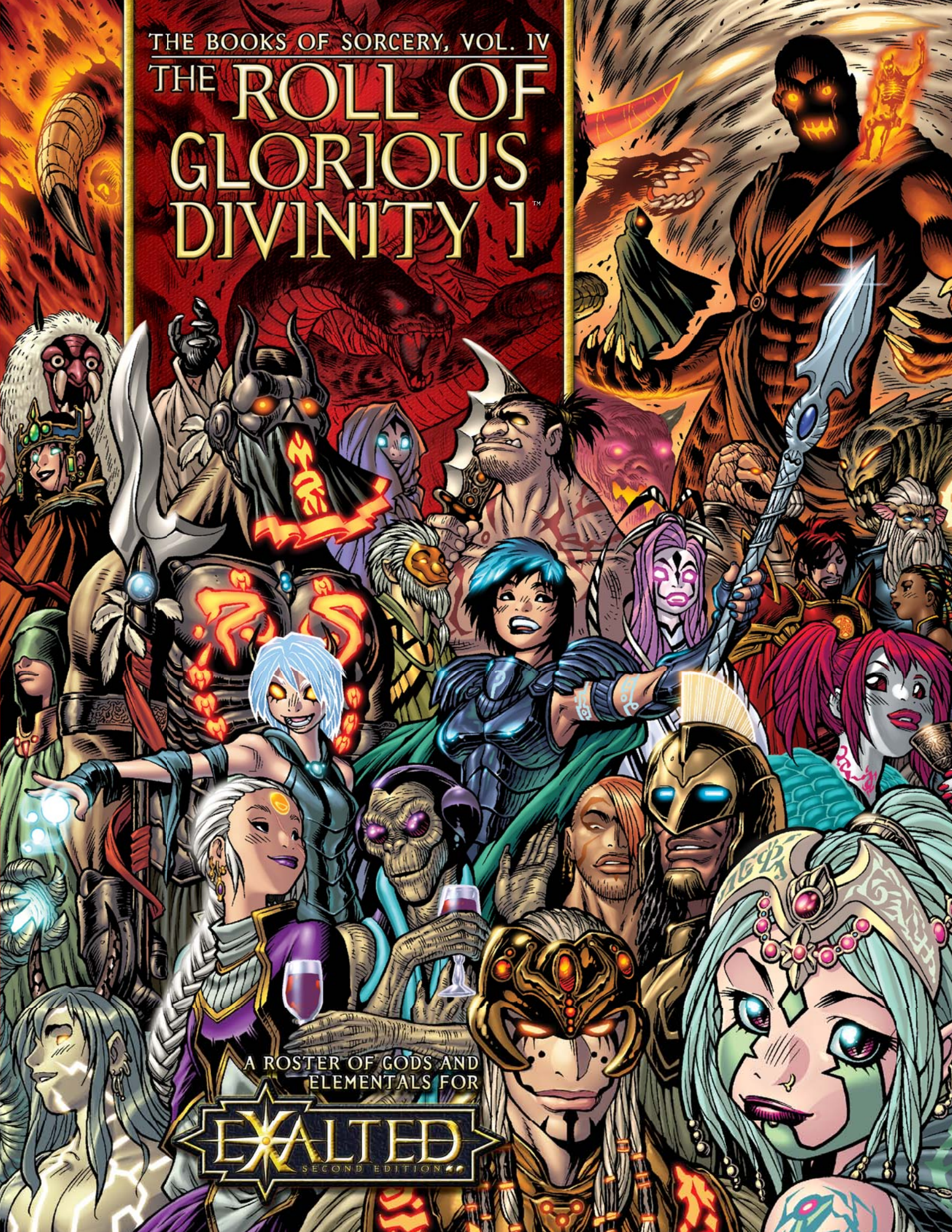


THE BOOKS OF SORCERY, VOL. IV

# THE ROLL OF GLORIOUS DIVINITY I™



A ROSTER OF GODS AND  
ELEMENTALS FOR

**EXALTED**  
SECOND EDITION



THE BOOKS OF SORCERY, VOL. IV  
**THE ROLL OF  
GLORIOUS  
DIVINITY I**™

BY ERIC BRENNAN, DEIRDRE BROOKS, CONRAD HUBBARD,  
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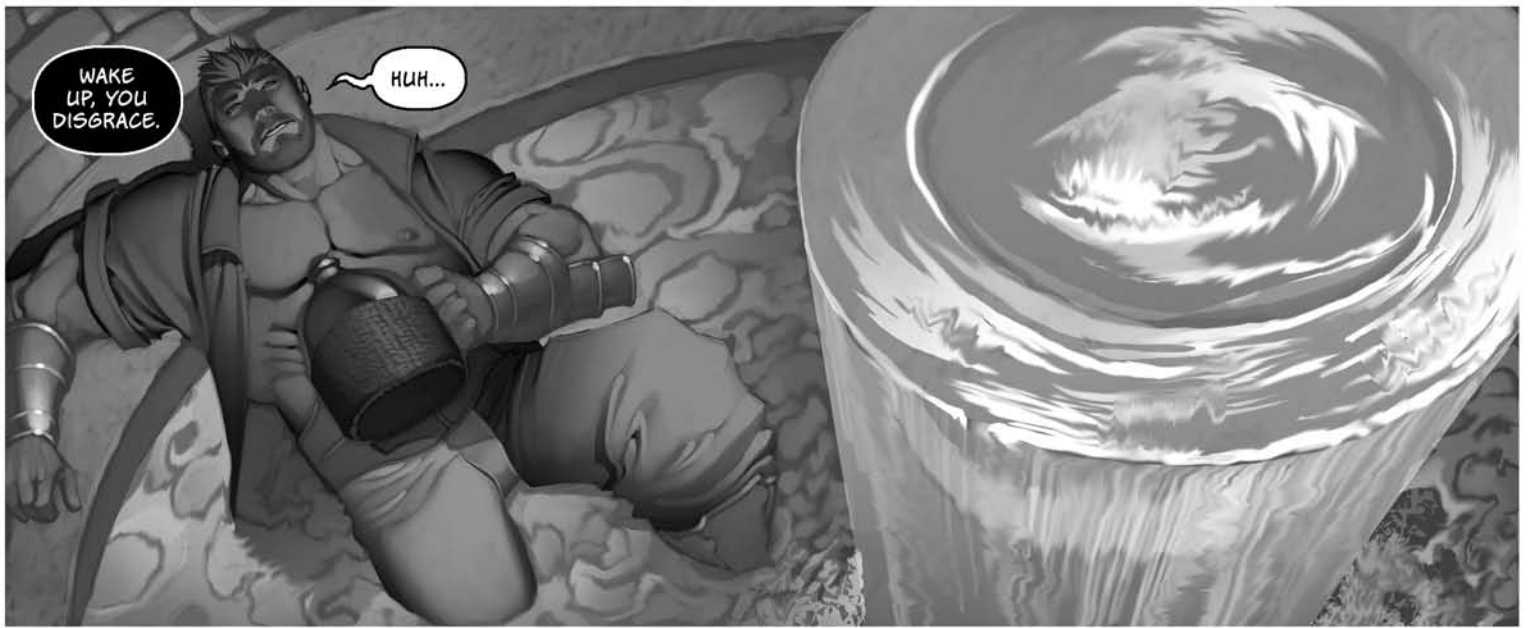


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WAKE UP, YOU DISGRACE.

HUH...



...THE HELL'RE YOU?

MY NAME IS BURNING FEATHER, LADY OF INTOXICANTS.



NORMALLY I'D BE THRILLED TO SEE SOMEONE IN YOUR CONDITION, BUT YOU...  
YOU'RE EXALTED BY THE UNCONQUERED SUN HIMSELF! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

ALL THIS WALLOWING IN FILTH AND SELF-PITY. IT'S SHAMEFUL!



STICK A CORK IN IT, WILLYA? I'M A DANGEROUS GUY. IF YOU RILE ME UP, I'LL—



WHAT? KILL ME LIKE YOU DID YOUR YOUNG FRIEND?

OH YES, I KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT. DO YOU THINK THAT EXCUSES YOUR BEHAVIOR?

PINCH



COME WITH ME. I WANT YOU TO SEE SOMETHING.

HEY, OW! LET GO!





# INTRODUCTION

*But old men tell, whose fathers heard it from the ancients, how once the lords of the three rivers of the plain rebelled against the law of the Worlds, and passed beyond their boundaries, and joined together and whelmed cities and slew men, saying: "We now play the game of the gods and slay men for our pleasure, and we be greater than the gods of Pegāna."  
And all the plain was flooded to the hills.  
—Lord Dunsany, "The Gods of Pegāna"*

This is a book about spirits, but it's not just a book about spirits. The gods and elementals of Creation interact with humanity often. This is also a book about those interactions.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

**Chapter One: The Terrestrial Bureaucracy** explores the gods of the Second Age of Man. The chapter examines what it means to be a god, how gods see the world, the mechanics of divine sanctums and how gods interact with Creation's mortals. Finally, the chapter presents a sample Terrestrial court, the Court of Seasons.

**Chapter Two: The Roll of Terrestrial Divinities** presents 13 types of common Terrestrial gods, two types of divine sentinels, two types of servitor gods, 14 unique gods and two types of forbidden gods.

**Chapter Three: The Elemental Courts** looks at the elementals' roll in Creation. The chapter explains how elementals differ from gods in nature and role, and delves into the particulars of elemental summoning. The chapter also presents a sample elemental court, the Principality of the Shore.

**Chapter Four: The Roll of Elemental Beings** presents a wide variety of elementals, from the tiny need fires to the horrifying Kukla. The chapter also looks at the differences between each type of elemental.

**Appendix: Divine Mechanics** provides an exhaustive list of divine Charms, as well as rules and guidelines for creating new gods and some thoughts on how groups might experiment with gods as players' characters.





## LEXICON

The following supplements the lexicon found in **Exalted** and examines the differences between a few precise terms used when discussing the spirits of Creation. The lexicon also notes not just definitions, but how the people of Creation use these terms.

**Abcissic binding:** When a summoner binds an elemental to herself for a month (or binds a demon for a year and a day). Compare to *task binding*.

**Celestial Bureaucracy, the:** The structure of the divine hierarchy of Creation and Yu-Shan. Compare to *the Celestial Order*.

**Celestial Court, the:** The divinities of the Heavenly City of Yu-Shan.

**Celestial god:** A god in *the Celestial Court*. Celestial gods oversee universal concepts. Compare to *Terrestrial god*.

**Celestial Order, the:** The structure of the divine hierarchy in Creation and Yu-Shan; also, that hierarchy's ideal state. Used most often by those who don't wish to imply that the divine hierarchy is now disordered. Compare to *the Celestial Bureaucracy*.

**Creation-Ruling Mandate, the:** See *the Mandate of Heaven*.

**Cselenite pact:** A summoning pact between a *spirit court* and a group of sorcerers (or a group containing sorcerers), following the set of ethical guidelines developed by the lesser elemental dragon Cselenine.

**cult:** A group dedicated to worship or veneration of a specific being or group of beings. The people of Creation don't use "cult" as a term of denigration—in the world of **Exalted**, cult is a value-neutral descriptive term.

**elemental court:** A *spirit court* governed by and composed largely of elementals in imitation of the greater *Terrestrial courts*.

**Five Elemental Dragons, the:** Mela, Pasiap, Hesiash, Daana'd and Sextes Jylis; the five greatest of the *Terrestrial gods* and rulers of *the Terrestrial Bureaucracy*. Unlike the lesser and greater elemental dragons, the Five Elemental Dragons are not elementals.

**least god:** Those barely sentient gods whose interactions define Creation's natural law.

**little god:** All gods less than the Celestial Incarnae and the *Five Elemental Dragons*. Rarely used

in practice. Immaculate monks say "little god" as a matter of policy and dogma, as do peasants in areas where the Immaculate Order is strong. Savants and the urbane say "little god" when they speak amongst each other. However, no god enjoys being called little to its face. Those both wise and used to dealing with gods personally—priests, shamans and many mortal rulers—use this term only to remind the *Terrestrial gods* of the *Mandate of Heaven*, and then only when in a position of advantage. Where the gods are untamed, the common folk say it only within Immaculate earshot. Across most of Creation, gods are simply gods.

**Mandate of Heaven, the:** The proclamation made by the Unconquered Sun at the end of the Primordial War, which states the rulership of Creation falls to the Exalted. Also called *the Creation-Ruling Mandate*.

**shinma:** A concept, entity or property of the Wyld (savants dispute in which category the shinma fall), in five of which the Primordials anchored (among other things) will and the four Virtues. Inhabitants of Creation draw from other shinma similarly essential aspects of being such as the properties of possessing identity and location. The savants of the Second Age understand the shinma poorly.

**spirit:** Term used by savants to mean elementals, demons, ghosts and gods. Some savants argue the Fair Folk, too, are spirits, but Heaven disagrees. Like *little god*, "spirit" is a term little used amongst the uneducated, who often call all gods and elementals (and any other obviously supernatural being) "gods," and who think of demons and ghosts as entirely different orders of being.

**spirit court:** Broad term encompassing *elemental courts*, *Terrestrial courts* and *the Celestial Court*.

**task binding:** When a summoner binds an elemental to a task for a year and a day (or binds a demon to a task forever). Compare to *Abcissic binding*.

**Terrestrial court:** A *spirit court* of Creation, governed by gods. Some Terrestrial courts count elementals as subjects, and some do not.

**Terrestrial god:** A god in *the Terrestrial Bureaucracy*. Terrestrial gods oversee tangible phenomena. Compare to *Celestial god*.





THAT'S QUITE A LIST OF COMPLAINTS.

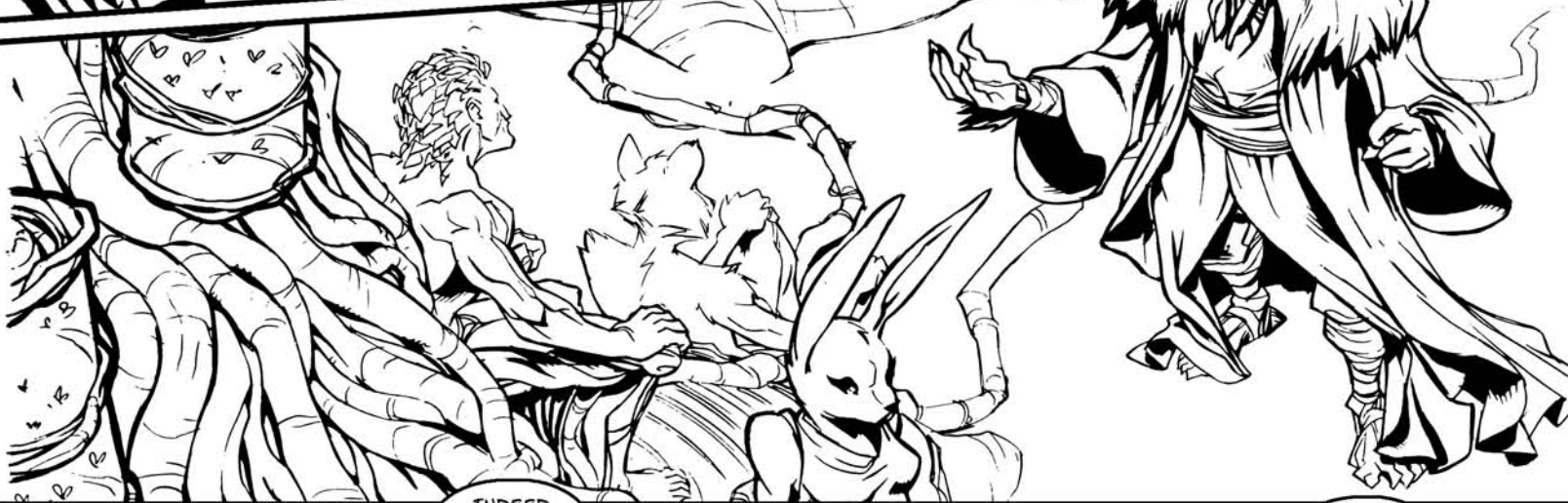
LET ME SEE IF I GOT THEM ALL.

THIS MAN KNOCKED DOWN YOUR SHRINES, INSULTED YOU, BROKE YOUR WEAPON AND EVEN DARED ATTACK YOU?

HE DID! RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY SUBJECTS!

YOU AND I HAVE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, BUT WE HAVE TO LOOK PAST THAT NOW.

WE CAN'T LET THIS IMPERTINENCE STAND.



INDEED. TELL ME, WHAT WAS THIS TROUBLE MAKER'S NAME?

IT WAS PANTHER.

PANTHER... I'M AFRAID WE HAVE A PROBLEM.







# CHAPTER ONE THE TERRESTRIAL BUREAUCRACY

Gods are omnipresent throughout Creation. The smallest stone and simplest tool each has its own least god. Through the least gods' interaction, they define Creation's natural law. Greater gods watch over greater natural features and crafted things—cities, mountains, forests, rivers, nations—in a hierarchy, the Celestial Order, from the least gods through the Terrestrial Bureaucracy to the gods of Yu-Shan's Celestial Court and, at the pinnacle, the Incarnae.

Superstitious mortals see the hand of the little gods behind every event and offer constant appeasement. Others see the gods as remote, and may think of them little, but even these men and women perform good luck rituals, participate in priest-led worship and mouth prayers to whatever divinity the mortals hope will listen. Behind everything stands a watchful god, but to offer excessive praise and worship tempts divinities into indolence, for through worship gods grow in

power beyond Heaven's dispensation. And yet, in this fallen Age, the gods of Creation solicit prayer openly and shamelessly, flaunting the Celestial Order.

## HISTORY

When the Primordials brought Creation out of chaos, they anchored the world in the influence of the shinma, and they chose five shinma to support the power of their servants. In Dharma, the Cup and the shinma of corrosion, ignorance and desire, the Primordials rooted the Virtue of Compassion. In Nirvikalpa, the Staff and the shinma of communication, they rooted the Virtue of Conviction. In Nirvishesha, the Ring and the shinma of identity, they rooted Temperance. In Nishkriya, the Sword and the shinma of conflict, they rooted Valor. In Nirguna, the Heart and the shinma of existence, they rooted not a Virtue but the principle the Virtues define. In existence, the Primordials anchored will.

In the time before the Primordial War, Creation was a machine of clockwork efficiency. The Bureaus of the gods were absolute, and each god knew its task. Each god knew how to maintain the world, and how to fix the faults introduced when the Primordials broke from the Games of Divinity and took amusement in Creation.

The will of the gods, stemming from existence and upheld by desire, communication, identity and conflict, was the Primordials' downfall. Will abhors its own absence. Will defies unwilling servitude. From will springs ambition. Because of will, the gods detested their slavery. Though it took aeons for rebellion to blossom fully, the Primordials planted its seed at the beginning and in the heart of their great work.

In secret, the Unconquered Sun, highest and most virtuous of the gods, to whom the Primordials had granted the greatest will that he might form an invincible bulwark against the Wyld, made plans for a coming war. He gathered together trusted conspirators and began searching for gifted mortal heroes. With the allegiance of Autochthon, the complicity of Gaia and the aid of the Exalted, the gods set out to overthrow the Primordials and take the Games of Divinity for themselves.


They succeeded. The war between the Exalted and the Primordials did much to damage Creation, however. Many gods died, and the world was thrown for a time into chaos, but the gods tempered their sadness with elation and joy. The Unconquered Sun made his Victory over Primordials Mudra, and the gods proclaimed *we have won*.

Following the war, the gods were faced with the task of bringing Creation back into order. They lacked the understanding of Creation the Primordials had possessed, and though Gaia stood aside during the fighting, she could not bear to watch as Creation's geomancy decayed. In the time before the war, she had aided them in their creation of the five great elementals. In the war's aftermath, she woke *her* children and creations, the Five Elemental Dragons.

The forms of Mela, Hesiesh, Daana'd and Sextes Jylis roused from the Elemental Poles of Air, Fire, Water and Wood. Their Essences flowed through Creation's dragon lines, repairing what damage they could, and converged at Meru, the Elemental Pole of Earth. With their brother Pasiap, the Elemental Dragons ordered a great convocation of the divine. They bade the little gods of Creation kneel before







the Five Elemental Dragons. With their intuitive understanding of Essence and its conduction, the Five Elemental Dragons set forth a new Celestial Order by which the little gods could abide and ensure Creation's survival. The great dragons organized Creation's gods into courts and hierarchies of form and type, supplementing the existing Bureaus, that all should know their stations and their tasks. Afterward, the Five Elemental Dragons slipped back into Creation's geomancy and returned to the function they'd always performed, while their Essences returned to the elemental poles to slumber.

As the immediate danger to Creation's integrity passed, the Unconquered Sun handed down a Creation-Ruling Mandate to the Exalted, through the Crown of Thunders the Unconquered Sun gifted to the Solar Queen Merela. Henceforth, the rulers of Creation were the Exalted of the Unconquered Sun, as the Unconquered Sun himself became the ruler of Heaven. Other Solars eventually deposed Merela and took the rule of Creation for themselves, but such was their privilege, as the Mandate of Heaven rests in the hands of the Exalted as a whole.

With the Mandate of Heaven came responsibility for Creation's maintenance. The Exalted would rule Creation and ensure the gods received proper veneration, and in return, the gods would keep Creation whole for the Solars to do with as they willed. The Celestial gods emigrated to Yu-Shan and remained under the rulership of the Incarnae. The Unconquered Sun placed the Terrestrial gods, who live on Creation's face, under the rule of the Solar Exalted. In doing so, he provided the gods with respite from the toil in which they'd labored during prehistory. No more would divine power maintain Creation exclusively, and no more would divine duty be fixed, for gods who showed great diligence could seek promotion and advancement.

During the early High First Age, the gods were seldom seen nor heard. They watched Creation and recorded what they saw. They monitored their domains, looking for irregularities, such as could indicate incursions from Malfeas or the Wyld. When a god found a discrepancy, the god notified its superiors. Eventually, the report reached the Solars. The Exalted dealt with the problem as they saw fit, and the god returned to monitoring its domain.

## THE USURPATION

During the Usurpation, the Terrestrial and Sidereal Exalted overthrew the Solars who held the Creation-Ruling Mandate and chased the Lunar Exalted beyond Creation's edge. The Sidereals then occluded them-

selves from Creation's vision and Heaven's judgment. For this upset, the gods had no one to blame but the Dragon-Blooded.

The ensuing conflicts between the Terrestrial Exalted armies and Solar Exalted survivors damaged Creation once again. Few gods died this time, but the battles destroyed or reduced the domains of many and left multitudes of divinities unemployed and destitute. The Terrestrial Exalted sought to bring the management of Creation under their own authority, citing bargains struck by the Celestial Exalted the Terrestrial Exalted had slain.


Because of the vast changes to Creation's landscape and culture the Usurpation had caused, many gods found their positions adjusted in importance. As the Terrestrial Bureaucracy's hierarchy shifted, many gods saw the crisis as an opportunity to advance their station in the world. The demoted gods blamed the Dragon-Blooded for the gods' loss of power, and the gods who'd been promoted capitalized on the grudge born by most of the Celestial Order against the Terrestrials, refusing to recognize the power of the Terrestrial Exalted as they redrew the world's divine map. The gods gained independence from the Exalted's rulership. The Unconquered Sun, his face turned from Creation, saw it not. And in the end, the gods who'd lost power and who'd helped catalyze the rebellion against the Dragon-Blooded saw little benefit.

Despite the best efforts of the Sidereals, Heaven and the Terrestrial courts refused to acknowledge the authority of the Dragon-Blooded to rule as the Solars had.

## THE CONTAGION AND THE FAIR FOLK

During the outbreak of the Great Contagion, the gods of the Celestial Order feared a repeat of the Usurpation. Whole nations died, infrastructure collapsed, concepts and ideals were reduced in importance. All foresaw another massive swell in the number of unemployed gods and worried how the inevitable bureaucratic reshuffling would negatively affect their standards of living.

None predicted the Fair Folk Invasion. Creation contracted as the Wyld grew in strength; huge tracts of land dissolved in the face of expanding Chaos. The gods of the affected areas saw the destruction of their domains and their sanctums simultaneously. Before the gods could retreat to safer ground and establish new sanctums, the armies of the Fair Folk annihilated them. It was mass extinction. Nothing since the end of the Primordial War had affected the gods of Creation so. It was—and still is—the worst disaster in the Celestial Order's history. The scars have never healed.



After the young officer who would become the Scarlet Empress used the Sword of Creation to fling the Fair Folk back beyond the world's edges, a great bitterness infected the relationship between the Terrestrial Bureaucracy and the Celestial Court. The sanctums of the Celestial gods were safe in Yu-Shan. When Celestial deities deigned descend to Creation and lead divine armies of Terrestrial gods in defense of the world's borders, even when these generals lead from the front and died with their soldiers, they were in little real danger. The Terrestrial gods, the surviving outer principality deities who'd lost homes and friends and the gods of the inner principalities who had had to watch firsthand as 90 percent of all life died (and who now contended with a flood of divine refugees), saw a Heaven full of gods who'd lost merely positions and influence. The Celestial gods, by contrast, lacked anything in their experience to help them comprehend the Terrestrial gods' loss. The Celestial gods had never faced such disaster, and from their worst conflict, the Primordial War, they'd emerged bloodied but triumphant. Exacerbating the crisis, unscrupulous Celestial gods inflicted terrible setbacks on rivals who had devoted time and resources to aiding their Terrestrial siblings to better take advantage of the opportunities afforded by Heaven's reshuffling.

The Terrestrial and Celestial gods blamed their counterparts for gaps in understanding, and many Terrestrial courts took advantage of the confusion in Heaven to cut ties with their Celestial overseers. These newly seceded Terrestrial courts took mortal worshipers among what remained of Creation's shattered population and began arming for a conflict with the refugee gods. Many of the refugees, though weakened by their loss of domains, also began gathering mortal worshipers and creating new sanctums, some establishing squatter courts within the domains of the existing Terrestrial Bureaucracy's established borders. Others found places within existing Terrestrial courts that sought to shore up their numbers for the coming conflict. The mortals, their populations devastated by the plague and the war, flocked to the criminal gods, desperate for any aid to survival during that dark time. The gods left their roles as silent observers and have not returned since.

## THE AGE OF SORROWS

The Terrestrial Bureaucracy splintered and fought itself, gods and courts competing for worship from the mortal population. Gods appeared as saviors in the Contagion's wake, promising safety, and encouraged their chosen peoples to war over resources and ideology. New nations rose, fought and fell. Mortal armies sacked temples, disrupted lines of geomantic power at

the order of their patrons and wiped out the worshipers of their gods' enemies. Over the course of centuries, the fighting between the legitimate Terrestrial courts and the refugees quieted, and the Terrestrial Bureaucracy achieved a rough status quo. Some legitimate Terrestrial courts destroyed their squatter court rivals or assimilated them, while in other areas, the refugees attained power and forced neighboring Terrestrial courts to acknowledge the refugees' authority.



As the status quo solidified on the face of Creation and in Heaven, the Celestial gods began to reestablish communication between the Terrestrial courts and Yu-Shan. Some courts, tired of conflict and yearning for the days of proper order, submitted readily to Heaven's law. Others, happy with the new way of doing things, openly refused to comply with Celestial order, forcing Heaven to deploy armed forces to Creation. In some cases, such as Whitewall and Great Forks, the rebellious gods retained enough influence in Heaven to forestall direct attack, directing the Celestial censors and Yu-Shan's armies elsewhere. In other places, where the Celestial courts won these conflicts, they dispatched rebellious deities and often set up oppressed local gods in the rebels' places—refugees where the legitimate courts had grown rebellious, legitimate gods where refugees had won. Former victims granted divine authority over former victors were seldom kind to their conquerors-turned-subjects, and reignited old disputes.

The majority of courts neither totally aligned with Heaven nor openly rebelled. Instead, they gave Yu-Shan their half-hearted allegiance, resuming their torrent of bureaucratic status reports but largely ignoring Heaven's decrees. These courts continued to gather mortal worship and carried on their local feuds as they had while independent. The overworked censors had to concentrate their efforts on the truly rebellious gods and settled on bringing order to the merely troublesome courts one by one, as time permitted. More often, the Celestial censors accepted hefty bribes to look the other way indefinitely.

Also in this time of confusion rose the Immaculate Order. During the Shogunate, the Immaculate faith had been one Dragon-Blooded attempt to bring order to the Terrestrial Bureaucracy among many. The others had been a variety of localized truces between the Celestial Order and the Dragon-Blooded Shogunate. With the Shogunate gone and Creation's Dragon-Blooded population reduced from almost a million to fewer than 10,000, those deals were null and void. The Immaculate Order aided the establishment of the Realm's power, and with the backing of the Sidereal Exalted, began bringing Terrestrial







courts within Realm-controlled territories into line. The Immaculates continue this process today.

## THE TIME OF TUMULT

The Empress has vanished. The Scarlet Dynasty wavers. The Deathlords make themselves known. The Solar Exalted return.

As the rightful holders of the Mandate of Heaven, the Lawgivers have the authority to bring law to the Terrestrial Bureaucracy and restore order to the Celestial Order. They don't yet have the power to back this authority on a large scale, however. The dominant Terrestrial gods, used to openly flaunting Celestial law and with Celestial censors in their pockets through blackmail and bribes, don't necessarily care about the legal power held by the Solars.

Some gods remember the First Age and foresee a return to lives of quiet distance from the world. Not all look forward to it. Many gods have gained much power through the current disorder and would be unhappy with a return to the old ways. Other gods are too young to remember the First Age and have heard only stories of the Solars, either from wandering Immaculate missionaries or from older gods with varied perspectives. Some gods attempt to bring the Solars under their sway while the Lawgivers are young and impressionable. Other gods curry favor, backing Solars in the hope of winning preferential treatment in the future when a Solar Deliberative once again controls Creation. A few genuinely hope to see the Celestial Order restored, but seldom out of idealism. Those gods who have the most to gain from the restoration of the Celestial Order are those who've fallen furthest since the end of the First Age. Gods such as Vanileth (see pp. 63-66) have much to offer, but most honest supporters of the Lawgivers are now only pale shadows of their former glory. By contrast, the strongest Terrestrial gods in the Time of Tumult have the most to lose from a restored Deliberative.

## THE ESSENCE OF THE DIVINE

What is a god?

A god is an aware, naturally immaterial being of Essence held together by will. Gods are immortal. They age not. They starve not. They cultivate no illnesses of mortal origin. Barring exceptions stemming from unusual natures, gods lead lives bereft of mortal inconvenience. They feel pain, but only from injury. During the normal course of a day, a god feels no aches in his joints. His clothing does not chafe. He feels no discomfort from extremes of climate—a god sweats not on a hot day and, when material, isn't bothered

by rain falling on his skin. Chill wind does not make a god shiver. A god may grow tired if he exerts himself meaningfully, but the limbs of even a weak god don't grow leaden from casual exertion. A god needs no sleep. For all these reasons and more, gods hold themselves superior to Creation's mortals.

Most gods possess responsibility for some area of Creation. Terrestrial gods look over concrete things, while many Celestial gods hold dominion over abstract concepts. A god wields power according to the importance of his position, as determined by the bureaucracy of Yu-Shan.

Some gods lack domains—most notably those gods whose domains have been destroyed and those mortals who ascend to divinity without being assigned positions within the Celestial Order. These gods derive the majority of their power from their own divine Essence, augmented by what veneration they can collect.

## MOTIVE

With the possible exception of the Incarnae, the Five Elemental Dragons and certain prehistoric gods who survive from when the Primordials still ruled Creation, gods are not so unlike human beings as to be total ciphers. Gods act from motivations that humans can understand. Even the most strange and incomprehensible god is no more irrational than an insane human being, and gods as enigmatic as that are rare.

Similar to people, gods want things. They want to survive. They want comfort and pleasure. Gods with forms capable of eating want to eat delicious food, though what they find delicious may vary. Gods with forms capable of intercourse want to have sex with entities they find attractive, though what they find attractive may likewise vary (and doesn't necessary depend on physical traits). Gods with forms capable of sleep or relaxation want to find repose in comfortable places, though a volcano god may be comfortable in a place that would kill a mortal in an instant.

Gods want fulfillment. All want to feel comfortable with themselves and their nature. Many want the validation of their peers, pleasant company and enjoyable conversation. Many are ambitious, especially powerful gods—in prehistory, all gods did the jobs they were assigned, but in the time since the Primordial War, gods with desire for power have risen in status, while complacent gods have fallen in rank.

The degree to which any god feels any one of these motives varies. In this, they are once again much like humans. But gods aren't human. Their human-like motives and ambitions often manifest in inhuman ways.

## WHAT LITTLE GODS AREN'T

Gods are managers. They oversee. They represent.

The god of a river is not the river. The river itself cares not for the god's well-being, and while many gods are dedicated to their charges, in the Second Age just as many see their responsibilities as burdens to maintain through the minimum of effort.

Were a river's god to die, with none to correct the river's behavior the river might begin flooding out of season. With no god to inspect the river, it might be an excellent place for a demon to hide from Heaven's eyes. In Yu-Shan, the planning of fates surrounding the river would grow more difficult as the paperwork reporting the river's status ceased. But the river would not disappear. In an ideal world, Heaven would soon notice the lack of reports and assign a replacement, through promotion or transfer. In practice, some vacant positions go unfilled for centuries.

Were the river to dry up, its god would not disappear either. He would lose status and power in the eyes of Heaven and be left unemployed, but he could restore to himself some measure of power by gathering a cult. If he found an unsupervised potential domain, he could even petition his superiors in Yu-Shan to reassign his duties. He could also seek the patronage of a Terrestrial court.

## IMMORTALITY

Because gods fear neither weakness nor death from old age, only a very rare god ever acts out of a desire to leave a legacy upon Creation once she's gone. Gods can have children, but no god feels the need to create a family to support her come old age. Mortality provides mortals beings with incentives to act selflessly. Gods don't feel the same incentives.

Because gods are not mortal and need not leave a legacy, most gods feel little in the way of urgency when it comes to achieving long-term goals. Even a god with ambition is used to believing she has nigh-infinite time to pursue it, and even if she knows her time is limited for some reason, she may fall back on old habits of thought. The virtue of endless patience easily becomes the vice of endless procrastination.



THE  
GODS





## POWER

Gods are personally powerful and don't have to work to achieve it. With the easy comfort available in their sanctums and their tolerance for extremes of climate and lack of hunger, thirst and sickness, gods are unaccustomed to hardship and unexpected short-term setbacks. Physical inconvenience bothers them not at all, but frustration infuriates them. A god who can wait a thousand years to overcome a titanic, nigh-impassable obstacle may fly into a rage upon encountering the most minor of inconveniences.

## NATURE

A god's nature is the trait or set of traits that define the god and set him apart from mortality and other gods, such as incorruptible devotion to an ideal or fanatical obsession with a sensation. In prehistory, each god's nature aligned as perfectly with the god's responsibilities as the Primordials could ensure. As Creation has changed over time, and as the Primordials no longer create gods to maintain the world, the divinities of Creation have assumed new duties. In addition, gods reproduce amongst themselves, and a child god's nature is usually linked to the nature of his parents, but unpredictably so.

While strength can rise and fall, motivation may change and Heaven may alter or revoke a god's position within the Celestial Order, nothing natural can change a god's nature. Attempts to force a god to go against his nature fail. Some natures are absolute—a god whose nature is to be incorruptible cannot be bribed. Orders contradicting such a nature are unacceptable orders. Other natures are patterns of behavior a god can set aside but will always return to. Still others the god may set aside for longer, but will slowly kill the god if abandoned indefinitely. A volcano god may slowly die if forced to exist in a frozen tundra, though another volcano god, with a different nature, may be unaffected by cold but carry another limitation.

Repeated attempts to change a god's nature, carried out over decades or centuries, sometimes show success. Most often, however, attempts to change a god's nature drive that god insane, and even relatively stable gods with changed natures tend to be eccentric and unhinged.

Not every god accepts his own nature, or even knows it. Wayang, the Black Puppet Mask, Celestial God of Silence and Minister of the Division of Endings in Yu-Shan's Bureau of Destiny, worries constantly that his own nature includes secret loyalty to the Neverborn. Some gods possess natures that shape their

## NATURE IN DESCRIPTION

In the descriptions of gods throughout this book and in others, nature is seldom expressed in a perfectly succinct manner. Unlike Strength or Motivation, nature varies in scope from god to god. Some gods have natures that express themselves no more strongly than a physical trait that manifests no matter how the god changes his shape. Others gods have natures so all-encompassing they take up the entire god's description. In general, any part of a god's description expressed in absolute terms, such as a dryad's inability to use violence in defense of its tree (p. 36) or a bloody hand's bloody hand (p. 31), may be a manifestation of that god's nature. Some gods have natures so trivially unrestrictive as to be non-issues, while others are utterly defined by their natures and barely possess free will as mortals understand it.

For Storytellers, divine nature is a wildcard. Storytellers wishing to run games in which gods are inhuman can emphasize how a god's nature shapes him, while Storytellers wishing to run games in which gods represent little more than people in costume can play down emphasis on divine nature or even render it utterly trivial. As different gods express their natures at different magnitudes, a Storyteller need not commit fully to either of these extremes during the length of a series.

behavior fundamentally, even on levels beyond their own comprehension.

## FORM

Gods have mutable shapes. A god's body is a reflection of his nature and his domain. More importantly, the elements of a god's form relating to his domain changes if the domain changes. Ahlat began life as the god of bull-walrus mating duels, and in those days, he appeared as an anthropomorphic bull walrus, girded in armor and with a great spear. When he was promoted to Southern God of Cattle, he shed his walrus traits and took on a bovine appearance. His form changed again when he was promoted to Southern God of War and Cattle—Ahlat is now a great bull-headed warrior.

Some gods draw most of their form from their nature and shift appearance very little or not at all if reassigned. This is common amongst gods who began life as mortals. Other gods have forms most strongly influenced

by their domains, and become almost unrecognizable when they're promoted or transferred.

The forms of the gods also change under the influence of worship. A god worshipped as patron of crows will assume corvine appearance even if crows don't actually fall under the god's area of influence. (And if the worship provides the god with new Charms, they may be related to crows.)

The gods don't entirely control the nature of their shifting forms. Gods who possess shapeshifting Charms can often choose how their second shape looks, but still have little to no power over their true forms' appearance.

### SANCTUM

A god's sanctum is a creation of her own soul, a pocket bored through immaterial reality and into Elsewhere. A god with a sanctum never lacks for shelter or repose, and will re-form in her sanctum if killed.

Sanctums have natures tailored to the personalities and positions of the deities whose Essence forged them. The God of the Imperial City lives in an opulent throne room, while the Mammoth Avatar resides in a grand open hall that doubles as a mammoth graveyard. Sanctums created on demesnes possess the properties of manses, acting as a manse of a level equal to the god's dots in the Sanctum Background, up to a maximum of the demesne's rating. These powered sanctums don't naturally create hearthstones, but can be engineered to. Gods lucky enough to possess demesnes are always automatically attuned; others may attune only with the god's permission. (If using the manse creation system in **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex**, assume that sanctum hearthstones must be bought up from rating 0 at one point per level, instead of starting at a level equal to the sanctum's manse rating. Whether or not the sanctum has a hearthstone, its divine owner is considered the hearthstone bearer for the purposes of relevant manse powers, unless the god grants those abilities to another voluntarily. Sanctums may never possess the *Otherworld Gate* power—gods who want to travel to Heaven have to make the journey to one of the 61 Yu-Shan gates.) Capping a demesne with a material manse renders powerless any sanctums that draw from the demesnes. It is illegal for a god to prevent a Celestial Exalt from capping a demesne, but in these dark times, few gods let Celestial law discourage them from protecting their homes.

Immaterial doors connect Creation to each sanctum. Materially, these usually appear as little more than coincidental occult symbols—an arch created by two trees, an old doorway lying on the ground, a window

in a crumbling well, a crevice under a bush, a mirror or a small shrine. Recognizing or finding such a doorway requires either success on a (Perception + Occult) roll at difficulty 3 or the ability to sense immaterial beings. Only immaterial beings, or those capable of becoming immaterial, can pass through those portals, though one of the latter can guide up to (its Essence) material guests on a single trip through a sanctum door. A sanctum's owner can deny access to any being whose Essence score is lower than hers. Most also defend their sanctums through other mundane or magical means. **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. II—The White Treatise**, p. 54, presents the spell *Open the Spirit Doorway*, by which a sorcerer of the Terrestrial Circle may enter a spirit's sanctum without the means to become immaterial.

Heaven requires every god to keep a writing desk in his sanctum, an artifact often elaborately carved and inlaid with one of the magical materials. Within the desk drawers are stored infinite supplies of silk paper and fine ink, and resting in the upper right corner is a prayer fire or other device through which the god may send reports to Yu-Shan. Even a god who can't normally write can use this desk, although it does nothing to improve his skill—a god who can't write and who possesses no hands will find his sanctum's desk endows him with the ability to pick up a pen and make marks on silk paper, but grants him no literacy. The endless filing ghettos of Heaven are filled with unread and illegible reports.

Celestial gods don't usually have sanctums in Creation. Instead, Celestial gods make their sanctums in Yu-Shan, away from risk and at the center of divine culture. Celestial gods with no individual sanctums within Yu-Shan treat Heaven itself as their sanctum. Some Celestial gods maintain sanctums in Creation as well—normally, a god possesses only one sanctum, but a Celestial god may have a sanctum in Creation and another in Yu-Shan. For this reason, Celestial gods are much more difficult to permanently kill than Terrestrial gods.

### GROWTH

While a god's power normally depends on her place within the Celestial Order, and increases most easily through the accumulation of worship, a few gods cultivate personal puissance as mortals do.

Most don't. Gods live in comfort in Creation and Yu-Shan. They don't get sick or hungry. Most have no reason to believe they may someday die. Almost all have jade-clad job security. Gods are fickle because they've no reason not to be. For most beings used to thousands of years of idle boredom, lazing about in perfect material







## NEW BACKGROUND: SANCTUM

Any god with Essence 2 or greater may construct a sanctum in a manner appropriate to his nature. A spider-god may need to spin a web. The Mammoth Avatar gathered the bones of fallen mammoths and lashed them together with mammoth leather. Some gods must seek out physical components and bring them into Elsewhere to build their sanctums, while others can create sanctums without supplies.

Gods who fully trust each other, or under the orders of a superior, may combine their sanctums. To create a combined sanctum, the gods must create a number of sanctums equal to the desired sanctum's level, each at the level immediately below the desired sanctum's level. Combining the sanctums takes as much time as it would to build a new sanctum at the level below the desired sanctum's level. So, to create a combined four-dot Sanctum, four gods must all create three-dot Sanctums, and then labor for a decade to combine them together.

An enemy who gains entrance to a sanctum may destroy it from within. Certain highly destructive powers can destroy a sanctum from within in much less time than given below—the following times are for those who wish to destroy a sanctum by mundane means. Dissolving a sanctum's door into the Deep Wyld or Total Chaos also destroys that sanctum and anyone inside at the time.

Trait	Effect
X	No sanctum. Some gods who travel much in their duties, or who have no patience for labor or who, due to their natures, must create sanctums by particularly laborious or unpleasant means, simply go without.
•	A small sanctum, no more than one room. Comfortable by mortal standards, but incredibly poor by the standards of gods. Requires a season of labor to create or a scene of unsuccessfully opposed destruction to eliminate entirely.
••	A larger sanctum, with no more than five rooms. Sumptuous by mortal standards, and the bare minimum most gods are able to tolerate for long-term living. One year of work transforms a one-dot sanctum into a two-dot sanctum. One day of damaging a two-dot sanctum reduces it to one dot.
•••	A very large sanctum, the size of a villa—approximately 25 rooms. A god may labor for a decade to transform a two-dot sanctum into a three-dot sanctum. Very few gods ever bother to build sanctums rated above three dots. One day of damaging a three-dot sanctum reduces it to two dots.
••••	A huge sanctum, with more than 100 rooms and an “outside” (an area within the sanctum that appears as if it were outdoors, whether a courtyard or a thick forest surrounding a mansion). Sanctums are always closed spaces, and even if they appear to possess frontiers, an explorer will eventually find trees too thick to pass, an adamant wall or the like. A god must labor for a century to transform a three-dot sanctum into a four-dot sanctum. A week of damaging a four-dot sanctum reduces it to three dots.
•••••	A massive sanctum, the size of a small town, with dozens of separate structures of two- or three-dot size and at least five of four-dot size, plus a sprawling “outdoors.” A god must labor for five centuries or more to transform a four-dot sanctum into a five-dot sanctum, and enemies who wish to reduce a five-dot sanctum to four dots must engage in concerted destruction for a week to do so.

Gods have a much easier time moving an existing sanctum than creating a new one. A god may spend a number of weeks equal to the sanctum's rating sealing his home from Creation. Then, the god can travel any distance and spend an equal amount of time opening a new door.

comfort with no goals beyond filling out the minimum of paperwork and waiting for tomorrow, the trouble and stress of even five minutes of concentrated study or effort isn't worth the miniscule bother.

### MORTAL FIELDS OF STUDY

Gods who learn as mortals do most commonly learn Abilities. Gods have long lives. Some have hobbies, whether playing a game of Gateway with the chief of the nearest village once a year, painting pictures of a beloved landscape, sculpting, memorizing or composing poetry or appreciating (and incidentally appraising) the value of gemstones. Gods can learn mundane skills as easily as mortals, though the fickle divine attention span often ensures that gods take much longer, as they are often unwilling to devote the attention necessary for effective study.

To a limited extent, divinities can also improve their physical forms, but they reach limits quickly. Raw potential is a matter of position in the Celestial Order. Gods can generally raise Attributes by one or two dots through dedicated and arduous self-improvement regimens, but few bother.

Thaumaturgy is the art by which mortals perform the miracles the least gods use to maintain Creation. While most gods are confined to miracles within their own domain, divinities who study may learn thaumaturgy as mortals practice it. See **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex** for full thaumaturgy rules. Many gods learn the Arts of Elemental Summoning, Weather-Working and Husbandry to better control the lands in their domain, and the Art of Astrology to learn the will of Heaven—or at least see where its gaze falls. Fewer learn the Arts of Demon Summoning or the Dead.

### SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

Gods can learn Terrestrial Circle Sorcery once they reach Essence 3 and Celestial Circle Sorcery once they reach Essence 5. Along with supernatural martial arts, sorcery is one of the few ways gods can increase their personal puissance without the aid of some sort of infrastructure—Bureaucracy, court or cult.

Once, gods had as arduous a time learning sorcery as any mortal skill, but in the First Age, the Solar sorcerers of the Salinan School performed the great Salinan Working. The Working imprinted the principles of sorcery into Creation's fabric, altering the nature of all gods and elementals. Since that time, while gods must labor just as hard to learn sorcery as mortals do, gods' natures prevent them from detesting the commitment of time and attention necessary any more than a mortal would.

While this has been a great boon for gods who seek personal might, it comes with a price. No sorcerer-god may flatly refuse to teach sorcery to an Exalt. A god may set conditions for the would-be student to meet, but never impossible conditions. The gods are fully aware of this compulsion, and opinion amongst the sorcerer-gods is divided between those gods who resent the obligation and those who consider it a fair trade.

Some gods with darker natures may learn necromancy instead of sorcery, but no necromancer has ever performed a Working. Necromancy comes naturally to no god, not even those who favor it over sorcery, and would-be necromancer divinities find the learning of the black art as arduous as does any mortal or Exalt.

### SUPERNATURAL MARTIAL ARTS

Any god can learn Terrestrial martial arts, meeting prerequisites normally. Only gods of Essence 6 or higher can learn Celestial martial arts. The martial arts styles called the Four Arguments of Virtue are an exception to this rule—gods may learn these Charms with Essence as low as 3. (See **The Imperfect Lotus**, available at <http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/>, for the Four Arguments of Virtue.)

Though gods have as much difficulty learning supernatural martial arts as they do learning any foreign magic, the Martial Arts World offers an incentive for gods of a certain persuasion. A few gods who spend much time amongst humanity tire of Terrestrial court politics and long for meritorious recognition. While some gods learn supernatural martial arts to augment their own power, others learn simply as a way of joining a new subculture. Divine martial artists are well respected, and a god of low status in the Terrestrial courts may stride with head held high amongst the martial artists in Creation's arenas.

### REPRODUCTION

Under some circumstances, laid out by the Primordials during prehistory, certain types of gods generate spontaneously. The creation of a new thing always creates a new least god to oversee that thing. Other gods are created when a spirit uses the Endowment Charm (see p. 146) to raise a mortal's Essence from 3 to 4. But most commonly, gods reproduce through sex.

Many gods can grow pregnant or sire children regardless of apparent gender. Some must use magic to assume alternate genders, while others, who possess no other form-changing ability, can alter their genders for reproductive purposes. Divine mothers can often choose the speed at which a pregnancy occurs, whether allowing it to last years or achieving





full gestation in seconds. Some gods may couple with inanimate objects or themselves, while others must go through the process of intercourse with another god of differing gender.

Gods seldom bring children into the world casually, but many Terrestrial deities have children in order to cultivate loyal servants. Once a divine child is born, influential parents can usually petition Heaven through the local Terrestrial court to have the child assigned to some domain or other. Gods created through sexual reproduction usually have natures resembling those of their parents and are often assigned duties fitting this nature. Such gods stand in stark contrast to the gods created by Primordial processes, who have natures chosen for their intended domains rather than domains chosen to fit preexisting natures.

Most gods can have children with mortals, as well. The God-Blooded are mortals with divine traits, often an unusual appearance and the ability to channel Essence and learn Charms reminiscent of their parents'.

## DEATH

Though gods are immortal with regards to age, exposure and starvation (barring unusual natures), they can die by violence—but death by violence means different things

to a god than to a mortal. For gods, death is not usually permanent. They reincarnate, but as themselves.


The corpse of a murdered god first dematerializes (sometimes immediately when killed, sometimes shortly afterward), then disperses into ambient Essence at the end of the scene. A god with a sanctum is certain to reconstitute inside that sanctum within weeks or months. Once resurrected, the god's mote pool is empty, but it is otherwise fully healed. A dead god's panoply of artifacts (see p. 169) does *not* dematerialize, and resurrected gods must often go to great lengths to recollect their belongings.

A dead god of Essence 2 or higher who lacks a sanctum can revive as well, but only if the god's domain survives. Such a god reappears fully healed somewhere within his domain . . . usually. Sometimes, dead gods with no sanctums fail to resurrect, or do so years or decades later.

A slain god without domain or sanctum perishes utterly, as if slain by the Ghost-Eating Technique. Gods who lack domains are very cautious about the safety of their sanctums.

Living gods have power over gods they've killed. When one god kills another, the killer may ensure the





dead god never revives—even if the dead god possesses a sanctum. The killer may bind the dead god to service upon revival, to a single task indefinitely or to complete service for a year and a day. The killer may forge the god's corpse into a starmetal with a rating equal to half the victim's Essence (round up). Artifacts forged in such a manner are unlike regular starmetal artifacts in that the god within is conscious (though not in agony, as with ghosts bound in soulsteel) and may conceivably be restored to his former stature. Finally, the killer may do nothing save make it clear she *could* have done more. Sidereal Exalted with the Charm called Terminal Sanction (see **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Sidereals**, p. 176) possess these abilities as well, save that a god forged into an artifact by a Sidereal remains bound only for a year and a day.

When a god dies permanently through means such as the Ghost-Eating Technique or murder by another god, the dead god's sanctum usually fades from existence. Sometimes, this dissolution is immediate, but for other gods, the process takes days or weeks. A very few rare gods leave sanctums that survive forever—those who find such empty dwellings prize them much.

## TERRESTRIAL GODS AND OTHERS

Gods don't exist in a vacuum. Though Celestial law says they should keep to themselves, the gods of Creation are part of the world and change it as it changes them.

### THE HUNDRED GODS HERESY

Due to the Terrestrial gods' immaterial nature, they interact with the mortals of Creation less than do elementals; nevertheless, congress between mortal and god is fairly common. The Hundred Gods Heresy is not a single cult or organization of cults, but rather a term adopted by the Immaculate Order to describe any sort of cult in which mortals worship the gods.

Throughout most of Creation, save in the Realm, in the shadowlands and in places where powerful organizations such as the forces of the Perfect of Paragon hold sway, a local god or Terrestrial court holds power over the mortal populace. Even in places where the little gods don't rule directly, a single divinity or Terrestrial court usually collects all the prayers and sacrifices and, in return, protects its territory from outside supernatural influence. In small communities, the local gods tend to be weak and visible. A weak god must demonstrate his power on a regular basis to maintain a dedicated cult, while stronger gods hold more remote positions, cultivating awe and minimizing resentment.

(A god does not hold this position everywhere. Elementals, raksha, ghosts, septa of beastmen, outcaste Dragon-Bloods, Lunar Exalts, powerful God-Blooded and other supernatural beings may command a region's worship. Almost everywhere in Creation, *some* potent being holds the position described here, however.)


Most successful communities in Creation possess a priest or shaman (or a whole class of such) who specializes in interacting with the gods. The priest ensures local gods are placated and don't demand too much of the community. The community goes about its business confident that the priest is doing her job, dealing with the local gods so others don't have to.

In some communities, the priest and the gods work together to squeeze the most out of the populace. In others, the priest and the community work together to keep the gods appeased with minimal cost to the mortals. Most mortal-god relationships balance between these two extremes, with the priest working largely on the side of the community but still taking advantage of her privileged position to acquire wealth and excuse herself from certain community taboos. In response to this, most priests are feared by their native communities and suffer a lack of regular interaction with their fellow mortals. Often, this increases the priest's alienation and sense of entitlement, in a cycle that eventually reaches equilibrium once the priest must balance how much the community needs her with how much it's willing to put up with from her. (And few priests, just as few people, work only from self-interest, while most want to aid their community to some extent.) The more often the local god or spirit court makes itself known to the populace, the more alienated the priest tends to feel.

Whenever a new power appears in the region, such as a spirit or an Exalt, the people will seek to contact their priest, who will try to contact the local divinity or spirit court. A god who seeks new worshipers (or a Solar who wishes to build a new nation) must contend with any local gods happy with the status quo. Many communities will also arm themselves, if they've had good fortune driving off rogue gods in the past, and *every* community contains someone who will try to use the new entity's appearance to advance her own agenda, whether that agenda be the harmless selling of home-crafted idols or maneuvering to have the paramour of the most desirable young man of the village sacrificed so her daughter can marry him instead.

In larger communities, this pattern plays out over larger numbers of people and longer spans of time. A strong god may seldom appear to his followers, concerning





himself with Terrestrial court politics the rest of the time. Such a god may cultivate a powerful priestly order, capable of dealing with supernatural threats itself. The order of priests, similar to the singular shaman, placates the god (or ensures the community does so), draws tribute for his work and protects his interests from outside threats.

## RIVAL FAITHS

Many other forces throughout Creation oppose gods who seek to establish cults. The most potent impediments to the spread of the Hundred Gods Heresy are its competitors, movements that oppose the gods because both sides seek the same thing: power over mortals.

### THE IMMACULATE ORDER

In places where the Immaculate Order holds sway, a temple of Immaculate monks tames the local gods. The Immaculates draw up a schedule by which they worship the local deities, and all the Immaculates work together to ensure the prayers of the Dragon-Blooded monks are the only worship the local spirits get. During scheduled festivals, the monks lead the mortal populace in veneration of the gods according to the Immaculate calendar. The Immaculate Order doesn't consider the calendar-scheduled festival veneration worship, as the monks intercede and there's no direct interaction between god and worshiper, but such acknowledgement does provide Essence to the gods receiving veneration. Gods who openly demand worship from the mortal population, beyond that which the calendar provides, face punishment by detachments of skilled supernatural martial artists. So do mortals who try to win the Terrestrial Bureaucracy's favor.

According to the Immaculate Philosophy, mortals who worship gods are confused, criminals or victims. The gods of Creation are limited beings, unlike the transcendent and numinous Elemental Dragons. Only one who misunderstands the nature of the little gods would offer up selfless worship, because the Terrestrial gods are unworthy of such devotion—one should be concerned only with one's own spiritual advancement (which includes, for mortals, perfect devotion to the desires of the Dragon-Blooded). Worship in search of the gods' favor is bribery. The place of the Terrestrial Bureaucracy is to ensure the correct progress of impartial destiny as decided by the Elemental Dragons' flawless judgment, and a mortal who coaxes favors from a god upsets destiny's course. Even if the god accepts the veneration but shows the mortal no favor, such behavior still retards the mortal's progress along the path of reincarnation. A god who demands worship through threat is a simple extortionist.

The Immaculate Order has had great success taming the spirit courts in the Realm's area of control. The monks attempt to ensure all the gods the monks favor receive limited prayer, deal with uncooperative spirits and reassure the local mortal population that all mortals who contemplate the Noble Insights and follow the Diligent Practices will progress along the path to incarnation as Terrestrial Exalts.

Weak gods who would otherwise receive no veneration at all often become devoted followers of the Immaculate Order. The monks often promote the domains of such spirits to increase the power and loyalty of the monks' allies, and in places where the Immaculate Order has held sway for the longest, the most powerful gods are often Immaculate devotees. Spirits who believe they'd fare better without the Immaculate calendar often resent the Order, but the Immaculate Order has a far easier time dispatching new monks to troublesome spirit courts than the courts have of recruiting new gods to fight the Immaculates. Spirit courts usually lose this conflict and submit. Still, many gods try to cultivate small cults under the Immaculates' noses. Some even succeed, with the Hundred God Heresy existing in tiny pockets throughout Immaculate-controlled lands.


Most gods oppose the Immaculate Philosophy because the monks make accruing cults inconvenient or impossible. Few gods oppose the Immaculate Philosophy because the Immaculate doctrine of reincarnation is a sham.

### THE ANCESTOR CULT

Next to the Immaculate Order, the ancestor cult is the greatest threat to gods who wish mortal cults. The ancestor cult declares the gods unworthy of worship and promises the patronage of ancestors' ghosts. For mortals, the worship of mortal ancestors has its advantages—having once been human, ghosts understand humanity better than gods ever can. Also, ghosts often attach sentimental value to the well-being of their descendants, while gods often see their worshipers as pawns. For mortals used to the arbitrary favor of capricious divinities, the ancestor cult has much to offer.

The gods don't approve of this.

In shadowlands, where ghosts have the advantage, the ancestor cult is entrenched. Beyond the shadowlands, the battle between the Hundred Gods Heresy and the ancestor cult is as fierce as that between the Terrestrial gods and the Immaculate Order. Each side has trouble affecting the other directly—ghosts possess magic to communicate with humanity from the Underworld, which gods cannot usually reach. These



ghosts are seldom strong enough to take on gods directly, though. Each competes for the hearts and minds of mortals, alternating offers and threats and turning followers against each other.

As the Abyssal Exalted become more active in Creation, the gods realize that the ancestor cult is often a front for the Deathlords and the forces of Oblivion. This reinforces what the gods believed all along—ancestor worship is an affront to the natural cycles of Creation and a danger to the Celestial Order. The hope it offers Creation's mortals is as much a lie as the Immaculate Order's promises.

## THE FAIR FOLK

Almost all gods hate and fear the Fair Folk, but that doesn't mean all dealings between the gods and the Fair Folk are hostile. Young gods, those not survivors of the invasion following the Great Contagion, know of the ancient massacre only from stories. Older gods often understand necessity. Tempers, once hot at the damage to Creation, have cooled over the course of almost eight centuries.

In some Terrestrial courts, the perception of collusion with the Fair Folk can lead to exile—and in such courts, enemies use accusation of such things to strike at each other. In other Terrestrial courts, places where the nearby Fair Folk are seldom hostile, uneasy peace blossoms into unsteady alliance. Gods who ally with the Fair Folk are often wary, but even in the aftermath of the Contagion, those who define their enemies along purely ideological grounds fall before rivals willing to be more flexible and pragmatic in their alliances.

## DEMONS

Demons are the gods' reminder that the Yozis still live. Every demon in Creation represents a crack in the prison of Malfeas. Though the gods understand the Incarnae placed these cracks deliberately, the presence of demons in Creation is still unnerving. And, of course, demons free in Creation may cause much damage before they're sent back to Hell.

There's another reason for gods to fear demons. A free demon in a god's territory is almost always the result of a rent in fate. Such a twist often brings attention from Heaven, and criminal gods dislike falling under Yu-Shan's eye. In the presence of a demon, gods must curb their activities, lest Celestial peacekeepers, dispatched by Heaven to banish the Yozis' servant, spy the gods breaking Celestial law. No god enjoys paying the bribes most Celestial censors demand when presented with evidence of criminal activities.

## THE TERRESTRIAL BUREAUCRACY

The Five Elemental Dragons are Mela, Pasiap, Hesiesh, Daana'd and Sextes Jylis. The most potent gods in Creation, the Five Elemental Dragons rest atop the Terrestrial Bureaucracy.

Similar to the Incarnae and the greatest of demons, the Five Elemental Dragons are not limited to one location. All five move through the dragon lines of Creation. Without the Five Elemental Dragons, there would be no demesnes and no geomancy. Mela also moves ceaselessly throughout Creation's atmosphere. Mela renews it. Without Mela, the air would grow stale. Daana'd moves through Creation's waters as well as Gaia's dragon lines, bringing the tides and causing rivers to flow. Though lesser gods and elementals of weather bring specific rain, clear skies or storms, Mela and Daana'd oversee all climate. The Dragon of Wood, Sextes Jylis, oversees growth. Together, these three Elemental Dragons permit mortal life.

Hesiesh and Pasiap sleep. In ancient aeons, they, too, moved about the world. Earthquakes cracked the land. Volcanoes pierced the crust. Pasiap and Daana'd brought tidal waves and tsunamis. Hesiesh, Daana'd and Mela brought hurricanes. In those primeval climes, hardier life prevailed. The Dragon Kings ruled, and the behemoths. When the Primordials brought forth the race of man on the face of Creation, Gaia ordered her Dragons of Fire and Earth to lay down and rest. The world's climate grew mild, that the young race could survive and multiply. The fitful slumber of Hesiesh and Pasiap brings earthquakes and volcanoes still, but in much reduced numbers. Yet, the dominion of man over Creation is but an eyeblink to a Primordial, and one day, Gaia may order her Dragons of Fire and Earth to wake again.

Though the Elemental Dragons are powerful and high-ranking, they are a step removed from the governance of the Terrestrial Bureaucracy. They tend to their duties as they always have and coalesce only rarely at the elemental poles to hold court.

The real Terrestrial Bureaucracy is made up of the Terrestrial courts. Each court is unique. As the Five Elemental Dragons designed the courts, each functioned to ensure the gods carried out their proper duties in the absence of the Primordials and the five original elementals. The Terrestrial courts' first and foremost duty is to ensure Heaven is properly informed of the goings-on in Creation. The gods of Creation watch the causality of Creation and send paperwork to Yu-Shan, where the Celestial gods monitor everything and use the information submitted by Terrestrial courts to inform the planning of fate.







## THEY'RE ALL JERKS?

They're not.

Benevolent gods exist. Humble and dutiful gods who obey Heaven's laws exist. Gods who break the laws of Heaven and intercede in mortal affairs for compassion's sake exist.

They're just rare. Gods who don't break Heaven's laws are unseen by man and beast. Without cults, unwilling to engage in underhanded maneuvers and bereft of the support of virtuous Celestial censors, such gods are at significant tactical disadvantage against less scrupulous rivals. Where the criminal gods are most powerful and tyrannical, they've stripped their law-abiding peers of power, banished them to the lowest rungs of the Terrestrial court ranks, pressed them into servitude, forged them into artifacts or just killed them permanently, terrifying all the other local gods into obedience. In less dystopian courts, law-abiding gods are still quickly pushed to the bottom of society.

More gods started out virtuous than exist now. More than a millennium of temptation since the Usurpation and more than 700 years since the Great Contagion have lead many gods astray, and they've grown comfortable. In most of Creation, while outright divine tyranny rules not, lesser corruption is omnipresent. The Celestial Order should self-police, but it doesn't and hasn't for a long time, and gods succumb to the logic of "It's okay because everybody's doing it" as easily as do mortals.

Even self-interested gods with no respect for Heaven's laws are not always without sympathetic traits. These gods may yearn for friendship, seek equitable deals with mortal communities, express casual charity or show selfless dedication to friends. True malevolence amongst the Terrestrial Bureaucracy is rare (though more common in the higher ranks), and while some malevolent gods use their ruthlessness to rise to positions of power, others lack the aptitude and merely become unpopular outcasts from the Terrestrial courts, reduced to bullying mortal communities. Likewise, gods admire a charismatic leader who puts forth concern for her followers as much as anyone, and such gods often rise in the Terrestrial Bureaucracy as long as they don't inconvenience their superiors and until their scruples affect their ability to get things done.

Furthermore, many gods who lead cults and demand worship from mortals in exchange for basic protection rationalize their actions as protecting mortals from more dangerous foes. In areas where a powerful being doesn't offer protection to the mortal populace, supernatural dangers can run rampant, and mortals often have little means of defending themselves. Tyrants they may be, but the Terrestrial gods of the Hundred Gods Heresy often serve to ward away Fair Folk or other, less savory gods. One who'd remove a tyrant had best have a plan for filling the resulting power vacuum.

Gods who seek to perform their duties, aid their fellows or aid humanity out of selfless devotion and with painless means, and who *succeed*, are rarest, and often fall after a time to jealous rivals, the temptation of indolence or the weight of dependents. Storytellers interested in presenting a benevolent, effective and powerful god can make such a character more poignant by stressing the scarcity of such figures and the fragility of their positions in the fallen Second Age.

Once, the Terrestrial Bureaucracy was one organization with many branches, but that time has long passed. Most courts now function semi-autonomously, feuding amongst each other and professing only rough fealty to Heaven.

## THE COURT OF SEASONS

Worshipped in many cultures as Heaven's representatives to Creation, known by name to all savants of the divine, its favor sought by many, admired even by other spirits, the Court of Seasons is made up of

the gods of the months. Those the Court of Seasons favor prosper. Its devotees claim the Court of Seasons brings the harvests of the Season of Wood and the chill of the Season of Air. Life and death both are the Court of Seasons' purview. Records scavenged from the First Age show the people of that time venerated the Court of Seasons alongside the Incarnae. Wherever the Immaculate Faith holds no absolute power over the hearts and minds of mortals, the people love and fear the Court of Seasons: they seek its approval and dread its wrath.


During the First Age, the Court of Seasons' duty was to organize the lavish festivals that accompanied the end and beginning of every month, and the even more lavish festivals that accompanied the end and beginning of every season. The Court of Seasons was an assignment for gods fabulous in appearance and manner. At the beginning of the First Age, the gods of the Court of Seasons were already famed, not for accomplishment but for their fame itself. The role of a month god is ceremonial, with few actual duties, and so, the Court's gods were chosen for their beauty, their wit, their charm and their utter incompetence at whatever they oversaw before the Five Elemental Dragons transferred them. The Dragons chose the month gods well for their roles, for the Court's membership proved magnificent as carousers. So well did the Court of Seasons enliven celebrations that Celestial gods began requesting parties and gatherings in Heaven be arranged by the Court of Seasons as well. Devoted to self-promotion, the Court incorporated its iconography into the banners of these festivals, and its fame grew ever greater.

When the Usurpation brought the Deliberative to its end, the celebrations in Creation ceased, but the

Heavenly parties continued. Unlike other Terrestrial gods, many of whom lost face in the eyes of Heaven as their duties lost relevance and their domains shrank, the month gods retained their reputation as divine celebrities. They became sought-after guests even at the parties they didn't arrange. Yet, as Terrestrial gods, the month gods could not make Heaven their permanent home. Many Celestial gods sought to promote the Court to Celestial status, on the basis that months are just as easily called abstractions as concrete. The Court initially considered these offers, but just before the promotion was finalized, they rejected the opportunity. The gods of the Court had seen another path.

Over the length of the Shogunate, the Court of Seasons established its reputation as gods willing to deal with the Dragon-Blooded. Though the month gods may have been little more than socialites, they had the ears of many of Heaven's greatest gods and arranged minor favors for those mortals and Dragon-Blooded who pleased these gods, always stringing along their chosen with grander promises, never quite delivering. By the time of the Usurpation, the Court had cemented its position as the gods with whom to speak to catch Heaven's ear.





The Deliberative had always taken as its doctrine that mortals need not understand the complexities of Heaven's working, and the Shogunate had always concealed from Creation's peoples the degree to which Heaven disfavored the Dragon-Blooded. The gods who rose to prominence in the Contagion's wake spread self-aggrandizing lies, painting themselves as far more vital to Creation's welfare than they really were. Some truth survived this endless cascade of misinformation, but always tainted by word of mouth and the agendas of those in power. Common knowledge amongst Creation's mortals in the Age of Sorrows is that the Court of Seasons turns the seasons themselves, intercedes in Heavenly affairs on mortals' behalf, brings plenty and leads celebrations. From a few seeds of truth, the Court cultivates a grand fallacy.

The Court of Seasons is migratory and gathers within the domains of other spirit courts. The gods of the months choose courts overawed by the Court of Seasons' reputation and settle within these domains for however long they're tolerated. Usually, this amounts to a season, but sometimes, it's as short as a month or as long as a full year. While the gods of the months have settled, word spreads amongst nearby mortals that the Court of Seasons is in session, and people visit seeking the Court's favor. Performers display their talents, martial artists stage tournaments, rulers send emissaries and heroes boast of their great deeds. Those whom the Court favors, Heaven favors as well, for the gods of the Court of Seasons use their reputation within Yu-Shan to provide for those who impress them. The bulk of Celestial gods believe the Court of Seasons should be placed in charge of the conservative Bureau of Seasons—the same Bureau that does the actual work of plotting the world's weather and seasons' turning, for which the Court of Seasons takes credit. As the Court of Seasons has no expertise ruling large bureaucracies and the Bureau of Seasons is not hesitant to use its Aerial Legion against political rivals, this is unlikely to happen.

For much of the year, four-fifths of the court's gods are absent. At any given moment, only the gods of the preceding, current and upcoming months see fit to attend, with the gods of the current month reigning over the court. The rest travel Creation and exult in their fame or visit Heaven and carouse—the exception is Calibration and the Carnival of Meetings, which the gods of the Court of Seasons organize and which every month god attends to ensure no other god of the Court claims that time. Since Calibration's addition to the

calendar of Creation, the gods of the Court of Seasons have squabbled endlessly as to who should reign during the five days. None wish to allow any other month's god to have it, and no god wishes to join the Court only to rule five days while every other rules 28.

#### THE MONTH GODS

**Ascending Air:** The Unseen are invisible sprites who manifest through touch and whisper. Petty, malicious and prone to theft, the Unseen are a thorn in the Court's side—their antics often bring ill will to the other month gods from whoever hosts the Court.

**Resplendent Air:** The Divine One, a tall woman with white hair and eyes, perpetually pregnant. Every 10 years, she gives birth to rainbows, clouds or monsters. She is proud of these children and takes terrible vengeance on anyone who fails to honor them.

**Descending Air:** The Dreamer, an emaciated being of variable gender. The Dreamer's favor is difficult to earn. The Dreamer is a social gadfly amongst spirits; mortals who wish to speak to the Dreamer must sleep for three days after imbibing a tincture made from poisonous mushrooms and distilled river water. The god visits these mortals in their dreams. The Dreamer also has an addiction—he craves to devour the hair of dying old men and women. Those who satisfy his craving find his favor easy to earn, but his gifts are less lavish than the other gods of the Court of Seasons as a result.

**Ascending Water:** The Cold Roars are a pair of young white spirit bears. Long ago, they claim, the race of omen dogs did them a terrible slight, and now, the Cold Roars prefer to spend all their time stalking the Northern wastes hunting the canines. Naïve when comes to the particulars of Court of Seasons politics, the Cold Roars are often the butt of jokes made by other month gods.

**Resplendent Water:** The Three is a trio of grandfather, father and son, made entirely of ice. They've taken inspiration from the Seer and the Seven Fangs, and seek to usurp control of Ascending Water from the Cold Roars. The Three have not yet recruited the Dreamer into their scheme.

**Descending Water:** The White Terrors are small feline primates. Amongst the people of the North, the White Terrors are perhaps the most feared of the gods of the Court of Seasons, for with a look or a glance, the White Terrors may rob a mortal of the capacity to feel heat. Mortals cursed by the White Terrors have been known to burn themselves to death in attempts to feel again—or to freeze, unable to feel the onset of frostbite and succumbing to gangrene.





**Ascending Earth:** The Reflecting Silence is a white sand god of variable form. It appears sometimes as a pile of sand, sometimes a man and sometimes a beast—any beast. Alone amongst the gods of the Court of Seasons, the Reflecting Silence hates pointless discussion. The Reflecting Silence is unpopular amongst the other month gods.

**Resplendent Earth:** The Seer is a vain quartz-god who desires nothing more than to find the perfect angle through which to shine light through itself. The Seer grants favors only to those who bring it light sources when the sun is out of view. The Seer collects lamps and candles, but will not light them itself.

**Descending Earth:** The Whisperer, a powerful clay god. The Whisperer has lost control over his month to the Seer and the Seven Fangs, who have cursed him with near-immobility. Only water from the Uttermost West could free him from the paralysis, something the Seer and the Seven Fangs would do almost anything to prevent, for the Whisperer is wise, cunning and, while mobile, a terrifying combatant.

**Ascending Wood:** The Seven Fangs (see pp. 61-62) is a group of bull-sized fox gods who hunt men as men hunt foxes.

**Resplendent Wood:** The Riddling Tree is a brown-skinned god with leaves for hair. The Riddling Tree is well-connected amongst the Celestial gods of the Bureau of Nature, and the favor he shows petitioners usually relates to animals or knowledge of same.

**Descending Wood:** The Twin is a wooden god with two bodies, each eight feet tall. To converse with the Twin, one must touch one of its two bodies—one body takes a postulant to a complex maze, the other to a simple maze filled with terrible dangers. The postulant must traverse the maze within a single day to speak to the god, or else serve it for a month. The Twin is often surrounded by an entourage of servants who failed.

**Ascending Fire:** The Golden Stars are six plain sisters identical save for the birthmarks on their left

ankles. The Golden Stars fall in love frequently, and shower the objects of their pursuit with gifts, but wax wroth at any lovers who can't tell them apart.

**Resplendent Fire:** The Pinion is a flame in the shape of a man or a large bird. Powerful and fickle, the Pinion takes terrible revenge on postulants whose requests the god finds trivial, sometimes destroying whole villages. The gifts the god does grant are well worth the risk, however.

**Descending Fire:** The Desert Noon is a tall, black-skinned woman with hematite eyes and a penchant for asking troublesome questions. She will grant favors to those who offer her lodging for a period between the months of Resplendent Air to Ascending Fire; the duration of the lodging depends on the favor's magnitude. While a guest, her questions often cause trouble for her hosts. Many consider her the most approachable of the gods of the Court of Seasons.

### USING THE COURT OF SEASONS

The gods of the Court of Seasons make for effective allies and enemies. Their motivation is largely to enjoy life and accrue fame, which can manifest in harmless or exploitative fashions. They possess little in the way of great magical might, with Essence scores of only 3 or 4—far lower than other Terrestrial gods with similar reputations. Yet, the social network of the gods of the Court of Seasons is vast. As an ally, the Court of Seasons provides Storytellers with a means to introduce any number of exotic gods into a series, because the Court of Seasons knows everyone. They're easy to introduce no matter where a Storyteller has set her game, because they can make court anywhere.

Moreover, the Court of Seasons is the perfect vehicle through which to introduce a circle of players' characters to Heaven, as Court members travel to the Celestial City of Yu-Shan often. For more information on the Heavenly City and the Celestial Court, see the upcoming **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. III—Yu-Shan.**



SO IS THIS FRIEND OF YOURS AS PRETTY AS YOU?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN...

YOU'LL SEE. HE'S RIGHT THROUGH HERE.

"HE"...



RUN! SAVE YOURSELF!

GSSSH!



URK!  
Y-YOU...

SLACK!



WONDERFUL, VANISHER.



YEAH, YEAH! NOW ARE YOU GONNA TELL ME WHO KILLED RAVENWING, OR WHAT?




# CHAPTER TWO THE ROLL OF TERRESTRIAL DIVINITIES

For every concept and thing of Creation, there is a commensurate god whose purpose is to protect and maintain the concept or thing. These gods were created to serve as the caretakers of the world so the Primordials could play the Games of Divinity instead of attending to its complications. When a new thing or concept comes into being, a god is assigned to it, and when the thing or concept is completely eradicated, its god fades away, is reassigned or persists in squalor. As the components of the world depend upon one another in a complex chain of reactions, the gods assume a bureaucracy with the most influential of their number at its pinnacle. From the least gods that sustain a speck of dust or a grain of rice to the Celestial Incarnae who watch over the heavenly bodies in the sky, all of Creation is attended by divinities.

In theory, all gods are part of the same perfect court, answering to the Unconquered Sun and their

own inherent sense of obligation. In practice, swathes of Creation's intricate tapestry are worn thin with the rot of the Underworld, the strains of the Yozis as they seek to escape their bonds, the aftershocks of elemental disruption and the endless siege of the Wyld. The gods of the Second Age are divided into often-antagonistic courts that do not even recognize each other's existence, much less manage Creation properly. Yu-Shan essentially remains a single court, if sometimes a fractious one, due to its proximity and importance to the Incarnae. Powerful Celestial gods may entertain vast gatherings of scheming guests and their entourages at one of the palatial estates that dot the Heavenly City, but everyone in Yu-Shan knows that such parties are pale reflections of the divine assembly that surrounds the Games of Divinity. The gods of Creation are not so unified.





Most Terrestrial gods are associated with concrete things rather than abstract concepts, and these separate interests lead to disparate goals. The perceived remoteness of the Celestial Court combines with local concerns to foster dissension within the ranks of the gods of Creation. Some gather according to their desire to protect their domains, while others merely seek to enhance their own influence. Potentates such as Gri-Fel, God of the Imperial City, naturally attract supplicants hoping to gain from their service, while gods such as the storm mother Sikunare intentionally amass hangers-on to boost their own status. When the Usurpation brought the Solars low, and their incomparable patron did nothing to help them, many gods of Creation felt that they had been left to their own devices. Other gods honor their ancient duties, whether due to dogmatic conviction or opportunistic hope of promotion. Creation's divine fabric has become a thousand ragged tapestries ruled by a thousand petty courts and defied by a thousand rebellious factions. Spirits great and small face the chaos of the Time of Tumult, and greet the return of the Solars as allies and foes, heroes and murderers, cat's-paws and kings.

## COMMON GODS

One can find common gods nearly everywhere in Creation—or everywhere throughout the appropriate region of Creation (dolphin spirits are common throughout Creation's oceans but seldom visit the great deserts of the South). Even when common gods are not seen, they exist immaterial, ensuring that the world continues to follow the course set by Fate and Heaven's Bureau of Destiny. Though every god is an individual, with a distinct name and personality, these are the broad groups to which many of the most common gods belong.

Absent are the field gods and the salt gods, both found in **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. I—The Blessed Isle** beginning on page 155. Field gods and salt gods play important roles in humanity's relationship with the divine, and are summarized here.

Field gods are the most common form of god in rustic spirit courts, overseeing agriculture. Throughout most of Creation, field gods remind humanity of the gods' importance by demanding that a small portion of each field be sown but not harvested. Some field gods maim or kill anyone who violates this edict. Field gods usually keep their sanctum entrances within these unharvested crops. Most field gods lack Charms capable of increasing their crops' yields, though the gods are loathe to admit this and often take credit for plenti-

ful crops while claiming bad harvests are the result of their displeasure.

Salt gods are notable for their impact on Creation's mortal economies. Aligned with Heaven's Bureau of Nature, the salt gods seek to keep their domain within nature's purview and out of the purview of the Bureau of Humanity. Salt gods therefore seek to prevent mortals from harvesting salt. As salt is vitally important for human survival (used as it is in the preservation of food), violent clashes between mortals and the salt gods were common in the early days following the Great Contagion. This settled into a pattern whereby mortal salt harvesters sacrificed some percentage of the salt's value to the local salt god in exchange for being left alone during salt gathering. The Immaculate Order disapproved of this sacrifice, but faced with the alternative of renewed hostilities between salt gods and humans, the Empress exercised her self-proclaimed authority as queen of Creation to set a standard sacrifice rate (which began at 2 percent) and used the Immaculate Order to ensure the salt gods agreed to it. For more information, see "The Salt Rate" in **Exalted**, p. 362.

## BAIJI

The playful dolphin gods see themselves as protectors of the sea and the freedom to relish life within it. Each baiji has technically been assigned a region of the ocean by the god's superiors in the Bureau of Nature, but the baiji are well-known for straying from these areas whenever it suits their purpose. The dolphin gods are fiercely hostile to sharks of any kind, including the war goddess Siakal and her children, although the dolphin gods prefer to avoid grossly uneven battles. Sailors consider the appearance of baiji as a good omen, as they often warn ships of unseen dangers or even help fight off marine creatures.

Wise old sailors know that these warriors of the sea can be selfish or even dangerous, however. They favor other anthropomorphic beings as often as humans, and side with pelagotheropes as freely as they do people without Wyld taint. In addition, the baiji have a strange sense of humor and readily employ trickery to coerce others to unwittingly join whatever games they happen to be playing. In human form, the dolphin gods are lusty creatures and will casually seduce whomever strikes their fancy. Demanding lovers are often discarded and left to care for any unexpected offspring.

Long ago, the baiji sought to improve their positions by supporting the nascent Bureau of Humanity. To supplement their status within the Bureau of Nature, where they were respected as powerful warriors of the

sea, the dolphin gods adopted a protective role toward humans. Though numerous people have been saved by baiji, the dolphin gods approach this arrangement with a far more pragmatic eye than most humans imagine. Baiji know that every person they save will inspire a thousand others to utter prayers on the gods' behalf. Baiji are heroic figures, but they take great pleasure in their freedom. The dolphin gods will generally protect a human being from drowning or the like, but they are hardly incorruptible.

**Sanctum:** Though the baiji possess sanctums, unless these have somehow been lost, they rarely visit them, instead traveling freely through the ocean and depending upon the hospitality of allied gods. A few spend their time ranging territories close to their sanctum, and these baiji are among the most powerful and politically oriented of their kind.

**Motivation:** To thoroughly enjoy life at sea and upon its shores.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (Swim +3), Awareness 4 (Underwater +3), Dodge 3 (Underwater +1), Integrity 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Seatongue) 1, Martial Arts 3 (Bite +1, Ram +1), Melee 3, Performance 2, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Thrown 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2 (Other Baiji), Influence 1, Sanctum 2

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*—Target gains a bonus die to all rolls related to the sea, from maritime lore to swimming efforts.

*Essence Plethora* (x2)

*Harrow the Mind*—Tricks the target into believing something about the dolphin god or the sea is true.

*Materialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Principle of Motion*—Six banked actions

*Shapechange*—May take a human form

*Touch of Eternity*—Target gains supernatural endurance while swimming.

*Touch of Grace*—Heals a wounded target

*Tracking*—The ocean currents betray the target's path.

*Words of Power*—The god assaults its target with an overwhelming projection of squealing sounds.

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Awareness, Martial Arts

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Awareness, Dodge

*Additional Charms*—Some baiji of greater power possess the ability to enter a Dreamscape or create a Worldly Illusion. Others are capable of granting divine blessings more potent than Benefaction.

**Join Battle:** 8 (11 underwater)

**Attacks:**

*Human Form:*

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 6B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 9B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 6B, Parry DV –, Rate 1

Javelin (melee): Speed 4, Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Javelin (thrown): Speed 4, Accuracy 7, Damage 9L (P), Range 20, Rate 2

*Dolphin Form:*

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV –, Rate 2

Ram: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 9B, Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 6L/9B (Tough skin, 3L/3B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5    **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2    **Essence Pool:** 70

**Other Notes:** None

**BLOODY HAND**

Bloody hands are gods of murder. They prefer cities, especially violent and lawless cities such as Nexus, where they can bear witness to the taking of human life as often as possible. A bloody hand's purpose is to observe murders, rather than commit them. A few still do so dispassionately, but most enjoy watching humans dispose of each other in cruel and painful ways. Many bloody hands collect trophies from murder scenes, and some encourage murderers to ever more baroque methods to satisfy the gods' own lust for death.

Despite most bloody hands' taste for murder, few kill on their own except in self-defense. They prefer to observe and occasionally offer advice. Some assassins have found bloody hands to be useful allies; the gods will happily lure victims away from safety where they can be easily (but creatively) killed. In exchange for these services, bloody hands will demand that the murderer kill his victims in unusual ways. These methods range from using an exotic weapon or poison to deaths so gruesome only the most hardened killers are willing to perform them.





While bloody hands enjoy witnessing murder and are willing to help murderers to a point, the gods rarely warn the mortal of approaching attackers who wield unusual weapons. An attacker who intends to kill a murderer she suspects of working with a bloody hand will typically arm herself with an exotic weapon in the hopes that the god will be more interested in seeing the weapon in action than in protecting or warning the god's mortal confederate.

Occultists and murderers know of a number of rituals used to attract a bloody hand's attention, and all require human sacrifice. In most places, possession of a copy of one of these rituals is considered the same as intent to murder at least twice, and the owner is punished appropriately—torture until death is popular. Some desperate individuals call a bloody hand to assist with a single murder, a request any bloody hand will almost certainly grant. Unfortunately for such people, bloody hands are willing to go to great lengths to sate

their hunger for observing murder and will often blackmail their summoners into committing more murders. Those who refuse find themselves quickly arrested and convicted of the murder, sacrifice and possession of the ritual to call a bloody hand.

Investigators who track dangerous or high-profile murderers are sometimes tempted to go to bloody hands for information. Since bloody hands are witness to numerous murders, they're almost certain to have the information an investigator might need to track down his quarry. The price for such information is to commit at least one murder for the bloody hand—two if the bloody hand is working with the murderer in question. For many investigators, a relatively worthless life or two is cheap compared to capturing quarries the investigators may have chased for months or even years. The fact that this is possible is enough to serve as deterrent for *some* would-be murderers. Others prefer to find a way around doing the deed themselves or even hire



bloody hands in advance to identify investigators who would be willing to use this method to track the murderers down. This simply serves to complicate murder and assassination of important people in Creation to a Byzantine level.

As a counterpoint, some officials in Creation are unwilling to sanction the use of murder to solve murder. These incorruptible few prefer to find other means to solve such crimes, and are less tolerant of subordinates and colleagues who try to take the easy way out. Others not only sanction the use of murder to solve murder, they have officers retained solely for the purpose of dealing with bloody hands. Such men are dangerous for their lack of principle or conscience.

Bloody hands appear as disturbingly slender humans with brilliant carmine lips and long, bloody claws. They can alter their appearances to look like any human, but blood always drips slowly from one hand. A bloody hand can hide this with a glove or bandage, but this disguise must be changed regularly or it will seep or overflow with blood.

**Sanctum:** Bloody hands live in horrific sanctums decorated with murder weapons and the trophies of murders they have witnessed. Most reside in cities and place their sanctums in poor and dangerous neighborhoods. Those who ally themselves with murderers must be prepared to move on short notice. Unfortunately, this often means temporarily leaving sanctums behind or moving a sanctum to one of the murderer's possessions—a purse of some kind is the most common item.

**Motivation:** Witness ever more exotic murders.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Dodge 5, Integrity 3, Larceny 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Varies; usually the local language and a trade language) 2, Lore 2, Martial Arts 5, Melee 5, Occult 1, Performance 3, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 5, Thrown 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 2, Influence 1, Sanctum 2

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*—Murderers

*Harrow the Mind*

*Hurry Home*

*Materialize*—Costs 55 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*Paralyze*—Crippling effect; -3 dice with a successful claw attack

*Possession*—Murderers

*Shapechange*—Any human form

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+12B/+6L against weapons

*Spirit-Cutting*

*Stoke the Flame*—Only one target at a time

*Tracking*

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts, Performance, Socialize

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Performance, Presence

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 8L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 8B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 5B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Throwing Knife: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Range 15, Rate 2

**Soak:** 9L/15B (Jade reinforced buff jacket, 7L/10B, -1 mobility penalty; Hardness: 5L/5B)

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


**Dodge DV:** 6 (7 without armor) **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 70

**Other Notes:** Blood from a bloody hand can be fashioned into a powerful paralytic poison equal in potency to arrow frog poison, but doing only bashing damage. The ritual to call a bloody hand is part of the Art of Spirit Beckoning (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex**, p. 140): *Beckon Bloody Hand* (2, Charisma + Performance, 3, one hour). It catches a bloody hand's attention and draws its interest, but doesn't compel it. This always requires a human sacrifice.

## CARAVAN GOD

Caravan gods are summoned by the Ritual of Exodus, a ceremony performed by the masters of a Guild caravan before it begins its journey. Ostensibly, the ritual is a celebration of the trip to come, filled with sacrifices to the gods of the cities that lie upon the caravan's route and prayers to the gods of the roads over which the caravan will travel in order to curry their favor. But the ritual also formally marks the beginning of a contract with the god of the road over which the caravan travels, usually arranged beforehand by a Guild thaumaturge and guaranteeing that the road god makes a tidy profit from the Guild. In exchange for prayers and sacrifices along



the caravan's path, as well as discounted access to Guild services, the god of the road provides a servant under its control to the caravan to make the trip smoother. This god, in turn, is propitiated by the merchants and drovers of the caravan during the trip.

Caravan gods are not particularly strong or powerful, but they have enough might at their disposal to aid a caravan in a tight spot against mundane foes or to smooth the caravan's passage through most normal hazards. Caravan gods are also good at interceding on the caravan's behalf with other spirits that the caravan may unexpectedly encounter on the road (the ones the caravan expects to encounter having already been bribed). The contract between the caravan god's divine superiors and the Guild factors usually stipulates that the god must come to the caravan's rescue unless the caravan faces overwhelming force—which is read to mean a strike force of Exalted or powerful God-Blooded. However, caravan gods are often younger protégés that the god of that particular road or chain of roads is grooming for bigger and better things—connected and cocksure, and often willing to bite off more than they can chew. More than one Exalt has slain or driven off a caravan god only to find himself in hot water with that god's superiors—which is exactly how the Guild likes it.

Caravan gods often appear as subordinates clothed as their divine superiors, if their superiors have human seemings, or as lesser versions, if the road gods appear as objects or animals.

**Sanctum:** Caravan gods usually keep whatever sanctum they had before they were assigned to assist the caravan, appropriate to a god of their rank in the area in which they reside, although most caravan gods decorate their sanctums with souvenirs and gifts from generous caravan masters.

**Motivation:** Keep the road they oversee functioning smoothly. Note that, as road gods temporarily reassigned, caravan gods don't usually change their Motivation for the journey's duration.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Integrity 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Other: Whatever languages the caravan will meet along the way) 4, Lore 3, Melee 4, Occult 3, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Socialize 3, Survival 4

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Influence 1, Mentor 2 (Superior in the Road Network), Sanctum 2

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*

*Hoodwink*—Enemies of the caravan

*Hurry Home*

*Landscape Hide*—Roads

*Landscape Travel*—The road

*Materialize*—Costs 35 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Travelers on the road

*Principle of Motion*—Five banked actions

*Sense Domain*—Anything on the road

*Tracking*—Travelers on the road

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Melee, Dodge, Survival

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 5, Damage 4B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 7B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Walking Staff: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 11B, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

**Soak:** 9L/15B (Jade reinforced buff jacket, 7L/10B, -1 mobility penalty; Hardness: 5L/5B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 45

**Other Notes:** This is but a single sample caravan god. Caravan gods vary more so than other gods of similar type.

**CITY GOD**

In theory, every city in Creation has a god who acts as its divine sponsor and is dedicated to its well-being. With the growing chaos within the Terrestrial courts, some of these gods are usurpers who have gained Heavenly dominion over an urban area via force or political trickery. Occasionally, more than one god cares for a city, whether due to a change such as Deheleshen becoming Lookshy, or because multiple gods join together to seize a position, as with the three Syndics of Whitewall and the three gods of Great Forks. Officially, city gods are designated as the Lords of the Wall and Moat, and they answer to the Bureau of Humanity's director. Other gods, and humans in Creation, refer to city gods as city fathers, city mothers or oppidans. Wun Ja, God of the Shining Metropolis, is a strong proponent of the rule of city gods over their mortal dominions, and the Bureau she directs is cautiously resistant to enforcement

of the Creation-Ruling Mandate, which forbids gods to act in such a manner. She subtly encourages the city gods of the Bureau to assume greater control over their dominions and is rewarded with ever-greater worship for doing so. Unfortunately for the Bureau director, one of her most powerful underlings defected to the Bureau of Heaven during the Great Contagion. The exemplary city god Cheng Huang Ye, assigned Civic Manager of the Eperopolis, voluntarily transferred to the Department of Celestial Concerns in the Bureau of Heaven. As the civil administrator of Yu-Shan's metropolitan operations, Cheng Huang Ye has the ear of the uppermost circle of gods who serve the Celestial Incarnae, including Ryzala, the Shogun of the Department of Celestial Concerns and de facto head of the Bureau of Heaven. The perceived abandonment of Creation on the part of Yu-Shan has nonetheless placed most of the city gods firmly in Wun Ja's camp. She routinely manages to deflect the investigations of Celestial censors, and the city gods who follow her lead grow ever bolder in their roles as city patrons.

Most city gods, whether they engage in the politics of Yu-Shan or not, are dedicated to the welfare of the city for which they are patron, according to their own immutable nature. Gri-Fel cannot betray the Imperial City to any enemy without betraying his inherent character. For some city gods, the patronage of a city necessarily demands that the god rule the city. This is considered a crime against the laws of Yu-Shan, because the Exalted were technically given mandate over Creation on behalf of the Unconquered Sun, but many powerful city gods don't care to restrict themselves in such a fashion anymore. One reason for the hesitancy of divine censors is the fact that the city of Whitewall, once called Ondar Shambal, was built by a respected Solar who declared the Unconquered Sun the city's designated city father. Today, the three Syndics jointly manage Whitewall in his name. Technically, the Synics are not city fathers. They are Yo-Ping, the Celestial Minister of Harmony, Luranume, the Master of Fivefold Luck and Uvanavu, the Chrysanthemum Shogun. The three gods of Great Forks, also not really city fathers, have abandoned such fiction and rule their city directly, bribing numerous divine allies with the devotions of an extensive temple district. Other gods act publicly in defense of their cities, but do not seek to command them directly. Grandmother Bright looks after Chiaroscuro but has never disputed the leadership of the Tri-Khan. The city gods of Lookshy may offer advice, but they never challenge the supremacy

of the Seventh Legion. On the Blessed Isle, most city gods at least pretend to trade strict adherence to the divine mandate for the calendared worship of the Immaculate Order.

Gods who have assumed city father status, unlawfully or unrightfully, are unfortunately all too common. The Syndics, the gods of Great Forks and Grandmother Bright are the best known examples. These interlopers are a source of internal conflict within the Celestial and Terrestrial spheres. City fathers and mothers have long been reduced to Terrestrial status, and now, they face direct competition from oftentimes more powerful Celestial gods bent upon seizing the city fathers and mothers' domains as retreats from the increasingly deadly politics of Yu-Shan. The resulting friction threatens to pit the Bureau of Humanity against its Heavenly brethren.

**Sanctum:** A city god's sanctum varies in glory according to the prestige of her city. The sanctum's entrance is usually found in the god's primary temple or within an important civic building.

**Motivation:** To promote the power and prestige of the city god's city.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 6, Bureaucracy 6 (Its Own City +2), Craft (Earth) 1, Dodge 4, Integrity 5, Investigation 1, Larceny 1, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Three languages appropriate to area) 3, Lore 3 (City Facts +3), Martial Arts 3, Melee 4, Occult 1, Performance 2, Presence 5, Resistance 5, Socialize 5, Stealth 4, Thrown 4, War 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 5, Cult 1+, Influence 4, Resources 4, Sanctum 2

**Charms:**

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Hurry Home*—May appear anywhere in its city

*Malediction*—The Essence of the city subtly turns against the victim.

*Materialize*—Costs 45 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Sense supernatural influences in the city

*Plague of Menaces*—Gods of the city recognize the victim as an enemy of the state.

*Principle of Motion*—Six banked actions


*Regalia of Authority*—Enforce its will in its city

*Sense Domain*—Detect the status of its city

*Signet of Authority*—Badge of the city god







*Stoke the Flame*—Incite the city’s populace  
*First (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Bureaucracy, Integrity, Melee, Presence, Socialize  
*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Lore, Socialize  
*Additional Charms*—Many city gods also possess one or more of the following Charms: Benefaction, Dreamscape, Endowment, Foretell the Future, Landscape Hide, Landscape Travel, Natural Prognostication, Paralyze, Portal or Words of Power. Gods of preeminent cities or those with a distinctive ambiance may possess additional Charms or different ones.

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 6B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 9B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 6B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Perfect Straight Sword: Speed 4, Accuracy 12, Damage 10L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Perfect Javelin (thrown): Speed 4, Accuracy 11, Damage 10L (P), Range 40, Rate 2

**Soak:** 10L/14B (Jade lamellar armor, 8L/9B, -1 mobility; Hardness: 5L/5B. Target shield, +1 DV)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6    **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 3    **Essence Pool:** 70

**Other Notes:** These are recommended traits for a “typical” city god. Storytellers should always adjust the traits (at least slightly) to fit the unique character of the city in question. Particularly consider adding one or more Abilities that seem appropriate for the god’s city and removing Abilities that seem inappropriate. For example, add Craft Abilities for a city of crafters, increase the Lore of the god of a city known for its scholars and add Ride to the god of the Marukan capital Celeren. Conversely, the god of a closed, conservative township might have no Linguistics Ability, while the god of a barbarian warlord’s settlement is unlikely to practice the Bureaucracy Ability much, and the god of a peaceful community of artisans in An-Teng probably isn’t well versed in combat. The gods of powerful city-states will typically be deities of Essence 4 or 5, or rarely even as high as 6, with commensurate increases in power. For examples of greater city gods, see Tu Yu and Tien Yu of Lookshy and the three gods of Great Forks, all found in **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. I—The Scavenger Lands**, and Gri-Fel, God of the Imperial City, from the main **Exalted** rulebook.

## DISEASE GOD

Disease gods are tasked with overseeing the outbreak and spread of disease within any given area. Each disease god is associated with a single disease, although any given disease has more than one god tasked with handling it. Where disease is widespread, these gods are common. Where it’s under control, they’re relatively rare. In a city with a massive influenza outbreak, there may be dozens or even hundreds of disease gods handling the plague. In a city where disease is kept under strict control, there may only be a few.

These gods’ existence depends upon disease—if a plague is controlled or eradicated, so are the associated gods. As a consequence, most disease gods do what they can to promote their particular ailments, spreading them whenever and wherever possible. This occasionally means that in bad outbreaks, physicians and thaumaturges are necessary to bring the situation under control.

In addition to using Charms to spread disease, these gods will recruit mortal allies and even other minor gods or elementals to assist—and disease gods are willing to give extensive advice on how to properly spread their diseases for maximum effect. A god of cholera will know how to ensure that the local drinking water is tainted as thoroughly as possible, while a god of syphilis will work hard to keep brothels in business.

Disease gods can also instantly cure their own diseases and provide at least some aid against almost any ailment. A few can even be persuaded to work against other disease gods, but this is hard to accomplish, and the price can be dear indeed: many a disease god has spared a supplicant’s loved one in exchange for assistance in further spreading their diseases to others.

Exalted often use threats and force to get disease gods to cooperate, rather than even attempt to bargain. Disease gods aren’t very powerful and have little leverage over the Chosen. On many occasions, Exalted have captured disease gods and forced them to eradicate the contagion that sustains their existence.

Disease gods appear to be humans afflicted with terrible cases of their particular disease—gods of leprosy look horribly rotted, gods of plague are covered with blackened sores and so on. They vary greatly in size, as well. Most are fairly small. Gods of truly deadly diseases stand taller than mortals, while it is said that the gods of the Great Contagion dwarfed the tallest buildings of the First Age. In contrast, gods of minor infections or cowpox rarely stand taller than two feet.

**Sanctum:** Disease gods prefer to locate their sanctums near death and decay—most are located in cemeteries

where many of those who died from their diseases are buried. Other disease gods prefer hospitals where their diseases are treated (usually with little success, with the god right there). Their sanctums are vile and foul-smelling places with fleshy walls that appear to be afflicted with the god's associated ailment. They're furnished with filthy, decaying furniture made of the same material. Disease gods who have sanctums won't fade away along with their diseases. Most gods spawned by an outbreak don't yet have sanctums, which allows a quick response to eliminate them along with their plague.

**Motivation:** Survive by spreading disease.

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

\* Equal to the disease's virulence

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 5, Integrity 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Local language) 1, Lore 3, Martial Arts 3, Medicine 5 (Associated Disease +1), Occult 1, Resistance 2, Socialize 2

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Works on the god's disease

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Works on any disease. Against diseases other than the god's, apply a +1 external penalty.

*Essence Bite*

*Fruit of Living Essence*

*Hoodwink*

*Malediction*—This manifests as an illness—achy joints, headache, or fever

*Materialize*—Costs 35 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Also identifies anyone suffering from disease

*Paralyze*—Sickness, -2 dice on successful claw attack

*Plague of Menaces*—This mark calls diseased rats

*Sense Domain*

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Medicine

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage (Strength+3)L\*, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage (Strength)B(P), Parry DV -, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage (Strength+3)B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage (Strength)B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

\* Exposure to the god's disease

**Soak:** □ Stamina L/Stamina B (Plus divine rags [buff jacket] 3B/4L, -1 mobility penalty)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 35

**Other Notes:** At a cost of five motes, disease gods can cause or cure their associated ailment. They also subtract 2 from the difficulty of all Medical rolls (to a minimum difficulty of 1) they make to treat or cure diseases. Also, the bones of a disease god can be made into a powerful talisman against all disease (add two dice to the [Stamina + Resistance] roll to withstand any disease as well as recover from one). Creating this talisman requires a successful difficulty 2 (Intelligence + Occult) roll.

## DREAM FLY


Dream flies are tiny, fey gods that hold sway over dreams. All are small, winged humanoids standing no taller than two feet, but their appearance depends upon the kind of dreams they are associated with. The gods of romantic and erotic dreams are sensuously beautiful with wings like a dragonfly or a hummingbird. Those whose dreams cover action and adventure resemble predator creatures with razored claws and raptor wings. Dream flies that govern nightmares are horribly twisted creatures with bat wings and tickling claws, and lack any face at all. To those who can see immaterial beings, dream flies are sometimes found hovering over sleeping mortals. The presence of dream flies means that the sleeper is having a particularly intense dream.

Dream flies observe dreams and keep track of those that are new or especially powerful. The dream flies record the dreams they observe in small dreamstone pendants, and store them in special cabinets in their sanctums. Each cabinet is filled with hundreds of tiny drawers, each containing a particular dream, normally the exemplar of a particular category of dream.

Over time, many dream flies have become bored with their role as observers and have taken to crafting dreams for mortals to experience. Taking the raw material from their collections of recorded dreams, these dream flies brew the new creations in tiny glass retorts that resemble those used by perfume makers.

Dream flies prefer to grant their dreams to those whom the dream flies feel would appreciate such dreams most: romantic gods may choose the most attractive mortals to receive erotic dreams while adventurous





dream flies may grant dreams of battle and conquest to warriors. Nightmare gods may grant their nocturnal terrors to anyone—most often someone who offends their sensibilities in some way. She might be too noble, too pretty or might have given offense to a nightmare god in some manner.

Dream flies can sometimes be persuaded to create dreams made to order. Although dream flies hate being servants, they're willing to work if paid well: pieces of dreamstone, small exquisitely made baubles or epic poems of love or valor written in the dream fly's honor can sometimes convince one to perform a single service, such as crafting a special dream.

Although dream flies tend to be self-absorbed to a great degree, and care little about the needs and desires of others, sufficient pampering, flattery and favors can make one a useful, if sometimes inattentive, ally. There are dream parlors in Chiaroscuro and Whitewall where proprietors have secured the services of several dream flies, who create erotic and adventurous dreams. Few can afford to experience these dreams, as even the cheapest can cost more money than most mortals will see in a year. However, such high costs are necessary to keep the dream flies happy (as well as to keep the owners fabulously wealthy). These proprietors sometimes deal in shadier business, such as selling nightmares to those who would do terrible things to their enemies without killing them outright.

Coercing dream flies rarely works. Those who attempt such crude tactics often find themselves unable to get a peaceful night's rest, their dreams plagued with terrifying visions and twisted hallucinations.

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

**Motivation:** Garner emotional reactions through crafted dreams.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 4, Craft (Dreams) 5, Dodge 5, Integrity 3, Larceny 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Local language) 1, Lore 3, Martial Arts 2, Occult 1, Performance 5, Presence 3, Socialize 2, Stealth 4

**Background:** Allies 2 (Other Dream Flies), Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*  
*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Affects dreams

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Affects dreams

*Dreamscape*

*Harrow the Mind*—Must be used on a dreaming target

*Malediction*

*Materialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Paralyze*—Unnatural mental influence (Illusion), -2 dice on successful punch or claw attack

*Worldly Illusion*—The god crafts these from dreams she's collected

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Craft (Dream), Dodge, Martial Arts, Performance

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Craft (Dream), Performance

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Craft (Dream), Performance

**Join Battle:** 10

**Attacks:**

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 1L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 1B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 1B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

**Soak:** 1L/2B

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

**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 50

**Other Notes:** Dream flies can detect dreams and locate dreaming humans at a range of one mile by simply spending one mote of Essence. All dream flies carry a dreamstone the size of a small acorn.

## DRYAD

Every tree has a god, no matter how small. Most are little more than spiritual representatives, observing the tree's progress and advocating for it at the local spirit court. A few are more zealous, curing the tree's ills and nurturing its growth, but they are forbidden to physically end a threat to the tree's existence from cutting or fire (although this does not stop many of these gods from using their wiles to dissuade men from chopping their trees down). The oldest and greatest of trees have gods even more powerful still, whose rank gives them nearly unfettered right to use force and guile to protect the lives of their trees.

In the Linowan and Haltan cultures, where the forest is an integral part of society, dryads take lovers from the populace, dallying with the fairest youths in exchange for talismans and blessings. The bravest, most foolish and most desperate adolescents go so far as to perform rituals that invite a dryad into their





Dryad

home so as to begin long-term romantic relationships. Any who dare perform the ritual without being of suitable appearance, temperament and skill disappear from their homes, killed for their temerity. While few other nations have formalized ties to the dryads to this extent, informal relations such as this occur frequently, especially amongst the Eastern forest tribes.

Dryads appear as humans with bark-like skin, leafy hair and features that clearly define what kind of tree they are tied to. All of them, as a rule, are beautiful beings, although some bear tattoos and ritual scarification to commemorate damage done to their trees before they became powerful—faded scars to show where an ax fell or jagged tattoos to mark where lightning struck.

**Sanctum:** Weaker dryads reside in their trees, while the most powerful have created spiritual counterparts to their trees that consist of leafy and trunked mansions. These dryad lives in luxury, with furniture of living wood and treasures and mementos the dryad has gathered over its long life.

**Motivation:** Protect its tree

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Local languages) 2, Lore 3, Martial Arts 3, Melee 3, Occult 2, Presence 4, Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** Followers 2 (Mortals), Influence 1, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Wood Control*

*Benefaction*—Those who pray to their tree

*Camouflage*—As a tree

*Hurry Home*—To their tree

*Landscape Travel*—The forest

*Materialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Those who wander in their woods

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Presence, Socialize

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 7, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Spear: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 8L/11L, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

Soak: 9L/13B (Bark hide, 7L/9B; Hardness: 2L/4B)

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

Dodge DV: 5 Willpower: 6

Essence: 2 Essence Pool: 50

**Other Notes:** The oldest dryads wield living spears made from the wood of their trees, while the youngest must resort to their own wooden claws.

## FOREST WALKER

For Ages before the wood elementals ever walked Creation, the gods known as the forest walkers tended the woodlands. As the wilds lie largely outside of human existence, the forest walkers managed to avoid much of the impact of the divine mandate and retain their rule over the woods. Each of the grandfather trees cares for an entire forest, acting as the representative of every plant and beast who inhabits its wood. Most forest walkers are content to lord over their dominions and bicker with their brethren over where the borders of one wood end and another begin. When they grow bored, the grandfather trees gamble amongst themselves, wagering the species that lie within their domains. Sudden migrations of hordes of woodland animals in the East often owe their origins to such bets. Some of the forest walkers wager with tribal chieftains or human rulers of kingdoms bordering the woods, gambling exotic beasts or rare herbs against promises to allow fields to overgrow with saplings or to serve as slaves to the needs of the forest.

Many forest walkers are forced to deal with the incursions of humanity or powerful spirits, with varying results. Some grow tired of dealing with humans, and their axes and bows, and forbid them from trespassing within their woods. In such woods, the twisted corpses of intruders hang as grim warnings to others, or their rotting flesh enriches the soil below. Honey-tongued interlopers might be able to escape death by promising worship, service or even love. Other grandfather trees resolve the nuisance by offering their protection to the mortals who will live with them in peace. Usually, the forest walkers come to dominate the lives of these mortals, slaying those who violate the forest laws. Elder Oak, of Farhold, rules a human clan in such a manner.

When the Primordials destroyed the five original elementals, their Essence flowed throughout Creation and gave rise to new breeds of spirit. One of these, the elementals known as the kings of the wood (see pp.

136-137), has directly contested the rule of the forest walkers. Typically, a grandfather tree manages to bring millennia of allies to bear, driving off or forcing binding concessions from a king of the wood. However, these elementals are individually powerful, and even if they are frequently vanquished, they often manage to seize at least some territory from the forest walkers.

In a forest walker's natural form, he appears as a tall humanoid clad in bark skin, with "hair" composed of leaves or needles appropriate to his wood, bearing a mighty spear of timber and green jade. Forest walkers' Charms allow them to easily masquerade as various woodlands entities and to control the forest around them.

**Sanctum:** Typically reached through a protected clearing in the center of the woods, the sanctum of a forest walker is a mansion composed of living trees grown together to form the walls, roof and furnishings. Within their sanctums, most forest walkers have amassed vast collections of woodland beauty rarely seen by mortal eyes. Forest walkers who trade with humanity or other gods often possess other stores of luxury.

**Motivation:** To protect and rule over its forest and everything within it.

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

\* Strength varies according to current size.

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 1 (Wood Courts +2), Craft (Wood) 2 (Favorite Tree-Type +1), Dodge 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 1 (Forests +3), Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue, additional suitable language) 2, Lore 3, Martial Arts 5, Melee 5 (Spears +2), Occult 4, Performance 5, Presence 5, Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 2 (Forests +3), Survival 5, War 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5, Cult 3, Followers 5, Influence 2, Resources 2-5, Sanctum 3

### Charms:

*Affinity Wood Control*—Forest walkers are masters of the wood element.

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Form Reduction Technique*—The forest walker may reduce his size, and his Strength alters accordingly. At the size of a huge human, a forest walker usually has Strength 9, with Strength 14 at tree size.

*Hurry Home*

*Landscape Hide*—Within his forest

*Landscape Travel*—Within his forest

*Materialize*—Costs 50 motes  
*Measure the Wind*—Within his forest  
*Ox-Body Technique* (x1)  
*Principle of Motion*—Six banked actions  
*Regalia of Authority*—Enforces his will within his forest  
*Sense Domain*—Detects the condition of his forest  
*Shapechange*—A forest walker may take the shape of any creature native (or gained via wager) to her woods, or can appear as an indigenous human ranging in size from the tallest tree to the tiniest insect  
*Tracking*—Within his forest  
*Weather Control*—Only within the borders of his woods, though the effects may scatter over the edges  
*Words of Power*—Frightening sounds of wood cracking resonate with the victim's bone and flesh  
*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Performance, Presence  
*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Integrity, Resistance, Survival

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage (Current Strength)B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage (Current Strength +3)B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage (Current Strength)B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Great Spear: Speed 4, Accuracy 14, Damage (Current Strength) + 9L\*, Parry DV 7, Rate 2

\* For three motes, the forest walker may increase the spear's damage by +2L for the remainder of the scene.

Attack as Animal: Speed [as animal], Accuracy 10, Damage [as animal] +2, Defense [as animal], Rate [as animal]

**Soak:** 19L/23B (Tough bark, 15L/15B; Hardness: 8L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 4 **Essence Pool:** 80

**Other Notes:** A forest walker's great spear changes size along with its wielder. When charged with Essence, the spear withers life (except its owner's) with a touch. This is reflected in the weapon's damage bonus.

## LEAST GOD

Everything of Creation has a god to watch over it, be it a stalk of wheat or a pebble on the road. Most of these gods are single-minded beings, with divine influence limited in scope to single thing. These tiny gods are tasked with the care of a particular object or plant of little import to Creation except in conglomerate.

If such an item becomes important to the destiny of the world, then the least god is sure to gain a promotion and become something greater. Barring such an unlikely event, however, the least god usually spends its existence sleeping within its charge, emerging to check on it periodically.

The least god rests within the plant or object that is its domain or spends its time investigating the thing's current condition. An Exalt using a Charm such as Spirit-Detecting Glimpse may catch a glimpse of a sword's god checking its edge before a battle or the god of a rose fretting over the slow expiration of its perfumed petals. The appearance of least gods varies, but they are generally attractive creatures with features given to their particular role as caretaker. The god of a grain of rice might appear as a miniscule rice farmer, while the god of a napkin may be a shimmering silkworm. It is possible to converse with a least god, but its thoughts are limited to the specifics of its domain. Least gods are unlikely to notice anything outside of their charge, and questions about such events are usually greeted with shrugs or blank stares. Even should it possess such knowledge, the least god is likely to bargain for the care of its charge in exchange.

Wise Exalted recognize that even least gods can have value. The intimate knowledge the god possesses, combined with its great willingness to exhaust an audience with such details, grants a -1 difficulty to Craft rolls to repair or care for the thing in question. In addition, methods exist by which one may increase the power of a god, and Exalted crafters sometimes seek to improve the least god of an artifact in order to increase its power.

**Sanctum:** A least god does not have a sanctum. A least god typically slumbers peacefully dematerialized within its object or plant.

**Motivation:** To watch over the thing that is the god's domain.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 1, (*Objects Only*) *Craft (Appropriate Type)* 2, Investigation 1, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm) 0, Lore 1, Occult 1, (*Plants Only*) *Survival* 2


**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Hurry Home*—The least god immediately returns to its domain. A least god will reflexively employ this Charm if the least god ever loses contact with its charge.







Most of a least god's activities are performed solely with its immaterial form or its limited natural thaumaturgy. Occasionally, a least god may have an additional Charm or two, but beyond that, the god ceases to be a least god and becomes something greater. The Charms of a least god cannot affect anything outside of its domain.

**Join Battle:** 2

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 2, Damage 1B, Parry DV 2, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 1, Damage 4B, Parry DV –, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 1, Damage 1B, Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 1L/2B

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

**Dodge DV:** 1    **Willpower:** 3

**Essence:** 1    **Essence Pool:** 25

**Other Notes:** None

## LIFE TREE

Many are the gods in the Second Age that profit at the expense of their duties. Fewer have figured a way to profit by performing their duties. It is rare, however, that a whole family of gods agrees to undertake some illegal enterprise. But such is the way of the life trees, who use their domains to expand their power over man and Creation.

Each life tree is the god of a particularly rare form of tree that produces a curative herb or fruit that grows only on the edges of Creation. During the First Age, Celestial regulations required that such medicines be placed at regular intervals across the face of the Earth, but after the Usurpation, more powerful gods whose domains were various races of more common trees pushed the life trees out of the Threshold and the Blessed Isle through successful lobbying efforts in the Bureaus of Yu-Shan. This was fine as far as the life trees were concerned—petitioners looking for some cure were willing to pray more frequently and offer better sacrifices if they had to work harder to find the cure they were looking for. But over time, relegated to backwaters outside of the notice of most of the Celestial censors, the life trees grew bitter and grasping, especially as the divine bureaucracies broke down or grew corrupt. Together, the life trees agreed that they would quietly begin to cultivate tribes of men to better the life trees' own lot, and cover for one another in the various courts, creating a kind of divine extortion racket on the edges of Creation.

Their method is simple. A tribe of humans near a life tree is afflicted with some disease that only the life

tree can cure, usually through discreet bribes to a local disease god. The life tree will contact the shaman of the tribe and let him know via dreams that if the tribe performs some duty for the life tree—usually involving planting trees of the kind the life tree has dominion over, or through sacrifices renewing the spirit of the life tree itself—the life tree will cure the tribe's illness. Soon, a symbiotic relationship forms between the tribe and the spirit. Other tribes in the area suffer because they are not protected by the life tree, while the tribe under the life tree's protection thrives, and through the tribe's planting rites, expands the territory of the life tree. Because it has the cure that the life tree possesses, the tribe demands greater power over other tribes in the area still afflicted with whatever diseases the life tree's fruit or herbs are meant to cure, and so spread the tribe's rites and taboos to other nearby tribes.

As the life trees grow more powerful, they bully other wood spirits and elementals into submission, rising within the ranks of the local spirit courts or forming courts of their own. Rivals who inform the local censor of this operation usually meet accidents, or find their complaints ignored when other life trees use their power to buy cooperation from the authorities. The power of the life tree cabal's power is strongest in the East and the South, where the trees and cacti possessed of curative powers are most often found.

Many wood gods and elementals chafe under this criminal enterprise and seek assistance from other quarters. But the life trees have moved quickly within the last decade to expand their power further, and with the disappearance of the Scarlet Empress, the Immaculate Order is occupied by other concerns closer to home. It is just a matter of time until a band of spirits pools their resources to hire a Celestial Exalted circle to come to their aid, pulling the young Exalted into the cutthroat world of Terrestrial-court politics.

Life trees appear as old men with bark-like skin and walking sticks made of the wood of their trees. They move slowly, but only because their current ascendance means they don't have to move fast for anyone. They're surprisingly tough and quick when pressed.

**Sanctum:** Life trees frequently live in opulent surroundings, gaudily—and many would say tastelessly—decorated with the spoils of their crimes. They frequently surround themselves with the most beautiful or handsome dryads and sycophants of lesser species of tree.

**Motivation:** Spread their dominion wherever there are men who need their cures.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 2, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 2, Integrity 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue [for trees] or Flametongue [for cacti], local tribal tongues) 3, Lore 3, Medicine 5, Martial Arts 1, Melee 3, Occult 4, Presence 4, Resistance 5, Socialize 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3 (Life Tree Syndicate & Assorted Toadies), Backing 2, Cult 3, Followers 3, Influence 2, Resources 4, Sanctum 4

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*—Those who have tasted their fruit or herbs

*Camouflage*—The forest

*Dreamscape*—Shamans in their region

*Endowment*—Those who have tasted their fruit or herbs

*Elemental Control*—Wood, natural poisons and medicines

*Hide*—The forest

*Hurry Home*—Sanctums

*Impromptu Messenger*—Shamans in their region

*Landscape Travel*—The forest

*Materialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Medicine, Resistance

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge

**Join Battle:** 4

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 5, Damage 3B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 6B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 3B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Walking Stick: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 10B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

**Soak:** 6L/9B (Bark 4L/4B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 65

**Other Notes:** None

**MASK**

Masks are relatively weak gods that exist primarily as empty faces—or at least, they start out that way. Most masks come into being near shores when mortals gaze upon their own reflections and leave an impression of their souls in the water. This might happen

because a mortal has a great destiny, or because she was experiencing a strong, profound emotion. Whatever the reason, this shapes the mask.

Over time, masks grow, increasing in stature, eventually becoming fully humanoid over the course of centuries. Each mask has a distinct personality, shaped by the mortal who created it—one created from grief will be morose or cynical, while one born from wrath may be vengeful. Whatever the basic personality, all masks are social and seek the company of humans or gods. Most have some gift at prophecy—not something they do deliberately, but the future can be seen and heard in their actions and words, at least to one who knows how to interpret. Masks themselves seem to be initially unaware of this gift, but most become aware of it over time.


Fully grown masks look human in outline and have mostly human features (two eyes, a mouth, a nose, two arms, two legs, etc.). They don't perfectly resemble humans and are clearly identifiable as little gods. Masks are gods intended to record and influence human social groups—the Primordials originally created masks as a means of encouraging and maintaining worship among mortals. To this end, masks were given tools and powers that they could use to present omens and portents that would encourage humans to take actions the Primordials desired. During the Primordial War, the gods responsible for managing masks as well as most masks were killed, releasing their Essence into Creation. Mask Essence reforms around human reflections and strong emotions.

Some of this Essence was elementally tainted and seized by the remnant of Oecku, and this was the genesis of the water children (see pp. 130-131). Every water child created is a mask that might have been created but wasn't. Thus, masks are much less common now than they were before the Primordial War.

Many lords and merchants exploit masks' desire for company in order to gain access to their prophetic insights. They find it relatively easy to earn the masks' trust and keep them around. After that, it's merely a matter of finding someone who is sufficiently skilled in the occult to interpret the mask's subtle omens. Of course, those lords and merchants take the risk that a given mask may not have prophetic abilities. Some choose a more risky path of trying to abduct a mask with proven ability.

Some masks (whether they have prophetic abilities or not) try to capitalize on the perception of their prophetic powers to live lives of high comfort. Considering their reputation, this isn't really that difficult. Some masks have even used this perception to bring powerful mortals to ruin—usually on behalf of someone else.





A mask's domain is composed of the humans around it. This can and does vary on a regular basis, as a mask who visits a teahouse has all the mortals in the teahouse as a domain, but when it returns to the prince's palace, all the mortals in the palace become the mask's domain. Masks are gods of human social relationships.

**Sanctum:** Masks are fragile creatures, and rarely have sanctums of their own. They find the creation of sanctums arduous, as existence Elsewhere separates them from their domain.

**Motivation:** Learn about mortal culture.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2 (Swimming +3), Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Local languages) 2, Lore 1, Martial Arts 3, Occult 3, Performance 3, Presence 3, Socialize 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3 (Local Mortals or Gods), Influence 1, Mentor 2 (Mortal Patron or a Powerful God), Resources 3

**Charms:**

*Benediction*

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Foretell the Future*

*Harrow the Mind*

*Malediction*

*Materialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*Memory Mirror*

*Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe*—Human forms

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+2L/+4B against humans (including Exalted)

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Presence, Socialize

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 2B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 5B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 7, Damage 2B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 1L/2B

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

**Dodge DV:** 5    **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2    **Essence Pool:** 60

**Other Notes:** None

## ROAD GOD

Every road in Creation has its own god, from the recently created dirt roads small caravans use to travel to the nearest city to the ancient and indestructible roads of the Old Realm. The gods of these roads vary in power based on the road's quality. The gods of First Age roads, for example, are impressively powerful given their station.

Road gods normally take the form of hooded travelers carrying staves or walking sticks. Those whose roads pass through the wilderness sometimes take the form of widely traveled domestic animals, such as dogs, horses or even yeddim. Regardless of the form a road god takes, road gods all have obviously unnatural features such as unusual color or size. The god of the Traveler's Road running from Whitewall to the sea takes the form of a huge gray-white warhorse with hairless skin and hooves of polished ice, for example. The god of the vermilion glass road running from Chiaroscuro to Paragon is a tall, fierce-looking woman with long, translucent, brilliantly red hair that falls to her ankles and that she wears like a great cloak. Regardless of the form a god takes, her appearance is typically known to travelers on the road, and many present offerings and prayers to the road gods in exchange for safe travel.

A road reveals much about its god—some road gods keep to strict interpretations of their duties and do nothing to maintain their roads, while others have moved beyond their station and act to maintain their roads and encourage use. On the other hand, some road gods who fail to maintain their roads do so not out of dutiful adherence to Celestial law but out of neglect and carelessness. Experienced travelers move down ill-maintained roads warily.

Road gods are expected to file reports with the local courts regarding the frequency, identity and purpose of travelers on the gods' roads. The worst neglect their duties, fail to respect the local courts or even make it impossible for mortals to use their roads. Some corrupt road gods have become little better than bandits—where a normal god would accept an offering and prayer and bless a caravan in exchange, one of these gods might demand such offerings and prayers and make travel for those who refuse as deadly as possible. Some insane gods of long-disused tracks even hunt down and slay any who dare use their roads, regardless of offerings.

Road gods have full knowledge of every past and present event to occur on their roads and can be persuaded to answer questions about the actions of other travelers. More active road gods may also help travelers



by doubling their speed, or slow troublesome travelers to half speed. Some road gods can even be persuaded to aid one group of travelers while hindering another.

Road gods also travel widely, have knowledge of any place within a month's travel of their roads and are willing to trade that knowledge as readily as they might trade information about their own roads.

All road gods, regardless of their dutiful nature (or lack thereof), are equally protective of their roads. Even if they allow their own roads to fall into disrepair, they will respond to attempts to harm those own roads with deadly force. Their well-being is tied to their roads, and anything that disrupts their well-being must be stopped. Road gods are also willing to bestow favors on those who act to protect or maintain the gods' roads, to warn the gods of threats or to build shrines to the road gods along their roads.

Guild caravans often shower road gods with offerings, especially during Rituals of Exodus, when a caravan begins its journey—road gods typically attend these rituals, and insulting the road god with a poor offering or a badly handled ritual can doom a caravan before its journey has even begun. Powerful road gods respond to the Ritual of Exodus through the assignment of a caravan god (see pp. 31-32).

**Sanctum:** Road gods rarely have sanctums. Those few who do have sanctums attach them to the shrines along their roads.

**Motivation:** Protect the road.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 4, Integrity 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Guild Cant, Riverspeak, at least two directional languages) 4, Lore 3, Melee 4, Occult 3, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Socialize 3, Stealth 2, Survival 4

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

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*—Within domain

*Hoodwink*

*Hurry Home*

*Landscape Travel*

*Materialize*—Costs 35 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*Paper Tiger Arrangement*

*Principle of Motion*—Five banked actions

*Sense Domain*

*Tracking*

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Melee

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 5, Damage 8B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 5, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Staff: Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 12B, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

**Soak:** 10L/16B (Jade reinforced buff jacket, 7L/10B, -1 mobility penalty; Hardness: 5L/5B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 (6 without armor) **Willpower:** 5


**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 45

**Other Notes:** These stats are for those of a basic road god of a well-maintained road running from a city to nearby towns. Gods of greater roads have more power—the Ancient of Stone Journeys, God of the Great Coast Road that rings the Blessed Isle (see **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. I—The Blessed Isle**, pp. 154-155) possesses Essence 4. Most road gods high ranking enough to assign caravan gods are Essence 3.

## SIREN

Once, before the Exalted held the Mandate of Heaven, one of the problems that plagued the spirit courts was human population control. Mankind is a fecund species, and incredibly innovative. Natural causes and infection claim lives, but the delicate balance that the courts seek to maintain between man and the rest of Creation is precarious even without humanity constantly finding ways to avoid death. If too many humans survive in a certain area, other things within the Terrestrial sphere are affected—animal populations become depleted, forests are wiped out, and the gods have to work harder to maintain the status quo. The gods were thus given mandates by the Incarnae about the proper number of humans who could live in an area, and when humanity developed to a point where natural causes were insufficient to keep numbers down, certain types of gods were placed in charge of maintaining the proper population density by physically intervening. The sirens were one such kind of god, maintaining the proper number of humans by culling the excess.

After the overthrow of the Primordials, the development of advanced Essence-based technologies allowed



Creation to support more of humanity, and the Chosen looked askance at gods such as the sirens performing population control. While the Celestial Order functioned properly, under the direction of the Chosen, sirens were reassigned to other roles or relegated to servant positions with Western Terrestrial courts. But after the Usurpation, the courts stopped listening to Dragon-Blooded directives concerning population, and so, those predatory gods whose job it was to cull humanity gave in to their baser instincts and resumed their previous roles. Vicious forest spirits left chains of corpses strung between trees, gods of the cold froze men solid and then shattered them, making arrowheads from their bodies. The sirens, who were meant to maintain proper population growth in water-based communities, spread far and wide across the West, plaguing sailors from ships as well as fishermen near the coast.

Today, sirens and their counterparts exist as divine predators picking off the unwary when they enter the gods' element. Their murderous appetites are not suppressed by their superiors in the courts unless the sirens completely deplete the population of an area. Without updated directives from the Bureau of Humanity, the courts are too busy with other tasks to worry about how many people die due to divine predation. With the

current crises in Heaven and Creation, the predatory gods find it easy to prey beyond their earlier excesses, or to extort tribute from communities in exchange for keeping the number of murders low. At the same time, the sirens often kowtow to the newly returned Solar Exalted if confronted, insisting that the sirens' killings are part of the divine order, and offering lore and treasure for the hunting rights.

Saltwater sirens are vicious creatures who rend men apart and devour their flesh, while the freshwater breed enjoys luring men to the edge of the water and drowning them, sipping their last breaths. Sirens are flirtatious and vain. They avoid the territories of storm mothers, who find the sirens easy prey, and who use them as handmaidens and servants wherever possible. Ironically, as much as sailors dread storm mothers, sailors are almost totally safe from sirens in storm mother territories.

Sirens appear as young, beautiful women with flowing hair and eyes the color of the sea at noon. Sirens inevitably bear some sign of their aquatic nature, be it fishtails instead of legs or slightly scaled skin. They can be identified by the thin gill slits that adorn their necks. Although sirens can breathe above water, they sicken and die after a day without immersion.



**Sanctum:** A siren's sanctum is one part abattoir and one part luxurious bedchamber, a place of respite where they can be adored by lovers and dine on the flesh or breath of their prey at leisure.

**Motivation:** Control the local population's growth through murderous attacks on anyone foolish enough to come near the water.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 2, Dodge 2, Integrity 2, Martial Arts 4, Performance 5 (Singing +3), Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Backgrounds:** Resources 2, Sanctum 2

**Charms:**

*Affinity Water Control*

*Camouflage*—In the sea

*Instill Obedience*—Mortals

*Landscape Travel*—Water

*Materialize*—Costs 30 notes

*Measure the Wind*—Prey

*Tracking*—Mortals

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Presence

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts

**Join Battle:** 4

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 4B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 6L\*, Parry DV –, Rate 1

\*A siren's clinch attack is lethal because instead of crushing she bites. She may opt to crush instead, in which case the damage is bashing and piercing.

**Soak:** 1L/2B

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 4

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 40

**Other Notes:** None

## TERRESTRIAL SENTINELS

The divine sentinels are those gods assigned by Heaven to watch over locations within Creation sacred or profane in the eyes of the Celestial Order. Far from common, sentinel gods are legendary or notorious amongst the world's savants.

### LION DOG

Lion dogs are the least of the Celestial guardians and have suffered the most with the turn of the Ages.

Once, lion dogs were guardians of Exalted strongholds in the First Age, symbolizing the Exalted's role as masters of all under Heaven. Those days are gone—most lion dogs still bound to sites in Creation find themselves guarding lost manses or the remnants of ancient fortresses that are little more than piles of weed-choked rubble. Many lion dogs have grown forlorn enough with the current situation to abandon their duties or, worse still, become corrupt, allowing intruders into the ruins the lion dogs protect in exchange for prayers or riches. A handful still uphold their obligations but find new masters, protecting villages, roads or private holdings, charging whatever the market can bear or nothing at all, depending on the individual. More sinister still are the reports of those lion dogs who have formed extortion rings, "guarding" a city neighborhood or town for a massive fee, and "mistakenly" allowing an accident or two to happen if their demands are not met. In the North, a ring of a half-dozen of these creatures operates across three of the Haslanti League's largest cities, operating underneath the authority's noses.


The lion dogs' natures demand they guard something, and so, they seek out anything that will help them fulfill this ancient purpose. Many thus seek to serve God-Blooded, Dragon-Blooded or Celestial Exalted as boon companions. Although lion dogs are willing to travel, they are, by nature, a stationary breed, and so, they prefer to guard their allies' homes or manses from intrusion, if at all possible. A lion dog makes a potent ally—strong, resolute, intelligent and temperate.

Lion dogs stand two yards high at the shoulder, a combination of mastiff and maned lion carved from living jade. Their jaws are filled with terrible fangs, and their roars can be heard from at least a mile away, when they wish it—a kind of natural alarm system. They are capable of holding themselves absolutely still like a statue, and they can converse hospitably on any number of subjects, if their masters allow it.

A lion dog will happily spend hours talking to a guest, exchanging riddles and conversation, until that moment where the god tears out the guest's throat because she trespassed into a forbidden part of the manse or tried to steal an object the lion dog guards. Lion dogs make terrible enemies—one will hunt down a trespasser to the ends of Creation unless ordered to do otherwise by a master. Given how rarely the lion dogs' masters survive into the modern era, it is often up to the individual to determine interlopers' fates, and some harry the least of trespassers for years simply to alleviate boredom.







**Sanctum:** Lion dogs rarely use their sanctums, instead living in the areas they guard. A few possess a warm and comfortable den that opens into the area under their protection. Ironically, as gods who sit around and do nothing for centuries on end, lion dogs are in the position to build huge and elaborate sanctums to pass the time, sanctums they seldom visit once complete.

**Motivation:** Guard his territory.

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

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Dodge 5, Integrity 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Local languages) 2, Lore 3, Martial Arts 5 (Bite +2), Occult 1, Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Stealth 3 (When Still +2), Survival 4

**Backgrounds:** Backing 3, Sanctum 1

**Charms:**

*Camouflage*—Around his assigned location

*Essence Bite*—Against interlopers

*Materialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Paralyze*—Interlopers

*Principle of Motion*—Seven banked actions

*Sense Domain*—His assigned location

*Spirit-Cutting*—Interlopers

*Tracking*—Those who have stolen from him

*Words of Power*—Interlopers

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Dodge, Integrity, Martial Arts, Stealth

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Dodge, Integrity, Martial Arts, Stealth

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Dodge, Integrity, Martial Arts, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

**Bite:** Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 9L, Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Claw:** Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

**Clinch:** Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 7B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 15L/20B (Jade hide, 12L/14B; Hardness: 8L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6      **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 3      **Essence Pool:** 65

**Other Notes:** None

## SCARAB GUARDIAN

Most guardian spirits watch over areas precious to Heaven or that were sacred to the ancient Exalted, but some things are protected not because of their value, but because of their infamy—they are abominations in the eyes of the gods of Yu-Shan. Such places of ill-repute tend not to be placed under the aegis of lion dogs or celestial lions, but instead, terrible creatures called scarab guardians, roiling masses of carnivorous insects that lurk in objects and places anathema to the gods.

Scarab guardians disappear at the slightest sound only to spring out at interlopers when they least expect it, swarming and biting the trespasser until nothing is left. The hunger of the scarab guardians is legendary, and since they often desire nothing more than to reduce intruders to bones, cunning robbers throw a duped companion to scarab guardians in order to steal past them. Even those robbers heartless enough to pull off such a maneuver are not safe once they possess the spoils of their betrayal—scarab guardians will pursue the robbers, a whirling and swift moving wave of shiny, black-carapaced beetles as large as a woman's hand, capable of traveling faster than any mortal runner. If pressed by a god, Exalt or other powerful entity, the beetles may clasp onto one another and take the form of a large human, its body an ever-shifting carpet of beetles. This terrible entity speaks in a quiet, rasping voice, actually made up of the scraping of the beetle's shells together. Depending on the terms of its service, the entity will give information and warnings concerning what it guards. At other times, the beetles will grasp together to form terrible appendages to lash at intruders, or climb over one another in a massive wave of scarabs that collapses on top of a foe.

Those who've become lost in the tunnels under Gethamane whisper about larger versions of the scarab guardian, made up of beetles the size of men or even larger, guarding ancient treasures underneath the earth from inchoate horrors and any intruders.

**Sanctum:** No mortal or Exalt has ever seen the inside of a scarab guardian's sanctum. The guardians of a single site come together to live communally in a warren-like sanctum whose entrance is too small for anything bigger than a housecat. In most cases, the vast majority of the scarab guardians will reside there while the rest hide near their charge. When intruders come, the guardians outside the warren will instantly and silently call the others to them. Scarab guardians never speak of the inside of their sanctums, but a few reports tell of them dragging animal carcasses or pieces of trespassers to their warrens to devour at their leisure.

**Motivation:** Eat the flesh of all intruders!

**Attributes:** Strength 10, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6; Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

**Abilities:** Awareness 5, Dodge 5, Integrity 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Local languages) 2, Lore 2, Martial Arts 5, Occult 2, Stealth 5, Survival 5

**Backgrounds:** Backing 2, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Camouflage*—Around their assigned location

*Essence Bite*—Against intruders

*Materialize*—Costs 45 motes

*Paralyze*—Intruders, to eat later

*Sense Domain*—Their assigned location

*Spirit-Cutting*—Trespassers

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Dodge, Martial Arts, Stealth

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Dodge, Martial Arts, Stealth

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Dodge, Martial Arts, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Appendage Strike: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 10L, Rate 3

Engulf\*: Speed 6, Accuracy 15, Damage 10L, Rate 1

\* Resembles a clinch, but see “Other Notes”

**Soak:** 18L/18B (Swirling carapaces, 15L/15B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 45

**Other Notes:** As a mass of hand-sized biting insects, a scarab guardian’s “crush” action within its clinch-like engulf attack represents hundreds of bites, doing lethal damage. While an opponent may attempt to take control of the engulf attack, a scarab guardian that loses control isn’t reduced to inactive and may continue to take crush actions. The scarab guardian’s opponent cannot attempt the “hold” action after wrestling control from the spirit—he may only retaliate or break free. Scarab guardians swarm through chinks in opponents’ armors, and as a result, only a target’s innate lethal soak or soak gained from Charms applies against these attacks. Even then, scarab guardians on the armor will chew through straps and even the metal of mundane armors. Every action an opponent is engulfed by a scarab guardian and is wearing non-magical armor, the value of the lethal soak provided by the armor decreases by 1 until it reaches 0.

## SERVITORS

Servitor gods overlap somewhat with the most common of gods, but while common gods can usually serve their function alone, servitors exist as the staff of some high-ranking unique god. Many more servitor races of gods exist than are presented here, including the hoarders of Madame Marthesine (see pp. 55-56).

### BIRD OF VANILETH

Though their design varies, ranging from raptors to crows, the primary servants of Vanileth (see pp. 63-66) are minor gods who appear as clockwork birds made of silver and adamant. These swift-winged companions often leave Vanileth’s mountain to watch over their patron’s dominion. Wherever people build or use gliders, air boats or other flying devices, the servants of the Shogun of Artificial Flight are sure to spy from their immaterial perches. The Haslanti League and Lookshy are amongst the servants’ favored destinations, though a complement of no fewer than two dozen birds is reserved exclusively for Vanileth’s satrap Relza at her sanctum in the ruins of Rathess.

The clockwork gods are linked to Vanileth through the winds of Creation, and the Shogun of Artificial Flight can see or hear anything that they can. On occasion, Vanileth asks one of his birds to attend someone who attracts his favor. When the Shogun’s servants are left to their own devices, the clockwork birds diligently search Creation for flying devices, masterful pilots and skilled craftsmen they can observe and encourage. Though Vanileth has given up on methods of flight that involve Charms or sorcery, many of his clockwork birds are hopeful that they can change his mind. These servants feel that if flight comes into vogue again, and their master regains his position in Yu-Shan, that it doesn’t really matter how this is achieved. If the Shogun’s exile comes to an end, then all of them will be allowed into Heaven again.

Typically, the clockwork birds of Vanileth will watch their targets of interest safely from an immaterial state. They will defend themselves with their razor-sharp adamant-edged wings if necessary, but if things go wrong, the birds are quick to dazzle their foes with a shimmering flash of light and then vanish.

**Sanctum:** Vanileth’s birds do not have their own sanctums, as they typically reside in his solitary fortress or travel in his service. When pursuing tasks abroad, they usually depend upon the hospitality of allies.

**Motivation:** To act as the eyes and ears of Vanileth.

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



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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Craft (Air) 1, Dodge 5, Integrity 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Skytongue) 1, Lore 2, Martial Arts 4, Occult 1, Presence 1, Resistance 2, Stealth 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2 (Other Birds of Vanileth), Mentor 2 (Vanileth)

**Charms:**

*Essence Bite*—Razor-sharp adamant feathers, beaks or claws

*Hoodwink*—Vanish in a dazzling flash of light

*Hurry Home*—May immediately return to Vanileth's sanctum

*Landscape Travel*—Double flight speed while active

*Materialize*—Costs 35 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*Tracking*—The winds betray the target's path.

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Martial Arts, Stealth

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

Claw Slash: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 1L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Wing Razors: Speed 4, Accuracy 10, Damage 6L, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

**Soak:** 5L/9B (Adamant body, 4L/6B; Hardness: 2L/3B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 45

**Other Notes:** The current activities of a bird of Vanileth largely depend upon the Shogun's desires. Players whose characters have friendly birds of Vanileth purchase them as allies. If a bird is destroyed, the primary "feather" of each wing may yield a single razor-sharp nigh-unbreakable adamant blade that acts as a perfect throwing knife, with the perfect equipment bonuses applied to the standard throwing knife profile as an additional +2L damage, +10 range and +1 accuracy. Extracting an intact blade requires a successful Craft (Air) roll, difficulty 3—roll separately for each wing. If a bird suffered particularly egregious damage, the Storyteller may increase this difficulty or even rule that the bird was smashed beyond all use.

## HOUND OF THE ENDLESS HUNT

Despite the name, hounds of the endless hunt actually resemble claw striders, standing approximately six feet in height and covered in dense fur. They have

clawed arms as dexterous as a man's, and feet equipped with long, sword-like talons. Hounds are gods of the hunt—their primary purpose is to observe important or dangerous hunts, typically the kind that Grala is most interested in. Occasionally, they may materialize and participate directly in another's hunt or go on a hunt of their own. Some do so purely for the joy of the chase, but some do so for a purpose—Grala orders the god to do it, or the hound notices something that requires its attention.

Skilled hunters will occasionally see hounds running alongside them or the prey, which is usually seen as a good omen on the hunter's part, and many will dedicate the hunt to Grala right then and there. Sometimes, the hounds even help directly. Most hunters who receive aid from a hound will sacrifice a choice part of the kill to the hound and Grala in thanks.

Sorcerers and thaumaturges can call upon the hounds. They can be called to any large hunt with relative ease, and if promised a share of the kill, will assist. Hounds have no respect for hunters who let the hounds carry most of the hunt, and those who show incompetence or cowardice during a hunt that a hound participates in will often find themselves becoming the prey. Hunters who do not wish to be hunted should take great care not to summon the hounds for any hunt that cannot be completed even with their aid, let alone one that requires the hounds do most of the work. (See "Other Notes" for how they might be summoned.)

Hounds can be persuaded to hunt on behalf of someone who pays a sufficient price—for example, a hunter who brings down particularly dangerous prey may offer the best part of the kill to the hound in exchange for the hound hunting prey of the supplicant's choice. The hounds prefer that the prey be something truly dangerous—one of the Fair Folk, a tyrant lizard or even a Lunar Exalt.

Grala (see pp. 50-52) is always surrounded by a host of her hounds wherever she goes.

**Sanctum:** The hounds have no sanctums of their own. They wander Creation in search of exciting and dangerous hunts, and come to Grala's palace for rest or to pay homage to their mistress. Hounds of the endless hunt treat Grala's palace as a sanctum if killed or otherwise in need of such a place.

**Motivation:** Watch over fascinating hunts.

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



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

**Abilities:** Archery 5, Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Dodge 5, Integrity 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Appropriate directional tongue) 1, Lore 1, Martial Arts 5, Melee 5, Occult 1, Resistance 4, Stealth 4, Survival 4

**Backgrounds:** Influence 1, Mentor 2 (Grala)

**Charms:**

*Essence Bite*

*Materialize*— Costs 50 motes

*Measure the Wind*— Also identifies prey

*Principle of Motion*— Seven banked actions

*Spirit-Cutting*

*Tracking*

*First (Ability) Excellency*— Archery, Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Stealth

*Third (Ability) Excellency*— Archery, Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage, 8L, Parry DV –, Rate 5

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage, 9L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Claw Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 14L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 6B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Spear: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 10L/13L, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

Composite Bow: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 8L, Range 250, Rate 3

**Soak:** 15L/20B (Tough hide 12L/14B; Hardness: 8L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 65

**Other Notes:** *Beckon Hound of the Endless Hunt* (2, Charisma + Performance, 6-Resources value of offering, one hour): This rite, part of the thaumaturgical Art of Spirit Beckoning, calls up a hound of the endless hunt and draws its attention to the thaumaturge. The rite compels no special behavior from the god, however.

## UNIQUE GODS

Creation's unique gods are many. Unlike the races of gods presented earlier, each god here is named, with a domain, a personality and an agenda. Unique gods make powerful allies and terrible enemies for the Exalted.

## BURNING FEATHER, LADY OF INTOXICANTS

Burning Feather is the goddess of all forms of intoxicants, euphorics, narcotics and hallucinogens. She's also known as the White Lady because of the arctic white of her hair, robes and featureless eyes.


Burning Feather travels Creation, appearing wherever intoxicants are consumed in quantity, whether for recreational or medicinal uses. She can appear in a hashish house in Great Forks or the finest hospital in the Realm. Those who wish to address prayers to her must typically do so while under the influence of an intoxicant. Rarely, she may answer a sober supplicant who seeks intense or mind-expanding experiences.

Most petitioners call upon Burning Feather to ask for exceedingly rare intoxicants such as the pollen of ice ferns or the hallucinatory venom of the great rasp spiders. If Burning Feather believes a supplicant is truly dedicated in his quest for controlled derangement of the senses, she may send him visions. The visions will direct him to perform some task for Burning Feather, after which she will reward him with what he desires. The tasks test her petitioner's resolve and endurance (such as spending a week under the influence of a powerful opiate such as heroin) or his ability to perform a difficult and important task (such as navigating a difficult river during a flood or leading soldiers into battle—while under the influence of a strong mind-altering drug). Other tasks include allowing her to possess the petitioner so that she may act anonymously (at least to the eyes of Heaven or the local spirit courts), or she may ask for a specific, apparently simple, action that will no doubt have profound consequences.

Burning Feather's requests are intended to advance her goals—anything from defeating Celestial rivals to blocking attempts to outlaw intoxicants and thus depriving her of worshipers. She typically has many such schemes going on at once, and seemingly random tasks are always tied directly into one of them. If she asks a vendor to recite poetry to a prince, that poetry may imply blackmail, or it may be a hidden message to an ally. More rarely, she sometimes asks a truly attractive supplicant to become her lover for a week, or even as long as a season. Few remember much of these trysts, but many go mad from the sometimes deranged and excessive sensuality. Most become celibate because no mortal love can possibly compare to what they've experienced.

**Sanctum:** Burning Feather keeps a sanctum in Great Forks as well as a modest palace in Yu-Shan. Both are luxuriously appointed and baroque. Guests find the long winding corridors, elaborate and colorful tapestries and





constantly shifting lighting confusing, especially since anyone who enters her sanctum becomes instantly intoxicated with a powerful drug. Although Exalted and particularly healthy mortals (roll [Stamina + Resistance], difficulty 2, for mortals—no need to roll for Exalted) can act, they still experience a -1 die internal penalty to all actions.

**Motivation:** Advance her political agendas in Heaven from her location in Creation.

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

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

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

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 4, Cult 5, Followers 4, Influence 2, Sanctum 3 (Yu-Shan), Sanctum 3 (Great Forks)

**Charms:**

*Affinity Air, Fire and Wood Control*

*Air, Fire and Wood Dragons' Embrace*

*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Create or destroy drugs, poisons or alcohol

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Used on drugs, poisons or alcohol

*Dreamscape*—Target must be under the influence.

*Emergency Prayer Relocation*

*Essence Plethora* (x2)

*Harrow the Mind*

*Hoodwink*

*Hurry Home*

*Instill Obedience*

*Materialize*—Costs 70 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Can also determine who's intoxicated or drugged

*Paralyze*—Unnatural mental influence (Illusion), poison and sickness; -6 dice on successful poison kiss

*Portal*—Only where drugs are in use

*Possession*

*Sense Domain*—Anywhere drugs are used

*Signet of Authority*

*Stoke the Flame*

*Worldly Illusion*

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Lore, Medicine, Melee, Presence, Socialize

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Lore, Medicine, Melee, Presence, Socialize

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Medicine, Presence

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 2B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 5B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 2B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Poison Kiss\*: Speed 3, Accuracy 8, Damage \*\*, Rate 1

\* The kiss requires a clinch first.

\*\* Poison: Burning Feather's Poison Kiss; Resistant Diff 4, Damage 8, -4 Impairment for 6 hours. Technically, her kiss can deliver any drug. This assumes she uses it to deliver arrow frog venom.

**Soak:** 12L/17B (Divine robes, 8L/9B, -0 mobility penalty; Hardness: 5L/5B)

**Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap  
**Dodge DV:** 7   **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 6   **Essence Pool:** 120

**Other Notes:** By spending three motes of Essence, Burning Feather can cause anyone within arm's reach whose Essence is not higher than hers to experience powerful and uncontrolled hallucinations for a full scene. The hallucinations apply a -2 dice internal penalty to all actions. Burning Feather can apply this attack repeatedly against one target with cumulative effect, up to a number of times equal to her Essence. This attack is Speed 5.

### GRALA, MISTRESS OF THE ENDLESS HUNT

Grala is the Mistress of the Hunt—she soars above the tundra and runs through the forests pursuing all manner of game, including humans. She is the goddess of hunting and pursuit, and over the past few centuries has become the matron of hunters. Hunters who wish to gain her favor verbally dedicate the hunting of a particularly dangerous or difficult quarry to her. If the hunt is successful, Grala might bless the hunter with good fortune or other minor boons. If the hunt fails, she takes it as an insult and may curse the hunter with ill luck.

Hunters who wish more specific and extensive favors from Grala must dedicate more dangerous and difficult hunts to her—one of the Fair Folk, or an Exalt, for example. She doesn't particularly care what the prey is, so long as the hunt is successful. A dedicated hunter may also visit one of Grala's shrines (or build one), bedecked in trophies from his most impressive kills and offer his services to Grala in exchange for a single favor. Grala is a straightforward goddess, and the services she asks are not subtle—she typically asks the



Grala

supplicant to hunt down a dangerous creature, usually a rival god, or one of the dead or Fair Folk who may be disturbing hunting in the region. Whatever the prey is, it won't be easy for the hunter—a mortal might find herself hunting down one of the hungry dead, while a Solar might find himself tracking an Abyssal who's killing indiscriminately, thus upsetting the natural balance of hunter and prey.

Grala's rewards for such hunts are as great as the hunts themselves are difficult. Grala can provide magical weapons, hunting Charms or the secret weakness of any individual in Creation. Failing the hunt earns terrible retribution—Grala will typically try to maim or kill the hunter. If she is not strong enough to do so herself, she will try to find someone who is both strong enough and willing (or can be made willing) to hunt her quarry down.

One of the boons that Grala grants for impressive hunts is the chance to set her hounds on any one creature named. On rare occasions, Grala may even grant a hunter the service of one of her hounds for a season. This hound will follow the hunter with absolute loyalty and will attempt to kill whenever ordered to do so. If the hound is killed, its service ends, but Grala does not mind the death. If the hound is permanently killed, however, especially if the hunter sacrificed the

hound foolishly, Grala may become angry and curse the hunter.

Some assassins offer sacrifices and worship as well, as they consider themselves hunters of men. This is not true of all assassins, but Grala accepts those who come to her.

Grala appears in either of two forms: an enormous hawk with a golden head, gilded claws and jet-black wings or a tall woman covered in black and gold feathers, possessing taloned hands and feet. She carries an artifact long spear enchanted with powerful magics and a black jade hunting whistle that can call her hounds as well as strike fear into any living beings who hear it. She carries a brace of javelins upon her back.

Caltia the Eternal, one of the great Forest Rulers of the East, is Grala's sister. Caltia's domain covers the evergreen forests of the Northeast. Grala was not always Mistress of the Endless Hunt. She was once simply the God of Eastern Hunting Beasts, but she tricked Tleny, the previous Master of the Endless Hunt, defeated him and had him forged into her black jade whistle.

**Sanctum:** Grala lives in Yu-Shan, in a vast palace of polished bone and ivory. The palace is decorated with the trophies of all manner of dangerous animals. In fact, everything within the palace is made from the skin or bones of a dangerous or impressive creature.



**Motivation:** Collect the worship of all hunters, and grow strong.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Craft (Wood) 3 (Traps +2), Dodge 5, Integrity 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue, High Realm, Eastern tribal tongues) 3, Lore 4, Martial Arts 5, Medicine 3, Melee 5, Occult 4, Presence 4, Resistance 5, Stealth 5, Survival 5, Thrown 5

**Backgrounds:** Cult 5, Follower 5 (Hounds of the Endless Hunt), Influence 3, Sanctum 4

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*

*Damnation*

*Endowment*

*Essence Bite*

*Essence Plethora* (x4)

*Hurry Home*

*Instill Obedience*

*Malediction*

*Materialize*—Costs 75 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Also identifies predator and prey

*Paralyze*—Crippling, Wound and unnatural mental influence (Emotion: fear), -3 Dexterity if Eversharp hits

*Portal*

*Principle of Motion*—Eight banked actions

*Scourge*

*Sheathing the Material Form*—All-Encompassing

*Spirit-Cutting*

*Tracking*

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Survival, Thrown

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Survival, Thrown

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Survival, Thrown

*All-Encompassing Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 13L, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Claw Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 16L, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 15, Damage 10B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage +0B, Parry DV 7, Rate 3

Javelin (melee): Speed 4, Accuracy 12, Damage 13L, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

Orichalcum Direlance (Eversharp): Speed 5, Accuracy 14, Damage, 18L/22L, Parry DV 7, Rate 3

Javelin (thrown): Speed 4, Accuracy 12, Damage 13L (P), Range 30 Rate 2

**Soak:** 17L/21B (Ebon feathers, 12L/11B, -1 mobility penalty; Hardness: 9B/9L)

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

**Dodge DV:** 9 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 150

**Other Notes:** Grala's black jade whistle (Artifact ●●●●) has two functions: The first allows Grala to summon up to (her Willpower + permanent Essence) of her hounds of the endless hunt (see pp. 48-49). The other function instills terror in all who hear it. This requires a Valor check at difficulty 3, with failure causing characters to flee for a scene. Supernatural beings (Exalts, gods, elementals, demons, etc.) can spend a Willpower point to suppress the urge to flee, but suffer a -2 internal penalty when attempting to attack or otherwise act against Grala. Both actions are Speed 5, and both can be used once per scene. This whistle requires 12 motes to attune from anyone but Grala. Use of the whistle to summon hounds costs one mote per hound summoned, to a maximum of the user's Essence. Grala does not have to pay this cost, and she has her own limit, as stated above.

## GRANDMOTHER BRIGHT

Chiaroscurans hold a middle-class district of their city called the Plaza in awed regard. Its accommodations aren't princely and its inhabitants aren't wealthy, but the Plaza is the safest and best-maintained area in the city. Though surrounded by the shattered glass witnessing Chiaroscuro's former invasions, the Plaza's First Age buildings stand unharmed. Their remaining Essence-powered conveniences (slight cooling against the heat of the Southern sun, glowing walls that can be dimmed with a touch) are a marvel in this fallen Age, as are their beautiful windows kept whole through past chaos of war and disease.

All this can be traced to a soft-voiced elderly woman who walks the Plaza's streets. Her robes are rich with gold and vermilion, and her skin shines at night. Most assume this Grandmother Bright to be the city mother of Chiaroscuro, but she's not. During the First Age, Grandmother Bright was not a protective spirit; she wasn't even from Chiaroscuro. She was Bright Sanguine Saber, Goddess of Betrayal and Vengeance, and her wrath was feared even by the gods.

In those halcyon days, the goddess's favorite responsibility was hunting those who defied Heaven's laws. Her techniques were legend, and she often took protégés who shared her bloodlust (one such was Ogime, the current Frog Queen [see pp. 123-124]). Only one target evaded Bright Sanguine Saber. For centuries, she sought him, but he escaped every trap she laid and humiliated her time and again. In rage and desperation, she finally bargained with an Eclipse Caste who promised to destroy him. The price: Bright Sanguine Saber had to pass her duties to another and, instead, protect the Exalt's home.

Today, Grandmother Bright's origins are difficult to discover. Millennia of protecting the Plaza have changed her. Beautiful and heartless no longer, the old goddess has abandoned her crimson hunting gear, and the once-piercing black of her eyes is a warm brown. She rules her neighborhood with care, enforcing safety with an iron fist; and though she concentrates on the Plaza, Grandmother Bright safeguards the whole city, knowing that to best fulfill her bargain she must also see to Chiaroscuro's well-being.

Although spirits are undeniably altered by changes to their purpose, they retain qualities of their original selves. Grandmother Bright is still both powerful—far more powerful than a spirit of her station should rightfully be—and extremely vindictive. Thus, though she has powers that affect the Plaza, her greatest Charms involve punishment and justice. Stories about her are often more along the lines of what terrible things she did to those who hurt the city or her Plaza, rather than the things she has done to aid and protect.

Grandmother Bright makes wise decisions when people apply to the Plaza for residence. She keeps a strict cap on its population (1,001)—the Plaza's women can't even get pregnant without her permission, and must receive her consent and wait for another citizen to move (or die). Those Grandmother Bright allows in are most often chosen on the basis of personal honor: she must be sure they'll obey an oath not to harm the Plaza or its residents, and won't bring danger to the area. Of course, her prejudices are not those of a human. One of her favorite residents is a highly paid assassin whom she often has over for tea.

Yet in her personal life, this god retains one odd taste. She can keep her head when measuring the character of possible Plaza residents, but her former domain was both revenge and *betrayal*—and she has a serious weakness for those most likely to stab her in the back. Bright Sanguine Saber was known for taking lovers who'd someday hurt her, and the vast majority of her students eventually

did so as well. Grandmother Bright is the same way (though she has far fewer sexual relationships now, and more mentorly ones). Strangely—or predictably—she never consciously considers this possibility and invests the same amount of affection in everyone she trusts. Naturally, this makes her inevitable vengeance all the more passionate and dire.

**Sanctum:** A brocade pavilion in the Plaza's center houses Grandmother Bright's immaterial home, though it also contains a lavish physical receiving-room. She can step through any Plaza entryway to enter her sanctum.

**Motivation:** Ensure the Plaza's safety and vitality. Grandmother Bright has an Intimacy toward revenge.

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 5, Intelligence 6, Wits 7

**Virtues:** Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 4

**Abilities:** Athletics 6, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 5, Dodge 6, Integrity 8, Investigation 8, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Delzahn tribal languages, Flametongue) 2, Lore 5, Melee 8 (Saber +3), Occult 4, Presence 5, Resistance 4, Socialize 4, Stealth 5 (Ambush +3)

**Backgrounds:** Artifact 5, Backing 3, Contacts 2, Cult 2, Influence 3, Resources 4, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Bane Weapon*— Those who have betrayed her or broken her laws

*Benefaction*— +1 to combat rolls made in anger

*Capture*— Takes anyone who breaks her laws or seeks her audience to her parlor

*Divine Decree*— Complete control over the Plaza

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*— Utterly controls the Plaza in every way

*Dreamscape*— All-Encompassing

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Geas*— Any quest to which the target agrees

*Instill Obedience*— Terrifying golden glow

*Intrusion-Sensing Method*— Watching for crimes within the Plaza

*Materialize*— Costs 75 motes

*Material Tribulation Divestment*— All-Encompassing

*Measure the Wind*

*Natural Prognostication*— Moves toward betrayal

*Portal*— Move to any place within the Plaza

*Principle of Motion*— Nine banked actions

*Scourge*— Makes mindless, golden-skinned thralls of criminals with whom she catches up, who are then set to cleaning the Plaza



*Sense Domain*—Can listen in on any conversation in the Plaza

*Touch of Saturn*—All-Encompassing

*Tracking*—Invests in all criminals

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Integrity, Investigation, Melee, Presence

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Melee

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Integrity, Investigation, Melee

**Join Battle:** 12

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 5B, Parry DV +2, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 8B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Green Jade Reaper Daiklave (The Hateblossom Longknife): Speed 3, Accuracy 22, Damage 10L, Parry DV 10, Rate 3

**Soak:** 13L/16B (Glassmail robes, 5L/7B, plus jade chain shirt, 5L/3B; Hardness: 2L/2B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 9 (10 without armor)      **Willpower:** 9

**Essence:** 6      **Essence Pool:** 105

**Other Notes:** Bright Sanguine Saber's Essence was 8. Grandmother Bright, though technically demoted, thus did not end up with traits as low as her current station might imply.

Grandmother Bright's green jade reaper daiklave, the Hateblossom Longknife, looks like a green steel knife until its wielder brandishes it for combat. She wears enchanted robes of Chiaroscuro glass over a green jade chain shirt, in an attempt to appear non-threatening. Grandmother Bright has several more low-level artifacts that she keeps inside her sanctum.

## KIREEKI, HUNTRESS OF THE WAVES

Kireeki is the goddess of most ocean predators, including dolphins, orcas and mantas, but specifically excluding siaka and sharks, for whom Kireeki holds a deep, cold hatred. She has a long-standing agreement with Zhuzhiao: she respects his dominion over the tentacled hunters of the depths, and he does not send them against her favored children.

When dealing with mortals, Kireeki prefers to assume a semi-humanoid form—hairless and smooth-skinned, like a dolphin. From the waist up, she resembles a beautiful young woman with a fringe of tentacles where her ears should be, and a fin-like crest on her bald head.

Her skin has orca-like markings, black and gray, with white patches around each eye. Below the waist, she has a mass of tentacles instead of legs, up to five feet in length. Her true form is that of a great orca, with paired tentacles that trail from beneath her flukes.

Kireeki is the most approachable of the Ocean Court and considered by many to be the friendliest. She often aids those who petition her properly (preferably with offerings of ice wine and rose honey), but she is still the Huntress of the Waves. She hunts and kills those who offend her or those whom she thinks would make good sport. Kireeki rarely takes mortal lovers, and quickly discards them when she tires of their presence. She gives lavish farewell gifts to those who pleased her and devours those who disappoint her.

In Creation, Kireeki favors the Northwestern seas, but she can be found anywhere her children pursue prey.

**Sanctum:** Kireeki has a sanctum in the Northwestern seas, a vast grotto within a glacier, with a surplus of edible fish swimming within the water. On dry land, Kireeki keeps a second sanctum that's fabulously decorated with lost treasures scavenged from the ocean as well as the ocean's natural resources. The grotto includes a large network of caves, all filled with creature comforts and wealth beyond most mortals' imaginings. The sanctum is linked closely to her glacial manse of water, but is not dependent upon it.

**Motivation:** Defeat and destroy the goddess Siakal and take her place as Western God of War.

**Attributes:** Strength 14, Dexterity 8, Stamina 12; Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

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

**Abilities:** Archery 3, Athletics 6 (Swimming +4), Awareness 6 (Underwater +3), Dodge 4, Integrity 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Guild Cant, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue) 4, Lore 1, Martial Arts 5 (Bite +1, Punch +1, Tentacle Grab +1), Melee 4 (Bident +2), Occult 3 (Water Magics +2), Presence 3 (Physical Intimidation +2), Resistance 4 (Poisons +2), Socialize 3, Stealth 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Backing 2, Cult 5, Followers 5, Influence 3, Manse 4, Resources 3, Sanctum 5

**Charms:**

*Affinity Water Control*

*Benefaction*

*Endowment*

*Hoodwink*

*Host of Spirits*—Creates duplicates to harry her prey

*Hurry Home*



*Instill Obedience*  
*Landscape Travel*  
*Malediction*  
*Materialize*—Costs 75 motes  
*Measure the Wind*  
*Portal*  
*Principle of Motion*—Eight banked actions  
*Scourge*  
*Sense Domain*  
*Shapechange*—Humanoid form  
*Sheathing the Material Form*—All-Encompassing  
*Signet of Authority*  
*Stoic Endurance*  
*Stoke the Flame*  
*Subtle Whisper*  
*Tracking*  
*Words of Power*  
*First (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Presence  
*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Presence  
*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Presence

**Join Battle:** 14 (17 underwater)

**Attacks:**

*Orca:*

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 14, Damage 16L, Parry DV –, Rate 1

Ram\*: Speed 5 Accuracy 14 Damage 24L, Parry DV –, Rate 1

\* Requires Kireeki to move at least half of her allowed movement during the tick.

*Humanoid:*

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 14B, Parry DV 8, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 5, Accuracy 19 Damage 14B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Blue Jade Direlance (Bane of the Shark): Speed 5, Accuracy 16, Damage 22L/26L, Parry DV 8, Rate 3

**Soak:** 6L/12B

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

**Dodge DV:** 10 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 110

**Other Notes:** None

**MADAME MARTHESINE OF THE LOST**


Madame Marthesine is one of the most powerful gods in Creation. She would certainly rank high in Yu-Shan if she chose to spend more time there as well. Marthesine spends most of her time near places where

many items of value have been lost, so she can claim them as her own. Since her domain is the entirety of lost things, this is not difficult for her. She can most often be found near ruins of First Age cities, long-forgotten shipwrecks or ancient tombs.

Mortals and Exalted know she can give them anything that's ever been lost—secrets, artifacts, treasures beyond imagining—but the wisest of them know that such boons come at a steep price. Madame Marthesine asks for something of greater value to replace that which she's giving to any supplicant. She refuses to allow her domain to shrink—it must grow. So anything that leaves her reach must be replaced by something greater. Petitioners should have the item ready to trade when they make the request. If the supplicant does not have an object of the proper value, Marthesine may offer to let him make up the difference. This is the proverbial deal with the devil, and the price can be terrible indeed. Madame Marthesine does not negotiate “making up the difference.” She simply takes it—whether it's the supplicant's family, eyesight, the love others feel for him, memories, Charms, even permanent Essence. She can take anything tangible or intangible and claim it as her own. Whatever she takes does not vanish immediately. Instead, it slowly fades away until the supplicant notices the lack. He won't remember precisely when or how it disappeared. The only way to retrieve it would be to make another trade. If the supplicant simply has nothing that can possibly make up the difference, she'll simply refuse. Everything lost to Madame Marthesine is lost forever, or until another suitable trade can be arranged.

Madame Marthesine's horde of lost things is vast beyond measure. It's possible that she possesses many of the secret arts and knowledge of the First Age. If it were possible to convince her to give up these secrets, the Solar Exalted could use her treasures to restore the First Age and rule over all Creation again. Unfortunately, the price for even one of these secrets is equally priceless—who could pay? She might take the supplicants' senses and memories in their entirety, leaving them completely unable to communicate the knowledge she imparted, or even to place it in any context. Marthesine has divine servants who assist her in gathering lost things (or more likely, making found things into lost things). They're the hoarders, stunted little gods that scour Creation for unique or interesting items to add to their own collections. Technically, they should turn everything over to Marthesine, but they keep as much as they can and give her only the oldest items they have when their sanctums simply cannot contain any more treasures. Most anyone who





has wealth in Creation has charms to protect against these gods, but the charms tend to break or disappear at inopportune times. Hoarders may only take a few things at a time, but what they take is always valuable enough to be missed. Fortunately, it is much easier to retrieve lost items from a hoarder's stash than it is to bargain with Madame Marthesine for them. Marthesine recruits young mortals to become hoarders, granting them status as small gods in exchange for their eternal service. Most were fairly greedy in their mortal lives. Greed isn't all Marthesine wants, however; she also wants the ability to satisfy that greed. Thus, the folk she recruits are often thieves, merchants and others who show the ability to gather and hoard as much wealth as possible

Madame Marthesine can find anything that's been lost: objects, people, love, youth. No matter how concrete or abstract, living or dead, the lost thing is, she can find it. If she finds a lost person who has died, she can find only his ghost—but she *can* find that ghost.

Madame Marthesine appears to be a slender old woman with light-brown skin, an old tattered gray cloak and long white hair. She carries a large, bulging, threadbare sack that seems ready to burst at any moment. All of her collection of lost things is in this bag, and anyone attempting to steal from it finds he can remove nothing he put inside it—a thief who reaches within cannot pull his hand out. He must cut it off, pay Marthesine to get it back or follow it in. Few are willing to do the latter. Madame Marthesine does not fight too hard to keep others from trying to steal from her—she knows that they, or something valuable of theirs, will become hers in the attempt.

**Sanctum:** Marthesine's bag is in fact her sanctum. When she materializes, she carries it with her at all times. When she chooses to dematerialize, the bag disappears with her. When she enters her sanctum, she appears inside without the bag.

Inside, the sanctum is an enormous decaying palace packed full of lost items, places and knowledge.

Sorcerers can use spells to enter her sanctum, but they cannot remove anything without paying the price. The few Exalted thieves who have stolen treasure from her soon find themselves bereft of something valuable, such as their sanity or their capacity to want.

**Motivation:** Bring everything in Creation into her domain.

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

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

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

**Backgrounds:** Artifact (See "Other Notes"), Contacts 5, Cult 2, Followers 5 (Hoarders), Influence 2, Resources 5, Sanctum 5

**Charms:** Madame Marthesine knows all spirit Charms with an Essence score for which she qualifies, and many that she doesn't—she is *literally* one of the most powerful Terrestrial gods, and eclipses many Celestial gods as well. She has taken many as a price for lost objects for other gods. Since they are lost, Heaven's bureaucracy can't find them to take or replace them—and if they did, they'd lose something in return. Madame Marthesine must spend 70 motes to Materialize.

**Join Battle:** 10

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 2B, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 5, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 5, Damage 2B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Starmetal Short Daiklave (Forgetfulness\*): Speed 4, Accuracy 14, Damage 9, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

\* see "Other Notes"

**Soak:** 2L/4B

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

**Dodge DV:** 8 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 105

**Other Notes:** Madame Marthesine can access any common artifact if she so desires, as well as many unique artifacts. She's unlikely to use the latter since if people saw her waving them around, they wouldn't exactly be lost anymore, or at least not perceived as such. Her divine panoply does include Forgetfulness (Artifact 4). In addition to damage inflicted, each strike by Forgetfulness that actually scores an injury steals one memory from the target—it can be anything from "The first time she kissed her true love" to "who just attacked me right now."

## THE MAMMOTH AVATAR

Unlike the spirits of various animals and the gods of individual herds, the animal avatars have decided to take an active hand in the cultivation of their species in the Second Age. This is especially true of the larger

and more powerful wild animals such as mammoths, tyrant lizards, hybrocs, river dragons and yeddim. These gods now work to aggressively protect and promote their animal populations, usually by organizing the animals in a region to destroy human settlements near the hearts of the gods' territory. With the return of the Solar Exalted and their ability to pursue large-scale goals across the face of Creation—and with the memory of the extinction of many species during the High First Age—many animal avatars are beginning to rethink this tactic, and follow the lead of the Mammoth Avatar, who long ago decided to cultivate humanity as an ally.

The Mammoth Avatar's greatest innovation was to create pacts with several groups of humans in the North, from the icewalker tribes to the Haslanti League. She allows these groups to cull the weak, the sick and the old from her herds in exchange for the protection of her charges from dangers as varied as Wyld barbarians, the terrible Northern winters and rapacious and out-of-control huntsmen. The Mammoth Avatar accepted that some members of her herds would fall to predators. Making a deal with the most successful kind of predator that threatened them, so that such destruction would occur on her terms, is her stroke of genius.

The Mammoth Avatar never appears to normal men, instead sending her lieutenants: mammoths as wise as men and capable of speech. These man-wise mammoths will speak to the greatest leaders and shamans of a tribe in exchange for a great deed done for the mammoth race. For the destruction of some threat to the herds, protection of some of the race, the man-wise will whisper of hidden caches of ivory or the location of artifacts of great power. The greatest heroes among the icewalkers and other nations may, after a number of such deeds, be given a man-wise mammoth as a boon companion.

The Mammoth Avatar appears as a massive beast of that race, with reddish fur as soft as silk and orichalcum tusks carved with the deeds of her people. Her voice is soft but penetrating, gentle yet terrible.

**Sanctum:** The Mammoth Avatar dwells in a great hall hidden in the Far North. Made entirely of the bones, skin and ivory of the greatest of her people, her sanctum is protected from intrusion by man-wise mammoths, mammoth spirits and other guardians. The skull of each mammoth present can speak of anything the mammoth witnessed in life, and mortals sometime petition for the right to approach the sanctum and find the answer to some riddle within the memories of these dead creatures.

**Motivation:** Protect the mammoth species and those humans who serve it.

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

**Attributes:** Strength 18, Dexterity 7, Stamina 14; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5; Perception 6, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

**Abilities:** Awareness 5, Dodge 5, Integrity 8, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Other: Forest-Tongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Low Realm, Skytongue) 5, Lore 7, Martial Arts 5, Occult 7, Performance 5, Presence 7, Resistance 5, Socialize 5, Survival 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5 (Man-Wise Mammoths), Cult 4, Followers 5+ (Icewalkers and Mammoths), Influence 3, Sanctum 5

**Charms:**  
*Blessing Charms*—Those who are under her protection, be they mammoths, the man-wise or those humans who wear a swatch of her fur

*Divine Decree*

*Instill Obedience*—Mammoth spirits and the gods of lesser animals

*Materialize*—Costs 70 motes

The Mammoth Avatar is one of the most powerful of the animal avatars—if not the most powerful—and should possess any or all other Charms the Storyteller sees fit. The above Charms are the Charms the Mammoth Avatar is best known for, and any other Charms she possesses will be ordered around the protection and promotion of the mammoth race.

**Join Battle:** 10

**Attacks:**

Gore: Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 26L/30L, Parry DV 8, Rate 3

Trample: Speed 3, Accuracy 12, Damage, 19L, Rate 1

**Soak:** 29L/34B (Tough hide, 22L/20B; Hardness: 11L/10B)

**Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap  
**Dodge DV:** 10 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 105

**Other Notes:** The Mammoth Avatar's shed fur and the fur of her man-wise mammoths can be woven into long, exceptionally warm coats that protect the wearer from all cold, including frozen fog, and are heavy enough to protect the wearer as if he were wearing a chain shirt. (Against cold caused by magic, the wearer doubles the armor's soak.) A chip of ivory from one of the dead mammoths entombed in the sanctum may be carved into an amulet that gives the wearer an extra two dice to



rolls to ride or control mammoths. The Mammoth Avatar has great rank in the courts of the other animal avatars.

### RABSZOLGA, GOD OF SLAVES

Nearly every slaver in Creation burns incense to Rabszolga; and, knowing prime worshipers when he sees them, Rabszolga has indeed been known to bless successful slavers in need. The Guild has even built two small but lavish temples to the god, each staffed by three priests (and seven slaves) who pray constantly. They ask for enslaved war captives to grow swiftly resigned and for caravans to return safely, with a lucky catch.

Rabszolga's domain may be slaves, but this hardly translates into a god who looks out for them. In Rabszolga's eyes, it's best for the slave trade to be profitable and for there to be as many slaves as possible. Their treatment matters little to him, particularly since the merchants are the ones who venerate him and not the slaves themselves. To a lesser extent, Rabszolga is additionally responsible for not-quite-slaves such as Lookshy's helots, but that domain is occasionally contested by other gods who see his control as a hierarchical gray area. This god also has some interest in lovers, whose slavery can be as intense as the involuntary kind.

Unlike many gods whose power earns them the right to Heavenly residence, Rabszolga is often in the world. As a member of Yu-Shan's Bureau of Humanity, Rabszolga can get away with tirelessly working toward his domain's welfare. Three of the Guild's hierarchs know an exhausting six-hour rite that gains Rabszolga's immediate attention. Rarely used, the rite allows them to humbly inform him of major threats to his interests. During the past decade, the rite has been performed once: the god was warned that a Solar had Exalted from bondage and sworn to eradicate slavery forever. Taking the threat to heart, Rabszolga came personally to Creation and took the Solar captive. The god secretly gave the Exalt to his sometime-friend, the Deathlord Lover Clad in the Raiment of Tears, and she warped the Solar into an Abyssal. In doing this, Rabszolga committed no actual crimes, but he's sensibly never spoken of it. If word of his vile act reached the ears of the Celestial censors, he knows he could expect no mercy—even if Celestial law contains no explicit provisions for his crime.

The goddess Ystara, a less powerful deity who governs the trade of luxury goods, noted Rabszolga's handsomeness some time ago. She also couldn't help





noticing the puissance of his domain. However, he never seemed to register her—so, in a spectacular gamble, she began a subtle campaign with his worshipers. Stretching across the world, Rabszolga's cult is somewhat scattered and hard to influence as a group, but Ystara has been gaining ground. Her goal: use threats, bribes and lies to persuade most of them to pay homage to her as Rabszolga's consort. She believes that if she can pull it off before the god notices and interferes, the cult's beliefs will already have shaped him into being affectionately inclined toward her. And she'll not just have his regard; if she's worshiped as one of the gods of slavery, Ystara reasons, then some of the domain's power will become hers as well.

In appearance, Rabszolga is slender and hollow-eyed. Though he aligns himself with slaves' captors, the world's slaves are the ones who most influence his nature. He speaks little, keeps his eyes cast down and endures trouble and suffering with stoic, despairing resignation. In recent centuries, he's found that he and the Lover Clad in the Raiment of Tears have a lot to talk about. Rabszolga has been visiting her fortress with increasing frequency; Ystara has noted his absences, but she keeps quiet about them, hoping not to jeopardize her own plans. If she takes the time to investigate and figures out what's up, she may resort to blackmail and demand that Rabszolga officially take her as his wife.

**Sanctum:** Rabszolga's sanctum in Creation may be entered by anyone who meets the hopeless gaze of a slave and utters the proper words. Inside, there's a bare and ill-lit cell-like room—the god dislikes creature comforts. Along one wall, Rabszolga stores an interesting array of collars and other implements of bondage, such as a collar of dutiful submission (used by Celestial police to wrest rogue gods to heel) and a Monstrance of Celestial Portion (a cage on loan from the Lover, built to warp Solar Essences into Abyssal ones). In his rare moments of leisure, Rabszolga's hobby is the study of such devices.

**Motivation:** Subordinate himself.

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 8; Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 6; Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 6

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 5, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 7, Dodge 4, Integrity 8 (Torture +5), Investigation 4, Larceny 2 (Smuggling +5), Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Flametongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Low Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue) 6, Lore 4, Presence 5,

Martial Arts 5, Resistance 5 (Torture +5), Socialize 5  
**Backgrounds:** Allies 5, Artifact 5, Contacts 5, Cult 5, Followers 4, Influence 4, Resources 5, Sanctum 1

**Charms:**

*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Breaks the spirits of large groups of people

*Capture*—Can capture anyone who lowers his eyes, sending him to a cell in Rabszolga's sanctum

*Chrysalis of Preservation*—Preserves masters

*Divine Decree*—All-Encompassing

*Dreamscape*—All-Encompassing

*Essence Plethora* (x2)

*Form Reduction Technique*—Can become anything that serves

*Hurry Home*—Returns to his sanctum

*Instill Obedience*—Forces everyone to bow

*Materialize*—Costs 75 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*Memory Mirror*—Senses submission, authority and hubris

*Mind-Knife Sacrament*—Rewrites memories of freedom, integrity and lore

*Ox-Body Technique* (x2)

*Paper Tiger Arrangement*—All-Encompassing

*Principle of Motion*—Eight banked actions

*Reserve of Will* (x2)

*Sense Domain*—All-Encompassing

*Subtle Whisper*—Everyone must bow before him. This influences everyone with an Essence score greater than 2.

*Symbol of Invincible Authority*—No slave may harm him

*Wine of Intimate Heartbreak*—His pain becomes an addiction for whoever induces it

*Words of Power*—Orders of submission

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Integrity, Larceny, Martial Arts, Resistance

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Integrity, Martial Arts, Resistance

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Integrity, Resistance

*Martial Arts*—Rabszolga has mastered the Celestial martial art Laughing Wounds Style (see **Scroll of the Monk**, pp. 94-97).

**Join Battle:** 11

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 5B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 8B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1



Everyone's Chains (Clinch): Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 12B, Parry DV –, Rate 1

Everyone's Chains (Strike): Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 14B, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

**Soak:** 14L/17B (Artifact lamellar armor [Copper Bonds of Eternity], 10L/9B, -1 mobility penalty; Hardness: 5L/5B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 8 **Willpower:** 8 (10)

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 130

**Other Notes:** Everyone's Chains are a level-3 artifact with combat stats identical to a dire chain. With the expenditure of one mote, the god can cause anyone struck by Everyone's Chains to suffer a Compulsion effect of Rabszolga's choosing, and the victim cannot begin to resist any commitments to their Intimacies. Both of these effects can be resisted for one scene by spending three Willpower points, and both last until the effect lands on someone else. Everyone's Chains is made from divine material that confers no magical material bonus, instead raising Rabszolga's Integrity, Martial Arts and Presence by 1.

The Copper Bonds of Eternity are a level-4 artifact. They have defensive stats identical to a suit of artifact lamellar armor of no standard magical material. The copper bonds prevent the wearer from dashing or sleeping and remove any ability to regain Willpower from fulfillment of one's Motivation or sleep. In exchange, the wearer is completely immune to Crippling effects, Shaping effects and Unnatural Mental Influence that affect her Intimacies, Motivation or Virtues. The Copper Bonds of Eternity raise Rabszolga's Integrity by 3.

### SESSEN DOUJI, THE MOUNTAIN BOY

Long ago, a mountain boy herding his goats heard a faint but melodious chanting. Enchanted, he followed the sound to an obscure cave, sensing the power behind the words. In the cave sat a grinning demon, its palms garlanded with lotuses. "Teach me your chant," begged the boy. "Not," said the demon, opening its black eyes very wide, "unless you let me eat you afterward."

The boy agreed, took a week to set his affairs in order and came back to learn the demon's chant. He sat meekly at the creature's feet for nine days, forgoing both food and sleep until he had the sutra memorized. Then, he cut his palms, and using his blood as ink he wrote the sutra all over the nearby cliffs and trees. Returning to the demon, he cast himself at its feet; and true to its word, the demon ate him.

The Mountain Boy was once a mortal, and this is well known; less well known is his domain, for the Maiden of Secrets herself has marked that file to be left unopened. This god could be the spirit of study, hard work and the rewards thereof; or of foreknowledge and prophecy, and the pains thereof. He might have domain over enlightenment, sudden insight and the shock of new ideas.

Those who seek knowledge—enlightening sutras, martial arts, historic secrets—may seek Sessen Douji, but he travels far and wide, and his natural form is merely that of a goat-boy. Only during Calibration is he always in the same place—meditating and murmuring sutras atop his mountain—but that mountain is beset by monsters, and its location is variously reported. One who wishes to be his student must not only find and identify him but travel with him for a season (all the while, he'll categorically deny being Sessen Douji). In the end, he'll take the petitioner as a student, but only if she can tell him something—anything—that he didn't already know.

Certain gods of higher rank defer to Sessen Douji, often to the surprise of their lessers. Even some Exalted have asked him for training, and he always requires them to go through the same steps as any potential student. The one thing the Mountain Boy will never teach is the sutra he sacrificed himself to the demon to learn. To those who beg, he says only that the Maiden of Secrets has set her seal upon that as well.

**Sanctum:** Upon the peak of an isolated mountain is a small, cold cave; in that cave is Sessen Douji's sanctum. A pallet and some tattered scrolls of wisdom are the only things decorating his home, and a few goats have been known to wander in and out.

**Motivation:** Seek and share enlightenment. The Mountain Boy really likes herding goats and has an Intimacy toward doing so.

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4; Perception 7, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 5, Integrity 5, Investigation 9, Larceny 4, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue, Guild Cant, Low Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue, Skytongue) 6, Lore 9, Martial Arts 7, Medicine 5, Occult 5, Presence 3 (Pursuit of Knowledge +3), Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Survival 5

**Backgrounds:** Mentor 6 (Jupiter), Resources 2 (Healthy Goat Herd), Sanctum 1

## THE LOVER'S SUTRA

Sessen Douji knows many sutras, and will give them away to those who prove worthy. He teaches this one to those seeking love. One who learns and recites this sutra as the Mountain Boy instructs will either find lifelong love in an unexpected place or may spend the experience to raise her Compassion without other explanation or training time (player's choice).

*A chain of notes: the woman tilts her head, leans back, steps forth, and brings an arm around; the man now bites his lip alone, tastes dread — in hollow darkness, hears the hours sound; around them softly winds the music's thread.*

*The panther-graceful woman steps again, curving the dance, her flushed skin sheened in heat; does not allow herself to think of men.*

*Leaving, the man allows the door to close and, humming, walks from darkness into fate, remembering the dancer as he goes.*

*She sees a man who looks like him, quite near; curves away, ends the dance. The song echoes; bowing, she bites her lip, fights back a tear.*

### Charms:

*Amethyst Awareness*

*Divine Prerogative*—None shall know that of which he does not speak

*Endowment*—All-encompassing

*Eye of Inspiration*—All-encompassing

*Foretell the Future*—Knows the things to come

*Form Reduction*—Any seeker of knowledge, or a mortal goat-boy in a round hat

*Hand of Destiny*—Sessen Douji can set himself to learn any one fact, but will definitely die in the pursuit. If he pursues knowledge not yet intended for Creation, his resultant death will be permanent; hence, he's reluctant to use this Charm to gain potentially world-shaking knowledge.

*Intrusion-Sensing Method*—Activates when Fate's plans are interrupted

*Loom Stride*—All-Encompassing

*Materialize*—Costs 70 motes

*Measure the Wind*

*Natural Prognostication*—Is always ready  
*Reserve of Will* (x2)

*Worldly Illusion*—The world is a pond with all time between two ripples.

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Lore, Martial Arts

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Lore, Martial Arts

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Lore, Martial Arts

*Martial Arts*—Sessen Douji has learned every Terrestrial Style the Storyteller feels like giving him.

**Join Battle:** 10

**Attacks:**

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 13, Damage 5B (piercing), Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 8B, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 14, Damage 5B, Parry DV 8, Rate 3

**Soak:** 2L/5B

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

**Dodge DV:** 8    **Willpower:** 9 (11)

**Essence:** 5    **Essence Pool:** 95

**Other Notes:** During the 50 years before the turning of an Age, Sessen Douji's Essence will rise one permanent point per decade. During the Age's change, he will have Essence 10, and once the new Age has set itself in place, his Essence will slip back down to 5 at the rate of one point per decade.

The Mountain Boy has always refused to learn sorcery and will not explain this choice to anyone. He has no divine panoply. When asked why, he replies that a messenger has said that it is on its way.

## THE SEVEN FANGS, GODS OF ASCENDING WOOD

The Seven Fangs oversee the month of Ascending Wood within the Court of Seasons (see p. 25). They appear as foxes the size of bulls, fleet as snakes. They countenance only beautiful things and will abide the sight of ugliness only if it's very, very interesting.

During the month of Ascending Wood, the Seven Fangs run the Court like a fox hunt, only with mortals as their prey. To enter the Court that month, one must be vouched for by the wood gods who accompany the foxes as hangers-on and brush-beaters, and any such guest who would threaten the Fangs or behave in an ill-mannered way earns the ire of the Court of Seasons as a consequence. The month after their reign, the foxes lurk around the Court, gossiping, sampling strange drugs and drinks, and behaving like wretches, only occasionally coming forth to aid the Riddling Tree in his interactions with the Bureau of Nature.

During the month of Descending Earth, however, the month before their reign, the Seven Fangs have a more difficult task. They must carefully manage their influence over the Whisperer. The Whisperer cannot afford the loss of face he would suffer were others to realize the Fangs and the Seer inflicted his paralysis (he normally claims it's part of his nature), and the Fangs wish to avoid the scandal that would result were the Whisperer's admirers to realize the truth. They issue edicts in his name and listen carefully to all he says, that they might twist his words to fit their petty agendas.

Those who earn the enmity of the Fangs are marked for death—or at the very least, extreme harassment. For mortals and weaker Exalted, this entails being hunted by the Fangs in a stylized affair, formalized and marked by spirit assistants blowing horns, gods of the hunt driving the prey forward and inevitably, a brutal end, marked by a celebration. For those the Seven Fangs deem too powerful to deal with in such a manner personally, the fox spirits take special pleasure in harassing via their influence with the Terrestrial courts, making sure that the beings' villages are marked for natural disaster, that their prayers to functionaries in Yu-Shan go unanswered and generally maligning them to the rest of the spirit world.

**Sanctum:** The Seven Fangs keep a luxurious sanctum anchored to several ancient redwoods in the East for themselves, crowded with items they have received as gifts for intercession in seasonal matters and trophies from their innumerable hunts. When the Seven Fangs lead the Court of Seasons, they reside at whatever locale the Court has decided will play host that month, which is determined randomly through some arcane process known only to the Court's functionaries.

**Motivation:** Party, gossip, hunt mortals, rest, repeat.

**Attributes:** Strength 7, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6; Charisma 3, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4; Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Martial Arts 3, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Stealth 4, Socialize 5, Survival 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Contacts 3, Cult 2, Followers 3 (Sycophants), Influence 2, Resources 3, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Wood Control*

*Benefaction*—Those whom they favor

*Camouflage*—The forest

*Endowment*—Those whom they favor

*Hide*—The forest

*Hurry Home*—Sanctums and wherever the Court of Seasons is

*Landscape Travel*—The forest

*Materialize*—Costs 45 motes

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts, Dodge, Socialize, Survival

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Presence

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

**Bite:** Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Claw:** Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 10L, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

**Soak:** 9L/16B (Pelt, 6L/10B; Hardness: 3L/6B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6

**Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 3

**Essence Pool:** 60

**Other Notes:** None

**TRANSLUCENT ALABASTER, THE PORCELAIN LADY**

With pure white skin and delicately sculpted features, Translucent Alabaster's domain shows itself in every line of her perfect body. She speaks in a voice like wind chimes and moves carefully, lest her brittle flesh be chipped. This goddess is responsible only for porcelain, but she loves all beautiful things, and keeps galleries in several of Creation's most artistic cities.

Most of the Porcelain Lady's time is spent in the Realm. The Immaculate Order tolerates her residency in Tuchara, a former artists' colony, because she has publicly embraced the Faith and speaks in its favor. Local priests make small and proper sacrifices to her, and in exchange, she's a model citizen; she donates money to charity and pays taxes without a murmur. Translucent Alabaster has become a fixture in Tuchara's social whirl, attending the most exclusive parties and teaching especially talented craftsmen (or any Dragon-Blood who asks) for free.

One might suspect that the Porcelain Lady, whose domain covers sculpture as well as vases and tiles, would have a problem with the Immaculate Order's ban on iconic art (said to disrespect the Immaculate Dragons by means of its "idolatry"). In public, she doesn't at all, and reviles such disregard for the Dragons with the best of them. In practice, the goddess quietly seeks out gifted but irreligious artists whose creativity the law stifles. If necessary, she'll subtly encourage them to give full rein to their vision; if they've already done so, she'll gain their trust, then arrange to smuggle their work to a place where it'll be properly appreciated. Her Nexus gallery, for





instance, sees a volume of “blasphemous” art that would give its homeland’s faithful establishment apoplexy.

Heretical Realm artisans who craft such things send them away under pseudonyms, and Translucent Alabaster’s discretion is such that none have yet been discovered. At one point, some Cynis dealers came sniffing around her operations, but the goddess persuaded them that she was merely smuggling to avoid high drug tariffs, and solved the problem by cutting House Cynis in on the supposed deal.

Translucent Alabaster has also made a different bargain with a well-known Nexus hero. The goddess claims maternity of the girl, who’s very preoccupied with concealing her Demon-Blooded heritage. A fragile-looking pale-skinned beauty known as Lady Frost, the Demon-Blood is an exceptional jeweler, as well as a warrior who protects the weak. The Porcelain Lady figures that she’s not just protecting the hero, but gaining fame from her supposed legacy. Of course, if the truth comes out now, it will be as much of a problem for the goddess as Lady Frost. And the hero may have less wholesome reasons for her concealment than the stated one (fear of “unreasonable” prejudice). She’s descended from Makarios, most silver-tongued of demons; it might be easy for her to deceive such a softhearted creature as Translucent Alabaster.

**Sanctum:** Right now, Translucent Alabaster keeps her home in Tucharā, which she views currently as Creation’s most vibrant and artistic city. There, she has a mansion filled with elaborate scrolls of calligraphy, exquisitely carved furniture and—naturally—the most extraordinary china vases, plates, abstract tiles and censers. The immaterial sanctum within that house both overlays and is much like the physical area, but has a great deal of illegal art in it, including dozens of framed mosaics and porcelain sculptures. Everything the goddess smuggles is stored there first.

**Motivation:** Protect beauty.

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

**Virtues:** Compassion 4, Conviction 2, Temperance 3, Valor 1

**Abilities:** Athletics 1, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 4, Craft (Fire) 3 (Ceramics +4), Dodge 1, Integrity 3, Larceny 3 (Smuggling +3), Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Guild Cant, High Realm, Low Realm, Riverspeak) 4, Lore 4 (Artifact-Crafting +2), Occult 3 (Artifact-Crafting +3), Performance 4, Presence 4, Socialize 4, Stealth 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 4, Artifact 5, Contacts 5, Followers 3, Influence 2, Resources 6, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Air Control*—All-Encompassing  
*Animating Management*—Any porcelain object  
*Chrysalis of Preservation*—Preserves beautiful things  
*Divine Prerogative*—Protect her fragile world  
*Dreamscape*—All-Encompassing  
*Eye of Inspiration*—Craft  
*Host of Spirits*—Fragile illusions  
*Intrusion Sensing Method*—Senses danger to her house of cards  
*Landscape Hide*—Lives in beautiful things  
*Materialize*—Costs 55 motes  
*Measure the Wind*  
*Mind-Knife Sacrament*—Removes ugly memories  
*Principle of Motion*—Seven banked actions  
*Touch of Divinity*—Imbue with Essence  
*Touch of Grace*—Repairs beautiful things  
*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Craft, Larceny, Socialize

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Affinity Air Control: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 12L, Range 13, Rate 4

**Soak:** 0L/1B

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


**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 4 **Essence Pool:** 75

**Other Notes:** Any physical attack that deals damage to the Porcelain Lady causes a disabling wound, just as if a mortal had suffered from a grievous injury, and is healed in the same ways.

## VANILETH, SHOGUN OF ARTIFICIAL FLIGHT

In the First Age, sleek flying ships flashed across the sky, and magnificent citadels floated higher than the mountains. The god Vanileth was honored in temples across Creation, and the Twilights enjoyed his special patronage. Known as the Shogun of Artificial Flight, he lived in a crystal tower in the Celestial City of Yu-Shan and played the Games of Divinity with the mightiest of the gods. The Usurpation shook the foundations of the First Age infrastructure, and the Great Contagion brought it crashing down. In the centuries that followed, humanity lost the secrets of flying vehicles, and Vanileth’s dominion withered away. Political enemies bid for his divine estate, and the weakened Shogun was quietly encouraged to leave Yu-Shan. He took up residence in a secret valley in the windswept Blue Peak Range in Creation’s Far North.



With the loss of so much magical knowledge, Vanileth has become obsessed with flying mechanisms. His clockwork birds have spread the word that any mortal or Exalt who can reach the Shogun's citadel solely through the use of some flying machine will be richly rewarded. Meanwhile, Vanileth's birds drive off or kill invaders who employ Charms or spells to reach his palace. The frozen bodies of would-be intruders sliced to ribbons by razor sharp wings slowly merge with the glacial ice at the bottom of the Shogun's valley. Their corpses have been stripped of all valuables, as the clockwork birds swoop down and carry them to the Shogun's treasury.

Reaching Vanileth's palace is extremely dangerous, with rolls to operate air vehicles made at +4 difficulty due to the treacherous winds, frigid temperatures and jagged peaks. Anyone who successfully reaches Vanileth's palace will receive special instruction on how to pilot a single type of flying vehicle (this may take the form of a Blessing, or the student may choose to learn a relevant specialty in Ride or Sail). Anyone who constructs a vehicle that succeeds in the voyage may be given advice on how to construct an improved version of the vehicle (this may take the form of a Blessing, or the student may choose to learn a relevant Craft specialty). A handful of craft guilds in the North owe their origins to the rare survivors of glider flights who have reached the Shogun's palace. The Haslanti desperately want to reach Vanileth via one of their air boats and thereby gain his blessing. Previous expeditions have been disastrous, but the Haslanti hope to find brave, competent people who can succeed where others have failed.

Visitors who are polite may gain the benefit of Vanileth's rambling discourse about the various flying devices that fill the halls of his palace. If they show a genuine interest, they might even be gifted with a minor enchantment of some kind. Examples of such gifts include foldable gliders that easily fit in a pack, broaches that prevent their wearers from dying from a fall or possibly a clockwork bird as a companion. Unfortunately, some of the Shogun's creations are dangerous and untried, including mechanical wings that permanently bind to the user's flesh or crash to the earth if not meticulously maintained. One young man who visited became Vanileth's lover for a time and was given an artifact ornithopter with spring driven wings. Some Dynasts believe that Cynis Mond visited the Shogun and somehow gained his favor. Vanileth's birds seem to take special interest in the city of Lookshy, but the Shogun has not visited there since the days of Dehelesh.

Vanileth appears as a swift cloud of constantly moving wings of a bewildering variety: bird wings, mechanical wings, glider wings and insect wings. All of these wings are white. In the First Age, he could also appear as a beautiful man with great white wings, but in the centuries of his power's withering, he has forgotten how. The Shogun speaks in a sweet voice, though he is unused to addressing anyone but himself and his mechanical birds.

**Sanctum:** Vanileth's sanctum is a shimmering palace of crystal and silver hidden in a valley between two jagged mountains in the windy North. Remarkably, the palace is visible in the material world, despite the palace's immaterial nature. Nonetheless, as with other sanctums, only those with the appropriate power may enter. Inside, a visitor finds a score of vast rooms with high ceilings decorated in white with furniture of ivory and fixtures of platinum. Unless drowned by the sound of Vanileth's own wings, the mechanical whirring of clockwork birds fills the air. Intricate flying devices lie upon shelves or tables, or hang suspended from the ceiling.

**Motivation:** To inspire dreams of flight and the craftsmanship and daring to achieve it.

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

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

**Abilities:** Archery 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 2, Craft (Air) 5, Craft (Fire) 5, Craft (Magitech) 5, Craft (Wood) 1, Dodge 5, Integrity 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: High Realm, Low Realm, Skytongue) 3, Lore 5, Martial Arts 4, Melee 3, Occult 5, Presence 2, Resistance 1, Ride 1, Sail 1, Socialize 2, Stealth 1, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** Artifact 5, Arsenal 5 (Flying Devices), Cult 1, Followers 4 (Clockwork Birds), Influence 2, Manse 4, Resources 4, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Air Control*—The winds still answer Vanileth's call

*Benefaction*—Vanileth can grant bonuses to Craft, Ride or Sail rolls involving specific flying devices, or teach a student the relevant specialty (though the student's player must then spend the requisite experience).

*Creation of Perfection*—The Shogun may manipulate the material, immaterial, winds or dreams of flight

*Essence Bite*—Razor-sharp wings

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Hoodwink*—Vanileth disappears in a flash of silvery white light



*Host of Spirits*—Some of the Shogun's wings separate and form a new entity, swirling into action as his command  
*Hurry Home*

*Landscape Travel*—The Shogun is particularly swift and dexterous in flight

*Materialize*—Costs 55 motes

*Measure the Wind*—Vanileth may sense the Essence of those around him

*Ox-Body Technique* (x4)

*Principle of Motion*—Six banked actions

*Sense Domain*—The Shogun detects the status of some part of his domain, which includes his sanctum and every flying device in Creation. In addition, he may use this Charm to see through the eyes of any of his clockwork birds. Though they are exceedingly rare, a priest of Vanileth also qualifies as part of his domain for the purpose of this Charm.

*Subtle Whisper*—The winds carry the sweet voice of Vanileth to the ears of his intended audience without revealing his presence

*Tracking*—The winds betray the target's path

*Weather Control*—Vanileth stirs the winds about his palace into particularly violent conditions, so as to better test the skill, daring and craftsmanship of those who seek his patronage

*Words of Power*—The words of Vanileth may become as piercing as the biting winds of the North

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Craft, Dodge, Martial Arts

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Craft

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Craft, Dodge, Lore, Martial Arts, Occult

*Sorcery*—Vanileth has mastered a number of Terrestrial Circle spells related to flight, birds and the sky, including Cirrus Skiff, Conjuring the Azure Chariot, Death of Obsidian Butterflies, Emerald Countermagic, Flight of Separation, Flight of the Brilliant Raptor, Impenetrable Frost Barrier, Infallible Messenger, Keel Cleaves the Clouds, Personal Tempest, Ritual of Elemental Empowerment, Stormwind Rider and Summon Elemental. He has also mastered a few Celestial Circle spells related to flight, birds and the sky, including Cloud Trapeze, Servant of Infallible Location and Swift Spirit of Winged Transportation.



**Join Battle:** 10

**Attacks:**

Blade-Wing Attack: Speed 4, Accuracy 16, Damage 10L, Parry DV 7, Rate 4

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 12, Damage 6B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 17L/23B (Iron-hard feathers, 15L/18B; Hardness: 8L/9B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 9    **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 5    **Essence Pool:** 90

**Other Notes:** If the artifice of flight were to return to First Age levels, Vanileth's Essence trait would rise to 7, and his power would increase commensurately.

**VERUMIPRA**

Since the overthrow of the Primordials and the survivors' banishment to the prison-city of Malfeas, the gods have tried to have as little to do with the Yozi as possible, but regardless of the gods' desires in the matter, the broken Primordials remain a power, with interests in Creation and Yu-Shan. While the gods see Malfeas as an anarchic prison, the Yozi view themselves as a government-in-exile, and necessity demands that there be some minimal contact between the Demon Princes and the Incarnae. Thus, the highest of the gods created the title Ambassador to the Cursed City, Warden of the Exiles.

This ambassadorship was always something of a joke. Those who took the job maintained an official residence in Malfeas, communicating with the Yozi on behalf of the Celestial Bureaucracy and the Incarnae. But there were also the attendant intrigues that any official can expect to be asked to perform at a foreign post—the cultivation of spies, the reporting of local gossip and the management of the odd assassination. Unfortunately, the Yozi, by their very nature, are corrupting influences, sly and unfathomable. The average gods forced into the position of ambassador survived less than a decade, finding themselves compromised by scandal, turned by the Ebon Dragon, murdered by one of the many factions in Heaven and Hell or driven insane. One god was compromised by the Yozi and removed by Sidereal auditors so swiftly that he never actually had the chance to leave Yu-Shan for Malfeas.

Such was the status quo until Verumipra assumed the office. Verumipra held many positions in various departments during his time in Yu-Shan, and was promoted into the ambassadorship because an enemy

saw the soft-spoken, competent and popular bureaucrat as a threat to his office. To everyone's surprise, Verumipra has made it through two and a half centuries of maintaining the embassy to Malfeas, and to the best of either side's knowledge, he has not been turned, driven insane or murdered and replaced with a doppleganger. Although it's not recorded in any official ledger, he is reputed to have turned several demons of various circles into spies for Heaven, arranged the assassinations of important Malfean personages and carried messages directly from the Incarnae to the Yozi and back, during those few times when they deign to speak to one another. For his services, he has been feted endlessly in Yu-Shan, allowed to play a turn of the Games of Divinity no fewer than four times and can expect a promotion to top rank once his tenure is over—assuming he survives.

Verumipra's success makes him a target. The fact that he has access to the Incarnae upsets many gods, while others are tempted to use him as a stepping stone for their own careers. His impending retirement next century has drawn the attention of more than a few bureaucratic climbers who see him as a threat to their own careers. And those whose stock in trade is skullduggery wonder whether he can be used to further their own plans. That's not to mention the various auditors who suspect Verumipra has been turned in a way no one's discovered.

Unfortunately for Verumipra, the escape of the Solar Essences from their prison has finally given everyone a chance at leveraging his past against him. Verumipra's one indiscretion in his career was a tumultuous, passionate, centuries-long love affair with a Solar Exalt. Verumipra long lamented his lover's destruction during the Usurpation, and with the reappearance of the Lawgivers, every faction in Heaven, Malfeas and the Underworld has cast a net, hoping to catch this reborn lover. Some want to protect the Exalt, and thus secure Verumipra's success and Yu-Shan's security. Others want to threaten to endanger or corrupt the Solar to secure Verumipra's loyalty. And the rest hope to destroy the Solar in order to settle some score. Verumipra has begun searching for his old lover, using channels he long ago discarded, and knows only that his lover is now part of a circle of Solar Exalted in Creation. Verumipra has no idea of the character—or even gender—of this new incarnation, but he hopes to somehow rekindle his romance and protect his old lover from his current enemies.



Verumipra appears as a tall, impossibly thin man with cocoa-colored skin and golden eyes. Instead of hair, he has a collection of black, downy feathers. He is dressed in the height of Heavenly fashion no matter where he goes. As ambassador, he wields the Seal of the Warden as the only part of his panoply, a powerful artifact that appears as a massive, orichalcum disc on a silver chain about his throat.

**Sanctum:** Verumipra keeps a lushly appointed Celestial manse for himself in Yu-Shan, which acts as his sanctum. In Malfeas, he resides on an estate in an area specially prepared for him, although the ever-changing landscape of the city means that the grounds and layout are inconstant at best, and riddled with spies and observers.

**Motivation:** Protect Yu-Shan from Malfeas.

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

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

**Abilities:** Archery 4, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 5, Dodge 4, Integrity 6, Investigation 5, Larceny 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Flametongue, High Realm, Low Realm, Riverspeak, Seatongue) 5, Lore 5, Martial Arts 5, Medicine 4, Melee 6, Occult 4, Presence 4, Resistance 5, Socialize 6, Survival 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5 (Superiors in Heaven), Artifact (See Below), Backing 4, Celestial Manse 3, Contacts 4, Followers 3 (Servants, Spies, and Soldiers), Influence 2, Resources 5, Sanctum 3

**Charms:**

*Bane Weapon*—Demons in Malfeas cannot strike Verumipra without invoking his right as Warden to end their lives

*Materialize*—Costs 80 motes

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Larceny, Martial Arts, Lore, Socialize

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Larceny, Martial Arts, Lore, Socialize

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Larceny, Martial Arts, Lore, Socialize

*All Encompassing Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Bureaucracy, Larceny, Socialize

Verumipra should possess all other spirit Charms the Storyteller sees fit to give him as a puissant Heavenly official engaged in an important and unique position, and should be as strong—or as weak—as the story dictates. He likely possesses at least one Martial Art of significance, if not a unique one created for him by Sidereal functionaries and known only to them and him.

**Join Battle:** 10

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 5B, Parry DV 7, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 8B, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 6L/9B (Bark 4L/4B; Hardness: 2L/2B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 9 **Willpower:** 9


**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 115

**Other Notes:** The Seal of the Warden is an N/A artifact. The Incarnae and Yozis created it jointly at the council in which the Demon Princes were sealed inside Malfeas under the light of the green sun. The Seal of the Warden is not a key to Malfeas—the Incarnae would never be so foolish as to create such a thing, and sealed the prison so that it could never be unlocked. The Seal of the Warden is instead a *word* given tangible form, and that word is “Submission.” It is a symbol of the victory over the Primordials and the establishment of Malfeas not as a world away from Creation but a lesser thing, a gaol meant to cage the creators of Heaven and Earth. By committing 12 motes of Essenc, the bearer may, as a reflexive action, create a 10-meter in radius sphere of Creation around himself while in Malfeas. This is, for all intents and purposes, Creation, and spirits can manifest there from Heaven with the proper Charms. As a Holy effect, all damage Verumipra does to demons while the sphere is active is aggravated, and all demons are considered to be acting in Creation while fighting within the sphere’s bounds. The creation of such a bubble of stability within Malfeas’s inconstant realm is pain beyond imagining, and the Yozis themselves rear in pain—the light of the seal blinds Liger and scars the flesh of the Demon City, causing destruction all across the landscape.

**ZHUZHIAO**

Zhuzhiao’s title is High Prince of the Deep Trenches; although, as appropriate for a god of his rank, he bears at least a dozen others, the most important being Arch-Curator of Fuliginous Depths. Zhuzhiao is one of the highest ranking gods of the Ocean Court, but before he took up his current position, he was a force to be reckoned with in Yu-Shan’s Celestial Bureaucracy and privy to the inner workings of Heaven. His prideful and ambitious personality grated on his superiors, and so, he was given a choice between soulforging or promotion upward and outward—a high rank and larger portfolio





but in a subordinate Terrestrial court away from Yu-Shan. Zhuzhiao accepted the promotion and exile, but has patiently awaited an end to his disgrace. He is eager to take advantage of the current chaos in Heaven and Creation to move himself back into the good graces of the Incarnae. Any being who can aid him in returning to Yu-Shan will have his gratitude, if only for a little while.

As Arch-Curator, Zhuzhiao views the sunken wrecks that litter the ocean floor as his personal property. Beings interested in raiding First Age hulks must do so at their own peril, unless they deal with Zhuzhiao personally. Only the most powerful of Lunar Exalted and the ancient and wretched pelagials raid those sites with any frequency, and Zhuzhiao constantly tests their resolve with random attacks by creatures under his control—a tactic he is quick to deny if called upon by a being as powerful as Leviathan or his ilk. Those who wish to bargain with Zhuzhiao can do so only by offering up an item of equal value for the piece of treasure they want. While some ascribe this fair bargaining to an innate mercantile sense somehow related to his old position, others claim that Zhuzhiao insists on equal trades as a sign of the other party's respect for him. There are legends of mortals and cunning Dragon-Blooded trading some worthless bauble for a priceless artifact, but those tales end with the violent death of the offending party as often as they do with Zhuzhiao smiling in admiration of their cunning.

Zhuzhiao appears as a massive and many-tentacled beast, equal parts squid and octopus, with tentacles hundreds of feet long and a beak that can crack a trireme in two. He takes no other forms. Zhuzhiao's domain is properly the dark waters where the light never shines and where life grows into strange and frightening configurations, although he has expanded his portfolio through brute force and various intrigues. Amongst other things, it now includes all tentacled life, thanks to a pact with Kireeki. However, so obnoxious is Zhuzhiao's demeanor with subordinates that a whole race of dog-sized crustacean spirits, the many-clawed and phosphorescent cavern mysteries, have left the Ocean Court en masse and now trade the lost secrets of the depths for mundane and magical trinkets, occasionally preying on humanity.

**Sanctum:** Zhuzhiao eschews a sanctum in favor of a massive palace-manse submerged in the darkest depths of the West, where he rules imperiously over his subjects and those few who come to him seeking a favor or a trade. He keeps the most valuable pieces of treasure under his control there. He has apartments in Yu-Shan, but he has avoided them since his demotion.

**Motivation:** Maintain control of his domain and expand his temporal power.

**Attributes:** Strength 30, Dexterity 9, Stamina 18; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0; Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (Swim +3), Awareness 6, Bureaucracy 5, Dodge 4, Integrity 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: High Realm, Rivertongue, Seatongue) 3, Lore 10, Martial Arts 7 (Bite +1, Clinch +2), Occult 6, Presence 4, Resistance 5, Socialize 4, Stealth 3 (Camouflage +2)

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Artifact N/A, Backing 4, Cult 3, Followers 4, Influence 2, Manse 5, Resources 5

**Charms:**

*Affinity Water Control*—Deep water

*Banish*—Treasure seekers

*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Shipwrecks

*Divine Decree*—His servants

*Essence Plethora* (x2)

*Geas*—Intruders

*Hand of Destiny*—Policing the deep

*Hurry Home*

*Intrusion-Sensing Method*—The black depths

*Malediction*—Intruders into the deep

*Materialize*—75 m

*Measure the Wind*

*Melodious Diagnostic Report*—The depths

*Ox-Body Technique* (x7)

*Portal*—To his manse

*Principle of Motion*—Eight banked actions

*Sense Domain*—The black depths

*Sheathing the Material Form*—In combat against underlings

*Signet of Authority*—To those who bargain for access to a shipwreck

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts, Occult, Stealth

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Stealth

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 16, Damage 32L, Parry DV –, Rate 1

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 39, Damage 30B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Hooked Tentacle Rake: Speed 5, Accuracy 17, Damage 30L, Parry DV 9, Rate 3

**Soak:** 21L/30B (Scaly, slippery skin, 12L/12B; Hardness: 6L/6B)

**Health Levels:** -0/-1(x13)/-2(x12)/-4/Incap

**Dodge DV:** 10 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 130

**Other Notes:** Zhuzhiao's N/A Artifact rating represents his access to immense stores of artifacts hidden in his manse or on the ocean floor. Assume he has access to whatever the Storyteller believes Zhuzhiao may need. Zhuzhiao has fewer Charms than is normal for a god of his power, but this is because he relies on his massive supply of ancient artifacts and his use of underlings as shock troops. The Storyteller may give Zhuzhiao any other Charms she sees fit in order to make him a challenge for the players' characters. Zhuzhiao may engage in mass combat as a solo unit with an effective Magnitude of 7. This trait reflects his enormous size and, thus, does not increase his effective health levels. In regular combat, he is so huge that he suffers a -3 external penalty when attacking anything smaller than a warstrider.

## THE FORBIDDEN GODS

The forbidden gods serve not the Celestial Order.

Even the most criminal of the gods presented elsewhere in this chapter *profess* loyalty to Heaven, honest or not. The forbidden gods are different. When the Incarnae rebelled, not all gods sided with the Incarnae against the Primordials. The forbidden gods who'd fought with the Primordials outright were executed, but some traitors went undiscovered until much later, when their retaliatory guerilla strikes from within the spirit courts began to disrupt the Celestial Order. Over the course of the First Age, the original forbidden gods were hunted down and slain. Heaven denies any survive.

Since that time, Heaven has discovered many other remnant gods without a place in the Celestial Order, and many more have been turned irrevocably away from the favor of Yu-Shan. Savants have since appropriated the term forbidden god to mean any god Heaven would rather not exist.

### LEECH GOD

In the time before history, the Primordials created many gods as experiments in the manipulation of form. They created gods for reasons aesthetic as well as practical. Because it pleased the Primordials to do so, they created monsters, gods of parasitism and domination. The leech gods are one such race.

The leech gods hate light and all life they don't control. Anything not theirs that lives must be destroyed or bent to their will. Those they cannot break they consume.

In time, the Primordials grew tired of the leech gods and their single-minded consumptive urges. As they did to all their rejected children, the Primordials banished the leech gods to the underways below the surface of Creation. But the leech gods, unlike their less-malignant banished siblings, prospered beneath the earth, surviving in pools of stagnant water within the deep caves where the gods were imprisoned, consuming less robust exiled divinities and extorting worship from the dark broods of mortal races who shared the leech gods' fate.

In the wake of the Contagion, humans of Rathess desperate to escape the plague broke one of the many barriers sealing the underways from the surface. In the First City, the leech gods again tasted fresh air and saw the hated sun. They took the mortals who had freed the gods into their caves, and ate the weak. The strong, the leech gods bred together. Their cult of underpeople prospers below the squabbling packs of stalkers and hobgoblins who war for control of the surface ruins. The leech gods breed monstrous leeches the size of dogs for their hunting hounds, and they spread their territory beneath the earth against their many exiled rivals. Once again, the leech gods grow strong.

Leech gods appear to be giant white leeches between eight and 10 feet in length, with two long, thick tentacles near their mouths. Human worship has changed the leech gods, and they now carry vestigial human arms and faces.

**Sanctum:** The leech gods have no sanctums of their own. The Primordials cut these gods off from such luxuries when these gods were locked away.

**Motivation:** Fully express hatred and will to dominate and consume.

**Attributes:** Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 1; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2 (Climbing +2), Awareness 4 (In Darkness +2), Craft (Earth) 3, Dodge 5, Investigation 2, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: High Holy Speech) 1, Lore 3, Martial Arts 5 (Biting Clinch +3), Medicine 3, Occult 3, Presence 3 (Intimidation +3), Survival 3 (Tracking by Scent +2), War 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies (Other Banished Gods) 4, Cult 2, Followers (Underpeople and Leech Hounds) 5, Resources 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Water Control*

*Bread of Weak Spirit*



*Dreamscape*  
*Essence Bite*  
*Instill Obedience*  
*Landscape Travel*—Within stagnant pools and the underways  
*Materialize*—Costs 60 motes  
*Measure the Wind*  
*Meat of Broken Flesh*  
*Mind-Knife Sacrament*  
*Paper Tiger Arrangement*  
*Paralyze*—Crippling and Sickness effect, -4 dice on successful bite attack  
*Possession*  
*Principle of Motion*—Eight banked actions  
*Sheathing the Material Form*—While in water  
*Stoke the Flame*  
*Subtle Whisper*  
*First (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Dodge, Martial Arts, Presence  
*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Dodge, Martial Arts, Presence

**Join Battle:** 8 (10 in darkness)

**Attacks:**

Biting Clinch: Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 10L (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 8B/4L

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

**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 4 **Essence Pool:** 80

**Other Notes:** Leech gods attack by grabbing with their tentacles, wrapping their bodies around their prey, and biting. This is treated as a “crush” action within a clinch that does 10L piercing damage. Mundane armor protects against this damage only until the total damage the leech god has done with the bite attack exceeds the armor’s lethal soak. After this point, the leech god’s burrowing tongue ignores all mundane armor.

**SOUL THIEF**

Soul thieves are wood gods whose nature has been corrupted by the shadowlands of the East, and specifically those areas controlled by the Deathlord Walker in Darkness. As all eyes turn to observe the machinations of the Mask of Winters, few notice his rival’s experiments with nature. None outside the Walker in Darkness’s closest confidants know how the Deathlord corrupted these spirits—whether he broke their wills in Underworld dungeons or bribed them with power, whether it was some alchemical process or necromantic ritual. Those who know of the Deathlord’s hand in the soul thieves’ creation

wonder if they are but one piece of a larger plan, and if more powerful versions do not wander the East or lurk within its shadowlands.

Soul thieves follow bands of travelers in the wild, waiting for one amongst their number to lose their way or separate from the rest. The thieves then steal the traveler’s breath while he sleeps—but soul thieves are willing to use force to hurry the process along if need dictates and gain the same sustenance from devouring their victim’s flesh. As the life of the traveler leaves the body, the soul thief takes its seeming and memories. The soul thief then disposes of the corpse, taking the traveler’s place amongst his companions, living his life until the soul thief is discovered. Unless directed by a superior, the soul thief will content itself with lethargically basking in the glow of the human’s life, doing as little work as possible and living off the work of others.

The soul thieves’ abilities make them excellent assassins and spies, and Walker in Darkness uses the soul thieves as such. Not all work for the Deathlord—many wander the East hopping from life to life, and a handful of others act independently. Rumor has it that the Grass Spider outcaste cult either makes use of the soul thieves or has several of them amongst the cult’s number (see *The Manual of Exalted Power—The Dragon-Blooded*, pp. 68-69).

Soul thieves appear as ebon-skinned children in their natural form. Their flesh has a soft and rotten feel to the touch, and they smell of the wet, slow death of autumn. They loathe themselves for their own diminishment and rarely take their natural forms because of it, moving from stolen life to stolen life. They feel a deep, unquenchable emptiness that only the consumption of the experience of human existence can stave off. Scattering a loaf of leavened bread around a soul thief while it sleeps will cause its stolen form to appear wizened and old for a few minutes after it awakes, but almost nothing short of sorcerous force or Charms will compel a soul thief to take its natural form of its own volition.

**Sanctum:** Soul thieves eschew their sanctums in favor of wandering Creation. When found, these empty sanctums are sepulchral groves of trees forming a tiny pillared-temple, decorated with white wood and bones.

**Motivation:** To taste the breath of the living, to eat of their flesh and to live their lives.

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





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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue, Riverspeak) 2, Lore 3, Larceny 3, Martial Arts 3, Melee 3, Occult 2 (The Underworld +2), Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** Backing 2, Resources 3, Sanctum 2

**Charms:**

*Affinity Wood Control*

*Fruit of Living Essence*—Only lost mortal travelers, by way of stealing breath or eating flesh. Those reduced to zero Willpower and motes are slain and their souls consumed. Such unfortunates leave no ghosts.

*Materialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe*—A traveler whose soul the soul thief has consumed

*Paralyze*—Travelers

*Subtle Whisper*—Travelers

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Larceny, Martial Arts, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 7, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 2L/4B (Modified by what armor they steal)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5      **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2      **Essence Pool:** 50

**Other Notes:** Soul thieves still in the employ of Walker in Darkness possess Mentor ratings between 2 and 4. When it takes a human shape, the soul thief gains a single “phantom die” in all the Abilities its prey possessed that the soul thief does not. This phantom die goes away when the soul thief sheds its human form and does not count toward purchasing the first dot in an Ability with experience points. This trick is innate and cannot be learned by Eclipses, Moonshadows or God-Bloods not descended from soul thieves.





HEY, I'M NOT FINISHED! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!



YOU OKAY, HONEY?

YEAH, BOSS. HE JUST GOT A LITTLE OUT OF HAND.



WELL, NOBODY HURTS MY GIRLS!

...UNLESS THEY PAY EXTRA FOR IT.



OY, I'M NOT THROUGH WITH YOU YET!





# CHAPTER THREE THE ELEMENTAL COURTS

Air permeates. Earth abides. Fire burns. Water flows. Wood lives. So do the elements rest.

Air precedes water. Water precedes earth. Earth precedes wood. Wood precedes fire. Fire precedes Calibration. So do the seasons proceed.

Wood refreshes air. Air fans fire. Fire renews earth. Earth channels water. Water feeds wood. So do the elements cultivate.

Fire consumes wood. Wood covers earth. Earth blocks air. Air freezes water. Water drowns fire. So do the elements destroy.


These are but three and one of the 25 harmonious and five impeded elemental cycles of Creation.

## HISTORY

Before he was the Yozi Malfeas, before the Incarna trapped his green metal sun within his breast, when Gaia, Cytherea and Autochthon

still toiled to complete the Primordials' bulwark against the Wyld, the Primordial king proposed a sixth element called *Theion To*, or vitriol. Passive and consumptive, vitriol was to be a transcendent acid. Gaia rejected *Theion To*. None now in Creation remember Cytherea's views. Autochthon found vitriol intriguing, but upon Gaia's urging set the matter of a sixth element aside. So it was that Creation possessed, and still possesses today, the five elements savants know.

In the gods' experimentation on the nature of Essence soon after their creation, they discovered the world's elemental cycles. With Gaia's tutelage, and the aid of the Elemental Dragons, the Incarna learned the secrets of creating life unlike themselves. With this secret in their grasp, they began work on a race of five great beings who would regulate the natural processes of Creation's elements.



They created Mindful Forest first. Mindful Forest was a great tree, seven miles tall, and it moved like a man. The aptitude of her students pleased Gaia. Mindful Forest was the first elemental, exemplifying wood, patterned after Sextes Jylis's nature, if not his form. The great tree oversaw the world's life. The gods went on to create the Great Garda, the first elemental of fire. They created Oceku, the first elemental of Water, and Urwl, the first elemental of earth. Finally, the gods created the Wind Master, the first elemental of air. The five great elementals created, the gods convinced these titanic beings to swear an unbreakable oath of loyalty, patterned after the oath the Primordials had caused the gods to swear. Aeons later, when the Incarnae accepted the surrender of the Primordials, the Incarnae derived the oath of submission from the oath of the five great elementals.

For measureless time, the first five elementals performed the basest maintenance upon Creation while the gods toiled at more specialized tasks or sought after more esoteric pursuits. When the Primordial War dawned, the world's creators saw the danger of allowing the elementals to survive. As the Primordials' first act of retaliation against the assault of the Exalted, the Primordials shattered Mindful Forest, the Great Garda, Oceku, Urwl and the Wind Master.

The elemental chaos that followed defined many of the battlefields of the Primordial War. Earthquake, inferno, flood, hurricane and toxic fecundity swept Creation and added to the sorrows of prehistory's end.

Though the five elementals had died, they were too like gods to die forever. The storms of elemental energy, which had retreated from Creation's center but still raged at the edges, burst forth with a million million tiny forms of elemental life. Elementals were small at first, such as need fires and wind sprites, scarcely more powerful than least gods. Over time, though, more and more advanced forms of elemental life came into being. The first of the highest order of elementals were the garda birds, and the last were the Wind Masters (see pp. 90-93), who were also the first lesser elemental dragons.

During this time, the Five Elemental Dragons drew Creation's gods together and instructed them in the proper care of the world. Afterward, when the new elementals began to appear, the gods were puzzled by these lesser beings. The Five Elemental Dragons, returned to the world's lines of force, had no advice on how to incorporate the elementals into the Terrestrial Bureaucracy. The elementals carried remnants of the oath their predecessors swore—not enough to forbid elementals from performing violence on gods but enough

to ensure that the new beings were instinctively inclined to serve Creation's divinities.

The gods immediately drafted the elementals into the Terrestrial courts. The elementals served in the lowest positions, with little or no chance of promotion. Then more elementals appeared, and the gods drafted those. The gods soon realized the elementals weren't going to stop forming and settled on recruiting the new beings only when the gods needed the elementals' services. The rest, for the most part, were happy to perform the same task the original five elementals had performed—the regulation of Creation's base elemental Essence flows.

As the elementals aged and grew in power, the greatest of them formed into draconic shapes. Though the five original elementals had carried no dragon forms, the most powerful of the elementals patterned themselves after the Five Elemental Dragons. The gods of the Terrestrial court put the lesser elemental dragons to work just as they did every other elemental... until Sextes Jylis, during one of his rare occasions holding court at the Pole of Wood, expressed reservation at the disrespect the gods showed to himself and his siblings by demanding service from that which took their forms. Sextes Jylis decreed that the gods should treat the lesser elemental dragons as the children of the Five, the favored result of the long-ago experiments they'd helped the Incarnae perform. The lesser elemental dragons have been known as the children of the Five Elemental Dragons ever since.

The gods released the dragons from base service and allowed these new beings to mature as they saw fit. When, soon afterwards, the lesser elemental dragon of earth called the Kukla (see pp. 102-103) blossomed further and became a huge miles-long beast, the Five Elemental Dragons were well pleased their forms were so well represented in the emergent properties of elemental Essence. Soon, other dragons mimicked the Kukla's metamorphosis. Though the Five Elemental Dragons were overjoyed to see such tributes to their majesty, the gods of Yu-Shan worried. These greater elemental dragons possessed power untested and seemed mightier even than many demons of the Third Circle. The Incarnae bound the greater elemental dragons to remote places and duties so as to prevent their free reign across Creation.

Most elementals were so absorbed in their tasks at the beginning of the Usurpation they barely noticed when the fighting started. Initially unsure of how to react, the elementals quickly close sides—unlike the gods, who largely just observed. The thunderbirds sided with the Solars at first, while the ifrit sided with





Wyld

the Dragon-Blooded, and other elemental beings were similarly divided in opinion. Eventually, however, most elementals realized the Dragon-Blooded were the winning team and fought alongside the Terrestrials in hunting down the few Solar remnants. The elementals hoped peace would return to the Essence flows of Creation once the Usurpation was complete.

It wasn't to be. The Shogunate was fractious, with daimyo vying against daimyo for territory and influence, and the Terrestrial Exalted fielded armies of summoned elementals and demons against each other's provinces. Very slowly, the Terrestrial Bureaucracy realized they'd have to work *around* the Dragon-Blooded conflicts to keep Creation functioning smoothly, and they'd just begun to work out policies optimized for this when the Contagion wiped out 90 percent of all life and then the Fair Folk invaded.

The Fair Folk Invasion damaged Creation badly. The invasion upset the world's dragon lines. The feedback tore apart many elementals even in those areas of Creation the Fair Folk didn't dissolve into the Wyld. Elemental Charms ceased functioning properly, and elemental natures took on new aspects. Amidst the chaos affecting the Terrestrial courts of


the time, many elementals found themselves without divine guidance.

Most of these gathered together to form courts of their own, in imitation of what they'd always known. Unlike the fractious courts of the gods in the time since the Usurpation, the elemental courts have stagnated, run by beings with little vision beyond their own limited spheres. The elemental courts faced no rebellion and no civil wars—they exist only because courts are all their founders know. Such has it been since the end of the Great Contagion, and such is it now in the Time of Tumult.

## THE ESSENCE OF THE ELEMENTS

Much of what Chapter One has to say about gods is useful for understanding elementals. Where differences aren't called out here, one can assume elementals and gods are similar.

An elemental is a naturally material spirit—a being of Essence and will. Creation's dragon lines have been saturated with an excess of elemental Essence since the destruction of the five great elementals, and wherever geomancy is imbalanced, the upset can form a seed, which crystallizes as a solid spirit formed of



elemental matter. A newly formed elemental's instinct is to correct whatever imbalance called the elemental into being. If this imbalance is endemic, the elemental will toil to lessen the effect. A temporary imbalance leaves behind an elemental free to pursue whatever agenda the being desires.

Elemental motives are often simple, and amount to promoting an element. Most elemental minds are limited. Though usually capable of speech and the sort of reasoning practiced by gods, mortals, Dragon Kings and similar races, most elementals resemble animals in desires and sophistication. In the same way that some wolves are stronger than others, or of more or less vicious temperament, every elemental in Creation is an individual, but few elementals have much individuality as humans think of it. Minor variations in attitude and aptitude aside, one sobeksis or llama-yu is much like another. Only as elementals age and cultivate their Essence do they acquire unique desires, fears, ambitions and roles within the Celestial Order.

## THE ELEMENTAL CONDITION

Elementals aren't immortal.

When an elemental dies by violence, the elemental's Essence disperses into Creation's dragon lines. The elemental Essence does not reincarnate in the manner of a god. Rather, the elemental Essence recombines as a number of similar elementals in the vicinity. The death of a storm dragon may herald the birth of a plethora of minor air and lightning elementals over the next year, but the dragon itself is gone.

Age is another matter. Some elementals are ageless and may persist indefinitely if not slain. Others live out finite spans. Elementals can most easily acquire an ageless existence by experiencing the epiphany that brings individuality—elementals with some concept of self are often inured against the mortality brought by time.

Similar to gods, many elementals reproduce sexually. The jokun raise families in their subterranean homes, while the people of the South know well the seasonal spawning of the llama-yu. Elementals suffer more limits on their sexual reproduction than gods, however. Most elementals who breed cannot change gender on a whim as most gods can, and elementals are often limited to reproducing amongst their own races. They have greater freedom spawning with animals or man, producing God-Blooded descendents with the same abandon as other spirits.

Elementals draw their strength not from Heaven, but from their own bodies and Essence and their connection to the Terrestrial sphere. For an elemental,

the process of increasing Essence is much like Essence cultivation for an Exalt, save elementals “meditate” during their labors and the process takes much longer. Elementals may also learn as gods do, developing new skills, shaping their bodies to a limited extent and even pursuing sorcery and supernatural martial arts. Finally, elementals may gain power granted by gods through Blessing Charms (see pp. 144-148)—this is how elementals gain Heavenly promotion.

## NATURE AND FORM


Elementals have natures as gods do. Elementals fulfill their purposes and play out their quirks and bans. A command forcing an elemental to go against its nature is an unacceptable order just as is such a command to a god.

Elementals also draw their nature from their element. An elemental's form and being are tied to the element of the elemental's body. Air elementals hide wrath beneath a veneer of order. Earth elementals are strong and consistent. Fire elementals tend to be passionate, beautiful and dangerous. Water elementals, perpetually at war with the air, hide their consistency beneath superficial chaos. Wood elementals are dynamic as life and insidious as a tree's questing roots, dangerous and complex, and carry little respect for those who value justice over strength. Attempts to force elementals against their natures fail, and an elemental removed too long from its native material will weaken and die. Stronger elementals can usually survive months or years away from their elements, while weaker elementals die in days, with notable exceptions. Elemental dragons find repose in their native element but sicken not in its absence.

## PLACES OF REST

Elementals don't have sanctums as gods define the term.

Unlike gods, elementals have no innate ability to carve space from Elsewhere. An elemental's soul expresses itself in the material, not in another state of existence. Some elementals manage to find a rare unclaimed sanctum that survives the death of its maker. Others set up court in the neglected sanctum of a nomad god with a lower Essence score. Elementals who try to oust a god from its sanctum and claim the home for themselves usually meet with failure, though, as even fractious gods will often unite against elemental hostility. Should an elemental succeed in claiming a god's sanctum, the elemental gains none of the benefits gods enjoy. To an elemental, a god's sanctum is just an immaterial bolthole.



Many an elemental has taken to *calling* its material home a sanctum, even when that home is just a hollow log or underwater grotto. Amongst gods, such nomenclature is just more evidence elementals are ignorant rustics.

## ELEMENTALS AND OTHERS

With regards to mortal worship, elementals have much in common with gods. What Chapter One says about the Hundred Gods Heresy applies equally to elementals. In areas where humanity understands the difference between the two orders of being, mortals often see gods as the instruments of fate, infallible and invulnerable to human influence. Such mortals also tend to see elementals as less perfect and more influenced by prayer and veneration. Mortal communities are more likely to try gaining the favor of an elemental or an elemental court than they are a Terrestrial court.

The Immaculate Order teaches that elementals are functionaries of the Celestial Order. Unlike gods, who must remain unseen, elementals are tasked with acting to maintain Creation's natural rhythms. Where the Immaculate Order is strong, elementals are more commonly seen than gods are, for obedient gods must keep themselves hidden, whereas obedient elementals must remain in the material world to perform their duties. But for all this means elementals are free to move about, the Immaculate calendar favors the gods much. The Sidereals who shaped the Immaculate Order's doctrines feel much the same way about elementals as the gods do—the elementals did not award rulership of Creation to the Exalted and did not agree to receive limited veneration in return.

## ELEMENTALS AND GODS

The gods look down on the elementals. Elementals were created to serve the gods by easing the latter's labor in maintaining Creation. Elementals perform this duty still, and so, in the eyes of the gods, elementals are servants. The divine stereotype of elementals is as unsophisticated rustics, and gods often show contempt for elementals of much higher Essence than their own. Many Terrestrial courts fill their lowest positions with elementals, because those elementals are either useful or convenient.

Elementals suffer a number of inherent weaknesses in fighting the gods that make asserting independence from the Terrestrial Bureaucracy difficult. First, elementals are not immortal. Even a fight between an evenly matched god and elemental quickly becomes disadvantageous for the elemental if the god can always return.

Second, gods are naturally immaterial. When they're material, shifting to immaterial costs no motes. Elementals are naturally material, and an immaterial elemental may become immaterial at the cost of no motes. During war time, each side has the tactical advantage on the home turf of the other—it's easy for an immaterial elemental to escape to the material world if a fight goes badly for the elemental, and the god an elemental flees from has a difficult time following (especially if the god expended motes during the fight).

Unfortunately for the elementals, this means that during times of war between Terrestrial and elemental courts, gods are often material so as to have an escape from any elementals who might attack them. Elementals are often immaterial. The material gods have an easy time maintaining their mortal cults. From a mortal perspective, gods almost always appear to be winning in any conflict between the two, even if neither side has the advantage. The one consolation prize for the elementals is that material gods have a hard time defending their immaterial sanctums.

Third, elementals are subject to the Mandate of Subordination (see p. 169).

Although the gods treat elementals as inferiors in most cases, the Celestial Order is supposed to come to the defense of elementals abused by sorcerers. This isn't out of respect for elemental dignity, but the gods' own pride. Elementals *are* functionaries of the Celestial Order. A sorcerer who abuses a summoned elemental is abusing, however symbolically, a representative of Heaven. Gods who wouldn't think twice about violating an elemental's dignity may object when they see a summoner do the same.

Unfortunately (again) for elementals, in the Age of Sorrows the gap between "is supposed to" and "does" is wide. Still, there's always the chance of catching a grumpy Celestial censor's eye, so most abusive summoners stick to demons.

## DEMONS

In demons, the elementals observe something unique—a race of beings even more downtrodden than the elementals are. With their low position in the Celestial Order, many elementals take much enjoyment from the knowledge that the demons have it worse. When a sorcerer summons both demons and elementals and uses them together to accomplish some task, the elementals often treat the demons badly and exult in the knowledge that the sorcerer can abuse summoned demons freely but must treat elementals with a modicum of fairness.





## THE FAIR FOLK

As many elemental courts exist closer to the edges of Creation, they deal with the Fair Folk often. Elementals offer little the Fair Folk want (and vice versa—elementals have little need for the demesnes that both Fair Folk and gods desire), and as badly as the elementals were hit in the Contagion's aftermath, they never suffered as the gods did. Elementals and Fair Folk courts have become quite skilled at quietly ignoring each others' existence.

Ignorant mortals often confuse the Fair Folk with elementals, conflating the Fair Folk's tendency to take on elementally aspected bodies with the vague awareness that elementals are a separate order of beings from gods. The Fair Folk are amused by this. Elementals seldom care.

## SUMMONING

When a summoner begins her spell, a messenger of Essence departs through Creation's dragon lines, finding its way through the principles of sympathy and contagion to the one elemental in all the world best fitting the criteria set forth by the sorcerer. The messenger bears a scroll, which in Old Realm reads, "You are summoned to attend upon the will of the Chosen." The rest of the scroll bears a message of the summoner's choosing.

A wise elemental sets its affairs in order, for two hours into the summoning ritual—two hours after the elemental receives the message—a shroud falls over the elemental's fate. The elemental departs Creation's common strata of existence and enters Gaia's geomancy, traveling for two hours through white foam. The elemental sees only the sun, the moon and the stars.

At the ritual's culmination, the air before the summoner shatters, and the elemental appears. At first, its will remains its own. For the next hour, the elemental and the sorcerer may converse freely. At any point during that hour, the summoner may begin the process of binding the elemental. She has two ways to do this, or she may forgo it and seek a more equitable arrangement.

Should the sorcerer bind the elemental to a task for a year and a day, the summoned being may spend Willpower and channel Virtues to resist the binding. Furthermore, the elemental remains loyal only to the sorcerer's orders and not to the sorcerer herself—the sorcerer had best not bind powerful elementals to a task she is uncertain needs accomplishment, as they will not stop if she asks them.

The summoner may also bind the elemental to her own will. Abscissic binding is dealt with in more detail below.

Finally, the sorcerer may choose not to bind the elemental's will at all. If she avoids binding the elemental, it remains by her side but serves according to its own judgment. The elemental's only restriction is that, at some point during the next year, the elemental must declare its service ended.

When an elemental's term of service ends, the elemental departs once more through Creation's dragon lines and returns to where the elemental stood when the sorcerer summoned it. Should it wish not to depart, it may elect to stay (this requires a successful Willpower roll by the elemental's player). Whether the elemental departs or remains, the magic compelling the elemental's loyalty disperses at the end of its service.

Elementals bound to tasks they'd perform even without compulsion sometimes elect to stay and complete their duties. Elementals bound to sorcerers whose company they enjoy sometimes remain in the sorcerer's service.

## LOYALTY VS. NATURE

When a summoner breaks an elemental's will, the elemental becomes loyal to the sorcerer. This loyalty is artificially imposed, but genuine from the perspective of the elemental for the duration of the binding. Even elementals well schooled in the nature of elemental binding, aware of the artificial nature of the impulse, still feel it and follow it as if it were genuine.

A bound elemental cannot consciously act against the sorcerer's orders as defined by the binding. The spell prevents the elemental from reading that order in a deliberately hostile, counterproductive or passive-aggressive way. A task-bound elemental feels genuine desire to fulfill its duty, though it carries no loyalty to the sorcerer's subsequent desires. Abscissic binding (see pp. 79-84) is more total, and the elemental remains loyal to the sorcerer's desires for the duration of a full month, barring some Limit Breaks.

Unfortunately the spell does nothing to ensure the sorcerer's orders are well considered. Although tales of elementals twisting orders against their masters are exaggerated, tales of ill-thought orders bringing more woe than benefit are genuine.

The binding cannot overcome the elemental's nature. Orders rendered unacceptable by spiritual nature remain unacceptable. When loyalty and el-



emental nature come into conflict, loyalty wins out, but nature flavors its manifestations. It is in the nature of wood spiders to be contrary—a bound wood spider, who feels genuine (albeit magically imposed) care for the sorcerer's well-being and approval, will continue to behave in a contrary fashion, but as trivially and harmlessly as the wood spider can manage.

Storytellers need to arbitrate conflicts between loyalty and nature fairly, just as they arbitrate the letter versus the spirit of a command. Elemental summoning needs to be genuinely useful. Next to demon summoning, elemental summoning is the most useful form of sorcery. Summoned elementals should perform the tasks granted them, and whatever complications arise from conflicts between an elemental's nature and an elemental's orders should serve to make the game engaging rather than difficult.


### ABSCISSIC BINDING

When a summoner binds an elemental's will to her own, she breaks it. Just as all breakable things, the wills of summoned entities fracture along pre-existing points of weakness. During the First Age, to aid in the summoning of demons, a protégé of Silur developed *The Abscissic Guide*, a book discussing the demon psyche and containing a collection of

nine major and 34 minor illustrated plates charting the fracture points of the demonic mind. As the sorcerer breaks the summoned being's will, she can use the methods set out in *The Abscissic Guide* to ensure the will breaks as she desires. The summoners of Creation quickly applied *The Abscissic Guide* to the task of binding elementals, and found only one of the major plates, the Horror, incompatible with the elemental mindset. The rest, sorcerers adapted to elemental binding. Each plate describes a weakness in an elemental's Virtues and nature, and how a summoner might, through the exploitation of that weakness, leash the elemental to her will.

Though it seemed at the time the book had introduced a new form of controlling magic overlaid atop basic summoning, sorcerers soon realized the book merely codified a phenomenon they'd been observing all along. Before *The Abscissic Guide*, summoners called up demons and elementals conforming to these archetypes; the sorcerers simply weren't as expert at selecting which profile to use or recognizing which profile a summoned being fell into, and were much less knowledgeable about how to bring bound spirits back under control when those spirits became erratic. The same is true of those summoners in Creation today without access to *The Abscissic Guide*.





All elementals bound to the will of the summoner conform to one of these archetypes.

**Availability and Cost:** The nine major and one of the minor plates are common, available together as a single Resources ••• purchase in the Realm and the major cities of the Threshold. Twenty of the minor plates are rare and available only to collectors—assuming a character can find someone willing to sell such a treasure, each usually costs Resources •••• plus whatever favor the character must perform to persuade the seller to spread the knowledge. Thirteen of the minor plates are thought lost and would be Resources ••••• purchases were they reintroduced to the world. In the Realm, however, sorcerers who wish to acquire summoning licenses on the Blessed Isle must pass tests demonstrating working knowledge of *The Abscissic Guide*. For much the same reason that, in the Heptagram, every student spends two years learning how to banish and control demons before learning how to actually summon them, all the libraries of the Blessed Isle with books restricted to Dynasts carry a copy of the book, and anyone eligible to read such books may do so. Those responsible for the Realm's maintenance today assume that *all* sorcerers will eventually dabble in summoning and ensure wide distribution of the tome so that, at the very least, the summoners will have some idea of how the forces they're manipulating work. Storytellers should assume any character with enough dots of Occult to qualify for the Terrestrial Circle Sorcery Charm is familiar with this material, unless unfamiliarity with the subject is a plot point.

**Mechanics:** An elemental bound to a sorcerer's will gains a Limit track and conditions by which it gains and loses Limit. Each major plate aligns itself with a Virtue—to summon an elemental using one of the Abscissic plates, the elemental must by default have that plate's Virtue at 3 or less. (Every elemental in Creation is an individual, even if most elementals of the same race are alike. Even if a race of elementals usually possesses a Virtue at greater than 3, somewhere in Creation hides an exception.) Minor plates, much more specific and narrow in their purpose, align themselves with other traits.

When circumstances place the elemental in conditions in which its Limit gain condition applies, roll the relevant Virtue or other trait; the elemental gains one point of Limit per success. Players of sorcerers seeking to reduce an elemental's Limit describe methods by which their characters do so. Each stunt die garnered

by the description reduces Limit by one, to a maximum of one such stunt per scene of interaction with the elemental. Throughout the following descriptions, *low Limit* refers to a Limit of 0 to 3, while *high Limit* refers to a Limit of 7 to 9.

Each plate also has two Limit Breaks. The sorcerer chooses which plate to use, but has no power over which of the two the elemental manifests when it reaches Limit 10. An elemental experiencing Limit Break regains Willpower as if the elemental were a Solar Exalt. After an elemental's Limit Break concludes, the elemental's Limit drops immediately back to zero; however, many Limit Breaks last for a number of months equal to the trait associated with the template. For elementals, this means the Limit Break lasts until the end of the binding, as a sorcerer cannot bind an elemental using the Abscissic method for a period of longer than a month.

Sorcerers familiar with *The Abscissic Guide* know how to phrase their arguments such that the elemental's weaknesses snare it from the beginning of the battle of wills. Elementals never spend Willpower or channel Virtues to resist such a summoner's binding attempt. Sorcerers who try to bind an elemental's will without *The Abscissic Guide*'s guidance benefit from no such effect.

### THE COURTESAN (TEMPERANCE)

The elemental Courtesan values self-indulgence but desires duty. The Courtesan will engage in self-degradation to achieve its aim and desires control over its circumstances. It gains Limit when presented with new evidence that it's helpless or unneeded. The sorcerer can reduce the Courtesan's Limit by involving the elemental in decision-making processes, presenting it with gifts, offering it apparently sincere flattery or otherwise proving it valuable.

At low Limit, the Courtesan lives to please its master and retains confidence all its orders are justified. As the Courtesan's Limit increases, the elemental's confidence erodes, and it begins gathering intelligence on its master's plans that it might advance them itself and prove indispensable. At high Limit, the elemental often moves boldly to advance its master's agenda in ways she may not fully appreciate.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Fury of the Scorned:** The Courtesan wishes its master to experience helplessness and dependency. The elemental will strive to cause her suffering for (its Temperance) days, though this suffering will

not actively endanger the sorcerer. Alternately, the elemental may decide on one minor inconvenience to inflict in secret for the duration of its servitude, such as impotence with all partners save the Courtesan.

**Lash of Self-Hatred:** The Courtesan abandons all pretensions of empowerment and accepts that it exists only to fulfill its master's idle whims. It grows listless and purposeless, acting only on orders, and can no longer engage in creative activities or spend Willpower unless its actions are also self-destructive, in which case it throws itself into them with nihilistic relish. The elemental cannot rouse out of this state until its period of servitude is finished.

### THE ECSTATIC (COMPASSION)

The elemental Ecstatic longs for the love it feels not. The summoner opens its heart to Creation, and it serves her to pursue emotion. The elemental gains Limit when it observes others fulfilling or attempting to fulfill great passions—common, when traveling with the Exalted (but no more than once per scene). The sorcerer can reduce the elemental's Limit by forcing the elemental to spend time in isolation from the world.

At low Limit, the Ecstatic serves the sorcerer emptily, not yet filled by the emotions it's been promised. As its Limit increases, the elemental strives to find the object of its future devotion, and Creation responds to the elemental's burgeoning emotions with minor elemental displays. Water near it may boil, or flowers bloom out of season. Fires flare. At high Limit, these elemental displays grow in magnitude, occasionally damaging the surroundings—more so the higher the elemental's Essence trait.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Love:** The elemental finds the love it's been promised. For (its Compassion) days, the elemental devotes itself totally in its own alien way to the object of its affection. The elemental's behavior is limited only in that it may not harm the sorcerer bodily, whether out of love for her or to protect its love from her.

**Shattered Heart:** Venus and Saturn deny the elemental the love they promised it. Dejected, the elemental suffers +1 difficulty on all rolls made for it and -1 to its Defense Values until its servitude ends.

### THE FUNCTIONARY (COMPASSION)

Out of a lack of care for the rest of Creation, the elemental Functionary obsesses totally over a single task, established by the sorcerer at the moment of binding. The elemental gains Limit when duties or

circumstances interfere with its obsession (but no more than once per scene). The sorcerer can reduce the elemental's Limit by giving the elemental time to mix relaxation and the pursuit of its obsession—more or less a week suffices.

At low Limit, the Functionary's existence is defined only by its purpose. Even as it performs other duties, the focus of the elemental's obsession prevents its mind from wandering away from the sorcerer's commands. As its Limit increases, the elemental's inability to fulfill its function distracts it from the world, and it may suffer +1 difficulty to rolls unassociated with its obsession or survival. At high Limit, difficulties increase by +2, and the elemental may plead incoherently with the sorcerer to be allowed to focus on its function.

#### LIMIT BREAK


**Absolute Obsession:** The Functionary's obsession consumes it totally. For (its Compassion) days, it suffers +4 difficulty on all rolls not associated with its function, regains no Willpower or motes, cannot communicate intelligibly and suffers one health level of lethal damage per day from self-neglect. If the sorcerer wishes the elemental to still abstain from its function, she must remind the elemental hourly.

**Compassionate Gift:** The Functionary's obsession shifts, and it conceives of a grand gift or service to provide to its master, which none can dissuade it from pursuing. The construction or pursuit of the Compassionate Gift pushes all its other tasks to the side, and though the elemental means no harm, the gift when finally delivered is difficult to get rid of or undo and as much a curse as a blessing. The elemental pursues this task until its binding concludes and presents the gift before departure.

### THE HUNTER (CONVICTION)

An elemental summoned as a Hunter can function as literal hunter, a builder, a research assistant or in any position where the elemental must pursue an endless series of similar but unconnected tasks. The restless elemental Hunter longs for purpose. The summoner offers fulfillment, and the Hunter uses it as focus, and yet, this focus is ever-shifting, a series of individual goals with no overarching purpose between them. The elemental gains Limit when the elemental suffers enforced idleness (no more than once per day). The sorcerer can reduce its Limit by providing the elemental exciting tasks and ensuring these pursuits are successful.





At low Limit, the Hunter's focus satisfies it. As the Hunter's Limit increases, the elemental begins to embark upon small, self-directed hunts during moments of free time—if the sorcerer reduces its free time, it merely takes this as a challenge. At high Limit, these self-directed actions may become actively counterproductive to the sorcerer's agenda.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Fair Play:** For the remaining duration of its servitude, the Hunter applies itself only to truly challenging tasks. It encourage the sorcerer to assign it projects to the limits of its ability; if she does not comply, the elemental begins to handicap itself during lesser tasks to make the challenge more interesting.

**Madness of Shadows:** For (its Conviction) days, the Hunter confuses targets or tasks, embarking on projects essentially at random (though the Storyteller should chose tasks that make play interesting). The elemental still cannot harm the sorcerer directly, but it may betray her inadvertently.

#### THE KILLER (VALOR)

The sorcerers of the First Age adapted the Killer imperfectly to the summoning of elementals. It seizes not upon a weakness in an elemental's Virtues, but a strength. The sorcerer may apply this plate only to elementals with a Valor of 3 or *more*. Its name is also something of a misnomer. The elemental Killer lusts for dark, selfish experience—murder, sex without attachment (sometimes without consent), gluttony—and to fully express its elemental nature upon Creation. The sorcerer does not impose a desire upon the elemental she summons, but the spell does summon an elemental with a desire she wishes to see. The elemental's Limit increases when denied its chosen indulgence (no more than once per scene). The sorcerer can reduce its Limit by feeding the elemental what it desires.

At low Limit, the Killer is sated and on its best behavior, seeing the sorcerer as the path to opportunities for satisfaction. As its Limit increases, the elemental becomes sullen and brooding, it expresses petty revenge through minor acts of vandalism and elemental rage, and it follows orders carelessly. However, the elemental does not yet wish to see its master seriously harmed. At high Limit, the elemental begins to pursue its pleasures to the detriment of its assignments.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Sorcerer as Target:** The sorcerer's bindings fray to the point of snapping. For (its Valor) actions, the

elemental Killer makes the sorcerer the target of its indulgence, attacking her to kill or subdue.

**Unstoppable Indulgence:** For (its Valor) days, the Killer processes orders only to find what pleasure it may take from them. The Killer cannot understand any order it would not enjoy, and even the orders it does carry out, the elemental performs as a side-effect of indulging itself

#### THE SLAVE (TEMPERANCE)

The elemental Slave is a mechanism in service to its master. The Slave can think, solve problems, reason and comprehend all it could before its binding, but it lacks self-awareness. It gains Limit whenever the elemental's Virtues force the Slave to feel—whenever its behavior is compelled by success on a Virtue roll. The sorcerer has no means to reduce its Limit.

At low Limit, the Slave's psyche is a pure, clean void. The Slave cannot spend Willpower. As the Slave's Limit increases, the elemental grows troubled by premonitions of a future break in its oblivion, and it develops a sense of time. At high Limit, the elemental gain rudimentary and suppressed emotions and can spend Willpower in pursuit of the sorcerer's commands.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Flare of Rebellion:** The Slave gains a new self, defined by a burning hatred for the sorcerer who has bound it, though the force of its binding allows it to conceal this motivation. Some time during the remaining period of its binding, the Slave can spend up to (its Temperance) actions attacking the sorcerer directly, or it can work to undermine her interest for as many minutes. Once the Slave has carried out its revenge, the sorcery submerges its identity again.

**New Self:** The bindings snap. The sorcerer must immediately engage the elemental in a new contest of wills (regardless of distance). If the sorcerer declines, the elemental wins by default and departs. Even if the sorcerer triumphs, the elemental acquires a new Abscissic profile (of the Storyteller's choice, not the sorcerer's) for the remaining duration of the elemental's binding. The sorcerer gains no knowledge of which profile the former Slave now follows.

#### THE SUFFERER (RESISTANCE)

The Sufferer is the sole minor plate still in common circulation amongst Creation's occult circles. An elemental Sufferer knows it's naught but a tool for Creation's maintenance. The Sufferer has no pride



to sustain it and no purpose except what its betters provide it. A sorcerer may only apply this template to an elemental with Resistance 3 or *more*. The elemental gains Limit whenever the Sufferer knows surcease from suffering or learns to cope with the pain the elemental feels. The sorcerer can reduce its Limit by torturing the elemental into incoherence, though she must invent new methods to circumvent its ability to cope.

At low Limit, the Sufferer's self-hatred ensures total servitude, but if not kept at a -2 health penalty, it gains Limit daily. As its Limit increases, it suffers not enough, and begins to self-mortify. It must be kept at a -1 health penalty or gain Limit daily. At high Limit, the elemental turns its suffering outward, and while the sorcerer need not keep it wounded to ensure loyalty, the Sufferer begins to share its pain with those around it.

The Celestial Order and elemental courts frown on sorcerers using the Sufferer plate to bind elementals.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Suicidal Frenzy:** The Sufferer attempts to kill itself for (its Resistance) minutes, seeking a method with maximum collateral damage. If standing orders keep the elemental from this task, the Sufferer delays until an opportunity presents itself.

**Transcendence of Pain:** Through pain, the Sufferer finds new purpose. The elemental gains an instinctive understanding of the sorcerer's fate and discards its old Motivation, acquiring a new Motivation directly related to the sorcerer destiny. Usually this is malignant, but some elementals, glad of their new transcendent understanding of Creation, adopt benevolent Motivations. The elemental remains bound but no longer gains Limit, and once its binding snaps, it retains its new Motivation. Even should the elemental die, this new transcendent comprehension will shape the way its Essence reforms, and the new elementals created from its reincarnation will return to affect (or plague) the sorcerer's life.

#### THE VIZIER (CONVICTION)

The elemental Vizier, aware of its own failings in upholding its duty to Creation, seeks to ensure its master fails not in those same tasks. It takes upon itself the mantle of advisor to the Prince of the Earth, showing her the path of righteousness, and denies itself indulgence so as to set a proper example. Using this plate, sorcerers can summon only elementals with Intelligence 2 or greater, in addition to the necessary Conviction of 3 or less. The Vizier gains

Limit whenever its words are ignored or whenever it spends five days in circumstances that prevent it offering advice. The sorcerer can reduce its Limit by following its advice without question. Unfortunately, owing to their focus on the substance of one element, all elemental Viziers offer incomplete and biased suggestions.

At low Limit, the Vizier contents itself with the knowledge its advice is well taken. As its Limit increases, the Vizier grows more aware of its masters' failings, and begins to study them. It may manufacture circumstances whereby the sorcerer's own actions bring her into conflict with Heaven, to emphasize the importance of relying on the elemental's advice. At high Limit, the Vizier grows convinced that any agenda of the summoner's not in concordance with the harmonious will of the Celestial Order must be working against that order.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Body Hunger:** For (its Conviction) hours, enraged that it has denied itself indulgence to no purpose, the Vizier sates itself according to all the wishes it put aside in the name of setting an example for the summoner. Preventing the elemental from sating its desires extends this time.

**Cruel Measures:** The Vizier attempts to bring all of the summoner's crimes and misdemeanors to the attention of Heaven, that she may be audited by a Celestial censor and brought to task for her insufficient devotion to Creation's welfare. Even if the sorcerer's crimes are forgiven or otherwise go unpunished, the Vizier is unsatisfied, and serves unreliably for its remaining term.

#### THE WARDEN (VALOR)

The Warden, too, adapted imperfectly to elemental summoning. The sorcerer may apply this plate only to an elemental of Valor 3 or *more*. The Warden is possessive. Through the binding, the sorcerer convinces the elemental that *she* belongs to *it*, and it serves her to best protect her, as it would any of its possessions. The Warden gains Limit whenever the sorcerer or anything she assigns it to protect is threatened (but no more than once per threat). The sorcerer can reduce the elemental's Limit by providing the elemental days of apparent safety, but more importantly, killing a legitimate threat to its charge reduces its Limit to zero, provided it's not in the midst of Limit Break.

At low Limit, the Warden feels secure and obeys its commands without protest, as its possession's





interests are its own. As its Limit increases, the elemental grows aware that Creation is full of danger. The Warden monitors its charge carefully, though it still retains discretion. At high Limit, the Warden abandons discretion; unless specific orders leash the elemental, it spends its time chasing away all things it sees as potential threats.

#### LIMIT BREAK

**Stone-Hearted Gargoyle Warden:** For (its Valor) days, the Warden grows convinced its charge cannot protect herself. It stops up its ears to prevent hearing contrary orders, kidnaps her and imprisons her while keeping all other individuals at bay.

**Terrible Guardian Vengeance:** The Warden ceases to understand discretion at all. Until it has killed (its Valor) apparent enemies, the elemental attacks anyone who shows even the slightest disrespect or threat to its charge, even friends and lovers.

#### ADDITIONAL PLATES

Rare and lost plates other than the Sufferer exist. Players and Storytellers can work together to create new profiles if the above are insufficient. By default, minor profiles are based on Abilities and require

their base trait at 3 or more, though some may base themselves on Attributes, Willpower, Essence or even Backgrounds.

#### TASK BINDING

An elemental bound to a task gains that task as a new Motivation in addition to the elemental's existing Motivation. Though provided through magic, this new Motivation is in all ways real and confers all the same benefits as a real Motivation. If the new Motivation and the old Motivation conflict, the elemental's player may spend a Willpower point for the elemental to ignore the imposed Motivation for a day—otherwise, the elemental's desire to fulfill the task to which it's bound takes precedent. The elemental's player may not spend a Willpower point to ignore the imposed Motivation unless the previous Motivation forces a conflict.

If the sorcerer has a task in mind when she begins the summoning, the spell will call an elemental with a Motivation compatible to the task, unless she deliberately works the magic otherwise (for example, specifically binding an elemental she knows by name to aid her in a task she knows it opposes).

## WHAT'S ALL THIS, THEN?

The Limit Break system presents a method by which Storytellers may chart the behavior of bound elementals who become recurring characters, providing plot hooks and potential complications while keeping the spell useful and worthwhile to cast. This also provides a system by which players can have their characters engage with this process through means other than fiat, in much the same way that the social combat system provides a way to run social conflict without fiat.

This system *isn't* meant to discourage summoning by making the players of summoners feel horribly guilty about their characters violating the minds of summoned elementals by imposing artificial enslavement personalities. As emphasized earlier, Abscissic binding isn't additional mind control bundled with the summoning spell—it's the ways elemental minds naturally fracture, codified. Few characters in Creation see Abscissic binding as inherently less ethical or intrusive than task binding, and while the Abscissic plates may appear from our perspective as artificially imposed personalities, within Creation they just seem like a set of categories an elemental's broken will might fall within. Two elementals with the Courtesan template may be as different from each other as two Solars with the Heart of Tears Limit Break. One may be a concubine; another a dedicated majordomo.

## CSELENINE ETHICS

During the First Age, in response to the Celestial Incarnae's repeated refusal to judge the spell Summon Elemental a violation of Celestial law, the lesser elemental dragon of Fire Cselene developed a system for more equitable relationships between elementals and the Exalted. She based her *Cselene's Book of Thoughts* on the axiom that the vows ensuring elemental loyalty to the gods and their Chosen remain valid, but breaking an elemental's will is an abhorrent crime. Realizing few Exalted would agree to this premise without some incentive, she proposed a system whereby elemental courts would bargain with powerful Exalted for terms of loyal service in exchange for modest payment—bargains favoring the Exalted first and foremost.

## TAXI!

The most common favor demanded by the lords of the elemental courts, second to payment in jade, exploits a quirk in the spell Summon Elemental. When a sorcerer performs this service for an elemental, the elemental first journeys to some place in which the elemental believes itself safe, and waits while by prearranged schedule the sorcerer summons it. When the elemental arrives, the sorcerer releases it without breaking its will, then gives the elemental no orders and allows it to do whatever it wants. By the laws of Heaven, over the course of the following month, the elemental is in service to the sorcerer—but that simply means at any time during that month, the elemental may “declare its term of service finished” and journey back to where it stood when the summoning began. Sorcerers who perform it for their elemental allies sometimes become targets for those elementals' enemies, which is actually an advantage to the sorcerers during Cselene pact bargaining sessions.

An elemental court with a Cselene pact typically pledges loyalty to a specific Celestial Exalt or family of Dragon-Blooded. The Exalted pay the leaders of the court several talents of jade per year (approximately Resources ●●●● all told) as well as whatever favors for which the court negotiated, and in return, the summoner gains the loyalty of all beings within the court she may wish to summon, loyalty backed not by magic but by the enforcement of the elemental court's leaders. Often, Cselene pacts present circumstances in which the elemental should stay in service beyond its allotted time. Summoners who call upon Cselene pacts aren't supposed to break the wills of the elementals they summon—it's up to the lord of the elemental court to punish elementals that declare their service finished early.

Though Cselene pacts are typically slanted in favor of the Exalted first, the leaders of an elemental court second, and the rank-and-file amongst the elemental court last, all participants *do* benefit. Under a Cselene bargain, a mistreated elemental may appeal to its supervisors and report mistreatment—something it cannot do if summoned by a lone sorcerer.





## THE ELEMENTAL COURTS

Following the chaos of the Contagion, when the Terrestrial Bureaucracy was in disarray, the elementals of Creation formed themselves into courts in imitation of the courts of the gods. Having no experience in the leadership of spirit courts, and never having received the instruction of the Five Elemental Dragons, the elementals imitated what behavior of the gods they'd seen. The gods seldom explained themselves to their lowest servants, and from this, the elementals learned that leaders need not explain their motives to subjects. The gods were often contemptuous and cruel to the elementals, and from this, the elementals learned that leaders should be contemptuous and cruel. As comparatively simple beings, the elementals saw courts full of discussion amongst the divine administrators, and from this, the elementals learned courts should be full of discussion.

The elementals assumed if they performed in their courts as they'd seen the gods do, then efficiency, purpose, fulfillment and satisfaction would follow naturally.

Savants who understand the history and behavior of the elemental courts gain keen insight into why the gods often dismiss elementals as ignorant, primitive and backward. The elementals of the courts most often concern themselves with internal matters and debate over minutiae, often taking those debates to extremes that seem ludicrous to outsiders. When confronted with this, the elementals assert that none but elementals can understand the details of the debates, and then go back to arguing what the wind speed should have been for the seven minutes following the brief rainstorm three months ago.

Though the Terrestrial courts and the elemental courts often govern the same territories, the gods of the Terrestrial courts ignore the elemental courts whenever possible. Aside from manipulation of the weather, most elemental courts accomplish very little, and take haughty and belligerent attitudes when criticized or challenged. Through experience, the gods have found they have much better luck dealing with the elementals who turn their backs on the elemental courts.

## THE PRINCIPALITY OF THE SHORE

The Silk and Pearl Peninsula is the furthest west and least populous land of the Blessed Isle, and the Principality of the Shore makes a home on its coast.

On the Blessed Isle, the war between water and air is limited. The Empress had no desire to see the vendetta of the Wind Masters carried out upon her shores, and by her order, air elementals who attack water elementals while either party is material suffer greatly at the fists of the Immaculate monks. On the Blessed Isle, elementals of water and air spend even more time material than elementals normally do. The few mortal inhabitants of the Silk and Pearl Peninsula are well acquainted with the ways of the elementals, for the subjects of the Principality are a common sight.

The Principality is an elemental court of water, but not exclusively so. Five three-clawed sages rule it. They appear as man-sized crabs, dripping with brine. Often they wear raiments of gold and fine silk. Three-clawed sages were once common throughout Creation, powerful water elementals who lead many water courts, but the activities of the Wind Masters' soldiers have brought low the three-clawed sages' numbers. The five three-clawed sages of the Principality of the Shore believe themselves the last in Creation. They are not, however, given to sentimentality.

Centuries ago, one of the Principality's leaders approached Tepet Isai about a Cselonite pact with his House. Isai was surprised at the great crab's appearance, because the lord of an elemental court lord approaching a summoner in search of a pact is unusual and because the sage appeared to Isai as he woke from a night of debauchery, its great brine-dripping carapace (wrapped in a gold and silk skirt) looming over him as he opened his eyes. After a brief incident, the sage found a moment to catch its breath and explain its motives, and Isai contacted the House elders. Tepet had few sorcerers even in those days, and the sages believed the House would call upon it pact little. They were correct. Not only were House Tepet's sorcerers few, but the elementals of the Principality of the Shore are of little use to summoners. But since the Tepet legions were wiped out, the few remaining sorcerers of the House call upon the pact more and more often, in an effort to extract full value from the pact's price in jade.

Though the pact doesn't obligate House Tepet to come to the Principality's defense against attack, the three-clawed sages have always implied the House would do exactly that during their rare talks with the representatives of the wind bears, and when the elementals of water and air collude to tend the peninsula's weather. Now that the Empress is gone, Black Grinning Bear



## SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED

Due to space constraints, this book does not include traits for many of the elemental types native to the Principality of the Shore. Storytellers are invited to create traits for these elementals using the following information and the information presented in the Appendix. All of these elementals possess the Dematerialize Charm, and many possess common Charms such as Principle of Motion and Excellencies.

**Black tar vortices** are earth elementals that resemble yard-wide pools of tar spread out upon the beach. They absorb the heat of the day until nightfall when they erupt into sandpit fires (below). Vortices are grumpy and uncomfortable beings, who use Stoke the Flame to provoke those around them into rash action. When black tar vortices speak, they use Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe to cause oily humanoid figures to rise from their surface, and with the Paralyze Charm and the strikes of their pseudopodia they cripple anyone who treads upon them. Most have Essence 3, Compassion 3, Conviction 2, Temperance 1 and Valor 2.

**Golden fire keepers** are Fire elementals who resemble one-sided sheets of flame. They rest upon the surface of the ocean managing the Unconquered Sun's reflection, confuse sailors with the Subtle Whisper and Harrow the Mind Charms, multiply in combat using Host of Spirits or blast their foes with their Dragon's Suspire. Golden fire keepers cannot be harmed while in direct sunlight and speak telepathically to anyone they wish ill. They also possess Curse Charms. Most have Essence 2, Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 2 and Valor 2.

**Sandpipers** are small, birdlike earth elementals, their brown feathers laced with gold. They use Affinity Earth Control to shape the shore to their liking and may moreover create up to five pounds of sand per minute at no mote cost. They possess Charms relating to perception, stealth and quick travel, and the most compassionate possess Touch of Grace. Most have Essence 2, Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 2 and Valor 3.

**Sandpit fires** are fire elementals, the nighttime forms of the black tar vortices. Through the night, sandpit fires melt a hole in the sand until morning comes, the walls of their pits collapse, sand drowns their flames and they bubble to the surface as tar. Unlike the black tar vortices, sandpit fires cannot move, though they can reshape themselves. They can use Dreamspeak to interact with anyone sleeping nearby, Harrow the Mind and Stoke the Flame to cause confusion amongst traveling parties or just ignite things with their Affinity Fire Control. Most have Essence 3, Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2 and Valor 3.

The five **three-clawed sages** who rule the Principality of the Shore possess many, many Charms, including an All-Encompassing Dreamscape Charm and many Charms relating to manipulation of others' minds and memories. Three-clawed sages have Essence 6, Compassion 3, Conviction 5, Temperance 3 and Valor 5. Notably, they also possess Intelligence and Perception each at 6.

**Urchin kings** are the honor guard of the Principality. Water elementals, their spines secrete poisons, antidotes and aphrodisiacs, and they crave women for their harems, but they lack genitalia or a way to use those harems as anything but status symbols amongst other urchin kings. They can hurl their spines at enemies, and urchin kings possess Charms related to combat as well as weather-manipulation, plus Affinity Water Control. Most have Essence 3, Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 2 and Valor 3.

(see p. 91) is eager to test the Principality's honesty and mettle, as well as White Venerable Bear's control over the Blessed Isle.

Four of the three-clawed sages tend the Cselenite pact. The fifth has an older pact with the Scarlet Empress herself, now known only to the Principality and the

Empress (wherever she is). The border between shore and sea is fragile along the Peninsula's coast, and the Wyld ever waits for the two to slip apart, that it may take hold of the gap between. The fifth three-clawed sage spends her life holding the sea against the shore of the Blessed Isle.



### USING THE PRINCIPALITY OF THE SHORE

What the court doesn't realize is it is the best hope for peace between air and water. Many water elementals remember the days of three-clawed sages fondly, for then the wind bears had not yet begun their pogroms. Were the water crabs to speak, no matter what they said, other water courts would listen. The air elementals of the Blessed Isle might listen as well, for the edict of material peace has ensured a least a modicum of interaction between the two elements over the past 700 years. The three-clawed sages may believe their interactions with the air elementals few and strained, but those negotiations are common and relaxed compared to similar meetings elsewhere.

Chief Storms-As-He-Walks, the legendary and respected thunderbird (see pp. 99-100) is Black Grinning Bear's chief lieutenant. Chief Storms-As-He-Walks enjoys close ties with House Tepet, and his time away

from the other thunderbirds has dulled his hatred of the elementals of water. Were he to come out in defense of the Principality, many thunderbirds would join him. Whether this would presage peace between the elements or merely enough of a split amongst Black Grinning Bear's troops to render the dragon vulnerable to water elemental attack is up to the Storyteller.

A group of Solars investigating the origins of the feud between water and air would eventually come to unearth these facts. Of course, they'd have to brave the Blessed Isle to take advantage of the opportunity....

Should air elementals kill the fifth three-clawed sage, or should she abandon her duty for other pursuits, disaster would strike the Realm. A Wyld zone would form along the shore, first thin but ever expanding in both length and width. The Empress knew she could repair such a rift with the Realm Defense Grid, but she's hardly in a position to do so at the moment.





WELL, WELL...  
I TOLD YOU WE  
MISSED ONE.

THAT  
YOU DID.



HE HASN'T  
DROWNED YET,  
BUT HE'S  
CLOSE.

WUH  
...?



UNHAND  
ME, SPIRIT...  
AT ONCE...

HEY, FEISTY!  
MAYBE I OUGHT  
TO TAKE HIM  
HOME FOR SOME  
FUN.



I  
SAID...



Later

KEEP  
PADDLING,  
CUR.

AGAIN, I'M  
REALLY SORRY  
ABOUT THIS.



## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE ROLL OF ELEMENTAL BEINGS

### ELEMENTALS OF AIR

Air elementals conceal an inner raging chaos beneath a veneer of cold order. The first elementals to form after the destruction of the five progenitors, the air elementals were also the last to count powerful beings amongst their number. But the Wind Masters, the last of the highest order of first-generation elementals, were also the first lesser elemental dragons, and today, these ursine dragons ensure the elementals of air are the most unified, most organized and most militant of all elemental beings.

The Council of Winds, the elemental court of the Wind Masters, claims authority over every air elemental in Creation. Though they're not the only dragons to claim authority over all elementals of their sort, no other dragons can count on as many elementals to agree and submit. The Council of Winds is also the


elemental court with the strongest remaining ties to Yu-Shan—though the great bears retain independence from the Bureau of Seasons' full control, they nevertheless works eagerly with the Celestial storm serpent Nasri and Shogun-Regent Ghataru. The Wind Masters need the support of Heaven, for only this cooperation provides for them the leniency they require to pursue their endless military crusades against the elementals of water. For the past 1,000 years, the elementals of air have waged pogrom after pogrom against the water elementals, decimating the ranks of the latter and ensuring that the air elementals have control over the courts of the North and the West.

### WIND MASTERS

#### LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGONS OF AIR

Every season, on a cloud high above the Omphalos, five great bears come together and speak in voices of





thunder. In a moment of ire, each could rear up as a bear-headed dragon; but the five keep tight rein on their emotions as they propose, debate and finally plan the five winds' patterns across Creation. An observer of that orderly discussion might be surprised to know that the Wind Masters are the bitterest of rivals. When they encounter each other outside their seasonal council, they lunge at each other and wrestle in a jumble of scaled coils and azure lightning. Terrible tornadoes and hurricanes attend those fateful meetings, killing mortals caught in their fields and wrecking nearby cities.

Each Wind Master would love to seize the power of another, but they're evenly matched politically and physically, and pride prevents each from allying with others. An uneasy feeling of brotherhood prevails, with all the Wind Masters spending some time keeping their enemies in the water courts from becoming a problem. The Frog Queen (see pp. 123-124) is a particular annoyance. She constantly snipes at the Wind Masters in the Court of Seasons and seeks to rally water leaders against them. But the Court of Seasons knows that disturbing the five winds would have catastrophic effects on seasonal changes and hierarchies, and Creation's water courts are far too disorganized to work effectively against anyone.

Though the five Wind Masters are older than him by millennia, they follow the directives of Nasri, the Daimyo of Rainstorms, Daimyo of the Season of Air and General of the Aerial Legion in Yu-Shan's Bureau of Seasons. The Great Bears are served by huraka (see **Exalted**, pp. 303-305), translucent bears fierce as any storm. White Venerable Bear, wisest of the Wind Masters, has devised a system: each new huraka, as it falls softly from its birthplace above Diamond Hearth, is assigned to the Wind Master who currently commands the fewest. The five have agreed to this allocation, for it ensures than no wind dragon keeps a larger army than any other.

**Blue Skulking Bear**, Master of the North Wind, is a cold and silent dragon whose scales are rimed with frost. He deals with the Northern water courts only when he absolutely must—but when he does, his rage splinters icebergs, blasts tsunami across the water and freezes every Northern watercourse so numbingly that even inoffensive algae dies. The North's terrified water elementals have long since agreed to follow his commands; when one goes against his will, it's almost always by mistake. Blue Skulking Bear resides alone in an icy fortress, accepting no visitors whatsoever. His servants guard him in shifts; the rest of the time, they meander slowly through the frozen wastes, watching for rogue water activity and pondering the beauty of untamed

snow. The Master of the North Wind's Motivation is nothing less than the freezing of the world, but he understands that his time has not yet come. No one knows that of him, but if the Deathlords discover it, they might consider sending an emissary to the elemental.

On the other hand, the Master of the East Wind, **Green Frowning Bear**, loves to talk and is very approachable—at least, for anyone who can find his hunting lodge in the Far East. There is even something of an accord between him and the Eastern water courts. As long as the water elementals don't do anything too egregious, such as calling large, unscheduled storms—and as long as they keep the rivers near his house plentifully stocked with jewel-scaled salmon—Green Frowning Bear will overlook small transgressions. The Eastern Bear's Motivation boils down to vanity: above all things, he desires compliments and adulation, and to be surrounded by wonderful things. His huraka hunt for beautiful, unique trophies when they aren't in the lodge praising him and telling astonishing stories.

The cruelest and most arrogant of the Great Bears is **Black Grinning Bear**, Master of the West Wind. Since his island dominion is obviously surrounded by water, he's hardest on the Wind Masters' common enemies. He handsomely rewards his huraka, as well as thunderbirds and other visitors, for every dead water elemental or trophy they bring him; currently, he seeks to complete his 30th full set of vodonik teeth. In political circles, Black Grinning Bear is barely civil to water delegates. If they approach in any mood other than craven submission, he'll respond to their negotiations with vicious threats. He's the one who deals with the Frog Queen, and though he's never explicitly demanded her head, the thunderbirds whisper that killing her would bring a great reward. Black Grinning Bear's Motivation is to crush Creation's water elementals so thoroughly that they will never challenge him again. Though he doesn't think much of mortals, he'll accept their fealty, and anyone who comes to him with suggestions for how to deal with the water courts gains his instant attention. It's easy to find Black Grinning Bear's island. He instructs his huraka to walk atop the water whenever possible, as a visible show of strength; any of those lesser bears can give directions to his home. However, though he does grant great favors to those who perform his will, the Western Bear doesn't quite understand the limitations of mortals and has been known to demand impossible things of petitioners.

**Red Stalking Bear**, Master of the South Wind, deals least with water elementals, since he makes his home in the howling desert. Perhaps because of this, he's actually



polite when he does encounter them and treats the concerns of Southern water courts with evenhanded fairness. Of course, there's no possible way their influence could grow very much, so he loses nothing from his kindness. He also greatly dislikes politics: outside their seasonal summits, Red Stalking Bear never speaks of his siblings, and water elementals must track him down to negotiate, since he never attends any court. Huraka who serve the Southern Bear have fewer duties than their brethren, and their master encourages them to follow their own passions. He speaks freely of his Motivation—to find a cause he loves enough to fight for—but though he's unfailingly attentive to mortal petitioners and offers advice and medicinal aid for free, it seems unlikely that Red Stalking Bear's cause will be a human one.

The fifth Great Bear, **White Venerable Bear**, Master of the Omphalos, holds the cloud-riding Tower Aneme and hosts the Wind Masters' seasonal meetings there. The overall planning of the winds' cycles has always been his responsibility. His huraka make specific changes to the Wind Masters' program and direct particular currents, such as those bearing the cloud people's cities (see pp. 93-94). He visits the Court of Seasons meticulously once a year, and there he listens silently to any complaints about the five winds—even those levied by water elementals—though he almost never acts on them. A rail visible only to air elementals leads to the Center Bear's sparkling Tower Aneme. Anyone who touches that rail will be transported to the Tower, but then must justify his visit to White Venerable Bear, who has little patience for random questions or powerless petitioners. He will listen carefully to visitors' complaints about the winds, of course, but as with his Court visits, he'll likely ignore them. White Venerable Bear's Motivation, following an insight he had after the Usurpation, is to persuade his brothers to set aside their differences. Sadly, he suspects that the bitterness is too old, that it's become part of the nature of the winds—and thus intrinsic to the Wind Masters themselves.

**Summoning:** The Wind Masters are powerful enough that, if summoned, each has the right to send a servant elemental in his stead. Black Grinning Bear and Red Frowning Bear have Cselenite pacts: Red lends his huraka to a society of sorcerers within the native Dragon-Blooded of Chiaroscuro, while Black traded a promise for favorable sea-winds to the Realm's House Peleps.

**Motivations in Common:** In addition to their individual Motivations, each Wind Master has an Intimacy to the orderly maintenance of the winds' cycles and being the most powerful wind spirit in Creation.

**Attributes:** Strength 10 (*Blue* 11), Dexterity 6, Stamina 10 (*Green* 12); Charisma 4 (*Black* 6, *Red* 6), Manipulation 4, Appearance 5; Perception 5, Intelligence 6 (*Black* 4, *Green* 4), Wits 5

**Virtues:** (Black Grinning Bear) Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 5

(Blue Skulking Bear) Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 5, Valor 3

(Green Frowning Bear) Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 3

(Red Stalking Bear) Compassion 4, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 3

(White Venerable Bear) Compassion 2, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 2

**Abilities:** Athletics 5, Awareness 8 (Sound +4), Bureaucracy 3 (*Red* 1, *White* 5), Dodge 5, Linguistics 5, Lore 4 (*White* 6), Martial Arts 6, Medicine 0 (*Red* 4), Occult 3, Performance 4, Presence 6, Resistance 5 (*Blue* 7), Socialize 4 (*Blue* 1), Survival 8, War 4 (Huraka +2) (*Black* 5 [Huraka +2, Thunderbirds +1])

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 5, Followers 4, Influence 4, Manse 0 (*White* 5), Resources 5

**Charms:**

All:

*Dematerialize*—Costs (*Blue*) 80 motes, (*Black*, *White*) 75 motes, (*Red*) 70 motes, (*Green*) 65 motes

*Divine Decree*—Control the sky

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Moves the winds

*Essence Bite* —

(Black) Crackling lightning 6LHL bypasses armor

(Blue) Numbing cold 5 LHL bypasses armor

(Green) Deadly withering 3AHL bypasses armor

(Red) Blistering heat 5LHL bypasses armor

(White) Smashing winds 16 dice, bashing

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Host of Spirits*—Create useful messengers and heralds

*Material Tribulation Divestment*—All-Encompassing

*Measure the Wind*

*Principle of Motion*—(*Blue*) 9 (*Black*, *White*) 8 (*Green*, *Red*) 7 stored actions

*Signet of Authority*—Visible to all air spirits and elementals

*Symbol of Invincible Authority*—Immune to weather of all kinds

*Weather Control* —

(Black) Electrical storms

(Blue) Cold weather

(Green) Pleasant weather

(Red) Warm weather

(White) Normal, seasonal weather



*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Martial Arts, Presence, Survival

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Martial Arts, Survival

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Awareness (Anything that touches the winds), Martial Arts (Rolling Storm Kata)

### **Black Grinning Bear**

*Bane Weapon*—Anything wet

### **Blue Skulking Bear**

*Reserve of Will* (x1)

*Fruit of Living Essence*—Steal heat and life

### **Green Frowning Bear**

*Come When Called*—Quickly summoned by beautiful creatures

### **Red Stalking Bear**

*Hand of Destiny*—All-Encompassing

*Touch of Grace*—Heals any fire and smoke-related problems

### **White Venerable Bear**

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Bureaucracy (wind-related)

**Join Battle:** 12

#### **Attacks:**

**Bite:** Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 19L (*Blue 20L*), Parry DV 5, Rate 1

**Claw:** Speed 4, Accuracy 14, Damage 15L (*Blue 16L*), Parry DV 7, Rate 4

**Clinch:** Speed 6, Accuracy 16 (*Blue 17*), Damage 10B (*Blue 11B*) (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Gale Blast:** Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 20L (*Green 24L*), Range 30, Rate 1

**Tail Slap:** Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 25B (*Blue 26B*), Parry DV 8, Rate 3

**Soak:** 13L/26B (*Green 14L/28B*) (Dragon hide, 8L/16B; Hardness: 8L/8B)

#### **Health Levels:**

(*Blue*) -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

(*Black, White*) -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

(*Green, Red*) -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap

**Dodge DV:** 9

**Willpower:** Blue 9 (10); Black, White 8; Green, Red 7

**Essence:** 7      **Essence Pool:** Blue 125; Black, White 120; Green, Red 115

**Other Notes:** The Wind Masters can move through the air as easily as across the earth, which is triple the normal movement speed.

Wind Masters absorb air elemental damage per *Blessed Air Body* (see pp. 163-164).

The Wind Masters' *Dragon's Suspire* is an unblockable blast of intense lightning, wind, hail and all manner

of terrible weather that targets everything generally in front of the dragon. It is an air elemental attack.

White Venerable Bear's manse is the Tower Aneme, a rating-4 Air manse that produces a stone of airwalking (see *The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex*, p. 88) whose cloud-stepping power is useless to the Center Bear. He can throw his voice from any location inside to any other and can eavesdrop on any conversations held there as well.

## CLOUD PERSON


Atop the highest clouds, invisible to Creation, stand delicate shining towers. Slender, pale beings with multihued eyes drift vaguely through those aerial cities. They thin and flatten their forms to bathe in the moody sunset, grow wings with which to glide from spire to spire and turn their opalescent gaze to the sky at nightfall. To mortals, these remote-eyed elementals seem beautiful and ineffable.

Even Sidereals are flattered to receive invitations to astrological symposia in the clouds, for the cloud people possess an astonishing understanding of the stars. Long ago, these elementals cast a horoscope that foresaw the coming of the Void. Disturbed, they recast it and saw the same results. They held many conferences on the subject, some of which were attended by the Maidens' Chosen. Those Sidereals, themselves worried, returned to their own observatories and determined that the apocalyptic forecast might be true. When young star-Chosen hear of this, they go to their elders seeking reassurance: surely, they say, the cloud people cannot be correct; their limited worldview must have led them astray. Don't their star-charts contain certain flaws? Most elder Sidereals refuse to speak on the matter, changing the subject if it's brought up, and turning away when faced with persistence.

Cloud people are flighty and self-centered. Their time goes to hollow affairs, idle dreaming and ridiculous debates: "Are you your body?" is a popular question, as is the enigmatic "How high?" Though their society publicly disdains the world below, cloud people are curious about everything. Rare is the one who never weakens and drifts down to explore, if only for a day. Most return home unimpressed, having come by nothing to occupy them; but a few find a melodramatic battle, exquisite artwork or a passionate relationship to entertain them. Even then, though, they almost always return home within a week. Anyone heartbroken by a cloud person's departure will be casually invited to visit, then abandoned without a second thought.

Tourists are rare in the cloud cities, and appreciated for their novelty. Attractive visitors, or those who or





bring lovely gifts, will gain favors. Cloud people can ritually invest solid things with cloud substance, making them light enough to float; this requires a feather from a cloud person with wings. After a week, however, the ritual causes invested objects to dissolve into air. Moreover, those with souls can't be so enchanted. A chosen mortal may only visit her inhuman lover during Calibration, when the cloud cities become solid enough to support weight. This restriction applies to Essence-wielders, but sorcerers can learn a Terrestrial spell that renders the target's substance light enough to travel the upper sphere for a week. Sidereals construct cloud-houses, -libraries and -observatories of worldly materials and buttress them with similar sorceries.

The pastel cloud spires don't quite float at random. They're directed by huraka (see **Exalted**, p. 303), who do their best to make the patterns whimsically unpredictable, but keep careful records of the cities' passage. The Wind Masters (see pp. 90-93) have long-standing pacts with the cloud people: White Venerable Bear makes the cities' course impossible for others to follow; in exchange, he always knows where the cities are. Huraka diplomats visit the cloud cities every season to renew those pacts, and only once in history has the bargain been broken.

Cloud people are brilliant and learned, but usually lack the patience for rigorous argument. Most are unwitting sophists. Their universities focus on rhetoric, and teach only their own texts and philosophies. A cloud person who traveled Creation at length might return home with insights for her fellow cloud people, perhaps even in regards to the stars. For—despite the cloud people's astrological brilliance—there are indeed tiny flaws in these elementals' most advanced methods, deriving from their lack of worldly knowledge. These flaws would make no difference at all to nearly anyone else, but for the cloud people, discovery of such flaws would be a shocking revelation.

**Summoning:** Cloud people make fair concubines, but better spies. They travel swiftly upon the winds, and since they can look just like clouds, they need not dematerialize to subtly overlook an open area. In the end, however, they're best as astrological advisors. Summoners most often bind them as Courtesans or Hunters.

**Motivation:** Avoid thinking of the coming doom by losing itself in self-indulgence.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 2, Investigation 2, Linguistics 4, Lore 3, Occult 3 (Astrology +5), Performance 3, Presence 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1

**Charms:**

*Affinity Air Control*—Three barrels of wind guard and attack

*Benefaction*—+1 die to Mental rolls

*Dematerialize*—Costs 45 motes

*Hurry Home*—Return to home cloud

*Sense Domain*—Measure the winds below

*Shapechange*—Become anything wispy, insubstantial and flowing

*Spice of Custodial Delectation*—Occult planning and philosophizing

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Occult

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 1B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 3, Damage 4B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 3, Damage 1B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Affinity Air Control: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 3L, Range 10, Rate 1

**Soak:** 2L/3B (6L/7B vs. Air)

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 60

**Other Notes:** Cloud people can become many kinds of flying creatures. They always move through the air as easily as they could across land, or more so, and can achieve flight speeds that double their normal movement speed.

## DOLDRUM

Always surrounded by utter calm, doldrums come in many shapes and sizes. An individual may be formed like a human, a panther, a hummingbird—but all are only gleaming outlines, filled with apparently empty space. The transparent elementals are also empty of mind and heart, and travel Creation trailed by silence. Winds cannot move within 100 feet of doldrums, and are slowed and softened for 100 yards beyond that. Occasionally, the Wind Master White Venerable Bear (see p. 92) sends huraka to ask the doldrums to avoid a certain area; his orders are phrased as polite but firm requests, and the doldrums always obey them.

Doldrums live mainly near the ocean, but can be found all over. These creatures can speak to all others—




from humans to animals to every spirit in Creation—in their own languages. The less merciful ones use this gift to confuse and manipulate every person they talk to, questioning her every ideal and encouraging her to lose hope. If they blow on someone, she'll become like them—a shining, empty outline without a purpose; they're always disappointed when that curse ends, sometimes apparently believing it would last forever. Kinder doldrums, on the other hand, are more likely to try to fill their own emptiness with the drives of others.

One Western legend holds that doldrums are shaped by a hidden Air-pected island demesne, overgrown with similarly hollow palm trees and surrounded by hollow fish. Shipwrecked sailors, birds blown off course and animals carried to sea by enormous storms all end up settling on the island. Over the next several years, they're slowly changed into doldrums by the demesne's energies. Another tale, whispered fearfully among sailors, claims that existing doldrums becalm seafarers in order to study their drives. Those trapped by the stillness usually become listless—and are then slowly warped into new doldrums. Yet, a becalmed creature who possesses the conviction not to fall into depression and inactivity may eventually be approached by some doldrums, and asked to describe what keeps her going. A good enough explanation will inspire these doldrums to adopt her motivation as their own; they'll send her on her way and may follow her to watch what she does with her life.

Precisely what happens to doldrums who find a purpose is unknown, but not many seem to be around. Some sages theorize that after one of these creatures discovers one, it dies at the end of the next Calibration. Others point to a rarer elemental, the serufu. Also associated with air and likewise coming in many shapes, serufu are trailed by music and colored a beautiful solid sapphire. They always seem anxious to act, and sometimes confess that past actions are all that remind them of whom they are: without memories of those actions, they'd forget their drives and become silent and purposeless. They'll add, if pressed, that this is also the reason they're constantly accompanied by music: songs are powerful emotional reminders, and the tunes that follow them tell their life stories. Savants have published whole treatises claiming that doldrums with newfound motivations evolve into serufu. But if they remember past lives as doldrums, the serufu have never said so.

**Summoning:** Naval sorcerers often order doldrums to becalm foes. Some use the elementals as emissaries, for





doldrums argue cleverly. Doldrums also, of course, make the best possible translators, but will warn sorcerers who order them to speak to animals that human concepts don't translate well (plants are out of the question). One of these elementals might communicate a *very* simple human question to an animal, as long as it contains no human measurements, colors or relative qualities ("Did you see a human come through here?" works; "Did you see a red-coated, tall man in the last half hour?" won't get through on three levels).

Doldrums are generally bound as Hunters, and may be intrigued by the focus provided. Some even ask for it when summoned. If called by a sorcerer with a strong personality and a clear sense of purpose, these elementals may stick around after the end of their servitude, impressed by her evident motivation.

**Motivation:** (Compassion 1-2) Cause others to become as empty as itself.

(Compassion 3+) Find a Motivation.

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

**Virtues:** Compassion (Varies), Conviction 1, Temperance 3, Valor 2

**Abilities:** Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 1, Integrity 5, Occult 3, Presence 5, Socialize 5, Stealth 5

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Air Dragon's Embrace*—Makes the target hollow

*Call*—Speak with other doldrums

*Dematerialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Destiny Sponsorship*—Only while devoid of any inspiration or motivation

*Landscape Travel*—Fly at double movement speed

*Material Tribulation Divestment*—Removes all Mental and Social effects

*Measure the Wind*

*Memory Mirror*—Absorbs target's language

*Shapechange*—Assume any vague outline of a form

*Subtle Whisper*—Used to manipulate and gauge others' motivations

*Touch of Saturn*—Removes target's Motivation for one month

*First (Ability) Excellencies*—Awareness, Presence, Socialize, Stealth

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Presence, Socialize, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:** None

**Soak:** 5L/10B (Hollow, 4L/8B; Hardness: 2L/2B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 4 **Essence Pool:** 70

**Other Notes:** None

**STORM SERPENT**

As lightning streaks through the heavens and a thunderclap announces rain, a storm serpent is born. Its sky-dark coils flex with the wind; its claws are ice, and its tail lashes lightning. As precipitation pours down, the 400-foot elemental spirals slowly after it, destroying whatever the storm serpent passes. Its fate is cut short by the end of its storm, so most storm serpents will never reach the earth—but those that do cause great devastation.

Storm serpents have only bestial intelligence. They can't make complex judgments, communicate or understand speech (though summoners can command them through the sorcerous bond). But though their attacks are largely random and their urges wholly animalistic, storm serpents can scent innocence and are attracted to it. The destruction a storm serpent causes will seem all the more tragic in light of the undeserving people the storm serpent slaughters first. Once it has killed the population's kindest and best, the serpent turns its attention to tall structures, bright lights and anything that moves.

Some cultures try to use a storm serpent's taste for innocence as a kind of "trial by fire." For instance, a villager accused of great crimes may be left in an obvious place during the monsoon season so that his guilt might be judged by the storm. He dies immediately if innocent, but at least, judges calculate, it gets settled the issue.

As the last raindrops fall and the sun emerges from behind the clouds, a storm serpent will begin to disintegrate. The deep blue and gray scales vanish, and it is seen to contain nothing but sparkling white dust. This powder settles softly over the miles covered by the storm; the powder can be gathered, but since so little covers such a wide area—a teaspoonful spread over a square mile—doing so is quite difficult. Still, it may be worth the effort. That teaspoonful would be worth a fair amount (Resources ●●●) to alchemists, who can use it to make philters that cure frostbite or summon rain.

A few storm serpents achieve the epiphany that brings individuality before their time is done. These elementals disperse not into powder. One such storm serpent, Nasri, Daimyo of Rainstorms and Daimyo of the Season of Air, is the General of the Aerial Legion in Yu-Shan's Bureau of Seasons. Many more such unaging storm serpents make up the Aerial Legion's forces,

alongside thousands of thunderbirds and huraka.

**Summoning:** Since storm serpents exist only under certain circumstances, calling them requires a fair amount of planning and is rarely considered worthwhile. There are easier ways for sorcerers to kill large numbers of people; and it's hard to orchestrate events such that a nemesis may be killed by a storm serpent during the specific hour of its existence. A few battle-hungry summoners have called a storm serpent specifically to prove themselves against it. They are considered entirely insane by their peers. More often, a sorcerer protecting an area will perform the ritual as a preventive measure: she'll realize that a terrible storm is coming, suspect that it will be accompanied by a serpent and arrange to bind it so she can force it not to attack.

**Motivation:** Express the storm's rage by destroying everything.

**Attributes:** Strength 14, Dexterity 7, Stamina 12; Charisma 4, Manipulation 1, Appearance 5; Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Valor 5

**Abilities:** Athletics 6, Awareness 5, Dodge 6, Martial Arts 7, Presence 0 (Intimidation +6), Resistance 4

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Dematerialize*—Costs 70 motes

*Essence Plethora* (x6)

*Hoodwink*—Paralyze with Terror

*Memory Mirror*—Sense Innocence

*Reserve of Will* (x6)

*Shatter*—Thunderclap Destroys Structures

*First Excellency*—Martial Arts, Presence, Resistance

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Martial Arts, Resistance

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Martial Arts, Resistance

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 23L, Parry DV 6, Rate 1

Claw: Speed 4, Accuracy 16, Damage 18L, Parry DV 8, Rate 1

Tail Slap: Speed 5, Accuracy 17, Damage 29B, Parry DV 9, Rate 3

Lightning Streak: Speed 6, Accuracy 13, Damage 25L, Range 10, Rate 1\*

Shatter: Speed 6, Accuracy 19, Damage 25B (Structures Only), Range 60 (Max), Rate 1

\* A storm serpent's lightning streak cannot be parried, but it may be dodged.

**Soak:** 14L/28B (Ice-lightning dragon hide, 8L/16B, Hardness: 8L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 10 **Willpower:** 8 (14)

**Essence:** 6 **Essence Pool:** 160

**Other Notes:** Storm serpents fly at triple the normal movement speed, but cannot land.

Storm serpents absorb air elemental damage per *Blessed Air Body* (see pp. 163-164).

**THUNDERBIRD**

Rash and warlike, these rainbow-winged elementals bring lightning out of storms. Thunderbirds find slain enemies' flesh delicious, and enjoy mastering new weapons and strategies. All find ways to make war: some lead bellicose mortal cults; others hunt water elementals for fun or for the approval of Wind Master Black Grinning Bear (see p. 91). The Western Bear manages his thunderbird guests handily. He gives them alcohol and marijuana, allocates plenty of land for their wild dancing and bonfires and has instituted an island hierarchy that they climb by killing water elementals. Those with the most status are sent on challenging quests, assigned stints as Black Grinning Bear's bodyguards or granted the privilege of leading visitor tours of his vast trophy halls, where they extol his virtues as a leader and brag about their own accomplishments.

Known also by the name of *wind makers*, thunderbirds can call thunderous blasts of air by flapping their wings. They all know a second language of thunder. Simpler than the spoken one, it sends warnings and requests echoing across Creation, and these elementals can thus communicate to siblings up to 1,000 miles away. Their actual voices are flutelike.

A newborn thunderbird breaks out of its black egg as a huge many-colored raptor (hawk and eagle forms are common). It shakes static from its wings, stretches and soon stands tall as a powerfully built, dark-skinned bald human. Having found both forms, it's immediately respected by its fellows as a true thunderbird. Normally, this process takes only a few hours, but some wind makers—for whatever reason—have needed to complete long vision quests to achieve human form.

Western mortals worship these elementals for their beauty, power over storms and especially for the war-blessings they give. Thunderbirds demand human sacrifices, to eat and take as concubines, and followers must go raiding five or more times a year and take battle-captives to sacrifice—lest they be required to sacrifice some of their own people. The mortals often suffer mild poisoning as well, since their masters command them to wear white war paint laden with lead. Still, thunderbirds protect their cults. Though their prismatic eyes are sharp enough to gaze



through any physical thing, wind makers can hardly see water elementals, and often bring human helpers on the hunt. (Without assistance, a thunderbird takes an external penalty of -2 to rolls against water spirits that require sight; with it, this penalty is reduced to -1.) An especially talented and loyal worshiper can earn a war club just like her master's own: forged of orichalcum and ironwood in the heat of lightning. (Such clubs are level-2 artifacts with statistics as shown in the notes below.)

Thunderbirds' lusty passions are legendary. They're most attracted to warriors, and an ancient Western adage advises anyone who seeks a thunderbird's love to defeat it in battle. They're also incredibly jealous; these elementals won't hesitate to slaughter anyone who makes a move on an object of desire. However, love won't stop a thunderbird from continuing to visit its harem during a relationship, and if accused of hypocrisy by an infuriated lover, a thunderbird will be perplexed. After all, if the loved one hates its harem so much, why doesn't he just slaughter all the concubines out of hand? All this leads to a lot of children, and thunderbird blood is one of the most common divine influences on Creation's mortal population. Thunderbird males rarely take an interest in their kids, and thunderbird females often abandon their own eggs with the father—though naturally, if a wind maker's child grows into a famous fighter, the proud parent will take all the credit.

Although thunderbirds can formulate astoundingly sneaky battle-stratagems and certainly love to exaggerate, they are uncomfortable with deception and elaborate social maneuvers. The typical thunderbird is blunt and won't consciously lie—though it might “overstate itself” in the heat of passion: “Of course I love you!”

**Summoning:** Calling a thunderbird requires that a sorcerer, just as its worshipers, paint her face white and wear white feather garments. As long as the thunderbird is being summoned to do battle, the elemental will be perfectly fine with its servitude. In fact, the elemental will act as if it's freely doing the sorcerer a good turn; a thunderbird whose term of service has ended might even visit a summoner later, demanding a return on the “favor” it did her. But if ordered to back down from a battle or given too few opportunities to indulge in fighting, a thunderbird's resentment will last long past the end of its binding. These elementals adjust well to becoming Killers, Wardens and Ecstatics.

**Motivation:** Show great battle-prowess.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2 (Flying Maneuvers +3), Awareness 3, Craft (Fire) 1 (War Clubs +3), Dodge 4, Integrity 3, Linguistics 2, Lore 0 (War Club Artifact Crafting +3), Melee 4 (War Club +3), Occult 0 (War Club Artifact Crafting +3), Performance 3, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Survival 3, Thrown 0 (Thunderclap +3), War 3 (Thunderbird Formation +2)

**Backgrounds:** Artifact 2, Contacts 3

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*—+1 to combat rolls

*Blessed Air Body*—Lightning

*Dematerialize*—Costs 45 motes

*Impromptu messenger*—Language of thunder

*Landscape Travel*—Fly at normal movement speed

*Material Tribulation Divestment*—Only to dodge attacks

*Shapechange*—The shape of a human

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+7B/+3L in storms

*Stoke the Flame*—Inspire fear

*Tracking*—Tracks its Intimacies

*Weather Control*—Storms

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Melee

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

*All Forms:*

Thunderclap: Speed 6, Accuracy 11 Damage 12B, Range 100, Rate 1

*Raptor:*

Talon: Speed 4, Accuracy 5 Damage 5L, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

*Man:*

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 3B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 6B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 2, Damage 3B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Warclub: Speed 5, Accuracy 13 Damage 19B/4 (piercing), Parry DV 7, Rate 2

**Soak:** 7L/15B (Naturally armored, 6L/12B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 60

**Other Notes:** As men, thunderbirds must use Landscape Travel to fly, but as birds, flight comes naturally with their wings, and their flight speed is doubled.





## CHIEF STORMS-AS-HE-WALKS

The great Chief Storms-As-He-Walks has sworn never again to take on his sky-spanning falcon aspect, for his fellow thunderbirds once failed to answer his thunderings for aid, and he died at the claws of Swan Dragon. Some say his siblings forsook him because, when he first fell in love with an Air-pected Dragon-Blood (a habit that keeps getting him into trouble), he neglected their own calls to dally by her side. Others claim he rejected living as a wind maker in order to better lead his mortal cults, taking residence with humans and hurting the feelings of his then-devoted thunderbird warriors. In the end, he was indeed lucky to have those human followers: after Swan Dragon killed Storms-As-He-Walks, he was resurrected by mortal prayer. He values his humans all the more for this and blames his death entirely on the other thunderbirds' disloyalty, never questioning his own actions.

In human form, Storms-As-He-Walks can still fly, and when he takes to the warpath he marches far above ground. Technically, he still holds thunderbird commands he earned in the First Age, as well as the position of Black Grinning Bear's chief lieutenant; indeed, Storms-As-He-Walks has the right to a full retinue of wind makers. Moreover, his extraordinary tactical ability cannot be denied. Hence, the Chief still leads many thunderbird battles, and his siblings obey him unquestioningly in the field. But he brings his greatest mortal champions to the island portion Black Grinning Bear has given the elemental, and stays with them when he's not maintaining his cults or visiting the Realm on "business." When he must visit other thunderbirds, he reads rejection in their eyes and leaves as quickly as possible; he calls his retinue only when heading into battle. Truly, Storms-As-He-Walks has been influenced by humans, and part of his discomfort with his kind is due to his own humanlike mores and social understanding—but he doesn't realize that.

Storms-As-He-Walks has ancient ties to House Tepet, whose ancestors he sided with during the Usurpation. They gave him Marnhammar, a blue-jade-headed war club only he can wield. He has also gone through several Tepet lovers, the latest of whom completely obsesses him. In the effort to win Tepet Sarita's devotion, he took the unprecedented step of disbanding his harem; she has finally accepted his advances, partly because of pressure from her House, but remains coy and has a lover on the side. It's hard to say who would be angrier if they discovered that she's cheating on the Chief—the head of Sarita's Household or Storms-As-He-Walks himself.

Secretly—though Storms-As-He-Walks loves humans, and remains furious at the betrayal of his brethren—the Chief feels out of place and longs to take on his falcon wings and live with fellow thunderbirds again. He hasn't admitted this desire even to himself and would never consider returning to the roost without a complete, unqualified apology from them. Perhaps that's for the best. If, by some miracle, Creation's proud wind makers apologized and brought Storms-As-He-Walks back into the fold, he'd still take extended vacations among mortals, which seems likely to cause all the same problems over again.

**Summoning:** Just as all thunderbirds, Chief Storms-As-He-Walks *can* be summoned, but doing so would enrage Black Grinning Bear and the entirety of House Tepet. It's worth noting that many powerful Tepet Dragon-Bloods see the Chief as a person and would be unnerved (perhaps despite themselves) if he were forced to endure an Abscissic binding. It's one thing to know that sorcerers casually reshape elemental psyches all the time; it's quite another to see it happen to a friend. That said, the Chief has a friendly standing Cselenite pact with Tepet's sorcerers, though he trades no explicit services for it.

**Motivation:** Show great battle-prowess.

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5; Charisma 10 (5 from helmet), Manipulation 3, Appearance 5; Perception 2, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2 (Flying Maneuvers +3), Awareness 3, Craft 1 (War Club Artifact Crafting +3), Dodge 4, Integrity 5, Linguistics 2, Lore 0 (War Club Artifact Crafting +5), Martial Arts 4, Melee 5 (War Club +3), Occult 0 (War Club Artifact Crafting +3), Performance 5, Presence 4, Resistance 3, Socialize 3, Survival 3, Thrown 0 (Thunderclap +3), War 5 (Thunderbird Formation +2)

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Artifact 2, Artifact 3, Backing 4, Contacts 5, Cult 2, Followers 4, Influence 1, Resources 3

### Charms:

*Benefaction*—+1 to combat rolls

*Blessed Air Body*—Lightning

*Dematerialize*—Costs 55 motes

*Impromptu Messenger*—Language of thunder

*Landscape Travel*—Fly at full movement speed

*Material Tribulation Divestment*—Only to dodge attacks

*Shapechange*—Falcon aspect

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+7B/+3L in storms

*Stoke the Flame*—Inspire fear  
*Touch of Grace*—Heal wounds  
*Tracking*—Tracks his Intimacies  
*Weather Control*—Storms  
*First (Ability) Excellency*—Melee, Athletics, Integrity, Performance, War  
*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Melee, War

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 5B, Parry DV 6, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 8B, Parry DV 4, Rate 1

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Thunderclap: Speed 6, Accuracy 11 Damage 20B, Range 100, Rate 1

Blue Jade War Club (Marnhammar): Speed 5, Accuracy 17 Damage 23B/4 (P), Parry DV 9, Rate 2

**Soak:** 14L/23B (Naturally armored, 6L/12B; helmet, 6L/6B, Hardness: 6L/6B)

**Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap  
**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 70

**Other Notes:** Marnhammar is a rating-3 artifact with the following stats: Speed 5, Accuracy +2, Damage +18/4, Defense +2, Tags: O,P. An unattuned character would require 20+ (Strength + Athletics) successes to lift it; no Excellencies count toward this total save Infinite Athletics Mastery. The Chief also wears a Artifact 3 jade helmet that adds to his Charisma and soak.

## ELEMENTALS OF EARTH

The elementals of earth are the strongest and most numerous of the elementals in Creation, but deceptively so. Most earth elementals live out their lives beneath Creation's surface, in the mineral courts. During meetings of multiple elemental types, the earth elementals avoid raising the issue of their strength—that by their will, Creation's surface could crack and swallow the ocean, or that the elementals of wood depend entirely on earth's foundations or that the first of Creation's greater elemental dragons, the Kukla, is an elemental of earth. The elementals of fire, too, depend upon the earth to produce consumable materials. Only the elementals of air are free from earth's grasp. The Wind Masters sometimes claim their independence from earth as the reason for their own strength.

Not as organized as the courts of the air, the mineral courts are nevertheless some of the most consistent elemental courts. Each mineral court is ruled

by a gemlord and served by kri omen-avatars, jokun soldiers and whatever local race of earth elementals is most prominent. Other earth courts exist, such as the mountain courts, but the numerous mineral courts are the best known.

Yet, the earth elementals have no central authority at all, and the immobility of the gemlords ensure the earth elementals cannot war against each other strongly enough to ever decide upon a single unified commander. Once, before the Kukla was a greater elemental dragon, he called himself master of all earth elementals, but now, he cannot speak and only dreams and roars. Strength aside, the earth courts are the courts that perform the fewest deeds and alter Creation's course the least.

## THE QUICKSILVER QUEEN

### LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF EARTH

Mercury ants (see pp. 108-110) respect one thing: their ruler, the Quicksilver Queen. Each ant subordinates itself completely to her will, unable to conceive of so much as analyzing her orders (hence, she's always very clear with her servants). Even if the Queen ignores or sacrifices them, she's certainly doing the best possible thing. Only the Queen is perfect and unchangeable.

The Quicksilver Queen can become an ant-headed woman, but she hasn't chosen that form since the Age of Splendor. For the last few millennia, the ant-headed dragon has coiled still and quiet in her subterranean royal chamber. Ant servitors dust the treatise-lined shelves, polish her lead and silver scales and antennae and carry her silent alchemical messages to the four corners of Creation. Usually, the ants' sole task is expanding the colony, some passages of which extend 3,000 miles. Clever ones are sent to retrieve stored artifacts from underground caches, or to steal intriguing tomes and reagents from the surface. Especially trusted, talented males are allowed to mate with the Queen; her closest advisors know the formulae for the potions dripped upon her eggs. When new mercury ants hatch into the world, they know everything their mother wishes them to know.

Long ago, the Queen spoke with all petitioners. Her symmetrical cinnabar palace was a much-discussed point of pilgrimage for Creation's savants, and she studied under the pioneering sorcerer Devon. But the clever Solar known as Gilded Whisper gained the Queen's confidence, became her protégé, then destroyed the Queen's manse and took credit for her most brilliant insights. The dragon waxed wroth with humanity and withdrew beneath the earth's surface, learning from books and hoarding her knowledge. She's one of the greatest alchemists the world has ever known; even her

name is a formula—her ants address her in silence, for it's far quicker to synthesize than speak. But the last time she wrote a treatise was before she was betrayed, and most copies of her works are long gone. The Queen hardly noticed the change from the First Age to the Second (except inasmuch as it's now *much* easier for her servants to steal from the world above). Today, it would take a surpassingly charming—and determined—petitioner to find and speak to her. Her ant guards have strict instructions: never allow a human to reach her.

Once, the dragon knew the secret of immortality, but as part of her revenge on humanity she mixed a potion to purge the secret from her mind. She also changed the nature of cinnabar: any piece of the mineral mined in the past few millennia yields only poisonous quicksilver. This vilely shimmering liquid drives mortals mad and deforms unborn children. But mercury derived before the Queen's resentful act is healthful, aiding focus, finesse and agility—even extending a drinker's lifespan. That ancient liquid is known to savants as "benevolent quicksilver," and Creation holds four remaining vials. Each is owned by a powerful sorcerer, who uses only a drop at a time for various arcane purposes. And all of those sorcerers prefer to buy other anagathics at fabulous prices than use this precious rarity to live longer.

The Quicksilver Queen has been Censor of the Omphalos more than once, for she's never bothered to offend any gods, and the other candidates are sometimes seen as worse. When she occupies that position, she does absolutely nothing about it. She could also care less about the mineral courts, though she'll politely receive elemental emissaries, and often trades information with gemlords. Thus, she's dearly beloved by some spiritual politicians, loathed by others.

**Summoning:** If summoned, the Quicksilver Queen has the right to send a servant elemental in her stead.

**Motivation:** Learn everything about the nature of the world.

**Attributes:** Strength 8, Dexterity 5, Stamina 9; Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4; Perception 6, Intelligence 7, Wits 5

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 3, Valor 2

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 5 (Insects +2), Craft (Water) 8, Dodge 3, Integrity 6 (Anything Humans Say +3), Investigation 5 (Research +3), Larceny 4, Lore 8 (Alchemy +3), Martial Arts 3, Occult 6, Presence 6, Resistance 4, Socialize 4, Stealth 3, War 4 (Ants +3)

**Backgrounds:** Artifact 5+, Contacts 3, Followers 4, Influence 3, Resources 5

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*—Use seven barrels of earth to shape into useful or dangerous chemicals

*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Creates metal or alchemical things by ingesting the ingredients and spitting them back out

*Creation of Perfection*—All-Encompassing

*Dematerialize*—Costs 80 motes

*Destiny Sponsorship*—All-Encompassing

*Endowment*—All-Encompassing

*Essence Plethora* (x3)

*Form Reduction Technique*—Ant-headed woman, insect, metallic object or ore

*Geas*—All-Encompassing

*Host of Spirits*—Any ant form

*Landscape Hide*—Under the surface

*Possession*—All-Encompassing

*Principle of Motion*—Nine banked actions

*Reserve of Will* (x2)

*Symbol of Invincible Authority*—Completely immune to all earth or metal-based objects

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Craft, Integrity, Lore, Occult

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Craft (Internal Alchemy)

*Sorcery*—The Quicksilver Queen knows dozens of Terrestrial and Celestial Circle spells, including every non-summoning spell in the **Exalted** core book except Wood Dragon's Claw.

*Devonian Absorption*—Detailed on page 22 of **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. II—The White Treatises**, this Charm expresses the Queen's orderly, analytical viewpoint and her sorcerous tutelage at the hands of Devon.

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 17L, Parry DV 3, Rate 1

Claw: Speed 4, Accuracy 10, Damage 13L, Parry DV 5, Rate 4

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 8B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

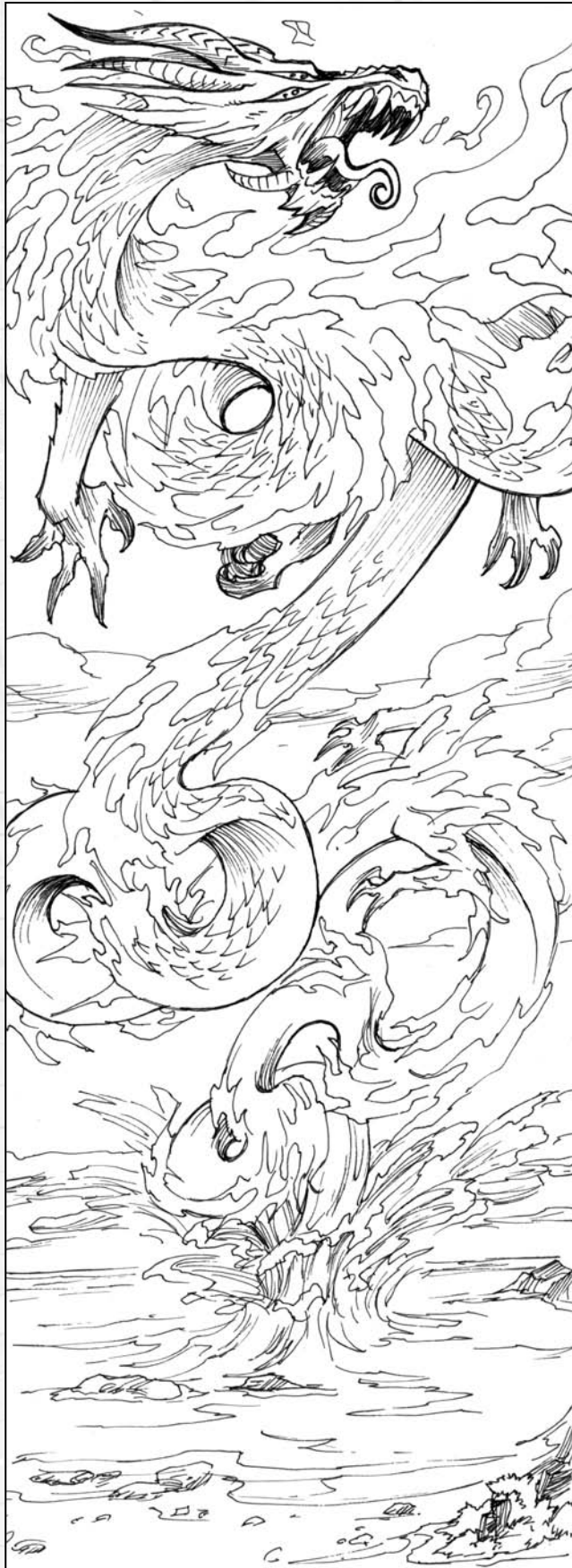
Chemical Spray: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Range 30, Rate 1

Tail Slap: Speed 5, Accuracy 11, Damage 23B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

**Soak:** 14L/23B (Leaden dragon hide, 10L/14B; Hardness: 10)

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





**Dodge DV:** 8    **Willpower:** 9 (11)

**Essence:** 7    **Essence Pool:** 145

**Other Notes:** As a dragon, the Quicksilver Queen may fly at double her normal movement speed. She may burrow through any kind of earth at full speed.

The Queen absorbs earth elemental attacks per *Blessed Earth Body* (see pp. 163-164).

The Queen's *Dragon's Suspire* is an unblockable wash of acidic chemicals that targets all creatures generally in front of her. The strange mix of fluids causes those who suffer even a single health level to be affected by mutation as though they had been exposed to the Middlemarches of the Wyld (see *Exalted*, p. 283). It is an earth elemental attack.

The Queen's artifacts include various books of sorcery, alchemical distilleries, potions and Essence-infused magical components.

### THE KUKLA

#### GREATER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF EARTH

An underwater volcano in the West, long cooled to dormancy, holds a horror forgotten by all but Creation's immortals. Four thousand years ago, the Unconquered Sun appointed 12 battle-hardened elementals to guard that prison; any who approach will be confronted by their sun-bright spears and shields. The Kukla, they'll say, is not to be awakened till the Sun decides that current civilization must be no more.

If that day comes, the 12-legged dragon will burst from his prison in a tsunami, rearing higher than the Imperial Mountain. His roar echoes to Heaven itself. Mountains shatter at his passing, sandstorms scour Creation's surface to polished rock, earthquakes break the world in five great pieces. However, the Kukla's blazing aura holds the formative power of earth as well as its wrath. Amid the death and suffering wrought by its release, seven of the dragon's gold and lapis scales will fall to Creation and grow. They'll become new, living land, so vital that the Wyld will fall back and shadowlands gain no purchase in the destruction.

Only the Kukla's guardians (and the Unconquered Sun himself) have the authority to recall the unleashed dragon. Sidereal rumor has it that Gaia was once able to tame the beast. Certain elders whisper that she entirely relinquished that control to the Unconquered Sun, for he would not otherwise trust her.

**Summoning:** Are you nuts? You're nuts, aren't you?

**Motivation:** Express the rawest power of earth.

**Virtues:** Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 5



**Statistics:** As a greater elemental dragon of middling power, the Kukla has Essence 10. The Charms in this book are insufficient to represent the full impact of its release. The Kukla is best treated as a Creation-reshaping natural disaster to be prevented or endured, rather than an enemy to be fought. Should a Storyteller wish to pit the Kukla against the players' characters as a combatant, she's advised to give it traits such that the characters can conceivably defeat it by sacrificing all their earthly resources and all the armies they control, making pacts best unmade with their worst enemies, etc.

**Sample Powers:**

*Benthic Wave Strike*—The Kukla's prison rips asunder in a cloud of boiling water, and tsunami are hurled in all directions. An unblockable, undodgeable wall of water (inflicting 50 health levels of lethal damage, triple to structures) pounds every coast of Creation and floods three miles inland for a season.

*Creation-Scouring Technique*—Some areas close to, or affected by, the Kukla are remade into featureless sand-scoured plateaus that become incredibly fertile over the next decade. This includes but is not limited to every nearby Wyld area. No shadowlands can be engendered by the dragon's actions.

*Great Justice Retribution*—As its tail sweeps back and forth (30 ticks per sweep), the Kukla inflicts 85 health levels of damage on everyone and everything unfortunate enough to be within its immense length. This can easily destroy any army or city, and could wipe small nations from the map.

**Guardians:** The Kukla's 12 stewards each have Essence 8; combat-relevant Abilities should be counted as 6 to 8, as should Presence, Awareness, Physical Attributes, Charisma and Wits. They've learned all the combat and leadership Charms in this book, as well as several Celestial Martial Arts styles. Should a summoner attempt to call forth the Kukla, a guardian appears in the dragon's place. (But should a summoner bind all 12 guardians and then attempt to summon the Kukla once again....)

**GEMLORD**

Miles beneath the earth stretch enormous, jeweled formations: diamonds and rubies jumbled chaotically with cloudy quartz and rough granite. These immobile masses are not antique treasure stores, but elementals—leaders of the mineral courts. Gemlords are powerful and intelligent, but cannot move, and must use slaves called omen-avatars to accomplish all the gemlords' tasks. They choose omen-avatars from among the deerlike kri (see pp. 107-108), whose peculiar nature makes them easy for gemlords to control.

Exactly how gemlords come into existence and move to a preferred location is unknown. The prevailing theory supposes that they're created in an ambulatory larva-like form, which becomes a gemlord once it finds the right conditions. At any rate, gemlords prefer to situate themselves in areas that are demesnes and close to stores of Essence clay, or *ryku*. Both qualities are desired, neither necessary. A gemlord that prefers solitude may choose a powerful demesne that lacks nearby *ryku* stores, but most gemlords prioritize *ryku*, for it's the source of their kri servants. A gemlord claiming a site with both will be the envy of its peers, who may send their own servants to steal its *ryku* or to undermine its court's stability out of spite.


Still, no matter how gemlords hate their most fortunate siblings, they don't let hostilities escalate beyond pettiness. The enormous elementals are nearly impossible to kill (there are no vital parts to target, so the entire miles-long formation must be destroyed), and they're important to the structural integrity of Creation: when a gemlord dies, near-constant earthquakes and cave-ins occur as far as 1,000 miles away and continue until the mineral courts have fully addressed the problem. This usually takes years—even decades—and severely annoys the world's other gemlords, who will certainly take vengeance for their slain brother. It's rumored in the mineral courts that the destruction of three gemlords within the same year would be such a catastrophe as to awaken the immortal Kukla (see pp. 102-103).

A gemlord in control of a demesne takes centuries to grow into the best formation to channel that demesne's energy: a manse, to which the demesne then attunes. Most gemlords create manse-bodies as interlocking caverns for their courts and human worshipers to live in. As gemlords cannot hold or carry anything, a gemlord cannot bear its own hearthstone and may spend a fair amount of energy making sure no one else seizes it.

The incredibly arrogant gemlords are always sure they know best, partly because they can sense the future. Since gemlords rarely bother to explain themselves, their followers know only fragments of their visions. The mineral courts hear little but direct orders from their inscrutable masters, whose source-less booming voices echo loudly enough to be heard anywhere within 1,000 yards. Any gemlord can mentally communicate with any other, and gemlords spend most of their time silently discussing Creation's balance of earth.

Whether it has become a manse or not, every gemlord has one great open space in its center heaped with hundreds of fist-shaped, glittering gems. These are the





gemplord's eyes; more stud the length of it, and some are bestowed upon those who earn its favor. Simply holding one establishes a mental link between bearer and gemlord. The elementals can send Essence through that link as well as thoughts (and steal both, for that matter). Generally, a gemlord's eye-bearer is a kri or valued mortal worshiper, granted a small force of jokun to attend her and mentally examined once a week by her master. Any hint of mutiny will gain the eye-bearer a warning: her Essence pool is entirely stolen. If the servant outright disobeys the gemlord, the elemental will send a force of jokun and kri to kill her and recover the eye.

**Gemplord-Manses:** If you don't possess **Oadenol's Codex**, assume that any given gemlord is a manse whose auspiciously jet-floored caverns may be physically rearranged at the whim of the gemlord—or the hearthstone-bearer. Thus, an archway that once led into a library of crystals may suddenly open into a great hall; an emerald slope leading up could end in a room below it. The elemental doesn't wish for another being to have power over the manse's structure, so it has disguised the structural and geomantic indicators that might allow observers to figure out the hearthroom's location. All rolls to find the hearthroom—or, indeed, to determine anything about the manse by studying its geomancy—suffer an external penalty of -3. This gemlord-manse produces the rating-2 hearthstone, stone of the earthweb, which allows its bearer to sense everything within 10 yards that rests upon the ground. She can feel each object's size, approximate weight and any movements it makes (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex**, p. 90, for additional details).

Since the gemlord can rearrange its rooms at will, the best way for a character to attune to the manse is by having an ally distract the gemlord while she explores. Her goal: make it to the hearthroom before the elemental realizes she's there and changes the layout. If the character manages this feat, she will then need to escape the gemlord's servants: it will send viziers, whom the gemlord believes it can trust not to claim the hearthstone for themselves, to retrieve it from her clutches. As hearthstone bearer, her decisions take precedence over the gemlord's in terms of rearranging its rooms, because that power is derived from the manse's geomantic structure rather than the gemlord's own will. (Since the elemental's intelligence and powers are not factors of its manse, the attuned character has no control over those.) A desperate gemlord that cannot defeat a hearthstone thief may instruct its own servants to damage it, so the room-rearranging power

## **Ryku**

Sometimes dark clay sparkling with copper glints, sometimes delicate blue or white crystals, *ryku* gives off a sweet-smelling smoke as soon as it's gathered. Gemplords send jokun to mine it and keep watch for newborn kri (see pp. 107-108), but humans also gather it if they can. *Ryku* commands stupendous prices on Creation's surface, and some Southern nobles show off by burning *ryku* as incense.

*Ryku* is formed by subterranean demesnes. Those who mine it are using one version of the Pearl-Collecting Rite, which gathers a demesne's Essence tokens. (See **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex**, pp. 48-49 and 138, for more on this.) Just as all Essence harvests, *ryku* denatures quickly once mined; it must be transported in enchanted casks that sorcerously mimic the originating demesne's conditions. If the magic seals on these containers are disturbed, the *ryku* begins to smolder, and will have released at least some of its smoke—and Essence—by the time the *ryku* reaches its destination.

Not all underground demesnes produce *ryku*. Others give different Essence harvests. Not all *ryku* is created equal, either. Truly, *ryku* is simply a blanket term for any subterranean Essence harvest that births kri and denatures by giving off smoke. Since an Essence harvest's potency is determined by the power of its parent demesne, a given type of *ryku* may grant those who breathe its smoke anywhere from one to five motes of extra Essence per hour, and may take between one and five days to burn into lifeless ash. (The *ryku* of the gemlord written up here releases three motes per hour, denaturing in three days.)

Capping a *ryku*-producing demesne with a manse ends its production of *ryku*, which is otherwise a renewable resource. This is why a gemlord's perfect site is so rare: a gemlord wants a demesne it can cap with itself and a separate demesne, close by, that produces *ryku*.

derived from its geomancy no longer works. Such a move could have dire consequences for the demesne the manse caps, whose Essence would then be improperly channeled—and potentially explosive.

If you have **Oadenol's Codex**, treat each gemlord as an Earth-aspected manse of a level determined by the power

of the demesne the manse caps. Gemlord-manses cannot take Drawbacks, and a gemlord will prefer to grow itself into a manse that can't be too disastrously hijacked. A gemlord will always try to give its manse Central Control, which allows the gemlord to decide how its manse powers are used (though this also means that any hearthstone bearer could do the same). A gemlord will also decrease its hearthstone's rating as far down as geomantic concerns allow, for a kri who found and attuned an Essence-giving hearthstone might become dangerously independent. A gemlord will avoid powers such as Self-Destruct Sequence, which could kill the gemlord.

This sample gemlord is designed as a rating 3 manse with 7 manse Creation Points ([rating x 2] + 1 for reduced hearthstone level). The gemlord was unable to take the hearthstone below level 2. Luckily, the gemlord was able to design itself with Central Control (two points) as well as Geomantic Subtlety (two points), which prevents occultists from learning too much about the manse's geomancy through observation. The room-rearranging power, of course, is Puzzle Manse (three points).

**Summoning:** Summoning a gemlord to Creation's surface would be ridiculous. There have been entertaining incidents: one Dragon-Blooded sorcerer of House Mnemon crushed her ebony palace under the gemlord she called, having misunderstood the elemental's sheer scale. More to the point, removing a gemlord from its natural environment also removes the gemlord's stabilizing influence, causing the same earthquakes that would follow if it died. If the sorcerer doesn't swiftly send the gemlord back, she'll need to deal with the servants and allies of Creation's mineral courts.

Occasionally, a sorcerer will go to a gemlord and cast a summoning, binding the gemlord to her service where it sits. Of course, gemlords don't take kindly to people who march up and begin that spell, so such a sorcerer will need companions—many companions—to deal with the elemental's court. If successfully bound, though, gemlords don't usually remain irritated about it for long. After all, gemlords live a long time; what's a month, or a year? Such sorcerers usually bind the gemlord as a Functionary, and the gemlord will only have lasting problems with a summoner who forces it to harm the earth, disrupt the mineral courts or work against one of the gemlord's centuries-long plans.

**Motivation:** Luxuriate in the earth's Essence.

**Attributes:** Strength 0, Dexterity 0, Stamina 20; Charisma 6, Manipulation 7, Appearance 5; Perception 7, Intelligence 7, Wits 4

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 2

**Abilities:** Awareness 6, Bureaucracy 3, Craft (Earth) 4 (Architecture +3), Linguistics 4, Lore 5 (Earth +3), Integrity 6, Investigation 2, Presence 5, Occult 4 (Manses +3), Resistance 7, Survival 2, Socialize 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5, Cult 2, Demesne 3, Followers 3, Influence 3, Manse 3, Resources 5

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*—Attack with great crystal shards and carve new tunnels

*Banish*—All-Encompassing

*Blessed Earth Body*—Attacks from things smaller than itself

*Capture*—Those touching cave walls find their way to the gemlord

*Divine Decree*—Complete control over inner caverns and eyes

*Dreamspeak*—Send commands to creatures touching the earth

*Foretell the Future*—All-Encompassing

*Fruit of Living Essence*—Any creature touching a gem (including its eyes)

*Geas*—Sends any creature who knows greed on any quest

*Harrow the Mind*—All-Encompassing

*Measure the Wind*

*Natural Prognostication*—Senses the subtle things that come from very far below

*Regalia of Authority*—All-Encompassing

*Sense Domain*—Senses anything underground within 600 miles

*Stoke the Flame*—Uses propaganda to capture other gemlords' followers

*Touch of Divinity*—Transfer motes through its eyes

*Words of Power*—Echoing vibrations within caves

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Integrity, Occult, Presence, Resistance

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Integrity (ignores things smaller than itself)

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Affinity Earth Control: Speed 5, Accuracy 15, Damage 18L, Range 20, Rate 6

**Soak:** 25L/50B (Skin of gems, 15L/30B, Hardness: 15L/15B)

**Health Levels:** N/A (see "Other Notes")

**Dodge DV:** N/A      **Willpower:** 9

**Essence:** 6      **Essence Pool:** 105



**Other Notes:** As noted above, gemlords cannot move from place to place and cannot dematerialize.

This is a medium-to-large gemlord; larger and smaller (more and less powerful) gemlords exist.

Gemlords can only be destroyed by effects capable of disintegrating an enormous underground cave system. Gemlords have effectively 300 health levels and do not take wound penalties.

The gemlord's manse, though it's made from the gemlord's body, is for the purposes of game mechanics a manse the gemlord inhabits.

## JOKUN

Rough-featured, manlike elementals with rusty iron teeth and whiplike iron-tipped tails, these warriors serve the mineral courts with singular honor and tenacity. Semi-transparent crystalline flesh encases each jokun's red granite bones, and they weigh enough to crash through wooden floors with ill-placed steps. Slow in thought and motion, jokun make up for these shortcomings with paranoia. Jokun resist walking into any potentially dangerous situation, and each trains several giant bats and cave dogs to act as companions and lookouts.

At any time, jokun can choose to collapse in a shower of glinting mica; this sandy pile can then per-

colate through underground mineral veins at the speed of a cantering horse. Reassembling takes a day and 30 motes of Essence. When fighting a difficult but ignorant opponent, a jokun may take a chance that she won't know it can do that and fragment after a hard blow. Since playing dead is equivalent to fleeing a battle, jokun do this only when assured that survival is preferable to more honorable conclusion (i.e., rarely).

When not serving a worthy master, jokun live communally, singing together in underground fissures. It's well-known that these elementals congregate near valuable luminescent lichens; if a sharp-eared surface-dweller hears their lovely bass voices below her feet, she'll know mining there would be profitable. Fortunately, jokun won't mind moving if approached peacefully and offered something in exchange; well-crafted weapons are a special favorite. Jokun prefer to fight with heavy war hammers or two-handed swords. It bothers the ethical jokun that their teeth and blood are venomous (equivalent to arrow frog venom, described on pp. 130–131 of *Exalted*). They employ those poisons only as a last resort.

A jokun's obsidian eyes offer protection. A jokun's gaze conducts the resistance of his firestone bones. Those defended by a jokun have an easier time resisting heat





and flame (+4 to soak), but only as long as the jokun is looking at them. If removed from the elemental's head, the black eyes become useless.

**Summoning:** Jokun are stolid and dependable. Moreover, their masters in the mineral courts rarely pay attention to the outside world, so summoning one is almost risk-free. They may be the most common elemental bodyguards, making excellent Wardens. In particular, a principled sorcerer will want jokun servitors, for she'll know she can win a jokun's loyalty simply by being her virtuous self—though more sorcerers believe themselves principled than can live up to a jokun's standards. If very dissatisfied with its master within the mineral courts, a jokun may even elect to continue serving such an ethical sorcerer after its term of service has ended, though it will ask for occasional time off to visit its extended family underground.

A sorcerer can force a jokun to spend extended time without touching the earth, but the elemental won't like it, and will not heal damage or regain Essence until it resumes contact. The mineral courts consider such treatment abusive.

**Motivation:** Act with honor; in particular, demonstrate fealty to whoever has earned its service.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 1, Dodge 2, Integrity 3 (Warrior Ethic +3), Investigation 2, Melee 4, Performance 0 (Voice +3), Presence 1, Resistance 3, Survival 2, War 3

**Backgrounds:** Backing 1, Familiar 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Fire Control*—Reduce light level and +4 soak against fire and heat

*Call*—Summon additional jokun for aid

*Dematerialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Endowment*—Bless with +4L soak vs. heat

*Hoodwink*—Creatures accustomed to the open are shaken with claustrophobia

*Hurry Home*—Mica percolation (see description)

*Landscape Hide*—Works in any solid stone

*Landscape Travel*—Mica percolation through the earth at full movement speed

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+6B/3L soak vs. weapons

*Subtle Whisper*—Silently instills a sense of honor in all around

*Tracking*—Invest Essence through a song and hear the song from any distance away

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Melee, Resistance

**Join Battle:** 2

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 2, Damage 7L, Rate 1

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 6B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 9B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Punch: Speed 4, Accuracy 3, Damage 6B, Parry DV 2

Hammer: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 14B/2 (P), Parry DV 5, Rate 2

**Soak:** 7L/15 B (Rock structure, 4L/9B; Hardness: 2L/2B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 65


**Other Notes:** Jokun, due to their weight, take a -3 internal penalty to Athletics checks. Feats of strength are unaffected.

**KRI**

The three-horned kri come into existence rarely. Only when the Kukla dreams of them—no more than once in 30 years—do these short-legged deer spring up from deposits of *ryku* (see p. 104). With coloration derived from the *ryku* creating them, the new kri might not be easily spotted—save that all *ryku* in the area is consumed by a kri's birth (the surrounding demesne will produce no *ryku* or Essence till the next Calibration). When jokun posted at the demesne see the *ryku* they're mining go up in a pillar of smoke, they know to take the newborn to their gemplord master (see pp. 103-106) for judgment.

The local gemplord puts every kri through an exhaustive interview and physical examination before deciding whether it wants another slave. The kri must walk upright on its hind legs, an uncomfortable stance seen as elegant by the gemplords; the kri must answer hundreds of strange questions, and will be banished if it fails to modulate its voice. If chosen, a kri pledges its eternal servitude in exchange for one of the gemplord's eyes, which feeds the kri five motes of Essence per hour. This is important, for kri don't naturally respire Essence: they lose it instead, at the rate of 10 per day. If a kri's Essence pool reaches zero, the kri loses a dot of Essence each day thereafter and dies permanently at Essence 0—unless the kri manages to take energy from another, or gains control of a manse or demesne. To a kri, this is the most excruciating pain imaginable. A kri will do nearly anything to avoid it.

On the odd occasion that a rejected kri survives, its lot is uncertain and dark. After a few weeks, the kri will



already have suppressed any morals it had, desperately lying, cheating, murdering and prostituting itself for Essence. A very lucky few find demesnes to live in.

Enslaved kri lead only slightly better lives. Their masters leave them no privacy—not even their innermost thoughts are their own. If kri even consider refusing a single assignment, they're subject to torture, imprisonment and worse at the hands of less recalcitrant kri. Some go rogue and join their rejected brethren, but if they escape their masters' wrath, most return when they discover just how hard it is to live without an Essence source. Most never consider it, for loyal and competent service will earn a kri trust. Eventually, a smart kri will graduate to tasks such as acting as its gemlord's messenger or leading groups of jokun on searches for *ryku*.

Kri express portions of the earth that feed their birthing demesne's wild energies. Building a manse on a *ryku*-producing demesne will tamp down its Essence such that every kri born there finds itself no longer constantly drained of motes (but won't be able to respire Essence either and will need an outside source to replenish its pool after using Charms). No kri know this, but their masters do. All gemlords also understand that this manse "solution" is unnatural and dangerous: such a manse risks destruction every time the Kukla dreams again of kri. At any time a capped *ryku*-producing demesne would normally create a kri, the blocked Essence instead builds up for five hours. If, after that, the Essence has not been properly rechanneled by a brilliant artisan (requiring success on a difficulty 10 [Wits + (Craft [Earth] or Occult, whichever is lower)] check that takes two hours), the manse and everything in it will shake for 10 ticks and fall into the mouth of the Kukla. Hopefully, this won't awaken the dragon—but even if it doesn't, the demesne is forever destroyed, and all kri derived from it permanently killed.

Gemlords truly believe that there is no other way for kri to gain independence, and consider themselves to be doing the deerlike creatures a favor by keeping them alive in exchange for servitude. They are not, however, as all-knowing as they think.

**Summoning:** Rogue kri have no protectors and may be called with impunity, but will then need a source of Essence to survive. Gemlords may be irritated by the summoning of servant kri, but may also seize the opportunity to communicate with and make an ally of the sorcerer. Still, a kri's hatred of its master, whether gemlord or Exalt, is unwavering and all-consuming. Sorcerous loyalty can overlay this, but can't remove it. Kri practically never choose to remain at the end of a

binding, and if bound with an Abscissic plate—sorcerers often use the Vizier—the kri's hatred of the sorcerer will be nigh-psychotic once their servitude is done.

**Motivations:** (Enslaved) Escape servitude.

(Rogue) Escape the trap of its nature.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 6, Awareness 3, Dodge 6, Integrity 2 (*Rogue* 5), Investigation 4, Linguistics 2, Lore 3, Martial Arts 5, Occult 2, Presence 2, Resistance 4, Socialize 3, Stealth 5, War 4

**Backgrounds:** Backing 0 (*Enslaved* 3)

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*—All-Encompassing

*Blessed Earth Body*—All-Encompassing

*Call*—Call any kri within range

*Dematerialize*—Costs 55 motes

*Host of Spirits*—Create weaker copies for battle

*Landscape Hide*—Sink into the ground anywhere

*Measure the Wind*

*Meat of Broken Flesh*—Bite motes from brave men

*Paralyze*—5 dice with a successful hoof attack

*Sense Domain*—Sense the area around where it was born

*Shapechange*—Change hoofs to hands

*Sheathing the Material Form*—All-Encompassing

*Tracking*—Marks those who step into its traps

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts, Stealth

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Martial Arts

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Martial Arts (hoof strikes only)

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 7L, Parry DV –, Rate 1

Hoof: Speed 4, Accuracy 11, Damage 6L, Parry DV 6, Rate 4

Affinity Earth Control: Speed 5, Accuracy 13, Damage 15L, Range 16, Rate 5

**Soak:** 7L/14B (Gem-studded fur, 5L/10B; Hardness: 2L/2B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 8 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 5 **Essence Pool:** 80

**Other Notes:** Kri dash at double the normal speeds.

## MERCURY ANT

These five-foot-long, silver-black ants have short lifespans (50 to 100 years), but a communal memory

stretching through the First Age. Some savants believe mercury ants to have a hive mind, but they actually communicate by means of silent alchemical signals, leaving invisible trails for others to follow and releasing scents of fear and anger when attacked. (A threatened ant will likely be joined by one to 10 fellow ants within 12 ticks, as they detect its call and rush to join it.) They dwell far underground, farther even than most Exalted could mine, digging tunnels and vying for the favor of their Quicksilver Queen (see pp. 100-102).

Mercury ants know many alchemical secrets. Their bite can transmute any metal into any other (at five motes per pound, with no effect on the magical materials). Their bite also has strong effects on sexual beings: injecting mercury into their bodies, the bite alters their internal alchemy and lends a vague shimmer to their blood. This is a Poison effect. A bitten character finds that her libido is stronger than usual, and will become overpowering. Every two weeks afterward, her Temperance suffers an internal penalty of -1 in sexual situations (this stacks, maxes out at -5 and is an explicit exception to the rule that internal penalties can't reduce pools below a character's Essence). If she manages to control herself, her mercurial blood will build up, channeling itself through her spine and nourishing her brain. Her focus and analytical abilities are thereby improved: she may add 1 to Intelligence rolls every time the Temperance penalty increases. Experiencing orgasm by any means releases a great deal of mercury and relieves the character for two weeks, resetting the Temperance penalty and Intelligence bonus to 0—and decreasing her Wits dice pools by 2 for that time. She'll feel exhausted and slow, bled of mental energy.

The effects of the ants' bites are permanent for mortals, but Essence-wielders "heal" the mercurial blood after a month (whether they want to or not). Bodies don't take well to the transmutation: each year after being bitten effectively ages a character three years.

In the First Age, a smooth-tongued lady won the favor of the mercury ants' Quicksilver Queen, then stole her alchemical secrets and collapsed her underground palace. The Queen remembers the incident well and passes the memory to each follower before they're born, teaching them to loathe and distrust all surface dwellers. Humans who invade mercury ant territory—even innocently exploring children or miners who accidentally come a few feet too far—will receive no mercy and may provoke the elementals to overrun nearby human settlements. Villages above ground are likely safe, however, as the ants fight best beneath it, where they can collapse

## THIS BITES

Some players are uncomfortable with forcible sexual effects such as the mercury ant's bite. Storytellers, don't use this effect unless you're sure it won't freak your players out—and by sure we mean positive. Dealing with issues of sex in games can be fun, but it can also be awkward or even traumatic, particularly if a given player feels as if he or she doesn't have control over the situation.

tunnels upon enemies or transmute nearby metallic deposits into drowning floods of mercury.

**Summoning:** The Queen doesn't often notice absences among her nigh-infinite servants and considers them easily replaced when she does. Sorcerous architects summon mercury ants for help digging foundations, and alchemists for advice. Mercury ants know the locations of many buried wonders, not to mention underground ores. Obviously, mercury ants are frequently summoned for their ability to transmute metals; cities with many citizen sorcerers, such as Nexus, often use mercury ants to aid in their industries.

It's nearly impossible to win the liking of these elementals, but they're accustomed to unquestioning servitude. Even after the end of servitude (they make good Functionaries), the ants rarely care about their summoners one way or the other.

Mercury ants can explicitly not be bound—or even persuaded—to attack or disobey their Queen.

**Motivation:** Expand the colony and protect the Queen.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 1 (Running +2), Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 2 (Anything Surface Dwellers Say +3), Investigation 3, Larceny 3, Lore 2 (Alchemy +3), Martial Arts 3, Resistance 2, Stealth 3, War 2 (Ant Formation +3)

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5, Mentor 4

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*—Transmutes and sculpts

*Bread of Weak Spirit*—Consume other mercury ants

*Call*—Summons mercury ants

*Dematerialize*—Costs 35 motes

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Poison (see above)  
*Landscape Hide*—Hide within colony tunnels  
*Landscape Travel*—Burrow at full movement speed  
*Natural Prognostication*—Senses alchemical signals  
*Principle of Motion*—Five banked actions  
*Sheathing the Material Form*—+2L/+5B when fighting alongside other mercury ants  
*Spice of Custodial Delectation*—Gain strength from communal effort

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 4, Accuracy 8, Damage 8L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 4L, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

**Soak:** 4L/9B (Quicksilver carapace, 3L/6B ; Hardness: 1L/1B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 45

**Other Notes:** Mercury ants move along ceilings and walls at their normal movement speed.

### SERPENT-AND-EGG

These reclusive malachite-scaled snakes never manifest without their copper eggs. Wound about those eggs and apparently about to swallow them, the serpents lie unmoving wherever Creation places them. On a moonless night, or over the course of a solar eclipse, one of these elementals may vanish from its current resting place and appear in a new one. The serpent has no conscious control over where it goes, and it ends up in a location where a dire and passionate event is about to take place. Appropriate places include a hollow at the base of a statue commemorating a despot's rule, just before that dictator is overthrown in rage; a burrow beneath the mansion of a famously beautiful, aging woman who's about to murder her lovely daughter in jealousy; a hollow at the base of a hill, atop which an Abyssal will soon Exalt in agony.

Upon reaching its new home, the serpent studies the surface of its egg until a vision of what's coming coalesces in the bright copper. Then, the elemental flicks out its tongue, smelling the local emotions. The elemental finds the heart of the passions that will cause the dire event and begins to whisper encouragement. Its murmurs suffuse through the area to influence darker and darker feelings: jealousy, fury, uncaring lust. After the event, the serpent whips up the participants into the worst possible frame of mind before departing. During any lulls the serpent can find, it will try hard

to bring visions of its own future to the egg's shining surface, but the serpent can't succeed more than once every 1,000 years.

These elementals once followed an earth dragon named Traditional Wisdom. In her service, they encouraged ill events that resulted from a disregard for custom. Back then, the serpents-and-eggs invoked regret and penitence after those events, reminding humanity to respect its traditions. But Jealous Saffron Rage, a lesser dragon of fire (see pp. 113-115), became discontented with his own servitors and began eyeing the serpents-and-eggs. He felt that Traditional Wisdom's followers were better suited to him than to her; in jealousy and quick anger, he challenged her to a contest for them.

Rather than fight another dragon, Traditional Wisdom offered to trade servitors peacefully. The two completed the paperwork in less than a century, and now, the serpents-and-eggs are shaped by a very different master. A few Sidereal Exalted consider this an unfortunate change for Creation, and something that ought to be reversed—but they've been too busy to address such a minor matter for many, many years.

Serpents-and-eggs store all their compassion in their eggs. If an egg is broken, its white jade heart (a somewhat coveted ingredient for artifacts) will be revealed, and the malachite snake will become a paragon of kindness (Compassion 5, rather than 1). However, the snake will also be unable to regain Essence or Willpower, and will die permanently at the next new moon.

**Summoning:** A sorcerer who commands a serpent-and-egg to speak of itself will earn the elemental's eternal (possibly vengeful) enmity. These creatures immediately forget orders to break their own eggs, and any sorcerer who breaks one herself will face the Celestial Hierarchy's wrath (other egg breakers need merely deal with Jealous Saffron Rage). A serpent-and-egg can be compelled to move, but the serpent will be forced to swallow its egg for safekeeping while it slithers; such is unlucky, presaging a loss of harmony such as a bad harvest or the disruption of a truth-seeker's quest. Beyond these things, a serpent-and-egg is passive and content to do as it's bound. Usually, it's asked to seek precognitive visions in its egg's mirrored surface.

The vast majority of serpent-and-eggs have too much Conviction to become Viziers, but sorcerers often wish to bind the creatures to that plate. As a result, the few serpents-and-eggs with Conviction 3 or less have been called an *awful* lot, and are more accustomed to dealing with humans than their brethren. (They even have a few different Traits, labeled "Vizier-bound" in the stat block



below.) These elementals know that their advice leads to terrible passions and ill ends; if Vizier-bound, they'll warn the summoner of that. More importantly—because a Vizier offers what it truly believes is good advice—these elementals second-guess themselves, and occasionally give their summoners what they think is *bad* advice in an attempt to counteract their uneasy self-knowledge. The “bad” advice makes little difference, for the knowledge serpents-and-eggs impart is ill-fated even when they don't want it to be. Their self-contradictions end up harming the sorcerer more than truth would. Most servants don't fully understand this facet of serpent-and-egg psychology, but its repercussions have led to a common belief that the creatures don't take well to Abscissic bindings. Knowledgeable teachers (for instance, professors at sorcerous academies such as the Heptagram) discourage summoning serpent-and-eggs as Viziers. Because sorcerers tend to be powerful people with lots of potential to hurt others, Jealous Saffron Rage instructs his servants to watch for their emotional weaknesses when summoned and report those weaknesses back to him. Later, he may capitalize on the information. But serpents-and-eggs can explicitly be bound—or even persuaded—to attack or disobey the Underground Fire.

**Motivation:** Learn its own future.

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

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 4 (*Vizier-bound* 3), Temperance 3 (*Vizier-bound* 4), Valor 2

**Abilities:** Awareness 3, Bureaucracy 0 (*Vizier-bound* 3), Integrity 3, Investigation 4, Lore 3, Occult 3 (*Vizier-bound* 5), Presence 0 (*Vizier-bound* 3), Resistance 3, Socialize 4

**Backgrounds:** Mentor 4

**Charms:**

*Dematerialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Foretell the Future*—Occasionally senses fates

*Hurry Home*—Moves the spirit to where it needs to be

*Landscape Hide*—Covers itself in stone to hide

*Measure the Wind*

*Natural Prognostication*—Knows places of passionate turmoil

*Plague of Menaces*—Automatically curses the area around it when it must swallow its egg or is angry

*Spice of Custodial Delectation*—Delights in strife

*Stoke the Flame*—Encourages dark passions

*Subtle Whisper*—Affects others without moving

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Investigation, Lore, Occult, Socialize

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Occult, Socialize

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

None

**Soak:** 4L/9B (Malachite scales, 3L/6B; Hardness: 1L/1B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 (can dodge only while egg is swallowed) **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 65

**Other Notes:** Serpent-and-eggs cannot dash.

## SEVENTH AMETHYST

Seventh Amethyst is the Minister for Unforeseen Events of the Island of Broken Masks, one of the many isles secreted away in the West's Archipelago of the Exiles. Her rank makes her general of the largest military force in the archipelago and one of the most magically potent navies in the West, on those rare occasions when it sets sail. She works hard at manipulating events so that military conflict is never necessary, however, because the laws of Heaven demand that the archipelago stay hidden from the view of the rest of Creation. Therefore, the forces at her command go to war only against the token forces of the other islands, and any conflict with outsiders is viewed as a failure of the island chain's security. This has made Seventh Amethyst a master of intrigue the equal of any being within the archipelago and one of the few exiles who actively cultivate spies in the other governments of the West. Any hints that Western Deathlords, pirate bands or Wyld barbarians seek to raid the archipelago are dealt with before those forces even set sail.

Seventh Amethyst has risen to her current position from the humblest of beginnings, exiled from a family of earth elementals shortly after her creation due to some fluke of astrological forecasting that said that she was doom-wracked. By the time she found her way to the archipelago, she had survived enslavement by renegade gods, forced labor by the Guild and the policing of the Immaculate Order. The King of the Island of Broken Masks appointed her to his private guard, and she was soon climbing its ranks, subjugating those less crafty and arranging accidents for those who posed a genuine threat, until she finally was elevated to her current title. If it were not for the paucity of actual threats to the Island of Broken Masks, it might find itself imperiled by Seventh Amethyst's culling of those possessed of any competence.

Seventh Amethyst's form is that of a beautiful statue of a girl of 10 years, carved from black marble.

As with all spirits who reside on the Island of Broken Mask, she has been disfigured. She cut out both of the amethysts that once rested where her eyes should be, and now wears them around her neck on a golden chain. The dagger Seventh Amethyst used to do this rests at her side, on a crimson sash she wears across her waist. When she rests, she is serene and unmoving, but she despises inactivity and wanders the corridors of power ceaselessly, always thinking about potential threats and intrigues. Recently, Seventh Amethyst has begun to wonder about who uttered the horoscope that led to her expulsion from her clan, and if her path has not been directed by some force in Heaven. If so, is her position as Minister for Unforeseen Events part of some plot? Is *she* a flaw in the archipelago's security? She would do anything to answer that question, and has become increasingly hostile to Sidereal and Celestial visitors to the island chain because of it.

**Summoning:** Seventh Amethyst has never been summoned. She has no particular notoriety amongst the summoner communities of Creation, and no sorcerer has ever seen fit to mention her by name in any guide to summoning. She does not expect to be called up by a sorcerer at any point during her life and gives little thought to what she'd do were it to happen.

**Motivation:** Protect herself from betrayal, and make herself invaluable.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Lore 4, Martial Arts 4, Medicine 2 (Torture +1), Melee 4, Presence 2, Resistance 3, Sail 4, Stealth 3, War 4

**Backgrounds:** Backing 4, Contacts 5, Followers 5, Resources 2

**Elemental Powers:** *Elemental Rejuvenation*

**Charms:**

*Affinity Earth Control*—Stone

*Dematerialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Fruit of Living Essence*—Rivals

*Landscape Travel*—Stone

*Memory Mirror*—Enemies of the Island of Broken Masks

*Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe*—Items of rock and stone

*Paralyze*—Rivals

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Bureaucracy, Sail, Presence, War

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 4B, Parry DV 4, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 7B, Parry DV 2, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Jade Dagger: Speed 4, Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

**Soak:** 7L/12B (Stone skin, 6L/6B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 5 **Essence Pool:** 75

**Other Notes:** None

**ELEMENTALS OF FIRE**

The elementals of fire are the most respected of the elemental beings. The garda birds are the only elementals not of dragon stature with passing influence amongst the gods. The ifrit are the elementals most respected amongst humanity. Virtuous yet aloof, the ifrit and garda birds who lead the fire courts remain neutral in conflicts between other elementals, and so garner a reputation as moderators and hosts during talks of peace. Only the water elementals despise the elementals of fire, for refusing to come to water's aid against the Court of Winds.

It needn't have been this way. In the chaos following the death of the Great Garda, amidst the endless inferno clouds of need fires, the garda birds were born immortal, and could join with each other to create wise and pure beings. By an accident of history, a few such gardas broke past Creation's barriers and found their way into Heaven, where they remained pure and unsullied by the rage and chaos of a world torn by war. At war's end, when the gods claimed Heaven for themselves, the garda birds were already there, and these Celestial gardas traveled back to Creation, where they joined with the rage-filled garda birds of the Terrestrial sphere. The withdrawn wisdom and Temperance-counteracted Valor of the garda birds shaped the fire courts thereafter. Other fire elementals are base, violent and emotional, but by ifrit and garda guidance, the fire courts remain at peace. Had no gardas found their way into Heaven, the fire courts and all of Creation would have reached a far different outcome.

Fire court peace comes at the cost of influence. Unlike earth elementals, who never seem to concern themselves with outside affairs, fire elementals have consciously surrendered the possibility of a great and centralized authority to retain the respect and admiration of the other elemental courts. Fire elementals have left the role of grand generals to the Wind Masters.



## JEALOUS SAFFRON RAGE, THE UNDERGROUND FIRE

### LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF FIRE

Though the fire courts pride themselves on their clear heads and calm manners, the children of the Great Garda are prone to unreasoning emotional flares. Many fire elementals keep a careful watch on their own hearts. They recognize the potential influence of their passion-inspiring fellows, and the one they fear most is the Underground Fire.


Jealous Saffron Rage is only physical when there's a tree nearby, preferably an old and stately one. Those around him will smell faint burning, but may not understand what it portends: the dragon is a root fire afflicting that tree, devouring its base and then burning up through the center. If someone chops his way into a tree afflicted by the Underground Fire, he'll find a smoky inferno inside. Within that yellow blaze flares eight clawlike tongues of flame—the only indication that it's truly the body of a dragon.

Whether or not Jealous Saffron Rage is burning the heart from living wood, he manifests as dark passions. Wherever he is, there's wrath, uncaring lust and (naturally) jealousy. If there aren't any nearby trees to burn, these emotions will be his only presence. He speaks little, but if he must, he does so through the mouth of whomever's most under his sway.

Many tragedies are attributed to the Underground Fire. He rarely attends the flame courts, for mayhem ensues when he does. In his presence, lovers are enraged enough to kill each other, and peaceful gatherings become impassioned mobs. Fortunately for humanity, the dragon remains mainly in the depths of the East. But he sometimes receives word of sorcerers' emotional weaknesses from his servants the serpents-and-eggs (see pp. 110-111), and may personally try to capitalize on that knowledge during a foray into civilization.

In forests, Jealous Saffron Rage's subsurface fire can ignite the ground where roots meet underbrush. Hence, the dragon sometimes causes wide-ranging devastation.





Though terrified of the Underground Fire, Creation's wood dragons recognize that fire revitalizes forests, so they've worked out a deal. The fire dragon restrains himself somewhat, slowly burning his way through stagnant woods that need renewal, and taking sabbaticals three times a century. In exchange, the wood courts never interfere with his activities.

Anyone who finds this dragon and addresses him by name will gain his attention. Practically no one seeks him out, and he's unaccustomed to bargaining for his favor. He asks for simple things in return for his help. A seductive petitioner might be asked to undermine a famous relationship by instigating jealousy, thereby setting a famous example; an assassin might be sent to carefully murder two heads of Dragon-Blooded families at odds with each other, thereby arranging a long and vicious vendetta.

**Summoning:** If summoned, Jealous Saffron Rage has the right to send a servant elemental in his stead.

**Motivation:** Inspire destructive passions. Jealous Saffron Rage has an Intimacy toward burning out trees.

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 9, Manipulation 9, Appearance 3; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

**Virtues:** Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 3

**Abilities:** Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 3, Dodge 6, Integrity 7 (Destructive Passions -7), Lore 5, Occult 4, Performance 10, Presence 10, Socialize 7 (Reading Emotions +5), Survival 3 (Forests +3), Thrown 0 (Dragon's Suspire +3)

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 4, Followers 4, Influence 3, Resources 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Fire Control*—Uses eight barrels of fire to attack

*Banish*—Works on himself, teleporting him to a random tree as a means of escape

*Capture*—Summons any creature to the foot of his tree

*Dematerialize*—Costs 75 motes

*Essence Bite*—Deals three aggravated health levels of fire damage that bypasses armor

*Essence Plethora* (x1)

*Fire Dragon's Embrace*—See below

*Form Reduction Technique*—Jealous Saffron Rage has never attempted to use this Charm.

*Geas*—Tasks whose completion inspires jealousy or vendetta

*Impromptu Messenger*—Through those most impassioned

*Measure the Wind*

*Regalia of Authority*—Orders others to obey him

*Reserve of Will* (x1)

*Ride*—Jealous Saffron Rage has never attempted to use this Charm.

*Stoke the Flame*—Inspire incredible passions

*Subtle Whisper*—Inspires emotions through mere presence

*Stoke the Flame*—Inspires negative passions only

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Performance, Presence, Socialize

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Socialize

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Performance (Inspiring Negative Passions)

*All-Encompassing Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Presence

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Dragon's Suspire: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 6L, Range 10, Rate 1

**Soak:** 9L/19B (Entirely fire, 8L/16B; Hardness: 8L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 9 **Willpower:** 7 (8)

**Essence:** 8 **Essence Pool:** 125

**Other Notes:** As a dragon, Jealous Saffron Rage can fly at double his normal movement rate. He can also move through root systems at full speed.

The Underground Fire absorbs fire elemental damage per *Blessed Fire Body* (see pp. 163-164).

Jealous Saffron Rage's *Dragon's Suspire* is an unblockable explosion that targets all creatures within 10 yards of him. It is a fire elemental attack.

Jealous Saffron Rage has traded much of his physical draconic power for emotional and insubstantial power.

As a result, his physical scores are much lower than a normal elemental dragon's, and he cannot physically attack. However, the dragon is completely immune to all physical attacks that are not elementally aspected toward water.

Furthermore, the *Fire Dragon's Embrace* of the dragon are special. They cost no Essence, activate reflexively, inflict only the negative effects of the charm and cannot be avoided, because they are Jealous Saffron Rage.

One who successfully resists this Charm still feels jealousy, rage, lust—whatever dark emotion is most appropriate to the moment.

Resisting targets simply recognize the emotion's supernatural origin and suppress it to a manageable level, basically becoming just rather touchy.

Only characters with Temperance 5 and Compassion 5 totally overcome the emotions that make up Jealous Saffron Rage. Such characters



cannot be detected by the dragon: he won't see them, hear their words, etc. (though he'll certainly still be wounded if they fight him).

It's comparatively easy to inspire dark passions in Jealous Saffron Rage; against attempts to do so, his Integrity is 0.

### AMABOSAR

During the invasion of the Fair Folk, after the dragon lines were bent out of millennia of alignment, the border between elements was terribly injured. Time eventually mended the wound, but in the meantime, elementals of mixed affiliation coalesced in great numbers. Amabosars, squat and unsightly humanlike beings, are some of these.

When Gaia healed, amabosars assumed the element of fire; but their nature had many aspects of earth. This contradiction affected them keenly. They had been reserved, but passionate. Now they're lazy and ill-tempered. Their fire makes them leaders with bold new ideas, but the thwarted earth within warps them toward an incoherent traditionalist bent: easily amassing cults, amabosars cannot command. Once, they were consummate warriors with hand and blade; now, they're too confused to choose one method. When threatened, they just discharge quantities of fire from their rough-skinned joints.

Amabosars often use their cults to claim rocky, warm areas, particularly if they're demesnes. The cults usually fall apart quickly, but the amabosar will stay in its new territory till driven out. Truly happiest alone, the grumpy, disagreeable amabosars have trouble making allies even of fellow Essence-wielders.

**Summoning:** Just as other blurred elemental types born of Gaia's indisposition, amabosars are prized by sorcerers. The elementals aren't much help as servants. Their nature is weird enough that it's hard to predict which commands will contradict it, and thus hard to find orders the amabosar won't forget. But their Essences demonstrate unique ambiguity, useful for a variety of occult studies. These beings are especially fascinating for the very few sorcerers interested in spiritual psychology, for amabosars enjoy Absscissic bindings. Indeed, the plates other elementals most abhor—notably Slave and Sufferer—are gratefully welcomed by amabosars. Some literally beg for the empty clarity of Slavery.

**Motivation:** Find a home matching its elemental imbalance.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2, Awareness 1, Dodge 3, Integrity 2, Larceny 3, Linguistics 1, Performance 2, Presence 2, Resistance 3, Socialize 1, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** Cult 1, Demesne 2

#### Charms:

*Affinity Fire Control*—Shoots three barrels of fire at targets

*Blessed Fire Body*—Non-magical fire only

*Dematerialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Landscape Travel*—Magma

*Shapechange*—A man's height for one scene

*Stoke the Flame*—Rash and reactionary hate and anger

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Performance, Survival

**Join Battle:** 3

#### Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 2, Damage 4B, Parry DV 2, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 2, Damage 7B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Affinity Fire Control: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 9L, Range 10, Rate 3

**Soak:** 5L/8B (Burning aura, 3L/6B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5    **Willpower:** 5


**Essence:** 3    **Essence Pool:** 55

**Other Notes:** None

### FIRE BUTTERFLY

In 13 places stand the Quiet Fires, mute witness to a long-ago world-spanning holocaust. The sky-reaching pillars of flame burn silently, but so hot that none but fire spirits can approach. Sparkling creatures born of the Quiet Fires, fire butterflies usually swarm around their birthplace till death, but some flutter out into the wider world and bring back reports of everything beautiful.

Fire butterflies hate other pretty spirits with a burning passion that will never die. These lovely palm-sized insects, which seem made of solid black-spotted flame, can't handle the idea of anything more gorgeous than they. In particular, they resent flame ducks (see pp. 116-117), who aren't (they're quick to point out) even that beautiful—so why do they always get all the ifrit attention? Not that the butterflies don't also dislike ifrit (see pp. 119-120)—after all, those human-loving jerks are just so full of themselves. But the thing fire butterflies loathe most is gold (or orichalcum), which



most butterflies secretly feel is the loveliest thing in the world. Just seeing a golden earring or bracelet can drive a fire butterfly to fury.

When flying across Creation, these elementals pause to observe each beautiful creature, learn everything they can, then seek out their new victim's enemies and reveal all her secrets. Near the Quiet Fires, attractive men and women go hooded in hopes of evading the butterflies' notice.

The hottest of sensual passions come to life in fire butterflies. In insect form, their mere touch ignites nothing—but if one loses its temper, it'll become a fiery human who sets everything possible aflame. The powder coating their lower wings can be mixed in oil and used as body paint that causes 24 hours of violently sexual hallucinations in any human the butterfly decorates. On the bright side, this also gives the victim the ability to set fires with a glance. When dissolved in water, this powder cures fevers; it's also a useful ingredient for explosives.

**Summoning:** For obvious reasons, some sorcerers like having fire butterfly consorts (at least, if they also have powers that make them immune to fire). They make excellent Courtesans, but will inconveniently attack the summoner's other lovers if given half a chance. Most sorcerers avoid fire butterflies entirely, especially since they're not good for much besides... *ahem*.

**Motivation:** Be the prettiest.

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

**Virtues:** Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 1, Valor 4

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Linguistics 3, Performance 2, Presence 3, Socialize 3

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Dematerialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Dreamscape*—Sends passionate dreams

*Essence Bite*—4L fire damage

*Fire Dragon's Embrace*—Lust that burns

*Hoodwink*—Passionate visions

*Malediction*—Reduce Appearance by one dot (does not stack)

*Natural Prognostication*—Find beauty, or lust

*Shapechange*—Fiery humanoid

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Presence, Socialize, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

*Fiery humanoid form:*

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 1B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 3, Damage 4B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 3, Damage 1B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 1L/2B

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 50

**Other Notes:** In butterfly form, fire butterflies fly to get from place to place, at their full movement speed.

In fiery humanoid form, fire butterflies have a tendency to ignite any combustible materials that they touch.

Fire butterflies absorb fire elemental damage per *Blessed Fire Body* (see pp. 163-164).

## FLAME DUCK

As short, fit women with dark green skin and flame-red hair, or as small bright ducks with flame-edged wings, these elementals wander the South in the pursuit of justice. Once, they followed Sorsa Endi, a lesser elemental dragon of fire whose brother was lost during the Usurpation. Certain her brother wasn't dead, Sorsa Endi became obsessed with finding him. She even released her flame ducks to pursue their own lives while she searched, but they didn't relish the freedom. Longing for their mistress to lead them through the sky again, the ducks watched her grief-stricken search for centuries before deciding enough was enough. Together, they secretly plotted to make their mistress forget her heartache.

The flame ducks themselves weren't powerful enough to work such enchantments upon a dragon. So, though they wished their mistress only good, the flame ducks found themselves allying with her enemies. Those enemies swore holy oaths that they'd only make the dragon forget her brother—but they lied. They used the flame ducks' aid to destroy Sorsa Endi, and left the devastated elementals with nothing to do but repent.

In the aftermath of their sin, Creation's flame ducks found themselves at loose ends. They follow a variety of professions, and use the skills they learn to venerate the fallen dragon's memory. Some flame ducks capitalize on their exotic good looks and charm, becoming high-class courtesans, gamblers or merchant princes. Others take advantage of their fighting prowess to lead mercenary companies or work as highly paid bodyguards. Just as most fire elementals, flame ducks are emotional, but they're also smart. One of the few things they aren't

good at is blindly following orders, which is why they tend toward freelancing and leadership positions.

Those flame ducks who were alive when their race betrayed Sorsa Endi want nothing but to atone. They work for just causes because the dragon would have served them, and burn sulfurous incense to her memory every day. Younger flame ducks, though deeply affected by the tales of their sisters, have no such emotional wound. They do as their sisters expect, but they'll soon be a majority. When that day comes, there will be a shift in flame duck culture—for though flame ducks honor justice in Sorsa Endi's memory, they're born seeing little virtue in justice for its own sake.

**Summoning:** Flame ducks make fair lieutenants and majordomos, being good at many things, but their sometimes-unorthodox approach to problem-solving means that they require a lot of oversight, and their distaste for following orders makes them sulky and ill-tempered even when influenced by sorcerous loyalty. These elementals often form tight, sisterly groups with oaths of mutual protection, and in areas where Celestial law is weak, a flame duck's siblings may hunt down her summoner, observe the situation and attack if they suspect that their fellow elemental is being mistreated—and the flame ducks take a more all-encompassing view of what constitutes abuse than the Celestial Order does.

**Motivation:** Venerate Sorsa Endi's memory.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Larceny 2, Linguistics 2, Martial Arts 4, Presence 3, Resistance 1, Survival 2, Socialize 3, War 2 (Duck Formation +3)

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 3, Mentor 4, Resources 3

**Charms:**

*Affinity Fire Control*—+3 fire damage

*Call*—Scream for aid in battle

*Dematerialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Eye of Inspiration*—Combat prowess

*Harrow the Mind*—Illusions of dangerous people with weapons

*Landscape Travel*—Flight at running speed

*Loom Stride*—Rejoin formation

*Measure the Wind*

*Meat of Broken Flesh*—Fists drain warriors' Essence

*Shapechange*—Small woman or fiery duck

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+6B/3L vs. hand-to-hand attacks

*Tracking*—Other flame ducks

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts, Presence, War

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 3B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 6B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 8, Damage 3B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Javelin: Speed 4, Accuracy 9, Damage 6L, Parry DV 5, Rate 2

**Soak:** 5L/12B (Fiery plumage, 4L/9B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 50

**Other Notes:** None

**GARDA BIRD**

Rumors surround the mysterious garda birds, who originate from the Great Garda that (some savants say) brought fire to humanity. Perhaps the Great Garda, storytellers whisper, was torn into many birds by the machinations of the gods, who felt angry that it had given wisdom to mortals. Perhaps the Great Garda was the font of all forbidden knowledge—and perhaps every lesser garda is a source of secrets and temptation.

Garda birds, after all, have hidden knowledge of men and women. They boast both emperor forms—beautiful peacocks with purple and flame feathers—and empress forms—enormous, burning silver-eyed pheasants. Their third form—a blazing phoenix with a man's legs and the head, talons and wings of an eagle, six arms and six fiery swords—expresses primal secrets of fear; almost everyone who sees this form flees in terror. The birds even understand immortality. Unlike other elementals, garda birds aren't replaced by the world when they die. After every death, a garda bird will rise again in flame—self and individuality intact.

Because of this last secret, garda birds are willing to destroy themselves. If backed into a martial corner, the bird sings a requiem of victory, then detonates across the sky in a tremendous Essence flare. Only fools fail to run when faced with a garda bird girding its loins.

Garda birds, perhaps the oldest fire elementals in existence, are sometimes involved in the flame courts. There, their wisdom and mystery are respected. They rarely gain quite the influence they could, because they aren't considered very reliable, but when they speak their words gain great attention. Still, most of these elementals





are solitary. They never pursue affairs with any creatures but each other. When two garda birds are truly in love, they have a unique way of expressing it: they immolate themselves together (probably wrecking an entire region in the process), then rise again as a new garda with a new self. The only thing left of the former birds will be their tail feathers, which are avidly sought by sages. All garda tail feathers burn with a cold, painless indigo flame, which cannot be quenched but also cannot spread.

**Summoning:** Garda birds are obviously the perfect tactical weapon for sorcerers, who can bind these elementals to detonate over a designated area. This irritates the birds, as they think it an ill and unvalorous use of their sacrifice. They must personally seek redress over this, as the Celestial Order cares not, but garda birds' immortal nature makes them tenacious enemies. Sorcerers who call garda birds usually just use them as warriors, and occasionally advisors in matters historical or magical. The secrets of garda birds—immortality, fear, sex—are part of their nature; garda birds cannot reveal their secrets even to a summoner, because they cannot be articulated.

**Motivation:** Find the perfect mate, with whom it shall combine. Garda birds are *very* choosy about this—only the greatest love is worth sacrificing immortality.

**Attributes:** Strength 4 (*Phoenix* 6), Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 5, Manipulation 3 (*Phoenix* 2), Appearance 5; Perception 4, Intelligence 4 (*Phoenix* 3), Wits 4

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Dodge 4, Integrity 3, Lore 4, Melee 0 (*Phoenix* 5), Occult 4, Presence 4 (Intimidation +3), Resistance 3, Socialize 2, Stealth -3, War 3

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 4, Influence 2

**Charms:**

*Dematerialize*—Costs 60 motes

*Divine Prerogative*—Will punish any crimes against its person

*Dreamspeak*—All-Encompassing

*Immolation*—With the expenditure of one mote, the garda bird erupts in a fiery explosion. Every character within (Essence x20) yards suffers an attack. Roll the bird's (Charisma + Valor), adding (Essence) automatic successes; the result is the attack's successes. This attack can be blocked or dodged normally. The attack's raw damage is equal to the motes remaining in the garda bird's Essence pool at the moment of immolation. The garda bird dies, though it will be reborn. A garda bird shifting



into phoenix form unleashes a similar attack reflexively, at no mote cost, with a raw damage of 16L.

*Landscape Travel*—+2 Dexterity and double speed when flying

*Memory Mirror*—Sense the passions and purity within *Paralyze* (*Phoenix form only*)—2 internal penalty to Valor with a successful hit

*Regalia of Authority* (*Phoenix form only*)—All opposing the garda suffer utter terror.

*Shapechange*—Emperor, empress or phoenix (see description)

*Stoke the Flame*—Inspire awe and terror

*Subtle Whisper*—Subtly encourages curiosity and awe

*Tracking*—Invests Essence in any summoner or unholy being

*Words of Power*—Sings out burning, passionate mysteries

*First (Ability) Excellency*—Melee, Presence

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

*Emperor and Empress form:*

Claw: Speed 4, Accuracy 6, Damage 7L (Empress +2 Fire), Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 5, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Arc of Flame: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 4L, Range 10, Rate 1

*Phoenix Form:*

Phoenix Sword: Speed 4, Accuracy 12, Damage 11L (+2 Fire), Parry DV 6, Rate 3

**Soak:**

*Emperor:* 2L/4B

*Empress:* 4L/6B; 8L/10B vs. Fire (Halo of flame, 2L/2B; 6L/6B vs. Fire)

*Phoenix:* 10L/14B; 14L/18B vs. Fire (Halo of flame, 2L/2B; 6L/6B vs. Fire) (Lamellar armor, 6L/8B, -2 mobility)

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

**Dodge DV:** 7 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 4 **Essence Pool:** 80

**Other Notes:** In any form, garda birds may fly at their full movement speed. *Landscape Travel* may increase this speed.

In Empress and Phoenix forms, garda birds set fire to any combustible material that they touch, and absorb fire elemental damage per *Blessed Fire Body* (see pp. 163-164).

Due to their blazing plumage, garda birds take a -3 internal penalty to any Stealth checks they're unwise enough to make.

Neither Eclipses nor Moonshadows can learn Immolation.

## IFRIT

Ifrit resemble tall, handsome desert nomads, reaching up to eight feet in height, with smooth foreheads and noble noses—save only for their incandescent skin. The skin of the ifrit glows with an orange light, visible for miles at night. By nearly everyone they meet, the ifrit are prized. They make excellent warriors, diplomats and generals. They are virtuous, honorable and honest. Unfortunately, that they sided quickly with the Dragon-Blooded during the Usurpation lent the ifrit an undeserved reputation for treachery in Yu-Shan—while once ifrit and garda birds visited Heaven together, now the gardas go alone and the ifrit aren't welcome.


Ifrit are incredibly proud. An ifrit who chooses to become an ascetic must go through the worst privation and offer the sagest, most impenetrable insights. A diplomat-ifrit must be renowned for its wise and evenhanded compromises. A warrior-ifrit will seize every opportunity to demonstrate bravery and mercy. An ifrit who feels no mortal respect for its character will be unhappy—even if it claims all it wants to do is sit meditating on a 50-foot column, alone and uninterrupted. Thus, ifrit dislike being around other ifrit and enjoy granting favors to suitably humble petitioners: a lone ifrit will often go unchallenged as a city's most upstanding citizen.

Ifrit excel at nearly everything. Their aspect is inspiring and intimidating, and their commands form hot words that cannot be challenged. Elemental courts welcome ifrit gladly, and quickly elevate them to high positions. Even the Terrestrial courts, which normally treat elementals disdainfully, sometimes receive ifrit with respect and request their help with thorny issues. Ifrit don't often settle down, but one might commit itself to a cause or region that's having a great many problems. This can be a curse in disguise, for when these elementals dedicate themselves to something, they are more likely to feel stress over its shortcomings—and their tempers can be fiery indeed.

It's not unusual for ifrit to take flame ducks (see pp. 116-117) as consorts, and the South has more than a few ifrit-flame duck teams.

**Summoning:** An ifrit will warm somewhat to a sorcerer who gives it interesting and challenging assignments (thus, ifrit make good Hunters), particularly if the summoner is polite. Nothing insults an ifrit so much as being called to do something easy, such as guarding an unthreatened front door for show or carrying written messages like a street urchin. These elementals would never whine or seek their own revenge, but an ifrit





bound to demeaning purpose will later drop complaints in powerful, well-chosen ears.

**Motivation:** Provide a good role model for less righteous folk (i.e., everyone).

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics 4, Lore 3, Performance 3, Presence 4, Martial Arts 5, Resistance 2, Socialize 3, Stealth -3, Survival 2, War 4

**Backgrounds:** Artifact 2, Contacts 5, Influence 1, Resources 4

**Charms:**

*Benefaction*—Bonus die to any one Ability

*Dematerialize*—Costs 55 motes

*Destiny Sponsorship*—Safe in the desert

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Brighten to anima banner level

*Harrow the Mind*—Illusions plague the guilty

*Landscape Travel*—3x speed over the desert

*Material Tribulation Divestment*—Cleanses any Crippling, Poison or Sickness effects

*Regalia of Authority*—Inspire awe in mortals

*Sheathing the Material Form*—All-Encompassing

*Spice of Custodial Delectation*—Gain Essence from having others thank him profusely

*Stoic Endurance*—Soaks, heals, bleeds, recovers and ages similar to an Exalt

*Tracking*—Find anyone the ifrit has blessed

*Worldly Illusion*—Target is alone with his sins

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Integrity, Martial Arts

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Integrity, Martial Arts

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 4B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 7B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV -, Rate 1

Excellent Straight Sword: Speed 4, Accuracy 12, Damage 8L, Parry DV 6, Rate 2

**Soak:** 8L/12B (Lamellar armor, 6L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 4 **Essence Pool:** 75

**Other Notes:** Due to ifrit's blazing flesh, ifrit take a -3 internal penalty to any Stealth checks they're unwise enough to make.

**LLAMA-YU**

Every five to 15 years, scarlet eyes couched in incandescent flame roar from the desert, devastating the habitations of men. Behind these eyes, the heat waves upon the sands melt and intensify into extraordinary visions. These depict scenes from stories valued by the llama-yu: simple tales of the triumph of loyalty and love. Rarely, they include flashes of the future.

In the uncharted desert, llama-yu travel in roving bands, some numbering in the hundreds. They have no malice to them, but that doesn't mitigate their destructive capacity: unless they work to control it—and wild llama-yu never do—they'll set nearly everything they see aflame. Some thaumaturges make a career of keeping close track of llama-yu migration patterns, then traveling ahead of a herd, offering protective wards to those in its path.

Often kept as fierce pets that double as bodyguards, llama-yu can be trained (this requires Survival and Occult scores of 2+ each). Thousands are gathered and domesticated by trainers in the employ of the Court of the Orderly Flame, then sold to wealthy owners throughout the South. For flaming balls of destruction, llama-yu are surprisingly affectionate. The elementals form swift attachments, and work hard to make their masters happy.

Llama-yu have a certain degree of occult emotional understanding. As they speed past villages or are shepherded through cities, the mirages that trail llama-yu portray recent joys and heartbreaks of those they pass. Many secrets are betrayed by unwitting llama-yu, who leave the visions as a "footprint" of their passage, not a deliberate revelation. This and the fires they spread lead cities to license llama-yu ownership; citizens with important confidences to protect rarely buy the elementals.

The rare llama-yu who takes a particular liking to someone will rush straight toward her and surround her in white fire. After a moment, the blaze will clear, with the llama-yu nowhere to be seen. The favored person will later find herself seeing auras or even envisioning near futures; when she does so, a red eye opens on her forehead. The llama-yu has possessed her, though gently, for she can still act as she wills. It will leave in a crimson flash if she does something the llama-yu finds distasteful—such as acting solely from cruelty or moving to the snowy North—or if the llama-yu begins to miss its wide and open home.

Once trained, a llama-yu forever loses its ability to possess others and grant them insight.

**Summoning:** Sorcerers avoid llama-yu for the same reasons some refuse to buy them: many have emotional secrets they don't want shown to an audience. There are better warriors to call, and since llama-yu cannot control the visions they trail, sorcerers can't even effectively use llama-yu to learn the secrets of others. In addition, although sorcery may compel a llama-yu to possess someone, the red eye will never appear unless the creature actually likes her.

Those few who call llama-yu often use the Slave plate, reasoning that these creatures are unaware animals anyway. The Court of the Orderly Flame would gladly inform them that those llama-yu suffer emotional problems at the end of their servitude, becoming practically impossible to train. The elementals will be much less traumatized if the Ecstatic plate is used instead.

**Motivation:** (Wild) Spread beautiful fire with the loving fellows of its herd.

(Trained) Spread beautiful fire at the will of its loving master.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Integrity 4, Martial Arts 3, Presence 2, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** Backing 0 (*Trained 1*)

**Charms:**

*Amethyst Awareness*—Senses the emotional intent of powers

*Dematerialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Endowment*—Bestow Memory Mirror

*Landscape Travel*—Move through burning areas at full movement speed

*Memory Mirror*—Senses emotional states

*Possession*—Enters the minds of those she likes, but doesn't control them

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+4B/2L vs. missile attacks

*Stoke the Flame*—Movements cause intense curiosity

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Martial Arts, Presence

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Firebite: Speed 4, Accuracy 8, Damage 5L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

**Soak:** 4L/9B (Aegis of flame, 3L/6B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 50

**Other Notes:** Having no arms, llama-yu cannot carry things.

**NEED FIRE**

Every vivid spark is a portion of the Great Garda. Such tiny motes may come together to form a whole far more than the sum of its parts: a floating, sparkling ball called a need fire. Usually this is at the behest of a summoning, but need fires are also created whenever a wood elemental burns to death. Those last are known as will-o'-the-wisps, which protect forests and their ashes.

Since need fires come into being for a purpose, they'll dissolve into disparate sparks once they've fulfilled it. When a need fire finds its own Motivation while serving its created function, though, the need fire continues on. All need fires are nearly impossible to fight physically, since they're nothing but a group of burning motes; but they can be quenched with water. Spirits of Essence 3 or lower are horribly repelled by the scent of a need fire's smoke (though they grow accustomed to it within a month). Thus, if the smoke is breathed by one who's been possessed by such a spirit, she'll violently cough up her possessor.

If a cremation fails to prevent the rise of a hungry ghost, some of its death-Essence will taint the flames. A need fire may coalesce from those sparks, cherishing a warped darkness in its blazing heart. Such need fires are not obviously different from others, but they burn maliciously, setting fires in the most dangerous possible places. Naturally, they make favored servants of Abyssal Exalted. On the other hand, need fires can also come together from the pyres set by the Zenith Caste, whose holy flames cleanse souls. Those elementals wish only to destroy the unholy, and will seek out demons and other unclean things to attack.

**Summoning:** Even mortals can command need fires though the use of thaumaturgy. See the ritual below.

A true sorcerer can summon need fires without birthing one from flame, and bind them not to burn what she doesn't wish burned (rather than controlling them with water), often as Ecstatics. Since mortals can call need fires, though, formally trained sorcerers consider it a tad *déclassé*.

**Motivations:** (Created by summoners) Varies, but always involves setting fires.

(Created by the burning of a wood elemental) Guard the site where the wood elemental lived till a new one arises (if ever).



(Created by the pyres of unsettled spirits) Start fires wherever they can cause great pain and death.

(Created by the Zenith Caste anima) Burn creatures of darkness.

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

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 3, Dodge 4, Occult 0 (Spirits +3) (Fire +3), Resistance 3, Survival 2

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Dematerialize*—Costs 45 motes

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Start and direct fires

*Essence Bite*—2 lethal health levels of fire damage that bypass armor

*Fruit of Living Essence*—Regains motes as it burns

*Natural Prognostication*—Seek what they were brought forth to burn

*Spice of Custodial Delectation*—Regains motes from fueling the fire

*Subtle Whisper*—Those who speak of the flames subconsciously realize their purpose.

*Touch of Grace*—Cures disease in animals

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

None

**Soak:** 4L/6B; 10L/12B vs. Fire (Body of fire, 3L/3B; 9L/9B vs. Fire)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6 **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 60

**Other Notes:** Having no solid bodies, need fires cannot carry things. They are always floating, but may not fly higher than 20 yards off the ground of their own power. They move through burning material at their full speed.

Need fires absorb fire elemental damage per *Blessed Fire Body* (see pp. 163-164).

## ELEMENTALS OF WATER

After more than a thousand years of persecution, the elementals of water are fragmented and without guidance. The Wind Masters have hunted not just the most numerous of the water elementals but their leaders as well, and the only vocal opponent of the Wind Masters amongst the water dragons is spiteful, unpopular Ogime. Amongst the other lesser elemental dragons of

## SUMMON NEED FIRE

(2, Charisma, 3, three hours)

Since every fire holds sparks, every fire can birth a need fire; a mortal need only offer the potential need fire a reason to come into the world. The summoner must be careful, for need fires like to spread their birthing fires as far as possible. But, aside from caution (many buckets of water are usually kept nearby), the summoner requires only a special wreath of wormwood and laurel, which she feeds to the flames while chanting her request: perhaps “Come, need fire, to burn in a spirit-repelling circle about me as I work,” or “Come, need fire, and burn beneath my son’s nose so the fox god that took him departs.” If creating the need fire in front of an audience, most summoners will make an ostentatious ceremony of it, but only the wreath and words are necessary. Any successes at all will summon a weak need fire for (successes x 10) ticks. Four successes or more will birth a permanent fire. This ritual requires no resources.

water, Fakhru’s loyalty is to himself, his lover and his nostalgia for the First Age, while Naresh, the Arbiter of Northern Storms, allies with the Bureau of Seasons and works alongside the Wind Masters, turning a blind eye to their crusades. The rest of the water dragons, too, have abandoned their lower kin.

The water courts are desperate. None aid them; even the elementals of fire turn a blind eye. Nymphs seek succor in the company of the sorcerers who bind them, prostituting themselves to avoid air elemental death squads. Sobeksis gather cults to defend themselves. Water children mimic humans and conceal themselves at all times. With no help from anyone in the Celestial Order, the water elementals have begun to look outside it. Lord Verethine of the vodonik bargains with the Lintha and their Yozi patrons for aid. Other water courts speak of allying with the Fair Folk. Better to side with Creation’s enemies, the water courts say, than tolerate their lot further. Though their loyalty to each other is strong, it may one day be that the elementals of water turn their backs on Creation, and rise up to drown the world entire—if the elementals of air don’t wipe the water courts out first.



## OGIME, THE FROG QUEEN

### LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF WATER

Though she can give herself a body as beautiful as any girl's, Ogime travels among mortals as a warty crone. She delights in being treated badly by humans—it gives her an excuse to take whatever vengeance she wishes. Tsunami and waterborne disease are both at her command, as are her frog-headed daughters the heketa (see pp. 125-126); she herself can become a frog-headed, smooth-skinned sea dragon in a trice. If she's feeling particularly irritable, she'll find the offenders' families and destroy them, too, using her vicious curses or toxic breath. Ogime was once the protégé and is now a close friend of the Chiaroscuro god Grandmother Bright (see pp. 52-54), who was herself once goddess of revenge. As a result, Ogime comes to the South more often than other water elementals, and Chiaroscuro natives treat ugly old women with superstitious respect.

Among other elementals, the Frog Queen's retribution cannot be so violent or direct. This doesn't prevent her from finding ways to exact it on anyone she thinks *might* have slighted her, and she's greatly feared in the Western water courts. Ogime usually transports herself in a gorgeous coral chariot with dozens of doting heketa attendants, and spends a lot of time telling water court leaders that her enemies ought to be punished—even though she holds no official position. Nor is she likely to take one, since that would involve doing actual work, and she considers such a thing below her. Still, "Frog Queen" is a great and ancient title, whether it holds bureaucratic cachet or not. For one thing, it entitles Ogime to the undersea coral and starmetal manse Gojipon, which many Sidereals would love to visit.

A stinking, three-legged toad called the Whistling One follows Ogime everywhere, constantly making its eponymous shrill noises. Ogime takes it in her lap and caresses it while sitting, and she'll passionately defend the toad against the slightest appearance of threat. Some among the water courts speculate that this shows she can love wholeheartedly, but in truth, the Frog Queen is fundamentally selfish. She's ultimately protective of the Whistling One not just because she loves him, but because she invested a facet of her nature in him. He is the portion of her hermaphroditic self that can fertilize her and give her heketa children. If the Whistling One is slain, Ogime will be unable to lay heketa eggs for 700 years (though she'll still be capable of giving birth to the children of any man she copulates with).

Of everyone who has offended her, the Frog Queen most loathes the thunderbirds and Wind Masters (see

pp. 97-98 and 90-93), followed by the dragon Fakharu (see **Exalted**, p. XX). She chose to bear Fakharu a child after their one-night stand. He claims never to have spoken to her. During her pregnancy, she tried to reclaim his affections, but abandoned the effort once she'd given birth. Ogime has raised the son to hate his father and has planted two agents in Fakharu's home; the other dragon has discovered one, and thinks he has outsmarted her. He'll be nearly as upset to meet his child as when Ogime kidnaps his lover.

**Summoning:** Ogime is powerful enough that, if summoned, she has the right to send a servant elemental in her stead.

**Motivation:** Avenge herself on everyone who's ever offended her.

**Attributes:** Strength 11, Dexterity 7, Stamina 11; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 6; Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

**Virtues:** Compassion 2, Conviction 4, Temperance 3 (Vengeance -2), Valor 4

**Abilities:** Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 7, Integrity 7, Linguistics 3, Lore 3, Martial Arts 8, Occult 5, Presence 4 (Intimidation +3), Resistance 5, Socialize 2, Survival 3, War 4 (Heketa +2)

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 5, Followers 4, Influence 3, Manse 4, Resources 5

#### Charms:

*Calculated Order of Immediate Action*—Can summon great poisons, frogs and ugly beasts from the depths

*Capture*—All-Encompassing

*Dematerialize*—Costs 75 motes

*Divine Decree*—Controls frogs, slow poisons and ugliness

*Dreamspeak*—Speaks only in curses

*Essence Plethora* (x4)

*Form Reduction Technique*—Become any amphibious creature or a human

*Geas*—All-Encompassing

*Hurry Home*—Return to the briny depths of her lair

*Impromptu Messenger*—Speaks through frogs and pools of still water

*Measure the Wind*

*Principle of Motion*—Eight stored actions

*Regalia of Authority*—All-Encompassing

*Scourge*—All-Encompassing

*Touch of Saturn*—Can cause basically any poison effect

*Weather Control*—Creates storms

*Wine of Intimate Heartbreak*—Delights in the hatred of her enemies

*Words of Power*—Curses of enormous power

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Integrity, Martial Arts, Occult, Presence

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Martial Arts  
*All-Encompassing Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Martial Arts

*Sorcery*—Ogime knows a number of Terrestrial Circle spells and a few Celestial Circle ones, including Blood of Boiling Oil, Summon Ghost and Torrential Cascade.

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

**Bite:** Speed 5, Accuracy 16, Damage 20L, Parry DV 7, Rate 1

**Claw:** Speed 4, Accuracy 17, Damage 16L, Parry DV 8, Rate 4

**Clinch:** Speed 6, Accuracy 19, Damage 11B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Poison Frog Blast:** Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 11L, Range 30, Rate 1

**Tail Slap:** Speed 4, Accuracy 18, Damage 26B Parry DV 9, Rate 3

**Soak:** 13L/27B (Slippery dragon hide, 8L/16B; Hardness: 8L/8B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 11 **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 7 **Essence Pool:** 150

**Other Notes:** As a dragon, Ogime may fly at double her normal movement speed. She may also swim at double her normal speed.

The Frog Queen absorbs water elemental attacks per *Blessed Water Body* (see pp. 163-164).

Ogime's *Dragon's Suspire* is an unblockable spray of acidic venom that explodes out of a frog that she disgorges at a nearby target. The spray coats everyone within 10 yards of the frog's gruesome death. In addition to the listed damage, the attack poisons the characters with seven doses of a deadly slow poison. See stats for the poison below. It is a water elemental attack.

Ogime's underwater palace Gojipon is a rating 4 Sidereal manse. It produces the level-3 Precision of Form Gemstone, which reduces the mote cost of one style's Martial Arts Charms by 2 as long as the bearer has activated that Form (see **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex**, p. 105, for more information).

## BRINE CUR

Vodonik (see pp. 128-130) tolerate brine curs, though they're water elementals, because the vodonik see the huge sea-colored dogs as mere animals; vodonik warlords make steeds and guardians of the fierce beasts, which can grow to the size of small boats. Wild brine curs have been known to attack ships in packs, and sailors passing through cur-infested waters will keep animals on board that the sailors can cut open and throw overboard if necessary (thereby attracting the brine curs to the fresh blood, and allowing the ship to make its getaway). The curs' kelp fur allows them to blend into the water's surface, though, and their terrible double rows of teeth, seven deadly tongues and 10-tined claws can rend sturdy wood in seconds—long before they can be distracted. Thus, sailors usually decide to sail around cur territory entirely.

**Summoning:** A sorcerer might summon a brine cur to ride and train it to remain loyal beyond the sorcery's end, just as any dog. Most sorcerers don't bother, because the creatures die within a day of leaving saltwater. Most sorcerers bind brine curs as Slaves.

**Motivation:** (Wild) Protect the pack.

(Tame) Protect its master.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Dodge 3, Martial Arts 3, Stealth 4, Survival 0 (Water +2)

**Backgrounds:** Backing 0 (*Tame*) 1

**Charms:**

*Bread of Weak Spirit*—Anything with Essence 1

*Dematerialize*—Costs 30 motes

*Intrusion-Sensing Method*—Sensing incoming ships

*Landscape Hide*—Sink into the sandy sea floor

*Measure the Wind*

*Ox-Body Technique* (x1)

*Tracking*—Invests through smell

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Martial Arts, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 5

### OGIME'S POISON

Damage	Toxicity	Tolerance	Penalty
3L/1 day	3	(Stamina)/1 week	-1

### Attacks:

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 9L, Rate 1

Claw: Speed 4, Accuracy 7, Damage 7L, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Tongue-Spear: Speed 3, Accuracy 6, Damage 5L, Parry DV 1, Rate 4, Tags: P

Soak: 4L/8B (Kelp fur: 2L/4B; Hardness: 1L/1B)

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

Dodge DV: 4 Willpower: 4

Essence: 2 Essence Pool: 40

**Other Notes:** Brine curs swim to get from place to place. They swim at full speed, but double their speed when they dash.

### HEKETA

Once, a monarch killed a frog. In one telling, the king was a Solar whose frog-totemed Lunar mate plotted his downfall. In another, the king's naïve daughter was seduced and abandoned by the Frog Queen's son, and the king found a champion to avenge her heartbreak. In a third, the frog was placed in his bed as a practical joke. Whatever the case, the Frog Queen's vengeance was immediate and terrible. Five frog-headed women—heketa—were sent to the kingdom, where they poisoned every well and aborted every pregnancy. When certain elemental courtiers suggested to the Frog Queen that her actions were extreme, she shrugged and went back to haranguing the court about thunderbirds.

Heketa are beautiful women with alabaster skin and the heads of frogs. They exist as forces others call up for vengeance. Heketa have no society as other sorts of elementals sometimes do. However, heketa are not naturally thus. When Ogime (see pp. 123-124) lays eggs, the tadpoles are hatched into a darkened pool that she poisons every day. Three weeks later, heketa emerge. If a tadpole were to escape the pool and the three-week regimen, the tadpole wouldn't be hatched without ambition—on the contrary, the resulting elemental would be every bit as driven as its mother. Ogime keeps close watch on the tadpoles, for she herself was once just such a heketa, and unseated her mother as Frog Queen long ago.

Though heketa can darken the sky and call storms, doing so invites the retribution of thunderbirds (see pp. 97-98), who see it as an unacceptable intrusion on their domain. Poisoning vast bodies of water can likewise annoy other water elementals, such as sobeksis (see pp. 126-167), but given Ogime's influence in the water courts, there are never any real consequences. That influence also allows heketa a lot of control over their element: they can become water (and often do, particularly during the split second that a sword would

otherwise slash them open); they can jet water from their mouths with enough force to break bones.

Each heketa possesses a smidgen of unconscious understanding of how her own mother ruined her, and therefore loves to disrupt pregnancies. Sorcerers are often warned that summoned heketa must be specifically ordered *not* to do so whenever they come near a gravid being. A heketa can't force a miscarriage upon anyone with an Essence equal to or greater than hers.

**Summoning:** As a devotee of vengeance, Ogime is fascinated by watching what others do with her children. She takes any summoning of her heketa for purposes other than vengeance as an insult. Though Celestial law doesn't technically permit her to punish every summoner, she'll often do *something*. As the Frog Queen's attention is a hassle at the very least, most summoners call on the heketa only to ruin those who've wronged the summoners. Normally, summoners bind heketa as Slaves.

Heketa can explicitly be bound to attack or disobey Ogime.

**Motivation:** Deliver vengeance. A heketa who escaped Ogime's tender maternal care would want nothing more than to grasp as much power as possible, so as to be in the best possible position to avenge itself against her.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 8, Martial Arts 4, Performance 3, Resistance 3, Survival 2

**Backgrounds:** Backing 3, Mentor 4

### Charms:

*Affinity Water Control*—Water jet attack or turn all water within (Essence) miles black and toxic for one hour for every five motes spent

*Bread of Weak Spirit*—Any water or air spirit with its tongue

*Dematerialize*—Costs 25 motes

*Landscape Travel*—Swim at double the normal speed

*Touch of Saturn*—Lick target for Damage 1L/week, Toxicity 1, Penalty -1, touch pregnant belly to induce miscarriage


*Tracking*—Anyone they've cursed with poison

*Weather Control*—Cause heavy, wet storms

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts

*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Dodge. Defense against attacks with a physical component only; conviction flaw. Heketa's bodies are liquid before material attacks,





though they cannot use this Charm against attacks incorporating magical fire.

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 2B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 5B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 7, Damage 2B (piercing), Rate 1

Tiger Claws: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 5L, Parry DV 4, Rate 3

Water Jet: Speed 6, Accuracy 5, Damage 4L, Range 10, Rate 1

**Soak:** 5L/4B (Breastplate, 4L/2B, -1 ,mobility)

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

**Dodge DV:** 4 (5 without armor) **Willpower:** 8

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 70

**Other Notes:** None

### SOBEKISIS

Appearing as huge crocodiles or muscular crocodile-headed humans, sobeksis protect Threshold rivers and ensure the fertility of local lands. Those who'd cross a sobeksis's river, the elemental threatens with drowning, unless the pilgrim offers a toll—the elementals prefer lapis, gold or outright worship—or demonstrates great power. Sobeksis stay in the water, sunning themselves or swimming lazily, and resist leaving their rivers at all costs. If dragged from its home, or if the watercourse dries, a sobeksis's body will take a month to fade to dead white. The next day after the sobeksis's color finishes fading, the sobeksis expires; only at such a drastic time can a sobeksis weep.

A poultice properly made from river kelp, mud and sobeksis blood and urine will halve the healing time of wounds the poultice is applied to for a week. Sobeksis treat injuries thusly for a price: some for as little as a well-composed verse, others for as much as a fist-sized black pearl. For this reason, they are worshiped by doctors as well as the farmers whose crops the sobeksis feed.

Each month, humans who would seek these elementals' favor come to the riverbank to propitiate the haughty sobeksis. Filling cats' bladders with blood to be steadily dripped in the water, the worshipers abase themselves and chant an epic poem called the Jaji Po. As they kneel, three sobeksis swim to shore with their eyes closed. Only an improperly recited phrase stirs the elementals (they eat the offender); otherwise, they

remain still and silent. When the Jaji Po reaches its final verses, the humans send a recent mother to beg the sobeksis for a boon: a good harvest, more fish, occult medicines. In a hypnotized fashion, the sobeksis agree and submerge.

The humans return home feeling pleased, but tired. The rite they believe controls and binds sobeksis has actually drained half the mortals' Essence pools, feeding the motes to the elementals. Perceptive and learned worshipers occasionally figure out the deception, but rarely care—the sobeksis do keep the rivers fertile and flowing.

Female sobeksis won't tolerate any children within sight, immediately grasping them in their jaws to swallow them whole. Once in a long while, a sobeksis finds herself pregnant after doing so. Delivered one month later, the child is a God-Blood with the soul and exact appearance of the devoured child—as well as the predatory urges of a crocodile. Sobeksis mothers apparently care nothing for these, abandoning them near the closest human village to be found and adopted.

Notwithstanding their harsh demeanor and inability to weep, sobeksis feel deeply. They compose heartrending, tragic poems and enjoy hearing those of others. Exacting judges, they won't hesitate to eat a bard who recites mediocre verse.

**Summoning:** Most useful as doctors, sobeksis are sometimes called en masse as battlefield medics. If they're not from nearby rivers, of course, they'll need to be sent home within a month lest they die. A sorcerer who permanently kills a sobeksis will suffer a terrible vengeance from whomever depended on the sobeksis's presence, as the elementals are irreplaceable.

**Motivation:** Demand worship. It's exceedingly unusual for a sobeksis to change this Motivation. If one does so, it immediately gains an Intimacy to demanding worship; furthermore, its mindset will usually revert over the course of the next Calibration Period. Most sobeksis also have an Intimacy to the delicious taste of human flesh.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2 (Straight Ahead +3), Awareness 3 (Hearing +3), Dodge 3, Linguistics 5, Martial Arts 4, Medicine 5, Presence 3, Performance 3 (Poetry +1), Resistance 3, Sail 3, Socialize 2, Survival 0 (Rivers +3)

**Backgrounds:** Cult 2, Followers 3, Influence 1





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**Charms:**

- Bane Weapon*—Children
- Bread of Weak Spirit*—All-Encompassing
- Dematerialize*—Costs 55 motes
- Divine Prerogative*—Must demand worship
- Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Raise and lower home river
- Essence Plethora* (x1)
- Fruit of Living Essence*—Mmm, tasty worship
- Measure the Wind*
- Memory Mirror*—Painfully invades thoughts
- Sense Domain*—Senses home river
- Shapechange*—Crocodile or crocodile-headed human
- Stoic Endurance*—Halts bleeding, allows supernatural healing
- Touch of Grace*—All-Encompassing
- Words of Power*—Bleak poetry
- Third (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Craft, Martial Arts, Performance, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

- All forms:*
- Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 10L, Rate 1

*Crocodile Form:*

Claw: Speed 4, Accuracy 8, Damage 6L, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

*Humanoid form:*

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 10, Damage 5B, Parry DV 6, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 9, Damage 8B, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 8L/17B (Crocodile hide, 6L/12B; Hardness: 3L/3B)

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


**Dodge DV:** 6      **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 4      **Essence Pool:** 85

**Other Notes:** In crocodile form, sobeksis swim at full speed, but double their speed when they dash in the water.

**UNDERTOW**

Undertows have no surface and no appearance. They're unlikely to venture from their swift-flowing undersea homes, but when these elementals do, nearby surface-dwellers detect only a vague pulling sensation. With no voices, undertows communicate by means of



odd telepathic images and isolated phrases. So obscure are these beings that many other water elementals don't even know undertows exist. Still, the quiet elementals love to listen. Many a water court has unknown undertow residents who drop by to observe, then leave to share their insights with each other.

Every secret has its least god, and those gods live where they're least likely to be found—in the darkest depths of the water. Invisible and intangible, secret-gods speak to no one save the undertows, who weave around and through the secret-gods during the course of their travels. Some undertows even incorporate secret-gods, pulling the others into themselves and flowing together for months or years.

Unsurprisingly, undertows are of a slightly paranoid bent. They see the world as layered in a vast, unavoidable web of secrets, and usually won't shake off that attitude when summoned to Creation's bright surface. These elementals can't help but examine things within the context of their own secret-ridden world; they look for the clandestine connections among everything around them. Having quick and devious minds—not to mention vast experience with secrets—undertows can swiftly extrapolate the mysteries and unknown forces behind everything they encounter. However, undertows'll have a very hard time explaining those things to anyone besides their brethren, because undertows simply don't draw conclusions the way others do. Furthermore, things that are mysterious to an undertow might not be that confusing for a mortal. One of these elementals might spend hours trying to express a magnificent new insight to a mortal—only to feel hurt when she cries, "You mean all this time you were talking about the *nature of sunlight?*" and stomps off in frustration.

**Summoning:** The least gods of secrets are nearly impossible to find and, similar to most gods, cannot be summoned. Thus, sorcerers call undertows in hopes of learning the confidences of loved ones and the weaknesses of enemies. The elementals are more than willing to share such things, for undertows have no comprehension of how important secrets can be. However, their weird communication style and complete lack of worldly understanding combine to mean that teasing out a particular secret can be *incredibly* frustrating. At the very least, a summoner needs one small, related secret to tell an undertow if she wishes to learn a large one; that way, she'll have an example of what she's looking for and (hopefully) a connection to the right place in the undertow's mental secret-web. If she's particularly unlucky, she won't be able to explain

what she needs without three or four related examples. Unfortunately for Dynastic sorcerers, secrets protected by Charms and sorcery never wend their way to the undercurrents of Creation. Hence, undertows never encounter them.

These elementals are also occasionally bound to drag someone or something below the waves.

**Motivation:** Figure out all the mysteries of the world.

**Attributes:** Strength 6, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0; Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 1, Integrity 3, Lore 3, Martial Arts 4, Occult 2, Presence 2, Stealth 4

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Claws of the Angry Dragon*—Steal breath

*Dematerialize*—Costs 30 motes

*Domain Manipulation Scenario*—Undertows

*Hoodwink*—Shattered perspective

*Natural Prognostication*—Finding hidden things

*Subtle Whisper*—Silent calls

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Awareness, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 10, Damage 6B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

**Soak:** 3L/6B (Bodiless, 2L/4B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 2 **Willpower:** 4

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 40

**Other Notes:** Undertows swim to get from place to place, and do so at triple the normal movement speed.

Undertows absorb water elemental damage per *Blessed Water Body* (see pp. 163-164).

## VODONIK

Master shapeshifters, every vodonik can appear as anything from a fat old man to a floating kelp bed to a fish-tailed monster with claws of ice. If the relevant species is divided into sexes, vodonik always choose the male form, and most commonly look like tall, white-eyed men with chiseled features and long, foam-colored hair. Vodonik are ambitious and socially adept, and deal with powers outside the oceans for their own gain. They don't leave the sea, but a vodonik tooth placed under a mortal's tongue will enable her to breathe underwater; hence, vodonik can receive delegates of all stripes. Lord Verethine, a vodonik king, has set his warriors and brine curs (see sidebar) to

patrol Lintha territory in exchange for some of the pirates' captives. These he releases into underwater preserves, targets of a stylized and glorious hunt.

These elementals dislike other water spirits, however, and keep to their own palaces and courts instead of attending the official water courts. Even a vodonik ruler will say he'd rather go without servants than invite other water elementals into his home (of course, he won't need to make that choice, since he can put one tooth under a human slave's tongue to keep her underwater). As a result, vodonik have little influence over most of the ocean—though in places where vodonik outnumber their fellow elementals, vodonik have been known to take over local courts and make them vodonik-only. Such situations seldom last longer than a century or two.

Each vodonik believes it once had a mortal soul, and has been reincarnated in its current form. Sadism inspires the strongest emotion, though they've not identified *how* it makes them feel; after that, greed and desire exert a powerful sway. The predominant opinion amongst vodonik scholars holds such strong feelings to be their only clues for discovering their past selves, and many vodonik pursue such feelings obsessively. These elementals love committing acts of grand and creative cruelty, hoarding undersea treasures, decorating their palaces strangely, seizing beautiful concubines—and then analyzing their pleasure at length. Vodonik might watch a captive boiled alive in an undersea fissure, for instance, or redecorate a palace with blood-filled orange porcelain globes, then turn to each other and discuss the exact flavor of enjoyment derived from the experience.

Though they might attack a ship in order to pillage it—particularly if it carries butter, porcelain or tobacco—vodonik are more likely to watch for ships wrecked by rocks or storms, then search the sunken hulks. If given the choice, vodonik prefer negotiation over physical means (though a lone mortal straying near vodonik territory risks being forcibly dragged underwater and enslaved). Lord Verethine has carefully spread a legend that encourages sailors wishing to appease vodonik to pour butter into the sea; tobacco, he assures, is also acceptable. Sometimes, vodonik attend such tributes in a mood to discuss new agreements, and they've been known to grant favors to their most regular and dedicated petitioners.

**Summoning:** Vodonik cannot survive outside the water: a moment on dry land will melt one into black ooze, destroying the vodonik permanently. Hence, sorcerers almost never call vodonik. Some use the spell as

a heavy-handed threat, since summoning one outside the ocean is a death sentence, but the water elementals are rarely intimidated.

**Motivation:** Figure out the consciousness of its past incarnation. Most vodonik also have an Intimacy toward watching others suffer.

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

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 2, Dodge 5, Integrity 6, Linguistics 2, Lore 2, Martial Arts 3, Melee 4 (Spear +2), Performance 4, Presence 3, Resistance 4, Ride 6, Sail 3, Socialize 3, War 4

**Backgrounds:** Artifact 2, Cult 1, Backing 2, Contacts 1, Influence 2, Resources 4

**Charms:**

*Affinity Water Control*—Five-barrel environmental hazard of aquatic dominance

*Blessed Water Body*—All-Encompassing

*Dematerialize*—Costs 50 motes

*Essence Bite*—Stinging coral 4LHL bypasses armor

*Impromptu messenger*—Manipulate from a distance

*Landscape Travel*—+2 Dexterity and double speed while swimming

*Measure the Wind*

*Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe*—All-Encompassing

*Regalia of Authority*—Aura of aquatic command

*Sense Domain*—Access connections from a distance

*Stoke the Flame*—Rabble-rousing

*Storm-Shuttle Passport*—All-Encompassing

*Tracking*—Investing in contacts

*Words of Power*—Sharp rhetoric

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Dodge, Integrity, Melee, Performance, Ride

*Infinite (Ability) Mastery*—Melee, Ride

**Join Battle:** 8

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 4B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 7B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 7, Damage 4B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Spear of Obedience: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 8L, Parry DV 7, Rate 3

**Soak:** 8L/12B (Seaweed lamellar armor, 6L/8B, -2 mobility)



**Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap  
**Dodge DV:** 6 (7 without armor) **Willpower:** 5  
**Essence:** 5      **Essence Pool:** 75

**Other Notes:** The excellent spears used by vodonik are powerfully enchanted. Anyone struck by a Spear of Obedience without a Dodge MDV at least twice as high as the number of health levels suffered by the attack suffers an Intimacy and a Compulsion effect to serve the vodonik. Breaking the commitment to the vodonik costs one Willpower per scene, and resisting the Compulsion costs three Willpower points per scene while the Intimacy lasts.

As is usually the case with elementals who are more ambitious or have more varied experiences than their brethren, Lord Verethine's statistics are higher than the above.

### WATER CHILD

Born of the chaotic swirls that attend the drowning of a child, water children first take the appearance of that child. The elementals, having observed that terrible death, often draw conclusions based entirely on what they saw; if a parent on the shore seemed not to notice as the child died, for instance, then a water child might conclude that the mother wanted the child to perish. Whether correct or incorrect, the water child creates a goal for itself based on its deductions. The water child may decide to kill a murderer, or comfort a bereft parent by becoming her new child.

Wherever a water child goes, even immaterial, it leaves wet footprints. With a glance, it can tell whether someone's parents are biologically hers—or whether a person has ever killed a baby. It might deviate from its mission to drown sinners or protect the innocent, but usually remains fixated.

Some water children fade away once they've accomplished their purpose; others travel the waterways, seeking other drowned children to echo and avenge. Sometimes a water child is imprinted when a sobeksis eats a human infant (see p. 126). If the sobeksis later gives birth to the baby's duplicate, that God-Blood and its water child twin will have a mystical connection, sharing certain dreams and feelings. The water child will follow its twin as closely as it can. It may or may not introduce itself, but will never allow itself to be seen by others unless the sobeksis's child is threatened, in which case the water child intervenes.

After the sobeksis's child passes age 21, the water child must make a choice. The water child can imprint itself from a new drowned baby, or die over the course of the next year. Only if the sobeksis-born twin agrees to share his soul with the water child

can it survive as it is, and though the water child knows this instinctively, it doesn't know the ritual that must be performed to split the soul. A female sobeksis could tell them the rite—but would also warn that the consequences of using it are inevitably very weird. Though the magic can certainly preserve the water child's life and self, the two might feel each other's injuries or even share minds.

**Summoning:** Aside from the tasks of determining paternity or figuring out who murdered a child, sorcerers would find water children useless—save that they can predict familial betrayal. Whoever kisses a water child and swallows a mouthful of liquid from its mouth will immediately collapse in a trance. She is under an Illusion effect that will show her three ways her relatives could turn on her. After five hours, she awakens; nothing but time can pull her out of these dreams.

Such predictive visions are vivid, but inchoate. Sorcerers who've seen such visions have taken action against their families that not only worsened their situation but may have caused the ends they foresaw. And dreaming of so many potential betrayals could drive any sorcerer to acute paranoia. Thus, most summoners—even in the backstabbing Scarlet Dynasty—resist the temptation to call water children.

**Motivation:** Correct the circumstances it believes led to its imprinter's drowning.

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

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

**Abilities:** Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Martial Arts 4, Resistance 1, Stealth 3

**Backgrounds:** None

#### Charms:

*Dematerialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Endowment*—Sense familial betrayal (see above)

*Foretell the Future*—Sense familial betrayal (see above)

*Landscape Hide*—Become part of the water at spot of birth

*Malediction*—Internal penalty of 1 while in water

*Memory Mirror*—Sense sin of a child's murder

*Natural Prognostication*—Knows parents and twin

*Paralyze*—Stamina drops by 1 with a hit

*Spice of Custodial Delectation*—Receives what is dropped into the water at spot of birth

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Martial Arts, Stealth

**Join Battle:** 6



### Attacks:

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 8, Damage 5B, Parry DV 5, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 7, Damage 8B, Parry DV 3, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 9, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Soak: 1L/3B

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

Dodge DV: 4 Willpower: 6

Essence: 2 Essence Pool: 50

Other Notes: None

## ELEMENTALS OF WOOD

The elementals of wood are the most devoted to their elemental principles: fecundity and competition. Philosophically, the elementals of the wood courts espouse that no life has a right to exist, and only the strongest survive. Practically, many are cruel, violent bullies. Most famous of these are the children of the elemental dragon named First Wood Spider, but the Willow Ichneumon wasp-dragon is no different. The efforts of the wood elementals ensure that Creation's mortals fear deeply the darkest forests, and with good reason.

The forest courts are kingdoms of aggression and vendetta held in tenuous check by endless ritual. The kings of the wood rule the forest courts with the strength of ancient giants, keeping the wood elementals from destroying each other. Yet, though they compete amongst themselves, wood elementals unite to fight most viciously against Creation's enemies. It is this dedication the kings of the wood strive to maintain, and by the actions of the wood elementals is the East of Creation the most populated of the Threshold directions—though the East is also the direction that fears wood elementals the most.

## JOYOUS YOUTH JURITSU

### LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF WOOD

Few elementals have as many children as Juritsu. Able to carve himself into the shape of any natural animal, he's had affairs with leopards and dolphins, queens and peasants. He once had a child with an ice-scaled air dragon, and dark rumors hint at half-raksha or half-demon descendants. It doubtless helps that in every appearance, he's flower-scented and beautiful. Vines spiral about the limbs of dragon-formed Juritsu, whose coils are carved from seven woods and whose eyes are emerald spheres. As man or animal, his body is a warm brown, and his gaze flares bewitching green.

The children of Juritsu inherit their father's pleasure-loving nature as well as power. Indeed, they can inherit more than they know: a particularly unique descendant may become an avatar of her father. Juritsu closely watches each and every child—plant, animal or human. If she meets his specifications, he'll introduce himself. At first, he'll shower her with gifts and attention and awaken her Essence (if necessary); his easy laugh and extraordinary kindness often win her over completely. Within a year, though, he'll either abandon her forever and without explanation—or take over her body and life. In the latter case, Juritsu gives his descendant his “greatest gift”: an exquisite rowan bracelet. As it settles around her wrist (or paw or root), her soul flees to Lethe, and Juritsu is drawn into its place.

Because he cannot release himself from an avatar once he's within it—in fact, will not remember himself till an incarnation dies—Juritsu is very selective: not for power or beauty, but for potential to have an interesting and far-ranging life. To those who know her, Juritsu's avatar will seem different once he possesses her, but since she'll insist (and believe) that nothing has changed, most dismiss their concerns. In cases where Juritsu's personality is radically different from the body's former soul, the avatar itself experiences cognitive dissonance and will need to “evolve” into its new ideals. Once the avatar dies, Juritsu coils invisibly up from its corpse and heads straight to his manse Kurie-Tibu, there to meditate and digest his latest lifetime of experiences.

Since he spends so much time experiencing Creation “firsthand,” Juritsu is far more in touch with life “on the ground” than most spirits. He has always campaigned for the rights of mortal creatures, scolding careless elementals whose inattention harms the living, and cracking down on kings of the wood who torture humans (see p. 136). His approach is invariably gentle and pleasant; only when a situation is dire will he stop smiling. Principled and persistent, Juritsu is unsusceptible to distraction or “political expediency.” Recently, he finished a lifetime as a princeling in the Threshold; when he returned to himself, he wept for a full season.

Juritsu's servants are the artisans (see pp. 134-135), which he painstakingly carves from Essence-imbued wood and breathes alive during Calibration. Similar to Juritsu, they love to create beautiful wooden things, and he uses them as assistants on his huge and amazing sculptures. During Juritsu's long incarnations, three artisan viziers are entrusted with his authority.



Those artisans are more outgoing than their fellows, but only speak for Juritsu in crises—otherwise, they let the wood courts run without input. Juritsu himself is an active participant in the courts when he's around, and sometimes jockeys for the position of Eastern Censor, for he feels that none care for the East as much as he. Given his extended absences, he's never been considered a good candidate for that important position. Still, the dragon is now *very* agitated by the state of the world—and certain no one else can see it. He's been gathering allies, and will soon attempt to become Censor by trickery or (if necessary) force. Once he's in charge, he promises, the East will change.

**Summoning:** If summoned, Juritsu has the right to send a servant elemental in his stead.

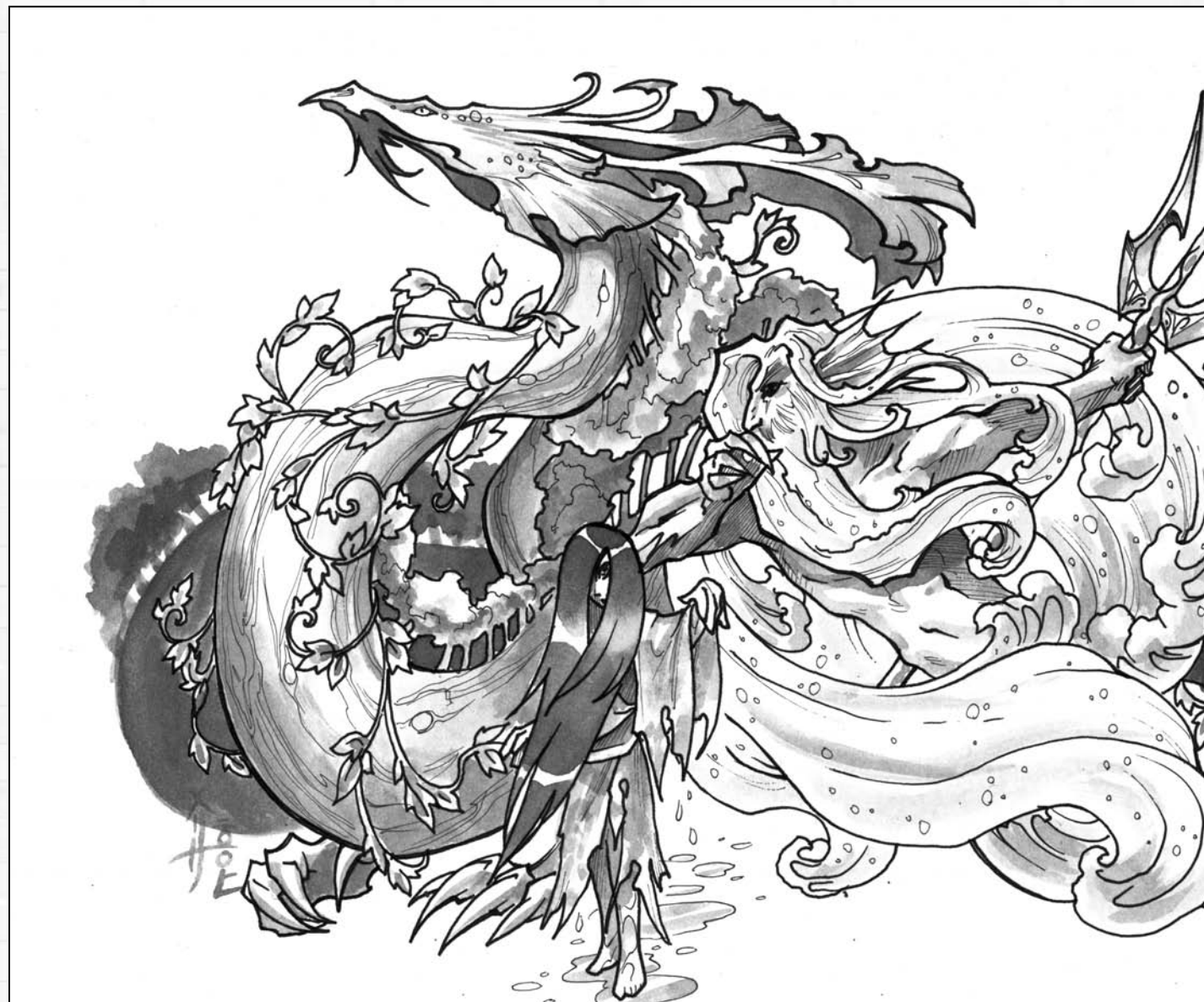
**Motivation:** Experience all aspects of life.

**Attributes:** Strength 9, Dexterity 6, Stamina 9; Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 6; Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

**Virtues:** Compassion 5, Conviction 4, Temperance 4 (Lust -3), Valor 2

**Abilities:** Archery 5, Athletics 4, Awareness 5, Bureaucracy 5, Craft (Wood) 8 (Aesthetics +3), Dodge 4, Integrity 5 (Protecting Mortals +2), Investigation 3, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Others: Forest-Tongue, Guild Cant, Riverspeak, Eastern tribal tongues) 5, Lore 5, Martial Arts 5, Occult 3, Presence 7 (Seduction +3), Resistance 3, Ride 3, Socialize 4, Survival 4, War 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 4, Contacts 4, Followers 4, Influence 4, Manse 5, Resources 5




### Charms:

*Chrysalis of Preservation*—All-Encompassing  
*Creation of Perfection*—All-Encompassing  
*Dematerialize*—Costs 75 motes  
*Divine Prerogative*—All of his children are sacrosanct.  
*Dreamspeak*—All-Encompassing  
*Essence Plethora* (x2)  
*Form Reduction Technique*—Become any natural animal, including humans  
*Hand of Destiny*—Protects a life  
*Hollow Out the Soul*—Used to craft his child's body into the perfect vessel  
*Melodious Diagnostic Report*—All-Encompassing  
*Possession*—Enter biological child. When Juritsu becomes one of his children, most of her Traits—including Motivation and Intimacies—remain, but her Virtues

are permanently replaced with his scores, and she gains a permanent Intimacy to carving beautiful things from wood. During that lifespan, he does have access to all his own Charms—he just won't know they exist (unless someone manages to convince the avatar that she's actually a lesser elemental dragon of wood).  
*Principle of Motion*—Nine banked actions  
*Reserve of Will* (x3)  
*Wine of Intimate Heartbreak*—All-Encompassing  
*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Craft, Integrity, Martial Arts, Presence  
*Divine (Ability) Subordination*—Craft (Woodworking), Presence (Social attacks that cause others to form Intimacies)  
*Martial Arts*—In one incarnation, Juritsu became an Immaculate monk. His Dragon-Blooded teachers were





shocked by his aptitude for the Wood Dragon Style. They never did figure out why he was able to learn the entire style, though no God-Blood before or since has been enlightened enough to do so. Juritsu retains knowledge of the entire Style.

**Join Battle:** 9

**Attacks:**

Bite: Speed 5, Accuracy 12, Damage 18L, Parry DV 5, Rate 1

Claw: Speed 4, Accuracy 13, Damage 14L, Parry DV 6, Rate 4

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 14, Damage 9B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Hail of Thorns: Speed 6, Accuracy 11, Damage 18L, Range 30, Rate 1

Tail Slap: Speed 4, Accuracy 14, Damage 24B, Parry DV 7, Rate 4

**Soak:** 11L/27B (Oaken dragon hide, 7L/18B, Hardness: 7L/7B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 8    **Willpower:** 9 (12)

**Essence:** 7    **Essence Pool:** 125

**Other Notes:** As a dragon, Juritsu may fly at double the normal movement speed. His movements are completely unimpeded by plant life.

Joyous Youth Juritsu absorbs wood elemental attacks per *Blessed Wood Body* (see pp. 163-164).

Juritsu's *Dragon's Suspire* is an unblockable wave of thorns that weaves around objects and people that he wishes not to harm, targets all of his enemies that are generally in front of him. It is a wood elemental attack.

Juritsu's manse is named Kurie-Tibu; he calls it "the tree of myself." One of his previous avatars was a rowan that grew for five centuries in the center of a powerful demesne. When the avatar died, Juritsu was released into his dragon form, and left to check up on the courts. On a subsequent visit, he found that his artisan servants had carved the dead tree, as they said, into the form that "went best with the grain." This turned out to be a curving tower, whose panels are so thin that sunlight shines straight through and everything within can be seen as silhouettes. As it happens, the structure also channels the demesne's Essence in such a harmonious way that the dead rowan became a rating 5 Wood manse. Its hearthstone is the level 4 Song of Life Stone, which causes plants near the bearer to grow with supernatural speed and vigor. Anyone who rests within the manse's walls will awaken feeling magnificently inspired and creative.

## ARTISAN

Each artisan is an expressive humanlike sculpture with long limbs and seven-jointed fingers. Artisans all begin as introverted, careful creatures who step delicately through field and forest in search of deadwood. Later, they learn to whittle new facets of themselves and become whatever they wish.

Similar to Juritsu, artisans can carve themselves into new forms; unlike the dragon, artisans' personalities can change with their shapes. An artisan spends at least three seasons considering every alteration, practicing the new shape on deadwood. Each change is exactly calibrated, based on the type of wood used and the pattern it follows. Plain oak details render artisans more steadfast, though conservative. An elaborate birch pattern makes an artisan loyal, but unwilling to let go of bad ideas. The elementals can make gross alterations as well—animal traits are common, such as a deer's legs or a ram's curling horns. No matter what artisans become, they're aesthetically pleasing, and retain their long-fingered hands.

Artisans have a horror of carving live wood (aside from themselves), and never voluntarily work it unless it's been dead for more than a month. When another wood elemental dies, the first artisan to find it will summon two siblings to create a memorial. After a respectful rite, the three elementals carve that deadwood into a wondrous homage: for instance, a small sword inscribed with honorable maxims from a dead tree that birthed stick people (see pp. 137-138). Often, artisans use trace amounts of green jade to make such tokens magical (use normal artifact creation rules).

**Summoning:** A sorcerer wanting something made from wood could do no better. Artisans can also identify the occult associations of any wood, aid in the crafting of wooden artifacts and faultlessly lead sorcerers to the nearest tree of a given type. Sorcerers often bind artisans as Functionaries or Hunters.

Sorcerers can bind artisans to carve live wood, but after the sculpture is finished, the unfortunate elemental's fingers become painfully stiff—immovable for a year and a day.

Artisans can explicitly be bound—or even persuaded—to attack or disobey Juritsu.

**Motivation:** Find beautiful traits to carve into itself.

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



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

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Craft (Wood) 5 (Aesthetics +3), Dodge 3, Integrity 3, Investigation 3, Occult 4, Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** Mentor 4, Resources 3 (valuable carvings)

**Charms:**

*Affinity Wood Control*—Used for shaping and self-defense

*Dematerialize*—Costs 35 motes

*Landscape Hide*—Becomes a knot on a certain type of tree

*Landscape Travel*—Swings through branches at full movement speed

*Natural Prognostication*—Always finds the best deadwood

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Athletics, Craft, Occult, Survival

**Join Battle:** 6

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 5, Damage 2B, Parry DV 3, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 5B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 4, Damage 2B (piercing), Rate 1

Affinity Wood Control: Speed 5, Accuracy 6, Damage 6L, Range 7, Rate 2

**Soak:** 3L/7B (Oaken overlay, 2L/4B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 5 **Willpower:** 5

**Essence:** 2 **Essence Pool:** 45

**Other Notes:** Artisans are flammable. An artisan that catches fire will continue to burn, suffering damage until the elemental can extinguish the flames, which will require more than just rolling around on the ground. These statistics are for a newly made artisan. Most of the time, an artisan's self-change subtracts as much from one of that Trait type as it adds to another: for instance, an artisan could raise its Valor by 1 but would usually have to reduce another Virtue by 1. More elaborate changes can be balanced as the Storyteller sees fit: an artisan with wings might be able to fly but incapable of walking or running. Older artisans have experienced technical breakthroughs that can sometimes circumvent this necessity.

Juritsu's three viziers (see pp. 131-132) have hawthorn inlays, making them much more charming and confident than the above. At the Storyteller's discretion, they may also have other higher statistics.

## CARMINE LILY

Arguably the most horrific of advanced necromantic spells, the Blood Monsoon drenches an entire region in sanguine rain. On several occasions, two peculiar and awful omens have followed the storm. The first: a pregnant woman who felt the rain on her flesh later gave birth to a heartbreakingly beautiful child. This infant (which has appeared as different sexes) had blood-red eyes and some control of its Essence. Its horoscope could not be cast, for it was outside Fate.

The second omen: supernatural items exposed to the rain (artifacts, manses, even magics invoked while the user was bloodied) took on a reddish cast and a warped fate—to accomplish something terrible before the end of their sojourns in the world. Those dark destinies each manifested in a blood-colored, bone-stemmed lily, growing upon the spot where the things were tainted . . . even if that spot was deadwood or solid brick.

Carmine lilies grow tall, opening their petals to reveal bone pistils and let loose a bloody stench. They dematerialize apparently at random; it takes a talented occultist to deduce that it happens only during certain star-formations. A truly brilliant astrologer (succeeding on a difficulty 5+ [Intelligence + Occult] roll) might note that the petals' black markings resemble detailed horoscopes. Each lily, in fact, is an arcane link to the supernatural item whose tainted Fate begat it. The lily's petals tell the story of what that thing will accomplish. If the object is destroyed, the lily wilts.


As a red-eyed infant grows, it will be seen to control carmine lilies. They'll twist their open petals in its direction whenever the infant passes, and it can signal them to dematerialize or release a particular toxic scent. On some occasions, such children have been burned alive by frightened mortals. The lilies can likewise be burned to death, but many humans are too terrified to go near the lilies after realizing that the elementals can't be uprooted or killed with plant-wilting toxins.

**Summoning:** No one's ever tried to call a carmine lily, but the ritual would likely involve plenty of blood and bone. The plants are not remotely sapient, though they register and respond to certain stimuli. Still, they could theoretically be bound to any tasks they're capable of performing.

The red-eyed child is not an elemental.

**Motivation:** Attract ill Fate and undead. These processes are instinctive, since the lilies don't think.





**Attributes:** Strength 0, Dexterity 0, Stamina 1; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4; Perception 4, Intelligence 0, Wits 2

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

**Abilities:** Awareness 5, Integrity 7, Occult 3, Performance 4, Presence 3, Survival 3

**Backgrounds:** None

**Charms:**

*Dematerialize*—Costs 45 motes

*Divine Decree*—Unholy omens

*Malediction*—All-Encompassing

*Material Tribulation Divestment*—Surprisingly difficult to uproot or wilt with toxins

*Natural Prognostication*—Grows toward the unholy

*Sustenance*—Flourishes in the presence of agony or wickedness

*Touch of Saturn*—Persistent pollen bestows an aggravatingly itchy Sickness effect

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

None

**Soak:** 0L/1B

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

**Dodge DV:** 0 **Willpower:** 2

**Essence:** 3 **Essence Pool:** 40

**Other Notes:** Carmine lilies use Abilities such as Presence and Performance when giving off compelling scents, and Awareness when growing into environmental changes or determining whether to bring bad luck to their surroundings.

## KING OF THE WOOD

The rulers of Creation's most brutal forest courts are ugly, vicious man-shaped trees with hooked noses and mossy hair. Some have the heads of beasts; some possess other animal parts, such as paws or tails. None admit that other wood kings exist, and all claim dominion over every forest in the world.

Kings of the wood wish mainly to protect their homes, but their methods of doing so can be cruel. Their philosophy is that it's best to rule by fear (and that, as kings, they may feed their own appetites however they wish). The Ironwood Kings of the Coral Archipelago have spent long centuries pushing Coral's culture toward worship of strength and contempt for the weak, to match their own ideas of how a home should be defended. Some kings also demand a certain quota of attractive young men and women, whom the kings sexually abuse and send home traumatized. The methods of torture

these elementals use can be astoundingly creative; and they don't hesitate to apply such methods to the elemental members of their courts as well. Yet for all their bluster, the kings of the wood keep poor control over their forests, holding power only by isolating themselves in palatial manors and appearing personally only during court. Their terrible cruelty against human captives serves first and foremost to foist terror on their wood elemental subjects.

Although mortals sometimes, in sheer desperation, wage losing battles against the dark forest ruled by the kings of the wood, the forests' wood elementals almost never rebel. They know their king represents the forest's health, will and the lingering Essence of Mindful Forest itself—and they also know that Mindful Forest's echo deposes and replaces any king who truly demonstrates itself unfit to rule. In that case, the last sunrise of Calibration will herald the arrival of a new king crowned in hawthorn. As soon as the king steps past the palace's threshold, it's fated to defeat the old king in ritual battle and assume the rowan throne.

The oaken palaces of kings of the wood are well-hidden: sometimes high in a nest of crisscrossing branches, sometimes in deep glades screened over by leaves. Every king enjoys politics and often receives spirit and elemental guests, whom the king will be shower with luxuries and interrogate for news of courts outside the forest. Though kings can't leave their woods, they make up for it by cultivating powerful foreign contacts and collecting spiritual gossip at every opportunity.

**Summoning:** Sorcerers summon kings of the wood from within rather than outside their forests, because the king will die if it leaves. These elementals know their domains nigh-perfectly, and can answer any geographical question a summoner might have. They also, of course, command every other elemental within that forest, and though a king's order isn't usually as effective as another sorcerous binding would be, calling a king could get a sorcerer a veritable army of wood elementals. Naturally, though, most kings give their courts standing orders to destroy any sorcerer the courtiers suspect might be controlling their ruler. In particular, some kings have taught their viziers every known Abscissic plate, and given strict instructions that sorcerers using Abscissic bindings must receive no mercy if discovered. The notable exception to this is the Killer plate: few kings have the necessary Valor to become Killers, but those who do rarely mind.

A few kind sorcerers have simply bound kings against the horrific demands they make of mortal worshippers. (Some take the more diplomatic tack of offering Cselenite pacts to kings who refrain from making such demands.) However, those who went further and bound kings of the wood against cruelty have often come back to find either a court collapsed in shambles... or a new king of the wood, and no trace of the predecessor.

**Motivation:** Protect the forest with an iron fist.

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 6, Manipulation 5, Appearance 1; Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Virtues:** Compassion 1, Conviction 5, Temperance 2, Valor 2

**Abilities:** Athletics 2, Awareness 4, Bureaucracy 4, Dodge 3, Integrity 4, Linguistics 4, Lore 3, Melee 3, Occult 3 (Sorcery +3), Performance 1 (Speeches +3), Presence 6, Resistance 4, Socialize 5, Survival 2 (Forests +3), War 5

**Backgrounds:** Backing 5, Contacts 4, Cult 2, Followers 3, Influence 2, Resources 4

**Charms:**

*Affinity Wood Control*—+5 wood damage to attacks

*Dematerialize*—Costs 60 motes

*Endowment*—Natural Prognostication, -1 Appearance

*Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe*—Can appear to be any animal in the forest

*Geas*—Target cannot leave the forest

*Landscape Travel*—Triple speed through the woods

*Regalia of Authority*—Demands subservience from wood elementals

*Signet of Authority*—Creates a small twig on the target's forehead that cannot be removed

*Malediction*—All-Encompassing

*Measure the Wind*

*Natural Prognostication*—Always knows when it's threatened

*Scourge*—Wood-oriented deformities

*Words of Power*—Hurls deadly insults

*Second (Ability) Excellency*—Presence, Socialize

**Join Battle:** 7

**Attacks:**

Punch: Speed 5, Accuracy 2, Damage 5B, Parry DV 2, Rate 3

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 1, Damage 8B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 3, Damage 5B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Huge Cudgel: Speed 6, Accuracy 5, Damage 17B/4, Parry DV 2, Rate 1, Tags: 2,O,P,R

**Soak:** 7L/15B (Bark skin, 5L/10B, Hardness: 2L/2B)

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

**Dodge DV:** 6 **Willpower:** 7

**Essence:** 5 **Essence Pool:** 85

**Other Notes:** A king of the wood's Stamina and Resistance scores will rise if its forest expands and fall if its forest is shrunk by fire or disease.

**STICK PERSON**

Humans regard stick people as incredibly cute. They're a few feet tall, have huge green eyes and invariably wear playful smiles. Stick people love to play imaginative games involving everything from miniature mock-tourneys to elaborate practical jokes to constructing small hang-gliders from leaves. With a childlike and dramatic view of morality and combat, stick people carry little bows and swords; these stick people use to defend justice, goodness and whatever the local king of the wood has told them to protect. Since they are rather naïve, the elementals will believe almost any petitioner who claims to also be on the side of justice and goodness, excitedly promising aid to any "good cause." The stick person can then be expected to forget such offers at least twice, but will follow through if reminded often enough.

An unmoving stick person can't be distinguished from an orange-berried branch, partly because stick people *are* branches that have gained consciousness and ventured away from their trees. When the elemental's tree dies, the elemental dies; happily, trees that birth stick people tend to be long-lived. An injured stick person bleeds golden sap, but if the stick person flees home to its parent tree and reattaches, new sap will invigorate the stick person and heal its wounds (one health level per turn at the tree).

It's hard not to trust stick people. In fact, the seeming of trustworthiness is a property of their substance: their sap carries trustworthiness. If stick person sap is collected and hardened into amber, then enchanted with a certain seven-day rite, the sap can be given as a present that places the recipient under an Emotion effect to trust the giver for one day. For this reason, many Threshold natives are taught from childhood never to accept amber gifts, though the rite is now known only to a few kings of the wood. The kings protect the secret fiercely, anxious to keep their subjects from becoming a commodity and prevent the havoc that a token of instant trust might cause in their courts.



Stick people themselves certainly gain people's trust incredibly easily, and gleefully exploit this ability to convince unsuspecting humans to eat their orange berries. The victim then staggers about laughing, beset by hilarious hallucinations and trailed by giggling elementals who keep asking him to describe everything he sees. This is a Poison effect with statistics listed in the notes below.

**Summoning:** Binding won't improve a stick person's memory, so a sorcerer will need to be very patient with her new servant. The elementals feel no animus against summoners, and act just as friendly (and mischievous) with sorcerers as with everyone else. In the woods, stick people are ideal guides and spies, not even needing to dematerialize to be practically invisible. Some diplomacy-minded sorcerers call stick people as emissaries, hoping to take advantage of the elementals' apparent trustworthiness, but most would find the elementals too easily distracted to be much use.

Stick people have fun being Ecstatics (rhapsodizing at great length about true love) and Wardens (raising their little swords to swear great and honorable protective oaths). When bound to these roles, the elementals occasionally convince themselves the binding changed nothing about them—they've always been like that! They might even stick with oaths they swore while bound.

**Motivation:** Protect all that is just and good; if necessary, the forest takes precedence over other causes.

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

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

**Abilities:** Archery 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Dodge 3, Larceny 3, Linguistics 3, Melee 3, Presence 5

(Gaining Trust +3), Resistance 2, Socialize 5 (Gaining Trust +3), Stealth 3, Survival 4, War 2

**Backgrounds:** Allies 4, Backing 1

**Charms:**

*Call*—Contact nearby stick people

*Dematerialize*—Costs 40 motes

*Essence Bite*—Tiny sword does 3L

*Hurry Home*—Return to home tree

*Intrusion-Sensing Method*—Sense danger to home tree

*Landscape Travel*—Run through branches at full movement speed

*Sheathing the Material Form*—+2L/5B against weapons

*Subtle Whisper*—Earns trust quietly

*Third (Ability) Excellency*—Melee, Presence, Stealth, Survival

**Join Battle:** 5

**Attacks:**

Claw: Speed 5, Accuracy 4, Damage 2L, Parry DV 2, Rate 3

Clinch: Speed 6, Accuracy 3, Damage 2B (P), Parry DV –, Rate 1

Kick: Speed 5, Accuracy 3, Damage 5B, Parry DV 1, Rate 2

Wooden Short Sword: Speed 4, Accuracy 8, Damage 5L, Parry DV 4, Rate 2

Bow: Speed 6, Accuracy 6, Damage 2L, Range 150, Rate 2

**Soak:** 3L/11B (Spry bones, 2L/8B)

**Health Levels:** -0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/I

**Dodge DV:** 4      **Willpower:** 6

**Essence:** 2      **Essence Pool:** 50

**Other Notes:** Stick people are flammable. A stick person that catches fire will continue to burn, suffering damage until it can extinguish the flames, which will require more than just rolling around on the ground.

#### ORANGE BERRY

**Damage**  
2B/1 hour

**Toxicity**  
4M

**Tolerance**  
(Stamina + Resistance - 2)/10 minutes

**Penalty**  
-3





SO MUCH TO CHOOSE FROM. THIS IS MY LUCKY DAY.



OOH, PRETTY SKULL. THIS'LL BE—



HEY! PUT THAT DOWN!

THIS ISN'T WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.



DON'T LIE TO ME, YOU LITTLE THIEF!

TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE, HONEY.



YEAH, THIS HAS BEEN FUN, BUT...

**SNAP**



WHAT THE—I'M STUCK.

YOU LITTLE BASTARD!

**POOF!**



# APPENDIX DIVINE MECHANICS

## SPIRIT CHARMS

The natural power of spirits manifests most obviously in their Charms. Unlike Exalted, spirits don't learn to call upon awesome supernatural power. The Essence manipulations of a spirit—its abilities to materialize and dematerialize, speak to favored mortals through dreams, curse an enemy to failure and so on—are intrinsic to the spirit and related to the function the spirit is intended to serve.

Because Charms are expressions of a spirit's nature and personality, spirits sometimes use Charms unconsciously. A river god might use Domain Manipulation Scenario (see p. 154) to cause his river to flood in reflection of his emotional state, even without realizing it.

**Spirits treat the minimum Essence of their Charms as guidelines. Many spirits possess Charms**

**with a minimum Essence higher than their own Essence scores. For example, though Dematerialize has a minimum Essence of 3, nearly all elementals possess this Charm; likewise with gods greater than least gods and Materialize.**

### UNIQUE LIMITATIONS

When a spirit uses a Charm, that spirit does so in a unique fashion. Typically, a given spirit can only invoke a Charm a certain way or at a certain time or against certain foes. This limitation is usually tied to the spirit's nature and domain. For instance, a god of lust might need to deliver its Malediction (see p. 165) through a kiss. The weak Terrestrial deity of a forest pool under the effects of Sheathing the Material Form (see p. 164) might only protect herself from the attacks of those who don't know the properties of her water (i.e., lack dots of Survival), or perhaps the armor is only effective as

long as she remains at least ankle-deep in water. Such limitations can be narrow or broad, depending on the power of the spirit, but they're always limited in a way a foe can exploit.

Powerful spirits can have unrestricted, All-Encompassing Charms. All-Encompassing Charms usually cost five motes and one Willpower point more than their restricted versions and require an Essence 2 greater than the base Charm. Sheathing the Material Form, for instance, costs two motes per extra 2B/1L of soak and has a minimum Essence requirement of 2. An All-Encompassing Sheathing the Material Form that protected a spirit from all forms of damage would cost around one Willpower point, five motes and two motes per 2B/1L, and a spirit would need an Essence of 4 or more to have the Charm in the first place. Aside from most Excellencies, Materialize or Dematerialize, Principle of Motion, Essence Plethora and other Charms where limitations make little sense, All-Encompassing Charms are rare. Most powerful spirits' Charms will be very powerful in their effects, but as limited or more limited as the same Charm in the hands of a lesser spirit.

### COMBOS

Because spirits' Charms are instinctive, spirits don't need Combos to use more than one spirit Charm during the same action. However, they still follow the normal type and keyword restrictions. A spirit can't use a Supplemental Charm to enhance a Combo-Basic Charm, and it can't use more than one Extra Action Charm during the same action. In effect, a spirit has access to every valid Combo that could be constructed from every Charm it knows, and need not spend Willpower for their access nor develop signature anima displays (as spirits have no anima banners). The exception is foreign Charms. Spirits using multiple non-spirit Charms (such as supernatural martial arts techniques) within the same action, or in combination with native Charms, must form Combos and must include spirit Charms in those Combos as if the spirit Charms were non-native.

### KEYWORD: ELEMENTAL

(This keyword first appeared, in expanded form, in *The Manual of Exalted Power—The Dragon-Blooded*.)

A Charm with this keyword has an elemental effect. In some cases, this effect is purely cosmetic, and the underlying Charm functions the same way regardless of element invoked. More often, however, the Charm functions somewhat differently depending on element. Damaging elemental effects produce the same base damage regardless of element, but fire causes damage

## ECLIPSES, MOONSHADOWS AND GOD-BLOODS

Eclipse Caste Solars, Moonshadow Caste Abyssals and some God-Blooded can learn spirit Charms. Learning such Charms is as radical as learning sorcery or the Blossom of the Perfected Lotus. Learning a divine Charm always requires a tutor, and the student always learns the version of the Charm her teacher uses. For instance, if an Eclipse Caste learns Touch of Saturn from a spirit who spits on a target to cause miscarriage, then the Eclipse herself must spit on her target when invoking Touch of Saturn, and the Charm will cause only miscarriages. An Eclipse who wishes to learn additional curses must learn them separately.

**Unlike spirits, Eclipses, Moonshadows and God-Bloods treat the minimum Essence of spirit Charms as a rule.** An Eclipse or God-Blood cannot learn Dematerialize until Essence 3, even if his tutor is an elemental with Essence 2.

through burning, while wood causes damage through sharp thorns or a plant toxin.

## EXCELLENCIES

Spirits can use the First, Second and Third (Ability) Excellencies for each Ability, as well as Infinite (Ability) Mastery, as long as they meet the prerequisites for each Charm as described on pages 181–186 of *Exalted*. These count as spirit Charms, and most are related to a specific Virtue, just as their other Charms are. **A spirit cannot use Charms to add more dice to any dice pool than the spirit's Essence. A spirit cannot increase its static values by more than half that amount.**

Virtue	Associated Excellencies and Ability-Based Charms
Compassion	First, Second and Third: Awareness, Craft, Investigation, Linguistics, Lore, Medicine, Survival, War
Conviction	First, Second and Third: Bureaucracy, Integrity, Larceny, Performance, Presence, Ride, Socialize, Stealth
Temperance	Infinite (Ability) Mastery and Divine (Ability) Subordination for all Abilities



**Valor** First, Second and Third: Archery, Athletics, Dodge, Martial Arts, Melee, Resistance, Thrown

**Universal** First, Second and Third: Occult  
Spirits have one additional Ability-based Charm, Divine (Ability) Subordination. This is a Temperance Charm.

#### DIVINE (ABILITY) SUBORDINATION

**Cost:** 5m, 1wp ; **Mins:** (Ability) 5, Essence 5;

**Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Combo-OK

**Duration:** Instant

Spirits with this Charm exercise their divine will to automatically succeed on any check of the Ability in question. When the spirit's player invokes this Charm, she forgoes rolling for a single task and instead the spirit succeeds on that task with a threshold of 0,

regardless of the roll's difficulty or external penalties. When associated with a combat Ability used to calculate a Defense Value (Martial Arts, Melee or Dodge), the spirit's player can invoke this Charm to perfectly defend against a single incoming attack, whether the attack can normally be blocked or dodged. Used in this manner, the Charm possesses one of the Four Flaws of Invulnerability (see **Exalted**, p. 194).

As with almost all spirit Charms, each spirit with Divine (Ability) Subordination will have unique limitations applied to its invocation (in addition to the Flaw of Invulnerability). Even when All-Encompassing, this Charm suffers one of the Four Flaws of Invulnerability when used for defense.

### UNIVERSAL CHARMS

Universal Charms aren't tied to Virtues.

#### ESSENCE PLETHORA

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 1;

**Type:** Permanent

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

A spirit increases its Essence pool by 10 with this Charm. Spirits may take this Charm (Essence) times, and its effects stack.

#### HURRY HOME

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

**Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious

**Duration:** Instant

This Charm dematerializes a spirit and teleports it instantly to a place within the spirit's domain, its sanctum, the nearest gate to Yu-Shan or the point where the spirit entered Creation. A spirit must be dematerialized or be able to dematerialize to use this Charm.

Hurry Home follows all Relocation guidelines (see p. 156).

#### MATERIALIZER

**Cost:** Varies; **Mins:** Essence 3;

**Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious

**Duration:** Varies

With this Charm, a god may become material by spending  $(\text{Essence} + \text{Willpower}) \times 5$  motes. These motes are not committed, and a materialized





spirit may respire Essence normally. A material god may dematerialize as a miscellaneous action at no mote cost. Normally, only gods and demons may learn this Charm.

Elementals, Eclipse Caste Solars, Moonshadow Caste Abyssals and God-Bloods learn a Charm called Dematerialize. With Dematerialize, a naturally material being may become immaterial by spending  $(\text{Essence} + \text{Willpower}) \times 5$  uncommitted motes. A being under the effect of Dematerialize may become material once again with a miscellaneous action at no mote cost.

Materialize and its counterpart are exceptions to a number of rules and guidelines about spirit Charms. First, only the most unusual of spirits have restrictions on how they can use these Charms. There's no All-Encompassing Materialize or Dematerialize, because the Charm itself is All-Encompassing in most cases. Second, when an Eclipse or Moonshadow learns De-

materialize, his player calculates the cost in motes from the character's own traits, rather than using a version of the Charm with a mote cost defined by the spiritual tutor's traits.

The meaning and potential applications of this Charm are highlighted in the "Charm Concept: Material and Immaterial" sidebar below.

#### MEASURE THE WIND

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Combo-OK

**Duration:** Instant

This Charm determines the Essence trait of all living creatures within a number of yards equal to the spirit's Willpower. This Charm also allows for a  $(\text{Wits} + \text{Perception})$  roll to find hidden creatures within this range, and the difficulty of this roll is reduced by 2. This Charm recognizes what type of being

### CHARM CONCEPT: MATERIAL AND IMMATERIAL

Immaterial beings are invisible and intangible to the material world, but they may spend one mote or one temporary Willpower to become visible and audible (though still obviously immaterial to all viewers) for the remainder of the scene. Immaterial objects the immaterial beings carry likewise become visible and audible. Structures such as floors and walls support an immaterial being's weight only so long as the being does not will itself to pass through them—an immaterial knife can rest on the material second floor of a two-storey building, but will pass through the material wall of the same building if thrown by an immaterial creature. Use common sense when adjudicating this.

Immaterial creatures are not as affected by the bodily needs of the material world. Immaterial creatures do not require air to breath or food or water. They can still appreciate these things for their virtues but no longer need them to survive. (And most spirits never need those things anyway.)

As follows, immaterial creatures do not affect the material world without powerful Charms designed to do so. Most of an immaterial creature's Charms will not affect the material world.


A creature that dematerializes may bring along objects it owns (as defined in *Exalted*, on p. 238) and can carry. Unattended immaterial objects do not materialize alongside their owners and, if left unattended for more than a fortnight, fall under the domain of Madame Marthesine of the Lost and her hoarders (see pp. 55-56 and 47). Hoarders sometimes attempt to claim immaterial objects before that time limit is up.

Many relatively common effects, such as thaumaturgical wards, can interact with immaterial beings, and places that have access to a decent thaumaturge can force immaterial beings to materialize if they wish to enter warded places. See *The Books of Sorcery, Vol. III—Oadenol's Codex*, pages 140–144, for the Art of Spirit Beckoning and the Art of Warding and Exorcism.

Naturally material creatures that dematerialize must concern themselves with their location in the real world, because an immaterial being that materializes in a place where it cannot normally survive will die. In other words, an immaterial Eclipse Caste forced to materialize while walking straight through, say, a wall or a mountain will indeed be gruesomely killed as the wall splits her apart or the mountain instantly crushes her.

There are realms in which the chasm of the material does not exist, and nothing can dematerialize. Everyone and everything in the Underworld, Malfeas and the Celestial City of Yu-Shan is considered material.





each creature is—Exalt, spirit, ghost, etc. Finally, the Charm detects whether any creature the spirit examines is capable of killing a god permanently, as with Ghost-Eating Technique.

Measure the Wind follows all Divination guidelines (see p. 148).

#### PRINCIPLE OF MOTION

**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 6, DV -2)

**Keywords:** Obvious

**Duration:** Indefinite

A spirit may invoke this Charm to gain a number of “banked” actions equal to the spirit’s Willpower. At any later time, on the spirit’s own turn to act, for as long as the spirit retains motes committed to this Charm, the spirit may reflexively use these banked actions to construct a magical flurry following the same guidelines as the Solar Charm Peony Blossom Attack (see *Exalted*, p. 191). Such a magical flurry contains a number of actions equal to the banked actions the spirit draws forth, plus one. Banked Principle of Motion actions need not be draw forth all at once. Principle of Motion may not be invoked while motes remain committed to a previous activation of Principle of Motion, and may not be invoked using an action in a flurry Principle of Motion provides.

The magical flurry generated by drawing forth Principle of Motion actions carries a few limitations due to its peculiar nature outside the normal flow of time. This Charm cannot contain Shape Sorcery actions, Shape Necromancy actions, actions requiring long ticks, actions operating on a dramatic timeframe, Extra Action Charms or Combos (though this last limitation applies only to Eclipses and Moonshadows who learn the Charm, as spirits need not use Combos to activate multiple Charms within the same action).

Note that it takes an action to invoke this Charm, and one who uses the Charm may only draw banked actions on his turn to act, so it’s impossible to invoke Principle of Motion and then make a magical flurry immediately—after invoking Principle of Motion to bank actions, the Charm’s user must wait until his next action to draw those actions and construct a magical flurry.

#### RESERVE OF WILL

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Permanent

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

This power allows a spirit to increase its temporary Willpower pool beyond its Willpower trait. Each instance of this Charm grants a spirit an additional temporary Willpower.

This Charm can be taken no more than (spirit’s Essence) times.

## BLESSINGS

### GIFTS FROM THE GODS (COMPASSION)

Spirits use blessings to aid their allies in battle, but more importantly, blessings often ensure the loyalty and effective service of a spirit’s messengers, followers and lieutenants.

All recipients of a blessing must be willing. If the target (or targets) possess Essence 1, the motes the spirit spends to power the blessing Charm are uncommitted, and the spirit may do so from any distance (unless the spirit possesses a version of the Charm that must be delivered through physical contact or presence), provided she has an arcane link to the target (most commonly prayer; see pp. 168-169). If a target possesses Essence 2+, the spirit must be in his presence in some fashion and commit the motes to bless the target.

Some spirits can issue blessings that deactivate under certain conditions. Blessings from similar sources and with similar purposes don’t stack their effects.

### BENEFACTION

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

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target receives a one-die bonus to some sort of roll (any or all rolls only in the case of All-Encompassing Benefaction).

### (ELEMENT) DRAGON’S EMBRACE

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Elemental, Holy, Emotion, Illusion, Obvious, Shaping, Sickness, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit adjusts the target’s core Essence balance in favor of one element, Celestial Incarnae or Primordial. The effects are somewhat positive—but ultimately, any such imbalance is unhealthy, even when administered benevolently. As a result, this power can be used as a curse against unwilling targets, in which case it follows Curse guidelines (see p. 165).

Potential effects include the following:

- Eliminating the normal penalty for having 0 dots in any Ability associated with the element in question
- Removing the mote surcharge from certain elementally aspected Charms
- Removing the penalty associated with working one magical material
- Fooling certain powers that can ascertain elemental associations

## HIGH-ESSENCE BLESSING GUIDELINES

Normally, blessings affect one target for one scene, but powerful spirits may spend one temporary Willpower to extend the duration or to affect a larger group. The spirit gains a number of points equal to its (Essence + Compassion - Charm's minimum Essence), which the spirit can divide between the magnitude of the group the spirit wishes to affect and the duration of the effect, as determined by the chart below.

When the target of a blessing expires with duration on the blessing still remaining, the blessing passes to the deceased's legal heir. Inheritance is according to the law of the target's culture, or the predominant law of Creation (currently imperial law) if the local culture has no inheritance policy. Under imperial law, the spouse is the primary inheritor, with the eldest child inheriting next, with all Exalts inheriting before unExalted relations. However, blessings don't pass to invalid targets, which means they don't usually pass to the Exalted as most spirits who leave blessings that last long enough to pass on to heirs only do so to mortals and don't leave the motes committed.

For the purposes of the chart, one generation is 20 years, and laying a blessing on beings whose "generations" are longer (such as the Dragon-Blooded) will not extend the effect's duration beyond that period of time.

Points	Duration
0	scene
1	Day
2	Week
3	Month
4	Season
5	Year
6	10 years
7	20 years
8	60 years (unto the 3rd generation)
9	140 years (unto the 7th generation)
10	260 years (unto the 13th generation)
11	600 years (unto the 30th generation)
12	2,000 years (unto the 100th generation)


No more than once a year, an Essence 5+ spirit may sacrifice one permanent Willpower to grant a permanent blessing. No spirit makes this sacrifice lightly. Permanent blessings don't pass on to heirs when the subject dies.

- Varies altering Charm effects that have the Holy or elemental descriptor
- Increasing Essence respiration in appropriately aspected areas by one mote per hour, which might thereby allow respiration in places where it wasn't previously possible

Stranger and more powerful effects are possible, especially when esoteric creatures or other gods are infused. Most gods possess a version of (Element)

Dragon's Embrace capable of producing only one of the above effects; some can use two or three.

For every positive effect granted by this Charm, the target suffers an emotional or mental imbalance of some sort. These take the form of Illusion or Emotion effects that occasionally force the target's player to spend one Willpower lest they dramatically manifest. They might influence a character into acting strangely—perhaps out of uncontrollable, fiery



rage—or based on incorrect beliefs—perhaps due to wispy, airy hallucinations.

Some spirits, especially elementals and servants of the Celestial Incarnae, seem to spring into being with the effects of this Charm as a permanent part of their existence.

#### ENDOWMENT

**Cost:** Varies, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target gains an immense boon. This Charm can grant dots of traits such as Attributes, Abilities, Willpower, Virtues—even Essence. Endowment can grant the use of Charms. It can even grant physical or metaphysical alterations. Almost any sort of boon is possible, though generally the spirit possess that quality itself. The minimum Essence of this Charm is determined by the granted power, and the mote cost is equal to triple the final minimum Essence. When bestowing trait dots, increase the minimum Essence by two for every dot gifted after the first. Blessing a target beyond her normal potential—for instance, beyond five Attribute dots or one Essence for a mortal—increases the minimum Essence by two more.

If an Endowment bestows the use of a Charm, then use the minimum Essence of the bestowed Charm (if higher than that of Endowment). If it bestows the effects of a Charm, on the other hand, the duration of the Endowment is limited to the duration of the gifted Charm, and the spirit must pay the cost of the Endowment plus the cost of the bestowed Charm.

Endowments that grant physical benefits other than Charms or trait dots can be modeled with the “Touch of the Wyld” section on pages 288-290 of *Exalted*. (Even more such benefits may be found on pp. 144-148 of *The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld* and on pp. 206-209 of *The Manual of Exalted Power—The Lunars*.) Endowment can add positive qualities or remove negative ones. If the Endowment is about as useful as an affliction or heals a problem as bad as a debility, add one to this Charm’s minimum Essence. Blights and deformities raise minimum Essence by two; abominations by three.

Most spirits have one unique version of this Charm that bestows a combination of effects. If a spirit’s Endowment grants dots of various traits, physical changes and Charm effects, use the highest minimum Essence of all of the effects and add one for every additional effect.

#### EYE OF INSPIRATION

**Cost:** 15m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target is blessed by one of the spirit’s Excellencies, which can add up to the spirit’s Essence in dice. These dice always count toward the maximum number of dice the target can add to her pools through Charms.

The recipient may be allowed to instinctively understand how to draw upon it when she needs it, or the spirit might set conditions in which the Excellency activates (for instance, “When fighting an enemy of my faith”), or the spirit may choose when to use the Excellency itself to assist the recipient.

A target of this Charm with her own mote pools may fuel the Excellency’s activation with her own motes. Otherwise, the spirit must allow her to draw from its own pool.

#### SIGNET OF AUTHORITY

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

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target is marked by the spirit’s sigil (though the mark may only be visible to senses that penetrate the immaterial) and can give orders in its name. She’s much less likely to be attacked by the god’s inferiors, and may spend one Willpower to call upon the Mandate of Subordination (see p. 169) and give an order that such an inferior must follow, as long as it’s seen the signet on the target.

#### TOUCH OF DIVINITY

**Cost:** 3m+, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

This Charm can be a gift of motes, Willpower points or some other temporary spiritual renewal. If motes are transferred, then they’re given on a one-for-one basis. Temporary Willpower costs three motes of Essence and one of the spirit’s own temporary Willpower per point. More potent examples include nourishment or Virtue channels, which cost more than motes or Willpower. Spirits cannot spend more motes per use of this Charm than their (Essence x 3).

If the spirit consents, the target may receive this boon permanently; the spirit may also withdraw it at any time before the Charm ends. These blessings are usually much more specific and interesting than motes or Willpower. Recipients have been known to use the divine boon as a guide to awaken their own Essence,



uncover esoteric truths buried deep within themselves, relive memories lost to the Ages and so on.

#### TOUCH OF ETERNITY

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target's body and soul are reinforced with the resilience of immortality. The effects vary, but examples include the following:

- Soak lethal damage with half Stamina, as do Essence wielders
- Rapidly stop bleeding as an Exalt does
- Resist poison and disease as an Exalt does
- Heal as fully and rapidly as an Exalt does
- Shrug off enchantments and curses as an Exalt does
- Half aging speed (does not stack with other uses of this Charm)

Powerful gods can imbue recipients with more powerful and creative effects. Some can even enhance the Exalted, but this blessing cannot generally bestow powers the spirit itself doesn't possess.

#### TOUCH OF GRACE

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

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch


**Duration:** One scene

Touch of Grace allows a spirit to pour its own ephemeral substance into cracks and wounds, mending them. Spirits might use the Charm to fix broken parts of their domain, to perform miraculous healings or perhaps to relieve themselves of minor damage.

For every three motes a spirit spends powering this Charm, the target removes one health level of damage (one mote per level, if the damage is bashing). Recipients may even remain healed after the duration of the Charm has expired, if the spirit wishes.

This considerable power has weaknesses. Wounds that are too deep cannot be healed: a spirit may spend no more motes per usage than its ( $[\text{lower of Essence or Compassion}] \times 3$ ), and if the spirit can't heal the target completely with a single use of Touch of Grace, the Charm has no effect. Also, damage of a supernatural nature, including all aggravated damage, can be healed only until the spirit uncommits the motes fueling the Charm—whereupon it returns.





Touch of Grace can cure Crippling, Poison or Sickness effects. To determine the mote cost, each counts as a number of lethal health levels equal to a Poison's Toxicity, a Sickness's Untreated Morbidity or a Crippling effect's relative seriousness, as decided by the Storyteller on a scale of 1 to 5. Unusually powerful effects may count as up to 10. Supernatural effects, such as magical wounds, also return when the duration ends.

Touch of Grace has no effect on artifacts or on things that are in stark opposition to the spirit's nature. For example, undead or demons usually cannot benefit from this Charm if it's used by a god of the Celestial Hierarchy, and a water elemental may not understand how to heal a creature made of fire.

## DIVINATIONS

### EYES OF THE GODS (COMPASSION)

Spirits can perceive many things beyond mortal ken.

Divinations are an exception to the normal rule for retries; similar Divinations can interfere with each other. A Divination that would glean data contradicting another Divination the spirit has made within the past month won't yield information contradicting the earlier Divination, and might be influenced into giving false predictions. As a result, diviner-spirits prefer to ritually invoke their foresight no more often than once a month.

Divinations can see only into the sanctums of willing gods, and only the most powerful divination can see into other realms of existence.

### AMETHYST AWARENESS

**Cost:** 6; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 1)

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Indefinite

This Charm provides the benefits of All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight (see *Exalted*, p. 222).

### FORETELL THE FUTURE

**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit spends one entire scene in prayer formulating a personal passkey into the Bureau of Destiny's archive of fates. At the scene's end, the spirit dreams her way through the archives, researching her domain. She has access only to materials associated by the Bureau with her domain. The Bureau of Destiny has the right to restrict access to this information to beings who possess a certain Essence score, but a spirit may spend one

## CHARM CONCEPT:

### REALMS OF EXISTENCE

Malfeas, Yu-Shan, the Wyld, the Underworld, Autochthonia, Elsewhere and similar places are realms apart from Creation. Many powers aren't designed to work between such places, which are described as "realms of existence." For instance, since spirits can't invoke Sendings into other realms of existence, a spirit couldn't send a dream from Heaven to a follower in Creation or a friend in the Wyld. Celestial gods who wish to send dreams to mortals must travel through a Yu-Shan gateway and send from the other side (though this limitation doesn't apply to the Incarnae).

Willpower to perform a priority override (requiring a Compassion roll and then adding the successes to the spirit's effective Essence score). The Bureau is alerted to priority overrides and who knows what else that goes on in its dream archives.

With this Charm, the spirit has limited access to the future. If the Bureau of Destiny cannot determine what will happen, neither then can the spirit. If a destiny is in flux, the spirit receives incomplete prophecies—the best Heaven can reasonably determine.

This Charm is an exception to the usual prohibition against Divinations crossing realms of existence.

### HAND OF DESTINY

**Cost:** 20m, 2wp; **Mins:** Essence 5; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Indefinite

Using Hand of Destiny, a spirit marks a certain part of its domain for personal attention. The spirit personally decides what must happen, and personally accomplishes that end. Subordinate spirits governing affected domains immediately become aware of their superior's floating decree and level of personal involvement; thus, those spirits also actively work toward the end the Charm is shaping.

By using this Charm, the spirit sets itself upon a path that leads to the spirit's goal. The spirit becomes the Hand of Destiny: an instrument of its own decision to interfere with Creation. The spirit has a perfect, unconscious instinct for everything that brings it closer to success, and often takes great steps toward its larger goal without even realizing its actions were relevant till later.

This Charm is essentially a managerial priority override—it brings the spirit into conflict with the way things will work out “naturally.” As a result, spirits using this Charm without permission from the Bureau of Destiny risk that Bureau’s wrath.

#### INTRUSION-SENSING METHOD

**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit defines a potential change within its domain and commits the requisite motes. If that event occurs, roll the spirit’s (Perception + Awareness), adding (Compassion) automatic successes. This constitutes a check to notice that change as though the spirit were present at the event’s location.

#### MELODIOUS DIAGNOSTIC REPORT

**Cost:** 15m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** One Scene

The spirit focuses on a problem affecting her domain and issues notice of impending analysis. By the end of the scene, her being resonates with the wise prayers of every aspect of Creation that owes fealty to the spirit. Unless the problem is masked by magic backed by a higher Essence score than the spirit’s, the spirit will determine the problem’s source, and may then roll (Intelligence + Compassion) to determine how to fix it. Problems well beyond the spirit’s normal scope of operations may impose an external penalty to this roll. For instance, if the issue is a Essence 9 Lunar working against the spirit’s domain, then the spirit will likely take a large penalty to the spirit’s (Intelligence + Compassion) roll—it’s really hard to find a solution to a Essence 9 Lunar. The number of threshold successes determines the wisdom of the spirit’s conclusions, and subsequent mental rolls made to deal with the problem receive bonus dice equal to those successes.

Subordinate spirits involved in the diagnostic report must pray to issue their decisions, and any such spirit with an Essence score 1 less than the user may attempt to upset the process, creating an external penalty equal to its ([Charisma + Performance] / 2). A greater number of rebellious smaller spirits might also upset this Charm.

#### MEMORY MIRROR

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

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit finds what it seeks in the target’s mind.

The spirit attempts to read her per Reading Motivation (see **Exalted**, p. 131), but actually reads something besides Intimacies and Motivation, such as a memory. Unless the target’s Essence exceeds the spirit’s, the Reading Motivation check receives (Compassion) automatic successes.

#### NATURAL PROGNOSTICATION

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit’s words and actions casually reveal fate’s plans. This Charm activates automatically when the spirit encounters a character or region for which Heaven has a weighty plan. The Charm reveals the preplanned fates of those with the Destiny Background (see **Scroll of the Monk**, p. 151), though the Charm cannot determine the Background’s strength. Natural Prognostication also senses the effects of ascending or descending destinies caused by Sidereal astrology.

#### SENSE DOMAIN

**Cost:** 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Instant

When the spirit invokes this Charm, the spirit’s player makes a single Awareness roll pertinent to the spirit’s domain’s status or interior (if the domain is a location). The Charm adds (Compassion) automatic successes to the roll, and the spirit may count its priests’ senses as part of its domain. The spirit can explicitly notice anything within its domain that the Storyteller deems noticeable—even things beyond the reach of its normal senses.

#### TRACKING


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

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit tracks something or someone to which the spirit has committed Essence, whether by a blessing, a curse or any Charm requiring committed motes. The spirit instinctively knows the target’s distance from the spirit, as well as in what direction the target lies. Any spirit with this Charm may also commit a mote to a target for an indefinite period with a touch and a successful (Essence + Compassion) check; unwilling targets apply an external penalty to this roll equal to their Essence. Removing this “tag” usually requires specialized thaumaturgy or sorcery, though cutting the tag out occasionally works. This tag is an arcane link to the spirit, so cautious spirits use the tag sparingly.





If the target of this Charm has access to supernatural stealth, the spirit's player rolls (Essence + Awareness), adding (Compassion) successes, and the target's player rolls (Essence + Stealth), adding dice or successes from other sources. The power associated with the winning roll overrides the power associated with the losing roll. The target's player may invoke Excellencies to increase the dice pool for this roll even if the target character is unaware she's being tracked.

## SENDINGS

### VOICES OF THE GODS (COMPASSION)

Spirits send dreams to their worshipers and visions to their priests, and often manipulate humanity from a distance. A spirit can use a Sending on a target within Creation from within the spirit's own sanctum, but Sending can only enter the sanctum of a willing spirit and cannot otherwise cross between realms of existence. A spirit doesn't necessarily know if its Sending failed to reach the target.

Sendings may reach material targets, even if the spirit itself is immaterial.

### CALL

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Obvious

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit sends (Compassion) simple ideas to any or all creatures within range, but only those who share a particular quality with the spirit will hear the message. Many spirits and demons use this Charm to communicate with others of their kind.

### DREAMSCAPE

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Emotion

**Duration:** Instant or Indefinite

The target receives a dream of the spirit's design. Sleepers can enter only one such dreamscape per period of sleep. If more than one spirit seeks to place a target within a dreamscape during the same period of sleep, the highest-Essence spirit's dream takes precedence. In case of ties, the target enters the dreamscape sent first. A spirit may commit the motes for this Charm, specifying that it activates as soon as the target is willing to receive the dream or falls asleep, but won't necessarily know when that happens. Most spirits with this Charm may send dreams only to mortals the spirits can see, though they may do so while immaterial. Spirits with Essence 6+ may send dreams (Essence x Compassion x 100) miles.

## HIGH-ESSENCE SENDING GUIDELINES

A spirit with one Essence can use a Sending out to a range of 10 yards. For every additional dot of Essence possessed by a spirit using a Sending, this maximum range is multiplied by 10. For example, the Sendings of an Essence 3 spirit have a maximum range of 1,000 yards, over half a mile. A spirit who takes advantage of an Essence score higher than its Compassion when using a long-distance sending will find its message slowed. Occasionally, this is as little as a few ticks; more often, a few minutes or hours. The longest a Sending can be thus delayed is one day, which can cause serious bureaucratic problems if it's not properly planned for.

## ENCHANTMENTS AND SENDINGS

Sendings can be supplemented with Enchantment Charms (see pp. 157-160). Gods thus manipulate followers and enemies without leaving their sanctums. A spirit may transmit the power of one of its Enchantment Charms with its communication, so long as (the Enchantment's minimum Essence + Sending's minimum Essence) doesn't exceed the spirit's own Essence score.

Enchantments transmitted through Sendings are less powerful than they would be in person. Subtract the Sending's minimum Essence or the Essence a spirit would need to send its message the desired distance, whichever is higher, from the spirit's Essence trait for the purposes of determining the Enchantment's power.

From within the dream, the target may receive any message of any length—through this message, the spirit may deliver a social attack that gains twice the normal benefit from using the target's Intimacies, Virtues or Motivations against him, up to a maximum bonus equal to the spirit's Compassion. If the spirit is activating this Charm while the target sleeps, the spirit may enter the dream and communicate with her in real time, in which case the spirit may deliver one social attack at the above bonus or hold a regular conversation, including the possibility of participating in regular social combat where the spirit's as vulnerable to the dreamer as the dreamer is to it. The dream message may also constitute up to a full day's worth of training. Finally, the dream can simply be a nightmare, designed to prevent the target from regaining Willpower upon waking.



For one Willpower, spirits with an Essence score greater than the target's Dodge Mental Defense Value can force conscious targets into a dream, which lasts but a moment, though its effects may be profound. Targets may lower their Dodge Mental Defense Value voluntarily should they wish to receive such a dream.

#### IMPROMPTU MESSENGER

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit usurps control of a mortal's voice or speaks through an inanimate object if the object has a feature that could function as a mouth. Assuming they share a common language, the spirit can hear and speak to anyone near its vector.

#### WORLDLY ILLUSION

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Illusion

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit uses its understanding of immortality to place itself and its targets outside of time. While this Essence is committed, the spirit (or another of its Sendings) and a number of targets up to the spirit's Essence depart the normal flow of time and enter into a mass dream. This effect is usually consensual, but targets with a Dodge Mental Defense Value greater than the spirit's (Essence + Compassion) may choose to be unaffected. One spirit may cause the world to appear to freeze in place. Another may appear to transport itself and its targets to a far away location or to a location the spirit imagines. There, the spirit and its targets may wage social combat between the blows of a sword or strategize in the midst of a battle. Once the committed Essence is released, all the participants return to exactly where they were just before this Charm was used.

What happens in the dream is purely social. No changes whatsoever last beyond the end of the conversation save the effects of social combat, with the special exception of Compassion Charms invoked during that "time."

A player who wants her character to leave the dream world may spend three Willpower to do so.

This Charm may be used a number of times per scene equal to the spirit's Compassion.

### DIVINE WORKS

#### HANDS OF THE GODS (CONVICTION)

Many spirits can affect their domains without personal interaction—examples include raising and

lowering mountains, erupting volcanoes and deciding the bounty of the harvest.

Spirits complete Divine Works by calling upon their domains, so these Charms function at limited capacity—if at all—when a spirit is outside its station. Gods outside Creation, demons outside Malfeas and elementals in places where their elements cannot exist (for instance, a wood elemental in a howling inferno) count their Essence scores as being 3 lower when invoking Divine Works.

Some of these Charms are Shaping powers. They casually alter extras' minds and could change Creation on almost any level. However, Divine Works cannot reshape anyone of Essence 2+, or any artifact, in any dramatic fashion. The Charm might still affect such targets—it just can't use them to complete its effect: a Celestial Exalt might be affected by a Divine Decree that the Imperial City is inhospitable to Anathema, but the Decree can't force her to make it inhospitable to Anathema.

Divine Works can only be performed while the spirit is material.

#### AFFINITY (ELEMENT) CONTROL

**Cost:** 6m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Elemental, Obvious, Stackable

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit has considerable control over a particular element. The spirit may manipulate (Essence) barrels worth of that element equal within (Essence x 10) yards. Every action, each barrel can be used to one of a number of effects.

- **Elemental Corruption/Purification**—The spirit makes its element poisonous, changing sand into toxic salt, befouling waters, etc. The Damage is 1L/minute and the Toxicity is 1. Every additional barrel committed to the poison adds 1 to the damage and 1 to the Toxicity. This poison is only dangerous if internalized. Every barrel contains 100 doses of this poison. With the purification effect, the spirit may cleanse its element, removing poisonous qualities. The spirit may also cleanse its element of diseases with Virulence less than the spirit's Essence. These effects are permanent.

- **Elemental Damage**—Every barrel adds 1 to the damage of the spirit's attacks.

- **Elemental Hazard**—The spirit creates an environmental hazard from its element. This hazard has a damage of 1L/minute and a Trauma of 1L. Every additional barrel committed to the hazard adds 1 to the damage and Trauma. Barrels of the element committed to an already existing hazard enhance it in the same way or add the L tag to the hazard's trauma. This effect



supersedes the effects of Elemental Expression (see p. 170) and cannot be combined with hazards created or enhanced by other spirits.

- **Elemental Material**—The spirit may manipulate its element as though it were a much more useful material. The spirit's Craft score for this is limited to its Conviction, but it requires no tools, and what would take scenes takes only actions. If the material is solid, then it remains after the Charm expires.
- **Elemental Resistance**—Every barrel adds 1 to the character's bashing, lethal and aggravated soak values, or triple that amount against damage from the same element. This soak counts as armor.
- **Elemental Weapon**—The spirit may launch attacks with its element, rolling (Wits + Conviction) to hit. This attack has Speed 5, Accuracy +1, base Damage 3B or 3L and a Rate of 1. Every additional barrel committed to an attack adds 1 to the Accuracy and Rate and 3 to the damage. Some spirits may make special attacks with the elements that they control, such as grapples or disarms, and other can even use their element to make ranged Athletics actions.

Not every spirit can perform every function of the Charm.

#### CALCULATED ORDER OF IMMEDIATE ACTION

**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping  
**Duration:** Variable

With this power, the spirit outright creates or destroys an instance of its domain within (Essence x 10) yards. The spirit's authority cuts the red tape that delays projects, making complicated and difficult feats as quick as stamping a form. As long as the spirit has the necessary power, Abilities and raw materials to mundanely create or destroy the spirit's target, this Charm makes it happen within a matter of seconds. The first moments of Calculated Order of Immediate Action begin the process; this is Power Level 0 (see chart, below). This Charm

can then be re-invoked, with each new use increasing Power Level by one until the spirit is finished. At that point, the Divine Work is complete. If interrupted, the process must be entirely restarted. Objects created with this Charm are born with weak least gods, making them particularly vulnerable to ownership and Inhabittings.

This Charm's Essence minimum increases by the desired Power Level—a god with Essence 2 can invoke only Power Level 0 effects, and a god must be Essence 7 to invoke effects of Power Level 5.

#### CHRYSLIS OF PRESERVATION

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping  
**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit invests some of its immortal, intangible self in something, making that thing immune to age and anything that can't affect the immaterial. Against things that affect dematerialized creatures, this Chrysalis has a Hardness equal to the spirit's (Essence x Conviction). However, crystallized things can't change, move, be used, improve or do anything but be perceived. Only creatures with Charms that can affect things even more intangible than the immaterial—for instance, Creation of Perfection (below)—can touch it.

Anything at all can be thus crystallized. Concepts lose a little potential, but gain a pseudo-material form holding part of their power. People and artifacts can be crystallized, but only by Essence 6+ spirits; Exalted and their Essences can't be crystallized by any being of less than Essence 9. However, the spirit may not surround a being of Essence 2+ with a Chrysalis of Preservation without the target's consent. Since crystallizing things can weaken their spirits, gaining consent can be tricky. Furthermore, only spirits with an Essence equal to or greater than the target's Essence or the Essence of the target's spirit can crystallize a thing. As most things only have least gods, this is seldom a concern when creating a chrysalis around an object.

Power Level	Description	Example
0	Common, Resources 0	Walking stick, sound of drums
1	Simple, Resources 1	Sword, common lust
2	Useful, Resources 2	Chain shirt, romantic feelings, small apartment
3	Effective, Resources 3	Firewand, familial ties, one-story house
4	Rare, Resources 4	Mundane artillery, nationalism, substantial building
5	Awesome, Resources 5	Articulated plate, city-wide hysteria, a furnished mansion



Releasing this Charm's motes decrystallizes the thing, as does inflicting any damage upon it at all. A spirit whose Essence or Conviction is higher than the Conviction of the crystallizing spirit might itself be able to use this Charm to end a chrysalis.

**CREATION OF PERFECTION**

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Shaping

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit becomes tangible to everything—material, immaterial, barely substantial or wildly conceptual, though concepts at least need a representation for the spirit to touch. A spirit might use this Charm to work Fate through the Loom of Fate, or to prune a concept wrapped within a Chrysalis of Preservation (see above). This uses the normal Craft rules. Conviction limits the spirit's Craft score, but the spirit can call upon the Excellencies.

**DIVINE DECREE**

**Cost:** Varies; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Shaping

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit delivers a powerful order that is unhesitatingly enforced by subordinates who control lesser

aspects of the spirit's domain. The relative power of the spirit's invocation is determined by the Decree's Power Level. A Power Level 1 decree might be: "This statue of me shall stay spotless," at which point the idol will never again need polishing. A Power Level 3 decree might be: "The ocean shall swallow you and your children," in which case it would be prudent for the target to avoid the sea. A Power Level 5 decree might be: "The Imperial City offers no quarter to Anathema," in which case all doors might close and lock when any Celestial Exalt approaches, and citizens would normally show distaste and distrust toward them.

Each Divine Decree has one Power Level for every invested 10 motes and one Willpower. Using this Charm involves harassing and commanding spirits with all Essence scores equal to or less than the Power Level, so using high levels runs a serious risk of angering other powerful bureaucrats, who can spend Willpower to resist this Charm as they would the Mandate of Subordination. In any case, a spirit can't manifest a greater Power Level than its (Essence - 1). The exact effects of this Charm are unpredictable, but as a quick rule, attempts to contradict the decree always require a roll, to which an external penalty equal to the Power Level is applied.

## DOMAIN MANIPULATION SCENARIO

**Cost:** 6m or 12m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping

**Duration:** Indefinite

For six motes, the spirit commands its domain to do something normal, or “naturally” calls its domain into existence. The spirit can slow or stop its domain’s natural processes, but only in a relatively plausible way. This Charm has a range of (Essence x 10) yards. The god of a volcano could make his volcano erupt if he’s inside it; a love goddess could make two nearby people who are actually right for each other fall in love.

Essence 3+ spirits might spend 12 motes and one Willpower to guide their domains in temporary, moderately powerful ways. A spirit might cause its domain to do almost anything that isn’t extremely rapid or outside its nature: a disease spirit could induce plague in an unexpected area—but not a magically sterilized one; a river spirit could cause its river to dry up, overflow its banks or even alter its course—but couldn’t make it fly. A city father might decide that all shops are closed for the day, but couldn’t move the place or make it invisible. This Charm’s threats are never so powerful that a person with a Defense Value (or Mental Defense Value, when appropriate) greater than the spirit’s Conviction couldn’t best them.

## WEATHER CONTROL

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** (Essence) hours

The spirit manipulates nearby weather in a semi-natural way. For the first scene, the spirit “mildly” affects the weather within a one-mile radius. The next scene, the spirit intensifies the weather within this zone by one level of severity (see chart), creating a “mild” zone around that for another mile. This continues till the weather reaches

its maximum radius: one mile per Essence dot. The spirit need not intensify the weather to expand its radius.

Excellent thaumaturgy or a spirit with greater Essence and Weather Control could both counteract this Charm. Spirits who commonly regulate an area’s weather have the appreciation of Heaven’s Celestial Monitors of the Seasons and Weather. Others, without such permission, might attract the Bureau’s ire.

## EIDOLA

FORMS OF THE GODS (CONVICTION)

Spirits can take many shapes and can even re-form their domains to protect them.

Eidola can only be performed while material.

FORM REDUCTION TECHNIQUE

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

**Keywords:** Shaping

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit compacts its substance into a smaller shape; this shape doesn’t usually have traits or significantly useful qualities that the spirit could not otherwise call upon—it thus becomes the lesser creature in all respects, and could be a lower-Essence spirit, mortal, animal or any other living thing.

This Charm can’t emulate specific creatures; it mimics certain types of creatures or creates new ones. Unlike other Eidola, Form Reduction Technique actually remakes the spirit in every way that matters. No senses, spiritual or otherwise, will perceive the spirit as anything but what it’s become. This isn’t an Illusion effect. Short of extrapolation based on considerable knowledge of a given spirit—its exact speech patterns, for instance—there’s no way anyone can figure out the deception. Picking up those subtle cues requires a successful (Perception + Occult) roll, suffering an external penalty of the spirit’s (Essence + Occult + Conviction).

Weather Severity	Description	Spirit’s Prerequisites
Normal	Subtle effects, but no unseasonable ones.	
Mild	Unusual effects, not terrible ones; makes travel more difficult, but doesn’t cause damage.	Essence 2, Conviction 2
Severe	Potentially dangerous or extremely unlikely.	Essence 3, Conviction 3
Drastic	Extremely dangerous; imposes penalties to all rolls. Might freeze fast-moving rivers or uproot trees.	Essence 4, Conviction 4
Legendary	Conditions of the elemental poles; without excellent shelter, mortals die quickly.	Essence 5, Conviction 5



If the spirit becomes a creature with a smaller Essence pool than the spirit's own, the extra motes go Elsewhere, and the spirit regains them upon resuming its normal form. This Charm shapes no equipment save the being's divine panoply.

#### HOST OF SPIRITS

**Cost:** 3m per copy; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Shaping

**Duration:** One scene or indefinite

The spirit animates a piece of itself into its full shape. Weak spirits create doppelgangers to fool or outnumber foes; powerful ones also create units of followers or avatars to send out into the world.

(Conviction) copies can be formed per action, to a maximum of (Essence x Conviction) at any one time, and each costs the spirit three committed motes. These doppelgangers possess all of the spirit's traits and other qualities, but two fewer dots of each Attribute save Appearance (Minimum 0), only the illusion of equipment, no Charms, motes of Essence or temporary Willpower, and only a single -0 health level. Each member of the Host has an Essence three less than the spirit's (minimum 1). Such copies last until the end of the scene under the perfect mental command of the spirit.

With a touch, copies can be invested with motes or temporary Willpower by the true spirit, but never recover them once they're spent or lost. If a copy meets the prerequisites, it can also be imbued with the spirit's Charms, but the original will lose access to those Charms as long as the doppelganger persists. Charms return to the spirit upon a copy's destruction, but not motes or Willpower.

Essence 3+ spirits may spend one Willpower to allow another character to don one of the spirit's copy bodies. Any basically humanoid creature smaller than the spirit may enter into a Host copy, riding it until she chooses to leave or the spirit releases the three committed motes. While inside, the inner creature sees as the copy would see, with the spirit's senses. The inner creature may not, however, use any of her own Charms without disrupting the power, and all of her Physical Attributes and Abilities are considered those of the doppelganger, as well as its Essence score.

Wearing a copy constitutes a perfect disguise, per the Charm Flawless Mirror (see *Exalted*, p. 228); if the character suffers any damage while wearing a Host copy, however, she's exposed.

The spirit need not invoke a Host that looks exactly like it, but it will need other Charms such as Shapechange if the spirit wishes to alter forms more than a little. If the spirit decides its doppelgangers are exact,

then onlookers seeking the original must succeed at a (Perception + [Awareness or Occult]) check with an external penalty of (spirit's Conviction) to do so.

#### MIRROR OF THE INFINITE WARDROBE

**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Illusion

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit disguises itself as something it can perceive. Creatures with a Dodge Mental Defense Value greater than the spirit's (Essence + Conviction) can pierce the Eidola just by spending one Willpower, and if the illusion is pointed out, anyone may spend one Willpower to spot it. Otherwise, the Mirror of the Infinite Wardrobe requires either Willpower or successes on a (Perception + Occult) roll equal to the spirit's Conviction to overcome the unnatural mental influence.

Most spirits have one alternate form, and may carry a likeness of that shape. Powerful ones are more flexible; one demon is known for using Memory Mirror (see p. 149) to retrieve the memory of the demon's victims' lovers, then matching those loved ones' forms.

#### PAPER TIGER ARRANGEMENT

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

**Keywords:** Illusion

**Duration:** One scene/indefinite

The spirit creates an illusion surrounding everything within (Essence x 10) yards. If Paper Tiger Arrangement is used only to make something appear as part of the spirit's domain or make a part of the spirit's domain seem to not be, the duration is indefinite. Otherwise, the illusion lasts for a scene, but may be instructed to act in a certain fashion with a Willpower. With a successful Conviction roll, the instructions may be changed by the spirit. Failure means the paper tiger becomes confused, frays and quickly disintegrates.

Anyone whose Dodge Mental Defense Value exceeds the spirit's (Essence + Conviction) recognizes the illusion. Others who are suspicious may spend three Willpower to disbelieve; if the illusion's pointed out, the recognition costs only one Willpower.

#### SHAPECHANGE


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

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit can alter its physical form. Most spirits of a certain type possess unique alternate forms that they can assume. These spirits generally take on some minor useful physical characteristics of the new form, such as attack modes or different Physical Attributes.





These changes don't usually exceed the effects of 1 or 2 Essence spirit Charms. Other spirits are able to assume nearly any shape, and these spirits usually have severe limitations to the powers of those forms that the spirits can assume or suffer from restrictions while in those forms. Almost all shapechanged forms are easily identifiable as the spirit in a new body—those spirits whose Shapechange Charm is useful as a disguise gain a number of automatic successes on their disguise rolls equal to their Conviction. Spirits who possess powerful alternate forms usually have the powerful form as their true form and use Form Reduction Technique (see pp. 154-155) to assume a weaker form.

## RELOCATIONS

### MOVEMENTS OF THE GODS (CONVICTION)

Spirits soar on wings of light and travel Creation as natural forces, sometimes flashing across vast distances in the blink of an eye.

Relocations can target anything the spirit can perceive within (Essence x Conviction) yards.

When these Charms involve moving targets to or from a domain, that function of the Charm can only be used by spirits with physical domains. Spirits who wish to banish foes from an abstract domain, or drag them into it, will need to use other methods—a war god cannot end a war simply by expelling all the soldiers fighting it from “war” or by Banishing the war itself. Any spirit whose domain is affected by a Relocation may prevent the Charm's use with nothing but a moment's concentration, but only if its Essence is higher than the spirit using the Relocation, and only if it knows the Relocation is occurring. Some spirits set Intrusion-Sensing Method (see p. 149) to watch for Relocations.

### BANISH

**Cost:** 12m 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit purifies its domain of an unwanted element, forcing the target through a portal (see p. 157) out of the spirit's domain or sanctum. Banish may not cross the boundaries of realms of existence save to force the target out of a sanctum, and the spirit has no control over where she goes beyond “away.” The portal never deposits the target more than the spirit's (Essence x Conviction x 5) miles away, and always on safe ground. The player of an unwilling target rolls (Stamina + Integrity) to resist, with an external penalty of the god's

### HIGH-ESSENCE RELOCATION GUIDELINES

Normally, Relocations affect only individuals, but powerful spirits may spend temporary Willpower to expand a Relocation's scope. For every dot of Essence that the spirit possesses in excess of the minimum Essence of the Charm used, the spirit may increase the Magnitude of the group that the spirit can move by 1.

([Essence + Conviction] / 2); success protects the character against this Charm for a scene.

Spirits might also banish instances of their domain from their presence.

### CAPTURE

**Cost:** 16m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit opens a portal (see p. 157) and drags the target into a specific place within its domain or sanctum. Capture can pull a target from Creation into a sanctum, but cannot otherwise cross realms of existence. The Charm always deposits targets to the same place. An unwilling target rolls (Stamina + Integrity) to resist, suffering an external penalty of the spirit's ([Essence + Conviction] / 2); success protects her for a scene.

Spirits might also capture instances of their domains.

### EMERGENCY PRAYER RELOCATION

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

**Keywords:** None

**Duration:** Variable

When a spirit receives a prayer, the spirit may invoke Emergency Prayer Relocation to travel to the petitioner in less than a scene, no matter how far away the prayer is. The actual time taken depends on the target's distance from the spirit—generally one tick per 100 miles.

Because the spirit's departure is so hasty, the spirit cannot take its entire Essence along. When the spirit arrives, its Essence score is limited to the number of threshold successes the target scored on her prayer roll, and it cannot use Charms with Essence minimums greater than the new Essence score. Furthermore, the spirit cannot remain divided. After taking (Conviction) actions (or up to [Conviction x 6] minutes if it engages only in behavior with no mechanical effect, such as conversing without using social combat), the spirit returns whence it came. The spirit is aware of the strength of the target's prayer and must decide whether such a hasty move is worth the risk.

The spirit finds dividing its Essence arduous. Every time a spirit uses this Charm in a single scene after the first, the spirit suffers one level of unsoakable aggravated damage.

#### LANDSCAPE TRAVEL

**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Combo-OK

**Duration:** One scene

For every two dots of Essence the spirit possesses, it grants itself one of three bonuses:

- One die to all Dexterity rolls associated with a particular form of movement, to a maximum of the spirit's Conviction.
- Double the speed of a particular form of movement.
- Grants itself a new form of movement, just as fast as it would be on land.

#### LOOM STRIDE

**Cost:** 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Combo-OK

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit replaces its normal Move action with a special Move action that doesn't require it to cross space. This Charm must be invoked on a tick on which the spirit acts. The spirit focuses on a point within (Essence x Conviction) yards, and its player rolls (Wits + Conviction), taking into account vision and cover-based penalties as though the spirit were making a ranged attack. With a successful roll, the spirit instantaneously moves up to (Essence x Conviction) yards. The spirit cannot dash or reflexively move until its next action. Successes on this roll constitute successes on a roll for the spirit to reestablish surprise, which is resisted normally.

#### PORTAL

**Cost:** 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping

**Duration:** Instant

The spirit summons a door to its sanctum or domain, which appears within (Essence x Conviction) yards of the spirit and lasts up to a scene. The spirit may only use this Charm within (Essence x Conviction x 5) miles of the destination. Characters cannot be moved through a portal against their will (with the exception of portals created through the Banish Charm, see p. 156).

#### STORM-SHUTTLE PASSPORT

**Cost:** 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious

**Duration:** (10 - Conviction) ticks

Spirits traveling long distances on official business often rely on storm travel. While a cloud is overhead, the spirit calls down a bolt of lightning that takes the spirit into the cloud; when the cloud reaches the god's destination, the spirit returns to Creation riding the lightning. The spirit must refrain from moving for the Charm's duration. Using this Charm places a certain amount of control—and, therefore, trust—in the hands of the Bureau of Seasons.

Some spirits with Storm-Shuttle Passport learn thaumaturgy that allows them to summon storms and command their movement.

## ENCHANTMENTS

### TRICKERY OF THE GODS (TEMPERANCE)

Spirits befuddle, awe and inspire.

Enchantments override a target's essential belief structure. A high Mental Defense Value is a good defense, but Enchantments simply don't work on targets whose Essence scores are higher than the spirit's.

### GEAS

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

**Keywords:** Crippling, Social

**Duration:** One month

The spirit makes a normal social attack to persuade the target to do something; if the attack is successful, the target may still spend Willpower to shrug off the Mental Influence, but her soul cannot. Every day the target doesn't spend working toward the spirit's stated end, she suffers a Crippling effect. (For many spirits, including most Celestial censors, this drains the target of one Willpower and one bashing health level.) The losses can't be recovered while the target isn't working toward her geas, and only begin coming back a day after she starts. "Working toward her goal" means the character spends more effort than she is used to spending, even on important endeavors, to pursue the geas. She can only stop to eat, sleep or rest for a few hours a day. The target must sacrifice one Willpower and one bashing health level to take any action that significantly distances her from the geas, and she won't recover that damage on that day. At the end of the month, if the target hasn't done her duty, she suffers as if she missed (spirit's Essence) days.

Spirits choose geasa carefully; the wording must be very simple to work at all, and clever targets have twisted geasa in the past. Targets can't be geased to perform deeds that they couldn't reasonably complete within the month. Social attacks that are unacceptable orders will also fail unless the spirit can make a target accept unacceptable orders.





### HARROW THE MIND

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

**Keywords:** Crippling, Illusion, Social

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit convinces the target that something is true, supplementing a (Manipulation + Presence) attack, adding (Temperance) successes. If this social attack is successful, the target finds the impossible possible, then probable, then certain: she's forced to believe the spirit. She sees things the spirit says are there, feels what the spirit says she feels; she may explicitly act on this information however she wishes, but she cannot doubt that it's true. Spending one Willpower allows her to disbelieve the illusion for a single action; once the target has spent as many points of Willpower as the spirit's Essence, she's overcome the Charm's effects completely.

A spirit with Essence 4+ may spend a point of Willpower when invoking this Charm to make its effect Crippling. The illusion persists, in a more manageable form, forcing the target to spend one Willpower each day and during any scene in which the illusion is in any way reinforced to avoid acknowledging the illusion as reality. The effect fades entirely only after the target has successfully resisted the illusion for a number of days equal to the spirit's Essence.

### HOODWINK

**Cost:** Varies; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Social

**Duration:** Instant

With a thousand tricks, the spirit overloads the target's mind. The spirit spends as many motes as it wants. It then counts (motes spent) successes on a special social attack, which can only be made during the tick that an opponent acts, and can only be defended against by the target's Dodge Mental Defense Value. If the spirit is successful, the target suffers a (spirit's Essence) internal penalty to all actions that tick. On a threshold of 5, the target becomes Inactive; at 7, the target forgets where he is and what he was doing, and cannot recall anything about the past scene. This most potent effect usually fades after the target takes (spirit's Essence) actions, but mortals must spend one Willpower before they can begin to recover at all. Finally, until the target's next action, he must make a (Perception + Awareness) roll with a difficulty equal to the threshold to perceive any of the spirit's attacks against him.

The spirit gains one bonus success if this Charm is used within a social timeframe, and another if the target is taking any actions that don't focus on the spirit specifically. Because Hoodwink is only tiny tricks, the



target may spend one Willpower to double his Mental Defense Value against this attack.

### MIND-KNIFE SACRAMENT

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Social, Touch, Training  
**Duration:** Instant

Mind-Knife Sacrament reshapes the target's mind. This Charm works only if the spirit is able to repeatedly and freely touch the target during the social action, which requires either restraining the target, or trust. The spirit issues a social attack using ([Charisma or Manipulation] + Temperance), which only the target's Dodge Mental Defense Value may defend against. Successes may seal off or bestow Abilities, Virtues, Intimacies or memories, or bestow priesthood. Sealed traits cannot be used as prerequisites for Charms, and characters who lack the prerequisites for their Charms lose access to those powers.

- Ability dots may not be raised by more than 1, and may not be caused to exceed the spirit's own. They can be reduced to as low as 0. Ability dots require three successes per dot to add or remove.
- Virtue dots also require three successes per dot to add or remove, but the spirit's own Virtues are not a limitation.
- Intimacies cost one success per scene's worth of building or eroding the Intimacy, and the spirit must possess the Intimacy, or a similar one, to bestow it.
- Memories cost one success per scene's worth of memory. Removing elements from larger sections of time requires five successes. Rewriting life-long memories requires 10 successes.
- Priesthood costs five successes.

Raising a target's traits puts the target into experience debt per normal for training effects.

Large-scale revisions to a target's mind are possible because repeated uses of this Charm are cumulative; however, every success applied to the target saps one Willpower from the target, or deals one unsoakable aggravated level of damage if the target runs out of Willpower. When this Charm is used to lower traits, the effects of this Charm are temporary. Every time the target dreams, and every time she is placed in a new situation in which her old mind has an opportunity to resurface, such as a warrior who has lost Melee wielding a new familiar weapon, the target automatically rolls (Wits + Integrity). Successes on this roll negate the Charm's successes that have been applied to her. Mortals suffer a -1 external penalty to this roll.

The roll for this Charm suffers a cumulative -1 external penalty for every use on a single target. These negated successes still damage the target.

### REGALIA OF AUTHORITY

**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Compulsion, Obvious, Servitude, Social  
**Duration:** One scene

The spirit speaks as a godly commander, socially overwhelming every character who perceives it whose Essence score is not greater than the spirit's own. The mental influence the spirit exerts against such inferiors is unnatural. More importantly, everyone affected immediately gains a normal Intimacy toward worshiping the god, unless his Mental Defense Value is greater than its Temperance. While the Charm remains active, such weak minds even suffer from a Servitude Compulsion effect to honor and serve the god, which can only be resisted at the cost of one Willpower per action. Spending (spirit's Essence) temporary Willpower frees a target from the Compulsion, but not the Intimacy. Finally, the spirit's may substitute its Essence for its Appearance score for the duration of this Charm.

### STOKE THE FLAME

**Cost:** 3m per dot of Magnitude; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Emotion, Social  
**Duration:** One scene


This Charm adds (spirit's Temperance) automatic successes to a social Performance attack designed to provoke an emotion. If the roll is successful or the target is otherwise willing, the Charm induces an unnatural mental influence emotion; this counts as (spirit's Temperance) scenes building or eroding an intimacy defined by the spirit. Furthermore, everyone affected must act on the their induced feelings for the remainder of the scene, unless a target spends one Willpower point every action, in which case the Emotion effect only lasts till she's spent Willpower equal to the spirit's Temperance.

Unresisting targets do as the spirit suggests; those who succumb recover all Willpower spent resisting this Charm (if any) and gain a pool of "Stoked Willpower" equal to the spirit's successes (maximum Temperance). Stoked Willpower is independent of a target's normal Willpower pool, can only be spent on actions relating to the spirit's suggestion and vanishes at the end of the scene.

### SUBTLE WHISPER

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Social  
**Duration:** One scene





A spirit supplementing an attempt at natural mental influence with Subtle Whisper won't obviously be the source of the influence. The spirit might roll to make a target calmer when it sees her enter its temple, for instance. Characters resisting the attempt with one Willpower may attempt to determine the source of this feeling; realizing that a social attack came from a divine source requires success on a (Perception + Occult) check with an external penalty of the spirit's Temperance.

Subtle Whisper may be used by immaterial spirits against material targets.

## INHABITINGS

### POSSESSED BY THE GODS (TEMPERANCE)

Immaterial spirits can go places that material creatures can't, such as into people or objects.

Inhabiting requires a material host, such as a person, object or natural feature. People must be living. Objects must be at least whole enough to function. Natural features must be at least man-sized, but cannot usually exceed the size of a large tree. If a spirit's host becomes unusable—for instance, an elemental dematerializes, a person dies or an object is broken—the spirit is ejected over at least five ticks, during which time the spirit's Inactive. Ejection deals 10 dice of aggravated damage that can only be soaked internally, and probably not at all.

Under normal circumstances, only one spirit may inhabit any potential target, by immaterially touching it and entering the same space that it occupies. Living creatures' souls don't count as possessing spirits for this purpose. Because most Essence 1 spirits can use the Charm Landscape Hide, it can be difficult for a spirit to find a place to inhabit that isn't the spirit's own domain.

Inhabiting spirits are counted as immaterial for the purpose of determining what can affect them. They cannot move independently of their host without ending the Inhabiting. The external soak of the host does not stack with the external soak of the inhabiting spirit.

Inhabiting can only be used while immaterial. Inhabiting spirits are considered material, except that they may continue to perform Inhabiting, and become immaterial if they leave their host.

### ANIMATING MANAGEMENT

**Cost:** 12m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Touch

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit possesses an object, requiring Essence and Temperance scores greater than an artifact's level if the target is an artifact. (Possessed artifacts that require attunement to function still require that attunement.)

The spirit may then activate the object and use it as its designer intended. The spirit may use its own traits to accomplish things from within the object, but Attribute scores are limited to the spirit's Essence, and Abilities are limited to its Temperance. For instance, a spirit inhabiting a daiklave may swing it with ([lower of Dexterity or Essence] + [lower of Melee or Temperance]); the sword's bonuses would still count. A spirit in an Essence cannon could fire the cannon. Spirits possessing armor could walk the empty suits around. For the purposes of this Charm, "an object" needs to be a self-contained unit, but it may consist of multiple components, such as a suit of armor or a magitech artifact.

By spending another 10 motes and one Willpower point, a spirit of Essence 3+ can imbue its possessed object with a certain level of flexibility. This might move the object in weird ways or allow it to be used in a way it wasn't designed to be used.

Spirits possessing objects can be recognized by anyone who can see the immaterial. Another spirit with domain over the inhabited object and higher Essence can eject the possessing spirit just by wishing to, but this takes a scene.

### COMMANDEER

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

**Keywords:** Obvious

**Duration:** Instant

This Charm has two effects. If the spirit touches a host and a successful roll of the spirit's (Essence + Temperance) is made against an external penalty of a possessing spirit's ( $[\text{Essence} + \text{Temperance}] / 2$ ), it may eject the current inhabitant. Second, if this Charm is used while another character is attempting to eject or exercise the spirit from its host, it may activate this Charm to add an external penalty of (spirit's Temperance) to any rolls to do so. Any character who is successfully rebuked through either effect of this Charm by a spirit with a higher Essence than her own loses a number of Willpower points, is knocked back a number of yards and is considered Inactive for a number of actions equal to the difference in Essence scores.

### HOLLOW OUT THE SOUL

**Cost:** 20m; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Crippling, Obvious

**Duration:** One day or instant

The spirit erodes the soul of a creature the spirit's inhabiting. It attacks a part of its host's soul, usually a Virtue or Willpower, and its player rolls (Essence + Temperance), applying an external penalty of (the

host's Essence). If the spirit scores more successes than the rating of the trait the spirit wishes to damage, that trait is reduced by one dot. If this power is used again on the same target within a week, successes from earlier in the week carry over; but once a dot has been lost, accumulated successes vanish.

The traits of an Exalt or similarly fortified creature will return at a rate of one dot per week once the spirit stops hollowing her soul, but mortal traits don't recover without magical aid.

If a spirit possesses at least four more dots of permanent Essence than the spirit's target, the spirit may also attack the host's permanent Essence, but must score (5 x normal) successes to damage that trait. Exalts are immune to this effect.

If the motes powering this Charm are committed for a full day, the spirit works slowly. It may attempt to conceal its actions, represented by a (Manipulation + Temperance) roll, suffering a (host's [Perception + Occult] / 2) external penalty; but if the spirit is successful, the target is unaware of the attack even if one of her traits loses a dot.

Hosts reduced to 0 Willpower can't contest Inhabitations.

#### LANDSCAPE HIDE

**Cost:** 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Touch

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit exists in an object or natural feature. While inhabiting it, the spirit senses only its host and what touches it, and cannot affect its host in any way. Thus tucked away, the spirit can't easily be analyzed; only its existence can be detected, and then only through the use of thaumaturgy or similar powers that examine objects spiritually. Measure the Wind, Essence sight and other such generic powers don't differentiate objects containing spirits using this Charm from those that don't.

#### POSSESSION

**Cost:** 12m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit fills a gap in a mortal soul. While dematerialized, the spirit must "touch" the target and select one of her Virtues; if the spirit's Essence exceeds both the target's Essence and the selected Virtue, then roll the spirit's (Essence + Temperance). This roll suffers an external penalty of the target's (Essence + [higher of selected Virtue or Integrity]). If the spirit uses Possession while or immediately after the target takes an act on an

action that forced him to override a Virtue of 3+ (see **Exalted**, p. 102), that Virtue counts as 2.

If the roll is successful, the spirit may take control of the target's actions whenever it sees fit. The target loses all control. The spirit must use the host's Physical Attributes. The spirit may, but doesn't have to, use the host's voice and senses. Without using Charms, it can't perform physical actions that the host can't. The host retains her attunements, and if the spirit knows how, it may use the host's artifacts. Any physical properties of the host are the spirit's to command, but it can't draw on the host's Essence or use her Charms (Charms that were already active instantly end when the spirit floods into its target).

The player of a host with a permanent Willpower score of 1 or higher can at any time make a (Willpower + Integrity) roll, adding (Essence) successes, in an attempt to regain control from the spirit. The spirit's player resists with a (Willpower + Temperance) roll, adding (Essence) successes. If the spirit wins, it retains control, and the host loses one Willpower point. If the host wins, he gains control for a number of actions equal to the successes scored in excess of the spirit's player's roll, and the spirit loses one Willpower point. If the host scores successes in excess of the spirit's successes equal to the spirit's Temperance, the spirit is ejected. Hosts may not regain Willpower while possessed.

If a spirit uses Possession on a target reduced to zero permanent Willpower (most often through Hollow out the Soul, see p. 160), the Charm's duration becomes indefinite.

#### RIDE

**Cost:** 18m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple


**Keywords:** Obvious, Touch

**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit enters a willing host. The result is often an uncomfortable amalgam of man and spirit vying for consciousness, thought and dominance, but sometimes, a true and beneficial union occurs. If either spirit or host boasts three or more dots of permanent Essence than the other, or they don't have similar positive Intimacies toward each other, the union will be incomplete. Otherwise, after an uninterrupted month of this Charm, the union becomes complete.

In an incomplete union, the partner with the highest Essence dominates, and the gestalt entity has the dominant partner's traits. Only the dominant character may use her Charms, but gains the use of (spirit's Temperance) of the other character's Charms. These are chosen by the spirit when it begins its ride. The dominant character uses the formula that she'd normally use to





compute her Essence pool, but if either character was an Exalt, all their motes become peripheral.

In a complete union, the personalities mix, keeping no secrets from each other. A number of traits equal to the spirit's Temperance use the highest of their two scores—these are the traits with the largest difference between spirit and host, and are never Willpower or Essence. The traits that don't use the higher of the two characters' scores are averaged and rounded up, including Willpower and Essence. Furthermore, the pair may use all their Charms and may even Combo them normally. The team uses the most advantageous of the two formulas for calculating their Essence pool, but if either of the characters was an Exalt, their motes are still all peripheral.

No matter what, both characters retain their Virtues and can channel through either set as usual. Whenever the gestalt entity faces circumstances that challenge Virtues, each partner must check for Virtues influencing behavior separately. A gestalt with two Valor scores each at 4 would have to fail two subsequent Valor checks to stand down from a martial challenge.

In the mists of prehistory, the patron gods of the Dragon Kings merged with the saurian race's heroes to become *olchiliké*, which means "Chosen" in High Holy Speech (this name was later appropriated by mortals and applied to the Exalted). Some gods near Rathess still possess Ride, but it's rare throughout the rest of Creation. The Immaculate Order especially considers this power blasphemy and acts against spirits known to use it.

## TANTRA

### THE HUNGER OF THE GODS (TEMPERANCE)

Spirits devour life with these Charms.

How a spirit sustains itself matters. A spirit's form shifts to match the resonance of the Essence on which it subsists. The changes occur subtly over time, but mindful spirits can see them happening. Weak or easily manipulated spirits might show signs after a season, while stronger spirits remain unchanged for years, even centuries.

### BREAD OF WEAK SPIRIT

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Obvious, Touch  
**Duration:** Instant

The spirit consumes another willing (or Incapacitated) spirit, inflicting up to its Essence in aggravated levels of damage. For every such health level, the cannibalizing spirit converts one lethal health level of damage to bashing or recovers five motes.

Instead of inflicting a level of aggravated damage to the target, a spirit can also drain one Willpower point

or 10 motes. If the spirit cannibalizes a being of higher Essence, the spirit may also recover one Willpower point for every two health levels, but can't bring its own temporary Willpower higher than its Temperance.

It's worth noting that, for the purposes of this Charm, Exaltations and the souls of living humans aren't spirits.

### FRUIT OF LIVING ESSENCE

**Cost:** 3m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Obvious, Touch  
**Duration:** Instant

The spirit touches its target and its player rolls (Essence + Temperance), with an external penalty of (the target's Essence). If the target actively resists, she may add half her permanent Willpower to the external penalty; she can also consent, and thereby remove all penalties. Every success steals three motes of Essence, which go right to the spirit. If it scores three or more successes, it may steal one Willpower point instead of motes.

A spirit stealing from a creature without an Essence pool still gains Essence or Willpower; the creature just pays the cost in other ways. She suffers a Crippling or Sickness effect that inflicts at least an internal penalty equal to the spirit's successes. This effect vanishes within a day from magically fortified creatures, but mortals must be treated normally. What sort of Crippling or Sickness effect the Charm inflicts depends on the spirit.

### MEAT OF BROKEN FLESH

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious  
**Duration:** Instant

The spirit supplements an attack with this Charm, and if that attack deals any health levels of damage, the target loses (spirit's Essence) motes. If the attack inflicted lethal or aggravated damage, the spirit gains all those motes, but if it dealt bashing damage, the spirit only gains half those motes. Either way, the spirit can't gain more than (Essence + Temperance) motes from Meat of Broken Flesh during one normal action.

### SPICE OF CUSTODIAL DELECTATION

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Permanent  
**Keywords:** None  
**Duration:** Permanent

During any scene in which the spirit's domain receives proper care, the spirit gains a mote of Essence. This can only be invoked if the care is performed by the spirit or by creatures within (its Essence x 100) yards, and those creatures' qualifications matter: A priest's ministrations net the spirit one mote for the scene.





An occultist nets the spirit one mote per dot of Occult the occultist possesses. A group of otherwise unqualified individuals net the god one mote per dot of the group's Magnitude.

#### WINE OF INFINITE HEARTBREAK

**Cost:** 1m; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Emotion, Social, Stackable  
**Duration:** One week

The spirit flavors a mortal's Essence with divine power and drinks in the nectar of her joy. Repeated targets of this Charm become enthralled with the parasitic spirit, longing for the magical feeling of power and completion.

This Charm supplements a social attack designed to build an Intimacy toward the spirit. If the attack is successful, the spirit invests a mote into the target for one week, and cannot retrieve the mote early. In exchange, it regains (target's Essence x 3) motes. (The spirit can stack the effect to receive [target's Essence x 3] motes for every mote still in the target, to a maximum of [Temperance] motes.) If the target has an Intimacy toward the spirit, the spirit also regains one Willpower point.

While this Charm is active, the target is counted as having at least as many scenes devoted to building

an Intimacy toward the spirit as the number of motes invested in her. If the spirit has more motes in a target than her Conviction, she cannot even begin to break her commitment to the Intimacy while the Charm lasts.

Each victim's hourly mote respiration rate is reduced by the number of motes invested in her. If this would bring her respiration rate to below 0 (as is always the case with mortals), she counts her permanent Willpower as one lower for each point below 0. Finally, if the target has an Intimacy to the spirit, and the spirit achieves a threshold on the original social attack greater than (target's Temperance), the target also suffers from an Emotion effect that forces her to spend two Willpower per day to avoid feeling so devoted to the spirit that she's practically its slave.


#### AEGIS

##### SHIELDS OF THE GODS (VALOR)

Spirits do what they can to stay immortal.

##### BLESSED (ELEMENT) BODY

**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Elemental, Obvious  
**Duration:** Instant



The blessing of an Elemental Dragon is upon the spirit, for harmful elemental energies become beautiful dancing dragons, butterflies or simple streams of power as they course into its hungry chakra, which glow in acceptance. The spirit has access to all of the benefits of Elemental Rejuvenation (see p. 170), and this Charm supersedes that power. Furthermore, if the spirit would be damaged by an effect of its chosen element, the spirit may spend two motes to perfectly and completely negate the damage from that effect. For every three dice or one health level of raw damage that the effect would have inflicted, the spirit instead heals one level of damage or regains one mote.

#### DESTINY SPONSORSHIP

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Obvious  
**Duration:** Indefinite

The spirit has reached an accord with destiny that shields the spirit from most casual troubles. This sacred contract imposes a an external penalty equal to the spirit's (Essence + Valor) to most rolls which could be opposed by the spirit's Resistance, Integrity, or Dodge, even if the spirit is unaware of the effect. The spirit also gains soak equal to its (Essence + Valor) against most lethal or bashing damage. The only things that bypass this power are Essence-enhanced effects intended to affect the spirit specifically and the machinations of character with a Destiny (see **Scroll of the Monk**, pp. 151-152) greater than the spirit's ([Essence + Valor] / 2). This Charm has no effect during Calibration.

The Destiny Sponsorship contract involves a number of taboos and restrictions equal to the spirit's Essence, which she must always observe. Any spirit who fails to observe these taboos loses the effects of this Charm and cannot reactivate it until Calibration.

Any spirit requested to state the conditions of its Destiny Sponsorship in Old Realm must immediately and honestly do so, lest the spirit lose the benefits.

#### DIVINE PREROGATIVE

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Permanent  
**Keywords:** None  
**Duration:** Permanent

Per Righteous Lion Defense (see **Exalted**, p. 199), save that the Intimacy must involve a material object, a creature weaker than the spirit, another spirit (to whom Creation believes the spirit owes fealty) or the spirit's domain.

#### MATERIAL TRIBULATION DIVESTMENT

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious  
**Duration:** One action

The spirit briefly dematerializes, avoiding material consequences and removing material afflictions. The instant this Charm is used, the spirit dematerializes. On the tick the Charm is used, its action switches to Inactive. During this time, all effects not designed to affect immaterial being pass through it harmlessly. Ongoing Crippling, Poison and Sickness effects not specifically designed to affect immaterial spirits become heavy vestments, imbedded weapons and sucking leeches on the spirit's immaterial form. It automatically knows which hindrances relate to which effects and may remove a number of them equal to its Valor. Effects created through magic resist being cast off, and the spirit must score successes equal to the Essence rating of the effect on a roll of (Essence + Valor). Failure not only means that the spirit cannot remove the item, but also that the spirit has spent the rest of its action trying. Attempts to remove effects backed by an Essence score higher than the spirit's automatically fail. At the conclusion of this Charm, the spirit rematerializes in the same place that it was before.

If the immaterial items created by this Charm are replaced on the spirit, then their effects resume.

#### OX-BODY TECHNIQUE

**Cost:** —; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Permanent  
**Keywords:** Stackable  
**Duration:** Permanent

The spirit gains extra health levels (one -1 and one -2). This Charm may be purchased (spirit's Essence) times.

#### SHEATHING THE MATERIAL FORM

**Cost:** 1m per 1B/halfL; **Mins:** Essence 2;  
**Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Combo-Basic  
**Duration:** One scene

For every two motes spent, the spirit increases its lethal soak and hardness by 1 and bashing soak by 2. A spirit may spend no more than (Essence x Valor) motes on this Charm.

#### SYMBOL OF INVINCIBLE AUTHORITY

**Cost:** 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5; **Type:** Simple  
**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Obvious  
**Duration:** One scene

A glowing rune symbolizing the spirit's domain appears surrounding it, announcing to all things its divine authority over its concept. The spirit becomes effectively immune to its domain. Poison, Sickness and Crippling effects originating from the spirit's domain all mean nothing. The spirit's even immune to such effects caused only in part by its domain, unless they're backed by an

Essence greater than its Valor. Raw damage related to the spirit's domain is reduced to 0 before any added by Charms. If the spirit's domain has a social component, the spirit may create a temporary magical Intimacy involving its domain. Any mental influence opposing this Intimacy counts as an unacceptable order.

## CURSES

### WRATH OF THE GODS (VALOR)

Spirits curse their nemeses and battle foes, of course, but most often use these Charms to show displeasure with a mistaken follower.

A cursing spirit must normally be within (Essence x 100) yards of Essence 1 targets, but may be further away if it has an arcane link. Essence 2+ targets must be within (Essence) yards. Some spirits take Supplemental versions of Curses that affect their natural attacks or other offensive actions.

Like Blessings, Curses do not require a roll to enact. However, a spirit attempting to curse a character with a higher Essence score than its own increases the minimum Essence of the Charm by the difference between the characters' Essence score.

Furthermore, targets who defy the spirit may spend one Willpower to attempt to shrug off the effect, but may attempt this only once for each effect. This spiritual resistance requires only a successful Essence roll, but the roll suffers a -1 external penalty for every point the spirit's Essence exceeds the target's. A particular curse may only be attempted once per scene per target.

Curses affecting Essence 1 creatures continue to affect them for the duration of the Charm or until the spirit calls the effect off, even if the spirit releases the committed Essence. However, they only affect Essence 2+ creatures while the spirit keeps the necessary motes committed.

Some spirits may issue Curses that deactivate under certain conditions.

Different Curses with similar effects don't stack.

### CLAWS OF THE ANGRY DRAGON

**Cost:** 3m+, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The spirit removes powers such as those bestowed by the blessing Touch of Divinity (see p. 146). The spirit doesn't steal Essence or Willpower; the spirit simply drains it.

This Charm can't unawaken a target's Essence. Touch of Divinity doesn't actually awaken Essence; the Charm simply grants its target power that helps her awaken on her own.

## HIGH-ESSENCE CURSE GUIDELINES

Spirits may extend curse duration and/or expand the effect to a group using the same guidelines as Blessings (see p. 144). For Curses, simply replace instances of "Compassion" with "Valor." Unlike Blessings, Curses fall dormant for a month following the death of a target, and only at that month's end pass on to the target's heir.

Powerful spirits may enact a permanent curse just as they might a permanent blessing. Spirits must place a condition on these, though; the only way for targets to end such eternal Curses is to fulfill that condition. A permanent curse with an impossible-to-fulfill end condition immediately ceases to be.

### DREADED EMBRACE OF MUNDANITY

**Cost:** 15m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

By interrupting the connection between the target and the source of her power, the spirit may negate the dice that a particular one of the target's Excellencies would add at a cost of one mote per die. The spirit can't negate more Excellency-added dice than its Essence, and the target can't spend more motes than she would normally be able to (i.e., the target's dice pool cap is reduced by every mote the spirit spends). The spirit may counteract an Excellency (Valor) times with a single invocation of this curse.

Blocking power to an Exalted Essence is like smothering a fire by closing your fist around it, and deals to the spirit one die of armor-bypassing aggravated damage for every die the spirit attempts to negate.

### MALEDICTION

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

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target receives a one-die penalty to rolls related to a certain task (or all rolls, in the case of All-Encompassing Malediction).

### PLAGUE OF MENACES


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

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

The target is marked as the spirit's enemy (though the sigil may only be visible to senses that penetrate





the immaterial). All of the spirit's subordinates treat the mark as an order to harm the target. Some spirits resent this Charm, but they must still obey it. Non-subordinates who have reason to support the spirit's agenda, and any spirits looking for an excuse to make the target's life difficult or have fun at the target's expense may also participate in the curse.

The Division of Endings has authority over five plagues: diseased rats, poisonous amphibians, hungry locusts, feral dogs and ichneumon. These creatures take great joy in harassing targets of this Charm and all those around him. Most spirits with this Charm know how to call down at least one of these menaces.

### SCOURGE

**Cost:** Varies, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

Scorge functions as per Endowment (see p. 146), save that this Charm removes positive traits, bestows negative traits or removes the effects of a Charm. For traits, the cost to remove them is identical to the cost to Endow them. For physical alterations, all positive effects are switched with their equivalent negative effects. The spirit may only remove the use or effects of a Charm that the spirit can itself use. If the spirit removes the effects of a Charm, those effects are negated for as long as the Charm would last if the spirit used the Charm upon the target. However, spirits Scourge targets of traits they don't possess.

### TASTE OF MORTALITY

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping, Touch

**Duration:** One scene

This Curse removes such abilities as those bestowed by the blessing Touch of Eternity (see p. 147), and can make targets without those abilities considerably weaker.

### TOUCH OF SATURN

**Cost:** 3m+, 1wp+; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Obvious, Shaping

**Duration:** One scene

For every three motes the spirit spends, its target suffers one lethal health level of damage or two bashing health levels of damage. Spirits of Essence 4+ can change the damage from lethal to aggravated by adding one Willpower point per level. The spirit may spend no more than ([lower of Essence or Valor] x 3) motes on this Charm.

The Touch of Saturn can inflict Crippling, Poison or Sickness effects. To determine the mote cost, each counts

as a number of lethal health levels equal to a Poison's Toxicity, a Sickness's Untreated Morbidity or a Crippling effect's relative seriousness, as decided by the Storyteller on a scale of 1 to 5. Unusually powerful effects may count as up to 10 and are considered supernatural.

Aggravated damage and supernatural Crippling, Poison or Sickness effects definitely vanish when this Charm's duration expires; other effects might not.

## EDGES

### STRIKES OF THE GODS (VALOR)

Spirits may not often interfere with Creation, but when they must fight, they're fearsome foes even of the Exalted.

Unless otherwise stated, Supplemental Edges affect only a spirit's natural attacks and those made with its divine panoply (see p. 169).

Edges can only be performed while material.

### BANE WEAPON

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious

**Duration:** Instant

Attacks supplemented by this Charm do aggravated damage. If the spirit's attack is useful against objects, it instead ignores the object's soak and Hardness. The limited nature of this Charm deserves special mention, as aggravated damage is particularly dangerous. There is no All-Encompassing Bane Weapon Charm; every spirit with Bane Weapon can inflict aggravated damage only upon a narrow range of creatures. For example, the demon Octavian (see *Exalted*, p. 309) may deal aggravated damage to earth elementals. Groups such as "all elementals" and "all mortals" are too broad for this Charm to encompass, though "all redheads," "all djala" or even "all men" would be possible. This Charm cannot distinguish between the Exalted and the unExalted, so no spirit has a Bane Weapon Charm that deals damage to all Exalted in general, all Solars, all Dragon-Blooded or the like. Generally speaking, this Charm is not used to represent increased competence against a particular opposed group; instead, this Charm is the manifestation of a grudge or vendetta that lies orthogonal to the spirit's assigned purpose.

If the spirit's attack is useful against objects, attacks supplemented by this Charm instead ignore the object's soak and hardness.

### ESSENCE BITE

**Cost:** Varies; **Mins:** Essence 1; **Type:** Simple

**Keywords:** Combo-Basic, Obvious

**Duration:** One scene



The spirit does damage to every creature that strikes the spirit, touches it or is struck by it. The Charm can deal bashing damage at a cost of one mote per die, lethal damage for two motes per die or aggravated damage for four motes per die. Lethal damage requires the spirit to have at least two Essence. Aggravated damage requires four Essence. No more than  $(\text{Essence} \times 2) + \text{Valor}$  motes may be spent per invocation.

A more potent effect—inflicting health levels rather than dice, and bypassing armor—would raise the cost by one mote per health level and the Charm's minimum Essence by 1. If the damage takes the form of an element, this Charm carries the Elemental keyword.

#### PARALYZE

**Cost:** 6m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious, Variable  
**Duration:** Instant

The spirit converts an attack's damage into a Crippling effect, a Poison effect, a Sickness effect, a wound penalty, a Shaping effect or an unnatural mental influence (pick one). Until the spirit's next action, all the target's non-reflexive dice pools are reduced by (spirit's Essence), or one of her traits is reduced by (spirit's Essence/2). For every three dots of  $(\text{Essence} + \text{Valor})$

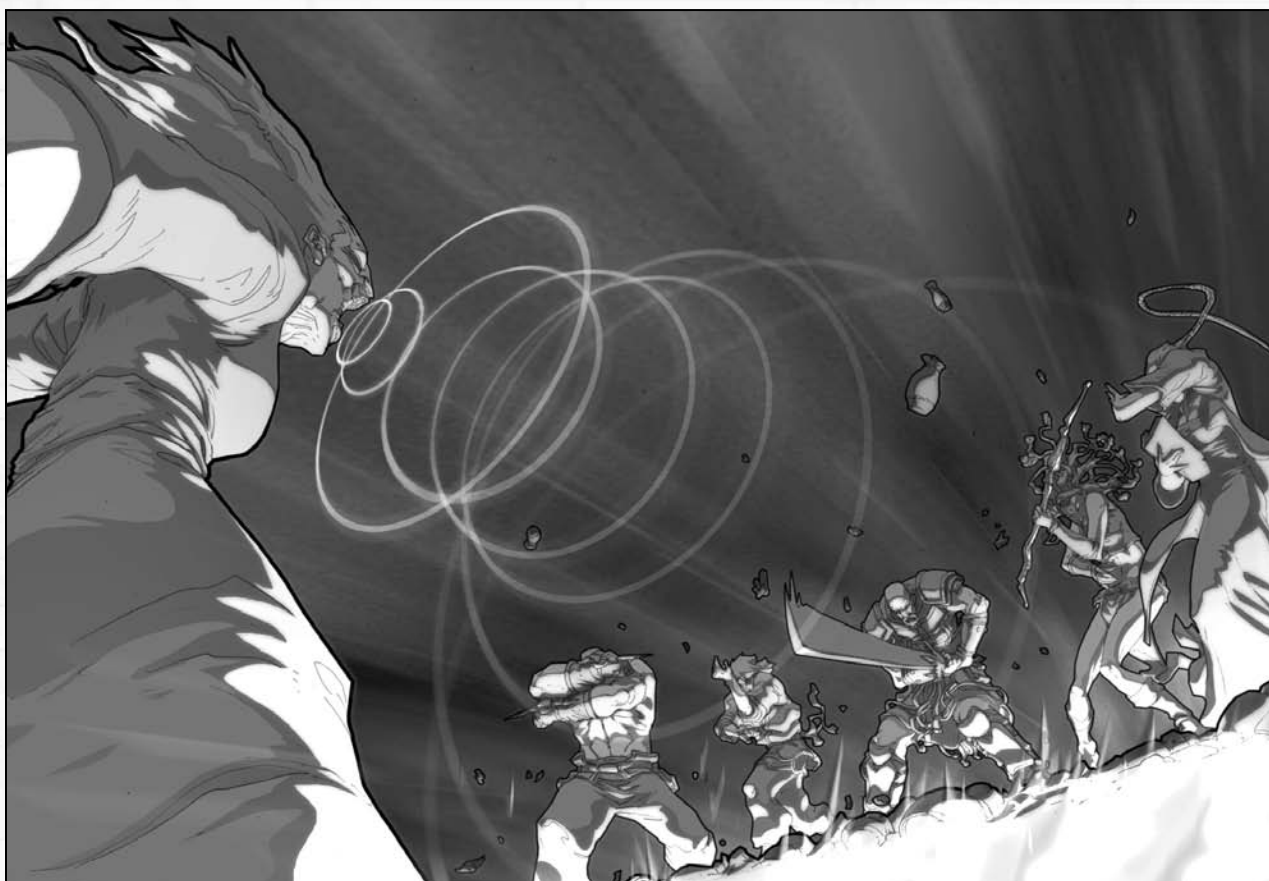
the spirit possesses, it may include an additional reason for the effect in the attack: for instance, a spirit with 6 (Essence + Valor) might inflict paralysis that's both a Sickness and a Poison effect.


A target immune to all the associated keywords, or with an Essence higher than the spirit's, is immune to its version of Paralyze. Other targets resist Paralyze with a successful (Stamina + Resistance) roll, with an external penalty of the spirit's Valor.

#### SHATTER

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 4; **Type:** Extra Action  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious  
**Duration:** Instant

The spirit unleashes a cacophonous shout, a crushing wave of energy or some other all-encompassing attack on the area around it. The blast affects all creatures and/or objects within  $(\text{Essence} \times 10)$  yards, and is either unblockable or undodgable. Whichever mode of defense works requires a Defense Value equal to the spirit's  $(\text{Valor} + \text{Any Attribute})$  to avoid. Damage from the attack is equal to the spirit's  $(\text{Essence} + \text{Valor} + \text{Attribute})$ . This damage is usually bashing, but spirits of Essence 5+ may spend an additional five motes and one Willpower to convert the damage to





piercing bashing or lethal damage. Shatter is a natural attack. If the spirit uses other Charms to supplement Shatter, count it as a number of attacks equal to the spirit's  $([Essence + Valor + Attribute] / 2)$ .

#### SHATTERED ADAMANT ATTACK

**Cost:** 10m; **Mins:** Essence 5; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious  
**Duration:** Instant

Attacks supplemented by this Charm affect the material world. Subtract 5 from the spirit's effective Essence when enhancing the attack—the spirit cannot invoke other Charms that require a minimum Essence higher than the modified figure, and those Charms use the modified figure to calculate their effects.

Unlike other Edges, Shattered Adamant Attack can obviously be used while immaterial; the attack itself becomes material before it begins, though, which might allow the target a roll to notice it. This also means other Edges can enhance it. If a spirit invokes this Charm more than (Valor) times in one scene, every additional use inflicts an unsoakable aggravated health level upon the spirit as its substance is lost in the rapid transition to materiality and back.

#### SPIRIT-CUTTING

**Cost:** 2m; **Mins:** Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious  
**Duration:** Instant

Attacks supplemented by this Charm affect the immaterial.

#### WORDS OF POWER

**Cost:** 5m; **Mins:** Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive  
**Keywords:** Combo-OK, Obvious  
**Duration:** One scene

The spirit rolls (Manipulation + Valor) to use its words as a physical attack against any creature it could socially attack. This attack does a base bashing damage of (Valor) in health levels; successes add damage dice, as normal; the whole can only be soaked naturally. For every health level of damage the target suffers, she incurs a -1 internal penalty to all actions or a -2 internal penalty to actions with a specific Ability for (spirit's Essence x 3) ticks.

## OTHER SPIRIT TRAITS

Not all spirit powers are Charms. Permanent facets of natural form, such as Fakharu's dragon hide, the terrible maws of the leech gods and Zhuzhiao's great mass and many tentacles are just that—natural traits some spirits possess. Likewise, the gods' ability to hear

prayers is not a Charm. Spirits cannot “teach” these traits to Eclipses or Moonshadows; there's nothing to teach. The most obvious of these traits provide armor or methods of attack or movement. Often, traits other than armor function according to the rules for the mutation matching the trait's description. See **Exalted**, pp. 288–290, **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II—The Wyld**, pp. 144–148, and **The Manual of Exalted Power—The Lunars**, pp. 206–209, for mutations you can use to represent the unique forms of spirit you create. Natural elements of spiritual form that adhere to the rules for individual mutations aren't actual mutations, and powers that remove mutations can't remove these traits from spirits. They also tend to appear fully integrated into the spirit's form, unlike mutations inflicted by the Wyld, which often appear crude and inelegant.

(Note that spirits can be twisted by the Wyld just as mortals can; mutations inflicted by Wyld exposure are normal mutations and follow all the rules for affliction and removal, etc.)

Some spirits possess natural armor, representing tough hides or unusual forms. This armor is unrelated to divine panoplies (see p. 169) or the Sheathing the Material Form Charm (see p. 164). While an Eclipse can learn Sheathing the Material Form and anyone can (theoretically) steal a god's panoply, natural armor is an intrinsic spiritual trait, and the spirit cannot usually teach it or lose it.

#### HEARING PRAYERS

Most gods' existences are filled with the constant requests of their worshipers. It's intrinsic to a god's nature that the god hear prayers sent to its domain. They form a sort of a painless melody within its Essence, a familiar, constant hum that the god feels somewhat in the way a person would feel a song stuck in the back of her mind.

Most of the time, though, a god won't recognize a prayer's source. The mortal's voice will be lost in the sea of infinite notes playing out the prayer song. With concentration (and the expenditure of a Willpower point), a god can sometimes listen closely to pick out a single prayer, especially if the petitioner is desperate. Gods with high Compassion and Perception are best at this, but mortals can rarely rely on a common prayer to satisfy their desires, for most deities—even kind ones—simply don't feel the need to seek out mayfly mortals to help.

Sometimes, one voice rises above the rest. The prayer rules on page 132 of **Exalted** explain how a

mortal might achieve this end. If the prayer roll is successful, the god can't help but notice the request. Such prayers are loud and clear enough that deities can distinguish the petitioner's general wishes—but prayers don't arrive in words or specific thoughts, just emotionally charged desires.

Each prayer forms a channel to the deity receiving it; the god can then use the prayer as an arcane link, sending Charms to (or targeting sorcery at) distant worshipers. Characters who fall out of favor with powerful gods should be careful what they wish for, lest their desires allow the angered spirit to enact a terrible retribution.

Since elementals' domains aren't regulated by the prayer-channeling powers of Heaven, elementals cannot hear prayers or use them as arcane links.

### THE MANDATE OF SUBORDINATION

As stated on page 295 of *Exalted*, each spirit may spend a temporary Willpower to give an irresistible order to spirits under its command. This effect constitutes a powerful unnatural mental influence Compulsion effect, which can conceivably be resisted (though it almost never is). Resisting spirits must pay one temporary Willpower per dot of Essence that the spirit giving the order possesses greater than their own. Spending the necessary Willpower allows a subordinate to resist all orders from a given greater spirit within that scene.

### DIVINE PANOPLIES

A powerful spirit can expect Heaven to issue her one or more artifacts that are intimately tied to her domain or nature. These items are known as the spirit's divine panoply. The spirit caretaker does not have to spend any motes to attune those artifacts, and she may do so instantly, reflexively and completely anytime she comes in contact with them. The items automatically count as being owned by the spirit. The spirit finds her divine panoply's use natural—divine panoply armor, for instance, carries no fatigue value for the spirit for whom the armor's intended.

Most artifacts in divine panoplies range from Artifact rating 2 to 4. The sum of the artifacts' ratings is usually equal to the appropriate Essence rating for the domain's caretaker—even if the spirit has greater or lesser Essence than that rating.

Otherwise, the artifacts in a divine panoply are normal artifacts. They incorporate magical materials, and anyone else can use the artifacts as if they were otherwise unremarkable. A number of daiklaves

### PRIESTHOOD

Priesthood is dedication to a single god. Many gods ask that their priests perform regular religious tasks, observe taboos or practice a certain philosophy; others don't. Either way, the process of becoming a priest to a particular god usually requires the expenditure of five experience points (or one bonus point during character creation), which are dedicated to becoming what the god needs.

A priest has a much easier time reaching her god than other mortals. She receives a one point of difficulty reduction on all prayer rolls to her deity (see *Exalted*, p. 132). Furthermore, gods can tell whether particular prayers comes from their priests, and so can often tell whether a particular character who prays to her is a priest.

There are usually conditions that could revoke a character's priesthood, such as worshipping competing spirits, failing to observe a taboo or simply ceasing to care; but priesthood is not under the spirit's control. The quality belongs to the follower and her actions.

Zenith Caste Solars, Day Caste Abyssals and No Moon Lunars are always considered priests of every god. Sidereals are considered priests of any god whose domain falls within the associations of an astrological college into which they've been initiated. (This may require some Storyteller arbitration. We advise leniency.)


used by the Exalted started out as belonging to a god's panoply.

A god can only have one divine panoply at a time. If she loses it, Heaven will be unable to issue her a replacement unless the first is destroyed.

### ELEMENTAL POWERS

*Exalted*, page 302, describes powers unique to elementals. However, the core book then goes on to describe one of those powers (Dematerialize) as a Charm. For clarity, the rules for those powers are revised here. Though Dematerialize is unique to elementals, it is a Charm, examined in more detail on page 142. Elementals can teach Dematerialize to Eclipse and Moonshadow Caste Exalted. The rest are not Charms, and Eclipses and Moonshadows cannot learn them. All elementals possess Elemental Expression and





Elemental Rejuvenation, unless otherwise described. Only some elementals possess Dragon's Suspire. These descriptions supersede the descriptions in **Exalted**.

(Readers familiar with **Exalted**'s previous edition will recall a broader array of elemental powers. Those powers that aren't unique abilities such as the garda bird's Immolation have been folded into the general set of spirit Charms—few were sufficiently elemental in nature to warrant denying them as potential abilities for gods.)

### DRAGON'S SUSPIRE

Some elementals (most famously, the lesser elemental dragons) can make a ranged attack that emanates from their bodies, usually in the form of breath. This effect might be a gout of flame, a rain of splinters, a thunderclap, an explosion of rock, a freezing fountain of water or any other appropriate effect. Dragon's Suspire is effectively a mode of attack that costs five motes and one Willpower point to use. By default, an elemental using this attack takes a Speed 6 and Defense Value -1 action to exhale a burst of elemental force 10 yards long and five yards wide. Every individual within the blast is subject to an attack with an Accuracy equal to the elemental's (Dexterity + [highest of Athletics, Archery or Thrown]) and a damage of 4L. Extra successes on the attack add dice to the damage roll per normal. Some elementals possess versions of Dragon's Suspire with altered traits, as noted in their descriptions.

### ELEMENTAL EXPRESSION

All elementals can expend their own Essence to affect or control natural phenomena of their own elements. A mote of Essence reflexively spent either doubles or halves the effects of any natural phenomenon, including heat, wind, fog, rain, thunder, undertows, flames and earthquakes. These effects may amplify a natural effect until it can cause damage to material creatures, as described on **Exalted**, p. 131. The resulting environmental hazard has a damage of (the number of motes spent)/minute and a Trauma of 2L. The elemental can also amplify an existing hazard (including a hazard created with Affinity [Element] Control) through use of this ability, provided another elemental has not already done the same: Elemental Expression adds one to the hazard's Damage per mote spent, as well as making that damage lethal and adding the L tag to the hazard's Trauma. Furthermore, the elemental can render an existing hazard less severe (every mote spent decreases the hazard's damage by 1). The effects of this power last for as long as the elemental remains in the vicinity and keeps the motes committed. No elemental may spend more than one mote on this

power per dot of Essence the elemental possesses on any given hazard, or create or enhance through this ability a hazard with a radius larger than (the elemental's Essence x5) yards. Elementals with insufficient Essence to enhance the effect of a large pre-existing hazard may opt to enhance only part of it.

Elemental Expression represents only the most base command over a given element. Elementals with greater control over the elements of Creation often possess the Affinity (Element) Control Charm (see pp. 151-152).

### ELEMENTAL REJUVENATION

All elementals can rejuvenate themselves when in contact with the raw element with which they are aligned. When an elemental comes into contact with a naturally occurring instance of its element, the elemental may take a Speed 3 and Defense Value -2 action to heal one level of damage or regain one mote. This action may not be part of a flurry.

### UNIQUE SPIRIT POWERS

Aside from the powers elementals possess, certain spirits possess their own unique powers that aren't precisely Charms. The garda bird (see pp. 117-119) can immolate itself without permanently dying, for instance. Also, the Ocean Father in **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. II—The West** cannot be killed save by the dagger Black Depths Foretold (or creatures outside fate). These powers are called out as unique in their descriptions. As they're not actually Charms, Eclipses, Moonshadows and God-Bloods can't learn these powers.

### DESIGNING AND RUNNING SPIRITS

Far more spirits inhabit Creation than could ever be detailed in a hundred books. The best way to present them is to provide guidelines for creating them. Here, then, are just such guidelines.

It's important to remember what "guideline" means. This section presents formulas for deriving a spirit's Attributes, Charms and other traits from its Essence and Virtues. These formulas are a baseline from which to deviate. Far more spirits vary from these formulas than adhere to them. Some spirits may possess unusually high Attributes at the expense of the number of Charms they know. Others may simply be inexplicably more or less powerful than they might seem. Take the formulas into account, but don't feel confined by them.

What the formulas are more useful for is determining spiritual change. If a spirit gains a dot of Cult, the traits derived from the spirit's Cult score should probably



change accordingly, even if it didn't start with Cult-derived traits adhering to the formulas. This change doesn't occur immediately—it can take anywhere from seasons to decades—but it happens eventually.

### ATTRIBUTES AND ABILITIES

A spirit often possesses Attribute dots equal to  $([Essence \times 3] + [Cult \times 3] + [Sum \text{ of } Virtues \times 2])$ . These can be divided any way the Storyteller chooses; spirits are much more likely to have very high or very low scores in certain Attributes than mortal creatures are. A spirit with Strength 5, for instance, isn't particularly unusual. Rarely will any of a spirit's Attribute scores exceed  $(Essence + 4)$ .

Most spirits spring into existence with dots in Abilities they're predisposed to. Rare would be the god of war without more than a few dots of War! Over the course of their existences, spirits can even pick up and forget Abilities. Generally, though, spirits have sufficient dots in Abilities they use over the course of their existences, and shockingly little skill at anything else.

### CHARMS AND COMBOS

A spirit possesses a minimum number of Charms equal to its Willpower, and generally possesses a number of Charms equal to  $([Essence \times 2] + [Cult \times 2] + [the \text{ sum of } Virtues])$ . The specific Charms the spirit knows can change. Sometimes, spirits' powers simply evolve over time; most gain and lose a few Charms over the centuries, as Creation itself changes. A spirit will almost always have at least one Charm associated with a particular Virtue per dot of that Virtue.

Spirits who learn supernatural martial arts or sorcery (see p. 17) normally retain those Charms indefinitely, and learn them in addition to their spirit Charms. Divine martial artists must learn Combos to effectively combine their spirit Charms with their martial arts Charms... but since spirit Storyteller characters don't develop through experience, it's up to the Storyteller how many such Combos the spirit knows.

### VIRTUES AND WILLPOWER

The ephemeral substance of a spirit is not quite like that of the solid world, and it is influenced by its Virtues in a much more profound way than that of a mortal or Exalt. Certain types of spirits are predisposed to certain Virtues, but Virtues are still a unique part of a spirit's personality. A spirit's Virtues determine what types of Charms she has an affinity for, and contribute greatly a spirit's temporal power. Approached sociologically, this means spirits with high Virtues are more likely to stand out, break out of their station and generally contribute to stories.

If Essence is a spirit's blood, Willpower is the spirit's bones. Its Willpower score is an effective measure of how long the spirit can sustain itself in the face of social or physical assault. A high Willpower is especially necessary for spirits who wish to maintain any level of independence from their superiors, since they must spend Willpower to resist superiors' orders and will then have difficulty regaining it. **Exalted**, page 295, presents an array of ways spirits can regain spent Willpower points.

### ESSENCE

As spirits are woven into the Loom of Fate, they emerge into existence with an ordained amount of power. If the spirit's domain drastically gains or loses importance, a spirit's Essence score will likely go up or down—though it may take a while to change. Essence is the most direct measure of a spirit's power. It's not just spirits' only Charm prerequisite, but usually determines the power and scope of their effects. A spirit of low Essence will be a minor functionary with little real power, even if her Abilities and Virtues are extraordinary; but one with high Essence is capable of altering the world in the blink of an eye. However, even if the importance of a spirit's domain shifts, the spirit generally won't lose more than two dots of Essence, and a spirit of Essence 2+ won't ever fall below Essence 2.


As **Exalted**, pages 294-295, says, spirits have only one mote pool, equal to  $([Essence \times 10] + [Willpower \times 5])$ . This is not a guideline; spirits gain larger mote pools through the Charm Essence Plethora (see p. 142).

### MOTIVATION AND NATURE

Motivation is usually what links a deity to its domain; a spirit's born with a Motivation that encourages the spirit to follow its purpose. To mortals, the Motivation of a god would seem more like an obsession or a mysteriously inevitable direction in its life. Deities can change Motivation, but such incidents occur under none but the strangest circumstances, usually when the being's domain shifts radically or its perspective is dramatically redefined.

Elementals, though they resemble gods in most other ways, interact differently with their domains. They spring into existence when an elemental imbalance warps the Loom of Fate in a certain way. The creatures begin life with a Motivation and domain defined by that imbalance, but as they experience the world's other elements and the Loom weaves away from the circumstances that produced them, they become more and more independent. Their domains are assigned by automatic forces of Creation, rather than Heaven,





and their purpose is largely to exist (thereby expressing certain elemental truths) rather than oversee (like gods, who regulate the world). This isn't to say that no elementals regulate parts of Creation, but they usually don't actually *have* to unless they've been assigned a station in one of the spiritual Bureaus of Heaven. (The Wind Masters, pp. 90-93, are an example of this, as are all Celestial censors.) Elementals are hence more flexible in outlook and action than other spirits, and change Motivation far more frequently than gods.

A god's nature should be unique. Gods who've served in the same position for a long time usually have a nature tied very closely to domain and come off as somewhat one-dimensional creatures as a result. This is because the Primordials created the gods to be effective first and foremost, and their knowledge of the nature of Essence allowed them much accuracy when creating new beings. Gods who've changed positions a lot since the dawn of the First Age and gods who've sprung into existence since after the Primordials were defeated often have natures tangentially or orthogonally related to their domains and are much more complex as a result. Amoth City-Smiter, the Sub-Director of Bribery and Finance in Heaven's Bureau of Humanity, began his existence as the god of tumbled ruins (and he still counts that amongst his titles). He now applies the attitudes of his original city-destroying monster domain and nature to his new station as a bureaucrat, and is more interesting as a character than would be a god of bribery and finance totally defined by bribery and finance. Ahlat, Southern God of War and Cattle, began his existence as the god of bull-walrus mating duels in the Far North, and after he was made god of cattle in the South as a reward for leading a contingent of angry bull-walruses in defense against Creation's first major Fair Folk incursion, he expressed his nature as a god of both fecundity and violence by first teaching mortals how to domesticate cattle (introducing humanity to animal domestication and agriculture in the process) and then how to kill each other over the herds they gathered.

By contrast, Han-Tha, Ghoul King and Eater of the Dead, the god of cannibalistic decay who lurks around Rathess, has *always* been a god of cannibalistic decay, and isn't much more than a horrible cannibal monster god. The leech gods are likewise primitive. Creation has room for gods of all different depths.

When designing a spirit's nature, ask yourself, "Has this spirit always been this way?" Did the god always serve in its current position, or was it promoted from another role? Did the lesser elemental dragon spring forth fully

formed, or did it begin life as a simpler elemental? As immortal or just long-lived beings, spirits can have a lot of past. How does the spirit's past inform its present?

As established earlier in the text, forcing a spirit to go against its nature is usually an unacceptable order. Summoned elementals are the exception—they can sometimes be ordered to go against their nature, but will usually forget the order within an hour or so.

#### INTIMACIES

Similar to mortals, spirits possess Intimacies, but because their lives are so different from humans', their Intimacies might seem odd.

#### HEALTH AND FORM

As it says on **Exalted**, page 295, spirits have a number of health levels equal to (Willpower + highest Virtue)—one health level is -0, one is -4, and the remainder are divided evenly between -1 and -2, favoring -1 if (Willpower + highest Virtue) is an odd number. The Incapacitated health level doesn't count. Spirits with more health levels than that use Ox-Body Technique to gain them.


A spirit can possess an effectively arbitrary number of mutation-like traits to represent an inhuman form, though these are not mutations and magic that banishes mutations can't get rid of them. Try not to go overboard with this—give spirits the minimum number of mutations necessary to approximate inhuman forms.

Likewise, a spirit can possess an effectively arbitrary amount of natural soak and hardness. Once again, try not to go overboard. Look to similar spirits and also animals and monsters with a similar form for an idea of how much natural soak to give a spirit. It should probably approximate a non-magical form of armor (or magical armor if the god's form prevents wearing such) and never be so much that soak-enhancing Charms are superfluous.

#### SPIRITS AS PLAYERS' CHARACTERS

Spirits aren't designed for use as players' characters in mind. A lot of spirit powers rely on Storyteller arbitration to function. They're also not really suited to the sort of behavior players' characters often engage in, and spirits don't advance the way players' characters in most games advance. The spirits' Charm set is designed with easy creation of antagonists, supporting characters and foils in mind—it's not as broad, as deep or as finely balanced as a Charm set for a player's character type. For all these reasons, playing a spirit is tricky.

That said, spirits *can* make excellent characters. Anyone who's ever run a game in which one player



plays a Solar and another plays a Dragon-Blooded has run up against problems similar to (though lesser than) those faced by a group where one of the player's characters is a spirit. The multitude of successful games with varied character types proves that a lot of players and Storytellers are up to the challenge.

If the rules presented in this section are treated more like character creation rules than Storyteller guidelines, there's no reason the resulting character can't interact with other players' characters in a fun way. Playing a spirit offers a unique, strange perspective on Creation. Spirits were never human, and pondering their existences is a good basis for a character-oriented game all by itself.

Spirit characters created to be balanced with Exalt characters (and we stress that this balance will be tentative) should be created with at least as many dots of Essence as the other characters. Spirit player characters get Virtue dots numbering (Essence + 5) in addition to the first dot. Their permanent Willpower score is the sum of their two highest Virtues. The player may choose one Favored Ability and (Essence x 10) Ability dots, which are capped at 3 before bonus points. Panoply is effectively the Artifact Background. Just as other characters, spirits start with a number of Intimacies equal to their Compassion score. Spirits get 15 bonus points, spent just a Solar would spend them save that all Charms—including non-spirit Charms—cost seven bonus points. Inhuman forms are bought as mutations: a pox costs one bonus point, an affliction costs two, a blight, four and an abomination, six. Players may take negative mutations to offset the cost of positive ones: a deficiency reduces the total bonus point cost for positive mutations by one, a debility reduces it by two and a deformity reduces it by four. While negative mutations offset the cost of positive mutations, they don't provide extra bonus points, though, and very, very few gods have them.

In terms of experience, spirits can gain and spend it as the other characters do, but can only buy Abilities, Virtues, sorcery and supernatural martial arts. Storytellers may wish to charge for Essence raises incurred by promotion or Endowments from more powerful gods, but the player can't decide to buy Essence up on her own. She could seek to grow her character's Cult, though.

Storytellers are, of course, free (and encouraged) to tinker with the above when allowing spirit players' characters.

Elementals may be treated similarly, but there's one issue for elemental characters that gods lack: even Dragon-Blooded sorcerers can summon and bind elementals, and that might be a problem for a player's character. Storytellers could play this up as a source of drama—for instance, an elemental character could be bound, then struggle to outwit her captor while the other players' characters seek ways to free her. A Storyteller might also wish to implement slightly harsher rules about what elementals cannot be forced to do. Perhaps they not only can't go against basic principles of their nature, but also can't be bound against Motivations or Intimacies, or can spend Willpower to act against such bindings. (Obviously, this latter rule should then be consistent with creatures summoned by players' characters, so it's best used with caution.) The easiest approach, and the most comfortable for most players, may be to ignore summoning entirely. Just because the plot hook is there doesn't mean it must be used, especially if it could ruin a player's fun... and a lot of players have their fun understandably ruined when control of their characters is taken away from them.

Ultimately, it's up to the Storyteller to decide whether spirits are open as a player character type, even more so than it's normally up to the Storyteller which character types are available. But while it's not for every group, playing spirits is worth experimenting with.



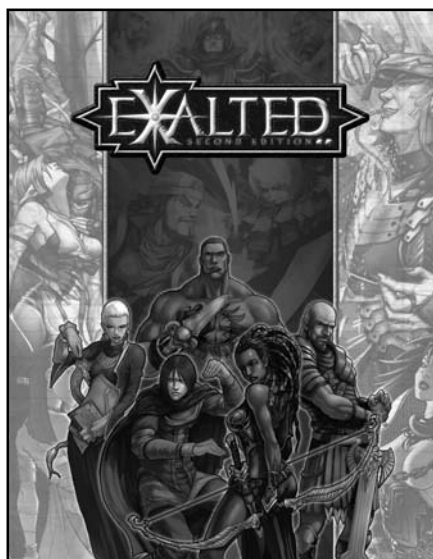


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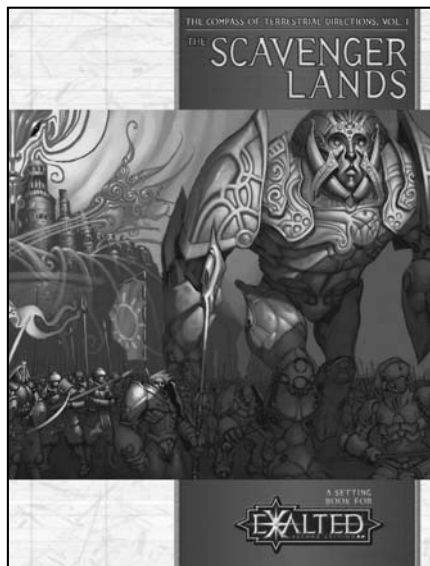




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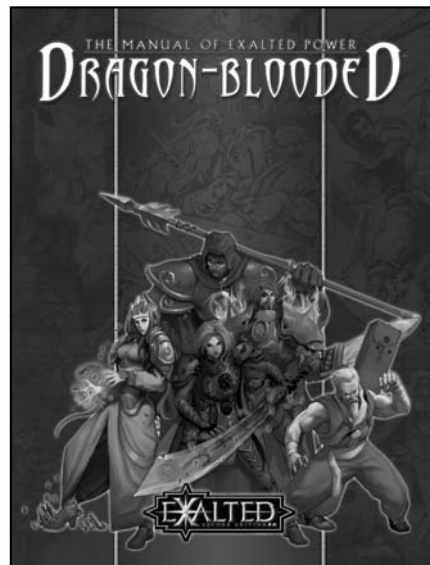
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