see or hear anything they can. Sometimes, Vanileth gives one of these birds as a present to someone who has journeyed to his castle or, occasionally, to an exceptionally skilled glider pilot or a builder of unusually fine air boats. These spirits count as normal allies, and while they appear to be mere mechanisms, they are as smart as a person and occasionally talk in a low voice filled with clicks and whirs. The spirits will defend themselves against attack with their razor-sharp wings, but if faced with overwhelming odds, they will instead dazzle their attackers with a glittering shimmer of light and vanish.

Sanctum: All of these creatures live in Vanileth's solitary fortress. When they leave, they rarely create more than a small perch accessible from the house of their current ally.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 6, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 1, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Endurance 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics 1, Lore 2, Occult 1, Resistance 2, Stealth 5

Backgrounds: Allies 2 (Other Birds), Mentor 2 (Vanileth)
Suggested Charms: Essence Bite, Hoodwink, Materialize, Tracking

Cost To Dematerialize: 25

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Wing Razors: Speed 12 Accuracy 10 Damage 6L Defense 12

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 5L/9B (Adamant body, 4L/6B)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 51

Other Notes: Each intact wing can be crafted into a razor-sharp unbreakable adamant knife that is Speed +4, Accuracy +1, Defense -1 and Damage +3L. Such knives are finely balanced for throwing as well and can be thrown with a Rate of 3 and a Range of 30.

DREAM FLY

Description: The tiny gods who hold sway over dreams are a great and varied lot. All are small winged humanoids between one and two feet tall, but their appearance depends upon the type of dream they are associated with. The spirits of romantic and erotic dreams are lithe and sensuously beautiful, with wings like dragonflies' or hummingbirds'. Those who control adventurous dreams filled with battles and feats of martial prowess are graceful but predatory creatures with razor-sharp claws and the wings of raptors. The worst are the ones with domain over nightmares. They have wings of bats or ravens, and they are horribly twisted and withered. Those who can see immaterial spirits will occasionally notice one of these creatures hovering over someone who is sleeping. Their presence means that the sleeper is having a particularly vivid and memorable dream.

The role of these gods is to observe dreams and to keep track of those that are new or especially powerful. The dream flies record the dreams they observe in small dream stone pendants and carry these dreams back to special cabinets in their sanctums. Each cabinet is filled with hundreds of tiny drawers. Each one contains a particular dream, normally the exemplar of a certain category of dream.

Some dream flies grew tired of their purely passive role and took to crafting dreams that they sent to certain mortals. Taking tiny fragments from dozens of different dreams, dream flies brew up their own creations in small retorts of violet glass that closely resemble the tiny stills used by perfume makers.

Some who create romantic dreams give their dreams to mortals whose appearance strikes their fancy. Mortals who regularly meet a wondrous dream lover often forsake all mortal love. Other dream flies inspire warriors with

dreams of conquest, while the dread nightmare spirits create quintessential terrors for mortals or Exalts who have wronged them or whose joy and good looks offend these creatures' dire sensibilities.

Dream flies can sometimes be persuaded to create specific dreams. While a dream fly is loathe to become anyone's servant, pieces of dream stone, small exquisitely made baubles or, perhaps, simply epic poems of love or valor written in honor of the dream fly can sometimes convince one to perform a single service for a mortal or Exalt. Dream flies can occasionally even be enticed into working regularly with a sorcerer, Exalt or one of the God-Blooded. Although the dream flies tend to be both highly independent and somewhat dismissive of the needs and desires of others, they can be useful allies if they are well pampered. There are dream parlors in Whitehall and Chiaroscuro where the proprietors have obtained the services of several dream fly who create erotic and adventurous dreams. A well-treated dream flies will sometimes even seek out another who works with other types of dreams if its mortal companion wishes for a type of dream that it cannot provide. In contrast, those who attempt to coerce dream flies into creating dreams find themselves plagued with terrible hallucinations and twisted dreams that leave the dreamers exhausted and shaken (lose one point of Willpower every night that cannot be recovered until the characters get an untroubled night's sleep).

Sanctum: Dream flies live in tiny mansions made from fragments of their favorite dreams.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 6, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1-4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1-3, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 1-3 (depending upon the type of dreams they inspire)

Abilities: Awareness 4, Brawl 2, Dodge 5, Larceny 3, Linguistics 1, Lore 3, Occult 1, Performance 5, Presence 3, Socialize 2, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: Allies 2 (Other Dream Flies)

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Dreambane, Dreamscape, Dreamspeak, Harrow the Mind, Materialize, Paralyze, Stillness

Cost To Materialize: 15

Base Initiative: 10

Attack:

Fist or Claws: Speed 10 Accuracy 8 Damage 1B or 1L I Defense 1

Dodge Pool: 11 **Soak:** 1L/2B

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-2/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 46

Other Notes: Dream flies are capable of using the Dreamscape and Dreambane Charms even though they do not meet the Charm's minimum Essence requirement. Dream flies can also detect dreams and locate dreaming humans at a range of one mile by simply spending 1 mote





of Essence. All dream flies carry a dream stone the size of a small acorn (Scavenger Sons, p. 47).

BLOODY HAND

Description: Bloody hands are spirits of murder. They cluster around cities, especially violent and lawless ones such as Nexus — bearing intangible witness to the taking of human life. While a few still dispassionately observe these crimes, most have developed a taste for death and gleefully watch the many inventive and horrific ways that humans have of disposing of one another. Many collect trophies from murders, and some encourage murderers to use rare and complex methods.

Bloody hands will never kill except in self-defense. They greatly prefer to be observers and critics rather than actual murderers. However, more than one assassin has found bloody hands to be useful allies. Bloody hands are more than happy to lure victims into isolated locations where they will be easy prey. In return for such services, a bloody hand will demand that its mortal companion dispatch his victims in various interesting and unusual ways. Some requests merely involve the use of an exotic type of weapon or poison, while others are so gruesome and horrific that only the most hardened killers can stomach performing them. While bloody hands sometimes warn their partners against capture, they are far more interested in murder than in who is actually murdered. They rarely warn of the approach of another assassin or of a coming attack by anyone who is using an unusual weapon. Individuals who suspect that they are facing an assassin partnered with one of these creatures frequently arm themselves with unusual weapons in the hopes that the bloody hand will be interested enough in seeing these weapons used that it will not warn its ally.

There are a number of rituals used to attract the attention of the bloody hands, and all of them involve human sacrifice. In most places, merely possessing a copy of such a ritual is grounds for torture and death. Some desperate individuals call upon a bloody hand to help them with a single murder. The bloody hand almost always agrees to such requests. Unfortunately for such summoners, the bloody hands then blackmail these one-time killers into periodically committing further murders. Any who refuse find that those who would torture them to death slowly for their crimes mysteriously find evidence against them.

On occasion, people who seek answers to the identity of a murderer will call up a bloody hand for information. Since a bloody hand likely witnessed the murder, such information is easily obtained. However, the price is always another murder performed in a fashion of the spirit's choosing. If the murderer is currently partnered with a bloody hand, this price is increased to two murders. The knowledge that any murder can be solved by anyone

willing to commit one or two additional murders has tempted more than one individual hunting for a killer.

In their natural state, bloody hands appear to be horribly slender humans with brilliant carmine lips and long, perpetually bloody claws. Bloody hands can alter their appearance to look like any human. However, they always have blood dripping slowly from one hand. A glove or bandage can hide this fact, but if forced to remove it, the blood will be obvious. In time, the glove will also seep or overflow with blood.

Sanctum: Bloody hands live in horrific sanctums decorated with murder weapons and the grisly trophies of the murders they have witnessed. Most bloody hands reside in cities and place their sanctums in poor and dangerous neighborhoods. However, those who ally themselves with murderers must be prepared to move on short notice and tie their sanctums to one of the murderer's weapons.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Dodge 5, Larceny 4, Linguistics 2, Lore 2, Melee 5, Occult 1, Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 5, Thrown 5

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Contacts 2, Influence 1

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Details, Element Touch, Form Match, Harrow the Mind, Hurry Home, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Possession, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Stoke the Flame, Tiny Damnation, Tiny Gift, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 35

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Claws: Speed 13 Accuracy 16 Damage 13L Defense 12
Throwing Knife: Accuracy 14 Damage 10L Rate 2 Range 30

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 15L/21B (Spirit buff jacket, 7L/10B, tough hide, 6L/6B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 76

Other Notes: Blood from a bloody hand can be fashioned into a powerful paralytic poison equal in potency to arrow frog poison but only doing bashing damage.

ROAD SPIRIT

Description: In addition to greater gods who have dominion over travel or entire road networks, each individual road possesses its own deity. These spirits vary in power, depending upon the size and importance of their road. Also, spirits associated with roads from the Old Realm tend to be especially powerful. Potent sorcery was often used to make these roads self-cleaning and nearly

immune from wear or harm. The glass roads in and around the ancient city of Chiaroscuro are but one example of such thoroughfares. Even today, many of these highways are unmarked by age and kept perpetually clean of dirt and debris. A side effect of these magics made the spirits of these roads unusually powerful. The small gods who look after smaller and more recent roads are often considerably less powerful. Nevertheless, some of these lesser road spirits use their Charms to attempt to keep their road as pristinely perfect as the old First Realm roads.

Road spirits frequently take the form of hooded travelers carrying staves or walking sticks. Those whose domain passes through the wilderness sometimes take the form of widely traveled local domestic animals such as huge dogs, proud horses or even yeddim. Regardless of form, road spirits all possess obviously unnatural features such as unusual color or size. The spirit of the Traveler's Road running from the city of Whitehall to the sea takes the form of a huge gray-white warhorse with hairless skin and hooves of polished ice. The spirit of the vermilion glass road running from Chiaroscuro to Paragon is a tall, fierce-looking woman with inhumanly long and brilliant, translucent red hair that she wears like a great cloak.

The character of the road can reveal a great deal about the temperament and demeanor of its spirit. Some keep the old pacts and restrict their duties to acting as their road's spiritual representative — writing reports on their road's condition and the nature and actions of its travelers. Others have decided that since spiritual and material aid have both become rare and sporadic, they will use their Charms to repair and maintain the road and provide aid to travelers. Although there are spirits who perform these tasks solely out of pride, most now expect travelers to give sacrifices in return for these efforts. The worst of the road gods have chosen to either largely ignore their duties in order to play politics in the spirit courts or to no longer let anyone travel on their precious road. While some can be persuaded with lavish offerings provided by mortals or threats made by the Exalted to allow travelers, others hunt down and slay any who dare to trespass on their road. Most spirits are not so extreme, but still regard their domains as petty kingdoms — travelers who refuse to pay sufficient tribute often find their journeys slowed by all manner of minor troubles ranging from poor footing to localized bad weather that inexplicably follows them.

Road spirits normally have full knowledge of every past and present event to occur on their roads and can often be persuaded to answer questions about the actions of other travelers. More active road spirits may also provide aid that can double a traveler's speed. These same spirits can also slow a journey to half the pace the characters would normally be able to make on a road. Road spirits often travel widely and frequently have at





least some knowledge of anyplace within several weeks' journey of their roads. These gods can often be convinced to both aid one's own travels and to hinder or disrupt the travels of one's enemies. Of course, one's enemies can buy the road spirit's favor just as easily.

Regardless of its normal temperament, those who attempt to harm a road tended to by a powerful spirit frequently meet unpleasant ends. Threatening to block, cut or otherwise harm a road spirit's road is a quick way to earn either its wrath or, possibly, its grudging and hostile cooperation. In contrast, anyone who provides information about potential threats to a spirit's road or who is willing to erect valuable or artistic shrines to the spirit along the roadside can obtain favors in a less hostile fashion. Individuals who both erect shrines and convince travelers to make regular sacrifices to the spirit can obtain the road god's enduring favor.

Sanctum: Since they are perpetual wanderers, some road spirits have no sanctum. Those that do rarely have more than small but comfortable huts or way stations built on the sides of their roads.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 2

Abilities: Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Endurance 3, Linguistics 4, Lore 3, Melee 4, Occult 3, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Socialize 3, Stealth 2, Survival 4

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Influence 1, Mentor 2 (God of the Local Road Network)

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control (Earth), Hoodwink, Hurry Home, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Tracking

Cost To Materialize: 26

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Staff: Speed 11 Accuracy 12 Damage 10L Defense 13

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 15L/20B(Protectivecloak, 12L/14B)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 53

Other Notes: Any being wearing a road spirit's boots can easily walk over all solid and semisolid terrain, including ice, mud, quicksand and even lava without harm and at her normal movement rate.

FIELD GUARDIAN

Description: All civilized peoples require agriculture to survive, a fact that is not lost on most field guardians. These spirits inhabit tracts of cultivated land. Their appearance and demeanor depends upon what their land is traditionally used to grow. Grain spirits tend to be tall, slender and somewhat cutting and acerbic, while the

spirit of an apple orchard is normally ruddy-cheeked and inclined to mirth. All field guardians know the proper way to care for their land and the plants on in, and most will send dreams that tell how to improve crop yields or warnings of pests or disease in return for offerings of the fruits of their land. Field guardians ask that mortals never pick the fruit or harvest the grain from a small portion of their fields and maim or slay all who break this rule. Most field guardians interact little with the mortals that work their land beyond sending them dreams. However, the older and more powerful field guardians can prophesy and are generally well versed in all manner of secrets, including the location and nature of everything buried in their fields. Obtaining such information from a field guardian generally involves some sort of test. In Great Forks, field guardians will only give up their secrets to someone who bests them in a riddle contest. If the spirit wins, it usually takes the loser's prize animals, though, sometimes, the loser's body fertilizes the spirit's field. In the date orchards of the South, field gods require payment of an object that has been lost for at least a decade — the more valuable the object, the greater the secret they will reveal.

While normally fairly passive, these agricultural gods can rend and tear mortals who offend them as easily as scythes reap wheat. Anyone who dares to construct a dwelling or other building in one's fields must make the proper offerings of animal blood, strong drink or incense or risk the spirit's wrath. Also, indiscriminately destroying the crops in a god's field is a sure way to meet a messy death. Fortunately, the death of the crops can always be balanced with another death. When soldiers burn a village's fields to deprive the residents of its crops, the vandals always make certain to sacrifice a prize farm animal or to kill a human and to leave the body and blood in the field. Traitors, deserters and troublesome captives form the majority of such sacrifices.

While their appearance depends upon the local crop, all field guardians are tall and strong. They normally dress as farmers and are generally armed with some form of agricultural implement.

Sanctum: The entrance to a field spirit's sanctum is always located in the portion of the field that remains unharvested. Inside, the entire structure appears to be made from various portions of the spirit's crop, with walls made of bundles of grain or woven from the leaves of date palms. The furnishings are normally rustic but comfortable. A field spirit lives much like a prosperous farmer.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Craft (Farming) 5, Dodge 4, Endurance 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics 3, Lore

Name	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Commitment
Spirit Scythe	-3	+4	+9L	+1	5 motes

4, Melee 4, Occult 4, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Socialize 2, Survival 4

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Donning Spiritual Armor, Dreamscape, Dreamspook, Foretell the Future, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Sense Domain, Uncanny Prowess, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 35

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Scythe: Speed 5 Accuracy 11 Damage 15L Defense 8

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 14L/15B (Spiritual tunic, 7L/5B, tough hide, 5L/5B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 68

Other Notes: A field spirit can harvest an entire field in one days work but need extravagant payments to convince it to do so. Its great scythe is a deadly but slow weapon that can be use by any magical being, including the Exalted.

DISEASE SPIRIT

Description: Disease spirits are twisted and diminutive creatures who observe the progress and spread of various diseases. Each spirit is associated with a single ailment. When a disease is widespread, these spirits are common, but in regions with clean water and little illness, they are relatively rare. Although they are only tasked with keeping track of the progress of their ailments, these spirits know that their existence depends upon their diseases. As a result, many of these small horrors have become devoted advocates of their diseases. Most are more than happy to offer their services to Exalts and sorcerers who wish to sow chaos and destruction. Although a plague started by such a spirit is no more serious than a purely natural one, it can determine the town or section of a city where the plague will originate. Also, these spirits will advise their allies on ways to make a disease worse. Spirits of flea-borne diseases instruct their allies to kill all cats, while spirits of water-borne ailments are full of advice on the best way to place diseased matter into water supplies.

Disease spirits are also able to instantly cure their own diseases and can provide at least some aid against almost any ailment. Some disease spirits can be convinced to work against spirits of rival diseases, but all are loathe to do anything to halt the spread of their own diseases. A number of desperate mortals have spared their loved ones from catching a disease or even obtained cures for them by promising to help a spirit spread its disease. Both threats and force can also be used to obtain the cooperation of disease spirits. While mortals can rarely

use this option, Exalted have on many occasions captured disease spirits and forced them to help eradicate the very diseases that sustain them.

Disease spirits all appear to be twisted humans who have been afflicted with particularly terrible cases of the spirits' associated diseases. Spirits associated with dread diseases such as the plague and leprosy are horrific to look upon, while those connected to colds or other mild ailments simply appear pitiable. The spirits also vary greatly in size. The gods of the Great Contagion were said to stand taller than the highest buildings, and spirits of virulent and deadly diseases are the size of large men. In contrast, spirits of minor infections or cowpox are rarely more than two feet tall.

Sanctum: The sanctums of disease spirits are located in cemeteries where many of those who have died from their diseases are buried or in hospitals that frequently treat their ailments. Their sanctums are vile and foul-smelling places with walls that appear to be afflicted with the spirits' ailments and filthy, decaying furniture.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Lore 3, Medicine 5, Occult 1, Socialize 2, Survival 3

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Essence Bite, Ghostly Presence, Hoodwink, Imprecation, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Steal Sustenance, Sustenance, Tiny Damnation, Will-o-Wisp

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Claw: Speed 8 Accuracy 6 Damage 2L (+ exposure to the disease)

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 4L/6B (Spiritual rags, 3L/3B)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 53

Other Notes: At a cost of 5 motes, they can cause or cure their disease. They also subtract 2 from the difficulty of all Medical rolls (to a minimum difficulty of 1) they make to treat or cure diseases. Also, the bones of a disease spirit can be made into a powerful talisman against all disease (add two dice to the Stamina + Resistance roll to withstand any disease and two dice to the Stamina + Endurance roll to recover from one). Creating such a talisman requires a difficulty 2 Intelligence + Occult roll.





LESSER SPIRITS OF THE WILDERNESS

HOUND OF THE ENDLESS HUNT

Description: Grala, Mistress of the Endless Hunt, is always surrounded by a host of her sentient hounds. These creatures appear to be miniature tyrant lizards slightly more than two yards tall that are covered in dense fur. They have clawed human arms and feet equipped with great sword-like talons. The hounds are spirits of the hunt. In their dematerialized state, they follow and observe all manner of great hunts — when they materialize, the hounds either participate in others' hunts or go hunting on their own. On occasion, great hunters who are pursuing large and dangerous game will find one of these creatures running beside them or chasing with the dogs after prey. These beasts can also be summoned by Exalted or called by mortal sorcerers. The hounds can be called to any large hunt, and if promised a choice share of the kill, many will agree to assist in the hunt. However, anyone who attempts to trick these creatures into doing most of the work or who shows cowardice or incompetence when hunting finds that he has become the hounds' new quarry. Hunters who do not want to end up pursued through the woods by a pack of these deadly spirits should never summon them for any hunt that cannot be completed without their aid. Calling the hounds of Grala requires a successful difficulty 3 Charisma + Occult roll.

While the hounds strongly resent being tricked into hunting in another's stead, they can occasionally be persuaded to hunt for someone who pays a sufficient price. However, they will only hunt difficult and dangerous prey, and anyone who wishes to acquire their services must first hunt down and kill a creature at least as dangerous as the target she wishes the hounds to hunt. To persuade them to hunt any single Exalt, the hound will demand that the summoner single-handedly hunt down and slay a foe at least as deadly as a full-grown tyrant lizard or one of the Fair Folk, for Grala's hounds will never serve cowards.

Sanctum: The hounds have no sanctums of their own — they wander Creation pursuing hunts, only coming to Grala's great and terrible palace to sleep and to pay homage to their mistress.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 5, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 5, Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Endurance 4, Linguistics 1, Lore 1, Melee 5, Occult 1, Resistance 4, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Backgrounds: Influence 1, Mentor 2

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Essence Bite, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Bite: Speed 9 Accuracy 9 Damage 8L

Foot Claw: Speed 13 Accuracy 13 Damage 11L Defense 11

Spear: Speed 18 Accuracy 12 Damage 11L Defense 10

Bow: Accuracy 12 Damage 10L (Broadhead Arrow) (Rate 3 Range 300)

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 15L/2IB (Toughhide, 12L/15B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 73

Other Notes: None

DOG OF THE UNBROKEN EARTH

Description: These spirits are minor gods of the wilderness. They can only exist on land where farmers have not tilled the soil and builders have not dug foundations for at least a century. Now that the Celestial censors have forsaken their duties, many of these spirits actively resist any efforts to diminish their domain. Anyone who attempts to clear and plow virgin land, to build a dwelling or a road in the wilderness or to reclaim an abandoned farmstead that has been vacant for more than 100 years will need to contend with them.

There are two common methods of avoiding the spirits' wrath. As long as the intrusion is relatively small (no more than a single farm in a large wilderness area), appropriate sacrifices of meat, grain and fermented spirits can mollify the dogs. However, forgetting to pay this seasonal tribute or continuing to clear land can have dire consequences. Alternately, making copious offerings to various spirits of humanity may protect farmers and settlers from attacks by the dogs, as the gods of field and road are always eager to expand their domains.

The dogs of the unbroken earth are of greatest danger to wanderers through the wilderness. The dogs especially resent roads and those that travel them — they see such travelers as harbingers of civilization. Although walking along animal paths or boating down wild rivers will not draw their attention, walking on a road through the deep wilderness sometimes attracts the ire of the dogs. Roads that are defended by proud road spirits are usually safe from attack, but anyone on a less protected path is in danger if he wanders into an area where the dogs are active.

Some mortals and Exalts have made alliances with these dogs. Hermits and recluses who hide in the wilderness occasionally give them offerings and promise to help them prevent others from disturbing their domain. The dogs will attack anyone who attempts to find or harm these mortals. In some places, entire villages of primitives who do not know farming have made similar pacts. In return for regular offerings of their herd ani-

imals, the food they gather and the skulls and hands of all intruders, the dogs help protect their villages. Lunar Exalted and their mortal allies are especially likely to have such pacts with these spirits.

The dogs appear as large, heavily built omen dogs that are pitch black, with glowing red or green eyes. With relentless fury, they will attack and pursue travelers or those who break their earth. Only powerful magics, the actions of another spirit, entering developed land or destroying them causes these spirits to abandon their chase.

Sanctum: The dogs have immaterial lairs in caves or hollows. These appear to be a combination of animal dens and trophy rooms decorated with the bones and belongings of the intruders they have killed.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 1, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Endurance 4, Linguistics 2, Lore 2, Occult 2, Resistance 4, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Influence 1

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control (Earth), Essence Bite, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Sense Domain, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Bite: Speed 11 Accuracy 12 Damage 11L Defense 12

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 12L/15B (Tough hide, 10L/10B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 56

Other Notes: A talisman made from the paw of one of these spirits gives the user one additional die on all Survival rolls while in the wilderness. Creating this talisman requires a difficulty 2 Intelligence + Occult roll.

FOREST WALKER

Description: Also called grandfather trees, forest walkers are powerful spirits who rule entire forests. They are the representatives of every tree, bird, fern and bear who inhabits their woods. They can take the shape of any creature in their forests, or they can appear as humans that range in size from the height of the forest's tallest tree to the size of the tiniest insect that lives there. Most are content to play games of power and status with others of their kind and rarely meddle in mortal affairs. Throughout the East, the occasional migrations of great numbers of small animals are known to be the result of one forest walker losing most of her squirrels or parrots in a bet with a rival. Fortunately, deadly predators such as hatra are considered valuable enough that they are rarely the subjects of such wagers.



Exalted



Some forest walkers engage in similar bets with tribal chieftains and the queens of forest kingdoms. Winning can grant the ruler rare boons such as a pack of obedient scythe-feet to guard her palace or a great herd of marmosets with fur of brilliant and silky gold. The nation of a ruler who loses such a bet might be magically compelled to give up their homes and fields to the forest or to spend a season or more as mind-numbed slaves who clear aging trees, fight forest fires, hunt overly populous animals and defend the forest against direct attacks by rival forest walkers.

Others, such as Elder Oak, the grandfather tree of Farhold, adopt a single human clan as their allies, granting its members free passage through the forest and teaching them the forest's secrets, while slaying any that oppose this clan. Grandfather trees tell the clan members the new laws they must follow. Those who break them are maimed or killed as a reminder that the spirit's decrees cannot be ignored.

Some forest walkers grow sick of dealing with humanity and forbid any humans from venturing into their forests. Those people who stray only a short distance into such wilderness are merely chased out or killed by vicious wild beasts — those who wander deep into such woods meet the wrath of predatory spirits and may be so unfortunate as to become captives of the forest walker. The twisted remains of most who enter these woods enrich the forest loam, while others are left hanging from trees on the edge of the forest, serving as a grim reminder of the penalty for entering such woods. However, a few clever and silver-tongued individuals manage to persuade hostile forest walkers to allow them to live in such forests in return for devout worship or freely given love.

Sanctum: Forest walkers normally dwell in sanctums that resemble large groves of living trees grown together to form the walls, roof, floor and furnishings of a vast mansion. With walls of living wood and great roots that sink deep into the earth, these residences are often fitted with almost every luxury imaginable, especially in the case of forest walkers who deal with mortals.

Attributes: Strength 1-14*, Dexterity 5, Stamina 8, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

*depending upon size. Strength 9 for huge human, 14 for tree sized.

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Endurance 3, Linguistics 2, Lore 3, Melee 5, Occult 4, Performance 5, Presence 5, Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Cult 3, Followers 5, Influence 2

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control (Wood), Element Control, Instill Obedience, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Materialize,

Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Shapechange, Tracking, Weather Control, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Attack as an Animal: Speed 12 Accuracy 12 Damage (as animal +2L) Defense 12

Great Spear: Speed 15 Accuracy 14 Damage 20L/22L* Defense 12

* +2 damage for the next scene if the spear is charged with 3 motes of Essence. Damage is for Strength 9.

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 19L/23B (Tough bark, 15L/15B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 4 **Essence Pool:** 80

Other Notes: A forest walker's spear changes size with its wielder and can be charged with Essence to wither all life (except its owner's) with its touch.

DRYAD

Description: Each and every tree holds its own spirit. However, the majority of these small gods are so minor that few ever notice their presence. The laws of Heaven dictate that such spirits should only act as their trees' spiritual representatives. Most who exceed their station merely tend the hurts of their tree and encourage helpful animals and plants to live on or near it. When faced with the threat of bronze or steel axes or great fires, these minor spirits are both forbidden and unable to defend their trees from harm. A few plead for their trees' lives with anyone capable of hearing their cries, while most simply accept their fates.

In contrast, old trees, especially the ancient giants of the East, have spirits that have grown proportionally with their homes. Many of these dryads have forsaken their passive role and now seek to protect their trees from harm. Woodcutters who attempt to harm such trees meet various terrible fates, and some of the more active dryads discourage anyone from harming any tree in their groves or otherwise affecting their surroundings in a manner that would hurt their homes. Most such spirits offer threats and bargains to protect their trees from harm, and some recruit daring mortals and Exalted to attack rival dryads and destroy their trees.

The Linowan of the East tell stories of how sometimes the favor of the mightiest oak and maple spirits of their land can be obtained by exquisite youths and lovely maidens. A single night's dalliance can purchase a prophecy or a minor talisman. The Linowan hold a festival every year where their most beautiful young men and women compete for the right to be chosen to approach the tree spirits. Only the bravest, the most foolish or the desperate do more than perform a brief ritual asking the tree spirit to visit them in their homes.

Those who dare to actively seek the trees' favor sometimes become the long-term lovers of tree gods and obtain rich rewards. However, they may also be kidnaped by the trees and never seen again. Any deemed insufficiently beautiful are maimed or killed for their insolence. Few other nations have formalized relations to this extent, but most forest dwellers know that a pretty face can turn a dryad's head. Dryads appear as humans who possess bark-like skin, leafy hair and other features that clearly show what type of tree they are tied to.

Sanctum: Lesser dryads simply reside inside their trees. The oldest and most powerful dryads have created sanctums where spiritual counterparts to their trees have been transformed into leafy, strong-trunked houses. Inside a bark-lined doorway, the dryad lives in dendritic splendor, with furniture of living wood and all of the treasures it has managed to gather in its long life.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 2, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Endurance 3, Linguistics 2, Lore 3, Melee 3, Occult 2, Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Followers 3 (Various Mortals), Influence 1

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control (Wood), Benefaction, Essence Bite, Hurry Home, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Tiny Gift

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Claw: Speed 10 Accuracy 9 Damage 7L

Spear: Speed 17 Accuracy 9 Damage 9L Defense 9

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 9L/13B (Bark, 7L/9B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/
Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 58

Other Notes: The oldest and most powerful dryads wield spears made from the living wood of their trees. Dryads of younger trees have only their claws.

LESSER GUARDIAN SPIRITS

LION DOGS

Description: Lion dogs are the least of the Celestial guardians. They were given the tasks of guarding ancient temples, the graves of loyal allies of the Celestial gods and various sites of import in the mortal world. Lion dogs are brave and loyal beasts who were once widely acclaimed by both mortals and the Exalted as highly prized protectors and guardians. In many First Realm festivals, children decked the lion dogs' strong necks with garlands of flowers

and braided ribbons into their gleaming manes. Those days are long past — many lion dogs now guard ancient ruins that are shunned by travelers, such as decaying temples or tombs that were completely looted or destroyed long ago. Some now guard nothing more than a few tumbled stones. As a result, many lion dogs have become disheartened and take little pleasure in their duties.

Some become corrupt, accepting bribes to let people into the sites they protect. Others extend their guardianship to include nearby roads and towns. The best offer their services for no payment other than the gratitude of the local populace, but most demand tribute to allow mortals to trespass on the lion dogs' lands or to prevent them from wreaking terrible vengeance upon nearby villages. Others become lost and forlorn, abandoning their duty to wander fruitlessly or remaining at their posts while filled with silent desolation. Lion dogs have an inborn need to protect something or someone and value themselves by both the effectiveness of their guardianship and the importance of what they guard.

Even in the First Age, mortals and Exalts would sometime befriend the brave lion dogs. Today, such friendships can be these spirit-beasts' one source of joy and companionship. Mortals, Exalts and the God-Blooded occasionally form close alliances with lion dogs. While some lion dogs will agree to travel with an individual, aiding her and guarding her while she sleeps, most prefer a more stationary life. These gods will happily protect a friend's home, palace or Manse against all thieves or invaders. When praised and given an important purpose, there are few guardians more loyal than a lion dog. An Exalted character who wishes to have a lion dog as an ally must spend two dots on the Allies Background. However, lion dogs are both unforgiving and extremely sensitive to any betrayal. They have been known devour children for





stealing a single candy from the parlor of one of their allies and to hunt former allies who betrayed them to the ends of the known world.

Lion dogs are large beasts that appear to be made of living jade. They stand two yards high at the shoulder and appear like a strange hybrid of a stocky maned lion and a mastiff. Their enormous round heads with gaping mouths full of a multitude of gleaming fangs can intimidate all but the bravest warriors, and their roars can be heard for miles. Lion dogs can hold themselves inhumanly still, and many pretend to be stone statues in order to lull potential intruders into a false sense of security. However, lion dogs are also happy to talk to visitors who either have permission to enter the place they guard or are not attempting to invade their domain. While few are scholars, lion dogs will sometimes share small amounts of information about the place the guard. Many are quite talkative, although they have no compunction about devouring someone they have shared jokes and wine with, if that person ignores their warnings and attempts to trespass.

Sanctum: Lion dogs rarely use sanctums, and many do not possess one. The most devoted endlessly stand guard over their domain, others rest for short periods of time in a warm and comfortable den that opens directly out onto the entrance to the place they guard.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Endurance 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics 2, Lore 3, Occult 1, Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Backing 3

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Essence Bite, Materialize, Paralyze, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Tracking, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Bite: Speed 11 Accuracy 13 Damage 14L

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 15L/20L (Jade hide, 12L/14B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 73

Other Notes: None

SCARAB GUARDIAN

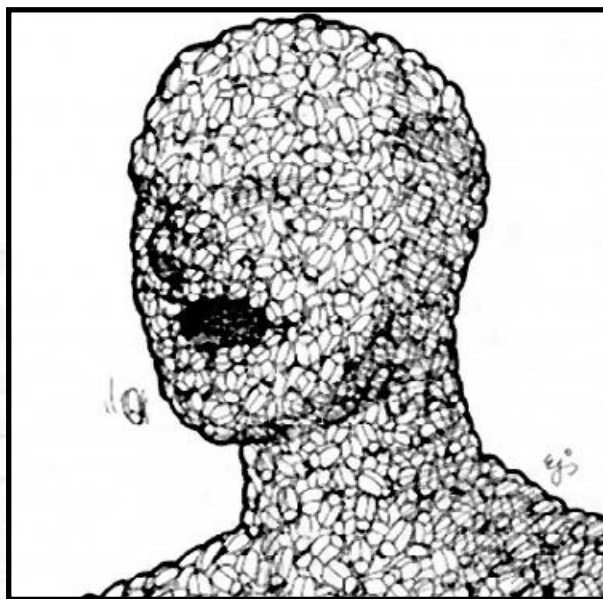
Description: Most Guardian spirits are assigned to protect sites that were honored by the Celestial gods. However, on occasion, the gods wished to guard terrible prisoners or dangerous artifacts against any who might disturb them. Unwilling to honor such horrors with the presence of proud lion dogs or glorious celestial lions, the gods used their most terrible servants, the dread

scarab guardians. These crawling horrors continually swarm over the prisoner or item they are guarding. However, they conceal themselves as the first sounds of activity and then rush out to attack intruders without warning. These creatures are without mercy, and they will consume accidental intruders as quickly as deliberate invaders.

There are ways to get past them, but only for the truly fleet and brave. Scarab guardians are always hungry and not particularly bright. Intruders sometimes throw them the carcass of a large animal or release a live cow or goat into their midst. In their frenzy to devour the beast, they occasionally miss additional looters. Even if they notice the invaders, most of them will already be consuming the animal, and only a few will be willing to attack another before their first meal is done.

Unfortunately, anyone who attempts this deception must then be prepared to depart quite rapidly. Scarab guardians pursue any who defile their domains for many leagues. They are tireless and move faster than a mortal can run (20 yards a turn). Unless the intruders are equipped with swift mounts or cross obstacles such as deep ravines or wide rivers, the scarabs will almost certainly catch them, slay them and return the stolen goods to their rightful place. Since few know that scarab guardians will pursue looters beyond the bounds of the spirits' domain, many greedy mortals have gained valuable treasure, only to be slain in their sleep by the scarab beetles.

The other risk of stealing from these monstrous spirit insects is the fact that they only guard individuals or items that the gods deem too dangerous to remain loose. Such items include wondrous treasures that are subject to deadly curses and spirits intent on wreaking terrible destruction. As a result, any who steal from the scarab





incredibly focused and literally do not notice anything that does not directly concern their domains.

Attributes: Strength 0, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 2, Temperance 1, Valor 1

Abilities: Awareness 1, (Objects — Craft 2), Lore 1, Occult 1, (Plants — Survival 2)

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: None

Cost To Materialize: N/A (cannot materialize)

Base Initiative: 2

Attack:

None

Dodge Pool: 1 **Soak:** 1L/2B (if attacked in immaterial form)

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** 0/-2/Incap

Essence: 1 **Essence Pool:** 29

Other Notes: None

HALF SPIRITS

GOD-BLOODED

Description: In some cities, such as Great Forks, as many as one person in a hundred has a minor godling or a powerful elemental somewhere in his ancestry. Although such individuals are often unusually healthy and long-lived and many are unusually gifted with mortal magic, most have no allegiance to the spirit courts and care little for its intricate politics. However, a few of the God-Blooded have a far more direct connection to their spiritual ancestors.

Either such individuals are the children of a mating between a mortal and a powerful spirit or have gained their god-blood by convincing a powerful spirit to grant them a point of permanent Essence with the Endowment Charm. These exceptional individuals all possess a direct tie to one or more powerful and important gods. While some of the God-Blooded are free agents, their spirit parents employ many as agents in the mortal world. Some are spies, secretly watching the manner in which other spirits interfere in the affairs of humanity — others are asked to perform various deeds for their spirit parents. By acting in their parents' stead, God-Blooded enable powerful spirits to take an active roll in the mortal world without alerting rivals or censors who might take an exceedingly dim view of such interference.

God-Blooded can be found all over the world, but they are most common in metropoli that contain many spirits. Great Forks, Chanta, Chiaroscuro and Abalone each contain more than a dozen God-Blooded. Some are open representatives of a single spirit — others keep their

allegiances completely secret. Most live to be more than two centuries old and can become exceedingly wealthy, powerful and magically adept in this time. Most know various spirit Charms and are sometimes provided with enchanted weapons and armor by their parents, as rewards for diligent service.

While such rewards are always welcome, many God-Blooded desire the greatest boon of all. God-Blooded can only have a permanent Essence as high as 2 — if a spirit uses Endowment to grant them a permanent Essence of 3 or more, they lose their humanity and become immortal small gods. A few God-Blooded who perform a century or more of truly exemplary service for their parents are sometimes granted this great gift. Unlike normal spirits, God-Blooded receive an Essence pool of (Essence x 5) + (Willpower x 2) + (sum of Virtues).

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 1, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 2, Larceny 3, Linguistics 2, Lore 3, Melee 4, Occult 4, Presence 2, Ride 1, Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Thrown 2

Backgrounds: Allies 1 (minor spirit), Artifact 3, Contacts 3, Influence 1, Mentor 2 (spiritual parent), Resources 4

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Dematerialize, Donning Spiritual Armor, Hoodwink, Measure the Wind, Stillness, Tracking, , Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Dematerialize: 15

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Jade Daiklave: Speed 9* Accuracy 9 Damage 8L Defense 9
Throwing Knife: Accuracy 6 Damage 5L Rate 3

*The God-Blooded is not a Terrestrial Exalted and, thus, receives no material bonus and must commit 5 motes to wield the blade.

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 5L/8B (Spirit-sharkskin buff jacket, 4L/5B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 32

Other Notes: Most God-Blooded have one or two minor enchanted items such as enchanted masks (see **The Book of Three Circles**, p. 93) or jade bracers. They can attune themselves to Manses and Hearthstones and to items of the Five Magical Materials. Also, by spending 3 motes of Essence, God-Blooded can perceive all immaterial spirits for one scene.

TERRESTRIAL CIRCLE SORCERY

OPEN THE SPIRIT DOOR

Cost: 15 motes + 5 motes per additional target

This spell allows the caster and anyone she cares to bring with her to physically enter the sanctum of any spirit with an Essence that is equal to or lower than the caster's. The caster can also use this spell to enter the sanctums of more powerful spirits, but only with the owner's permission. This spell does not allow the caster to dematerialize, it can only be used to enter a small god's sanctum, and the caster rematerializes when he leaves the sanctum. To cast this spell the sorcerer and everyone she is bringing along with her must be within three yards of one of the sanctum's entrance. To locate a sanctum, the caster can either ask a spirit, use the Spirit Detecting Glance charm or make perform a complex divination. This divination requires several hours and a Perception + Occult roll of difficulty 3. If this roll succeeds, the sorcerer locates all sanctum entrances within a 100-yard radius.

Once the entrance has been found, the sorcerer and her companions need only stand before it and she then cast the spell. In the next instant, they all find themselves on the threshold of the sanctum. For the duration of this spell, everyone under its influence can interact physically with the sanctum - and all of its inhabitants and furnishings. This spell lasts until the sun next crosses the horizon. If the caster wishes to leave the sanctum before the duration of the spell is up, she can simply cast the spell again, and she and everyone she brings with her will find themselves back in the mortal world. Regardless of how the caster and her companions leave the sanctum, they always find themselves back in the exact place where the spell was first cast. While a number of clever Exalted have used this spell as a method of hiding from mundane pursuit, it cannot be used to intangibly move through space.

Anyone using this spell can carry out items and furnishings from the sanctum as long as he can pick them up and carry them. Spirits generally object strongly to having their sanctums invaded by greedy or aggressive Exalts. Anyone who is known to make a habit of attacking the sanctums of small gods will eventually have to deal with the wrath of more powerful spirits who object to their underlings being harmed or robbed. This spell can also be used to gain entrance to the Celestial City of Yu-Shan, but anyone attempting to enter Yu-Shan in this fashion must also talk their way past the celestial lions who guard it. See page 21 for information on entering Yu-Shan.

SOLAR CIRCLE SORCERY

TRANSCERENCE OF THE SANCTUM

Cost: 45 motes

This spell allows an Exalted to transfer a small god's sanctum into the mortal world. If the sanctum is modeled on the spirit's charge, such as a tree or a building, then the sanctum physically replaces this object. Until the sun next crosses the horizon, this sanctum will be physically present and accessible to all mortals and Exalted. Also, anything that is removed from the sanctum will remain in the mortal world once this spell ends. At the end of this spell, the sanctum and everything inside it will dematerialize and be replaced by whatever was previously in that location. The caster need not fight the sanctum's owner to move the sanctum, although she may have to battle an angry spirit once this spell has been cast.

This spell can also be used to permanently move a small god's sanctum into the mortal world. To accomplish this prodigious feat, the caster must perform a complex ritual lasting from sunrise to sunset. Unless she has the permission of all of the sanctum's current residents, at the end of this ritual, the sorcerer's player must make an opposed Willpower + Essence roll with the Storyteller for each and every spirit that has made the sanctum its home. Every 5 motes of temporary Essence the caster spends reduces the Essence + Willpower dice pool of her current opponent by one die. In addition to having to fight these spirits, many small gods call upon all of their allies when their home is attacked in such a direct fashion. While a sanctum may make a wonderfully secure new home and can be used as the basis for a potent Manse, capturing a sanctum that belongs to a powerful spirit often requires an epic battle. This spell can only be used upon sanctums that are controlled by spirits whose permanent Essence is no greater than the caster's. It is impossible to affect the sanctums of the greatest gods with this spell.







CHAPTER TWO ELEMENTALS



In Exalted, elementals are very much a part of the world, their very beings often tied to the existence of particular places or natural objects. These creatures come in many shapes and sizes and live complex lives, with varied personalities and motives. By nature, elementals are the personifications of particular forms and functions of Creation, brought to life through the admixture of elemental matter and Essence. Elementals typically come into existence to fulfill some purpose, such as to direct winds or to tend growing things. Most perform their tasks by natural inclination and without instruction.

For the smaller, less-powerful elementals, the concept of individuality is unheard of. When one of these creatures springs into existence, it enacts the same behavior that other elemental creatures of its kind do — there is nothing to be said of individual desires or ambitions. This is not to say that they possess some kind of hive-mind mentality; it just wouldn't occur to most of them to do anything other than what their friends and neighbors are doing. A few species of elementals, such as terraserpents, have no motives other than to live out their existences and to perform their duties (if any) in peace. These elementals, though self-aware, are simply not intelligent enough to have a complex and varied internal landscape, and so, they have few concerns beyond what they perceive as the goals of their existence.

Of course, there are reasonably intelligent elementals, with somewhat wide individual variation with respect to desires and motives, but their basic nature remains true to that of their type (a stick person, though naturally quite impulsive, isn't going to go out and join the imperial navy). Very rarely, however, after a certain individual elemental creature has endured for millennia and collected experience and wisdom, it is possible for that elemental to go its own way, though this is very rare. Storms-As-He-Walks is a good example of this possibility. As such an individual progresses along its self-conscious path, it is possible, in even rarer cases, for the creature to shed its association with its individual race altogether.

Most of the more powerful elementals are obsessed spirits who plan and plot and worry about little else but the dominance of their particular element over the others, a struggle that most commonly manifests as storms, earthquakes and other natural phenomena. For the most part, the more powerful elementals are at least somewhat rational and intelligent (if not always especially keen), and they do have personalities that are not necessarily species-specific (though they are often rudimentary). Some of these sophisticated elementals are so wrapped up in complex tasks and their own specific personal goals that concerns about the wider world never enter their minds.

Most elementals are not worldly. Few travel outside their region, and even fewer regularly interact with other



spirits or mortals. This is the result of having a fairly sheltered existence with respect to their relationship with other spirits. To put it bluntly, more powerful and worldly entities have better things to do than worry about the weather, which tends to be a major sticking point for them, as it is one of the only realms that they have been permitted to maintain any control over.

HISTORY OF THE ELEMENTALS

Creation was designed to maintain itself, so that the Games of Divinity would not be disturbed by a constant need for the Primordials to tend to minor matters. To achieve this end, the Primordials introduced the principal of life — Essence — not only into the gods and to mortal beings, but also into every fiber of Creation itself. Water, air, earth, wood and fire were the cardinal elements; all material things were composed of them. The principal of Essence was interlaced throughout all of them, so that certain elements would attract and hold onto each other, in effect holding the world together. Most mortal things that are commonly thought of as having life, such as plants, animals and humans, are of such a composite that they are able to live and grow and reproduce, being fairly balanced aggregates of all five elements. Other simpler things, such as rocks and the wind, are still imbued with Essence, but are so unbalanced in their composition toward a particular element (rocks, for example, are composed almost entirely of earth) that they cannot be said to live in the commonly understood sense. In any case, the principal of Essence, being introduced to the entirety of Creation, was to regulate the world, with the gods charged with overseeing the entire operation, so that all things might follow their natural course.

The universe proved to be quite a puzzle to the gods. All of these elemental particles, all imbued with Essence, and all infinitely interlocking. For a while at least, the gods played at reshuffling reality's cards and coming to grips with the manner in which Creation was put together and shaped. Gaia pensively observed their efforts, at times even guiding many of the gods toward an understanding of how the world was brought into being and how the fragments of reality coalesce in Creation. With Gaia's help, and by studying how she had created her progeny, the Five Elemental Dragons, the gods achieved a great enough mastery of Creation's secrets that they were able to imbue certain elements with far greater Essence than they normally possessed. The gods twisted this excess Essence and manipulated it as well, so as to make the result even more powerful. In this manner, the gods made the elementals. Mindful Forest, who took the form of a great walking tree seven miles in height, who tended the earth as his garden, was the first of the elementals created. Gaia was pleased with the gods' creation, for Mindful Forest seemed to be very useful, so she agreed to teach the gods more. Soon, the remaining four elementals — die Great Garda (fire),



Oceku (water), Urwl (earth) and the Wind Master (air) — were created, with Gaia's blessing. The gods were satisfied with their creations as well and were eager to tend to more intriguing pursuits now that Creation could tend to itself.

The original elementals were of greater power and organization. In that time, many of the spirit courts were unnecessary, for there was nothing to be decided and no one with whom to confer. All was laid before them by the gods, and for uncounted ages, things ran like clockwork. There was but one mighty Wind Master, as tremendous as a mountain, whose sole purpose was to govern the four winds. There was only one Great Garda, with total mastery over the fires of both earth and the stars. This state of affairs did not last, however. The upheaval caused by the gods' war with the Primordials brought instant chaos and uncertainty to the world. Believing (perhaps correctly) that these megalithic giants could pose some sort of threat, one of the Primordials' first actions was to destroy the titanic elementals that the gods had created.

The destruction of the first elementals was accomplished with one brutal, decisive stroke. Much of the Essence the gods had invested in the elementals was scattered and dissipated, and other fragments were scattered and forgotten, surviving as new entities. As the world plunged deeper and deeper into chaos and the destruction continued even after the gods defeated the Primordials, any hope that Creation might be restored to its former bucolic state seemed foolish.

The gods were not completely disinterested, however. Gaia saw the chaos that war had wrought, and she released the Five Elemental Dragons on Creation. These mighty creatures brought the little gods of the Terrestrial Sphere to their knees before them and were soon proclaimed divine lords of the Terrestrial Sphere. Through them, the Celestial Bureaucracy of responsibility was quickly put into place in the Terrestrial world. A bureaucracy was established, and accountability as well, so that the Incarna need not attend to everything themselves. Though they soon slipped into a vast sleep common to dragons of the most powerful sort, it was a shallow slumber, and the dragons seldom hesitated to devour any god or elemental who made designs on the Incarna or their mother. The Celestial Incarna looked on momentarily and then returned to the Games of Divinity, and the world attempted to move on.

When the Primordials destroyed the first elementals, some of their Essence persisted, taking the shape the gods originally set for it, but on a dramatically smaller scale. Likewise, the second generation of elementals consisted mostly of smaller and less-powerful versions of the first. These new elementals, like the rest of the Terrestrial divinities, quickly fell under the yoke of the Five Elemental Dragons, who were successfully cleaning up the mess the Primordial War had left behind. The Court of Seasons was already a functioning body when the new generation of elementals appeared, and the Elemental Dragons were busily sanctioning other spirit courts as well. Because of this

THE FORM OF ELEMENTALS

The elemental spirits of the present age are of the same substance and are imbued with the same elementally aspected Essence as the great elementals from the time before the Primordial War. Because of this, they retain a faint, unconscious memory of their former forms. The Essence of elementals is permanently imprinted with the signature of the original elementals. Thus it is that new creatures formed with that substance and imbued with elementally aspected Essence have a similar shape and purpose (even if such things have been blurred by time and circumstances). It is easiest to think of the substance of elementals as the clay from which they're made, while the elementally aspected Essence of elementals is what gives these building blocks the shape they take.

Thus, when a storm dragon dies, the Essence released does not then necessarily lead to the creation of another storm dragon (though that is possible). Rather, whatever building blocks happen to be around might be brought together and given life, though this process is usually a gradual one, sometimes taking months or years, depending on the size and complexity of the elemental and what, if any, sorcery is involved. The original elementals were huge, and the shards of their Essence countless. There is elementally aspected Essence all over Creation, and it is forever bringing elemental creatures of one kind or another into existence. Like the Celestial Exalted, when one elemental dies, other elementals rise to take its place, though this process is not so swift or so perfect as that which creates the Celestial Exalted. Destroyed elementals may fragment and rise again as smaller, weaker elementals, or the Essence may combine with other elementally aspected power and form a great elemental.



late arrival (and the fact that they believed the elementals too stupid to be of any use), the Elemental Dragons found little purpose for the elementals beyond simple tasks such as moving the wind and shaping the earth.

As time wore on, the offspring of the Five Elemental Dragons took up positions of power in the Celestial Hierarchy as well. Such lesser elemental dragons had more sympathy for the elementals than their parents and named some elementals their own personal servants, which is perhaps all most of them could have hoped for in the new order of things at the dawn of the First Age.

It has been said elsewhere that the First Age was an enlightened time and that great deeds were done. At the



beginning of the First Age, savants and sorcerers who wished to better understand the structure of Creation sought out the elementals, whose very structure revealed powerful secrets to those who knew how to look and which questions to ask. At times, elementals found themselves hunted, other times politely studied. As the mighty Old Realm grew into a splendorous and thriving empire, most elementals paid little heed, going about their chores of caring for the world much in the same way their ancestors had.

When the first Solar Exalted were slain by the Dragon-Blooded, few elementals were particularly aware of the fact. As the decades passed and the strife continued, elementals became more and more involved. Thunderbirds at first sided with the Solars, then fell in line as the eventual outcome became clear. Ifrit immediately sided with the Dragon-Blooded, though, in the end, their loyalty to the Terrestrial Exalted earned them nothing but expulsion from the Realm and an unearned reputation for treachery.

And then, the Contagion fell upon Creation just as Celestial Order was regaining its feet, nearly killing everyone. In the ensuing mayhem, the Fair Folk emerged from the shadows at the edge of Creation and loosed their legions upon the world. The effect of their presence was devastating to the very fabric of the world and, consequently, elementals as well. Essence was again scattered across Creation as the Fair Folk reshaped the very land and sea. Many elementals, especially those away from the Blessed Isle, were physically torn apart. Those who were able to hide themselves still were not left untouched. With the diminishment of Creation, the elementals were lessened as well. Their bodies weakened, their Charms and abilities no longer worked properly. And there was the knowledge that there was little to go back to, should the chaos ever cease. The world was out of balance. Vast stretches of land now contained no Essence at all, while other areas were so thick with it that entire tracts of land sunk into the earth. As the world was reshaped, those few elementals remaining watched with fear for what the future might bring.

After the Fair Folk were finally thrown back, reality began to settle into new patterns. Elementals started demonstrating new behaviors as well, and elementals of new shape and temperament sprung to life. Without any kind of leadership or guidance, many of these new elemental spirits observed the activity of other spirits, who were quick to reclaim their traditions of courts and tribunals, and attempted to follow in their footsteps. Most officials of the new elemental spirit courts hastily drew up labyrinthine and nightmarish policies and procedures (most of which still have the force of law) for their tribunals. For a time, these elemental spirit courts enjoyed some success, in that a decent level of order was achieved, but the cooperation did not last long. Despite their willingness to confer with and assist one another, few could agree on much of anything, with only the wind courts maintaining any sort of effectiveness. Down to this day, little progress has been made, and the elemental

spirit courts are looked down upon by other spirits as ridiculous exercises in process at best and a breeding ground for another cataclysm at worst.

Other elementals had better luck avoiding regional and elemental organizations by remaining solitary, such as the cloud people or the garda birds. This is true for most of the very powerful elementals, unless they serve as heads of their own elemental spirit courts, like the gemplords or the vodonik.

THE PRESENT

Despite the sweeping changes in the Realm, life for most elementals has not altered in any dramatic way since the Contagion ended. Their relationships, conflicts and loyalties are still much the same as they were centuries ago, and they are not likely to change any time soon. This is due to the static nature of their politics and their tendency to be repulsed by even the suggestion of change. As elementals are so closely tied to their surroundings, modifying their behavior may also modify their own physical environment, which would, in turn, endanger their very identity. As such, their relationships with other beings have not changed much over the ages, either.

ELEMENTAL SPIRIT COURTS

Only a very select few non-elementals have any interest in elemental spirit courts. The elemental courts ape the formality of the little gods and their formal courts but without the original intent of informed and efficient governance. As a result, the subject matter tends to be somewhat abstruse and obscure, while the participants must use a Byzantine jargon and follow intricate rituals, making for a bizarre, confusing and, sometimes, even silly experience.

On top of this, the issues discussed at such tribunals tend to be rather precise. In the Council of Winds, for example, an argument to determine the exact velocity of the North Wind on an afternoon in Resplendent Earth could literally go on for months. Because of this kind of desperate clinging to details, and in spite of the formal underpinnings of the proceedings, elemental spirit courts are rarely effective in coming to any decisions at all. It is quite common for arguments concerning, say, a certain season to go on for decades after that season has passed. This fact does not discourage the victors of such pointless proceedings from claiming decisive victories, nor the almost obnoxious insistence that the conventions to blame for the inefficiency are beyond reproach and cannot be revised for the sake of mere convenience.

Only the Council of Winds hold any claim to success, though this is probably because none but the Wind Masters, who often hold their councils in utterly remote locations solely to avoid such dilemmas, may so much as speak during the proceedings. This court is also one of the few elemental courts that functions as an important arm of a powerful spirit court, namely the Court of Seasons. Not so for other courts, in which days may go by in which

one is at a loss to understand one coherent word being uttered for all of the shouting.

Outsiders are generally tolerated at elemental spirit courts, however, so long as there is some meaningful purpose for their presence and they have a sponsor among the participants. Pleas will also be heard, grudgingly, though propositions for minute variations in court procedure — let alone sweeping changes — will be met with contempt, if not outright hostility. The only such proposals likely to succeed are those that make the court more sophisticated: meaning, of course, more incomprehensible.

Depending on the specific court in question, and sometimes also on the subject matter to be discussed, the elemental spirit courts are held in different locations around the world, usually at regular intervals. However, if the court will address important issues requiring the presence of important, powerful personages, court will likely be held near that element's elemental pole.

ELEMENTALS AND OTHER SPIRITS

Elementals are considered by other spirits (and, sometimes, even themselves) to be the lowest rung in the spiritual hierarchy. They are probably right. Unlike other spirits, who are naturally spiritualized, elementals exist primarily in the physical world and must put forth great effort to disperse their bodily form. Many cite this fact as proof of the elementals' base nature. Even elemental dragons without portfolios from the celestial gods are disregarded at times, sometimes by those spirits obviously less powerful (and much younger) than them. This attitude allows elementals to slip below the radar of other spirits, essentially allowing them free rein over their spheres of influence. Even important elementals are generally ineffectual at affecting any kind of change in the world, and so, other spirits pay them little mind. If at odds with an elemental, another spirit will likely not waste much power on it, unless the elemental in question has achieved some kind of notoriety, in which case the spirit is more cautious, though still generally overconfident.

ELEMENTALS AND FAIR FOLK

Some elementals are mistaken for Fair Folk due to some superficial similarities and a general mysteriousness in their behavior. This amuses most Fair Folk, who are always willing to let others go on being mistaken about their true nature. Some of the more powerful faerie, who have no need to hide their nature, will sometimes gently point out the error if it is made innocently enough. Others are not so kind. But it all works out generally in favor of the elementals, who are quick to capitalize on the error (if they are intelligent enough to realize that one has been made). Many elementals have dealings with the Fair Folk out of necessity, since most elementals dwell on the fringes of Creation where the faerie are most powerful. Day-to-day relations, however, cannot be adequately characterized

due to the chaotic nature of Fair Folk behavior and the wide range of their temperaments. Most of the more powerful elementals dread dealing with the fey, knowing full well what could be at stake. Lesser elementals are content and sometimes happy to indulge the games of the Fair Folk, occasionally even coming out on top, though they best the faerie less often than they think they do.

ELEMENTALS AND HUMANS

The more duty-bound elementals have little concern for humans. Their responsibilities of such elementals are meticulous. Their personalities are often wrapped up in, or even defined by, either the very specific duties assigned to them by their masters or their own personal or racial concerns. These elementals typically have no real reason to even think about humans, let alone to converse with one of them, especially when it is much more important that the elementals attend to some imponderably precise point pertaining to the winds or a fire that needs to be arranged and sculpted in the forests to the East. Some rare creatures of this conservative bent may know the names of some very prominent politicians or military leaders (typically long-dead politicians and military leaders) but little else. This generally holds true everywhere except in places where elementals and humans live in close proximity, such as in the city of Great Forks, where gods and men work side by side as comrades.

Some elementals, usually those of a more independent mind, find human society endearing and meaningful. These elementals are in many cases thoroughly entrenched in the human social order, acting as rulers, generals, soldiers, servants, shopkeepers and even slaves. These creatures are of a mind usually not much different from the surrounding humans, though the powers they have typically offers some distinction, both in the elementals' behavior toward humans and in the way humans treat with them.

There are also those elementals whose control over the elements and alien behavior has caused them to be revered in human society. Most of these elementals have accepted this reality and have even begun to define themselves around it. They are worshiped throughout the world as bringers of rain, crops, love, good fortune, babies and victory, among other fine things, though some also provide enough fires, floods, earthquakes and general mayhem that mortals come to revile them instead. For most of these worshipers, elementals are the only divine, otherworldly forces in Creation that they can deign to assume any control over. Elementals are seen as fallible, while it is assumed (usually falsely) that by never failing to pay homage to the local river god, for instance, the yearly crop will never fail.

GODLIKE ELEMENTAL BEINGS

Below are a few examples of very powerful elemental spirits that hold high positions in the spiritual hierarchy.





SWAN DRAGON

(LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF FIRE)

Description: As far as the world is concerned, Swan Dragon disappeared during the Great Contagion in a conflict with the forces of the Wyld. It has been a long time since then, and there are few who even remember his face, let alone hold any hope of his eventual return. Unbeknownst to all, however, he still lives. Moreover, he is closer than anyone would guess.

Swan Dragon, once a magister in the spirit courts of the South, led the last great assault on the forces of the Fair Folk as Creation's defenses crumbled during the Contagion. He single-handedly pushed back the Rain Princes and assumed command of the Celestial Chariot. But despite his efforts, Swan Dragon was thrown from the chariot and into the hands of the Fair Folk, who returned to their lands with him in chains. He remained captive in their mad kingdoms for what seemed like countless centuries.

He was finally driven mad and left to providence at the edge of the known world. Without any memory of his true

nature, Swan Dragon wandered throughout the land as an ancient old man clad in dirty white robes. He spouted nonsense and gained a reputation for being a modest crackbrain and holy man, though one to be watched with care, as he had been known to exhibit bouts of fiery rage. On occasion, when particularly pleased with someone he had met, he would offer a gift: a small pillow of light, soft cottony matter that, if treated well, would open eyes and a small mouth and coo at its caring new possessor.

The pillow creature sheds cottony fabric often, and if collected, this material may be fashioned into a garment that will protect one against fire. The owners of such creatures are always eventually disappointed, however. Whenever the Swan Dragon is unusually disturbed or abused, his rage is focused through the small pillow creatures he gives as gifts, which are actually constructed from a very small portion of his soul. The pillow creatures explode terribly, usually burning anyone (regardless of the poor owners behavior or intentions) and anything in the area to ashes (though people wearing the clothing made from the creatures' sheddings are safe, and the clothes are left intact).

NEW ELEMENTAL POWERS

- **Consume Element:** An elemental using this power can absorb any elemental attack, such as Dragon's Suspire or Affinity Element Control. The elemental adds half as many points to his soak as motes of Essence burned (e.g., 10 motes burned = +5 soak vs. that one attack). This power is also effective against natural elements such as fire. Burning 3 motes renders the elemental immune to natural fires, tidal waves, typhoons, etc.

- **Day to Night:** By burning 10 motes of Essence, the elemental blackens the sky in a one mile radius for one hour, causing dark clouds to suddenly blot out the sun completely. Another 10 motes extends the effect another mile, and so on.

- **Elemental Unction:** The elemental grants one of its own elemental powers or abilities to another. This power costs 10 motes and lasts one day. More potent powers (Dragon's Suspire) costs 15 motes to grant. This power does not effect other elementals. Common boons include simple abilities such as flight and underwater breathing.

- **Foul the Waters:** The elemental causes rivers and streams for miles around to turn black and undrinkable. Crops will wither and die in the surrounding land after a few days under this curse. This power requires the expenditure of 5 motes of Essence for every hour that the curse is in effect. Water elementals are, of course, not affected by the curse, though all other life in the blighted water certainly is. Fish die, surrounding animal life leave for less-scourged pastures, and plant life seeps black creosote. Until the curse is lifted, treat the fouled waters as mild poison.

- **Immolation:** Possessed only by the Garda birds, this power allows the elemental to detonate its being in a tremendous flare of Essence. This power is a dice action that occurs on the bird's initiative. Spends 1 mote of Essence and roll the bird's Valor + Charisma, with a number of automatic successes equal to its Essence. This is the number of successes on an attack, which can be dodged or parried normally and which does an amount of lethal damage equal to the spirit's remaining temporary Essence. The elemental is destroyed. A garda bird shifting into phoenix form reflexively unleashes a 16L immolation attack as it does so, at no cost to itself.

- **Plague of Menaces:** By burning 10 motes of Essence, the elemental can cause an onrush of annoying creatures associated with its element to overrun a village or town for one day. Common choices include frogs, locusts, giant earthworms, gulls and cockroaches.

Swan Dragon presently wanders the South's main road, usually stopping for days at the Lap (whose monumental Hermit functions as his secret Manse, where he is often found perched above the main door in his swan guise). He speaks in riddles, often answering them himself with solutions that make little more sense than the questions. He double-talks, holds entire conversations with herons (providing the herons' voices, of course) and babbles half-remembered obscure facts of the time before the Great Contagion. He is entirely amiable, however, unless he is either physically threatened or he feels he may be losing an argument. In either case, any pillow creatures he has given away since his last outburst explode just as he blows his top.

If threatened, Swan Dragon turns into a swan and flees, trailing flames in his wake. If losing an argument, his eyes begin to glow with an orange, fiery light, and tiny flames appear at his nostrils and at the ends of his whiskers and hair. If his interlocutor does not relent, Swan Dragon becomes violent, attempting to pummel her with slightly flaming hands. In such a state, he is easy enough to overcome, though difficult to calm down. If he is deeply incensed, his exit is accompanied by a massive fiery detonation. Anyone unfortunate enough to attack Swan Dragon is met with a miraculous sight. Flames of gold and purple rend the air and fiery miniature stars whip through the sky as he takes his full dragon form: a 100-foot-long, white-scaled, four-toed serpent with eyes like suns and the mad voice of an apocalypse. In his fury, he will rend anyone tempting his anger. He strikes with poisonous breath and the powerful blows of his claws, tail and fangs, subconsciously activated Charms and elemental powers as needed. Swan Dragon eventually reverts to his swan form, though only after several hours and only when alone, recalling nothing of the battle or transformation.

Nature: Swan Dragon is insane. As such, his Nature changes quite frequently.

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 10, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 1

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 6

Abilities: Awareness 5, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Flametongue, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue, Sky tongue) 5, Lore 5, Occult 5, Presence 2, Socialize 2, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: Cult 2, Manse 5

Charms: All available spirit Charms, though their use is entirely accidental.

Elemental Powers: All elemental powers, though their use is likewise accidental.

Cost To Materialize: 50

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 9 Accuracy 9 Damage 10L Defense 9

Kick: Speed 4 (6 in water) Accuracy 8 (11 in water) Damage 14L Defense 10

Pillow Creature Explosion: Speed 20 Accuracy 6 Damage 27L**

Fiery Detonation: Speed 7 Accuracy 6 Damage 18L**

Dragon Bite: Speed 9 Accuracy 14 Damage 18L Defense 9*

Dragon Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 12 Damage 15L Defense 10*

Dragon Tail: Speed 6 Accuracy 9 Damage 20L Defense 9***

Fiery Venom: Speed 18 Accuracy 7 Damage 22L**

* Swan Dragon may make two claw attacks and a bite attack every turn without splitting his dice pool.

** Swan Dragon's fiery venom, fiery detonation and pillow creature explosions cannot be blocked, but may be dodged.

He may only breathe his venom seven times per day.

*** Double damage versus structures and objects.

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 25L/30B(Dragonhide, 20L/20B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 8 **Essence Pool:** 136

Other Notes: Swan Dragon's fiery venom has a range of 150 yards.

OGIME, THE FROG QUEEN

(LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF WATER)

Description: Ogime often takes the form of a wandering wise woman with a hunched back and a warty face leading her three-legged toad companion on a leash. Other times, she appears as a sea serpent with smooth skin and a frog's head. She does not approve of others using her servants and has been known to cause heketa to turn against their summoners once their task is complete. She will even (very rarely) appear herself and deal with such upstarts personally, though this punishment is usually reserved for repeat offenders or for those who have caused many of her servants to be killed. When traveling through underwater realms, she is inevitably attended by a dozen or more heketa. While traveling on land, she is frequently borne in a jade-gilt coral chariot pulled by six blue-skinned young boys.

In the spirit courts of the West, the Frog Queen is a force to be reckoned with, though she does not command the same respect or power of her rival, the censor Fakharu, whom she hates bitterly. Ogime makes frequent appearances at various seasonal courts demanding that punishment be meted out to various enemies (though her main enemies seem to be the Council of the Winds and the thunderbirds). She is incredibly territorial and demands that all petitioners go through proper diplomatic and informal channels before she will grant them anything.

Unlike her rival, who spends most of his time in repose, Ogime mounts campaign after campaign to further her own political agenda in the courts. She dwells in Gojipon, a lavishly furnished gigantic undersea Manse made of blue coral, starmetal and gold, and is doted on shamelessly by her near-mindless servants, the heketa.





THE SANE SWAN DRAGON

The conditions of Swan Dragon's return to sanity are not set and are left entirely up to the Storyteller. Needless to say, however, the event should be treated with the gravity and seriousness that it deserves. Should Swan Dragon's sanity return, it's not going to be a sidebar or a footnote in a story, and the players' characters should be at the center stage. In addition, the statistics above are solely for Swan Dragon in his maddened state. If he were to regain his sanity, these figures would be significantly higher. Such an incident is certainly conceivable, however, for certain members of Swan Dragon's ancient house — mostly old cronies and God-Blooded descendents — still maintain hope and keep their eyes and ears open for information about him. Should his mind return, Swan Dragon will immediately take control of the Lap and the surrounding lands as he orders old allies to his aid, gathers armies and negotiates new treaties. If the Locust Crusade is underway (see **Time of Tumult**), that may provide quite an interesting twist to local politics. Swan Dragon also immediately calls to his hand his lost daiklave, called Shurtimu Ji, a thin white shimmering blade of starmetal that was lost at his defeat during the Great Contagion. Swan Dragon can call this sword to his hand from any distance without burning Essence. This advantage was gained at the sword's forging during the First Age, when the fiery-hot metal of the sword was cooled with Swan Dragon's own blood.

The changes in Swan Dragon's statistics should his sanity return are below.

Attributes: Dexterity 6, Intelligence 7, Wits 7

Virtues: Compassion 5, Temperance 6

Abilities: Bureaucracy 7, Dodge 7, Lore (The First Age) 8, Presence 7, Ride 6

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Followers 5, Influence 6, Resources 5

Attack:

Starmetal Daiklave (Shurtimu Ji): Speed 14 Accuracy 13 Damage 18L Defense 16

For all her bravado and insistence on formality and respect, she does not hold any official position in the courts, though she would likely reject all but the most prominent stations if any were offered her.

She pays little attention to mortals, Exalted or otherwise, though if she discovers injustice being done to her servants she is quick to retaliate — and with incredible ferocity — regardless of how powerful her perceived enemy might be. She is not above penalizing entire

populations to punish a few (see "Heketa," p. 69). For the most part, however, she holds no truck with any mortal, blatantly ignoring all but the most insolent appeals.

When faced with a threat, the Frog Queen does not hesitate to annihilate her opponents with floods, famine and plague. In one-on-one combat, she is quick to use her poisonous breath and her constricting body. After killing her victims, she is not above visiting their families and either killing them outright or placing terrible curses on them or their land.

Ogime's relationship with Fakharu is one of resentful envy and anger. Although she was his lover only once, she sees herself as a jilted, betrayed paramour and has tried on numerous occasions to have Fakharu's mortal lover killed, with little luck. Fakharu himself publicly denies that he has even exchanged words with the Frog Queen, noting her poisonous disposition and general obnoxiousness, which only fuels her madness.

The Frog Queen's familiar is a highly intelligent toad called the Whistling One, whom she takes with her wherever she goes. "Whistling" is a misnomer, of course, for the Whistling One's song is maddeningly vile and impresses only other toads. Members of whatever court Frog Queen is currently attending cringe at the sound of the Whistling One clearing his throat. Ogime loves the Whistling One dearly and will obviously not brook cruel behavior toward him. She also has a number of sons and daughters and mortal champions in various stages of favor who she protects at her whim, though there is no guarantee that even an Exalted champion will reap much pity from the Frog Queen if in trouble.

Nature: Bravo

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Dodge 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Flametongue, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue, Sky tongue) 5, Lore 3, Martial Arts 3 (In Dragon Form +2), Occult 5, Presence 5, Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 4, Cult 1, Familiar 4 (Toad), Followers 5, Influence 3, Manse 5, Resources 4

Charms: All available Charms

Elemental Powers: All elemental powers

Cost To Materialize: 50

Base Initiative: 10

Attack:

Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 9 Damage 10L Defense 9*

Bite: Speed 4 (6 in water) Accuracy 8 (11 in water) Damage 14L Defense 10*

Venom Breath: Speed 20 Accuracy 6 Damage 27L**

* The Frog Queen may make two claw attacks and a bite attack every turn without splitting her dice pool.

**The Frog Queen's venom cannot be blocked, only dodged. Frog Queen can use this breath once every 12 turns.

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 15L/31B(Dragonhide, 10L/10B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 123

Other Notes: Frog Queen is served by a large retinue of heketa, who will defend her and her Manse without question.

Ogime's breath has a range of 100 yards.

THE KUKLA

(GREATER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF EARTH)

Description: Chained for millennia beneath thousands of feet of molten lava, this dormant terror is all but gone from living memory. Those ancient enough to know of his existence are also wise enough to speak of him only in whispers and then only in the language of the Old Realm. It is said that the last time Kukla was released he destroyed half the world and that his tail alone reduced a mountain range to pebbles. He is a horror to behold: an ever-flaming serpent over four miles in height with 12 legs and five-toed claws the size of high hills. His scaled skin is blue and gold beneath his fiery aura, and his horse-shaped head holds five sets of eyes with two pupils apiece. His razor sharp teeth number the same as a legion.

The Kukla's prison is in the heart of a long-dormant volcano on a Western island that is currently underwater. The prison is tended by powerful spirits who were appointed by the Unconquered Sun eons ago. These stewards await the order to release the beast upon the world. Once released, there is no controlling the Kukla, and only the appointed stewards can recall him. As his prison practically detonates, earthquakes and tsunamis shake Creation for hundreds of miles, and terrible storms rage, having a lasting effect on the lives of everything in the Realm. This is not done lightly, and is only the result of severe divine outrage at the entire population.

As far as statistics go, they aren't really necessary. If a specific character does not run like hell at the sight of the Kukla, the Storyteller should promptly collect her character sheet. The creature is a plot device. The only beings who have even a chance of killing him are elder Exalts and maybe the armies of the Fair Folk.

WIND MASTERS

(LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGONS OF AIR)

Description: Also known as the Great Bears, the five principal elemental air spirits (lesser dragons) manifest themselves either as giant bears or as scaled dragons with the heads of bears. They are supremely exacting and decisive in all of their duties, holding councils each season to determine the precise movements of the five winds across Creation. Wise and orderly, they are nevertheless bitter opponents of one another, using all diplomatic and



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rhetorical means to increase their power in the coming season. Adding to this difficulty is the Wind Masters' distaste for aligning with other wind spirits, for that would entail elevating another along with themselves. Hence, a delicate balance has remained throughout the ages, with no wind spirit able to topple any other. This balancing act and the wind spirits' orderly character is expressed further in their desire to impose orderly systems on other elementals as well, especially water elementals. Put simply, the wind spirits continually conflict with the less powerful and less organized spirits of water, who are usually unable to resist the wind spirits' superior planning and coordination. Once, there were tide councils as well, but the actions of the Wind Masters make such councils meaningless. Certain water spirits have challenged the Wind Masters in the past. The Undertows despise the aplomb with which the Wind Masters disregard the pleas of the water spirits. The Frog Queen has been very vocal in her opposition as well. She has been trying for centuries to involve the Court of Seasons in the matter, but with little luck. The Court of Seasons knows that any attempt to dislodge the Wind Masters would involve upsetting the seasons as well.

In addition to the wind makers, there are other lesser air spirits, who are descended from the Wind Masters and are also under their command. These are the huraka: fierce soldiers with sharp bird's talons created from thistles and thorns and from all the other things of the airy realm that are dangerous and warlike. They perform their masters' bidding by battling the forces of the enemy water spirits, almost always emerging victorious. These lesser air spirits are often found walking on water as a show of bravado.

It is their power to overcome and rein in chaos that allows the Wind Masters to control the five winds. Even lesser wind spirits have this power to a degree. Despite their great power, however, Wind Masters are not widely worshiped in human society, as they take little to no notice of the comings and goings of mortals.

The wind dragons are named Blue Skulking Bear (North), Green Frowning Bear (East), Black Grinning Bear (West), Red Stalking Bear (South) and White Venerable Bear (Omphalos). Outside of the seasonal councils, they interact with one another only through their servants. If one Wind Master should encounter another outside of the Council of Winds, he is unable to resist the urge to attack the other dragon immediately, resulting in terrible storms (hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis — whichever is appropriate). Such disasters have occurred before, obviously, but the Great Bears remain, as not one is powerful enough to defeat another.

Blue Skulking Bear rules the North Wind and dwells in those frozen wastes so that he can keep a close eye on the wind's behavior. Naturally, freezing cold wind results when he uses his elemental powers. His fortress is made entirely of ice and is possibly the most inhospitable place in existence, as apart from the unbearable cold, Blue

Skulking Bear accepts no visitors, period. His retinue of huraka is instructed to give one and only one warning to petitioners and then to attack, which they are always glad to do. The defeat of these huraka will bring the Wind Master himself, who will give the petitioners a minute or so to explain themselves before slaying them.

Green Frowning Bear rules the East Wind and lives in a fortified forest lodge surrounded by gigantic precious stones and rivers that yield enormous salmon. Amongst the retinues of Wind Makers and huraka, colossal bees, who dwell in hives fashioned from the hollowed-out skulls of gigantic enemies of their master, are found guarding the gem-encrusted silver gates of his domain. Green Frowning Bear is the vainest of the Wind Masters and, perhaps because of this, the easiest to influence. He is also the most difficult to reach, as few people know where to search for him. Even other woodland spirits have become lost in search of his lodge.

Black Grinning Bear, Master of the West Wind, is the most arrogant of the Wind Masters and is the chief cause of grief for the elemental spirits of water in the Western Ocean. He instructs his massive armies of thunderbirds to hunt down and slaughter any water elementals they can find. His private island halls west of Wavecrest are lined with the preserved bodies of his own special hunts as well as those of his greatest champions. Visitors are greeted and given proud tours of the halls by high-ranking thunderbirds, who extol their master proudly and discuss the challenges and advantages of serving him. Those who offer to pledge themselves to his service are introduced to Black Grinning Bear, who laughingly geases them into running off on a quest for him, then haughtily dismisses them to their task. Still, all are shown great hospitality, though there are tales circulating the Western Threshold warning of this Wind Master's manipulative nature. Many have been sent off on impossible quests never to return (as Black Grinning Bear often forgets that humans cannot breathe underwater). For this reason, few visit his island, which beckons on the Western horizon.

Red Stalking Bear, Master of the South Wind, dwells amidst the volcanoes in the cruel Southern desert. He is the proudest of the Wind Masters, as he keeps no permanent hall and does not surround himself with admirers and servants (though a retinue is easily summoned). He is happy to speak with petitioners, if they can find him, though he will give them his attention only briefly. If the subject of the other Wind Masters is raised, he immediately dismisses visitors without explanation. Otherwise, he is willing to listen to anything. Giving aid to petitioners, however, is another story. Unless the circumstances are absolutely dire, Red Stalking Bear never personally involves himself in the problems of mortals, Exalted or otherwise. He may offer information and point a supplicant in the right direction, though, and he rarely refuses requests for healing.



White Venerable Bear, Master of the Omphalos, resides high above the clouds in the Tower Aneme, where the five winds meet. This tower rises from thin air in the middle of the sky. Walking on its transparent opalescent floors is like stepping on a cushion of freezing air. From here, White Venerable Bear, the most circumspect of the Wind Masters, can hear the voices of all other air elementals in the span of Creation and can throw his voice to anyone he chooses from the seclusion of the Omphalos Chamber at the heart of the Tower Aneme. Visitors may approach only by way of an invisible rail that runs from the earth to the sky and is located precisely beneath the Tower Aneme on Earth. Only air elementals can make this rail visible to non-elementals. Merely touching the rail transports visitors into the outer chambers of the Tower Aneme, where they may petition the Wind Master's huraka servants for an audience with White Venerable Bear. Only by the express command of White Venerable Bear can the Omphalos Chamber be opened and visitors allowed to enter. To be admitted entrance, visitors must, of course, have urgent business. Though the Master of the Omphalos is not cruel by nature, needless disturbances may result in a minor curse. White Venerable Bear will give his fullest attention to petitioners with requests, news, complaints, etc. regarding the winds. His primary duty is to coordinate the other four Wind Masters' efforts by applying his own winds against theirs as a controlling element, thereby preventing, with utter exactitude, any miscalculations. In aid of this pursuit, White Venerable Bear is a studious, serious individual, who never acts without long (sometimes hundreds of years) periods of consideration.

Because the Wind Masters are nearly equal in power, separate statistics are not necessary. Specific differences are noted below. All Wind Masters are impossible to sneak up on or to surprise, being able to smell the approach of any other being on the wind.

Nature: Leader (*Blue Skulking Bear*), Gallant (*Green Frowning Bear*), Conniver (*Black Grinning Bear*), Rebel (*Red Stalking Bear*), Bureaucrat (*White Venerable Bear*)

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6, Charisma 4 (*Black Grinning Bear* 6), Manipulation 4, Appearance 4 (*Green Frowning Bear* 6), Perception 6, Intelligence 3 (*White Venerable Bear* 6), Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 3 (*Red Stalking Bear* 6), Conviction 5 (*White Venerable Bear* 7), Temperance 4, Valor 4 (*Blue Skulking Bear* 6)

Abilities: Athletics 6, Awareness 7, Bureaucracy 2 (*White Venerable Bear* 6), Brawl 6, Dodge 5, Endurance 5, Linguistics (Native Tongue: Old Realm, [*Red Stalking Bear* — Flametongue], [*Green Frowning Bear* — Forest-tongue], [*White Venerable Bear* — High Realm], Riverspeak, [*Black Grinning Bear* — Seatongue], [*Blue Skulking Bear* — Sky tongue]) 2, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Stealth 4, Survival 5, Lore 3 (*White Venerable Bear* 5), Occult 2 (*White*



Venerable Bear 6), Socialise 3 (Black Grinning Bear 5, White Skulking Bear 1)

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Backing 5, Contacts 5, Cult 5, Followers 5, Influence 5, Manse 4

Charms: Affinity Element Control, Banish, Benefaction, Camouflage, Capture, Curses (*all*), DreamSpeak, Element Kiss, Element Infusion, Element Touch, Geas, Hurry Home, Instill Obedience, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Largesse, Lend Authority, Measure the Wind, Portal, Principal of Motion, SenseDomain, Shapechange, SummonFood, Sustenance, Tiny Gift, (*Red Stalking Bear* — Touch of Grace), Tracking, Transport, Weather Control

Elemental Powers: All elemental powers

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 10

Attack:

Claw: Speed 16 Accuracy 14 Damage 18L Defense 16

Bite: Speed 1.3 Accuracy 15 Damage 21L Defense 12

Wind Breath: Speed 20 Accuracy 14 Damage 16B

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 19L/32B (Dragonhide, 16L/26B)

Willpower: 8 (*White Venerable Bear* 9) **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 126 (*Green and Black*)

130 (*Blue*) 132 (*Red*) 133 (*White*)

Other Notes: Each of the Wind Masters may summon 2-20 huraka at a cost of 10 motes of Essence per attempt. This is a simple action. These creatures will coalesce out of the air at the Wind Master's command.

The Wind Masters' breaths have a range of 80 yards.

WOOD ELEMENTALS

When Mindful Forest was destroyed during the war between the Primordials and the gods, his Essence was scattered across the earth, and forests bloomed in its wake. In time, this Essence began to take a sentient form again.

More than any other type of elemental spirit, wood elementals are concerned with the proliferation and preservation of life in the Terrestrial Sphere. To this end, they have, with the cooperation of other spirits, developed the most elaborate and complex of the elemental spirit courts and fleshed out highly structured systems of behavior that may rival those of the Fair Folk, at least when it comes to inscrutability. While individual wood spirits may be of somewhat independent thought (and questionable honor), all are aware that the proliferation of life demands inequity and that true justice cannot be expected. Creatures prey on each other for survival, and none have an inherent right to live. The majority of wood elementals respect this fact and know that their day will eventually come.

Wood elementals tend to disagree and quarrel, often merely for the sake of argument. The general cacophony evidenced by these elementals at the various forest courts is so obnoxious, in fact, that it is uncertain if the entire

enterprise is not merely an attempt to mimic certain Fair Folk conventions learned through hearsay rather than a time-honored body of tradition, experience and wisdom.

Where one combines vigilance, aggression and adherence to ritual, one might expect to find an uncontrollable court full of mock-oaths, ridiculous demonstrations, spontaneous dueling and general disobedience. However, some Kings of the Wood, who rule the forest courts, are able to contain their subjects, though only through tyranny. These rulers are the most conservative and intolerant of their number, whose courts are rife with threatening sentries and vicious public punishments. For the most part, however, the Kings of the Wood are ineffectual at controlling the denizens of their domains. They keep their tenuous grip on power by isolating themselves in mile-wide palaces and only appearing publicly when at court.

Wood elementals can be quite cruel when they feel they have been wronged or betrayed. Offenders have been tied to trees and flayed and their skin either eaten or hung from branches or caves as fetishes. Teeth, noses, toes and eyes are prized as well for jewelry, belt buckles, buttons and even as forms of currency. The oaths of wood elementals are also a serious matter (though some have poor memories) and will never be consciously broken unless the situation is dire.

KING OF THE WOOD

Description: Every forest (or forest-district, for very large forests) has a King of the Wood, though these elementals only grudgingly acknowledge the authority or even the existence of any other, considering themselves individually the rulers of all woodlands everywhere. They might know better, but they never say so in public. Each wood king has a unique appearance, though there are some common features: Many have bones of oak, greenish-pale skin, vaguely animal-shaped heads with thick beards of water-flowers, thistles and hazel leaves and unusually long and bent wooden noses. In some cases, they appear wilder, with hands and feet of one beast or another. A crown of hawthorn or some similar local wood typically adorns the wood king's head. Kings sometimes give locks of their thick mossy hair as boons to favored guests or worshipers, who fashion rings or bracelets from the hair and wear them until they wither and disappear (conveys +1 temporary Temperance for one week). As for weapons, a King of the Wood usually wields some sort of enchanted war club that he bears as the symbol of his office and power. In a wood king's hands, this weapon can restore life to trees and banish enemies to the forest edge (though more powerful foes are able to resist this ability).

The sole mission of the wood kings is the protection of their forests, and they will go to great lengths to achieve it. Forest courts are held within their hidden halls, sometimes

built high among the branches of towering alder trees, other times in impossibly sunken glades of such dense growth that one may only enter through secret trails—and then only with permission. Having a keen interest in the politics of the spirits, though unable to physically leave their particular forests, Kings of the Wood pay close attention to all spirit factions and maintain intimate contact with all notable personages. Most of these personages, even those of greater power, respect and pay heed to the words and wishes of the Kings of the Wood, if only for the sake of stability. There are those who defy them, however, and these are usually beings too powerful for the Kings to deal with and possessing an agenda that runs counter to that of the either the King himself or to that of court and wood as a whole. The wood kings still try to keep an eye on such wild cards through stick person and wood spider spies.

Each particular King's hold on authority is tenuous at best. The true test is whether or not he can manipulate circumstances to affect some kind of balance between the inherent chaotic character of his court and the order required for effective rule. The Kings understand that their subjects' chaotic bent can never be fully curbed but must be kept in check. Failure to control their subjects can have a variety of consequences. Many unfortunate Kings of the past have watched their domains wither and die from the destruction wrought by the forests' own denizens. In rare cases where an unfit King's rule goes unchallenged, a new King, born of the self-preservation impulses of the forest, may arrive and slay the old ruler before beginning the long, perhaps doomed, process of reconstruction.

Kings accept offerings from anyone living in their particular forests, though they never make promises of favors unless the forest itself is in danger and the petitioners can in some way be exploited. These elementals are worshiped differently in nearly every case, though the rites involved in such worship are always cruel affairs involving human sacrifice and slow torture. In the Far Northeastern forest region of Glassentine, worshipers sacrifice three barren women each moon to the inexorable Ironwood King. The villagers impale the victims through the navel with a long wooden needle and hang them from the high branches above an altar of seven arranged tree trunks for five days, until every drop of blood is collected in belly-shaped wooden vessels. On the sixth day, the victims are cut down, beheaded and dressed in leaves and bark, so as to resemble the Ironwood King. The villagers bury the heads in the earth and fasten fox heads on the effigies, then parade them through the forest, finally ritually defeating each king-effigy in mock combat and leaving the body at the gates of Hamiko, the Ironwood King's palace. When the villagers return home, they drink the blood from the belly-shaped vessels. Granted, some societies are not so cruel or so grandiose in their worship, but all share a similar grotesque complexity.



Mortals living within the forest typically make elaborate seasonal offerings and enjoy the wood king's protection from marauding outsiders. Some Kings also accept suitably grandiose offerings from communities outside the forest and extend a modicum of protection from forest denizens. Notably treacherous Kings in the North, such as the Ironwood King, have been known to make outrageous demands of neighboring villages, and even of those making their homes within the forest, sometimes amounting to the burnt offering of hundreds of live warriors and their wives. Most Kings especially like to receive attractive young men and women as gifts from local villages. These "guests" are kept for a year and a day and are expected to perform sexual services for the King and his honored visitors.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5*, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

This figure is variable with the overall health and size of the forest.

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 3, Linguistics 5, Lore 2, Melee 3 (Cudgel), Occult 3, Performance 4 (Oration), Presence 4, Resistance 3, Ride 4, Socialize 3
Backgrounds: Allies 3, Artifact 3, Backing 3, Contacts 4, Cult 3, Familiar 5, Followers 5, Influence 3, Manse 3, Mentor 4

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Benefaction, Details, Element Touch, Foretell the Future, Form Match, Geas, Imprecation, Instill Obedience, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Travel, Largess, Malediction, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Summon Food, Tiny Damnation, Tiny Gift, Touch of Grace, Words of Power

Elemental Powers: All elemental powers



Cost To Dematerialize: 10

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Cudgel/Warclub: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 7L Defense 12

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 8L/12B

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 109

Other Notes: None

STICK PERSON

Description: Indistinguishable from normal sticks when motionless, these small (but potent) elementals watch over the forest glens of the many Kings of the Wood, though they are also found elsewhere in the forest. These creatures begin life as twigs and branches that are still attached to certain ancient trees, usually spruce or redwood, though many varieties are known to exist. After a variable amount of time, they are able to break free, but they are thereafter tied to the life of this primary tree. If this tree were to be cut down or otherwise destroyed, the stick person would be no more. Very playful and often in remarkably high spirits, these elementals play games and execute practical jokes when not vigilantly protecting their masters. They are also fond of attaching giant leaves to their bodies, effectively transforming themselves into gliders. Very rarely, one might spot one of these unusual conveyances drifting quietly through the trees. Help is always promised to friendly petitioners, though stick people have poor memories and may need to be reminded several times.

Seeing themselves as defenders of all that is good and true in the forest, they can be comically valiant, dressed in leaves cut so that they resemble soldier's uniforms and carrying tiny carved wooden swords and bows. Size-wise, they can be anywhere from three to five feet in height and have tiny heads the size of an average fist, with miniature smiles and disproportionately large green eyes. When in contact with their primary tree, they immediately begin healing one health level per turn and begin to rejuvenating their Essence.

Stick people sometimes grow small orange berries from their thinner branches. These berries, when eaten by a mortal, cause amusing hallucinations to randomly spring into sight over the course of the day. Initiative is at -1 for the duration of the effect.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 3, Dodge 4, Lore 1, Melee 3 (Sword), Stealth 4, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 2, Familiar 1

Suggested Charms: Hurry Home, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Travel, Stillness

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Element's Domain, Rejuvenation (when in contact with home tree)

Cost To Dematerialize: 30

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Claw: Speed 12 Accuracy 8 Damage 2B Defense 4

Sword: Speed 8 Accuracy 6 Damage 3B Defense 7

Bow: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 4L (Rate 2, Range 150)

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 4L/2B

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 59

Other Notes: None

FIRE ELEMENTALS

When the Great Garda was destroyed, raging fires swept across Creation and even through the far reaches of Heaven. Some places in the world still burn with those selfsame fires. The garda birds that formed from those fires burned with blind rage and lashed out at all life in search of the Primordials, who were, by that time, beyond the birds' reach. Other lesser garda somehow broke through the barriers at the borders of Creation and into the heavenly realms of Yu-Shan. These garda suffered none of the rage and pain that their earth-bound brothers endured, wandering the spiritual aether above the Celestial City for an age, and returned to a world gone mad. These wiser garda birds merged with their earth-bound brothers (see the garda bird description) and helped to bring a degree of peace to the world. They confined the ancient fires to the edges of the known world and restricted themselves likewise to these places, so that none might come to abuse the power therein.

It was a successful endeavor, for a time, but the garda birds never expected new and powerful creatures to spring from the heart of the flames they guarded. Attempts were made to control these new elementals, but with no real results beyond this: Those sent on the hunt realized that fires shine much brighter when burning alone and that they, the hunters, quite liked to sparkle brilliantly. Many of these hunters never returned and, in time, even those left behind to guard the ancient fires abandoned their posts in favor of solitude.

Fire elementals position themselves in the moral high ground when it comes to the political activities in the elemental spirit courts. Fiercely opposed to no one, fire elementals typically choose not to take sides when presented with a struggle involving other elementals, even if grave injustices are ongoing or imminent. With respect to the ongoing struggle between the elementals of water and air, the fire elementals are, for the most part, unimpressed with either side's claims. It has been noted,

THE QUIET FIRES

Ancient fires burn quietly in some uninhabited lands, fires that reach miles into the sky and burn so furiously that none but fire elementals even dare approach. These flames birth hundreds of fire butterflies, which swarm the area continuously, every second. The hearts of the quiet fires are pockets of green phlogiston that spit need fires and howl with the rage of the original Great Garda. The greatest and most noteworthy of these fires, the Omnilac, is a towering column of ceaseless raging polychromatic flames reaching from the earth to the sky. The Omnilac burns incessantly in the frozen tundra south of Diamond Hearth. Another quiet fire exists far to the southwest of Rathess, in a region so barren and deserted that few have cause to approach it. It is called the Last Pillar, and it marks the edge of the known world.

however, that this reluctance may be due to fear rather than any great wisdom, for if peace prevailed between the disputants, these new allies might then be capable of overcoming the fire elementals.

As for their own courts, several garda birds and ifrit hold dominion over the Court of the Orderly Flame, which is always in session within the invisible palace of Lusa Seragon, a prominent ifrit of the Southern deserts. The location of this palace is unknown to all but initiates of the Orderly Flame, though it is said to be visible on astrologically significant evenings. There are a few other elemental spirit courts of fire in the world, though these are all locally based and mostly concern one powerful fire elemental or another and their hangers-on.

GARDA BIRD

Description: According to legend, in the beginning there was but one Garda. It was given its power by the Unconquered Sun and, with it, brought light and warmth to the world and enlightened man with the true knowledge of the elements. But the lesser gods became angry with the Garda and accused it of betrayal for imparting this wisdom to such base creatures and, though unable to destroy the Garda (and unwilling to anger their brother, the Unconquered Sun), conspired with each other to reduce its power by spreading it over the earth.

This is, of course, only a legend compiled from bits of true history and wild speculation. For many, the garda birds are satanic figures, symbolizing the cause of humanity's disfavor with the gods, tempters sent to corrupt all of mankind.

Hunters of this mysterious creature once prized the garda bird for its peculiar nature, for garda birds cannot be permanently killed. Unlike other elemental creatures, which can rise again in one form or another, it is believed that the garda birds are born again in fire after nine days of their death with their individuality intact. Because of this peculiar fact, they were considered priceless by the savants of the First Age who sought the secrets of immortality.

The garda birds are still to be found on remote islands, within dormant volcanoes and in other remote locales. Reports of their appearance vary widely, but it is certain that they often reach six feet in length with a wingspan of 20 feet. Somewhat wild, though also reasonably wise with years, the garda birds have little interest in human society, though they often delight in confounding those who would try to trick them into revealing their secrets. Some approach them for wisdom but are frequently disappointed, for even though the garda always speak the truth, they rarely speak to humans. Even the appearance of an Exalt is seldom reason enough for them to parley.



THE COURT OF THE ORDERLY FLAME

Less a proper court than a secret society, the Orderly Flame is fiercely loyal to the memory of Swan Dragon and is led by certain ancient garda birds who served under him. The select members of this court — exclusively fire elementals — are, at least historically, dedicated to the tenets of fairness, reason and justice, concepts dear to Swan Dragon before he fell.

In these idealistically lean times, however, the Orderly Flame has become self-centered and morally superior to the point of imperiousness. It has spies and puppet officials (mostly ifrit) in place in cities all across the Southern deserts and, to a lesser degree, throughout the entire Threshold. The Orderly Flame also has spies in the Realm itself, though these are mainly the half-blooded offspring of ifrit and humans (as the ifrit themselves would be easily detected by Immaculate monks). Their aim, in theory, is to topple unjust governments.

In practice, at least lately, the goal has become the silent conquest of any government that offends the court's sensibilities. Outwardly, the Orderly Flame provides arbitrators for diplomatic disputes to those who ask for its assistance, as its members have gained a reputation for being judicious and impartial. Several members operate embassies in various Southern governments so that the order may be contacted, though they hold no formal rank. The cooperation of one of these representatives is required for petitioners to gain access to the Court of the Orderly Flame.



Garda birds are hermaphroditic and can assume either male (emperor) or female (empress) forms, each with different powers. With the expense of the requisite essence (25 motes), they may also take the form of the glorious phoenix: a brilliant, immolated flame-being with the beak, wings, talons and tail of an eagle and the body and legs of a man (sometimes having as many as eight arms, all wielding blazing swords). This was the form of the original Great Garda, when it was whole. Because of the primal nature of the vision, all but the most valorous who look upon it flee in terror.

The garda wear their emperor form under normal circumstances. In this guise, a garda bird appears as a handsome purple-and-gold-plumed peacock with a pheasant's head and comb haloed with flame. The empress form, that of a giant burning pheasant with silvery human eyes and razor talons, is the shape taken when the garda is threatened. The transformation is instantaneous, though those closely surrounding one during the metamorphosis will surely suffer injury from the sudden blast of energy. Whether in battle or not, the flame of a garda bird, in either form, destroys nothing unless the garda wishes it. In this way, a fully immolated garda may sit atop a tree or building without setting it alight.

In battle, because of their peculiar nature, garda birds are not averse to destroying themselves to conquer an enemy, knowing that they will rise again. If one chooses

this path, her body immediately bursts into a flame of myriad hues as her eerily triumphant song echoes across the sky. The explosion resulting from this act of self-immolation is visible for several miles around, and the resonances of the bird's final hymn are heard for days, sometimes weeks, after the event.

If events become dire, and it is reckoned that its own destruction will not be an adequate solution, the garda may take the phoenix form. By taking this form, the garda assumes the aspect of unmitigated annihilation, as centuries of rage suddenly burst forth. All natural beings (normal humans and beasts) flee immediately at the sight, assuming they survive the initial blast. Most others are so distracted by either fear or awe that battle becomes a difficult matter at best. Even the Exalted and other magical beings are affected by this terrifying sight, and their players must succeed at a reflexive difficulty 2 Valor roll for the characters to stand against the garda. Even if the roll succeeds, they are still at — 2 dice to any action taken in opposition to the bird.

The garda birds live in solitude, feed only on morning dew and, though they can assume the form of either sex, cannot reproduce. What the garda occasionally do is more akin to reduction, as union with another garda is permanent, beginning with the death of both lovers and ending with their rebirth as a single individual. This new garda begins life truly anew, with few memories of its former lives. Therefore, some garda birds, though they



have had the opportunity to do so, have not merged with others, for fear of losing the wisdom gained over millennia, as well as their hard-won individuality. It is said that when the Great Garda is whole again, the world will enter a new age of enlightenment. Such an occurrence is undoubtedly a long way off.

The eldest of the garda birds remain active in the spirit courts, though their appearances are sporadic, leading some to pin them as irresponsible. The tales of their origins do nothing to calm such suspicions, either. They are little trusted, though tolerated, due to the great power at their disposal. Some spirits believe that the garda birds still retain some connection with the Unconquered Sun and that the god sees through their eyes. Other spirits believe that the garda birds derive their power from the fiery sun and cannot be permanently destroyed as long as the sun burns.

A garda bird's feathers, once highly prized by First Age savants, burn continuously with a soft, painless and spreading indigo flame that will not ignite other materials. Such prizes are still sought by sorcerers keen to learn what secrets these feathers hide.

Attributes: Strength 3 (*Phoenix* 5), Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3 (*Phoenix* 2), Appearance 5, Perception 3, Intelligence 3 (*Phoenix* 2), Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 5, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 3, Dodge 5, Linguistics 3, Lore 4, (*Phoenix* — Melee 4), Occult 4, Presence 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Artifact 3, Backing 2, Contacts 3, Cult 2, Influence 2

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, DreamSpeak, Hurry Home, Ignite, Landscape Travel, Memory-Mirror, Paralyze (*Phoenix only*), Portal, Sense Domain, Terrible Visage (*Phoenix only*), Tracking, Will-O-Wisp, Words of Power

Elemental Powers: Coarse Skin, Dragon's Suspire, Enshroud, Immolation

Cost To Dematerialize: 20

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Claw Swoop: Speed 9 Accuracy 10 Damage 12L Defense 16

Arc of Flame: Speed 16 Accuracy 9 Damage 18L

Sword (*Phoenix*): Speed 15 Accuracy 14 Damage 16L Defense 22

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 4L/3B

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 4 **Essence Pool:** 94

Other Notes: None

IFRIT

Description: These tall desert scholars, nomads and warriors have little trouble dealing with humans on a personal basis, unlike many other elementals. Often holding powerful diplomatic or military positions in human society

while remaining in close contact with the elemental courts, ifrit are one of the best and most likely points of contacts between humans and elemental society. Superficially resembling humans and often reaching heights of seven feet, with high, smooth foreheads and straight, noble noses, these creatures are used by human warlords to coordinate fortress' defenses and to lead armies into battle. Their very aspect commands obedience, and their word cannot be challenged. Ifrit can command existing fires to attack enemies, though they cannot emanate flames from their bodies like other fire elementals. However, the elementals do possess a bright-orange radiance that cannot be doused. At night, this personal radiance can be seen for miles.

Ifrit are known to be generous gift-givers to those who impress them with feats of diplomacy and etiquette. Powerful blessings are accorded to those fortunates deemed worthy. However, the word has gotten out about the ifrit's appreciation for such deeds, so it is likely that most ifrit will avoid throngs of obvious favor-seekers. Ifrit are also valued very highly in the spirit courts for their wisdom and their diplomatic skill and are often employed as negotiators in important disputes. Several ifrit of a more civic bent serve as palace guards in the city of Great Forks. These guards are afforded high honors and are respected as wise and capable defenders. Others have taken a more ascetic approach and hold their own court in desert caves. One such ifrit of this stripe chooses to live his life entirely atop a 50-foot column in the middle of the desert. Those who would interrupt his prayers must remember to have impressive donations on hand to sate his anger at being disturbed.

Ifrit are fierce individualists and are only very rarely found in the company of others of their kind, unless conferring with one another professionally or actually in one of the spirit courts (they may even be adversaries). As such, there is no home city or place of origin for the ifrit. They simply spring into existence where certain universal conditions hold, though there are thought to be several thousand in existence. The ifrit's wisdom and glibness are offset by their fiery temper, which manifests in times of political stress or during particularly vicious combat.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 5, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 4, Endurance 3, Investigation 4, Linguistics (often Orderly Flame Cant) 5, Lore 2, Martial Arts 3, Melee 4, Presence 4, Ride 3, Socialize 3, Survival 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Artifact 2, Backing 2, Contacts 3, Familiar 2, Influence 1, Mentor 3, Resources 2

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Benefaction, Harrow the Mind, Ignite, Instill Obedience, Landscape Sustenance, Landscape Travel, Largess, Tiny Gift, Tracking, Worldly Illusion





Elemental Powers: Elemental Unction, Mobility, Rejuvenation (when in contact with flame)

Cost To Dematerialize: 40

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Sword: Speed 10 Accuracy 9 Damage 10L Defense 12

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 3L/5B (This does not include any armor the ifrit might be wearing)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 4 **Essence Pool:** 96

Other Notes: None

NEED FIRE

Description: Appearing as a tall tongue of flame, this elemental is actually comprised of several small insect-like beings that burn with the original flame of the Great Garda and flock together when summoned. Millions of these creatures inhabit the furious quiet fires on the edges of civilization, ever in search of ways to spread the ancient fires. Those who even wander near these distant haunts are said to suffer incurable madness from the cacophony.

Need fires are summoned by worshipers for specific tasks or to serve as the minions of sorcerers. Those folk who worship these creatures follow a long tradition of viewing fire as a means to purify the world. This idea of fire as a destructive instrument that may be employed for the eradication of evil things is a fairly obvious one, and it is grasped by even the lowliest hedge magicians. Such people are frequently witch doctors, city fathers or even magically inclined mortal leaders of cities who commonly hold festivals and seasonal rituals in attempts to call the need fires to their aid (or at least to make an impressive show of authority). The evils these creatures are most often called to combat are foreign magic, the diseases of livestock, evil spirits (though more as a repellent than through actual battle) and the ravages of destructive weather.

A need fire is not summoned. It is *born* from the flames of massive and intricately constructed bonfires made of wormwood and laurel consecrated with sorcery so simple even mortals have no difficulties performing it. The ritual may only be performed during the midnight hour, with the need fires remaining until the bonfire is extinguished. The birther who calls for the need fire must be careful, as the creature will do all in its power to keep the fire alight, even if that involved spreading it elsewhere. It is also a curious fact that as the summoning fire grows, so does the cloud of need fires. In rare (but by no means impossible) cases, an entire forest may be caught alight, resulting in need fire swarms of unbelievable size. Such a situation is often ironic, for need fires are often summoned to protect large forests or tracts of farmland.

Need fires are only slightly intelligent, though they are perfectly capable of communicating. Their speech crackles and pops and sizzles in the ears. In battle, they are able to

change shape and even split into smaller need fires if necessary. They also make for hard targets, as swords are not normally very effective against clouds of flaming mosquitoes. Their smoke repels spirits of less than 3 permanent Essence for up to one month, and their fires cannot be blown out by the wind, which only spreads it further. By blowing need-fire smoke through their noses, diseases in animals may be cured. Such smoke can be collected by farmers and animal doctors for these purposes. When a need fire has completed its service or is smothered through the use of water or sorcery, the being dies away.

The statistics below are for normal-sized need fires. Larger or smaller ones will, of course, be more or less powerful.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 2

Abilities: Awareness 2, Dodge 4, Endurance 3, Lore 4 (Fire), Survival 1

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Confusion, Hurry Home, Ignite, Landscape Travel, Stoke the Flame, Touch of Grace (on animals)

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Dragon's Suspire (flame emission), Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 20

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Dragon's Suspire: Speed 10 Accuracy 8 Damage 4L*

* This power may be used as many times per day as possible, as long as the birthing fires stay alight.

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 10L/20B (Insubstantial body, 9L/17B)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 67

Other Notes: None

WATER ELEMENTALS

A water elemental's chaotic nature is on the surface, unlike that of air elementals, who try to hide this proclivity behind a veil of orderliness. No attempt is made to conceal the general character of these creatures, which is freedom-loving and somewhat selfish, though genuinely caring to those in their fold. At this point in history, elementals of water, especially those in the Western Ocean, view themselves as victims of the wrongheaded and arrogant obsessions of the denizens of air, who consider themselves superior to water elementals in every way. Pleas have been made, but few are listening. Fire elementals want nothing to do with the water spirits and listen only grudgingly — and only when they have to. The earth elementals are even worse, for they will riot even entertain the notion of intervention

and decisively excuse themselves from responsibility. Wood elementals would like to help, but they are quite disorganized themselves. Given such an attitude from their equals, the water elementals are now haunting several spirit courts in the faint hope of gaining a friendly ear among the powerful hosts and representatives there. Whatever the elementals' successes with these endeavors, little is likely to change. Why upset the balance when the likely result is a world under water?

Water elementals have no single elemental spirit court that rules over all the denizens of their element. There are many such courts, and the rulings of one hold little precedent over the policies of others. Basically, each sovereignty of the sea holds its own court, which often consists of many types of spirits (including many not elementally natured). The leaders of such courts often care little for policy or etiquette, however, unless it furthers their own ambitious aims (which does little to set them apart from similar situations the world over). Still, there is a certain solidarity to the water elementals that cannot be dismissed, as they will almost always stick with their own kind in troublesome times.

HEKETA

Description: Long ago, an arrogant Threshold accused a frog of conspiring to kill him with sorcery and put him on trial for the deed. The frog was found guilty and executed, inviting the wrath of the Frog Queen, who set her minions upon the kingdom. Vengeance came in the form of the heketa, five sisters who appeared as beautiful women with alabaster skin and the heads of frogs. They rose up out of the kingdom's river, which turned black and poisonous, and slowly made their way across the king's domain, fouling the waters, bringing terrible thunderstorms and disrupting pregnancies such that no child was born alive and whole that year. The king attempted to expel them, but his forces could do nothing against these strange women. Ordinary weapons passed through them as though through water. When the heketa were threatened with burning torches, the women consumed the fire painlessly, looking even pleased at the meal. Many courtiers fled the kingdom, only to be driven back by the storms and by plagues of frogs falling from the sky. After a year — and many hundreds of deaths — the heketa withdrew back into the river from which they first emerged and the waters again ran pure. From then on, frogs were looked on suspiciously in that kingdom, though they were always treated considerately.

The heketa are elemental creatures under the power of the Frog Queen, and so, they take her humanoid form when summoned. Unlike some elemental creatures that have formed a kind of society, the heketa exist only to be called upon by others as a force of vengeance. They are not completely lacking in intelligence or willpower, however, having impressive knowledge of herbs and healing. The fungus that grows under their chins has healing properties

and was quite valuable to the savants of the First Age, who believed it to hold some of the secrets of immortality.

The heketa possess many useful Charms and powers and will assist anyone with enough willpower to control them. They can darken the sky. They can cause storms to rage across a city or village. They can also poison bodies of water. The heketa's most unique power lies in its ability to halt a woman's pregnancy by touching her belly. This form of curse can only be attempted once per day and is ineffective against women with an Essence equal to or greater than that of the heketa attempting the curse (otherwise treat as a form of Malediction Charm). The heketa may also become insubstantial at will, turning their entire bodies into water, then reforming a split second later, usually before an attacker realizes that his sword blow never struck its target. Also in this vein, the heketa can project powerful jets of water from their bodies or animate existing water to do the same (this is especially effective with poisoned water). As is common with water elementals, only magical Ares do them any harm — normal fires can be smothered easily.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Presence 3

Backgrounds: Backing 3, Mentor 3

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Imprecation, Landscape Travel, Tiny Damnation, Tracking, Weather Control

Elemental Powers: Coarse Skin (Mild Poison), Consume Element, Day to Night, Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain, Enshroud, Foul the Waters, Plague of Menaces, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 5

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 10B Defense 12

Kick: Speed 7 Accuracy 7 Damage 12B Defense 10

Jets of Water (Dragon's Suspire): Speed 13 Accuracy 15 Damage 16L

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 3L/5B

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-1 x 4/-2 x 3/-4 x 5/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 80

Other Notes: None

VODONIK

Description: These male water spirits are master shapeshifters, sometimes appearing as old men with long green or white beards, sometimes as creatures with huge toes, claws, horns, a tail and burning eyes in a human face. At times, they look like corpulent old bald men and, other times, like mossy looking fish or tree trunks. If one takes on human form, he can be recognized by the water seeping





from the left side of his coat. Vodonik live in underwater palaces made from treasures salvaged from sunken ships and often marry nymphs.

Vodonik are usually malicious and are believed to lie in wait for human victims so that they may drag them under the water to their deaths. Dark marks on the bodies of drowning victims are held to be bruises received during struggles with the vodonik. Retrieving a drowned body angers the vodonik, who want to keep and devour his spoils. For this reason, it is common for sailors to toss the bodies of those who die while traveling on the sea overboard in an effort to appease these creatures. Vodonik may also be appeased by pouring butter into the water or by offering them one's first fish of a catch. Fishermen often ask the aid of these creatures by tossing a pinch of tobacco into the water and saying a prayer aloud. Sometimes, when the whim takes them, a vodonik bestows one of its long, almost transparent teeth to a hapless petitioner. By keeping this tooth under one's tongue, a mortal can breathe underwater.

The vodonik do not leave the safety of the oceans. If they are removed from the sea through force or trickery, they immediately dissolve into a noxious green and black muck that, if treated properly, may be used to produce a potent poison. Vodonik dying in the manner are permanently dead and cannot return or reform later. Vodonik know this and, consequently, stay as far away from dry land as possible.

Politically, vodonik are most notable for holding frequent water courts that are rife with "entertainments" such as public executions, displays of powerful captives, military demonstrations and other bellicose exhibitions. In addition, vodonik have an outright disrespect for most other underwater spirits, most notably sirens, whom they consider to be dull and too devoted to the Storm Mothers. Vodonik have little love for Storm Mothers either, although there is little vodonik can do about the spirits. At court, vodonik often bar certain creatures from attending at whim and make terribly unjust proclamations about dress codes and modes of speech. Vodonik are also often fond of odd decor for court proceedings, such as ordering the water within the halls colored orange and scented with the blood of sailors. One such vodonik ordered a volcanic vent to be opened in his halls and the soldiers of an enemy army to be boiled alive one by one in the roiling white-hot rock.

In battle, these creatures bear heavy enchanted spears that command the obedience of those struck and ride upon massive brine curs. Vodonik do not often ride into combat alone, though, unless the object of a summoning—in which case they will attempt to skirt the summoner's bindings at every turn. Fortunately, the vodonik do not understand sorcery very well and so are usually not successful.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4



ボニク

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Endurance 2, Lore 2, Melee 3, Occult 5 (Water Spirits), Performance 4 (Rabble-Rousing), Resistance 3, Ride 4 (Brine Cur), Socialize 3

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Artifact 3, Backing 2, Contacts 2, Cult 2, Familiar 3, Followers 4, Influence 2, Manse 3, Resources 4

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Confusion, Essence Bite, Instill Obedience (from spear), Measure the Wind, Sense Domain, Shapechange, Stoke the Flame, Summon Food

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Element's Domain, Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 25

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Punch: Speed 12 Accuracy 11 Damage 9B Defense 13

Kick: Speed 11 Accuracy 9 Damage 10B Defense 5

Spear: Speed 14, Accuracy 15, Damage 17L Defense 16

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 3L/5B

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 92

Other Notes: None

BRINE CUR

Description: Horrific, pale-gray, giant-finned dogs with kelp-like fur and seven barbed tongues, these salt water elementals are the preferred steeds of vodonik warlords, though they also may be found in wild packs that attack unfortunate wanderers and sailors indiscriminately. The terrible 10-tined claws and massive jaws of these beasts are fearsome enough even without their legendary barbed tongues and nearly invisible tails.

Only semi-intelligent in their own right, these creatures are nevertheless expert order-takers when properly trained or ensorcelled. If treated properly, these beasts can be convinced to remain in the service of a master even after the original term of servitude. Of course, this requires such a master to remain in the undersea realm, as brine curs cannot journey long on land, perishing after a mere day out of salt water.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Stealth 4 (Ambush)

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Measure the Wind, Tracking



Elemental Powers: Coarse Skin, Element's Domain, Mobility

Cost To Dematerialize: 15

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Tongue: Speed 13 Accuracy 10 Damage 15L Defense 17*

Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 17L Defense 8

Bite: Speed 8 Accuracy 8 Damage 9L Defense 7

Tail: Speed 11 Accuracy 6 Damage 14B Defense 11

*Brine curs can attack with up to 4 tongues per turn.

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 5L/7B (Tough fur, 3L/3B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 58

Other Notes: None

SOBEKISIS

Description: The sobeksis can take the shape of either a giant crocodile or a human with the head of a crocodile. These creatures are the guardians of many rivers beyond the Threshold and are reluctant to allow anyone to pass who does not first offer them some gift — they are especially fond of jewelry — or outright worship. Those of obvious power will grudgingly be allowed to pass, though the sobeksis remember the names and faces of such beings. The sobeksis can cause great devastation, as they can command their waters to rise and fall at whim, usually as punishment for indolent worshipers. Beneath such an imperturbable veneer, however, these spirits are deeply emotional as well, many being quite accomplished poets. They also have the ability to see into minds, which they use somewhat grudgingly when necessary, as the undertaking causes both participants severe pain. Intimately tied to the existence of their river, if a sobeksis is ever away from her watercourse for more than a moon, she slowly dies over the next day, gradually changing from deep emerald green to pale white, leaking tears all the while. After the second day, the sobeksis dies permanently. Likewise, if their river is to dry up or be otherwise destroyed, all of the sobeksis making that river their home suffer a similar fate.

Local farmers worship these elementals for their ability to transform the flood plain into fertile farmland. For their mastery of the healing arts, doctors venerate the sobeksis as well. Proper local worshipers who would ask a boon of their gods dribble blood into the river from a cat's bladder and call on the sobeksis in chants of musical couplets. The chants continue as the sobeksis appear, always in threes, as the requests are sung to them. An improperly sung note results in the poorly tuned worshiper being eaten and the immediate cessation of the ceremony. This song, the Jaji Po, ostensibly aids in holding the sobeksis at bay, though the blood being dripped into the river is what keeps them at the shore. During this

very close and peculiar worship, the sobeksis are lulled into a complicit, nearly catatonic state, where they oath themselves to provide river inundations, heavy stocks of fish, protection from natural predators or small supplies of healing balm. When the blood from the cat's bladder has run out, the sobeksis are released from their trance and submerge back under the water.

The villagers, satisfied, go home, though feeling a bit tired, for the ceremony, naturally, is a sham. The sobeksis never enter a trance and never take proper oaths. They do, however, enjoy the Essence transferred to them through the Jaji Po. During the ceremony, which lasts 15-20 minutes, all chanters lose half of their Essence Pool. Some astute worshipers may suspect the sobeksis' deceit, though few have ever been known to take the sobeksis to task for it. Those who refuse to perform the ritual on a monthly basis (sometimes weekly, for large cults who can provide chanters on a rotating basis) lose all favor with the sobeksis. The surrounding lands dry up, and the rivers are emptied of fish. The offended sobeksis abandon that portion of the river and inflict punishment on those emerging from the cursed region.

For the right price, which could be anything from a gargantuan pearl to a suitably impressive verse, a sobeksis will expertly heal a character's wounds (halve the healing time for one week, though the character must still rest) with specially treated mudpacks and river kelp mixed with the sobeksis' own blood and urine. It is not pretty, and the smell is appalling, but it is quite effective.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 3, Dodge 2, Investigation 4, Linguistics 4, Lore 2, Medicine 5, Performance 4 (Poetry), Presence 3, Thrown 3

Backgrounds: Cult 2, Followers 4, Influence 1

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Camouflage, Measure the Wind, Memory Mirror, Poison the Waters, Sense Domain, Stoic Endurance, Touch of Grace, Words of Power

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Element's Domain, Enshroud, Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 25

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 13 Damage 10L Defense 12

Bite: Speed 13 Accuracy 9 Damage 14L Defense 13

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 6L/10B (Crocodile hide, 3L/7B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 4 **Essence Pool:** 95

Other Notes: None



EARTH ELEMENTALS

Earth elementals are perhaps the most conservative of the elementals, for theirs is plausibly the greatest strength. A sudden crack in the earth could drain an ocean or cleave a continent in two. The wood's dependence on the powers of earth is quite obvious. Only the denizens of fire and air have some freedom from the earth's power, though only a little, as most must in some way cling to the land. The earth elementals try to keep such eventualities in the background, however, so that their dealings with others may remain fair and unencumbered by hostility.

Unfortunately, this attitude is viewed by most other elementals as pompous and condescending and it is believed to be merely an excuse not to get involved in "important" struggles. But the mineral courts are quite enough responsibility for the more powerful earth elementals, such as the gemlords. Other less powerful earth elementals, such as the jokun, may be convinced or otherwise persuaded to join in another's cause, but they are generally not potent enough to have any lasting effect on the status quo.

Though earth elementals receive worship from several small cults both above and below ground, these spirits almost never acknowledge rituals or adulation from mortals. The Essence such rituals provide is negligible compared to the tremendous amounts of concentrated Essence available deep underground in geomantically auspicious rock formations and crystals. Most earth elementals focus their attention on mining these Essence pockets, either for their masters or to increase their own power. Quarrying such deposits of Essence always requires a serious undertaking by at least several dozen individuals. For extremely large deposits, hundreds are required to move the earth and transport the Essence-infused material properly. Essence miners use magically sealed casks for the task; breaking this seal caused the unstable material within to lose its potency, rendering it useless. To the eye, this Essence-infused earth appears either as white or blue crystals or as very dense and tightly packed coal-black clay veined with shimmering copper and silvery flakes that seem to smolder, giving off a sweet, burning odor. Breathing these fumes increases Essence rejuvenation by 3 per hour. To mortals, this clay is known as *ryku*, and it is highly prized by Southern caliphs and warlords, who burn the *ryku* in specially constructed sweat lodges.

GEMLORD

Description: Gemlords are the masters of the mineral courts and are made up of massive amounts of Essence contained within tight amalgamations of every imaginable gemstone and mineral. As such, each gemlord is individually unique with respect to size and appearance, though none are small. In fact, some gemlords continue on for several miles in length or depth. They are also functionally immobile and possess no moving parts. However, they are able to act physically through their

omen-avatars, the *kri* (see the entry on *kri* for greater detail on the *kri*'s relationship to the gemlords).

The mineral courts are held deep underground in vast complexes built around their gemlord rulers. Because of this, some are hundreds of miles away from the nearest rival mineral court, others mere miles. This fact vexes the gemlords terribly, as each enjoys ruling over large domains. Gemlords also prefer to have access to the massive stores of compressed Essence deep under the earth; some unfortunate gemlords with little access to these natural reserves of power have become bitter with jealousy, and single-mindedly plot against their more powerful gemlord brethren. Sometimes, petty wars erupt, though they never last long, as gemlords are practically impossible to destroy, especially the largest of them, and despite their jealousy of other rulers, the gemlords understand the need for order and balance. The voice of a gemlord echoes from the great fissures in its body. The sound is both exceptionally deep and excruciatingly soft, and everything said has the force of finality. Questions are rarely answered, if acknowledged at all. Even in the mineral courts, the gemlords do little more than issue commands. If threatened, they may summon as many jokun as they wish to, as well as unleash a host of curses and other subtle powers. As far as destroying a gemlord goes, it is no easy task, especially considering their size and the fact that there are no vital parts or "heart" that one might target in order to slay one. While it is possible to destroy one, it is usually not well-advised — or even a very useful endeavor. At a gemlord's death, earthquakes and cave-ins occur, practically guaranteeing the crushing death of anyone still underground and in the area at the time. It also rewards the murdering party with the utter enmity of all gemlords (and hence all earth elementals) in Creation, which can't really be a good thing.

Gemlords possess strong precognitive faculties, and some even claim to have seen the end of all things. Their minds are so attuned that they can communicate easily with one another over long distances and are always aware of the locations of all the others of their kind, even those solitary gemlords in remote areas, who have no court built around them. They can also communicate with other earth elementals at will, often using the *kri* as heralds to other spirit courts and for other important, often dangerous, missions to the surface world. For lesser missions, they use jokun servants or mortal lackeys.

Gemlords have small cults of worshipers, some of whom make seasonal treks underground to visit their masters' mineral courts. A few have even taken up residence in small caves around the courts, when the gemlords' jokun servants are willing to abide the presence of mortals. These worshipers have little to offer, however, apart from prayers, which gemlords barely notice, as they are much more interested in geomantic Essence. Gemlords



generally tolerate their worshipers, however, and sometimes have the kri grant minor boons, though the kri often require tribute of their own in such cases. Sometimes, gem lords take an interest in especially powerful worshipers, though they usually merely want to geas them into performing some lowly task not worthy of the kri.

Gemlords hoard as many casks of ryku as they can, as it is the main source of Essence transferred to the kri. The more Essence a gemlord has access to, the more kri can be dominated.

Attributes: Strength 0, Dexterity 0, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 4, Linguistics 5, Lore 7, Occult 5,

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 4, Cult 2, Followers 4, Influence 3, Manse 5, Resources 5

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Foretell the Future, Geas, Harrow the Mind, Instill Obedience, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Sense Domain, Steal Sustenance, Stoke the Flame, Words of Power

Elemental Powers: Element's Domain, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: Cannot dematerialize

Base Initiative: 4

Attack: N/A

Dodge Pool: 0 **Soak:** 30L/50B

Willpower: 10 **Health Levels:** N/A

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 116

Other Notes: There are larger gemlords in Creation, with more Willpower, Essence and Essence pools. As gemlords amass Essence for themselves, their permanent Essence will rise. Especially ancient gemlords will have a higher Willpower score as well.

EYES OF THE GEMLORDS

The eyes of gemlords are roughly fist-sized and of ever-shifting hue. Most gemlords have hundreds of these, though very ancient gemlords will have thousands. These gems function even when detached from the body, allowing the gemlord to both easily view remote locations and to transmit Essence to the holder. This Essence transfer is like that of a Hearthstone, operating at a rate of 5 per hour, even when the holder is active — sometimes more Essence is available, depending on whether the gemlord likes the bearer very much. The ability to transmit Essence through a gemlord's eye is a two-way road, however, as gemlord's can steal Essence in this manner as well — and at a greater rate (as per the Steal Sustenance Charm, but with automatic success and the victim need not be sleeping) — as long as the bearer keeps hold of the eye. The bearer of a gemlord's eye also shares an almost telepathic bond with the gemlord who granted it, allowing two-way communication between the two (though a gemlord is unlikely to answer questions). When a gemlord turns his attention to the bearer of one of his eyes, a cold, painful chill is felt as the gemlord reads the bearer's mind (as the Memory Transference Charm, without the need to touch), though it is unknown just how deeply the gemlord can pry. As such, the eyes are commonly in the possession of the gemlords' omen-avatars, the kri. Others may be gifted with them as well, though this is uncommon and usually indicates more a distrust of the receiver than any great favor. The advantages of possessing one of these eyes, however, usually outweigh the inconvenience of being constantly observed. If the character given the eye has the gemlord's favor, she may petition the gemlord to grant her 1-10 jokun as her servants. Provided she does not mistreat the jokun entrusted to her, others may be made available, though a gemlord is usually fairly stingy unless a character is on a mission that serves his interests. A character who is cruel to the jokun (or who is seen to be cruel to any earth elementals, for that matter) will be swiftly stripped of her servants and denied further help. A character who goes so far as to slay the jokun provided to her or to act in some other way that is grossly contrary to instructions given to the character, will likely be visited by one or more kri. In such an instance, the kri (possibly accompanied by more jokun, depending on the size of the character's Circle) will burst suddenly from the earth and exact their master's vengeance before recovering the eye. Finally, a gemlord can recall the eye itself, and the bearer as well, back to the gemlord's mineral court (treat as the Capture Charm, though the effects are limited to those touching the eye).

Some eyes of the gemlords have made their way to the marketplace, though in these cases their true nature is rarely known. Rings, crowns and personal trinkets have been fashioned around them, and they command a very high price. The owners of these trinkets, however, sometimes feel as if they are being watched.

KRI

Description: The kri are the vengeful, cruel and malignant omen-avatars of the gemlords. These earth elementals appear as multi-hued, short-legged, woolly deer with three horns on their heads and wide, silvery beards on their chins. Kri usually walk on all four legs, though they have been known to walk upright at times, such as in battle or when attending court. They have even been known to dress in human clothes. The kri speak pensively, when they speak at all, and are always listening for some arcane knowledge that will free them all from servitude.

Kri erupt from the massive deposits of compacted Essence found miles beneath the surface of the earth. At the moment of their birth, the earth above shifts subtly as the remaining ryku is consumed in a conflagration, and the gemlords know that another of their servants is in their midst. From the moment of birth, a kri's body is unstable. Kri continually lose Essence from their Essence pool at a rate of 10 per day. When one's Essence pool reaches 0, she loses a permanent Essence point per day until either the kri expires or she is able to steal Essence from another. It is possible for a kri to get back to full strength, given that they are able to steal enough Essence, but it is a much slower process (the Essence pool must be filled anew for each permanent Essence point regained). Understandably, a kri will do just about anything to keep from losing very much of her Essence. Most of them are even willing to sell themselves into slavery.

Newborn kri are attracted to the Essence amassed by gemlords, who are always eager to take on another servant. Once a kri oaths herself to a gemlord, she is given one of the gemlord's eyes (see text box above), which the gemlord will use to reinvigorate the kri's Essence pool. Following this, Essence is conferred at a rate of 5 motes per hour to the kri.

None of this is given freely, however. In return for keeping the kri alive, the gemlord demands loyalty and nearly unrelenting service, as well as access to the kri's intimate thoughts. Any failure results in a loss of Essence, imprisonment, assignment to impossible or meaningless tasks, constant mental intrusion or, in extreme cases, visits from kri death squads.

Gemlords primarily use their omen-avatars as heralds to other spirit courts or as captains of jokun explorers sent to hunt for pockets of compacted Essence. In some cases, kri act as bodyguards for favored allies of gemlords or as assassins. Other times, they appear merely to announce impending doom. Most kri grudgingly accept their fate as wretched lackeys and underlings. The frequent prodding at their minds shatters any thoughts of rebellion, leaving only bitterness and festering anger.

Some kri have, either due to failure or simple refusal to serve, managed to live without the dubious aid of the gemlords. These rogues present a different kind of danger



than their broken-spirited brothers and sisters, as they must constantly steal Essence in order to survive. Some achieve this Essence relatively peacefully, by seizing Demesnes, hosting harems or obtaining hapless followers whom the kri regularly drain. Others are outright evil, murdering any crossing their paths and draining the Essence from their victims' hearts.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 5, Valor 6

Abilities: Athletics 6, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 7, Endurance 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics (High Realm) 4, Lore 3, Martial Arts 6, Occult 2, Presence 4, Socialize 1, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Backing 3

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Camouflage, Cunning Thief, Details (used to alter hoofs into hands), Host of Spirits, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Sense Domain, Stillness

Elemental Powers: Element's Domain, Enshroud, Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 15

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Punch (Hoof): Speed 14 Accuracy 16 Damage 12L Defense 16

Bite: Speed 13 Accuracy 15 Damage 15L Defense 12

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 6L/10B

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 105

Other Notes: Most kri possess a gemlord's eye, so its advantages (and disadvantages) also apply.



JOKUN

Description: These fierce fair-skinned and obsidian-eyed warriors are the servants of the mineral courts, defending their proceedings and performing missions for their masters. The jokun's thick granite bones give them such bulk and weight that are easily caught off guard by quicker opponents, so they are often accompanied by expertly trained cave dogs or sentient giant bats that serve as scouts and can attack or distract potential enemies. The jokun are able to easily assume a semi-corporeal state akin to mud and then travel in this form when making long journeys underground. In this state, the speed of a horse at a moderate gait may be achieved by slowly flowing through the veins of the earth. Unfortunately, there are limitations, for it is quite difficult and time consuming to return to a jokun's natural state, sometimes taking as long as a day and requiring the expenditure of much more Essence (30 motes to begin the process of reincorporation).

Jokun are relatively intelligent and are wise enough to know their intellectual limitations. They are also naturally suspicious, even of other earth elementals. For these reasons, they are very difficult to trick, as a jokun will almost never walk into a potentially dangerous situation without taking precautions. In battle, jokun carry a variety of weapons, mostly very heavy war hammers or swords of very high quality. They also possess extraordinarily sharp rusty iron fangs in their lower jaw that can be lethally poisonous (court poison) and equally toxic blood (arrow frog venom) that, when spilled, can slay any who touch it. When in contact with the earth, jokun are able to regenerate Essence. Damage done to their bodies is likewise repaired when in contact with their element. Jokun wear no armor, but they have very rough, almost scaly, crystalline skin that is surprisingly resilient to both blades and blunt weapons. Their long, thin tails are also potent as weapons, though primarily used for defense. There are no real restrictions on summoning a jokun, as the masters of the mineral courts pay little attention to the outside world. Hence, they are one of the most common elemental servants.

When not serving the courts or bound into servitude, jokun live in groups of several dozen deep underground. They favor wide subterranean fissures with access to crude oil baths and luminescent lichen. Some are accomplished musicians and singers and, at times, their songs can be heard like lilting whispers on the earth's surface. Jokun have few possessions and live communally, with little to no privacy. They are also highly moral, taking a sometimes-arrogant pride in their ethical mastery.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Endurance 4, Melee 4, Performance 3, Presence 2, Resistance 3, Socialize 4
Backgrounds: Allies 3, Backing 1

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Hoodwink, Hurry Home, Landscape Travel, Stillness, Tracking
Elemental Powers: Aegis, Element's Domain, Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 10

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Bite: Speed 7, Accuracy 10, Damage 9L (+ difficulty 2 poison) Defense 5

Hammer: Speed 9 Accuracy 12 Damage 13L Defense 11

Sword: Speed 13 Accuracy 15 Damage 12L Defense 15

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 8L/12B

Willpower: 4 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 70

Other Notes: None

MERCURY ANTS

Description: Silvery-black in hue and four-to-five feet in length, these creatures fluctuate between being invaluable workhorses and dangerous, meddlesome pests. Once, they were used by First Age architects for grand underground construction projects and by deep-earth miners as scouts and diggers. While they can still sometimes be persuaded to assist in small-scale mining operations, they have little interest in participating in grand projects that take them close to human society. Most of their time is spent digging tunnels and constructing caves in service of their colony.

Mercury ants dwell miles underground and only rarely journey to the surface. In fact, unless summoned, most never see the sun in their lifetime, which commonly lasts 50 years or so (in rare cases reaching over 100 years). Because of this relatively short lifespan and their distance from society, mercury ants are poor savants. The most valuable information they hold is the locations of ore deposits, though most of the deposits are so deep as to be unreachable by mortals or even the Exalted. They also have the ability, quite interesting to the savants of old, to transmute metals (by burning 5 motes of Essence per 10 pounds transmuted), though they rarely exploit this gift and cannot affect the Five Magical Materials.

Because of some past slight lost to history, mercury ants have little desire to interact with the surface world. Attempts to talk with them usually end abruptly, with the mercury ants turning into liquid metal and disappearing into cracks in the surrounding rock. Summoned mercury ants leave in a like manner immediately following their service. If attacked, they commonly flee, though they will

fight if cornered. If human society encroaches on their perceived territory in any way (i.e., a miner accidentally digs into one of their passages), a full-scale invasion is the likely response, whether the humans realize the slight or not and whether they offer reparations or not.

In battle, mercury ants can kill foes quite easily by causing tunnels to collapse or by drowning enemies in liquid metal. Especially difficult opponents will be discouraged to find that mercury ants can easily summon others of their kind to aid them (1-10 arrive in 1-10 turns), though they will likely not call for aid if summoned unless the cause is to their liking, regardless of the sorcery being used to summon and bind them.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Endurance 4, Lore 1, Resistance 3, Stealth 2, Survival 5

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Backing 1, Followers 5

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Principle of Motion, Stillness

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain, Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 8

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Claw: Speed 9, Accuracy 10, Damage 6B Defense 8

Bite: Speed 7 Accuracy 9 Damage 8L Defense 7

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 4L/9B

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 69

Other Notes: None

TERRASERPENT

Description: The terraserpent dwells almost exclusively deep underground, though it may be called to the surface by powerful sorcerers. With pinkish scaled skin and tiny eyes but very little in the way of a brain, this elemental resembles a 300-foot-long earthworm. Powerful, though not at all intelligent, terraserpents are surprisingly nonviolent, though they respond to attacks decisively enough. Assuming that they notice harmless passers-by, they will do what they can to prevent harming them. If attacked, and the thing doing the attacking is under 12 feet in height, the preferred method of retaliation is to eat the offending pest. Larger foes are crushed.

Terraserpents can easily bore through the earth both quickly and quietly. One of their favorite tactics is to dive into the ground and reemerge in a more strategic position, often surprising their opponents by suddenly springing up behind them.



Mercury Ants



It is surprising that terraserpents don't live longer than they do, having an average lifespan of four or five years. After this span of time, the terraserpent sheds its skin and dissolves into the earth. This skin is widely prized for its strength and makes for excellent armor (Soak 9L/16B [+1 soak against heat or flame] Mobile Penalty - 3, Fatigue 3, Resources ••••, but rarely available), given a skilled enough craftsman. Terraserpent leather is also highly resistant to heat and cannot be destroyed by natural flames.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 5, Valor 6

Abilities: Athletics 3 (Strength +2), Awareness 2, Brawl 7, Dodge 5, Endurance 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Principle of Motion, Stillness

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Element's Domain, Mobility, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 65

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Bite: Speed 12 Accuracy 9 Damage 24L Defense 11

Tail: Speed 15 Accuracy 10 Damage 19B Defense 14

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 15L/30B (Tough skin, 12L/24B)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-1 /-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 5 **Essence Pool:** 99

Other Notes: None

AIR ELEMENTALS

When the Primordials were defeated and the Wind Master was annihilated, the winds were in such a wild state that no powerful beings could be born from the Essence contained within. It was not until smaller creatures, the thunderbirds, began to emerge from the great storms that the winds could finally be herded into a state from which the Wind Masters could emanate, at last bringing order to the winds. Following this event, many other air elementals appeared, some fiercely loyal to the Wind Masters, others not much concerned with the task of regulating the winds.

On an intellectual level, air elementals see the world as such a chaotic mess that they have made the ordering of nature their primary goal. To this end, they have taken it upon themselves to keep order in other realms as well, most notably the realm of water. The generally freedom-loving character of the majority of air elementals belies this lofty goal, however, as they are far from organized

themselves and are almost never of a like mind when it comes to any matter of importance.

Other elemental creatures scoff at this orderly attitude, pointing out that the elementals of air can hardly keep order among their own ranks and should, therefore, clean up their own house before deigning to fix anyone else's. Antagonistic outbursts and spontaneous violence regarding the issue have taken up many sessions of the Court of Seasons. The Court of Seasons pays little attention to such outbursts, however, for the Council of Winds, the highest court of the element of air, is one of the Court of Seasons' most valuable arms. Those complainants with any issues pertaining to air-related affairs are quickly shuffled off to the Council of Winds, where they are paid little attention.

HURAKA

Description: Like their overseers, the Wind Masters, the huraka also assume the form of bears of various stripes (bearing the same color as their respective masters) and reach heights of 12 to 14 feet. Very strong, though more than a little clumsy and not very bright, their lives are dedicated to serving the Wind Masters, with little room for independence or the development of any particular personality. They may be freely summoned to perform certain peaceful tasks, but the Wind Masters may become angry if the huraka are harmed or if they are summoned too often. Black Grinning Bear is especially protective of the huraka and is not above slapping around those who would abuse his charges. The huraka are very obedient, however, and never question or turn on their commanders, no matter what the task. Whether this is because of a naturally obedient nature or a lack of good judgment is unknown.

Mighty in battle and unquestioningly loyal to their Wind Masters (whom they will never attack), the huraka have powers similar to their masters, though to a lesser degree, of course. Many huraka dwell in Black Grinning Bear's island halls, though they are also found in the service of the other Wind Masters.

The breath of a huraka is said to shatter all deception. Those capturing a huraka's breath in a clear bottle or jar need only look at the world through the container to see through any illusion. This includes the glamours of the Fair Folk, but it will not reveal the Tell or the tattoos of one of the Lunar Exalted.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Endurance 4, Resistance 3, Survival 3

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Backing 2, Contacts 2



Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Hurry Home, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Principle of Motion, Tracking

Elemental Powers: Aegis, Element's Domain, Enshroud, Mobility

Cost To Dematerialize: 15

Base Initiative: 3

Attack:

Claw: Speed 13 Accuracy 11 Damage 12L Defense 14

Bite: Speed 12 Accuracy 12 Damage 14L Defense 8

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 6L/ 8B

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 64

Other Notes: None

THUNDERBIRD

Description: Older than even the Wind Masters (though not nearly as powerful), the thunderbirds are mighty, warlike air elementals who animate the gray storm clouds with thunder and lightning and were the first elementals to arise following the defeat of the Primordials.

Born in the heart of storms, a thunderbird's bodily form may run the gamut of the hundreds of species of birds, the hawk and the eagle being more common than most. However, thunderbirds are sturdier in build and have a prismatic plumage that affords a majestic appearance unequalled by the birds of the earth. As such, they are the objects of reverence for many. Their voices are like the whispers of flutes, recalling both the whistle of the wind and the cries of raptors.

Like normal birds, thunderbirds hatch from eggs. When born, they instantly grow to full size and power and join their fellows as equals. When they appear before humans, thunderbirds usually assume the form of

bald men, crowned with wreaths of white cedar and carrying the thunderbird warclub: a long sturdy club of orichalcum shod ironwood, blackened by fire, which, if legend is to be believed, never fails to hit anyone against whom it are swung. The first warclub was created when the thunderbirds went on the warpath against the cranes (spirits of water) in support of their brothers-in-arms, the huraka. Some mortals who have proven their loyalty and mettle to the thunderbirds are gifted with these special warclubs.

As their name suggests, thunderbirds command thunder by flapping their wings. They use this power as a weapon, as a warning to their enemies or as a signal for help, with different intonations carrying different meanings across the sky. The thunderbirds may also cause deep reverberating thunder under water or underground in subterranean caves when they encounter their eternal enemies, the spirits of water. They may also animate and control the lightning from nearby storm clouds in order to strike down their enemies.

The thunderbirds are beings whose glance can penetrate any object. They also have the power to cause or to stop rain. They dwell on perches in the center of storm clouds, though they are occasionally the guests of the Wind Masters or certain prominent cloud people.

Unfortunately, the great age and power of their race says nothing for the thunderbirds maturity and temperament. Thunderbirds are courageous and potent warriors, to be sure, but, at times, slow of mind and somewhat unsophisticated. They are also illiterate and prone to tell overblown tales and smoke hemp instead of tobacco. They also have scores of proud ancestral victory hymns that they are often overeager to present, especially during bouts of drinking. They also believe that humans are very clever creatures and are thus prone to distrust them.

Nevertheless, thunderbirds have a taste for, among many other things, human flesh and will even devour consecrated individuals whose holiness makes them taboo as food. Their favorite food is the flesh of slain enemies, especially water spirits, against whom they engage in ceaseless warfare. Lately, the thunderbirds have become somewhat fat on their successes, however, and a general laziness is evident when these elementals are not in battle. Ironically, thunderbirds have great difficulty seeing water spirits, who are nearly invisible to their gaze, requiring the assistance of mortals or other air spirits.

Thunderbirds play an important role in the religious life of those who pursue a life of battle and struggle, for the thunderbirds can give powerful blessings for prowess in war. Some human communities venerate thunderbirds, though this is infrequent except on certain Southwestern islands where Storms-As-He-Walks is widely worshiped (this worship does not usually extend to other thunderbirds). Where they are revered,





THUNDERBIRD WARCLUB

Thunderbirds' warclubs are less effective in the hands of men, even Exalts, than they are when wielded by the storm-warriors themselves. It requires an investment of 6 motes of Essence to attune a warclub.

Warclub: Spd +5 Ace +3 Ding +10L Def+2

thunderbirds are known for demanding human sacrifices, which they consume in front of their worshipers. Because of their intimate bond with thunderstorms, thunderbirds are able to regenerate Essence by flying through them and do so as often as they are able.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Melee 4 (Warclub +3), Endurance 3, Melee (Warclub) 4, Resistance 4, Socialize 3

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Backing 2, Contacts 2

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Benefaction, Stoke the Flame, Tiny Gift, Touch of Grace, Tracking

Elemental Powers: Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain, Elemental Unction, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 20

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 9 Accuracy 11 Damage 7B, Defense 10

Kick: Speed 8 Accuracy 9 Damage 11B Defense 8

Warclub: Speed 15 Accuracy 17 Damage 14L Defense 13

Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 12 Damage 9L Defense 12

Bite: Speed 12 Accuracy 14 Damage 13L Defense 11

Thunderclap: Speed 18 Accuracy 16 Damage: 18B (Rate 1 Range 100)

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 5L/ 7B

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 76

Other Notes: None

CLOUD PERSON

Description: Living out their lives in constant pursuit of pleasure and literally looking down on the rest of existence, these proud and spoiled creatures live in want of nothing. Considering the world below base and corrupt, they live their lives in contemplation, studying the heavens and, to a certain extent, exploring the realm beyond the upper atmosphere. To even turn an eye downward toward the earth is considered



STORMS-AS-HE-WALKS

(LEGENDARY THUNDERBIRD)

Storms-As-He-Walks is the last of the great thunderbirds who assumed human form and came to earth to help mankind during the First Age. He is commander of the thunderbirds, and he customarily scouts out the enemy by marching in the clouds above. When Storms-As-He-Walks is on the warpath, a mist of rain always marks his presence in the heavens.

Storms-As-He-Walks' curious affection for humanity — an outlook by now considered old hat by other thunderbirds — is so remarkable that he took up residence with his mortal champions centuries ago. This occasioned some resentment from his fellow thunderbirds, and when Storms-As-He-Walks got into trouble while combating the Swan Dragon, they would not answer his thunderings for help. As a result, the Swan Dragon killed him, although he was eventually restored to life through the prayer and devotion of his mortal followers. Now, Storms-As-He-Walks refuses to assume the brilliant falcon aspect he was once so proud of, choosing to remain in his human guise forever, though he is still able to take flight.

Various human communities in the Far Western islands venerate Storms-As-He-Walks as their protector, and he makes frequent appearances to accept gifts and to receive praise. If one of these islands is under attack by water elementals, he will most likely be there with a retinue of thunderbirds at his side.

Storms-As-He-Walks refuses to make his home among other thunderbirds and is a permanent guest and chief lieutenant of Black Grinning Bear. Other thunderbirds pay him lip service and obey his orders, but they view him as a deserter and no longer a true thunderbird. In human company, Storms-As-He-Walks is all smiles and kindness and sweet words as he attempts to please as many people at once as possible. He is pleasant enough but always gives the impression of a man perhaps stretched too thin.

In battle, Storms-As-He-Walks wields Marnhammar, a warclub embossed with blue jade and topped with a heavy steel square cap that hums softly in the midst of a fight. The other thunderbirds fear this weapon terribly for its effectiveness in their leader's hands. Some have tried to claim it for their own, only to find themselves struggling to lift it as Storms-As-He-Walks pummeled the unfortunate thieves to death with his bare hands. The club's head was discovered on the sea floor during the First Age and grafted to Storms-As-He-Walks' warclub as recompense for helping the Dragon-Blooded defeat the Anathema. Storms-As-He-Walks also wears an elegant and deceptively fragile-looking jade helmet that provides both added protection in melee combat and a bonus of +5 dice toward all rolls involving Presence.

Nature: Leader

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 6

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Bureaucracy 1, Dodge 3, Endurance 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; High Realm, Seatongue, Skytongue) 3, Lore 2, Melee 6 (Marnhammar +3), Performance 4 (Singing), Presence 4, Resistance 5, Socialize 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Artifact 5, Backing 4, Contacts 4, Cult 4, Followers 5, Influence 4, Manse 4, Mentor 5, Resources 5

Charms: Affinity Element Control, Benefaction, Instill Obedience, Stoke the Flame, Tiny Gift, Touch of Grace, Tracking

Elemental Powers: Dragon's Suspire, Element's Domain, Rejuvenation

Cost To Dematerialize: 20

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 14 Accuracy 13 Damage 13B Defense 14

Kick: Speed 12 Accuracy 10 Damage 15B Defense 12

War Club (Marnhammar): Speed 18 Accuracy 21 Damage 18L Defense 16

Thunderclap: Speed 20 Accuracy 18 Damage 22L (Rate 1 Range 100)

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 5L/7B (Helmet soaks an additional 10L/15B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 87

Other Notes: It requires a Strength + Athletics total of at least 20 for a character who is not Storms-As-He-Walks to wield Marnhammar.





indecorous, and those who do so are shunned by the majority of their fellows. Still, at times, the clamor of battle or the fragrance of newly bloomed flowers catches the notice of one of the more curious cloud people, and he descends to the earth to investigate, though careful to keep his jaunt a secret from his fellow cloud people. Their idle curiosity aside, cloud people care very little about life below the clouds. The intricacies of politics bore them. Wars seem hollow and irrelevant beyond the excitement of the act of battle itself, which cloud people appreciate mainly for its melodrama and entertainment value. This mindset makes it very difficult for cloud people to participate in any spirit courts, though few of them are interested in such pursuits anyway. At times, cloud people have been known to host wind courts, however, when they wish to make it clear that a certain wind pattern or other atmospheric phenomena inconveniences them.

Cloud people do not eat in the normal sense, taking sustenance from the scents and wisps that circulate among the clouds. They mainly take the form of feathery, vaguely cloudish-looking men and women of human size, with large, childlike eyes and flowing hair reaching dozens of feet in length. Virtually any form is possible for them, however, though all assumed aspects have a wispy, insubstantial character, and all are white as clouds. At times, they are even mistaken for such during their drifting descents to the earth. Cloud people have the ability to become insubstantial at will, and they can ride the winds and reach distant locations in minutes. Cloud people communicate in a dreamy, almost incomprehensible fragile voice, speaking a language only fully understood by others of their kind. Their love of beauty and fine objects belies their scorn of the world below, however, as they have a weakness for receiving beautiful gifts and taking human lovers. Such indulgences are never permanent — they can keep gifts from falling back to the earth for only a short time (at a cost of 10 motes of Essence per day for small items, 20 for larger objects — after a week of being infused with Essence, such objects turn to dust and disappear). Human lovers may stay only one night per year, or else, they suffer the same fate.

The cities of the cloud people are massive (though nearly insubstantial) structures built atop of many gigantic clouds. These are unlike earthbound cities in that they contain mostly massive ceremonial buildings and impressive halls of learning. Personal residences are located in enormous and luxurious apartment complexes. Great spires and towers rise high into the atmosphere so scholars might have an unobstructed view of the heavens. Some of these towers are said to

extend into the heavens themselves. It is sometimes possible to catch a glimpse of one of these cities from the surface, especially from high mountains, where it is even possible to stow away on a passing city (though not for longer than a day without magic). Under normal conditions, however, cloud cities are undetectable. The movements of these floating cities are, to all appearances, random, though, due to shrewd pacts with the Wind Masters, their locations are strictly monitored and controlled by the huraka. These pacts are usually renewed every season, so that the cloud cities might be kept hidden and so that the distrustful Wind Masters are able to keep close watch over the movements of the cloud people's floating island homes.

Cloud people have little interest in fighting and will normally snort condescendingly if summoned to do so (despite their attitude, they must fight anyway, of course). However, they are consummate scholars of the heavens and can relate much information on the subject, especially if they deem their interlocutor worthy of notice. They have been known to speak at great length with some Sidereal Exalts, whom they consider intellectually above the rest of the rabble below, often taking them as lovers. Still, cloud people prefer hosting visitors to being summoned and will make their preferences known without reservation no matter who the summoner might be.

Sidereal Exalts know that the cloud people have deduced the coming of the Void by the use of their star charts and that their self-indulgent conduct owes itself to a deep despair and hopelessness at the realization of the inescapable doom.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 2

Abilities: Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 2, Performance 4 (Sophistry), Investigation 3 (Deduction), Linguistics 3, Lore 3 (Astronomy), Occult 2

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Contacts 2

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Hurry Home, Landscape Travel, Sense Domain, Shapechange, TinyGift

Elemental Powers: Element's Domain, Mobility

Cost To Dematerialize: 5

Base Initiative: 6

Attack: N/A, can fight only with Charms and powers.

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 4L/6B

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 80

Other Notes: None

STORM SERPENT

Description: Storm serpents are the pent up rage of powerful storms that suddenly coalesce during a storm's apex and descend to the earth in miles-wide spirals, destroying everything in sight. These wingless creatures are usually 300 to 500 feet in length with scaly skin the color of storm clouds (they are often mistaken for low-hanging storm clouds until it is too late). Unfortunately, they are not rare, though being tied to a particular storm means that they have a very short lifespan and usually never make it to the ground before fading away. If they do make it to the ground, however, they do not play favorites when it comes to their victims. Whatever structures, people or creatures a storm serpent sees first becomes its first targets. Reasoning with it is pointless. Fighting it is hopeless for mortals and a precarious enterprise even for the Exalted. The best defense is evacuation, though, of course, this solution may not always be feasible.

To determine the storm serpent's targets after it destroys the first victims, remember that a storm serpent's behavior is much like any animal's. Bright lights and moving things attract it first. If none are around, it will attack obvious targets such as trees and buildings, the taller the better.

Summoning storm serpents takes patience and planning. The ritual itself must be performed during the hour before a storm. Four diviners climb four separate trees that have been grown since saplings in a precise astronomical pattern amidst a cleared field. The diviners each carry a heavy cauldron filled with water mixed with goat's blood and milk and secure the cauldrons in the lower branches. Then the men climb to a higher, safer vantage. Spilling a drop before the proper time ruins the incantation. As they climb, four assistants light the base of the four trees afire with dried willow leaves and heather struck with a single spark from a flint shard and an orichalcum knife. If the flames rise too quickly and one of the diviners jumps to safety or dies in the fire, the ritual is ruined. If all is timed correctly, the rains will douse the fire just as the cauldrons begin to boil over.

When the flames are gone, there is a thunderous roar as a storm serpent is born.

When the storm ends, the storm serpent expires in a cloud of platinum-white dust, which was valued by First Age savants for its ability to cure many diseases. Given the difficulty of gathering storm serpent dust, however, elixirs and potions produced with the material are incredibly rare and the knowledge needed to create them even more so.

Attributes: Strength 9, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 1, Valor 8

Abilities: Brawl 10, Dodge 5, Presence 10

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Affinity Element Control, Confusion, Sense Domain

Elemental Powers: Dragon's Suspire, Mobility

Cost To Dematerialize: 70

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Claw: Speed 18 Accuracy 14 Damage 20L Defense 15*

Bite: Speed 17 Accuracy 17 Damage 24L Defense 13*

Tail: Speed 20 Accuracy 22 Damage 25L Defense 16*

Lightning Streak: Speed 30 Accuracy 15 Damage 24L**

Thunderclap: Speed 25 Accuracy 17 Damage 28B***

* Storm serpents may make two claw attacks, a bite attack and a tail attack every turn without splitting their dice pool.

** A storm serpent's lightning streak (Dragon's Suspire attack) cannot be blocked, but may be dodged. It may only use this attack four times per storm.

*** This attack does double damage to objects, can only be performed the turn after a successful claw, bite or lightning streak attack and is the only attack possible that turn.

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 20L/40B

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 108

Other Notes: None







CHAPTER THREE DEMONS



With one step, the Yozis could shake the world. With one breath, they could cast back an army. Their touch could end life, create life, raise cities or break mountains. All the world would lay before them like a feast — save that they are imprisoned.

They are Primordials: creatures that predate the gods, the first rulers of the world, cast into their cell of stone and brass by the power of the Exalted and the gods that created them. They are the cousins and allies of the Malfeans, the dreaming lords of death and endings. They are the princes of a cold and purposeless world, lit by a green and angry sun, locked forever outside the boundaries of Creation.

A VISION OF MALFEAS

This is the Realm of Demons. Among Malfean's bones rests the sea Kimbery. The forests Szoreny, Vitalius and Hrotsvitha rise from his flesh as vast constructs of silver, gold and brass. At every level, the desert Cecelyne plays around the Demon Realm's edges, and above it all, a mad green sun shines.

Most of the Demon Realm is city, and black stone and brass walls hem in the visitor. A web work of roads built by an eccentric demon's voice rise and fall at all angles between the multistory buildings, while other roads rise into the sky. Wide streets lead between homes, towers and other buildings. The streets dip in the middle where metody feet have worn them down. Everywhere, bells ring and monstrous voices speak, sing or shout; this

din keeps back the Silent Wind. Demons in a thousand varieties crowd around. Some have comprehensible business, and others do not. Strange clouds drift in the mostly empty sky. Nautilus-horn towers hold courtesans, bugs croon at the entrances to the taverns, and great glass libraries grow atop distant city blocks.

In the corners of the city, one may find many-spined firmin nests as large as a Dynast's holdings, spitted demons still twitching on the giant thorns where they hang impaled. There are stages where the gilmyne dance, and hopping puppeteers go about their alien work, tearing down and building up with their countless thin arms. There are pits of bubbling acid where the metody dwell. In the distance, an angyalka plays the harp named Time.

THE NATURE OF THE YOZIS

The Yozis do not so much inhabit the Demon City as define it. They are vast beyond imagining. Their flesh forms the demon world, its weather and its greatest landmarks. One Yozi is the Malfean sea. Another embodies the prison's edge. All the Demon Princes exist on such a scale; they are creatures and forces beyond measure.

Concepts of space mean nothing to the Primordials in their prison. In Malfean, the Yozis are in many places and in many forms. In one place, they spread to their limits and become larger than the world. In another, they collapse to the size of a yeddim or a flea.



The Yozis transcend shape. Their nature defines their true forms, but many favor a dozen other bodies, often including a human shape. In these forms, they drink in the taverns of Malfeas, ravage its courtesans and orchestrate pointless and brutal intrigues among the sycophants of their realm.

Eternally bitter, the Yozis reach out from their prison to work vengeance against the world. Few things in the Demon City do not ultimately serve this end. Its horrors exist to torment and kill. Its beauties exist to break the mortal heart. Only in the music of the realm do the Yozis relent. They are both dancers and musicians beyond mortal peer, and though their songs can destroy as easily as heal, there is no malice in them.

SELECTED YOZIS

THE DEMON CITY

His name is Malfeas, the Demon City, though once he wore another. His heart is a green metal sun. His body has turned inside out to form his eternal prison: a city of black stone and brass, a living metropolis of fluted, flared architecture and mad interwoven design. In his rage and frustration, he has grown new cities of his flesh and sent them slamming against the older cities that surround them — a hundred times, at least, and perhaps a thousand. Now, the city exists in endless layers, with his tarnished heart casting a green glow over the whole.

Often, two layers crush together. They do not rebound. Rather, the outer layer expands, its structure both collapsing and unfolding like a puzzle to form a larger, greater shell. The

greatest city of them all, the outermost layer where his inside-out body lies raw and open with its visceral rooflines and its black towering bones, has nearly infinite scope. There is room for worlds to pass between its arches and Yozis to wander down its streets. Even Malfeas, the Demon City, can dance in its central square. The demons that fly between that city and the next one inward sometimes become lost in its skies, unable to see anything but green light in any direction. They wither into nothingness thereafter.

Of all the Yozis, Malfeas hates the world most. Though his pain matches theirs, his shame is greater. He cannot break free, though he tries, and so, he rages. He plans more cruelly than his peers against the Exalted and the gods who imprisoned them.

CECELYNE, THE ENDLESS DESERT

Near the edge of the Demon City, there lies the beginning of the desert Cecelyne. On one side, she rests within Malfeas, bound by the terms of their imprisonment. On the other side, she has no boundary and extends outward forever. One can walk on Cecelyne straight through the Malfean walls, under the blank black desert sky. A traveler with the time to spare could walk from Malfeas to where Creation should begin, and beyond, and keep on walking for the desert goes yet further. Cecelyne stretches to the very edge of infinity, and what she has learned there she does not say.

The creatures of Cecelyne resemble the desert creatures of Creation: snakes and scorpions, vultures and mice. They rise at her whim from the sand, and they are of the sand, and they travel to the other places where Cecelyne does not extend. They gulp the substance of the outer worlds and spit



out desert, and in this fashion, Cecelyne ever grows. If Malfeas stopped casting off his shells and the wind Adorjan stopped blowing back her edge, Cecelyne would drown the Demon City, and this would make her glad.

Cecelyne is the affliction of the Yozis. Her endlessness has become their boundary. The gods twisted her living essence to bind the Yozis away from Creation. Thus, if the Demon Princes should crack open Malfeas and crawl into the world beyond, they would find only Cecelyne — and know only Cecelyne — and this would not bring them closer to Creation.

The Yozis have given Cecelyne care over the demons of the city, that their servants should not seek to overthrow the Primordial lords. In her name, her servants order and regiment the demons. Her power also keeps the lesser demons from Creation, that they may not slip from Malfeas while no one watches. The Yozis cannot leave, and their petulance rarely permits their lessers freedom.

SHE WHO LIVES IN HER NAME

She Who Lives in Her Name is a fire surrounded by a crystal sphere. That fire whispers its name to the 100 fires that surround it, each in their own sphere. Each of those fires whispers its name to the 99,997 fires that whirl around the whole.

Mortals and demons who hear the name that these fires whisper become its stool. They murmur or shout that name to those around them, never ceasing in this chant, and turn their hands and eyes to the lady's work. Until their voice fails and they fall from the chorus, they are the servants of the great fire at the center of She Who Lives in Her Name.

Of all the Yozis, She Who Lives in Her Name fought the hardest against her imprisonment. As the flesh of Malfeas closed behind her, she cracked three spheres against his bones, and the flames that rose from them swept across all things. The things they did not burn are now Creation. The things they turned to ash are beyond the memory and ken of the world and the gods. Not even the Yozi know the price Creation paid for her vengeance, before the flames died and the bones of Malfeas sealed her in.

She Who Lives in Her Name embodies the principle of hierarchy. Her touch made the great things greater and the small things smaller. Her fires bound the small to the great. Creation is a place of hierarchies, of rulers and the ruled, with chains of command descending from the greatest gods and kings to the smallest spirits and slaves. Before her vengeance, it held better orders, though their natures are unknown. Now, it reflects her nature, the organization of her fires. For all their glory, the gods fear that they live in her shadow — in the world she remade.

She Who Lives in Her Name still hates the gods and their children, but her plans for the mortal world rarely express this hatred. She wishes to see the world become as she would have created it, a thing of absolute order and regulation, without the freedoms and insubordination that

corrupt its hierarchies today. She wishes to rub the gods' noses in the knowledge that the world is already somewhat hers. For all her bitterness, these motives are benign in comparison to those of her peers. Sometimes, they even lead her to aid the gods and the Exalted in their tasks.

ADORJAN, THE SILENT WIND

Somewhere in the Demon City blows the wind Adorjan, and all things she touches die.

Once, she was Adrian, the River of All Torments, who encircled Creation and rained fire, razors and ice upon the army of the gods. The horrors that raged from her surface held even the Exalted back, until the Solar Marus met the demon Lilike that was Adrian's heart and slew him. Then, Adrian lost herself and became Adorjan, the Silent Wind. This took some of her power — but Creation and Malfeas still fear her. Without the secret of the Demon Wracking Shout that Marus heard as Lilike died, the Exalted could not have held Adorjan back from their armies. Demon Princes and immortal behemoths alike bear scars from where they have felt Adorjan's touch.

Silence heralds Adorjan's coming. A sufficient clangor rebuffs her. Thus, throughout the Demon City, there is song, music, shouts and the ringing of bells to keep Adorjan away. However, even the greatest raucous sounds the demons make cannot keep Adorjan at bay if she chooses to pass among them. When a silence rises from the north or the west or the south or the east, the demons cry "Adorjan comes!" and make to flee. Then, she descends among them, and they die by the hundreds.

These things are most effective against the Silent Wind: the Demon Wracking Shout that certain of the gods remember; the laughter of a child, caught in a shell, ground down to paste and mixed painstakingly with silver and gold; and the arias of Adorjan's smallest children, the demjen and the katalinae, the gyorgyike and the jazon, the fulope and the angyalka. For this reason, there are demons who spend their eternal lives grinding shells and others who hunt Adorjan's children along the spindly roads and black stone towers of the city, so that the great and powerful may live without fear of Adorjan's touch.

The whims of Adorjan defy comprehension, but her ultimate aspiration is known. She desires only to see that all things, in time, bear her touch and fade away to silence. Until and unless her new heart dies and she must remake herself from ruin, she dreams no greater dream, and she pursues it with plans both subtle and blunt.

On occasion, Adorjan distills her essence down into the shape of a woman, long-fingered and large-eyed, with black pageboy hair and teeth of white jade. Her voice never rises above a whisper, but that whisper can cut across a room, a battlefield or the entire Demon City. In this shape, she may lay hands on others without killing them, using her dagger, Iluske Gale-Tooth, when killing must be done. In this form, she lay with a Solar Exalted in





his dreams and gave birth to seven daughters. Three of those daughters traveled to the mortal world. The other four cast off their human forms and now blow through the Demon City, each a lesser echo of the great Silent Wind.

ADORJAN'S DAUGHTERS

Adorjan's four daughters also embody significant weather patterns in the Demon City. They are Kalmanka, the Arrow Wind, whose gusts are full of razor arrowheads; Vitaris, the Brilliant Wind, that shines too brightly for the eyes to bear; Pellegrina, the Grinding Wind, that strips away stone but leaves flesh intact; and Kamilla, the Wind of Promise, that comes after a battle and carries the corpses away. These four winds have no consciousness, but once, they did, and perhaps, they might again.

THE EBON DRAGON

The Ebon Dragon is the shadow of every creature that has ever lived.

At the edge of the dragon, the world dims, as insect shadows blur together and form an undifferentiated gray pall. As one moves into the dragon's flesh, black shadows appear. These shadows take on the shapes of humans, demons, spirits and things, and none have an obvious source. As one moves still further inward, the shadows fade to undifferentiated darkness. That darkness has a face.

If the Ebon Dragon crawls along the ground, he casts his shadows on the earth. When he flies atop the clouds, he dims them to black. When he flies through empty air, his shadows fall on the sky itself and darken all the world beneath.

The Demon City has no night, but on occasion, the Ebon Dragon passes under the sun. Then, the green light fades away. The stomach bottle bugs chirp. Demons, disquieted and unhappy, clear the streets. The things that hunt only in darkness stir beneath the stone and rise into the city.

The Ebon Dragon is not a creature of the living world. Even before his imprisonment, he partook in the essence of the other side, of the things that follow life. He sipped from hidden springs beneath the world where one should not drink and loved only those doomed to die and, of them, only those deaths that would change the world.

He has claimed a new fiancée, taken her captive within the shadows. He speaks not of the matter. But in the song of Erembour, who is among his souls, there is distress; for it may be that this consort will live.

The Ebon Dragon's nature is to test his prison. He does not trust the work of the gods to contain him, for he is that which they are not. Thus, the Yozis have given him the task of breaking their durance, and his plans work always to free him from his cell. This effort is doomed, but it may be that the Ebon Dragon may damn Creation along the way.

OTHER YOZIS

Surviving records indicate the existence of at least 23 Yozis in the Malfean prison. Others may exist of whom no records remain. Kimberly, the Sea That Marched Against the Flame, slumbers unhappily beneath Malfeas' ribcage. Isidoros, the Black Boar That Twists the Skies, whose passage pushed aside the cycles of moon and stars and transformed destinies, roams the forest Szoreny. Oramus, the Dragon Beyond the World, lives in a cage and temple built of its own wings. The troubled dreams of this creature of chaos still twist the worldly Wyldlands. Somewhere in Malfeas dwells Cytherea, the Mother of Creation, about whom nothing more is known. Scraps of knowledge on the others exist in books and records scattered throughout Creation.

LIFE IN MALFEAS

THE LAYOUT OF THE DEMON CITY

The body of Malfeas provides most of the buildings in the Demon City and most of the raw materials for the rest. Basalt, jet, brass, black iron and black marble abound, looming in rough and inelegant structures over the streets and causeways of the realm. Certain other metals, including gold, silver and tin, grow in rare veins scattered through the city.

Most of the city's districts follow the basic pattern of Malfeas' nature: ambitious in their planning, ancient in their aspect and often rough-hewn in their construction. Their buildings weave and twist together so that an observer cannot always tell one from the next. Arches, crumbling fluted columns and overhanging eaves are common. These sections of Malfeas bear the same visual resemblance to human cities that a beast does to the behemoth that inspired it. They are different than human metropoli, both lesser and greater than the cities of Creation.

The remaining districts vary one from another. In some, Malfeas grew in an unusual pattern. In others, demons have painstakingly (or haphazardly) torn down the buildings and made their own. Some regions have simple and elegant houses; others stunning spires; yet others betray a perverse and alien aesthetic that is no cousin to human construction.

Vegetation is rare but present. Something in the light of the green sun sometimes causes metal to grow, with brass vines at times climbing up a building side or silver trees occasionally rising from a vein. In most of the city, seeing a single tree or bush is a wonder. Three regions, however, have suffered peculiar outbursts of growth, creating the Malfean forests Szoreny, Vitalius and Hrotsvitha.

Each layer of the city — save the outermost — has two sides, and demons inhabit both. One moves between them by spelunking through the catacombs that lie under the streets. With good directions or intuition, it can take

anywhere from three hours and two days to reach the other side. When traveling through the catacombs, “down” refers to the nearest layer. Passing the equilibrium point can produce spectacular falls if the traveler is incautious.

Malfegas has an immense number of causeways leading between random buildings and even between the layers of the city. Some of these roads are large enough to serve as major thoroughfares. Others have room for one or two human-sized creatures to walk comfortably along them. Most are no wider than a human foot, though practically unbreakable, serving only the smaller or more acrobatic demons. In some sections of the city, and in the air between the layers, these roads come together thickly, so that a hundred may cluster within a short jump of one another. In other areas, each road appears alone. For those who cannot fly, these causeways represent the best means of transit between two layers.

STRUCTURAL STRENGTHS

Object	Soak (B/L)	Health Levels to Damage	Health Levels to Destroy
Black Stone Wall*	20/14	40	80
Brass Wall*	12/8	24	40
Metal Vegetation*	12/8	24	40
Causeway (Thick)	25/25	40	80
Causeway (Thin)	18/18	5	10

* This represents a section of wall big enough to let a human pass or a human-sized piece of vegetation. Both are stronger than one might expect under the light of the green sun.

LIFE IN THE DEMON CITY

Cecelyne’s first decree as the lawmaker of the Demon Realm established the basic hierarchy of the city. Those of greatest might — invariably demons of the Third Circle — she named Unquestionable, for such is their will. Those with the proper qualities to lead — demons created to the Second Circle and exceptional creatures of the lesser order — she named citizens and set a protection upon them. The rest are nameless, serfs or denizens, until and unless they prove themselves citizens before Cecelyne’s demon priests. Thus, though 50 First Circle demons might kill a citizen, the intelligent ones dare not. Though a citizen might smolder against the will of an Unquestionable, he only rarely rebels. The lesser creatures may never rise to overwhelm the greater.

In practice, the Second Circle drives the affairs of the city. The First Circle, their inferiors, have no influence. Their superiors, the Yozis and the Unquestionable, occupy

themselves with individual pursuits that would, in most cases, continue unchanged even if every other demon in the city ceased to exist. Protected from all but the angriest of mobs by the social order, the citizens establish small kingdoms within the city. Most rule no more than a 15th part of a city layer, but a few build serf armies strong enough to drive away their neighbors and accumulate a larger turf.

As the citizens provide the practical local governance, the demon economy focuses on trade between their territories. Key resources include: several forms of liquor coaxed out of Malfegas’ flesh with a distillation of demonic stomach acids, powdered brass toadstools, unusual metals, talismans against various unpleasant fates (particularly against the touch of the Silent Wind, described above), demon resources, inks of various colors extracted from various demons, tanned midwryth hides and, most of all, treasures brought from the mortal world. Some trade arrangements are fixed transactions that occur on a regular basis. Others, the citizens negotiate piecemeal at great demon markets while the serfs skulk at the fringes trading their own tiny treasures among themselves.

An intelligent serf has one of three lots in life. First, it may have an innate function. For instance, the stomach bottle bugs exist primarily as symbiotes to the infinitely greater Yozis, and the neomah are invariably courtesans. Second, the serf may work constantly, as some miners do, if its services provide continuous benefit to its lord. Such serfs own nothing and live lives of toil without rest. Finally, a serf may have significant free time, which it spends loitering, carousing, resting, copulating, playing humane or monstrous games or — if it has its citizen’s favor — drinking, dancing and telling stories in the wine shops of the city. Serfs of this sort may claim a home or even a mansion simply by moving in and defending it from rivals; the city has no shortage of real estate. Small groups of serfs often share a large building so that some can defend their few possessions while others go to do their lord’s work.

The Demon City also knows both animals and monsters. Many of the city’s denizens have no minds, or no useful minds, and do not understand the will of Cecelyne. Some are dangerous. Most simply go about their instinctive business, and the citizens ignore them. Other creatures of the city cannot survive without in some fashion feeding on their neighbors. They do not participate in society, unless a citizen can provide their meals. Instead, they hunt and kill among the streets.

ENTERING AND LEAVING MALFEAS

Only five days’ walk separates Malfegas and Creation. A visitor to the Demon City moves with unmeasured and immeasurable speed through the desert Cecelyne. The nature of things does not permit a Calibration to both begin and end while one travels to the Demon City, nor for the journey to take longer on one occasion than another. Thus, the time





for the journey is prescribed: The fastest runner and the lamest turtle alike take five days.

To find Malfeas, a human must first leave Creation. Three water routes and 13 land routes open directly from Creation into Cecelyne on each Calibration. Modern savants know of seven. The rest of the year, one can take a coracle enhanced with the Chaos-Repelling Pattern (see *Exalted*, p. 186) and paddle it out through the Wyld at the edge of the world. If the traveler does not seek the faerie courts, she may find her way beyond them. A few Exalted have ridden air spirits to the highest point in the world and cut holes in the sky. They then climbed through into the madness outside Creation. In addition, various sorcerous artifacts of the First Age allowed more direct travel, as with a key (Artifact ••••) that can cause any door to open directly into the demon world. If one still remains extant, no one has advertised rediscovering such a relic.

There is a simpler route to Cecelyne, although less reliable in its timing. One walks or rides into a desert or an unknown land with a will to find her. It may take days or weeks or months, but the sky *will* fade to black, and the sands *will* grow cold, and the Endless Desert *will* surround the seeker. Five days later, if the traveler does not die along the way, the outer wall of the Demon City becomes visible.

The prison of the Yozis does not hold humans and Exalted. To leave, they must simply make their way to the desert and walk back to Creation. On occasion, Cecelyne may demand a sacrifice from travelers who wish to leave the desert alive. Outside help is also possible. A variation on the demon summoning spells that instead pulls mortals and Exalted back from Malfeas existed once and could be researched again.

DEMONS ENTERING AND LEAVING MALFEAS

Demons can enter Malfeas more readily than humans. Any demon both summoned and bound can and must step instantly into Cecelyne at the end of its indenture. Those that kill their summoners instead, or enter the world through some peculiar condition, follow different rules. First Circle demons are stranded. Second Circle demons can enter Cecelyne at their whim, but this gives them no special ability to reenter Creation. Third Circle demons can travel to Cecelyne and take others with them, if they maintain a grip on their victims for five turns. Again, this gives them no special ability to return to Creation.

Most demons can only enter the world when summoned, departing Malfeas and crossing Cecelyne five days before the sorcerer's call. A few, however, have particular conditions that permit or require their entry — cracks in the prison large enough for that particular demon. Cecelyne sometimes permits it, for such is the order of things. Ultimately, the Yozi's prison exists to seal in the Yozis. It binds the demons only because of the whim of the Yozis and . the demonic kinship with the fallen Primordials, and for

demons to be as thoroughly imprisoned as their lords would do them too much honor for the Yozis' tastes.

THE CIRCLES OF DEMONS

The Yozis are creatures beyond human in their nature. What a human has in their whole, the Yozis have in their parts. Each of the shadows that crowd around the Ebon Dragon has a rudimentary consciousness. Each gust that trails behind Adorjan, the Silent Wind, has a small awareness of its own.

What humans have achieved, the Yozis find trivial. Minds and souls and hearts are small to them. The essence of a Yozi has many parts, many souls — and each has a mind, a heart and souls of its own. Thus, the wind Adorjan has 20 souls, and the 18th of them is Jacint, the Prince Upon the Tower. This is the first step in the demon hierarchy. Such creatures as Jacint are demons of the Third Circle, each with their own will and whim, dependent upon but not puppets to their lords.

The demons of the Third Circle, like their superiors, have multiple souls. Typically, a Third Circle demon has seven, defining her ability to protect, gratify, define, communicate, express, reflect and understand her own essential nature. This is the second step in the demon hierarchy: Each one of *these* souls takes form as a demon of the Second Circle.

In service to their superiors, demons of the Second Circle often spawn whole races of lesser demons. These are the demons of the First Circle, and they arise not from spiritual, but from material processes. Most gestate inside their creators, or hatch from eggs their mothers lay. Some bud off their parents, and a few Second Circle demons craft their children from stone, wood or severed organs.

The hierarchy of demons does not strictly depend on their power level. In practice, demons of the Third Circle transcend their inferiors. Some are practically immortal, and others are simply terrible beyond a lesser demon's ability to defeat. However, the most powerful individual demons of the First Circle — who have developed themselves through training, age, natural endowment and painful lessons — could take on a Second Circle demon and emerge triumphant.

IMPLICATIONS IN REGARDS TO YOZI MORTALITY

In their own persons, the Yozis are beyond death — or close to it. Killing She Who Lives in Her Name or the Endless Desert would require not just defeating the creature, but finding a practical way to extinguish a life vast beyond measure. However, each Yozi has a heart, the center of its essence. This heart — a demon of the Third Circle, foremost among the Yozi's souls — is its *fetich*. To slay a Yozi's fetich is to slay their living core and to permanently destroy the Yozi's nature. The Demon Prince does not *die*, not properly, but it must become something *else* — a new and generally

weaker member of the Yozi pantheon. Its mind, its heart and its souls change. Sometimes, its body and its fundamental properties shift. The order of the demon world shakes.

Third Circle demons do not have proper fetiches. Their relationship with their Yozi sustains them. However, methodically extinguishing all seven souls of a Third Circle demon partially incapacitates her until she can regenerate something of her inner nature.

THE MALFEAN ENVIRONMENT

Malfeas does not have a day and night cycle. Ligier, the Green Sun, shines on all the city, even when he walks the mortal world. The light dims only when an opaque weather system passes overhead and goes out only when the Ebon Dragon flies above.

The Silent Wind represents the most significant weather system in Malfeas. Her touch instantly kills mortals and demons of the first two circles. Exalted, powerful spirits and Third Circle demons have the opportunity to survive but take damage from her touch until they find shelter. Her four daughters also embody notable weather patterns.

Deadlier than Adorjan's daughters is the "stone rain" — when two layers of the city collide with one another. They can easily crush humans and demons between them. Buildings provide no refuge: they may swing down to form the new ground or turn inside out to form the walls of five new structures. Until a character finds adequate shelter (accumulating seven successes on an extended reflexive Perception + Awareness check), she risks being struck by falling or shifting walls (see boxed text).

The rest of the Malfean weather arises from certain lesser demons — specifically, creatures of storm and omen. In Creation, rains of frogs and blood precede some demons everywhere. In Malfeas, such demons don't *normally* cause this kind of effect, but vast numbers of demons fill the streets, and a great deal of the material of Creation has been imported over time. Demon-Creation reactions are common, filling the skies with small hurricanes, strange rains and balls of lightning. Such effects generally drift out into the space between layers rather than dissipating.

THE CRACKS IN THE PRISON

These are the tools of the Ebon Dragon as he wrestles against his cage.

The Yozi have the power to visit the dreams of those in the mortal world. Through dreams, they may corrupt their targets or influence them or turn all of an enemy's dreams to nightmares. Yozi appear in dreams as they do in truth, which can stun and frighten most mortal dreamers. Those who can readily take human shape, such as Adorjan, have better fortune seducing dreamers to their will.

The Yozi can possess lesser demons. They cannot fit their power into a lesser shell, but they can temporarily squeeze in their consciousness. While a Yozi inhabits a demon, it abides by no sorcerous binding and fulfills the Yozi's will rather than its own. A Yozi can possess the Third Circle demons directly under it in the hierarchy — its own souls — for no more than a day in every year. It can possess Second Circle demons under it in the hierarchy — the souls of its souls — for no more than an hour in every month. It can possess any First Circle demon — but for no more than a minute in every day. Anything more destroys the demon, gaining the Yozi no more than an extra turn of presence in the world.

The Demon Princes have the power to communicate with their slain brothers, the Malfeans. These dead Primordials slumber beneath the lands of the dead and, ultimately, command the Deathlords and the Abyssal Exalted. This communication gives the Yozi a possible direct handle on the world. Unfortunately, this alliance — between the bound and the dead — has grown strained of late. Even those Yozi who have tasted fetich-death have little understanding of the nature of the Neverborn. Even the Ebon Dragon, who was born to death and who lives in it, finds himself disturbed when speaking to the Malfeans. Though maddened by millennia of imprisonment, the Yozi do not wish to ally with creatures less sane than they. Still, the dead Primordials have power, and their cooperation has furthered many Yozi plans.

The Yozi understand the nature of the Exalted. Those whom they corrupt do not simply lose their



ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE IN MALFEAS

Hazard	Difficulty	Resisted Effect	Failed Effect	Interval
Malfean layers colliding	1	2L	5L	1 turn
Adorjan's touch	4	1A	5A	1 turn
The Arrow Wind*	2	1L	7L	1 minute
The Brilliant Wind*	2	bright light	temporarily blinded	1 minute

* Storytellers should permit, characters to resist Kalmanka and Vitaris with appropriate Charms (e.g., using Fivefold Bulwark Stance against the Arrow Wind.)



ethical compass. The Yozis trade them strength for their souls and magic for their morality. Most bargains with a Yozi involve tainting one's mortal soul and divine power in exchange for an easy road to supremacy. From these bargains, the Yozis have created the Infernal Exalted: twisted, powerful creatures bound body and soul to the cause of their Primordial masters.

Few Infernal Exalted exist in this Age. When the Dragon-Blooded revolt began, they slew the Celestial Exalted indiscriminately. The corrupted Exalted that hid among their peers were incidental casualties, and most of them went to their graves still wondering how they had been exposed. The Wyld Hunt then kept these Infernal Exalted from Creation. Some of their tainted essences are now returning to the world of men. A few have the opportunity to redeem themselves, having never fully committed their souls, but most find themselves drawn to the service of the Yozis from the moment of their Exaltation. Only the greatest traitors of the First Age, who have had long experience in surviving and triumphing despite the world's enmity, simply survived from the First Age to the present. Most of these spend their lives in Malfeas itself, apart from the flow of mortal time. The Ebon Dragon currently seeks to expand the ranks of his Exalted servants. In particular, the Yozis have a number of the Solar essences the Deathlords stole from the Jade Prison, and the Ebon Dragon now crafts his wedding honor guard from them.

LESSER DEMONS

Uncountable demons of lesser ilk fill the Demon City. Though few in number, the demons of the Third Circle often touch the lives of the demonic denizens, as they have the peculiar talent of occupying more than one region of Malfeas simultaneously. The demons of the Second Circle strut the streets full of vanity, and hordes of lesser creatures move aside.

The demons herein described are known to a typical sorcerer who learns the appropriate summoning spell — or even to mortals wise and mad enough to call them up. Learning the names and functions of other demons makes a suitable quest for an occultist seeking to increase his flexibility.

Defeating a demon in the contest of wills and earning its loyal service does not give a sorcerer full control over the creature. Many of the creatures of Malfeas have peculiar constraints upon them, which they must fulfill regardless of their masters' desires. For example, Zsofika, the Kite Flute, must hunt and kill an appropriate victim before she can tend to any other task. Others retain limited autonomy despite magical binding.

A demon can invest his infernal essence into an artifact of the Demon City. This binds the object to him. It travels with him when someone summons him into Creation and departs with him when he leaves Creation, and no one else

may actively use the artifact without his free and uncoerced consent. Demons cannot do the same with objects made in Creation. Thus, sorcerers can force demons with treasure troves in the mortal world to reveal their locations.

The natural tongue of demons is the language of the Old Realm. Some demons have had opportunities to learn other languages, either by visiting Creation or by studying it from afar. The Storyteller should use the Linguistics scores provided to assess the likelihood that a particular demon knows a particular language relevant to the series, rather than assigning a fixed set.

All listed demons have the Materialize Charm, although some demons exist that do not.

THIRD CIRCLE DEMONS

EREMBOUR, THAT WHICH CALLS TO THE

SHADOWS, DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

When the shadows of the Ebon Dragon obscure the light of the green sun, a wise demon abandons the causeways of the Demon City. There are things that emerge in the Ebon Dragon's darkness that frighten even the creatures of Malfeas. Some, however, do not flee: for when the Ebon Dragon passes, the lady Erembour takes out her horn and blows a long slow song. It fills the hearts of those who hear it with a melancholy attraction to the darkness. It calls the people of Malfeas out to make blind revel and follow in the Dragon's path. Some who hear it resist. Others are drawn to her and die. A few become the things that lurk in the darkness, monsters that live in the Dragon's shadow forever or slumber in the stone while waiting for it to return. Broken by the horn of Erembour, they can no longer face the light.



Erembour wears robes of pale silver and has skin of deepest black. Her eyes glimmer like the moon, and scattered strands of her ebon hair glow white. She carries a long silver horn curved like a ram's, and a rat's tail trails from the back of her robes. Thunder cracks when she enters the mortal world. Torches and other lights instantly go out in her presence.

It is Erembour's purpose to celebrate the darkness, and for this reason, she opposes both the plans of Ligier (see below) and the Unconquered Sun. She favors the things of night: theft and murder, bats and owls, the Dune People and the creatures of the caverns beneath the world. She blesses those generals who hold their battles at night and shows favor to lovers who keep their trysts in darkness. Though she visits the world but rarely, the music of her horn drifts between the worlds. It calls sheep away to the omen dogs and humans into dark professions.

Notes and Abilities: If successfully bound, Erembour can ruin whole cities, making many of their inhabitants unable to bear the light and turning others into monsters. She goes quiescent inside a cocoon of darkness when touched by the light of the Unconquered Sun, but at night, she can lend massive good fortune, Charm support and military prowess to her captor. Erembour commands the animals of the night, such as wolves, owls and crickets, and can marshal them for war. She is one of the finest instructors in the arts of love in Creation and Malfeas alike.

JACINT, THE PRINCE UPON THE TOWER, DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

In every layer of the Demon City, there stands a tower of black stone. Atop the tower stands the statue of a winged man in brass, each hand as large as a peasant's hut. From one hand, there rises a pillar of marble, surmounted by a disk of glowing light. Upon that disk stands Jacint, the 18th soul of the lady Adorjan and, of them all, the kindest.

As Jacint stands upon his disks, atop his towers in each layer of the Demon City, he speaks: And with each word, a road is born. It springs from one great building to another, level, rising or falling, sometimes nothing more than an overpass between two wine shops and sometimes a great thin causeway that stretches from one layer of the Demon City to another.

For as long as the Demon City has been the demon prison, for as long as his greater self Adorjan has dwelt within, Jacint has stood upon his towers and spoken. With his voice, he has bridged the city with an endless mass of filament. The roads, never very wide, grow thinner as he works, to give him room; for never can they touch one another, but only pass near.

Jacint looks much like a man, save for the exquisitely carved basalt wings that adorn his back and his backward-bending knees. His eyes glitter blue and black.

Notes and Abilities: Jacint has occasional patience for sorcerers who summon him. He will build such roads or

pathways as they command in an instant. Walls do not concern him, nor even the most potent seals. He can carve a road through a mountain or to Yu-Shan's gates with a word. He has less patience for those who try and keep him from his important work. Unlike certain others of his rank, he cannot exist in Creation and Malfeas simultaneously, and a sorcerer who extorts a year's service and keeps him from a year of construction earns the eternal wrath of Jacint and all the demons directly below him in the hierarchy.

LIGIER, THE GREEN SUN, FETICH DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

When the books of lore speak of the green sun as Malfeas' heart, they mean that it is his central and foremost soul — his fetich, the living core of the Demon City and its greatest weakness. If Ligier, who is the Green Sun, should die, the nature of Malfeas himself dies. The flesh and power of Malfeas would then recreate itself in a new form for a new era of the world.

Ligier in his own person is the finest smith of the demons — and on the largest scale. He bums rivers of metal out of Creation's mountains or Malfeas' layers to forge his works, from great sea gates to city-sized automata. He takes joy in his work and has too much pride to deliberately forge a thing awry. However, his smithcraft often requires obscure sacrifices, from children's blood to treachery. If a client denies him these, Ligier cannot help but hide flaws within the craft.

Above all things, Ligier seeks to bring an order to the human world like that of the demon world: to turn the Unconquered Sun's light green and to spread black stone and brass across the earth. Such is his love for the world and its people that he wishes it to know the glories that he knows, that its populace might join the demons in celebration for the magnificence of the green sun—Ligier himself.

Ligier normally appears as a handsome young man with auburn hair. He has been known to enter the mortal world without sorcery, at the invitation of a queen, prince or smith, and even to offer his services. In battle, he unhoods the light within him, shining an impossibly brilliant green. This brilliance melts even armored mortals and can temporarily blind the Exalted in his vicinity. Shafts of light spear across the field like javelins, and his sword—an extraordinary work of brass — comes winging to his hand.

Notes and Abilities: Ligier, as a fetich, is significantly stronger than a typical demon of the Third Circle. He considers a small army of Dragon-Blooded or a Circle of experienced Solar Exalted a fair match. Anything less does not concern him. His combative power can empty battlefields. His smithcraft exceeds parallel. However, particularly heroic Celestial Exalted have slain fetiches in the past, in two cases without a Circle. Ligier is less immortal than he thinks.

Like all fetiches and many Third Circle demons, the Green Sun can exist in Creation and Malfeas simultaneously. Calling him to the mortal world does not turn the Demon City dark, though killing him might.





MUNAXES, THE RAVINE OF WHISPERS,

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

The fourth soul of She Who Lives in Her Name exists inside the fire in the 30th sphere that circles that Yozi's central flame. Her name is Munaxes, the Ravine of Whispers. Those that speak ill of their loyal kith and kin, those who whisper against their friends or betray their rightful lords, and those who speak in secret of sins best left unspoken cast their words into Munaxes, where they echo forever after in her hollow embrace.

As a sorcerer summons Munaxes, the ground splits open before him in a crevasse deeper than the world. The earth cracks and sunders for a mile around, shattering buildings and swallowing mortal lives. The central chasm is the demon herself, and if all goes well, she then reveals the secrets and truths lost within her depths.

Notes and Abilities: In combat or service, Munaxes moves slowly. Her maw, about 100 feet in length and 20 across, is infinitely deep. Those who fall into the Ravine proper can fall forever. Most extraneously disappear, screaming, but Exalted characters should have ample opportunities to rescue themselves and favored mortals from this endless fall. The gorges and split earth that spread through the mile around her are mundane, and one can climb out of them normally. Avoiding a fall requires a Dexterity + Athletics roll at difficulty 2 whenever a new crack opens at a character's feet; this occurs once during the summoning and later as Munaxes directs it. Munaxes can also cast up spears and other weapons of stone and issue horrifically painful screams.

Munaxes can answer many of a summoner's questions, drawing on her full knowledge of everything ever said in a context of iniquity. She can also stifle words spoken against a sorcerer or a favored subject. Forever after, no creature can speak ill thereof.

ORABILIS, THE END OF ALL WISDOM,

DEMON OF THE THIRD CIRCLE

The eyes of Orabilis move ever through the Demon City, looking upon all there is to see there. When they pass, the sesseljae go still and the metody grumble, the hopping puppeteers cease their cavorting and the chrysogonae weep. All honor the passage of the eyes of Orabilis. They seek eternally for those who would disrupt the Demon Realm's order and break Cecelyne's law.

The words of Orabilis fall ever on the Demon City. His little words make glass, beads of it that rain onto the stone and brass and congeal over days into the great glass libraries of Malfeas. His greater words create wisdom, augmenting the shelves with scrolls of learning containing truths of Creation and Malfeas never known before. It is Orabilis' will that the demon scholars should come to these libraries and read the truths they find there. It is his will that they should become wiser — but never too wise. Certain understandings are forbidden, and if a demon

achieves them, then she must hide herself from Orabilis' eyes; for if he finds her, he says, "These are things known only to the Yozi." Then he puts his touch upon her.

The touch of Orabilis casts a demon into the void between two layers and burns her to a point of light. She hangs there until extinguished by the wind, often many years later, as a reminder that one should never be too wise. From fear of Orabilis, the demons keep to their place. The demons of the First Circle give their makers all due reverence. The demons of the Second Circle obey their masters above their own desires. The demons of the Third Circle, Orabilis does not govern; but still, they fear to wrestle with him, for some things are known only to the Yozi, and these things live in Orabilis.

Orabilis sometimes assumes mortal shape as a man of the Realm, regally dressed and aristocratic in features. Sand drips off him with each motion, for he is Cecelyne's sixth soul, and his tongue resembles an adder's.

Notes and Abilities: Descriptions of Orabilis in the old books carry a warning: Do not ask him to reveal the mysteries of the world. To do so frees him to lay his touch upon the sorcerer, even if bound, and to cast the sorcerer into the sky. However, one can safely demand a glass library from him, built in the mortal world and full of the lore Orabilis chooses. One may also ask that Orabilis' eyes roam the world looking for enemies, traitors or a hidden prize. Finally, one may demand that molten glass rain upon the enemies of one's choice.

SECOND CIRCLE DEMONS

ALVEUA, THE KEEPER OF THE FORGE OF NIGHT, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE EXPRESSIVE SOUL OF THAT WHICH
CALLS TO THE SHADOWS

Description: Alveua knows when a mortal makes offerings to her and loathes any sacrifice less than an innocent's life. At that, a single life rarely suffices to catch her attention. The Demon Realm is very far from Creation, and Alveua has many things to occupy her mind. Still, shed blood can make a crack by which she can enter the world, and sometimes, she answers such sacrifice. Then, she takes her petitioner to her forge made of night.

Alveua does not do her work where there is light. The light of Luna is as much a sacrilege against her work as the light of the Unconquered Sun. She takes her supplicant to a dark place she knows, lit only by the stars, and places him upon her anvil. From his body she forges a peerless thing: a blade, a ram, a gate or anything such as men make of metal. He does not survive the process, in any conventional sense, but his spirit lingers in the black and shining thing she makes. So long as it exists, it serves the aims that he served and works in its fashion to protect the things he loved. If he loved naught but himself, Alveua makes a



Yozi



crown, and it shall find itself on a royal head in time, overlooking the world. In this way, some vain mortal sorcerers seek to become immortal or to fulfill some goal greater than the span of mortal years permits.

Alveua has the look of a mortal woman, save for the massive red-hot hammer she carries over one shoulder, the shining black metal of her dress and the two small horns that adorn her forehead. Her hair is short and red, and her overall appearance is delicate. Her philosophy she expresses thus: "If I had the shaping of all things, as I have for those I reforge, then the Yozis would not be imprisoned; the gods would not rebel against them; the mortals would not be so bold; and both harmony and happiness should fill the world. Sadly, as Erembour and the Ebon Dragon are held, so held am I; and I can fix only certain aspects of Creation."

Insects love Alveua, for something in her Essence is like theirs, and she crafted the insects of Malfeas. Those who hurt Alveua find themselves assaulted by random swarms for some months thereafter.

Nature: Architect

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Craft (Smith) 6, Dodge 3, Endurance 5, Linguistics 2, Lore 5, Melee 5 (Hammer +3), Occult 2, Presence 5, Stealth 1

Backgrounds: Artifact 5, Resources 5

Charms: Creation of Perfection, Hurry Home, Materialize, Portal, Principle of Motion, Transport

Cost To Materialize: 100

Base Initiative: 11

Attack:

Fist: Speed 11 Accuracy 9 Damage 6B Defense 9

Red-Hot Hammer: Speed 6 Accuracy 13 Damage 17L Defense 13

Dodge Pool: 10 **Soak:** 16L/21B (Infused with enchanted metal, 14L/16B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 125

Other Notes: Alveua's forge allows her to forge humans into objects with peculiar destinies, as described above. She can forge other things of worth at more mundane forges. She takes a +1 difficulty penalty when working with Magical Materials — no such metal is aligned to her, as she is not Exalted.

BERINGIERE, THE WEAVER OF VOICES, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE INDULGENT SOUL OF THE GREEN SUN

Description: Berengiere coalesced around the Green Sun's passion for craft and creation. In the Demon City,

she serves as the guardian of a boneyard where a fetich's remains lay. She does not know how it came to pass from life, but her peculiar aptitudes help her preserve a respectful silence around the grave. When given the chance to visit the mortal world, she indulges her alternate and preferred profession as a maker of cloth.

When Berengiere approaches, animals weep. Tears run down their faces in silence, and their expressions grow disconsolate. The air thickens, and ears begin to ring. Then, the murmuring begins, as if in a crowded room. This sound drifts from the dark, red-veined clothing she wears and is no louder up close than from 50 yards away.

Berengiere wears a thin veil. It seems to hide a face but, instead, holds back a landslide. If removed, brass dust and igneous rock tumble out until the veil falls back into place. Her body, otherwise, represents more than one ideal of beauty. This beauty has brought her many lovers, and many have survived the experience. A suitor is, however, advised to avoid kissing her hand or removing his jacket. Aconite dusts her fingernails.

As her name suggests, Berengiere's particular talent involves weaving fabric from human voices. The stronger the emotions in the voice, the stronger the fabric. Cloth-of-torture makes exceptional armor, and cloth-of-true-love is all but impenetrable. Some of the oldest tapestries in the world are hers, depicting scenes both morbid and marvelous.

Berengiere claims most of her voices from the willing, making cloth from lovers' whispers, cries for mercy and the songs of her summoners. Sometimes, she steals voices, instead, placing her hand over a victim's mouth and taking his voice together with his breath. When her hand lifts, he is mute for a year and a day, and she has the raw materials for another bolt. Only those who consent lose their voices forever. From such prizes she weaves her most beautiful fabrics. The desire to claim such voices drives her—she has served mortals willingly for a pledged voice of unique quality.

Nature: Architect

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 6, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 6, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 4,

Abilities: Archery 2, Awareness 4, Craft (Weaving) 6, Dodge 2, Lore 3, Martial Arts 3, Linguistics 10, Medicine 2, Melee 2, Occult 3, Presence 2, Resistance 5, Ride 2, Sail 1, Socialize 2, Thrown 1

Backgrounds: None

Charms: Confusion, Creation of Perfection, Dreamscape, Dreamscape, Essence Bite, Ghostly Presence, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Memory Mirror, Paralyze, Principle of Motion, Willo-Wisp, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 95

Base Initiative: 10

**Attack:**

Nails: Speed 10 Accuracy 10 Damage 4L Defense 9

Voice Theft: Speed 10 Accuracy 9 Damage N/A Defense 9

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 14L/16B (Cloth-of-true-love clothes, 12L/12B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 123

Other Notes: A scratch from Berengiere's nails poisons the target with aconite (difficulty 2, 2L/6L damage, 6 hours/-3 penalty) unless he has no exposed flesh. Additional scratches produce additional full-strength poisonings, as Berengiere's attack is supernatural.

Stealing a voice costs Berengiere 6 motes and 1 Willpower. A successful attack renders an Exalted target mute for the remainder of the scene and a mortal target mute for a year and a day. If the target consents, Berengiere can instead remove his voice forever. This costs 20 motes and 1 Willpower.

Berengiere can weave the equivalent of various mundane suits of armor from her cloth, using airy fabric rather than leather or chain and thick cloth rather than metal plates. This armor has half the normal mobility and fatigue penalties. Heavy armor requires cloth made from tortured or otherwise deeply passionate voices. She can make superheavy armor only from voices speaking their true love. Berengiere can also make other fabrics (tapestries and so forth) of incredible durability.

Those in physical contact with Berengiere's cloth can choose to hear the voices it contains. Cloth made from transient words contains only those words. Cloth made from a person's whole voice, forever stolen, records something of his nature. Someone touching the cloth can converse with him as he was the moment Berengiere took his voice away — that is, with a record of his memories and personality frozen at the moment she wove her cloth.

**FLORIVET, THE WHIM-OF-THE-WIND,
DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE**

THE REFLECTIVE SOUL OF THE END OF ALL WISDOM

Description: Florivet sails through Malfeas and Cecelyne on a land ship made of bone. He has features mixed of owl, wolf and man. Snowy wings spread from his back, his neck turns nearly full around, his face juts out in a lupine jaw, and his eyes shine with the spirit of adventure. He lost the grace of his master Orabilis by casting aside his first nature as a scholar to roam the world he knows, but Orabilis stayed his wrathful hand, and Florivet sails on.

Florivet knows the ways of the void between Malfeas and Creation and can sail his ship through the city's cracks to the nearest edge of the world. There, he must stop, unless invited further, for Orabilis has not granted him the freedom of Creation. Florivet also knows the ways of sailing back, and many sorcerers born to folly have ridden on his craft to the Demon City.





Nothing appeals more to Florivet than the excitement of a journey — preferably into the unknown, but even upon a charted sea. However, mortal wine and mortal women can turn him temporarily from his path. The Whim-of-the-Wind is notorious both as a drunkard and a womanizer. He takes rejection easily but is often moved to mock or tease the rejecter afterward. On the rare occasions when his pride is hurt, he conjures acid to mar the woman's face, intending that she should never tempt him again. Those who accept his advances are also at risk, however, as he takes similar vengeance on those whose erotic performance displeases him.

The winds blow always behind Florivet. When he angers, they shriek and howl, and the water, sand or earth beneath him bucks — but Florivet has an easy disposition and is soon forgiving, and thereafter, the winds blow calm again. When something moves him to a more cheerful passion, the gusts grow playful, and sailing is smooth. The sorcerers of old knew no better guarantee of a pleasant voyage than to have Florivet dally with a courtesan or a keg of wine below their decks.

Nature: Explorer

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 1, Valor 3

Abilities: Archery 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Investigation 1, Larceny 4, Linguistics 5, Lore 4, Melee 3, Occult 1, Presence 5, Sail 6, Socialize 2, Stealth 3, Thrown 4

Backgrounds: Artifact 5, Cult 1

Charms: Affinity Element Control (Wind), Confusion, Dreamscape, Dreamscape, Element Control, Imprecation, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Tiny Damnation, Tracking, Weather Control, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 88

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 6L Defense 8

Wind: Speed 9 Accuracy 12 Damage 17B Defense 10 Range 15

Long Bow (Lovers' Sigh): Speed 9 Accuracy 17 Damage 6L (Rate 2 Range 200)

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 20L/22B (Yozi-glassbones, 18L/18B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 103

Other Notes: Florivet receives a 10-die bonus with the Weather Control Charm, for a total of 15 dice. Without a Charm, he can cause the winds behind him to rise and buffet nearby opponents, and those same winds make his arrows' flight uncannily exact (this is accounted for in the attack's accuracy).

Florivet uses the Imprecation Charm to scar those who displease him; this removes a point of Appearance. For a mortal, the scarring and the Attribute point loss are permanent unless her player makes a Stamina + Resistance roll at difficulty 4, she has excellent medical care (an Intelligence + Medicine roll at difficulty 3, which, at most, two doctors can attempt) or she receives supernatural healing. Florivet pilots a 20-foot land ship made of his own bones and sinew. He blew crimson Yozi-glass from the Endless Desert's sand, cut out his bones piece by piece to make his ship, and replaced them with the crimson glass struts. The sinews he simply regrew.

**GERVESIN, THE GRIEVING LORD,
DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE**

THE MESSENGER SOUL OF THE GREEN SUN

Description: Ligier's fourth soul takes the form of a weapon, a long spear of verdant light, but no wise hand wields the light of the Green Sun. Though Gervesin needs no human hand to guide him, he prefers to draft some hapless soul for the task. Once a mortal hand closes on the haft, releasing Gervesin again becomes difficult. The spear drags its wielder from battle to battle until she dies — and further yet, until the last flesh falls from her hand and her bones can no longer maintain their grip.

More than 200 years ago, Gervesin wore the title “The Light Unnatural,” and lore knew him best as a blight upon the things of the sun: crops, flowers, clouds, certain birds and the relics of the Anathema.

That changed when the spear struck the heart of a mortal named Kinnojo. In the instant of this meeting, Gervesin fell in love. In that same instant, Kinnojo's flesh turned to ash and blew from his bones. While the demon took himself away to savor his pain, scavengers fell upon the mortal's corpse. Now Kinnojo's bones are scattered across the world as curios and wonders, unbreakable and touched with a hint of greenish light. When Gervesin returned to the world, he swore to protect the cause that Kinnojo died fighting for: the health of Chiaroscuro, his home.

When not dragging a human victim — or, more likely, a corpse — Gervesin flashes over the world in a great green arc. His passage blisters red the clouds he passes through, petrifies the crops and flowers beneath him and spreads fibers of brass through day birds' flesh. If his arc passes over a pregnant woman, the child may be born a demon or a monster. Stones turn black and gold turns to brass. In a long thin line from start to finish, Gervesin leaves a trail of destruction across the world.

At times, Gervesin finds a spear's shape limiting. Then, he may co-opt his wielder's mind and body, or he may take his own human form: an Eastern man with perfect green eyes and a series of intricate tattoos along his arms and back. Those who understand Old Realm script can read Kinnojo's story in these glyphs.



Nature: Martyr

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Dodge 2, Endurance 5, Linguistics 3, Lore 2, Melee 5 (Gervesin +8), Occult 2, Resistance 5, Thrown 5 (Gervesin +8)

Backgrounds: Cult 1

Charms: Essence Bite, Hurry Home, Ignite, Instill Obedience, Materialize, Portal, Possession, Principle of Motion, Shapechange, Spirit-Cutting, Steal Sustenance, Stoke the Flame, Sustenance, Transport, Uncanny Prowess, Will-o-Wisp

Cost To Materialize: 110

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Green Spear: Speed 10 Accuracy 18 Damage 18L Defense 17
Thrown Green Spear: Speed 8 Accuracy 18 Damage 18L
(Rate 1 Range 100)

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 17L/34B (Made of light, 15L/30B)

Willpower: 10 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2A4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 128

Other Notes: Releasing Gervesin, once taking him in hand, requires the character's full attention for a turn and a Willpower + Essence roll at difficulty 4. If Gervesin



cooperates, this lowers the difficulty to 2. Spending a temporary Willpower point each time allows one to make additional attempts after the first.

Many of Gervesin's Charms work only against his wielder. Possession, Stoke the Flame, Instill Obedience, Sustenance and Steal Sustenance apply only to the person holding the spear. The sustenance he drains is a mortal's awareness of her own free will. Conversely, Gervesin's transportation Charms only work when no one wields him.

In any turn of combat when a mortal hand holds him, Gervesin can either take his own action or lend his Melee skill and specialization to the wielder. The players of those struck by Gervesin — whomever guides the blow — must make a reflexive Stamina + Resistance roll with difficulty 3 or have their characters catch fire. This fire burns green and inflicts one lethal wound per turn. No soak applies, and the damage is not rolled. Characters can extinguish it through any standard fire-extinguishing action.

GUMELA, THE JEWELLED AUDITOR, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE WISDOM SOUL OF THE PRINCE UPON THE TOWER

Description: Gumela is Jacint's seventh soul, a man dressed in thousands of silver and golden threads. One end of each thread dangles toward the earth, weighted with a sapphire or an emerald. The other ends curl about his neck or shoulders and disappear beneath the hanging filaments, knotting in the center of his hollow chest before emerging around his hips to form his skirts. His feet, sometimes momentarily visible as he walks, usually seem human. On a few occasions, when the ground offers no firm footing, watchers instead see foot-shaped tangles of multicolored thread, each toe a six-inch tendril independently seeking the best anchor.

Sorcerers call Gumela to unravel mysteries or to break the morale of their enemies. The sweet scent of Gumela's breath provokes outbursts of truth and passion in the mortals around him. Thoughts become words, hidden desires become public, and secrets become shouts. Gumela himself has no immunity to passion. When he drinks and revels, his clothes turn the color of wine, and when a woman gives herself to him, she vanishes — for the night or for eternity — beneath a carpet of thread.

Three signs portend Gumela's approach: long shadows creeping along bodies of water, glints of light in gemstones and a faint lassitude that falls across the region. His path is often marked by long, trailing threads, sometimes literal threads from his garment and sometimes similar things: trickles of water or blood, lines of fine white dust, bizarrely long twigs and long strands of fur or hair.

Even the memory of the orgies and the outbreaks of violence inspired by Gumela's visit often proves detrimental. Though his presence can lead to unfortunate events, it has an addictive quality. If he does not return

within the decade, the celebrants drugged by his breath may draw together again without him, engaging in narcotic-fueled rituals to reenact Gumela's visit. Such rites repeat over the course of decades until the last of the original mortal participants die — many suggest that frequent visits by Gumela may be the root of the Chayan Republic's seasonal madness.

Gumela holds no particular malice in his heart. He regards mortal lives and interests with absolute dispassion, to brighten or trample as his momentary interests dictate, save when his temper rises and his breath turns sour. He hunts knowledge for the enjoyment of discovery and engages in revels for the pleasure of the night.

When free of sorcerous control in the mortal world, Gumela searches for a person, thing or quality of being named Mayoigo. Finding it would resolve a quest given him long ago by the Prince Upon the Tower — and perhaps by the Silent Wind herself. Rumors of its presence arouse the interest of occult scholars and the fear of superstitious mortals, as no one knows precisely what disaster its discovery would bring.

Nature: Savant

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 2.

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3 (Balance +2), Awareness 3, Dodge 2, Endurance 2, Investigation 5, Linguistics 4, Lore 5, Martial Arts 3, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Occult 3, Presence 4, Resistance 2, Stealth 2, Thrown 5 (Green-Tipped Death +2)

Backgrounds: Cult 1

Charms: Camouflage, Confusion, Geas, Hoodwink, Imprecation, Instill Obedience, Malediction, Materialize, Principle of Motion, Spirit-Cutting, Stoke the Flame, Tiny Damnation, Tiny Gift, Will-o-Wisp

Cost To Materialize: 94

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Sapphire Tiger Technique: Speed 7 Accuracy 8 Damage 16B Defense 10

Shining Elephant Fist: Speed 7 Accuracy 8 Damage 16L Defense 5

Green-Tipped Death: Speed 7 Accuracy 13 Damage 7L Rate 2 Range 20

Dodge Pool: 7 **Soak:** 18L/21B (Thread armor, 16L/16B)

Willpower: 10 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 114

Other Notes: Gumela can use Stoke the Flame on an entire crowd by paying 5 motes per die.

Gumela's primary distance weapon is the Green-Tipped Death. This whip-like thread, ending in an emerald point, treats the lethal soak of the target's armor as half its normal value when applying damage. It draws back to his hand after

a throw. On an exceptionally brutal hit, the Green-Tipped Death blossoms into an eight-pointed star within the victim's flesh before closing again and whipping back to Gumela.

When Gumela uses the Sapphire Tiger Technique, sapphire threads spin out to form great spiked fans on the edges of his arms. Half of these writhe out to shove defenses out of the way and the other half strike with his fist to augment its impact. Those struck by the Sapphire Tiger Technique are left tangled in knotted threads. These impose a one-die penalty on all actions. This penalty is cumulative between successful attacks. The penalty persists until the character makes a reflexive Feat of Strength equal to a combined Strength + Athletics of 8 to snap the threads or takes a Dexterity + Athletics action to disentangle herself. This Athletics roll requires one success per point of cumulative penalty.

In the Shining Elephant Fist, glimmering threads wrap around Gumela's arm and extend outward, turning one end of his arm into a massive club and luminescing brilliantly when they strike the target. Players of those hit by the Shining Elephant Fist must make a reflexive Stamina + Resistance roll at difficulty 2 or the light blinds their characters for three turns (see **Exalted**, pp. 237-238, for rules on blindness in combat).

LUCIEN, THE GUARDIAN OF SLEEP, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE EXPRESSIVE SOUL OF THE END OF ALL WISDOM

Description: The stories say that Lucien walked the desert Cecelyne, six feet tall and gaunt as a ghost, until a sandstorm blew straight through his soul. For this reason — or some other — endless tiny holes pierce his body and clothing, so that one can vaguely see the world behind him. When he becomes agitated, many of these holes swell to the size of mouths and white teeth gnash inside them.

Like his lord, Orabilis, Lucien serves his masters as a tracker and a spy. He ferrets out or hunts down those who disturb the rest of the great: ideologues and rebels, heretics and moralists, pretenders and usurpers, beggars and assassins. Lucien kills those whose deeds would awaken Sacheverell, the Demon Prince that knows the shape of things to come, for Sacheverell's sleep is prized by gods and Yozis alike. He causes to vanish those who appeal at the Malfean temples to Adorjan, for the Silent Wind shuns prayers. He catches those demons that worm through the cracks of Malfeas and enter Creation without the permission of their betters. In the mortal world, he has served sorcerers in a similar capacity, digging up or hunting down traitors among their servants.

Lucien has endless shapes, for he must move among many creatures. He speaks to the raitons in their trees and the worms in the earth, to the thieves in their dens and the kings among their courtiers. He may wear any face when seeking out treachery or information and, in

so doing, hide his demonic nature. Only when he comes for a victim does he reveal himself, assuming his own shape and taking up the ivory knives he uses for murder. Then, animals howl at his approach, shadows twist in the moonlight, winds blow first hot then cold, and dice turn up one on every toss. At such times, it is generally too late for his victim to run.

Nature: Paragon (of Respect for the Great)

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 7, Appearance 4, Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 8, Endurance 5, Investigation 4, Larceny 6, Linguistics (see below), Lore 2, Martial Arts 2, Melee 4 (Ivory Knives +2), Occult 5, Presence 6, Resistance 2, Socialize 5, Stealth 7, Survival 5, Thrown 3 (Ivory Knives +2)

Backgrounds: Artifact 4, Cult 3

Charms: Camouflage, Details, DreamSpeak, Form Match, Harrow the Mind, Host of Spirits, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Memory Mirror, Principle of Motion, Shapechange, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 93

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Fist: Speed 9 Accuracy 7 Damage 3B Defense 7

Ivory Knife: Speed 12 Accuracy 12 Damage 5L Defense 11

Thrown Ivory Knife: Speed 12 Accuracy 12 Damage 5L Rate 2 Range 25

Dodge Pool: 13 **Soak:** 13L/16B (Full of holes, 12L/14B)

Willpower: 10 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 118

Other Notes: Lucien speaks every language, including the languages of the animals. This does not increase the effective Intelligence of an animal when it converses with him. Lucien's two ivory knives strike at the life-force of their victim, not the victim's body. The knives' damage is not reduced by physical armor, but it is reduced by Stamina and Charms that enhance the character's natural soak. Lucien can also use these knives to cut at a person's reputation. Each level of damage rolled counts as one success on a Manipulation + Socialize roll to poison the waters against someone. Doing so requires him to cut the victim with a knife, voids the damage for the attack and does *not* require that he interact with the people he thus manipulates.

If another character wields Lucien's knives, he must make an Essence roll with each attack. Failure means the knife turns and bites him instead. For this reason, Lucien sometimes gives his consent for others — his enemies or even his allies — to wield the magic of the blades.





MAKARIOS, THE SIGIL'S DREAMER, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE WARDEN SOUL OF THAT WHICH
CALLS TO THE SHADOWS

Description: Those who wear Makarios' symbol on their brow suffer consecration to him. Until it fades, they do not dream, and — unless Exalted or unless they remove the mark in time — they inevitably go mad. If someone dies while marked, he dreams for Makarios eternally. Only a few bear this burden willingly, in exchange for considerations. The rest are branded by their owners or their enemies.

From the dreams of those given to him, Makarios crafts trade goods — for he is a merchant among demons, and even a sorcerous binding cannot compel him to give away what he could trade.

One can bargain with Makarios in the waking world. There, he seems a charming lad. One may recognize him by the rainbow shimmer on his eyes. Those without the lore to do so simply find it pretty. One can also discover him by the fine copper wire that makes up his hair. Most see only its beauty. Makarios is a demon merchant, and it is his nature to appeal.

As a common trader, Makarios has skill enough. His knowledge of the market is impeccable. His insight into his trading partners is precise. His eye for value is peerless. In these capacities, as advisor or emissary, he may serve the sorcerer who commands him.

A proper bargain with Makarios, however, does not take place in the summoner's circle or in the market. Such bargains transpire within one's dreams. There, Makarios sits in his citadel of chrysoptase and alabaster, surrounded by white and apple-green, with a table carved from a single sapphire before him, and invites his trading partner to a seat of ivory and gold. Sweet incense burns and fills the air, and a feast of fine foods sits not far beside.

Those who bargain with Makarios within their dreams trade in things rarely found upon the world: necklaces of tears, the key to a naiad's heart, spices from outside Creation, living wolves made of copper, lions with the heads of men, the language of toads, poison made from a young man's hate, mist woven into a cloak and boots that walk upon the wind. Such wonders Makarios can craft from the dreams of those bound to him and, with sufficient effort, bring through to the world of flesh and dirt.

Makarios bargains well, but his basic prices are fair. He wishes only to expand the ranks of those consecrated to him, to bring his goods to broader markets and, occasionally, to bring some interesting mortal artifact into his own possession. He has no particular qualm about those who brand or mark others involuntarily in order to keep their bargains. However, someone who promises him dreams and fails to deliver meets an unsavory end.

Nature: Architect (of a Merchant Empire)

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 6, Stamina 3, Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4, Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 2

Abilities: Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 6, Craft (Wonders) 5, Investigation 2, Larceny 6, Lore 5, Linguistics 6, Occult 2, Presence 2, Ride 3, Sail 3, Socialize 3

Backgrounds: Artifact 1-5 (x8 each), Contacts 5, Cult 2, Resources 6

Charms: Confusion, Creation of Perfection, Dreambane, Dreamscape, Dreampeak, Ghostly Presence, Harrow the Mind, Hoodwink, Hurry Home, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Sustenance, Uncanny Prowess, Will-o-Wisp

Cost To Materialize: 87

Base Initiative: 12

Attack:

Prismatic Cloud Touch: Speed 12 Accuracy 10 Damage 17B Defense 10

Dodge Pool: 2 **Soak:** 16L/15B (Prismatic Cloud Armor, 15L/12B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/4/4/-4/Incap

Essence: 6

Essence Pool: 117

Other Notes: Those with Makarios' mark on their forehead cannot dream except when Makarios himself uses the Dreampeak, Dreamscape or Dreambane Charm on them. Exalted can endure a life without dreams, though it is not pleasant; an Intelligence + Resistance roll (difficulty 2) must be made each month for mortals to avoid ill effect. The first failure begins occasional hallucinations. The second failure initiates madness. After the third failure, even removing Makarios' mark cannot return them to sanity. Makarios receives his tribute of dreams regardless of his location. They come to him in Malfeas as easily as in Creation.

It does not cost Makarios Essence to craft things out of the dreams he receives as tribute, though appropriate Craft rolls must be made. Once he crafts something from dreams, bringing it to the waking world requires 100 motes of Essence and 100 successes on his Intelligence + Craft rolls for each dot of Artifact the treasure merits. He can spend this Essence and accumulate these successes over the course of time. As noted above, even sorcerers cannot coerce him into giving away a possession for less than its fair value. A sorcerer can, however, mug him and steal anything he has on him. Makarios does not invest his own infernal Essence in things he intends to sell.

Makarios' Prismatic Cloud Touch gathers the stuff of dreams, fantasies and nightmares about his hand before he issues a blow. It can knock an enemy unconscious and wrack her body, but it cannot actually kill her. A similar Prismatic Cloud Armor forms about him as a reflexive action whenever a weapon begins to strike him.

OCTAVIAN, THE LIVING TOWER, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE DEFINING SOUL OF THE RAVINE OF WHISPERS

Description: Ten feet tall, elephant-tusked and oiled black, Octavian rules a quarter part of one layer of the Demon City. All who have come against him have fallen. His skin has the strength of stone, and his hands bear the power of the avalanche. He has torn the wings from dragons and wrestled down his peers. The head of a Solar Exalted hangs from his belt, shriveled by the passage of time. He has served as both general and champion among the demon hordes.

Octavian once loved the earth, but now it rejects him. Dirt and stone cries when he treads upon it, tear-colored pebbles welling up through the ground. These are easily crushed, with a sound like a sob. Spirits and elementals of the earth avoid him. But though the earth itself hates his touch, Octavian rules the beasts of it: The rabbits, the badgers, the deer, the moles and all the four-legged creatures that run on, scurry over or dig beneath the earth are his to command. The secret to this governance is hound inside an acorn he wears on a string about his neck. If someone takes it from him, his rule dissolves; in the black stone of his Malfean home, an oak grows that, in time, gives him another.

The oil that blackens Octavian has three potencies. Touched against the eyes, it makes men blind. Touched against the ears, it makes men deaf. Touched against the forehead, it makes a man forget the passage of a day. It spreads from Octavian's footsteps to blight circles in the earth and drips from his fingers to ruin his feasts.

Octavian seeks to test his strength against the world. He has reached the logical limits of his empire in Malfeas and wishes to forge one in the mortal world. He considers ambitious sorcerers the perfect allies, for, in his eyes, governance is less interesting than conquest.

Nature: Bravo

Attributes: Strength 1.3, Dexterity 7, Stamina 7, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 5

Abilities: Archery 6, Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 6, Endurance 3, Linguistics 3, Martial Arts 6, Melee 6 (Equitable Resolution +2), Occult 3, Presence 6, Resistance 4, Ride 3 (Damaskenos +2), Socialize 2, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Artifacts 4, Allies 2 (Damaskenos), Cult 5
Charms: Materialize, Principle of Motion, Spirit-Cutting, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 110

Base Initiative: 13

Attack:

Fist: Speed 13 Accuracy 13 Damage 13B Defense 13





Blinding/Deafening Fist: Speed 13 Accuracy 10 Damage 13B Defense 10

Malfean-Iron Staff (Equitable Resolution): Speed 10 Accuracy 16 Damage 20L Defense 15

Dodge Pool: 13 **Soak:** 18L/22B (Tougher than Hell, 15L/15B)

Willpower: 10 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 128

Other Notes: Octavian can speak to and command mortal animals associated with the element of earth. This does not give them any exceptional intelligence beyond the ability to understand the essence of his orders, but they will follow those orders to the best of their abilities, even in perilous circumstances. He has no control over earth spirits and elementals. Equitable Resolution is Octavian's staff, forged from Malfean iron. When it blocks any mundane weapon, that mundane weapon shatters. When it blocks a weapon made of a Magical Material, Octavian may immediately, reflectively attempt to disarm that weapon's wielder with his full attack dice pool. Octavian rides an Agatha (q.v.) named Damaskenos, a large example of her kind. Generally, summoning Octavian also brings Damaskenos. Binding Octavian binds Damaskenos.

When Octavian's fist targets a victim's eyes, he blinds her temporarily. Her player can make a reflexive Stamina + Resistance roll at difficulty 2 the next turn for the character to recover and an additional such roll every subsequent day. When his fist targets a victim's ears, he deafens her temporarily, on the same premise. When he hits a mortal's forehead, it takes away her memories of the past day. This is the effect of the oil on his skin, and it applies even if he pulls his punch. The oil can blind or deafen Exalted victims but cannot make them forget.

STANEWALD, SHE WHO SURMOUNTED THE OMPHALOS, DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE

THE REFLECTIVE SOUL OF THE RAVINE OF WHISPERS

Description: Few have seen Stonewall clearly, for she dissipates in strong light, the strands of her being dissolving away and regathering in shadow. In her presence, dark blood wells up from cracks in the earth and a soft insectile whine fills the air. Her touch tarnishes both silver and brass. The sound of her voice renders fire itself impotent. Her footsteps make no sound, for her feet drift half an inch above the earth.

Stonewall wears a tanned horsehide cloak over a Southern tunic and pants made from fine white silk.



When she wishes her enemies to hear her approach, she casts off the cloak. It twists into a full horse's skin, its dried and hollow legs ending in black steel horseshoes. This is Wulfthryth, a creature neither wholly part of her nor wholly separate, and its precise and perfectly even hoofbeats ring for miles when it runs.

Above all else, Stonewall is a dancer. In all Malfeas, only the Yozi's themselves and two other demons surpass her. Many who have seen her dance say it exceeds any mortal thing in its beauty — but they speak without certainty. Her dance is half-dream and half-suggestion, for she must dance in shadow or in night and never beneath the dissolving touch of the sun.

Nothing calls to Stonewall so much as shattering stone. Sometimes, she steps into the mortal world without a summoner, drawn by a major earthquake or a Sundered Manse. Tumbling stone towers and catapult-broken walls catch her attention and can distract her even from an Exalted sorcerer's demands. This relates, in part, to her greatest efficacy: 13 of her dances are potent against stone, from the hour-long Hollows Dance that makes a stone wall porous to the seven-day Dance of Earth and Fire that can melt a castle into gelatinous magma.

These qualities came to her at her creation. When she coalesced within Munaxes to form the Ravine's sixth soul, her first title was "The Answer to the Earth." For many years, she strove to unmake the spirit courts of stone. Her goals shifted a mere 70 years ago, when she climbed the Imperial Mountain at a Yozi's behest. Whatever magic it asked her to work there changed her. Her obsession has deserted her, and she desperately seeks a new passion.

Nature: Visionary (currently missing a vision and, thus, unable to regain Willpower through her Nature)

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 7, Stamina 4, Charisma 6, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Dodge 5, Endurance 4, Linguistics 3, Lore 4, Martial Arts 4, Occult 3, Performance 11, Presence 6, Ride 5, Socialize 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Cult 3, Familiar 5 (Wulfthryth)

Charms: Affinity Element Control (Stone), Ghostly Presence, Host of Spirits, Materialize, Principle of Motion, Stillness, Will-o-Wisp, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 110





WULFTHRYTH

If Wulfthryth dies, but Stonewall does not, Stonewall regenerates the creature on the next midnight of the new moon.

Physical Att Str/Dex/Sta	Willpower	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Atk/ Dmg	Dodge/ Soak	Abilities
14/3/10	5	-0x3/-1x3/ -2x2/-4/1	Trample: 3/6/12L	4/5L/10B	Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Intimidation 2, Presence 6

Base Initiative: 11

Attack:

Stone-Breaking Fist: Speed 11 Accuracy 13 Damage 10L Defense 13

Boulder-Exploding Kick: Speed 8 Accuracy 12 Damage 14L Defense 12

Gate-Shattering Touch: Speed 3 Accuracy 13 Damage 20L Defense 13

Dodge Pool: 12 **Soak:** 15L/17B (Partial dematerialization*. 13L/13B)

*Attacks that can damage dematerialized targets affect Stonewall without the benefit of this soak, and Stonewall is always vulnerable to the Ghost-Eating Technique and other Charms that only work on dematerialized spirits.

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 8 **Essence Pool:** 130

OtherNotes: Stanewald's attacks do double damage against rock, earth spirits and earth elementals, before soak is applied. She must meditate for five minutes immediately before using the Gate-Shattering Touch. During this time, she cannot take other actions.

When summoned in the presence of shattering stone, Stanewald takes a three-die penalty to her Willpower + Essence rolls.

Firedust within range of Stanewald's voice becomes permanently inert the instant she speaks. This requires no roll.

**ZSOFIKA, THE KITE FLUTE,
DEMON OF THE SECOND CIRCLE**

THE MESSENGER SOUL OF THE PRINCE UPON THE TOWER

Description: When a sorcerer calls Zsofika from the embers of a low-burning fire and the demoness takes up

Time Required	Effect
26 hours	Carve a tunnel through stone wide enough for a human to pass through, extending one foot per success for each hour she continues to dance.
29 hours	Open a pit beneath her feet seven miles deep and one square foot around per success. She does not fall in.
Three days	Create a small fumarole from which pebbles and smoke jet into the sky. This volcanic vent lasts one year per success and has essentially cosmetic effects.
Five days	Wipe the god-blood from a half-earth-elemental child (no more than one year old per success).
Seven days	Produce a significant local earthquake that lasts until the dance stops.
Seven days	Dissolve a castle-sized stone structure into magma. Those who remain inside the castle suffer burns from molten rock dripping onto them and engulfing them; mortals generally die from it.
62 minutes	Make 50 square feet per success of stone wall porous, halving its soak.
63 minutes	Turn a boulder into sand.
67 minutes	Cause the earth to shake lightly for one square mile per success, until the dance stops.
69 minutes	Make one mortal per success feel generally spiteful against and about rocks and stone.
92 minutes	Inflict agony upon a captive earth spirit or elemental.
24 hours	Enrage one local spirit against a stone structure per success.

STANEWALD'S 13 EFFICACIOUS DANCES

These 12 dances draw on the power of the Ravine of Whispers and, ultimately, on She Who Lives in Her Name. For all of these dances, roll Stanewald's Essence + Conviction pool. A failure or botch yields no effect, but even a single success causes the dance to have its full effect. The name and effects of her 13th dance are unknown.

her arms, a centuries-old celebration begins. To the precise beat of distant drums, shadows swim and insects circle. Humans bereft of mind and humans bereft of soul moan and stomp their feet. Horses toss their heads and often go mad. Zsofika's arrival awakens the Things that Dwell in Corners, which cannot interact with the living world but prick at and disturb the senses as they move.

Zsofika has the ebony skin of the Far South and great soft eyes. Her hair is long and red, with bells knotted into it. She has cut free several braided locks and twisted them into vambraces. Her clothing is argent and her fingers have an extra joint in them. When she enters the world, she turns for 70 beats within the fire. Her dark skin smokes, and her eyes show nothing but a blaze. In this time, she chooses — by whim or sorcerous command — the victim of her celebration. Then, she becomes inexorable.

With each drumbeat, Zsofika takes one step closer to her prey. Every 10 beats, she clashes together her swords. In every 100 beats, another standardbearer rises from the ground to march behind her. Hollow tubes — “kite flutes” — mounted atop each standard catch the wind and give forth a mournful howl. Storms and omens follow in her path.

Zsofika can track a target unerringly and moves slightly faster than her mortal prey does. When the howling of her standards approaches, it inspires even the sternest minds to fear. This is the song of the wind through the kite flutes: “You may think yourself mighty, but there are things in the world that you do not understand, and they are both greater and more terrible than you.” Driven by that song, whole settlements and barbarian tribes have scattered from Zsofika's path, and powerful potentates have abandoned their armies and defenses to flee in starkest fear.

When she has caught her victim, killed him and eaten each of his bones, the celebration of Zsofika ends. Then, she is free to obey a sorcerer's other orders or her own desires, depending on the circumstances of her arrival. Generally, her desires involve trading her services to mortals or spirits for the opportunity to implant a child within them. Lucky or wise bargainers suffer a long but harmless malaise carrying the infant to term, while the unlucky or desperate suffer consumption from the inside out.

In the Demon City, Zsofika's celebration never ends. She moves from one end of Malféas to the other, hunting petty demons whose names she does not even know. She needs no other celebrants, for the city walls drum for her as she passes, the streets make the sounds of stomping feet, and gusts of wind hold her kite flutes aloft. The omens she leaves in her track mean nothing, for there is no destiny in the Demon City. The weather her passage stirs up is strange, from snows made of gold to black stone hail. It spreads up and out into the interstices of the city, mixing with the patterns created by other weather demons and fading only slowly into the naturally still, air.

Nature: Traditionalist

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6, Charisma 1, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4, Perception 7, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 5, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Brawl 6, Dodge 3, Endurance 6, Linguistics 2, Lore 3, Melee 6, Occult 2, Performance 10, Presence 5, Resistance 6, Sail 6

Backgrounds: Cult 4, Followers 5+ (Ghostly Standardbearers)

Charms: Foretell the Future, Host of Spirits, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Natural Prognostication, Principle of Motion, Spirit-Cutting, Tracking, Weather Control, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 60

Base Initiative: 10

Attack:

Nails: Speed 10 Accuracy 11 Damage 6L Defense 11

Dragon Fan Dance: Speed 10 Accuracy 15 Damage 18L Defense 13

Swords: Speed 10 Accuracy 12 Damage 10L Defense 11

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 15L/20B (Steel-like skin, 12L/14B, plus vambraces, +1 difficulty to hit.)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/4/4/4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 119

Other Notes: During Zsofika's celebration, and until she catches her target, those able to hear the kite flutes suffer unnatural fear. Their players must successfully roll Valor + Essence against difficulty 2 or the characters flee. The difficulty rises to 3 for someone wishing to actively approach her. Zsofika always moves at least two yards per turn faster than her target, whether on foot or at sea, regardless of terrain. She always knows the direction of her target, unless that target has extremely powerful supernatural protections. This power does not involve the Tracking Charm.

Zsofika's Weather Control Charm does not build on an Affinity Element Control.

Zsofika has spawned many races of demon children. The teodozji and the angyalka appear below, but if she implants a child in a mortal or a spirit, that child need not be of either race. In the Dragon Fan Dance, great fans open between Zsofika's arms and her sides. Darkness spirals up over her lower body in the shape of a serpent. That serpent rears up over her victim before Zsofika darts down to slash him with blades like fangs. The player of someone hit by this attack must succeed at a Valor + Essence roll at difficulty 2 or have his character spend the next three turns in violent trembling and panic. In this state, he may take no action save to dodge or parry attacks. Zsofika can only use the Dragon Fan Dance one turn in three. She stole this dance from Gumela many years ago, but he no longer uses it himself. Zsofika's vambraces, though small, can block and annul even the most fearsome attack. They serve, therefore, as a





shield rather than as armor, subtracting one die from attacks made against her.

Zsofika's standard-bearers are extras with 5 soak. They take no actions save to follow her, hold the flutes aloft (with a dice pool of 7 if contested) and reflexively resist damage. On a long hunt, they become as legion as the locusts. A single kite flute can be heard from a mile away. Each power of 10 thereafter doubles the range, so that the sound of 1,000 kite flutes held aloft by 1,000 standard-bearers rings for eight miles.

THE THINGS THAT DWELL IN CORNERS

Tiny bits of demonic essence, the Things That Dwell in Corners are little more than Creation's memory of the Primordials that built it. Normally, they slumber. If awakened by Zsofika's celebration or another demonic event, they take on a vague existence akin to that of the least gods (p. 47), scurrying almost-visibly in the corners and encouraging an oppressive atmosphere. They make their presence known wherever demonic energies gather.

FIRST CIRCLE DEMONS

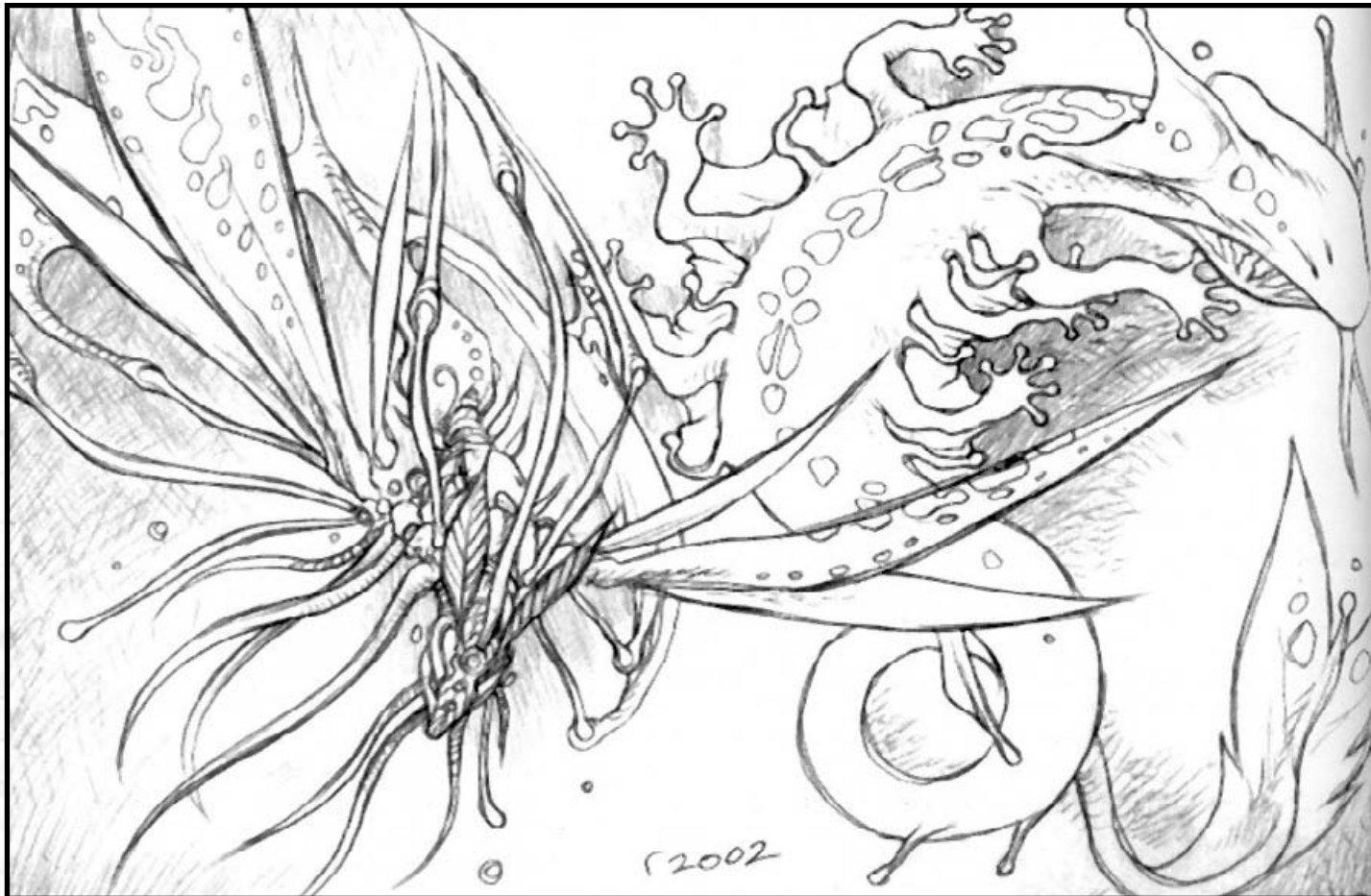
AGATA, THE BEAUTEOUS WASP, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE WHIM-OF-THE-WIND

Description: There are men who hate wasps and women who would see them dead; but those men and women have not seen the agatae. There is a brilliance of sunlight in their beating wings and a glittering of a thousand colors in their translucent forms. Their stings have every beauty of a blade, and their heads are crowned with gold. About them hangs a glory, a transformative light. It changes those who see it, marking them forever, in the same fashion as a cave-raised child's first glimpse of a sunrise or a Southerner's first sight of snow. Stories are written of the agatae, and songs, though this is a degenerate age with many of those stories lost.

The wasps of the demon world stand as high as a man, on six crystal legs. Their wings beat in one great motion, strong enough to hold alight the agata and two armored men. Their senses and intuition are keen. Their voices peal like bells.

The agata thought process exceeds most human minds in its scope, and the wasps are both cunning and wise. At the same time, the strange philosophical thoughts that occupy their heads have no easy translation into any demonic or



human tongue. These thoughts often fill them with random outbursts of emotion, from an all-embracing happiness that makes them hover in their ecstasy to outbursts of anger or jealousy that can make them attack their peers. In the agata's worldview, such emotions make perfect sense, and any questioning of their motivations produces a blank stare and the assertion that no other action was reasonable. Even sorcerers can have difficulty determining whether an agata's action reflects some deep understanding or a transient passion.

The agatae are riding beasts, and they accept this as their function. If one should lose a mortal rider out of its folly, or hers, or if it casts free its rider during some momentary temper, it feels a great sadness. Many have traveled long distances to fetch a fallen mortal's lover to tend the human's grave, spent days mourning their rider or composed great poetry to mark a dead woman's passing. Others, realizing that the natural order of the universe endorses their behavior, proceed on without care.

Sorcerers do not lightly bring agatae into the world to face their deaths. Even the callous find it difficult to doom the Beauteous Wasps thus. Others have an easier time of it; those who must fight the agatae fight the agatae. One can love the sea and still kill the Storm Mother at one's throat.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 6, Perception 2, Intelligence 5, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 1 (Airborne +2), Endurance 3, Linguistics 2, Occult 1, Resistance 2, Survival 3

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Hurry Home, Materialize, Portal, Principle of Motion

Cost To Materialize: 50

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Claw: Speed 5 Accuracy 2 Damage 6L Defense 7

Sting: Speed 8 Accuracy 7 Damage 10L Defense 6

Dodge Pool: 4 (Airborne +2) **Soak:** 4L/9B (Thin carapace, 2L/4B)

Willpower: 8

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3

Essence Pool: 76

Other Notes: The agata have a Temperance of 3 when using Charms and battling external temptation. Their effective Temperance is 1 when battling their own passions and impulses.

In an enclosed space, the agatae can fly 21 yards per turn. They can fly 12 yards per turn in such a space while taking





other actions. These numbers double to 42 and 24 in the open air, for a maximum speed around 30 mph.

It takes an agata one turn to become airborne or to land, and an agata can only use its sting while in the air.

**AMPHELISIA, THE TEAKETTLE COURTIER,
DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE**

PROGENY OF THE JEWELLED AUDITOR

Description: Coupling with demon courtesans, or perhaps with some principle inside himself, Gumela gave birth to the amphelisiae. They are one species among many; the Jeweled Auditor has spawned more than two dozen races of demons.

An amphelisia most resembles a glimmering lizard, seven feet from nose to tailtip. It murmurs softly at all times, to itself or to any other amphelisiae present, a quiet staccato whisper like the cracking of wood underfoot. Even when dematerialized, it cannot cloak this sound; the noise simply recedes into the farthest distance. This whisper contains secrets that the amphelisia cannot let itself forget. If forcibly silenced, an amphelisia dissolves into dank wind, but a sorcerer cannot command one to do this.

When stirred into excitement, an amphelisia raises a bright-orange fan behind its head and murmurs more loudly. Poisonous things — scorpions, spiders, snakes — begin to drift out of the shadows or fall from the trees. If the amphelisia is not quickly slain, most of these creatures surge together and swarm over the demon's flesh, forming a new creature from the still-active mass of vermin — a black and amorphous beast with long curling tentacles. At this point, the murmur rises to a shrill whistle, and the demon can spit an endless supply of poison at its enemies. On sorcerous command, it can, instead, drool that poison for over an hour, tainting a water supply or stocking an armory.

Amphelisiae cannot bear laughter. The sound of mirth strikes one almost invariably as a slur upon itself. For this reason, laughter excites even relatively secure amphelisiae. When spoken to softly, without provocation, amphelisiae are generally more playful. They find still water, soap bubbles and other reflective surfaces endlessly interesting, and are often quite loyal to those who offer them new secrets. This does not change the consequences of overexciting a Teakettle Courtier. When swallowed in a swarm of poisonous creatures, the amphelisia has no loyalties save those that sorcery enforces.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Survival 3

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Confusion, Materialize, Principle of Motion

Cost To Materialize: 33

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Bite: Speed 8 Accuracy 5 Damage 2L Defense 4

Tentacle: Speed 8 Accuracy 5 Damage 5L Defense 8

Poison Spray: Speed 10 Accuracy 9 Damage Poison Defense 9

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:*** 1L/3B//8L/10B (Poisonous arachnid/snake bodies, 7L/7B)

* When an amphelisia has transformed, the bodies of poisonous vermin blunt the force of an attacker's blows. The vermin killed intercepting such attacks fall out of the swarm, and new venomous things pour from the shadows and trees to replace them.

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 65

Other Notes: Summoning the venomous creatures takes three turns. The amphelisia's Appearance drops to 0 when they swarm over its body, but it gains access to its armor and the tentacle and poison spray attacks. Treat a character's first two exposures to the poison — from a tentacle touch or the spray — as exposure to coral snake venom (difficulty 3, 1L/4L damage, 1 minute/-6 penalty). After two exposures, she cannot suffer further amphelisia poisoning that day.

When surrounded by venomous creatures, an amphelisia can spit or drool roughly one gallon of venom per minute. This costs the demon 1 mote of Essence per gallon. In an hour, an amphelisia can produce roughly eight cubic feet of poison. That is enough to poison an army, a city or a small lake.

**ANGYALKA, THE HARPIST,
DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE**

PROGENY OF THE KITE FLUTE

Description: In the Syndics' halls in Whitewall to the north, an angyalka bound by chains of orichalcum plays the flow of Time as if it were a harp. Two dozen fingers more precise than any mortal horn's pull music from the air, and all who listen to her nod: for she plays the moments of their life lost to the listening. To hear her play teaches nothing of the future, for that Time is not yet come. It speaks nothing of the past, for that Time is lost. Those who listen to her hear the beat of moments within their soul and know what they have lost — an hour from a life of valor, perhaps, or five minutes from a life of shame. To those that like their nature, the song of the angyalka seems beautiful. To those that despise themselves, it is painful—either denying their self-image or confirming it. The angyalka of Syndic is bound beyond her ability, or her maker's, to set her free, and so, she plays as she has played for more than 30 years. She does not truly mind. An angyalka cannot cease to play, or her existence will end, and there are less comfortable places in Creation than the Syndic's halls.

The angyalkae wear the shapes of beautiful men or women, save for their hands: Each hand ends in a dozen long fingers, thin as candle wicks, and each finger has seven joints. These hands are constantly in motion, pulling music from the air. If an angyalka must take up arms or defend herself, she uses her prehensile hair. The melodies of the angyalkae cannot be perfect, for they are creatures smaller than Time, but they often sound an able echo of the listeners' souls. Sorcerers who wish to know themselves — or humble an enemy with the truth of that enemy's nature — call the angyalkae to the world.

The truths of the angyalkae's song sound to the spirits of the world as much as to human ears. The earth rests peacefully, secure in itself. Water ripples uneasily, aware of its forgetfulness and unsure of what it has forgotten. Fires burn the angrier for knowing their own rage, and winds blow more subtly, commending themselves on their guile.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 5, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 2

Abilities: Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Endurance 2, Linguistics 5, Lore 4, Occult 4, Performance 8, Presence 5

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Ghostly Presence, Materialize, Natural Prognostication, Stoke the Flame, Will-o-Wisp, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Hair Whip: Speed 7 Accuracy 5 Damage 3L Defense 2

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 1L/3B

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 57

Other Notes: None

CHRYSOGONA, THE CRYING WOMAN, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE SIGIL'S DREAMER

Description: Ten stick-like fingers support a chrysogona above the ground, each a yard longer than her head and body combined. A chrysogona's body is little more than a withered piece of wood, and her head is a backless tragedy mask. Generally, chrysogonae do not walk on their fingers, which are sensitive and arthritic. Rather, they extrude new fingers at need while fire twines up and destroys a few existing ones. Chrysogonae can also extend the fingers they have. In the extreme, these demons can spiral straight upward by simultaneously extending and burning each extremity.

Chrysogonae find no meat or drink so satisfying as ambition. They find the intrigues of a court a most satisfying meal and gleefully encourage such backstabbing,

blackmail, treachery and deceit as they can. To protect her banquet, a chrysogona generally bargains with the highest lord or lady of the court, offering her advice and protection in exchange for a home. Until the demon judges that another ruler would serve her better, a king could have no more loyal friend.

Although they take much pleasure in the play of ambition and how it leads men and women to their doom, the chrysogonae do not love all things made by malice. To see an innocent come to a sad end, to see things of beauty ruined or to see true love destroyed can make tears drip from the hollow sockets of a chrysogona's eyes and turn to gray the fine brown fingernails on which she stands. They find births most tragic of all. The rain from a chrysogona's eyes can drown a newborn child.

A chrysogona does not fade entirely, even when killed or banished. Its fingernails remain hooked into the souls of those who have served it, and such individuals often dream of long fingers crawling on their flesh in darkness. Every now and again, the gentle touch of a lover will suddenly feel like twisted wooden sticks, or the rain will sound like a chrysogona's tears.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 7, Appearance 1, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 4, Valor 1

Abilities: Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 5, Dodge 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics 3, Lore 2, Occult 1, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Socialize 6, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Influence 4, Resources 4

Suggested Charms: Confusion, Harrow the Mind, Ignite, (Instill Obedience), Lend Authority, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Stillness, (Stoke the Flame), Sustenance, Tiny Gift

Cost To Materialize: 33

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Bite: Speed 1 Accuracy 3 Damage Transformation Defense 2

Poke: Speed 1 Accuracy 3 Damage 2B Defense 2

Dodge Pool: 4 **Soak:** 2L/5B (Wooden body, 2L/4B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 63

Other Notes: The chrysogonae do not need the Stoke the Flame and Instill Obedience prerequisites for the Lend Authority Charm.

Chrysogonae run at 10 yards per turn, not 15, and can also move one to three yards straight up. They have the option of hovering — rising as fast as gravity pulls them down — but they cannot fly at an angle.

A chrysogona's bite does no damage, but it begins the process of transforming the victim to wood. Until the chrysogona dies or someone forces her from the character's presence, she can continue this transformation with a successful Essence + Valor roll. The first time she succeeds on this roll, she inflicts





three levels of lethal damage; the second time, six; the third, nine; and so forth. Characters can soak this damage normally. Unsoaked damage represents flesh turning to wood. When this damage would normally kill her opponent, the victim instead becomes a wooden statue. A mortal victim shrivels over the next three turns and becomes a chrysozona. Exalted victims remain Incapacitated wooden statues, and can be healed through Charms that restore health levels or transmute them in some fashion.

**DECANTHROPE,
DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE**

PROGENY OF THE GRIEVING LORD

Description: Typical decanthropes have 10 human bodies and a single demonic form. They often come into a settlement as a group of performers—each body is gifted in the arts — but have sometimes sought entry as farmers, refugees or 10 individuals with distinct skills.

A decanthrope body's eyes do not reflect, and its skin is often cold. It gives off no scent, and its hair typically hangs to its waist. Nevertheless, humans are often fooled. Decanthropes do not walk the world often enough to be a common concern.

Individually, a decanthrope's human bodies are shells, animal in their intelligence, with a vague memory of the demon's own skills and its most recent intentions. The demon body is a long and ugly ribbon, serrated, warty and green, resembling a thin scarf or an elongated tongue. At any given time, it is attached to the nervous system and mind of one of its human bodies. When it wishes to change forms, it darts in a perfectly straight line from the finger or mouth of one body to another. The force and speed of this projection exceeds that of the swiftest arrow, sufficient to slice through solid oak or shove aside an iron gate.

A decanthrope performance generally leaves its audience well-satisfied but also troubled. The music or theatre echoes themes in an observer's heart, awakening rivalries, grudges and suspicions. Paeans to love arouse jealousy. Songs of joy evoke despair. Even a juggling routine can make its viewers feel that their life is spinning out of control.

Decanthropes have an old hatred for the Exalted, a single burning strand of ancient anger that trickled down from Malfeas through Ligier and Gervesin to the center of their nasty minds. Their favorite game is to trap a Dragon-Blooded or Celestial Exalted in a crowd, where the milling humans conceal its human bodies and offer many lethal angles for darting from one host to another. Even in ideal circumstances, however, a decanthrope generally finds itself outmatched. Any decanthrope who has slain five Dragon-Blooded or a Celestial Exalted receives great respect in the Demon Realm.

Without an obvious opportunity to strike at the Exalted, a decanthrope soon pursues its secondary goal: personal growth. If it seduces a mortal and then hangs her for three days from a high tree branch, the body becomes the demon's. Some

regions have the respectful custom of cutting down bodies found hanging in this fashion. This greatly annoys the demon.

Decanthropes cannot pool or exchange their bodies, but nevertheless have an irrational fear of having their bodies stolen. For this reason, decanthropes almost never work together willingly, and if forced to serve side by side, they spend more time and effort squabbling and worrying than in service.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 2

Abilities: Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 1, Craft (Varies) 3, Dodge 2, Larceny 2, Linguistics 3, Medicine 1, Melee 1, Performance 4, Presence 3, Resistance 1, Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Thrown 3 (Projection +3)

Backgrounds: Followers 3-4

Suggested Charms: Element Touch (Unpleasant Emotions), Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Stoke the Flame

Cost To Materialize: 50

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Bite: Speed 7 Accuracy 5 Damage 4L Defense 2

Projection: Speed 9 Accuracy 12 Damage 13L

Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 3L/7B (Rubbery flesh, 2L/4B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 77

Other Notes: A decanthrope's bite only functions outside its bodies. A decanthrope's projection only moves it between two bodies. It takes a level of lethal damage each time a body it resides in is killed and must reach the next body without a projection.

For 20 motes of Essence, the decanthrope can use Element Touch or Stoke the Flame on every individual member of a crowd watching the demon perform. Make die roll only once. The decanthrope also has 10 bodies, and it uses their Physical Traits when inside one of them. A body can manage hand-to-hand combat on its own but gets confused if it loses sight of its opponent. On their own, these bodies have the following Traits.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1-3, Perception 1, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 1, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Brawl 1, Craft (Varies) or Performance 2, Dodge 2, Linguistics 3, Melee 1, Presence 1, Resistance 1, Stealth -1, Survival 1

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Materialize, Measure the Wind

Cost To Materialize: 22

Attack:

Fist: Speed 7 Accuracy 5 Damage 4B Defense 5
 Knife: Speed 10 Accuracy 5 Damage 5L Defense 3
Dodge Pool: 6 **Soak:** 3L/5B (Numb to the world, 1L/1B)
Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 44

Notes: The Storyteller should probably treat these bodies as extras when the decanthrope is not inside.

**FIRMIN, THE NEEDLEMAKER,
 DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE**

PROGENY OF THE KEEPER OF THE FORGE OF NIGHT

Description: Firmin appear human from the front. Their backs, however, are bristles of spines. Organs underneath their fingernails generate a thick black mucous. It is a firmin's wont to touch its fingers together and then pull them apart, a strand of this ichor spreading between them and, in an instant, hardening into a shiny black needle with a negligible curve. Such needles cannot harm a firmin, and, if left alone to work, a firmin generally builds a great nest out of needles and daub. Firmin are social creatures, and 10 or 100 firmin in a single place build one great nest rather than many smaller ones.

When she has constructed her nest, a firmin seeks to decorate it. At first, she skewers small animals or birds on the spines of her nest. Eventually, this fails to satisfy her. She augments an existing needle until it is long and strong enough to support a human or demon and seeks to pins one there. Many victims get away; the light of the Green Sun and the Unconquered Sun alike have an active, almost deliberate, propensity to glint off firmin needles and betray their approach to their prey. Regardless of how the hunt ends, local settlements generally remove themselves or the firmin after the first encounter. If they do not, for whatever reason, the nest grows to support as many humans or demons from its spines as the firmin can catch.

Despite their appearance, the firmin are not an intelligent species. They build their nests and hunt their prey on instinct alone. They understand the idea of communication and that it involves human noises. However, the firmin themselves only use a few miscellaneous syllables to indicate such things as "danger" or "food" and become extremely confused and irritated when spoken to in a modern tongue. Humans who know the language of the Old Realm can generally indicate such concepts as "kill that person," "sit" and "no! eat that outside!" but nothing more.

Firmin needles are extremely strong. Clever firmin can be trained to extrude their ichor into a mold, making light, durable tools and weapons. Sorcerers cursed with dull firmin can use firmin needles in ordinary smithcraft. Molten metal does not melt them, making a bundle of needles a suitable core for a sword.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 0, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 1, Brawl 2, Craft (Needles) 5 (Making Nests +3), Dodge 2, Endurance 1, Melee 3 (Needle Sword +2), Resistance 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Thrown 1 (Needle Knives +2)

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Landscape Camouflage (Nest), Landscape Hide (Nest), Materialize, Sense Domain, Stillness, Tracking, Uncanny Prowess

Cost To Materialize: 25

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Fist: Speed 6 Accuracy 5 Damage 3B Defense 5
 Needle Sword: Speed 6 Accuracy 9 Damage 6L Defense 9
 Needle Throwing Dagger: Speed 6 Accuracy 6 Damage 5L (Rate 3 Range 15)

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 3L/2B (Needle-strengthened bones, 2L/0B)

Willpower: 2 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap
Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 48

Other Notes: It takes a firmin one turn to extrude a needle sword or dagger, if it is not carrying one.

The firmin make unexceptional weapons for themselves. Guided by an intelligent mind, however, one can use firmin or their needles to produce exceptional weapons as quickly as a mortal workforce produces normal weapons (or normal weapons at the rate of one per turn).

**GILMYNE, THE DANCER AT THE SAIGOTH GATES,
 DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE**

PROGENY OF THE GUARDIAN OF SLEEP

Description: The gilmyne have a myth — and there is almost certainly no truth to it — that beyond Creation, beyond Cecelyne, at the farthest Western edge of that which is, there stand the Saigoth Gates. Carved of starmetal and set with emeralds, they mark the end of existence. Nothing ever enters through the Saigoth Gates, that which leaves through them ceases to exist. This myth defines the gilmyne, for they are dancers. Their dances speak in ways beyond words of the Gates they imagine beyond the edges of the known.

The gilmyne know only two efficacious dances: the Dance of Existence, that celebrates life, and the Dance of Extinguishment, that celebrates endings. One dance inflames the passions of the living and cuts the cold hearts of the dead. The other invigorates the dead and saps the living, and a gilmyne performs this dance before it kills. A gilmyne's peers consider it unschooled unless it also learns 5,000 mortal dances, including 3,000 known primarily in Malfegas and 600 that only the gilmyne dance. The other 598 dances exclusive to the gilmyne, like the two efficacious dances, celebrate the gilmyne dream of the Saigoth Gates, but they have no magical effects.





In strictest physical appearance, the gilmyne resemble silver pillars of flame. Viewers, however, rarely regard them as such. Such is a gilmyne's charisma that it seems in no eyes like a stranger, appearing human to the humans, elemental to the elementals and feline to the cats. Those who do not specifically study the details of a gilmyne's form assume even superficial details match: to a man of the West, they seem Western, and to a woman of the East, they have an Eastern form. Only those who insist on noting the details of a gilmyne's shape — its nose, its eyes, the length of its limbs — notice the disconcerting fact that it has no nose, no eyes, no limbs nor even flesh. Those who do not expect a gilmyne may notice the burned ground where the gilmyne danced, the ashes of the wood it touched — but while a logical examination of the possibilities soon exposes the gilmyne's nature, instinct never does.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2, Charisma 7, Manipulation 2, Appearance 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Dodge 4, Endurance 4, Martial Arts 1 (Performing Kata +3), Performance 6, Presence 3, Socialize 1, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Ghostly Presence, Materialize, Principle of Motion, Stillness, Stoke the Flame, Uncanny Prowess, Will-o-Wisp, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 9

Attack:

Touch: Speed 9 Accuracy 6 Damage 8L Defense 6

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 4L/8B (Made of fire, 3L/6B)

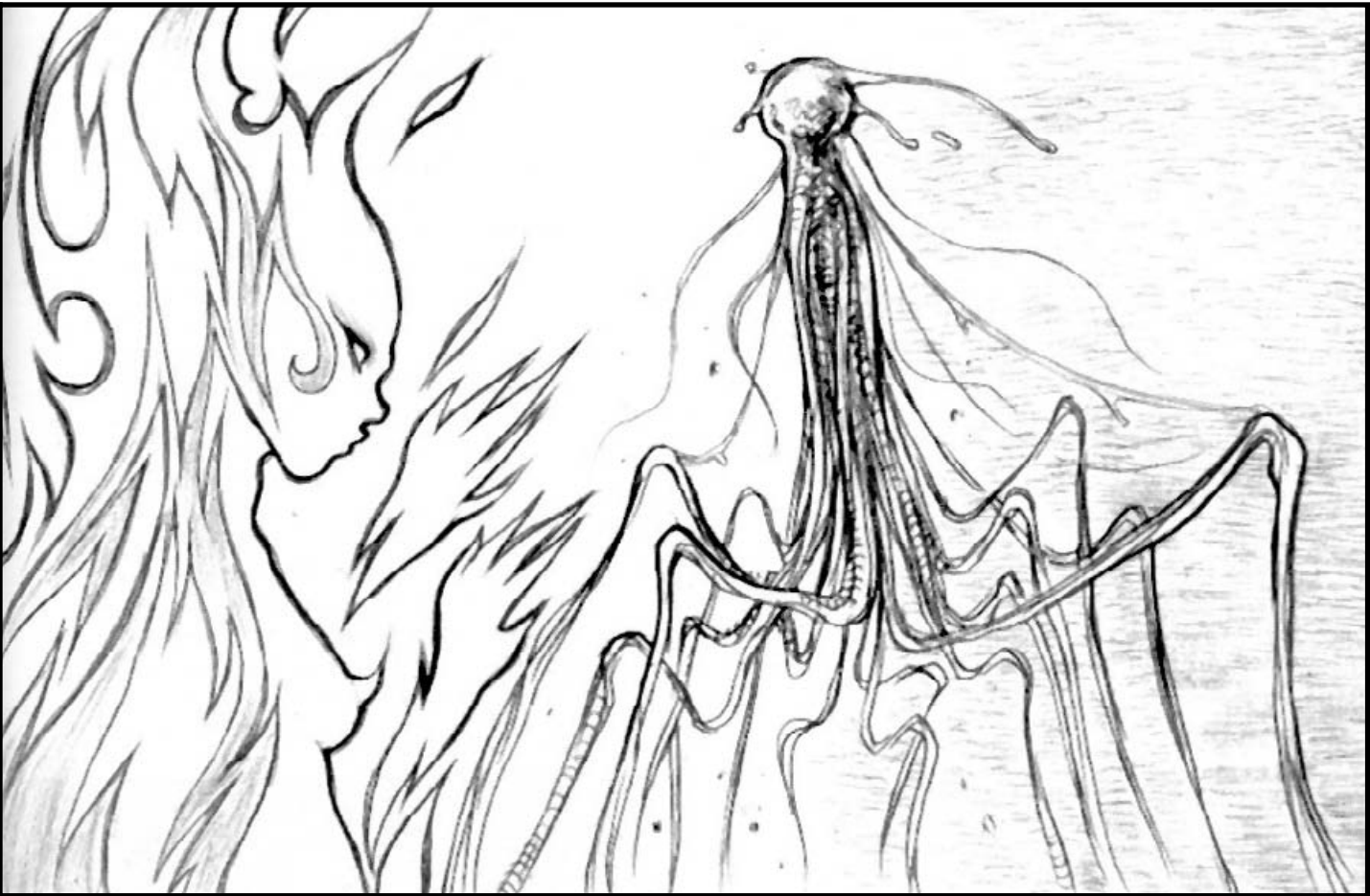
Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2

Essence Pool: 71

Other Notes: It requires a Perception + Awareness roll at difficulty 5 to notice a gilmyne's nonhuman nature without explicitly thinking about the matter.

The gilmyne's version of Words of Power uses a dance and not words. The gilmyne efficacious dances have a strong emotional effect on the audience, but the Charms behind them only affect one person at a time. Thus, the gilmyne must focus on one member of the audience when dancing Stoke the Flame or Words of Power.



HOPPING PUPPETEER,
DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE JEWELLED AUDITOR

Description: The puppeteers are creatures of landscape and architecture, never satisfied with the structures or wilderness around them. They are most at home in the Demon City, where raw material abounds and the climate suits their taste.

In their quiescent state, these demons resemble fist-sized masses of knotted hair glued together by phlegm and bile. When stirred into motion, the hair unrolls into dozens of spindly legs ending in small black feet. The central knot, the size of a coin, reaches heights of 50 or - 100 yards. Their gait gives the creatures their name. Rather than moving in any synchronized fashion, the terminus of each leg gathers itself and springs, moving more or less in the direction the demon desires. The overall impression resembles that of an insect swarm with an unstable speck located high overhead. A wild puppeteer, freed for some reason to wander the world, often has infants in various states of dehydration and starvation curled up in several non-hopping legs. Puppeteers adore tiny children but have no interest in caring for them.

Those who have seen a puppeteer at work report a chaotic and almost comical process of change. The jerking, uncertain legs coordinate in a bizarrely short span of time to build walls or towers from scattered stones or fencing from fallen wood. They tear trees and shrubs from the earth, kick them from limb to limb while other feet scabble to dig holes, and then replant them. A puppeteer can pass from one end of a village to the other within a day, shattering some homes, creating others, carrying buildings and their foundations to new locations and using spare pieces to build a sheltering wall around the whole. With the right raw materials, a puppeteer can build siege equipment or defenses almost as fast as it can walk across them.

For the most part, structures built by hopping puppeteers are clean of taint. The slime that covers these demons clings to the puppeteers surprisingly well. Only a few thin trails slide off while the demon hops. Though vile, this substance has narcotic and addictive properties. That certain wealthy mortals appreciate. The ultimate end to such addiction, as the need for puppeteer ichor grows, is to swallow a quiescent demon. This usually leads to the addict's death.



Puppeteers do not like being summoned. A puppeteer can kick a sorcerer who fails to control it from one foot to another for hours, until the battered body has no life in it. Then, it will rearrange local habitations to its inhuman aesthetic until killed or banished.

Attributes: Strength 13, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Craft (Architecture) 7, Craft (Landscaping) 7, Craft (Stoneworking) 7, Craft (Woodworking) 7, Dodge 4, Resistance 4, Thrown 3

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Host of Spirits, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Kick: Speed 8 Accuracy 7 Damage 13B Defense 7

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 3L/5B (Hard shell, 1L/1B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 70

Other Notes: When engaged in its craft, a single puppeteer counts as a workforce of 10.

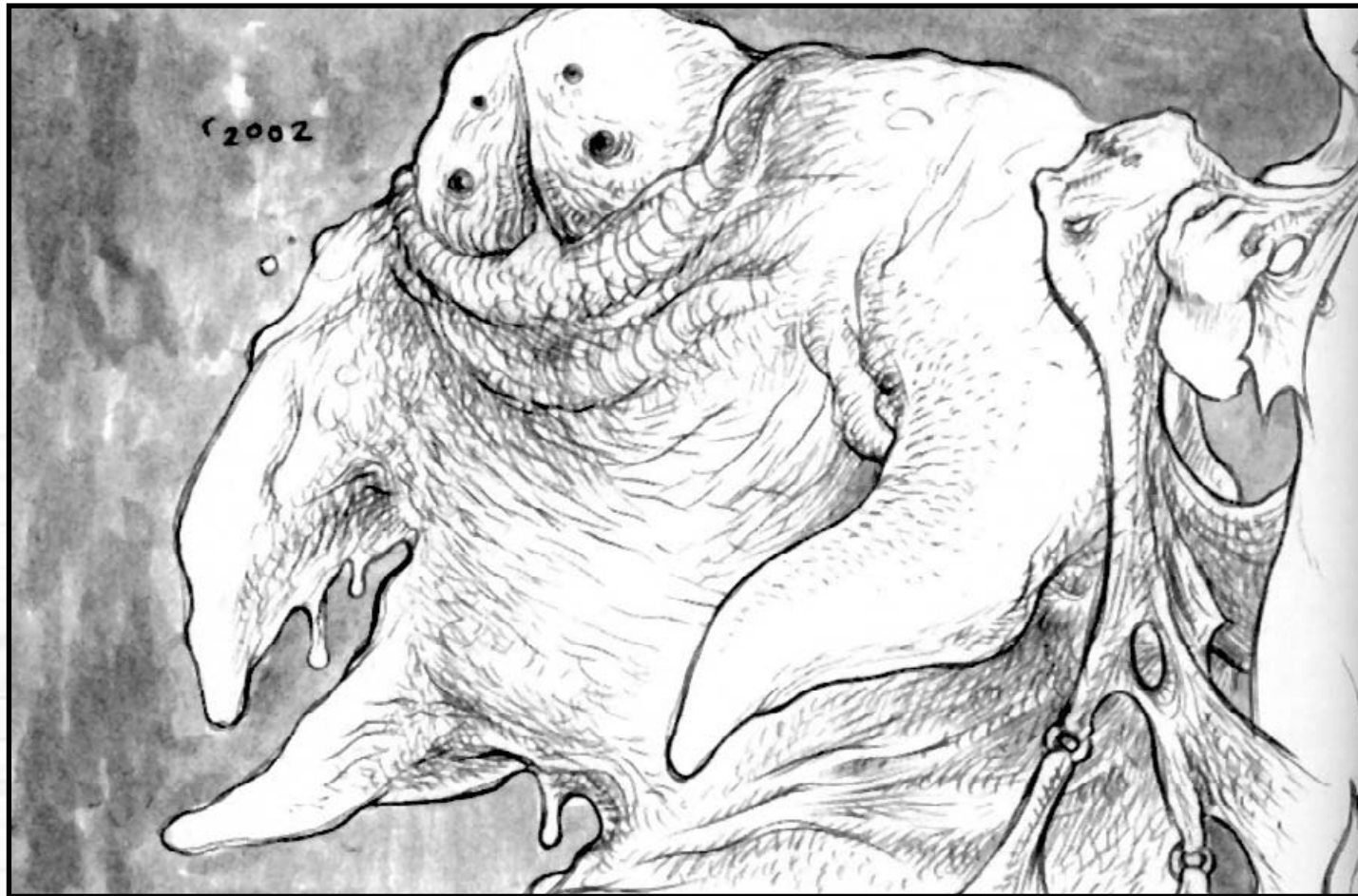
LUMINITA, THE DEER THAT HUNTS THE MAN, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE LIVING TOWER

Description: From a distance, she seems a pure white deer, a magnificent beast, sometimes with the horns of a stag. To the hunters that see her, she seems a prize, one that draws even the weary and successful back into the woods. Up close, she is nothing but writhing white tendrils bound into a deer's shape, with two cold brown eyes. No one knows where one tendril begins and another ends. Even in death, the creature's shape resists untying.

The oldest woods know the luminita and loathe them. A weapon of oak, rowan or ash can extinguish a luminita instantly and forever. The simple touch of such woods leaves welts on her white flesh and — if too close to the eyes — can blind her. With the aid of such wood, a hunter may survive an encounter with the luminita. Without it, he is likely doomed.

For as long as she can, the luminita plays the hunted. She keeps her hunters moving fast, on ground as treacherous as possible: on crumbling slopes, near their own traps or at a cliff's edge. She hopes to keep them at the game until



they suffer injuries or night falls. Then, she lays Confusion Charms on them to make them lost. She hounds them with the sounds of monsters at their back. Only when they have run until they can run no more, until they are bruised, battered or broken, does she step out in front of them and dissolve into a mass of angry white.

The luminita love nothing more than their hunt, not even Octavian, their father. In the Demon City, they spend their days hunting for a path into Creation and rumble low at those demons who detain them. Such paths are hard to find, even for demons like the luminita, who are small enough to slip through the prison's cracks.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 0, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0 (+ 5 from a distance), Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Stealth 5, Survival 5

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Confusion, Ghostly Presence, Harrow the Mind, Landscape Camouflage (Forest), Landscape Travel (Forest), Materialize, Principle of Motion, Stillness, Stoke the Flame, Uncanny Prowess, Will-o-Wisp

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Tentacle: Speed 7 Accuracy 8 Damage 8L Defense 8

Dodge Pool: 9 **Soak:** 4L/8B (Rubbery flesh, 2L/4B)

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 59

Other Notes: Weapons of oak, rowan or ash do aggravated damage to the luminita, and the luminita's Stamina and rubbery flesh do not provide a soak against this, meaning it has a 0 aggravated soak against such weapons.

METODY, THE MALFEAN ELEMENTAL,
DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE GRIEVING LORD

Description: The Demon Realm hangs outside Creation. It has no true earth, no true air, no true water, fire or wood. The stone, the metals, the wind, the streams, the blazes and the tarnished brass trees come from the twisted flesh of Malfeas himself—or, on occasion, from the whims of his peers. In addition, there is something else: a substance never used in the making of the world. This is a passive and consumptive element that demons call *Theion To*, or vitriol, similar to but transcending the acids of Creation.





The metody are the creatures of this element. They come in an endless array of shapes and natures. They are both vicious and calm, inclined toward a slow dissolution of their enemies. They have little fear and no doubt. Their plans are deep but often impractical. They speak cuttingly and offensively on a matter—and then forget that it happened. They see no reason why any barrier should hold them back. Only in enmity does the nature of a metody change—for, as these elementals oppose a creature, they take on some of its qualities. A metody that claims a Solar Exalted for an enemy generally dies immediately after; but if it lives, and keeps living, the metody itself achieves a certain transfiguration, aspiring to greater and greater strength.

In the Demon City, the metody wear twisted human shapes — some horned, some with hooves, some bent around at the back and others shriveled into homunculi. A few take broken animal forms instead. The exact shape is a matter of personal preference. The metody can even untwist into an unmarred human form, but they never choose to. Their trails are often marked with hissing footprints carved into the stone, the scent of brimstone or simply an oppressive presence. Their passage ultimately wears even the greatest streets away. Many display other elemental qualities, such as the ability to control the acidic pits they build within the city.

Brought into the human world, where their element does not truly exist, the metody are immaterial spirits by default and have a difficult time maintaining their material forms for long outside a Demesne.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 2, Temperance 4, Valor 3

Abilities: Brawl 2, Endurance 3, Larceny 1, Linguistics 1, Lore 1, Melee 1, Occult 2, Resistance 3, Stealth 1

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Details, Element Touch, Essence Bite, Form Match, Ignite, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Shapechange, Spirit-Cutting

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Punch: Speed 5 Accuracy 5 Damage 3B Defense 5

Dodge Pool: 2 **Soak:** 8L/11B (Elemental nature, 6L/6B)

Willpower: 3 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 59

Other Notes: When materialized, a metody can dissolve its body into a shapeless acidic foam. This requires no Essence, permits it to eat its way slowly through most obstacles and damages or destroys most non-magical weapons used against it. The demon moves at one yard per turn while thus dissolved — or much slower, when eating through strong

substances—and can return to its normal state at will. The metody cannot eat through the Magical Materials.

**NEOMAH, THE MAKERS OF FLESH,
DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE**

PROGENY OF THE WEAVER OF VOICES

Description: Neomah are demon courtesans. Spitting forth brass and fire like a spider's thread, each constructs her place of business: a great tower shaped like a nautilus horn. A doorway opens at its base. Halfway up its length, three bridges lead off in three directions to the buildings or landscape features around the tower. A fourth bridge leads to a perpetual inferno that hangs above the city or landscape below. Neomah generally lick a nugget of tin before crafting their windows and doors, shuttering the tower's entrances with it; only tin keeps the passion morays out.

Many creatures are more beautiful than a neomah, but few things in Creation or outside it are beautiful to more creatures' eyes. Demons, humans and animals find the neomah scent alluring. A neomah's neutral features and sensual movements appeal to humans from every culture in the world. Nor is a neomah's appeal strictly limited by gender. She can become a he, an androgyne or a hermaphrodite if the situation suits. In the Demon Realm, and for decadent mortal sorcerers, it often does.

The neomah sate the lusts of the demons or of their summoners. This is their business and their charter. They do not impose themselves on those demons that find the notion uninteresting, such as the stomach bottle bugs. They do not take risks with those demons whose mating usually involves murder. All others are welcome; the neomah asks only for a piece of their flesh. When a neomah has accumulated enough flesh, she casts her collection into the fire on the fourth bridge of her home. Crooning over that fire, she builds a wonder: a creature of mismatched parts and natures, such as has never been seen before. Then, she abandons the child to its own devices, spins the tower back into her mouth and moves on to establish business elsewhere.

If compelled or suitably bribed, the neomah can craft flesh to another's specifications. Building a composite of two creatures or creating a child from two mothers is a simple, if time-consuming, task. In this fashion, sorcerers have sometimes overcome constraints of anatomy to breed their way into a royal line.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 5, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Craft (Courtesan) 5, Dodge 3, Endurance 1, Larceny 2, Linguistics (see below), Occult 3, Presence 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Details, Materialize, Shapechange, Stoic Endurance

Cost To Materialize: 35

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Spitting Fire: Speed 7 Accuracy 8 Damage 10L Defense 8
Aconite-Dusted Hairpins: Speed 10 Accuracy 6 Damage 4L Defense 4

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 0L/5B

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 63

Other Notes: Neomah can communicate in any language. They have limited shapes available with their Shapechange Charm. A neomah always looks like a neomah; she simply adjusts her sex and other necessary traits.

A neomah dips her brass hairpins in the same poison that coats her mother's fingers (difficulty 2, 2L/6L damage, 6 hours/-3 penalty). However, in the neomah's case, the poison is not supernatural; players need make only one Stamina + Resistance roll once per scene for their characters no matter how often the neomah skewers them.

Neomah can create children from random collections of flesh — a male's seed and a woman's menstrual fluid being optimal. This costs 10 motes and 1 temporary Willpower. Make a Dexterity + Compassion roll for the neomah to create the child. Mixing together two humans has difficulty 2. Making a child from many humans has difficulty 3. Combining many demon and human parts has difficulty 5. She can increase the likelihood of a Dragon-Blooded Exaltation, given Dragon-Blooded ancestry, at a +1 difficulty penalty. On a failure or a botch, she still creates the child, and it still seems normal in infancy, but the child develops *wrong*, even by the relevant standards.

The neomah can create their towers in the mortal world. The process takes approximately five hours and can only produce a neomah tower — other, similar buildings are beyond her capacity.

PASSION MORAY, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE WEAVER OF VOICES

Description: The gelatinous passion morays swim in swarms through the streets and gable windows of the Demon City, transparent and almost invisible even to the denizens of that world. Their natural food is memories of passion, both those in the living mind and the impressions left on the local world. Demon courtesans shutter their windows with tin, which the morays find poisonous, to keep them out.

Seen through a mirror or other reflective surface, a moray's flesh contains a glowing red pattern of veins that marks its presence. Otherwise, it is all but invisible even to a trained watcher's eyes. Even in their spirit forms, the morays cannot pass through any metal. Thus, a clever hunter can look up from other activities, catch a pattern of red in a mirror, and spear one to the ground.

Where a passion moray sleeps, the world drains of color. Plants often die, their leaves or flowers turned to white. Animals go blind, their irises and pupils turned so clear that a farmer can look through them to the sockets behind. Building roofs have pallid smears for stains, and roads have figure-eight white marks where the demon lay. The passion moray drains the color of blood with its mere presence, whether it sleeps or swims. Wounds drip clear liquid and bloodstains fade away.

Passion morays can regurgitate a stolen memory of passion, although they find the process deeply uncomfortable. Sorcerers willing to ignore their objections, as most summoners are, generally use passion morays to gather evidence for or to prevent blackmail. In addition, if a passion moray consumes every memory of sexual passion in a person's mind, it also restores their physical and spiritual virginity.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 5, Appearance 0, Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 2

Abilities: Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Stealth 5

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Harrow the Mind, Materialize, Memory Mirror, Memory Sponge, Principle of Motion, Stillness, Uncanny Prowess, Worldly Illusion

Cost To Materialize: 33

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Bite: Speed 5 Accuracy 5 Damage 2L Defense 3

Dodge Pool: 3 **Soak:** 0L/2B

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 65

Other Notes: Passion morays can fly at 15 yards per turn (8 yards per turn if taking other actions). They can use Harrow the Mind and Worldly Illusion only to disgorge a previously stolen memory (in real time) into the target's mind.

PERRONELE, THE LIVING ARMOR DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE GUARDIAN OF SLEEP

Description: When each perronele tears its way free from the stomach of Lucien, who gave rise to their race, he leans down and whispers into its ear. From that moment, no creature in Malfeas or Creation is more loyal than the perronele. It would suffer annihilation for Lucien,





and it knows no lesser loyalty for those who both summon and bind it. The phrase Lucien whispers is “I have seen you in the dreams of Sacheverell, who knows the things to come.” The reason this should inspire such fanatic loyalty is unknown.

The perronele resemble flesh-colored puddles, tinted from ebony to pale. They move viscously along any surface and have no real orientation: One end is as much the head of the demon as another. They manifest eyes, ears or mouths at need and survive with limited senses in the interim.

Those demons or humans under Lucien’s protection — as well as some sorcerers — wear the perronele like an undergarment, pulling the creature on over their body before donning their armor or clothes. It can reshape itself slightly to match the creature it protects — and protect it does, for when it spots an incoming blade or hammer, the perronele makes itself as hard as stone. It protects with equal ease against an assassin’s knife or arrow, if its blurred senses can spot it without eyes.

Generally, mortals and many Exalted find spotting garments of perronele flesh difficult (requiring a Perception + Awareness or Lore roll at difficulty 3). However, the skin tones never match perfectly, often giving a person the appearance of ill health.

One can drive away the perronele with things of ill fate, for they think often of the dreams of Sacheverell. Thus, a perronele draws back when faced with a truly atrocious geomantic arrangement, an ill cast of the fortune sticks or a raiton’s croak.

Perronele sometimes use their close proximity to a sorcerer to corrupt her, whispering in the voice of Lucien of the virtues of serving the Yozi. Sensible creatures, they proceed only so long as their chances of success exceed their chances of a sorcerous smiting.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Linguistics 5, Stealth 2

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Camouflage, Details, Materialize, Stillness

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Tentacle Slam: Speed 5 Accuracy 5 Damage 8B Defense 5

Dodge Pool: 4 **Soak:** 9L/13B (Living armor, 8L/11B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 71

Other Notes: A perronele takes a 2-die penalty to Awareness rolls when it does not have an appropriate sensory organ manifested in an appropriate location. Manifesting such organs

is free but often visible. It can see in any direction without eyes and can manifest eyes at any point along its surface.

Someone wearing a perronele has armor equal to her normal armor rating or the perronele’s armor (8L/11B), whichever is greater, so long as the perronele is aware of the attack. There is no mobility penalty from the perronele.

SESSELJA, THE STOMACH BOTTLE BUG, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE KEEPER OF THE FORGE OF NIGHT

Description: Stomach bottle bugs resemble fist-sized beetles with 10 legs arched like a grasshopper’s. Their natural environment is flesh — human, animal or demon — and they can pass through it as easily as air or swim in it as easily as water. The echoes of their travel are often visible as distinctly unnatural quivers or ripples in the stomach, spine, chest, limbs or head. On occasion, a bug makes mistakes in its travel and one leg flounders out through some inappropriate location before it recovers its balance.

Cursed with a peculiar appetite for tainted and corrupted substances, the sesseljae spend most of their lives scurrying through Yozi innards cleaning away that which might do the demon lords harm. On the rare occasions where they find something sufficient to mildly discomfit a Yozi, they die in the thousands, only to have their corpses pulled from the Demon Prince and devoured by their equally doomed peers. Eventually, the sesseljae reconstitute themselves from whatever poisoned wastes remain.

Unoccupied stomach bottle bugs lurk outside the taverns of the Demon City, pleading for entrance in their child-thin voices. If a substantial force makes its way inside, it soon devours the liquor both from the shelves and from within the patrons. For this reason, demons generally hate the sesseljae, and most kill them whenever convenient. Fortunately, the sesseljae are allergic to pure substances — tears, seawater, silver, gold, salt and virgin’s blood — making it feasible to seal them out.

In the mortal world, sesseljae make efficient surgeons. Manipulating human flesh is much more like “play” than work to them, and they sing happily with their rear four legs as they patch together bone and sinew. To prevent someone from crushing their summoned healers, many sorcerers carry sesseljae in their stomachs. This gives rise to their name. As another benefit, if someone carries a sesselja in his stomach, it suffers the effects of alcohol or poison in his place. Some sorcerers instead keep their sesseljae in their brains, where the creatures can peek out through the back of their heads and watch for assassins.

Having an untamed sesselja inside one’s flesh can be terrifying, but an effort of will can always expel the creature. It may resist, dragging tiny chunks of bone out

through the flesh. This resistance is futile, but the nuggets can make potent talismans against disease.

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1, Charisma 2, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 2

Abilities: Awareness 1, Dodge 2, Endurance 3, Larceny 1, Martial Arts 1, Medicine 5 (Internal Surgery +3), Performance 1, Resistance 5, Stealth 4

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Creation of Perfection, Materialize, Touch of Grace

Cost To Materialize: 37

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Leg Slash: Speed 5 Accuracy 4 Damage 1L Defense 2

Scurry Into Someone: Speed 5 Accuracy 4 Damage 0 Defense 0

Dodge Pool: 5 **Soak:** 0L/1B

Willpower: 5 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 67

Other Notes: A stomach bottle bug can move at its normal rate (8 yards per turn, regardless of other activities) in flesh or in air. Scurrying into someone who does not want a sesselja inside her requires the relevant attack. Characters can expel a stomach bottle bug from inside their flesh without a roll, but suffer one automatic level of bashing damage if the bug resists.

TEODOZJI, A LION SENT INTO THE WORLD, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE KITE FLUTE

This is the scripture of the teodozjia.

People, and even the Exalted, die. Mountains crumble. Even worlds do not live forever. Knowing these things, and wishing to guide the mortals afflicted with their terrible condition, the Yozis had the teodozjia created, to carry their message into the world.

The teodozjia transcend mortality. They have no existence independent from their scripture. They share one mind and one memory. If killed, they arise again from their mother Zsofika. If held captive for more than a year and a day, they dissipate into mist.

The Lions Sent Into the World know no death. They know no pain, for they have only one care: the scripture of the teodozjia. They know no sorrow, for this scripture never dies.

So must humans be: They must abandon their petty cares for mortal things and, thus, become immortal. They must forget the things of the world and the fire in their hearts and join the teodozjia in celebration of eternity.

Thus ends the scripture of the teodozjia.

Description: The teodozjia take the form of great jade lions. Every teodozji in the world moves in perfect

synchrony — not the same motions, but to the same inexorable beat. They share a single great mind and memory, though it cannot manifest its full power through any single teodozji vessel.

The teodozjia exist to spread their scripture, and so, their presence is antithetical to other sacred things. Their breath defiles the relics of the little gods. Their growl makes the texts of the Immaculate Order crack and burn. Clouds swirl above them to keep away the light of the Unconquered Sun and his consort, and only the greatest holy things can long survive their company. They live to teach humanity to revere nothing and love nothing, for it is the will and spite of the Yozis that humanity falter and die.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 5

Abilities: Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Endurance 6, Investigation 2, Lore 2, Linguistics 5, Occult 5, Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Cult 5

Suggested Charms: Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Spirit-Cutting, Stillness, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 83

Base Initiative: 6

Attack:

Claw: Speed 6 Accuracy 8 Damage 9L Defense 8

Bite: Speed 3 Accuracy 6 Damage 12L

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 8L/12B (Jade hide, 6L/5B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

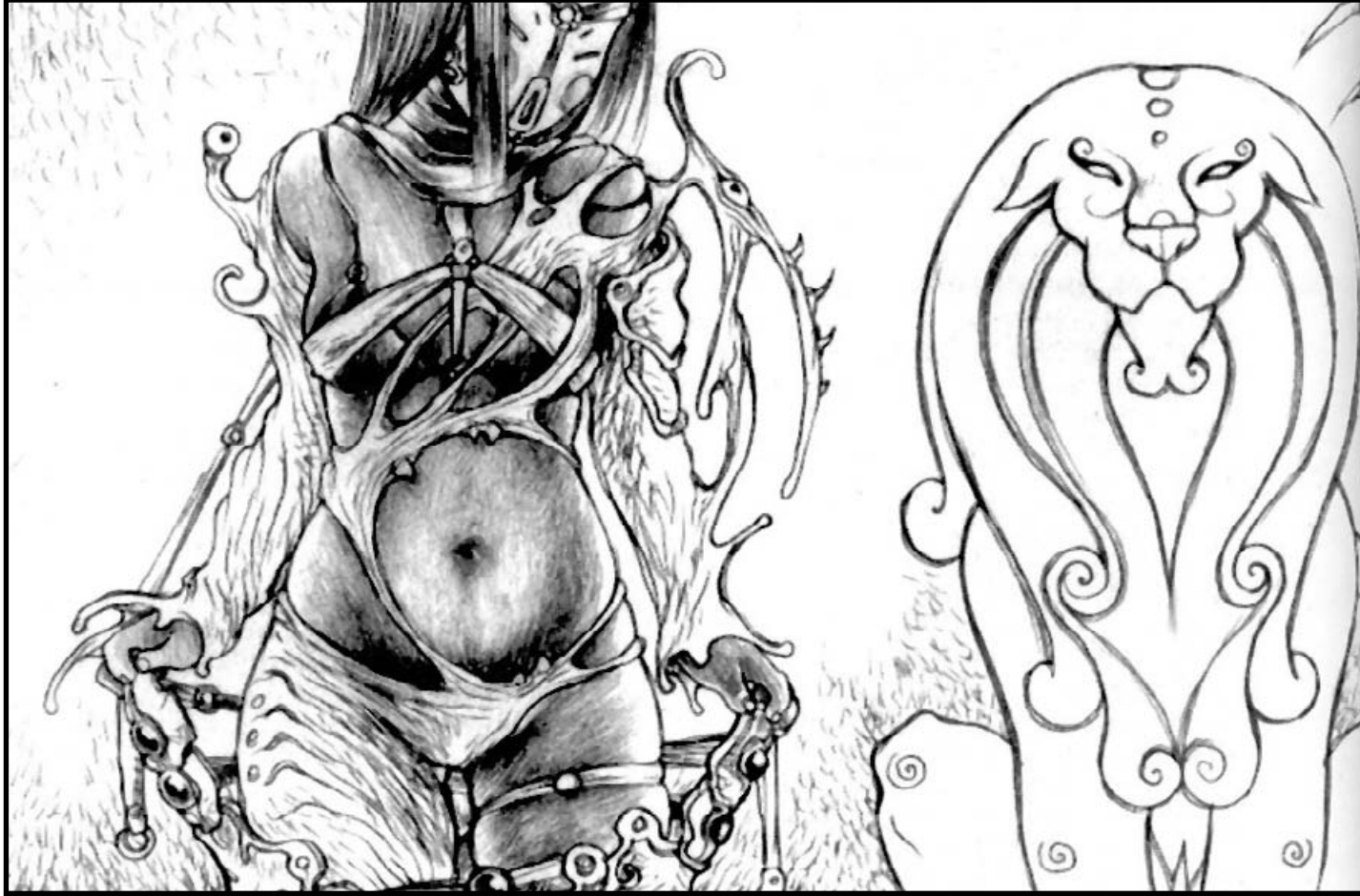
Essence: 4 **Essence Pool:** 93

Other Notes: The teodozjia have very limited access to their group mind. An individual teodozji can make a reflexive Intelligence + Lore roll at difficulty 4 to learn anything immediately relevant that any other teodozji has ever known. On rare occasions, their greater self implants some piece of information or purpose in all teodozji minds. Nothing more is feasible. The jade brain of an individual Lion has limited space, and too much information would slow the creature down.

Make a reflexive Essence + Conviction roll for a teodozji in the presence of a sacred thing to destroy it. The difficulty varies between 3 (something without supernatural protection) and 10 (the relics of the Unconquered Sun). This roll is not optional. If the teodozji has Essence in its pool, this action costs it 3 motes. Otherwise, it is free.

Make a reflexive resisted Essence + Conviction roll for a teodozji in the presence of a Zenith Caste Exalted, holy priest of the Unconquered Sun, and the Zenith's player makes a reflexive roll equal to twice the Exalt's Essence + Conviction. Any successes that one achieves over the other translate into unsoakable levels of lethal damage.





Again, the roll is not optional, even if the teodozji expects to take damage rather than inflict it, and again, it costs 3 motes if the teodozji has Essence in its pool. The Zenith's Caste Mark burns as in an anima banner (the equivalent of spending 4-7 points of Peripheral Essence), and the teodozji crackles with black lightning. This roll is made every turn.

TOMESCU, THE CLAMOROUS CLOUD ARSENAL, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

PROGENY OF THE LIVING TOWER

Description: Every tomescu knows its ultimate destiny. For this reason, it cries out in pain when a new day dawns, and it cries out in pain when each day ends; and by the cries of the tomescu, one may know the passage of days even in the city of demons. Only one tomescu in 100 does not cry out; of these, 99 in 100 are stoic or addled. Only one tomescu in 10,000 foresees a beautiful end. These tomescu the other demons fear.

One never sees the tomescu directly, for a cloud always surrounds them, an airy vapor that partakes of the creature's Essence. On occasion, one or more limbs

become visible: long green insectile legs tipped with metal blades, thick stone hammers, long thin axes, spears and even golden bows. Goetic tomescu depict them as green-carapaced crabs with at least five dozen limbs. Most of these limbs end in weapons below the joint, but the innermost limbs have either hands capable of working the bows and manipulating other objects or feet to support the tomescu in its crab-like gait.

The tomescu do not live for violence, for they remember the beginning of their lives and they know the ends of them. To them, the matters of beginnings and endings hold no interest, nor the matters of life and death. They live for the instants of the present and in service of the immortal things. In the transient events that pass under the clouds, they find great joy and great pain. In honor to the Yozis, who endure past time, they live their lives in furious service. They listen to the air of the Demon City and from it glean the whims or will of the Demon Princes. They move from place to place in the city carrying out their incomprehensible tasks and do no differently when freed to act in the mortal world.



トメスキ

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Archery 4, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Endurance 2, Lore 2, Occult 2, Martial Arts 5, Melee 4, Resistance 2

Backgrounds: None

Suggested Charms: Materialize, (Natural Prognostication), (Spirit-Cutting)

Cost To Materialize: 35

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Axe Limb: Speed 9 Accuracy 9 Damage 8L Defense 12

Sledge Limb: Speed 3 Accuracy 8 Damage 13L Defense 12

Spear Limb: Speed 12 Accuracy 10 Damage 6L Defense 12

Sword Limb: Speed 9 Accuracy 10 Damage 7L Defense 12

Short Bow Limb: Speed 8 Accuracy 10 Damage 8L (Rate 2 Range 300)

Dodge Pool: 7

Willpower: 7

Essence: 2

Soak: 7L/11B (Carapace, 6L/8B)

Health Levels: -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

Essence Pool: 65

Other Notes: Experts at fighting multiple opponents, tomescu receive a free parry or counterattack at their full dice pool for each attack made against them.

A tomescu generally conceals its sledge limb within the cloud, swinging it out only if a battle turns against the demon.

Tomescu bows normally fire broadhead arrows, but the tomescu obtain and notch these arrows in a mundane fashion. Thus, they can run out of ammunition. Tomescu can also use fowling, frog crotch or target arrows if available.

Tomescu have other limbs, including various sorts of swords, axes and maces. Most particularly, they have limbs that resemble seven-section staves or hook swords. They use one or two of these when parrying attacks, even if attacking with another limb

A typical tomescu must cry out at dawn and at each day's end, even if it desires stealth.





APPENDIX SPIRIT CHARMS



The spirit Charms in this chapter are templates. Each spirit has its own way of doing things, and its Charms reflect its unique identity. One spirit might cast *Tiny Gift* (a small “blessing”) by biting its target, while a second utters complex benedictions and a third gives its target a trinket to wear. While each of these spirits possesses the same Charm, each one may see it as a totally different ability. Some spirits might not be able to use every aspect of a Charm, while others can do things with a Charm that seem beyond the magic’s ability.

Treat these Charms as guidelines. Expand upon them. Narrow them. Give each one a personality to fit the spirit you create. They are suggestions that have been balanced, not strict rules. Don’t feel limited by what you find here.

The “Prerequisite Charms” are also guidelines. You will find that not all spirits in the previous sections who are listed as having the same Charm use it in the same way, and a few of them don’t even possess the normal minimum requirements; this is deliberate. If you think a spirit would have one Charm but would never have learned its prerequisite, then go with that. You might choose a different prerequisite instead if it makes more sense.

ECLIPSE CASTE CHARMS

Members of the Eclipse Chaste Solar Exalted are capable of learning Charms from spirits. Some Charms’ effects depend largely on the nature of the spirit involved. For instance, *Landscape Travel* allows a spirit to travel easily within “its

natural element.” The Exalted who learns this Charm would be able to use it in the same element that the spirit did. If she learned it from a forest spirit, for example, it would enable easy travel in forest areas.

Eclipse Caste Exalted always learn the version of a Charm that the spirit uses, with all inherent limitations and style, not the generic Charm. In the case of blessings and curses, which are particularly broad, the Exalted learns only the one or two effects that the spirit prefers to use.

Spirits aren’t particularly eager to teach their powers to mortals. They might exchange knowledge of a Charm in return for a significant favor or quest. Characters might also trick a spirit into teaching them a Charm.

While *Materialize* may technically be learned by Exalted, it won’t do them any good unless they somehow end up disembodied. Any other Charms that similarly have no effect on Exalted may be learned but do little good until something makes them useful. In addition, the Storyteller should feel free to disallow the acquisition of any Charm that seems too powerful for the game.

CONVICTION

Spirits may use *Conviction* to employ mental attacks against others, as well as to affect others’ emotions and mental states.



SOUL RAPT

Cost: 10 motes, 2 Willpower

Duration: Indefinite

Type: Simple

Minimum Conviction: 5

Minimum Essence: 4

Prerequisite Charm: Possession

As the Possession spirit Charm, roll the spirit's Manipulation + Conviction against the target's Willpower in a resisted action. If the spirit gains more successes than the target has temporary Willpower, then the initial possession succeeds. As long as the spirit occupies the victim, temporary Willpower cannot be regained. The possessing spirit must relinquish control of the victim's body at least once per week, though it isn't necessary to abandon the victim. The spirit must make the attempt to regain control of the victim by repeating the initial possession roll. After each month of possession, the victim loses one point of Willpower permanently. If a spirit fails in its attempt to regain control of its victim, the spirit is expelled, and the victim cannot be possessed by that spirit again.

WORLDLY ILLUSION

Cost: 20 motes, 1 Willpower per person

Duration: Instant

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Conviction: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Harrow the Mind

The target of this Charm finds herself in an illusory world of the spirit's design. The illusion is total and covers all senses—according to all of her senses, the target has been transported elsewhere. The illusion has a nearly instant duration but may appear to last for up to one day to the mind of the target.

This Charm requires the spirit to touch its target (a nonreflexive Dexterity + Brawl or Martial Arts roll if she's actively evading) or to look in her eyes. The spirit may use this effect on multiple people at once, but all of them must find themselves in the same illusion, and the spirit must touch all of them at once.

Any damage the target takes within the hallucination is purely illusory. However, if the target dies within the illusion, then her player must succeed on a Stamina + Resistance roll or have the character fall into a coma for one day per point of the spirit's Essence (or longer, at the Storyteller's discretion, if it suits the dramatic needs of the story).

TEMPERANCE

Spirits use Temperance to defend themselves, as well as to steal Essence from others.

DONNING SPIRITUAL ARMOR

Cost: 5 Motes

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Temperance: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

The small god summons up the forces of the elements or similar powers to protect it from harm. The spirit gains armor equal to Temperance + Essence. This armor can be used to soak any form of bashing or lethal damage, including damage caused by environmental conditions such as excessive heat or cold. Elementals and elementally associated spirits always surround themselves with elemental protections such as a hauberk of tough roots, a shirt of flexible rock or a breastplate of living flame. Other spirits don armor of light or darkness or, occasionally, transform their ordinary garb into supernally beautiful and durable garments of pure magic.

ESSENCE INVEIGLE

Cost: 6 motes, 2 Willpower

Duration: One week (at least)

Type: Simple

Minimum Temperance: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sustenance

The spirit has consensual sex with a mortal in order to activate the Charm, so no Brawl or Martial Arts rolls are required. Amidst the merriment, roll the spirit's Manipulation + Temperance. For each success, the spirit devours 1 mote of Essence. What is more, the victim later develops an unquenchable craving for another rendezvous with the spirit. If the victim returns freely, the process is repeated (and any lost Wits suffered from the process below are regained). If the victim does not return within one week, roll his Wits + Conviction -1 die for each time the spirit successfully used the Charm against the victim. If the roll yields fewer successes than the spirit's Willpower, the victim loses a point of Wits temporarily. If he does not return to the spirit that day, repeat the process the next day, continuing every day until the victim either returns of his own volition, succeeds in breaking the Charm or reaches 0 Wits (in which case the victim loses all control and will do anything within his power to return to the spirit). If the victim's Wits + Conviction roll succeeds against the spirit's Willpower, the Charm is cancelled, and all temporary Wits losses are regained. This Charm has no effect on beings with an Essence higher than the spirit's.

VALOR

Spirits use Valor to affect the physical world, whether positively or negatively. Valor Charms are often used to harm others.

UNCANNY PROWESS

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Special

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Valor: 2

Minimum Essence: 1

Prerequisite Charms: None

The spirit may add a number of dice equal to its Valor score to a single Dexterity roll. This roll could be anything

from a single blow with a weapon to a single performance or even to the roll to create a single piece of fine jewelry. When used for longer endeavors, this Charm adds dice to each roll of a single extended action. However, it can only be used on one endeavor at a time, the Essence invested in this Charm cannot be regained, and the Charm cannot be recast until the task has been completed or abandoned.

CREATION OF PERFECTION

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: Special

Type: Simple

Minimum Valor: 2

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm allows spirits to create supernaturally exquisite items or to perform feats of inhuman skill with various crafts. When using this charm, roll Intelligence + Valor for the spirit. Every success gained on this roll can be added to a single Craft, Medicine, Occult or Larceny roll designed to create an item or to

carry out a slow and careful process such as performing surgery, compounding a drug, putting on a disguise or creating a magical talisman. This Charm cannot be used to enhance any task that requires speed or haste such as picking a lock before the guard arrives, stopping someone from bleeding to death or any form of combat. It can also only be used on tasks that require both clear thought and nimble fingers. No activity can simultaneously benefit from both this Charm and the Uncanny Prowess Charm.

SPIRIT-CUTTING

Cost: 1 mote

Duration: Instant

Type: Supplemental

Minimum Valor: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm allows a materialized spirit to launch a single attack at an unmanifested spirit. For the purposes of the individual attack, the small god attacks the immaterial spirit normally.



CULT

There is Essence in worship. Prayers and burnt offerings provide power to those gods who receive them. In this fallen age, the Essence of prayer lures gods to demand the worship of men. They are not alone in this, for some Exalted accept worship as well, and even mortal cult leaders like the doomed prophet Ikerre can gain power from worship. Though it does not provide as much Essence as ownership of a Manse or Demesne, worship is harder to disrupt. While a god's control of a holy place can be directly contested, her cult will attempt to continue worship even if it becomes illegal.

It doesn't matter if the god's worshipers like her or not. What matters is that they make regular offerings and prayers to her. Cults that hate and fear a god are less likely to persist if the local political climate turns against her, however. Having this Background does not make an Exalt or mortal into a god, it just grants them access to Essence and Willpower.

The Immaculate Order's attitude about personal cults is very dim, but the more autocratic Great Houses are effectively cults.

x None, the god has no cult and must rely on respiration and control of holy places to regain Essence.

- The god has a small hut devoted cult, with perhaps a half-dozen full time priests or ascetics tending to his shrines and singing his praises. Every morning when the sun rises or sets (the god picks), the god gains a point of temporary Willpower.

- The god's faith lays its hand on the everyday life of a large community or several small ones. Several hundred people offer the god daily prayers

and small offerings, and the god has feasts and sacred days (perhaps informal ones) throughout that area. The god gains a point of temporary Willpower every morning or evening and, in addition, gains 2 motes of Essence per hour from worship.

- The god is venerated in a region. Several thousand people daily seek the god's favor or forbearance. Gods who are divine rulers of a single city have this level of worship. The god may regain a point of temporary Willpower once every 24 hours as a reflexive action requiring no dice. The god gains 3 motes of Essence per hour from the power of the cult.

- The god's worship is the faith of a nation. Tens of thousands of beings hold the god in reverence. There are regional festivals in the god's name that draw merchants and traders from all around. The god may have a city sacred to her where she rules either symbolically or in truth. Once every 12 hours, the god may gain back a point of temporary Willpower as a reflexive action that requires no dice, and the god's cult blesses her with 4 additional Essence per hour.

- The god's worship is the faith of a region, and he is seen as the arbiter of some major sphere of life affairs, such as hunting, war or procreation. There are seasonal festivals in the god's honor all over the land, many children carry the god's name, and much is done in honor of that name. The god must surely face fierce competition from other powerful divinities for the prayers and honors and will have to spend a great deal of time furthering his worship. Every six hours, the god can gain a point of temporary Willpower as a diceless reflexive action, and the god gains back 6 motes per hour from the constant prayers of the faithful.



EXALTED

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GAMES OF DIVINITY



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From the farthest reaches of the Elemental Poles to the heartland of the Realm, the world of Exalted teems with spirits, elementals and demons. Some still serve the Celestial Bureaucracy or are held in check by the Immaculate Order. Where the powers that restrain them are weak, the little gods rule men as princes, and their demands for worship and sacrifice impoverish nations.

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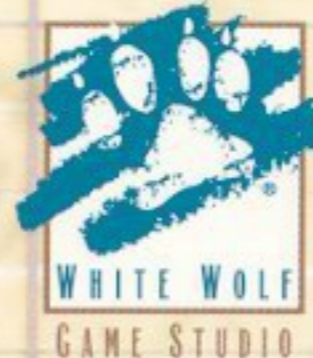


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