



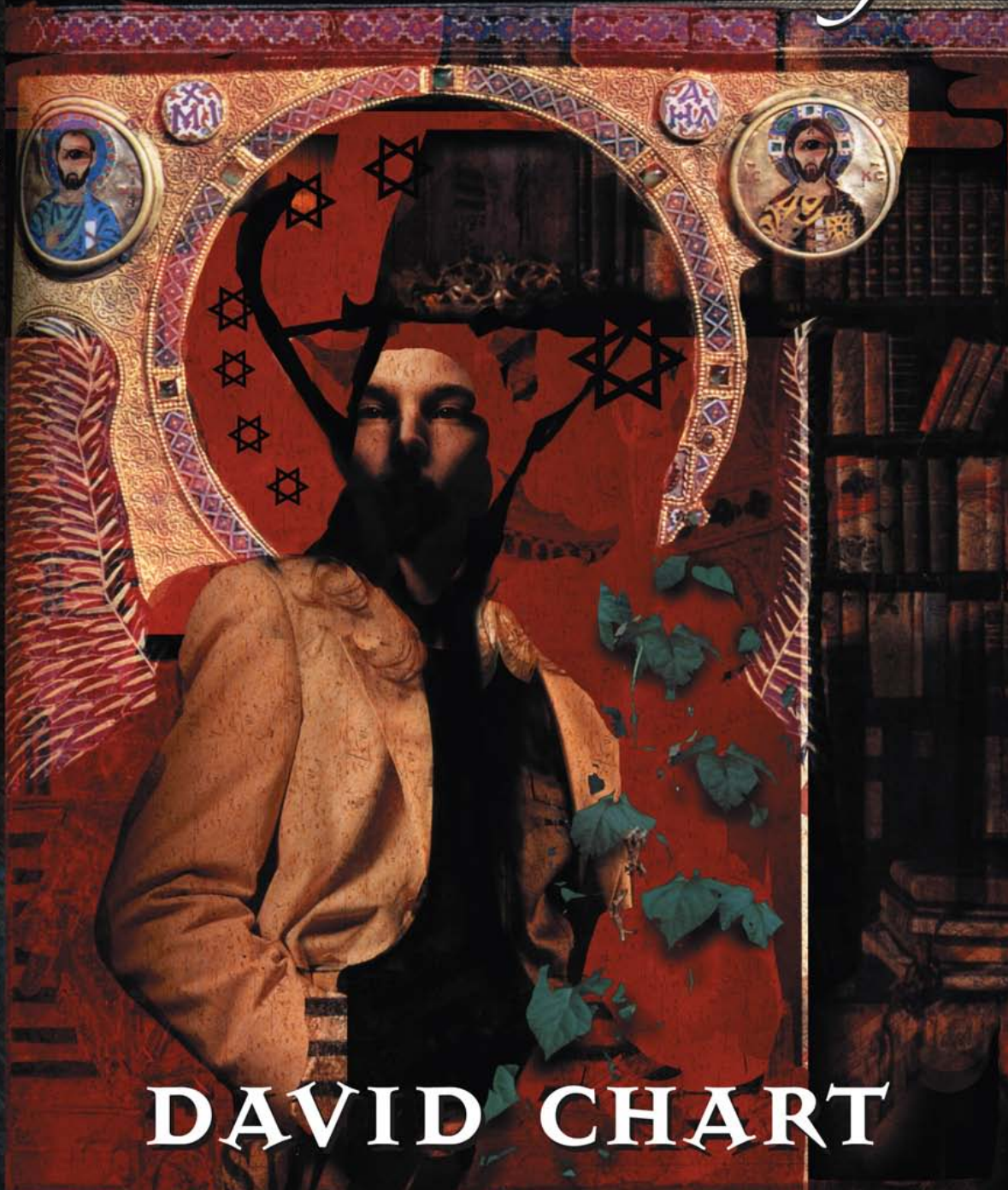
Power and Privilege



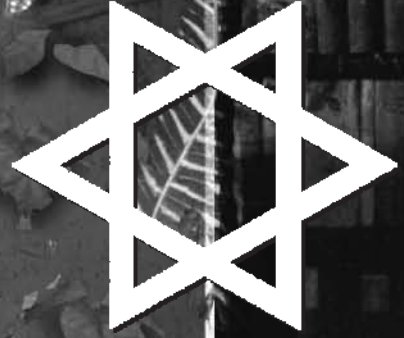
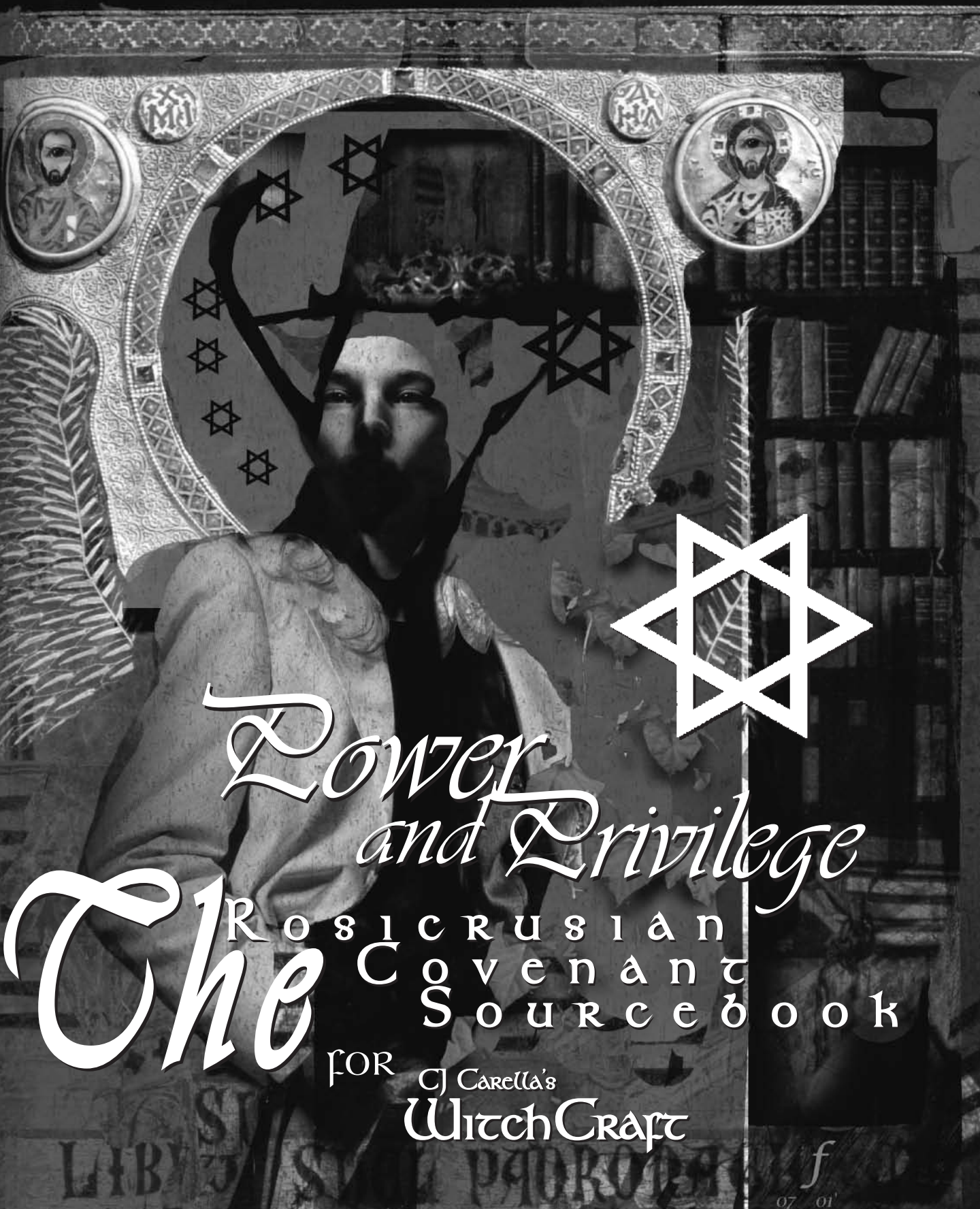
CJ CARELLA'S

Witchcraft

ROSICRUCIAN
COVENANT BOOK



DAVID CHART



*Power
and Privilege*

The ROSICRUSIAN
COVENANT
SOURCEBOOK
FOR CJ CARELLA'S
WITCHCRAFT

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Reader discretion is advised.

Comments and questions can be directed via the Internet at www.edenstudios.net/witchcraft, via e-mail at edenprod@aol.com or via letter with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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A Word to the Wise

The *WitchCraft* RPG is, first and foremost, a work of fiction meant to entertain. A number of facts have been mixed with a liberal dose of fantasy in the pages of this *WitchCraft* supplement, and people who seek information, spiritual guidance, or an excuse to do stupid things should look elsewhere. The magicians in this game are as unrealistic as the wizards in Tolkien's tales; none of the secret organizations and conspiracies in this book are meant to be exact replicas of real world groups.

Having said that, I would like to point out a few real facts. The Rosicrucians was (and may still be) a real world movement, and was very influential in Europe for a time. Wicca is a real world religion, based on ancient folk beliefs and practices from Europe. Both the Rosicrucians and the "Wicce" in this book (Wicce is nothing but the female form of the ancient Anglo-Saxon

word Wicca, or Wise One) are portrayed as having some of the features of their real world counterparts, but are as fantastic as the Christian-oriented Sentinels and other associations also depicted in this game.

Finally, anybody who has problems distinguishing fantasy from reality, or who thinks this or any other game depicts actual occult practices should stay away from this and similar books. They should also stay away from television, books of all kind, and most forms of mass media; in fact, they should probably not leave their homes. Any off-beat soft drink commercial may prompt them to jump off a tall building. Parents of minor children should, of course, exercise their judgment as to whether this and other roleplaying games are appropriate for their children. Everyone else, I hope you enjoy this supplement to the *WitchCraft* RPG.

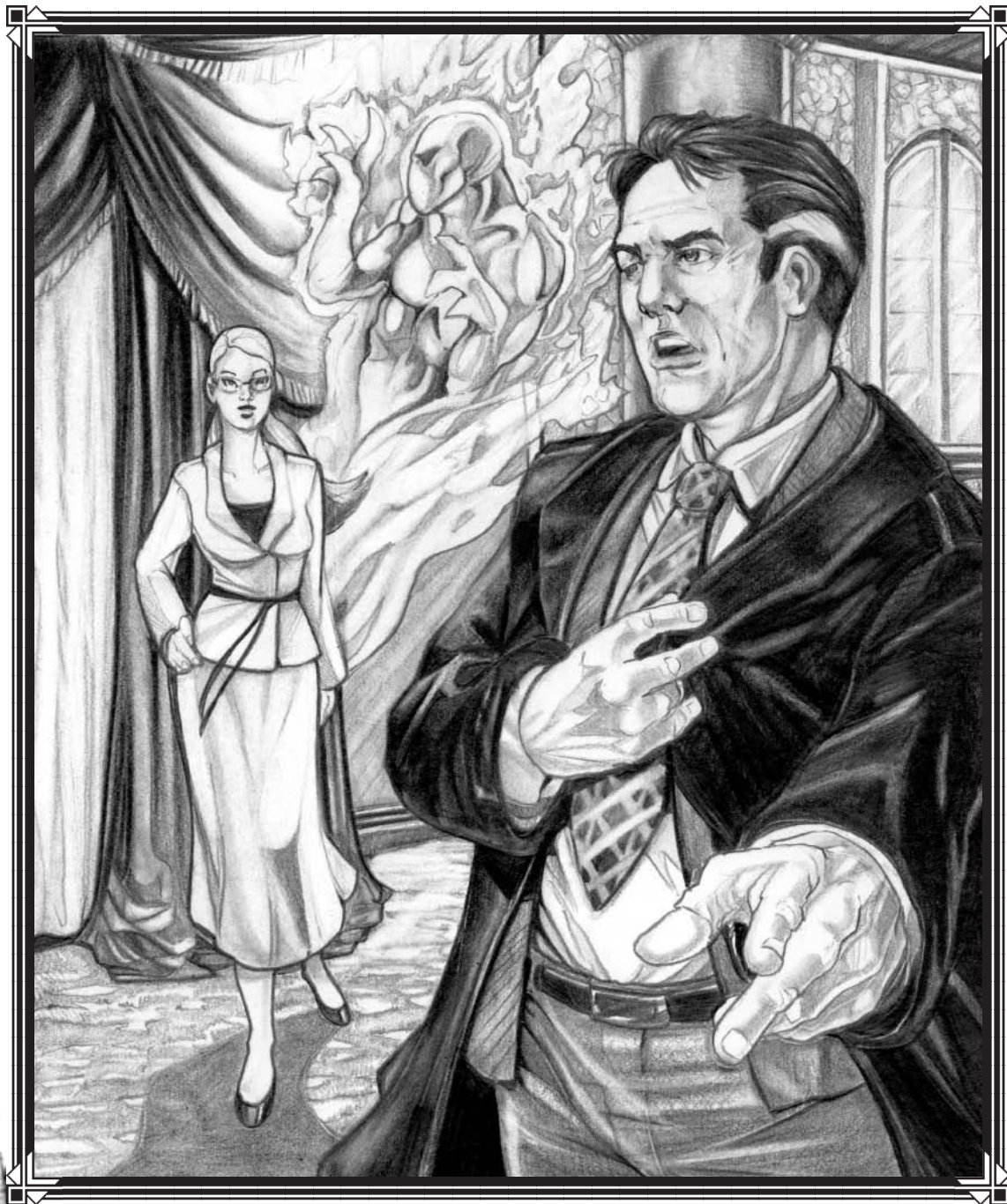
-- Carlos J. Martijena-Carella



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Chapter One: Recruitment



Jennifer could almost feel everyone turning to look at her as she entered the reading room of the *New York Shrine*. She quickly scanned the room for Marcus and walked over to his table, careful not to look around as she did so. From the way the older members still reacted to the presence of a woman, it was hard to believe that one of the *Twelve Founders* was female.

"Mmmmm, books. Books burn nicely." The spirit's voice was inside her head, and Jennifer quickly stifled the giggle that rose up in her throat. As she reached Marcus's table, the voice continued. "I could just light that one, just a little bit. Go on. It'd be fun to see their faces." It would, she agreed silently. The subsequent trial would be less fun, however.

"Marcus, could I have a word with you?" Jennifer kept her voice just above a whisper, as was polite. Marcus finished reading the paragraph, and then marked his place with a slip of paper before he looked up.

"Is it urgent? I am trying to study."

Jennifer nodded. "I'm afraid so. It's about the . . ." her voice dropped even further, ". . . party."

Marcus sighed and took a slip of paper from the holder on the desk. As he filled in his details to reserve the book, Jennifer stood by the desk, careful not to show her impatience.

"What about that piece of paper? No one would miss it." She shook her head slightly at the incorporeal voice. "Aw, come on. Pleeeease."

Marcus placed the reservation slip in the front of the book and stood up. They walked to the ornate wooden entry doors of the chamber. Marcus indicated that she should go first and opened one door for her. As the door swung shut behind them, Jennifer began talking under her breath.

"Lirran, stop teasing like that. If I ever think that you mean it, I will have to bind you properly. And neither of us would like that." Marcus had moved closer as she started speaking, but was now standing a couple of paces away, ostentatiously not listening. He always was a stickler for the proper form, Jennifer thought, even though he knew Lirran at least as well as she did. There was a shimmer in the air as the *Fire Elemental* partially materialized.

"But my lady, you already have me bound by a Compact firm and true. Hardly lets me burn anything."

"Maybe later today." Marcus started slightly at that, and then moved a couple of paces further away. Lirran brightened for a moment, then vanished. Marcus immediately moved back to join Jennifer.

"Lirran giving you trouble again?" he asked, as they walked the grand staircase.

"Not really. You know how he gets if you don't let him burn things once in a while." Marcus nodded in response.

In the hall they paused briefly while Marcus collected his overcoat from the cloakroom, and then they pushed out of the Shrine into the blustery New York fall.

"So," Marcus said, "what about the party?"

"It's Travis. He's ill. Really ill."

Marcus raised his eyebrows. "Enemy intervention?"

Jennifer shrugged. "Could be. Could just be food poisoning, or the flu bug that's going around. The problem is, I don't have time to find someone with an appropriate healing Invocation, and if it is enemy intervention, I'll have wasted time I don't have."

"So, you came to find me. Because...?"

Jennifer took a deep breath. "Because you're the only other person I know with the same skills as Travis." Marcus had stopped walking. Oh, come on, she thought, you had to have seen this coming. "Can you fill in for him?"

"Fill in for Travis? Jennifer, I might have some of the skills, but I'm hardly suited to his kind of activity. Look at me." She did. She saw a middle-aged man, slightly overweight but not too much, dressed in a very conservative suit and overcoat. "And remember Travis." A young black man, in bright sweatshirt, ripped jeans, and a baseball cap. "See?"

"I didn't say you were Travis. I said you have the same skills. You could fill in for him. You aren't going to be rated on how up-to-date your wardrobe is."

"I gave up that sort of thing."

"When you were made Tribune. I know. But this is important."

"What will the Shrine think?" Jennifer could see the beginnings of a smile, and knew that she had won.

"I'm not planning to tell them. And I don't think that there's a big risk of encountering Posicrucian spies. Besides, it isn't really against the rules. Our rules say 'never work with Mad Gods or demons', not 'never work with—'"

Marcus cut her off. "All right, all right. You will owe me a favor, young lady."

"Hey, I saved your life back when the Sere Rose attacked."

"And I'll save your life some day. What you are asking is far, far worse."

"Oh, come on, Marcus. I'm asking you to give a stage magic performance to a bunch of elementary school kids, not face Morsater itself."

"I'd rather face Morsater. There'd be more hope." Jennifer could see that Marcus was trying hard not to smile.

"They aren't that bad."

"You've had three stab wounds and one gunshot."

"They've gotten better. They only throw rotten fruit now."

"Oh, wonderful. Maybe I should keep a shield up, just in case." They reached the subway station and Jennifer turned to go in. Marcus paused.

"Ah, do I have time to change?"

"Fraid not."

"Collect my props?"

"No."

"Jennifer, how exactly am I supposed to do this?"

"Illusions? They won't be able to tell the difference."

Marcus' face darkened, but he started after her. "You want me to use real magic to fake stage magic? Jennifer, this is sounding worse by the minute."

"Be quiet. You have to work out a show before we get there." The Tribune glowered at her, but he was silent for the rest of the journey.

They arrived at the school just in time, and were met by the principal, who looked rather worried.

"Where is Mr. Peters? The children have been looking forward to this for weeks. And if we break our promise, there's going to be real trouble convincing them next time. We've been doing so well—"

"It's all right, Mrs. Samuels. Travis is ill, but Mr. Johnson here has agreed to fill in for him."



The teacher turned to look at Marcus. "He doesn't really look the part, does he?"

Marcus stared at her. "Don't look the part? My good woman, I am Tremenso the Marvelous, lord of illusions. I was also at a meeting with my bank manager when Ms. Reynolds managed to get hold of me. I am afraid that I will have to improvise a bit." Jennifer looked at the ground, so that neither Marcus nor Mrs. Samuels could see her silly grin. The principal seemed mollified and headed back into the school.

"Tremenso the Marvelous?"

Marcus looked embarrassed. "It was all I could come up with on the spot. I could hardly use my real stage name, now could I."

Jennifer thought back to the rather notorious Vegas show he had fronted. "Um, no. Point taken. Well, Tremenso, your audience awaits . . ."



Jennifer applauded wildly along with everyone else at the end of the show. Marcus hadn't lost his touch.

"It worked, then."

She turned to Travis, who had arrived after the show started. "He's going to flip, you know. He'll have us on Vampyre hunting duty for a month."

The applause quieted as Marcus raised his hand. "For an encore, I shall perform the great illusion of sawing a woman in half. Ms. Reynolds?" He looked straight at them, and Travis coughed, not terribly convincingly.

"Make that a year. Provided I'm still in one piece."

"Oh, he wouldn't really saw you in half."

"No, but did you see his Vegas version of this trick?" Jennifer thought Travis was blushing.

"He wouldn't."

"Mrs. Reynolds? Please, the children are waiting." They were all staring at her.

"He might."

He did. Being cut in half by an illusory saw is not the world's most pleasant experience, even if it has no long-term ill effects, and at least Jennifer was wearing something under the clothes that "got caught on the blade." The children loved it, although the staff was slightly shocked when Jennifer emerged from the box in her underwear and grabbed Marcus's coat, looking daggers at him. He smiled sweetly, and only she could hear his comment.

"They'll never have me back, you know."

He was right about that. Mrs. Samuels was appropriately grateful to Marcus for stepping in at the last moment, but did suggest that not all of his act was entirely appropriate for such a young audience. He apologized profusely for the "error in judgment," and then led Jennifer away, still wrapped in his coat.

"You could have just asked."

"You would have said no."

"Exactly."

"You're much better than Travis."

"Next time, I won't leave you your underwear."

"There won't be a next time."

"Glad to hear it."

There was a long pause.

"They did quite enjoy my show, didn't they?"

"Yes." They joined Travis, who was still smirking as he looked at Jennifer.

"All right," Marcus said. "I'll help out on this project. But no more stage magic, real or faked. I have my dignity to think of."

"Yes, Tribune. Thank you," Jennifer said, trying to retain some of her own dignity.

They talked in the cab and explained all the details of the project to Marcus. He was rather more interested now that he had actually met the children, and by the time they dropped him off, he had agreed to offer even more help than they had hoped for. Travis and Jennifer chatted about inconsequential things until they got back to their apartment. Once inside, Travis turned to her.

"A good day's work, Ms. Reynolds. May I take your coat?"

Introduction

The Rosicrucians are one of the most important magical Covenants in the world of *WitchCraft*. Their history is relatively brief, not quite eight hundred years, but it has been eventful. They have formed and lost good relations with the Wicce and Storm Dragons, formed and held good relations with the Twilight Order, and formed a completely false idea of the Cabal of Psyche. They have come closer to defeating the Combine than any other organization, and closer to complete destruction than they like to admit. They have spawned one of the oldest and most powerful Dark Covenants, but are now one of the most pure organizations in the world. They believe in responsibility and the centrality of magic, but recruit primarily from those who have had mundane power handed to them on a plate. They require absolute obedience to orders, but hardly ever give any. Like all organizations, the Covenant is based on a set of contradictions that are absolutely invisible to its members.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter One: Recruitment contains these introductory remarks.

Chapter Two: Covenant provides the basic information about the “timeless” aspects of the Covenant. That is, it contains those pieces of information that are not going to change in the immediate future, as a result of internal politics or external events. Some parts are unlikely to change at all, while other parts are bound to, but not quickly. This information is not generally the subject of debate and controversy within the Covenant, and is taken for granted by most members. Accordingly, it is also essential background for any Rosicrucian characters. Any member could know all the information in this chapter.

Chapter Three: Roles is concerned with the details of character creation, and includes five Archetypes. It further contains a number of articles, explaining how the Rosicrucians see their world, and some of their main activities.

Chapter Four: Past, Present, and Future gives the basic information about the “timed” aspects of the Covenant. Its history, its current politics, and its

involvement in *Armageddon* are all detailed here. This chapter also contains most of the information about how the Covenant has interacted with external bodies, including other Covenants, and gives the Rosicrucian perspective on a number of major events in the *WitchCraft* universe.

Chapter Five: Stories sets out a number of ways in which the Rosicrucians can appear in a Chronicle. It covers using them as antagonists, and various types of Chronicles that can be run, drawing on important features of the Covenant. Finally, it includes Story ideas, three of them in some detail.

How to Use this Book

This book provides extensive information on the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross, both for playing members of the Covenant and for Chroniclers. Players of Rosicrucian characters should read everything except Chapter Five, and Chroniclers should read the whole lot. Players of members of other Covenants should not read the book, as their characters would know little about the Brotherhood’s internal workings.

Most of this book -- Chapters Two and Four, and much of Chapter Three -- is written from the point of view of the Rosicrucians. Thus, the information is biased and, occasionally, inaccurate. As a general rule, everything is biased so as to paint the Rosicrucians in the best light possible, so Chroniclers should take that into account. In particular, the accounts of history given in this and other Covenant books are biased towards a particular Covenant. Apparent contradictions are merely different views of the same event, and the truth is probably not recorded in any of the books.

Inaccuracies are harder to generalize about. Players may assume that the book is correct when talking about the internal affairs of the Rosicrucians, although even then it may be a little biased. Once it starts talking about the outside world, other Covenants, or the wider significance of the Covenant’s activities, readers are definitely getting the Rosicrucian view, which may well be completely wrong, or at best seriously incomplete.

Generalities aside, there are a few points that do need to be clarified. The following information is authoritative for the official *WitchCraft* background, but it is up to each Chronicler whether it applies in any given Chronicle. (These points will make more sense after the rest of the book is read.)

The Rosicrucians are completely wrong about the Cabal of Psyche. Someone has set them up, and created conflict where it is utterly unnecessary. Rosicrucians are completely sincere in believing that the Cabal is part of the Combine, and they are also completely wrong.

On the other hand, the Rosicrucians are right about the effectiveness of the Inquisition. The Covenant is almost completely free of corruption, more so than any other organization. There are no groups serving demons or Mad Gods, and those isolated individuals who do are almost always caught within a few years. Similar considerations apply to extreme evil. This does not mean that all Rosicrucians are nice guys, or that other Covenants do not see some of their actions as evil. The Covenant is not, however, the puppet of a demon or Mad God, nor is it in even remote danger of being taken over by such forces.

Finally, the Covenant does not have a secret agenda. Vitalinus really did plan to set up an organization in which Magicians could support one another while pursuing their research, and he has done so. While some elements of the Covenant want to take over the world, this has never been official policy. Many people, including most Rosicrucians, think that the Brotherhood may well have a secret agenda, but they are wrong.

To a great extent then, the Rosicrucians are a secret society that is exactly what it appears to be. People, even members, find this hard to believe, and it is perhaps the central paradox of the Covenant. The layers of secrecy, ritual, and mysticism are ultimately wrapped around a core identical to the outer layer.



Conventions

Text Conventions

This book has different graphic features that identify the type of information presented. This text is standard text, and it is used for general explanations.

This is sidebar text. It contains additional, but tangential information, or material supplementing the standard text.

This information provides ready-to-use examples of Supporting Cast Members that can be used as allies or Adversaries.

Dice Notations

D10, D8, D6 and D4 mean a ten-sided die, an eight-sided die, a six-sided die and a four-sided die, respectively. When a number appears before the notation, that number of such dice should be rolled, and their results should be added together. For example, 2D6 means roll two six-sided dice, and generate a result between 2 and 12. Multipliers are expressed after the dice notation. For example, 3D10 x 4 means roll three ten-sided dice, add the results together, and multiply that total result by 4. This generates a number between 12 and 120. A number in parentheses after, or in the middle of, the notation is the average roll. This number is provided for those that want to avoid dice rolling and just get the result. So the notation D6 x 4(12) means that players who want to skip rolling just use the value 12. Some notations cannot provide a set number because their result depends on a variable factor. For example, D8(4) x Strength is used because the Strength value to be plugged into that notation varies depending on who is acting.

Gender

Every roleplaying game struggles with the decision about third person pronouns and possessives. While the male reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female, there is no question that it is not entirely inclusive. On the other hand, the “he or she” structure is clumsy and unattractive. In an effort to “split the difference,” this book uses male designations for even chapters and female designations for odd chapters.

Measurements

This book primarily uses U.S. measurements (feet, yards, miles, pounds, etc.). Metric system equivalents appear in parentheses. In the interests of ease of use, the conversions are rounded relatively arbitrarily. For example, miles are multiplied by 1.5 to get kilometers (instead of 1.609), meters are equal to yards (instead of 1.094 yards), pounds are halved to get kilograms (instead of multiplied by 0.4536), and so on. If a Chronicler feels that more precision is necessary, she should take the U.S. measurements provided and apply more exact formulas.

New Rules

Every effort has been made to avoid providing new game mechanic material in this supplement. Given prior experience, this policy runs contrary to most folks’ ideas about new supplements. This policy was adopted so players would not need to consult numerous books during character creation. If new abilities and powers are scattered among several volumes, many books must be opened and many pages flipped to know the scope of the choices, or to find one vaguely remembered aspect. Further, scattering game mechanics in many books tends to create creeping power levels, with each new book attempting to “trump” the prior ones.

Rest easy, there is no shortage of new game mechanic ideas. In time, and as much as possible, these rules will be gathered in larger volumes devoted almost entirely to new game mechanics. Many will bear a **Unisystem** logo, rather than a specific game title, to indicate that they are applicable across any of the **Unisystem** contexts.

Bibliography

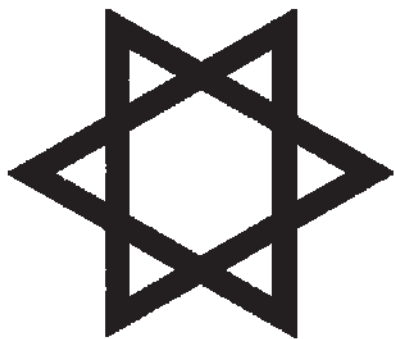
Ritual Magic, by Elizabeth M. Butler (Sutton Publishing, ISBN 0-7509-1859-4): A scholarly study of the style of magic on which the Rosicrucians are based. Read it to discover why players should just make everything up.

The Rosicrucian Enlightenment, by Frances A Yates (Routledge & Kegan Paul, ISBN 0-7100-7380-1): A fascinating, and historically fairly sound, study of the historical Rosicrucians, and what they were up to. This book was an important inspiration for this supplement.

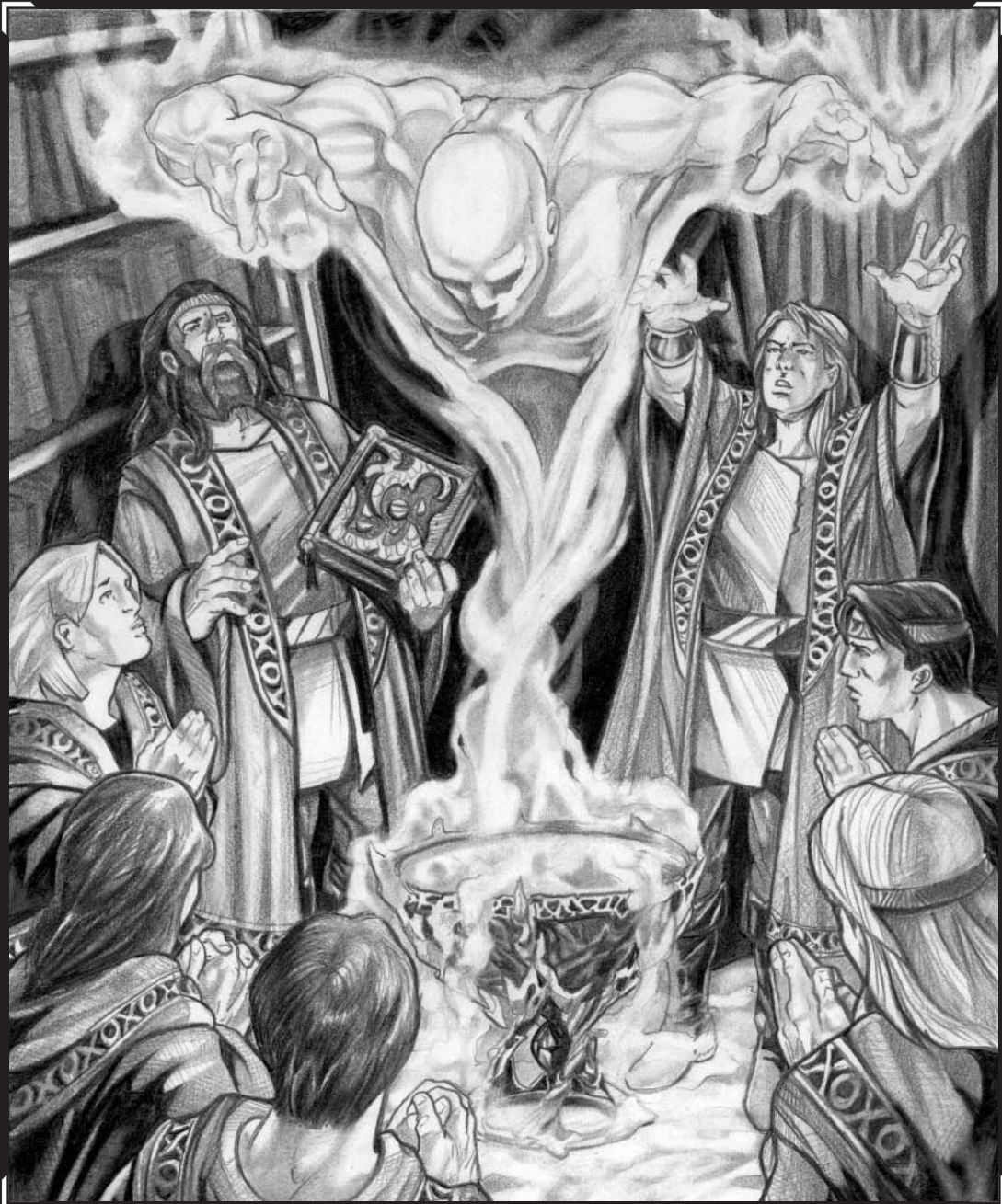
From Paracelsus to Newton, by Charles Webster (Cambridge University Press, ISBN 0-521-24919-8): An account of the role of magical thinking in the Scientific Revolution, and another important influence on the vision of Rosicrucians presented here.

About the Author

David Chart was born in England, where he has lived all his life. He has avoided leaving the safe environment of academia, at least so far, and his day job involves teaching the philosophy of science to medical students. In his spare time, he reads, plays, and writes roleplaying games, and this is his second sole author book. The supernatural has so far left him well enough alone, and he suspects that this is because it does not exist.



Chapter Two: Covenant



Mythos

The Brotherhood of the Rose Cross was founded to enable its members to learn from one another and benefit from mutual protection. As such, it does not have group aims, unlike some other Covenants. This is not to say that Rosicrucians all lead selfish lives dedicated to their own aggrandizement. Many of them do not. Still, while the Covenant permits its members to have altruistic goals, the Brotherhood itself does not have such lofty aims.

The main goals of the Covenant, therefore, are knowledge and security. Since the seventeenth century, security has come to mean secrecy, and is regarded as more important than knowledge in many ways. If security were compromised, many Rosicrucians would probably die, and it is not worth risking that for a small increase in knowledge. Of course, different members balance the two factors in different ways.

The covenant also places some restrictions on its members. These are almost all concerned with things that Rosicrucians may not do. Essentially, Rosicrucians may not be evil sorcerers. They are not required to be noticeably good, and selfishness is not a problem, but active malice brings down the wrath of the Covenant. Further, each is expected to take responsibility for his own actions. The Covenant may help a member clean up messes that are too large to be handled alone, but the member then has a debt to repay.

The main positive requirement on members is that of mutual aid. This is left open to individual interpretation, so members are not expected to heed every request for help. On the other hand, refusing every such request would get the Rosicrucian into trouble. Some people do freeload on the Covenant, taking advantage of others' assistance without contributing much themselves, and while this destroys any chance of promotion or respect, it does not get them thrown out.

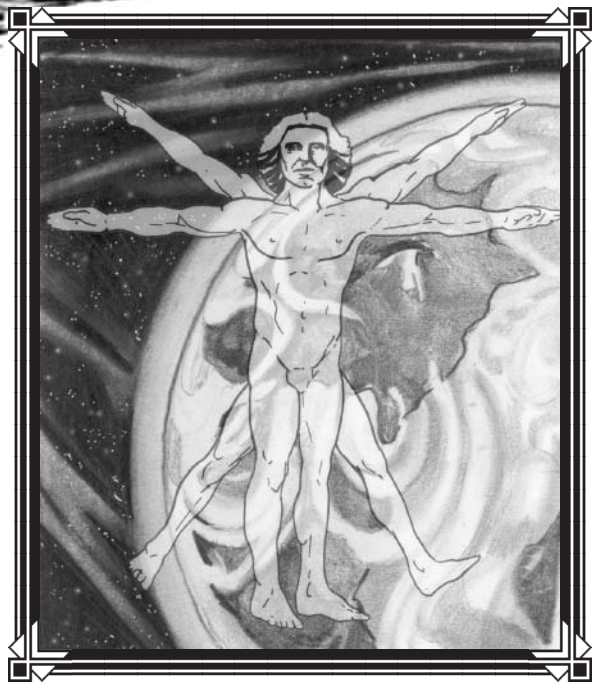
The official language of the Covenant is Latin, and has been since its foundation. Most members speak at least a smattering of that language, which helps a great deal when visiting a distant Shrine.

Evil

The Brotherhood has two fundamental rules concerning evil that must never be broken. The first is that no one deals with the Mad Gods. The second is that no one deals with demons, even if they are "completely under control." The Inquisition is particularly alert for such offenses, and the mandatory penalty is death plus unraveling. Violations of these rules are rare, roughly one every ten years. Trials and punishments are made known throughout the Brotherhood, so members know that they are still enforced.

The Inquisition also looks out for other kinds of evil. Suffering, death, and enslavement of human beings are regarded as evil, and any Rosicrucian causing them is likely to be investigated. On the other hand, humans are made in God's image to rule over the rest of creation, and so the suffering, death, and enslavement of other kinds of beings, from animals to spirits, can be justified as means to an end. Thus, a Rosicrucian would get in some trouble for torturing a person even if there was a really good reason for it, whereas torturing a cat would only cause problems if they did it purely for fun—and even then it would be more likely to result in a warning than a serious punishment. Nevertheless, cruelty is rare in the Covenant because it tries to avoid recruiting such people. It is worth noting that binding spirits, and thus effectively enslaving them, is always regarded as acceptable—spirit servants are so useful that their control can always be justified as a means to an end.

On the other hand, the Covenant is not much concerned with defining good. It believes that many different conceptions of good are possible, and that members should be free to pursue their own vision so long as it is not actively evil.



The World

Humanity is the pinnacle of creation, made in God's image to rule the rest. Even the Seraphim were created to serve humanity, a fact they often seem to forget. While some nonhuman spirits are more powerful than any human, only humankind has the potential to truly create, and a human being who lived long enough could become as strong as the highest Seraphim.

With great power comes great responsibility, and human beings should ensure that they do not destroy the world given into their care. The Gifted have an even greater responsibility than mundane humans, because they are granted more power and a greater likeness to the Creator. Of course, different people see their responsibilities in different ways, but everyone must be ready to face the consequences of their actions.

The existence of a Creator is accepted by virtually all Rosicrucians, although a significant number do not believe that it is possible to know anything about him. Most believe that everything, Essence and Taint alike, was produced by the Creator, and that, therefore, humankind is destined to defeat the Mad Gods as well as those evils that belong to the world. A significant group, however, believes that Taint is merely other

beings' equivalent of Essence. They believe that the Creator is a powerful Mad God, but that he seems sane because this universe is built according to his rules. According to this group, every Mad God has its own kind of Taint, and it is not generally sensible to describe them as evil or malicious, because those terms rely on the rules provided by Essence. Since the Mad Gods were not made by the Creator, humankind may not be able to defeat them, and they are certainly the greatest threat to the order of the world.

Mutual Aid

The Covenant was founded on the idea that its members would help one another, and refusing to do so will make a Rosicrucian very unpopular. Members are expected to provide trivial amounts of aid on request: small gifts of money, accommodation for a night or two, transport to somewhere within an hour's journey. Even such small requests can be abused, however, so this is not a rigid rule. As the amount of aid requested increases, so does the expectation that the transaction should benefit both parties. Of course, a request to help stop a Mad God breaking through downtown should be honored, as everyone clearly benefits from the deity's absence.

A particularly important form of mutual aid is tuition. Rosicrucians are free to share the Invocations they know, and indeed should teach them to other members who offer suitable compensation. Given the amount of time involved—months, in most cases—this is regarded as a fairly major service, but a member who always refused it would be looked down upon. A member who discovers a new Invocation is expected to make it available to the Covenant, either by writing it down or by teaching it to at least one other person. This responsibility is taken very seriously, as the Covenant places a great premium on the increase of knowledge, and a member may actually be punished for refusing to pass on his knowledge.

In most cases, however, a refusal to be helpful is not actively punished, as it is counterproductive to force people to help each other. Unhelpful members find it hard to get help for themselves, are almost never promoted, are denied access to useful resources, and are turned into social pariahs. They usually get the message.

Initiates

Recruitment

The Brotherhood sees itself as an elite, and recruits people who will maintain and enhance that position. As a general rule, it recruits from among the upper classes of mundane society. The selection criteria are primarily meritocratic, so the Covenant recruits the intelligent and the talented, but birth, breeding, and wealth does play a part.

The typical Rosicrucian recruit is a talented individual from a privileged background. Such people form the largest single group within the Covenant, but even so they are a minority over all. The recruit would normally have won undergraduate admission to a prestigious university and would first be approached by the Covenant during his undergraduate studies. There are Rosicrucians associated with all the world's great universities, for precisely this purpose. When a potential candidate is at a less prestigious institution, the nearest academic Rosicrucian makes contact. This also applies if the candidate is at some other kind of establishment: a research center, library, or museum, for example. However, this is unusual, as those kinds of places usually require a university education prior to employment.

The initial contact concentrates on testing the waters. First, it is necessary to confirm that the candidate does have the potential to learn Magic, or other Gifted Art. Second, his ability to be discreet must be ascertained. If he passes these tests, he becomes a Page in the eyes of the Covenant, and his contact is instructed to find out whether he would make a good member.

Ideally, the candidate must have a certain degree of openness to the idea of the supernatural, as well as significant intellectual ability and a good social background. However, there are other aspects of personality, which are no less important. Cruelty and malice generally result in rejection, as does extreme selfishness or a fanatical dedication to some other cause. Spoiled favorite children are not necessarily rejected, but they must show signs of growing maturity. (If the covenant rejected such people out of hand, it would

have to change the groups from which it recruited.) In order to assess the Page in this way, the Rosicrucian attempts to become friends with him, and discusses philosophical and metaphysical topics with him.

If the Page still seems suitable, there is one final test. An encounter with the Otherworlds is arranged and his behavior and response carefully observed. This encounter is always staged, and often involves bound spirits and other Rosicrucians. However, it is not unknown for things to go wrong, and the local Shrine usually provides fairly heavy firepower, just in case. If the Page reacts suitably—not going mad, or showing signs of fanatical hatred of the supernatural, or abject cowardice—then his contact tells him about the existence of an organization of people who deal with such things, and asks him if he would like to join. This is a perfectly free choice, although the Page is asked not to mention the existence of the group if he chooses not to sign up. In the event, very few Pages do refuse at this stage. Things are generally timed so that the Page joins the Rosicrucians around the time of graduation. A job is then arranged by other members of the Covenant; a change in lifestyle is expected and raises no eyebrows.

Similar procedures are followed in the case of other kinds of recruits. These fall into three main categories: Rosicrucians by birth, talent recruits and accidental members.

The first group is the children of Rosicrucian families, whose ancestors have been members of the Covenant for generations. Members of this group are often initiated earlier in life, because it is very difficult for their parents to shield them completely from the Otherworlds. The least talented members of the Covenant fall into this group, because their prior association earns them the benefit of the doubt. On the other hand, some of the most talented members also fall into this group, and the “hereditary Rosicrucians” do tend to be very good at Covenant politics. Rosicrucians by birth form the second largest contingent in the Covenant as a whole, and are far more numerous than those recruited by either of the other two alternate means. Hereditary Rosicrucians and those recruited by the usual method (described above) together form the overwhelming majority of the Covenant.

The second group is people with so much talent in one area wanted by the Covenant that their lack in other areas can be overlooked. This talent can be magical, intellectual, or financial, but the candidate must have some magical and intellectual talent to be considered at all. The Covenant generally keeps an eye open for such people, but it does not search systematically. There are important Rosicrucians who were born in the slums of a Third World city, but not many. This group mainly consists of children of the middle classes who took a non-academic career, but still came to the attention of the Rosicrucian recruiters. A number of members think that the Covenant should pay more attention to this group, but part of the problem is that the assessment process does require significant resources, and these are already spread quite thinly. (Part of the problem is conservatism and prejudice, as well.)

The third, and smallest, group consists of people who have worked with the Rosicrucians to counter some threat, and along the way have both learned quite a lot about the Covenant and displayed some talent. They are asked to join partly to keep them quiet, and partly as a reward. Many accept, because there are significant benefits to membership. This group has rarely been through a careful assessment procedure, and the final test may well have been replaced by fighting off a demon for real. However, since they have all survived a major supernatural experience, they tend to do well in the Covenant. They also tend to produce a disproportionate number of renegades, thanks to the lack of initial assessment.

Finally, the Covenant has some nonhuman members. They tend to be recruited via the third route, or were members while they were still human. These constitute a tiny minority and tend to be well known in the Covenant because they stand out. There are around a dozen Bast, about the same number of Vampyres, and about half as many Phantasms. Most members of the latter two groups were already members before they died. Nonhuman Rosicrucians are, in theory, full members and equal to the humans, but none have ever risen above the rank of Equestrian. Given their small numbers, this could be pure chance, but it seems unlikely.

Initiation

Initiation into the Covenant is a highly ritualized affair, as is initiation into a higher rank. (The rest of Covenant business is conducted formally, but without the elaborate rituals or costumes.) The initiation rituals are very old, dating back to the founding of the Covenant, and take place entirely in Latin. Initiates who do not speak Latin need not worry—they are allowed small crib sheets for their words, although they are encouraged to learn them if at all possible. Generally, the initiation does not take place until the initiate has learned the words, but in exceptional circumstances it can happen very quickly.

All initiation ceremonies have a similar plan, with differences of detail for different grades. They all take place in a specially prepared chamber at a Shrine headquarters. For ranks of Duke or higher, the initiation ceremony happens in London. Rosicrucians of the grade that the initiate is entering, or higher, may attend the ceremony, but usually only do so if they know the initiate.

The initiation chamber is a cube, ten yards (meters) on a side. The edges are picked out in gold, one for each Founder. In some Shrines, the bottom edge near the door is undecorated, to represent the traitor. The floor is paved in black and white marble, with the black forming a simple cross stretching between the mid points of the walls. The walls are usually hung with tapestries representing important incidents from the Covenant's history, or bearing mystical symbols. The ceiling is painted with the Seal of Solomon, the symbol of the Covenant. There is a single door, in the center of one of the walls.

The ceremony is led by a president, selected from among all the Rosicrucians eligible to attend. The president is usually someone who knows the initiate, or is an important leader within the Shrine. A few Shrines have members who usually preside at the ceremonies, but this is rare. The president wears a scarlet gown, embroidered in gold with the Seal of Solomon on the back, and with a rose entwined around a cross on the front.

The initiate is presented by a sponsor, invariably someone who knows him well and almost always the

Rosicrucian who in fact recommended him for membership. The sponsor wears a deep blue gown, embroidered with the Seal of Solomon in silver on the back, and a small image of a rose entwined around a cross on the front. He also wears a small blue cap. The initiate wears a plain white gown, with a hood, which is raised at the beginning of the ceremony. Those attending are required to dress smartly, but need not wear any special gear.

The guests and president enter the initiation chamber before the ceremony, while the sponsor and initiate wait outside. The ceremony begins with the sponsor knocking three times, slowly, on the door. The president says "Enter," and the sponsor opens the door. He takes the initiate by the right hand and leads him to stand on the center of the cross, just in front of the president. The initiate kneels, still holding the sponsor's hand. The sponsor says, "I bring before you (name), whom I declare worthy by talent, gift, and character to be a brother among us." (He refers to a brother even when the initiate in question is female.) The sponsor releases the initiate's hand and steps back.

The president says, "It is both a privilege and a burden to be a brother to us. Do you truly understand what you are to do, and desire to do so of your own free will?" The initiate replies, "Freely have I chosen."

The president asks the initiate to make several promises. The first three are: "Do you swear never to deal with the Mad Gods or their servants, other than to drive them from the world?", "Do you swear never to deal with demons or their servants, other than to defeat their schemes?" and "Do you swear to obey the commands of your superiors?" To these, the initiate replies, "I do so swear." The last one is: "Will you strive to aid your brothers as far as it lies in your power?", and the answer is: "I will so strive."

The president asks those present, "Do any of you know of good cause why this person should not be a brother among us?" It is customary to say nothing at this point, although objections may be raised. Anyone doing so is asked why they did not say something earlier in the process, however. Assuming that the expected silence ensues, the president takes a white tabard, embroidered with the Seal of Solomon on one side and a rose and cross on the other, and places it over the initiate's head.

"I declare you to be a brother among us, to and beyond death. Rise now, and greet your new brethren." The initiate stands, lowers his hood, and formally introduces himself to each of the Rosicrucians present, as they introduce themselves to him. He begins with his sponsor, and finishes with the president. As each person is greeted, he leaves the room, so that the new member leaves last, closing the door behind himself.

The ceremony is customarily followed by a party, after the main players have had a chance to change into more practical clothes. It is very bad manners to attend the ceremony and not the party, but acceptable to attend the party but not the ceremony. The party is the first chance the new member has to get to know many of the other members of his Shrine. This can involve a number of surprises, but is vital if he is to know where he can turn for help. Of course, it is very rare indeed for an entire Shrine to attend, and some people are told to stay away to help maintain secrecy.

If the initiate is merely being admitted to a higher grade, the ceremony has the same structure, but different promises, with more emphasis on taking responsibility for power as the ranks are climbed. Of course, Rosicrucians only know for sure about the rituals they have attended, but the descriptions of the rituals are open to all so it is unlikely that the *real* rituals for higher levels are radically different.

Mundanes

There are no mundane members of the Rosicrucians, but many mundanes are associated with the Covenant, usually without knowing it. The Covenant keeps a careful eye on how its members treat associated mundanes, largely to ensure that they are given no reason to investigate more carefully. Thus, instructions should not be particularly mysterious, nor should someone loosely associated be required to do something that really requires an insider's knowledge. Ignorant mundanes should not be exposed to supernatural risk, and no mundane should be exposed to a greater risk than their job normally involves, as most of them have families. Members are also expected to treat mundane associates well, as happy people are less likely to cause trouble.

The Covenant's mundane members fall into a number of categories. By far the most numerous are those employed in mundane businesses by members of the Covenant. They provide important services, but have no idea of what they are really doing, or of their bosses' true nature. Next are those who know that they are working for some kind of secret organization, but do not know that it is linked to the supernatural. Many of these people think that the Covenant is a criminal organization, and most of the rest think that it is a government agency. Both beliefs give them a good reason to keep quiet. This group poses the largest security risk, and some within the Covenant think that all those mundanes who know that they are working for a secret organization should be told about the supernatural.

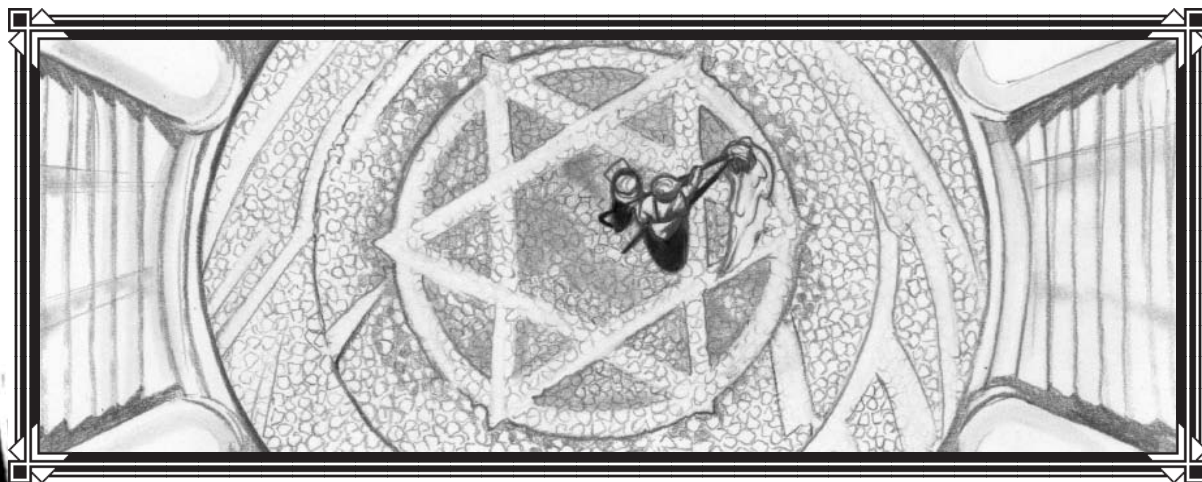
The next group, which is only slightly smaller than the last, consists of those mundanes who know that they work for a secret group with supernatural powers, but know very little about that group. The Covenant occasionally recruits from such people, and members are encouraged to use magic to help them in subtle ways, or in major crises. If their children get cancer, for example, magic is used to cure them, to avoid resentment.

The final, and smallest, group consists of mundanes who know almost as much about the Covenant as its members. These people would have been recruited if they had any magical talent, and they are treated very well indeed. This creates some odd circumstances—the cleaners of the Shrine HQ are paid

significantly more, and are considerable more loyal, than comparable employees at other buildings. This group also includes librarians, researchers, combat specialists, and so on. There are fewer people in this group than there are members of the Covenant, and they are not easy to replace.

All members of the Covenant may request assistance from its mundane associates. These requests are relayed through the member who has immediate responsibility for the mundanes, and are granted at his discretion. The inner group is under the control of the Tribune of the Shrine in which they work; the other groups are under the control of the Rosicrucians who have established them. As a general rule, Rosicrucians are willing to instruct their mundane employees to render minor assistance, but very reluctant to put them at risk or expose them to the supernatural. Even those trained in combat are held back unless a really convincing case is made, because they are hard to replace and it is never certain when they might be needed for a true emergency.

This mundane influence helps make life easier for most Rosicrucians. They have little trouble finding jobs, housing, or good deals on other purchases. A Rosicrucian with a good reputation for assisting others probably does not even need to work, as other members provide housing and goods in order to encourage him to help them in the future. Indeed, some of the most respected Rosicrucians sponge off their fellows in this way, providing extensive training in Invocations in return.



Hierarchy

Orders

The Brotherhood has a well-defined internal hierarchy, and the various ranks have both rights and responsibilities. The main right is the authority to give orders to lower-ranked members. If a higher-ranked Rosicrucian orders a lower-ranked member to do something, the inferior is required to drop whatever else he is doing and obey the order. No questioning is allowed, at least not before the order is obeyed. There are a few exceptions—orders to serve a demon or a Mad God may be safely ignored. However, even in those cases, a formal investigation will be conducted.

The safeguard is that the ranking members are required to give orders only in extremely urgent, extremely serious situations. Otherwise, they are expected to explain the problem and ask for help. The upper ranks are given this authority so that the Covenant can respond swiftly to emergencies, without needing to explain everything to all the people involved in dealing with it. Using it for any other purpose is an abuse, and one that might well lead to a reduction in rank. Thus, ranking members very rarely give orders.

A Rosicrucian who has carried out an order can expect a fairly full explanation of what he was doing, after the event. Sometimes it will have become clear already, for example if he was ordered to defend a certain place, and that place was attacked by a group of Fiends. Sometimes it may not be so obvious, and then the Rosicrucian who issued the order is required to explain its purpose. If the lower-ranked member is not satisfied with this explanation, he may complain to another Rosicrucian of at least equal rank to the one who issued the order, and the Covenant will investigate the order.

Abuses of this authority are dealt with very severely, because repeated abuses would destroy its usefulness. The Covenant is widely dispersed, and most of its members have significant personal power, so there is no way to impose military discipline as a general thing. Orders are obeyed because an expectation

exists that the consequences of not doing so will be disastrous, and if that expectation were weakened by abuses, people would argue before obeying. The resulting delay might be catastrophic. Thus, the hierarchy vigorously defends both the principle that orders must be obeyed, and the principle that orders must relate to vital and urgent events.

This does mean that “I was only obeying orders” is accepted as a defense in the Covenant’s courts. Unless explicitly told to serve a demon or Mad God, the fact of the order is taken as an assumption that the Rosicrucian issuing the order has properly assessed the situation and decided that the action is justified. The flip side is that the Rosicrucian who issued the order is responsible for the actions taken in just the same way as if he had done them himself. There are two known cases in which Covenant members have carried out brutal massacres on the orders of their superiors. In both, those responsible for the killings were unpunished, because they were obeying orders. In one, no one was punished—the people killed were cultists of a Mad God, which was partially present in each of their bodies and could only be driven back from the world by killing them. In the other, the superior was executed and unraveled, because he had no good reason for the order.

The responsibilities of rank are more onerous. Every Rosicrucian above the rank of Squire has a number of other members under his supervision. He is required to make sure that they are not having problems that could leave them vulnerable to corruption, or taking actions that might endanger the Covenant. In the former case, he is required to help; in the latter to warn. This responsibility is fairly serious, but is not expected to take up all of a member’s time. A failure of oversight will lead to a reprimand, but it may not be a serious one if the overseer could not have been expected to have known about the problem without taking extreme measures.

This oversight is taken more as a duty to help than as a duty to watch. Thus, a leader is expected to offer help to his charges if he thinks that they might need it. With other members, a member is not expected to help unless asked. For Equestrians set over a Squire, the main purpose of the role is to help the new member to find his way around the Brotherhood.

Ranking Rosicrucians are also expected to provide leadership, even when they are not giving orders. Most of the time, they are expected to lead by consensus, but it is their responsibility to resolve impasses and get people working together. They are expected to do this without resorting to issuing orders, and thus they are not expected to succeed every time.

Promotions

Promotions are issued by members of the rank above the rank to which a member is being promoted, with the obvious exception of the Grand Masters, who choose their own. For example, a Tribune recommends the Squire for promotion to the other Tribunes. They consider the case, and say whether or not they agree. If consensus cannot be reached, the Tribunes appeal to the Duke, who settles the case. Normally, however, doubts on the part of one of the Tribunes are taken to indicate that the member in question is not quite ready for promotion.

The criteria for promotion are complex. The candidate must be reliable, must have shown wisdom, and must have a demonstrated ability to avoid issuing unimportant orders. He must also have earned the respect of the Covenant, so that other Rosicrucians are inclined to listen to him. Finally, he must have a suitable personality. Thus, promotion is almost entirely a judgment call on the part of the hierarchy.

This renders it vulnerable to conscious and unconscious bias, and is one of the reasons why the upper ranks of the Covenant are still dominated by white men. Some younger members are campaigning for greater transparency in the promotions process, for explicit criteria, and for the possibility to appeal against a lack of promotion. These campaigns are getting nowhere, largely because a secret society cannot be transparent, and the other desiderata are no use without such a process.

Page: Pages do not usually know about the Brotherhood, but they have passed the initial assessment and are being seriously considered for membership.

Squire: Squires have passed the initial tests, including the final ordeal, and have taken the initiation vows described above. They are, to a certain extent, on probation, and are not taught many of the secrets of the Covenant. Most Colleges do not take

Squires as members, but that is, in large part, because a Squire who convinces a College to accept him as a member is clearly capable enough to get immediately promoted to Equestrian. Squires are not introduced to many members of the Covenant, generally only to their own Cohorts, the Tribune of their local Shrine, and one or two other members who can offer them particular assistance. With the recent surge in the number of Gifted being born, about 40% of the Covenant are Squires at the moment. This is placing some strain on the assessment system, and some people are being kept at this level for longer than they merit, and longer than the Covenant usually prefers.

Equestrians: This is the first level of full membership, and promotion to this grade signifies that the Covenant trusts the member. In the past, this was the normal level for members who did not want leadership responsibility, and it is possible to be highly respected and still an Equestrian. These days, however, the Equestrians are being required to shoulder a great deal of responsibility for the increased number of Squires, and it is not uncommon to find a Cohort with only one Equestrian member, the rest all being Squires under his authority. At this level, the member is told quite a lot about the Covenant, and is encouraged to meet most of the other Equestrians belonging to the local Shrine, although contact with other Shrines is still minimized. The information in this book is presented at an Equestrian level; Squires would not know all the information here, and Tribunes would know rather more.

Tribune: The Tribune is the first of the leadership ranks, and the head of a Shrine is always at least a Tribune. There are, however, significantly more Tribunes than Shrines, and those who do not have a Shrine to govern are often called non-regent Tribunes. Most non-regents have a particular area of authority, and travel while carrying it out. Tribunes are introduced to the other Tribunes over a significant area, often the area under the authority of a Duke, and frequently have to travel within that area. This makes Tribunes the first rank to pose a significant risk to the Covenant as a whole, and thus candidates are required to have significant personal power. Tribunes occasionally have their own Cohorts, consisting of lower-ranked members, to back them up in their duties.

Regent Tribunes are responsible for the smooth running of the local Shrine, and for ensuring that security is not breached. This is a largely administrative post, and thus magical power is not as important as good political skills, because organizing magicians, even Rosicrucians, is like herding cats. Most Tribunes have other duties. The majority of the members of the Inquisition are of Tribunal rank or higher, enabling them to order most Rosicrucians to cooperate with an investigation, and allowing them to know enough about the Covenant as a whole to follow evidence that leads them to another area. Many areas also have Tribunes assigned to particular classes of threat: demons, Mad Gods and the Combine are common areas of responsibility, and if an area has had major problems with some other group, a Tribune may be given responsibility for that. As Tribunes can live a long time and are very rarely stripped of special responsibilities, this can lead to odd situations. The Shrine of Southern Africa, for example, still has a Tribune with special responsibility for the British.

Dukes: Dukes are essentially the same as Tribunes, but one level up. Particularly large or important Shrines are headed by a Duke, and they know about the Covenant throughout a large area. There are also Dukes with responsibility for particular threats, who co-ordinate the Tribunes with similar responsibilities in their area. Most of the Covenant is sure that this cannot be all that there is to the rank, but since Dukes do not often deal directly with Equestrians, there is a lot of rumor and speculation and very little in the way of hard facts.

Masters: The Masters are the members responsible for global coordination of the Covenant on a day to day basis. There are six with responsibility for broad global areas: Europe, North America, South America, Africa, Asia, and Orient-Pacific. There are also equivalents of non-regent Tribunes, including the Master of

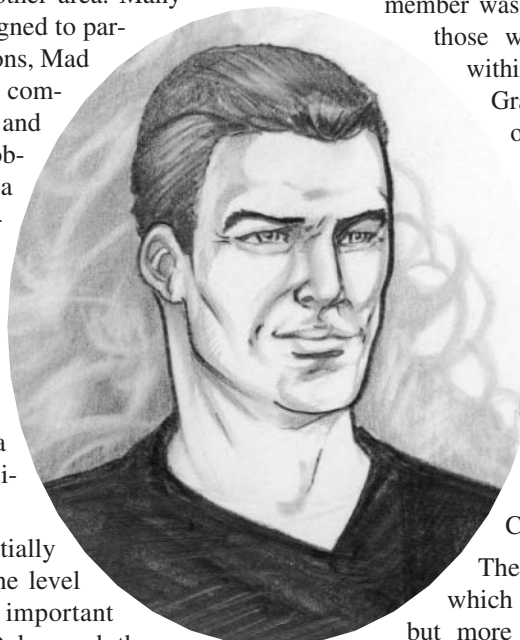
Armageddon, responsible for making sure that the world does not end. The Masters are very shadowy figures as far as most of the membership is concerned, and no names are generally known.

Grand Masters: The thirteen Grand Masters are responsible for the overall government and direction of the Covenant. They are rather less shadowy than the Masters, because one of their functions is to provide visible leadership. However, most of their identities are unknown. The Twelve Founders formed the original Council (as the whole group is known), and a thirteenth member was admitted in 1278, to represent those who had been trained entirely within the Rosicrucians. Since then, Grand Masters have been replaced on death or retirement.

The generally known Grand Masters are Vitalinus, the effective founder of the Covenant; Virginia Moreau, presumed to be the only woman among them; Christian Haggis, responsible for "official doctrine;" and Erik Fire-Rider, one of the Founders. It is likely that some other Founders are still on the Council, but no details are known.

The Council can issue decrees, which are less binding than orders, but more binding than suggestions. A

Rosicrucian had better have a compelling reason for violating a decree, but as they are general and cannot be tailored to every situation, it is accepted that he might have such a reason. The Council's decrees are nearly always negative, as positive policy can be more effectively enacted through the Masters and the normal chain of command. However, to stop people doing things it is necessary to provide a general prohibition. This does not stop some groups from agitating for a decree on their pet project, but this rarely works. The only current decree is one prohibiting action against the Combine, except as an immediate response to a direct attack by them on Covenant interests, and this decree is explicitly described as temporary.



Informal Status

Alongside the formal ranks is an elaborate system of informal status. This depends on the amount of respect that other Rosicrucians have for the member, and is a major factor in deciding whether he should be promoted. Although this does vary on an individual basis, there are a number of factors on which most Rosicrucians agree.

Teaching: Teaching Invocations to other Rosicrucians generates a lot of respect, and not only from those actually taught. Teaching Invocations which the member either created or discovered garners even more respect. Failure to teach does not result in disapproval unless the member is believed to be hoarding unique knowledge, as the investment of time is recognized to be significant.

Mundane Assistance: This works the opposite way from teaching. Members lose respect if they fail to provide mundane assistance, but not much is gained by being helpful, even if the member is spectacularly generous.

Personal Risk: Rosicrucians who actually risk injury, death, or other serious losses to help their fellows get a great deal of respect. The negative side is that they also get a lot of requests for help. Failure to accept a risk for another is not usually reason for disapprobation, but it can be. If the member were asked to help prevent a major disaster and refused because it would not affect him personally, he would lose a great deal of status.

Vengeance: Avenging other members of the Covenant is a tricky case. Members are expected to do it to a certain extent. Thus, if some group wipes out the rest of a Cohort, the survivor would be expected to take revenge, and would lose respect if he did not. On the other hand, such action would cause a loss of respect if others felt the avenger was a dangerously volatile character.

Spectacular Actions: Members can gain respect by successfully achieving something spectacular. Toni Bains, for example, has a huge amount of informal status as a result of saving the world. If a member achieves something spectacularly bad, he can also lose a lot of respect, of course.

Rank: The formal system does interact with the informal. The higher a member's rank within the Covenant, the more respect garnered, purely on that basis. This respect is something of a presumption of competence, however—if the member shows that he is no good at the job, he quickly loses the respect. On the other hand, competence at a high rank generates much more respect than similar competence could win for an Equestrian.

Power: Finally, there is personal, metaphysical power. The more powerful a member is, the more respect he gets. Power in Magic, as opposed to other Gifted abilities, instills more status, but a powerful Necromancer would still be accorded a significant amount of respect.

Enough respect is an effective substitute for formal rank in most cases. Other Rosicrucians will obey a respected member's orders and take his suggestions very seriously indeed. Those few individuals who hold the rank without the corresponding respect find their jobs to be very difficult.

Shrines

The Rosicrucian Brotherhood is organized into Shrines. These are areas of responsibility, rather than physical buildings, and in theory they need not be tied to geography. As a matter of fact, they all are, and the Covenant is unlikely to found any other kind of Shrine at this point.

Every Shrine is headed by a regent, who is at least of Tribune rank. Almost all Shrines have a headquarters in one of the cities they cover, and the regent often lives here. If he does not, he at least has an office there, where he can be contacted if necessary. All members of the Shrine have the right to use the facilities of the headquarters, but in general they rely on their own resources. Indeed, Rosicrucians are discouraged from visiting the Shrine headquarters too often, as the Brotherhood would like to keep their precise locations secret. The headquarters need not be the largest building controlled by the Shrine, as its status is mostly a matter of custom. However, it almost always contains the initiation chamber.

The Covenant usually owns a number of other buildings scattered throughout the Shrine, which pro-

vide resources ranging from temporary safe houses to libraries to workshops. Some of these locations are within Places of Power, and members of the Brotherhood may seek permission to conduct rituals there. Most of the Shrine's buildings are looked after by mundane associates of the Covenant, as the Gifted members have more important things to do with their time. The exceptions are the headquarters and those in Places of Power, which always have at least one Gifted guardian.

Beyond this, there is little structure to a Shrine. The Brotherhood is not a military organization, and its members are expected to spend much of their lives pursuing their own interests. The main purpose of the Shrine is to allow contact between Rosicrucians without compromising the security of the whole Covenant. This means that the details of a Rosicrucian's daily life depend almost entirely on the interests of the particular Rosicrucian.

Geography

The Covenant has about 3,000 members worldwide. Most of them are concentrated in Europe and North America, but there are Rosicrucians on every continent. (There is a Parmenidean, Dr. Samuels, in the British Antarctic Survey, and he is usually stationed in Antarctica.)

Europe: Europe is the heartland of the Covenant, and still the largest single area, with about 1,100 members. European Rosicrucians tend to see themselves as the natural aristocracy of the Covenant, an attitude that annoys the Americans to no end. The Shrines were mostly named in the Middle Ages and follow divisions that were sensible then. There are Shrines in London and Paris (both of which are headed by Dukes, for historical reasons), Western Isles (Britain, Ireland, and Iceland; headquartered in York), Scandinavia (Oslo), Aragon (northern Spain; Barcelona), Al-Andalus (southern Spain and Portugal; Granada), France, The Empire (Germany, the Low Countries, some bits of France, the Alps, northern Italy, and parts of Eastern Europe—headed by a Duke because of its sheer size; headquartered in Cologne), Sicily (Sicily, Southern Italy, a few enclaves in North Africa; headquarters in Palermo), Constantinople (Istanbul), Turkey (includes

Greece—the name of this Shrine has come the closest to being changed, particularly as the headquarters are in Athens), Slavonia (the rest of Eastern Europe; the headquarters are in Krakow), and St. Petersburg (a more recent Shrine, which refused to change its name under Communism and is happy to be accurate again). The thirteen Shrines do not have a sensible distribution of members. St. Petersburg has only 12 members, while The Empire has more than 200. However, proposals to reorganize tend to get bogged down in local politics and eventually get shelved as more trouble than they are worth.

North America: The North American Shrines see themselves as the dynamic part of the Covenant, dragging it forward into the nineteenth century (one step at a time, they say). They have about 1,000 members, and are much more sensibly organized than those in Europe. In large part, this is because the Shrine boundaries have been reviewed every fifty years since 1800, so no great attachment to ancient borders has built up. The North American Shrines are Canada (led by a Duke because it covers such a wide area, with headquarters in Toronto), New York (led by a Duke because it has a large number of members), Los Angeles, San Francisco, New England (headquarters in Andover, Massachusetts), the Midwest (headquarters in Toledo, Ohio), and the South (headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee).

South America: This is the fastest growing region, with around 300 members at present. At the moment, it is divided into two Shrines, North and South, but negotiations are in progress to split them further. The Caribbean falls under its authority. At present, the North has its headquarters in Mexico City, the South in Rio de Janeiro.

Orient-Pacific: This region covers all the Pacific islands, Australasia, China, Korea, and South-East Asia. It is the second oldest region, having been recognized since the fifteenth century, and is still quite large, with about 300 members. However, it is also notoriously conservative and it is not showing any signs of growth, even with the recent surge in the numbers of Gifted. It is also split into more than thirty Shrines, which constantly merge with one another, or split apart again, or negotiate border changes. This is largely due to the region's conservatism; there is

very little difference in practice between Shrines so membership can change easily. This region causes some concern for the rest of the Covenant.

Asia: Asia has started to grow in membership recently, particularly in the former Soviet Union. It has about 200 members, of whom most live in India, although the balance is shifting. There are three Shrines: India, Arabia, and The Steppes. The borders are very vague, and there are so few members that it does not really matter. A Duke has recently been appointed as regent of the Steppes, in recognition of the rapid growth there. The Indian Shrine has its headquarters in Bombay, the Steppes in Samarkand. The Arabian Shrine used to have its headquarters in Baghdad, and is still trying to agree on a new location.

Africa: With around 100 members, this is the smallest region by a substantial margin. It is also, apparently, shrinking. Rosicrucian philosophy is very European, and the recent resurgence of African nationalism has made it unpopular even with the Gifted, so that it is difficult to find recruits. The fact that many African Cohorts exclude black members does not help, although the Council forced both Shrines to accept them. The two Shrines in the region cover the northern coast and sub-Saharan Africa, respectively. The Sahara Desert is up for grabs. The Shrines are based in Cairo and Nairobi.

Antarctica: Dr. Samuels occasionally suggests that he should be promoted to Master, or at least

Duke, to look after this large region, but as it has only one member, the Council has told him that would be excessive. He is a Tribune, however, just in case something urgent happens here.

Roving Cohorts

Roving Cohorts are a recent addition to the Covenant's structure. They serve as troubleshooters, dealing with particular threats to the Brotherhood. These Cohorts are generally attached to a particular Shrine, and deal with threats in that area. They are supposed to follow up on any evidence they find, but if it leads back to the Covenant, most are under instructions to hand the matter over to the Inquisition. Some Roving Cohorts, however, are composed entirely of Inquisitors, and are assigned to investigate suspected internal threats.

Most Shrines have at least one Roving Cohort. The members of this Cohort know all the non-regent Tribunes of the Shrine and are expected to assist them in their tasks. If a certain threat is particularly severe, it may be assigned both a Tribune and a dedicated Roving Cohort.

Serving in a Roving Cohort entails a significant degree of personal risk, and thus tends to boost status within the Covenant. It has become common for ambitious young Rosicrucians to seek membership in these Cohorts, as they are seen as useful stepping stones on the way up through the hierarchy.



Justice

The Rosicrucians are very concerned about the behavior of the members of the Covenant. The rules are not particularly onerous, but the leaders are very keen to see that they are kept. The Covenant has two methods of law enforcement. Judgment by peers was established when the Covenant was founded, and is still used for most problems. The Inquisition was established in 1400, after the Rosicrucian Purge, and is dedicated to finding and destroying corruption within the Covenant.

One inviolable rule is that all problems must be dealt with internally. Criminal Rosicrucians are punished by the Covenant, not turned over to the police. Indeed, they are protected from the police as far as possible. This rule is followed because the last time the Covenant tried to use the mundane authorities to deal with internal problems, it was nearly destroyed by the Inquisition. They do not want to risk the same thing happening again.

The Inquisition

The Inquisition is the Covenant's main defense against corruption, and it has been highly effective. Corruption is quite tightly defined: dealing with Mad Gods, dealing with demons, treachery, or extreme and gratuitous evil. Proof of murder or torture is generally required before a member can be convicted of extreme evil, and isolated incidents are insufficient. In practice, the Inquisition tends to concentrate on associations with Mad Gods and demons, as these pose the greatest threat to the rest of the Covenant.

The Inquisition was founded in 1400, after the Rosicrucian Purge, and took its name from the organization that inspired the most fear in members of the Covenant. By taking the name, it also openly admitted the similarities between its organization and the mundane version, thus helping to emphasize the differences. The Rosicrucians are now used to its name, although members of other Covenants might find it rather strange and somewhat disquieting.

Almost all open members of the Inquisition have a rank of Tribune or higher. There are rumors of lower-ranked agents, who merely keep their eyes and ears open and pass on suspicions, but these may be noth-

ing more than rumors, as all members of the Covenant are expected to inform the Inquisition of any suspicions they may have. The Inquisition always investigates accusations, but if it finds no evidence, it usually reports the accuser to his superiors, who then investigate him through judgment by peers.

The Inquisition always carries out its investigations thoroughly, and almost always exonerates the suspect of corruption. It conducts around twenty full investigations every year, convicting one person of corruption about every decade. About half the investigations reveal no wrongdoing at all, the accusation being either groundless or based on a misunderstanding by someone in possession of only some of the facts. The latter case is by far the most common, as might be expected in a secret society. The other half almost all reveal lesser problems, which are reported to the relevant authorities and turned over to normal justice.

As a result of this care, the Inquisition is respected rather than feared by most members of the Covenant, and the Inquisitors try to keep it that way. They are known to be particularly vigilant over corruption in their own ranks, and almost any wrongdoing is enough to warrant stripping someone of Inquisitor status. Nevertheless, there is a further safeguard. Any member of the Covenant may report suspicions of the Inquisition to a Grand Master, who then organizes an investigation. It is customary to report such things to Vitalinus because, as one younger Rosicrucian put it, "if he's corrupt, we're all stuffed anyway." These investigations sometimes involve people from outside the Covenant, to ensure their independence, but since that compromises the Covenant's secrecy this is not inevitable. Reports of Inquisitorial corruption are rare, but taken very seriously.

The only punishment inflicted by the Inquisition is death with unraveling. Any less serious offense is not within their jurisdiction.

Judgment by Peers

Judgment by peers is the normal method of enforcement within the Covenant. This is the way in which accusations and apparently questionable actions are investigated. The accused's superior appoints someone of the accused's rank as prosecutor



to gather information and present a case. A jury is selected from the accused's equals: three are chosen by the accused, three by the accuser, and three by lot. The case is presented by the prosecutor, and the accused has the opportunity to defend himself. The jury decides on guilt or innocence by majority vote, and may recommend a sentence. Actual sentencing is done by the superior officer, although he himself might be investigated if he ignores the jury's advice.

In theory, any action could be investigated in this way. However, since it is quite time consuming, it is normal to resolve minor incidents less formally. A member who feels aggrieved can always accuse his superior before a jury of his peers, and such appeals are actually the largest single source of cases. Cases passed on by the Inquisition are always tried by jury, to make sure that the true level of guilt of the accused is well-known.

A member cannot be tried for being unhelpful. He can, however, be tried for disobedience, issuing unjustified orders, endangering the Covenant, or evil activities which do not quite count as corruption. The juries can hand out sentences of death and unraveling, but these must be confirmed by a Master before they are carried out. More often, they demote people, or require them to perform some service for the Covenant. Sometimes, they are merely required to stop doing something—this is often used when the accused really believed his actions to be justified, but the court did not agree. Expulsion from the Covenant is very rarely used as a punishment, as members know too much.

Leaving the Covenant

Sometimes, members find themselves in a fundamental dispute with the Covenant and want to leave. The rules are simple. Equestrians and Squires may leave, on condition that they swear not to betray the Covenant. Tribunes and above may not leave, as they know too much, but they may retire from active service. This puts them outside the usual hierarchy and leaves them free to act as they choose. They are generally denied access to the Covenant's resources, but they are no longer vulnerable to judgment by their peers. The Inquisition keeps a particularly close eye on them. It is rare for people to leave, however, since the Covenant offers a significant number of benefits and requires little from its members.

Colleges

There are a number of more or less formal groupings within the Covenant, known as Colleges. They gather together people with similar interests or backgrounds, and provide support and some degree of political clout. Some of the Colleges are the surviving form of Covenants that merged to form the Rosicrucians, while others have been created since the foundation of the Brotherhood. This section details the larger and more important Colleges, although others do exist.

Many Rosicrucians are members of a College, but by no means all. Many Colleges do not make their membership public, but the best estimate is that about 1,500 Rosicrucians are also affiliated with a College. Some are connected to more than one—none of the Colleges have exclusive membership requirements, although some combinations are very unlikely.

As a rule, only Equestrians are accepted as College members. However, if a member proves himself sufficiently for a College to want him, a promotion to Equestrian is all but inevitable. There are always a handful of Squires in the Colleges, but they are almost always soon promoted. Most Colleges accept applications for membership, but they have sole discretion over whether to accept the applicant. Some have initiation rituals, but these vary greatly from one to another and are not detailed here.

A lot of the Covenant's internal politics revolves around the Colleges. Every College has its own agenda, and tries to get as much support as possible for that agenda from the Covenant resources. These conflicts rarely become acrimonious, let alone violent, but they do ensure that Rosicrucian politics are very convoluted.

The Archaic Alliance

This College consists of those magicians who worship the ancient pagan gods. As a result, its members fall naturally into factions, depending on which of those gods they worship. Particularly important groups are the Scribes of Thoth and the Daughters of Isis, both remnants of Covenants involved in the founding of the Rosicrucians.

The Archaic Alliance is notorious for its internal tensions, and only survives as a unit because its members need each others' support against the pressure of a predominantly Christian Covenant. In recent years, however, the complexion of the Covenant has changed. In particular, far fewer of the new recruits are recognizably Christian, and more are attaching themselves to the old gods. Thus, this College may well split into a number of smaller groups, each one worshipping a particular god or set of gods. A number of members of the College are trying to prevent this, because the group would lose a lot of influence should such a split come to pass.

The Eclectics

The Eclectics believe that the Covenant should broaden its focus and stop concentrating so much on the study of Magic. Almost all its members have the Rosicrucian Scholar Quality, and at least one member studies virtually every kind of Gift, in addition to Magic. (This naturally means that there are no Inspired among them.) Since they regard a narrow focus within Magic as even worse than a narrow focus on Magic, they are willing to teach Invocations to other members of the Covenant, but they are even more eager to teach other Gifted Powers. This is easier said than done, however, as many Rosicrucians simply cannot manage the radically different mind set needed for, say, Seer Powers or Tao Chi.

Their willingness to teach means that the members of this College are generally respected, but their emphasis on non-Magical powers means that they are rather marginalized. They are becoming more mainstream as time passes and the Covenant expands, and some Rosicrucians believe that the Covenant may need to diversify if it is to survive the coming Reckoning. They also have an unusually high number of links with groups outside the Covenant, links which they exploit to gain tuition in other Paths of Power.

Among these links, a few are particularly important. Most of the links with the Twilight Order are through the Eclectics. They also have close links with the Pythagoreans, a fairly small group of Seers. The Pythagoreans claim a descent from ancient Egypt, and have an interest in geometry and numerology.

which translates into an interest in Invocations. Indeed, a couple of Pythagoreans have joined the Rosicrucians, having chosen to emphasize Magic in their studies. So far, no Rosicrucians have moved the other way.

The Exoterics

The Exoterics have been in disgrace since the failure of the Rosicrucian Utopia in the early seventeenth century. They believe that the emphasis on secrecy is a mistake, and that ultimately the only way for the Covenant to be safe is for it to be public. That is not to say that they favor publishing the addresses of all members in the newspapers—they accept that the public is not ready for the information at the moment. They think that the Covenant should be preparing the ground, making the idea of Gifted Powers more acceptable, then revealing their reality, finally stepping out of the shadows. The recent growth of New Age philosophy has moved them some way toward their goals, and some Exoterics have been actively involved in that movement.

Some members of the College go a little further, however, and believe that the Rosicrucians should step out of the shadows and rule the world. Some members of this faction think that it is better not to tell people about the Gifted until they already control all the levers of power, so that they do not have a chance to act against their rightful rulers. This group is marginal even within the College, however, as the failure of the Rosicrucian Utopia and the obvious power of the Combine make it clear that their scheme has virtually no chance of success. They remain within the College because it grants them additional influence, and the College lets them stay because in many internal debates their goals dictate the actions that the mainstream Exoterics want.

This College has been growing in influence recently, as the signs of approaching Reckoning make it apparent that something must be done. Indeed, with the increasing numbers of Gifted it is not clear that it will be possible to keep the secret much longer, and in that case it would certainly be better to prepare the mundane public in advance.

The House of St. John of Jerusalem

The House of St. John is the current form of one of the Covenants from which the Brotherhood was formed. It is a fairly large College, and consist of people who take the responsibility of power very seriously. They dedicate most of their effort to helping and protecting the mundanes, although they always try to keep such intervention secret.

The College is not a benevolent conspiracy, however. It is very loosely organized, serving more as a clearinghouse for contacts and information than as any sort of control center. Its members intervene as they see fit, whether to alleviate disasters or to nurture positive situations. Many members are deeply involved with charitable work, sometimes in a wholly mundane fashion. For example, some Householders work at soup kitchens for the homeless, which allows them to help now, and to keep an eye open for signs of more serious trouble.

The main philosophical split within the College is between those who think that it is best to try to prevent disasters by building good communities and social structures, and those who think that, in a complex world, it is more important to relieve the disasters that do occur, because there is no way to prevent all of them. The debate between the two factions remains friendly, and most members are willing to help in either kind of project. The College is becoming fairly sure that a Reckoning is approaching, and this is sharpening the philosophical debate—should they try to prevent it or concentrate on being able to help in the aftermath? Whichever way they decide, it seems likely that the College will act in a more organized and unified fashion in the immediate future.

One role that the rest of the Covenant tends to thrust upon the College is that of ambassador. Most Householders are good at dealing with people, and their activities are likely to meet with the approval of virtually any group that the Covenant would want to deal with in a friendly fashion. They are, to a great extent, the acceptable face of the Rosicrucians, and they are happy with the role—although, as they point out, it would not be necessary if more Rosicrucians acted as they do.



The Marchers

The Marchers are also an old College, dating back to the middle of the thirteenth century. They are concerned with the defeat of supernatural threats, and the defense of both the Covenant and the rest of humanity. The emphasis is very definitely on defeating the supernatural rather than defending humanity, and the College is happy to accept collateral damage, even on a massive scale. This leads to a rather ambivalent relationship with other groups within the Covenant. The House of St. John often works with the Marchers, but equally often finds itself defending mundanes against the consequences of the Marchers' more drastic actions. Many Marchers are also Inquisitors, but members of the College are frequently investigated by the Inquisition, and expect to be called before a jury of their peers about once per year.

This College is absolutely convinced that there is a Reckoning approaching and is desperately trying to mobilize the Covenant into some sort of concerted response. Most members are in favor of trying to stop this approaching armageddon, on the grounds that it is easier to keep Mad Gods and demons out of the world than to drive them back once they are here. They do not even consider the possibility of simply trying to survive in the aftermath, as that would be to admit defeat.

The Marchers have a surprising number of informal contacts with the Sentinels, as they often find themselves fighting on the same side. However, a substantial proportion of that other Covenant would as happily hunt Rosicrucians as work with them, so these contacts have remained purely personal, and are generally kept secret, even from other Rosicrucians. Not all members of the Brotherhood approve of links with the Sentinels, either.

The Parmenideans

Not all members of the Covenant accept that there is a fundamental split between science and magic. In its earliest years, the Brotherhood investigated both, and it only abandoned science after the debacle of the seventeenth century. Some members of the Covenant maintain an interest in science, but they are not Parmenideans. The Parmenideans think that science and magic are ultimately the same thing.

They reason that everything is made of Essence, so science and magic both manipulate Essence. Further, just as magicians without Essence Channeling must enact long rituals to get the power to drive Invocations, scientists must carry out long experiments to get technological devices to work. In mass production, these long procedures are carried out by machines, but they still exist. Thus, those procedures are gathering the Essence necessary to drive the device.

The College pursues two lines of research. One is the search for automated Invocations: machines that can be turned on and made to perform rituals indefinitely. The other is the quest for a way to use Essence Channeling to boost scientific devices, or use them more effectively. The College is aware of Atlantean Arcana (see Abomination Codex, p. 123), and has a few samples, which it studies with great interest but little insight. A few members of the College are pure theoreticians, trying to work out grand unified theories of science and magic, but most believe that rather more information is needed first, and spend their time tinkering. Neither group has any success to show.

The College takes its name from Parmenides, an early Greek philosopher who believed that the world

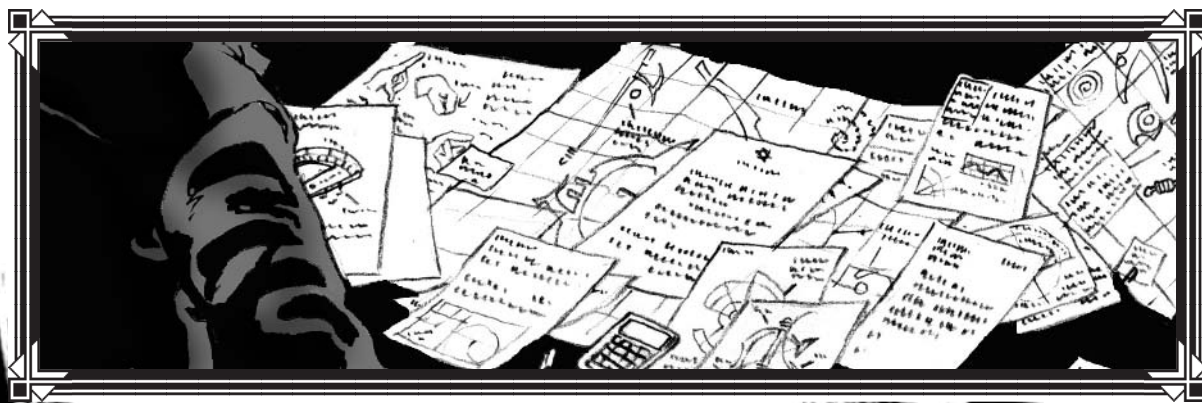
was one, and that plurality and change were illusions. Most of his contemporaries thought that he was a bit mad, and most Rosicrucians feel the same way about the College.

The Wards of Heaven

This College is one of the founding Covenants of the Rosicrucians, although they were then known as the Sons of Enoch. They specialize in summoning and controlling angels. This is a dangerous specialty, because the Seraphim do not like to be ordered around by mere humans. However, angels also make very powerful servants, so those Magicians who can manage the trick are well respected.

Younger members of the College usually deal with the Ethereals that serve the Seraphim, as they are much easier and safer to control. Nevertheless, new members of this College are generally regarded as reckless, and get treated with the same sort of caution as an unexploded bomb—one never knows when the Seraphim might decide to intervene. The older members, on the other hand, receive a vast amount of respect. They have obviously got the power to back up their claims, because the Seraphim have not killed them yet.

The Wards is one of the more secretive Colleges, giving out its knowledge only to members. It is believed to maintain many traditions of the Covenant from which it arose. There are no recorded cases of demonic corruption in its history, nor have any members been found serving the Mad Gods. Further, any member who turns to evil tends to lose control of the Seraphim he summons, and is quickly dealt with that way. Thus, the Covenant as a whole is ready to grant them their secrecy.



The Others

The Brotherhood has relations with many other organizations of the Gifted, and even with some Supernaturals. These relations vary from friendship to outright hostility, and vary further for different members of the groups in question. The summaries here describe general Rosicrucian attitudes, and may not be true for any particular member. However, members are only likely to have differing opinions of groups with which they have personal experience, and this is unlikely to be true of more than a couple of them, at least at the beginning of a Chronicle.

The Rosicrucians are often called "Rosies" by themselves and others. They use it among themselves with impunity. For those who are not members of the Brotherhood, a close relationship with the Rosicrucians is necessary or the use of that diminutive is taken as insulting. It is often unwise to insult a Rosicrucian.

The Wicce

Of all their external links, the relationship between the Rosicrucians and the Wicce is the most complex, and heavily freighted with history. The first contact with the Wicce was very friendly, to the point that a merger of the Covenants was seriously discussed. This all went wrong at the end of the fourteenth century (see pp. 68-69), and since then the Wicce have been somewhat hostile toward the Brotherhood.

The feeling is not *exactly* mutual. The Wiccen philosophy is very different from that of the Rosicrucians, and many Rosicrucians think that the Wiccen emphasis on impossibly high ideals prevents them from taking effective action against things they dislike. Further, most Rosicrucians see the open structure of the Wicce as an invitation to corruption. All Rosicrucians know what happened to their own Covenant and the near destruction that resulted. They can easily see how it could happen to the Wicce. Some members think that it has happened already.

These worries lead to suspicions of the Wicce, and this and the hostility on the other side have worked against any attempts at reconciliation. However,

from both Covenants have worked together, usually in the face of a greater threat. Those Rosicrucians who are worried about the Reckoning generally accept that the Wicce and the Brotherhood must work together, although they disagree over whether this should be formalized in any way.

It is common among Rosicrucians to stereotype the Wicce as "happy fluffy tree-hugging pagans," but the hierarchy frowns on anyone taking this seriously. The magical power of the Wicce is not to be underestimated, nor is their potential for dark actions.

The Twilight Order

Of all the other Covenants, the Brotherhood has best relations with the Twilight Order. The Order's interest in the truth, and in protecting the living from the dead and vice versa, meshes well with the interests of the Rosicrucians. Further, their lack of interest in Magic means that they are not direct competitors. A historical accident also helped: when the Twilight Order came into existence in the nineteenth century, its members moved in much the same social circles as many Rosicrucians.

This good relationship has been built on effectively, and it is not uncommon for Rosicrucians and Twilight Order necromancers to work together. Further, some members of each Covenant have been trained by members of the other. This is a very small-scale affair, as the Rosicrucians are not generally interested in Necromancy, and the Twilight Order has only a small group interested in Magic (although this group is surprisingly knowledgeable). Nevertheless, those members of the Brotherhood in favor of more relations with other Covenants point to this as an example of what can be achieved.

The Storm Dragons

Relations with the Storm Dragons got off to a tempestuous start in the fifteenth century, but since then they have become more stable. The two Covenants are so different in methods, aims, and area of operations, that they have very little contact with each other. Still, the contact they do have is cordial, if not actively friendly.



The Sere Rose

The Sere Rose, or, as they call themselves, the Covenant of the Ros Crucis ('Covenant of the Transforming Oeuv'), is the dark reflection of the Rosicrucians. The original members were the demonically suborned survivors of the fourteenth century Rosicrucian Purge, but the Covenant has continued to recruit since.

The Sere Rose maintain a structure very similar to that of the Rosicrucians, and their rituals are closely based on those of their original Covenant. While the details have drifted apart over the centuries, the main difference is that the Sere Rose knows dark rituals which allow them to extract Essence from unwilling victims, and then use it to power their magic. The Cult of Pain (see *Mystery Codex*, p. 196) was founded by a renegade member of the Sere Rose, and their use of Sadicus seems to be derived from Sere Rose practice.

Indeed, the general belief that the Cult of Pain was founded by a Sere Rose member illustrates one of the main problems that the Dark Covenant creates. It can be somewhat difficult for Rosicrucians to distinguish members of their Brotherhood from members of the Sere Rose on first acquaintance; for outsiders it is all but impossible even on close investigation, unless the outsider in question is fully aware that the Rosicrucians would never engage in the sorts of rituals carried out by the Sere Rose. Accordingly, the Covenant usually tells its allies about the Dark Covenant. Unfortunately, this technique only works when there is already a significant degree of trust—otherwise it amounts to saying that there is a completely separate organization that is exactly like the Rosicrucians, but evil. Groups who already think that the Rosicrucians are evil and dangerous are not going to be impressed, and may have their prejudices reinforced by the actions of the Sere Rose.

On the positive side, the Sere Rose seems to be much smaller than the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, with no more than 500 members worldwide, and probably significantly fewer than that. The Brotherhood would like to wipe out the Sere Rose, and the feeling is mutual. The main reason that all-out war has not erupted for the last six centuries is that both sides have been very careful to keep themselves hidden. On the few occasions that members of one Covenant have become aware of members of the other, a brief, bloody and very discreet battle has ensued. A second reason is that neither Covenant is obsessed with its counterpart, and many of their activities are directed to other ends. In particular, both groups are strongly opposed to the Mad Gods, and scurrilous rumors within the Brotherhood suggest that the two groups have even tacitly cooperated in the past. These rumors are, of course, strongly denied by the hierarchy, and the Inquisition has made it clear that alliance with the Sere Rose is tantamount to dealing with demons.

Opinions of the Dragons tend to fall into two camps. Those who have little contact with them tend to regard them with something approaching contempt. Their emphasis on the physical, and the whole orientation of Tao-Chi, seems to encapsulate a way of life that the Rosicrucians look down upon. This opinion often comes out in the thought that Tao-Chi is nice for those who cannot manage Magic. Rosicrucians who have personal experience of the Dragons tend to have much more respect for them. They are more aware of the spiritual aspects of their beliefs, and have a better appreciation of just what Tao-Chi can accomplish.

The Templars

The Rosicrucians are not entirely sure what to make of this group. They are very secretive, and the association of the historical Templars with demon worship makes some Rosicrucians nervous. On the other hand, they have access to the Keys of Solomon, and Rosicrucian scholars would love to find out more about them. Further, they have, on occasion, provided the Covenant with very useful information.

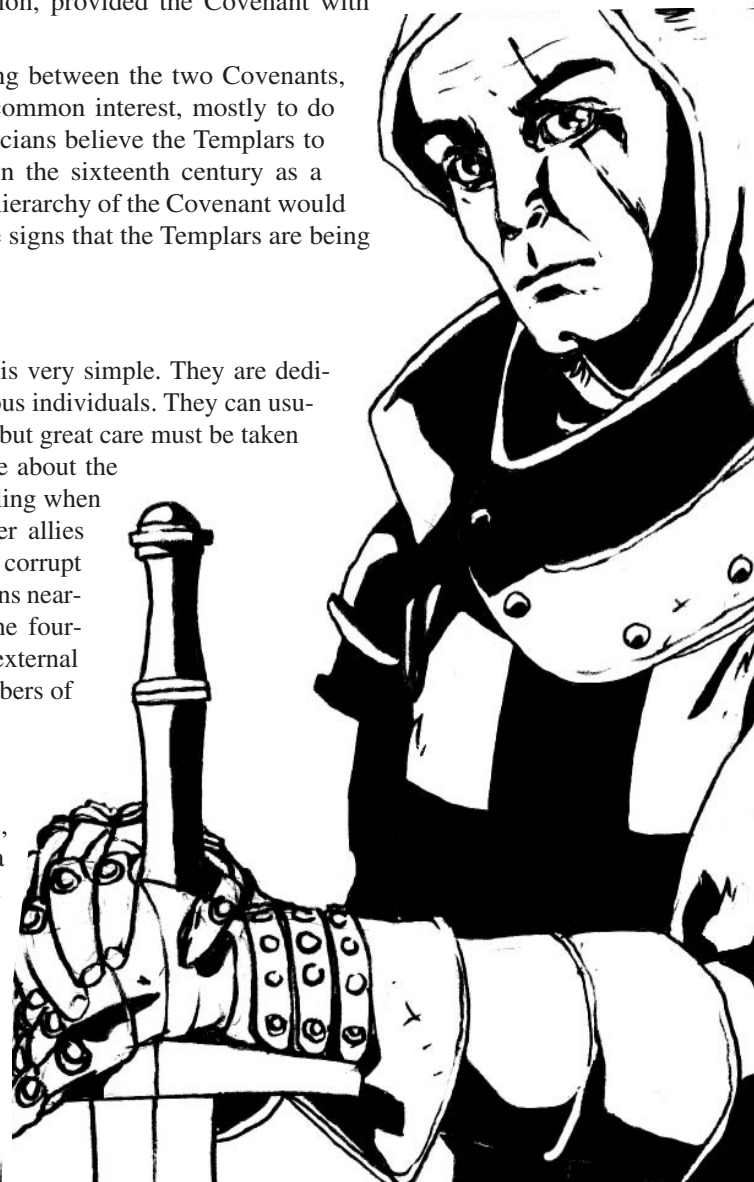
At the moment, there is an understanding between the two Covenants, and they help each other out in areas of common interest, mostly to do with opposing the Combine. Most Rosicrucians believe the Templars to be a small Covenant, probably founded in the sixteenth century as a result of the Rosicrucian propaganda. The hierarchy of the Covenant would love to know more, because there are some signs that the Templars are being grossly underestimated.

The Sentinels

The Covenant's opinion of the Sentinels is very simple. They are dedicated, well-meaning, and incredibly dangerous individuals. They can usually be trusted to help against a greater evil, but great care must be taken to ensure that they learn as little as possible about the Brotherhood or its members. There is no telling when the Sentinels might decide that their former allies must be removed. Turning them against corrupt Rosicrucians is strictly forbidden: such actions nearly destroyed the Covenant at the end of the fourteenth century. Working with them against external threats is, however, allowed, and some members of the Marchers do it on a fairly regular basis.

The Lodge of the Undying

This Covenant is a group of immortals, most of them True Immortals, although a couple of former Rosicrucians have joined it—this is how the Covenant knows of its existence. Beyond that, very little is known about the group. It is not thought to be hostile, but neither is it thought to be actively friendly.



The Notorious

Game statistics are provided for characters who are both members of the Rosicrucians and likely to deal with the characters in a context where their statistics are needed. Statistics are not provided for powerful shadowy figures, or for characters who are, in part, notorious because no one knows quite what they can do. Such characters should be customized for the Chronicles in which they appear.

Toni Bains

Toni Bains saved the world, and as a result is very famous within the Covenant. The fact that she is both black and female is being used to great effect by the elements of the Brotherhood who are pushing for reform. Bains' actions are detailed in Chapter Four: Past, Present and Future (see pp. 74-75).

Since driving Morsater back from the world, she has gone into retreat, and had little contact with the rest of the Covenant. She was promoted to Tribune, but she does not rule any particular Shrine. Few people can claim to have so much as seen her since 1950. Bains current concerns are largely unknown and the subject of wild speculation.

Martin Forsyth

Martin Forsyth is a member of the Exoteric College, and very active in the New York Shrine. He has a strong interest in politics, both mundane and Rosicrucian, and writes a newsletter, *The Crossroads*, in which he comments on important developments in both areas. This newsletter is distributed throughout the Covenant, and it is carefully phrased so that a mundane who got hold of it would not be able to work out that there were occult activities behind it.

Forsyth is friendly unless someone gives him a really good reason not to be. He is concerned about the current state of the world, and is almost convinced that a Reckoning (or, at the very least, another Ripple) is imminent. He makes a strong case that the Brotherhood must get involved in the mundane world if it is to help protect people from the effects of

this disaster, and he makes a very effective spokesman for the position, particularly in person.

Unfortunately, Forsyth's delusion is that the mundanes will only be truly safe and happy when they are ruled by the Gifted. His ultimate aim is to set up a totalitarian government wherein the Gifted hold power, electing executives from among themselves, and the mundanes merely do as they are told. He is aware that a significant number of Rosicrucians have not yet seen the truth, so he does not speak of this aspect too openly. He is, however, already engaged in schemes to get political power, and some of them may bring him into conflict with other major powers in the world.

Forsyth is in his late thirties and in good physical shape. He is slightly over average height, with short dark brown hair and dark eyes. He is not handsome, but has an indefinably attractive quality about him. He smiles almost all the time, often enough with a look that is somewhat artificial.

Shaifali Hattiangadi

Shaifali Hattiangadi is a member of the House of St. John and extremely active in disaster relief. She has traveled widely in southern Asia, Africa, South America, and the Far East, always trying to help after some catastrophe. There are enough calamities to keep her very busy. She is an Equestrian, and the House is trying to have her promoted to Tribune in recognition of her sterling service.

Hattiangadi is rarely encountered outside a disaster zone. On those occasions, she is rather shy and tends to be very abrupt with people. In large part, this is because she is trying to recover her energy before she sets off again, but it is also because she has never spent the time to learn how to deal with people in a relaxed environment. If she is in the aftermath of a disaster, she works hard and generally quietly, only speaking to tell people what to do to help, or to argue with officials about the distribution of supplies.

She never tries to prevent disasters, explaining that there are potential disasters everywhere, and that one can never be sure that the harm to be prevented is

really the most serious one. Further, well-meaning efforts might actually make things worse. It is better to leave prevention to the people who are actually involved, she claims. On the other hand, disaster relief is much more clear-cut. You save lives, and it is clear that you are helping. There is very little risk of making things worse, given how bad they are already.

Hattiangadi is concerned about the upcoming Reckoning, but has yet to decide whether it would be better to try to prevent it or to simply prepare to deal

with the aftermath. She is very concerned that concerted actions by many Gifted individuals could be just the thing needed to trigger a Reckoning.

Hattiangadi is an Indian woman, born in Mumbai, in her late thirties. She is noticeably underweight, as she often forgets to eat, and usually works in situations where there is little food available in the first place. She rarely makes eye contact, and answers questions as briefly as possible—usually with a grunt or monosyllable.



Martin Forsyth

Strength: 2 **Intelligence:** 3
Dexterity: 2 **Perception:** 2
Constitution: 2 **Willpower:** 5
Life Points: 26 **Speed:** 8
Endurance Points: 32 **Essence Pool:** 48

Qualities: Charisma 2, Delusion (Mundanes Should Be Ruled By Gifted), Essence Channeling 2, Gift, Increased Essence Pool

Skills: Acting 2, Bureaucracy 4, Charm 5, Computer 3, Humanities (History) 4, Humanities (Law) 5, Humanities (Public Speaking) 7, Language (English) 5, Language (Latin) 5, Magic Theory 3, Oratory 7, Research/Investigation 5, Rituals (Rosicrucian) 4, Smooth Talking 7, Writing (Advocacy) 5

Invocations: Affect the Psyche 4, Blessing 4, Insight 1, Lesser Curse 2, Spirit Mastery (Elementals) 5



Shaifali Hattiangadi

Strength: 2 **Intelligence:** 4
Dexterity: 3 **Perception:** 3
Constitution: 2 **Willpower:** 4
Life Points: 26 **Speed:** 10
Endurance Points: 29 **Essence Pool:** 51

Qualities/Drawbacks: Honorable -2, Essence Channeling 4, Gift, Increased Essence Pool

Skills: Bureaucracy 3, Computers 2, Dodge 3, Drive (Car) 4, First Aid 6, Hagglng 3, Language (Chinese) 3, Language (English) 5, Language (French) 3, Language (Hindi) 5, Language (Korean) 3, Language (Latin) 5, Language (Malay) 3, Language (Spanish) 3, Mechanic 5, Medicine 2, Rituals (Rosicrucian) 3, Smooth Talking 2, Survival (Desert) 3

Invocations: Blessing 6, Cleansing 5, Farsight 3, Greater Healing 6, Lesser Healing 7, Shielding 2, Spirit Mastery (Ethereals) 4

Wilson Hebring

Wilson Hebring is a Wiccen who bears a strong grudge against the Rosicrucians. The Brotherhood is not entirely sure why, but strongly suspects that it may have had something to do with the events around the end of the fourteenth century. Certainly, his first recorded attacks on the Covenant took place in the early fifteenth, and he was fairly weak at that point. These attacks continued sporadically until the late seventeenth century, but they never did much damage. The attack which killed Vassaras's family (see p. 41) was the most effective, and was also the last which can be firmly traced back to him. At the time, it was decided that Hebring was a minor threat, and that the Covenant had more important things to do with its resources than pursue him. Some members now wonder if this was unwise.

Early in the eighteenth century, Hebring tried to infiltrate the Brotherhood. He was caught fairly quickly, and despite his attempts to cover his tracks, he was identified and traced back to a Wiccen Coven. Many members of the Brotherhood wanted to launch an all-out attack on the Wicce at that point, but calmer counsels prevailed. It was pointed out that the Wicce do not have a central command, so that Hebring was probably acting on his own, and that the Brotherhood really did not want to move to open war with another Covenant at that point. A couple of attempts to assassinate Hebring were made, but after meeting the other Wicce, he had managed to cover his tracks more effectively, and he was not found.

He made another attempt at infiltration about thirty years later, and although he was, again, found and identified, this time he covered his tracks more effectively, and the Covenant was unable to trace him back to the Wicce. Since then, there have been a number of attempts to infiltrate the Brotherhood, and Hebring was almost certainly responsible for some of them. However, he has got better at concealing himself, and he has not been positively identified since the mid-eighteenth century. Indeed, the Covenant is not even sure that he is still alive, let alone pursuing his vendetta. The consensus is that he probably is, and

that he could be very dangerous. He knows a lot about the Brotherhood, and if he did infiltrate it successfully, he could do a great deal of damage.

The Council are in agreement that Hebring should be killed and, if possible, unraveled if he is positively identified. However, this is unlikely to happen. While he is still out there, close contacts with the Wicce are risky, as any information they gain may be fed back to Hebring.

Misty

Misty is a Common Bast, and a well-known figure in the San Francisco Shrine, her reputation spreading even to the rest of the United States. She is a powerful magician and a good teacher, and her ability to learn Invocations from the Goddess Bast means that she can teach a very wide range of magic. She is an Equestrian, but shows a cat's disinterest in politics, merely requiring that her life be made comfortable by those she teaches. She employs a human servant, who looks after her home and is the legally registered owner, and thus she is able to accept money in payment, as well as more immediately usable goods.

Misty is solid black and has only three legs. She lost her left foreleg a number of years ago, and tells many stories—it may have been eaten by a demon, a Mad God, or a Feral, or chopped off by a Combine interrogator. Other members of the Shrine whisper that she lost it in a car accident and is too proud to admit to such a minor cause, or that she would like the leg back.

Virginia Moreau

Virginia Moreau is the first, and so far only, female Grand Master (if the Founders are excluded). She is also the current leader of the Wards of Heaven, making her a highly respected individual. She was promoted to her current position in 1921, after the death of Christopher Voormann. Moreau was born in Louisiana in the late eighteenth century, and was initiated shortly before her twentieth birthday. Her total dedication to the goals of the Brotherhood, and her strong ambition, were apparent from very early on. Rumor claims that Vitalinus visited her Shrine while she was still a Squire, and said then that she would be a Grand Master some day.

Moreau petitioned for membership in the Wards of Heaven at the young age of thirty-two, causing quite a stir in that College. They had not previously admitted any women, but social mores were beginning to change even then, and they could not deny that Moreau was extremely talented. Eventually the group decided to admit her, but on a probationary basis. She was a full member within a year, and the reasons for this are still kept quiet. Indeed, Moreau is probably the only person with the authority to release the information now, and she refuses to talk.

Whatever the initial reasons for her membership, she proved to be an adept Ward of Heaven, binding heavenly Ethereals and dealing with the Seraphim. Indeed, she is believed to have bound two of the Seraphim, an achievement almost unprecedented in the history of College—its foundation legends say that Enoch bound four angels to his service. She has also served the Covenant well, coming to early prominence when she was a major actor in the destruction of a cult of Morsater among slaves in the American South. She has also destroyed one group of the Sere Rose and built up the wealth and power of the Brotherhood to a great degree.

Moreau became Tribune of the American South in 1873, Duke of the South and Mid-West in 1894, and Master of the United States in 1905, before her final promotion in 1921. She does not have time for casual socializing, and it is very hard to meet her without some vital business for the attention of the Council. She is, however, held up as a role model for female Rosicrucians, and so is better known than most Grand Masters.

Moreau is a tall white woman who appears to be in her early to mid-forties. She has striking, long red hair and green eyes. Her features are very sharp, and she tends to hold eye contact for so long as to make people uncomfortable. She always dresses very well and formally, even when not on Covenant business.

Walter de Ros

Walter de Ros is one of the Brotherhood's greatest enemies. In the fourteenth century, he was a prominent member of the House of St. John, but he proved to be in thrall to a demon, and to have corrupted a

large portion of the Covenant. His actions led to the Rosicrucian Purge and the foundation of the Sere Rose, and he was killed in 1485 at the end of the Wars of the Roses. This did not finish him, however, and he came back as a Vampyre, rebuilding his Dark Covenant and acting against the Rosicrucians wherever possible.

De Ros's actions seem to be based entirely on hatred. He hates the Rosicrucians, and he hates the Mad God Morsater. These paired hatreds can give rise to fairly complex behavior, as he is willing to work with one entity against the other, but ultimately wants to see them both brought down and destroyed. Attempts to understand him are further complicated by the whims of his demonic master, to whom he is still in thrall, and by the personal agendas of the other members of the Sere Rose.

De Ros is a powerful magician, and thinks nothing of drawing the Essence he needs to power his Invocations from other people. However, he rarely acts personally against the Rosicrucians (possibly because he was killed before), preferring to work through minions and spells. Still, he does intervene in person at times, and when he does so he normally leaves a crippled and emotionally scarred survivor, to ensure that the Covenant knows who was responsible. Despite this usual practice, he might also be responsible for several unexplained Rosicrucian deaths.

De Ros is badly scarred, the legacy of the injuries that killed him. He is certainly powerful enough to remove these effects, so his retention must be deliberate, probably as a reminder of what the Rosicrucians did to him.

Canon Peter Riley

Canon Riley is a Sentinel, and one of the most vocal of those who see all other Covenants as supernatural threats to be eliminated. His methods are worrying; he very nearly caused a rift between the Rosicrucians and the Twilight Order. A few years ago, three new recruits were killed and the evidence at the scene pointed to the involvement of the Twilight Order. As is usual, one of the investigators was a Marcher, and he was able to summon the ghost of one of the victims. The ghost was sure that the

attackers had been members of the Twilight Order, and most of the description tallied with this. As the Brotherhood wanted to take this up with the Order's leadership, rather than simply severing relations, they wanted descriptions of those responsible.

The ghost was able to provide these, and the Marcher was shocked to realize that one sounded a lot like Canon Riley. He had contacts in the Sentinels, and had once met Canon Riley, a rather tense event for both him and his contact, as both tried to ensure that the Canon suspected nothing. The Marcher was able to obtain a photograph of Riley, and the ghost confirmed that he was among the attackers.

This information was passed back to the hierarchy, who were faced with a dilemma. They did not want to strike against the Sentinels, as so many members of that Covenant seemed to be looking for an excuse to move against the Brotherhood. Similarly, they did not want to tell the Twilight Order what had happened, as the hostility between them and the Sentinels was already quite serious enough.

In the end, Rosicrucians were warned that certain forces were trying to foment conflict between Covenants, and that they should treat evidence of unprovoked attacks by members of other Covenants with some suspicion. (Obviously, this does not apply to attacks from the Sere Rose or the Combine, as relations with those groups are already as hostile as possible.) The rumor mill has carried the information that the Sentinels are responsible, and Canon Riley is known by name to those who pay particular attention.

Greg Sollan

Greg Sollan is an Equestrian, and if he were less outspoken, he would probably be a Tribune. He was born in the late nineteenth century in the American Midwest, but due to high Essence he appears to be in his mid-forties. He was recruited while young, and the first couple of decades of his career were undistinguished. He was among the first Rosicrucians to draw attention to the signs of the mid-twentieth century Ripple, and he devoted a lot of attention to the defense of the Covenant in that period.

When Toni Bains was looking for allies and stumbled across the Cabal of Psyche, Sollan was one of the

investigators who followed it up. He found the link to the Combine, but did not stop there, continuing his investigations until he had a frightening picture of the extent of the Combine's reach, and a clear idea of just how useful a group of Seers would be to them.

He spent the years up to the end of the Second World War pushing for greater Covenant attention to the Combine, and, in particular, a campaign to eliminate the Cabal of Psyche. While he failed to get general support, he did convince a number of individuals, and he now leads his own Cohort, which is dedicated to the fight against the Combine.

Once the war was over and the Reckoning averted, Sollan turned to more direct action against the Combine, seeing it as the major threat to Rosicrucian interests. His first large raid took place in 1948, wiping out a number of Seers. There was then a delay while the Inquisition investigated his actions. They decided that he was acting reasonably, even if others were not convinced of his cause. Since 1952, he has continued his actions, although actual attacks have been separated by substantial periods of research, and time to recoup losses. His actions have been restricted since 1988, when the Grand Masters issued a general decree prohibiting proactive assaults on the Combine. He has, thus far, been willing to restrict himself to gathering information and trying to convince the Grand Masters that direct action must be taken, but he is chafing under the curb, and may go rogue in the near future.

Defeating the Combine has become an obsession for him, and his attention is still focused on the Cabal of Psyche. This obsession seems to have blinded him to the signs of a coming Reckoning, but there are still many Rosicrucians who think that his direct action against the Combine is worth imitating. He is always ready to help such people, and always keen to recruit more allies in his fight.

His support for Seers within the Rosicrucians is perhaps a little unexpected, but Sollan has a perfect justification for it. He believes that one way to oppose the Cabal is to starve it of recruits, by enlisting them in the Rosicrucians instead. He has a number of Seers in his Cohort, most of whom are keen to stop the perversion of their Gift at the hands of the

Combine. Even those Rosicrucian Seers with different priorities tend to look to Sollan for political support, when their Gift threatens to marginalize them. He is usually happy to oblige.

Sollan is under average height, with thinning black hair turning gray at the temples. He often appears distracted in conversation, and he always brings the conversation around to the threat posed by the Combine.



Greg Sollan

Strength: 1 **Intelligence:** 3
Dexterity: 2 **Perception:** 4
Constitution: 2 **Willpower:** 4
Life Points: 22 **Speed:** 8
Endurance Points: 26 **Essence Pool:** 112

Qualities/Drawbacks: Adversary (Cabal of Psyche), Essence Channeling 8, Gift, Increased Essence Pool, Obsession (Defeating the Combine)

Skills: Bureaucracy 1, Computer 2, Disguise 4, Dodge 3, Driving (Car) 2, Language (English) 5, Language (Latin) 3, Magic Theory 3, Notice 5, Occult Knowledge (Cabal of Psyche) 2, Questioning 2, Research/Investigation 2, Rituals (Rosicrucian) 4, Stealth 2

Invocations: Farsight 3, Greater Illusion 3, Insight 4, Lesser Illusion 4, Locate 5, Shielding 5, Soulfire 5, Spirit Mastery (Elementals) 5

Megan Vassaras

Megan Vassaras was born in the seventeenth century, but her high Essence has kept her active, and she now appears to be in her early fifties. Her family had long been part of the Covenant, and she was initiated as soon as she came of age. She was only 22 when Wilson Hebring (see p. 38) destroyed her family. Vassaras escaped by good luck rather than skill, hiding in the back of a cart driven by a witch-hunter. She made her way back to the Covenant and was quickly reintegrated. Aware of the risks of generalizing and of being lied to, she refused to bear a grudge against the Wicce. Also, she was too weak to challenge Hebring.

In the early eighteenth century, she was targeted by the servants of a demon, and she managed, with the help of her Cohort, to track them down. They proved to be a Wiccen coven, and after they had been destroyed Vassaras began to wonder whether the Wicce really were all dangerous lunatics. If they were, it would clearly be the Brotherhood's responsibility to wipe them out. She studied the histories, and read the accounts of how the Wicce had struck at the Rosicrucians in their hour of need, after lulling them into a false sense of security with deceitful assistance.

She then turned her attention to observing the Wicce alive at her own time. This was not easy, as they sought secrecy as much as the Rosicrucians, but she found that she was always treated with suspicion, if not attacked outright, and that the Wicce always had something to hide. Sometimes she was able to find out what that was, and her discoveries bolstered her conviction that they were particularly prone to corruption. Often, however, their secrecy proved too effective, and she was unable to discover what crimes they had committed.

By the end of the eighteenth century, she was actively hunting the Wicce. She claims to always give them the benefit of the doubt and to judge them as individuals, only killing those who are unacceptably corrupt. Many other Rosicrucians have some doubts about this; any cause pursued for long enough will warp the mind, and sometimes her evidence seems remarkably flimsy. After all, the Wicce must know by now that she hates them, so the occasional pre-emptive attack can hardly be described, as Vassaras does.

as “unprovoked.” However, the Covenant has very little contact with the Wicce, and much of that is due to Hebring’s attacks, so they are unable to provide evidence that she is wrong. The Inquisition has found no evidence that she is involved with demons or Mad Gods, so the Covenant allows her to continue her activities, but still watches her with care.



Megan Vassaras

Strength: 2	Intelligence: 3
Dexterity: 3	Perception: 3
Constitution: 2	Willpower: 6
Life Points: 26	Speed: 10
Endurance Points: 35	Essence Pool: 163

Qualities/Drawbacks: Adversary (Wicce), Age, Essence Channeling 10, Gift, Increased Essence Pool

Skills (Only those skills rated five or higher are listed): Dodge 5, Guns (Handgun) 6, Intimidation 5, Language (English 5), Language (French 5), Language (Latin 5), Language (Portuguese 5), Language (Spanish 5), Occult Knowledge (Corruption) 7, Rituals (Rosicrucian) 8, Trance 6

Invocations: Blessing 2, Cleansing 2, Consecration 4, Elemental Fire 7, Gateway 4, Insight 3, Lesser Curse 4, Lesser Healing 5, Levitate 5, Locate 7, Shielding 8, Soulfire 8, Spirit Mastery (Nature Spirits) 9, Symbols of Protection 4, Walkgate 3

Vassaras is short for the modern period, and her hair has turned uniformly gray. She is calm and focused, and seems perfectly rational on all subjects, even the Wicce. However, she does prefer not to talk about the other Covenant, unless actually discussing a case, because she gets quite enough of them in her “work.”

Vitalinus

Vitalinus, the motive force behind the founding of the Covenant, is still active in its affairs eight hundred years later. He is effectively immortal and appears to be in early middle age. His true age is unknown; what is known is that he was old and powerful when he founded the Rosicrucians, and that he has not been wasting his time in the eight centuries since. It is safe to assume that he is one of the most personally powerful human beings in the world, and his status within the Rosicrucians makes him one of the most influential human beings alive, as well.

For all his power, Vitalinus is very approachable, and is the most accessible of the Grand Masters by a large margin. In part, no doubt, this is because he does not have to worry about his personal safety to any great extent, at least not within the Covenant. Indeed, most Rosicrucians have met him, as he travels the world, visiting Shrines to find out how they are doing. On these visits, Vitalinus rarely condemns, although he will strike hard if he finds evidence of dangerous corruption. Instead, he works to solve problems, and to help the members to solve their own problems so that the solutions do not collapse as soon as he leaves. He has been asked about his motives for such assistance, and his answer is very simple. He founded the Covenant, and he wants to see it flourish and grow stronger. Since the Covenant is only the sum of its parts, this means that he wants to assist the various parts.

Vitalinus normally lets a Shrine know a few weeks in advance that he plans to visit. This invariably provokes a frenzy of activity as the Tribune tries to present his Shrine as a model of efficiency and Rosicrucian virtue. Problems that were on the back burner are suddenly upgraded to urgent, the meeting rooms are redecorated, and an effort is made to ensure that all the Rosicrucians in the area are secure and comfortable. After all that, the visit is usually

something of a relief, particularly if a problem has proved intractable—because Vitalinus helps to solve it. This process is almost certainly deliberate on Vitalinus' part, because the effect is to prevent any Shrine from neglecting a serious problem for too long. A given Shrine can expect to be visited about once every ten years, and Vitalinus usually stays for a month or two, meeting all the members.

Vitalinus spends several months in every year dealing with his own concerns, which he keeps to himself. It is generally assumed that he spends time on developing his own magical power. Certainly, he has contributed a number of new Invocations to the Rosicrucian archives over the years. Some people, however, think that he has broader plans, and that he spends those months working on some secret agenda, possibly against the Reckoning or the Combine, or to raise the Brotherhood to world rulership.

Vitalinus is six feet tall and robustly built—he must have seemed almost a giant in the thirteenth century. He appears to be in his mid-thirties, and has black hair and blue eyes. He is always relaxed and friendly, and almost impossible to surprise or annoy. He has seen everything the world has to offer, and nothing is going to shock him.

Christopher Voormann

Voormann died in 1921 in an attack on a major cult of the Mad God Morsater. He was not ready to move on, however, and returned to “life” as a Vampire. This presented the Covenant with an immediate problem. Before his death, Voormann had been one of the Grand Masters. Most of the other Grand Masters were reluctant to have an undead colleague, but rumor has it that he was almost allowed to continue in his position, until someone pointed out that he had died and come back within the temple of a Mad God. The risk was deemed too great, and he was reduced in rank to Equestrian. As far as is known, they never even considered expelling him from the Covenant—he had, after all, died heroically.

Despite his loss of formal power, Voormann retained a great deal of influence. He was able to protect Toni Bains from censure when she took somewhat dubious steps, such as allying with a Sentinel and a Wiccen in her continued campaign against

Morsater, and her ultimate success reinforced his influence as well as hers. Over the last seven decades, Voormann has been working on building his informal influence, taking the time to meet with other Rosicrucians and to help them with their projects, so that they owe him favors.

Remarkably, he does not seem to be bitter about his demotion. He has even defended the Council's decision, arguing that, after such a big change, it was only right that he should be required to prove himself again. The implication, of course, is that he now has proved himself, and that he should be promoted into the hierarchy once more. He does not, yet, seem bothered by the lack of recognition he has received, as promotion beyond Equestrian is notoriously slow, but everyone with whom he has worked knows what he wants.

Voormann feeds by inducing sexual ecstasy. He has had a number of years to get very good at it, and his reputation in this regard is known throughout the Covenant. He is, now at least, bisexual and extremely promiscuous, a trait which he justifies by a desire not to risk draining anyone of all their Essence. Since he generally feeds off individuals with Essence Channeling, this is rather a specious defense. It would take such a person no more than ten minutes to regain any Essence he drained, and at least as long to recover their purely physical energy in order to do it again.

Voormann is just under six feet tall and very good-looking in a rather dangerous way—at least, he is if he is spending the Essence to appear alive. Otherwise, he looks like a very fresh walking corpse. He nearly always does spend the Essence, because he has little trouble getting enough to maintain it. He always dresses in a way that counts as “well-dressed” for the context he is in.

One open question about Voormann is why, exactly, he came back from the dead. Those people who bring themselves back from the Threshold are generally obsessed, which he does not seem to be. The alternative is that some other power was responsible. Voormann will not say, and few people are brave enough to ask. If he is, in fact, obsessed with something, he will presumably take action soon, which would make major waves. If, on the other hand, another power brought him back, it presumably had its reasons, and now has a hold over him.

Chapter Three: Roles



This chapter has three parts. The first part collects a number of in-character discussions from the Rosicrucians, giving the reader some idea of how they see their Covenant and their abilities. The second part runs through the usual *WitchCraft* character creation process, discussing options that are particularly appropriate for Rosicrucians and noting those that are not. The final part consists of five Archetypes or ready-to-play characters. The Archetypes all have fewer than ten points of Drawbacks, to give some room for customization, and were all created using the Optional Skill Point Generation System (see *WitchCraft*, p. 55). The number of skill points that must be dropped when using the basic rules is noted for each character.

Common Knowledge

Living with Magic

Tribune William O'Shea's introductory talk, as transcribed by Squire Martine Derby

"Magic is the center of our lives. You are all nodding as if I've said something obvious, but have you really thought about what that means? All new members of the Covenant get a version of this talk, because experience tells us that it is important. So listen.

"Magic is the center of our lives. Everything that we do must be considered in its light. Everything you do affects your magic, so you must shape your activities to support it. You must not acquire habits or friends that draw you away from the magic, for now that it has been awakened, it can never sleep again. If you neglect it, it will have its revenge.

"Magic is the center of our lives. The center is not the whole. You must not let magic take over all of your existence, because such obsession leads to madness and corruption. The good life is the broad life, one that travels as far from its center as possible, in all directions. But the good life also returns to its center when its travels are finished.

"Magic is the center of our lives. It is the balance point, the fulcrum, that gives us a place to stand. Magic is the secure foundation from which we can view the rest of life, and the tribune from which we can judge plans and actions.

"Magic is the center of our lives. This is an important truth because it is complex, and because you will have to struggle with it until you die. This is not an easy road, but you must walk it. Think, as you learn, about how you will live, not just about what you can do. And think about magic."

Of Invocations

by Nathaniel Attemill, c. 1630

Invocations are like the market, where diverse goods are for sale, but the same coin will serve to purchase any. The sorcerer is the trader, who should trade in a range of goods as may suit his purpose, but at all times must be sure that his coffers be full to his aim. Some merchants trade but one good, and they must needs trade it well, in large quantity and great quality, if they are to be among the great. Others trade in all things, and may make their living despite that they have not the finest of any stock.

It is as vain to give sorcerers general advice about their Invocations as to give merchants general advice for the care of their trade, for wine is best stored and sold when it is aged, but fish must be brought to market as soon as may be. By that token, what have Invocations to summon spirits in common with those to heal the body?

But as all merchants may be advised as to their funds, whether to borrow at usury or trade on their capital, and as all need be warned against base coin and losses on the wild ventures of projectors, so all sorcerers may be advised on their handling of Essence, which serves for them as coin for the trader.

To form an Invocation, one must gather the Essence. The intoxication is finer than that produced by wine, and more noble, but it can derange the senses as easily and quickly as the most potent spirits. Hold not the power beyond time, for you will find yourself so caught up in dreams of your own power that you can no longer control it. In this we see that, in truth, pride comes before a fall. When a magician gathers the power within his soul, it is as if he sees and controls the universe. Everything appears as

ready to hand, shaped to his purposes, a tool for the working of his will. And this is not altogether a lie, for the magician may wield any part of the world for his purposes, but nor is it altogether truth, for no magician may control everything, and we remain mortal. But it is hard for the mind to resist the lure of this vision, and soon the sorcerer comes to believe that he is God in very truth. Then he must needs lose control of his power, for he can no longer control his will, and the Essence he spills into the world will provide the vengeance for his pride.

Focus, therefore, swiftly, and let the power pass into the form of the Invocation. If your skill fails you here, you must send the Essence back into the world, or it will cling to you until it has spent its force to your hurt. Just as a merchant who carries a hundred pounds of gold for some transaction is a target for robbers until he return the money to his strongbox, so is the sorcerer who has not dismissed the power he called.

While money earned from thievery may be spent on works of charity, and gain as little tarnish from the one as polish from the other, Essence takes on the hue of the work to which it is put. As you use the power to help and heal, you color your soul with mercy, and as you use it to work harm you take on the pitch of cruelty. The magician must therefore lead a holy life, lest his sins come to haunt him even before he is taken for judgement. For while the world may stand ready to our command, it will visit the consequences of our actions upon our heads.



The Control of Spirits

An introduction dictated by Misty

Spirits make good servants, but bad masters. They are too bound up in their own concerns to be bothered with those who serve them, and they will let you die, or even torment you for their amusement. Nothing like cats, madam, so stop smirking. No, cats make poor servants as well, for we are naturally independent and rely on no one.

So, do not allow yourself to serve spirits, not even the greatest. Be wary when you enter into agreements with them, because they are cunning and will try to trap you. But I cannot discuss this now; so I will assume that you can at least keep yourselves from servitude.

If you can, it is far better to enter into a Compact with a spirit than to Bind it. Bound spirits are surly and unwilling servants, and will never do more than the minimum required. Often, they will do as much damage as they can on the way, and an elemental can do a lot of damage. You should only Bind spirits when you want to prevent them from doing something. This, a Bond can achieve very well.

Compacts provide you with servants whom you can trust. Spirits will be loath to violate the terms of an agreement, and since you were able to bind them in the first place, they will have some respect for your power. This gives you a good foundation to build on, so treat the spirit well. Ask it to do tasks that suit its personality. Do not ask it to go into hostile environments and give it time to recover if it is injured. Obvious? Perhaps, but easy to forget. Many of you humans treat spirits as if they were tools, like hammers or saws. Bast are much less prone to this, as we do not use such inanimate aids.

Remember, a Compact will limit a spirit's actions, but if it doesn't like you it will twist your instructions as far as possible. A spirit with whom you have good relations is far more likely to do what you intended, regardless of what you actually said. Some sorcerers even claim that it is better to have no magical binding at all, to convince spirits to work with you voluntarily. This is dangerous nonsense. Spirits are not human and lack even a tie to the physical world. How can you hope to understand their motivations so much as to make them reliable allies? Most of you can't even

understand me, and I am far closer to you than an Arc. The Compact is essential because it provides the foundation on which you can build an understanding. You know that the spirit will act within its terms, and that constraint will make it comprehensible, at least in most cases. Remove the constraint, and the spirit may well do something horrible to you, sure that it is repaying a kindness.

Politics

A conversation recorded by an Equestrian, entered into evidence at a trial by peers. All names have been suppressed, but the conversation is publicly available.

"I'm glad you could come. Do have a seat."

"Ah. Thank you. You wanted to speak to me?"

"Yes. I must say that I really admire your recent work, and it has led me to think that—how should I put it—you would be sympathetic to the true interests of the Covenant."

"Ah. That's very, er, yes, very kind. Thank you. Um. I'm sure your latest, recent work is fascinating."

"You flatter me. Now . . . I'm sure you're aware of the problems posed by the Combine."

"Ah, yes. But, isn't there a, you know, decree?"

"The decree does not forbid us to be aware of the problems, and it seems to be our responsibility to know what is going on about us."

"Ah, true. True, true. I don't know, though . . . You wouldn't be suggesting anything drastic? I mean, not with the, um, Reckoning?"

"We don't even know that there is to be a Reckoning. The signs may have been misinterpreted, after all, and we do know that the Combine threatens the Brotherhood."

"Ah, it does, yes, you are right. But isn't that, you know, part of the Reckoning? I mean, ultimately?"

"I suspect not. The Combine relies on mundane methods, and a Reckoning would be almost the direct opposite of that."

"Ah, no. Er, yes. But wouldn't the destruction of the Gifted, you know, be a, um, a real Reckoning?"

"Well, yes. You are, of course, quite right. But that would only make the Combine the means to a

Reckoning, not the Reckoning itself."

"Ah, of course. But shouldn't we fight the, um, real, final, ultimate cause, not just one manifestation? Really?"

"Of course, but only if the final cause really exists."

"Ah, you're right. But even if it doesn't, you know, many people believe, er, believe that it does."

"Yes, but the threat of the Combine is more immediate, don't you agree?"

"Ah, perhaps. Who really, who knows when the Reckoning will come. I don't."

"But we know that the Combine may come at any time."

"Ah, but we may not, you know, may not do anything. There is, um, that decree. Isn't there?"

"I am not suggesting that we should act first—"

"Ah, of course not. But, if the Combine are part, er, are part of the Reckoning, then we would have to take some action. Well, if we were going to do something about the, well, Reckoning."

"Exactly. I couldn't have put it better myself. Surely you can see the need for such action?"

"Ah. Um. Yes. But. Er. Well, there is the decree. You know. Maybe if there was some sort of official, er, statement or something about stopping the Reckoning—"

"Yes. Then we would be able to act against the Combine as part of our plan to prevent the Reckoning."

"Ah. Quite, but, you know, we don't have any such statement or policy. Perhaps we should both speak to, um, Tribune N. She is, ah, responsible for supernatural threats."

"Indeed. So you would be willing to speak to her as well? Encourage her to support an official policy statement permitting us to take such actions as may be necessary to prevent a Reckoning, even if they involve acting against the Combine?"

"Ah, yes. Um. Yes, I guess I would be so willing. Strickly for the greater good of the Brotherhood, of course."

"Naturally, my friend."

Character Creation

Character Concept

The typical Rosicrucian concepts are Seeker of Knowledge, Student, and Weird One. Forsaken is inappropriate; the Brotherhood does abandoned members, even if everyone else has. Similarly, the Covenant will hide a member from a pursuer, so Fugitive is not a good concept. Scoundrel is also an unlikely choice, as the Covenant's internal system would have caught and disciplined such a person, even if she slipped through the recruitment process. Wanderer is hard to fit in, as the Covenant has a strong regional basis to its organization, and does not encourage contact with other Shrines.

Avengers fit if the target of their vengeance is outside the Covenant, and not an ally. A grudge against the Wicce or Combine would be fine, as would be one against a Mad God or demon. Daredevils are likely to get in trouble with the hierarchy, and should not take risks with the Covenant's secrecy. Even so, a Daredevil who takes lots of risks in working toward the Brotherhood's goals might reach high rank. Daredevil would also be a suitable concept for a young member of the Wards of Heaven.

Fanatics are not common in the Covenant, but they do exist, and they could be fanatical about the goals of any of the Colleges as well as about larger issues. Players should consider how likely their characters' fanaticism is to get them into trouble with the hierarchy: a fanatical Householder of St. John would be fine, but a fanatical Exoteric might well be executed for betraying Covenant secrets. Survivor would be a good concept for a Rosicrucian recruited after aiding the Covenant in fighting some supernatural menace. Finally, the Marchers and Roving Cohorts are good places to put a Warrior.

New Character Concept

As discussed in the introductory pages, new game mechanics have been generally avoided in this volume. Still, the following new Character Concept was so appropriate for the Brotherhood of the Rose Cross that this book would be incomplete without it.

ARISTOCRAT

You were born into privilege, and for all your life, good things have been yours for the asking. Hard work and disappointment are experiences that happen to other people. However, you also feel a responsibility to be worthy of your gifts and to use them for the greater good. You could be the heir of a noble family with ancient traditions, the child of a successful entrepreneur, or someone gifted with an immense talent in one area.

Defining Questions: In what way are you privileged? Is the obligation to excel imposed internally or externally? How badly do you react to frustration or failure? How do you feel about people less privileged?

Qualities and Drawbacks: The privilege is usually represented by Qualities, such as Status, Resources, or Artistic Talent. The Lazy Drawback is appropriate, as are Delusions of Grandeur.

Professions: Some Aristocrats have no profession, living off inherited wealth. The others have a profession reflecting their gift, in which they excel without even trying.

Association: Obviously, the Rosicrucians draw many Aristocrats due to their targeted recruitment practices. The Templars and the Lodge of the Undying would also be a common place for an Aristocrat. The Pariahs and Covenant of Legda would not likely have an Aristocrat among their number. An Aristocrat is possible among the other Associations, although it would be an unusual occurrence.

Character Type

The overwhelming majority of Rosicrucian characters should be Gifted or Lesser Gifted. However, it would be possible to play a Mundane: a character who is being considered for membership in the Rosicrucians, but has not yet been initiated and does not yet have any Gifted Powers. Such a character should be created as a Mundane, but should buy the Gift Quality. Such a character will only work if the Chronicler plans to spend several stories playing through her recruitment and initiation, and thus permission for such a step is needed before character creation. See Chapter Five: Stories (see p. 91) for some ideas on how to run a recruitment Chronicle.

Nonhuman members of the Covenant are very rare, and should only be played with the permission of the Chronicler and a good background story. Of the non-humans, the Bast are the most common, as their easy access to Invocations makes them valuable. Ferals and Relentless Dead are not accepted into the Covenant, owing to their inability to learn magic and their general incompatibility with the Covenant's nature. There are a few Ghosts, Phantasms, and Vampyres, all of whom were members before they died, and sufficiently important to be accepted back in when they returned. Such characters are not really appropriate as beginning characters.

Attributes

Mental Attributes take priority over physical. Any character with any mental Attribute less than 2 would not have been recruited under normal circumstances. This is not to rule out such characters: if she was recruited after helping the Rosicrucians face down a Mad God cult, she might have higher physical Attributes and still be recruited as long as she is Gifted. Such a character would not be well-accepted in the Covenant, which could be a lot of fun to play.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Most Qualities and Drawbacks are appropriate for Rosicrucian characters, so this section confines itself to discussing those that are particularly appropriate or otherwise, and to expanding on some.

Non-Supernatural Qualities and Drawbacks:

Contacts, particularly with the wealthy and powerful, or with academia, are common among Rosicrucians. To some extent, the Covenant provides all its members with such Contacts, and this Quality should be taken if the character has a good relationship with other Rosicrucians, as well as if she has external links. However, it is not required. A character without the Quality may get help from other Rosicrucians, but it will not be as easy to convince them.

Covetous (Greedy) and Covetous (Ambitious) are both stereotypical Rosicrucian Drawbacks. However, their stronger versions are inappropriate, as they would create conflicts with the Covenant's internal standards. Level 1 would be no problem; level 2 would cause only occasional problems. Level 3 would lead to a character constantly in trouble and would probably make her unplayable. Covetous (Conspicuous) is completely inappropriate. No such character would have been recruited.

Delusions (Prejudice) against women and non-whites are common in the Covenant, but only at a low level (1 point). Higher levels are known, but are frowned upon, and violent racist or sexist action might well count as corruption. Delusions of Grandeur are also common, and a good way to create a really arrogant character.

Emotional Problems (Fear of Commitment) is a common Drawback, due to the Rosicrucian emphasis on secrecy.

Honorable is a very common Drawback in the Covenant, at all levels of seriousness. A Rosicrucian's honor would be likely to require her to take action against Mad Gods and demons, but this does not increase the value as it does not require her to do it rashly, and most sane people would want to act against such beings anyway.

Humorless is rather a conventional Drawback for Rosicrucians, but it is quite common nevertheless.

Minority is an uncommon Drawback, because the Covenant does not recruit many members of minorities. However, as the Cast Members are supposed to be exceptional, there is no reason why a character should not have it.

Virtually all Rosicrucians have positive Resources, and negative Resources are very rare indeed. As a rule, no Rosicrucian character should start with negative Resources, as the Covenant would have found her at least a decent job. Similar considerations apply to Status, although negative Status is slightly more common. A character with negative Status should have some strong point that explains why the Covenant recruited her anyway.

Supernatural Qualities: Gift is all but essential for Rosicrucian characters. Similarly, the vast majority have Essence Channeling and Increased Essence Pool. Old Soul is not particularly common in the Covenant, as the recruiters are more interested in who a person *is*, not who she *has been*.

Nonhuman Rosicrucians should only be created with the Chronicler's explicit permission, and with a compelling character story to explain how she got in. Pretending to be human is not an option, given the level of magical power in the Covenant.

Familiar (see Abomination Codex, p. 22) is a common Quality in the Covenant. Most Rosicrucian Familiars are Elementals or, occasionally, Ethereals. Fiends would be seen as evidence of corruption, and Nature Spirits are simply not the Covenant's style. Some members do have Nature Spirit Familiars, however, but it would have to be a central part of the character concept—otherwise it is far easier to go with the majority. Most Rosicrucian Familiars are Compelled or Pact Familiars, and many members of the Covenant distrust Free Familiars, because the “master” has no way to control their actions if they decide to act inappropriately.

Spirit Patrons (see Abomination Codex, pp. 25, 104-114) are not common in the Covenant. This is largely because the Rosicrucians would rather see themselves as masters of the Otherworlds, not as servants. There are some exceptions. The members of the Archaic Alliance often take their gods as Spirit Patrons, and this is particularly common among the

Thoth

Thoth is an Old God who moves with the times. The Egyptian god of knowledge and wisdom, he was depicted with the head of an Ibis, and often seen writing on a piece of papyrus. The Ibis head is still there, but these days he is usually portrayed writing on a palm-top computer, and wearing jeans and tee-shirt. He has plans for his followers, but he rarely explains them in detail. His current worship bears very little resemblance to those of ancient Egypt, and his followers have been flatly forbidden to use hieroglyphics, on the grounds that they are a terribly inefficient form of writing.

Aspects: Wisdom and Knowledge, Judgment of the Dead.

Common Boons

Invocations (all), Necromancy, Power, Prophecy, Spirit Speech (2 points)

Thoth often grants Spirit Speech to his Scribes. They are his chosen elite, and he is willing to give them specific instructions and advice. This advice is almost always good, and when it fails to be, it is always because Thoth failed to take everything into account.

Obligations

These Obligations are imposed on all of Thoth's servants, and are the only ones he imposes.

Beholden, lesser level. Thoth uses his servants as his eyes and ears in the world. Trying to prevent him from doing so will offend him, and he will withdraw all Boons until the character has recovered herself in his sight.

Oath of Duty. The characters are priests of Thoth, and thus must promote his ends in the world. This is only a -1 Obligation, as Thoth is not a terribly demanding deity.

Scribes of Thoth. A few Householders of St. John have Seraphim as Spirit Patrons, as do some Marchers. The Wards of Heaven do not have Spirit Patrons. They command the Seraphim, and the Seraphim are the mightiest of possible patrons. What, then, could any patron offer them? Even among the Rosicrucians, this is regarded as a somewhat arrogant position.

Skills

All Rosicrucians must have Rituals (Rosicrucian) at some level, and virtually all have Language (Latin) at level 1 or above. Magic Theory is also very common, and Rosicrucians tend to look down on members who do not have it, describing them as “crude empirics.” Otherwise, the Covenant tends to emphasize academic and scholastic skills. Instruction is a particularly highly regarded ability, as is high skill with any form of learning. Physical skills are not explicitly discouraged, but no status is garnered for being good at them.

Metaphysics

Magic is by far the most common Gifted Power among the Rosicrucians, and this section concentrates on discussing common Invocations. Any Rosicrucian with a different type of power is already atypical, and is not made more or less so by her choice of specialty within that power.

The various kinds of Spirit Mastery are by far the most common Invocations in the Brotherhood. Indeed, a Rosicrucian who knew none of them would be looked at with some suspicion. Elementals are the most common type of spirit summoned, with Ethereals behind. Ghosts are rather less popular, and Nature Spirits come a rather distant fourth. A few members know Spirit Mastery (Fiends), as the Invocation can be used to banish as well as summon, but the Inquisition keeps a close eye on such people. An elite few of hand-picked Inquisitors know Spirit Mastery (Demons), and can be relied upon to use it only to defeat the Fallen Seraphim. Finally, the highest members of the Wards of Heaven know Spirit Mastery (Seraphim), and use it with great care.

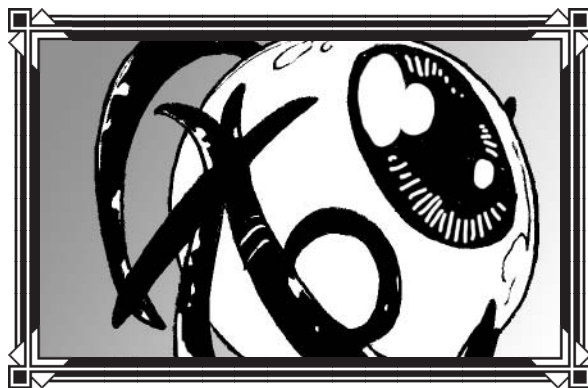
Many Rosicrucians have spirit servants on call, either Bound or under a Compact. The Covenant approves of both means of gaining their service. A Rosicrucian may, with the Chronicler’s agreement,

begin play with one or two spirits already under her control. She should mark off the Essence involved in maintaining the Bonds or Compacts, and work out their conditions in advance. The spirits should be slightly less powerful than the character binding them. Note that a Chronicler may require the Rosicrucian to summon and bind the spirits as her first actions, thus allowing for the possibility that something could go wrong.

Rosicrucians never keep Fiends on call, as this raises too many questions. Further, it is possible to tell quite a lot about someone from the kinds of spirits that serve her. A Rosicrucian served by Ethereals is a very different proposition from one served by Fire Elementals and Arcs, or by Wolf and Lion Spirits. Players should give this matter some thought when creating their characters.

The Rosicrucians do learn other Invocations, of course. Shielding, as the basic defensive Invocation, is very popular, as are the four Elemental Invocations, and the Greater Invocation of Weather Lordship (see *Mystery Codex*, p. 158). Consecration, Symbols of Protection, and Empowerment are also popular, as many Rosicrucians like having magical items to back them up. Consecrated items are usually small and conservative (Rosicrucians do not normally wear large pentacle earrings). Gateway is popular in theory, but in practice only those Rosicrucians who know the location of a gate bother learning it.

Illusions are not popular with the Covenant, as the Rosicrucians prefer to deal with reality, not images. Those Rosicrucians who do learn these Invocations rarely have them at high levels, and the Covenant’s few Illusion specialists are not well-regarded.



Aristocrat

As a member of the Rosicrucians you have found your natural place in life. You belong in this world and no one challenges your right to be here. Unless you turn to demons or the Mad Gods, no one will challenge your decisions and plans, either. While this grants you a great deal of freedom, it also means that you will have to provide any drive from your own resources. It would be so easy to just drift, learning some Invocations and relying on the resources of the Brotherhood to get you through life.

Deep down, however, you want to achieve more than that. You want a place in the Covenant based on your own abilities and achievements, not on your background. This will require you to work with other people, partly because you do not have all the skills you would need, and partly because otherwise you would too easily be distracted by things you want to do.

Origins

Your parents were members of the privileged classes, and may well have been Rosicrucians themselves. You went to the best private schools and to an elite university. While at university you were approached by a Rosicrucian recruiter, and you stepped into the new society with ease. You have never known financial hardship, and the idea that you could be socially excluded is completely alien to you.

Allies and Enemies

You have met many people in the course of your life, and a lot of them are in important positions in the world. With most, you had cordial relations, with a few, rivalries, but none of these really qualify as allies or enemies. You haven't exerted yourself enough to make a real impact on those around you, but that is all going to change now.

Roleplaying the Character

On the one hand, you have had life handed to you on a silver platter. On the other, you want to be more than just a member of the idle rich. Both aspects should be played up, so that, for example, you are keen to go out and hunt the agents of the Mad God, but dismayed that you cannot stay in nice hotels while doing it. A slightly naive failure to think through the mundane side-effects of actions is a strong characteristic, as your earlier life has almost always protected you from them.

The balance between the two can change. If biased heavily toward inertia, take the Lazy Drawback. In this case, you will have to be dragged off on adventures by friends, or forced into them by circumstances. Even in this case, you are keen to help in theory, just not right now, because you're doing "something else." If biased the other way, you might have the Reckless Drawback, in part because you have always been safe from consequences. The element of desire to get involved is vital, however, because otherwise you would not help in stories, and would be hard to work into a group.

** This character has been created using the Optional Skill Point Generation System for a Heroic Campaign (see WitchCraft, p. 55). If using the basic system, 11 skill levels must be dropped.*



WITCHCRAFT

Name

Association

Concept

CHARACTER POINTS	<input type="text"/>	SPENT	<input type="text"/>	UNSPENT	<input type="text"/>
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CHANNELING LEVEL	<input type="text" value="2"/>
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Gifted
Lesser

Primary Attributes

STRENGTH	<input type="text" value="2"/>	INTELLIGENCE	<input type="text" value="5"/>
DEXTERITY	<input type="text" value="3"/>	PERCEPTION	<input type="text" value="4"/>
CONSTITUTION	<input type="text" value="3"/>	WILLPOWER	<input type="text" value="3"/>

Secondary Attributes

LIFE POINTS	<input type="text" value="30"/>
ENDURANCE POINTS	<input type="text" value="29"/>
SPEED	<input type="text" value="12"/>
ESSENCE POOL	<input type="text" value="35"/>

Qualities

Point

Drawbacks

Point

Gift	<input type="text" value="5"/>	Delusions (Delusions of Grandeur)	<input type="text" value="-1"/>
Attractiveness 1	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Honorable 2	<input type="text" value="-2"/>
Essence Channeling 2	<input type="text" value="4"/>		<input type="text"/>
Increased Essence Pool	<input type="text" value="3"/>		<input type="text"/>
Resources (Wealthy) 3	<input type="text" value="6"/>		<input type="text"/>
Status 3 (includes bonus from Wealth)	<input type="text" value="2"/>		<input type="text"/>

Skill

Level

Skill

Level

Bureaucracy	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Play Instrument (Piano)	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Computers	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Rituals (Rosicrucian)	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Driving (Car)	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Seduction	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Fine Arts (Painting)	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Smooth Talking	<input type="text" value="3"/>
Handgun	<input type="text" value="1"/>	Power	Level
Humanities (History)	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Consecration	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Humanities (Law)	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Shielding	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Languages (Latin)	<input type="text" value="3"/>	Spirit Mastery (Elementals)	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Languages (French)	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Spirit Mastery (Ethereals)	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Languages (Spanish)	<input type="text" value="2"/>		<input type="text"/>
Magic Theory	<input type="text" value="4"/>		<input type="text"/>
Notice	<input type="text" value="3"/>		<input type="text"/>

Born Rosicrucian

You belong in the Covenant. Your soul has been a Rosicrucian before, and you feel completely at home with its structures. Little has changed since the last time you were a member, so you already know all the little quirks of etiquette. Indeed, there are still some members around who can remember your previous incarnation, and this is almost always a good thing.

Some people see your reappearance as an omen; both your previous Rosicrucian incarnations happened at times of crisis for the Covenant. You are not sure about this. It could just be a coincidence, but there do seem to be signs that something important is about to happen. If it isn't coincidence, then you doubtless have an important role to play in the approaching Reckoning. You will need to be ready, and you need to find out what your role will be.

Origins

You wanted to be a Rosicrucian from a very early age. You had memories of being a magician and a member of the society in times past, and those memories suggested that the society would still exist. So, you went looking for it. You were subtle about this, because you remembered that the society preferred to invite new members in. So, you put yourself in places where Rosicrucians might notice you, and dropped hints about your knowledge. It worked.

Your recruiter was very surprised to discover how much you already knew. He was even more surprised to discover whom you already knew. Your acceptance into the Covenant was a foregone conclusion, and you have settled in well.

Allies and Enemies

You have a few contacts at a remarkably high level of the Covenant, among people who remember one or both of your previous selves. These do not really count as allies, however, because they don't know how different you may be this time around.

Enemies are another matter. There were a couple of entities in your previous lives with whom you were at daggers drawn. If they have survived, and if they find out that you are back, you are likely to acquire enemies from the past. So far, however, they do not seem to have noticed you.

Roleplaying the Character

You must choose the historical periods at which you had your previous incarnations. Chapter Four: Past, Present and Future provides some guidance. You were a Rosicrucian twice, and the second one should be relatively recent—the Rosicrucian Enlightenment or later. As you only have one level of Old Soul, your other incarnations were all peasants. Your character will be shaped by your memories of the Gifted Incarnations, and your opinions on whether your rebirth is an omen.

You are something of a traditionalist, even though your background in this life is rather unconventional for the Covenant. You are also very loyal to the Brotherhood—obviously, as you have remained loyal beyond death. One of the things you need to do is shape yourself a personality for this life. You have recently realized that all your actions have been shaped by the past and that it is time to live in the present and future. You are not the same person as your previous incarnations.

** This character has been created using the Optional Skill Point Generation System for a Heroic Campaign (see WitchCraft, p. 55). If using the basic system, 7 skill levels must be dropped.*



Witchcraft

Name

Association

Concept

CHARACTER POINTS	<input type="text"/>	SPENT	<input type="text"/>	UNSPENT	<input type="text"/>
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CHANNELING LEVEL	<input type="text" value="2"/>
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Primary Attributes

STRENGTH	<input type="text" value="2"/>	INTELLIGENCE	<input type="text" value="4"/>
DEXTERITY	<input type="text" value="2"/>	PERCEPTION	<input type="text" value="3"/>
CONSTITUTION	<input type="text" value="2"/>	WILLPOWER	<input type="text" value="3"/>

Secondary Attributes

LIFE POINTS	<input type="text" value="26"/>
ENDURANCE POINTS	<input type="text" value="26"/>
SPEED	<input type="text" value="8"/>
ESSENCE POOL	<input type="text" value="32"/>

5122

Qualities

Point

Drawbacks

Point

<input type="text" value="Gift"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text" value="Minority"/>	<input type="text" value="-1"/>
<input type="text" value="Essence Channeling 2"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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<input type="text" value="Old Soul"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Skill

Level

Skill

Level

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<input type="text" value="Dodge"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="Handgun"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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<input type="text" value="Language (Latin)"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text" value="Magic Theory"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="Consecration"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>
<input type="text" value="Notice"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>	<input type="text" value="Lesser Healing"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>
<input type="text" value="Rituals (Rosicrucian)"/>	<input type="text" value="5"/>	<input type="text" value="Shielding"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>
<input type="text" value="Smooth Talking"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value="Spirit Mastery (Elementals)"/>	<input type="text" value="4"/>
<input type="text" value="Stealth"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="Warding"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Marcher

The world is a dangerous place, and there are beings determined to make it even worse. Your task is to stop them. Mundane threats are not your concern, but anything supernatural is. Vampyres, ghosts, Dark Covenants, Mad Gods—you've faced them all, or their minions, and it only makes your resolve stronger. Such things cannot be allowed to win.

You are fighting a war, and casualties are to be expected. You'd prefer the only deaths to be those of the enemy, but that cannot be guaranteed. Some people see you as callous, but you know that you have to build up a sense of detachment so that you can do what needs to be done. If the price of stopping a demon is the lives of a few mundanes, then the price is well worth paying. On the other hand, your allies are vital to you, and you will go to great lengths to protect them. Trained and willing comrades are not easy to come by, and losing them now might mean losing a vital battle later.

Origins

You were born into privilege, and until you were selected for recruitment to the Rosicrucians you had never faced hardship. You never really understood that some people spent their lives threatened by forces outside their control. Your recruitment test went slightly wrong, when the minor Dark Covenant you were supposed to deal with managed to summon a Fiend just as you arrived. The Covenant's backup was able to deal with the monster, and you weren't even badly injured, but the experience made you realize that the world was a lot less safe than people thought.

You studied these threats in the first months of your membership of the Covenant and decided that you could best use your abilities in fighting supernatural evil. Mundane evil was a threat, but mundanes were as well-equipped to fight it as you were, while threats from the Otherworld would be completely beyond their capacities. You joined the Marchers, and they trained you further.

Allies and Enemies

You are very close to your Marcher comrades and to the other members of your Cohort. Other than that, you try to keep friendships to a minimum, because of the risk that you will lose people in the war.

Your activities have gained you a significant enemy. This may be a supernatural creature that escaped one of your attacks, or it may be the undead revenant of one of your victims. You should work out the details with your Chronicler.

Roleplaying the Character

You are a soldier in a war, and the war is the most important thing happening. You have little patience with those who have other concerns, but will readily accept their help. In your fights you hope to avoid civilian casualties, but the important thing is driving the creatures back. When you are between missions, you like to party hard to make up for the terrible things you have to see and do.

** This character has been created using the Optional Skill Point Generation System for a Heroic Campaign (see WitchCraft, p. 55). If using the basic system, 4 skill levels must be dropped.*



WITCHCRAFT

Name

Association

Concept

CHARACTER POINTS SPENT UNSPENT

CHANNELING LEVEL
4

Primary Attributes

STRENGTH	2	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	2	PERCEPTION	2
CONSTITUTION	3	WILLPOWER	4

Secondary Attributes

LIFE POINTS	30
ENDURANCE POINTS	29
SPEED	10
ESSENCE POOL	37

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Qualities

Point

Drawbacks

Point

Gift	5	Adversary 3	-3
Essence Channeling 4	8	Cruel 1	-1
Increased Essence Pool	3	Emotional Problems (Fear of Commitment)	-1
Old Soul	4	Honorable 1	-1
Situational Awareness	2		

Skill

Level

Skill

Level

Brawling	2		
Dodge	6		
First Aid	2		
Handgun	2		
Intimidation	3		
Language (Latin)	2		
Notice	6		
Rituals (Rosicrucian)	2		
Stealth	4		

Power

Level

Elemental Fire	3
Lesser Healing	1
Shielding	3
Soulfire	2
Spirit Mastery (Elementals)	3

Parmenidean

You know that the secret of the universe is still waiting to be discovered. Most in the Brotherhood think that science and magic are separate things, but you know better. There are differences, to be sure, but everything is made of Essence, so both theories must come together at some fundamental level. It is true that there is little indication of it happening so far, but that is only to be expected. After all, the two sides of the equation aren't even unified themselves yet.

You are hoping to get an insight into some part of the theory, some idea or observation, which will spark a useful line of theorizing. As a result you are keen to investigate any unusual happenings, whether supernatural or apparently scientific. Events that can, apparently, be easily explained in understood terms don't interest you, and you aren't interested in the details of who was responsible and why. New scientific breakthroughs, anomalous results, or strange supernatural manifestations—all these fascinate you, because any one of them could provide the vital clue.

Origins

You always thought you wanted to be a scientist. You started reading *Scientific American* when you were eleven and took all the science classes you could in high school. You won third prize in a regional science fair just before you graduated, and no one was surprised when you went on to one of the best science universities in the country. There, you studied theoretical physics and dreamed of working at one of the particle accelerators probing the secrets of the universe.

Your introduction to the Rosicrucians was a little difficult, as you were initially inclined to reject all this talk of magic. A good scientist does not ignore evidence, however, and you were soon convinced that there really was something going on. You decided to study it, hoping to find out how it fitted in with what you knew from physics. You soon found like-minded people in the Covenant, and your studies continue.

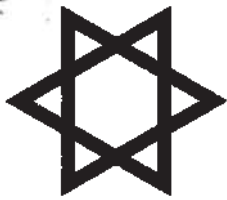
Allies and Enemies

You have close contacts with the scientific community and with other Parmenideans within the Brotherhood. However, these contacts are almost purely academic, and you don't really know them socially. You haven't, as far as you know, acquired any enemies yet.

Roleplaying the Character

You are not a mad scientist, you are a serious theoretical investigator. You don't build weird devices or expound your latest kooky theories. Indeed, you don't really have a theory, and you are happy to admit that you are largely ignorant. Your conversation tends to revolve around theoretical speculation, simply because that is the most interesting thing to talk about. You are also extremely keen to investigate unusual phenomena, and should press for closer investigation if at all possible. You want to understand things and are reluctant to stop something you do not yet understand, even if it is dangerous. Of course, imminent explosions need to be prevented, but you would like as long as possible to study the process first.

** This character has been created using the Optional Skill Point Generation System for a Heroic Campaign (see WitchCraft, p. 55). If using the basic system, 14 skill levels must be dropped.*



Witchcraft

Name

Association

Concept

CHARACTER POINTS **SPENT** **UNSPENT**

CHANNELING LEVEL
4

Lesser Gifted

Primary Attributes

STRENGTH	2	INTELLIGENCE	5
DEXTERITY	2	PERCEPTION	5
CONSTITUTION	2	WILLPOWER	4

Secondary Attributes

LIFE POINTS	26
ENDURANCE POINTS	29
SPEED	8
ESSENCE POOL	35

Qualities

Point

Drawbacks

Point

<i>Gift</i>	5	<i>Obsession (The Theory)</i>	-2
<i>Essence Channeling 4</i>	8		
<i>Increased Essence Pool</i>	3		
<i>Resources (Well-off) 2</i>	4		

Skill

Level

Skill

Level

<i>Bureaucracy</i>	2		
<i>Computer Programming</i>	3		
<i>Computers</i>	3		
<i>Instruction</i>	4		
<i>Language (Latin)</i>	3		
<i>Magic Theory</i>	6		
<i>Notice</i>	4		
<i>Occult Knowledge</i>	2		
<i>Research/Investigation</i>	5		
<i>Rituals (Rosicrucian)</i>	4		
<i>Sciences (Physics)</i>	6		

Power

Level

<i>Consecration</i>	1
<i>Gateway</i>	1
<i>Shielding</i>	1
<i>Spirit Mastery (Elementals)</i>	1
<i>Spirit Mastery (Ethereals)</i>	1
<i>Spirit Mastery (Ghosts)</i>	1

Spirit Master

The denizens of the Otherworlds are yours to command. You have no time for creeds of “wise spirit masters” or ideas of an alliance between equals. Humanity was made in the Creator’s image and, as such, rules over all other creatures by right. This does not mean that the spirits all accept your rulership or that you are presently capable of commanding all of them, but ultimately you will rule them all.

The Covenant is the perfect place for you. Here, your abilities are respected, and form the path to power and influence. The mundane world is of little importance to you, and you concentrate on your relations with the Brotherhood. You are confident in your abilities and willing to carry out tasks for the hierarchy. You also provide assistance for your brethren, although they don’t seem to be as grateful as they should be.

Origins

You were always picked on at school, partly because you preferred to study rather than play sports, and partly because of the ugly birthmark on your face. You made few friends, finding consolation instead in your studies. Even there you didn’t excel, but you kept at it, and determination got you into a good university.

You were no more popular there, but you were noticed by the Rosicrucians. They could see your true talents, and before you graduated you had been recruited. You leapt at the chance to join the organization, and were overjoyed to discover that you were treated well there. Since joining, you have studied the Invocations necessary to master the Spirit World, and built up your power.

Allies and Enemies

You have no real allies, because you are not that good at building close relations with people. Nevertheless, you do work with other Gifted people, because you recognize that you cannot do everything—although few can match you in your specialty.

You do have an enemy, a spirit whom you tried to bind before your power was quite up to the task. Something went wrong with the ritual, and now you find yourself unable to summon or bind the creature, and even dismissing it is a problem. The spirit wants revenge, and that’s a good reason to have some allies around you.

Roleplaying the Character

You are arrogant and socially oblivious. Because you were always treated badly before you joined the Rosicrucians, the acceptance you find there seems like genuine friendship to you. Thus, you do not realize that you are still alienating people with your attitudes. You find the Covenant to be the best environment you have ever known, and you are fiercely loyal to it.

You always want to be in control. This shows itself most strongly in your magic, but you will also be reluctant to let someone else handle arrangements, at least without telling you, and you always want to be in a position of leadership. You do accept the Covenant’s hierarchy, but you are working hard to climb it, so that you will be in charge.

** This character has been created using the Optional Skill Point Generation System for a Heroic Campaign (see WitchCraft, p. 55). If using the basic system, 4 skill levels must be dropped.*



WITCHCRAFT

Name

Association

Concept

CHARACTER POINTS **SPENT** **UNSPENT**

CHANNELING LEVEL
5

Primary Attributes

STRENGTH	1	INTELLIGENCE	3
DEXTERITY	2	PERCEPTION	3
CONSTITUTION	1	WILLPOWER	5

Secondary Attributes

LIFE POINTS	18
ENDURANCE POINTS	26
SPEED	6
ESSENCE POOL	45

Part 15

Qualities

Point

Drawbacks

Point

<i>Gift</i>	5	<i>Attractiveness -2</i>	-2
<i>Essence Channeling 5</i>	10	<i>Charisma -1</i>	-1
<i>Increased Essence Pool</i>	6	<i>Covetousness (Ambitious)</i>	2
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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Skill

Level

Skill

Level

<i>Computers</i>	2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Humanities (Sociology)</i>	2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Intimidation</i>	2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Language (Latin)</i>	5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Magic Theory</i>	5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Occult Knowledge (Spirits)</i>	3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Research/Investigation</i>	2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Rituals (Rosicrucian)</i>	5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Power

Level

<i>Spirit Mastery (Elementals)</i>	5
<i>Spirit Mastery (Ethereals)</i>	4
<i>Spirit Mastery (Ghosts)</i>	2
<i>Spirit Mastery (Nature Spirits)</i>	1
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Chapter Four: Past, Present and Future



Introduction

As Covenants go, the Rosicrucians are relatively young. They were formed on October 22, 1203 (Hallowe'en—this was before the reform of the calendar). A number of traditions joined together in the new Covenant, and their histories stretched back much further. The new Covenant was dedicated to the discovery of new Invocations and other advances in magic and science. In the fourteenth century, the Rosicrucians worked closely with the Wicce to ameliorate the Black Death and defeat the cultists of the Mad God Morsater. At the end of the century, however, the corrupt Rosicrucians who would become the Sere Rose were discovered, and the Covenant's efforts to purge the corruption soured relations with the Wicce and brought the Inquisition down on their heads.

In the fifteenth century, the Covenant caught the mood of the Renaissance and began to turn away from original research to the recovery of ancient magics. Some members sought wisdom from the east, and there they encountered the Red Lotus. At first, relations were friendly, but things quickly deteriorated. Paolo Cellini discovered the Storm Dragons, realized that they were a different group, and managed to arrange an alliance between them and the Rosicrucians. The combined forces handed the Red Lotus a significant defeat. After the battle, Paolo defected to the Storm Dragons, which made relations between the two Covenants much more awkward than they had been.

Over this period, the Exoterics grew steadily in power, until, at the end of the sixteenth century, under the leadership of John Dee, they began a great project to bring about the Rosicrucian Utopia. This involved bringing science, magic, and religious toleration to the mass population, reaching its peak with the Rosicrucian Manifestos of the early seventeenth century. The Combine struck harshly, driving the Rosicrucian magicians back underground with renewed witch hunts. By the end of the century, the Rosicrucians had little influence on society, but their activities had forced the Combine to accept science.

For most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Rosicrucians were concerned exclusively with their own researches and with maintaining secrecy. The French Revolution forced them to move their headquarters from Paris to London, where it remains to the present day. Also, in the nineteenth century, they made their first contacts with the Twilight Order.

Around the turn of the century, the Covenant noticed signs that an ancient foe, the dread Mad God Morsater, might be returning. Many members wanted to maintain secrecy above all else, but some believed that the fight against Morsater was more important. There were even whispers that a Time of Reckoning was approaching. The outbreak of World War I, and the Influenza epidemic that followed it, provided fertile grounds for the cults of the Mad God, and in the face of indifference from many Rosicrucians, the activists formed alliances with members of other Covenants. Finally, in 1943, a mixed group, led by the Rosicrucian Toni Bains, drove Morsater back from the world, and the Reckoning, if it had truly threatened, was averted.

Since then, the Covenant has been in the throes of change. Old attitudes on race and sex struggle with the pride of the members in a black woman who is the greatest living hero of the Rosicrucians. Also, the success of certain members intervention in broader affairs has led to pressure for more action. What is more, many members have come to suspect that the Reckoning was only postponed, not prevented, and that it hangs over them once more.

Origins

Of the Twelve Founders of the Rosicrucians, seven represented smaller Covenants, and five were Solitaires. The Covenants were the House of St. John of Jerusalem, the Sons of Enoch, the Scribes of Thoth, Hecate's Brood, the Daughters of Isis, the Crystal Chalice and the Pythagoreans. The last two were new organizations, devoted to alchemy and astrology respectively, and they quickly lost their identity in the early years of the new larger Covenant, as all Rosicrucians learned their techniques. The House of St. John was also young, but as it was bound together by attitude rather than knowledge it survived to become an important force over the years. The other four groups were, or claimed to be, ancient, and thus brought history and myth with them.

The Sons of Enoch

Early in the world, Enoch walked with God, and then he was no longer, for God took him up to heaven. Before his ascension, however, he had passed the secrets of dealing with angels on to his followers. Enoch laid strict conditions on the use of this knowledge, demanding that only the most holy of men be allowed to learn it. While he remained on earth, these conditions were honored, but men are proud, and after his ascension some sought their own glory through teaching these secrets to others. The knowledge spread, until God Himself was made angry, and determined to send a great flood to destroy the earth. He chose to save Noah and his family, for they had no knowledge of the magic. One of the Seraphim, Phanuel, chose also to save Irad, a magician wise in those arts. The angel caught Irad up in his wings and sustained him above the waters until the flood drained away. Then he set him back on the earth and charged him not to reveal the secrets beyond a small group, no matter how holy those who petitioned him, lest God flood the earth once more.

So Irad became the founder of the Sons of Enoch, and the organization survived, and even prospered, for many centuries. At length, the Son of God was born on earth and the old covenant between God and

man was superseded. The Sons of Enoch became willing to teach more people their secrets, although they still showed great caution. This was partly because dealing with angels was never safe and dead students could be hard to explain to mundane authorities. By the thirteenth century, the group numbered around a dozen magicians and was under threat from new attitudes in the Church.

The Scribes of Thoth

The wisdom of ancient Egypt was known to the Greeks, who recognized the land of the Nile as the source of all learning. At the beginning of the world the ibis-headed god Thoth chose two wise men to receive his teaching, and they were the first to use Magic. They taught their techniques to apprentices and served as scribes in the temples of the god. Thoth returned to them many times over the years, teaching them anew and guiding them through his priests. For Thoth was a wise god, and while he placed power in the souls of the scribes, he gave authority instead to the priests.

The priesthood survived the coming of the Greeks and Romans, for they respected the old gods of Egypt. But when Constantine accepted Christianity, the tolerance came to an end, and the priests were driven away and killed. The Scribes were able to survive by their magic, and they appealed to their god for guidance. He appeared to them and counseled them to remain hidden. At that time, he granted them the authority he had once reserved for his priests, for Thoth is not a god to blindly hold on to the trappings of the past. The world changes, and it is a sign of wisdom to change with it.

Hecate's Brood

In proud Mycenae, the citadel of Agamemnon, a small group of magicians came together under the protection of Hecate, goddess of magic. They fought at Troy, where, after nine years, they were able to capture and bind Tros, the patron god of the city. Troy fell soon after, and the magicians took to studying the god they had bound. They learned ways to draw power from him, and soon rose to positions of great influence in the civilization of Bronze Age Greece, based in their great temple at Thera.

A god cannot be bound forever, and at length Tros broke free. In his wrath he destroyed their temple and shattered the island on which it stood, then raged through the cities of the Greeks, hunting down and destroying all the magicians he could find. Hecate took pity on a small group of her followers and hid them from Tros until his rage was spent. She then made them swear never to bind another spirit against its will, for she would not protect them again. The magicians agreed, and kept a low profile as Greece rose to glory once again, then was swallowed by Rome. As the Roman Empire became the Byzantine, they found themselves forced into greater secrecy to hide from the church, and they slowly became less of a priesthood and more of a group of magicians with a religious background.

The Daughters of Isis

At the dawn of time, when the gods still walked the earth, Osiris was slain by Set and the pieces of his body scattered across the world. Isis, his sister and wife, set out to find the pieces. She could not do it alone, goddesses though she was. She taught some women her secrets so they could help her with the search. Her task was successful, and as a reward for their help she allowed the women to keep the knowledge she had granted and to pass it onto others. The only condition she imposed was that no one explain the knowledge to anyone outside the group.

Over the centuries, the group became a large mystery cult, restricted in membership to women only, reaching its peak in the later years of the Roman Empire. The coming of Christianity was a disaster for them, and the group found its membership rapidly dwindling. The outer levels of the mysteries were steadily stripped of religious significance, but women were still reluctant to join. By the Middle Ages, the outer levels contained much of the magical knowledge, as an incentive to new members, while the religious nature of the cult was only known to the two or three initiates of the highest levels.



The Twelve Founders

VITALINUS

Geoffrey of Acre, leader of the House of St. John

Isaac of Marseilles, leader of the Sons of Enoch

Philip of Paris, leader of the Pythagoreans

Einhard of Cologne, leader of the Crystal Chalice

Patrick of Armagh, leader of the Scribes of Thoth

Anna Photius, leader of the Daughters of Isis

Basil Euhemerus, leader of Hecate's Brood

Alfonso of Barcelona

Caedmon of Jarrow

Erik Fire-rider

Giovanni of Pisa, the Traitor

The Foundation

Vitalinus was the moving force behind the foundation of the Rosicrucians. He was old and powerful even then, and traveled across Europe searching out magicians with interests similar to his. He knew of no groups of any size, and he knew that the smaller groups were in danger of dying out. He also believed strongly in the benefits of cooperation. He was able to offer his knowledge as an incentive, even before anyone else had joined up, and Geoffrey of Acre was the first to accept his invitation. Isaac of Marseilles was the second, quickly followed by Alfonso of Barcelona. At this point, the group was large enough to be very attractive, and Philip of Paris, Einhard of Cologne, Caedmon of Jarrow, and Erik Fire-rider found Vitalinus and expressed their interest to him, Erik having come all the way from Iceland.

Some people thought that the Covenant should incorporate them, but Vitalinus, supported by Einhard and Geoffrey, wanted to approach some of the remnants of the ancient religions. Isaac was opposed at first, but ultimately brought round. Vitalinus was already in contact with Patrick of Armagh, Anna Photius, and Basil Euhemerus, and quickly extended a formal invitation to them. When the others learned that he had invited an entirely female Covenant to be part of the Rosicrucians, the project nearly

founded. Photius's personal power and Vitalinus's diplomatic skills smoothed ruffled feathers, but the women did not even begin to be properly accepted for several more centuries.

There were, therefore, eleven founders. For symbolic reasons, Vitalinus wanted there to be twelve, so he invited Giovanni of Pisa, one of Alfonso's students, to take a position among the Founders. He willingly accepted, but the others, with the exception of Vitalinus, treated him as an inferior, someone brought in merely to make up the numbers.

The Twelve Founders gathered in Paris on Hallowe'en 1203 to set their seals to the Charter of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross. The original document still survives in the library of the Covenant at the Castle of the Peak, in Derbyshire, England, although Giovanni's seal has been shattered. The symbol of the Covenant, with twelve points at which lines meet, was chosen to mark the fact that the founders drew together many traditions of magic.

Early Years

The first century and a half of the Brotherhood's existence was a period of extraordinary growth, in which its initial aims were fulfilled admirably. Many new Invocations were developed, most of which are still used today by Rosicrucians and other Magicians

alike. The Brotherhood maintained a strong presence in the new universities and began its tradition of recruiting largely from them. The Inquisition grew in power over this period, forcing the Covenant to be more concerned with secrecy than they had originally planned.

The Marchers formed during the thirteenth century, in response to the discovery of a number of supernatural threats. They took their name from the titles given to mundane lords who ruled over border areas, with responsibility for defending a land from invasion—the Marcher Barons, or Lords of the Marches. At first they worked closely with the House of St. John, but differences in ultimate aims quickly drove them apart, restricting them to occasional cooperation. More importantly for the future, the Marchers occasionally worked alongside the Inquisition, although there they needed to take great care.

This was also the period in which the Rosicrucians first clearly distinguished science from magic. Scientific operations did not require an act of will, or any intent, and were unaffected by the expenditure of Essence; magic was the opposite. Both remained important areas of study within the Covenant, and some members felt that the superficial differences masked a deeper unity.

The Black Death

In 1347, plague came to Europe. The Black Death was worse than anything Europe has seen since, and a third of the population died in less than three years; in some areas, everyone was killed. When the disease struck, many Rosicrucians concentrated on self-preservation. The House of St. John, however, led by Ugo di Lucca, threw itself into helping the victims and the survivors. In Scotland, Walter de Ros was able to hold the plague back completely, with the result that there were virtually no deaths, and a number of Rosicrucians went to study with him.

During this period, the Covenant became aware of other mystics who were also working against the plague. These were the Wicce, and initial contacts were friendly. At first, local groups simply cooperated in aiding particular communities, but within a year Ugo di Lucca had sought out the leadership of the other Covenant and made formal agreements to encourage cooperation. At first there were suspicions, as the two groups differed substantially in philosophy, but these were set aside in the face of an overwhelming common problem. Some members of both covenants thought that a Time of Reckoning had come, and that cooperation was the only way for

Roger Bacon (1214-1348)

ROGER BACON WAS THE FIRST IMPORTANT figure within the Covenant to be trained entirely within the Rosicrucians. He was born in Britain and studied first at Oxford, where he was noticed by a recruiter. He was initiated, and went to Paris to complete his training at the Covenant headquarters. He joined the Franciscan Friars in 1256, and pressed for a greater engagement of the Covenant with society. Indeed, Pope Clement IV asked him to outline his proposals for educational reform, which he did in 1267, in the *Opus Maius*. The magical elements in this work led to his condemnation by the Minister General of the Franciscans, and convinced him that society would have to be better prepared before it would be ready to understand magic. He carefully edited the manuscripts of the *Opus Maius* through mundane hands, and devoted himself to his own studies. In 1294, he arranged an apparent death, and in 1348 he died for real, in the Black Death.

ROGER BACON WAS A GREAT RESEARCHER, and the magical portions of the *Opus Maius* are still read within the Covenant. Many of his later works were lost in the chaos of the Rosicrucian Purge, and as the Renaissance members tended to look for wisdom from before the Covenant's founding, no one has looked very hard until recently. Thus, it is entirely possible that some manuscripts containing new Invocations, remain to be discovered.

THE EXOTERICs REGARD him as one of their spiritual forefathers, as do the Parmenideans. The former are certainly justified, but the latter ignore the fact that Bacon clearly distinguished science from magic when editing the *Opus Maius*.

them to survive; others saw the events as merely a Ripple, but agreed that they should work together.

In 1350, the plague died down and contacts between the two Covenants began to decline. This cooling of relations was abruptly halted in 1360 when the plague returned, and the House of St. John quickly mobilized its Wiccen allies to help minimize the suffering. In late 1360, a group of Rosicrucians and Wicce were wiped out while working in Florence. Since they had access to all necessary Invocations to fight the plague, the Covenants were worried, and sent more members to investigate. They discovered a necromantic cult dedicated to a Mad God, a cult that was actively engaged in spreading the plague. The cult was destroyed, and the Brotherhood started looking for evidence of other servants of the Mad God, which they called Morsater based on some documents recovered from the slain necromantic cult.

The second wave of plague subsided in 1361, but this time relations with the Wicce did not cool off, as both Covenants cooperated in searching out followers of Morsater. Small groups were found scattered all over Europe, leading Ugo di Lucca to worry that there might be a larger organization behind it all. The Wicce were not so sure, pointing out that they had very little in way of general organization and suggesting that he was merely projecting Rosicrucian structure onto their enemies.

The plague struck again in 1368, and the next three years were spent helping the victims and hunting the servants of the Mad God. As time passed, the emphasis shifted to finding the cults, and the Marchers gained influence in the Brotherhood at the expense of the House of St. John. Although the plague subsided in 1370, the hunt continued at full tilt, as Ugo had found evidence of a larger, more organized, and ancient group of necromancers operating from Italy.

By this point most Rosicrucians and Wicce were agreed that the Black Death might well become a Reckoning if the Mad God was not stopped. The return of the plague in 1375 drove them to redouble their efforts, and several cells of the cult were wiped out in joint operations. Ugo di Lucca led operations in Italy, Vitalinus himself in France and on the Iberian peninsula, and Walter De Ros in the British Isles and northern Europe. The Wicce agreed to appoint coor-

dinators to liaise with the Brotherhood; Colin Toulain in the north, Jordan de Machan in the west, and Bianca Severo in Italy.

In 1376, Ugo di Lucca and Severo finally identified the center of Morsater's cult at a location in the Alps. A carefully planned assault on the headquarters of the cult resulted in its destruction, although Ugo di Lucca was lost (and hoped killed), driving Morsater itself back from the world.

This did not stop the plague, but there was no longer any evidence of the activities of the Mad Gods, so the House of St. John regained its pre-eminent place. Led by Walter de Ros, it cooperated with the Wicce and was able to greatly ameliorate the next wave of the plague, between 1380 and 1383. This marked the high point of relations between the Rosicrucians and Wicce. There was even talk of merging the two Covenants, although that was restricted to the more extreme fringes of both. The Daughters of Isis did seriously consider changing Covenants, and a few of their number actually took that step, with the full approval of both groups.

The Rosicrucian Purge

In 1391, everything went wrong. The Marcher Otto of Gdansk had been pursuing evidence of demonic corruption in the Covenant for several years. At first, he had not really believed it, and even suspected that one of the Fallen Seraphim was trying to mislead him. When he had convinced himself, he found it almost impossible to convince anyone else. In 1391, he found the crucial final pieces of evidence and presented them to carefully chosen Grand Masters. The case was indisputable, and they had to take action.

Walter de Ros was working with demons.

The story, as the Marchers pieced it together, was this. In 1348, faced with the approach of the plague, Walter had accepted the aid of a demon. It had enabled him to save the lives of almost everyone in Scotland, but it demanded his service as a price. He was allowed to keep his respectable facade, because it helped in drawing in new recruits, but in secret he engaged in rituals ever more perverse and evil. The demon's ultimate plans were unknown, but the survivors of that time shuddered at how close they came to fruition.

The Rosicrucian Purge happened between 1391 and 1395. De Ros had been popular and influential, and all who had worked with him had to be questioned and checked for corruption. Many members of the covenant had direct contact with de Ros, and many others had studied with those who had studied with him. Whole Cohorts were cut off and eliminated. At this time, the Marchers used their contacts in the Inquisition to deal with corrupted Rosicrucians who were too powerful in the mundane world for the Covenant to attack directly.

By 1394, the Covenant was descending into paranoia. Members were being executed on suspicion of demonic associations, on the principle that it was best to be sure that there was no remaining source of corruption within the Brotherhood. Vitalinus fought hard against this, and by 1395 he had managed to bring things under control. The Covenant was purged, but much smaller and weaker, and Walter de Ros himself had vanished.

In late 1395, the Inquisition struck at the Rosicrucians. Marchers found their contacts turning against them and local groups turned to their Wiccen allies for help, only to be violently rebuffed and, in some cases, turned over to the Inquisitors. At the time, this was regarded as a great betrayal on the part of the Wicce, but later historians have discovered that many Wiccen Covens were caught up and destroyed during the Rosicrucian Purge, explaining the hostility of that Covenant as a whole.

The Inquisition hounded the Covenant for several years, showing a worrying ability to find members

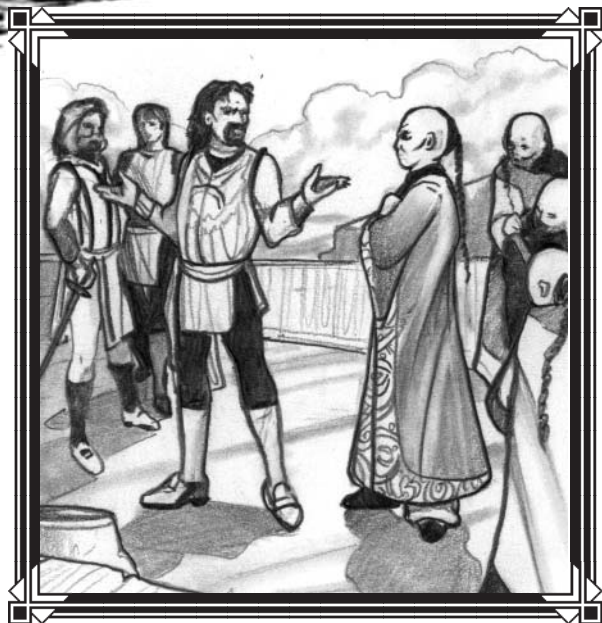
who were using magic to hide themselves. The obvious conclusion was that they were working with the Wicce, but the Brotherhood was unable to take action against its putative betrayers, being far too busy staying alive. By early 1399, it looked as though the Covenant would be destroyed.

Then the plague struck again. Inquisitors were no more spared than anyone else, and their distraction brought the Rosicrucians some breathing room. They hid, using mundane as well as magical techniques, and took steps to make sure nothing of the sort happened again.

In 1400, the Rosicrucian Code was adopted, and the Inquisition of the Rose established. The three most important provisions of the Code were based on recent experience. Members must not deal with Mad Gods or with Fallen Seraphim. Even playing one off against the other was to be strictly forbidden. Further, all problems must be dealt with internally, without drawing the attention of external groups such as the Inquisition. The Inquisition of the Rose was given the authority to find internal corruption, but hedged about with provisions to avoid the paranoia of the mid-1390s.

The Inquisition seemed to have lost track of the Covenant, and the early years of the fifteenth century were a time of rebuilding. In 1405, members first encountered a group calling themselves the Dew of Transformation (*ros crucis* in Latin), a Dark Covenant made up of the corrupted survivors of the Purge. Within the Brotherhood, they became known as the Sere Rose, as "sere" means dry or withered.





The Call of the East

After the trauma of the Purge, many Rosicrucians found the message of the Renaissance highly appealing. It urged them to seek wisdom from the past, from long before the recent troubles. This also provided a guarantee that whatever they found would not be tainted by Walter de Ros's manipulations. Accordingly, the Covenant as a whole turned away from research and toward the recovery of ancient magic. The Eclectics came into existence at the same time, as those members who thought that new research should be pursued became a recognizable minority, and began to band together for mutual support.

The Rosicrucians avoided the mundane Renaissance's fixation on Greece and Rome, and turned their attention to the ancient civilizations of the Orient. Members of the Covenant had been there from time to time since the mid-thirteenth century, but the first concerted expedition was mounted in 1418. These Rosicrucians, led by Paolo Cellini, traveled to Viet Nam and encountered a Covenant of martial artists who demonstrated mystical powers of a type previously unknown to them. At first, friendly relations were formed with the group, the Red Lotus Society, and some mutual teaching was undertaken.

In 1420, the Red Lotus were hired by the Chinese to destroy a temple, and they invited the Rosicrucians along. Cellini, assuming that the temple was corrupt, willingly joined them. The place was destroyed easily, Cellini's magic turning the tide as it was unexpected. Afterwards, sifting through the rubble, Cellini found no evidence of corruption and confronted his allies with the information, expecting them to be shocked. They were indifferent, asking why there should have been any corruption—they were only doing their jobs.

Cellini left quietly, but the Temple War between the Rosicrucians and the Red Lotus began at that point. For two years, the eastern branches of the Covenant sought out the mystical martial artists and tried to destroy them. In 1422, Cellini found himself sifting through the rubble of another temple, one which had been defended by mystical martial artists, and once again finding no evidence of corruption. Immediately afterwards, he vanished, leaving without telling the other Rosicrucians where he was going.

In his absence, his colleagues continued the war, now sure that they were fighting to avenge him. Juan Mozarab took over leadership of the effort, claiming that the fact that the martial artists did not follow a single God revealed their evident corruption. In 1425, Cellini returned, announcing that there were two groups of mystical martial artists, and that one group, the Storm Dragons, were worthy allies. The Brotherhood took some convincing, and Mozarab finally left rather than ally with a group he saw as dangerous pagans, but Cellini was ultimately successful in sealing an alliance between the two Covenants. By 1428, the Red Lotus Society had been beaten back, Viet Nam successfully defended from Chinese aggression, and the war was over. Cellini promptly resigned from the Rosicrucian Brotherhood and joined the Storm Dragons.

This provoked a political storm, with the Rosicrucians accusing the Storm Dragons of demonic corruption at its low point. Vitalinus himself traveled from the west to help calm the situation, and in the end distant but cordial relations were established with the Dragons, a considerable gain over the outright hostility existing at that time between the Rosicrucians and the Wicce.

The Wars of the Roses

In the west, the fifteenth century was a time of struggle for the Covenant, albeit one punctuated by periods of calm. The Sere Rose had not taken their expulsion from the Brotherhood quietly, and still knew much about the Covenant. Using this information, they were able to find Cohorts when the Inquisition could not, and they struck at them.

Sometimes their aim was simple destruction; more often, they aimed to corrupt Rosicrucians and bring them over to the other side. The conflict was particularly fierce in the British Isles, Walter de Ros's home territory. At first the British Rosicrucians, led by Caedmon of Jarrow, fought a largely defensive battle, worried about the consequences of a more active policy. Caedmon's death at the hands of the Sere Rose in 1461 marked the beginning of a more active period.

Margaret Faircastle, a prominent Daughter of Isis, took over the British Shrines, leading them in an active campaign against the members of the Sere Rose. The Marchers and the Sons of Enoch strongly supported her stance, and at first the Rosicrucians were largely successful. The tide turned in 1471, when Faircastle was killed along with thirty-four other Rosicrucians at the Battle of Avebury. Her son Henry, also a member of the Rosicrucians, led a successful rearguard and evacuation action, but it was undeniable that the Rosicrucians were falling back.

In 1485, Henry Faircastle led a daring raid into the heart of Scotland, attacking the center of the Sere Rose's power. Supported by Seraphim summoned by the Sons of Enoch, they were able to break through the outer defenses and Faircastle killed Walter de Ros with his own hands. All the Rosicrucians who took part in that raid were deeply shaken by what they saw, the Sons of Enoch to the extent that they changed their name to the Wards of Heaven, swearing that nothing similar would happen again.

It is an odd coincidence that the mundane Wars of the Roses, happening at the same time, should have so many correspondences with the occult version. The Inquisition looked for evidence of illicit manipulation of the mundane nobility, but found none. Most Covenant members believe that it was simply a strange manifestation of the law of correspondences.

Preparation for Change

The sixteenth century was a time of preparation for the Brotherhood. They had learned from Roger Bacon's failure in the thirteenth century that society would have to be prepared before they could lead it to a brave new world of truth and plenty, where magic and science would serve all mankind. Unfortunately, the Black Death, the Purge, and the wars with the Sere Rose had given them little leisure for such preparation. Not until the end of the fifteenth century were they able to turn their attention to it.

Their propaganda war began subtly, but still attracted the attention of opposing forces. The Covenant's first thought was that the opposition came from the Sere Rose or the Wicce, but further investigation strongly suggested a third force was involved. This forced them into even more careful schemes. The printing press was put to good use, as many copies of tracts and books were printed before the first was distributed, and then they were placed on sale in many cities at once. Even when the opposition struck to take them out of circulation, they inevitably missed some, and so the ideas spread.

By the middle years of the century, Rosicrucian ideas of magic and science were among the common currency of intellectual exchange, but there were clear signs that the opposition was preparing to snuff them out. John Dee, a remarkable young English Rosicrucian, assumed the leadership of a much more active campaign, talking to members of the nobility and trying to gain their support. Possibly his greatest success was with Rudolf II, the Holy Roman Emperor, who devoted himself wholeheartedly to the Rosicrucian scheme, studying alchemy and astrology, and encouraging religious toleration. Rudolf even sought membership in the Covenant, but was refused on the grounds that his public standing was too high. It is a sign of his commitment to the Brotherhood that he quietly accepted this rebuff. One of Dee's other successes was convincing Elizabeth, queen of England, to lend her influence to his scheme. While she never supported him completely, she did offer protection from his enemies, and was willing to judge his schemes by their results. Alas, she died in 1603, just before Dee was ready to act.



The Rosicrucian Enlightenment

Dee was forced to stage his death in 1608 and withdraw behind the scenes. He entrusted much of the active work to his protégé, Johann Valentin Andreae, although many Rosicrucians looked askance at delegating so much to one so young—Andreae was only twenty-two at the time. At first, however, Dee's confidence seemed to be justified. Andreae made overtures to the Elector Palatine of the Rhine, Frederick V, and obtained a solid commitment from him to support the Covenant's scheme. The hope was to base the Rosicrucian Utopia in the Holy Roman Empire, and then draw England in later. Prague (Rudolf's capital) and Heidelberg (Frederick's) were turned into Rosicrucian cities, where magic and science could be studied undisturbed by followers of any religion.

Rudolf died in 1612, and his likely successor was a fanatical Catholic, Ferdinand of Styria. The Rosicrucians saw the hand of their opponent behind this situation, and it was at this point that they first referred to this enemy as the Combine. Dee and Andreae arranged a marriage between Frederick and the daughter of James, the king of England and Scotland. Unfortunately, James was much less sympa-

thetic to the Rosicrucian scheme than Elizabeth, being violently opposed to anything that smacked of magic, but Dee hoped that he could at least be persuaded to support his son-in-law. This proved to be a vain hope.

In 1617, despite the best efforts of the Covenant, Ferdinand of Styria was elected king of Bohemia. As expected, he immediately reversed Rudolf's policies of toleration, trying to suppress the native Bohemian church and stamp out magical practices. By this time, however, the Covenant was committed to action. The Rosicrucian manifestos had been published in 1614 and 1615, and in 1616 Andreae had published a longer allegorical work, *The Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz*. Much of the world was aflame with speculations about the Rosicrucians, and many people tried to make contact with them. The original plan had been to go fully public in 1617, but Ferdinand's election put paid to that scheme.

Instead, the Covenant arranged for the Bohemian electors to offer the crown to Frederick, the Elector Palatine. They did so in August 1619, and Frederick accepted in September.

He became known as the Winter King, because he was driven out by Combine-backed Hapsburg forces in November 1620, having ruled for barely a year. He fought them at the Battle of the White Mountain, to which Giovanni of Pisa was supposed to have led a Rosicrucian relief force. The Rosicrucian army, including mundanes and the Gifted, turned up, but Giovanni led it into battle on the Hapsburg side. He disappeared after the battle, but no one in the Covenant believes that such a powerful magician could have made such a basic mistake, and it is assumed that he betrayed his Covenant, and the hopes of Utopia, to the Combine.

This battle marked the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, which devastated Europe and drove the Rosicrucians back into hiding. The Combine unleashed the Inquisition on the Covenant once more, and they found themselves hounded by individuals who could, it seemed, call directly on the power of God. At first, they naturally assumed that these people were part of the Combine, but by the end of the century the Sentinels were recognized as an entirely separate hostile organization.

Many Rosicrucian scholars claim that the early seventeenth century was a Time of Reckoning. A Utopia was nearly established, and then driven back, and the whole of Europe convulsed in a destructive war. Others point out that only Europe was convulsed, and consign the events to the status of a Ripple.

The duration and aftermath of the war were notable in several respects. The cult of Acramiss, a Mad God of despair and suicide, launched a major and apparently unprovoked attack on the Covenant. Their most prominent victim was John Dee, who hanged himself in 1625. The cult was eventually broken in 1640, but much damage had already been done.

Second, the Covenant became much more concerned with secrecy, and the Exoterics fell decisively from favor. Indeed, much as the Eclectics a couple of centuries earlier, this was the first time that they formed a definite faction within the Covenant. Interference with mundane affairs was restricted to the protection of the Covenant and to the support of its members.

Third, the Rosicrucians became aware of another Covenant, calling itself the Templars. While it was, and remains, unclear whether this group really was directly descended from the medieval military order or whether they had just taken that name because of the associated mystique, they did seem to share many of the Brotherhood's aims. Accordingly, occasional cooperation became the norm, although both sides were reluctant to reveal too much to the other.

Finally, and more positively, the Combine was forced to accept science and technology. At first, they tried to suppress both science and magic, but too much information about science was in the public domain, and no sooner had they silenced one practitioner than another stepped up and repeated his results. By the middle of the century they had admitted defeat, and begun co-opting science, emphasizing that it had nothing to do with magic, which was all lies and deception. The Covenant reacted to this by withdrawing from science, leaving that field to the mundanes and the Combine. A few Rosicrucians, believing that science and magic were ultimately one and the same, refused to go along with this, and thus the Parmenidean faction came into being.

The Quiet Centuries

For the next two hundred years the Rosicrucians did little but quietly look to their own interests. Wary of confronting the Combine again, the Covenant developed a policy of non-interference. Their interest in the upper levels of business and politics, combined with a certain degree of knowing what to look for, meant that they quickly became aware of the extent of the Combine's operations. This allowed the Covenant to warn members to stay away from Combine projects. This approach worked well for a long time, allowing the Brotherhood to rebuild its power and influence after the Bohemian debacle.

However, even the most determinedly passive group cannot pass two centuries without some important events, if only those imposed by the outside world. The first such incident was the reappearance of Walter de Ros. The rumors first circulated at the end of the seventeenth century, and in 1723 the Covenant confirmed that he had returned as a Vampyre. It was at this point that the mandated penalty for trafficking with Mad Gods or Fallen Seraphim was changed from death to death and unraveling. Under de Ros's undead leadership, the Sere Rose was attempting to rebuild its power, and skirmishes between the Brotherhood and its dark reflection were a constant feature from this time on.

The next two incidents came close together. In 1776, England's American colonies rebelled. Initially, the Covenant took little notice, as the grievances were relatively petty and they expected the rebels to be quickly brought to heel. As the struggle progressed, however, it was transformed into one which genuinely pitted liberty against oppression, and many Rosicrucians saw some of the goals of their schemes in Europe being put into practice across the Atlantic Ocean. By the time the constitution of the United States was approved in 1787, a significant number of Rosicrucians were in residence, enjoying the freedom granted to them.

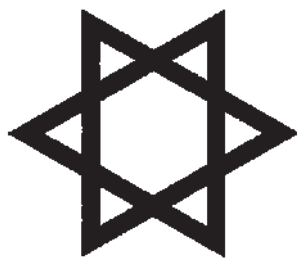
This migration was reinforced by the second event, the French Revolution of 1789. The violence drove the Rosicrucians from Paris, forcing them to relocate their headquarters to London. The Great Library of

the Brotherhood, which included the Foundation Charter as well as many texts on magic, was relocated to the Castle of the Peak in Derbyshire, home to the Peverils, who had been Rosicrucians for generations. While these moves were initially intended to be temporary, the influence of the British Rosicrucians and continuing troubles in France meant that the will to move them back never materialized, so that the Covenant remains centered in London to this day.

While the center of the Covenant only moved as far as England, many of its members moved further, traveling to the United States, where the Brotherhood began a period of growth which would ultimately see that nation as their most important single locus.

In the 1830s, members of the new American Shrines stumbled across evidence of a cult of Morsater among the slaves of the South. Worried about the possibility of plague as well as the immediate danger from the cult of a Mad God, they swiftly took action, and over the next few years the cult was wiped out. While investigation confirmed that Morsater was undoubtedly the center of the cult, no evidence of a link to disease or plague was found, puzzling those of the Brotherhood who thought that even Mad Gods showed some sort of unifying feature.

In the late nineteenth century, a growth in interest in the occult provided the Covenant with a great opportunity for expansion. It was not the only group to see the possibilities, and it was at this time that contact was first made with the Twilight Order. The Brotherhood had learned from the botched encounters with the Wicce and Storm Dragons, and this time was much more careful to build friendly relations more slowly, keen to avoid misunderstandings. The plan worked and the two Covenants still have close relations today.



The Near-Reckoning

Around the turn of the century, many members of the Covenant believed that they could see the signs of an approaching Reckoning. This time, it did not take the form of opposition to the Brotherhood's activities, as it had in the seventeenth century, and so their warnings were taken slightly more seriously. Those members who had allies in other Covenants discovered that these perceptions were rather more widespread, and began urging the Covenant leadership to take action. Alas, centuries of caution had rendered them passive, and they were reluctant to authorize even defensive measures.

While the Grand Masters procrastinated, events moved on. The Great War broke out in 1914, and quickly metamorphosed into a static nightmare in the trenches, where any attack meant certain death, yet the generals ordered one after another. Mystical events became more common, and the voices within the Covenant calling for action became more urgent.

The crisis came in 1916, when Toni Bains, a black British woman working as a nurse on the Western Front, found evidence of a cult following Morsater. Despite the fact that her family had been in Britain since the late seventeenth century and members of the Rosicrucians since the early eighteenth, her race and sex had kept her to the rank of Equestrian. Most members of the Covenant rejected her claims, pointing out that this was a war, not a plague, so she continued her search for evidence.

When the Influenza epidemic struck in 1918, the appearance of a disease on the scene allowed her to convince some members of the hierarchy to support her. Christopher Voormann, one of the Grand Masters, backed her, and even became personally involved in her activities. These led to the destruction of a major group of Morsater cultists in 1921, and although Voormann was killed in the battle, he was able to return as a Vampyre and defend Bains before the hierarchy.

Bains and Voormann argued that the Covenant had misunderstood the Mad God, that it was not concerned with disease but rather with despair in the face of inevitable catastrophe. The Grand Masters rejected

this argument and refused to support any further action, citing Voormann's death as an example of the unacceptable costs. Voormann's protests that he thought the victory worth the price went unheeded.

Bains knew that Morsater had not been beaten, even if it had suffered a setback, so she began looking for new allies. At first, she tried to draw from people unaffiliated with the Covenants, but this led to near disaster. By sheer bad luck, one of the first such people she approached, a Seer, was a member of the Cabal of Psyche. At first, things went well, but then an attack on another member of her Shrine was traced back to her contact. Further, careful, investigation revealed a large organization behind him, an organization which was linked to the Combine. Bains pulled back rapidly, and word was quickly passed through the Brotherhood.

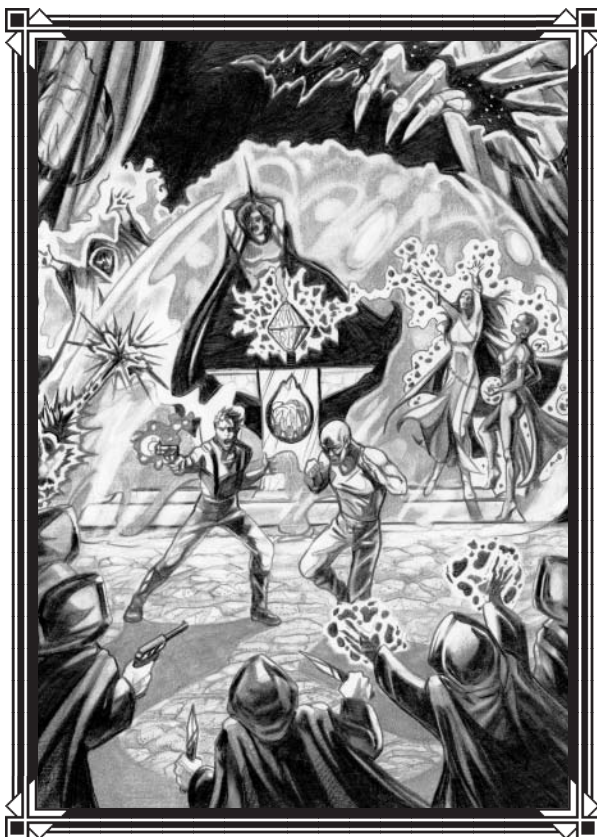
Frustrated there, Bains turned her attention to the other Covenants. Her first allies were drawn from those associations closest to the Rosicrucians: Martino Bund was a member of the Twilight Order and Sung Long Di a Storm Dragon from China. The Templars were approached, but preferred not to get involved. Her other allies really raised eyebrows, and Voormann found himself devoting much of his time to defending her. Richard Morris was a mundane, Lilly Kyle a Wiccen, and Lal Ram Singh an Indian Sentinel. The last two were widely regarded as posing an unacceptable threat to the Covenant, and it was all that Voormann could do to keep the Inquisition off her. He would probably have failed had not the Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression distracted many members of the Covenant, leading them to spend their time looking after their money rather than bothering Bains.

As Europe lurched once more toward war, Bains and her allies searched desperately for clues to Morsater's plans. The cult was covering its tracks better than it had in the past, and war had broken out again before they were able to do more than stop peripheral groups. In 1942, Bund picked up their first vital clue, and they were able to follow the trail to the heart of Siberia, where the inner circle of the cult was preparing to summon the Mad God into the world. The final confrontation took place in 1943. A frontal attack was impossible, so the group entered the cult's temple secretly, insinuating themselves into the final

ritual. At a critical moment, they struck at the cultists next to them, disrupting the ritual and sending it out of control. Taint began to flow into the central chamber, and Morsater tried to force an entrance through the small passage that had been opened.

The cultists had used a pattern of Tainted crystals to keep the world's Essence from smashing the gate closed, and they had protected it with magic. Bains, assisted by Kyle and defended by the others, broke the spell, allowing Morris to shatter the crystals. Essence poured into the area, consuming the Mad God as it was driven back through the gate and out of the world.

All of the Gifted had felt the final event, and Bains returned to a heroine's welcome among the Rosicrucians. She was immediately promoted to Tribune, but the event had exhausted her, and she has taken little part in Covenant politics since. With Morsater banished from the world and the center of its cult shattered, the Allies were able to win the war, and a period of relative calm followed.



Current Affairs

At the turn of the millennium, the Covenant faces many challenges, not the least of which is the approach of a Time of Reckoning. This is, however, not the only challenge, and not all Rosicrucians think that it is the most important.

The Reckoning

Most members of the Covenant believe that Toni Bains's actions averted a Reckoning in the middle of the twentieth century, but many have come to the conclusion that she did not postpone it by much, and that it will happen in the near future. A few regard the events that others see as signs of an impending Reckoning as the wake of the one that Bains averted. They point particularly to the growth in the numbers of the Gifted, arguing that this is a sign that a new Golden Age is dawning rather than a cause for concern. They also argue that Morsater was destroyed in the most recent confrontation, so that there is no more threat to be faced from that quarter.

This optimistic group is small, although it includes a few influential Rosicrucians. The overwhelming majority agree that a Reckoning is due any time now, but disagree as to what to do about it. Among those who are convinced that a Reckoning is coming, there are two main divisions. The optimists believe that the Reckoning can be averted, or at least postponed, while the pessimists believe it is inevitable. The optimists point to Bains's success in averting a Reckoning in 1943, and the most optimistic argue that her actions greatly weakened the Mad Gods, so that action now might be able to prevent a Reckoning altogether. Most are slightly less sanguine, accepting that it might only be possible to postpone the Reckoning, but pointing out that if they can keep postponing it, it will never happen.

The pessimists argue that Bains did not actually prevent a Reckoning, but that there was never going to be one in 1943 anyway, as the stars were not right. She did win an important battle, but it had no influence on the course of the war. They believe that the Reckoning is still to come, and that it will happen on schedule no matter what the Brotherhood does. A few



of the pessimists are truly fatalistic, claiming that one might as well live normally, because there is no way of knowing what sorts of actions will help to prepare for an event which is, by its very nature, completely unprecedented. Most, however, believe that something should be done to prepare for the Time, but disagree about what.

The disagreement about methods cuts across the distinction between optimists and pessimists. The radicals believe that the Covenant must work more closely with the other Gifted, patching up relations with the Wicce and the Sentinels. They argue that the Covenant does not have enough power itself to stand against a Reckoning, and that allies are important. They can point to the success of Bains's mixed group in the 1940s, and many of them put their ideas into practice. Some of the more extreme radicals even believe that some sort of alliance with the Combine may be justified—extreme measures for extreme situations.

The conservatives believe that the Covenant should concentrate on protecting itself and ensuring its survival through the coming disaster. They argue that it does not have enough resources to defend the rest of the world and that forming links with other Covenants will merely create more vulnerabilities.

A final difference concerns the attitude to mundanes. Some members, mainly in the House of St. John, think that the Covenant should make sure that its plans leave the mundanes in peace. Others disagree, including most of the conservative pessimists. They believe that the Covenant must leave the mundanes to their fate if it is to survive. Even some of the optimists take issue with some aspects of this position, claiming that if it is necessary to sacrifice the mundane population of a city or two to prevent a Reckoning, the price is worth paying.

The final faction could be called the cynics. Their own beliefs usually fall into one of the other categories, but they look at the squabbling that is going on and remark that the Covenant will not take any unified action until a Mad God turns up and tries to eat them. And probably not even then. Some of this group have given up pushing a particular agenda, and simply try to get the Covenant to agree on *something*. Any sort of united action would, in their opinion, be

better than the current dissipation in bickering and localized activity.

The Combine

The Covenant is also divided over what to do about the Combine. As mentioned above, some Rosicrucians think that some sort of alliance against the Time of Reckoning would be a good idea, but this is very much a minority opinion. Many of the Rosicrucians who do not believe that a Reckoning is approaching see the Combine as the greatest threat to the Brotherhood. They tend to think that they have another chance at Utopia, and remember how the Combine defeated them last time. Thus, they are in favor of direct action against it, to make sure that history does not repeat itself.

Even those who accept that a Time of Reckoning is imminent agree that some sort of policy for dealing with the Combine is essential. Some argue for a continuation of the current non-interference policy, on the grounds that it has served the Covenant well for centuries. Most, however, accept that the Combine has been acting more directly against the Covenant in recent years, and that they may have no choice but to enter a period of more actively hostile relations.

The Covenant is generally in agreement that Combine assaults on its interests must be resisted, and that the enemy must be convinced that the Rosicrucians are too difficult a target to be worth their while—virtually the only dissent comes from those who would seek an alliance with the Combine against the Reckoning. The differences surface when more extensive action is considered. Some argue that the Combine is a threat to all the Gifted, and that ignoring its assaults on others is a sign of culpable selfishness. Others claim that the Combine has been allowed to grow in power to the point where it is not clear that the Brotherhood could defeat it, and that they should attack now, before it is too late. Yet others claim that it has always been too powerful, but point to its forced acceptance of science in the seventeenth century as evidence that properly planned action could buy them more breathing room and freedom of action.

A lot of these discussions center on the Cabal of Psyche, the only group within the Combine that the Covenant has been able to positively identify. For the moment, the Grand Masters have decreed that the Cabal, and the rest of the Combine, be left completely alone unless they actually attack Covenant interests, but they have made it clear that this is a temporary injunction, designed purely to allow for a decision to be made.

Research

The Rosicrucian attitude to research is a matter for considerable debate within the Covenant. Since the fifteenth century, original discoveries have been downplayed in favor of unearthing the secrets of ancient masters. New discoveries have never been completely absent, but the Covenant as a whole has become highly conservative, locked into the preservation and development of the past.

Since the Combine was forced to accept science, that field has been pushing ahead with new knowledge, while magic has remained fixed in the past. The Eclectics have always been in favor of new research, as have the Parmenideans, but both groups were marginal until very recently. Further, their research interests tended to be somewhat irrelevant to most members of the Covenant: the Eclectics were interested in other Gifted Powers and in their relationship to

Magic, while the Parmenideans sought to reveal the underlying unity of science and magic. Since most Rosicrucians were pure magicians and did not believe in the underlying unity sought by the Parmenideans, these factions were largely ignored.

In recent years, however, the idea that the time is ripe for new concepts has been gaining strength in the mainstream of the Covenant. A number of factors have contributed to this. One is the cultural shift in the mundane world, with the emphasis moving from the glory of the past to the importance of originality. Another is the approach of the Time of Reckoning; many Rosicrucians believe that new tools are needed if humanity is to survive.

Finally, there is a purely pragmatic reason. A lot of Covenant members believe that the cost of searching for ancient knowledge is starting to outweigh the benefit, that it would be easier to try to make new discoveries. Their argument is that the obvious hoards of ancient knowledge have all been found, and that the remaining ones are likely to be small and hard to get at. Around 1400, there were still great gains to be made relatively easily if the lost secrets could be discovered, but now it is more prudent to invest the effort in original research.

As there is no need for a united Covenant policy on this subject, Rosicrucians tend to do their own thing. However, if a member's opinion differs from that of



his immediate superior, he is likely to find that his activities do not get the credit they deserve. This is leading to some tension and movement of personnel as people join together in groups with similar opinions. There is some danger that this will lead to the formation of real factions, and the Covenant really does not need to be further divided.

Internal Reform

Probably the biggest threat to the unity of the Covenant comes from the pressure for internal reform. For centuries, the hierarchy has been dominated by white males. The Daughters of Isis nearly left in the fourteenth century over this issue, and things have not got much better since. Similarly, although there are oriental Cohorts with lineages stretching back to the fifteenth century and African groups nearly as old, only those of European descent have found their way into the upper echelons of the Covenant. There have been occasional exceptions, but to a great extent these have only served to enforce conservatism, by allowing the hierarchy to insist that promotions are made entirely on merit—but that women and nonwhites simply have less merit, on average. Blatant racism and sexism are rare, but not unknown, especially among the older Rosicrucians. Much more common is a subtle bias, one that refuses to see the good in the actions of the minority groups, and thus refuses to promote them.

Two things have brought this issue close to boiling point recently. One is Toni Bains. Her actions against Morsater have provided an example of someone who was clearly as able as any member of the hierarchy, but who was kept to the lower ranks by their prejudice. The second is the recent massive increase in the numbers of the Gifted, an increase that has not been restricted to white males. Large numbers of young women and nonwhites have joined the Covenant, and these people have mostly been raised in environments in which prejudice is something to be fought. Unlike older recruits, they are not willing to work quietly. This does not endear them to the leadership, and thus keeps them from promotion. This is seen as further evidence of prejudice, which makes them even more confrontational, which in turn annoys the upper ranks even more.

So far this has been kept in check by the structures of the Covenant and the clear magical superiority of the upper ranks. As the new recruits learn more, however, they will expect to move up the ranks, and trouble could well follow if they do not.

A second reforming thread comes from the democratic tradition. The Covenant's leaders are appointed, rather than elected, and many of the younger members do not believe that this is an acceptable way to conduct a modern organization. Here, the main thing holding them in check is a practical problem. It is a little difficult to distribute manifestos and hold a secret ballot within a secret society, where most members are not supposed to know the identities of all other members. Every level of secrecy provides an opportunity for electoral fraud, and a barrier to the dissemination of the names and details of candidates. Most have decided to push for local democracy, with Cohorts electing their own leaders and Shrines their own Tribunes, but they are still unclear on how this could be enforced as a general policy.

Stability and Growth

This litany of disagreements may give the impression that the Covenant is about to splinter into a thousand pieces; that would be misleading. The Brotherhood is still a strong organization, and none of the disagreements threaten to pull it apart any time soon. Members debate the best approach to the Combine, the imminence of the Reckoning, and the relative merits of archaeology and discovery in a generally friendly fashion, while the occasional personality clashes merely create standard office politics.

Indeed, most Rosicrucians think that the current debates are a sign of strength, not weakness. It shows that the members of the Covenant are thinking about their situation, and that there is still enough variation for different solutions to appeal to different people. As long as the Brotherhood can continue to work as one while making its decisions, it will survive and become strong.

For most of the issues, this is fine. The Covenant has time to reach consensus and then act in that way. The Reckoning is different, and there is a danger that it will strike while the Rosicrucians are still trying to decide what to do.



Armageddon

This section details the actions of the Rosicrucians in the *Armageddon* roleplaying game. If the *Armageddon* Chronicle takes place before the Dark Apostle appears, things will most likely happen differently, as the Cast Members influence events.

Before Catastrophe

In 2003, the Rosicrucians learned that they were wrong about the Cabal of Psyche and began the slow task of patching up relations. This was largely complete before 2008. In 2005, the Council severed all links with the Templars, giving no reason. A number of Rosicrucians left the Covenant or retired from active service in protest, including one Duke.

The War

The Rosicrucians were caught by surprise by the Munich Massacre and lost a number of members. Immediately aware of its significance, and joined the Alliance almost immediately. The Covenant immediately started preparing for the assaults that it was sure were to come, readying its members to move out of Europe and the other danger zones. They also offered assistance to other Covenants and governments, as the Marchers and Exoterics suddenly found themselves with immense internal influence.

In 2011, as the War began, the Rosicrucians learned that demons had been admitted to the Alliance. They left immediately. Vitalinus explained to the Alliance's leaders that the Rosicrucians had almost been destroyed by demons, and it would not have anything to do with them or their ilk.

As the Army of Revelations swept across the world, the Rosicrucians tried to stem the tide, but were forced to fall back. There were many casualties, but hardly any turncoats. Only six members worldwide turned to Leviathan, and all of them have been killed and unraveled.

2017

In 2017, the Rosicrucians are deeply involved in the War against the Church of Revelations. Their overall aim is to defeat Leviathan while preserving the Covenant. It is this aim that led them to leave the Alliance, as they do not believe that they can preserve the Brotherhood if they work with demons. This double aim does affect their strategy, but not as strongly as might have been feared. The Covenant is not aiming to increase its power in the *Armageddon* world, merely to survive. Thus, it is willing to take actions that might weaken it, but not actions that destroy it.

At the moment, the Covenant is fighting a defensive war, desperately trying to hold the Army of Revelations back. It has pulled out of most of the

world, concentrating its forces in Europe and North America rather than trying to fight on all fronts. The overwhelming majority of Rosicrucians are stationed in the Free World.

The second main activity of the Covenant is information gathering. The Council does not believe that Leviathan can be defeated in a simple fight, although many battles are necessary to buy time. Rather, they must learn its weakness so that it can be driven out of the world again. Covenant members devoted to this purpose often work with the Underground in areas dominated by the Church, trying to learn as much as possible about Leviathan and its servants.

Finally, the Inquisition has widened its scope of operations, and seeking out servants of Leviathan in the Free World, particularly those in positions of power. While they do not neglect their monitoring of the Covenant, their external checks are regarded as more important, because it is generally safe to assume that Rosicrucians are not corrupt, while this is unfortunately not true of those outside the Covenant. The Inquisition has proved to be very good at finding Leviathan's agents and followers. They have, after all, had six centuries of practice.

The Covenant is much more unified than it was before the End Times began. A major threat from a Mad God was the ideal way to draw them together. The Archaic Alliance has grown significantly in importance as the presence of the Old Gods makes itself felt, while the Marchers now count almost the entire Covenant among their members. Everyone is agreed that Leviathan must be defeated and that great resources must be devoted to the struggle. There are still some disputes, but they are mainly about details of strategy.

The relations between the Covenant and other organizations fighting Leviathan are not easy. The Covenant left the Alliance rather than work with demons, but tries to maintain some contacts with it. It is not unusual for a Rosicrucian to be attached to an Alliance cell, as long as there are no demons within it. The Rosicrucian is not, however, a member of the cell, as the orders might be coming from a demon. This makes the relationship rather awkward, but neither group wishes to alienate the other.

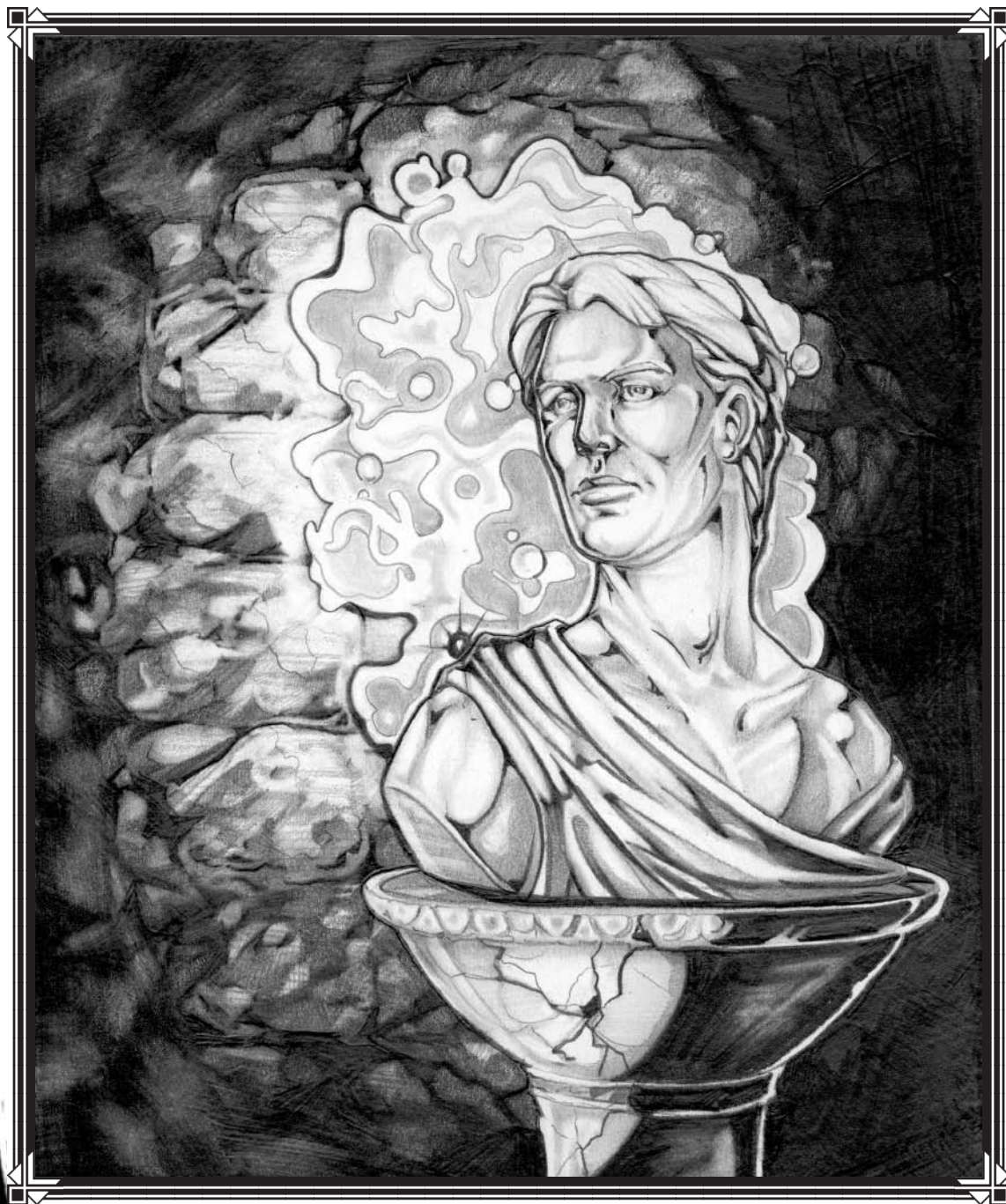
The Infernal Legions are, of course, still enemies, although Rosicrucians accept that they are not the most immediate problem. The Heavenly Host and the Watchers regard the Rosicrucians with some suspicion, because the Wards of Heaven are still capable of binding them. The Heavenly Host suffers from this more, probably due to wounded pride, but the Watchers also keep their distance. On the other side, the Rosicrucians are willing to keep their distance from the Nephelim; their immunity to magic makes the Brotherhood nervous.

Relations with the Pantheons vary. Members of the Archaic Alliance tend to get on well with them, while other Rosicrucians are inclined to distrust beings with that sort of power. The Covenant does number a few Inheritors and Avatars among its members, mainly those with an Aspect of Magic. However, such members are very rare, and the Brotherhood remains a predominantly human organization.

The Brotherhood works most closely with the mundanes, while staying out of their direct chains of command. Thus, a number of Rosicrucians are "consultants" with SOTF-COM, and members of the Covenant serve similar roles in Europe.



Chapter Five: Stories



This chapter contains advice on running Stories involving the Rosicrucians and Story seeds to spark the Chronicler's imagination. Players should check with their Chronicler before reading this chapter—there may be things here she wants to keep secret, at least for now.

The Rosicrucians as Antagonists

If none of the players have chosen Rosicrucian characters, a Chronicler could use the Covenant as antagonists. The Rosicrucians fulfill this role very well, for two reasons. They are not immediately pleasant and nice, meaning that they can easily inspire hostility, but they are also not corrupt, self-serving, or evil, making any conflict with them rather more complex than with, say, the servants of a Mad God.

If the players are predominantly Wicce and Cabal of Psyche, an obvious lead-in exists. In a Chronicle where most Cast Members are members of the Cabal, the Rosicrucians could even be the main villains. The ideal solution would be to convince the Brotherhood that the Cabal is not part of the Combine, then unite to find out and defeat whoever was responsible for the disinformation. However, the Rosicrucians will not inspire sympathy, so the Cast Members may not want to go for the ideal solution. If they become gung-ho, killing any Rosicrucians they find, make sure that they make a serious mistake, wipe out some Wicce, and only realize what has happened afterwards. That should give them some sympathy for the Brotherhood's predicament.

A Wicce-centered Chronicle should probably treat the Rosicrucians more subtly. The two Covenants were friendly at one point, and they have a lot in common, for all their differences. A rivalry could be set up between a Wiccen coven and Rosicrucian cohort, with the Wicce taking action to prevent the corporate allies of the Rosicrucians from despoiling the environment. As far as possible, the two groups should be kept from open violence. Later, the Chronicler could run a story in which they have to cooperate in order to defeat some far greater threat. They can, and probably should, go back to rivalry afterwards.

For the other Covenants, the Rosicrucians are unlikely to play a major role in a Chronicle. However, they still make good antagonists. The members of the Covenant tend to be rather arrogant, convinced that their powers are the best. One possibility is to have a group of Rosicrucians save the Cast Members when they have got in over their heads, and then treat them so condescendingly that they use up all the gratitude they are owed. If the Cast Members later have the opportunity to save the Rosicrucians, they may be reluctant. Failure to do so should have serious consequences, while saving them grants the satisfaction of seeing the Rosicrucians rather less self-satisfied than normal. This works best if the Rosicrucian characters show up more than once in the Chronicle before they need saving, patronizing the Cast Members every time.

Rosicrucians can also be the opposition in a much simpler way. They could be competing with the Cast Members for a Place of Power or for an ancient artifact. A Rosicrucian-influenced business could be undertaking a project that the Cast Members want to stop. In these sorts of cases, the Rosicrucians are simply opponents with mystical power, but without the obvious evil that would license the Cast Members to go in with all guns blazing. The Rosicrucians also avoid such crude methods unless they are provoked.

Finally, one of the rare corrupt Rosicrucians would make an excellent bad guy. The Cast Members would be able to track down an evil magician and get all their worst stereotypes of the Rosicrucians confirmed. At the climax, they should have the chance to defeat the villain, but if they fail, they are saved by the arrival of the Rosicrucian Inquisition—whom they probably did not expect. Even if they have succeeded, they may initially think that it will be difficult to get back out of the evil sorcerer's lair, only to find that the Rosicrucian Inquisition were on the way in and have provided an easy escape route. This allows the Chronicler to finish the Story at the climax without having to resort to the cliché of "the evil sorcerer is dead and all his minions just disappear." It also allows the Cast Members to learn that the Rosicrucians would have dealt with the problem themselves, without taking away their victory.

Rosicrucians in a Mixed Group

In most Chronicles, only some of the Cast Members will be Rosicrucians. This is fine. Toni Bains saved the world with the aid of a mixed group, so there is a strong element within the Covenant that believes that such cooperation is a good thing. In such a situation, the Chronicler can use most of the Story ideas in this chapter, as long as she bears a few things in mind.

Other Rosicrucians may be used as antagonists, because not all of them approve of mixed groups. However, direct assaults should be out of the question. The Rosicrucian Cast Members cannot help against them and, realistically, they would have to turn against the others if they found out. This can be a very good thing, as it forces the players to think of solutions that do not involve shooting anything.

Chroniclers can also use most of the Rosicrucian plot-lines, as long as they bear in mind that the other Cast Members will not be allowed to learn the secrets of the Covenant. Make sure that the other Covenants get an equal share of the limelight or their players are likely to start feeling neglected. Such stories could lead to the Cast Members being favored allies of the Brotherhood, and might even put them in the position of grand peacemakers, drawing all the major Covenants together to face the Reckoning.

There is one obvious major problem with mixed groups. What if people want to play both Rosicrucians and members of the Cabal of Psyche? One possibility is to simply forbid it. This may not be a viable option if the players have their hearts set on the character concepts in question. Chroniclers can also try to finesse the issue. Certain elements of the Rosicrucians do have contacts with the Cabal; they just do not realize that they do. Thus, the Cabal character would have to keep her real affiliation secret from the Rosicrucian, at least until she has proved herself to the extent that it is obvious that she is not a member of the Combine. If this route is taken, relations between the two Covenants are likely to become a dominant theme of the Chronicle once the player Rosicrucians have learned their colleague's true loyalties. They will almost certainly want to con-

vince the hierarchy of its mistake, and that will not be easy. Since it is almost inevitable that the truth will come out at some point, such a character combination should only be allowed if the Chronicler is prepared for the Chronicle to take such a turn. Of course, if the Chronicler anticipates that the Chronicle will be short-lived, this is less of a problem.

Rosicrucian Stories

Whatever the composition of the party, two main classes of Rosicrucian Story exist: the hunt for past knowledge, and Covenant politics. The second is far more complex, but tends to sideline non-Rosicrucian characters more. Most Gifted are interested in recovering past knowledge, and this could even lead to interesting and fun tensions within the group as they have to decide whom to tell what they have learned.

Quests for Hidden Lore

These sorts of stories are very easy to write, although it is hard to avoid cliché. To a certain extent, it is not necessary. Clichéd stories are usually fun to play, especially if they are not taken too seriously. However, care should be taken to avoid running nothing but clichéd stories.

Quests for knowledge can be made more interesting in a number of ways. One method is to tie the knowledge that is sought firmly into the background of the Chronicle. Thus, looking for the lost texts of Roger Bacon is less of a cliché than looking for some McGuffin that seems to have come out of nowhere to motivate the current story.

Another way to spice things up is to change the structure of the Story. Usually, the effort comes when trying to find the knowledge. After it has been unearthed, everything is easy. There are a number of ways to shift the emphasis of the story. Make the information hard to understand, or an artifact hard to use. Subsequent stories would then involve further research. Of course, Chroniclers should avoid having the "Quest for the Instruction Book," so the research should not be so simple. The instructions could be known, but might take something for granted, something that was obvious when the item was made, but is no longer. For example, in a culture where only

women wove cloth, a magical loom might only work for women, but have no indication of this, as it was taken to be obvious that the person using it would not be a man. Alternatively, the instructions might depend on local conditions, requiring the Cast Members to find out what those conditions are now.

Chroniclers can also make the information very easy to use, and the knowledge very powerful, then make the characters fight to hold on to it. The sudden appearance of a new, powerful item or technique may have political repercussions, from demands that it be handed over to "the proper authorities," to theft attempts, to war between two factions over it. This would be intensified further if one group thought that they were the only ones to know a given secret. Thus, if a Rosicrucian discovered another record of the Keys of Solomon, the Templars would take some sort of drastic action.

Another option is to make the information dangerous, but not useful. For example, if the Cast Members learn that another Covenant is descended from a group that was corrupted by a Mad God, what do they do? Releasing the information will almost certainly result in a war with that group, but sitting on it might allow a corrupted organization to consolidate its power.

To really cause the Cast Members problems, the information could be both dangerous and useful. Thus, suppose that they learned that all Inspired Powers were actually the work of a powerful spirit, and that there were rituals that would allow a Magician to gain access to them. (This is not official *WitchCraft* background.) It would be very useful to have access to such powers, but telling the Inspired that, actually, they had been conned by a spirit and had no direct link to the Creator would not go down well. The Cast Members could bury the information again, but that would mean they would not be able to get at the power.

Covenant Politics

The Rosicrucians are a highly politicized Covenant. The most obvious outlet for this is in the competition for higher ranks within the Brotherhood. As the criteria for promotion are not well known, all try to make sure that those in the position to choose regard them as suitable leadership material, indeed more suitable than other Rosicrucians at the same level.

This is only the simplest level, however. Rosicrucians can also try to increase their informal status without looking for promotion above Equestrian rank. Such promotions bring duties, while informal respect can give much of the power of official rank. Many members also want to promote the beliefs of their Colleges, and there is some rivalry between Shrines.

This complexity is all very well, but how can the Chronicler convert it into entertaining stories? The first step is to get the Cast Members involved in politics by having them take a stand on the various issues. Then, elements of the Covenant can be introduced who take a different position and encourage the Cast Members to work to change their policies. It is possible to simply roleplay out all the political negotiations and wheeler-dealing around a decision, and some groups enjoy this a great deal. It is also possible to motivate Stories as a favor for another Rosicrucian, one which encourages them to support a Cast Member on some crucial issue. Such additional sources of motivation can be very useful; any hook into a story becomes boring if overused.

Where there is politics, there are attempts at manipulation. The Cast Members are likely to be manipulated before they have the knowledge or influence to manipulate anyone else. Thus, they might be sent on missions which, at first sight, seem rather pointless. However, it becomes clear that they serve the political ends of some group within the Covenant, either directly or by neutralizing some internal opposition. The Cast Members might not agree with the ends that they have been made to serve, in which case they should manipulate back to redress the balance.

The Covenant's internal politics are a good way to take a break from world-shaking plots. The results are likely to have great significance for the Cast Members, but not for most other people. However, given the subjects that Rosicrucians debate, the world-shaking plots are always in the background. Thus, after a few stories in which the Cast fend off some harbinger of the Reckoning, a Chronicler could run a few stories in which they use the experience to build support within the Covenant for a united response to the coming crisis. The Cast is still doing something useful, but it is not directly involved in saving the world.

Rosicrucian Chronicles

If all or most of the Cast are Rosicrucians, it is possible to structure an entire Chronicle around a theme related to the Covenant. This section gives some sketched outlines of ways to do just that. Note that these are sketches of entire Chronicles, and thus the scale of the final outcome is generally spectacular.

The Sere Rose

The Sere Rose has been a thorn in the side of the Brotherhood for centuries. The two Covenants cannot live together forever, and the time has come for the final showdown. The Sere Rose start to make more overt moves against the Rosicrucians, and some of its initial attacks affect the Cast. The first contact should be indirect, with the Sere Rose attacking the Cast's friends, so that by the time they are faced directly, the Cast has some idea of who the enemies are and what is at stake.

The next step is the crisis point. The Cast should find themselves in a position where they can tip the balance of the battle between the two Covenants one way or another. This probably means that they have gained important information about the Dark Covenant's plans and can gather the resources needed to inflict a serious defeat. Of course, other members of the Covenant need not trust the information, thus forcing the Cast to rely on their own resources. The climactic confrontation is one that the Cast could win or lose, and the rest of the Chronicle would be shaped by that.

If they win, the Sere Rose is on the defensive, and the Cast have the opportunity to press their advantage. They should have seen enough to encourage them to go on the offensive, and have enough information to make it practical. In this phase, they might encounter Walter de Ros himself, although they should not come into direct conflict until the climax of the whole Chronicle. If the Cast has done well, their victory in the final scene should be guaranteed, although their survival should not. After all, dying in the final defeat of an ancient evil is a very heroic way to go.

If, however, the Cast Members lose the central confrontation, the Rosicrucians goes on the defensive. The Chronicle turns into a desperate attempt to salvage as much as possible in the face of concerted attacks from evil sorcerers. The climax of the Chronicle would be a final battle in which the Brotherhood risks destruction, but in which it has the chance to weaken the Sere Rose and buy enough time for recovery. Victory should not be guaranteed, survival even less so. However, a heroic death defending the evacuation of the last members of the Covenant is a fine way for a character to leave play.

The Cabal of Psyche

The Rosicrucians are seriously wrong about the Cabal, and the situation is a tragedy in the making. This theme should only be used if the Chronicler has a great deal of confidence in the players' role-playing, as it is essential that they act as if they think that the Cabal is the enemy, at least to start with. The easiest way to start is with a number of genuine Combine assaults on the Covenant, which provoke the hierarchy into overt action. Sollan then turns a great deal of this action against the Cabal. If the Cast Members were targeted by the initial Combine attacks, they should be keen to help in the counteroffensive.

The Cast should be given the opportunity to slaughter a few innocent Seers, to give them something to feel guilty about later. They should also be given the chance to learn that the Cabal is not part of the Combine. A good way to drop the first hint is to have a Cabal group that the Cast is monitoring be attacked by forces that they know are part of the Combine. This is not conclusive; it might be an internal feud or a disciplinary measure. It is, however, highly suggestive. If the Cast investigate further, they might learn that the Covenant already has extensive contacts with the Cabal through the Pythagoreans, and that there has been much less damage than would be expected if the contacts were with the Combine. Indeed, some Cast Members might be allied with (non-player) Seers who are actually part of the Cabal, and learning that would provide further indications that the Rosicrucians are wrong.

The main investigation then turns to the question of who is responsible for deceiving the Covenant. The initial evidence was too strong to be a mere mistake, so it must have been planted. The Sere Rose might be responsible, or the Combine itself might have planted the information to stir up trouble. Whoever the Chronicler decides is responsible, the Cast should be able to secure firm evidence of the deception. This is the crucial point—make sure that they can obtain varying amounts of evidence, depending on how well they do.

If they have a lot of strong evidence, Sollan and the hierarchy are convinced, and the Covenant turns its effort to patching up relations with the Cabal and seeking vengeance on the perpetrators, probably with the Cabal's willing help. As the evidence weakens, they have more of a fight on their hands to convince people. If they have so little concrete evidence that no one is convinced, the Cast have to watch their Covenant try to destroy another group of Gifted, while the Combine sits back and laughs. The Cast Members should be convinced of the Cabal's innocence, putting them in a very difficult situation.

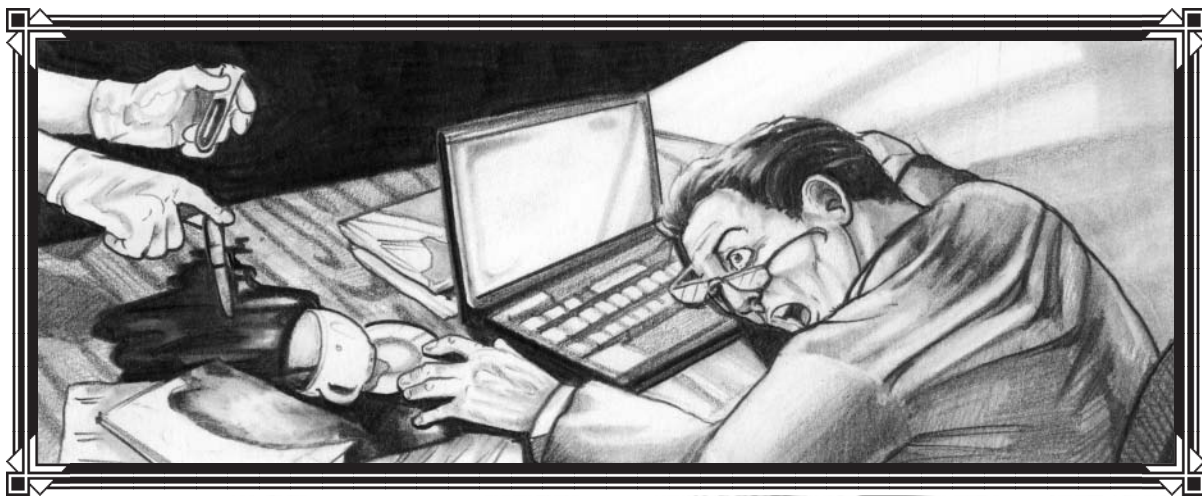
As attacks on the Cabal progress, evidence that they are not part of the Combine begins to mount up. If the Cast has kept up the pressure and has not left the Covenant in disgust, they may be able to stop the war sooner rather than later. Otherwise, it finally ends after great slaughter on both sides, leaving both Covenants greatly weakened. This may occur just in time for *Armageddon*, if desired.

If peace is made early, the Cast Members are able to participate in destroying the people responsible for the deception. This should be a relatively small group, not the entire Combine or Sere Rose, in order to make their destruction plausible as merely a part of a Chronicle. The climax here sees the destruction of a threat, and the two Covenants almost certainly on friendly terms, if not positively allied. There is nothing like a common enemy to encourage people to make up.

The Combine

While the Combine is clearly an enemy of the Covenant, the first part of a Chronicle centering around them would be largely concerned with internal politics, because of the decree of the Council forbidding proactive moves. In addition, because the Covenant believes that the Cabal of Psyche is an important part of the Combine, such a Chronicle is likely to involve elements of the Cabal Chronicle described above. However, it is possible to minimize this by giving the Cast Members fairly clear targets within the Combine to distract their attention from the Cabal. As long as they have in-character reasons not to attack the Cabal, most players should be happy to concentrate on the real enemy.

The first Stories should involve Combine attacks on the Rosicrucians, leaving enough evidence for the Cast Members to strike back after defending themselves. This evidence should be of the kind that is not time dependent, because they immediately are for-





bidden to do anything by their superiors. Being players, they doubtless do it anyway. They get caught by the Rosicrucians and severely told off. Make it clear to them that they do not want to repeat the experience, and ask if they really want to fight both the Combine and their own Covenant.

This should encourage them to get involved in Covenant politics, trying to get the decree lifted and to convince other members of the Covenant to assist them in their attacks. This could involve all kinds of activities, as described earlier. They are also likely to want to watch the Combine, and learn as much as they can without quite breaking the rules set by the Brotherhood. By the end of this phase, they ideally have a great deal of information, and permission and support from the Rosicrucian hierarchy.

The final segment is a furious assault on the Combine. They are unlikely to completely destroy it, but if they have done the earlier parts right they may well do a great deal of damage. Of course, if they have done the earlier bits wrong, they walk straight into a trap and almost certainly die. The details of this part depend on what the Chronicler has determined to be the truth about the Combine, but should lead up to a climax wherein the characters can either win or die heroically, or maybe both.

The Combine does not tend to make use of Gifted powers, but attempts to use such powers against them often fail, and the Rosicrucians do not really understand why. Further, the Combine rarely acts directly; it seems to prefer to work through mundane agencies, so that its targets find themselves charged with crimes, investigated for tax fraud, and so on. It does not seem too bothered if the Gifted keep to themselves, and it is possible to hide from it. The Combine does seem to act if the Gifted try to gain significant influence over the mundane world, as when it acted to break the Rosicrucian Enlightenment. Thus, the Combine's mode of operations makes the Covenant's current policy of non-engagement fairly easy to maintain—as long as the Rosicrucians maintain a low profile, the Combine generally leaves them alone. At least, that has been the case so far.

The Wicce

Of the opponent-centered Chronicles, the Wicce Chronicle is the most subtle. Relations between the two Covenants teeter between distant and hostile, always with the memory that they started off so much better. As both Covenants specialize in Magic, they have a lot in common, and an alliance between them would strengthen the hand of the Gifted as the Reckoning approaches.

The most likely aim for such a Chronicle is for the two Covenants to be on good terms with one another, a goal possibly harder to achieve than that of wiping the Wicce out. The Chronicle would begin with Stories which give the Cast Members an opportunity to see the Wicce in a positive light. With luck, these events also give the Wicce the chance to see the Rosicrucians in a positive light, but that really depends on the players. If the Cast Members manage to completely alienate the Wicce at this point, it might be best to change the focus of the Chronicle, unless playing out a developing war between the Covenants is desired.

The next step is to provide a powerful enemy that the Rosicrucians need Wiccen help to defeat. This gives the Cast Members the chance to acquire genuine allies in the other Covenant, and to settle their positive opinion of the Wicce. The Cast Members should survive the final attack on the common enemy, but if they have done badly, the Wicce may sacrifice themselves to give the Cast Members time to escape. This results in Rosicrucians with a very positive attitude to the Wicce, but reinforces Wiccen suspicions of the Brotherhood, as many think that they always intended their Wiccen allies to die. Alternatively, of course, the Cast Members could sacrifice themselves for the Wicce, in which case, as long as there are some survivors, the Wicce look on the Rosicrucians even more favorably.

The Cast Members should then be allowed some time to build regular relations with a number of Wicce, as the first steps toward a more general cooperative attitude. At this point they should face internal opposition from Rosicrucians who think that the Wicce are dangerous and a threat. Simultaneously, similar concerns arise in the other Covenant. The

emphasis now shifts to politics, as the Cast Members do not want to break off relations with their allies. What is worse, they have to work the politics on both sides. Success brings the Covenants much more closely together, while failure in both would lead to the preservation of the status quo. Success in one and failure in the other, however, would probably lead to a worse situation, as friendly overtures are coldly rebuffed. As with the Cabal plot, the possibility that the Cast Members would leave their Covenant is a real one, and might make a good ending if they fail to convince the Rosicrucian hierarchy to be friendly.

The Reckoning

There are two phases to a Chronicle based around the Reckoning: first, gathering evidence that it really is about to happen and convincing the Covenant hierarchy of this, and second, actually doing something about it. These two phases are likely to be radically different in tone and content.

The first phase is mainly concerned with investigation and politics. The Cast Members could turn up ancient prophecies while searching for lost lore, and then notice that some of the earlier parts fulfilled. They could also come across general evidence of a growth in supernatural activities. This might include cults that believe in the approach of the Reckoning and claim to have prophecies to that effect. The Chronicler could even start giving the Cast prophetic dreams and visions.

This requires some kind of decision about prophecy. It is vital that the prophecies be fulfilled, because that is what gives the predictions of Reckoning their credibility. On the other hand, the players' free will should not be taken away. Some prophecies can be fulfilled in such a way that the Cast Members cannot intervene, but this does not always work, and may make them feel helpless anyway—if all the prophesied events take place on the other side of the world, what can they do?

For important prophecies, the Chronicler should keep them vague and have two or three ways in which they could be fulfilled, one which is bad for the Cast Members and to be used if they fail, and one which is at worst neutral, the result of success. The players may well wonder whether everything has been fixed in advance, and their characters should



certainly be wondering how much free will they have, but if several Stories are run around prophecies, they should notice a correlation between the characters doing well and positive fulfillment, and the characters messing up and negative fulfillment.

In any event, the final prophecy in the series should be a prophecy of the coming of a Time of Reckoning, with attendant disasters and trouble. There should be no reference to what happens next, especially if plans exist to continue the Chronicle into the *Armageddon* setting.

As the fulfilled prophecies mount up, the characters get more evidence to present to the hierarchy. They should have a sense of racing against time, to get the Covenant to act before it is too late, and thus should be encouraged to try to win support as soon as possible, even before the evidence is truly convincing. Chroniclers can make some of the later prophecies very hard to turn to good without the aid of a significant number of powerful Rosicrucians, thus giving the Cast Members a more immediate motivation to get support.

Once they have convinced the hierarchy, the Chronicle switches to trying to do something about the Reckoning. The prophecies make it seem inevitable, but they may suggest ways in which its impact, at least on the Brotherhood, could be lessened. The details are up to each Chronicler, but if *Armageddon* is to be used, they might include the discovery that it would be an excellent idea to get all Rosicrucians out of Munich.

Alternatively, a Chronicler may decide that the Cast Members could actually prevent, or at least delay, the Reckoning. In this case, definitely leave the possibility of failure, so the exact form the Reckoning will take, if it is not prevented, must be decided. If the characters do succeed in such a Chronicle, they have saved the world, but probably do not get any credit for it outside the Brotherhood. Even within the Covenant, some people wonder whether the Reckoning really was about to happen. The Cast Members, however, should know that they have definitely saved the day.

Rosicrucian Recruits

A possible Pre-Heroic Chronicle (see *WitchCraft*, p. 292) sets the Cast Members as potential recruits to the Covenant. This works best if there are a small number of players, and would even work well with a single player. The standard Rosicrucian recruitment procedure is described in Chapter Two: Covenant, and provides the general structure for this kind of Chronicle.

However, for the Chronicle to be fun things need to go a little less smoothly than normal. Get the Cast Members involved with some very low-key occult events, just enough to draw the Covenant's attention. Then have the recruiter try to draw them in, while the low-key events get more serious. The Rosicrucian can serve as a useful mentor and *deus ex machina*, but make sure that he does not realize just how serious things are getting. Finally, he sets up the test experience, and the events that the Cast Members were already involved with intervene, making it rather more dramatic than expected. If they survive, they are invited to join the Brotherhood and start off with quite a reputation.

Suitable candidates for low-key occult events would be isolated individuals or most supernatural types. A single ghost could be quite a challenge for Pre-Heroic characters, as could be a Vampyre or lone Magician. The Chronicler should be able to prevent effective action by exploiting the Cast Members' ignorance. The players probably have a better idea of how to tackle these threats than their characters do, so do not be afraid to veto actions that the characters could not have planned or undertaken.

The first Story should cover the characters' initial encounter with the antagonist, and they should also be introduced to the Rosicrucian recruiter. Further stories should be structured around attempts by the antagonist to gain power, so that it will, almost certainly, be stronger by the climax, but just how much stronger depends on how well the players do. The Rosicrucian should be very reluctant to intervene in person, partly because he is not entirely convinced that the threat is real, and partly because he has more important things to do. He may even disguise the final test as an expedition to deal with the threat the characters have been investigating.

If he does, he is surprised when the real threat shows up. If the characters have been successful in earlier stories, the antagonist is not very powerful, and they know quite a lot about how to defeat it. Thus, they may be able to win before the reinforcements arrive. If they have not done so well, they may need to have their lives saved. This, of course, affects their reception within the Covenant.

The Chronicle should end with the initiation rituals, although a new Chronicle may be started with the characters as full members of the Covenant. There will, inevitably, be a significant discontinuity here, allowing players to join or leave as their lives dictate.

Toni Bains

This is less of an overall theme than a recurring thread, which could be worked into Chronicles with many other themes. Toni Bains is a great hero within the Covenant, but hardly anyone has seen her since her defeat of Morsater. It is clear that the experience affected her strongly, as would be expected, and there is a lot of speculation about just how it affected her.

The first Stories in this thread would revolve around the rumors and should not involve Toni Bains herself. Some ideas are presented below.

A group of Rosicrucians decide that Bains had some mystic experience when facing the Mad God, and is now Inspired as well as a magician. They devote themselves to strange practices in an attempt to replicate this, and one or two may even become corrupted. Tracking down the source of the rumor about Bains proves to be impossible.

A rumor spreads through the Covenant that Bains was Tainted in the final encounter and has been fighting it ever since. Some groups use this as a reason not to act against the Mad Gods directly. This story is best run if the Cast Members are in conflict with the cult of a Mad God, because then they will want the Covenant to help them.

The Cast Members are sent on some odd expeditions to recover things that seem to have no particular importance. After they are sent to Siberia, they begin to pick up hints that they are working for Bains through some intermediary.

The Cast Members build good relations with members of another Covenant involved in the defeat of Morsater. They hear a different version of the showdown with Morsater, one which gives Bains a much less prominent role.

Chroniclers must decide the truth about Bains's condition, but by the time the Cast Members encounter her, they should have heard lots of conflicting rumors and have a strong sense of just how important she is to the Covenant's mythology. Exactly how events unfold after they meet her depends on what the truth is. She could lead them in a desperate mission to stop Morsater once again, or they could find themselves fighting against the monster that Taint has turned her into—albeit a monster in which Bains's soul still fights for control.

The Rosicrucian Schism

There are many tensions within the Covenant. In the official background, none of them are nearly strong enough to provoke a schism, but things may be different in any given Chronicle. It is probably best to increase them only to the verge of schism, so that the Cast Members find themselves in a Covenant where enemies are still bound by the same structures. In most of the tensions, both sides of the debate have something going for them, and this should be retained, as it will make for better roleplaying.

The Cast Members may react to the tensions in a number of ways. The most obvious, and probably the best from a Chronicler's viewpoint, is for them to try to resolve the tensions and keep the Covenant together. This allows the Chronicler to throw lots of Stories at the players and avoid ever having clear heroes and villains. Of course, there are occasional villains: outside agencies try to stir up problems and exacerbate the existing tensions. However, there should be very few villains within the Covenant, and neither side should actually want to split the Covenant; both should see it as regrettable, but possibly necessary.

The Cast Members may also pick sides, in which case the Chronicle becomes a matter of trying to grab as many resources as possible for your side, so that when the split finally comes, the Cast's faction is the stronger. This has to be done carefully, of course,

because doing it too blatantly provokes the split rather earlier than the Cast might like. The other faction, of course, is doing the same thing, so the Cast Members also have to defend the resources that they do have.

The two approaches could both figure in the same Chronicle. The Cast Members could start by trying to heal the breach, but fail and be forced to pick a side. Alternatively, they could start on one side, but come to see that it would be far better for the Covenant to remain united, and thus change to trying to patch relations up.

The Exoterics

As the Exoterics want to make waves in the mundane world, they make a good focus for a Chronicle. There are two main groups within the Exoterics: those who merely want the Gifted to be accepted in the world and publicly known, and those who want them to rule the world.

Those who only want publicity work well as allies and antagonists. Their argument—that secrecy can never be maintained indefinitely, so it is much better to go public on one's own terms—is quite a strong one. On the other hand, it may be argued that the time is not yet right. If Chroniclers want to focus on this College, give the Cast Members an early opportunity to form their own opinions on the subject, then let them work on whichever side they choose.

No Exoterics are going to take out adverts in the national press announcing their existence. Instead, they run evening classes on the occult, at which some truths are revealed. Similarly, they campaign for tolerant treatment of extremely fringe religions and insist that reports of ghosts be taken seriously. They constantly walk a fine line between being so subtle as to be ineffective and so blatant as to bring the wrath of the Covenant down on their heads. No matter which side the characters are on, they have to handle this balancing act.

The Exoterics who want to rule the world are probably better as villains. However, they do not, on the whole, want to be evil dictators. Most of them really do believe that the Gifted could do a better job of running the world than the mundanes. Thus, the Cast Members might well find themselves in this faction almost by accident, as they work to stop the mundanes causing trouble for themselves.

If the Exoterics are used as antagonists, emphasize the sinister nature of their plans. Let the characters run across the strings by which one Rosicrucian is controlling some aspect of the mundane world, then trace them back. As long as she is not being blatantly evil or risking the exposure of the Covenant, the hierarchy will not touch her. The Cast could act independently, but that might get them into trouble for attacking a fellow Rosicrucian. It would probably be better to gather more information so that they can make a case that her actions are dangerous for the Covenant as a whole.

If a Chronicler wants to have the Cast Members on the side of the world conquerors, it is best to do things slowly. Have their plans stymied by mundane intervention, and provide ways for them to get influence over the relevant mundane authorities. This influence naturally leads to further influence, especially if it is allowed to be a fairly effective way to achieve their ends. Then have them approached by a member of the Exoterics and invited to join the group of Rosicrucians who are pulling the strings of the world. Their influence provides the group with a useful boost, and the group's influence is also useful to them.

If feeling evil, a Chronicler can combine the two ideas. It is fairly likely that the Cast Members will not realize that they have become exactly like their enemy before they are approached by her allies. After all, the Cast Members want the influence for purely altruistic reasons, not for personal aggrandizement.

The Parmenideans

In the official *WitchCraft* background, the Parmenideans are wrong. There is no deep connection between science and magic, and the two will be forever apart. However, this need not be the case in every Chronicle. The Parmenideans could make a vital breakthrough, and, of course, immediately share it with the rest of the Covenant.

The Chronicle would be concerned with handling the consequences of the discovery, and would lead to a variant world. The simplest breakthrough would allow people to boost the effectiveness of technological devices with Essence. Thus, the Gifted could run their cars on pure Essence and speed up their com-

puters in an emergency. This would increase the reliance on technology among the Rosicrucians, and should probably be mediated through a set of new Invocations.

These Invocations would be the target of interventions from a number of different groups. The Wicce would not like them at all, on philosophical grounds. The Combine would be even more violently opposed; any link between technology and magic would seriously undermine their plans. The True Immortals would be very curious, seeing a possible link with their ancient technology.

A more radical breakthrough would be the discovery of a means of mass-producing items charged with Essence and capable of casting Invocations. This would quickly lead to a very different world, so be sure that is acceptable before starting the process. Allow only one kind of device at first, and have researchers discover new ones very slowly. The Combine would come down even harder on this than on the previous discovery, providing plenty of opportunity for conflict.

Finally, anything that can be done for real can also be faked. The Parmenideans might think that they have made a breakthrough, but just need to iron out a few last problems. The rumors spread, and external groups react in much the same way as they would to rumors of the truth. Of course, in this case there is no breakthrough, and the Cast Members simply are involved in trying to limit the damage caused by the rumors.

The House of St. John

For a rather unusual Chronicle, Chroniclers could have all the Cast Members be members of the House of St. John. They would spend their time doing good works, and there would be very little combat. Indeed, a whole Chronicle might pass without a single fatality or illegal action.

Of course, tension is necessary if a Chronicle is to be exciting, but this can be provided in many ways. Rescuing people from massive floods, or helping them to evacuate ahead of a forest fire, or trying to control an erupting volcano long enough for people to get out of the town on its slopes, are all activities full of tension and opposition, even if the opposition is inanimate.

It is still possible to provide tension in long-term disaster relief. As disasters are often compounded by civil war, the Cast Members might have to guard supplies being taken to relief camps, and get them past soldiers who want to seize them for their own use. Of course, the soldiers may not be much better fed than the refugees the aid is intended for, and certainly need not be portrayed as the enemy. Even without such obvious obstacles, negotiating for supplies, arranging for transport, and then making sure that they are fairly distributed at the other end could provide the conflict needed for an interesting story.

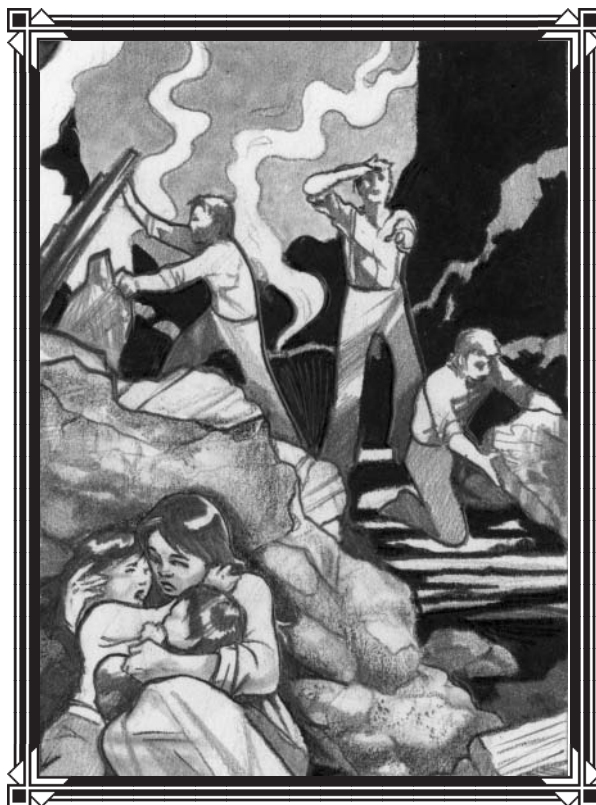
The House of St. John does not only engage in disaster relief, of course. It also tries to build positive communities and supply the resources that prevent disasters in the first place. Bringing clean water and sanitation to a Third World village, helping the residents to set up sustainable agriculture and industry, and even introducing more advanced infrastructure, like roads, telephones, and electricity, could form the motivation behind several Stories. None of the tasks are easy, and it is always important to involve the people who live in the village, because otherwise the new resources are likely to be neglected, and may not be what is really needed. Once the local people are involved, of course, local politics are in play, and the interests of the various groups must be balanced. Regional politics also affects the situation, and government officials may well expect bribes to let the Cast continue to help. If the Cast Members use magic to solve all the problems, ensure that the situation collapses soon after they leave to bring home to them that imposing solutions from outside rarely works.

For a really challenging Chronicle, both for Chroniclers and the players, put them in a deprived and crime-ridden ghetto in the United States. Drug-dealing violent gangs would be the most obvious problem, but the culture of the whole area would be the biggest difficulty. The aim would be to create a peaceful, cooperative, and more prosperous community. This would not necessarily mean that the residents would conform to the norms imposed by their richer neighbors, so the Cast might find themselves opposed by the authorities. They would certainly be opposed by many of the residents, particularly those who make their money from selling drugs. Killing

them is not an option, however, since these are the people you are trying to help.

It is inevitable, in running such a Chronicle, that the problems facing real people will be trivialized. Try not to do it too blatantly, but do not worry about it overmuch. This is a game, not a course in sociology or development studies. Chroniclers have a strong motive not to make it too easy to solve the problems in the desire to entertain the players. One of the best ways to do this is to require them to gain the respect and willing assistance of the locals; this is not something that can be done by killing people or by casting spells.

If such a Chronicle is desirable, discuss it carefully with the players first. There is likely to be very little combat, and most of the supernatural activity is the Cast Members' doing. Thus, the style of play would be very different from the *WitchCraft* default, so be sure in advance that the players are actually interested in such a game. If they are interested, however, the chance to try something rather different and interesting should make it all worth while.



Sample Stories

This section contains outlines of stories particularly appropriate for Rosicrucian characters. They are not ready-to-run, although an experienced Chronicler probably could (and usually does) run from notes like this. However, most of the important elements of the story are there, merely needing to be fleshed out.

The *Opus Maximum*

As mentioned in Chapter Four: Past, Present and Future, some of the works of Roger Bacon were lost during the Rosicrucian Purge. They were not all destroyed, however, and one, known as the *Opus Maximum*, has survived to the present day. Rumors of its whereabouts and contents circulate within the Covenant, and occasionally there is information of a slightly more concrete nature.

Preparation: The Cast Members should hear about the *Opus Maximum* some time before the Chronicler plans to run the Story, so that it does not seem to have been made up for a single session. Some possible rumors follow.

The *Opus Maximum* contained the greatest of Bacon's Invocations. One of these would call back the dead from the Otherworlds, create a new body for them, and restore them to life. Another could create living beings from nothing.

The *Opus Maximum* was inspired by demons. It is bound in human skin and its ink is made from the tears of innocents mixed with the ashes of their bones. Some say it corrupts any who read it, others that it allows the reader to control and destroy the Fallen Seraphim.

The *Opus Maximum* was left in the library of a monastery in the Alps and stolen during the seventeenth century. It has occasionally surfaced in the book trade, but has always been lost, stolen, or sold just before a member of the Brotherhood could get to it.

The *Opus Maximum* was Bacon's way of referring to his life. There is no book at all.

Background: The *Opus Maximum* does exist, but it is not a book. It is Bacon's greatest work: one of the Seraphim bound into a bronze head and required to

answer questions and otherwise assist the head's owner. The Seraph in question never liked the Gifted in the first place, and seven hundred years bound into a piece of metal has not improved his temper at all. Thus, he is unpleasant, arrogant, and insulting. The binding is still in effect, however, as is his essential nature as a Seraph—he has not Fallen. Thus, he is compelled to answer questions, and he always does so honestly and helpfully. His ability to use other powers is severely limited by the binding—he can heal anyone touching the head, restore their mental balance, and break any malign magics upon them. He can also transport the head and its owner anywhere on earth, although not to the Otherworlds. The head is almost impossible to damage, and even that does not break the binding. At this point, freeing the Seraph bound there would be very unwise, as he has a grudge against all Rosicrucians.

Hook: One of the Cast Members is looking up some piece of information in the Shrine's library. She is looking in an old book, covered in dust, which clearly has not been touched for years. It falls open because someone left an unfinished letter between the pages. The letter is dated 1786, and says that the writer has found a description of Roger Bacon's "greatest work" (*opus maximum*), and now knows where it is. The details, he says, are in a fourteenth century account book, which is currently in the library of Sir Samuel Hartshorne.

The book can be as easy or difficult to find as desired. Sir Samuel's library was sold upon his death, so the book is currently in the Reiner Susskind Memorial Library in Philadelphia. It may have gone there directly, or the characters may have to trace it through the book trade for several steps, coming up with plausible reasons why they should be allowed to look at the records. If the book was sold recently, it would have fetched around \$30,000, so people would expect anyone looking for it to have a good reason.

RSML: The Reiner Susskind Memorial Library is a private institution, open only by appointment. Getting an appointment is not simply a matter of calling and asking. Jonathan Hartry, the librarian, does not like people looking at his books, because they might cause damage. However, the terms of the trust that funds the library require him to allow access to people who can show that they have a genuine

research interest. If, by some strange quirk, one of the Cast Members is a noted medieval historian, this is easy—she just get references from her contacts and Mr. Hartry may even be quite friendly. Otherwise, things are much harder.

Mr. Hartry is not going to accept a story about looking for lost treasures of any sort, and flatly refuses permission to such people. Serious academic research on the middle ages, probably socioeconomic, is needed, and the characters need to be able to bluff. Given the standard background of Rosicrucian characters, it is likely that at least one person has some sort of contact with an academic in the field, even if it is merely someone who taught them. Otherwise, they have to work through their contacts in the Covenant, which means telling other people what they are up to, or coming up with a good cover story. Fortunately, leads to the *Opus Maximum* are so common, and so commonly false, that they will be allowed to get on with it—for now.

The Cast could also try breaking into the library or magically intimidating Mr. Hartry. If they do break in, they have trouble finding the book in question: the cataloguing system is unique to the Susskind library and not terribly clear. The place is also well secured, and the police turn up quickly, as there are a number of very valuable books on the premises. Mr. Hartry is not easy to intimidate (Willpower 4), nor is he easy to

bluff. He requires letters of reference to be on headed paper and posted direct to him from the relevant universities, and if the characters make him suspicious (by not knowing anything about medieval history, for example) he calls the numbers to check with the referees. If the characters are fake, he calls the police.

Assuming the characters do get the book, it is written in Latin with Gothic script, so it is not easy to read. Providing they have some time, they can figure it out, but not if they are rushing because the police are on the way. The accounts are for Sir William Percy and concern his castle in the north of England. The relevant entry is under 1386, saying “12 shillings for walling up the greatest work of Master Roger Bacon, thick enough so that it cannot speak to us nor upbraid us.” This is a clear reference to the *Opus Maximum*, but is likely to confuse people who think it is a book.

The Percy Castle: The Percy Castle is easy to find and get into, as it is owned by the National Trust and is open to the public (admission £5 for adults, free for National Trust members). The National Trust does not, however, let people knock down walls in the castle to look for hidden treasure. The Cast Members might come up with an absolutely brilliant scheme and somehow get permission, but it would have to be really impressive to be allowed.



Most likely, they have to use stealth to sneak in. The castle is well secured, with alarms and patrols. This is England, so the security guards do not carry guns. On the other hand, this is England, so any use of guns will bring the Armed Response Unit—effectively the SWAT team.

The account book does not mention where the head was walled up, but it can be worked out. The area must have been built in the late fourteenth century, and not substantially altered since. This limits the search to two towers, at opposite ends of the castle. If the Cast Members get near the relevant wall, they are able to sense the magic. The head is in the north tower, walled in above a garderobe, which was itself bricked up in the late fifteenth century.

The final complication is that the garderobe was bricked up because it is haunted. The ghost has long since gone insane and destructive, as anyone would if locked in the toilet for five hundred years.

Aftermath: If the characters recover the head and make it out of the castle, they have a very useful item, even if it is constantly rude to them. If they let anyone else know that they have it, senior members of the Covenant are keen to take it from them, so that it can be properly looked after. Also, the Inquisition wants to examine it to make sure that it does not contain a demon. The Cast Members can, of course, try to keep it secret, but that proves very difficult.

Political Maneuvers

Even though appointments to higher rank are decided by superiors, the masses do have some influence. The officers of the Covenant recognize that they cannot know everything relevant about candidates and they listen to evidence from other members. In some cases, they hardly know the candidates at all, and thus have to rely almost entirely on what they are told. In this Story, the post of Regent Tribune at the Cast Members' shrine is up for grabs, and they have to try to ensure that their rival does not get the job.

The set-up assumes that the Cast Members are not candidates for the post themselves, but that they have been around long enough to make allies and enemies. Chroniclers almost certainly should modify bits of

National Trust Security Guard

Strength: 2 **Intelligence:** 2
Dexterity: 2 **Perception:** 2
Constitution: 2 **Willpower:** 2
Life Points: 26 **Speed:** 8
Endurance Points: 23 **Essence Pool:** 12
Skills: Brawling 3, Notice 3

Armed Response Police Officer

Strength: 3 **Intelligence:** 2
Dexterity: 3 **Perception:** 2
Constitution: 3 **Willpower:** 2
Life Points: 34 **Speed:** 12
Endurance Points: 29 **Essence Pool:** 15
Skills: Firearms 7



Garderobe Ghost

Strength: 2 **Intelligence:** 3
Dexterity: 2 **Perception:** 2
Constitution: 1 **Willpower:** 4
Vital Essence Pool: 14
Endurance Points: n/a
Speed: 6
Energy Essence Pool: 64 (Includes bonus from Haunt)
Powers: Haunt, Animate

this outline to fit better into their Chronicle, or even completely rewrite it, keeping nothing but the inspiration. It is important that the Cast Members be aware of all the relevant people before the Story starts, and this means that they have to be of Equestrian rank at least. Their promotion to this level may have been quite recent, however.

The candidates are Samantha Martel, William Davies, Sarah Pfetz, and Mark Ffrench. The Dukes who will be making the decision are Alfred Martindale, Philip Carstairs, Michael Winterson, George Maltravers, and Janet Peterson. Initially, Martel has the firm support of Martindale and Peterson, and some support from Winterson. Maltravers is mildly opposed to her, favoring Ffrench, while Carstairs is fairly neutral. Unfortunately for the Cast Members, Martel is an old rival of theirs. It would not be good for them if she became Tribune.

Samantha Martel: Martel is an ambitious and manipulative Rosicrucian. She wants to get to the top and does not care whose heads she steps on to get there. She should be introduced quite early as a rival for the Cast Members, and should make herself thoroughly unpopular with them. She sees them, probably rightly, as her main rivals in the shrine, and thus loses no opportunity to make them look bad to her benefit. However, this should not be so effective as to lose the Cast Members all credibility. She is in her early thirties, quite young for the post, but not extremely so.

William Davies: Davies is about as unambitious as Rosicrucians get. He is reliable, but dull. He has never displayed much in the way of initiative, nor has he done anything noteworthy. He has, however, been a solid and reliable member of the shrine for many years. He is in his late fifties, and some people feel that his sort of personality is exactly what is needed in a Regent Tribune. He takes no action on his own behalf, and thus does not get the post unless the Cast Members decide to push for him.

Sarah Pfetz: Young, beautiful, and popular, Pfetz is being considered for the post in her late twenties. She is ambitious and competent, but also rather impulsive. This may be an effect of her relative youth,

and so far luck and skill have brought her through every time. If possible, she should be friendly with the Cast Members, possibly even having saved them on one occasion. She is, however, not a very good leader, and ideally the Cast Members should have experienced that as well. She tends to forget that other people have useful abilities, often trying to do everything herself. This does not generally work out.

Mark Ffrench: The scion of an old Rosicrucian family, Ffrench embodies the old Rosicrucian ideal. And he knows it. He is a talented magician, just about to turn forty, and has shown considerable leadership ability within his Cohort. He is also a terrible snob, and is not entirely convinced that women have the necessary occult potential to be full members of the Covenant—although he readily admits that there have been notable exceptions over the years. He has similar doubts about nonwhites. These doubts do not amount to bigotry, as he assesses anyone based on their own merits. However, white men from a good social background get a healthy benefit of the doubt, while lower class black women get no allowances at all. This means that he tends to see more merits in people who are like him.

Alfred Martindale: Martindale was the regent Tribune, and his recent promotion to Duke has created the vacancy and given him some say in his successor. He is Martel's patron, and thus strongly favors her for the job. The Cast Members should be aware of this, although he is not even remotely as hostile to them as Martel is. They should know that they have no chance of persuading him to support another candidate.

Philip Carstairs: Carstairs is a member of the Inquisition and is cautious about promoting someone who may be at risk of corruption. As things stand, he has no suspicions of any of the candidates, but information presented to him may change his mind. He does not require evidence that someone has fallen to block their promotion; evidence suggesting that they are likely to is sufficient, as he prefers to prevent problems. He is also wary of false evidence, as those liable to corruption might well use such techniques to blacken their opponents. It is up to each Chronicler just how much evidence the Cast Members have that Martel is vulnerable to corruption—being hostile to them is not

enough. Whatever is decided, if they tread carefully, Carstairs could be a very important ally, because the other Dukes are reluctant to go against the Inquisition.

Michael Winterson: Winterson has overall responsibility for the finances of several Shrines. As a result, he is very reluctant to support anyone who he feels might recklessly spend money. Thus, he is highly unlikely to support Pftetz. He also has doubts about Davies's ability to maintain the current sources of income, although he trusts him not to waste it for no good reason. He would favor Martel or Ffrench, and, as he is a member of the upper classes, he has always found Ffrench easier to get along with. This is a very mild preference, however, and he could easily be talked round to supporting Martel.

George Maltravers: Maltravers oversees the local area and is a staunch traditionalist. He believes that the ancient traditions of the Covenant have seen it strong through several centuries, and that reforming to meet the fashion of the day is unwise. Accordingly, he supports Ffrench for the post, although he could be persuaded to support Davies. He does not support either of the women due to his innate biases, but he can devise good reasons, if pressed. Thus, pretending to try to convince him to support Martel might lead him to come up with many reasons why she should not be promoted, which he then supplies when the Dukes debate the matter amongst themselves.

Janet Peterson: Peterson is a relatively recent Duke, and she is determined to change the atmosphere of the Covenant, to stop it discriminating against women. To this end, it is important to get more women into the higher ranks, so she only supports Martel or Pftetz. She believes that Martel is the better candidate and the only one likely to get broader support, so she supports her candidacy. It might be possible to get her to switch to Pftetz, but if that effort appears to be failing, she switches back to Martel.

If the Cast Members do nothing, Martel wins. Martindale and Peterson support her strongly, and Winterson and Carstairs can be persuaded. This leaves Maltravers isolated, and, as he does not want to admit to prejudice, he concedes the point. This would be a bad thing, so they had better act. It is not enough to oppose Martel, as in that case Martindale

would still support her and Peterson would initially support Pftetz. Winterson supports Ffrench, but could be persuaded back to Martel's side, and would be set against Pftetz. Maltravers would also be set against Pftetz, so Peterson would shift back to Martel. The Cast Members are unlikely to be able to present Carstairs with damning evidence against their rival, so he might well shift back as well. In short, simply opposing Martel probably leads to her selection, albeit after a longer debate.

The best option, then, is to pick one of the other candidates and try to produce a bloc in favor of that candidate, while generally spoiling Martel's chances. Martel, Pftetz and Ffrench all campaign on their own behalf as well, so undermining their activities is equally important—unless, of course, the characters choose to support one of them.



Community Action

This Story outline is best suited to Householders of St. John or those sympathetic to that College. It is a very small part of the process of regenerating a neighborhood in crisis, and is probably an early part of that process. It is vital that the players remember that the whole point of their actions is to help the residents of the area, including the ones who are causing them problems, and that violence is likely to be counter-productive. Obvious use of magic is also ruled out, although the use of magic behind the scenes is likely to be all but essential. If the problems could be fixed by entirely mundane means, they probably would have been.

Initial Situation: The neighborhood is disputed between two gangs, the Liberian Connection and Shades of Night, both of whom deal drugs and use violence to enforce their will. They also engage in random violence, intimidation, and theft. Unemployment in the area is high, so that the only apparent career is in crime. There is also significant ethnic tension between the black and white inhabitants. In short, it is one of those areas that the well-off just do not enter, and everyone has given up on. Criminal actions here rarely draw much attention from the police—there are simply too many, and they concentrate on making sure that the violence does not spread.

The owners of a café/bar/club type place near the center of the neighborhood have finally given up in the face of repeated vandalism. For a while, they were unable to leave, but the Rosicrucians recently bought the business, enabling the family to move out. The Covenant is now running the place, and the House of St. John is using it as a base from which to begin the revitalization of the area. The first step is to get the business established as somewhere people can visit in safety, and which does not get trashed by the gangs every few days.

The Liberian Connection: This gang is exclusively black. They are loud, brash, and flashy, and happily beat people up for disagreeing with them. They like rap music, and have a code of honor that requires them only to use weapons if the other side does so first, and only to use equivalent weapons.

Thus, if an antagonist only uses his fists, so will they. These rules do not apply to the police, Shades of Night, or punishment detail. In those cases, they use the best guns they have. Even then, sneaking around is regarded as cowardly. Most of the gang are on drugs, and they supply them to the black community.

Shades of Night: This gang is exclusively white. They think highly of the goth culture and dress appropriately. They are usually quiet, rarely shouting, but they have no compunction about shooting someone for standing in the wrong place. They cheerfully negotiate, but see no real reason to keep promises. Again, most of the gang are on drugs and deal them to the white community.



Typical Gang Member

Strength: 2	Intelligence: 2
Dexterity: 2	Perception: 2
Constitution: 2	Willpower: 2
Life Points: 26	Speed: 8
Endurance Points: 23	Essence Pool: 12

Skills: Brawl 4, Guns (Handgun) 5, Hand Weapon (Knife) 4, Streetwise 3

Note: One mental attribute should be dropped to 1, and one physical attribute raised to 3, for each gang member.

The leadership of both gangs is rather fluid and can change from week to week. Elements of the two gangs fight only about once a week, but not a day passes in which they do not cause some damage or commit some crime.

Characters: This outline does not give many details of the various characters involved in this Story. This is because it should be an open Chronicle, or at least a significant thread, and thus the characters need to be seeds for future Stories. Thus, they are characterized here purely by their role in this Story. The rest of their background should be devised according to the needs of the Chronicler.

The Cast Members can try to build up the club by any means they like. The outline that follows is merely one way that they could do it.

Their first problem is vandalism. The gangs, at first, try to vandalize the place every day, throwing bricks through the windows, spray painting the walls, and so on. If the café is left unguarded, they break in and completely trash the place. Thus, the characters need to guard the café twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. They may as well keep it open for that time, as well.

The only really viable way to stop the vandalism is to make it more trouble than it is worth. There are two components to this. One is to install toughened glass, paint-resistant coatings, and so on. Some of these effects could be achieved by magic. Thus, the gangs have to make a concerted effort to do any damage at all. As long as they can drive past, throw bricks at the windows, and drive on, the vandalism continues. The second component is making each attempt costly for the gang, and this requires the use of violence. However, this has to be very carefully judged. If the characters actually kill a gang member, they find themselves the target of revenge attacks. Bruises, and even broken bones, are simply part of business as usual. If the gangs find that it is hard to do damage, and they usually get injuries in the process, they give up. They are doing the damage for thrills, and if there are easier thrills to be found, they go look for them.

The next step is to get people to come to the café. At first, the only customers are the gangs, and they demand free service and vandalize the interior. If

both gangs turn up at once, they fight and probably completely wreck the interior. Note that this does represent progress, as the gangs are using the café as a café. From here, it is important to get them to value it as a functioning entity, so that they do not completely wreck the place. Cheap drinks, loud music, and attractive staff would be a good start. At this point, only people who have connections to the gangs are willing to work there, so finding attractive ones might be tough. Also, balancing the two racial communities is hard. One possibility is to have single race shifts, another is to have one race in the front and one in the kitchen, swapping them round depending on which gang is present. Of course, fights among the staff are to be expected, but the Cast Members have rather more influence in putting those down.

Another good idea would be to support particular individuals as the leaders of the gangs. Flattery, free drinks, special recognition, and so on would go some way toward that, as long as the person in question was already a viable candidate. External recognition of any sort would help to stabilize their position. They should then be able to hand off some of the responsibility for discipline to the gang leaders.

Keeping the two gangs apart would be wise, and fortunately their differing tastes make that easier to achieve. By alternating the kinds of music played, and possibly altering the decor, it would be possible to encourage one gang to attend on some days, the other on the others. Of course, they could show up looking for a fight, but as they become more attached to the café, this should become rarer.

Once the gangs can be relied upon not to vandalize the place too much, to pay for their food and drink, and only to have a fight once a month or so, it is possible to move on to the next stage: encouraging the gangs not to use the café at certain times, so that other members of the community can do so. Stopping serving alcohol, playing easy listening background music, and decorating the place in flowers should do the trick, as would providing discounts for families with young children and senior citizens, but not for gang members. This should be done for a very limited period of time at first, but over time it could be extended to all the hours of daylight.

The story is over when the café actually turns a profit, preferably with the gangs treating it as neutral territory, and either staying away during the day or, even better, behaving well if they do arrive. This success can be signaled by having the police start to stop by for snacks and lunch, thus actually appearing in the area rather more often. This would also create its own problems, but this is not supposed to be the end of the Chronicle.

The players may well be at something of a loss as to what to do, so give them advice. Let them ask more experienced members of the House of St. John for hints and be given advice along the lines given above. They then have to put this into practice, carrying out negotiations with the gangs and controlling their violent outbursts without escalating them. There would, in fact, be quite a lot of combat in this story, but the Cast Members would always be trying not to kill anyone, and not to damage the surrounding property, which makes things interesting. Further, victory is not achieved by killing the opponents, but by getting to the stage where they do not fight you anymore.

Quick Seeds

There follow some very brief outlines of potential Rosicrucian stories.

Ghost: A Ghost or Phantasm is killing people and causing damage. The Cast Members go off to deal with it, only to discover that it is the Phantasm of a Rosicrucian they knew. She believes that she is fighting the forces of the Mad God who killed her. She does not seem to be, but is she mad, or are the cultists much more subtle than the Cast Members realize? They have to decide whether to help the Phantasm, as her declared aim is certainly laudable, or try to defeat her.

Imitators: A group of people have got hold of a book describing the Rosicrucians and decide to set themselves up as the secret society. Rumors of this group of Rosicrucians get out and the Cast Members have to decide what to do. On the one hand, they might make a good cover organization, distracting anyone who goes looking for the Covenant. On the other, they might do bad things and hurt the Covenant's reputation among the Gifted. If they are Gifted themselves, the situation is even more com-

plex. Killing them all is unlikely to be the best response, but the Cast Members need to investigate, subtly, first.

Temptation: A demon, in disguise, starts helping the characters. At first, this aid has no down side at all—it does not harm anyone or have bad consequences. It is also fairly minor, although key on one or two occasions. Then the aid starts being more worrying, causing the Cast Members to do evil things. False leads on the location of cultists result in them killing a number of innocents, or the ritual to drive back a Vampyre requires them to steal a number of objects. The advice and assistance is still generally good for the Cast Members, but less so for those around them. The demon then reveals its true nature, and remarks that it would be a terrible shame if evidence of this were to get back to the Inquisition. It promises to ensure that it does not if the Cast Members agree to work for it. This is a serious dilemma, and is likely to rather annoy the players, so only do it if certain that they can cope with no-win situations.



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The Brotherhood of the Rose Cross

ROSICRUCIAN HISTORY IS RELATIVELY BRIEF, NOT QUITE EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS, BUT IT HAS BEEN EVENTFUL. THEY HAVE COME CLOSER TO DEFEATING THE COMBINE THAN ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION, AND CLOSER TO COMPLETE DESTRUCTION THAN THEY LIKE TO ADMIT. THEY HAVE SPAWNED ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST POWERFUL DARK COVENANTS, BUT ARE NOW ONE OF THE MOST PURE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WORLD. THEY BELIEVE IN RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE CENTRALITY OF MAGIC, BUT RECRUIT PRIMARILY FROM THOSE WHO HAVE HAD MUNDANE POWER HANDED TO THEM ON A SILVER PLATTER. THEY REQUIRE ABSOLUTE OBEDIENCE TO ORDERS, BUT HARDLY EVER GIVE ANY.

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