

# Introduction

*He's 180 years old but he has the easy smile and confidence of youth. He dresses like everyone else, performs wit and charisma. Hell, maybe he really does enjoy this dance, maybe that's real. You can't say for sure. What you know to be real are the fangs, and the deep red hunger that's suddenly the only thing filling his eyes once he gets you alone.*

*But also real is the power thundering from your heart all the way down your arm as you drive a fist through his chest, rip out his leathery unbeating heart. Watch 180 years of night turn to shock and disbelief and then greasy ash. The world shouldn't be this way, the shadows full of monsters and horror. Now the night's just a little bit safer.*

**Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness** is a game about the ancient power of forgotten gods from a lost age of splendors and terrors reincarnating into modern people, and arming them to fight the omnipresent darkness that hides in every shadow and mirror. These heroes, the *Exalted*, are few and far between, and have little notion of where their power comes from, but no illusions about what it wants from them.

And yet, being a demigod isn't all flashy action and preordained triumph. First, the Exalted are almost always badly outnumbered by the diverse monsters lurking in the world. Second, the power of the Chosen is a primal, atavistic thing from an earlier stage of the cosmos. Used recklessly, it can fray and damage the very world the Chosen are intended to protect. Can the Exalted learn to wield their power with precision and wisdom in the face of an endless stream of fangs and nightmares, or will they fall as a hundred hundred would-be heroes have fallen before them?

## Themes

The world is hungry and broken, in need of heroes it now lacks the words to even beg for help. History is a weak flashlight beam vanishing into a vast and cavernous darkness, offering few clues and no sure answers. The ancient heroes of legend? They're few, far between, and often broken in their own way. But when one appears, then they're the only ones who can maybe make a difference. When you're the one on the scene, the one with the power, you have to try *something*, right?

## Myth and Truth

**The Exalted are the scions and servants of ancient and mighty gods.**

Myth and Truth. The Exalted carry a shard of divine power dating back to some primal facet of the universe, but past that, little can be said for certain. If they still serve some divine agenda, it's so subtle that the Chosen aren't aware of it anymore. An Exalt carries the power of forgotten gods, but that power is her own.

**There are two echelons of the Chosen: Celestial and Terrestrial.**

True. The Terrestrial Exalted pass on their power to their children as a divine inheritance, although that mechanism faltered a long time ago and must now be... supplemented. The Celestial Exalted are truly eternal: at the moment of death, a Celestial Exaltation departs to find and empower a new champion. Unfortunately, this cycle, too, has broken down and rarely works quite the way it was intended to.

### **The Exalted are ancient.**

True – after a fashion. The history of the Chosen has been lost: not simply to the mists of legend, but washed out across such a span of centuries that very few tales survive even in broad, mythologized form. Trying to pin down even approximate timelines is a fool’s errand, but suffice it to say the Chosen were already very, very old in the era of Irem of the Pillars. On the other hand, the actual Exalted living in the world now are mostly very, very young, with only a tiny minority having wielded their power for more than a few years.

### **The Exalted are the good guys.**

Myth. The Chosen are individuals given enormous power. They have the power to bring great change to the world around them, but at best that change can just as easily be for ill as for good, and some of the Chosen find it much easier to lay waste to the world than to improve it.

### **The Exalted are heroes.**

Truth – and myth. Exaltation may have once demanded incredible, larger-than-life hosts, but humanity is more fragile now than it was in whatever strange epoch first saw the Chosen stride across the face of the Earth. Anyone incapable of consideration or restraint won’t last long as one of the Exalted now; but by that same measure, anyone incapable of surviving the rigors of the darkness and the night won’t ever become one of the Chosen, either.

### **The Exalted are at war with one another.**

Myth. The Chosen may fall into conflict, certainly, but their factional lines dissolved and unraveled in the very distant past. Now the Chosen must discover themselves and one another anew as they are reborn into the world.

### **The Exalted are impossibly mighty, and possess the power to cleanse the Earth.**

True – but many of the other things living in the dark are also mighty, from ancient vampires to godlike spirits to horrifying biomechanical angels. The Exalted *do* have the unique power to purify the supernatural taint left by monsters from the world, but it is exercised at significant cost to the Chosen.

## **What is This?**

**Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness** is an unofficial, fan-made product, to be freely distributed over any and all channels. Feel free to modify, change, elaborate or expand upon these rules and ideas in any way you see fit, so long as you don’t profit from them, because the IPs in question don’t belong to me.

### **Okay, but what *is* it?**

Not too long ago I put together another book, **Exalted vs World of Darkness**. This isn’t really a sequel to that, nor a companion volume, and it’s surely not just the same idea again but this time set in the “new World of Darkness.” This is... something else.

### **Heroes and Horror**

At the same time, it would be disingenuous to say this book exists wholly independent of **EXvWoD**. Let’s start with what its sister book is, and what this is *not*.

The original **World of Darkness** billed itself as a series of horror games, but had significantly broader range than that. In practice, it was often much closer to urban fantasy with a horror slant – and that slant often became so pale as to be transparent in **Mage** and **Changeling**, in particular. They were games that pushed politics and intrigue but easily fell into action and thriller tropes: Jason Bourne among the vampires.

**EXvWoD** took this storied, well-developed setting to its ultimate and most absurd conclusion by peering back at the original nebulous ties between the World of Darkness and the Age of Sorrows, and then swinging the Exalted into a beloved set of IPs like a wrecking ball. It was a love-letter penned in absolute violence to the object of affection: the World of Darkness with all the cheat codes turned on, optimized to be played in precisely all of the ways the books published during Justin Achilli's tenure begged you not to.

In 2004 White Wolf formally ended development on the World of Darkness (in what would end up being a decade-long hiatus rather than a true conclusion – you can't keep a good monster down) and began publishing a spiritual successor in the form of what was then also called the World of Darkness, and which fans took to calling the “new World of Darkness,” or nWoD. Later, this was re-christened to the less-confusing **Chronicles of Darkness**.

Chronicles is less of a solid setting than a toolbox and a mood. It's very *solidly* a horror setting, featuring horror games, eschewing the genre stew of its predecessor. It has no well-developed and labyrinthine lore, instead favoring questions, shadows, ambiguity. The world is big and dark and unknowable.

Sending the Exalted crashing into this world to save it from the impending apocalypse would make no sense. For one, there largely *isn't* an impending apocalypse. The threat is that the world will continue lurching along being the horrible place that it is, not that it will come to some sudden ending in blood or pollution. The joy of sending you PCs to go kick the shit out of some 20-year-old overstuffed signature character is also largely absent: for the most part, there just aren't any such figures to confront.

Instead of throwing the Exalted across the grain of the Chronicles, then, I made the decision to incorporate them directly: to present **Exalted** as a horror game, rather than the violent interruption of someone else's horror game.

## Conceits

These are the decisions and ideas that went into making this book what it is:

### **The Chosen are powerful, but not head and shoulders above their supernatural contemporaries.**

It is often said that among the two Worlds of Darkness, the classic version was the more high-powered and high-octane of the two. This used to be true during the first edition of the “new” WoD, but as of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Chronicles books it is in no way shape or form factual. The supernatural monsters of the **Chronicles of Darkness** game lines are often within spitting distance of the power levels of the Exalted in their native environment. Demons get an Embed that is functionally Bottomless Depths Defense, and can destroy entire cities if they Go Loud. Werewolves can go several rounds in each battle healing to full at the beginning of their turn. Vampires are incredibly difficult to inflict meaningful damage on. Mages – well, mages are bullshit, as always.

So: the Exalted are *very formidable*, but they're not intended to snap the power curve of the setting in half this time around. They live in the upper bounds of that curve, but are otherwise built to work on much the same scale and within the same mechanical framework as other "full template" supernatural beings. The other things living out there in the dark can be a real threat if the Chosen go off half-cocked or ill-prepared.

### **This is a horror game.**

The Chosen exist within a broken world, and in order to fit in, they're more than a little bit broken themselves. This isn't an attempt to faithfully port the Exalted into the **Chronicles of Darkness** setting; rather, it's a translation of the Chosen into a horror milieu. Do they hunt monsters? Yes. But rather than gloriously transcending the murk and horror of the setting, this just means the Exalted are trapped in a never-ending darkness full of fangs and curses, winning small victories day by day without a clear picture of what ultimate victory might look like or if it is even possible.

### **The lore is what you make of it.**

This game doesn't assume that the Age of Sorrows happened in exactly the form it occupies in the **Exalted** game books. It doesn't necessarily assume that the Age of Sorrows happened *at all*. The Exalted are old, certainly, but past that almost nothing can be said for sure about how they began or why they're still around.

You can weave the history of the Age of Sorrows into the tales of Irem and Atlantis if you like, of course; but this book makes no assumptions that you will do so, or that you should. The Chosen could easily be of some other origin entirely, or of no knowable origin at all.

As a consequence, there's really no trace of their old panoplies in this game – no "last daiklave," because it isn't a given that daiklaves were ever a thing. No hope of restoring the First Age, because there might not have been a First Age at all.

## How to Use This Book

This book is broken into a number of chapters, starting with the **Introduction**, which you're reading right now.

**Chapter One: The Exalted** details the different varieties of Chosen on offer in this book, outlining their themes and experiences in broad strokes.

**Chapter Two: A Cursed World** takes a walking tour of the world of the Night People, the legends of the Exalted, and the even stranger districts of reality into which the Chosen sometimes wander.

**Chapter Three: Weapons of the Gods** contains the rules and systems by which the Chosen operate: it's where you'll find their Merits, the secrets of ancient sorcery, and the terrible scars which their exertions sometimes leave upon the world.

**Chapter Four: The Dragon-Blooded** provides all the rules necessary to create and play Dragon-Blooded characters.

**Chapter Five: The Solar Exalted** provides all the rules necessary to create and play Solar characters.

**Chapter Six: The Lunar Exalted** provides all the rules necessary to create and play Lunar characters.

**Chapter Seven: The Sidereal Exalted** provides all the rules necessary to create and play Sidereal characters.

**Chapter Eight: The Abyssal Exalted** provides all the rules necessary to create and play Abyssal characters.

**Chapter Nine: The Infernal Exalted** provides all the rules necessary to create and play Infernal characters.

**Chapter Ten: The Anathema** is this book's antagonists chapter, detailing the terrible monsters that haunt the world when something goes wrong with an Exalt's reincarnation.

# Chapter One: The Exalted

The world is not a place for heroes; it's a place that cries out for them, never believing that they'll appear. They're out there, though, struggling to return from the mists of legend, from the depths of darkness. Always and forever, the heroes are coming.

When they arrive, their welcome will be fangs and curses and bullets rather than raised mead-horns and fire-lit feast halls. They come, nonetheless. It is their pride and their curse. No matter how many times they die, no matter how often their tale ends in tragedy, the heroes will always return, and struggle once again.

## The Terrestrial Exalted (The Dragon-Blooded)

You were born into a strange world.

Maybe you were a child of weird privilege. Maybe you were a home delivery into a stately manor house (your parents understood the kind of things that hunt and haunt in hospitals). Maybe you grew up on well-manicured grounds patrolled by vicious guard dogs, with clear sight lines from the house's reinforced windows to the edge of the property. Maybe your mother disappeared on frequent "business trips" and returned with her arm in a sling, or a burn on her neck, and ruffled your hair and dodged your questions.

Or maybe it wasn't like that at all. You don't remember being born in a ditch by the side of the road that stank of motor oil while something huffed and hunted through the woods only a hundred feet away, the bloody scent of your entry to the world miraculously covered by the stench of the wrecked and smoking car. You *do* remember your parents leaning conspiratorially toward one another in diner booths, whispering about vampires, about *la llorona*, about Mr. Let-Me-In, while you ate your hamburger and french fries. You remember all-night drives down roads with no street lights, greasy back rooms full of twentysomethings jittering on caffeine and paranoia, and waiting in the car while gunshots echoed from the dark house at the end of the lane.

Eventually, you weren't a passive bystander any longer. Eventually, someone clued you in: your family is special. A riddle sleeps in your flesh. It can be awakened, but the risk is terrible and all-consuming. You can walk away from your heritage, or you can cast your entire life into that flame, hoping the gods of old are pleased by the smoke that wafts up from it.

*Maybe this is the story they told you:*

Long, long ago, the gods fled the world in fear of five mighty dragons, shutting themselves away in Heaven. The dragons styled themselves rulers of the Earth, but they had few interests beyond sating their appetites for food, wealth, and slumber. Abandoned by their gods, brave men and women formed companies of heroes to hunt the dragons into their lairs, and slew them with crude spears and cruder sorcery. The brave heroes drank the blood of the dragons and ate their flesh, and gained their power. They were lauded as saviors. They were given crowns, and became the first kings and queens. But they also inherited the dragons' appetites, and foolishly made war upon one another. Their kingdoms fell, their glory faded, and they were forgotten. The gods continued to hide in fear of a world of dragons and dragon-kings, and monsters inherited

the Earth in their absence. But the line of kings, now bereft of their crowns and their power, still endures.

*Perhaps you were told a different tale:*

In a time long ago, like, before the Ice Age long ago, the world used to be different. There was nothing but a river dividing the lands of men from the place of gods and ghosts. There were more kinds of people back then, as well: *Homo sapiens* evolved alongside a host of brothers and sisters, *homo neanderthalensis*, *homo heidelbergensis*, others still debated or undiscovered. One forgotten subspecies rose up across the river, and was claimed by the jealous dragons who ruled there, their souls and flesh made loyal and leathery and potent. As the age of spirits waned, the reptilian folk died off, but not before a few of them crossed the river to mingle with *homo sapiens*. A few traces of their ancestry still linger, and also the power they once held. It can be awakened with the blood of other atavisms: werewolves, vampires, and worse. The prey of dragons.

*Or:*

The dragons were only ever allegory and imagery, but the power is real. Once, in the dawn of days, when people worshiped the sun and the moon and the cycle of the seasons, there rose up great shaman-kings: magicians who learned to speak with the primal elements of the Earth, which had not yet fallen into eternal slumber. They made great pacts, binding themselves to Fire and Water, to Air and Stone, to the great and hungry shadow of the Woods. They wielded power no-one else could match, ruled in splendor, and raised up dynasties of their children and their children's children. They built great altars to dragons representing their own glory and supernatural might. But the descendants of the shaman-kings forgot the pacts their ancestors had made, and did not uphold the ancient bargains. The flame and the woods and all of the other great forces tried to revoke their blessings, but some shadow of the power of Creation itself lingered in the blood of the dragon priests. The world forgot the now-powerless kings, but they did not die, and we are their distant inheritors.

*Sorry, Dracula, but divinity's a zero-sum game and I'm in it to win it.*

## Those Who Endure

*If you believe the stories handed down from jittery killer to jittery killer, we've got the blood of kings in our veins. The kingdoms fell before anyone invented writing, I guess, and nobody knows their names, but you can see where the idea of the divine right to rule came from, if you've ever seen one of us with that power awakened and active. It's in me, and it's in you, too. If you last long enough, one day it'll be in your kids as well. But it's just a little ember. That's all it'll ever be, unless you tend that spark, feed it, blow on it, build it into the sort of flame worthy of a dragon's heart.*

*Or maybe it's not a flame. Maybe it's a seed, and you need to grow a garden, if that's a prettier image. Except this seed is watered in the blood of monsters.*

*Yeah, the picture never stays pretty for long. Sorry, kid. Now pass me that coil of rope.*

The Terrestrial Exalted are unique among the Chosen, assuming they're really the same sort of being as the other Chosen at all; many have their doubts. Once, if you believe the tales – and after thousands of years of almost purely oral history, no one could blame you for being skeptical – they passed on Exaltation from parent to child, through the blood, rather than in a cycle of

reincarnation. Children were born, grew up, and either blossomed into the fullness of their demigod power, or else proved unworthy in some unspecified manner and remained merely mortal. But even the unworthy carried the seed or spark of power, and their children might, in turn, know the glory of Exaltation.

If it was ever like that, it's not like that now. Either nobody's worthy, or the blood has just become too thin for Exaltation to catalyze, or the old Sumerian tablets were full of shit and "natural Exaltation" was never a thing to begin with.

## Those Who Harbor Power

The criteria for Terrestrial Exaltation start very, very, very simple: it has to be in your blood. At least one of your parents was part of the bloodline, preferably both. Then, they wait and they see, and you have a hell of a weird childhood. Not just because your folks hunt monsters, though that's plenty strange enough, but because they love you, sure, of course they love you, they're *your parents*, but they also... watch you. And wait. Like they bought a Lotto ticket and the first number matched, and they're waiting for the rest to show, except stretch that tension out over *your entire childhood*.

You see, here's a cruel statement, but one that the houses of the Dragon-Blooded have absolutely accepted: some kids are duds. If, by the time you're rolling in toward the end of high school (assuming your folks are stable enough for you to attend school) all you've developed is acne and a pissy attitude towards authority figures, you're a cosmic write-off. The bloodline of ancient demigods petered out. You'll be invited to family weddings, you'll get cards on your birthday, but you don't really count, and this will gnaw at you because kids are smart and they pick up on rejection, even when people try to pretend it's not there.

If you're *not* a write-off, then your life becomes strange. Usually this happens sometime around puberty, though it can vary by several years in either direction. You start to have weird feelings, not about boys or girls, but about wind. Or fire. Or rocks. You get headaches, but it's like your head's stuffed with a kind of euphoria you can't decipher, rather than the usual throbbing pain. Eventually, as you fumble and fumble at these strange sensations, something will happen. You'll get mad and the tablecloth will start smoldering. Or you'll be in the shower, singing a Top 40 tune under your breath, and you'll realize the water is dancing in spirals around you. Congratulations, kid. You've... well, what?

People fall away from the big family branches, of course. They lose touch, or break off contact, or they're orphaned and lost in the system. This is as far as they ever get. Maybe they think they've made it, this is Exaltation. Or maybe they never hear about Exaltation at all. They muddle through their life as some kind of strange pyrokinetic, or person who can talk to rocks, or whatever. They're a little bit strange in a broken, cursed world where everything's a little bit strange if only you have the courage to actually listen to the noises coming from that alley at night.

But that's not *you*. No. Your parents, or whoever's still alive and around and in touch at this point, whoever's taking care of you, they see the manifestations, and they tell you: *You are Dragon-Touched*. You have the blood of ancient demigods running in your veins. This? This thing you're experiencing now, where you can make flames dance by waving your hand at them, or concentrate until you get a headache and make a garden bloom out of season? That's not the fulfillment of the potential in your blood. It's just a little flag, saying that the potential is *there*.



You could stop here, yeah. Of course you can. Maybe you have a shitty uncle, he'll try to pressure you into going further, because *he's* trying to go further, and frankly it's a team effort, and he's pushing 50 and still hasn't made it, but mostly, usually, the family understands when someone drops out, decides to try to get into Virginia Tech rather than chasing the dragon. Learns to live with the elemental gift, or bury it, or pretend it's not there. They'll talk shit about you at family events. They'll scoff, while on stakeout outside of haunted houses. Usually, they'll let you walk, but they always let you know what you're giving up *by* giving up, and how much harder it is for those walking the road to walk it without you.

You see, you don't *have* to just be some little jalopy-assed discount psychic. You could never get sick again, live for hundreds of years, and command the elements as a Prince of the Earth. Or, you could keep working to get into Princeton, then face down the cold white hell of student loan debt. Your call, really.

## Those Who Kill For Power

It sounds too good to be true, and this is usually where they bundle you into a car, drive you eight hours up the coast to North Carolina, and you meet Grandmother for the first time. You've heard of Grandmother before, of course, even though she's not actually *your* grandmother, and it's never quite been clear whose grandmother she *is*. It turns out this is because she's more like everyone's great-great-great grandmother. She spent the long ugly years of the Civil War roaming between Monroe and Rockingham, killing vampires and worse things. You're expecting an ancient crone with an apron and maybe a fresh tray of cookies standing on a sagging porch to meet you. Maybe there'll be an old rack of rifles inside, for that note of incongruity that's everywhere in your life.

Instead you pull up to an antebellum manor house hard up against a swamp. The building is old, but the security systems are state of the art, and it's plain as day you're looking at the dwelling of someone who can casually crush most of her problems by writing a check at them. Then the butler – yes, there's a butler – brings you inside, and Grandmother doesn't look a day over 35. Before you leave, she'll do something magical and impossible that's way beyond your little elemental parlor tricks because your folks want her to demonstrate that they're not kidding about this whole "becoming a god" thing, but she doesn't need to by the time it happens. Her eyes cut clear through all the ambiguities of your heart, and she knows you. When she talks about the hunt, and the nighttime battlefields where soldiers didn't dare to go retrieve their friends' bodies because *things* were eating the corpses, you know they're real stories.

*How can I be like her?*

You kill monsters. That's how.

There's an ember inside of you. Or a seed. Or – whatever. There is the *potential* for Exaltation. It will never catalyze on its own. The power just isn't there anymore. It ran out thousands of years ago. But you can take the power from somewhere else. It doesn't run on 9-volt, alas: it's supernatural power. So you go looking for things with power of their own: ghosts, vampires, magicians, stranger and worse things. Killer fungi. Biomechanical angels. Aunt Francine has a book she got from her father, full of all kinds of notes and drawings, and the lot of you use it as a field guide. There's a man in Akron, Ohio stealing bodies. He eats some of their organs, God knows why, and then raises what's left, and uses them as employees at the warehouse he owns. Business is great, since payroll is nil. You all ambush him as he comes over the cemetery wall,

and it gets pretty hairy, but at the end you smash the shovel down right between his eyes, crunch, and you feel a torrent of – *something* – come gushing out, and fill some hollow part of you, and something, some sleeping, scaled, vast, terrible thing you didn't even know was there, somewhere behind the little ember in your soul, it stirs in its sleep. And you know, this can work. You can wake it up. But it's going to take a lot more than one dead necromancer.

Time to do it again.

## The Terrestrial Exaltation

How many does it take? How many dead monsters? You don't know. Nobody knows. Usually it's *a lot*. Usually, the stronger they are, the more they push you toward your goal – it feels that way, anyhow, as that power pours into your soul. But of course, the stronger they are, the more likely they are to kill you, and dying is very much not the point of the exercise. So it's probably a long road. Sometimes, maybe, Grandmother – or whatever your family has in place of Grandmother – shows up, and leads a particularly brutal hunt. This is ultimately about family, after all, and you've all sworn pacts, again and again: *If I make it there first, I won't leave you all behind*. Finally, finally, for you, the day arrives. A monster falls dead, its power rushes into you, and that elemental egg hatches.

Terrestrial Exaltation is a revelation, a spiritual awakening, a *becoming of what you were always meant to be* that instantly contextualizes every feeling of emptiness or incompleteness in your life. In a constantly-unfolding heartbeat, you know that you are now the thing you always should have been, and due to the cruel decay of time and the fallen state of the world, were almost forced to live your entire life without.

It's an expanding, widening moment of consciousness of yourself, of the world around you, and of your connection to the primal forces of the Earth: the circulation of the winds around the globe, so much like the breath of the planet itself as it moves through the biosphere; the heat of every flame as both a physical energy and also an emotional impetus that drives life to expand and thrive; and so forth.

You feel stronger, minor bodily aches and inconveniences vanishing one by one. You feel, finally, a core of power flickering into existence deep in the pit of your soul, and you know that you can draw on it, linking yourself to the fundamental forces of the cosmos to wield miracles. A colorful and destructive halo of energy begins to burn around you, filling you with a manic energy and desire to laugh, to run, to cry. The mystic glow and the manic mood both fade soon enough, but your newfound divinity remains.

It's almost, but not quite, enough to make you forget the army of monsters that by this point actively seek your death for butchering your way through their ranks. Heavy is the head that wears the crown.

## Aspects

The Dragon-Blooded are one family, but their power is divided into channels of the five elements. You can touch all of the elements, but one of them claims sovereignty in your soul: your Aspect element. This is the element you commanded during your long hunt as one of the Dragon-Touched, and it will always be the one whose miracles you are most comfortable wielding. It also influences your personality and your appearance.

### Air Aspect

*Ultimately, the symbol of reason is a hurled spear. We're thinking animals, and that ability to prepare, to figure out the angles, kept me alive long enough to get here. But you also have to be willing to let violence off its leash when the time comes. You can't plan a werewolf to death. In the end it comes down to wits, will, and excellence.*

Aspects of Air often strike others as manic-depressive, but that's a bad read. They move between quiet periods and sudden bursts of frantic action, yes, absolutely, but that's simply the way of the wind: what people mistake for a calm day is actually great forces building across a vast area. Eventually, the hurricane or the cyclone appears, a hundred disparate subtle forces drawing together into something unstoppable. That's how Air Aspects like to operate. Work the angles, measure the situation, and then strike like lightning. Ultimately, it is *excellence* that ties their subtle and violent actions together; what an Air Aspect does, they want to do with grace and magnificence.

**Aspect Markings:** Aspects of Air trend thin and lightly-built. Their skin sometimes displays a blueish or white tinge. When agitated, small gusts of wind sometimes blow dramatically through an Air Aspect's surroundings. Powerful individuals may have icy-cold skin, and their presence is often accompanied by the scent of lightning strikes or fresh mountain breezes.

**Anima:** When an Air Aspect's anima flares, it swirls outward around her into a shimmering aura of pale blue and cloudy white, curling into patterns reminiscent of skirls of wind or cloudbanks.

**Aspect Skills:** Academics, Athletics, Occult, Politics, Stealth

**Divine Gift:** The wind itself upholds an Air Aspect's safety and dignity, allowing her to leap prodigious distances and to fall safely from any height.

## Earth Aspect

*You'll face a lot of things in the night that will try to intimidate you with their age. "Oh, little manling, I am older than the pyramids; my kind haunted the shadows before your ancestors had climbed down from the trees;" that kind of thing. But nothing's older than stone, and that's where my power comes from: the Earth itself. You bet against geological forces, you're going to lose.*

It's difficult to rattle an Earth Aspect. Things go wrong, of course, sometimes horribly wrong, that's the way of things, but an Earth Aspect trusts in her ability to endure and make a countermove. That isn't to say that Earth Aspects are passive or reactive, merely that they have a kind of intimidating confidence. They're often builders, tinkers, and deep thinkers: they derive satisfaction from seeing the way things really are and crafting solutions to problems. They usually also have the strength to simply hammer their way through whatever's in front of them if they have to.

**Aspect Markings:** Aspects of Earth are often compact or stocky. They often develop earthen skin tones, regardless of ethnicity. Their skin usually feels smooth or sandy to the touch, and can produce a click if tapped with a fingernail – though it yields to real pressure. Particularly potent Earth Aspects may develop wrinkles like fracture lines. They often smell of clay or freshly turned soil.

**Anima:** Earth animas manifest as great auras of white and yellow light, shifting like a landslide or blowing sand, or else gleaming like a faceted jewel.

**Aspect Skills:** Brawl, Computer, Crafts, Intimidation, Science

**Divine Gift:** Earth Aspects are supernaturally tough, and can shrug off injuries that would hospitalize or kill lesser beings.

## Fire Aspect

*My God, what's the point of living four lifetimes if you don't live them? I have the power of a raging inferno in my heart, so I'm going to drink all evening, bring home the prettiest lad at wherever I do that drinking, find out who hurt him once we're talking in the afterglow, and then wake up sometime after noon, hunt that motherfucker down and throw them through a wall, and I really hope it turns out to have been a monster so it's a fair fight. Then I'm going to do it all again.*

Aspects of Fire are creatures of passion: impulsive, active, *motivated*. They don't wait around for life to happen to them. They chase their goals, or simply their impulses of the moment, as hounds chase a fox. They also have a natural talent for destruction and for violence, and usually enjoy exercising both of those things. They don't usually feel a lot of guilt for the collateral damage they leave along the way; fires get out of control, it's their nature. The best Fire Aspects channel these tendencies into productive directions and get a lot done; the worst are indolent legends of the party scene.

**Aspect Markings:** Aspects of Fire don't have a common body type, save that they tend toward extremes: of fitness, indulgence, or whatever else. Their skin often displays a reddish tinge, and they tend toward spectacularly bright hair colors. Fire Aspects are often accompanied by the scent of smoke, and particularly potent individuals may even exhale smoke when angered. As a Fire Aspect increases the potency of her Essence, her skin becomes warmer and warmer to the touch.

**Anima:** A Fire Aspect's anima looks like – and in fact, consists of – actual literal flames, roaring in a medley of reds, oranges, and yellows.

**Aspect Skills:** Athletics, Drive, Expression, Socialize, Weaponry

**Divine Gift:** Aspects of Fire have especially destructive anima banners, and are immune to the ravages of flame.

## Water Aspect

*Water finds a way, and if it can't find a way, give it long enough: it'll make one. You're looking at me like I'm spouting bland platitudes about the Grand Canyon and filling jugs. Pay better fucking attention. I'm talking about telling people what they want to hear so they'll walk into a dark room with you. I'm talking about finding the key that opens the door that keeps you out of the place you're not supposed to be. I'm talking about figuring out the secret they never ever ever want you to know. Water flows through rules and laws and ethics. For instance, want to guess how I got this ledger with your name on it?*

Water Aspects, it can be said, are individuals of flexible ethics. They're goal-oriented, one might say, and not terribly concerned with how those goals are achieved. The truth is, they *like* skullduggery; they like finding cracks to exploit, gaps they can squeeze through where they weren't meant to go, uncovering secrets not meant for their eyes. They can lie with a smile, sucker-punch without the slightest flicker of the eye to give away the game, and cheating is almost elevated to the form of a religious observation. Is it cause for alarm? Well, sure, maybe, but how much does anyone really care if someone's not playing fair when hunting down a

vampire that drinks the blood of little kids? Fuck that vampire. And if they *do* still object, a Water Aspect thinks, what kind of skeletons might that person have in their closet, waiting to be found?

**Aspect Markings:** If you go looking for lithe water-dancers you'll find some among this Aspect, sure, but you'll miss the heavyset woman with the catfish smile watching you from the corner of the room. The giveaway for Water Aspects is a sinuous grace to their motions, regardless of body type. They also tend to show blue-green highlights to skin and hair when the light hits them just right. They sometimes smell of the river or sea, and particularly potent individuals seem perpetually damp, as though fresh from the shower.

**Anima:** Water Aspect animas burst forth as a blue-green or green-black glow, rippling like water or surging like deep-ocean currents.

**Aspect Skills:** Brawl, Investigation, Larceny, Streetwise, Subterfuge

**Divine Gift:** Water Aspects can swim as well as any fish, and can breathe underwater. With a bit of concentration, they can also walk on the surface of water.

## Wood Aspect

*The forest is a living system, you know: trees, animals, weather, life, death, decomposition, all of that. Energy moving in a system, that's what life itself is. You look at the trees and you just see these big static things, but there are deep shadows under the canopy, and teeth in the shadows, and a hundred winding paths to get lost forever down. You can disappear into the woods and never be seen again. Which brings us to you, and why you're in my house uninvited. Before you start explaining, keep in mind that I'm going to figure out where you live and who you love before you're three sentences in, so you'd better impress me. Or, we could skip to the bit with the hungry teeth. Your call.*

Wood is the only living element, the foundation of the energy system all life is built on. Wood Aspects embody that sense of connectedness. Aside from a penchant from gardening and the great outdoors, you'll rarely find a Wood Aspect alone; they're drawn to others, curious about people's woes, and as at home navigating the intricacies of the social ecosystem as they are backpacking through the remote wilderness. They have a knack for turning up strange, dangerous things in both sorts of environments, as well, and pruning them. No forest was ever in need of a haunted old well that eats people, after all, nor any gala event of a dead thing stealing attendees' memories.

**Aspect Markings:** Aspects of Wood carry with them some natural scent: pine, roses, fresh-cut grass, ripe fruit. Hair, eyes, even skin may carry a slight greenish tinge. Their skin may feel like bark if you touch them without looking at them. If a potent individual stays somewhere long enough, plants eventually bend toward her rather than the sun.

**Anima:** A Wood Aspect's anima unfurls into a bright emerald glow, waving like grass in a breeze or swirling like leaves in the wind.

**Aspect Skills:** Animal Ken, Firearms, Medicine, Persuasion, Survival

**Divine Gift:** Aspects of Wood enjoy immunity to all manner of poison, and are themselves venomous.

## The Solar Exalted

## (Chosen of the Sun)

*There are times when you go to sleep and remember what came before. Sometimes it's one way, sometimes another.*

Once upon a time there was a world of darkness, where great horrors leered down from the stars above, and lesser terrors crept forth: from the depths of the earth, from the darkness beneath the trees, from the tumult of nightmares. It was a time of fangs and fear and cruel laughter in the night. There came a day when the sun grew wroth at the power of darkness, and granted his strength to the best and bravest of humanity. These first heroes crafted armor and weapons and strode forth into the night, working a great and industrious butchery upon the monsters, until the darkness became a mere rumor swirling at the edges of the human world, rather than a constant and inescapable torment. Then the heroes, exhausted, laid down their arms and slept. While they slept the monsters grew bold and crept back in from the darkness, but sometimes they heroes still awoken in the hour of humanity's need.

*Or:*

Long ago, in a time of legend, the sun god grew jealous of the manifold powers of night and nightmare. He wished to become king of the heavens and the ruler of the gods. In pursuit of his ambitions he blessed an army of men and women to carry his name and his mantle, and set them against the horrors of his brothers and sisters. The heroes vanquished the monsters, but would not stand down and return to their caves and their labors at the end of the war. They turned upon the sun god, impaling him upon their spears, and drank his fiery blood, becoming immortal and terrible in their own right. Then the heroes raised up great empires to their own glory, and armies to carry forth the terror of their names. In the fullness of time they were slain by their own works. But they had drunk the blood of the sun, and could not be made to die forever.

*Perhaps:*

The very first among men and women in the dawn of days were the children of the sun, sired upon the Earth by the mightiest of all the primal gods. For years beyond counting they ruled as conqueror-heroes and sage-kings, but they could never fully tame the primal world. The ancient and terrible things that predated the world spawned children of their own, and their touch tainted all the works of humanity. The sun turned his face from his children in disgust, and retreated to the heavens, never again to grace humanity with his favor until they made the world a place he could stand upon without revulsion. Abandoned by their patron, the monsters dragged the sun-born down one by one. But they were the first of humanity, and the children of the sun, and would always be granted another chance to make things right for as long as the distant sun still shone.

*I don't know if I'm a wise man, or even a good one, but I do know I'm the last person you're ever going to fuck with.*

## Why We Return

*Perhaps, in long-ago times, in a finer age, we were the best and brightest humanity had to offer: its mightiest warriors, wisest savants, cleverest rogues, most silver-tongued bards. Tonight, we're survivors. The Solars Exalted have seen the supernatural world, felt its breath, and suffered beneath its fangs. We know that the shadows are alive, and hungry, and that humanity's many works are a banquet laid forth before monsters.*

*And we have inherited the power to kill monsters.*

The Solars are the mightiest of the Chosen, and that might is designed to expose that which lives in the darkness, cast it out, and keep it gone. This can be a violent conflict – in fact, it often is – but there are many ways to walk the road laid out by the sun, and a great diversity of people might be called to do so. Ultimately, the Solars know that their power exists to transform the Earth into a human place, free of the thirst of vampires, the cruel fixations of spirits, the uncaring plots of alien machinery, and the cynical manipulations of sorcerers.

## Those Who Are Called

Before Exaltation, every Solar carried scars. They might be of the body, or the mind, or the spirit, but look close enough and you can find them: and rest assured, a monster put them there. This is the first and most fundamental truth of the Chosen of the Sun: each of them has been victimized in a life-changing way by the supernatural world. Not merely nipped in the neck while dancing at the club and left to wander of dazed and a pint down, no. A Solar might have spent months or years rebuilding her life around the cold, pale, smiling man who opened her veins again and again, until the night he vanished and left her world in shambles; or tried to drink her dry, and instead *merely* left her in a coma for three months. Or perhaps she worked for six months in a factory that you couldn't find on even the most recent Google street view maps, and left with a severance check for \$6.66 and endless, inescapable dreams of blood-slick gears churning in the depths of the Earth. Maybe she watched as her son – her own *son* – ran off into the woods one final time with his father, skin tearing off as the wolf within emerged, neither of them ever to be seen again.

There are two other specifications, less central but still requisite to Exaltation.

First, the Solar must be compelled by her experiences with the supernatural world, drawn to dwell or act upon them. She cannot simply try to forget. Her deepest wish cannot be to bury her head in the sand, close her eyes, and go back to sleep. If the fires of heaven descend into her hands, she must already have some notion of what to do with that gift.

Second, the Solar must still be, at the end of the day, fundamentally human and ungoverned by the supernatural powers of the world. She might have been left with a painful sixth sense for the supernatural after being abducted by strange, gray-skinned beings; her veins may have been polluted by vampire blood; she may have been cursed (or blessed, it's often difficult to tell the difference) by a witch. But she cannot have been made a vampire herself, or scribed her name in the arcane rolls of ancient wizardry to become a mage, or escaped from a durance in a far-away place transformed into something half-human, half-fairy tale.

## The Golden Exaltation

Solar Exaltation is a thunderbolt, and it strikes out of nowhere when you *need it*, granting the power of a mythic hero from a forgotten age of legends.

There's the shriek of abused rubber, you look up, the headlights are *right there*. A rictus grin floats above the steering wheel.

You board the elevator alone, press the button for the ground floor. After a few moments the elevator shudders to a stop, well short of its destination, and the lights go out. In the darkness, something touches your shoulder.

The Broker is back, the thing that almost dragged you away forever, once upon a time – you saw it in the lobby and used the fire stairs to head back up to your office. Then you saw its pale, perfectly generic face emerge from the elevator and move into the cubicle space. Now you're sitting in the men's room, feet drawn up onto the toilet seat, and you hear the door open. Two patent-leather shoes stop in front of your stall.

*Then:*

Heat beyond description hammers out from your heart into every extremity. Your nerves sizzle. You feel the power of a million atomic explosions per second driving your muscles. Time slows and stretches; your thoughts are fast as light. *You are light.* It fades, quickly, but not all the way, not even close. Even as that first surge of godhood abates, complex solutions offer themselves up as simple observations. You know your fists can smash down doors, your kicks destroy cars, and when you lash out to test this feeling, you find it to be true. Your *anima* manifests in these first moments, burning so bright as to be visible to the naked mortal eye, thundering in the air. One of the heroes of old has returned, and the world shakes with that revelation.

The light will fade, but the power will not. If you survive this first moment of crisis, you are left as a divinity walking the Earth.

## Castes

There are five varieties of Solar Exalted, five Castes, five molds in which this form of Exaltation was struck, and they always seek out similar sorts of hosts to empower in incarnation after incarnation. Perhaps the five Castes were once intended to work together to pursue the will of their creator – there's a certain feeling of rightness, certainly, when Chosen of the Sun of different sorts join forces and work in accord, and an instinctive memory-suggestion that this unit, the *Circle*, is a natural and correct association. Regardless of their original purpose, the five *Castes* are now divided by their response to the trauma of the supernatural world: how the Solar will stride into the night to grapple with it.

### Dawn Caste

*In the beginning, I think we were the generals who commanded divine armies and warriors who held back the darkness with flashing blade and shining arrow. Me, I was just a janitor, but I can get a broken mop past the ribcage and into a vampire's heart smooth as you please. Just ask Mr. Fangs over there. He'd tell you, if he could still tell anyone anything.*

The Chosen of the Dawn want to *hit back*. They want to lay into the darkness with fists and tire irons and bullets. They know exactly what monsters need: killing; or if not outright extermination, then at least driving away from their victims by force of arms. Dawns may be motivated by revenge, revulsion, or a need to protect others; regardless, their chosen method is brutal and overwhelming force.

In a Circle, Dawns generally become their comrades' guardian and the voice that ever calls for straight-forward action.

**Anima:** When a Dawn Caste's anima flares, her forehead is marked with a stylized golden sunburst. The banner itself manifests in bright white and pale gold, sometimes tinged with red or violet.

**Caste Skills:** Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Firearms, Weaponry



**Divine Gift:** Warriors of the Dawn have an intrinsic genius for violence, and can always find a way to break or kill something when they really need to. They carry with them the weight of a hundred thousand years of violence, which strikes bone-deep terror into their opponents.

## Zenith Caste

*Sometimes I dream of sermons spoken from atop a great stepped pyramid, and plazas containing ten thousand people, all human, all inspired, all standing in the sun and unafraid of the coming night. But then I go outside and all I see are people afraid of today, afraid of tonight, and afraid of tomorrow. I don't need to be a priest-queen to know we can be more than this.*

Chosen of the Zenith Caste want to *build something better*. They've seen that the world is full of shadows and horror; they want to banish the shadows, rally communities, and create a world where the monsters have nowhere to hide, no weak victims to peel off from the pack. It's not as simple as an urge to *protect* those close to them; Zeniths want to see a world where what happened to them can never happen to anyone else, ever again. They want big-picture solutions that can't be accomplished by simply smashing the monster in front of them.

They also generally can't be accomplished alone, and so Zeniths are the Caste most likely to try to rally other Solars to them and to bend their various obsessions and methods to a greater purpose.

**Anima:** Zenith Castes manifest a large, golden disc in the center of their brow when unleashing their divine might. Their anima banner burning in a brilliant white or shining gold.

**Caste Skills:** Animal Ken, Empathy, Expression, Intimidation, Survival

**Divine Gift:** The touch of a Zenith purifies the world, rendering whatever carries her blessing useless to the monsters that inhabit the night.

## Twilight Caste

*The other day I was driving along a mountain road and I glanced down into the valley and for a moment, just a moment, I saw a city filling it from the river to the foothills: golden spires, gleaming highways, and a great palace floating above it all, lifted up on prayers. Then I blinked: just a couple lumber towns and lots of deep woods, same as ever. But I think we built something there once, and maybe we left things behind.*

Solars of the Twilight Caste want to *understand*. They've seen a vast and terrifying world that isn't supposed to exist, and already learned their first lesson: it has fangs, and it will bite. That's no reason to stop seeking out more knowledge, though, merely a reason to be cautious. Perhaps they think that understanding what happened to them will bring some closure. Perhaps they've simply developed an obsession. Or perhaps they think that uncovering enough information will enable them to control, change, or destroy the darkness in the world.

In a Circle, Twilights act as force-multipliers for the other Castes, making their efforts vastly more effective by learning and supplying necessary information to help the group avoid pitfalls and optimize its efforts.

**Anima:** Twilight Caste marks appear as a circle upon the brow, its top half filled with gold but its bottom half an empty ring. When their anima manifests, it does so in a spectacular display of bright golds accompanied by bright and dark reds, purples, and blues.

**Caste Skills:** Academics, Crafts, Investigation, Medicine, Occult

**Divine Gift:** Twilights have an instinctive understanding of the invisible world and the things that hunt and labor there. They are also natural sorcerers, one and all.

## Night Caste

*Hey. Eyes over here. Listen. I went digging. I know you didn't ask for this. I know Marcia didn't ask before she made you like her. I know you don't have a choice, you gotta have the blood. I get that. But you did have choices about how to get it. About what to make of yourself. Nothing forced you to hurt so many people. Nothing forced you to ruin Karim's life, make him your slave. So, yeah, I could have let you go, but instead here we are: you, and me, and that can of gasoline you keep looking at. What do you think happens next?*

Those Chosen by the Night Caste want *justice*. Not necessarily vengeance, but a balancing of the scales: for each thing living in the darkness to garner whatever it has coming to it, or to lose whatever it has taken unjustly. This requires a finer understanding of any given creature's behavior than can be gleaned by simply noticing that it exists, and so Night Castes observe and measure their quarry before rendering and executing judgment.

In a Circle, the Night Caste may act as the conscience of her fellows, assuming they feel the need for such a thing; else, she is also likely to be used as scout, infiltrator, and saboteur, since her information-gathering talents all lend themselves to those tasks.

**Anima:** The Night Caste mark appears as an empty golden ring upon the Solar's brow. Their anima banner glows ghostly whites and golds, tinged with indigo and violet.

**Caste Skills:** Athletics, Larceny, Stealth, Streetwise, Subterfuge

**Divine Gift:** Nights are able to smooth out the friction between their mystic feats and the world. When she does not wish to be detected, the Night Caste leaves very little trace of herself. She can also measure the hearts of those around her, the better to render judgment.

## Eclipse Caste

*Have you noticed that these nightmares always seem to play by some weird set of rules? Maybe we were the ones who bound them to that, when we were strong enough to force a sit-down with the darkness. All a mess now, of course, but it's something to think about. Anyway, this franken-guy: yeah, he's unpleasant, and I think I can convince him to skip town and save us all a lot of headaches, but before that, if we swap some of what we know, I can probably get him to help us raid that garage where all the werewolves hang out.*

Solars of the Eclipse Caste desire *reconciliation*. They want, they *need*, to know that things have been set into the best and most acceptable state they can occupy. They're the ones who think: Maybe she didn't want to be a monster. Perhaps if there were no vendetta, nobody would be caught in the crossfire. Maybe it's easier, or more just, to simply help the wizard get his book back. And so they try to reach out, to *speak* to the monsters or to those around them, and set things to rights.

They're not stupid, of course (or at least, the ones who last more than a week aren't); sometimes the best resolution is for someone to kill the thing crawling out of the sewers to eat children. In these situations, they generally defer to the expertise of their Circle. Otherwise, the aid of Solars of more martial or esoteric Castes can serve to give the Eclipse enough support, protection, or coverage to leverage recalcitrant monsters (and humans) into the situations she wishes to create.

**Anima:** Eclipse Solars have a golden disc within a circle as their Caste mark. Their anima banners are brilliant whites and golds, but filmy and flickering at the edges, like the corona of the sun during an eclipse.

**Caste Skills:** Computer, Persuasion, Politics, Socialize, Subterfuge

**Divine Gift:** Eclipses may sanctify the pacts they witness, making them sacrosanct and leveling an ancient curse upon any who should break them.

## The Lunar Exalted (Chosen of the Moon)

Sometimes bad people walk into dark places and don't walk out again. Sometimes it's you that walks out, wearing their face. Sometimes the dark place is a pristine forest, or a stinking bog. Sometimes it's a fetid alley. Sometimes it's their very own bedroom.

*Your kind has always been waiting in the dark, eyes gleaming like cold bright coins.*

Once upon a time a brave knight slew the Queen of the Woods at the behest of his lord. He knew, even as the crimson of her heart's blood leaped up his sword, that he had committed the gravest of sins. The trees shook in their grief, and the knight's horse bolted, and all paths turned upon themselves. Wolves hunted the knight, day after day, until he fell down in exhaustion, and they devoured him to red raw bones. Then the wolves swarmed and devoured one another, until only one remained. That final wolf split open from within and the knight stepped forth, now Knight of the Woods, ready to perform his penance upon any who might trespass in his domain.

*For as long as your lady high above has ridden the sky, the Warden Moon, Amahan Iduth, you have delivered her rage unto those who earned it.*

Once upon a time an innocent girl traveled to deliver medicine to her ailing grandmother. She was devoured by a hungry tiger. The tiger was slain in turn by a brave woodsman. The woodsman pondered the injustices that would drive an innocent girl into the tiger-haunted woods. That would leave an old woman sick and alone and far from succor. He turned himself inside-out. He became a hungry girl, axe in hand, golden-eyed. The tiger girl made her way to the county seat, where dwelled the magistrate who had foreclosed on the grandmother's home, and chopped off his head, and left it in the town square for all to find. She made her way to the market town, and tore out the throat of the peddler who charged the girl her last cent for medicine. She traveled to the capital, and devoured the king before his court.

*You have little use of history or memory, for injustice is wrought anew every day, and needs be answered in fang and claw and terror and blood.*

Once upon the night of 14 October, 1943, the residents of the Sobibor death camp staged an uprising. They killed 11 Nazi officers, and about 300 prisoners escaped into the woods; less than 60 would remain alive and free until the end of the war. That's a matter of historical record. What's less clear is that the deaths among the camp staff continued, week after week, month after month, as the Third Reich frantically tore down Sobibor and erased all evidence it had ever been there. The deaths continued even as the guards and officers were reassigned to other posts all across Europe. The deaths continued as the decades went on: men found bloody and dead and

fixed with a rictus look of horror as they awaited trial in their cells; men found slain in their apartments in Brazil, great chunks bitten out of their torsos, their faces, their arms and legs. The legacy of Sobibor is almost gone from the Earth now, but the new century has no shortage of Nazis, and every few weeks, somewhere, one of them turns up horribly dead, and will continue to do so for as long as the moon shines down from the sky.

*You shouldn't have come here, and now you're not going to leave.*

## Why We Hunt

*There was once an old trapper who lived in the forest near Eagle, Alaska named Nimrod Bodfish. In the winter of 1862, Nimrod developed a terrible toothache. The pain was intolerable. Being both alone and industrious, the trapper used a set of old rusty pliers to pull his teeth out, one by one, until he finally chanced upon the one that offended. Made hungry by his bloody labors, Nimrod sought out a cache of food he'd buried in a snowbank, only to find that a bear had eaten everything in the stash save for a few old tins.irate, Nimrod took up his rifle and killed the bear, then dragged it back to his cabin. He butchered it for its meat, and pulled out the grizzly's teeth with the same gory pliers he'd used upon himself. The trapper melted the aluminum handle of one of his cooking pots to make a base, and set the bear's teeth into the molten metal; when it cooled, he had himself a set of false teeth. Then, finally satisfied, Bodfish sat down and ate the bear with its own teeth.*

*Lessons to live by, hey?*

The Lunars are stalkers, killers, ferocious shapeshifters. Protection and retribution are their callings, both achieved by the spilling of blood. It's not that they're given an agenda, or issued orders, or recruited on a mission. It's nothing of the sort. Lunar Exaltation only visits those prepared to carry out its particular brand of vengeance, that's all.

The Lunar Exalted are monsters who hunt monsters.

## Those Who Are Found

Lunars are always people who would smile a terrible, painful smile if given the power to make wicked men and terrible monsters alike weep in terror at every sound and movement in the night. People who can think of someone, somewhere, that deserves Hell or worse. Who could plunge their thumbs into the eyes of the worst person in the world until blood ran thick and black over their wrists, and sleep untroubled. That's the first criteria for Lunar Exaltation: a rage that demands a noble place to roost. The taste of hate on the tongue, spiced with righteousness.

Lunars are people who've seen the edge. Who've been pushed there, and who lacked the strength to push back. Sometimes Lunars were ground down by monsters, but not always. Greed, cruelty, and callous disregard are the pressures that forge Lunars-to-be, and none of those things depend upon the supernatural. Where one Lunar was driven to desperation and ruin by a magician's curse, another could easily have arrived at the same place thanks to a predatory slumlord. That's the second requirement: to have known desperation.

Third and final, a Lunar must still be human, untainted, without supernatural power of her own. She can't harbor the unholy strength of vampire blood. She can't have a psychic gift. She certainly can't be some manner of monster already. That is a transformation the Lunar Exaltation reserves for itself.

## The Moonlit Exaltation

Lunar Exaltation waits for those worthy of it, and it waits in the Woods.

Every Lunar knows the Woods. The Woods don't have to be a forest, and in fact usually aren't. The Woods could be a hundred miles from the nearest tree. The Woods are the place you find yourself when you're lost and you don't know how to get back home.

It *could* be the trackless expanse of trees stretching from Maine up into Canada, yes, sure, of course it could. They're the Woods for a reason. But it could also be an unfamiliar, winding highway after you took the wrong turn-off an hour ago and only just realized it now, stretching on and on, twenty minutes since you last saw a gas station or street light. It could be the streets of your very own city after they pin up the eviction notice and you load all your shit into your car and start sleeping in Walmart parking lots and there's no *home* to find. It could be a weird place between the gaps in the world, full of thorns that snatch and tear at essential parts of you.

You're lost, and you're in danger. Maybe because of the cold. Maybe because the needle just kissed "E" as a howl shivered the windows. Maybe because of the three pale women who've been following you for the last four blocks. Maybe from the hunting horn somewhere beyond the choking, ever-present branches and brambles. Lost. In danger. That's the Woods.

*Then you see the moon.* Even if it's the middle of the afternoon, you feel that cool light on your skin, and you feel something, strange, liquid, run into you, coalesce in your secret inner hollows. As danger closes in, that strange fluid sensation suffuses you. It heats up. It lays heavy in your muscles. It aches in your bones. You feel something crack somewhere inside of you, something so solid you never knew it was even *there* before, and your soul comes tumbling out where you can see it for the first time.

(Probably not with your eyes. Probably this is metaphor. But it might not be. Hallucinations happen during Lunar Exaltation. They're not universal, but they're not unknown, either.)

Your soul is an albino-pale thing, elegant, with silver eyes. It's an animal. What animal is it? It's never a surprise to you, whatever it is. Then you blink, and you know your soul is inside of you, exactly where it's always been, but you *know* it now. You can reach in and touch it, if you need to, which you do right now, because you're in the Woods, and you're in danger. When you do that, when you reach for your soul, your Feral Heart, it moves up and into your flesh.

Your bones shrink, or collapse, or stretch. Muscles tear, reweave themselves, reattach. Your heart stops beating for a moment as it reconnects itself to your newly-rerouted veins and arteries: now you know what a heart attack feels like. Bigger teeth erupt from your jaw as your body reabsorbs your usual set. These teeth mean business. The rod and cone structures in your eyes do a little waltz and rebuild themselves. It hurts worse than anything you've ever imagined, but it also feels incredible, and it's over in moments. The agony is like a flash of lightning and the crack of thunder: illuminating, enlightening. *You're so fast now.* You're strong in a way no mere human being is strong. Your eyes cut through the dark. Your nose tells you a hundred new things about the world. Your tongue tests itself against your new teeth. Now the danger is in danger from you.

When you're ready, you can push your soul back down into its normal place. There will be that flash of agony as you become human again, or at least, as you once more don your human skin. You're not really human now. You're the kind of god people worshiped when they slept in caves.

## Castes

Not long after Exaltation, each Lunar is visited in her dreams by her Feral Heart: her own soul, embodied in its feral guise. It's not a welcome visitation. The Lunar's Feral Heart stalks her through the dream, once more hounding her through the Woods, and this time there is no waking up, no drawing upon its divine power to triumph. The Lunar's flight through the dreaming Woods reveal the injustices she has witnessed and suffered in her life; she stumbles through them until she is bruised and exhausted and staggering on bloody feet. In the end, her Feral Heart catches her. It savages her with claw and fang and horn and hoof, gouging deep, profound marks into the Lunar's arms and legs, her stomach, her back, her face and thighs. The Lunar does not die. She is not disfigured. Her Feral Heart melts back into her with each act of violence, running into her wounds as streams of molten silver. The Lunar awakens, body shining with strange eldritch tattoos which soon fade into invisibility. These are her Caste Scars.

There are three different Caste Scar patterns, marking the three Lunar Castes. Each concerns itself with a different sort of retribution against those who would defile and despoil the world, and manifests different powers and gifts in pursuit of that vendetta.

### Full Moon Caste

*Have you ever seen the kind of things mercury poisoning does to fetal development? Of course not; what does a mill owner know about something like that? Or care if some salmon are born with too many fins, for that matter. But it's not just some salmon. The food chain, you see? Other animals eat the salmon. Pick up the mercury contamination. The contamination you put there, in the water. People too, sometimes. Do you know what that contamination looks like in a Kodiak bear that manages to survive being born? Let me show you.*

Chosen of the Full Moon concern themselves with crimes against the world itself: the natural resources that *everyone* depends on. Some consider themselves spiritual crusaders, striking back on behalf of some ideal of Mother Nature, while others are more focused or pragmatic. They look at communities poisoned by contaminated groundwater, forests transformed into twisted killing grounds by supernatural parasites, or people displaced by dubiously legal mining or logging activities. They note the many blind eyes that should be tasked with regulating the exploitation of the planet's resources. They stand on beaches where the sand cannot be seen for the mass of dead, contaminated coastal life heaped up against the shore. And they feel that molten coil of anger burning in their gut, the one that demands bared teeth waiting in the back seat of expensive cars; men in tailored suits doused in the gasoline their own company produces; ancient thirsty corpses left to suffer and hunger forever in the depths of a tar pit.

Call them Mother Nature's revenge. Call them a balancing of the scales. Just don't walk into their Woods without a good reason.

**Anima:** When a Full Moon's anima flares, her forehead is marked with a jagged silver disc. The anima banner itself appears as a soft white or silver glow. Their Caste Scars are uneven, jagged lines and curves that intersect to form eerie runes.

**Caste Attributes:** Strength, Dexterity, Stamina

**Divine Gift:** Lunars of the Full Moon are nigh impossible to track down or evade while in the Woods. No one can get the drop on when it comes time for violence.

### Changing Moon Caste

*If you look out the window, and wipe away a bit of the blood – here, I’ll help – you can see the hospital where I was born. This is my city, but it’s not just my city, you know? I’m not the only one who grew up here. I’ve never lived anywhere else. I like it here. Or rather, I’d like to like it here. If only the streets were safer to walk at night. If only the cops were part of the solution, not the problem. If only there weren’t so many people sleeping on the porches of houses nobody can afford. You know? We’re trying to have a civilization here. And you, “Prince,” have been fucking it up for all of us.*

Chosen of the Changing Moon are social creatures. They like people, and the things people build. They’re at home navigating *systems*. They concern themselves with *communities*, and those that prey on them. The ones who exploit the system, who break it to their own benefit. The ones who divert resources earmarked for taking care of veterans after they get home. The ones who throw themselves \$10,000-a-plate fundraising dinners and can’t be assed to pass a budget to get some new mains laid in that aren’t leaking lead into people’s drinking water. The cops that show up to protect the Klan when it marches, the ones with hoods in their own closet, the message unmistakable: *This is a town of citizens and animals, and we’re not going to pretend very hard that you lot are citizens*. The monster that takes up residence in a neighborhood, and a year goes by, and everything’s all missing persons cases, and hauntings, and nobody will let their kids outside anymore.

Call them concerned citizens. When they come for you, they’ll do it with a too-bright smile, and you’ll tell yourself there’s nothing wrong until they decorate an elevator with your organs.

**Anima:** Changing Moon Caste marks may appear in a wide variety of forms: sometimes as a sickle crescent (facing in either direction), or a half-disc, or even a lopsided circle, shaved-down on one side much more than the other. Their anima banners manifest as shifting prisms of silver light and bruise-colored shadows. Their Caste Scars are series of hair-thin lines and arcs intersecting at mystically significant angles.

**Caste Attributes:** Presence, Manipulation, Composure

**Divine Gift:** Changing Moons can get close to any target without seeming suspicious or out of place until it’s much too late.

## No Moon Caste

*God, it’s like you can see forever from up here. Certainly, out into the harbor, where the Lady stands in all her copper glory. “Give me your tired, your poor,” all that. I was originally thinking, I’d turn into a big fucking bird and spear you on her crown, you know? Leave you for the sun. No, hush, shut up, don’t worry. I’m not going to do that. I wouldn’t sully her that way. Instead, I’m going to pitch you off this roof. I don’t know if that will kill a vampire? You lot seem pretty tough. If it doesn’t, I’ll come find you at the bottom, and drag you back up here. You’ve got that long to figure out a good excuse for drinking all of Lilah Salk’s blood and leaving her poor body in a Dumpster. If you don’t have one, I’m going to throw you off again. Then you can have another go at it. Don’t worry. I got all night.*

Perhaps the most dangerous of all Lunars, Chosen of the No Moon Caste mark crimes against *people*. Their vengeance is personal, and you can never tell whose suffering will catch a No Moon’s eye. Anyone, human or monster, who preys on or exploits someone a No Moon takes under her wing places himself directly in the Exalt’s crosshairs. Natural mystics, No Moons often insert themselves into the predations and conflicts of the supernatural world, in addition to

dispensing a brutal reckoning to those who prey on ordinary folks. Of all the Lunar Exalted, they are most suited to do deal with the subtle worlds of ephemera, being naturally adept with both curse and claw.

No Moons collect enemies the way a child on the beach might collect shells, but that's of little concern. When you have teeth this big, it's hard to bite off more than you can chew.

**Anima:** No Moon Caste marks appear as an empty, rough-hewn ring upon the brow. When their anima manifests, it does so as a shifting, dreamlike veil of dark blue and purple light edged in bright and shining silver. Their Caste Scars are gently curling and looping curves and spirals branching off of one another.

**Caste Attributes:** Intelligence, Wits, Resolve

**Divine Gift:** No Moons are naturally adept at sorcery, and may easily identify paths leading into the otherworlds and similar strange, liminal gateways.

## The Sidereal Exalted (Chosen of Destiny)

There's an order to things, a mainspring to the cosmos, a fundamental sanity and plan. It's too big to ever compass in its totality with the eye and the mind, but if you peel enough layers of the universe's blood and muscle back you can sometimes glimpse it ticking away: the structural bones of reality. The Master Plan. The way things are meant to be.

The world is a long way from compliance with that plan, but it has its agents. You, specifically. It made you for this. That's true, that's a fact, beyond a shadow of a doubt. But... what is *it*? What *is* the great hand that scribes the dictates of destiny?

You have no answers, but you do have scriptures, whispered in quiet moments from the empty alcoves of the Shattered Annex, where there are nothing but dust and shadows.

*Once there was a maiden...*

...whose shadow fled from her. She chased it over fire and stone. She chased her shadow into a monster's mouth. It went right in. It didn't know how to stop. The maiden caught her shadow in a deep cave full of ghosts. It turned into a ball of thorns that wrapped around her. When the ghosts pricked their fingers on the thorns, they came to life. This didn't make anyone very happy. The maiden made a ladder from the ghosts' bones, but it only pointed downward. "Why go on?" her shadow asked.

"I can't quit now," said she.

*Once there was a maiden...*

...who met a thing that lived outside the world, and there was a beauty to it. It burned with an unholy wrath that could destroy Creation. It hated her as much as it loved her. Its kiss was blood and perfection, for its teeth were sharp. It offered her power, and with it, hooks to tear her soul. With care not to burn her fingers, she took it into her life.

"Love is what you make of it," said she.



*Once there was a maiden...*

...whose battles called her far from home. She slew the thing she feared the most, and conquered the land that feared her. As she fought, far away, her children needed guidance. She knew they faced tyrants. She knew they faced fear. In her homeland, things were broken. So, she held up her hand before the sun, and cast a shadow on the world, and drowned the troubled of her home in darkness.

“Survival’s a long reach,” she said.

*Once there was a maiden...*

...who was the living embodiment of everything right in the world. While she lived, no real harm could come to anyone. Oh, wounds, disease, even death, sure. But she stood between the world and anything worse. “Except,” she said, “I’m going to die.” And no one listened. “I’m going to die tomorrow,” she said. And no one heard.

Into the silence, she said: “There’s always an ending, after all.”

*Once, there were...*

...shadows in the window.

...footsteps at the gates of life.

...whispering at the door:

“Should I live or die? Am I living or dead?”

“To know the world is to choose it,” says the Void.

*In seventeen seconds that door is going to open and your death will step through it. You can stay here and find out how many teeth it has, or come with me. Twelve seconds left to choose.*

## Why We Intervene

*Here’s our terror and our privilege, our burden: We’re the only ones who have any answers. Laugh, sure, you get it; most of the time we don’t have the questions that go with them, and absolutely never the context. But we get some answers, and it’s more than anyone else is working with. That’s one of the things we get to know, for example. That there are others out there, other Chosen, scattered out from whatever ancient calamity set us in motion. Sometimes they need our guidance. Sometimes we have to put them down. What’s it all in service of? A better world, I like to think.*

*No, I don’t know for sure. But if there’s a way the world is meant to be—and there is—surely it can’t be even more fucked up than this?*

The Sidereal Exalted are possessed of a soul-deep compulsion. They see the shape of *what must be*, and cannot rest until they shift events to meet that expectant necessity. To do so, they can lay their hands upon the ancient machinery of the cosmos, feel its power thrumming in their bones. While the other Exalted are granted a portion of divine power that becomes their own, Sidereals gain access to forgotten divine structures and mysteries embedded in the deepest layers of the world. They can wield these exploits and ambiguities with an inborn mastery without peer in the

supernatural world, but are constantly, ceaselessly called to do so in service to the demands of destiny: a force that will not speak to its origins or goals, and holds itself accountable to none.

Broadly, for the most part, it seeks to pit the Exalted against the rest of the supernatural world.

## Those Who Are Chosen

You were always fated to be who you are. Your Exaltation found you at the moment you drew your first breath outside the womb, settling in to sleep within your soul for years or decades, though at the time you didn't know it.

Your kind comes from every nation, every walk of life. You are scions of privilege, victims of misfortune. Sidereals are brave or cowardly, motivated or lazy, kind or cruel. They are surgeons in Bangkok, morticians in New York City, cigarette smugglers in the mountains of the Carolinas, sex workers in Mexico City, latchkey kids from broken homes in Dublin. Whatever quality marked you out as Chosen of Destiny, it is ineffable. When asked to reflect upon the question *why me*, most Sidereals simply shrug: for whatever reason, it could *only* have been them, they say. Others, comparing notes, arrive at the uneasy suspicion that in the eyes of fate, the choice of one champion or another is much like a child's choice between red or blue Play-Doh.

Your divine spark remains quiescent throughout your mortal life. You may experience moments of strange coincidence – your luck with coins, dice, cards, and other such expressions of chance and fortune is often notably odd – but be it dull or exciting, common or extraordinary, your life is always a prosaic one, not overtly marked by the supernatural.

## The Fated Exaltation

At some point, your divine spark awakens and you experience Exaltation. This *usually* happens at some point in your 20s, but may occur much later in life, potentially at any point up to and including advanced old age. There have also been a few verified instances of younger Exaltation; there doesn't seem to be a hard cap in either direction.

While the timing of Exaltation may vary, the circumstances don't. Exaltation always occurs at the moment when you realize, for the first time, that you are having an encounter with the supernatural.

Compared to other Chosen, Sidereal Exaltation is gradual, taking place over a span of hours or, more often, days. Strange omens and coincidences gather like stormcrows, foreshadowing the event or attack or revelation to come. You experience powerful flashes of intuition, urging you to take the day off work, or go to the beach, or linger on the bench to finish the novel you're reading, and catch the next bus. In hindsight, you can map the way these odd occurrences and breaks in your daily pattern drew you into the ultimate culmination of this slow, revelatory process: a confrontation with the hidden world. In the end, inevitably, you find yourself staring at a vampire's fangs, or a tenement building whose halls warp and twist to keep you captive, or a great shape that steps out from under the shadows of the trees and attempts to crawl into your soul.

In that moment, as you recoil from or lean into this terrible revelation, you feel them against you for the first time: threads. Strings, tense as piano wire, resting against your fingertips, your wrists, your ankles. You become aware of a great webwork of power stretching out around you, and you know – you *know* – that if you merely curl a few of them around your fingers, and twist like *so*—

A pale light races out along those strings and across your body as your Essence acts for the first time, commanding the world to perform its secret miracles on your behalf. Suddenly you can see the things you must do to escape, or to triumph. It's a calm, slow revelation compared to other Exaltations, in which time slows down and your mind unfolds like a lotus, drinking in the mysteries you can now plainly see all around you.

The light fades, but your expanded perceptions don't. You always feel the threads and hidden pathways of destiny held in tension around you, waiting to answer to your commands.

## Castes

A newly-Exalted Sidereal's anima is a prismatic wash of shifting colors. If she survives her initial encounter with the supernatural, she finds the soft halo of light fading, and her footsteps taking her down unfamiliar streets, across footbridges she hasn't seen before, or down small turn-off roads she never noticed were there. Before long the world falls away entirely, and she finds herself in one of the five wings of the Shattered Annex (see Chapter Two). It is here that she finds the signs, symbols, and tools that inform her of her Caste.

There are five distinct Sidereal Castes. While all are capable of broadly wielding the forces of destiny, each is heavily specialized in brokering and commanding certain fates and facets of the world. Sidereals are less similar to their brethren in different Castes than Solars or Lunars are, and feel less of a sense of kinship. Other Sidereals seem more like fellow workers than brothers and sisters, and while disparate Sidereals do feel a sense of rightness when working together, they also experience the same feeling, and to the same degree, when guiding the efforts of other sorts of Chosen entirely. Indeed, it's sometimes conjectured that the different Sidereal Castes may be entirely different sorts of Exalts, hailing from separate divine sources.

A Sidereal's life-experience and personality seems utterly irrelevant to the Caste she manifests. Her Caste is an assignment apparently made for her at the moment of her birth, and possibly even long before that.

## Chosen of Journeys

*Get in the car if you want everything you just went through to mean anything. No questions, there'll be time for them later. There's someone in Chicago you have to meet before they die.*

Life is a trip. Chosen of Journeys command the arts of travel and the lore of road, sea, and sky. They know when someone needs to be elsewhere, and they know when someone simply needs to go, even if not what it is they'll discover along the way. There are a thousand darksome horrors lurking on the midnight roads and lonely nighttime lanes of the hidden world, and it is the calling of the Chosen of Journeys to lead heroes to confront each and every one, and perhaps to find their ultimate destiny along the way.

**Anima:** The eyes of all Chosen of Journeys are some shade of yellow, their pupils shot through with yellow flecks like a star-filled sky. When her anima flares, the alchemical symbol for the planet Mercury and for quicksilver appears upon her forehead. The banner itself is a soft aura or halo of bright yellow light.

**Caste Skills:** Animal Ken, Athletics, Drive, Firearms, Survival

**Divine Gift:** Chosen of Journeys may extend the blessings of the wayfarer to themselves and their companions, granting a gift of greatly enhanced speed.

## Chosen of Serenity

*Maybe it seems premature, but the first thing I asked myself, once I'd gotten calmed down, was: What's it all for? You know? Gods and monsters, horrible conspiracies, life or death fights. It's got to be about something, right? And I think it's just about people getting to live a life, like they were promised. A place to live. Someone to love. No ghosts or curses or fangs, just a safe place to go at night that's mine. That's the dream, I think.*

Life is pleasure. Oh, don't laugh; the Chosen of Serenity aren't. Nobody can keep marching on, night after night, with only a promise of further suffering before them. And it's certainly not what anyone signed up for in life, to be part of some monster's experiment, or larder, or – whatever. Chosen of Serenity carry the key to every yearning, every desire, every heart within their Essence, awaiting only a smile and a bit of finagling to turn the key. It's a terrible, weighty power: to bring laughter and relief, or to brutally strike a name out of the book of love forever. But without their efforts, how will the world ever become a place worth living in and fighting for?

**Anima:** The eyes of all Chosen of Serenity are some shade of blue, their pupils shot through with blue flecks like a star-filled sky. When her anima flares, an alchemical symbol appears upon her forehead, representing the planet Venus, the female principle, and the metal copper. The banner itself is a soft aura or halo of bright blue light.

**Caste Skills:** Crafts, Empathy, Expression, Persuasion, Socialize

**Divine Gift:** Chosen of Serenity may extend the blessings of the celebrant to themselves and their companions, making them welcome and well-received in all circumstances.

## Chosen of Battles

*Nothing ever got done without that someone fought for it, kid. Saving your folks. Avenging your fella. Getting good enough with that sword to have a shot at either of those things. So get up, stop crying, and try to hit me again.*

Life is a battle. Chosen of Battles aren't just expert fighters, they're sages granted understanding of every facet and necessity of confrontation. They know *when* it's vital to fight, and *how* the scales of a struggle must be tilted to achieve a desired long-term outcome. Nor are they mere generals in a war against the forces of darkness. Chosen of Battles can see where conflict and confrontation is necessary for the health and maturity of individuals, groups, even societies. Nothing will ever be accomplished without that there's a fight over it, and the Chosen of Battles orchestrate the grand symphony of conflict.

**Anima:** The eyes of all Chosen of Battles are some shade of red, their pupils shot through with red flecks like a star-filled sky. When her anima flares, an alchemical symbol appears upon her forehead, representing the planet Mars, the male principle, and the metal iron. The banner itself is a soft aura or halo of bright red light.

**Caste Skills:** Brawl, Firearms, Intimidation, Persuasion, Weaponry

**Divine Gift:** Chosen of Battles may extend the blessings of war to themselves and their companions, protecting them from casual harm in battles where they are not fated to fall.

## Chosen of Secrets

*Five can keep a secret if four of them are dead. It's just you and Dale left now, right? He's figured that out, too. He's got a shotgun in the passenger seat, up where he's waiting to meet you. No, I'm not here to help either of you, or even to punish you. I'm here because what happened out at Three Bend Creek isn't going to end with Dale, and it's not going to end with you. It's going to happen again, and again, same as it's been happening since 1782 – unless you tell me exactly what kind of deal you made with the thing in the tree. Then, maybe, I can help.*

Life is a mystery. The night is a churning pit of darkness and teeth, unknown, ultimately unknowable. The Chosen of Secrets don't know all of the hidden ugliness of the supernatural world, but they know when it is *time* for one of those secrets to fall into the light, and they know what to do with it when that happens. They *also* possess an inborn instinct for when people have stumbled into something they shouldn't have, for when the hidden world is about to explode into visibility and wreak incalculable tragedy in the process. They are the cleaners of the Exalted, surgically investigating the night's most dangerous mysteries and tidying up the fallout of their brethren's battles so that the world at large can continue on in the peaceable ignorance that it so desperately craves.

**Anima:** The eyes of all Chosen of Secrets are some shade of green, their pupils shot through with green flecks like a star-filled sky. When her anima flares, an alchemical symbol appears upon her forehead, representing the planet Jupiter and the metal tin. The banner itself is a soft aura or halo of bright green light.

**Caste Skills:** Academics, Investigation, Larceny, Occult, Stealth

**Divine Gift:** Chosen of Secrets may extend the blessings of obscurity to themselves and their companions, protecting their thoughts from being stolen or meddled with.

## Chosen of Endings

*Shhh. It's been so much. I know. It's been such a long time. It's over now. It's finally done.*

Life comes to an end. Chosen of Endings are given a sense for the proper span of things, and the power to enforce conclusions. Sometimes they stand officiant at moments of great change: the end of one chapter, the beginning of another. But just as often, the end is simply that: a final conclusion. They bring an end to conspiracies, diseases, confraternities, killing sprees... lives, quite often. Things that need to be brought to an end call out to them, and the Chosen answer, marshaling the resources of their fellow Exalted if need be. They're troublesome companions, though; how long can one trust someone who maintains that everything, *everything*, will eventually have an appointed ending?

**Anima:** The eyes of all Chosen of Endings are some shade of violet, their pupils shot through with violet flecks like a star-filled sky. When her anima flares, an alchemical symbol appears upon her forehead, representing the planet Saturn and the metal lead. The banner itself is a soft aura or halo of bright violet light.

**Caste Skills:** Athletics, Firearms, Medicine, Politics, Science

**Divine Gift:** Chosen of Endings may extend the blessings of finality to themselves and others, making their blows unerringly deadly.

## The Abyssal Exalted

## (Chosen of the Grave)

You should have been a hero, golden and glorious. You should have been visited with power, and light, and righteous fury with which to avenge the scars the night put on your body, your mind, your soul. You should have *lived*.

But none of that happened. You died. You struggled against it, you fought *so hard*, but in the end, the monsters got you.

And *then* Exaltation came. You should have been one of the Solar Exalted, but instead, you're something else.

*Once upon a time:*

The cavalry didn't make it. The heroes, splendid in their shining raiment and alight with the fires of Heaven's blessing, made a glorious last stand. No help came. No relief arrived. They died, the heroes, cut down one by one until their blood soaked the earth and they were silent and still. The wicked birds came then, on wings like smoke and shadow, and had their feast. They ate the heroes' eyes. Drank their blood. Pecked at their flesh. Devoured their names. Growing bold from the feast, first one bird and then another poured itself into the vacant corpses. They made to parade about up and down in the land. But there was power yet in the dead heroes. Their corpses consumed shadow and smoke and timeless evil. Their torn lips drew air once again. Their empty eyes beheld the world for what it was.

Or perhaps you heard another tale. It doesn't matter; they all amount to the same. Sometimes hope dies, but power endures. Sometimes you don't get another chance, but you go on anyway. What are stories worth then? You're trapped in the darkness, forever.

And the monsters are trapped there with you.

*That's not me. Not anymore.*

## Why We Kill

*We should have been something else. Something golden. Something good. But death caught us in its claws. Exaltation wrested us back to the world of flesh and breath, but nobody ever really escapes the reaper. It demands its toll, again and again.*

*So we feed it. We kill the things that made us... this. We excoriate the world of their influence. And we become a little bit less who we were, death by death by death.*

The Abyssal Exalted are related to the Solar Exalted: that much is obvious at a glance, for those with any knowledge of the Chosen at all. Even newly-Exalted Abyssals themselves, ignorant of the affairs of their kind, know with a deep certainty that they should have been, were meant to be, something *else*. But they're not. They were dragged out of the black waters of death; given power, a mandate to kill, and a curse that hangs heavy over them should they rail against their fate.

As Solars become beacons of light, Abyssals are filled with the leaden horror of the grave. They are bleak knights of the Lower Mysteries, chalices filled up with the dark waters of the Underworld. The Essence of annihilation swirls around them. Theirs is the choice of who – or what – to cast into the silent river at the end of words. If they neglect to make that decision, the terrible resonance that infects them will eventually make it for them.

## Those Who Died

The Abyssal Exalted are, one and all, people who could have been Solars. *Should* have been Solars. They must share the same compulsions. They must be human. They must bear scars, inflicted by the night.

But in addition to that, they have to die. They die at the hands of the supernatural world. If you're an Abyssal, so sorry: your big hero moment didn't arrive. The monster had its meal. It was you.

## The Black Exaltation

The monsters get you. Everything fades to black. Then, *it* arrives, and you find out what darkness *really* is. You discover, absolutely and irrefutably, that you have a soul. You know this because you feel something colder than space and harder than iron binding itself around yours, hauling you *up*, out of the void, back to a world of... sensation, at least, if not yet quite life.

Sometimes bodies die for no good biological reason – a wicked spirit drained the life-force out of you, something like that – but most of the time it's not that way. Usually, there's damage. Your first sensation is probably your death-wounds going icy-cold and numb. If your eyes still work, you can see your final injuries un-happening. You're not *healing*. Broken bones jump back together. Ripped flesh draws shut. It's like watching video run in reverse. That's the first priority, the first moment of the Black Exaltation: the vessel must be made whole.

Or if not whole, at least capable of standing, moving, speaking, fighting. Sensation returns to your flesh: a pins-and-needles feeling, incredibly intense, as the blood begins flowing once again. It's about this moment that you become aware of the black fire. It's burning around you, an anti-light. It makes everything *around it* glow and shed a kind of strange radiance: reality asserting its solidity in terrified defiance of the void's presence. You feel parts of yourself burning away in the black flame, most notably your name. You can remember it, but you can't feel a connection to it, not anymore.

The black aura disappears soon enough, and your heart resumes its steady beating. That's Abyssal Exaltation, from the perspective of the one who goes through it. You never get a choice. You never get to refuse to come back. This is done to you.

What you may not realize until later is how much everything else about the process varies. Many Abyssals rise back up within seconds or minutes of their death. Some erupt with deathly power before their body finishes toppling to the ground, drawn back upright in defiance of gravity. But for others, Exaltation is gradual. It takes a while for their Exaltation to carry their captive soul back to their flesh. Hours, days. Sometimes weeks. The corpse is surrounded by strange and terrible omens during this period. Carrion birds may gather from miles around, standing vigil but refusing to eat. Terrible storms appear. Ghosts find themselves briefly able to interact with the living. The sound of weeping can be heard, emanating from nowhere.

Sometimes Exaltation's power must be expended to draw the Abyssal up through the cold, packed earth of a grave. Sometimes it must reconstitute her flesh from scattered ashes. In these cases, it's not uncommon for the Abyssal to be left powerfully marked by death: corpse-faced, terrible, a paragon of rot, perfectly hale of limb but still bearing the marks of decay or slaughter. Fresher Chosen of the Grave find that their flesh has been refined and perfected in the wake of Exaltation, given a haunting and uncanny grace or even a kind of otherworldly beauty.

## Castes

Abyssals fall into five Castes, mirroring those of the Solar Exalted they should have been. These Castes are twisted out of true when compared to their Solar counterparts. Where Solar Castes are divided by the Chosen's response to the trauma that made her a suitable candidate for Exaltation, Abyssal Castes revolve around the new Exalt's reaction to being dragged back from the grave and made into a terrible living channel for death's power. Or, in short: how the Abyssal copes with becoming a monster.

### Dusk Caste

*Yeah, it's me. You remember me. You remember holding me under the water, right? Oh, Mr. Horror. Mr. Lessons About Fear. All those things you tell yourself to justify what you are. What you got coming. What you got coming tonight.*

The Chosen of the Dusk are defined by the simplest reaction of all: violence. They want to punish the monsters for doing this to them. They want to kill. They want to glimpse the fear in their tormentors' eyes in the moment before that light goes out forever. They become the monsters that hunt monsters – and often anything else that gets in their way.

**Anima:** When a Dusk Caste's anima flares, her forehead is marked with a black brand in the shape of a sunburst. The banner itself is black tinged with an edging of gray and dark purple.

**Caste Skills:** Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Firearms, Weaponry

**Divine Gift:** Once a Dusk Caste sets her eyes upon the one she means to kill, nothing can stand in her way: no door, nor lock, nor sturdy wall. Those who have to fight them off must do so through a deep and aching terror that serves to protect the Dusk.

### Midnight Caste

*These are the rules: Don't kill each other. Don't gather five or more at a time. Don't leave the city. Don't look for me. Don't impersonate me. And stay away from the cross on Mount Royal. Break the rules, any of them, even once, and I'll fucking kill you.*

Chosen of the Midnight Caste didn't become heroes. They became monsters, they know it, and they're determined to become the monsters that all other monsters fear. Their goal isn't destruction or retribution, as such; rather, they want to ascend to a place in the supernatural world from which they will never again find themselves under the fangs of something more terrible still. They will ensure there is no such creature. Anyone or anything that isn't down with that agenda, well. Their bones can pave the path to the top. Simple as that.

**Anima:** Midnight Caste marks appear as an ominous black disc pressed into their brow. Their anima banner is a perfect black void.

**Caste Skills:** Animal Ken, Empathy, Expression, Intimidation, Survival

**Divine Gift:** Midnights can inflict a terrible sacrificial brand on a person, place, or object, marking it as their own.

### Daybreak Caste

*You think that's terrible? No. This is terrible: I have died and returned, and I can tell you nothing of what waits beyond the final heartbeat. Perhaps it's simply impossible for a living brain to store memories of the afterlife, but isn't it just as likely that there's nothing waiting but*



*oblivion? It means that life is good, I think, and to be cherished. So don't complain to me that the arm I gave you is not to your liking. Not when you still have a beating heart.*

A dark and terrible vista has opened up before Abyssals of the Daybreak Caste: a world of nightmares and impossibilities. It beckons to them, particularly now that they know it has already done its very worst. What more is there to fear? They want to understand it: the secrets of the night folk, the strange fractures in the design of the world, the lost histories of their kind. Most of all, they want to understand their purpose in this terrible nightscape. The world is now their laboratory, to break and rebuild and vivisection until it gives up its infinite mysteries.

**Anima:** Daybreak Caste marks appear as a circle upon the brow, its top half filled with darkness but its bottom half an empty ring. Their anima manifest as the more vivid hues of death: grays and purples with a tinge of dark green.

**Caste Skills:** Academics, Crafts, Investigation, Medicine, Occult

**Divine Gift:** Daybreaks are talented walkers between worlds, and natural sorcerers besides.

## Day Caste

*Is it true what they say, about the old motel by the interstate being haunted? What? No, no, I'm just a drifter, looking for a cheap place to put up for a while. Thought it might suit; I'm not afraid of ghosts.*

Every Day Caste has a clear and awful moment where she sees exactly what she has become, and cries out in refusal. She will not accept monstrosity. She will not be condemned quietly to the night.

It's not ignorance, it's not *denial*. Day Castes understand what has happened to them, or at least the broad strokes of it. But Days cleave toward the life they had, or at least the world of the living. If they could, they'd walk away from the world of darkness and horror that has claimed them, resume their old lives. But they can't. Their old name is gone. Refusing to engage with their new nature just causes it to spill out and ruin the world around them. Day Castes learn to walk a tightrope between worlds, dabbling in one and unwillingly moving through the other, trying to have the life they wish to create on the knife-edge between.

**Anima:** The Day Caste mark appears as an empty black ring upon the Abyssal's brow. Their anima banner is an unearthly gray-black, tinged with sickly green.

**Caste Skills:** Athletics, Larceny, Stealth, Streetwise, Subterfuge

**Divine Gift:** A Day can suppress the signs of her Exaltation for a while, the better to pose as something other than what she is. She can also sense the places where monsters gather.

## Moonshadow Caste

*Your grandfather is still watching over you, you know. He's sent me to speak on his behalf. I'm afraid I must tell you, he is not at all pleased.*

Moonshadows know they can't go home again, and so instead they seek to impose *control* over the nightscape into which they've been permanently cast. Their life has ended, and they sense chaos waiting in the darkness beyond. Chaos is best fought with rules, structure, laws. If they can't have peace, or a life like they used to, they can at least create *order* within the nightmare in

which they're stuck. Moonshadows act as arbiters, aiding or curtailing the actions of the monsters around them as best suits their personal plans and goals.

**Anima:** Moonshadows have a black disc within a circle as their Caste mark. Their anima banners are soft grays and blacks, often with pale green and purple sparkles like dimming stars.

**Caste Skills:** Computer, Persuasion, Politics, Socialize, Subterfuge

**Divine Gift:** Moonshadows may punish any who break faith with the Exalt by afflicting terrible binding laws, weaknesses, and curses upon them.

## The Infernal Exalted (Out of the Empty City)

Sometimes there's no difference at all between heroes and monsters.

*The night people have stories about what you are. What you might be. You find them in books bound in human skin, on servers connected to nothing.*

Once upon a time there were great and powerful gods, and they had enemies. Their champions cast those enemies down, cut their natures apart, and bound them away forever in darkness. Those monsters, those very first monsters, howled and roared in reality's basement for a thousand thousand years, but in time they fell silent and sullen.

Then the heroes returned, and broke them apart into pieces of power, and feasted upon the power. They butchered the monsters, and supped on their blood and their wisdom, until rising from their slaughter-banquet there was no difference between hero and horror, no difference at all.

*And:*

There is a place on the far side of infinity, a black city where no shadows lay upon the streets and a dead sun tumbles through an empty sky. This was reality's birthplace, this discarded shell, this cracked egg cast aside at the dawn of time. It should have been left empty forever, but once upon a time the heroes ransacked its halls and libraries, found its keys of power, and left power of their own behind. Now something gestates in the Empty City. Now something winds through the slow millennial spiral of time, waiting to be born.

*Finally:*

Sometimes a scream cuts its way across the entire breadth of the universe, condemning whosoever hears it, calling them back to the First Throat that they might be devoured or transformed. One night that maw will open and rise, punching its way through the crust of the dark and sleeping world. One night the Empty City will blaze with lights and fill its streets again. That night will be the last night on Earth.

*I don't think this ever ends.*

## Heirs of the Apocalypse

*I didn't ask for this. I didn't get to say no. And I won't apologize for fighting to survive. But I think there's something terrible banking on me winning.*

The Infernal Exalted are living vessels of corruption, tainted long ago in a profound and disfiguring way. That they are related to the rest of the Chosen is undeniable, unmistakable; but that they are monsters is also clear. Their power despoils the world. Their roots reach deep into a strange and empty Hell. And they are refugees, one and all, from something growing in that vast, empty place, something they do not understand and shudder to contemplate.

## Those Who Are Taken

The Infernal Exalted are, one and all, marked in some way by the supernatural. They might carry the scars of a vampire's bite; they might just as easily partake of vampire blood, polluting body and soul with the curse of undeath. They might be occultists, or might have narrowly escaped from sacrifice by some terrible cult. There seem to be no other qualifications. An Infernal-to-be might immerse herself in the horrors of the night as an active participant in the darkest of mysteries, or she might have spent years doing her best to forget her one encounter with the impossible. Whatever sort of life she lives, that she is marked is the only thing that matters. It's what draws the Exaltation to her.

## Abduction, Not Exaltation

Infernal Exaltation isn't a subtle, ineffable force that empowers the soul. It's a monster.

A rotting radiance burns through the fabric of dimensions, and then something formed of brass and flames steps through. You can run from it. You can scream for help. But at the end of the day, you are human and it is not. Escape is as unlikely as standing against it. The monstrosity's body gapes wide and it enfolds you in a steaming shell of stone and metal and terrible, soul-scarring light.

Then, it carries you back to the Empty City from whence it came.

## The Chrysalis Grotesque

It is the greatest and most horrid mystery of the Empty City. If you don't know about it, you'll never come upon it by mistake. Once you've encountered the Chrysalis Grotesque a single time, however, it can be seen from anywhere in the city: a great hulking tower of venous marble, black basalt, verdigrised brass, and slowly breathing flesh. It appears to be formed of wings folded upon wings folded upon wings; these sometimes rustle, revealing momentary glimpses of closed eyes or wicked fangs. It stands taller than a skyscraper, leaking a pale and unearthly radiance that spreads across the rooftops and sky of the Empty City.

Still bound within the burning coffin of Exaltation, this is every Infernal's ultimate destination. The Anathema that devoured them carries them through the Empty City, climbs the surface of the Chrysalis Grotesque, and then merges into its procrustean mass. Flesh and spirit are subsumed into a sea of irradiated Essence. To give in now is to be dissolved, to become part of whatever grows within that apocalyptic shell.

## Those Who Escape

The Infernal Exalted are those who face their own personal Armageddon within the Chrysalis Grotesque and find the strength to tear their way free of its surface. This is a very literal and physical escape; they must not only keep soul and psyche intact, they must also find the strength to pull apart a constraining prison of divine skin and muscle, writhing free like a worm from the edifice's diseased flesh.

Those who win free of the Chrysalis emerge transformed, often in body and always in spirit. They are Exalted now, corrosive harbingers of a terrible end-time. And yet, so long as a single Infernal remains free, their existence forestalls the night of annihilation. The Chrysalis Grotesque will not hatch until it has reclaimed all of its wayward children.

It becomes the new Exalt's first priority to escape the Empty City. Fleeing across the silver sands at its border will eventually return them to some terrible, barren place upon the Earth. From that moment on they will have no peace. Their fate is bent and disfigured, and will draw them into the world of monsters and nightmares again and again. Whether they choose to shape themselves into royalty among horrors or destroy all they encounter is, the Infernals suspect, of little consequence. It is very possible that no matter what they do, they're simply clearing the stage for the end of days.

## The Casteless

If the Infernal Exalted ever possessed Castes, they were long ago dissolved by hundreds of immersions within and escapes from the Chrysalis Grotesque. Now they evidence a confused handful of Divine Gifts and markings, detailed at greater length in Chapter Nine.

**Anima:** When an Infernal's anima flares, her forehead is marked with one of a baffling array of occult markings. A stylized third eye or flame, crossed swords, a variety of rings, sunbursts, starbursts, half-circles, hourglass markings, and various ideograms have all been observed. The anima banner itself manifests in varying shades and tones of green, sometimes with inclusions of sickly white or curdled yellow.

**Caste Skills:** Occult, any four other Skills.

**Divine Gift:** Several different Divine Gifts have been known to manifest. These are detailed in Chapter Nine.

## Chapter Two: A Cursed World

*This is a world of light.*

The sun comes up. It's a massive ball of plasma, fusing countless tons of hydrogen into helium every second in its nuclear core 92.96 million miles away, and yet the sunrise is a beautiful thing, betraying none of that cold and apocalyptic violence. People stopped in traffic on the way to work smile as fingers of rose and lavender spread across the horizon, at least if the source of that beauty isn't glaring right into their eyes.

They arrive at jobs they'd rather not do, but they do them, and somehow society lurches along for another day: things get made, things get sold. There's a break for lunch. There's some socializing; you can't ever put people together, for any reason, without them talking and getting ideas and doing things. We're social creatures.

Work ends. People hurry home, creating gridlock: everyone wants to be back in their safe and comfortable place, and so nobody gets to move. Eventually, the snarl works itself out, as it always does. Television beckons, or the internet, or games. So does dinner. Outside, the sun goes down, as beautiful in retreat as it was when it took the field, but fewer people take notice. They're inside now, doors locked, curtains drawn, staring at electric light. Outside, unremarked, the moon is rising. Soon it'll be time to sleep.

But that's a naïve view, of course it is. Incomplete. For much of the world, the day's just starting. Night-shift clerks are pulling their cars into their slots. Late-night drive-thru workers are putting their hair up in nets. Bartenders are a few hours into their shift. Others, already liberated from the daily grind, don't want a quiet dinner at home. They're looking for something: good times, good company, a good fix (or a bad one, if that's all there is to be had). They crowd into and around nightclubs. They drink. They dance. They laugh, sometimes genuine, sometimes not. They stagger off into the moonlight and the shadows, some alone, others not, as the sun's time creeps along again.

### This is a World of Darkness

Not everyone who vanishes into the shadows makes it back out. Some of the kids dancing at the club can track you by your heartbeat, by the smell of your blood inside of you. They're concealing sharp fangs. They would love for you to take them home. They're so lonely, their lips so dry and parched.

The city is full of alleys, and the alleys are full of garbage and the occasional mugger and the not-so-occasional poor homeless bastard who just wants a place to sleep out of the wind, but there's one alley you should never, ever go down. If you do that when the moonlight's shining at a certain angle, it will let you out in another city, an empty city, a hungry city whose windows are eyes and whose doorways are mouths.

In the suburbs, most of the houses are dark and quiet by midnight, but not all of them, not all of them. There are always a few night owls, a few homes where the windows glow softly with television-light, or the pale wash of a desktop monitor. In this house, the garage windows are bright with electric light. To the extent that anyone thinks about that at all – and they mostly don't – they assume whoever lives there has a hobby. They're right. His wife and children left him, you see (they had their reasons, oh they definitely had their reasons) and he's building a

better family to replace them. He's making them from old radio and automotive parts, and from bits and pieces of folks he picks up from here and there in his panel van.

If you drive out of town and take a certain series of roads, progressively older and more ill-tended, you'll eventually find yourself at a campground that hasn't seen any maintenance since 1989. From there, a quick hike uphill into the woods, over a deadfall that didn't happen as naturally as it appears to have, and down a nearly-invisible animal run will lead you to a clearing where, if you look up, you can see way more stars than you've ever seen before in your life. If you show up on the wrong night, the clearing may be occupied, and you will die for trespassing on the fangs of wolves that hunt with all the intelligence of men. If you show up on other nights, you will think you're all by yourself, because the spirits can't be seen unless they want to be. You probably won't leave alone. You will have something riding inside of you.

Come morning, a few of the people, but not as few as you'd think or hope, will go to work in a factory that you can't find if you look for it on Google Earth. There are five of them in the city, arranged in a pentagram. The foreman at each is identical save for their names: Mr. Greene, Mr. Black, Mr. White, Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones. Nobody ever sees them break for lunch. Nobody ever sees them leave. Nobody ever sees them eat. The factories perform a lot of dangerous work with heavy machinery, but they don't really produce anything. The product isn't the point, you see: the on-site accidents are. Specific mutilations must be performed in an exacting sequence of time and place if the angel is to be summoned.

*This is the world.* A fishing hole that grants your desires if only you shed a little bit of blood into it and issue a request, with results that make you desperately wish you'd kept your mouth shut. A hidden world of hungry spirits. Black-eyed children. A door in the back of an all-night diner, and on the other side of that door it is always 1941. Vampires, smiling in the shadows, avoiding the clubs doing cute shit with blacklights because it makes the blood on their collars show up. Everyone's bumped up against the world, and no one wants to think about it, because the world will usually let you go if it thinks you haven't seen it. Haven't seen what it *really* is.

It shouldn't be like this. Everyone knows it shouldn't be like this. The world of nine-to-five, of boozy dates, of telling the Vice President to go fuck himself on Twitter, it's far from the best of all possible worlds, but it's closer to right than a world where sometimes a cloud will descend on a lonely country road and just eat a car and all the passengers before returning to the sky.

The people who live in the dark – oh yes, they're there, in numbers larger than you'd suppose or enjoy hearing – will give you a broken, cynical smile if you say anything like that. Sure, it'd be nice if the world were what we were taught it was when we were children, they'll say. But it isn't, and it never was. It's always been like this. Dark. Hungry. Broken.

They're wrong. The darkness has always been there, sure, but there also used to be a light to shine against it.

## The Night People

The night people hide from scrutiny, but poorly. Once you know to look, they're not hard to find.

Who are they?

Well, there's the vampires, of course, but also the people who hunt them. There are the werewolves, casting surly glances from sagging front porches as they wait out the hours of sunlight in their man-skins. There are magicians of all sorts, from desperate stupid children who

opened a door into a world of horrors they don't know how to close, to ruthless killers trying to find immortality or enlightenment in the slick and secret chambers of human anatomy, to barely-human sorcerers calling down the power of angels and demons from ascended planes of reality. Look out for those last ones, especially; they're more like the alien inhabitants of the otherworlds they've glimpsed than they are like you or me. There are psychics with broken minds or broken souls limping, half-wounded, through a world full of things that would love to sup on their bleeding thoughts. There are patchwork people who shouldn't exist. There are the victims, and the victimizers, and the brokers who can put them together for the right price. Some of them are still human, some aren't, and some of course have only ever played at being human with the most cursory and unconvincing insincerity.

The night people are anyone or anything you might mistake for human that has seen the world smile wide enough to show its fangs. Even, perhaps especially, if they biologically *are* human; thinking of them as such is still a mistake.

Ask them, and they all have secrets. They don't even guard them that carefully. It's lonely in the dark, and if you know things, maybe you look a little bigger than you are. Maybe the worse predators will leave you alone. So ask them, and they'll tell you stories about the world.

## Horrors and Glories of Eld

*The world is older and stranger than we know*, the night people will say. They're right.

Seeking to impress you before offering you blood and slavery, the vampire smiles his bright white sharp smile in the shadows. *My clan rose up from the sands of ancient Egypt*, he says. *We were ghosts that walked up and down the banks of the Nile after an improper burial. In time we learned to pull together what was left of our broken souls, and to drink blood like civilized monsters. But that's how it all began.* He's a liar, repeating the lies of more clever liars than he.

*The world is a lie*, says the rogue magician, who likes to hear himself talk as he prepares to steal your soul. *Before it was broken, the wisest of the wise came together in a distant land – wherever you started from, it was always a distant land – and they built a silver ladder to Heaven. But the first who ascended it kicked the ladder down behind them, and trapped the rest of us in this miserable fallen world. And now no one can find that distant land at all, only the scattered shadow of its secrets.* He believes it. Every contradiction, every inconclusive discovery, every denial of his tale just makes him more certain the truth is being concealed by evil gods.

The werewolf, drunk and amicable in the wake of a ferocious slaughter, slings an arm around your shoulder. There's blood and meat on her breath when she speaks. *This story is true. In the earliest days, back when people lived in caves and sacrificed deformed children to gods they imagined or made out of rocks, the world of spirits was so close you could get there just by crossing a river, or climbing over a ridge. The spirits could come to the world of flesh the same way, and then there was terror and woe. My people, they hunted the Border Marches, kept people and spirits in line. But then we killed the god of the Border Marches – I swear, we had to – and the world ruptured, and you couldn't cross over any more without special tricks.* She's speaking of murder. You can probably trust her on that.

Melancholy and tired, an ancient immortal inducts you into its cult. *They ruled under the sign of the scorpion, from atop pillars built by the hands of slaves. My hands. They were necromancer-priests of terrible power, my masters. Was this Egypt? No. No. It was long before the Pyramids. Before the Ice Age. Before any of the Neolithic societies known to modern scholarship appeared.*

*They ruled in terror and splendor, and seared their magic into the world forevermore, even if the world has forgotten... forgotten... forgotten...* His fear and sorrow are genuine, at least.

A frenzy of terrible, frantic images as the owl-thing becomes oily smoke, pours itself into your eyes and nose and mouth, devours your soul, adds you to its own substance: *Lurking under the canopy the tall ones walk below the forest is silent they are afraid. They are wise to be afraid but it will not save them. The sun descends. I descend. I feast.* Here's something you can trust for sure: The owl doesn't know what that means, and it doesn't give a shit.

And yet, for all that they go back to the dawn of recorded humanity and maybe beyond, their boasts, their stories, all fall short. The world is older still.

## Dreams of the First Age

Ever since your Exaltation, you dream of lives you never lived. From the first time it happened, you knew they weren't just dreams. They didn't feel like dreams. They're things that happened, real things: this is what your heart tells you, even if your mind insists on their impossibility.

Mostly you can place your dreams in some sort of context:

*Longboats and lashing seas, and man-shapes lunging from the spray with lamprey-mouths to die upon your spear.* The Viking-dream, surely.

*Quiet sandals carrying you through the shadows of the Capitoline Hill as you pursue a trio of pale women in stolae before they can kill again.* The dream of Rome. Republic still, or Empire? You'd have to be a historian to piece together the small clues. But Rome, surely, Rome.

*Dust and horse-sweat as you ride toward a small town huddled close against the haunch of the Rocky Mountains, a town where children have begun to vanish every night of the full moon.* The dream of the American West, the Wild West. The cowboy-dream. It must be some time after the Civil War, even, because there is a repeating rifle on your saddle, and Colt pistols on your hips, and you used the internet the next morning to find these particular guns. They weren't manufactured until the 1880s.

*Prayers in your cell of the convent as you wait for the thing made of candle-tallow and bone to walk the halls, a dagger concealed beneath your habit.* The medieval-dream, to judge by the weak candlelight. Impossible to pin it down more than that, based on a simple bare room and a straw-stuffed cot.

*The wind howls and your eyes narrow as the spirits form in the blowing snow, all long claws and smiling icicle teeth, and you grip your ax of sharpened stone tighter.* The Ice Age dream. You awakened, shaking, when you first had that one, wondering: How old is this power?

Old. Very old. Your power passed through many hands before your own, over a long, long time.

But sometimes the dreams defy any attempt to even vaguely map them to history, or possibility, and the gulf of years yawns so wide it seems like a hungry maw all its own. These are the mad dreams, the fantasy dreams, the dreams that cannot be true:

*You stand on the crimson glass harbor of the great ruined city next to your sister, silent as the magistrates proclaim your father's fate. He has stolen salt from the wards that protect the city from the ghosts that dwell in the haunted districts, and according to ancient custom, he is to be given to the Fair Folk who dwell beneath the waves, his soul to be devoured at their leisure. Your father weeps and calls for mercy as an impossibly beautiful woman clothed in her own sea-*



*green hair rises from the water. Your sister takes your hand, and you squeeze it reassuringly. You were the ones who informed on him. You hope the fae take their time.*

*Tzatli is falling, falling. You plunge your blade into the polished marble floor, splitting sorcerously-reinforced stone easily, as the entire city tilts and plunges, its crystalline spires shattering around you under the unaccustomed draw of gravity. Your hand is slick with your own blood, and your grip is weak. The corpses of your enemies – other Chosen, the first wave of this terrible ambush – slide past you, tumbling into the mountain valley far below. You know you are out of options. When the miraculous flying city finishes its fall, you will join them there.*

*Anger hums in your veins, barely-contained, as you survey the sweep of the Violet Coast before you. The pirates, cowards that they are, did not bother to dispose of the bodies of their victims, leaving them bobbing in the surf, and now the sun is going down. You watch as the hungry ghosts, bristling with rage at their improper burial, emerge from the tide, walking on backwards-facing feet. You heft an impossible spear of gold and inlaid jade, and prepare to descend among the dead. Then you will find the pirates, and have a word with them about the responsibilities that even lawless marauders must uphold.*

*It is the end of the war, and you stand atop the mountain that rises high above the heart of the entire cosmos. The camps of your armies and those of your fellows stretch down its miles-long slopes and fill the isle around it for many more miles yet. The gods have departed, leaving gifts and blessings in their wake. For your service in particular, you have been granted a retinue of 250,000 soldiers, two retainer-families of the lesser Chosen, lands in the untamed furnace of the Great Southern Desert – taming them will be your first task – and an enchanted saddle stitched with the blessings of the Maiden of Journeys herself. But before you can depart, already you are drawn into debate. An argument has broken out among your fellows as to the disposition of the remaining demon prisoners. There are questions of whether they should be banished, or executed, or enslaved. Tempers begin to flare. You look for your brother, whose gift is for words and unity. This is not an argument that will be resolved with your killer's bow.*

*You and your Circle face a dragon, or a thing you can only understand as a dragon. It is older than the world. Its wings are the heaving sky itself. Multitudes of demons and worse things descend from the thunderheads of its breath. Essence boils in the air around you, twining into spells of defense and devastation. You brace yourself, and rush to meet the first wave of horrors.*

They are real. Your heart knows this as surely as it does the reality of the Viking-dream, or the cowboy dream. These things happened. These are the dreams of the First Age of the world.

What happened to those splendors, those wonders? How many thousands of years did they span? You have dreamed of gods and monsters, ghosts, spirits, armies, incredible machines, vast cities, advanced societies. Why is there no longer any remote trace of them anywhere in the world? How could those great works, incredible accomplishments, and miraculous sorceries simply vanish from history? Where did the people who built and witnessed them go?

Why is there no record, no record at all, of an untamed age of wild glories? Why is there not a single ruined city wall to be found? How did humanity lose the arts of agriculture, literature, advanced machinery and metallurgy? Why did sorcery recede into the shadows of myth and fiction?

Why did only the monsters survive? And who taught the world to hunger for blood?

## Heritors of Nothing

The First Age, if it existed at all, was a time of gods and monsters. The monsters are still around, thronging in the shadows. The gods are absent, silent, or dead. Everything else from that period seems to be long, long gone, reduced to less than dust.

Everything but the Chosen.

In the First Age, in the dawn-times, in the earliest days of the world, for some reason or reasons that have been utterly lost, mighty and primal gods granted a portion of their power to mortal champions. Perhaps it was to fight the monsters. Perhaps it was to fight one another. Or perhaps the Exalted weren't the beneficiaries of a gift at all. Perhaps they violently seized the power of Heaven for themselves. The origins of the Chosen are lost, but the power itself endures.

The Exalted awaken to their power in ignorance. They don't know what they've become. There's no divine guidance. They have to find answers, usually held in trust by others of their kind.

Here's what they might discover.

## High and Low

There exists a fundamental division among the Chosen: there are Terrestrial and Celestial Exalted. The way they express their power is quite similar, but the way they inherit that power varies significantly. In short, the Terrestrial Exalted are born with the potential for divine power and must coax it out with great effort. It has always belonged to them, if only they can win the right to it. The Celestial Exalted are visited by their power in the middle of their lives with no warning, and it is borrowed power, passed down from previous heroes.

Because they can chart and predict the emergence of further Exaltation among their kind, the Terrestrial Exalted have become the de facto lorekeepers of the Chosen. If one of the Chosen is to learn anything about the history and nature of her kind, it will probably be from a clan of Terrestrial Exalted.

## Circles

The Exalted are individually mighty, but not invincible nor unstoppable. They've always been drawn to one another, seeking strength in numbers. Working together seems to be their natural, intended state; it *feels* right, and their dream-memories almost always feature other Chosen. These fellowships are known as *Circles*.

Circles are an oddity. The Exalted are incredibly few in number compared to almost any other sort of supernatural being. They're vastly outnumbered by vampires, werewolves, spirits. And yet, they seem to find one another, somehow. More than that, inheritors of the same power seem inclined to band together again and again across history.

Circles aren't discriminatory. Sometimes they're composed of groupings of similar Chosen, but just as often they are mixtures of different sorts of Exalted. There exists some scant evidence that "mixed" Circles have become more common over the centuries. Perhaps "pure" Circles were the intended state of the Exalted, but their low numbers have forced mongrel fellowships to develop and solidify over time? It's impossible to say, when almost nothing is known of the origins of the Chosen.

## Terrestrial Exaltation

As far as anyone knows, there are five varieties of Terrestrial Exalted, each embodying the power of one of the primal elements. Collectively, they call themselves the Dragon-Blooded.

This is what the Dragon-Blooded believe: The power of their Exaltation lives in their blood, and is passed on in the blood. You might become one of the Dragon-Blooded if and only if your ancestors were Dragon-Blooded. That's it. There's no other path to this sort of power.

Further, they believe that in the ancient past, the power would awaken of its own accord. The children of heroes would Exalt if they proved themselves worthy, perhaps through some great feat of prowess or bravery. The oral histories are very insistent on this, but textual evidence is... thin. There's a clay tablet in London (smuggled out of Baghdad hours ahead of American missile strikes back in 2003) that hints at a line of kings "awakening in the trials of fire." There were hieroglyphics in an Egyptian tomb, destroyed by storms in 1902, depicting what seemed to be young men and women stepping into the Nile and emerging as gods. And then there's no more evidence at all past the Egyptian Old Kingdom period.

If that is indeed how things once worked, it's not how they are now. Oh, the power still lives in the blood, but it slumbers, and will not awaken of its own accord. The children of the Dragon-Blooded may, at best, inherit a fitful spark of elemental power, and if left to their own devices, that is all they will ever manifest. A girl whose anger sometimes starts small fires. A boy who speaks to the wind, if he concentrates with all his might.

The power must be fed. It must be fed with more power yet, and the blood of monsters. The Terrestrial scions hunt things in the dark, slaughter them, rip out their power, and feed it into their own slumbering blood. Sometimes this will eventually goad that power into awakening, and Exaltation occurs. Then, in time, that Exalt's children take up knife and gun and walk into the dark to seek power of their own.

## Celestial Exaltation

Depending on who you ask, how well-informed their records are, and how they do their counting, there are anywhere from three to about a dozen different sorts of Celestial Exalted. They're all a bit different, but also fundamentally similar.

Everyone who is eventually going to become one of the Celestial Exalted is born mortal, human, just like anyone else. They live their lives without any idea they're on a crash-course with ancient divine power from the dawn of time. Then, *bam*. They have an absolutely terrible day. Not just the kind of bad day where you lock yourself out of your car *and* the washing machine shits itself and floods the laundry room with water and suds. The kind of bad day where someone drugs you and throws you in the back of a murder van and drives you out into the woods to hunt you like an animal and eat you. The kind of day where you hook up with a guy at the club and the guy has been dead since 1957 and he tries to suck all your blood out when you get home. One of those days.

Except you don't get all your blood sucked out or whatever. Instead, right in the middle of things going to shit, the director of your life gets switched out from David Cronenberg to Chad Stahelski. The power of an ancient god drops into your soul, buckles in, and pops in the *Rocky III* soundtrack. Suddenly you're smashing your way out of trouble with the power of a rampant demigod. Your thoughts are clear. Your intent translates into action without fumbling or confusion.

That power doesn't go away when the crisis ends. It's yours now, for the rest of your life.

Where did it come from?

## Reincarnation

Celestial Exaltation is a fragment of pure divinity, created or bequeathed in the unimaginably distant past. It seeks a mortal to empower, and, having done so, remains with her for all the days of her life.

And then, upon her death, it departs in search of a new host. The Dragon-Blooded may be able to spread and pass on their bloodlines, but each of the Celestial Exalted is the inheritor of a legacy of power passed from Exalt to Exalt in an unbroken chain stretching back to... well, to the dawn of the world, if the dreams are to be believed.

At least, that's how it's supposed to work.

## Gifts of Forgotten Gods

Exaltation brings with it a host of benefits. The Dragon-Blooded seek their Exaltations so fervently for a very good reason.

### Health

Exaltation does not demand a hale and hearty host, but it will do its best to bring about that state. The divine power within them allows the Chosen to simply ignore or brush aside many of the minor pains and inconveniences of life. The Chosen aren't *immune* to sickness and disease, but they'll never come down with the sniffles or a head cold after Exaltation, and even if they wallow through a malarial swamp while covered in open wounds, the result will be no worse than a day or two of fever. An Exalt who has to sleep in a fucked up position in a compact car won't have her back and hips yelling at her throughout the following day. Afflicting herself with a hangover would require an epic, days-long bender, not a mere night on the town.

Exaltation doesn't repair all physical infirmities, but it knocks out most of them. It won't grant sight to the blind, or lift a paraplegic out of her wheelchair, but an individual who once needed prescription glasses doesn't in the wake of Exaltation. Arthritis pains recede to the occasional twinge, or vanish altogether. That bum knee from the old high school football injury isn't inclined to go out any more. Chronic migraines vanish. Shark week trades out a pissed off great white for a placid nurse shark.

Injuries heal quick and clean. Bruises hardly have time to form. A broken bone will only slow down one of the Chosen for a day or two. They can recover from gunshots over a long weekend. Even dreadful injuries don't leave massive scarring. There's no worry of a compound fracture leaving an Exalt with a limp, or impaired mobility. Nothing much less than having a limb torn clean off will afflict one of the Chosen with lasting debility.

### Longevity

The Exalted live for a very, very long time, unless violence or mishap cuts their span of days short, which it almost always does. The Dragon-Blooded may live upwards of two to three centuries, and they spend the majority of that time presenting the appearance of being in the prime of their life, only beginning to develop signs of advanced age in their final few decades. Celestial Exalted can last even longer. Nobody's quite sure how long, but at least one Solar Exalt was reliably documented to be over five hundred years old at the time of her (violent) death.

There are stories – tall tales, campfire rumors, really – of an Exalt known as the Old Man who was supposedly Exalted from among the slaves who built the Pyramids and were liberated by Moses. Of course, there are problems with that. For one, all the reports of the Old Man describe him as exactly that: an old man with sun-tanned skin, eyes sunk deep in nests of wrinkles, and long white hair. He’s apparently been old since at least 450 C.E., when the first reliable accounts of meetings with him appear. For another, accounts disagree on his ethnicity; he’s been alternately described as Semitic, Asian, and Caucasian. And of course modern scholarship generally agrees that the Exodus wasn’t a real historical event, or even closely based on one. Still, the tales circulate.

## Power

The greatest gift of Exaltation is the gift of might. Exaltation is a tiny spark of power drawn from the heart of a primal god in the first days of the world, and that power belongs to an Exalt for so long as she continues to draw breath. It lets her perform small but potent miracles: performing mundane feats with exacting perfection; transforming her body; exhibiting strength and speed and toughness far beyond human potential; bending the wills of others with a word or a gesture; even mastering strange and ancient spells.

## Purification

The Celestial Exalted enjoy one additional blessing: the ability to cleanse the Earth of the influence and corruption of monsters. Having triumphed over the things that live in the dark, a Celestial Exalt can draw their remnant power into the ancient furnace of her Essence and rend it into nothingness. She can annihilate curses, blood-corruption, and the despoiling of minds and souls in this fashion.

## Tribulations

No blessing comes without a cost, and Exaltation is certainly no exception.

## A Thousand Years of Darkness

Exaltation opens your eyes to the world, the *real* world. The things squirming in the shadows. The things hunting and hungering. The gaps in the fabric of things, with cold starlight or sharp teeth or pitiless churning gears in between. Once an Exalt sees the things in the dark, they see her in turn. And from there on out, it’s a fight that never ends.

## Essence and Anima

The miracles of the Chosen that make them strong enough to fight against the monsters they share a world with are powered by potent, condensed spiritual energy. When an Exalt spends this energy, fragments of burnt-off power collect around her in a kind of aura that can eventually ignite in a massive display of light and power. The Dragon-Blooded call this display the *anima banner*. An Exalt displaying her anima banner is a fearsome sight, but also an attention-getting one. It tells her enemies where she is. It tells the things that have learned to be wary of the Chosen that she is in the area. It reveals her, in a world where darkness and secrecy are vital to survival.

## A Fragile World

The power of the Chosen is ancient, wild, primal. Pushed to its limit, it can burn too hot and too bright for the world to endure its touch. In these moments, Exalted power scars the world,

producing phenomena known as *Burns*. A Burn is a place where the fabric of reality has been suffused with divine power, twisting its nature out of true. Burns may become haunted, or they can be places where a superabundance of energy starts fires or drives people mad. An Exalt who doesn't wish to become one more blight upon the world has to exercise caution when using her powers, lest she inflict collateral damage as severe as the depredations of the monsters she's fighting.

## The Anathema

Purification carries a price. Consuming thousands of years of hideous, corrupting power has taken its toll on each Celestial Exaltation. There was once a time, perhaps, when Exaltation flitted from host to host in a matter of hours or days following the death of its previous bearer. That time is long gone, if it ever existed.

Now each Celestial Exaltation lingers in the world after the death of its bearer, lurking invisibly in the Twilight realm of shades and truant spirits. It slumbers, shedding the burden of accumulated corruption it took into itself by purifying the power of darkness from the world. This process can take anywhere from months (after the demise of a very young Exalt) to decades (after the destruction of a potent and high-Essence hero). At the end of the cycle, having finally processed the extra weight it took on and contained within the furnace of its Essence, the Exaltation departs in search of a new hero to empower. That's the best-case scenario.

In the worst-case scenario, someone or something interferes with the Exaltation before it can finish recalibrating itself. Its burden of consumed darkness spills out, empowered by a glut of raw Essence, and hardens into a monstrous shell surrounding the Exaltation. While the horrors created by such interference vary greatly, they bear the common title of Anathema. So long as an Anathema persists, its Exaltation remains trapped within, and cannot invest itself in a new hero.

## Bumps in the Night

By the time she experiences Exaltation, every last one of the Chosen knows not only that the world is larger and older and darker than she ever imagined, but that she is not alone in the dark. Some simply buckle down and try to survive the horrors they encounter, while others attempt to examine and catalogue the terrors that lurk and hunt in the shadows. This isn't a futile endeavor, but it is a seemingly endless one. The night is endlessly inventive in the oddities and abominations it brings forth. Still, there are some nightmares that the Chosen seem particularly prone to bump into.

## The Hungry Dead

It's a sad, frightening lesson that everyone learns at some point during childhood: Sooner or later, everyone dies. They go away, and no matter how much you might wish it otherwise, no matter how much you might *need* it to be otherwise, you'll never see them again, never speak to them again, never hear their voice.

Except sometimes you do, and it turns out that's a *lot* scarier than when you thought death was a one-way door. Because they if they come back, they come back hungry. They come back empty, and they have to pretend to remember what it was like to be human, to be alive, to be warm and able to care about people as something other than food.

You can find them in most any city, vampires. They come in a variety of forms and configurations. Maybe they're not even really the same things, precisely, but they share a common *modus operandi*: they avoid the sun, and they drink human blood. They're usually pretty good at pretending to be people, until they don't need to any more, and then you wonder how you could have ever mistaken this cold, empty, hungry corpse for human. Then the mask goes back on, and you're left doubting your own memory.

Maybe they even fool themselves that way.

Vampires are very hard to kill, but that's not the really scary thing about them. The scary thing is that the curse inside of them, their bad blood, whatever it might be, it's infectious. It gets into everything. It wants to spread. It *likes* to spread. It's not that whoever they bite turns into a vampire. They don't, the world would be drowning in vampires if that were the case. But *something*, some little shadow, passes on to everything a vampire involves himself with. When he bites you, your life gets a little darker, a little more bent toward the night. It gets easier for them to pick you out of the crowd, to say: Yes, that looks tasty. When you drink his blood, you get tied into his curse, become part of his terrible slow immortal dance. You start to love him. Wherever he lairs, that place becomes slowly more and more like the vampire: cold, hollow, hungry. And the vampire becomes more like the places he hunts. The land adapts to the vampire, and the vampire adapts to the land, and everyone living in the hunting ground is pulled deeper and deeper into the shadow. Once in a while, a corpse might even get up and drink blood without the vampire wanting it to.

Vampires, and things very much like vampires, are detailed in **Vampire: The Requiem** and **Night Horrors: The Wicked Dead**.

## The Wolf Must Hunt

Sometimes things are born looking like people, but they're not, and they never were. Sometimes howls echo through the cities, the woods. You jump a bit, convince yourself someone is keeping a big fucking dog. It's not a dog. The wolves are hunting.

Werewolves are predators. They hunt. They kill. Sometimes, a very young werewolf, one that hasn't shaken the delusion of humanity yet, will try not to do those things. It makes them sick and crazy. They're obligate murderers. That's the most important thing to know about werewolves. The wolf must hunt. Everything else is a justification to prop up that imperative.

The Exalted are very robust, enticing prey.

Werewolves are fast, powerful, deadly, and if you find one, rest assured the rest of the pack is nearby. Their rapid healing and deadly claws and teeth are bad enough, but werewolves also inherit an indelible link to a hidden world of animistic spirits, and are able to weave the rituals and mysticism of the Shadow Realm into their hunts.

Sometimes werewolves hunt people, but a lot of the time they hunt spirits, or other monsters, and so an Exalt might be able to reach some sort of temporary accommodation with a werewolf pack if they don't view her as an immediate threat to their territory. Which they probably do; Exalted create great upheavals in the resonance of the spirit world, and werewolves tend to view that as a problem in need of immediate and lethal response.

Werewolves are detailed in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**.

## Rats in the Walls, Spiders in the Attic

Werewolves aren't the only things out there that blend humanity and animal into a deadly, primordial nightmare. Some Exalts have had the misfortune of encountering other lycanthropic creatures, most often rats or spiders. These horrors are more overtly monstrous than werewolves, and more immediately destructive. The rat-things gnaw holes in the barrier between the world of flesh and the untamed wilds of the spirit world, and spread disease far and wide. The spiders are flesh-eating nightmares whose webs cut off the connection between the two worlds, leading to a sickening decay of both. There are other, similar sorts of hybrids as well, much rarer: locusts, crows, lampreys. Stranger things.

These more monstrous lycanthropes are exceedingly difficult to kill, even moreso than werewolves. A deadly blow scatters them into hundreds of rats or thousands of spiders that frantically attempt to escape in every direction. Only by killing the entire outpouring tide can one of these nightmares be put down for good.

The grotesque Hosts are outlined in much greater detail in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, **Predators**, and **Night Horrors: Shunned by the Moon**.

## Man is the Warmest Place to Hide

That spirit world? It has native inhabitants. Spirits. Sometimes – more often than you really want to know – they get out of the spirit world. But they can't live here, not outside of very particular circumstances. They weaken in the thin air of reality. But when in Rome, they can survive as the Romans do: inside of an insulating curtain of meat. Spirits crawl into people, and they don't often content themselves with passively observing the world as passengers.

If a spirit-ridden individual is lucky, they are Urged: the spirit whispers into their mind and into their soul. It influences their decisions. It... adjusts their priorities. Spirits are simple, primal things. They have very little ability to empathize with anything outside of their portfolio. A car-spirit cares about cars. It *feeds* on the idea of cars. It needs cars to survive, to thrive. So its host spends all of his time working on his car. The spirit mutes the importance of things like "family" and "job" – anything that gets between the host and messing with cars. Going to car shows. Maybe buying another car. Maybe stealing a car. Maybe stealing lots of cars.

And that's just something really inoffensive, a car-spirit. Imagine what happens when a spirit of disease, or murder, or gluttony, crawls through the veil between worlds.

An *unlucky* host harbors a spirit that finds itself very, very at home in the host's life; or perhaps it's simply a controlling and powerful thing. Either way, it doesn't confine itself to whispers. It Claims the host, permanently. It inextricably intertwines its existence with that of a human being. Two minds bleed together. The spirits modifies the host's body to better suit its needs and desires. Perhaps the host needs a jaw that can unhinge and open wide enough to swallow a man whole. Perhaps he needs more eyes. Perhaps the spirit would be more at home if the host's heart were more like a V-8 engine, and smoke and petroleum pumped through his lungs and veins.

Spirits are detailed in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, **Predators**, and **Book of Spirits**.

## Memory and Ectoplasm

In Santa Fe, there's a phone booth – yes, even now, it's still there – that sometimes rings at midnight. If you answer it, a quiet, high-pitched voice on the other end tells you how you are



going to die. Half a mile outside of Freiburg, there's a great gnarled tree. It eats the small animals that try to climb on it or roost in its branches, and in the summer of 1987 it also ate a small boy named Klaus. Klaus's friends weren't able to save him, but they *did* discover that for two weeks after the tree digested their friend, it would grant them any little wish they whispered while standing in the dark of the forest at night. The community has forgotten about poor Klaus's terrible disappearance, but one of his friends, Michael, still remembers. Michael destroyed his life with drugs and gambling debts. Michael lives out of his car now. In the dark of night, debating whether or not to use his precious gas reserves to run the heater, Michael wonders how many wishes the tree would give if someone fed it a full-grown man, or at least one of Freiburg's college students. It's a college town, after all; surely no one would miss just one student. In Tokyo, a glowing figure with no visible eyes or ears sometimes appears in the apartment of individuals between the ages of 28 and 31 who live alone. If they're not home, the figure arranges their shoes into a small pile in the middle of the floor. If they are, it pulls out their two front teeth, eats them (and it chews before it swallows; the crunching is very audible), and then vanishes.

In a world like that, is it any surprise that ghosts are real? They're very much like you're expect them to be, or fear them to be: remnants left behind when someone forges Marley's chains for himself in life. They're sad, often dangerous beings. Sometimes they can reach out and touch the living. Sometimes a living soul and a ghost even get entangled permanently into one another.

Ghosts, and those rare strange figures – eerily like the Exalted in their own way – who permanently merge with a restless shade are detailed in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, and in **Geist: The Sin-Eaters**.

## Seekers of the Mysteries

Not a surprise at this point: Magic is real. Even more of a non-surprise: that's not a delightful thing.

Magicians are still human in every biological sense of the word. They bleed. They age. They need to breathe. Their cells have 23 pairs of chromosomes. In any other sense that matters, they're monsters like any other. They draw their powers from strange pacts with forces the magicians themselves can barely understand: maybe an ancient book bound in human skin; maybe a cold and lonely tower they saw during a waking hallucination, guarded by proud and bloody-handed angels.

Magicians don't care about other people. Oh, it's not that they *can't*. It's not even that they don't ever *want* to. But they forget to, and then they forget how to. They reduce everything down to symbols to be manipulated. They get caught up in their mysteries and secrets. They get lost in riddles, certain that if they pay the keeper's toll just *one more time* they will grasp some fantastic reward of power that makes it all worthwhile. Eventually, they compare notes, and they wall everything else off behind dismissive words: the Lie, the Fallen World, Sleepers. Those who don't share in their precious discovery. A world that doesn't speak to restless shades or living embodiments of concepts.

*What are ordinary people even doing with their souls?* a magician eventually wonders. *It's not like they even know they have one. I could do so many things, if I just took one soul to experiment with.*

Or maybe that makes them just as human as anyone else. As human as the Exalted, surely.

“Magician” accurately describes a wide number of groups and individuals. The most powerful of the lot are detailed in **Mage: The Awakening**, but other sorcerers can be found in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, **Second Sight**, and **Hurt Locker**.

## Patchwork People

A man in a rented storage space pieces together what used to be his wife, before the auto accident ripped her into pieces. She was beautiful, then. She’s not beautiful now, but he willfully ignores that. She wasn’t fit for an open casket, but he’s done his best to touch her up. At least she was buried with all her parts. Well. Almost all. The heart was pulverized when a tree limb came in through the windshield. He’s substituted a pig’s heart. He thinks he remembers reading about pig heart transplants? Whatever. It has to work.

When she rises up off the slab, he realizes in an instant that the thing he’s made is not his wife. He tries to un-make her. Confused, the creature fights back. She breaks him, very easily, and then sprints off into the night.

For one reason or another, people try to make people. Or people-like things. And sometimes, they almost succeed. The result isn’t really human. It has a wild fire reminiscent of the primal power of Exalted Essence burning in place of a soul. Having fire instead of a soul hurts. The creature quickly becomes agitated, violent. It’s very powerful. There are tears. There is blood. The creature flees. The drama repeats.

Sometimes the monster is pitiable. Sometimes it wants to be more than what it is. But always, it’s a monster. Not a person. You can see that at a glance. And it’s one of the lucky ones. Sometimes when bodies come up off the slab, they rip apart under the violence of their aborted creation, twisting into flesh-devouring monstrosities, without even the slightest pretense of humanity.

Artificial people of all sorts are outlined in more detail in **Promethean: The Created**.

## Beyond the Hedge

Sometimes a weird bus pulls up at the stop, and if you get on, it takes you a lot farther than you wanted to go. Sometimes a stranger chats you up, and his home is so much more distant than you could ever imagine. Sometimes a person turns the wrong corner and falls out of the world. They become trapped in a maze – the maze takes on many appearances – that rips at their flesh and their soul with transcendent thorns. If the lords and ladies that live in that maze find you, they’ll bring you back with them, and make you part of their games for ever and ever.

People escape from the Fae, but they never get away entirely unscathed. They’re left scarred, *changed*, paranoid of anything that might draw the bright gleaming eye of their master back upon them once again. And they bring a bit of that strange, otherworldly magic back with them. Beware of making deals with a man whose handshake feels like rough tree bark.

Arcadia and its scarred survivors are detailed in **Changeling: The Lost**.

## Wheels Within Wheels

The world is a strange place, and sometimes, if you dig deep enough into the right conspiracies, if you listen to enough crazy, broken people saying crazy, broken things, a pattern begins to emerge. An agenda – visible, but not comprehensible, too methodical to be random coincidence, too vast to be understood – begins to emerge. A Prime Mover, exploiting the strangeness of the

night. A mind calculating on a cosmic scale, scribing its works in occult machinery and human sacrifice. A God-Machine, if you will.

Of course, that's exactly how conspiracy nuts think, feverishly imagining patterns in television static, voices in empty radio noise. You'd probably be tempted to step back and think the great force you glimpsed is nothing more than that – the human mind attempting to impose order on meaningless chaos – until you see the skin of the world peel back to momentarily expose a place of blinding white light and shrieking static, which disgorges an angel onto the Earth to do the God-Machine's bidding.

What you probably won't realize is that someone is watching you watch the machinery of the cosmos. While you're figuring all this shit out and wondering how deep the rabbit hole goes, a blandly anonymous figure snaps your picture and quickly walks away. If you confront him, he'll give you a world-class poker face. If you push things far enough, that blandly anonymous face may melt away to reveal a biomechanical terror with great sharp electric talons and a mouth full of whirling gears.

There's a cold war going on whose stakes are nearly incomprehensible even for those caught up in the struggle. The God-Machine's parts are in revolt against it... if it really exists at all.

The God-Machine is detailed in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, while its errant operatives are described in **Demon: The Descent**.

## What Big Teeth You Have

You know what is, definitely and for certain, even older than the impossible dreams of the First Age? Fear. Fear might just be older even than death itself. The first thing that ever lived, before it died, knew terror at the stark uncaring size of the world in the moment of its creation.

Somewhere in the darkness outside the world, that primordial fear still echoes, birthing monsters of the mind, monsters of the soul. Proverbial terrors. It would be nice if they stayed out there, safely imaginary and symbolic, something for mystery-obsessed magicians to go poke and prod at and get themselves eaten by in the process, but the world isn't that accommodating. Sometimes people dream their way out into those dark and primal waters, and something swimming there gobbles them up. Then they wake up, and the Kraken or the Manticore is looking out through their eyes: a forgotten nightmare, hungry for terror to sustain itself and gifted with subtle and grotesque manifestations with which prey on the people around it.

They're usually not obliging enough to turn into a giant snake, so they're easy to miss. But once you've seen one, you start to notice them, lurking around the edges of other monsters' hunting grounds. Soaking up the fear. Making everything worse. Indulging petty sadism from inside of their man-suit. And if you go after them, they'll vanish into their lair in the elder darkness, where the *real* monster waits.

Ancient Horrors and the people they devour are detailed in **Beast: The Primordial**.

## Just a Whole Conspiracy of Assholes, and the Mess They Made

Not every monster can rip your arms out of their sockets, or twist your mind. A lot of them aren't even, in any strict sense of the word, monsters. They're just night people – folks who got their fingers into the squirming underbelly of reality – and started fucking with it, and found like-minded souls to help them perpetrate their fuckery. They formed a conspiracy. Maybe they were

a college frat that summoned a demon, and they stayed in touch and learned how to summon things that were even worse, and it made them wealthy and untouchable. Maybe they're a government outfit buried under six layers of black budgets. Maybe they're a mid-sized corporation that has been quietly retrofitting tech out of a strange, semi-organic vessel found under the Nevada desert since 1932. That birth control pill that got suddenly yanked off the market last year among the flurry of odd stories that surfaced and *immediately* vanished last year? That was them.

Eventually, having influence and weird resources, they do things to people. Why not, right? Fuck 'em; they volunteered. Or, they were homeless, and no good to anyone. Or, they had the mark of the Chosen One. Whatever the story, it ends with prenatal psychics locked up in a facility, treated like guinea pigs. Or a man with a mechanical spider living inside of his body. Or a privately-owned island where the natives keep disappearing, and there are rumors of animal-people sighted in the wooded hills. Usually, they die, and men in coats or windbreakers nod and write things in a journal that will never see publication. But sometimes they stabilize, and become part of the conspiracy's growing pool of resources.

And sometimes, they escape.

When you find yourself face-to-face with a girl who sets everything on fire every time she becomes the least bit upset, is there even a way to help? What about when the people who did that to her life come to collect her and take her back to the cage where she grew up (and surprise, the retrieval team has a boy with them, and he's even scarier)?

The Web of Pain and the broken souls it creates are detailed in **Deviant: The Renegades**.

## Other Terrible Things

Here's the one certainty of the night: You never know what you'll find in it next.

They don't call themselves a cult. They're a *fraternal society* whose roots stretch back to Victorian England (and in truth, a lot farther than that). Fathers induct their sons. They perform charitable works. But if you fuck with them, they'll descend to the hidden tomb where their god-slave sleeps, and awaken him from his immortal slumber to protect them. He's older than the Chinese alphabet, and he can vomit up a sandstorm full of flesh-eating locusts when angered.

Kindly old Mrs. Kersh lives in a walk-up flat in Utica, with her deep smile lines and her two little dogs. She looks to be getting on into her early 60s, but that's not true. The truth is, she was born in the winter of 1816, and has been restoring her youth by periodically bathing in human blood for going on two centuries now. Mrs. Kersh babysits for a lot of people in the neighborhood. One night soon, she's going to vanish completely, taking only a few precious mementos, and her two little dogs, and one of the neighborhood children, and then somewhere else in the United States, a pretty young woman with a sharp smile and two Yorkies is going to move into a new apartment.

There's a little town – very little – half an hour outside of Apalachicola. It has one local graveyard, and anything you bury there comes back to life – well, something like life – three days later. Trouble is, it comes back mean, and it comes back hungry. Mort Anselm tended the grounds from 1977 to just a few days ago, when he passed on in his sleep. He provided the public service of sitting up in the night with his stout old shovel, waiting for the dearly departed to come clawing their way up out of the sod. One good solid strike, thwack, made them peaceful

again, and then he re-interred them. He never told the community about his night vigils; reckoned it would upset folks. Mort died single and childless. He's been in the ground for two days now. There'll be nobody watching the boneyard tonight.

In Louisiana, there's a little patch of marshland with the quaintly racist name of Swamp Indian Hollow. The land itself went quietly insane at some point, and so did the handful of people living there. Now they make puppets out of old bits of bone and vegetation, to keep them company. The puppets hide when outsiders are around; they're shy. But their numbers are growing.

Shedford, Wyoming has a terrorist problem. At least, that's what the men in the black sedans and black suits and black glasses say whenever they arrive. They flash badges that hurt the eyes to look at, and whose exact credentials nobody can agree on, and then they make an arrest. It's always someone the community won't *really* miss: Joe Carpenter, the handsy drunk; Mr. Beeman, who yells at the schoolchildren; Billy Kenner, who ran that motorcycle up and down the streets at all hours of the night when decent people were trying to sleep. *Conspiracy*, the men in black say before driving the suspect off, never to be seen again. *Wanted for questioning by the authorities, up in Bixby*. The trouble is, there's no such thing as a Bixby, Wyoming. And the men in black have been making more frequent arrests. It used to be one every few years, but now there have been three just in as many months.

Mary-Ann Mosely wants to marry, but her family has a tradition. Mary-Ann inherited a seal skin from her mother, you see, and she's *desperately* in love with her fellow, a welder named Tad. But the skin, well, the skin isn't so sure. The skin tells her there's something she needs to know. Something the skin could sniff out, if only she could bring Tad to the water, and don the skin, and then take just... a little nip. A drop of blood in the water. That would clear up whatever it is. Unless, of course, it isn't nothing. Unless it turns out Tad's unfaithful. Then there'll be much more than just a drop of blood in the water. Mary-Ann doesn't want anything like that to happen, but once she dons the skin, well, it doesn't always listen to what she wants.

An hour and a half south of Dublin, there's a blasted little ghost town around a played-out mine. If you look it up on Google, you'll find that it was formally declared uninhabited in 1991. If you stop driving and get out of your car there, though, you'll find out that Google is very, very wrong. Albert McCready has been tunneling, connecting the empty town's basements to one another for years and years. It's where he keeps visitors, hunting them through the dark with big huffing and hooting laughs. The vehicles vanish into a nearby pond, whose bed is coming to resemble a used-car lot from Hell.

An enterprising Exalt erases one horror from the world, and always, always finds that the world has a new surprise waiting for her.

## The Otherworlds

Take a wrong step, a bad turn, and you can find yourself in parts of the world that shouldn't be parts of the world at all. Sometimes it's a vast Hedge whose thorns catch and tear at your soul. Sometimes it's a twisty labyrinth that is actually a monster's very own soul. Sometimes it's a broken maze of shattered space, twisted out of true by a magician's spell.

But sometimes – worse than all those things – sometimes you can fall out of the world altogether. There are other worlds than the one we live in, the world of flesh and time and light. Animistic worlds of hunger. Realms of thoughts aching to be real. Cold, echoing caverns where the dead slowly rot and fade.

The Chosen wage the majority of their battles in the world of flesh, but may learn the exacting arts of pursuing foes and secrets into the Otherworlds. These, then, are a few of the more commonly encountered realms invisible:

## Twilight

The most common of the invisible realms isn't truly a realm at all, but rather a thin skin attached to the world of flesh and matter. It might be thought of as a vibrational frequency, or a state of being. The Night People call it *Twilight*. It is the abode of ghosts, spirits, and other things made of ephemera rather than physical matter when they visit the world.

Beings in Twilight can perceive the world, but cannot interact with it without recourse to special powers. They are invisible, inaudible, intangible, save to other beings in Twilight or using supernatural powers to interact with that state. The Exalted deal with beings in Twilight far more often than they actually travel to any of the Otherworlds.

## The Shadow

The roaring power that drives every Exalt's magic is a fragment of Essence: spirit-stuff struck off from a god at the dawn of time. Those who learn to attune themselves to the emanations of Essence may find that it leads them away from the world, into an alien country where the moon hangs enormous in the sky and emotions and concepts hunt one another for sustenance.

The Shadow Realm, also known as the world of spirits, is held separate from the world of flesh by a dense layer of supernatural scar tissue which its natives refer to as the Gauntlet. Crossing the Gauntlet is only possible with specialized sorcery or Charms.

The Shadow is an animistic realm which reflects the nature, rather than exact details, of the real world, and most everything in it is both alive and predatory. Spirits feed on the Essence generated by the concept, emotion, or thing that they represent, and also on other spirits rich with that particular resonance of Essence. Dog-spirits hunt other dog-spirits, but also spirits of loyalty, or of the pack. Sometimes spirits can wriggle through the Gauntlet in places of power where the barrier between worlds is thin. The result is almost always chaos and calamity, for spirits do not temper their urges with consideration or restraint unless those qualities are inextricable from their nature. They are obsessives, and think little or nothing of ruining lives in the course of pursuing their own indulgence and advancement.

The Gauntlet and Shadow Realm are detailed in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** and **Mage: The Awakening**.

## The Underworld

Every graveyard in the world holds a portal to the Underworld.

It's not just the graveyards, of course; you might find an Avernian Gate almost anywhere that resonates strongly with death, but you'll *always* find one in a graveyard, if you know how to look. Of course, finding a Gate is only the beginning. Each will only open if induced through its unique Key, which could be anything from the shedding of blood on the full moon to the recitation of a certain poem.

Or, if an Exalt knows the right arts, they might simply force the Gate through an application of mystic force.

The Underworld is a place of powerful contrasts. It's bleak, but shot through with bright fragments and offerings. It's a place of memories that slowly forgets itself. It's not where we all go when we die, but it is the place ghosts fall into when they slip out of the world, when they grow old and worn and forgotten. They slide, inch by inch, into the Underworld's deeper tunnels, its Lower Mysteries, becoming more strange and monstrous decade by decade, layer by layer.

It is the realm of lost things, and eventually of forgotten things, and then finally of things that are simply no more. It may be of some interest to beings as ancient as the Chosen, who have forgotten so much of what they were and where they came from.

The Underworld is detailed in **Geist: The Sin-Eaters**.

## The Astral Realms

The Astral Realms are a collection of abstract Otherworlds collectively formed of the great massed unconsciousness of human thought. Its near shore is a frothing mass of dreams and mental landscapes which touch on individuals' specific souls. These may be used as a stepping-stone to the deeper Astral Realms: realms of abstract concepts, pure emotion, or incarnated facets of the human condition. It is primarily a place of interest to magicians, but Exalts sometimes learn the trick of walking among dreams and speaking to souls and ideas; and it is not uncommon for the Anathema to hunt these realms, confused and dazed by the mock-light of humanity.

The Astral Realms are detailed in **Mage: The Awakening**.

## The Shattered Annex

There's a place almost nobody goes. Even the Night People mostly haven't heard of it, and there have been times – years, decades, maybe even an entire century now and then – when it has stood completely empty, gathering dust and cobwebs. But every now and then its vast hallways echo with living footsteps, and human hands brush aside the dust and cobwebs. Sometimes the Exalted – specifically, the Sidereal Exalted – come here and explore its mysteries.

They know by some instinctive and unerring memory imprinted on their Essence that this place is the Shattered Annex, but when they meet in its halls, they mostly call it Spiderland.

## An Old, Empty Place

The Shattered Annex is a building, or more properly a large complex of buildings, constructed mostly from various sorts of dark stone. Pillars and columns abound, and arched ceilings are common. The Annex holds five distinct wings around a central domed building, which in turn is ringed by overgrown, ill-tended gardens.

Exalts looking out of the Annex's windows or peering over its walls may glimpse a vast, fantastic city stretching away to the horizon, still and quiet under a perfectly black and empty sky, but all efforts to reach the city fail. Those who climb out of the windows or leap the walls find themselves landing in the central garden. Older Sidereals generally hold that the city no longer exists, and is simply a comforting dream the Annex projects around itself.

The buildings are full of rooms and offices of multifarious design and purpose. The Annex seems to have once been a place of bureaucracy, for there are millions and millions of cabinets and shelves filled with scrolls, papers, and manuals, all printed in an indecipherable language that partakes of both High Speech and First Tongue, but is not either. There are empty, long-ago-

pillaged armories, private suites that have been left uninhabited for millennia, and many dry fountains and isolated alcoves hung with dusty curtains and decorated with not-precisely-human statuary. Sometimes scuttling sounds can be heard in far-away chambers. Whatever makes them is always long-gone by the time Exalts arrive to investigate, but sometimes the paperwork or furniture has been rearranged in their wake.

The central building at the heart of the Annex looks to be about the size of a civic auditorium, with a broad domed roof of green and black marble. Inside, winding corridors eventually lead to many, many, many balconies overlooking a vast, echoing, empty cavity. Glittering spiderwebs fill the empty space, stretching off in all directions until they are lost to the light, though there are never any spiders to be seen.

On Christmas Day, 1997, a heroically drunken Chosen of Secrets named Marion Greer employed a number of scientific instruments and unscientific supernatural abilities to measure the size of the Annex's central cavity. She recorded her findings in a notebook and left it on the floor of the balcony from which she'd made her observations; other Exalts, new Exalts, stumble across it year by year, ponder its findings, and put the notebook back down for someone else to find. According to Greer's best estimates, the Chamber of Absent Spiders is an elliptical cavity roughly 19.1652 astronomical units wide across its major axis: about the same size as the orbit of Saturn around the sun.

Nobody really knows what to do with this information.

## Seers in Spiderland

The Shattered Annex is a Sidereal place. Every Sidereal Exalt accidentally makes her way to Spiderland shortly after Exaltation; after that, it's a simple (though not *uncomplicated*) matter to leave and return.

The Shattered Annex features prominently in many expressions of Sidereal magic, which frequently conjures useful information or relics from the depths of the ancient, uncanny ruin. It also serves as one of the very few places in the cosmos where Exalts can easily meet one another and compare notes, and so in the good times, it is the hub of Chosen activity as they plan to reclaim the world from the monsters.

In the bad times – which have, in the past, lasted for years, decades, sometimes centuries – someone foolishly lets something bad into the Annex, and it becomes the Labyrinth of Knossos. Sidereals who wander unsuspecting into the Annex may be hunted by monsters, Anathema, their own maddened Exalted brethren, or whatever other inimical force claims the Annex for its own until it is slain, driven out, or otherwise dealt with.

## Entrance and Egress

All Sidereals can access the Annex simply by wishing to do so and going walkabout for a while.

Chosen of Journeys have the easiest time getting in and out. They need only go for a drive, or start walking without a destination in mind. If they wander aimlessly for long enough, with the intent to reach the Annex, they will eventually do so, arriving in the western wing of the structure, where the walls are decorated with brass and wood.

Chosen of Serenity reach the Annex by wandering among excited crowds, or by slipping away from a party. As the sound of people fades away, the Annex approaches. They arrive in the building's southwestern district, among hanging curtains of cerulean silk.



Chosen of Mars must walk crime scenes, old battlefields, or war memorials in order to find a way into the Annex. Eventually the old cannons and signs of violence are replaced by even older statuary of faceless soldiers and moldering spears, and they find themselves in the building's east wing, among faded crimson banners.

Chosen of Secrets attain the Annex by venturing deeper and deeper into the stacks of a private or public library or other archive of knowledge. At some point, they find themselves walking the stacks of the Annex's northern wing, where the shelves are overgrown with ancient, dead ivy.

Finally, Chosen of Endings reach the Shattered Annex by wandering through graveyards or other memorial sites. A fog comes up sooner or later, and when it recedes they find themselves in the Annex's southeastern wing, walking through echoing galleries of monuments and mausoleums.

Leaving the Annex is similarly easy: the Exalt simply wanders the winding halls of 'her' wing of the building, wishing to find a way back to the world. Eventually she does: she opens a door, or turns a corner, and realizes she is no longer in Spiderland. The only problem is that fate, or the Annex, decides where to return the Sidereal to the real world. She has little say in the matter.

All Sidereals can easily bring companions along with them when they enter or leave the Annex, simply by making an effort to keep up to a half-dozen or so people with them as they make the journey.

## The Lower Depths

Rip up the baseboards of Creation. Dig through the dirt, past the moldering bones of worlds that were. Keep going. Past even the memory of light. Into the depths.

These are the realms that shouldn't be able to exist, but do. Fundamentally broken, stillborn or aborted realities. Only mages have any truck at all with the Lower Depths, and even they barely understand these flawed, broken dimensions. Mages say that each realm in the Lower Depths is incapable of containing or expressing a critical element of existence. One might lack Time, while another is without Death, and a third lacks Shape, or Meaning. Sorcerers can sometimes summon *things* up from the Lower Depths, but they never venture there themselves and return to tell the tale, for these places are so fundamentally flawed as to be incompatible with life.

There is one exception.

## The Empty City

There is a place beneath all other places, an empty city beneath an empty sky. Its tea houses and dojos, shops and palaces are crafted from black basalt and brass, forever lit – just barely – by the burned-out cinder of a dead green sun. The buildings are uninhabited, the city silent. No wind stirs its banners, and nothing that stands or walks through its streets casts a shadow.

Hidden deep within the city's inner districts are a number of geographically impossible mysteries: a wood of dead, barren silver trees; a still, empty sea that is acidic enough to first bleach and eventually dissolve clothing, while irritating the skin and blinding the eyes; a plaza where one massive crystal sphere sits ringed by 100 smaller spheres, which in turn are surrounded by 99,997 even smaller spheres. All are empty, all coated in untold centuries of dust.

The city is surrounded by a vast desert of silver sand. One of the desert's borders connects to every point of the city's edge; its other side reaches to infinity. The Infernal Exalted alone know the secret of crossing its dunes. Where the wastes swallow all others who enter their immensity,

they will eventually deposit an Infernal wayfarer into some place of spiritual or physical desolation within the world if walked for five days.

The Empty City is unlike other realms of the Lower Depths in that it doesn't clearly lack any element of reality. Time, space, thought, souls – all of these and more can exist comfortably within the Empty City. The Empty City, rather, has been reduced from itself: it was once a prison formed of the very being of the entities it was meant to imprison. Those dread existences died eons ago, starved of substance, leaving behind an empty and pointless husk as the only evidence that they ever existed.

It remains up to the Infernal Exalted to decide if this realm will ever again hold any significance.

# Chapter Three: Weapons of the Gods

Welcome to the rules chapter. A few notes before we get rolling.

*This is not a complete game.* In order to use **Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness**, you'll need access to at least one of the Second Edition-era **Chronicles of Darkness** core rulebooks: **Chronicles of Darkness Second Edition**, **Vampire: the Requiem Second Edition**, **Werewolf: the Forsaken Second Edition**, **Mage: the Awakening Second Edition**, **Promethean: the Created Second Edition**, **Changeling: the Lost Second Edition**, **Hunter: the Vigil Second Edition**, **Geist: the Sin-Eaters Second Edition**, or **Mummy: the Curse Second Edition**. Alternately, the first editions of **Demon: the Descent**, **Beast: the Primordial**, or **Deviant: the Renegades** will serve, as will a First Edition corebook and the **God-Machine Rules Update**. You should *probably* also have an **Exalted** corebook (any edition will do) to have the context for what in the Hell's going on in this game, but it's not *technically* required.

**Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness** uses the Storytelling system, as detailed in the aforementioned **CofD** rulebooks. This is a decision made for two reasons. First, it's a game set *within* the Chronicles of Darkness, and as such it's easiest to integrate into a system designed to represent the Chronicles of Darkness. Second, translating the Exalted into Storytelling is about a hundred times less work than translating a dozen+ game lines into, say, **Exalted Third Edition**.

## Storytelling Rules Assumptions and Variations

The Storytelling system is highly standardized for crossover, but it's worth noting that not every **CofD** corebook has all elements of the system present. For example, **Changeling** doesn't have rules for spirits, while **Vampire** omits Tilts. **Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness** assumes you have access to all the large moving parts of the Storytelling system, and I'll do my best to point out places you can find them in case your particular book is missing pieces.

In general, the Chosen interact with the Storytelling system the same way most supernatural beings do. It's worth noting that, much like werewolves, the Exalted were designed as supernatural weapons, and do not become Beaten Down when injured during combat, nor do they have to spend Willpower to attack someone who has surrendered, although many Chosen may face other consequences for such actions. It's also worth noting that while the Chosen *do* have a Virtue and Vice, and these work the same way as those traits do for mortal characters as detailed in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, Exalts *don't* have an Integrity track.

## Character Creation

In **Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness**, your character is, or rather *was*, an ordinary person until the night when the ancient power of long-vanished gods granted her unreasonable might inherited from a forgotten age of savage glory. Let's start by deciding what sort of person she was before the fateful moment of Exaltation.

### Step One: Character Concept

Start by summarizing your character in a couple of words or a very short phrase. Is she a Vengeful Cabby? A Haunted Musician? Perhaps a Disgraced Journalist? It's a place to start.

Next, you'll need three Aspirations. These are things your character wants – goals she wishes to pursue. Select two short-term Aspirations (things that might be obtained or accomplished in a

single game session) and one longer-term Aspiration. Note that some **Chronicles of Darkness** games allow Aspirations to be player-defined rather than character-defined goals (like “I want to see my character lose his job, that would be a fun twist”), but in **Exalted x World of Darkness**, Aspirations must be in-character goals, since some powers interact with them.

Finally, define a Virtue and Vice, which provide your character with a means to regain Willpower. Virtue and Vice are explained in the greatest level of detail in **Chronicles of Darkness Second Edition** and **Mage: the Awakening Second Edition**.

## Step Two: Select Attributes

Exalts have the same nine Attributes as all other **Chronicles of Darkness** characters. Prioritize the importance of the following three categories for your character: Mental Attributes, Physical Attributes, and Social Attributes. Each Attribute starts with one dot. Allocate an additional five dots among the Attributes of the most important category, four dots among the second-most important group of Attributes, and three dots among the least important group. No Attribute can be raised above five dots.

## Step Three: Select Skills

Exalts also use the same Skills as everything else in **CofD**. Once again, prioritize Mental, Physical, and Social Skills. These don't have to be prioritized the same way Attributes were, and unlike Attributes, Skills begin at zero dots. Divide 11 dots among the most important category, seven dots among the secondary category, and four dots among the least important category. No Skill can be raised above five dots.

## Step Four: Determine Skill Specialties

Assign three Skill Specialties in whatever fashion best suits the character. Again, this works just as in other **CofD** games.

## Step Five: Add Exalted Template

At this point, go to the chapter devoted to the sort of Exalt you're going to play, and consult the rules for making that sort of character. If you're playing a Solar Exalt, for example, this is where you go to Chapter Five and apply the Solar template.

## Step Six: Choose Merits

Having applied your Exalted template, select 10 dots worth of Merits. You can choose from among the generalized Merits in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, as well as Merits specific to the Chosen and to the kind of Exalt you're playing.

## Step Seven: Determine Advantages

The Exalted share most of the same derived traits as other **CofD** characters. Determine and record the following Advantages:

**Size:** Characters start at Size 5.

**Health:** Characters start with Size + Stamina in Health dots.

**Speed:** 5 + Strength + Dexterity

**Willpower:** Resolve + Composure

**Initiative:** Dexterity + Composure

**Defense:** (Lower of Dexterity or Wits) + Athletics

## Exaltation

The Chosen have a number of special rules differentiating them from ordinary human beings, as well as from other supernatural creatures. These are detailed below.

## Character Advancement

The Chosen earn Beats and convert them into Experiences in much the same fashion as other **CofD** characters. To wit, once a player has earned five Beats, they are converted into one Experience, which may be spent on various forms of advancement. **Exalted x Chronicles of Darkness** *does not* recommend the Group Beats optional rule, nor is it calibrated for the communal Beats variation found in **Geist**.

As a fast-reference, here are all the common ways to earn Beats:

- Any time you resolve or make significant headway toward resolving an Aspiration (or fully resolve it), take a Beat.
- At the end of every chapter (game session), take a Beat.
- Any time you resolve a Condition, take a Beat. Any time you meet the Beat condition of a Persistent Condition, take a Beat. Max once per scene.
- When you mark damage in your rightmost Health box, take a Beat. Max once per scene.
- When you fail a roll, you can opt to make it a dramatic failure and take a Beat. Max once per scene.
- Any major dramatic event the Storyteller deems appropriate can award a Beat.
- When you create a Burn or trigger a Sear, take a Beat.
- When you neutralize some supernatural manifestation through Purification, take a Beat.

## Experience Costs

Trait	Cost
Attribute	4 Experiences per dot
Skill	2 Experiences per dot
Skill Specialty	1 Experience
Merit	1 Experience per dot
Caste/Favored Charm	2 Experiences
Other Charm	3 Experiences
Ancient Sorcery Spell	1 Experience per dot
Essence	5 Experiences per dot

## Anchors

Every Exalt has two *anchor traits* that help ground her in the world of human concerns, affairs, and ethics, even after she draws in the breath of the gods: Virtue and Vice. These are detailed in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook as well as in most other corebooks. They're the moral push-and-pull that drives the Exalt to *do* things, because she wants to or feels that she must or should. Virtue and Vice work the same for the Chosen as they do for any other human being.

## Essence

All major supernatural beings in the **Chronicles of Darkness** possess some sort of supernatural power trait: Vampires have Blood Potency, mages have Gnosis, demons have Primum, and so on. For the Exalted, this trait is *Essence*.

Essence is rated from 1-10 dots, and begins at one dot. Essence is the inherited fragment of divine power the Exalt has received, passed down from hero to hero since the dawn of time. At first it is a mere spark, burning bright and fierce, but in time it may be nurtured into a blazing inferno, or even a star worthy of the celestial firmament in its own right.

## Essence Ratings

Rating	Trait Max	Motes/turn	Anima (Shining/Radiant/Burning)
1	5	10/1	3/5/8
2	5	11/2	3/4/8
3	5	12/3	2/4/7
4	5	13/4	2/3/7
5	5	15/5	2/3/6
6	6	20/6	1/3/5
7	7	30/7	1/2/5
8	8	50/8	1/2/4
9	9	75/10	0/2/4
10	10	100/15	0/1/3

## Maximum Trait Ratings

At early Essence levels, the Chosen must live within human limits when not expressing their divine powers. Later, as their Essence rating rises, they gain the ability to raise their Attributes and Skills to intrinsically supernatural levels.

## Motes and Motes per Turn

The Chosen power their various miracle with *Motes*: tiny fragments of radiant power drawn from the eternal core of their Essence. An Exalt's Essence rating determines both how many Motes she may store at once, and how many Motes she can spend in a single turn.

## Anima

Anima banners are detailed below, but an Exalt's Essence rating determines the rate at which they make themselves manifest.

## Supernatural Conflict

Essence is *also* the supernatural resistance trait for the Exalted. When another sort of supernatural being uses a power that is resisted by a supernatural resistance trait the Exalted don't have – such as a vampire power that subtracts the target's Blood Potency from its dice pool – the Chosen substitute Essence instead.

## Clash of Wills

Sometimes two Charms or other supernatural powers smash into one another with contradictory effects. A werewolf calls upon spirit magic that allows her to perfectly track and locate anyone whose blood she has tasted. An Exalt responds with a Charm that makes him impossible to track. In such instances, the warring forces produce a Clash of Wills.

A Clash of Wills is a contested roll between the owners of the two conflicting powers. When an Exalt enters a Clash of Wills, her dice pool is her Essence + her highest-rated Caste Attribute or Skill. Other supernatural beings have their own dice pools and rules for entering a Clash of Wills.

A player may spend Willpower to empower a Clash of Wills, but only if the character is physically present and aware that her magic is clashing with another force. Powers with exceptionally long durations are more enduring in a clash. Daylong effects add +1 die to the clash roll, week-long effects +2, month-long +3; effects that would last a year or longer add +4.

It's very difficult for less enduring forces to prevail against Exalted Essence. When rolling a Clash of Wills against an un-Exalted opponent, Lunars and Sidereals add +1 die to a Clash of Wills, while Solar and Abyssal Exalted add +2 dice.

### Whither Essence?

Readers familiar with a variety of **Chronicles of Darkness** games may recognize Essence as a trait they've seen before. It's the substance which powers the abilities of ghosts, spirits, and angels, and which werewolves use to draw upon the spiritual side of their heritage. Is an Exalt's Essence rating dealing with the same sort of energy? And if so, why is it a power trait rather than a resource to be gathered and spent, as is the case with other sorts of beings?

The answer is: Yes, it's mostly the same energy. It behaves differently because all Essence is strongly flavored or aspected by whatever moment or phenomenon brought it into being. Most spirits can only absorb free Essence that aligns with their intrinsic nature (murder-spirits can feast in a serial killer's secret plastic-covered basement, but the eruption of Essence at a wedding is useless to them unless it's the Red Wedding from *Game of Thrones*), while angels can generally only make use of Essence provided by the Infrastructure of the God-Machine.

An Exalt's Essence is, in short, *divine*. It's not the soft ephemera shed by a murder or a bird making a nest or even weird occult machinery bending the laws of reality into a special conjunction: it's a fragment drawn from the core of one of the mightiest beings to ever exist, undiluted and undiminished since the dawn of time. It's a small but true piece of a god. Without the muffling of human flesh, it would move through the subtle world of Twilight or the Shadow World as an unleashed calamity, a remnant of the earliest times shouldering aside all lesser forces in its path.

In other words, an Exalt's Essence is of the same *nature* as the Essence of spirits, ghosts, angels, and werewolves, but exists at a completely different scale of scope and intensity, and as such, is governed by different rules.

## Motes

The heart of Exaltation is an ultra-dense, inexhaustible core of Essence. This is much like the energy of which spirits are composed, and which they use as both currency and sustenance, but far more concentrated, and self-sustaining. An Exalt's Essence is eternal, imperishable, and indivisible. As such, it can't be directly spent for power the way a spirit or werewolf's can. Instead, the Exalted draw upon the ambient, secondary power their Essence bleeds out into their mind, body, and spirit: evanescent fragments of eternal power known as Motes.

Motes collect in an Exalt's body and soul, waiting for her to channel them into various diverse miracles. Her Essence rating determines how many Motes the Exalt can retain before any further radiant power shed by her Exaltation is simply lost, dissipating uselessly into the world around her.

Young Exalted must struggle to learn how to channel their Essence into potent feats of magic and divine prowess. At first, they can only spend a single Mote per turn, but with time and mastery of their Essence they gain greater facility and may pour a great torrent of Motes into powerful effects, or even divert them to activate several miraculous powers at once.

In general, Motes are spent to activate the supernatural powers of the Exalted, which are known as *Charms*. These are detailed in the chapters dealing with specific types of Exalted. If a Charm or other effect requires an Exalt to spend more Motes than she's able to in a single turn, she can spend the required Motes over several consecutive turns, with the power activating once she's spent the proper number of Motes. If she stops spending Motes before meeting that number, however, the nascent power of the Charm collapses and the Motes already spent are wasted.

## Gaining Motes

The Chosen primarily regain Motes simply by waiting for their Essence to shed more of its power, creating more Motes for them to use. Exalts gain three Motes each day at sunrise, and three more at sunset. Certain kinds of Exalted may also gain Motes under specific conditions detailed in their respective chapters.

## Anima

Once upon a time, it may be supposed the Chosen leapt into battle bearing the spiritual banners of their divine patrons as displays of intimidation and inspiration. That was a long time ago and in a different sort of world; the world today is a thinner, more fragile place, and the Exalted must take care not to break it with their radiance.

The power of the Chosen radiates out around them in a mantle of divine power. This mantle – the *anima banner* – is normally invisible, even to the subtle senses of spirits and magicians. But as an Exalt expends Motes to fuel her Charms and other miracles, fragments of burnt-off Essence accumulate in her anima. This has two drastic side-effects. First, it announces her divine nature to those around her in an increasingly blatant fashion. Second, and of much greater concern, if an Exalt spends a vast quantity of Motes in a short period of time, her anima grows bright and heavy enough to “burn” the world around her, damaging its fundamental integrity under the



weight of primordial, godlike power from the dawn of time. The consequences of a burning anima can vary greatly between the different varieties of Chosen, but they're rarely pleasant for anyone living in the area.

As an Exalt's Essence rises in potency, her anima likewise intensifies in its ease and frequency of manifestation. Anima manifestation occurs in three stages: **Shining**, **Radiant**, and **Burning**. Each of these appears once an Exalt has spent a number of Motes during a single scene equal to the relevant Threshold, as detailed in the Essence rating chart.

## Shining Anima

Once an Exalt's *Shining Threshold* has been reached, she gains the Shining Anima Tilt. Her anima invisibly unfolds around her, heavy with spiritual power. Beings in Twilight can behold the character's anima in all its glory, as described in Chapter One, and entities in the Shadow Realm (a savage world of animistic spirits detailed in **Werewolf** and **Mage**) can see the dimmed radiance of the character's anima pressing against the skin of the spirit world. Any supernatural being can *feel* the character's anima – there's a palpable and clearly supernatural sense of power radiating from the Exalt, so visceral that it will never be dismissed as mere imagination – although they can't actually see it unless they're using some kind of supernatural sensory power, like a vampire's *Auspex* or a mage's *Active Mage Sight*. "Mundane" individuals with any sort of "sixth sense," such as the *Aura Reading Merit* or *any* *Unseen Sense Merit* can also feel a Shining Anima. The Shining Anima is only perceptible to supernatural beings within direct sensory range of the Exalt, and ordinary people don't pick up on it at all.

If the Exalt is attempting to use *Stealth* to evade the notice of any sort of supernatural being, Shining Anima imposes a -2 penalty.

**Resolution:** A few minutes pass during which the Exalt spends no Motes and takes no strenuous or stressful action.

## Radiant Anima

Once an Exalt's *Radiant Threshold* has been reached, she gains the Radiant Anima Tilt. Her anima erupts around her body, shrouding her in divine splendor as described in Chapter One. At this point, *everybody* can see the anima banner (and potentially feel its heat, and maybe also hear or smell it if it possesses such qualities) with their plain old ordinary eyeballs. A Radiant Anima is generally as bright as a signal fire; if the Exalt is on a rooftop at night, she'll be visible for miles. Her anima releases a number of points of free-floating Essence into the Shadow Realm and into Twilight around her, with a resonance appropriate to her Exaltation, equal to her Essence rating. She may also manifest other effects, depending on what sort of Exalt she is.

Attempts to record or broadcast the light of a Radiant anima tend to break down; traditional photos come out completely overexposed, while digital images can't compensate adequately for the light level and come out murky or blown-out. Video footage is similarly affected; it's clear there's *something* going on, but it's all silhouettes and flares of moving light.

If the Exalt is attempting to use *Stealth* to evade anyone or *anything's* notice, Radiant Anima imposes a -5 penalty. All forms of magical invisibility and other such concealment fail, burned away by the manifesting anima.

**Resolution:** A few minutes pass during which the Exalt spends no Motes and takes no strenuous or stressful action. This downgrades Radiant Anima to Shining Anima.

## Burning Anima

Once an Exalt's *Burning Threshold* has been reached, she gains the Burning Anima Tilt. Her anima swells to even greater size, towering above her as a great rising pillar of spiritual energy. Any recording medium that tries to capture the Exalt's splendor at this stage fails completely: video footage comes out so corrupted that even the sound pickup is nothing more than the crackle of flames, the roaring of wind, or a strange choral hum; security cameras pick up little more than a wild glare; even mirrors become flooded with light, unable to cast an accurate reflection. Stealth is completely impossible and fails automatically. Most importantly, the sheer power of the Exalt's unleashed divinity insinuates itself into and overrides the fundamental structure of the prosaic Earth, with potentially drastic consequences as detailed under the rules for Burns.

**Resolution:** A few minutes pass during which the Exalt spends no Motes and takes no strenuous or stressful action. This downgrades Burning Anima to Radiant Anima.

## Caste Skills and Attributes

Each and every Exaltation is coded with an intrinsic genius for certain heroic feats. These are an Exalt's *Caste Skills* (or in the case of the Lunar Exalted, *Caste Attributes*), detailed both in Chapter One and in the chapters dealing with specific sorts of Exalted.

When an Exalt suffers penalties to a dice pool containing a Caste Skill or Caste Attribute, those penalties can never reduce the size of her dice pool below one die; that is to say, such a roll can never be reduced down to a chance die. Destiny (in the form of player decisions) may visit calamity upon an Exalt, but sheer bad luck or weight of adversity never will.

Additionally, when an Exalt rolls a dice pool containing a Caste Skill or Caste Attribute, she needs only three successes to achieve an exceptional success.

## Superhuman Resilience

The Chosen are a *lot* more durable than ordinary human beings, and this manifests in several ways.

### Divine Mending

An Exalt's wounds clot very quickly, blood loss slowing to a trickle after only a few moments, even in the case of grievous injuries such as being clawed open by an angry werewolf. As such, an Exalt with lethal damage in her rightmost Health box doesn't continue upgrading damage every minute the way a mortal does, even in absence of medical treatment.

Furthermore, Exalted heal much, *much* faster than ordinary people. Instead of normal human healing times, an Exalt's rightmost injured Health box heals at the following rate:

**Bashing:** One point per minute.

**Lethal:** One point per 12 hours.

**Aggravated:** One point per two days.

Additionally, the Chosen heal wounds completely and perfectly. Tilts never develop into persistent Conditions unless they represent the complete loss of a limb; an Exalt's mangled limb

or ruined eye will heal back into a perfectly working limb or organ once her Health track no longer contains lethal damage.

## Disease Resistance

The Exalted are highly resistant to contagions and ailments of all sorts. All rolls to resist disease enjoy a +3 dice bonus. Additionally, an Exalt's body can defeat normally incurable ailments such as AIDS or cancer; once she's succeeded at enough rolls to force the disease into remission, it instead vanishes altogether.

## Poison Resistance

The bodies of the Chosen purge toxins of all sorts with great effectiveness. Exalts gain a +3 bonus to resist poison and to throw off the effects of drugs.

## Sacrosanct Soul

At the moment of Exaltation, a fragment of divine power from the dawn of time merges with the soul of each Celestial Exalt. The Exaltation not only empowers the Chosen, it also enfolds her soul in its immortal and eternal power, rendering it immune to tampering by outside forces. No power can inflict the Soulless, Enervated, or Thrall Condition on a Celestial Exalt. Her soul cannot be removed, stolen, or destroyed while she lives. Attempts to do so fail without even a Clash of Wills.

Dragon-Blooded, alas, enjoy no such intrinsic protections, and may be afflicted with soul loss, suffering the same consequences as those leveled against any other soulless character.

## Merits

Exalted can use most of the same merits available to mundane characters, explicitly including all of the Mental, Physical, Social, and Fighting Style Merits in the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook, though the following are particularly appropriate:

Allies, Alternate Identity, Anonymity, Contacts, Crack Driver, Danger Sense, Defensive Combat, Direction Sense, Fame, Fast Reflexes, Fast-Talking, Fighting Finesse, Fixer, Fleet of Foot, Hardy (this stacks with innate Exalted resistance to poison and disease), Holistic Awareness, Improvised Weaponry, Inspiring, Iron Will, Language, Library, Martial Arts, Multilingual, Meditative Mind, Mentor, Mystery Cult Initiation, Parkour, Professional Training, Pusher, Quick Draw, Resources, Retainer, Safe Place, Sleight of Hand, Status, Striking Looks, Taste, Trained Observer, True Friend

## Exalted Merits

The following Merits may only be purchased by the Chosen.

### Ancient Sorcery (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Occult •••

**Effect:** The Exalt has rediscovered the ancient art of shaping the ephemeral energy of the universe into miraculous and impossible manifestations by forcing it to conform to her Exalted will. She might have instinctively grasped this potential at the moment of Exaltation, pieced it together over time from fragmentary dream-memories, or been guided into the lost art by spirits,

Goetia, or even an older Exalt. She gains a one-dot ancient sorcery spell for free along with this Merit.

**Drawback:** Commanding the raw power of the cosmos means that the cosmos flows back through you, and that makes all sorcerers... weird. All ancient sorcerers must select one Strangeness (see p. XX).

### Divinity Enfleshed (•••••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Celestial Exalted

**Effect:** You have inherited some spark of the greatness of a hero of old, a previous bearer of your Exaltation who was legendary even among the ranks of the Chosen. Choose one Attribute that was key to your prior incarnation's legend. You gain a dot in that Attribute, and that Attribute can be raised to one dot higher than your normal trait maximum (usually six dots, unless you have a very high Essence rating).

**Drawback:** There's something about you that is reminiscent of the hero whose power you inherited. Ancient spirits, immortal monsters, and other foes of your prior incarnation may come around looking to settle old grudges.

### Dragon-Graced Chariot (•)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Dragon-Blooded

**Effect:** You have worked with a certain object (usually but not necessarily a vehicle) of up to Size 25 until it resonates with the tenor of your Essence. This object is immune to your anima flux.

### Dreamwalker (•••)

**Effect:** Your Exaltation has left you deeply in tune with your own soul, and able to bridge the gap between conscious thought and inner self. By meditating and spending a Willpower point, you can project your spirit into the Astral Realms, first appearing within your own Oneiros. This follows the rules on page 249 of **Mage: The Awakening 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**. The Exalt follows the rules for un-Awakened dream travelers, but retains access to her Charms and Ancient Sorcery.

### Exemplar of Virtue (•)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Solar Exalted

**Effect:** Your commitment to your Guiding Virtue is your rock, the unfailing element that keeps you going through the long dark nightmare of your war against the things in the shadows. Gain a +2 bonus to all attempts to draw power from a virtuous act.

**Drawback:** Wavering from your commitment shakes you to your core; it's not easy for you to forgive or overlook lapses. Suffer a -2 penalty to all breaking point rolls against your Guiding Virtue.

### Extra Caste Skill (•••)

**Effect:** You may name one Skill, which is considered a Caste or Aspect Skill for all purposes. Even Lunar Exalted, who normally do not have Caste Skills, may take this Merit.

### First Tongue (••)

**Prerequisite:** Intelligence •••, Occult ••

**Effect:** You can understand and (crudely) speak the native proto-language of spirits. Perhaps you studied with a werewolf pack, or were mentored by a spirit, or perhaps you simply Exalted with a natural affinity for the language of the Shadow.

## High Speech (••)

**Prerequisite:** Intelligence ••, Occult •••

**Effect:** You can understand and very crudely use a mysterious, mystical language that appears to be burned into the deepest layers of reality. Perhaps you discovered this hidden code during your investigations of the supernatural, or perhaps knowledge of it arrived at the moment of Exaltation. High Speech resounds with mystical truths of the cosmos (many of them strangely at odds with one another), and is often used in the workings of mages. You gain the 9-again quality to examine and understand any magical working incorporating High Speech, which by its nature shouts its truths to all those who can comprehend. It is impossible to lie in High Speech.

Ordinary people don't understand High Speech, and hearing it causes them to experience a breaking point; using it cavalierly in the presence of mortals is a cruel act.

## Humble Mouse Shape (•)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Lunar Exalted

**Effect:** The Lunar expands her shapeshifting prowess, learning to don the forms of animals smaller than a housecat. The Lunar may now learn and assume the form of Size 1 animals such as mice and large insects. If this Merit is taken during character creation, the Lunar may select a Feral Heart of Size 1.

## Inspiring Leader (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Zenith Caste

**Effect:** When you organize or direct a teamwork action, the participants may ignore up to your Essence rating in circumstantial penalties. As well, once per chapter, the primary actor can take a beat if he follows your advice and guidance. You don't have to be the primary actor to use this Merit.

## Into the Shadows (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Night Caste

**Effect:** You enjoy a kinship with the shadows. Each time an individual fails to notice you, all future attempts to notice your presence within the same scene suffer a cumulative -1 penalty. Once per scene, you can add your Essence rating to a roll to remain unnoticed or to act unobtrusively.

## Living Sunlight (• to •••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Solar Exalted

**Effect:** The Solar doesn't just resonate with the light of the sun, she *is* sunlight. It's baked into her spirit, her flesh, her very being.

**Drawback:** This makes the Solar's blood, flesh, soul, and the other elements of her being extremely rare and potent ingredients for a number of sinister rituals. A mage could use her blood as a powerful resonant Yantra, while mighty spirits of light could be bound into her bones

to create potent fetishes. Any such uses of the Solar's vital being grant an equipment bonus equal to her dots in this Merit.

**Liquid Sunlight (•):** Any vampire who drinks the Solar's blood suffers one point of lethal damage per Vitae taken. Simply coming in contact with her blood inflicts a point of bashing damage per turn to vampires.

**Hand of the Sun (••):** Touching the Solar's bare skin counts as exposure to sunlight. Any violent bare-handed attacks the Solar makes against a vampire inflict lethal damage.

**Midnight Sun Dawning (•••):** The Solar's anima flare is considered real sunlight. This can't inflict damage to vampires until the Radiant level, but beholding a Solar's anima at the Shining level can provoke a fear-based frenzy nonetheless.

## Persistent Attachment (••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Lunar Exalted

**Effect:** You don't suffer detachment from a Lunar Touchstone due to the lack of need to protect or avenge it until a number of lunar months equal to your Essence rating x 2 have passed.

**Drawback:** Whenever you've gone more than a month without checking in on your Lunar Touchstone (if it's a person) or patrolling it and surveying the state of it (if it's a location), you suffer the Distracted Condition until you have done so.

## Prey's Skin Disguise (•)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Lunar Exalted

**Effect:** The Lunar expands her shapeshifting prowess. She may add the appearance of specific human beings to her Heart's Blood library by slaying a person and drinking his blood or eating his flesh, and afterward may don that stolen form in the same manner that she transforms into animal shapes.

## Resonance Crafting (••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Twilight Caste

**Effect:** Through ritual effort, you can modify the resonance of the Essence within a small area. Roll Manipulation + Occult as an extended action; each roll requires an hour's worth of work. Five successes will shift the resonance of local Essence within a space about the size of a small building for the next several days. This alteration might be performed through chants, the creation of art, playing music, redecorating, bloodletting – whatever seems appropriate to evoke the desired resonance. Casting ancient sorcery in an area whose Essence resonates with the spell grants a +2 bonus.

## Secure Locus (••)

**Prerequisite:** Safe Place ••

**Effect:** You control a Locus: a place of power that permits crossing over between the world of flesh and the Shadow Realm of spirits.

**Drawback:** Loci are hotly contested commodities. Magicians, werewolves, and spirits would all very much like to make use of, or seize control of, your locus.

## Sharpened Senses (•)

**Effect:** The character's five senses combine with an ineffable, Essence-born awareness of the world around her, granting a greater depth of sensation and ability to pick up cues from the world around the Exalt. Add her Essence rating to all Perception rolls.

**Drawback:** This deeper awareness of the world can lead her to fixate on certain sensations and experiences. When she rolls an exceptional success on a Perception roll, she gains the Obsession Condition relating to the stimulus. Rather than being Persistent, the Condition naturally lapses after a number of days equal to the successes rolled.

### Silver-Tongued Diplomat (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Eclipse Caste

**Effect:** You have a natural gift for stepping into arguments and gaining the trust, or at least the belief in your impartiality, of the conflicting parties. When you step into an argument or debate and spend time listening to both sides, roll Presence + Persuasion + Essence versus the highest Resolve + Essence on each side. If you score more successes than a given side's contested roll, that group accepts your interpretation of the truth.

### Spirit Resonance (••)

**Effect:** Your Exalt's presence resonates powerfully with certain sorts of spirits. Such spirits find her attractive and appealing, and she gains +3 to all Social rolls to deal with them. For Solars, these are spirits of light, the sun, inspiration, or the sacred. Lunars resonate with luns and animal-spirits that match their Feral Heart. Sidereals resonate with spirits of night, knowledge, learning, spiders, and whatever Caste they represent (joy-spirits for Chosen of Serenity, war-spirits for Chosen of Battles, etc). Abyssals resonate with spirits of darkness, death, and decay. Dragon-Blooded resonate with elementals that match their Aspect, as well as spirits of wisdom (Air), stability (Earth), passion (Fire), cunning (Water), and with plant-spirits (Wood). Infernals resonate with spirits of pain, desolation, loneliness, hatred, rage, and hunger.

### Tougher Than You (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Dawn Caste

**Effect:** All forms of mystical intimidation fail utterly against you. You can still be overawed, mind, just not by magic. Blocked effects include the intimidating aspects of the predatory auras of werewolves and vampires, a Gauru werewolf's Defense calculation penalty, any attempt by a magician to inflict fear with Mind magic or with his nimbus, and so on.

### Towering Beast Form (•)

**Prerequisite:** Must be Lunar Exalted

**Effect:** The Lunar expands her shapeshifting prowess, learning to don the forms of great beasts of enormous size. The Lunar may now learn and assume the form of Size 8 and above animals such as moose and elephants. If this Merit is taken during character creation, the Lunar may select a Feral Heart of Size 8+.

### Vice Affinity (••)

**Effect:** The fracture lines in your personality run all the way down to your Exaltation, resonating with it. When you take an action directly driven by your Vice, add one bonus die to the roll.

**Drawback:** You may not take the Merit Virtue Affinity.

## Virtue Affinity (••)

**Effect:** The power of your Exaltation flares when you exercise the best part of yourself. When you take an action directly driven by your Vice, add one bonus die to the roll.

**Drawback:** You may not take the Merit Vice Affinity.

## Ancient Sorcery

Long ago, before the world was broken, the Chosen inherited (or perhaps stole, or won by trickery) the power by which the gods and those who came before the gods shaped and reshaped the cosmos with words of command. By exciting her own Essence and guiding its resonant emanations through her enlightened will, an Exalt may cause the swirling Essence of the cursed Earth to align itself according to ancient patterns seared into the deepest layers of reality. When Essence fills these forgotten scars, miracles spring forth. This is the power of ancient sorcery.

## Learning Ancient Sorcery

Nowhere upon the Earth does there survive a central repository of ancient sorcery spells. The great libraries of forgotten antiquity burned along with the world that raised them up. The legendary grimoires of old were consumed in the course of the wars fought over them, and even apprentice tomes lost to the march of a hundred thousand years and more. A few individual spells – latter-day copies of copies of copies of unimaginably ancient texts, or else relatively modern rediscoveries captured on stone or parchment or paper or 3.5” floppy disks – survive, carefully hoarded as curiosities in Mysterium libraries, or traded around the underground of collectors of occult curios, or (rarest of rarities!) preserved in the vault of one or the other of the Terrestrial families. There’s a palpable power in such discoveries, after all, even if they’re not actually usable by anyone save the Chosen.

But no: mostly, the secrets of Ancient Sorcery are no longer captured in any medium so placid as ink and wood pulp. Mostly, they can only be rediscovered in the depths of legend: from spirits who resonate with their secrets and who may instinctively convey their patterns if they can be convinced to part with such knowledge, or else lodged deep in the universal iconography of the depths of the human subconscious, a fine prize awaiting those who dare to quest into the Astral Realms.

## Strangeness

Every ancient sorcerer suffers from the Strangeness Persistent Condition, which manifests in a fashion unique (or nearly-unique) to each individual. Below are a few examples:

- Whenever someone is talking to you while exhausted, out of Willpower, or otherwise suffering a Condition that impairs their ability to concentrate, they address you by an ancient name that is not your own. They don’t know who the name belongs to, and you probably don’t either – but certain ancient enemies might.
- When you suffer a bleeding injury, the wound sometimes oozes scorpions. They’re not helpful guardian scorpions. They’re not *your* scorpions. They’re just scorpions.
- Anyone who spends ten uninterrupted minutes being touched by your shadow becomes ill, and suffers the moderate Sick Condition.



- Your sneezes, screams, and other involuntary physical reactions cause electronics to misbehave in odd ways. Maybe there's a local power surge. Maybe whatever you're thinking about plays out on a nearby television for a minute or so.
- Some odd fashion accessory always manages to accompany you, sooner or later, such as yellow gloves, or a red handkerchief or scarf, or glasses with yellow lenses. You can throw the damn things away, or even stuff them down a garbage disposal; they'll wind up sticking out of your back pocket again an hour later. This imposes a -3 penalty on all disguise attempts, and makes you easy to pick out of crowds.
- Sometimes other people's shadows step out of yours, and then leave the room on business of their own. Sometimes the shadows are of things you'd hesitate to describe as people.

#### STRANGENESS (PERSISTENT)

There's something *weird* about you, and other people rarely have trouble picking up on it.

**Possible Sources:** Becoming an ancient sorcerer

**Resolution:** The only way to resolve this Condition is to somehow burn all knowledge and capacity of ancient sorcery out of your mind and spirit.

**Beat:** You face some significant difficulty because of the Strangeness that follows you about.

## Casting Ancient Sorcery

Ancient sorcery doesn't work like Charms, the native miracles of the Chosen. The sorcerer doesn't use her own Motes. When casting a spell, the Exalted manipulate the flows of resonant Essence in the world around them, forcing the universe to conform to their desires as projected through the divine authority of their own Essence. If the pattern they demand matches one of the ancient keys scarred into the substance of the cosmos in the forgotten mists of prehistory, then the power of an ancient spell manifests.

**Cost:** 1, 2, or 3 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Occult + Essence

**Action:** Extended. See the Extended Action rules on page 70 of **Chronicles of Darkness**. The sorcerer may roll as many times as the unmodified dice pool. The base time per roll is 15 minutes if the sorcerer spent 1 Willpower, one minute if the sorcerer spent 2 Willpower, or 1 turn if the sorcerer spent 3 Willpower. A spell must be completed in one attempt. Sorcerers do not receive any bonus for attempting a spell having already failed with a near miss; spells automatically fail if interrupted; and sorcerers may not use Defense while casting, unless a Charm allows them to do so. Many spells are also Contested or Resisted, as noted in their descriptions.

Unless a Merit that modifies extended actions expressly says that it applies to ancient sorcery, ancient sorcery rolls are not affected by it.

#### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The spell dramatically collapses; any Willpower spent is wasted. The sorcerer gains the Tangled Essence Condition.

**Failure:** The sorcerer stumbles, and accumulates no successes. The player may either decide to safely abandon the spell, or may opt to continue at the cost of suffering a -3 penalty on all subsequent rolls during the extended action.

**Success:** The sorcerer accumulates successes. If the target number of successes is met, the spell takes effect.

**Exceptional Success:** The sorcerer makes great strides toward success. In addition to accumulating successes, the player may choose to have one of the following effects take place:

- Reduce the target number of successes by her Essence rating.
- Reduce the time per roll as though she had spent 1 more Willpower than she actually did.
- The sorcerer regains 1 point of spent Willpower when the spell succeeds. This can't give back more Willpower than she spent casting the spell.

**Suggested Modifiers:**

<b>Modifier</b>	<b>Situation</b>
+3	Sorcerer takes extra time, and uses an interval of one hour per roll.
+2	The sorcerer's surroundings are resonant with the spell being cast.
+2	The sorcerer's surroundings are resonant with her Exaltation.
-1 to -3	Sorcerer is distracted while casting the spell
-1 to -3	The sorcerer's surroundings are opposed or antithetical to the resonance of the spell being cast.
+3	Spell is cast within the Shadow, Astral Realm, or other ephemeral realm

**TANGLED ESSENCE**

The Essence flows around you are tangled and snarled, confused, turning inwards upon you and impeding your ability to channel Essence. You suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls including your Essence trait.

**Possible Sources:** Dramatic failure on attempts to manipulate Essence

**Resolution:** Spend enough Motes to provoke the Shining Anima Condition.

**Beat:** n/a

## Ancient Sorcery Spells

### Burning Eyes of the Offender (••)

**Target number of successes:** 6

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The sorcerer mantles herself in the Essence of the sun, the moon, the stars, the grave, and the five elements, becoming a beacon of divinity that no merely mortal being can gaze upon. Any creature that is neither immortal nor Exalted which looks directly at the sorcerer feels their eyes burn as though they were staring directly into the sun, and involuntarily weeps tears which dry on their cheeks as melted wax. Anyone attempting to target or even look directly at the sorcerer

suffers the Blinded Tilt for the rest of that turn and the following turn. Burning Eyes of the Offender lasts for one scene, or until the sorcerer bows his head and claps his hands to dismiss the enchantment.

**Drawback:** This spell doesn't distinguish between friend and foe.

## Calling the Calibration Gate (•)

**Target number of successes:** 5

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet.

The ground rumbles, the world momentarily darkens, and then an ancient, crumbling archway stands before the sorcerer. For her Essence rating in minutes, anyone who steps through this portal may pass from Earth into the Shadow Realm, or from the spirit world back to Earth.

**Drawback:** The Calibration Gate is present in both the physical and spirit worlds while manifest, and beings may pass through in either direction. They do not need the sorcerer's permission to do so.

## Corrupted Words (•)

**Target number of successes:** 5

**Contested:** by Composure + Essence.

The sorcerer binds together the Essence of a concept she declares forbidden with strains of a hundred different sorts of foulness until it becomes a festering curse, which she casts upon another character while looking him in the eye. The spell's victim suffers the Corrupted Words Persistent Condition. The sorcerer may voluntarily revoke her curse at any time prior to its natural conclusion by paying 1 Willpower and reaching into the victim's mouth to draw out a fat, wriggling beetle with too many eyes and limbs, then crushing it.

### CORRUPTED WORDS (PERSISTENT)

Whenever you attempt to speak of the forbidden subject, you double over and uncontrollably vomit a torrent of worms, writhing insects, and brackish water. This convulsion inflicts one point of bashing damage, prevents you from taking any non-reflexive actions for a turn, and penalizes your Defense by -3. Corrupted Words keys off of intent to communicate rather than specific spoken words, and so it will still trigger if you try to use sign language, writing, or pantomime to communicate about the banned topic.

This Condition lasts for a number of years equal to the sorcerer's Essence – your Supernatural Resistance trait (to a minimum of one month, if this would produce a result of 0 years).

**Possible Sources:** The Corrupted Words spell.

**Resolution:** The spell's duration elapses, or the sorcerer voluntarily ends it.

**Beat:** Whenever you suffer some hardship because of your inability to speak of the banned subject, or by your incapacitation when you try to speak of it anyway.

## Death of Obsidian Butterflies (•)

**Target number of successes:** 10

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The surface of the world cracks and fractures. Through the crack, the sorcerer might briefly glimpse a great cleft tree, flowering and weeping blood, before a fat Orizaba silkmoth wriggles through. The moth alights on the sorcerer's finger, trembles, and hardens into obsidian.

At any point in the future, the sorcerer may hurl down the moth-figurine and shatter it. She's advised to toss it well clear of herself, because a storm of razor-winged moths made of black glass erupt from the fragments and whirl about, creating a deadly hazard for everything within 30 feet of the spot where the figurine broke. The swarm of deadly moths inflict two points of lethal damage on anyone caught inside at the beginning of each turn, and continue to flutter and circle for ten minutes before finally unraveling back into wisps of Essence.

**Drawback:** The sorcerer may not summon another moth into the world until the last one she called has been broken. While she's carrying the figurine, any severe impact (such as falling down a flight of stairs, or being in a car wreck) will shatter it, unleashing the swarm right on top of the sorcerer.

### Incantation of Spiritual Discretion (•)

**Target number of successes:** 9

Weaving Essence with a series of slow, repetitive gestures, the sorcerer binds the fundamental forces of blindness and silence into the chamber in which she stands. It becomes impossible for anyone to extend their senses through the Gauntlet within the warded room, and any ephemeral beings or other creatures in Twilight which enter the warded area suffer from the Blinded and Deafened Tilts as long as they remain within. This spell's effects persist for a number of days equal to the sorcerer's Essence rating.

### Flight of Separation (•)

**Target number of successes:** 6

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The sorcerer's body rips apart, each goblet of flesh or bone transforming into a flying creature: usually birds, but bats or even flying insects are also possible. The flock or swarm disperses in all directions, seeking freedom by any route available. It reforms several minutes later and several miles away, at a place of the sorcerer's choosing, so long as that point is under the open sky: the component creatures fly together one by one, rejoining into a shuddering, quickly transforming mass that momentarily resembles something many-eyed and many-winged and unspeakable; a mere heartbeat later, it is the sorcerer once again.

**Drawback:** If the flock cannot escape whatever place the sorcerer happens to be in, then she reforms in the same spot where she cast the spell after one turn.

### Invulnerable Skin of Bronze (••)

**Target number of successes:** 7

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The sorcerer's body transforms into a statue of living, animated bronze. This grants her armor rated at 3/3, and her unarmed attacks inflict lethal rather than bashing damage. The transformation lasts until the sun next crosses the horizon, and cannot be canceled early.

**Drawback:** In addition to looking blatantly inhuman, the sorcerer also now weighs as much as a bronze statue; beware of thin ice. If immersed in water, she sinks like a rock. Her Species Factor is reduced to 0, meaning that she calculates her Speed with Strength + Dexterity alone.

### Mists of Eventide (•••)

**Target number of successes:** 8

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

When the sorcerer finishes casting this spell, a soft but audible sigh issues from everywhere and nowhere. An opalescent mist spills out of every corner and right angle around her, quickly spreading out to infest up to three floors of a large building, or similar amount of open ground. All those caught within the mist not given express protection by the sorcerer during the spell's casting must roll Resolve + Essence. Anyone who fails descends into a sleepy, dreaming state which is partly informed by the events unfolding around them, but from which they cannot awaken without some kind of external shock; this functions identically to the Insensate Tilt. The mists themselves dissipate after the sorcerer's Essence rating in minutes, but the slumber they induce may linger for hours.

### Quicksilver Wings of Dream and Nightmare (•)

**Target number of successes:** 6

**Contested:** by Composure + Essence.

This spell must be cast in the presence of a sleeping individual. At its culmination, many sets of softly glowing silver wings appear to enfold the sorcerer and up to seven companions, drawing them into the Astral Realm and depositing them within the sleeper's dream. All characters are physically present within the Astral, use their normal traits rather than the usual Astral traits described on page 249 of **Mage: the Awakening**, and navigate the Astral Realms using the same rules detailed therein.

Casting this spell while in the Astral Realm returns the sorcerer and her companions to the last place she slept in the physical world; they appear amidst a sudden, gentle rain of bone-white petals and droplets of quicksilver.

**Drawback:** The sorcerer and her companions are physically present in the Astral Realm; if slain, they don't bolt awake in the physical world. They're really dead.

### Rain of Doom (•••)

**Target number of successes:** 15

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The world shudders even during the casting of this ancient and dreadful spell. As soon as the sorcerer starts moving Essence into the horrid configuration that calls the Rain of Doom, the sky overhead begins to darken, and threatening black clouds roll in. Thunder rumbles, echoing in a strange metallic way that makes people uneasy. Lightning in otherworldly colors – green, red, orange – flicks sullen and intermittent tongues down to taste the landscape that will soon be destroyed. The wind blows down city streets, and the hunting-cries of the Shadow can sometimes be heard echoing in its lonely howl.

Upon the spell's completion, the sky opens and the horror begins. A heavy rain of faintly luminous, sizzling green acid pours down, burning flesh and wood, pitting stone, and corroding metal, creating a level four extreme environment for a mile around the sorcerer's location which lasts for (ten times her Essence rating) minutes, along with the Heavy Rain Environmental Tilt. Well-constructed modern buildings are likely to survive the rain so long as it doesn't last for *too* long, albeit with significant cosmetic damage (and in the case of suburban homes, probably a ruined roof), but less-sturdy structures such as wooden shacks, old box houses, and the like may collapse or catch on fire. Vehicles caught in the rain for more than a few minutes are left looking as though they'd been abandoned to the elements for a decade. Once the rain ends, the acid left behind remains dangerous until touched by direct light, at which point it immediately becomes ordinary salt water.

**Drawback:** Thanks to the nature of the spell, the sorcerer is by necessity caught in the midst of the Rain of Doom. She is strongly advised to cast it from within a fortified shelter.

### Risen and Screaming (••)

**Target number of successes:** 13

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The sorcerer dredges the curses of dead gods from the darkness at the end of all things. These curses sink into the Earth and bind their hatred into the hearts of every dead thing present, even as they bind that hatred in sorcerous chains. Every buried corpse within 100 yards of the sorcerer is enchanted, becoming a kind of horrific security system. When anyone comes within 30 feet of one of the buried corpses, it erupts from the soil while emitting a grating, blood-curdling scream. The intruder has one turn to either flee, or else present a mark of passage set by the sorcerer during the casting of the spell (which could be a word, symbol, specific object, gesture, or anything else she desires). If the intruder doesn't either present sufficient credentials or run for her life, the corpse advances, still screaming, until it fills its mouth with warm flesh. This spell endures for one week per dot of the sorcerer's Essence before losing its potency.

Zombies created with this spell use the traits given for the Horde on pages 149-150 of **Chronicles of Darkness**.

**Drawback:** The dead will also attack the sorcerer if she is unable to present the mark of passage encoded into the spell, and the spell cannot be canceled prematurely.

### Wood Dragon's Claw (•)

**Target number of successes:** 5

**Resisted:** by the strength of the local Gauntlet, if cast on Earth.

The sorcerer's hands tingle and become numb. A moment later her flesh stretches, bulges, and finally splits and falls away in gory chunks as enormous jagged wooden claws erupt from within. These claws act as natural weapons with a bonus of +2 lethal damage. They are capable of striking beings in Twilight, and inflict lethal damage even to undead targets that normally reduce lethal damage to bashing. They can also be used to attempt to stake vampires. This transformation endures for precisely 9,999 breaths (about ten hours), at which point the wood crumbles and falls away, revealing pristine and undamaged hands beneath; or until the sorcerer completely submerges her claws in the Earth, drawing them forth as her normal hands.

**Drawback:** The claws are enormous and unwieldy, inflicting a -2 penalty to all rolls requiring fine manipulation with the sorcerer's hands.

## Burns

Exalted Essence is primordial god-stuff from the first days of the Earth, existing undiminished in a world that is only a pale shadow of what it once was. When the Chosen unleash their full and unchecked power, the radiance of their Essence can scar and sear the very fabric of reality, creating an area known as a *Burn*. Different sorts of Exalted Burn the world in different ways; the details of how such Burns manifest can be found in Chapters Four through Nine.

## Creating a Burn

At the end of a scene in which one or more of the Chosen exercise a great unleashing of their Essence, the Storyteller may choose to declare that there is the risk of a Burn having been created. In general, Burns appear when the Chosen spend Motes with reckless abandon and unleash their divine power in blatant, flashy displays.

Before getting into the particulars, a note on use: Burns are a storytelling device, not a technical accounting intended to add a chore to the end of every action scene. If the Storyteller feels the works of the Chosen were generally low-key or restrained, or that the scene was so trivial that creating a Burn wouldn't be interesting, she is well within her rights to simply declare that there was no risk of a Burn manifesting.

That said, creating a Burn is never a certain thing. Rather, it's a *risk* the Chosen undertake. At the end of a scene during which a number of Exalted characters vigorously exercised their divine powers, go down the following list of modifiers and use it to build a dice pool, which is then rolled to see if a Burn manifests. If the modifiers total up to 0 or fewer dice, don't roll a chance die; this instead means that there's no risk of a Burn appearing at all.

<b>Modifier</b>	<b>Situation</b>
+1	An Exalt manifests her anima banner at the Burning level. (per Exalt)
+1	An Exalt spends one or more Motes to satisfy her Vice (per Exalt).
+1	Motes were spent to socially, mentally, or physically victimize a mortal.
+1	Ten or more mortals witnessed the Chosen doing something blatantly supernatural.
+1	One of the Anathema was physically manifest in the scene (per Anathema).
+1	One Exalt who manifested her anima banner at the Burning level was Essence 6, 7, or 8.
+2	More than one Exalt who manifested her anima banner at the Burning level was Essence 6, 7, or 8.
+2	The Chosen used their powers to battle one another in the scene.
+2	One Exalt who manifested her anima banner at the Burning level was Essence 9 or 10.
+3	More than one Exalt who manifested her anima banner at the Burning level was Essence 9 or 10.

- 1 An Exalt spent one or more Motes to uphold her Virtue (per Exalt).
- 1 None of the Exalted who spent Motes during the scene have an Essence rating higher than 2.
- 2 Motes were spent to oppose, manipulate, or confound monsters.
- 2 The scene took place in a site of significant supernatural power such as a Locus, Hallow, or Infrastructure.
- 3 One or more of the Chosen successfully enacted Purification during the scene.

**Dice Pool:** Sum of modifiers

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Dramatic failures aren't possible. If the dice pool is reduced to 0, no Burn appears.

**Failure:** The world weathers the storm of Exalted Essence. No Burn manifests.

**Success:** A minor Burn develops over the course of an hour or so.

**Exceptional Success:** A major Burn appears within minutes.

### Aspecting the Burn

If more than one type of Exalt contributed to the creation of a Burn, there remains the question: what sort of Burn do they produce?

A Burn is always strongly aspected toward one type of Exalted Essence. By default, a Burn will resonate with whatever individual Exalt had the highest Essence rating in the scene. In the event that two or more Exalted of different types are tied for having the highest Essence rating present, they all make Essence rolls; whichever accumulates the greatest number of successes determines the aspect of the Burn.

### Example

*A Solar, Lunar, and Abyssal all descend together into a nest of hungry corpses controlled by demonic worms, and in a blaze of violence and fire destroy all of the zombies they find, along with most of the basement they were nesting in. At the end of the scene, a Burn is created. All of the Exalts have Essence 3, so they each make an Essence roll. The Abyssal rolls no successes, while the Solar and Lunar each roll one. The Abyssal drops out, and the Solar and Lunar continue rolling; this time the Lunar gets one success, while the Solar gains two. The Burn that appears will have Solar characteristics.*

### Minor Burns

A minor Burn encompasses, roughly, the area where the action occurred that created the Burn, plus a small area around that. As a result, they're usually not very large. Some encompass only a few adjacent rooms of a building, a suburban home plus its back yard, or a small clearing in a forest, while the larger examples might cover a street, a whole floor of a hotel or office building, or several connected back alleys (and perhaps one or two rooms connecting directly to them, such as a restaurant's kitchen).

### Major Burns



Major Burns are significantly larger, suffusing a broad area surrounding the site of the incident that caused the Burn. Major Burns can easily consume an entire apartment building, hotel, wooded hill, farm, stretch of highway, several floors of an office tower, or even an entire city block in the case of the worst Burns.

## Dissolution

If left to its own devices, the saturation of divine Essence within a Burn will dissipate over time, its excess energies carried away along local energy lines or devoured by hungry spirits. A Burn dissolving isn't like someone flipping a light switch, of course; the effects become less pronounced over the span of its dissolution period, and its borders shrink, until finally the afflicted area returns to normal. Minor Burns endure for about a fortnight, while major Burns last for about a month (dwindling to a minor Burn after about two weeks of diminishment). However, *any* expenditure of Motes within the Burn halts its dissolution timer and effectively resets it to one month (for a major Burn) or two weeks (for a minor Burn, or a major Burn that has dwindled to the status of a minor Burn). An Anathema passing through the Burn undoes its dissolution in the same fashion.

## Cleansing a Burn

In the case of the most dangerous Burns, the Chosen may not wish to wait for the area to heal itself. Unfortunately, Burns are immune to Purification (see p. XX) and the Chosen have no universal mechanism to get rid of them in a quick and clean fashion.

Some idiosyncratic Charms interfere with the substance of a Burn, and a few of these can hasten its dissolution, but doing so is almost always dangerous, carrying significant risk of triggering a Sear. A few other supernatural beings can help speed up the dispersal of a Burn; a magician might use the Spirit Arcana to draw Essence out of the area and knock days off of the Burn's dissolution timer, for example; or an Exalt might bring a number of hungry spirits into the Burn's Twilight to feast on its abundance of resonant Essence. Bringing monsters into a Burn tends to present its own complications, though.

### Burning the Otherworlds

The supernatural substance of the Shadow Realm, the Hedge, the Underworld, and similar supernatural locales is more robust and better able to handle being saturated by divine Essence. As such, Exalts venturing into other realms don't have to worry about Burns or Sears. These hazards only threaten the physical Earth.

## Searing a Burn

There's a faster way to get rid of a Burn than waiting for it to disperse on its own, but it's also highly dangerous and destructive. A Burn is supercharged with Motes of divine Essence; the entire area is volatile, dynamic, simmering with baked-in power. This can be unleashed all at once by provoking a *Sear*. A Sear ignites all of the trapped Essence within a Burn in a great flash of light and supernatural power. A spiritual wave of energy, briefly visible to the naked eye as a flood of color in the anima hues of the Exalt who created the Burn, rages through the afflicted area. A Sear wreaks havoc in the Shadow Realm, flooding it with a wave of power that weakens or destroys some spirits and elevates others, but its effects on the physical world are far more severe. People and sometimes animals caught in a Sear can be transformed into a variety of vessels for unbalanced, destructive Essence, collectively known as the Seared. As a result, a wise

Exalt will only use a Sear to deliberately excise a Burn with the utmost caution. Deliberately triggering a Sear across a wide area where evacuation is impossible is a heinously irresponsible act.

Unfortunately, Sear don't have to be set off deliberately. A Sear happens whenever something occurs that would create a Burn within the confines of an extant Burn, or whenever the borders of two Burns touch. In the latter case, *both* Burns immediately ignite into a single massive Sear combining the qualities of both across the entire field of effect. Thus, for example, if a Solar Burn were simmering away in a third-floor office in Chicago, and then a much larger Abyssal Burn enveloped the entire bottom seven floors of the building, the smaller Solar Burn would immediately ignite the larger Abyssal Burn, and the resulting Sear would randomly afflict those caught in its path with either Solar *or* Abyssal Sear effects.

## Searing the Shadow

While the effects of a Sear upon the physical world vary between different sorts of Exalted, Sear impact the world of spirits the same way every time: they blast it with a hyper-concentrated burst of Essence with a resonance appropriate to the kind of Burn used to fuel the Sear. Spirits with Bans or Banes relating to the resonance of the flood of Essence may take catastrophic damage, be destroyed outright, or suffer reduction in Rank as a result of the Sear. Those who naturally resonate with the Essence produced by the Burn feast to the point of bursting, and may very well ascend in Rank. This tends to throw the local spirit ecology into violent disarray: a Sidereal Sear within a hospital touched off by a Chosen of Serenity might wipe out a significant portion of the local population of misery and disease-spirits, while creating a near-godling from among the scant joy-spirits within the building; by contrast, an Abyssal Sear going off in the same location could very easily send a vast wave of incredibly powerful spirits of death and disease pouring out into the rest of the city.

## Purification

Ultimately, anyone can kill a vampire, or light a sorcerer's house on fire while he's asleep inside. Frightened, desperate people have been doing it since well before the discovery of crop rotation, and yet still the Earth becomes a bit darker, year by year, decade by decade, and the monsters proliferate. The vampire dies, but the taint of his blood continues to fester in his victims, until one night one of them rises from the river where she drowned: a misbegotten bloodthirsty thing. The magician burns, but his curses continue to warp the world, tormenting their victims. His conjury persists, growing more stale and sour and mad by the year until it becomes a supernatural malady in its own right: the swimming hole whose waters he used for his divinations becomes a place where those who swim down far enough find themselves in the depths of a black and greasy sea that is not of this world. It's only a matter of time until something comes through from the other side and claims the swimming hole as its lair, and then what?

The Exalted can do more than simply kill monsters with supernatural power and fury. The Exalted, or at least the Celestial Exalted, can *cleanse the Earth*.

The very, very few texts that address the subject tend to speak of the phenomenon as Purification – a burning-away of impurities, a returning of the Earth to its natural state as a human place without the taint of monsters – but the truth is different. The Exalted don't *burn out* or *drive away* the supernatural influence of monsters, per se; their inherent ability is not one of

abjuration, exorcism, or ritual cleansing. Rather, an Exalt can draw out and *absorb* corrupt power, feeding it into the furnace-core of her Essence where it is neutralized and catalyzed into divine power... when everything goes right, anyway.

The process of Purification is relatively simple. The Exalt attunes her Essence to the power of some supernatural curse, infestation, or manifestation, then draws that power into herself with the intent of extinguishing it. The devil, as always, is in the details.

**Limitations:** Using Purification is subject to the following limits:

- **Purification can only be attempted by Solars, Lunars, Sidereals, and Abyssals.** Dragon-Blooded lack the capability, and Infernals exist for a different purpose.
- **Purification isn't an exorcism.** It can't be used to destroy or undo a supernatural being's nature; in game terms, it can't strip a full template off of someone, or remove permanent traits from their character sheet (such as the Merits that grant a psychic his powers), nor can it end an active possession of any kind. It can't make a vampire human again, or strip away a sorcerer's ability to do magic. In essence, the intent of Purification is to sweep away the taint and ruination that monsters inflict on the world and people around them, rather than to destroy monsters directly.
- **An Exalt cannot Purify some curse or supernatural power that has been inflicted upon herself.** She can only Purify other people, places, things, and phenomena.
- **The Chosen cannot Purify any supernatural manifestation created by the power of the Exalted.** This power can't be used to undo a Burn, for example, or to return an Ophanim's humanity.

**Requirements:** Purification also has two conditions that must be met before it can be attempted:

- **Purification demands concentration.** The Exalt must be relatively undisturbed for at least a few minutes to attempt Purification; she can't try it in the heat of battle, or while werewolves are bashing down the door.
- **Purification follows struggle.** Most importantly, the Exalt must achieve some sort of victory or triumph while opposing the supernatural force she wishes to Purify before she can attempt Purification. What this means can vary *tremendously*, and requires significant Storyteller adjudication. If the Exalt wishes to cleanse the blood taint from a vampire's servant, she might need to convince that servant to renounce the vampire and attempt to flee its influence by going with her; or it could mean that the Exalt first destroys the vampire. Trying to Purify a magician's curse, likewise, requires somehow confronting either the magician or the curse, or leading the person suffering from the curse to achieve some minor triumph in its face. If the Solar seeks to Purify a cursed wish-granting skull, she might first need to steal it from the family it has tormented for generations, or convince one of its victims to assent to her destroying the skull's power, rather than continuing to pursue the ruinous course of trying to repair the calamities it has already wrought with further wishes. If she's trying to neutralize the power of the God-Machine's Infrastructure, it's likely she would have to confront and defeat the angel guarding the Infrastructure, or else evade mortal and supernatural security to infiltrate to the heart of the site before she could attempt Purification.

The point is, there's *always* some sort of challenge to overcome before Purification can be attempted. The Exalt can't simply walk into a haunted alley and burn away its Anchor Condition. She always has to first confront the supernatural before she can consume and cleanse it.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies, but usually Stamina + Resolve + Essence versus (Relevant Trait) + (Supernatural Tolerance trait), *or* Stamina + Resolve + Essence – (Supernatural Tolerance trait)

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** As a failure, plus the Exalt draws in the power of the supernatural manifestation, but fails to hold it. It not only escapes and returns to its original form, it leaves her tainted by its brief presence. She gains the modest version of the Sick Tilt for a number of days equal to the supernatural potency of whatever force she tried to consume.

**Failure:** The Exalt fails to Purify her target, and cannot try to do so again until she has once more successfully confronted it in some way.

**Success:** The Exalt successfully draws in and consumes the supernatural power of her target. She takes a Beat.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Exalt also regains all of her Willpower from the rush of power.

### Potential Purification Modifiers

A few modifiers that might impact a Purification roll:

The Exalt is Purifying one of her own Touchstones. (+3)

The Exalt is working in an isolated environment, and has as much time as she needs to attempt the Purification. (+2)

The subject is alive and fervently wishes to be Purified. (+1)

The subject is alive (or at least animate) and actively resisting the Exalt's attempt to Purify him. (-1)

The Exalt is rushed; the cops aren't beating down the door, for example, but she knows they're on their way. (-2)

The Exalt doesn't really understand what the thing she's Purifying is or what it does, only that it's in some way supernatural. (-1 to -3, based on the degree of the Exalt's ignorance)

The Exalt's victory in her confrontation with the thing she means to Purify was marginal or very incomplete. (-3 to -5)

## An Incomplete Survey of Purification

The shadows are infinitely deep, and dark, and hide all sorts of awful things. A comprehensive review of everything an Exalt might attempt to Purify is impossible. But here's a highlight reel to get you started, and to give some examples to look at when one of the Chosen tries to cleanse the unexpected or inexplicable.

If there's no supernatural being directly responsible for a phenomenon that an Exalt is trying to Purify (such as an elevator which, for no clearly explicable reason, normally resides in the current year but occasionally admits passengers from or delivers them to the year 1903), then the roll is Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Magnitude. Magnitude is a rating from 1 to 5 assigned by the Storyteller, based on the scope and power of the phenomenon or artifact being Purified.

Some examples of Purification in action follow:

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Rank:** An Exalt can attempt to remove the Anchor Condition from a person, place, or thing so that a ghost can no longer haunt it.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence versus Resistance + Rank:** An Exalt can attempt to unravel and cancel the ongoing effect of a Numina used by a ghost, spirit, or angel.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Gnosis:** An Exalt can attempt to cleanse an uncontrolled Paradox manifestation caused by a mage.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence versus (highest Arcanum) + Gnosis:** An Exalt can attempt to destroy and consume a mage's ongoing spell.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Blood Potency:** An Exalt might try to cleanse the vampiric taint from a vampire's victim, or someone who once drank vampire blood, which makes them potentially subject to post-mortem Embrace or rising as a Revenant. Alternately, she might try to burn out the Vinculum that enslaves someone to a vampire's will.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence versus vampire's Stamina + Blood Potency:** An Exalt might try to burn out the infectious vampire blood that makes someone into a ghoul.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence versus (Discipline rating) + Blood Potency:** An Exalt could try to Purify an enchantment or curse laid through blood sorcery, or shatter the mystical bonds a vampire used to enslave someone's mind.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Cover:** An Exalt could rip out the reality-editing alterations in a demonic Gadget, making it a normal item again.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Rank:** An Exalt can remove the Open Condition from a person, place, or thing, so that a spirit, ghost, or angel can't use make use of the subject.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Azoth:** An Exalt could attempt to cleanse the taint from a Promethean's Wasteland.

**Stamina + Resolve + Essence – Magnitude:** An Exalt may attempt to destroy the link of power connecting the physical world to the Shadow at a Locus.

# Chapter Four: The Dragon-Blooded

The last fading remnants of a legacy of glory stretching back to the dawn of the world, the Dragon-Blooded must strive and struggle, often for years, before wresting their bloody Exaltation from the monsters that haunt the night. This chapter contains all the rules necessary to create and play both Dragon-Blooded and Dragon-Touched characters. Further information on the Terrestrial Exalted can be found in Chapter One.

## Dragon-Blooded Character Creation

Dragon-Blooded follow all the standard steps outlined in Chapter Two. In the fifth step they add the Dragon-Blooded template.

## Add Dragon-Blooded Template

To represent Terrestrial Exaltation, perform the following operations:

### Choose Aspect

Begin by choosing your Exalt's Aspect from among Air, Earth, Fire, Water, or Wood. These are outlined in greater detail in Chapter One. Your choice of Aspect will determine your Bonus Attributes, Aspect Skills, Aspect Charms, and Divine Gift.

### Bonus Attributes

Terrestrial Exaltation is inherited through the blood and awakened by a suffusion of supernatural power. When the divinity sleeping in the character's blood awakens, it activates hidden potential sleeping within her. Select one Attribute from the three listed for your character's Aspect and add a dot to it. This cannot raise an Attribute above five dots.

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Bonus Attributes</b>
Air	Intelligence, Wits, Dexterity
Earth	Resolve, Stamina, Composure
Fire	Wits, Dexterity, Presence
Water	Strength, Manipulation, Composure
Wood	Strength, Stamina, Presence

### Aspect Skills

Aspect Skills function exactly as Caste Skills, which are outlined in Chapter Two. Note your character's Aspect Skills:

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Aspect Skills</b>
Air	Academics, Athletics, Occult, Politics, Stealth
Earth	Brawl, Computer, Crafts, Intimidation, Science
Fire	Athletics, Drive, Expression, Socialize, Weaponry
Water	Brawl, Investigation, Larceny, Streetwise, Subterfuge
Wood	Animal Ken, Firearms, Medicine, Persuasion, Survival

Then, distribute two dots among your Aspect Skills. This cannot raise any Skill above five dots.

## Aspect Charms and Favored Charms

You have an easier time learning the Charms that correspond to your Aspect. Also, select one additional Aspect. You treat this Aspect's Charms as though they were also Aspect Charms for you for all purposes. These are your *Favored Charms*.

Gain the Charm "Excellence" for free, and then select four additional Charms, at least three of which must be Aspect Charms.

## Essence Rating

Your Dragon-Blooded character begins with an Essence rating of 1. You can give up five of your Merit points to start at Essence 2, or all 10 to start at Essence 3.

## Divine Gifts

Every Dragon-Blooded has a Divine Gift, an intrinsic feature of their Exaltation. Each Aspect bears a different Divine Gift.

### The Air Aspect: Walking on Air

The wind supports and uplifts those of the Air Aspect, conveying the following advantages:

- The wind is ever at the character's back, speeding her way. All Air Aspects gains the Fleet of Foot (•••) Merit at no cost, even if they don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 47).
- The Air Aspect enjoys the 9-again rule on all jumping attempts.
- No matter how far she drops, nor how unexpected or violent the fall, the wind always buoys up the Dragon-Blooded at the last moment, delivering her gently to the ground. She never suffers falling damage, and can generally land on her feet.

### The Earth Aspect: Endurance of the Land

The solidity of the land itself abides in the bones of all Earth Aspects. They gain the following advantages:

- Dragon-Blooded of the Earth Aspect have the very patience of geological time itself, and gain the Patient (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 46).
- While in physical, skin-to-soil contact with bare earth or stone, the Exalt is nigh-immovable, and immune to the Knocked Down Tilt.
- The flesh of the Dragon-Blooded shares the resilience of stone. The character enjoys natural armor rated 1/0.

### The Fire Aspect: Heritor of the Inferno

The power of Aspects of Fire is a very direct brotherhood with actual, literal flames. Fire Aspects gain the following advantages:

- Aspects of Fire are extremely quick to act and react in any situation. The character gains the Fast Reflexes (•••) Merit at no cost, even if she doesn't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 44).

- On any turn where the character would suffer damage from fire or extreme heat, make a reflexive Stamina + Composure roll. On a success, the damage is bashing. With an exceptional success, she takes no damage at all.

- When the Fire Aspect's anima flux manifests, it does so as very real flames. Though they still won't harm the Dragon-Blooded or her possessions, these flames can light the environment ablaze, and inflict terrible injuries on those who draw near. Damage from the character's anima flux is lethal rather than bashing, and when objects suffer Structure damage, they also catch on fire if they are flammable.

## The Water Aspect: Lords of the Depths

Water Aspects are as at home in their native element as any sea creature. They enjoy the following benefits:

- Water Aspects easily evade the notice of others, and may easily dare what others would not. The character gains the Sleight of Hand (••) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 49), even if she doesn't meet its prerequisites.

- By paying 1 Mote, the Exalt may walk for a scene upon the surface of any liquid as though it were solid land. She can also sink into it at will, treating it as a solid surface or permeable liquid from moment to moment as she desires.

- Aspects of Water cannot drown. The character can breathe underwater as easily as a fish, and can survive the rigors of deep-sea pressure with no problem.

## The Wood Aspect: Toxins of the Heart

Wood Aspects enjoy a kinship with living systems, and may manifest their most common passive defense: deadly poison. This manifests in the following ways:

- Wood Aspects have a natural instinct for the beneficial properties of growing things, and gain the Holistic Awareness (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 44-45).

- Going above and beyond the usual Exalted resistance to poison, Aspects of Wood are completely and unconditionally immune to all forms of poison. The character can do shots of rattlesnake venom all night without harm, if she so desires.

- The Wood Aspect may spend 1 Mote to flood her body with natural toxins for the rest of the scene. Any character that comes into contact with any of her bodily fluids during the scene suffers the grave Poisoned Tilt every turn they remain in contact with this poison. If this poison is ingested or injected into another character's body, it has a Toxicity equal to the Exalt's Composure, and inflicts its damage every ten minutes a number of times equal to her Essence rating.

## Elemental Nature

Dragon-Blooded no longer use the Integrity trait they did prior to Exaltation. The power awakened in their blood stabilizes their heart against the rigors of living in the supernatural world. Instead, each Dragon-Blooded carries the touch of her element in the form of an Elemental Condition.

The substance of one of the five elements has awakened within the soul of each Dragon-Blooded. The seed of the element was always within her, slumbering; with Exaltation, she's



experienced a homecoming, finally felt whole and complete and entirely herself. But having a soul that directly partakes of the cosmic essence of fire or earth is a profound experience, and it leaves its mark on her personality as surely as the Essence coursing through her invigorates her body. An Elemental Condition is the expression of that mark.

Elemental Conditions are a group of five Persistent Conditions, each unique to one Dragon-Blooded Aspect. They're present from the moment of Exaltation, and generally persist for the rest of the character's life.

#### EARTH SOUL (PERSISTENT)

You are patient, relentless, methodical. Once per chapter, you can make one extra roll when undertaking an extended action. Whenever you take point and are the one to escalate a situation (such as pushing a dinner discussion into a shouting match, or firing the first shot in a tense standoff), you lose the 10-again benefit on all your dice pools during the ensuing fracas.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Earth Aspect

**Resolution:** Suffer soul loss. Upon gaining a soul again, this Condition returns.

**Beat:** Whenever you hang back to let the situation develop for too long, and come to difficulty or trouble as a result, take a beat.

#### FIRE SOUL (PERSISTENT)

You are passionate, spontaneous, impulsive. Once per chapter, when impulsively acting to satisfy your Virtue or Vice, you may add a +2 bonus to a roll. When you are forced to follow a plan with no room for deviation or improvisation lose the 10-again benefit on your dice pools.

**Possible Sources:** Being a Fire Aspect

**Resolution:** Suffer soul loss. Upon gaining a soul again, this Condition returns.

**Beat:** Whenever you buy yourself trouble unnecessarily by acting upon a momentary passion, take a beat.

#### WAVE SOUL (PERSISTENT)

You are cunning, adaptable, and just a bit sinister. Once per chapter, when breaking the rules in some way (whether by performing a crime, cheating in a card game, running a scam, or otherwise doing something underhanded) you gain a +2 bonus. When you have to operate wholly aboveboard with all your cards on the table in a high-stakes situation, you lose the 10-again benefit on your dice pools.

**Possible Sources:** Being a Water Aspect

**Resolution:** Suffer soul loss. Upon gaining a soul again, this Condition returns.

**Beat:** Whenever you get caught in the middle of a crime, double-cross, dirty-deal, or otherwise breaking the rules with serious stakes or consequences, take a beat.

#### WIND SOUL (PERSISTENT)

You are analytical, measured, a plotter. Once per chapter, when executing a plan you worked out well in advance, you gain a +2 bonus. When you are forced to

abandon your plan completely and make up something new on the spot, lose the 10-again benefit on your dice pools.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Air Aspect

**Resolution:** Suffer soul loss. Upon gaining a soul again, this Condition returns.

**Beat:** Whenever one of your plans goes to hell in a handbasket, take a beat.

#### WOOD SOUL (PERSISTENT)

You are outgoing, sensitive, attuned to living systems. Once per chapter, when making a teamwork roll, you grant the primary actor the 9-again benefit, even if you are the primary actor. When operating on your own in a non-wilderness environment, you lose the 10-again benefit on your dice pools.

**Possible Sources:** Being a Wood Aspect

**Resolution:** Suffer soul loss. Upon gaining a soul again, this Condition returns.

**Beat:** Whenever you become embroiled in the problems of those you don't know terribly well and their trouble becomes your trouble, take a beat.

## Anima Flux

A Dragon-Blooded anima banner carries with it a heavier, more crude and earthly freight of spiritual power than those of their Celestial counterparts. As fragments of burned-off Motes collect in a Terrestrial's spiritual mantle, their anima becomes not only visible to the naked eye, but directly tangible – and destructive. This phenomenon is known as anima flux.

Anima flux scours anything brought into the visible aura of a flaring Terrestrial anima. Objects begin to take damage as though raked with thorns, scoured by a whirling sandstorm, blasted by an ice storm, or dissolved by corrosive acid. People fare no better.

At the Radiant level, anima flux affects anything in direct contact with the Terrestrial's body for a turn (such as a car she's occupying, furniture she's touching, or someone grappling her), or anything that stays within a yard of her for a full minute. At the Burning level, anima flux affects anything that spends a turn within a couple of yards of the Dragon-Blooded, including anyone locked in hand-to-hand combat with her.

Anima flux inflicts one point of bashing damage per interval to any individual it affects. Objects take a point of damage to their Structure every (Durability) intervals of exposure. Other Dragon-Blooded of the same Aspect are immune to one another's anima flux. Anima flux doesn't damage any objects the Dragon-Blooded is personally wearing or using, so long as their Size doesn't exceed her own.

## Dragon-Blooded Charms

Dragon-Blooded Charms are elemental manifestations that bridge the worlds of the mundane and the divine, brought forth from the great wellspring of the Exalt's own Essence. They bend together the splendor and terror of the fundamental elements with the excellence of mortal endeavor.

Every Dragon-Blooded Charm resonates with one or more Terrestrial Aspect. A Dragon-Blooded belonging to a resonant Aspect may buy a Charm for two Experiences. A Charm which doesn't resonate with a character's Aspect, on the other hand, costs three Experiences. Every

Dragon-Blooded is also able to select a second Aspect during character creation. She is also considered to resonate with Charms linked to that Aspect, even though it isn't her own Aspect, and may likewise buy them for two Experiences.

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## Excellence

**Resonance:** All Dragon-Blooded

Aligning her efforts with the resonance of the five elements, the Dragon-Blooded moves in perfect harmony with the world. For a few brief moments, her actions are almost perfected, natural forces unto themselves.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Varies

For each Mote spent to power this Charm, the Dragon-Blooded may enjoy one of the following benefits:

- Select a single Skill. All dice pools using this Skill add a number of bonus dice equal to the Skill in question. If an applicable specialty applies to the pool, it grants two dice rather than one. This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1 minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Skills at once, so long as each is paid for separately.
- Select a specific Attribute-based dice pool which does not involve a Skill (such as Attribute + Attribute, or Attribute + Essence). Add a number of bonus dice equal to the lowest-rated Attribute in the pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 dice roll.
- When Dodging, the character may add a number of bonus dice equal to twice the character's Athletics to the Dodging pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 turn.
- Increase the character's Defense by her Athletics rating for 1 turn.

*Example:* A Dragon-Blooded attempts to pick the sturdy lock on the back door of a vampire's lair. She had Dexterity 3 + Larceny 3 and a specialty in Lockpicking, which would ordinarily give her a pool of seven dice. She uses Excellence and decides to enhance Larceny rolls, and so instead she doubles her Larceny and specialty dice, rolling a total of 11 dice (Dexterity 3 + Larceny 3 + 2 dice for the specialty + 3 more dice from Excellence).

*All Dragon-Blooded begin play with this Charm for free.*

## All-Encompassing Earth Sense

**Resonance:** Earth

By concentrating for a moment, the Dragon-Blooded extends her senses down into the Earth itself, "seeing" the weight and tremors of movement upon the ground.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Exalt can "see" perfectly in the dark, so long as what she's "seeing" is connected to the ground in any way. All attempts at stealth or concealment within (Essence rating x 10) yards of the Exalt automatically fail if any part of the hiding character's weight is connected to the ground. This Charm cannot see any flying creature or object, and is entirely useless in or upon deep water or in an aircraft.

## Become the Hammer

**Resonance:** Water

The Exalt may imbue the force of a crashing tidal wave into a punch or kick, rupturing organs and smashing bones with the impact.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Exalt's unarmed strikes inflict lethal damage and gain the 9-again quality. This Charm's cost drops to 0 motes when the Exalt's anima is flaring at the Radiant or Burning level.

## Bellows-Pumping Stride

**Resonance:** Fire

The Dragon-Blooded runs, and her footfalls strike flames from the earth, leaving a trail of fire in her wake.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Exalt increases her Speed by her Athletics + Essence. When she moves at her full Speed, she leaves a trail of flames in her wake. The burning footprints are about the size and intensity of a torch (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 98).

## Bottomless Depths Defense

**Resonance:** Water

Faced with the inevitability of harm, the Dragon-Blooded trades calamity for lesser suffering, sending her enemy's attack spiraling away into the depths of the element of water itself. That ancient abyss has absorbed so much pain over the years that some measure of it overflows back into the Exalt, making some degree of injury unavoidable.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; may be declared *after* an attack is rolled.

The Exalt negates all damage from a single attack or other source of damage (or one turn's worth of damage from an ongoing source of damage such as a burning building). However, she automatically suffers one point of aggravated damage upon using this Charm, which cannot be negated by any means.

## Chaos-Warding Prana

**Resonance:** Earth

The Dragon-Blooded grows an invisible shell around her body and spirit, which protects her from any curse cast against her by far-away enemies.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever anyone tries to target the Exalt with a mystic attack from a greater distance than line-of-sight, such as using a lock of her hair to curse her from the other side of a city, their dice pool is reduced to a chance die.

## Confluence of Savant Thought

**Resonance:** Water



When the Dragon-Blooded stands amidst the complex workings of a formal organization, knowledge of its structural workings trickle down to inform her smooth interactions with it.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

When undertaking any extended action to push through bureaucratic red tape, the interval of rolls is reduced to one minute, no matter how long it should normally be: the Dragon-Blooded can accelerate her concerns from call-center peon to a direct chat with the CEO in five minutes flat.

Additionally, as long as she stays on the move and doesn't stop to socialize or go rifling through paperwork or look things up on the computers, once she's bypassed initial security and gained access to a bureaucratic environment she can move about freely without anyone noticing that she isn't supposed to be there.

## Dead Reckoning Technique

**Resonance:** Earth, Water

The Exalt embeds a Mote of divine power in the place where she stands, and takes a moment to familiarize herself with its resonance. Until that compaction of Essence dissipates, the Dragon-Blooded can flawlessly retrace her steps or intuit a new route to bring her back to the Mote's location.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Intelligence + Essence rating) hours

So long as the Charm endures, the Exalt may perfectly retrace her steps to return to the point where she first activated Dead Reckoning Technique. If that path is blocked, she can instinctively devise a new route to get her to the Charm's point of origin, if one exists.

## Deferment of Roots and Ashes

**Resonance:** Fire, Wood

Though a trunk should be cut through or a fire blown out, its roots and banked embers may yet endure and, in time, spring back again.

**Cost:** 1 mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

When the Dragon-Blooded ought to be rendered unconscious by damage, she may use this Charm to remain conscious and active for the rest of the scene. Once she's out of immediate danger, the Exalt collapses for at least an hour, even if she has since healed her injuries.

## Dragon-Graced Weapon

**Resonance:** All Dragon-Blooded

The Dragon-Blooded imbues her weapon with the surging power of elemental Essence, producing a crowbar wreathed in flame, a baseball bat wrapped in writhing thorns, or a sword crackling with lightning.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Exalt's Weaponry attacks gain an enchantment determined by the character's Aspect.

- **Air:** The weapon is surrounded by buffeting winds and crackling lightning. Successful attacks increase their damage by +1 and inflict the Knocked Down Tilt.
- **Earth:** The weapon is studded with jagged protrusions of stone and crystal. Successful attacks increase their damage by +1 and inflict the Stunned Tilt.
- **Fire:** The weapon is wreathed in flames. Successful attacks increase their damage by +3.
- **Water:** A concentrated edge of water cuts surrounds the weapon. Successful attacks gain the armor piercing quality at a rating of 4.
- **Wood:** The weapon is covered in bristling thorns. Successful attacks increase their damage by +1 and inflict a grave version of the Poisoned Tilt for (Essence + 1) turns. This duration stacks if multiple strikes are applied.

Dragon-Graced Weapon can be repurchased to obtain the effects of a non-native element, but only one effect can enhance any single attack.

## Dragon Shroud Technique

**Resonance:** Air

The Exalt bends light and air around herself, becoming little more than a very faint shimmer.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Dragon-Blooded becomes nigh-invisible. Those without reason to suspect her presence cannot detect her. Anyone who *does* have reason to think she's around (because of evidence left behind, or because she spoke or knocked something over, perhaps) must make a Wits + Composure roll at a -4 penalty to locate her. This invisibility will even endure the rigors of combat for (Essence rating) turns before unraveling, during which time all attacks directed at the Exalt suffer a -3 penalty.

## Dragon's Terrible Glare

**Resonance:** Earth, Fire

The Exalt's eyes become cold, flinty, and unyielding as the blackest depths of the Earth; or else smolder with barely-contained flames. No one can look into them without feeling himself on the verge of being crushed by tectonic forces.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the character enjoys the 8-again rule on all Intimidation rolls.

## Drowning Embrace

**Resonance:** Water

Holding an enemy in a forceful embrace, the Dragon-Blooded floods their body with the Essence of the deepest seas, causing them to drown on dry land.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Exalt must be in control of a grapple.

The character's grappled opponent takes one point of bashing damage at the beginning of each turn as their lungs fill with saltwater. This damage continues until the target takes an instant action to vomit up a great quantity of briny water, which they cannot do so long as they remain in a grapple with the Exalt.

## Elemental Bolt Attack

**Resonance:** All Dragon-Blooded

The Dragon-Blooded concentrates her Essence into a weapon, hurling a deadly elemental manifestation at her enemies. For Air Aspects this Charm takes the form of a lightning bolt. Earth Aspects hurl a stone spike, while Fire Aspects launch a bolt of flame. Water Aspects toss a lance of jagged ice, while Wood Aspects strike with a wooden javelin.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the character may hurl bolts of elemental energy as standard thrown weapon attacks (Dexterity + Athletics – Defense). These bolts inflict +3 damage, have a range of 20/40/60, and benefit from the 9-again rule.

## Elemental Empowerment Meditation

**Resonance:** All Dragon-Blooded

In extreme circumstances, the character may cannibalize her Aspect element for power, ripping Essence out of the world and leaving it injured and barren.

**Cost:** None

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Presence – 3 (for a minor Burn) or 5 (for a major Burn)

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** Requires successful meditation before use. Must be used in the presence of a powerful manifestation of the character's Aspect element, such as a storm, a house fire, a verdant forest, a suitable environmental Tilt, or a Terrestrial Burn matching her Aspect.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** If used in a Burn, the Burn immediately detonates in a Sear, and the Exalt's attempt to draw that volatile energy into her causes her to take one point of aggravated damage per Mote in her pool. If used otherwise, she attracts the attention of hostile elementals who are not pleased with her attempting to deprive them of resonant Essence.

**Failure:** If used in a Burn, it immediately detonates into a Sear. Otherwise, the attempt simply fails.

**Success:** The Exalt gains two Motes immediately. Any relevant environmental Tilts weaken or cease. Plant growth is stunted for at least a year.

**Exceptional Success:** The Exalt gains three Motes immediately. If used in a Burn, it shrinks a bit; treat its dissolution timer as though three days had just passed. Environmental Tilts end outright. Plants wither and die.

Using this Charm within the same area (encompassing about a mile) more than once per year can produce a Barren in the spirit world.

### Elemental Succor Method

**Resonance:** All Dragon-Blooded

By seeking refuge in her Aspect element, the Dragon-Blood may rapidly restore herself to health.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

By resting while surrounded by a potent manifestation of her Aspect – strong winds, bare soil, intense heat, immersing water, or growing things – the Dragon-Blood may heal one point of bashing damage per turn, one point of lethal damage per hour, and one point of aggravated damage every 12 hours.

### Enchanting Performance

**Resonance:** Wood

Over the course of an intimate, one-on-one artistic performance, the Dragon-Blooded lulls her target into a suggestive state, and may plant commands deep into their psyche.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Performance + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim sees through the Exalt's attempt to hypnotize him, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The Dragon-Blooded fails to hypnotize the target.

**Success:** The Exalt beguiles the target and may issue a post-hypnotic suggestion. He gains the Hypnotized Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the hypnotic commands can be delayed such that they don't kick in until a specific trigger is met. The Condition's "countdown" doesn't begin until the trigger condition is met.

#### HYPNOTIZED

Your will isn't your own. You've been given a set of instructions of no more than two or three sentences in length, and must carry them out to the best of your abilities. If your task has a natural end ("Follow that man, and call me when you find out where he's going.") then you resolve the Condition when the task ends; otherwise, it ends after (Exalt's Essence rating) days. Once you resolve this Condition, you can't quite remember what you did under its sway.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Take more damage (of any sort) than your Stamina. Experience a breaking point while following the command. Complete the task.

**Beat:** n/a.

### Entombed Mind Technique

**Resonance:** Earth, Water

The Dragon-Blooded infuses somnolent Essence into her target, burying them in a spiritual tomb of Earth Essence or pushing them deep into the darkness of Water Essence.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Composure + Empathy + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

**Requirement:** By force, guile, social obligation or trickery, the Dragon-Blooded must arrange for her target to remain relatively still for five minutes in order to use this Charm.

#### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt becomes lost in her own dreams of deep and elemental slumber, afflicting herself with a heavy fatigue. Represent with the Drugged Tilt.

**Failure:** The target feels drowsy, but shakes it off.

**Success:** The target is placed into a deep slumber for (Essence rating) hours. Nothing short of a dramatically loud noise or being vigorously shaken will awaken him prematurely.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and nothing shy of physical injury will prematurely awaken the target. He can be manhandled up a flight of stairs, hidden in a cupboard, and then a gunfight can occur in the room outside of the cupboard without awakening him, so long as he doesn't catch a bullet in the crossfire.

### Essence-Disrupting Technique

**Resonance:** Earth

Focusing the totality of her divine will upon an opponent, the Exalt blocks her foe's chakras and cuts him off from the energy flowing through both himself and the world around him.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Intimidation + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The curse backfires, and the Exalt suffers the Blocked Essence Condition.

**Failure:** The target throws off the Exalt's attempt to curse him.

**Success:** The Exalt inflicts the Blocked Essence Condition on her opponent.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the target loses one point of whatever resource they use to power their mystical abilities (such as Motes, Essence, or Vitae), or one point of Willpower if they have no such trait.

Blocked Essence

A debilitating curse or injury has knocked your body and spirit out of alignment with whatever power fuels them. You cannot spend whatever energy powers your mystical capabilities, such as Motes, Essence, Vitae, Mana, etc. If you have no such mystic resource, this Condition resolves immediately without granting a Beat.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Take at least one point of damage (of any kind). Successfully meditate. If all else fails, this Condition will naturally resolve itself after 24 hours.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Flickering Candle Meditation

**Resonance:** Air, Fire

As wind and flame dance together, so the Dragon-Blooded moves in perfect synchronicity with her opponents in battle.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Dragon-Blooded no longer reduces her Defense by 1 for the rest of the turn after applying it to an attack. When Dodging, she is no longer penalized for facing multiple opponents.

## Forgiveness-of-Nature Invocation

**Resonance:** Wood

The natural world favors its uncrowned kings, and forgives their missteps when attempting to survive its otherwise heartless rigors.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever the Exalt makes a Survival roll, she may do so twice and keep the preferred result.

## Geese Flying South Administration

**Resonance:** Air, Water, Wood

Sometimes you can't be there, even for family, but you can still lend them your strength. The Dragon-Blooded has learned to do so, and can pour her elemental miracles into one of the Dragon-Touched, as one fills a cup with water.

**Cost:** Varies

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The character touches one of the Dragon-Touched and spend as many Motes as desired. The Dragon-Touched gains however many of her Charms the Dragon-Blooded wishes to impart, as well as a pool of Motes with which to use them equal to the Motes contributed to this Charm. While the Dragon-Touched is in possession of the bestowed Charms, their original owner cannot use them, and the Dragon-Touched has no way to replenish their borrowed Motes; once the Motes are gone, they're gone.

This Charm lasts until the Dragon-Blooded spends an instant action to reclaim her loaned-out Charms. She cannot reclaim any unspent Motes; those are simply lost. If the Dragon-Touched accepts more Motes than her Integrity rating, she suffers a breaking point.

## Ghost-Fire Revelation

**Resonance:** Fire

The Exalt imbues a portion of her Essence into a nearby source of flame. The flame immediately emits a great quantity of faint, fragrant smoke, which expands to fill the area. Any beings in Twilight may be glimpsed as distortions displacing the resulting cloud of smoke.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The cloud of smoke is aromatic, refreshing, and in no way significantly impedes vision or irritates the lungs. It fills an area roughly the size of a modest home or forest clearing. Fire Aspects may use their own anima (even if it isn't visible at the moment) as a source of flame, but other Aspects must be able to produce some manner of open flame in order to activate this Charm.

## Grace of the Dragon

**Resonance:** Wood

Using a rapid infusion of harmonious Essence, the Exalt protects a creature or object from her destructive anima flux.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Dragon-Blooded touches a creature or object of no more than Size 25. For the rest of the scene, that creature or object cannot be harmed by the Exalt's anima flux.

## Harvest of the Hunter

**Resonance:** Wood

Nature itself abhors the thought of the Dragon-Blooded ever being caught helpless and unarmed by the things which creep through the night. At any time she can reach into a nearby plant or wooden object and draw forth both weapon and ammunition with which to fight

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The character may, at any point, use an instant action to produce a wooden weapon whose Size is no greater than the plant or wooden object she draws it out of. If used to produce a bow, the weapon is already strung with tightly-woven plant fibers. If used to produce arrows or bolts, the Exalt may draw forth a number equal to her Essence rating with a single action.

Each use of this Charm inflicts one point of damage on the plant or object the weapon or ammunition was drawn from.

## Hidden Petal Aria Method

**Resonance:** Wood

As beautiful flowers may conceal deadly poison, so the Dragon-Blooded's performance contains concealed messages for select members of her audience.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

While enacting a live performance, the Exalt can embed a secret, hidden message inside the words, motion, or music. This hidden message can only be discerned by those the Dragon-Blooded intends to address it to.

## Hopping Firecracker Evasion

**Resonance:** Fire

The Dragon-Blooded flashes through burst of staccato motion to avoid even the swiftest of attacks, the Essence within her guiding her reactions to the tiny explosions of gunshots, the hiss of wind around a projectile, or the ashen will of arrow and bow.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

So long as the Exalt moves every turn, she may apply her Defense against ranged attacks, such as gunfire. If she stands still for a turn, then she loses the protection of this Charm until the next turn in which she moves.



## Impervious Skin of Stone Meditation

**Resonance:** Earth

The Exalt draws the solidity of the Earth itself up into her flesh.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

**Requirement:** The Exalt must be in contact with stone or soil to use this Charm. Traditionally this is accomplished by standing upon the bare Earth or a stone floor, but many Dragon-Blooded carry a small rock in their pocket, or wear a precious stone on a ring in order to use this Charm at any time.

The Exalt's skin becomes armor rated 3/2. If the character is an Earth Aspect, this stacks with her natural Aspect-granted armor.

## Language Learning Ritual

**Resonance:** Air, Earth, Water

By spending at least an hour listening to a language, the Dragon-Blooded may gain temporary fluency in it.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Academics + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character fixates upon a false grasp of the language she's trying to assimilate, preventing her from using this Charm to attempt to grasp it again for the rest of the story.

**Failure:** The Dragon-Blooded fails to decode the language she's listening to.

**Success:** The character can understand the assimilated language and make herself understood in it for (Essence rating) days. She can't read or write the language unless it shares an alphabet with a language with which she's already familiar (so a speaker of English could read assimilated French or Spanish, but not Russian or Mandarin).

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but fluency remains for the rest of the current story.

## Life-Swelling Sap Strike

**Resonance:** Wood

In the hands of the Dragon-Blooded, wood is not merely a hard substance suitable for cracking skulls or shaping into arrows, it is a vector for life itself, and thus inimical to the undead.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, any attack the Exalt makes with a weapon made primarily of wood is capable of striking ghosts in Twilight, although this Charm gives no intrinsic ability to detect such creatures. Used against corporeal undead, such attacks inflict lethal damage even if the target would normally downgrade the damage to bashing, and gain a +1 damage bonus.

## Lightning Hand Prana

**Resonance:** Air

With a moment's concentration, the Exalt can usurp control of the electricity powering the devices around her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The character can operate any electronic device within (5 x Essence rating) yards, from a light switch to a mobile phone, without touching it. If the device she wishes to operate is actively in the possession of someone else who doesn't want her mucking about with it, she must win a contested Intelligence + (Crafts or Computer) roll to get it to do what she wants.

## Loquacious Courtier Technique

**Resonance:** Fire, Water

The Exalt's passion becomes contagious, spilling out of her words to inflame the hearts of those around her, or else to seep through their better judgment.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Dragon-Blooded must have just successfully used social maneuvering to open a Door via conversation or soft leverage.

Rather than opening a single Door, the Exalt's efforts open two. If this Charm is used to enhance an exceptional success, then three Doors are opened rather than the usual two, but the target gains the Obsession Condition, fixated on the Dragon-Blooded whose words and deeds continue to reverberate in his thoughts.

## Loyal Weapon

**Resonance:** Air

The Dragon-Blooded may use an invisible tether of air to quickly draw any object she has just thrown or released back into her waiting grasp, using nothing more than her mastery of Essence and a flick of her wrist. While this Charm is traditionally used to reclaim thrown weapons, it can just as easily be used to recover any dropped or discarded object.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Dragon-Blooded may use an instant action to draw anything she was previously holding back into her waiting grasp, so long as it left her possession no more than (Essence rating) turns ago. If another character has claimed control of the object, the Dragon-Blooded must win a contested roll of Strength + Athletics + Essence vs Strength + Athletics.

## Naked Thief Style

**Resonance:** Water

The rise and fall of tumblers within a lock is not, in its way, so unlike the motions of ocean waves. The Dragon-Blooded may pick locks and otherwise defeat security measures without any specialized or even improvised tools.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

The Dragon-Blooded never suffers a penalty for attempting perform larcenous actions without specialized tools. Moreover, by spending 1 Mote, she may cut the interval of any extended action to break into something she's not supposed to get into down to 1 turn.

## Obscuring Dance of the Elements

**Resonance:** Fire, Water

The Dragon-Blooded projects her Essence around nearby allies as a haze of concealing smoke or a shimmer of dancing reflections, momentarily obscuring their precise location.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

For the rest of the turn, all attacks directed against any allies the Dragon-Blooded can perceive within 30 yards suffer a penalty equal to lower of the Exalt's Essence or Athletics. The Exalt cannot shroud herself with this Charm.

## Ox-Body Technique

**Resonance:** Earth, Wood

The Dragon-Blooded's flesh partakes of the vivifying Essence of the living world, making her far more resilient than mere human biology should permit. Where anyone else would lay down and die under the weight of their injuries, the Exalt remains standing and fighting.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Dragon-Blooded's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + (Essence rating x 2).

## Passion-Attuning Attitude

**Resonance:** Fire, Wood

Closing her eyes for a moment and shutting out the rest of the world, the Dragon-Blooded becomes attuned to a certain passion in those around her: lust, anger, or fear. When she opens her

eyes, those in the grip of the attuned passion seem to swirl with a cascade of invisible leaves, while the object of their passion swirls with pale smoke and flames.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Exalt can detect anyone who suffers a Condition of her choice: Frightened, Irritable, Murderous, Shaken, or Swooning. If the subject of the Condition's fixation is also present, the Exalt also detects them as such, and knows who they are entangled with.

## Passion-Transmuting Nuance

**Resonance:** Fire

Blowing on the heart of another, the Dragon-Blooded fills his soul with smoke and flame, confusing his passions and manipulating them into whatever form she desires.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Empathy + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Dragon-Blooded fail to alter the target's passions, she inflicts the Condition she hoped to create upon herself, focused on the target of this Charm.

**Failure:** The Dragon-Blooded fails to alter the target's passions.

**Success:** The Dragon-Blooded may transform any of the following Conditions into any other Condition listed: Frightened, Irritable, Murderous, Shaken, Swooning. The subject of the Condition's fixation remains the same, if it has one; if not, a logical fixation develops.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Dragon-Blooded gains a point of Willpower from the rush of stoking her target's emotions.

## Persistent Hornet Attack

**Resonance:** Air

The Exalt hurls a weapon at her opponent and the air itself steers the blow, guided by her killing intent. Even should the target dodge, the projectile will bank and continue to seek his blood.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Up to (Essence + 1) turns

The enchanted thrown attack gains the 9-again quality. If it fails to strike the target, roll the attack again on the Exalt's initiative on each subsequent turn until the attack succeeds or the Charm's duration runs out. While an enemy is being pursued by Persistent Hornet Attack, his Defense does *not* refresh to full at the beginning of each combat turn.

## Phoenix Mate's Lament

**Resonance:** Fire

So long as the Exalt remains in motion, her anima forms a protective shroud around her that protects her from all incidental harm that is not directly guided by malign intent.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

So long as the Exalt isn't standing still, she is immune to penalties and harm from extreme environments. She can sprint through a burning building, vaulting over falling timbers and bursting through walls of smoke and flame undamaged; and can just as easily sprint or drive through the heart of a supernatural blizzard or raging sandstorm with no fear of injury or even of spinning out on ice-slick roads. Should a turn go by in which the Exalt remains stationary, however, this Charm's protection vanishes until she gets moving again.

## Poisoned Tongue Technique

**Resonance:** Air, Wood

Listening in on a conversation, the Dragon-Blooded may carefully insinuate her own Essence into the back-and-forth of the exchange, altering its subject to one of her desiring.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Expression + Essence versus highest Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt becomes lost in the flow of the discussion she's attempting to influence, and loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The conversation becomes momentarily muddled, but nothing more.

**Success:** The Exalt may steer the course of the topic, causing stray thoughts and word-choices on the part of the influenced participants to quickly shift the subject being discussed to one selected by the Dragon-Blooded.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and if the Exalt joins the conversation, all of her Social actions gain a +2 equipment bonus as her Essence makes her seem like an authority on the subject.

To influence a conversation, the Dragon-Blooded must be physically present to witness it; she can't, for example, steer a live debate that she's watching on television.

## Pyroclastic Caliber

**Resonance:** Fire

The Exalt channels the limitless power of flame into her weapon until it glows white-hot, then unleashes that banked fury in a single incredibly destructive strike or shot.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Exalt makes an Athletics, Firearms, or Weaponry attack, adding a damage bonus equal to the highest of her Fire Aspect Skills or her Essence rating. All damage from the attack is considered to be damage from fire. The weapon used is utterly ruined and destroyed whether the attack lands or not.

## Righteous Lion Defense

**Resonance:** Earth

Once the Exalt sets herself upon a course, she can no more be turned from her course than a roaring avalanche.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever someone or something tries to convince or force the Dragon-Blooded to abandon or act contrary to one of her Aspirations, she may add (highest rating among her Aspect Skills) to her Resistance Attribute for the purpose of not being persuaded or controlled.

## Ringling Anvil Onslaught

**Resonance:** Earth, Fire

The Exalt batters at her foe with blow after blow, beating down his defenses until he is supremely vulnerable to one final blow.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Exalt makes a Brawl or Weaponry attack, which ignores (Exalt's Strength rating) points of the enemy's Defense. If the attack succeeds, its damage bonus is increased by 2. Ringling Anvil Onslaught offers no benefit against an enemy that Dodges rather than simply applying Defense.

## Riptide Method

**Resonance:** Water

The Exalt flows from enemy to enemy, her body a perfect weapon that encompasses all who oppose her in a tide of violence that leaves them still and bloody.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Dragon-Blooded may make as many Strength + Brawl attacks as she wishes, so long as each is directed against a different target that she can reach. Subtract the total number of targets from her attack pool, then make one attack against each target.

## Safety Among Enemies

**Resonance:** Fire, Wood

The Dragon-Blooded dodges through the midst of her enemies, confusing them with the bright gleam of her eyes and contrails of smoke that trail in her wake, or giving the momentary impression of being lost and confused among shifting boughs. Before they know what has happened, her foes lay dead, cut down by their own crossfire.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Exalt must have just successfully defended against an attack, either with her Defense or by Dodging.

One attack that just missed the Exalt must be immediately re-rolled, this time directed against a target of the Exalt's choice within the attacker's range.

## Sense-Riding Method

**Resonance:** Air, Earth, Water

Through careful and total concentration, the Dragon-Blooded may insinuate her senses into the mind of another person she can see, "riding" his perceptions to see and hear whatever he does.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Empathy + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Duration:** For as long as the Exalt concentrates on maintaining the sensory link, taking no other action more strenuous than, say, walking or dictating what she's seeing.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt casts forth her senses, but fails to connect them to her target. She suffers the Blind or Deaf Tilt for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Dragon-Blooded fails to connect her senses to those of her target.

**Success:** The Exalt sees, hears, and feels whatever her target does for the duration of the Charm.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Exalt gains the Informed Condition regarding the person whose senses she rode.

## Soundless Action Prana

**Resonance:** Air

The Dragon-Blooded stirs the air to smother all noises she makes, or to carry them far away.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the character's actions make no noise at all unless she wishes them to. She may also smother the sounds made by anyone she is in physical contact with, such as to silence a scream as she grapples and stabs someone. All Stealth actions enjoy the 8-again benefit.

## Spirit-Detecting Mirror Technique

**Resonance:** All Dragon-Blooded

The Exalt allows her Essence to bleed out into reflective surfaces around her, attuning them to the emanations of the Shadow Realm of spirits. If she stands at a Locus, she can even step into an enchanted reflection, using it to pass through the Gauntlet.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Somewhere within several miles – the character doesn't know where – a reflective surface briefly becomes a Locus through which spirits can escape into the physical world. If trying to cross over, she bangs forcefully into a reflective surface that does *not* act as a portal, perhaps dunking herself in a pond or shattering a mirror.

**Failure:** The magic fails to settle, and mirrors remain only mirrors. If attempting to cross over, she feels the reflective surface remain a mere reflective surface in time to stop.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, the Dragon-Blooded may glimpse (and faintly hear) what occurs in the world of spirits when she looks into any reflective surface: a mirror, the chromed hubs of an automobile, a still pond. By using this Charm again while at a Locus, she may climb into any reflective surface of at least Size 3, passing into the Gauntlet and reappearing in the other world two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Dragon-Blooded may allow anyone else she chooses to also glimpse the Shadow in reflections. If crossing over, she does so instantly.

## Stone-Carving Fingers Form

**Resonance:** Earth

The Exalt's fingertips may carve stone and earth as though it were soft, wet clay.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The character may work stone with her bare hands, and gains a +2 equipment bonus to do so. In addition to its obvious use in sculpture, the Exalt may easily burrow through the earth or even solid rock, as well as scale any rocky surface with ease, sinking her fingers in to create deep handholds.

## Strength of Stone Technique

**Resonance:** Earth

The Dragon-Blooded draws power from the Earth itself into her body.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

**Requirement:** The Exalt must be in contact with stone or soil to use this Charm. Traditionally this is accomplished by standing upon the bare Earth or a stone floor, but many Dragon-Blooded carry a small rock in their pocket, or wear a precious stone on a ring in order to use this Charm at any time.



As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Dragon-Blooded may use Excellence to double the higher rather than the lower of her Strength + Stamina Attributes for feats of strength to lift and break objects, so long as she satisfies the Charm's requirements. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, the Exalt may perform one of the following feats:

- Add her Athletics rating as a damage bonus to all Athletics, Brawl, and Weaponry-based attacks made this turn.
- Lift and hurl an object far too unwieldy for an ordinary person to use as a weapon, such as a street lamp, motorcycle, or police officer. Any object she can lift, with Size no greater than her (Strength + Essence), can be used as an improvised melee or throwing weapon. Improvised weapons have a weapon bonus equal to the lower of their Size or Durability. Objects with Size greater than 5 deal lethal damage, while those with Size 10 or more deal aggravated damage.

## Sturdy Bulkhead Concentration

**Resonance:** Water, Wood

Concentrating her Essence into the vessel around her, the Exalt may momentarily render a vehicle impervious to damage.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

In the moment when a vehicle the Exalt is in contact with should take damage, it instead takes no damage at all. If the damage is from a high-velocity impact, this doesn't protect anyone inside the undamaged vehicle from injury due to being brought to a sudden, crashing halt, although it does cause any damage suffered to be reduced by half (round down). Hitting a brick wall at 60 miles per hour is still pretty bad, but not as bad as it is when the engine block folds back into the driver's seat and crushes your legs.

## Sun on Water Deceit

**Resonance:** Water

The Dragon-Blooded projects into the world only those impressions she wishes to, hiding the truth within the depths of her heart.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever the Exalt makes a Composure + Subterfuge roll to conceal her emotions, she enjoys the 8-again benefit, and inflicts a penalty on attempts to discern her motives equal to her Essence rating.

## Swallow Defends the Nest

**Resonance:** Wood

Marking a point with her eyes, the Exalt almost casually fires a shot into her surroundings. There's no whine of bullet on steel, no thunk of arrow meeting wood; the projectile instead vanishes into the complexity of the landscape, waiting. When an enemy crosses the line she marked with her Essence, the shot finally strikes home.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Exalt makes an attack when she uses this Charm. Any attack will do, so long as it's ranged; arrows, bullets, spears, even elemental bolts are all valid candidates for this Charm. This attack constitutes an instant action, but the player doesn't roll any dice yet. The attack then vanishes.

At the time of the Charm's activation, the Exalt mentally defines a point or area in space that she can see. It can be as specific as a doorway, or as broad as an invisible line that must not be crossed. As soon as anyone the Exalt doesn't consider an ally steps into the marked space, they become the subject of the attack, which is now rolled against them (not consuming any further actions from the Exalt). If the Exalt isn't in a heavily wooded setting, or at least one dense with plants (such as a greenhouse or garden), the attack suffers a -3 penalty.

If the Exalt wishes to enhance the attack with any further Charms, she must activate those Charms at the time the shot is fired, rather than when it is rolled.

## Talented Improvisation

**Resonance:** Air, Fire, Wood

So bright is the Exalt's smile, so ringing her laughter, so disarming her mannerisms that she can smoothly recover from any misstep or mistake.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

Should the Dragon-Blooded fail or dramatically fail any Social action, she may spend 1 Mote to attempt to re-roll it once, keeping the better result.

## Ten Thousand Eyes of Heaven

**Resonance:** Water

The Exalt extends her awareness into the water around her, gaining knowledge of the presence and exact position of anyone moving through it.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Exalt is automatically aware of the presence and location of anyone within 50 yards so long as they are moving through water. Generally this Charm is used while it's raining, but it can also be used while diving or to otherwise detect swimming characters, or those walking through puddles and the like. All attempts at stealth or concealment within 50 yards of the Exalt automatically fail if any part of the hiding is in contact with water.

## Thoughts as Ashes Defense

**Resonance:** Fire

The Exalt may protect herself from invasive mind-control, supernatural manipulation of her emotions, or even simply from memories that are too dangerous for *anyone's* good, by burning her own thoughts to naught but ash and cinders.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Instant

Use of this Charm can immediately end any supernaturally-imposed Condition denoting mind control or provocation of emotions. It can also delete a memory from the Exalt's mind completely, beyond all hope of retrieval. Such violent excision is draining and leaves the character disaffected for a time; for the rest of any chapter where this Charm is used, she cannot benefit from the 10-again rule on Empathy rolls or attempts to recall information.

## Thrashing Carp Serenade

**Resonance:** Water

The Dragon-Blooded casts turbulent Essence into the workings of a bureau, organization, or project, damming up its efficient function.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Politics + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The curse of confusion rebounds on the Exalt. She gains the Confused Condition.

**Failure:** The Dragon-Blooded fails to disrupt the targeted project.

**Success:** The character disrupts the operation of an office or project. The target must be of fairly limited scope. She can't curse an entire police department, but she could afflict everyone working on a specific case. She can't throw a wrench into an entire Presidential election campaign, but she could jam up one particular local campaign office. Everyone working on the cursed project suffers the Distracted Condition while attempting to perform the work of the cursed office or project, for one day per success rolled.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the curse being long-lasting, the project's leader gains the Paranoid Condition while working on it.

## Tomb of the Dragon Soul

**Resonance:** Earth

The Exalt hides her thoughts and innermost self behind a stolid curtain of Essence, safe from prying eyes.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Any successful attempt to read the Dragon-Blood's mind or mystically intuit hidden truths about her provokes a Clash of Wills. If she succeeds in the Clash, then she blocks the mind-reading or mystical insight without ever noticing the attempted intrusion.

## Unfeeling Earth Meditation

**Resonance:** Earth

By focusing her spirit and her concentration, the Dragon-Blooded becomes as enduring and eternal as the Earth itself.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene of action, or so long as the Exalt does nothing but meditate

While this Charm is active, the Exalt suffers no penalties due to fatigue, exhaustion, starvation, or dehydration; indeed, she has no need to rest, sleep, eat, or drink, nor to breathe. She doesn't age, either, though this benefit is unlikely to be of any consequence unless used to enable very, very protracted meditation.

## Vengeful Gust Strike

**Resonance:** Air

The Dragon-Blooded unleashes a vicious blast of wind as she strikes an opponent, bearing them to the ground and buffeting them savagely.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

This Charm may be activated upon successfully striking an enemy with a Brawl or Weaponry attack, or a thrown attack using the Charm Wind Weapons. The target automatically suffers the Knocked Down Tilt, and if he has not yet acted, he suffers a penalty equal to the Exalt's Essence on his Dexterity + Athletics roll to avoid the effects of the Tilt.

## Volcanic Fury Rebuke

**Resonance:** Fire

Passion and pain fuse in the white-hot smelter of the Exalt's soul, sending great power roaring through her limbs. There is nothing more dangerous than a wounded dragon.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Exalt no longer suffers from wound penalties. When there is damage marked in any of her three rightmost Health boxes, she gains one dot of Strength, Dexterity, and Stamina, even if this would push her total above her normal Essence rating maximum.

## Whirlwind Shield Form

**Resonance:** Air

The Exalt bends ferocious currents of air to swirl around herself, protecting her from distant attackers.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the character gains a number of points of ballistic armor equal to the higher of her Intelligence or Wits.

## Wind-Carried Words Technique

**Resonance:** Air

The Dragon-Blooded whispers into the wind, and it carries her words to a far-away ear of her choosing.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Composure + Expression + Essence

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character's message is carried to the wrong set of ears.

**Failure:** The Exalt's words are lost on the wind.

**Success:** A character of the Exalt's choosing hears her words as though they had been whispered in his ear. Her target must be within (Essence x 10) miles. By paying 1 Mote, this range can be extended to (Essence x 100) miles.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the wind will carry a response back if one is given.

## Wind-Walking Technique

**Resonance:** Air

The Dragon-Blooded distributes nearly all of her weight to the air around her, becoming effectively weightless and enjoying perfect balance.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is active, the Exalt needs never roll to maintain her balance, no matter how precarious her footing, and becomes near-weightless able to stand or run upon even the weakest or most insubstantial of surfaces, such as falling leaves, individual threads, drops of rain, or even the surface of water. So long as she continues moving to conserve momentum, she may even run up or across walls or ceilings.

## Wind Weapons

**Resonance:** Air

Shaping the air into a compact, deadly tempest and then solidifying it with her Essence, the Dragon-Blooded may conjure simple weapons to hand.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The character may create either a single melee weapon of Size 2 or 3 with no complex parts (so a flail would be fine, a chainsaw or stun gun would not), or else (Essence x 3) throwing weapons of no greater than Size 1. Defense is decreased by -1 against these weapons, which look like little more than blurs in the air.

These weapons persist until the end of the scene, but only the Dragon-Blooded herself can wield them; anyone else who attempts to take up the weapons finds that they dissolve into a bluster of winds and fall to the ground after only a moment, where they re-solidify. They remain tangible for just long enough to, say, draw an air-knife out of a wound.

## Wound-Closing Touch

**Resonance:** Wood

The Dragon-Blooded's ministrations fortify the burgeoning life within her patient, urging his flesh to recover in record time.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Medicine + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Exalt must successfully provide mundane medical aid to the target, then use this Charm.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Dragon-Blood's ministrations spread infectious wood-affected Essence into the patient's wounds, causing tiny rootlets and tendrils to thread themselves throughout the injuries. The patient suffers the Exalt's Essence rating in bashing damage.

**Failure:** The Exalt provides only mundane medical assistance.

**Success:** For each success rolled, the patient immediately reduces one point of lethal damage to bashing, or instantly heals one point of bashing damage. Lethal injuries are always downgraded first until none remain.

**Exceptional Success:** The Exalt either heals a great deal of damage, or else may spend five successes to convert one point of aggravated damage directly to bashing.

## Zephyr Stride

**Resonance:** Air

A potent wind waits to surge at the Exalt's back whenever she needs to put on a burst of speed. In a moment of desperate need, she can even dart from place to place faster than the eye can see, trailing streamers of lightning.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

If the Exalt possesses the Fleet of Foot Merit, double the Speed gained for each dot of that Merit.

By spending 1 Mote, the character may multiply her Speed by 5 for one turn, and also subtract her Athletics rating from all Firearms-based attacks directed at her during that turn. Any delicate electronics on her person suffer 1 point of Structure damage.

## 12-Gauge Fists

**Resonance:** Dawn

Concentrating wave after wave of Essence into her knuckles, the Solar may deliver punches capable of blowing holes through brick walls and doing far worse to living opponents.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Solar's unarmed strikes inflict +3 lethal damage and gain the 9-again quality. The character may activate this Charm as an instant action rather than reflexively by taking a moment to limber up, shake out her fists, or otherwise visibly prepare to start throwing blows. Doing so drops the cost to 0 motes.

## All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar may extend any or all of her senses – sight, hearing, taste, you name it – through the Gauntlet without physically crossing over, spying on the Shadow Realm from the physical realm or vice-versa. If she stands at a Locus, she may, with effort, push herself through the Gauntlet and enter the Shadow directly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's senses become temporarily lost in the Gauntlet, imposing relevant Tilts such as Blinded and Deafened for the rest of the scene. If she was trying to cross over physically, she becomes caught inside of the Gauntlet for anywhere from a few minutes to several days before eventually being pushed back out into the world she tried to leave, several miles away.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to extend her senses across the Gauntlet, or to cross from one world to the other.

**Success:** The Solar extends her senses across the Gauntlet for the rest of the scene, or until she reflexively ends the Charm. She can only have a sense rooted in one world or the other at any given time, so if she stands in the physical world and sees into the Shadow, she is effectively blind to things happening on Earth. If she is attempting to cross over, she does so successfully, vanishing into the Gauntlet and appearing in the other realm two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Solar may cross the Gauntlet instantly, or may pull her senses temporarily back from across the Gauntlet to the world she stands in without ending the Charm.

## All Voices Under Heaven

**Resonance:** Night

Sometimes warnings need to be delivered. Sometimes threats. When the Solar needs to speak with her quarry, she may always do so. The Exalt holds some token representing her target in one hand – a lock of hair, a photograph, a bloody knife – and dials a phone with the other.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Investigation + Essence – Manipulation

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The magic goes awry; the token smolders and burns, becoming useless, and the phone does likewise.

**Failure:** The Solar simply blind-dials a random number.

**Success:** The subject's phone rings. If he doesn't have a phone, someone else's phone nearby rings, drawing the target's attention and giving him an immediate (and correct) impression that the call must be for him. Once either the Solar or the recipient of the call hangs up, the connection is broken and the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The call *will* go through, even if there's no working phone anywhere near the target. A broken phone can receive the call, as can a disconnected one, or even a fake phone that is part of a sculpture. The subject can reach into a painting and speak on a *drawing* of a phone for a few minutes, if need be. If there's not even a depiction of a phone present, the Solar can conduct the conversation through a nearby television set, radio, gramophone, or anything else at least conceptually capable of facilitating communication.

Whatever number the Solar dials won't work if used again without Essence powering the connection (and neither phone will show any record of the call in any case). The Solar may eschew the need of a token to focus the call if the person she's calling has ever inflicted a level of lethal damage upon her, or vice-versa.

## Body-Mending Meditation

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar may heal at an accelerated rate by resting.



**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

So long as the Solar undertakes no strenuous activity, she heals one point of bashing damage per turn, one point of lethal damage per hour, and one point of aggravated damage every six hours.

## Chaos-Repelling Pattern

**Resonance:** Twilight, Zenith

The Solar surrounds herself with an invisible mandala of protective Essence, warding off curses hurled by distant foes.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever anyone tries to target the Solar with a mystic attack from a greater distance than line-of-sight, such as using a lock of her hair to curse her from the other side of a city, their dice pool is reduced to a chance die.

## Craftsman Needs No Tools

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar is a genius with her hands, able to improvise whatever works of craftsmanship she may need in even the most adverse of circumstances. In extreme need, she may even conjure up tools by sculpting them from her anima.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

The Solar never suffers a penalty for attempting to build or repair something without suitable tools. Moreover, when building or repairing something with an extended roll, she cuts the interval between rolls in half. By spending 1 Mote, she may conjure phantom tools from her anima to benefit her for the duration of one roll, granting an equipment bonus equal to her Essence rating, and may cut the interval until the next roll down to 25% of the time it should normally take.

## Cup Boils Over

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar composes a condemnation of purposeless existence, which is so profound that it strikes dead those with no bastion of ego to protect them against the Exalt's words.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Solar fail to achieve a soul-destroying condemnation of her target, but spending so much time in such an intensely negative place with nothing to show for it costs her a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to compose a soul-destroying condemnation.

**Success:** The Solar composes a shattering condemnation of a specific person that she is at least somewhat familiar with. Her condemnation may be either written or verbal. Should the target hear or read this condemnation while they possess 0 Willpower points, it flays their soul loose from their body, inflicting the Soulless Condition. A condemnation composed with this Charm loses its potency after one month, as the events and circumstances of the target's life cause her to no longer perfectly match the Solar's critiques.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Solar's critique is timeless, and never loses its potency.

## Deft Official's Way

**Resonance:** Eclipse

When the Solar engages with bureaucracy or labyrinthine systems such as courts of law, corporate networks, or government offices, red tape parts before her like the Red Sea and she is able to proceed in a mere fraction of the normal time. Moreover, the Solar blends smoothly into any office environment she walks into.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

When undertaking any extended action to push through bureaucratic red tape, the interval of rolls is reduced to one minute, no matter how long it should normally be: the Solar can accelerate her concerns from call-center peon to a direct chat with the CEO in five minutes flat.

Additionally, as long as she doesn't do something outlandish to call attention to herself, when the character is in a bureaucratic environment she can sit in on meetings, walk the halls, lounge around in the break room, chat with workers in the cubicle farm, and otherwise occupy an office space without anyone noticing that she doesn't belong there.

## Demon-Wracking Shout

**Resonance:** Twilight, Zenith

The Solar issues a great and primal cry, ringing forth from the dawn of time in wordless condemnation of all the powers of the night. Any monster that hears it is driven from her presence.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's cry is only the wind from her lungs. Monsters who hear it are emboldened by her impotence, and gain the Inspired Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar's mighty cry shivers the heart of the monster... but fails to shift it from its course.

**Success:** Each monster affected by this Charm gains the Frightened Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and if the monster is a physically corporeal being, it cannot spend Willpower to resist the Frightened Condition. If the monster is a spirit possessing a host in a temporary fashion, it must relinquish its possession to flee all the faster.

### FRIGHTENED

The character is terrified of whoever or whatever caused this Condition, and will do anything in his power to escape from it, even if that means abandoning friends and allies. He won't willingly approach the object of his fear or act against it. If unable to flee, he cowers in terror. He may ignore the effects of this Condition for a turn at the cost of a point of Willpower.

**Possible Sources:** Intimidation, various Charms

**Resolution:** The character escapes from the source of his fear.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Edge of Morning Sunlight

**Resonance:** Dawn, Zenith

The Solar takes a weapon to hand, be it sword or baseball bat or simple tire iron, and lets the ancient and righteous power of the sun flow through it. For a brief moment, it burns with the clear and radiant light of the dawn, and becomes the great bane of all things born of darkness.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

The Solar may enchant a single Weaponry attack she makes such that it acts as a bane to any supernatural being whose nature is intrinsically tied to the concepts of death, darkness, or fear, such as vampires, ghosts, Beasts, the Bound, mummies, Prometheans, werewolves of certain Auspices, and so on. If successful (this Charm must be activated before rolling), the attack inflicts aggravated damage.

## Ever-Ready Innovation Discipline

**Resonance:** Twilight

Working in a frenzy of inspiration, the Solar tears apart two devices to jury-rig a hybrid wonder, granting properties of one to the other, such as a combining a shotgun with a stove to create a shotgun that heats its slugs red-hot as it fires them (somehow without cooking the ammo off prematurely); or combining an umbrella and a rifle into an umbrella that is also a rifle; or combining a car with a pogo stick to make a car that can jump.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Crafts + Essence – Size of final creation

**Action:** Instant (one minute per Size of the larger of the two merged objects)

**Duration:** 1 scene

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar fails to create the hybrid device, and completely destroys all component materials beyond hope of salvage or trying again.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to create the hybrid device, and renders at least one of the objects used to attempt to create it nonfunctional without repairs.

**Success:** For each success rolled, the Solar may grant one property of a device to another one. For example, each success could convey a cement truck's ability to be driven, to dispense cement, or to rotate things inside of it. In the case of combining firearms with other firearms, one weapon characteristic can be swapped out for another (creating a pistol, for example, that uses rifle rounds for ammunition, or a shotgun with the ammo capacity of a Tommy gun).

**Exceptional Success:** The character can combine many qualities at once.

Hybrid items are held together more by magic and frenzied inspiration than any solid scientific principles, and never continue working for very long. At the end of the Charm's duration, the hybrid device suffers catastrophic and permanent breakdown. It definitely loses its extraordinary properties, and *probably* ceases to work as a basic car or gun or whatever it started as, as well.

By paying 2 Motes when activating this Charm, the Solar can grant it a duration of one day, while 3 Motes gives a duration of one week; keeping a hybrid device operating longer than that just isn't possible.

## Essence-Lending Method

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar touches someone else, and grants them a gift: a small portion of her divine Essence.

**Cost:** 1 or more Motes

**Action:** Instant

The Solar may grant one or more of her Motes to someone else. If the recipient is another Exalt, they gain a number of Motes equal to the number of Motes spent, though this can't take them above their maximum Mote capacity. *Motes spent in this fashion don't count toward Anima progression.* If the Solar instead chooses to grant her Motes to the un-Exalted, the effects differ, and all Motes spent *do* count toward Anima manifestation:

**Mortals:** A mortal may only receive one Mote. This infusion generates a sense of well-being and renewal. The mortal gains a point of Willpower.

**Werewolves, Spirits, Ghosts, Angels:** For each Mote the Exalt grants to a being that normally gathers and spends Essence, they gain two points of Essence.

**Vampires:** Being granted a Mote allows a vampire to use the blush of life (see **Vampire: The Requiem**, p. 90) at some point during the same night without spending Vitae. However, accepting the infusion of Solar Essence counts as a breaking point at Humanity 8.

**Mages:** For each Mote the Exalt grants to one of the Awakened, increase the strength of his Immediate Nimbus (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 89) by one the next time it manifests that day.

**Prometheans:** Solar Motes are, it seems, very much akin to the divine fire that serves a Promethean in place of a soul. For each Mote the Exalt bestows, a Promethean gains two points of Pyros.

**Changelings:** The infusion of Solar Essence calms and soothes a tormented soul, and brings the clarity of *what is* to a world fogged in nightmares and memories. Each Mote spent heals one point of mild Clarity damage.

**Sin-Eaters:** Solar Essence interfaces poorly with the ephemeral residue of the dead that powers the Bound. For every *two* Motes given, a Sin-Eater gains one Plasm.

**Demons:** Demons are attuned to a very particular power source, and can only convert the cast-off power of a different sort of divinity to interface with themselves with some difficulty. For every *three* Motes granted, a demon gains one point of Aether.

**Beasts:** Solar Essence offers nothing whatsoever to the Children, and receiving any Motes from a Solar gives a Beast the mild version of the Sick Tilt for a number of days equal to the Motes bestowed.

## Fivefold Bulwark Stance

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar stands alone in a world of monsters, ever-ready for the possibility of violence. Her every instinct and movement guides her through the red chaos of battle without compromising her poise or readiness to continue to defend herself, and by sharpening her senses even further with Essence, she may *see* her enemies' violent intent projected as pulsing crimson veins arcing through the air, betraying the path of claw, blade, and bullet a heartbeat before the attack is launched. It tells her where not to be.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Solar no longer reduces her Defense by 1 for the rest of the turn after applying it to an attack. When Dodging, she is no longer penalized for facing multiple opponents. After spending 1 Mote, the Solar gains the following benefits for the rest of the scene: She may apply her Defense against Firearms-based attacks, and if she spends Willpower to raise her Defense, that increase lasts until the end of the turn rather than only enhancing her efforts against a single attack.

## Foe-Scenting Method

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Twilight

Calling upon the scars left by her encounters with the supernatural world, the Solar attunes herself to the presence of monsters, learning to pick them out of a crowd.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure + Essence – supernatural obscurity trait such as Obfuscate or Cover, if appropriate

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** The Solar must have previously encountered the sort of monster she's attuning her senses to detect.

**Duration:** 1 scene

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only can't tell for certain if there are any monsters present, but that uncertainty preys upon her mind. She gains the Paranoid Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar can't accurately tell if monsters are present or not.

**Success:** The Solar attunes her senses to the subtle signs of a certain kind of monster. She notices the faux-breathing and odd pallor of vampires. She marks the wolfish posture and predatory attitude of werewolves. Her hair prickles in the uncanny presence of a magician.

**Exceptional Success:** This Charm's effects remain active for the rest of the chapter, rather than for one scene.

While Foe-Scenting Method will pick hidden monsters out of a crowd, it has a few restrictions. First, the Solar has to be able to sense the monsters in the first place, so it's of limited use at picking up ghosts if the Exalt isn't able to detect beings in Twilight (although it could still spot someone possessed by a ghost), and it won't reveal a magician if that magician is using her magic to be invisible. Second, the Solar needs to have at least some idea what she's looking for, based on personal experience. At minimum, she needs to have personally encountered the sort of monster she's searching for; she can't scan for vampires based on secondhand accounts. She *can* go on the prowl for something she's encountered without being certain precisely what it *is*, though: "If there's anyone in the room harboring one of those... things... that attacked us at the meat-packing plant, I want to know." Finally, if the Solar has ever suffered a Persistent Condition (or equivalent, such as being made a ghoul) thanks to the sort of monster she's scanning for, or had one of her rightmost Health boxes marked with damage by such a monster, then the cost of this Charm drops to 0 Motes.

## **Ghost-Eating Technique**

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar becomes Apollyon, bringer of final destruction. With nothing more than a glance, ephemeral entities know her to be a force of annihilation, and behave with proper caution.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar automatically removes one additional Door when attempting to intimidate ephemeral beings. When fighting manifested ephemeral beings, the Solar's lethal attacks are not downgraded to mere bashing damage. Finally, when the Solar destroys an ephemeral being, she may choose to attempt its eternal destruction, even if it has Essence remaining and would normally reform somewhere over time (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 129).

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence versus Resistance + Rank

**Action:** Reflexive and Contested

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only fails to destroy the being, but the attempt grants it some influence over her; she gains the Open Condition with regard to that being.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to eradicate the target.

**Success:** The entity's Essence is shredded and consumed in the eternal flame of the Solar's Exaltation. It forever ceases to be.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Solar regains a number of Motes equal to the entity's Rank.

## Glaive of Steel and Gasoline

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

To everyone else, motor vehicles are convenience and conveyance: a way to get around the city, to home and work and school, to visit relatives, to go on vacation. To one of the Chosen facing down eight feet of stinking fur and screaming teeth and angry muscle, a car is a weapon: a one-ton fist made of steel and glass and aluminum driven by slamming pistons and burning petrol. Her anima intertwines itself into the frame to make her one with the vehicle, reinforcing its frame against impact, brushing flying shards of safety glass away from her face and eyes, and preventing the engine block and door frame from collapsing upon her under the force of even the most violent impact.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Duration:** Permanent or Reflexive

The Solar never needs to make a Dexterity + Drive roll to avoid damage to the vehicle during a crash with a light object (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 99), succeeding at such attempts automatically. In crashes against heavy objects, reflexively spending 1 Mote prevents the vehicle from suffering more than a single point of damage in excess of its Durability, no matter how violent the impact.

## Graceful Crane Stance

**Resonance:** Night

The Solar becomes near-weightless, and enjoys perfect balance.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The character needs never roll to maintain her balance, no matter how precarious her footing. By spending 1 Mote, she also becomes near-weightless, and may stand or run upon even the weakest or most insubstantial of surfaces, such as falling leaves, individual threads, drops of rain, or even the surface of water. So long as she continues moving to conserve momentum, she may even run up or across walls or ceilings.

## Guarded Thoughts Meditation

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar's mind is a vault, holding her thoughts within like precious gems.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Any successful attempt to read the Solar's thoughts or memories provokes a Clash of Wills, and the Solar gains the 9-again rule on the Clash of Wills roll. If she succeeds in the Clash, then she blocks the mind-reading attempt, and the Solar becomes aware that someone tried to scan her thoughts, as well as who tried to do it.

## Heavenly Guardian Defense

**Resonance:** Dawn

Though the world is cursed and broken, the Solar can still call forth one moment of perfect defense, whether by interposing a weapon or object between herself and a source of harm, or else fading away from a deadly blow like a shadow at midnight. Whether she parries or dodges, her attempt is guaranteed to triumph.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; may be declared *after* an attack is rolled.

The Solar avoids being struck by one attack altogether; it misses or is blocked. The attack in question be some sort of physical threat, such as a werewolf's claws or a lightning bolt hurled by a mage; Heavenly Guardian Defense can't block a vampire's attempt to make the Solar hallucinate terrifying visions of her dead loved ones. Heavenly Guardian Defense can also be used to avoid harm from momentary environmental threats and hazards such as a collapsing roof beam, but not constant environmental hazards such as a sandstorm or burning building.

## Heaven Thunder Hammer

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar's blows burn with divine power, sending her opponents flying like leaves in a hurricane.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

Whenever the Solar achieves an exceptional success on a Brawl or Weaponry attack, her opponent is automatically smashed away up to 20 yards (the Solar can pull her punches if moving the enemy so away would be disadvantageous) and suffers the Knocked Down Tilt. Alternately, the Solar can reflexively spend 1 Mote upon connecting with a non-exceptional success to manually trigger Heaven Thunder Hammer's effects.

## Heaven-Turning Calculations

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar can compensate for all other deficiencies with her lightning acumen, precise analytical abilities, and canny foresight.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive



Spend 1 Mote to substitute Intelligence + Academics in place of any Attribute + Skill-based dice pool. Alternately, Intelligence may be used to replace any other single Attribute, or Academics in place of any other Skill in a single roll.

## Hungry Tiger Technique

**Resonance:** Dawn

Focusing all of her attention upon her martial skills, the Solar moves with a perfect economy of motion, inflicting maximum possible damage with her each and every attack.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Select one Skill when activating this Charm: Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Weaponry. For the rest of the scene, the Solar gains the 8-again quality on all attacks made using the enhanced Skill.

## Hypnotic Tongue Technique

**Resonance:** Zenith

By using nothing more than a steady patter of dialogue, the Solar can lull someone into a hypnotic trance and then talk them into doing whatever she wishes.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Empathy + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim sees through the Solar's attempt to control his mind, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to hypnotize the target.

**Success:** The Solar beguiles the target and may issue a post-hypnotic suggestion. They gain the Hypnotized Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the hypnotic commands can be delayed such that they don't kick in until a specific trigger is met. The Condition's "countdown" doesn't begin until the trigger condition is met.

### HYPNOTIZED

Your will isn't your own. You've been given a set of instructions of no more than two or three sentences in length, and must carry them out to the best of your abilities. If your task has a natural end ("Follow that man, and call me when you find out where he's going.") then you resolve the Condition when the task ends; otherwise, it ends after (Exalt's Essence rating) days. Once you resolve this Condition, you can't quite remember what you did under its sway.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Take more damage (of any sort) than your Stamina. Experience a breaking point while following the command. Complete the task.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Immortal Armory of the Sun

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

The Solar is never, no matter what, caught unarmed and unready for battle. In times of war, she may trust to her foresight. In moments of desperate ambush, she may trust to her preparedness. And even when lost and far from home, she may trust to serendipity to preserve her legend.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The player nominates one weapon the Solar owns as the subject of this Charm. Wherever the character goes, during the course of any scene, that weapon is always available when the Solar needs it: successfully concealed on her person, taped to the underside of the table she is sitting at, or conveniently leaning against a nearby tree; if no more sensible option presents itself, the Solar may even raise her hands to the sky and find that the weapon drops into her grip out of the wild blue yonder. Moreover, if the weapon uses ammunition, the Solar always has a ready supply on her person or in the immediate environment, and may reflexively reload the weapon in the scant moments when no one is watching her hands closely (crossbows, muskets, and similarly slow-to-reload weapons form an exception; they take only a single turn to reload). The weapon also increases its Durability by 1.

The player may name a new weapon as the subject of this Charm at the beginning of a story, or when the current weapon is destroyed, stolen, or otherwise rendered unavailable or unsuitable for use.

## Immunity to Everything Technique

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar gains the hardiness of the gods of old.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Poison and disease can no longer harm the character in any way whatsoever.

## Instant Treatment Methodology

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar is capable of blindingly swift medical treatment, able to step into a patient's room and provide world-class care while the nurse on duty is visiting the coffee maker, or to move across the aftermath of a gangland shootout, stabilizing everyone in a matter of seconds.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** One extended action

The Solar may reduce the interval of any extended action to provide medical treatment (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 96) to 1 turn.

## Integrity-Protecting Prana

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar fortifies her thoughts with Essence until they become as certain and inexorable as the course of the sun across the sky

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Any successful attempt to magically alter or influence the Solar's thoughts or emotions provokes a Clash of Wills, and the Solar gains the 9-again rule on the Clash of Wills roll. If she succeeds in the Clash, then she blocks the mind-control attempt, and the Solar becomes aware that someone tried to control her mind, as well as who tried to do it.

## Inverted Ego Mask

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar builds up a wall of masks around the innermost truths of her heart, ensuring that none can discover who she really is unless she permits it.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** None or Manipulation + Composure + Essence

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's attempt to bury her innermost self not only fails, but leaves her momentarily doubting her own identity. She loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to convincingly hide her innermost self.

**Success:** Believing she may be scrutinized, the Solar creates a false mask for herself. Any attempt to analyze her motives or personality automatically fail, instead revealing the false identity the Solar has established. This could, for example, reveal a false motive behind the Solar's attempts at interaction, or display her as possessing a false Virtue and Vice.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the next time the character uses Inverted Ego Mask during the current story, she may automatically take a standard success when activating it without needing to roll.

In addition, the Exalt permanently leverages a penalty to all attempts to discern her motives equal to her Essence rating.

## Iron Kettle Body

**Resonance:** Zenith

Infusing her body with her sense of discipline, the Solar treats even grievous injuries as mere nuisances.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Solar downgrades all sources of aggravated damage into lethal damage, and downgrades lethal damage into bashing damage.

## Iron Skin Concentration

**Resonance:** Dawn, Zenith

The Solar fortifies her body with Essence, making her skin as tough as steel.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Solar permanently gains a single point of armor. By spending 1 Mote, she gains her Stamina rating in additional armor.

## Judge's Ear Technique

**Resonance:** Night, Twilight

Woe to those who live by deception, for the Solar easily recognizes their lies. Some distinct sensation alerts the Solar to any attempt to deceive her – a sour taste or smell, perhaps, or a ringing in her ears.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Whenever someone knowingly lies to the Solar, she recognizes the lie immediately for what it is.

## Knowing the Soul's Price

**Resonance:** Eclipse

Everyone, no matter their integrity, no matter their morals, has a price for which they will bend to the Solar's desires. This Charm cuts through to the soul's innermost secrets, revealing that price.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Socialize + Essence vs Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and contested

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only fails to read the target's innermost desires properly, she disastrously misreads in such a way that if she attempts to act on her conclusions, she'll reduce the target's impression of her by at least one step.

**Failure:** The Solar comes up blank.

**Success:** After chatting with the subject for a few minutes and drawing them out enough to get a sense of their innermost desires, the Solar learns what would most effectively act as soft leverage (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 82) upon the target.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Solar also learns one of the target's Aspirations.

## Lightning Speed

**Resonance:** Night

The Solar moves with the speed of darting sunbeams, able to flash from place to place almost faster than the eye can follow.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

The character's Speed calculation becomes Strength + Dexterity + Essence + 5. If she possesses the Fleet of Foot Merit, double the Speed gained for each dot of that Merit.

By spending 1 Mote, the character may multiply her Speed by 10 for one turn, and also subtract twice her Essence rating from all Firearms-based attacks directed at her during that turn. The Solar blurs from place to place in a sizzling golden flash, often leaving flickering specks of Essence crackling in the air in her wake.

## Listener-Swaying Argument

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Zenith

The Solar's words burn with conviction, striking through the cynicism and doubt of any who listen.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Solar gains the 8 again rule on all social actions.

## Mastery of Small Manners

**Resonance:** Eclipse

An instinctive facility for etiquette and social currents ensures that the Solar never commits *faux pas* or social gaffes when dealing with strangers, and makes a good impression on everyone she meets.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is in effect, a Solar who simply walks up and says hello to a stranger starts off with an Excellent first impression (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 81-82) rather than an Average one. This makes pushing things all the way up to a Perfect impression fairly easy, rather than a costly matter of bribes and pandered Vices. It's still possible for a Solar to make a worse-than-Excellent first impression, or even a Hostile impression if she first encounters another character under truly unfortunate circumstances, such as being discovered standing over the corpse of someone's husband with a bloody knife. This Charm has no power to influence the Solar's standing with someone she already knows; it only gets things off on the right foot with new acquaintances.

## Memory-Reweaving Discipline

**Resonance:** Zenith

Focusing her will and her words, the Solar may rewrite the memories of another. Her target becomes lost in a recitation of events that never were, and forgets things as they truly happened.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Persuasion + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Solar fail to rewrite the target's memories, she loses herself in her Essence-laden narrative, and briefly has difficulty discerning truth from fantasy. She gains the Confused Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to alter the target's memories.

**Success:** The Solar can rewrite either the events of one crucially important event within the target's memories (such as his discovery earlier tonight that vampires are real), or the general narrative of up to two weeks of the target's life (making him forget that he got a speeding ticket and had a fight with his parents over it, instead papering the event over with memories of several uneventful days), so long as the alterations don't rewrite any events the target would consider critical to the current course of his life or identity (like discovering that his boyfriend is cheating on him). He gains the False Memories Persistent Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** Major swathes of the subject's life can be rewritten (such as who he's married to, where he went to school, or whether the Solar is a hated enemy or childhood friend). He gains the False Memories Persistent Condition.

### FALSE MEMORIES (PERSISTENT)

The way you remember things doesn't match up with how they happened. You might remember passing out drunk on the night when a vampire attacked you stone cold sober, or staying home sick and watching television rather than witnessing a vagrant strangle a werewolf to death in the parking lot in front of your office. While conclusive proof might lead you to doubt the veracity of your memories, anything less is going to have a hell of a time getting through to you. Being faced with proof

that your memories are false is a breaking point if you use Integrity, or a breaking point towards Humanity if you are Exalted.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Face proof that your memory is false and succeed at the breaking point.

**Beat:** You trust someone or take a risky action based on your false memories.

## Ox-Body Technique

**Resonance:** Dawn, Zenith

The Solar's body is fortified with divine power, enabling her to survive grievous injuries. Attacks that should have mortally wounded her instead show up as mere flesh wounds, allowing her to keep fighting long after absorbing an amount of punishment that should have long ago felled any lesser being.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + (Essence rating x 3).

## Phantom Steed

**Resonance:** Twilight, Night, Eclipse

Reaching deep within herself, the Solar finds a conveyance that expresses her innermost self. Pressing her will into her anima, she shapes this conveyance out of her Essence. In centuries past, this Charm summoned golden stallions and aura-wrought chariots to carry the Chosen into battle or to speed them to their destination, but in the current nights, it tends to produce cars and motorcycles.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Until the Exalt leaves the conveyance for a full minute

The Solar manifests a conveyance around herself. Example vehicles can be found on page 98 of the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook. In the first moments of its manifestation, the vehicle is clearly sculpted from transparent golden anima, but over a span of a few seconds it flushes with color and substance until it is indistinguishable from a normal horse, car, or whatever else. When the Solar's anima flares at the shining or above level, the conveyance's true nature may begin to shine through (golden contrails of Essence streaming out behind the wheels, or the headlights blazing with sunlight, for example).

Because the vehicle is an expression of the character's personality and spirit, this Charm tends to manifest the same vehicle every time; as a result, it can't be used to produce a sports car in one session, and then a motorboat in the next, even if a motorboat would be really useful at that moment. At the Storyteller's discretion, major upheavals in the character's life and psyche may justify changing the vehicle this Charm summons.

## Reed in the Wind

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

The Solar steps into violence as though it were music, matching herself to its beats and rhythms. She dances a ballet of bullets and passes through unharmed.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or Essence + 1 turns

The Solar may permanently apply the *lower* of her Defense or Essence rating against Firearms-based attacks. Upon spending 1 Mote, the Solar doubles her Defense (before other modifiers) for the next Essence + 1 turns.

## Sagacious Reading of Intent

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar's keen insight cuts through all attempts at dissembling, allowing her to easily decipher the intentions of another within a social encounter. She can also use this Charm to interrogate the agenda present in a text.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Socialize + Essence – Composure

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The player asks a question as though she had rolled a success; the Storyteller gives misleading information.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to unearth the target's true intentions.

**Success:** The player can ask the Storyteller one question, which the Storyteller must answer, granting the character an insight into the individual she is scrutinizing.

**Exceptional Success:** The player can ask two questions.

Valid questions include:

- What is the subject's goal (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 81) in this encounter?
- What is this person's current mood?
- What is this person's Vice (or similar trait, such as Requiem or Torment)?
- Are they acting under duress?

## Sensory Acuity Prana

**Resonance:** Night

By focusing Essence into her awareness of the world, the Solar's senses become impossibly, superhumanly sharp. She can hear a person's heartbeat from rooms away, read a sheet of paper by letting her fingers trail across the ink on it, and count the hairs on a fly's legs from across a room.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive



**Duration:** 1 scene

The Solar gains the 8-again quality on Perception rolls. As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Solar may use Excellence to double her Wits + Composure pool for Perception rolls, rather than adding the lower of the two Attributes.

## Seven Omens Shot

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

The Solar's keen eye and steady hand act as infallible channels for her killing intent, allowing her to draw a bead and fire as though hand and eye and gun were all placed upon the Earth in anticipation of that single moment.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

The Solar accumulates three bonus dice in a single turn by taking an aim action (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 90) rather than the usual one die per turn. By paying 1 Mote, she may take an aim action reflexively in the moment before firing.

## Seven Shadow Evasion

**Resonance:** Night

Wherever her enemies strike, the Solar is not there, though she seemed to be but a moment before. Wrapping herself in a fleeting moment of grace and serendipity, the Solar deftly avoids all but the most skillful or lucky of blows for a few blessed moments.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

For the rest of the turn, all attacks launched against the Solar roll a chance die to hit, no matter what dice pool or modifiers they should otherwise enjoy.

## Soaring Crane Leap

**Resonance:** Night

Essence surges through the Solar's legs, propelling her effortlessly through the air.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar may automatically succeed at any standard jumping attempt (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 71-72), such as to hop a picket fence or leap between the roof of two buildings with only a narrow gap between them, gaining an exceptional success without needing to roll. If she attempts a much more ambitious, superhuman jump – say, to hop from the ground to the top of an 18-wheeler, or to leap from rooftop to rooftop *across a street* – then she may make a jumping roll which carries her (successes) x (Essence + 2) yards.

## Spirit-Detecting Glance

**Resonance:** Twilight

With but a quick glance, the Solar may detect the presence of ephemeral beings, and, should it prove needful, rend them asunder.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

With but a moment's concentration and an instant action, the Solar can attune her senses to detect the presence of beings in Twilight for the rest of the scene. She can either search for a particular sort of being (such as ghosts, ignoring the presence of spirits and angels), or unveil *all* ephemeral entities. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, she can also dial herself into the same spiritual frequency occupied by ghosts, spirits, angels, or some other variety of ephemeral entity for the rest of the scene, allowing her to interact with them as though they were physically present, including harming them. Of course, this is a two-way street, and the ephemeral being can hit back.

## Strange Tongue Understanding

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar is a master of tongues, able to understand and be understood despite any language barrier.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Solar can understand any earthly language after a few minutes of exposure to it, and make herself understood after a few minutes more; she suffers a -2 equipment penalty to all Social actions using the tongue due to her halting and uncertain grasp of the language. Spending 1 Mote grants instant fluency for the rest of the scene, and makes the character sound like a native speaker.

## Subtle Speech Method

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar becomes a master of hidden meaning, coding messages inside messages that only reveal themselves to those she wishes.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

Spend 1 Mote while speaking or composing a written work to embed a second, hidden message inside the statement or writing. This hidden message can only be discerned by those the Solar intends to address it to.

## Surprise Anticipation Method

**Resonance:** Night

A sixth sense warns the Solar of impending danger, making her impossible to take unaware.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is active, the Solar is scanning for threats with both her mundane and divine senses. When she is in immediate danger, she experiences a unique sensation – perhaps she hears the tolling of a bell, or feels a rush of nonexistent wind from the direction of danger – and sees the threat briefly outlined in golden light. She automatically succeeds at all rolls to notice an ambush or sneak attack. This Charm may be reflexively activated in response to a surprise attack rather than in anticipation of one, but doing so adds 1 Willpower to its activation cost.

If the Solar possesses the Danger Sense (••) Merit, this Charm is always active at no cost.

## Ten-Ox Meditation

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night, Zenith

Essence burns and surges in the Solar's muscles, granting strength beyond strength.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Solar may use Excellence to double her Strength + Stamina pool for feats of strength to lift and break objects, rather than adding the lower of the two Attributes. The Solar permanently adds a bonus to all Strength rolls equal to her Essence or her highest Caste Skill, whichever is lower.

By reflexively spending 1 Mote, the Solar may perform one of the following feats:

- Add her Strength rating as a damage bonus to all Athletics, Brawl, and Weaponry-based attacks made this turn.
- Lift and hurl an object far too unwieldy for an ordinary person to use as a weapon, such as a street lamp, motorcycle, or police officer. Any object she can lift, with Size no greater than her (Strength + Essence), can be used as an improvised melee or throwing weapon. Improvised weapons have a weapon bonus equal to the lower of their Size or Durability. Objects with Size greater than 5 deal lethal damage, while those with Size 10 or more deal aggravated damage.

## Terrible Sun-King Condemnation

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar castigates her enemy as a foe of the living and villain in the eyes of all upright creatures. The weight of her disdain crushes him and marks him as outcast from the light; his wretched nature becomes clear to all he meets.

**Cost:** 1 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's condemnation falters, her own words ringing weak and hollow in her ears. She loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The target bears up under the Solar's ire, and her condemnation fails to find purchase.

**Success:** The Solar condemns her target, casting the shadow of divine disfavor upon him. He gains the Wretched Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the weight of the universe's disapproval crushes the target's will, causing him to lose a point of Willpower.

#### WRETCHED

The very universe itself is repelled by the fact that you occupy it. You know this, and so does everyone you meet. Strangers who catch sight of you whisper to one another, speculating about the ghastly social diseases you likely carry, or your doubtless appalling sexual proclivities. The 10-again rule no longer applies to any Social action you take.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Regain Willpower through your Virtue (or equivalent trait), affirming your self-worth. Otherwise, this Condition expires after the Exalt's (Essence rating) days.

**Beat:** n/a.

### Thunderclap Rush Attack

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar's Essence rises in reaction to killing intent projected against it, giving her the edge on her foes.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

The Solar permanently adds her Essence rating to her Initiative modifier. If she spends 1 Mote, she can act first in the current turn regardless of her Initiative rating.

### Vanishing From Mind's Eye Method

**Resonance:** Night

The Solar stills her Essence, becoming one with the many anonymous shadows of the world. She can become just another face in the crowd with next to no effort; or by sinking into the quiescent depths of her Essence, can fade from notice altogether.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

By ducking into a patch of shadows or an obscure corner for a moment, the Solar may shroud herself in anonymity. Nobody who isn't specifically on the lookout for her can notice her; she just seems to be a faceless member of the teeming crowds in an urban environment, or one

shadow among many in a rural setting. So long as she doesn't engage in some violent or alarming direct action to draw attention to herself – screaming, firing a gun, smashing a window – people will continue to ignore even things like taking out and assembling a high-powered rifle while sitting on a bus stop bench, or loading a bloody corpse into the trunk of her car. It just doesn't occur to them to care; the Solar sinks into the background noise of the environment. Interacting with someone directly (such as by speaking to them) voids this anonymity. If she does something disruptive, or if someone who *can* see her tries to call attention to her, bystanders must make a Wits + Composure roll (penalized by her Essence) to notice her.

By spending 1 Mote, the Solar becomes genuinely impossible to notice, even to electronic devices such as video cameras and motion sensors. She's effectively invisible. Even if she does something that leaves blatant evidence of her presence, such as kicking down a door, it still requires a Wits + Composure roll (again penalized by her Essence) to notice her, and those who *do* notice her will forget she is present after a number of turns equal to their Composure unless they spend a point of Willpower. If she attacks someone, the victim automatically becomes aware of her presence and remains aware so long as her violence persists (but this *only* applies to the victim; everyone else must roll as normal).

## Venomous Rumors Technique

**Resonance:** Eclipse

Insinuating a thread of her Essence into ill-intended gossip, the Solar assures that her poison reaches every ear that might matter.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Subterfuge + Essence – Composure

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Solar fail to smear her target's reputation, but her transparent attempts to do so leave others suspicious of her, inflicting a -1 penalty on all social actions against anyone in the target's social group for the rest of the current story.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to establish negative rumors about the target.

**Success:** While this Charm can't ensure that everyone *believes* whatever terrible rumor the Solar wishes to spread, success does guarantee that within a day or two, everyone who matters has at least *heard* it. The target gains the Slandered Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the results of success, the target suffers catastrophic damage to his ability to leverage his social assets. Until he resolves the Slandered Condition, the target loses access to a Merit of the Solar's choice. This can only disable social Merits like Fixer, Barfly, or Fame, not Merits that describe intrinsic qualities like Iron Will or Closed Book.

### SLANDERED

Your reputation has been trashed, either because of something you did or because of something people *think* you maybe did. Until you can convince everyone that you didn't do whatever the rumor mill says you did, or at least lay low long enough

for everyone to move on to the next thing, you add three extra doors to all social maneuvering against everyone who has heard about you.

**Possible Sources:** Scandalous behavior, pissing off the wrong vampire, various Charms

**Resolution:** Clear your name, or weather the storm until the end of the current story.

**Beat:** n/a

## Whirling Brush Method

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Twilight

Words pour through the Solar's mind like a rushing river, leaving wisdom behind in their wake without consuming her precious time.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Solar may read and absorb information as fast as she can track her eyes across the page or screen. Books can be consumed in moments, online databases memorized as quickly as the data can be loaded and scrolled across the screen. Moreover, she can copy text by hand at lightning speed, transcribing an entire book in minutes, up to and including any diagrams or illustrations.

## Whispered Prayer of Judgment

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar whispers the shortest and most heartfelt of prayers to the bullet as it rests in the chamber, soaking up her killing intent. It might be a litany of the names of her dead children; it might be nothing more than "Die, you fucking monster." Whatever the words are, they imprint deadly and explosive Essence upon quiescent lead. The shot leaves the barrel with the roar of thunder, and strikes with the fury of Heaven.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; can only be used to enhance a Firearms attack after the Solar has accumulated a +3 aiming bonus

A Firearms attack enhanced by this Charm doubles the gun's damage bonus, and automatically inflicts the Stunned Tilt.

## Wholeness-Restoring Meditation

**Resonance:** Twilight, Zenith

Such is the Solar's genius that her medical care can cure the incurable, or mend permanent maiming or ailments.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** Solar must roll an exceptional success while attempting to treat a normally-untreatable medical condition, then use this Charm.

Bringing together surgical genius (or holistic medical insights) and the power of her Essence, the Solar may repair normally incurable or permanent medical conditions. This Charm can cure diseases such as untreatable cancers or HIV, render supernatural insidious supernatural diseases vulnerable to purification (see p. XX), and undo permanent Conditions such as blindness, or ongoing Tilts like Arm Wrack due to complete loss of the limb by grafting on a replacement that functions as well as the original.

## Wound-Mending Care Technique

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Twilight

The Solar's ministrations grant health and hardiness with a speed and efficiency unknown to modern medicine.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Medicine + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** Solar must successfully provide mundane medical aid to the target, then use this Charm.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's ministrations have no more beneficial effects than those of any other physician. She gains the Doubting Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar provides only mundane medical assistance.

**Success:** For each success rolled, the patient immediately reduces one point of lethal damage to bashing, or instantly heals one point of bashing damage. Lethal injuries are always downgraded first until none remain.

**Exceptional Success:** The Exalt either heals a great deal of damage, or else may spend five successes to convert one point of aggravated damage directly to bashing.

## Terrestrial Burns

Dragon-Blooded Essence is the primal Essence of the Earth itself, its fundamental elements. As such, it's more difficult for the Terrestrial Exalted to create a Burn, in comparison to their Celestial counterparts, but no more pleasant to endure once a Burn finally forms. Dragon-Blooded Burns represent a drastic imbalance of natural elements, rather than a suffusion of divine power that warps the fabric of the world, and as such, come in five distinct varieties, depending on the Aspect of the Exalt who created them.

Air Aspected Burns are places of creeping cold and freezing gusts of powerful wind. An Air Aspected Burn develops the Extreme Cold Environmental Tilt; those within the Burn find themselves shivering and afflicted with chattering teeth even if the sun is shining bright and hot overhead, and must bundle up as though for arctic survival if they're to remain for any great length of time; or else huddle against fireplaces, open ovens, or space heaters. Larger Burns

suffer bouts of the Heavy Winds Environmental Tilt as well, even those that are completely indoors.

Everything in an Earth Aspected Burn seems to move at a crawl. Urgency no longer exists, as everything trends toward geological time. Once characters or objects come to rest, it seems best to let them stay there; stirring into motion takes a great deal of effort. Everyone within the Burn suffers the Somnolent Persistent Condition so long as they remain within its confines.

Fire Aspected Burns become sweltering hot-boxes, soaring up to Death Valley temperatures regardless of the season or the most ferocious efforts of modern air conditioning. They are afflicted by the Extreme Heat Environmental Tilt. Fires catch and spread easily within a Fire Aspected Burn, necessitating extreme caution that the Burn's inhabitants may not realize they need to exhibit.

Everything in a Water Aspected Burn is constantly wet – even if the Burn is in the middle of the desert. The humidity skyrockets. Everything's damp from condensation, all the time. Pipes leak, even if they're not connected to anything. Ceilings leak too, even when it's not raining, even if they're in the middle of an office tower and far from any sort of water line. Damp and mildew creep in not long after. Sooner or later someone turns on a faucet or sink, and they can't turn it off again. Disconnecting it doesn't help; the water doesn't seem to need to come from anywhere. If the Burn is outdoors, it starts raining and doesn't stop. It occasionally does that indoors, too, if the Burn's in a large open space like a warehouse. Eventually, the Flooded Tilt manifests, as a foot or two of water builds up.

Nature quickly reclaims a Wood Aspected Burn... even if it's a third-floor apartment in the middle of Chicago. Asphalt and carpet split to send up tender shoots and weeds when nobody's looking. Vines crawl up behind wallpaper. The effect intensifies over time: one morning, a coatrack sprouts flowers or fruit. There are birds nesting in one of the cabinets, which don't seem to have arrived from anywhere. Ants and other insects appear. If the Burn is situated in the wilderness, nature goes berserk. The Burn becomes massively, wildly overgrown. Animals flock to the area, and become highly aggressive. They hunt, kill, breed, and reproduce at an astonishing rate. Anyone who remains still in a wilderness Wood Burn for very long – say, anyone who falls asleep – risks waking up immobilized by creeping vines and swarming with hungry insects.

Elemental and nature spirits flock to Terrestrial Burns, both to feast on the bounty of resonant Essence, and because the Gauntlet thins by -1, allowing for easier access to the world of flesh. In a few cases, such Burns even become temporary Loci.

#### **SOMNOLENT (PERSISTENT)**

All you want to do is lay down and rest. You cannot spend Willpower. For every six hours you remain awake without laying down and sleeping, you suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to all actions. At every six-hour interval, make a Stamina + Resolve roll to avoid putting down what you're doing and sitting or laying down until sleep claims you.

**Possible Sources:** Earth Aspected Burns

**Resolution:** Leave the Burn. Sleeping merely resets the penalty, rather than dispelling the Condition, as it would in the case of ordinary extreme exhaustion.



**Beat:** When you fail an important roll due to mounting exhaustion, or fall asleep and sleep through some important event.

## Terrestrial Searing

When a Terrestrial Burn is Seared away, it pulses into an intense, destructive flash of unleashed elemental Essence. This may take the form of a literal firestorm, or a great pulse of emerald light that leaves cracked pavement and split wallpaper in its wake, as new plant growth erupts from every surface in defiance of logic or possibility. Every surface within the Burn suffers one point of Structure damage. Fire-aspected Sears almost always leave the area of the Burn aflame. Living creatures are at even greater risk than inanimate objects; they must all roll to resist the shockwave of invasive Essence.

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character suffers seven points of lethal damage and is Scoured.

**Failure:** The character suffers three points of lethal damage. If they possess an Integrity trait rated at 4 or lower, they undergo Divergence and become a Coactive Deviant (see **Deviant: The Renegades**).

**Success:** The character suffers a point of lethal damage.

**Exceptional Success:** The character weathers the storm of elemental power unharmed.

## Scoured

When an individual is Scoured, the flash-burn of Essence leaves an elemental imprint of their soul in Twilight, like a nuclear shadow. This supernatural scar can occur even if the one being Scoured survives the terrible damage inflicted on her body by the Sear.

Scoured have the memories, personality, and passions of the individual whose soul they were imprinted from. They are almost identical to ghosts (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 122) in most respects, with two exceptions. First, the site of the Burn where they were created is always their anchor (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 133). Second, rather than having Influence over their anchors (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 130), Scoured have Influence over the element of the Sear that created them.

A newly-created Scoured always possesses a Rank equal to half the Essence rating of the Exalt whose Burn created it, rounded up.

## Kyle Finger

*“How can I be me again?”*

At first, Kyle thought he died in the fire that ripped through his apartment building. He woke up in a ghostly realm of smoke and charred wallpaper, floated morosely among the firefighters and arson investigators. Then, a few days later, he got a *real* surprise when he watched himself, arms and face patched with bandages but very much alive, come to the charred apartment to collect those possessions that made it through the blaze intact.

Kyle wasn't able to follow himself very far out of the apartment building – he grew terribly weak in the attempt – but he's thought about nothing else since. Kyle sits among the ashes and ephemera of ongoing renovations, eyes drawn to the bright hot sparks of welding torches, the flare of lighters. Soon he'll find a way to ride one of those flames off-site for a while. One of the workers is a heavy smoker; perhaps Kyle can find a way to influence him. Then he'll find his truant body, and... well, Kyle's still not quite sure what, then. He wants, very badly, to be whole again. If he can't accomplish that by crawling back inside of his wayward skin, perhaps there can be a reconciliation in flame and ash.

## KYLE FINGER

Those who can see ephemeral beings will discover that Kyle looks much like his living self, save that he's constantly wreathed in smoke, and his eyes are two glowing embers.

**Virtue:** Hope

**Vice:** Selfishness

**Integrity:** 6

**Anchors:** An apartment building being renovated after a fire

**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 4, Finesse 6, Resistance 4

**Influence:** Fire

**Corpus:** 9

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 15

**Defense:** 4

**Initiative:** 10

**Armor:** None

**Numina:** Firestarter, Hallucination, Implant Mission

**Manifestation:** Materialize, Twilight Form

**Max Essence:** 15

**Ban:** Kyle cannot focus on anything else in the presence of his living self.

**Bane:** Emergency fire system sprinklers.

## Playing Dragon-Touched

Dragon-Touched characters are members of a Tier 3 conspiracy under **Hunter: The Vigil Second Edition** rules. To make a Dragon-Touched character, follow normal character generation rules found in that book, using the following material to represent the conspiracy.

## Status

Status among the Dragon-Touched absolutely requires a provable connection to the ancient bloodline. While that gets you in the door, advancement is based less on accomplishment in the hunt—that provides its own rewards—and more on an individual’s willingness and readiness to use their resources to collate information, distribute resources, and otherwise help organize and assist other members of the extended family in their quests for Exaltation.

- You’re known to be descended from the proper bloodlines, and have evidenced some hint of elemental potency. Your family has schooled you in either the lore of the unnatural, or else in archaic combat techniques. Choose a free Skill Specialty in Occult or Weaponry.
- You’ve built an extensive network of favors and good regard within the family, and can call on other cells for help. Gain two dots in Allies (the Dragon-Touched) who will cross state lines to give you a hand, at need.
- You’ve attracted the direct patronage of one of the Dragon-Blooded, who acts as a four-dot Mentor.

## Exaltation

There are two methods by which you can handle the matter of Dragon-Touched striving toward Exaltation. The first is very simple: it happens when the Storyteller and the player agree it should happen. The process of absorbing the dread potency of monsters is a long and unpredictable one, and it never seems to kindle in many of the Dragon-Touched, while others grasp their goal after a paltry few years.

The second option serves those desiring a more mechanical, objective method. Under this system, Dragon-Touched have a modifier called Essence Catalyst, which begins play at -5. Essence Catalyst is modified over the course of the hunt, as the character destroys monsters. She doesn’t need to be the one who lands the killing blow, but she does need to be present for the kill and to have contributed meaningfully to its demise. That’s “contributed” in the sense of “shot bullets at it,” incidentally, not “researched the location of its lair and figured out its weaknesses, then stayed in the van while everyone else fought it.” Absorbing the dread power of slain monsters requires getting your hands dirty.

- Whenever the character destroys a significant supernatural being, she increases her Essence Catalyst modifier by +1. “Significant” means “capable of significant action, or posing some meaningful danger to people.” Stepping on some kind of weird screaming bug in a sorcerer’s lair doesn’t cut it, but destroying even a rank 1 ghost would count. Destroy also means *destroy*, not merely defeat or banish or seal into an urn or gently convince to move on to the afterlife.
- Whenever the character destroys a fearsomely potent supernatural being – something with a power trait or rank of 4+ – she increases her Essence Catalyst modifier by +2.
- Whenever the character destroys one of the Anathema, she increases her Essence Catalyst modifier by 1 + its Rank.

At any point immediately after destroying a monster, the player may choose to trigger an Exaltation roll. Here's how that works:

An Exaltation roll can be attempted, at most, once per story. Attempting it is a choice made by the player, not the character, who has no control over the process of Exalting or not Exalting. The roll cannot be modified by outside forces in any way. You can't spend Willpower on it, enhance it with magic, or hamper it with wound or environmental penalties. It runs on Essence Catalyst and Essence Catalyst alone.

**Dice Pool:** 0 dice + Essence Catalyst modifier

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** You're not allowed to make an Exaltation roll unless your Essence Catalyst modifier is at least +1, or to willingly convert a failure into a dramatic failure, so dramatic failures are impossible.

**Failure:** The character doesn't Exalt, and her Essence Catalyst modifier drops by -10.

**Success:** The character doesn't Exalt, and her Essence Catalyst modifier drops by -5.

**Exceptional Success:** The character experiences Terrestrial Exaltation.

One further factor influences the roll: if it is triggered immediately after destroying one of the Anathema, *or* a monster with a supernatural power trait rated 5 or higher, the roll gains the 9-again rule.

## Elemental Manipulation

Those with the nascent blood of the Terrestrial Exalted running through their veins may manifest a series of Endowments allowing them to stir and influence one of the five elements: Air, earth, fire, water, or wood. These are purchased like any other Endowments. If a Dragon-Touched achieves Exaltation, she loses all of her Elemental Manipulation Endowments, and is refunded their cost in much the same fashion as the sanctity-of-Merits rebate.

### Elemental Aspect

Every Dragon-Touched is aligned with a single one of the five elements, which must be chosen during character creation. They can manipulate this element with their Endowments, and no other. If they later Exalt, this will be their elemental Aspect.

### Ash and Rain Prayer

The Dragon-Touched concentrates, bringing the unseen world into resonance with her Aspect element.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Composure

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character fails to bend the elements to her will, and the effort inflicts one level of lethal damage.

**Failure:** The character fails to make the elements resonate with her.

**Success:** The character creates an appropriate elemental resonance within 30 yards of the point where she used this power.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but with a radius of 60 feet.

Beings in Twilight are revealed to anyone in the resonant area when they come in contact with the Dragon-Touched character's aspect element. Ghosts become imprints in fog, mist, or smoke; or create footprints in soil; or siphon flames into themselves to make a man-outline; or displace rain; or gently stir the limbs and leaves of plants as they pass through.

### Conjure the (Element)

By focusing all of her will, the Dragon-Touched may create a tiny manifestation of her Aspect element somewhere within arm's reach: a cup's worth of water, a small flame, a simple stone, a puff of fresh air, or a fresh green shoot.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower, 1 level of lethal damage

**Action:** Instant

The elemental manifestation appears in an unoccupied space within one yard of the character, and is of Size 1.

### Elemental Armor

Harnessing her will, the Dragon-Touched may protect herself from harm from her native element.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** A number of minutes equal to the character's Stamina

The character gains 1/1 armor against damage from her Aspect element.

- **Air:** The character gains protection from wind-blown debris, air-based supernatural attacks, and lightning and other forms of electricity.
- **Earth:** The character gains protection from any damage inflicted by stone or metal.
- **Fire:** The character gains protection from heat and fire.
- **Water:** The character gains protection from supernatural attacks based on water, from damage inflicted by ice, and may hold her breath for the duration of this power.
- **Wood:** The character gains protection against all damage from plants and from anything made of wood.

### Feed the (Element)

By concentrating upon a discrete example of her Aspect element—a particular stone, flame, cloud of smoke—the Dragon-Touched may cause it to expand and become stronger.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character fails to manipulate the elements, and the effort inflicts one level of lethal damage.

**Failure:** The character fails to manipulate the elements.

**Success:** The character increases the elemental manifestation's Size *or* Structure by 1 per success.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the character regains one point of Willpower.

### Ghost-Beating Stick

The Dragon-Touched may briefly empower a weapon that resonates with her Aspect element with the ability to strike beings in Twilight.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Stamina

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** A number of turns equal to the successes rolled

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character fails to weaponize the elements, and the effort inflicts one level of lethal damage.

**Failure:** The Willpower cost is wasted to no effect.

**Success:** The character may strike beings in Twilight with any weapon that resonates with her Aspect for a number of turns equal to the successes she rolled.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and anyone within 10 yards may also strike beings in Twilight with weapons that resonate with the Dragon-Touched character's Aspect.

Below are examples of weapons that resonate with various elements:

- **Air:** Any thrown weapon, any weapon made of ice, ice-climbing gear.
- **Earth:** Any weapon made of or significantly comprised of stone or metal.
- **Fire:** Anything that is on fire, any firearm.
- **Water:** Anything that inflicts damage with joints or sinuous movement, such as a whip or chain.
- **Wood:** Any weapon made of wood, any bow.

### Heart of the (Element)

The character reaches into the depths of her soul's potential, briefly unlocking a shadow of what she could one day be.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the character selects one Skill from the list corresponding to her Aspect, and treats it as an Aspect Skill.

- **Air:** Academics, Athletics, Occult, Politics, Stealth
- **Earth:** Brawl, Computer, Crafts, Intimidation, Science
- **Fire:** Athletics, Drive, Expression, Socialize, Weaponry
- **Water:** Brawl, Investigation, Larceny, Streetwise, Subterfuge
- **Wood:** Animal Ken, Firearms, Medicine, Persuasion, Survival

### Starve the (Element)

By concentrating upon a discrete example of her Aspect element—an individual plant, body of water, or piece of statuary—the Dragon-Touched may cause it to shrink and erode.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Presence

**Action:** Instant

#### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character fails to manipulate the elements, and the effort inflicts one level of lethal damage.

**Failure:** The character fails to manipulate the elements.

**Success:** The character decreases the elemental manifestation's Size *or* Structure by 1 per success. If reduced to 0 Size it ceases to exist; if reduced to 0 Structure, it crumbles.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the character regains one point of Willpower.

# Chapter Five: The Solar Exalted

Glorious, mighty, and deeply scarred by the supernatural world, the Solars are possibly the most powerful of all Chosen – not always a good thing in a fragile world of mortals. This chapter features all the rules necessary to play one of the Solar Exalted (or to use them as antagonists, for that matter). Further information on the Solar Exalted can be found in Chapter One.

## Character Creation

Solars follow all the standard steps outlined in Chapter Two. In the fifth step they add the Solar template.

## Add Solar Template

To transform a mere mortal into one of the Solar Exalted, perform the following operations:

### Choose Caste

Begin by choosing your Solar's Caste from among Dawn, Zenith, Twilight, Night, or Eclipse. These are outlined in greater detail in Chapter One. Your choice of Caste will determine your Bonus Attributes, Caste Skills, Caste Charms, and Divine Gift.

### Bonus Attributes

A Solar's Exaltation has passed through a long lineage of countless heroes, and it carries with it traces of their ancient might, bestowing this power on the new Exalt. Select two Attributes from the three listed for your character's Caste. Add a dot to each of the two chosen. This cannot raise an Attribute above five dots.

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Bonus Attributes</b>
Dawn	Wits, Strength, Dexterity
Zenith	Resolve, Stamina, Presence
Twilight	Intelligence, Wits, Resolve
Night	Wits, Dexterity, Manipulation
Eclipse	Presence, Manipulation, Composure

### Caste Skills

The benefits of Caste Skills are outlined in Chapter Two. Note your character's Caste Skills:

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Caste Skills</b>
Dawn	Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Firearms, Weaponry
Zenith	Animal Ken, Empathy, Expression, Intimidation, Survival
Twilight	Academics, Crafts, Investigation, Medicine, Occult
Night	Athletics, Larceny, Stealth, Streetwise, Subterfuge
Eclipse	Computer, Persuasion, Politics, Socialize, Subterfuge

Then, distribute three dots among your Caste Skills. This cannot raise any Skill above five dots.



## Caste Charms and Favored Charms

You have an easier time learning the Charms that correspond to your Caste. Also, select one additional Caste. You treat this Caste's Charms as though they were also Caste Charms for you for all purposes. These are your *Favored Charms*.

Gain the Charm "Excellence" for free, and then select four additional Charms, at least three of which must be Caste Charms.

## Essence Rating

Your Solar character begins with an Essence rating of 1. You can give up five of your Merit points to start at Essence 2, or all 10 to start at Essence 3.

## Divine Gifts

Every Solar has a Divine Gift, an intrinsic feature of their Exaltation. Each Caste bears a different Divine Gift.

### The Dawn Caste: The Wrath of Heaven

Every Dawn Caste comes loaded with a number of advantages when it comes to seeking out and winning fights. In short:

- Wherever a Dawn goes, they instinctively identify potential killing tools. Every Dawn Caste gains the Improvised Weaponry (•••) Merit at no cost, even if they don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 62-63).
- Dawns have a genius for destroying things that get in their way, and can ignore two points of Durability when trying to break something if it's standing between them and a fight they're seeking or an opponent they're attempting to hurt.
- When a Dawn's Caste mark appears, it does so with a sound like iron bars slamming together, and sears the eyes of her foes. Everyone attempting to inflict violence upon the Dawn who beholds her Caste Mark, or who is even *considering* offering her violence, experiences a surge of bone-deep terror that slows their reactions and makes them feel as though they are struggling in a slow-motion nightmare. If they are at all capable of experiencing fear, and do not possess a supernatural potency trait (such as Blood Potency, Essence, or Gnosis) higher than the Dawn's, then all attempts to apply Defense against the Dawn suffer a penalty equal to the Dawn's highest Caste Skill.

### The Zenith Caste: A Better World

Zeniths exist to cleanse the world of supernatural taint, and their Divine Gift gives them several tools and advantages with which to do so:

- While the gods fell silent long ago, a tiny measure of their wisdom abides in each member of the Zenith Caste. All Zeniths gain the Common Sense (•••) Merit at no cost. When they draw upon it, they may add their Essence rating to the Merit's usual roll (so Wits + Composure + Essence).
- The Zenith Caste may purify whatsoever they touch, rendering it sacrosanct and thus useless to all manner of monsters. If a Zenith lays her hand on an object no larger Size 6 and spends one Mote, she may sanctify it for a number of days equal to her Essence rating. A sanctified object cannot be enchanted, transformed, or harmed with non-Exalted magic (for example, a mage

couldn't change an enchanted door into mist or burn it with mystic flames, though she could still attempt to kick it down), nor can it grant any mystic benefit to any non-Exalted supernatural being (a magical ring that makes its wearer invisible wouldn't give that benefit to a magician or vampire, but would still do so if worn by an ordinary person). Sanctified objects can't act as Anchors to ghosts or help spirits or angels manifest, sanctified tools can't help mages cast spells, and sanctified Infrastructure fails to do whatever it is that the God-Machine designed it to do. Sanctified weapons gain a +1 equipment bonus when wielded against monsters.

If the Zenith sanctifies a living creature, they cannot provide mystic power or sustenance to any sort of monster: a vampire finds their blood inert, a werewolf can't gain Essence from devouring their flesh, and a demon cannot cash in a pact to steal their existence. A sanctified person's soul also cannot be removed or harmed by any supernatural power. Only animals and mortals can be sanctified; Exalts and monsters cannot.

- Zeniths enjoy the 9-again rule on Purification rolls.

## The Twilight Caste: Gate of the Mysteries

Secrets and enigmas unravel themselves before the eyes of a Solar of the Twilight Caste, and when hard-pressed by her enemies, she may dissolve herself into the invisible world as a means of escape. The Divine Gift of Twilights conveys the following advantages:

- From the moment of Exaltation, a Twilight possess the capacity to speak with otherworldly beings. She gains the First Tongue (••) and High Speech (••) Merits at no cost, even if she doesn't meet their prerequisites (see p. XX).
- Once the Twilight obtains Occult •••, the universe conspires to teach her the art of ancient sorcery. Likely her dreams have been growing stranger for some time leading up to the final revelation that burns the forgotten secrets of antiquity into her soul one night, but it's also possible that a very old spirit might be drawn to her fertile Essence, or that she might be drawn through serendipity to a sorcerous scroll dating back to a forgotten age. In any event, she gains the Ancient Sorcery (•••) Merit at no cost.
- The Twilight may reflexively pay one Mote to cause her anima to flare blue and white, and then to engulf her. She ceases to exist, dispersing into scattered ephemera until the sun next sets, at which point she reappears at some location with powerful Solar resonance within 10 miles.

## The Night Caste: The Shadow of Justice

The Night Caste is adept at skimming through the world of monsters undetected to best determine what fate to mete out against them, granting the following advantages:

- The Night has a natural genius for not exposing herself in the course of her investigations, and gets the Untouchable (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 56).
- The Night may exert herself when using her various miracles to draw close to those she must shadow or investigate without exposing her divinity. By spending a point of Willpower, the Night discounts any Motes she spends that turn as counting toward her Anima Threshold.
- After a scene of active interaction with or prolonged observation of a person or monster, the Night may interrogate the way that individual's presence has resonated and echoed within her own Essence in order to determine something of their nature and worth.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure + Essence – target’s Composure

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar is left completely unable to read the target, and cannot use this Divine Gift again on that subject for the rest of the story.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to gain insight into her subject.

**Success:** The player may ask one question about the subject, gaining a general answer from the depths of her Essence, drawn from the list below.

**Exceptional Success:** The player may ask two questions from the list below.

The questions a Night Caste may ask of her Essence include:

- What is the subject’s Virtue – the thing they consider their best trait – or equivalent which expresses the element that they wish to present to the world (such as a vampire’s Mask, a werewolf’s Bone, a Promethean’s Elpis, a changeling’s Needle, or a Sin-Eater’s Bloom)?
- What is the subject’s Vice – the thing about herself the subject considers shameful – or equivalent which she holds close to her heart away from the scrutiny of the world (such as a vampire’s Dirge, a werewolf’s Blood, a Promethean’s Torment, a changeling’s Thread, or a Sin-Eater’s Root)? This can also be used to learn one of a mage’s Obsessions.
- Generally speaking, how stable is the being? Or how human is it? Answers are general rather than precise. Examples might include: “His heart is a fractured mess that can’t hold very much of what anyone else tries to put into it, which is to say, he’s got low Integrity,” rather than “He has Integrity 2.” “She hangs onto the memory of sunny days and having a heartbeat and looking at people as friends and community rather than food with all her strength,” rather than “The vampire has Humanity 8.” “There’s a strong sense of humanity in him, but he doesn’t place it above the need to hunt and howl,” rather than “The werewolf has Harmony 5.”
- What is one of the subject’s Aspirations?

### The Eclipse Caste: Oathbinding

The Eclipse Caste still carries with them the authority of some great and otherworldly force that brooks no opposition, with which to forge consensus out of would-be murder and chaos. This grants them the following tools and advantages:

- Solars of the Eclipse Caste possess a natural instinct for playing their cards close to their chest, even if they don’t intend to manipulate or mislead others, and gain the Closed Book (••) Merit at no cost, even if they don’t meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 50).
- Any supernatural being that beholds an Eclipse’s Caste mark is struck with an instinctive awareness that this is the symbol of an envoy or diplomat, empowered by great forces of the universe to bargain and negotiate. What they do with that information is up to them.
- The Eclipse may spend 1 Mote and 1 Willpower to sanctify any oath, deal, or promise she personally witnesses, scribing the words of the pact on the air with Essence. Anyone who breaks the letter of the sanctified oath suffers the Forsworn Persistent Condition. The Eclipse cannot revoke an oath once she has sanctified it.

## FORSWORN (PERSISTENT)

You swore an oath and were bound to it. Maybe you didn't mean what you said. Maybe it was a mistake. Maybe you just didn't care. Whatever the reason, you broke that oath, and now it seems like the universe itself has it out for you. Things go wrong, horribly wrong, at the worst possible moment for you, for your ambitions, for the people and things you value. Nothing seems to turn out right anymore. Whenever the Storyteller feels so inclined, she may ignore the results of a Forsworn character's dice roll and impose a dramatic failure instead.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking a sanctified oath

**Resolution:** Suffer a number of Storyteller-imposed dramatic failures equal to the Essence of the Eclipse that sanctified the oath.

**Beat:** The Storyteller drops a dramatic failure onto a roll that otherwise wouldn't have turned out so badly.

## Guiding Virtue

Solars no longer use the Integrity trait that mortals do. As inheritors of an ancient fragment of divinity (not to mention survivors of the worst the supernatural world could throw at them), their heart and spirit have been fortified against the rigors of the night and the inherent horror of violent resistance against the dark. Or, in plain terms: seeing a spooky ghost may disturb a Solar, but it won't alienate her from herself or pry up the floorboards of her sanity.

Instead of Integrity, Solars have a *Guiding Virtue*. A Guiding Virtue embodies what the Solar most values and clings to in her fight against the supernatural horrors of the night, and so it's usually something big-concept: Justice, Valor, Compassion. This *may* be the same as the Solar's regular Virtue, but it doesn't have to be. Guiding Virtue is aspirational, rather than personal. It's an ideal that guides the Exalt's actions, not an ineluctable part of her heart.

## Virtuous Acts

Once per chapter, a Solar acting in accord with her Guiding Virtue may attempt to draw upon the strength of that Guiding Virtue to sustain her. This is known as a *virtuous act*. For example, a Solar with a Guiding Virtue of Justice attempting to weigh the contents of a monster's heart would be performing a virtuous act. On the other hand, so would one attempting to immolate a corrupt landlord that burned down an occupied tenement house he owned to collect on the insurance; virtue isn't always pretty.

Performed with a clear heart, a virtuous act can sustain the demands of Solar magic. When attempting to draw upon the power of a virtuous act, use the following rules:

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Composure (no enhancements from Charms allowed)

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's efforts ring hollow, making her doubt her commitment to her Guiding Virtue. She experiences a breaking point.

**Failure:** The strength of the Solar's convictions isn't sufficient to sustain her efforts. She must spend Motes as normal.

**Success:** The Solar's virtuous act covers the cost of 1 Mote. This doesn't refund any spent Motes; rather, it allows her to use her Charms in the course of the virtuous act she's attempting, and to pay with the act itself in place of the Mote.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the virtuous act can stand in for 2 Motes.

When a virtuous act replaces a Mote expenditure, the "phantom Motes" expended do not count toward a Solar's Motes-per-turn limit, nor toward anima progression.

### **Suggested Modifiers:**

<b>Modifier</b>	<b>Situation</b>
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+1	The virtuous act is one that risks inflicting significant personal loss or distress on the Solar.
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-1	The virtuous act is in line with her Vice.
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-2	The virtuous act is directed against a mortal, not a monster.
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### **Breaking Points**

Much like Integrity, a Solar whose actions are in opposition to her Guiding Virtue suffers a *breaking point*. Her sense of commitment to the battle against the darkness fractures, leaving her vulnerable in the face of the enemy.

What constitutes a breaking point can vary drastically, depending on what a Solar's Guiding Virtue *is*. A Solar with the Guiding Virtue of Compassion, for example, almost certainly suffers a breaking point for executing a monster that is attempting to surrender, for torturing someone for information, or for turning away someone seeking her help. A Solar with a Guiding Virtue of Valor, by contrast, might suffer a breaking point for backing down from a challenge, surrendering in the face of a deadly opponent, or, once again, executing a helpless enemy who is trying to surrender. A Solar whose Guiding Virtue is Justice, on the other hand, might not be bothered by any of those things. For her, breaking points might include wielding violence against someone she isn't certain deserves it, discovering she delivered retribution against the wrong person, or acting to support an injustice. Executing a surrendering monster likely wouldn't cost her any sleep at all if she was certain the thing deserved to die.

Unlike Integrity, a Solar's Guiding Virtue is a constant. It doesn't have a rating to raise or lower: in the wake of affirmation or betrayal, the demands of the Guiding Virtue are still there, calling on the Solar to live up to them.

When a Solar suffers a breaking point against her Guiding Virtue, she must make a breaking point roll to weather the resulting uncertainty and psychological trauma:

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Composure (no enhancements from Charms allowed)

**Action:** Reflexive

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar is shaken to her core by what she's done. Take one of the following Conditions: Broken (Persistent), Fugue (Persistent), or Madness (Persistent). Also, take a Beat.

**Failure:** The Solar finds her conviction shaken. Take one of the following Conditions: Doubting, Enraged, Foolhardy, Grieving, or Guilty.

**Success:** The character has come through the breaking point unscathed, having successfully justified her behavior as being in some way acceptable in light of her beliefs and the circumstances.

**Exceptional Success:** The Solar not only justifies her actions, but finds greater meaning in the breach. She gains a point of Willpower and takes a Beat.

### Suggested Modifiers:

Modifier	Situation
+1	The Solar's action is in line with her normal Virtue.
-1	The Solar's action is in line with her Vice.
-2	The Solar violated her Guiding Virtue acting against a mortal rather than a monster.

#### DOUBTING

Your character has lost her self-confidence, and seeks the guidance and assistance of others. While the character is under the effects of this Condition, she suffers a -2 penalty to Resolve for all purposes, and a further -1 penalty to all rolls when working alone.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, supernatural powers

**Resolution:** The character manages an exceptional success in an endeavor without any help from anyone else.

**Beat:** n/a

#### ENRAGED

Your character is lost in a fog of anger just looking for something to land on. She must spend a point of Willpower to avoid confronting the first person that draws her ire in each scene. The resulting confrontation doesn't have to be physically violent, but the character's objective is definitely to make sure someone gets hurt in *some* way.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, intense frustration or setbacks, supernatural powers

**Resolution:** Start an ugly confrontation that wasn't really justified.

**Beat:** n/a

#### FOOLHARDY

Your character has retreated into the shell of her ego, and willfully ignores any signs she might be courting disaster. While the character is under the effects of this Condition, she suffers a -2 penalty to Composure for all purposes.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, supernatural powers

**Resolution:** The character bites off more than she can chew, or is terribly manipulated because she ignored the warning signs.

**Beat:** n/a

## GRIEVING

Your character is swallowed by a limitless sorrow. The world seems underwater, it's hard for her to stir herself to preserve what remains in light of what she's lost. She cannot spend Willpower to increase her Defense or during social scenes.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, severe loss

**Resolution:** The character withdraws for a few days to be alone with her grief, or else receives psychological help coping with it.

**Beat:** n/a

## GUILTY

Your character is experiencing deep-seated feelings of guilt and remorse. While the character is under the effects of this Condition, she receives a -2 to any Resolve or Composure rolls to defend against Subterfuge, Empathy, or Intimidation rolls.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points

**Resolution:** The character makes restitution for whatever she did; the character confesses her crimes.

**Beat:** n/a

## Caste Mark

Each of the Solar Exalted possesses a *Caste mark*, a symbol denoting the caste to which they belong. This symbol appears on their brow in golden light when their anima manifests at the Radiant or Burning level. Solars can also voluntarily cause their Caste mark to appear by concentrating for a turn and making a Willpower roll.

**Dice Pool:** Willpower

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt accidentally triggers her anima at the Radiant level.

**Failure:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears, shining through any concealment such as headband or mask, and continues burning for at least several minutes before abating. She suffers a -1 penalty to all Stealth rolls while it is manifest.

**Success:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears at whatever level of brightness the Exalt desires, and remains until she reflexively dismisses it or until the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the manifestation is so dramatic that the Exalt gains a +1 equipment bonus to Presence rolls while the Caste mark remains visible.

## Iconic Anima

In addition to the general anima rules found in Chapter Two, each Solar Exalt develops an *iconic anima display* upon reaching Essence 2. When the Solar's anima progresses to the Burning level, it surmounts her not as a formless, roaring pillar of energy, but instead as a phantasmagorical manifestation of some display that sums up her personality, will, and spirit. A Dawn Caste might display a snarling tiger or a coiled dragon, while a Zenith might stand beneath a mighty cathedral complete with tolling bells, and a Night Caste could display an angel with wings of knives, the scales of judgment weighting heart and feather, or a looming masked judge. Iconic displays can include any combination of visual, auditory, and even olfactory and tactile elements. They're never physically tangible, but witnesses might "feel" the heat of phantom flames, or walk through an anima display and find their clothing warm to the touch as though left out all afternoon in the sun.

A Solar's iconic anima display is as unique to her as her fingerprints, and tends to follow her around even when her anima isn't showing. For example, a Dawn Caste whose iconic anima is a great snarling skull uses one of her Charms to smash a werewolf into a wall hard enough to leave an impact crater. When the werewolf falls to the ground, the cracks radiating through the wall are as likely as not to resemble a skull. As a result, anyone trying to track or locate the Solar who has seen her iconic anima display gains a +2 equipment bonus to do so. Her anima iconography also tends to manifest in her Charm displays, as well as in any visions or auguries cast about the Solar by those attempting to learn about her through magic or omens.

## Caste Beats

In addition to the general Beat triggers detailed in Chapter Three, Solars gain a Beat whenever they resolve a conflict with some supernatural force or being in a way that accords with their Caste.

**Dawn Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you make people safe from a monster through applied violence.

**Zenith Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you disrupt the ability of monsters to organize, feed, or otherwise present a threat to people in some lasting fashion.

**Twilight Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you learn something new about the supernatural world.

**Night Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you bring justice to a monster or their victims.

**Eclipse Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you stabilize or defuse a dangerous situation through words, agreements, and understanding.

## Solar Charms

Charms are the miracles by which the Exalted once built empires upon the Earth and banished the enemies of the gods. The Charms of the Solar Exalted tend to embody principles of light, power, and *arete*: greatness beyond that of lesser beings, perfection of purpose.

Every Solar Charm resonates with one or more Solar Caste. A Solar belonging to a resonant Caste may buy a Charm for two Experiences. A Charm which doesn't resonate with a Solar's Caste, on the other hand, costs three Experiences. Every Solar is also able to select a second Caste during character creation. She is also considered to resonate with Charms linked to that Caste, even though it isn't her own Caste, and may likewise buy them for two Experiences.



## Solar Charm Index

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## Excellence

**Resonance:** All Solars

Pushing a powerful surge of Essence through her mind, body, and spirit, the Solar elevates mere mortal endeavor into the stuff of legends. For a few moments, her efforts are those of a god enfleshed.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Varies

For each Mote spent to power this Charm, the Solar may enjoy one of the following benefits:

- Select a single Skill. All dice pools using this Skill add a number of bonus dice equal to the Attribute + Skill total in question. This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1 minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Skills at once, so long as each is paid for separately.
- Select a specific Attribute-based dice pool which does not involve a Skill (such as Attribute + Attribute, or Attribute + Essence). Add a number of bonus dice equal to the lowest-rated Attribute in the pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 dice roll.
- When Dodging, the character may add a number of bonus dice equal to twice the character's Dodging pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 turn.
- Double the character's Defense before any other modifiers for 1 turn.

*Example:* A Solar shoots a magician with a police-issue pistol. She has Dexterity 3 + Firearms 3 and a specialty in Pistols, which would ordinarily give her a pool of seven dice. Since she's using Excellence on the roll, she instead doubles her Dexterity + Firearms dice, rolling a total of 13 dice (Dexterity 3 + Firearms 3 + 1 die for the specialty + 6 dice from Excellence). If she had, for some reason, been rolling Essence + Firearms, Excellence would have only given her three bonus dice.

*All Solars begin play with this Charm for free.*

## 12-Gauge Fists

**Resonance:** Dawn

Concentrating wave after wave of Essence into her knuckles, the Solar may deliver punches capable of blowing holes through brick walls and doing far worse to living opponents.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Solar's unarmed strikes inflict +3 lethal damage and gain the 9-again quality. The character may activate this Charm as an instant action rather than reflexively by taking a moment to limber up, shake out her fists, or otherwise visibly prepare to start throwing blows. Doing so drops the cost to 0 motes.

## All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar may extend any or all of her senses – sight, hearing, taste, you name it – through the Gauntlet without physically crossing over, spying on the Shadow Realm from the physical realm or vice-versa. If she stands at a Locus, she may, with effort, push herself through the Gauntlet and enter the Shadow directly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's senses become temporarily lost in the Gauntlet, imposing relevant Tilts such as Blinded and Deafened for the rest of the scene. If she was trying to cross over physically, she becomes caught inside of the Gauntlet for anywhere from a few minutes to several days before eventually being pushed back out into the world she tried to leave, several miles away.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to extend her senses across the Gauntlet, or to cross from one world to the other.

**Success:** The Solar extends her senses across the Gauntlet for the rest of the scene, or until she reflexively ends the Charm. She can only have a sense rooted in one world or the other at any given time, so if she stands in the physical world and sees into the Shadow, she is effectively blind to things happening on Earth. If she is attempting to cross over, she does so successfully, vanishing into the Gauntlet and appearing in the other realm two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Solar may cross the Gauntlet instantly, or may pull her senses temporarily back from across the Gauntlet to the world she stands in without ending the Charm.

## All Voices Under Heaven

**Resonance:** Night

Sometimes warnings need to be delivered. Sometimes threats. When the Solar needs to speak with her quarry, she may always do so. The Exalt holds some token representing her target in one hand – a lock of hair, a photograph, a bloody knife – and dials a phone with the other.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Investigation + Essence – Manipulation

**Action:** Instant

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The magic goes awry; the token smolders and burns, becoming useless, and the phone does likewise.

**Failure:** The Solar simply blind-dials a random number.

**Success:** The subject's phone rings. If he doesn't have a phone, someone else's phone nearby rings, drawing the target's attention and giving him an immediate (and correct) impression that the call must be for him. Once either the Solar or the recipient of the call hangs up, the connection is broken and the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The call *will* go through, even if there's no working phone anywhere near the target. A broken phone can receive the call, as can a disconnected one, or even a fake phone that is part of a sculpture. The subject can reach into a painting and speak on a *drawing* of a phone for a few minutes, if need be. If there's not even a depiction of a phone present, the Solar can conduct the conversation through a nearby television set, radio, gramophone, or anything else at least conceptually capable of facilitating communication.

Whatever number the Solar dials won't work if used again without Essence powering the connection (and neither phone will show any record of the call in any case). The Solar may eschew the need of a token to focus the call if the person she's calling has ever inflicted a level of lethal damage upon her, or vice-versa.

## Apocalypse Flare Attack

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Exalt draws the roiling power of a Solar Burn into a weapon or her very own fist, wreathing it in a terrible nimbus of red-gold flames. Its next strike inflicts untold ruin.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve + Essence – 3 (for a minor Burn) or 5 (for a major Burn)

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** Must be used within a Solar Burn.

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates in a Sear, and the Solar's attempt to draw that volatile energy upon her causes her to take one point of lethal damage per Mote in her pool.

**Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates into a Sear.

**Success:** The Exalt's fist or a non-ranged weapon of her choice is filled with burning Essence. Its next attack adds +5 to its damage modifier, and the damage is lethal if it wasn't already. If used to enhance a weapon, then this attack also destroys the weapon, shattering it under the discharge of power.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the attack adds +6 damage, and the Burn shrinks a bit; treat its dissolution timer as though one day had just passed. Weapons with Durability of 3 or higher are not destroyed.

If the Solar fails to discharge the stored energy of this Charm by the end of the scene, it boils over on its own, provoking a Sear. This also happens if the energy is grounded out by attacking an object or structure that is part of the Burn.

## Asp Bites Its Tail

**Resonance:** Eclipse

Such is the Exalt's assurance and bearing that she may turn barbs and imprecations cast against her back on their speaker with little more than a dismissive rejoinder.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Socialize + Essence – Manipulation

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** The Solar must have just been targeted by a social action that inflicted an unwanted Condition on her such as Guilty, Notoriety, or Slandered.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only fails to turn aside the barb, she makes herself feel like a fool with her weak rejoinder and loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to reverse the social thrust.

**Success:** The Solar neatly turns the tables on her tormentor. She doesn't gain a Condition; the character who tried to place the Condition on her gains it instead.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the flush of success gives the Solar the Inspired Condition with regards to doing further social damage to her enemy.

## Body-Mending Meditation

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar may heal at an accelerated rate by resting.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

So long as the Solar undertakes no strenuous activity, she heals one point of bashing damage per turn, one point of lethal damage per hour, and one point of aggravated damage every six hours.

## Chaos-Repelling Pattern

**Resonance:** Twilight, Zenith

The Solar surrounds herself with an invisible mandala of protective Essence, warding off curses hurled by distant foes.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever anyone tries to target the Solar with a mystic attack from a greater distance than line-of-sight, such as using a lock of her hair to curse her from the other side of a city, their dice pool is reduced to a chance die.

## Craftsman Needs No Tools

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar is a genius with her hands, able to improvise whatever works of craftsmanship she may need in even the most adverse of circumstances. In extreme need, she may even conjure up tools by sculpting them from her anima.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

The Solar never suffers a penalty for attempting to build or repair something without suitable tools. Moreover, when building or repairing something with an extended roll, she cuts the interval between rolls in half. By spending 1 Mote, she may conjure phantom tools from her anima to benefit her for the duration of one roll, granting an equipment bonus equal to her Essence rating, and may cut the interval until the next roll down to 25% of the time it should normally take.

## Cup Boils Over

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar composes a condemnation of purposeless existence, which is so profound that it strikes dead those with no bastion of ego to protect them against the Exalt's words.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Solar fail to achieve a soul-destroying condemnation of her target, but spending so much time in such an intensely negative place with nothing to show for it costs her a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to compose a soul-destroying condemnation.

**Success:** The Solar composes a shattering condemnation of a specific person that she is at least somewhat familiar with. Her condemnation may be either written or verbal. Should the target hear or read this condemnation while they possess 0 Willpower points, it flays their soul loose from their body, inflicting the Soulless Condition. A condemnation composed with this Charm loses its potency after one month, as the events and circumstances of the target's life cause her to no longer perfectly match the Solar's critiques.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Solar's critique is timeless, and never loses its potency.

## Deft Official's Way

**Resonance:** Eclipse

When the Solar engages with bureaucracy or labyrinthine systems such as courts of law, corporate networks, or government offices, red tape parts before her like the Red Sea and she is



able to proceed in a mere fraction of the normal time. Moreover, the Solar blends smoothly into any office environment she walks into.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

When undertaking any extended action to push through bureaucratic red tape, the interval of rolls is reduced to one minute, no matter how long it should normally be: the Solar can accelerate her concerns from call-center peon to a direct chat with the CEO in five minutes flat.

Additionally, as long as she doesn't do something outlandish to call attention to herself, when the character is in a bureaucratic environment she can sit in on meetings, walk the halls, lounge around in the break room, chat with workers in the cubicle farm, and otherwise occupy an office space without anyone noticing that she doesn't belong there.

## Demon-Wracking Shout

**Resonance:** Twilight, Zenith

The Solar issues a great and primal cry, ringing forth from the dawn of time in wordless condemnation of all the powers of the night. Any monster that hears it is driven from her presence.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's cry is only the wind from her lungs. Monsters who hear it are emboldened by her impotence, and gain the Inspired Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar's mighty cry shivers the heart of the monster... but fails to shift it from its course.

**Success:** Each monster affected by this Charm gains the Frightened Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and if the monster is a physically corporeal being, it cannot spend Willpower to resist the Frightened Condition. If the monster is a spirit possessing a host in a temporary fashion, it must relinquish its possession to flee all the faster.

### FRIGHTENED

The character is terrified of whoever or whatever caused this Condition, and will do anything in his power to escape from it, even if that means abandoning friends and allies. He won't willingly approach the object of his fear or act against it. If unable to flee, he cowers in terror. He may ignore the effects of this Condition for a turn at the cost of a point of Willpower.

**Possible Sources:** Intimidation, various Charms

**Resolution:** The character escapes from the source of his fear.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Edge of Morning Sunlight

**Resonance:** Dawn, Zenith

The Solar takes a weapon to hand, be it sword or baseball bat or simple tire iron, and lets the ancient and righteous power of the sun flow through it. For a brief moment, it burns with the clear and radiant light of the dawn, and becomes the great bane of all things born of darkness.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

The Solar may enchant a single Weaponry attack she makes such that it acts as a bane to any supernatural being whose nature is intrinsically tied to the concepts of death, darkness, or fear, such as vampires, ghosts, Beasts, the Bound, mummies, Prometheans, werewolves of certain Auspices, and so on. If successful (this Charm must be activated before rolling), the attack inflicts aggravated damage.

## Ever-Ready Innovation Discipline

**Resonance:** Twilight

Working in a frenzy of inspiration, the Solar tears apart two devices to jury-rig a hybrid wonder, granting properties of one to the other, such as a combining a shotgun with a stove to create a shotgun that heats its slugs red-hot as it fires them (somehow without cooking the ammo off prematurely); or combining an umbrella and a rifle into an umbrella that is also a rifle; or combining a car with a pogo stick to make a car that can jump.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Crafts + Essence – Size of final creation

**Action:** Instant (one minute per Size of the larger of the two merged objects)

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar fails to create the hybrid device, and completely destroys all component materials beyond hope of salvage or trying again.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to create the hybrid device, and renders at least one of the objects used to attempt to create it nonfunctional without repairs.

**Success:** For each success rolled, the Solar may grant one property of a device to another one. For example, each success could convey a cement truck's ability to be driven, to dispense cement, or to rotate things inside of it. In the case of combining firearms with other firearms, one weapon characteristic can be swapped out for another (creating a pistol, for example, that uses rifle rounds for ammunition, or a shotgun with the ammo capacity of a Tommy gun).

**Exceptional Success:** The character can combine many qualities at once.

Hybrid items are held together more by magic and frenzied inspiration than any solid scientific principles, and never continue working for very long. At the end of the Charm's duration, the hybrid device suffers catastrophic and permanent breakdown. It definitely loses its extraordinary properties, and *probably* ceases to work as a basic car or gun or whatever it started as, as well.

By paying 2 Motes when activating this Charm, the Solar can grant it a duration of one day, while 3 Motes gives a duration of one week; keeping a hybrid device operating longer than that just isn't possible.

## Essence-Lending Method

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar touches someone else, and grants them a gift: a small portion of her divine Essence.

**Cost:** 1 or more Motes

**Action:** Instant

The Solar may grant one or more of her Motes to someone else. If the recipient is another Exalt, they gain a number of Motes equal to the number of Motes spent, though this can't take them above their maximum Mote capacity. *Motes spent in this fashion don't count toward Anima progression.* If the Solar instead chooses to grant her Motes to the un-Exalted, the effects differ, and all Motes spent *do* count toward Anima manifestation:

**Mortals:** A mortal may only receive one Mote. This infusion generates a sense of well-being and renewal. The mortal gains a point of Willpower.

**Werewolves, Spirits, Ghosts, Angels:** For each Mote the Exalt grants to a being that normally gathers and spends Essence, they gain two points of Essence.

**Vampires:** Being granted a Mote allows a vampire to use the blush of life (see **Vampire: The Requiem**, p. 90) at some point during the same night without spending Vitae. However, accepting the infusion of Solar Essence counts as a breaking point at Humanity 8.

**Mages:** For each Mote the Exalt grants to one of the Awakened, increase the strength of his Immediate Nimbus (see **Mage: The Awakening**, p. 89) by one the next time it manifests that day.

**Prometheans:** Solar Motes are, it seems, very much akin to the divine fire that serves a Promethean in place of a soul. For each Mote the Exalt bestows, a Promethean gains two points of Pyros.

**Changelings:** The infusion of Solar Essence calms and soothes a tormented soul, and brings the clarity of *what is* to a world fogged in nightmares and memories. Each Mote spent heals one point of mild Clarity damage.

**Sin-Eaters:** Solar Essence interfaces poorly with the ephemeral residue of the dead that powers the Bound. For every *two* Motes given, a Sin-Eater gains one Plasm.

**Demons:** Demons are attuned to a very particular power source, and can only convert the cast-off power of a different sort of divinity to interface with themselves with some difficulty. For every *three* Motes granted, a demon gains one point of Aether.

**Beasts:** Solar Essence offers nothing whatsoever to the Children, and receiving any Motes from a Solar gives a Beast the mild version of the Sick Tilt for a number of days equal to the Motes bestowed.

**Deviants:** The infusion of Solar Essence grants temporary calm and constancy to a Deviant's broken soul. Each Mote given heals one minor Instability.

## Fivefold Bulwark Stance

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar stands alone in a world of monsters, ever-ready for the possibility of violence. Her every instinct and movement guides her through the red chaos of battle without compromising her poise or readiness to continue to defend herself, and by sharpening her senses even further with Essence, she may *see* her enemies' violent intent projected as pulsing crimson veins arcing through the air, betraying the path of claw, blade, and bullet a heartbeat before the attack is launched. It tells her where not to be.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Solar no longer reduces her Defense by 1 for the rest of the turn after applying it to an attack. When Dodging, she is no longer penalized for facing multiple opponents. After spending 1 Mote, the Solar gains the following benefits for the rest of the scene: She may apply her Defense against Firearms-based attacks, and if she spends Willpower to raise her Defense, that increase lasts until the end of the turn rather than only enhancing her efforts against a single attack.

## Foe-Scenting Method

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Twilight

Calling upon the scars left by her encounters with the supernatural world, the Solar attunes herself to the presence of monsters, learning to pick them out of a crowd.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure + Essence – supernatural obscurity trait such as Obfuscate or Cover, if appropriate

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** The Solar must have previously encountered the sort of monster she's attuning her senses to detect.

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only can't tell for certain if there are any monsters present, but that uncertainty preys upon her mind. She gains the Paranoid Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar can't accurately tell if monsters are present or not.

**Success:** The Solar attunes her senses to the subtle signs of a certain kind of monster. She notices the faux-breathing and odd pallor of vampires. She marks the wolfish posture and predatory attitude of werewolves. Her hair prickles in the uncanny presence of a magician.

**Exceptional Success:** This Charm's effects remain active for the rest of the chapter, rather than for one scene.

While Foe-Scenting Method will pick hidden monsters out of a crowd, it has a few restrictions. First, the Solar has to be able to sense the monsters in the first place, so it's of limited use at picking up ghosts if the Exalt isn't able to detect beings in Twilight (although it could still spot someone possessed by a ghost), and it won't reveal a magician if that magician is using her magic to be invisible. Second, the Solar needs to have at least some idea what she's looking for, based on personal experience. At minimum, she needs to have personally encountered the sort of monster she's searching for; she can't scan for vampires based on secondhand accounts. She *can* go on the prowl for something she's encountered without being certain precisely what it *is*, though: "If there's anyone in the room harboring one of those... things... that attacked us at the meat-packing plant, I want to know." Finally, if the Solar has ever suffered a Persistent Condition (or equivalent, such as being made a ghoul) thanks to the sort of monster she's scanning for, or had one of her rightmost Health boxes marked with damage by such a monster, then the cost of this Charm drops to 0 Motes.

## Fulminating Word

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Zenith

The Solar's words toll like an iron bell in the psyche of one who has accepted them, profoundly moving him. Reluctance and reserve crumble in the face of the Exalt's desires.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Solar must have just successfully used social maneuvering to open a Door via conversation or soft leverage.

Rather than opening a single Door, the Solar's efforts open two. If this Charm is used to enhance an exceptional success, then three Doors are opened rather than the usual two, but the hammer-blow of her divine word shakes a merely mortal psyche that is subjected to it; if her target has an Integrity trait, then being subjected to this Charm on an exceptional success is a breaking point.

## Ghost-Eating Technique

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar becomes Apollyon, bringer of final destruction. With nothing more than a glance, ephemeral entities know her to be a force of annihilation, and behave with proper caution.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar automatically removes one additional Door when attempting to intimidate ephemeral beings. When fighting manifested ephemeral beings, the Solar's lethal attacks are not downgraded to mere bashing damage. Finally, when the Solar destroys an ephemeral being, she may choose to attempt its eternal destruction, even if it has Essence remaining and would normally reform somewhere over time (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 129).

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence versus Resistance + Rank

**Action:** Reflexive and Contested

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only fails to destroy the being, but the attempt grants it some influence over her; she gains the Open Condition with regard to that being.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to eradicate the target.

**Success:** The entity's Essence is shredded and consumed in the eternal flame of the Solar's Exaltation. It forever ceases to be.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Solar regains a number of Motes equal to the entity's Rank.

## Glaive of Steel and Gasoline

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

To everyone else, motor vehicles are convenience and conveyance: a way to get around the city, to home and work and school, to visit relatives, to go on vacation. To one of the Chosen facing down eight feet of stinking fur and screaming teeth and angry muscle, a car is a weapon: a one-ton fist made of steel and glass and aluminum driven by slamming pistons and burning petrol. Her anima intertwines itself into the frame to make her one with the vehicle, reinforcing its frame against impact, brushing flying shards of safety glass away from her face and eyes, and preventing the engine block and door frame from collapsing upon her under the force of even the most violent impact.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Duration:** Permanent or Reflexive

The Solar never needs to make a Dexterity + Drive roll to avoid damage to the vehicle during a crash with a light object (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 99), succeeding at such attempts automatically. In crashes against heavy objects, reflexively spending 1 Mote prevents the vehicle from suffering more than a single point of damage in excess of its Durability, no matter how violent the impact.

## Graceful Crane Stance

**Resonance:** Night

The Solar becomes near-weightless, and enjoys perfect balance.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The character needs never roll to maintain her balance, no matter how precarious her footing. By spending 1 Mote, she also becomes near-weightless, and may stand or run upon even the weakest or most insubstantial of surfaces, such as falling leaves, individual threads, drops of rain, or even the surface of water. So long as she continues moving to conserve momentum, she may even run up or across walls or ceilings.

## Guarded Thoughts Meditation

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar's mind is a vault, holding her thoughts within like precious gems.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Any successful attempt to read the Solar's thoughts or memories provokes a Clash of Wills, and the Solar gains the 9-again rule on the Clash of Wills roll. If she succeeds in the Clash, then she blocks the mind-reading attempt, and the Solar becomes aware that someone tried to scan her thoughts, as well as who tried to do it.

## Heavenly Guardian Defense

**Resonance:** Dawn

Though the world is cursed and broken, the Solar can still call forth one moment of perfect defense, whether by interposing a weapon or object between herself and a source of harm, or else fading away from a deadly blow like a shadow at midnight. Whether she parries or dodges, her attempt is guaranteed to triumph.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; may be declared *after* an attack is rolled.

The Solar avoids being struck by one attack altogether; it misses or is blocked. The attack in question be some sort of physical threat, such as a werewolf's claws or a lightning bolt hurled by a mage; Heavenly Guardian Defense can't block a vampire's attempt to make the Solar hallucinate terrifying visions of her dead loved ones. Heavenly Guardian Defense can also be used to avoid harm from momentary environmental threats and hazards such as a collapsing roof beam, but not constant environmental hazards such as a sandstorm or burning building.

## Heaven Thunder Hammer

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar's blows burn with divine power, sending her opponents flying like leaves in a hurricane.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

Whenever the Solar achieves an exceptional success on a Brawl or Weaponry attack, her opponent is automatically smashed away up to 20 yards (the Solar can pull her punches if moving the enemy so away would be disadvantageous) and suffers the Knocked Down Tilt. Alternately, the Solar can reflexively spend 1 Mote upon connecting with a non-exceptional success to manually trigger Heaven Thunder Hammer's effects.

## Heaven-Turning Calculations

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar can compensate for all other deficiencies with her lightning acumen, precise analytical abilities, and canny foresight.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Spend 1 Mote to substitute Intelligence + Academics in place of a specific Attribute + Skill-based dice pool. Alternately, Intelligence may be used to replace any other specific Attribute, or Academics in place of any other specific Skill. Whichever substitution is made, it remains in place for the rest of the scene.

## Hungry Tiger Technique

**Resonance:** Dawn

Focusing all of her attention upon her martial skills, the Solar moves with a perfect economy of motion, inflicting maximum possible damage with her each and every attack.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Select one Skill when activating this Charm: Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Weaponry. For the rest of the scene, the Solar gains the 8-again quality on all attacks made using the enhanced Skill.

## Hypnotic Tongue Technique

**Resonance:** Zenith

By using nothing more than a steady patter of dialogue, the Solar can lull someone into a hypnotic trance and then talk them into doing whatever she wishes.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Empathy + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim sees through the Solar's attempt to control his mind, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to hypnotize the target.

**Success:** The Solar beguiles the target and may issue a post-hypnotic suggestion. They gain the Hypnotized Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the hypnotic commands can be delayed such that they don't kick in until a specific trigger is met. The Condition's "countdown" doesn't begin until the trigger condition is met.

### HYPNOTIZED

Your will isn't your own. You've been given a set of instructions of no more than two or three sentences in length, and must carry them out to the best of your abilities. If your task has a natural end ("Follow that man, and call me when you find out where he's going.") then you resolve the Condition when the task ends; otherwise, it ends after (Exalt's Essence rating) days. Once you resolve this Condition, you can't quite remember what you did under its sway.



**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Take more damage (of any sort) than your Stamina. Experience a breaking point while following the command. Complete the task.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Immortal Armory of the Sun

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

The Solar is never, no matter what, caught unarmed and unready for battle. In times of war, she may trust to her foresight. In moments of desperate ambush, she may trust to her preparedness. And even when lost and far from home, she may trust to serendipity to preserve her legend.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The player nominates one weapon the Solar owns as the subject of this Charm. Wherever the character goes, during the course of any scene, that weapon is always available when the Solar needs it: successfully concealed on her person, taped to the underside of the table she is sitting at, or conveniently leaning against a nearby tree; if no more sensible option presents itself, the Solar may even raise her hands to the sky and find that the weapon drops into her grip out of the wild blue yonder. Moreover, if the weapon uses ammunition, the Solar always has a ready supply on her person or in the immediate environment, and may reflexively reload the weapon in the scant moments when no one is watching her hands closely (crossbows, muskets, and similarly slow-to-reload weapons form an exception; they take only a single turn to reload). The weapon also increases its Durability by 1.

The player may name a new weapon as the subject of this Charm at the beginning of a story, or when the current weapon is destroyed, stolen, or otherwise rendered unavailable or unsuitable for use.

## Immunity to Everything Technique

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar gains the hardiness of the gods of old.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Poison and disease can no longer harm the character in any way whatsoever.

## Incalculable Flowing Mind

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar encounters an obstacle or mishap, but thanks to her canny foresight, has already anticipated such difficulties in advance and planned for them accordingly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

Once per scene, the Solar may reflexively spend 1 Mote and select one of the following benefits:

- Re-roll a failed or dramatically failed roll, keeping the preferred result, after her player explains how she anticipated the difficulty and planned ahead to avoid failure.
- Ignore one penalty to a roll, after her player explains how the Solar foresaw that difficulty and compensated for it in advance.
- Retroactively declare that the Solar brought along a bit of helpful specialty equipment. The gear in question must be something whose Availability is such that she could have acquired it with no more than a single dice roll, or that she is established to already own. The item's presence must also make sense given the scene in which this Charm is used; for example, the Solar might have smuggled a knife, small pistol, some lockpicks, or a folder full of incriminating photos into a grand opening gala at a museum, but she probably hasn't been toting around a grenade launcher all evening.

## Instant Treatment Methodology

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Solar is capable of blindingly swift medical treatment, able to step into a patient's room and provide world-class care while the nurse on duty is visiting the coffee maker, or to move across the aftermath of a gangland shootout, stabilizing everyone in a matter of seconds.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** One extended action

The Solar may reduce the interval of any extended action to provide medical treatment (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 96) to 1 turn.

## Integrity-Protecting Prana

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar fortifies her thoughts with Essence until they become as certain and inexorable as the course of the sun across the sky

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Any successful attempt to magically alter or influence the Solar's thoughts or emotions provokes a Clash of Wills, and the Solar gains the 9-again rule on the Clash of Wills roll. If she succeeds in the Clash, then she blocks the mind-control attempt, and the Solar becomes aware that someone tried to control her mind, as well as who tried to do it.

## Inverted Ego Mask

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Night

The Solar builds up a wall of masks around the innermost truths of her heart, ensuring that none can discover who she really is unless she permits it.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** None or Manipulation + Composure + Essence

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's attempt to bury her innermost self not only fails, but leaves her momentarily doubting her own identity. She loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to convincingly hide her innermost self.

**Success:** Believing she may be scrutinized, the Solar creates a false mask for herself. Any attempt to analyze her motives or personality automatically fail, instead revealing the false identity the Solar has established. This could, for example, reveal a false motive behind the Solar's attempts at interaction, or display her as possessing a false Virtue and Vice.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the next time the character uses Inverted Ego Mask during the current story, she may automatically take a standard success when activating it without needing to roll.

In addition, the Exalt permanently leverages a penalty to all attempts to discern her motives equal to her Essence rating.

### **Iron Kettle Body**

**Resonance:** Zenith

Infusing her body with her sense of discipline, the Solar treats even grievous injuries as mere nuisances.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Solar downgrades all sources of aggravated damage into lethal damage, and downgrades lethal damage into bashing damage.

### **Iron Skin Concentration**

**Resonance:** Dawn, Zenith

The Solar fortifies her body with Essence, making her skin as tough as steel.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Solar permanently gains a single point of armor. By spending 1 Mote, she gains her Stamina rating in additional armor.

### **Iron Whirlwind Attack**

**Resonance:** Dawn

Grasping her weapon tight, the Solar moves like ice on hot metal, like a deadly mirage, like an enraged angel amidst bullet casings and blood spatter, until only she remains standing.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Solar may make as many Strength + Weaponry attacks as she wishes, so long as each is directed against a different target that she can reach. Subtract the total number of targets from her attack pool, then make one attack against each target.

## Judge's Ear Technique

**Resonance:** Night, Twilight

Woe to those who live by deception, for the Solar easily recognizes their lies. Some distinct sensation alerts the Solar to any attempt to deceive her – a sour taste or smell, perhaps, or a ringing in her ears.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Whenever someone knowingly lies to the Solar, she recognizes the lie immediately for what it is.

## Knowing Beyond Silence

**Resonance:** Night

The Exalt may insinuate her senses into the volatile Essence of a Solar Burn, using it to spy upon others without being present herself.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure + Essence – 3 (for a minor Burn) or 5 (for a major Burn)

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** Must be used within a Solar Burn.

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates in a Sear.

**Failure:** The character fails to connect with the Burn. The Burn resets its dissolution as normal, and its boundaries may even grow just a bit.

**Success:** The Exalt may select a point anywhere within the Burn, and perceive what's happening there as though she were present. This can either be a specific location ("The break room down the hall") or else a conditional one meeting a set of given criteria ("Wherever Jack is right now"). The Solar can shift her sensory perspective at any point, "walking along" with moving subjects, or flitting from location to location. She has only the vaguest awareness of what's happening at her own location while projecting her senses – enough to know if something alarming is happening, like an angry werewolf slouching into the room intent on murder, but not enough to

follow conversations or keep track of who's coming or going if that information doesn't seem like a matter of utmost import.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and immersion in Solar Essence refreshes the character, granting her a point of Willpower.

## Knowing the Soul's Price

**Resonance:** Eclipse

Everyone, no matter their integrity, no matter their morals, has a price for which they will bend to the Solar's desires. This Charm cuts through to the soul's innermost secrets, revealing that price.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Socialize + Essence vs Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar not only fails to read the target's innermost desires properly, she disastrously misreads in such a way that if she attempts to act on her conclusions, she'll reduce the target's impression of her by at least one step.

**Failure:** The Solar comes up blank.

**Success:** After chatting with the subject for a few minutes and drawing them out enough to get a sense of their innermost desires, the Solar learns what would most effectively act as soft leverage (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 82) upon the target.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Solar also learns one of the target's Aspirations.

## Lightning Speed

**Resonance:** Night

The Solar moves with the speed of darting sunbeams, able to flash from place to place almost faster than the eye can follow.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

The character's Speed calculation becomes Strength + Dexterity + Essence + 5. If she possesses the Fleet of Foot Merit, double the Speed gained for each dot of that Merit.

By spending 1 Mote, the character may multiply her Speed by 10 for one turn, and also subtract twice her Essence rating from all Firearms-based attacks directed at her during that turn. The Solar blurs from place to place in a sizzling golden flash, often leaving flickering specks of Essence crackling in the air in her wake.

## Listener-Swaying Argument

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Zenith

The Solar's words burn with conviction, striking through the cynicism and doubt of any who listen.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Solar gains the 8-again rule on all social actions.

## Mastery of Small Manners

**Resonance:** Eclipse

An instinctive facility for etiquette and social currents ensures that the Solar never commits *faux pas* or social gaffes when dealing with strangers, and makes a good impression on everyone she meets.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is in effect, a Solar who simply walks up and says hello to a stranger starts off with an Excellent first impression (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 81-82) rather than an Average one. This makes pushing things all the way up to a Perfect impression fairly easy, rather than a costly matter of bribes and pandered Vices. It's still possible for a Solar to make a worse-than-Excellent first impression, or even a Hostile impression if she first encounters another character under truly unfortunate circumstances, such as being discovered standing over the corpse of someone's husband with a bloody knife. This Charm has no power to influence the Solar's standing with someone she already knows; it only gets things off on the right foot with new acquaintances.

## Memory-Reweaving Discipline

**Resonance:** Zenith

Focusing her will and her words, the Solar may rewrite the memories of another. Her target becomes lost in a recitation of events that never were, and forgets things as they truly happened.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Persuasion + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Solar fail to rewrite the target's memories, she loses herself in her Essence-laden narrative, and briefly has difficulty discerning truth from fantasy. She gains the Confused Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to alter the target's memories.

**Success:** The Solar can rewrite either the events of one crucially important event within the target's memories (such as his discovery earlier tonight that vampires are real), or the general

narrative of up to two weeks of the target's life (making him forget that he got a speeding ticket and had a fight with his parents over it, instead papering the event over with memories of several uneventful days), so long as the alterations don't rewrite any events the target would consider critical to the current course of his life or identity (like discovering that his boyfriend is cheating on him). He gains the False Memories Persistent Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** Major swathes of the subject's life can be rewritten (such as who he's married to, where he went to school, or whether the Solar is a hated enemy or childhood friend). He gains the False Memories Persistent Condition.

#### FALSE MEMORIES (PERSISTENT)

The way you remember things doesn't match up with how they happened. You might remember passing out drunk on the night when a vampire attacked you stone cold sober, or staying home sick and watching television rather than witnessing a vagrant strangle a werewolf to death in the parking lot in front of your office. While conclusive proof might lead you to doubt the veracity of your memories, anything less is going to have a hell of a time getting through to you. Being faced with proof that your memories are false is a breaking point if you use Integrity, or a breaking point towards Humanity if you are Exalted.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Face proof that your memory is false and succeed at the breaking point.

**Beat:** You trust someone or take a risky action based on your false memories.

### Ox-Body Technique

**Resonance:** Dawn, Zenith

The Solar's body is fortified with divine power, enabling her to survive grievous injuries. Attacks that should have mortally wounded her instead show up as mere flesh wounds, allowing her to keep fighting long after absorbing an amount of punishment that should have long ago felled any lesser being.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + (Essence rating x 3).

### Phantom Steed

**Resonance:** Twilight, Night, Eclipse

Reaching deep within herself, the Solar finds a conveyance that expresses her innermost self. Pressing her will into her anima, she shapes this conveyance out of her Essence. In centuries past, this Charm summoned golden stallions and aura-wrought chariots to carry the Chosen into battle or to speed them to their destination, but in the current nights, it tends to produce cars and motorcycles.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Until the Exalt leaves the conveyance for a full minute

The Solar manifests a conveyance around herself. Example vehicles can be found on page 98 of the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook. In the first moments of its manifestation, the vehicle is clearly sculpted from transparent golden anima, but over a span of a few seconds it flushes with color and substance until it is indistinguishable from a normal horse, car, or whatever else. When the Solar's anima flares at the shining or above level, the conveyance's true nature may begin to shine through (golden contrails of Essence streaming out behind the wheels, or the headlights blazing with sunlight, for example).

Because the vehicle is an expression of the character's personality and spirit, this Charm tends to manifest the same vehicle every time; as a result, it can't be used to produce a sports car in one session, and then a motorboat in the next, even if a motorboat would be really useful at that moment. At the Storyteller's discretion, major upheavals in the character's life and psyche may justify changing the vehicle this Charm summons.

## Phoenix Renewal Tactic

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Exalt can coax the divine power infesting a Solar Burn out into herself. Though risky, this Charm converts a Burn from a liability into a place of power.

**Cost:** None

**Dice Pool:** Composure + Wits – 3 (for a minor Burn) or 5 (for a major Burn)

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** Requires 30 minutes of concentration before use. Must be used within a Solar Burn.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates in a Sear, and the Solar's attempt to draw that volatile energy into her causes her to take one point of lethal damage per Mote in her pool.

**Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates into a Sear.

**Success:** The Exalt gains two Motes immediately.

**Exceptional Success:** The Exalt gains three Motes immediately, and the Burn shrinks a bit; treat its dissolution timer as though three days had just passed.

## Reed in the Wind

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

The Solar steps into violence as though it were music, matching herself to its beats and rhythms. She dances a ballet of bullets and passes through unharmed.

**Cost:** None

**Action:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar may permanently apply the *lower* of her Defense or Essence rating against Firearms-based attacks. When doubling her Defense with Excellence, that benefit lasts for (Essence rating + 1) turns rather than a single turn.



## Righteous Lion Defense

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Zenith

The Solar's ambitions are seared ineluctably into the eternal legacy of her Exaltation; neither threats nor honeyed words nor even hypnosis may turn her from her course.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever someone or something tries to convince or force the Solar to abandon or act contrary to one of her Aspirations, she may add (highest rating among her Caste Skills) to her Resistance Attribute for the purpose of not being persuaded or controlled.

## Sagacious Reading of Intent

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar's keen insight cuts through all attempts at dissembling, allowing her to easily decipher the intentions of another within a social encounter. She can also use this Charm to interrogate the agenda present in a text.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Socialize + Essence – Composure

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The player asks a question as though she had rolled a success; the Storyteller gives misleading information.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to unearth the target's true intentions.

**Success:** The player can ask the Storyteller one question, which the Storyteller must answer, granting the character an insight into the individual she is scrutinizing.

**Exceptional Success:** The player can ask two questions.

Valid questions include:

- What is the subject's goal (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 81) in this encounter?
- What is this person's current mood?
- What is this person's Vice (or similar trait, such as Requiem or Torment)?
- Are they acting under duress?

## Sandstorm Wind Attack

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar strikes with such blistering, divine speed that a cutting wind erupts from the edge of her weapon, splitting an entire room full of enemies in twain.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Solar makes an attack with Strength + Weaponry, and its effects are applied to every enemy directly in front of her in a line stretching out (Essence x 10) yards. This attack will even pierce objects and walls with a Durability less than or equal to the weapon's damage modifier.

## Sensory Acuity Prana

**Resonance:** Night

By focusing Essence into her awareness of the world, the Solar's senses become impossibly, superhumanly sharp. She can hear a person's heartbeat from rooms away, read a sheet of paper by letting her fingers trail across the ink on it, and count the hairs on a fly's legs from across a room.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Solar gains the 8-again quality on Perception rolls. As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Solar may use Excellence to double her Wits + Composure pool for Perception rolls, rather than adding the lower of the two Attributes.

## Seven Omens Shot

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night

The Solar's keen eye and steady hand act as infallible channels for her killing intent, allowing her to draw a bead and fire as though hand and eye and gun were all placed upon the Earth in anticipation of that single moment.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

The Solar accumulates three bonus dice in a single turn by taking an aim action (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 90) rather than the usual one die per turn. By paying 1 Mote, she may take an aim action reflexively in the moment before firing.

## Seven Shadow Evasion

**Resonance:** Night

Wherever her enemies strike, the Solar is not there, though she seemed to be but a moment before. Wrapping herself in a fleeting moment of grace and serendipity, the Solar deftly avoids all but the most skillful or lucky of blows for a few blessed moments.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

For the rest of the turn, all attacks launched against the Solar roll a chance die to hit, no matter what dice pool or modifiers they should otherwise enjoy.

## Soaring Crane Leap

**Resonance:** Night

Essence surges through the Solar's legs, propelling her effortlessly through the air.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Solar may automatically succeed at any standard jumping attempt (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 71-72), such as to hop a picket fence or leap between the roof of two buildings with only a narrow gap between them, gaining an exceptional success without needing to roll. If she attempts a much more ambitious, superhuman jump – say, to hop from the ground to the top of an 18-wheeler, or to leap from rooftop to rooftop *across a street* – then she may make a jumping roll which carries her (successes) x (Essence + 2) yards.

## Spirit-Detecting Glance

**Resonance:** Twilight

With but a quick glance, the Solar may detect the presence of ephemeral beings, and, should it prove needful, rend them asunder.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

With but a moment's concentration and an instant action, the Solar can attune her senses to detect the presence of beings in Twilight for the rest of the scene. She can either search for a particular sort of being (such as ghosts, ignoring the presence of spirits and angels), or unveil *all* ephemeral entities. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, she can also dial herself into the same spiritual frequency occupied by ghosts, spirits, angels, or some other variety of ephemeral entity for the rest of the scene, allowing her to interact with them as though they were physically present, including harming them. Of course, this is a two-way street, and the ephemeral being can hit back.

## Strange Tongue Understanding

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar is a master of tongues, able to understand and be understood despite any language barrier.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Solar can understand any earthly language after a few minutes of exposure to it, and make herself understood after a few minutes more; she suffers a -2 equipment penalty to all Social actions using the tongue due to her halting and uncertain grasp of the language. Spending 1 Mote grants instant fluency for the rest of the scene, and makes the character sound like a native speaker.

## Subtle Speech Method

**Resonance:** Eclipse

The Solar becomes a master of hidden meaning, coding messages inside messages that only reveal themselves to those she wishes.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

Spend 1 Mote while speaking or composing a written work to embed a second, hidden message inside the statement or writing. This hidden message can only be discerned by those the Solar intends to address it to.

## Surprise Anticipation Method

**Resonance:** Night

A sixth sense warns the Solar of impending danger, making her impossible to take unaware.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is active, the Solar is scanning for threats with both her mundane and divine senses. When she is in immediate danger, she experiences a unique sensation – perhaps she hears the tolling of a bell, or feels a rush of nonexistent wind from the direction of danger – and sees the threat briefly outlined in golden light. She automatically succeeds at all rolls to notice an ambush or sneak attack. This Charm may be reflexively activated in response to a surprise attack rather than in anticipation of one, but doing so adds 1 Willpower to its activation cost.

If the Solar possesses the Danger Sense (••) Merit, this Charm is always active at no cost.

## Ten-Ox Meditation

**Resonance:** Dawn, Night, Zenith

Essence burns and surges in the Solar's muscles, granting strength beyond strength.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Solar may use Excellence to double her Strength + Stamina pool for feats of strength to lift and break objects, rather than adding the lower of the two Attributes. The Solar permanently adds a bonus to all Strength rolls equal to her Essence or her highest Caste Skill, whichever is lower.

By reflexively spending 1 Mote, the Solar may perform one of the following feats:

- Add her Strength rating as a damage bonus to all Athletics, Brawl, and Weaponry-based attacks made this turn.
- Lift and hurl an object far too unwieldy for an ordinary person to use as a weapon, such as a street lamp, motorcycle, or police officer. Any object she can lift, with Size no greater than her (Strength + Essence), can be used as an improvised melee or throwing weapon. Improvised

weapons have a weapon bonus equal to the lower of their Size or Durability. Objects with Size greater than 5 deal lethal damage, while those with Size 10 or more deal aggravated damage.

## Terrible Sun-King Condemnation

**Resonance:** Zenith

The Solar castigates her enemy as a foe of the living and villain in the eyes of all upright creatures. The weight of her disdain crushes him and marks him as outcast from the light; his wretched nature becomes clear to all he meets.

**Cost:** 1 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's condemnation falters, her own words ringing weak and hollow in her ears. She loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The target bears up under the Solar's ire, and her condemnation fails to find purchase.

**Success:** The Solar condemns her target, casting the shadow of divine disfavor upon him. He gains the Wretched Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the weight of the universe's disapproval crushes the target's will, causing him to lose a point of Willpower.

### WRETCHED

The very universe itself is repelled by the fact that you occupy it. You know this, and so does everyone you meet. Strangers who catch sight of you whisper to one another, speculating about the ghastly social diseases you likely carry, or your doubtless appalling sexual proclivities. The 10-again rule no longer applies to any Social action you take.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Regain Willpower through your Virtue (or equivalent trait), affirming your self-worth. Otherwise, this Condition expires after the Exalt's (Essence rating) days.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Thunderclap Rush Attack

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar's Essence rises in reaction to killing intent projected against it, giving her the edge on her foes.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

The Solar permanently adds her highest Caste Skill rating to her Initiative modifier. If she spends 1 Mote, she can act first in the current turn regardless of her Initiative rating.

## Unshakeable Bloodhound Technique

**Resonance:** Night

When the Solar is in hot pursuit of her quarry, she seems inescapable, always cutting corners perfectly, judging the best moment to dart through traffic, and reading the evidence to regain the trail when her prey tries to give her the slip.

**Cost:** None

**Action:** Permanent

The Solar enjoys a permanent -3 modifier to her required target number of successes in chase scenes.

## Vanishing From Mind's Eye Method

**Resonance:** Night

The Solar stills her Essence, becoming one with the many anonymous shadows of the world. She can become just another face in the crowd with next to no effort; or by sinking into the quiescent depths of her Essence, can fade from notice altogether.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

By ducking into a patch of shadows or an obscure corner for a moment, the Solar may shroud herself in anonymity. Nobody who isn't specifically on the lookout for her can notice her; she just seems to be a faceless member of the teeming crowds in an urban environment, or one shadow among many in a rural setting. So long as she doesn't engage in some violent or alarming direct action to draw attention to herself – screaming, firing a gun, smashing a window – people will continue to ignore even things like taking out and assembling a high-powered rifle while sitting on a bus stop bench, or loading a bloody corpse into the trunk of her car. It just doesn't occur to them to care; the Solar sinks into the background noise of the environment. Interacting with someone directly (such as by speaking to them) voids this anonymity. If she does something disruptive, or if someone who *can* see her tries to call attention to her, bystanders must make a Wits + Composure roll (penalized by her Essence) to notice her.

By spending 1 Mote, the Solar becomes genuinely impossible to notice, even to electronic devices such as video cameras and motion sensors. She's effectively invisible. Even if she does something that leaves blatant evidence of her presence, such as kicking down a door, it still requires a Wits + Composure roll (again penalized by her Essence) to notice her, and those who *do* notice her will forget she is present after a number of turns equal to their Composure unless they spend a point of Willpower. If she attacks someone, the victim automatically becomes aware of her presence and remains aware so long as her violence persists (but this *only* applies to the victim; everyone else must roll as normal).

## Venomous Rumors Technique

**Resonance:** Eclipse

Insinuating a thread of her Essence into ill-intended gossip, the Solar assures that her poison reaches every ear that might matter.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Subterfuge + Essence – Composure

**Action:** Instant

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Solar fail to smear her target's reputation, but her transparent attempts to do so leave others suspicious of her, inflicting a -1 penalty on all social actions against anyone in the target's social group for the rest of the current story.

**Failure:** The Solar fails to establish negative rumors about the target.

**Success:** While this Charm can't ensure that everyone *believes* whatever terrible rumor the Solar wishes to spread, success does guarantee that within a day or two, everyone who matters has at least *heard* it. The target gains the Slandered Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the results of success, the target suffers catastrophic damage to his ability to leverage his social assets. Until he resolves the Slandered Condition, the target loses access to a Merit of the Solar's choice. This can only disable social Merits like Fixer, Barfly, or Fame, not Merits that describe intrinsic qualities like Iron Will or Closed Book.

### SLANDERED

Your reputation has been trashed, either because of something you did or because of something people *think* you maybe did. Until you can convince everyone that you didn't do whatever the rumor mill says you did, or at least lay low long enough for everyone to move on to the next thing, you add three extra Doors to all social maneuvering against everyone who has heard about you.

**Possible Sources:** Scandalous behavior, pissing off the wrong vampire, various Charms

**Resolution:** Clear your name, or weather the storm until the end of the current story.

**Beat:** n/a

## Whirling Brush Method

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Twilight

Words pour through the Solar's mind like a rushing river, leaving wisdom behind in their wake without consuming her precious time.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Solar may read and absorb information as fast as she can track her eyes across the page or screen. Books can be consumed in moments, online databases memorized as quickly as the data can be loaded and scrolled across the screen. Moreover, she can copy text by hand at lightning speed, transcribing an entire book in minutes, up to and including any diagrams or illustrations.

## Whispered Prayer of Judgment

**Resonance:** Dawn

The Solar whispers the shortest and most heartfelt of prayers to the bullet as it rests in the chamber, soaking up her killing intent. It might be a litany of the names of her dead children; it might be nothing more than “Die, you fucking monster.” Whatever the words are, they imprint deadly and explosive Essence upon quiescent lead. The shot leaves the barrel with the roar of thunder, and strikes with the fury of Heaven.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; can only be used to enhance a Firearms attack after the Solar has accumulated a +3 aiming bonus

A Firearms attack enhanced by this Charm doubles the gun’s damage bonus, and automatically inflicts the Stunned Tilt.

## Wholeness-Restoring Meditation

**Resonance:** Twilight, Zenith

Such is the Solar’s genius that her medical care can cure the incurable, or mend permanent maiming or ailments.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** Solar must roll an exceptional success while attempting to treat a normally-untreatable medical condition, then use this Charm.

Bringing together surgical genius (or holistic medical insights) and the power of her Essence, the Solar may repair normally incurable or permanent medical conditions. This Charm can cure diseases such as untreatable cancers or HIV, render insidious supernatural diseases vulnerable to purification (see p. XX), and undo permanent Conditions such as blindness, or ongoing Tilts like Arm Wrack due to complete loss of the limb by grafting on a replacement that functions as well as the original.

## Wound-Mending Care Technique

**Resonance:** Eclipse, Twilight

The Solar’s ministrations grant health and hardiness with a speed and efficiency unknown to modern medicine.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Medicine + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** Solar must successfully provide mundane medical aid to the target, then use this Charm.

**Roll Results**



**Dramatic Failure:** The Solar's ministrations have no more beneficial effects than those of any other physician. She gains the Doubting Condition.

**Failure:** The Solar provides only mundane medical assistance.

**Success:** For each success rolled, the patient immediately reduces one point of lethal damage to bashing, or instantly heals one point of bashing damage. Lethal injuries are always downgraded first until none remain.

**Exceptional Success:** The Exalt either heals a great deal of damage, or else may spend five successes to convert one point of aggravated damage directly to bashing.

## Wyld Cauldron Index

**Resonance:** Twilight

Standing within the boundaries of a Solar Burn, the character may bend and manipulate the volatile forces around herself to twist the world within the Burn into uncanny and often deadly configurations.

**Cost:** 1 or 3 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Resolve + Essence – 3 (for a minor Burn) or 5 (for a major Burn)

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** Must be used within a Solar Burn.

**Duration:** 1 scene (for 1 Mote) or Indefinite (for 3 Motes); in the latter case, the effects remain until the Burn dissipates or until this Charm is used again to redefine the alteration to the Burn

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates in a Sear.

**Failure:** The character's attempt to manipulate the Burn fails. The Burn resets its dissolution as normal, and its boundaries may even grow just a bit.

**Success:** The Exalt manipulates the Solar Essence suffusing the Burn, imposing one of the following Environmental Tilts throughout the entire Burn: Blazing Light, Extreme Heat, Heavy Rains, Heavy Winds, Maze, Sealed Exits, or Thunderous. She and up to (Composure + Resolve) individuals she elects to protect are immune to the deleterious effects of these Tilts.

**Exceptional Success:** The Exalt may invoke any of the Tilts she could on a success, as well as the following: Eternal Sunlight, Fire-Cursed, Heavy, or Mirages.

#### BLAZING LIGHT

**Description:** Everything is desperately, relentlessly bright, the light always coming from *somewhere* and ceaselessly stabbing at the eyes.

**Effect:** Affected characters suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls that depend on vision, and a -1 penalty to all other rolls due to the low-grade pain and distraction. Closing one's eyes negates these penalties but imposes the Blinded Tilt.

#### ETERNAL SUNLIGHT

**Description:** The sun never sets on the Burn – literally. Inexplicably, it is always high noon within the area’s boundaries. If you look up, there it is: the sun. You can’t catch it coming or going, either. It never *fades*. When you leave the Burn, there’s always some kind of moment or boundary marking the edge of the thing: an arch; an alley where you can’t quite see the sun, but you can look up and see the sky fade from blue to black as you traverse its course; even a wash-line behind which that hot bright coin disappears, taking the light with it; on the third floor, the sun is shining outside of the windows, but if you ride an elevator up or down even a single floor, there are stars outside. But then you step back in, and it’s not midnight, it’s midday.

**Effect:** It’s always daytime, and the sun is always shining. Vampires awaken at sunset (according to the world outside of the Burn) but suffer the Lethargic Condition.

### FIRE-CURSED

**Description:** The area is always ablaze or trying to get that way. Any source of flame will do everything in its power to escape containment and begin an uncontrolled blaze, and once a fire catches, it spreads quickly and energetically. For all that, the area seems reluctant to become a towering inferno and burn out; flames creep and consume, leaving everything deadly and sweltering, but they delay destroying the environment completely for much longer than seems truly possible.

**Effect:** Significant portions of the Burn are always on fire. See **Chronicles of Darkness**, page 98 for fire rules.

### HEAVY

**Description:** Gravity presses its hot and relentless hand down on everything in the Burn, pushing characters to the floor and robbing them of energy.

**Effect:** Characters must make a Strength + Stamina roll, penalized by one die per dot of Size above 5, to avoid suffering a -3 penalty to all Physical dice pools. Success fights off the penalty for (Stamina) turns, or for the rest of the scene with an exceptional success.

### MAZE

**Description:** The geography of the Burn twists and turns in on itself in strange ways, making navigation difficult. Doors, halls, and alleys may connect to one another in nonsensical ways, or a simple cubicle farm could become a bewildering rat-run.

**Effect:** Characters attempting to navigate the Burn must succeed at an Intelligence + Composure – Essence roll or suffer the Lost Condition.

### SEALED EXITS

**Description:** The Burn is a closed system. There are no exits; doors refuse to open, or simply vanish. Alleys are fenced off. Bridges vanish. Elevators take characters back to those floors that are part of the Burn.

**Effect:** Mundane means of escape from the Burn automatically fail. Supernatural methods of escape provoke a Clash of Wills.

## THUNDEROUS

**Description:** All noise within the Burn is amplified beyond reason. Footfalls sound like dropped bowling balls. Speech thunders and echoes, hurting the ears. A passing train is a cataclysm of noise, leaving everyone deafened for minutes.

**Effect:** After a few minutes in the Burn, everyone is effectively deafened by the cacophony, and rolls only a chance die for hearing-based Perception rolls, while suffering a -2 penalty on all combat-related dice pools due to disorientation.

## Wyld-Shaping Technique

**Resonance:** Twilight

The Exalt imposes her will upon the Essence impregnating a Solar Burn, remaking its landscape and contents to reflect her dreams and desires

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Composure + Essence – 3 (for a minor Burn) or 5 (for a major Burn)

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** Must be used within a Solar Burn.

**Duration:** The effects remain until the Burn dissipates.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates in a Sear.

**Failure:** The character's attempt to manipulate the Burn fails. The Burn resets its dissolution as normal, and its boundaries may even grow just a bit.

**Success:** The Exalt can select one of the following options:

- Reconfigure the layout of the Burn, such that various doors, hallways, alleys, and other points connect to one another in a different way, or else shrink the area by up to 50% or expand it to twice its original size (without altering any terrain outside of the Burn, leading to, for example, a floor of an office building that has twice as much square footage as the building it's inside should be able to contain). Expanded Burns either space out their existing geography, or add on "generic" additions to the existing landscape; an expanded office building will grow new halls and offices, while a Burned suburb will sprout a few new (empty) houses here and there, complete with mowed yards and ownerless cars parked in the driveways.
- Make cosmetic alterations to the landscape within the Burn, redefining its general "motif" to be something else, within the basic limitations of physics (which is to say, you can go for a futuristic look, but not a functioning zero-gravity warehouse). This doesn't change the layout or function of the Burn, so an office space transformed into a limestone cave system will certainly be dark and festooned with stalagmites, but it will also feature niches along the wall to hold the copy machines; and the break room is where it always was, although it's now a niche weathered out of solid rock. These alterations slowly manifest over the course of an hour or so.

- The Solar may conjure any object to hand that could reasonably exist within the Burn, up to Size 5. In an office building, she could create a laptop, office chair, or stapler, for example; in a fire station, she could immediately conjure a fire ax, safety gear, map of the city, or mini-fridge. She can also recreate destroyed objects that once resided at the location, such as the lost volumes of a library that burned down, or incinerated evidence from a bombed-out police evidence lockup. However, none of these objects can leave the Burn, or persist once the Burn ends.
- The Solar may create a generic inhabitant of the Burn, or else recreate a deceased (or simply departed) person who once dwelled or spent significant time within the Burn. The created individual is a simulacrum with neither inherent awareness that they are artificial, nor a true soul; their sense of identity is perpetuated by the Essence of the Burn in place of a soul. Created individuals cannot leave a Burn (they take one point of bashing damage per minute as the Essence matrix holding them together begins to fray and disperse), and painlessly cease to exist when the Burn does. Generic inhabitants have false memories of a past, and all simulacra are conditioned to mentally paper over the fact that they never seem to leave the Burn, particularly in cases where the Burn is a place that a person wouldn't normally live full-time such as an office or bus station.

**Exceptional Success:** Alterations made to the landscape (with the first two options) persist even after the Burn dissipates. Summoned objects can leave the Burn, but only while it continues to exist. Created individuals persist beyond the end of a Burn and can leave its confines, but suffer the Soulless Condition whenever they are outside of a Solar Burn.

## Solar Burns

A Solar's Essence presses hot and heavy against the fabric of the world, saturating it, permeating it, filling it with divine power the world long ago grew too strained and fragile to endure, and a Burn is born. Solar Burns are scoured by light, and without any counterbalancing force, the light is a trial to endure.

The light itself is the easiest way to spot a Solar Burn. All sources of illumination are significantly brighter, sometimes painfully so. Bare bulbs stab the eyes; the dim light of a cell phone is flashlight-bright; and the sky during the day is a broad screaming white expanse. Once switched off, electric lights take a few moments to fade away, rather than cutting off immediately. There's always at least a little bit of ambient light to see by. At night, it's easy to write it off as light pollution, or the stars and moon being very bright, but the sourceless illumination persists even when it's too cloudy for any stars to be seen, or when indoors with the curtains drawn, or underground.

Other things are off, as well. Gravity's a little bit heavier, imposing a -1 penalty on all Dexterity-based dice pools. Objects, structures, and surfaces that spend most of their time in the Burn become oddly brittle, reducing their Durability by -1. Electricity becomes erratic; brown-outs and power surges are both common, and everything carries a constant, low-key static charge. People in a Solar Burn get shocked by touching bare metal several times per day. Tension headaches are common. If a Solar has an Iconic Anima manifestation, it tends to appear in subtle ways throughout the Burn: glimpsed for a split-second as someone flips through television channels; forming itself for just a heartbeat in the ripples of a fresh-poured cup of tea; or sweeping across the room, there and gone, instead of the proper shape someone's shadow should have occupied.

Most importantly, and most dangerously, most forces brought into the Burn are significantly empowered. Fires burn hotter and brighter, the wind blows harder, and sounds are louder. Emotions are similarly amplified; anger quickly swells into rage, while sadness easily becomes paralyzing, crushing sorrow; all un-Exalted characters suffer from the Overstimulated Persistent Condition while in the Burn. Non-Exalted supernatural beings, too, find their power strengthened by the Burn; any roll which incorporates a supernatural character's power trait (Blood Potency, Gnosis, Azoth), as well as any roll to activate a supernatural power such as a vampire's Discipline or mage's spell, adds three bonus dice.

This final quality may make a Solar Burn seem like a place of supernatural power to be hotly contested, but channeling power from the Burn in this fashion overwhelms a supernatural being's mind, body, and spirit. The power gets inside of them, causing them to carry the Overstimulated Condition outside of the Burn with them for a number of days equal to their power trait after using bonus dice from the Burn.

Vampires are always on-edge within a Solar Burn, suffering a -2 penalty to resist frenzy.

Certain spirits are also drawn to the site of a Solar Burn, as it swells with the resonance of hope, light, power, inspiration, and faith. Alas for those spirits, the orderly power of Solar Essence also raises the strength of the local Gauntlet by +1.

#### OVERSTIMULATED (PERSISTENT)

Your emotions burn hotter and higher than they should. Glancing at a photo of your departed spouse provokes crushing despair rather than a small pang of sadness. Irritation swells quickly into rage. Amusement becomes hysterical laughter. You probably realize there's something wrong, that you feel out of control, but there's nothing you can do about it because *you* aren't the problem. You suffer a -3 penalty to your Composure at all times, and lose the 10-again rule when acting contrary to the dominant tenor of your emotions (such as sensibly trying to talk to and de-escalate a confrontation with the neighbor who keeps playing his music too fucking loud at night when you have *goddamn work* in the *goddamn morning*).

**Possible Sources:** Dwelling within a Solar Burn, certain drug overdoses, mystic curses

**Resolution:** Leave the Burn.

**Beat:** Whenever you do something horribly unwise that you regret because of your amped-up emotions.

## Solar Searing

When a Solar Burn is Seared away, the world swells with a terrible but momentary wave of all-consuming light. There's an almost hymnal sigh as everyone within the Burn suffers the Blinded Tilt for a turn. Every object caught in the Sear permanently reduces its Structure by -1. Electric lights usually burn themselves out, or explode. Vampires suffer momentary exposure to a painful and potentially damaging flash of sunlight. Then the light fades, and the Burn is gone.

The effects for human beings caught in the Sear are much more serious. Every mortal caught in the Sear must roll to resist the sudden hyper-infusion of undirected Solar Essence.

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve

**Action:** Reflexive

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character is transformed into an Ophanim.

**Failure:** The character is transformed into a Throne if they have Integrity 4 or higher; or an Ophanim with Integrity 3 or below.

**Success:** The character rides out the storm of Solar Essence, disoriented and crackling with static electricity, but ultimately no worse for wear.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the torrent of Solar Essence pouring through the character's body clears all non-aggravated damage out of her Health track.

## Thrones

A Throne probably thinks they survived the Sear unscathed, at least at first. They look outwardly normal. Their mind, memories, and personality are all intact. But a fragment of Solar Essence is caught in the soul of every Throne, and no Exaltation regulates it, no Charm directs it to bring forth a distinct and bounded miracle.

The Throne gains the Unseen Sense (••) Merit at no cost. If the individual has some existing history with the supernatural, she's probably attuned to detecting the sort of beings she's already familiar with, but it's otherwise difficult to guess what sort of supernatural sensitivity a Throne manifests. One woman might find herself picking up emanations of the God-Machine, while the man riding the elevator next to her during the Sear ends up with a searchlight in his head that points to vampires. Regardless of what else a Throne can detect, they *also* pick up on emanations from Solars, as well as from other Thrones, and it's clear that these emanations are like whatever's... inside of them, now. They don't feel monstrous. This can bring Thrones together to compare notes and find fellows who can understand what they're going through.

That's where the real problems start.

Whenever a Throne uses her Unseen Sense to highlight a supernatural being (in game terms, accepting the Spooked Condition to zero in on what's raising her hackles), the shard of Essence within her flares and produces a flash of spiritual "light" for just a moment, very much like a Shining Anima Condition. Some particularly sensitive monsters might use that moment to spot her in return, though the flash is only present for a moment, there and gone; a Throne in a crowd is very difficult to spot.

When Thrones gather in a group, the Essence within each of them resonates and surges in sympathetic response to its fellows. This doesn't feel like anything except a mild sense of affirmation to the Thrones, but it sends up a bright celestial beacon that shines with terribly clarity in the ephemeral reality of Twilight. The more Thrones grouped together, the brighter they shine. Solar Anathema can spot such a signal from miles away, and that shine looks to them exactly like the signature of a soul brimming with the potential for Exaltation, but not yet Exalted.

The solidified Solar Essence within a Throne's Soul is highly nourishing to the Unconquered. Each Throne soul consumed grants the Solar Anathema a temporary dot of new Dread Powers, which persist for a number of weeks equal to the thing's Rank.

The Anathema are blessedly rare, and few of them can be found on Earth at any given time. But if one is anywhere within range of the aura that appears at a gathering of Thrones, it *will* come to investigate, and to feast, if it can. In a way, the rarity of the Unconquered can almost be a curse; there are at least four cells of Thrones at present (two in China, one in the United States, and one in South Africa) that have gathered upwards of twenty members into a fairly organized monster-hunting compact. Their meetings are sometimes visible to predators whose existence they do not suspect from nearly a hundred miles away, and it's only a matter of time until one of those predators wanders into range.

A Throne's Unseen Sense is also capable of picking up on the presence of a Solar Anathema or Ophanim in Twilight, but attempting to zero in on the source of that particular tingle is fruitless, as the character can't pierce Twilight's veil to see the lurking predator. She *can* draw attention to herself by trying, though.

## Danielle Harrow

*"Some of the people around us aren't really people."*

She never asked for any of this, or for anything except a job that brings in enough to pay rent at the end of each month, really. Danielle's apartment is cheap and shabby, so it didn't strike her as odd when the lights kept getting bright and buzzing, or the power got erratic, or when she could hear her neighbors through the walls clearer and clearer by the day. Then there was the big flash that woke her in the middle of the night. The landlord went missing the night of the flash, along with Mrs. Robinson down the hall, but the thing that lodged in Danielle's head was the worst. It's like a light, and when she turns it on certain people, she sees that they're really patchwork *things* that only look and act like people. There's one of them living on the top floor of her building, Mr. Ranpaseki. Danielle doesn't know what to do about him. She doesn't know what to do about any of them, but something tells her Mr. Ranpaseki is dangerous.

Danielle thinks someone else – a skinny kid on the third floor – has maybe got the same kind of shine she does. She hasn't mustered up the courage to approach him yet, but she's getting there. She's seen the kid looking at her, too. Maybe if she weren't alone, she could do something.

## DANIELLE HARROW

Danielle is a young woman of mixed Latin and Filipino heritage. She's always had a nervous laugh, but these days she's also sporting bags under her eyes and a pinched, watchful expression – she's not getting much sleep.

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 2

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

**Mental Skills:** Academics (Moroccan History) 2, Computer 1, Crafts (Knitting) 2, Science 1

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 2, Drive 2

**Social Skills:** Animal Ken (Cats) 2, Empathy 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Subterfuge 2

**Merits:** Unseen Sense (Prometheans) (••)

**Virtue:** Generosity

**Vice:** Apathy

**Integrity:** 5

**Health:** 7

**Willpower:** 5

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 10

**Initiative:** 6

**Defense:** 4

## Ophanim

Compared to the Ophanim, Thrones got off very, very easy. The Sear shatters the integrity of an Ophanim's mind, body, and soul, filling the cracks and gaps with raw Solar Essence. It goes something like this:

There's a great all-consuming blast of light. It knocks you to the ground. Your heart stops, your limbs splay out; your body is starting to unravel, dissolving into light. Your mind is fragmenting along with it. The disjointed void draws a great rush of dissipating Essence into it, and the light solidifies. Something rises up off the floor as the light fades, and it's not the person who fell down anymore.

Ophanim are generally symmetrical beings that would be beautiful, in a strange way, if they weren't so subtly but consistently off-model from what a person is supposed to look like. Sometimes they look like marble statues. Sometimes they look like gargoyles, or living paintings, or stained-glass figures. They're usually mono-color: all white, or all black, or all gray, or all gold. An Ophanim's mind is as devastated as its body; sometimes it remembers who it used to be, but the memories are always hazy and fragmentary, like coming out from under anesthesia, and they never stay coherent for long. Mostly, Ophanim operate on instinct. Their Virtue remains intact, but their Vice becomes Hunger, and that hunger drives them at all times.

Ophanim are constantly unraveling. It takes an act of will (in other words, a point of Willpower) for an Ophanim to hold itself together each day. An Ophanim with no Willpower to spend is *starving*; it suffers a point of lethal damage each day at sunrise, which cannot be healed until it spends at least one point of Willpower to stabilize itself. Ophanim can still regain Willpower by enacting their Virtue, but that's difficult since they can rarely remember who they are or how to relate to other people, and such memories never surface while an Ophanim is starving. Worse, while Ophanim often fall dormant through the day (or for up to a week following a large meal), they don't really *sleep*, and can't regain Willpower that way. Dormancy negates the need to spend Willpower, so at least it spaces out the feedings, but no Ophanim can sleep forever. Eventually they're roused to an unrelenting wakefulness, and then their hunger must be answered.

The Solar Essence in an Ophanim, as blind and confused as the creature it has disfigured, seeks to imbue itself into a mortal soul. It can't – it isn't an Exaltation, merely the cast-off power of one – but this urge drives Ophanim to seek out human souls. Unfortunately, while Ophanim are capable of touching and interacting with a soul thanks to their hyper-suffusion of Solar Essence, they don't have any special ability to tease a person's soul free of their body, and so Ophanim



consume a soul by consuming the flesh housing it. Devouring a person, and thereby that person's soul, grants an Ophanim three Willpower points.

Ophanim aren't ghosts or spirits, but they fade into Twilight each day at sunrise nonetheless. They only ever manifest physically at night, and have no control over such manifestation. An Ophanim might manifest at sundown for three nights running, find itself impotently trapped in Twilight during the entirety of the two nights that follow, and then finally manifest again only an hour before dawn on the night after that. As a result, these creatures quickly learn to stalk prey invisibly, waiting for an opportune manifestation to give them a chance to feed.

If there's a way to turn an Ophanim back into a person, nobody's found it yet.

## Ophanim Creation

Use the following rules to create an Ophanim:

- **Rank:** Ophanim follow a Rank system similar to spirits and other horrors, and eventually grow in Rank if they survive long enough and consume a sufficient quantity of souls. Ophanim can also suddenly increase in Rank if subjected to additional Sears. All other traits are calibrated off of an Ophanim's Rank.
- **Attributes:** Ophanim begin with a single dot in all Attributes, and then distribute a number of additional dots based on their Rank. The maximum total rating of any given Attribute is also determined by Rank.
- **Skills:** Ophanim retain whatever Skills they had as humans, and normally develop Brawl to at least 3 dots within short order.
- **Merits:** Ophanim generally don't possess Merits.
- **Willpower:** Resolve + Composure, maximum of 10
- **Initiative:** Dexterity + Composure
- **Defense:** (Higher of Dexterity and Wits) + Athletics
- **Size:** Varies from 4 to 6.
- **Speed:** Strength + Dexterity + Species Factor 5 or 6
- **Health:** Stamina + Size
- **Mote Pool:** Ophanim have a Mote Pool which they use to fuel their Dread Powers. Its size, and the number of Motes they can spend per turn, are dictated by their Rank. They regain 2 Motes each day at sunrise.

### Effects of Rank

Rank	Trait Limits	Attribute Dots	Motes/Per Turn	Dread Powers in Dots
•	5	14-20	10/1	4
••	7	18-30	12/2	5
•••	9	25-40	14/3	9
••••	12	30-50	17/4	12
•••••	15	38-60	20/5	15

## Dread Powers

An Ophanim's Dread Powers are intrinsic manifestations of its shattered Essence, as natural to it as breathing once was.

### ARMOR (• to •••••)

The Ophanim's flesh has hardened into a shell very much like stone or metal.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Ophanim gains an armor rating equal to the dot rating of this power.

### BLEND IN (• to •••••)

The Ophanim may shift the color or consistency of its flesh to blend into its surroundings.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 Scene

Once this power is active, all rolls to detect the Ophanim's presence suffer a penalty equal to this power's rating.

### BREAKDOWN (•)

The Ophanim's presence is terribly disruptive to electronic devices.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Mechanical and electrical devices fail in the creature's presence. Lights flicker, cell phones get no reception, televisions and machinery randomly turn on and off. Attempts to use such a device in the Ophanim's presence suffer a penalty equal to its Rank.

### DEADLY WEAPONRY (• to •••)

The Ophanim sports some form of natural weaponry such as fangs, claws, horns, or a lashing tail ending in a wicked spike.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Each dot of this power grants the Ophanim a +1 lethal damage bonus to natural attacks.

### FIREPROOF (••)

The Ophanim is utterly at home in any environment, no matter how hot.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Ophanim can't suffer damage from fire or heat.

### HORRID PROWESS (• to •••••)

The Ophanim may feed Essence into its monstrous body, pushing it to incredible physical feats.

**Cost:** 1 Mote per dot

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

The Ophanim may add one dot to a single Physical Attribute for the rest of the turn per Mote spent.

## HUNTING GROUND (•••)

The Ophanim's Essence has grounded in a certain preferred killing ground, where the creature will preferentially stalk its prey if given the chance.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

While in its chosen hunting ground and when this power is active, the Ophanim enjoys a bonus of three dice to all rolls to stalk and consume prey.

## LETHAL PROJECTION (• to •••)

The Ophanim is capable of projecting some deadly expulsion, usually fire or condensed light that cuts like a laser.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Strength + Athletics

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The power fails and can't be used again for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The attack misses.

**Success:** The attack strikes its target and inflicts appropriate damage.

**Exceptional Success:** The attack hits, inflicts damage, and causes an appropriate Tilt.

Attacks made with this power have a damage bonus equal to its dot rating, and may strike out to 30 yards away.

## MAZE (••••)

The Ophanim may release its shattered Essence into the environment around it, turning the landscape into a twisted Escher maze where locations don't link together logically. The hallways of an apartment building could easily become a tangled labyrinth from which escape is nearly impossible, while the Ophanim stalks its prey through an endless succession of rooms and corridors.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

Anyone trying to navigate the maze must roll Wits + Composure – Ophanim’s Resolve or gain the Lost Condition.

## PRODIGIOUS LEAP (••)

The Ophanim can make great, bounding leaps no human could hope to match.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

By spending 1 Mote, the Ophanim can propel itself about four stories straight up, or across a six-lane highway.

## REGENERATE (• to •••••)

The Ophanim is capable of reconstituting its body with terrifying speed, pulling mangled limbs and torn flesh back together before its astonished enemies.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

By concentrating on healing itself, the Ophanim erases a number of points of bashing or lethal damage equal to its rating in this power. Regenerate cannot be used while the Ophanim is starving.

## SCURRY (• to •••••)

Loping on its twisted limbs, the Ophanim is capable of terrible bursts of speed.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

The Ophanim adds her rating in Scurry to both her Speed and Defense for the rest of the turn.

## WALL CLIMBING (•••)

The Ophanim can use its powerful limbs to easily climb up walls or even along ceilings.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Ophanim can traverse any surface capable of bearing its weight.

## WINGS (•••)

The Ophanim boasts angelic or batlike wings and is capable of flight.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Flight occurs at twice the Ophanim’s standard ground Speed.

Mrs. Robinson

*“<rustling sounds from within the boiler>”*

The people on Mrs. Robinson’s floor knew her as a nice grandmother whose kids moved out of the city. She used to work for a cigarette company from the ‘60s until the early ‘90s, but never picked up the habit herself. She kept her apartment tidy, and would look after people’s kids until they got home from work. One night there was a big flash of light, and Mrs. Robinson disappeared. Or at least, everyone thinks she did.

She’s still in the building. She spends most of her time sleeping in the basement, often invisible and intangible, but sometimes in the boiler. Its heat can’t hurt her, and she finds the light both comforting and... distracting. It keeps her from thinking about... the things she has to do, when she goes away from herself. She has enough presence of mind not to go back to her old apartment. There might be children there. She knows a lot about the children. She knows where they go. She knows where they play. She tries to stay away, but she thinks she knows too much, and she tries not to think about why she has to stay away, either.

There aren’t very many drifters or homeless left within several blocks of the apartment building anymore. Soon, Mrs. Robinson isn’t going to be able to be quite so picky.

## **MRS. ROBINSON**

Mrs. Robinson looks like a charred Greek statue with incredibly long arms and legs ending in sharp talons, and with the face of a kindly grandmother. That face’s features are fixed in a warm smile, even when her mouth opens far too wide so that Mrs. Robinson can eat.

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

**Social Attributes:** Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 1

**Mental Skills:** Investigation (Children) 1

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 3, Brawl (Ambushes) 3, Stealth 3

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Streetwise (Youth Gangs) 1

**Rank:** 1

**Virtue:** Patience

**Vice:** Hunger

**Health:** 11

**Willpower:** 5

**Size:** 6

**Speed:** 14

**Initiative:** 4

**Defense:** 6

**Dread Powers:** Deadly Weaponry (Talons) (•), Fireproof (••), Regenerate (•)

## **The Prospector**

*“<a faint knocking sound from the basement>”*

*“Howdy.”*

It’s an old ghost story. People have been seeing the Prospector around the honeycomb of old mines for as far back as anyone can remember; you heard it from your father, and he heard it from his dad, all the way back to... well, nobody knows, but if anyone bothered to dig through the newspapers at Town Hall, they’d find it goes all the way back to the 1890s, when a series of collapses led to the first closure of the mines. The wood and the metal had gone bad somehow. Brittle.

Wise parents don’t tell their children about the Prospector. Children ignore their parents, after all. Children might think it’s fun to go up to one of the old closed-off mineshafts, and people who go looking for the Prospector sometimes don’t come back.

Not that keeping the children ignorant keeps them safe. The Prospector isn’t a ghost, and isn’t confined to the mines; he just uses them to move around the valley conveniently. He’s been hunting these hills and the three towns scattered among them for over a hundred years, eating intruders that poke into the old maze of tunnels when he can get them, sure, but also creeping out to prey on drifters, or folks living alone. It’s easy; he can appear inside your house once he’s pegged you as suitable prey, after all.

The Prospector doesn’t remember anything about his mortal life any more, or the heroic gunslinger who battled the vampires lairing in the mines over a century ago before moving on and leaving an unresolved mess in his wake. The Prospector has consumed more souls than he can recall. He’s gotten good at the hunt, at sating the hunger and then sinking into the sweet relief of dormancy. It’s all he really is anymore.

## THE PROSPECTOR

The Prospector looks like a partially-melted gold statue of a frontier miner from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His features are fixed in a permanent expression of sorrow and regret, but he hasn’t felt either of those emotions since Woodrow Wilson was President. When hunting, he moves with terrifying speed, twisting his surroundings into an extension of the mining tunnels that are his lair and blending into them before finally leaping to the attack with a molten-gold grasp.

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 4, Wits 5, Resolve 5

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 8, Dexterity 6, Stamina 10

**Social Attributes:** Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

**Mental Skills:** Crafts 3 (Tunnels)

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 4, Brawl (Grapple) 5, Stealth 4, Survival 3

**Social Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Intimidation 3

**Rank:** 4

**Virtue:** Diligence

**Vice:** Hunger

**Health:** 15

**Willpower:** 9

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 19

**Initiative:** 9

**Defense:** 10

**Dread Powers:** Armor (•), Blend In (•), Deadly Weaponry (Superheated grasp) (•), Hunting Ground (Old mine shafts) (•••), Maze (••••), Scurry (••)

# Chapter Six: The Lunar Exalted

Scarred survivors of a callous world of predators and predation, the Lunar Exalted are vengeance incarnate. They are the monsters that hunt monsters. This chapter features all the rules necessary to play one of the Lunar Exalted (or to use them as antagonists, for that matter). Further information on the Lunar Exalted can be found in Chapter One.

## Character Creation

Lunars follow all the standard steps outlined in Chapter Two. In the fifth step they add the Lunar template.

## Add Lunar Template

To transform a mere mortal into one of the Lunar Exalted, perform the following operations:

### Choose Caste

Begin by choosing your Lunar's Caste from among Full Moon, Changing Moon, or No Moon. These are outlined in greater detail in Chapter One. Your choice of Caste will determine your Bonus Attributes, Caste Attributes, Caste Charms, and Divine Gift.

### Bonus Attributes

A Lunar's Exaltation brings with it the instinct-memories and rage of a thousand thousand hosts who came before. The newly-fledged Lunar becomes the beneficiary of that power from the moment of her Second Breath. Select two Attributes from the three listed for your character's Caste. Add a dot to each of the two chosen. This cannot raise an Attribute above five dots.

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Bonus Attributes</b>
Full Moon	Strength, Dexterity, Stamina
Changing Moon	Presence, Manipulation, Composure
No Moon	Intelligence, Wits, Resolve

### Caste Attributes

The benefits of Caste Attributes are outlined in Chapter Two. Note your character's Caste Attributes:

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Caste Attributes</b>
Full Moon	Strength, Dexterity, Stamina
Changing Moon	Presence, Manipulation, Composure
No Moon	Intelligence, Wits, Resolve

### Bonus Skills

Add one dot to Animal Ken, Brawl, and Survival. This cannot raise any Skill above five dots.

### Caste Charms



You have an easier time learning the Charms that correspond to your Caste. Gain the Charm “Excellence” for free, and then select four additional Charms, at least three of which must be Caste Charms.

## Essence Rating

Your Lunar character begins with an Essence rating of 1. You can give up five of your Merit points to start at Essence 2, or all 10 to start at Essence 3.

## Divine Gifts

Every Lunar has a Divine Gift, an intrinsic feature of their Exaltation. Each Caste bears a different Divine Gift.

### The Full Moon Caste: No Escape

Every Full Moon is gifted with a number of advantages to help her stalk, evade, locate, and punish those who trespass into her domain. These include:

- No one gets the drop on a Full Moon. Every Full Moon gains the Danger Sense (••) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 44).
- Once per chapter, so long as she is in the wilderness or some deeply rural surroundings (an old abandoned farmhouse in the countryside would work), the Lunar may close her eyes, scent the wind, and use an instant action to intuit the exact location of one individual she has selected as her prey. This awareness doesn’t update itself to track a moving target, so her quarry isn’t guaranteed to still be at the point her senses directed her to by the time she gets there.
- Once per chapter, so long as she is in primarily natural surroundings, the Lunar may use an instant action to vanish into the wilderness. A cloud passes over the moon, or a wolf’s howl distracts everyone. Flashlights flicker. Perhaps a flock of birds erupts from the undergrowth, drawing everyone’s eyes away. Whatever it is, when they look up, the Lunar is simply gone. This Divine Gift moves her into hiding somewhere at least 90 yards away.

### The Changing Moon Caste: No Warning

Changing Moons are social predators, able to blend into the urban environment and get close to their prey with none the wiser until they strike. They have no particular need of shadows or isolation; busy crowds, bright overhead fluorescents, and cheap carpeting are the environments they’re best suited to blend into.

- Wherever her prey goes, so too goes the Changing Moon, easily infiltrating and blending into any sort of scene. All Changing Moons gain the Barfly (••) Merit at no cost, even if they don’t satisfy its prerequisites.
- Urban environments welcome the Changing Moon into their deepest and most secure inner recesses. When attempting to gain access to a Safe Place (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 54), the Exalt ignores a number of points of penalties imposed by that Merit equal to her Essence rating, so long as the Safe Place is within a town, city, or similarly developed area (the access tunnels beneath a rural college campus that is almost a town unto itself would count, a booby-trapped old mansion deep in the woods wouldn’t).

- Once per chapter, she may use an instant action to move to within striking and biting range of someone she considers her prey, so long as she can see that individual and they are within a town, city, or similarly developed urban area.

## The No Moon Caste: No Limits

No Moons may easily insinuate themselves into the affairs of other supernatural beings, strange otherworlds, and the lost mysteries of sorcery. They gain the following benefits:

- The No Moon can easily sniff out the presence or influence of monsters and other strangeness. She gains the Eye for the Strange (••) Merit at no cost, even if she doesn't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 44).
- Once the No Moon attains Occult •••, the universe conspires to teach her the art of ancient sorcery. Likely her dreams have been growing stranger for some time leading up to the final revelation that burns the forgotten secrets of antiquity into her soul one night, but it's also possible that a very old spirit might be drawn to her fertile Essence, or that she might be drawn through serendipity to a sorcerous scroll dating back to a forgotten age. In any event, she gains the Ancient Sorcery (•••) Merit at no cost.
- The No Moon may use an instant action and pay one Mote to scent the air and detect the location of the nearest natural passage between the Earth and some otherworldly realm, such as the Hedge, the Underworld, or the Shadow. This doesn't tell her *what sort of passage* she'll find, or how to get into it if some special method is required; only where it is.

## Lunar Touchstones

Lunars no longer use the Integrity trait that mortals do. The blessings of *Amahan Iduth* allow their mind and spirit to easily adapt to the horrors and rigors of the supernatural world, and their newfound nature as vengeful predators hardens them against the great cost of violence. A Lunar may be sickened with herself after devouring someone's face, but it won't cause her to dissociate, become paralyzed by self-doubt or guilt, or even to hesitate the next time she needs to commit murder with her teeth.

Instead of Integrity, each Lunar always has one *Lunar Touchstone* as defined by her Caste: A place or person that has become important to her, and which she gains power from defending and punishing trespasses against.

- **Full Moon:** Each Full Moon Caste's Lunar Touchstone must be a primarily wilderness location, such as a given swamp, forest, large park, valley, mountain, or stretch of shoreline.
- **Changing Moon:** Each Changing Moon Caste's Lunar Touchstone must be a place developed for human use or habitation. This is usually an entire city (such as Chicago) or a smaller district of a larger conurbation (such as Englewood, in Chicago), but could also be a smaller town, or even part of a transit system (such as the US-95 corridor between Indian Springs and Beatty).
- **No Moon:** Each No Moon Caste's Lunar Touchstone must be a living mortal (Hi, Bob) or, sometimes, a very small, conceptually linked group of mortals (Bob's immediate family; Bob's bowling team). The mortal could be the Lunar's closest childhood friend, or they could just as easily be a total stranger the Lunar heard crying in one of the stalls when she walked into the bathroom at a bar.

## Acts of Protection

Whenever a Lunar discerns that her Touchstone is threatened in some way, she can intervene on its behalf to protect it from harm. At the end of any chapter where the Lunar took significant steps to prevent harm from befalling her Touchstone, she takes a Beat.

The Lunar has to proactively protect her Touchstone from *something*; just patrolling an area to make sure nothing's amiss doesn't cut it. She has to bust up a gang, fight a spirit-possessed gator, or throw an abusive ex-boyfriend off a roof – something like that.

The Lunar is also the sole arbiter of what does or doesn't constitute a threat. One Lunar protecting a forest may savagely drive off any loggers, hunters, or other intruders she encounters. Another may be completely blasé about the presence of humans in her forest as long as they're not burning the place down, and seek to protect *them* from the hungry shadows that dwell in the deepest part of the woods.

Finally, the threat doesn't have to be real; the Lunar just has to think it is. If she runs off a bunch of kids she thought might intend to mess with the old burial ground within her territory, she is considered to have protected her Touchstone, even if in truth the kids had no idea the burial ground was there at all, nor any intentions of going near it.

## Acts of Vengeance

Whenever a Lunar discerns that her Touchstone has suffered some sort of injury or affront, she can take action to brutally punish those who transgressed against it. At the end of any chapter where the Lunar actively pursued vengeance against such a transgressor, she takes two Beats.

For a given punishment to count as an act of vengeance, the Lunar must either inflict lethal damage to the transgressor, cause a breaking point, inflict a persistent Condition, or, of course, kill them. The Lunar is, once again, the sole arbiter of what does or doesn't constitute an injury or affront worthy of vengeance.

## Breaking Points

Every Lunar is intimately linked to their Touchstone, and actions taken against it – by others *or* the Lunar herself – twist the Lunar's spirit. If the Lunar deliberately takes some action that harms her Touchstone or knowingly stands by while someone else harms it, she suffers a breaking point. Learning that the Touchstone has suffered serious harm and deciding not to do anything about it *also* provokes a breaking point, unless the Lunar is already actively engaged in an act of vengeance to redress previous harm.

Unlike Integrity, a Lunar's Touchstone has no rating to raise or lower as the result of a breaking point. When a Lunar suffers a breaking point, she must make a breaking point roll to weather the resulting spiritual trauma:

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Composure (no enhancements from Charms allowed)

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar experiences a sense of disconnection and apathy. She loses her connection to the Touchstone altogether, and can't connect to a new Touchstone for the rest of the current story.

**Failure:** The Lunar's spirit twists and roils within her. Take one of the following Conditions: Doubting, Enraged, Foolhardy, Grieving, or Guilty.

**Success:** The Lunar convinces herself that her action (or inaction) was justified in some way.

**Exceptional Success:** The Lunar not only justifies her actions, but finds greater meaning in the breach. She gains a point of Willpower and takes a Beat.

### Suggested Modifiers:

Modifier	Situation
+1	The Lunar's action or inaction is in line with her Virtue.
-1	The Lunar's action or inaction is in line with her Vice.
-2	The Lunar's action or inaction aided a supernatural being, or allowed such a creature to go unpunished.

#### DOUBTING

Your character has lost her self-confidence, and seeks the guidance and assistance of others. While the character is under the effects of this Condition, she suffers a -2 penalty to Resolve for all purposes, and a further -1 penalty to all rolls when working alone.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, supernatural powers

**Resolution:** The character manages an exceptional success in an endeavor without any help from anyone else.

**Beat:** n/a

#### ENRAGED

Your character is lost in a fog of anger just looking for something to land on. She must spend a point of Willpower to avoid confronting the first person that draws her ire in each scene. The resulting confrontation doesn't have to be physically violent, but the character's objective is definitely to make sure someone gets hurt in *some* way.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, intense frustration or setbacks, supernatural powers

**Resolution:** Start an ugly confrontation that wasn't really justified.

**Beat:** n/a

#### FOOLHARDY

Your character has retreated into the shell of her ego, and willfully ignores any signs she might be courting disaster. While the character is under the effects of this Condition, she suffers a -2 penalty to Composure for all purposes.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, supernatural powers

**Resolution:** The character bites off more than she can chew, or is terribly manipulated because she ignored the warning signs.

**Beat:** n/a

## GRIEVING

Your character is swallowed by a limitless sorrow. The world seems underwater, it's hard for her to stir herself to preserve what remains in light of what she's lost. She cannot spend Willpower to increase her Defense or during social scenes.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points, severe loss

**Resolution:** The character withdraws for a few days to be alone with her grief, or else receives psychological help coping with it.

**Beat:** n/a

## GUILTY

Your character is experiencing deep-seated feelings of guilt and remorse. While the character is under the effects of this Condition, she receives a -2 to any Resolve or Composure rolls to defend against Subterfuge, Empathy, or Intimidation rolls.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking points

**Resolution:** The character makes restitution for whatever she did; the character confesses her crimes.

**Beat:** n/a

## Disconnection

A Lunar can lose her connection to her Touchstone either by abusing or neglecting it, by simply abandoning it, or when it becomes clear the Touchstone doesn't need her.

Abuse or neglect are detailed above – the Lunar may lose her connection to a Touchstone through a dramatic failure during a breaking point.

A Lunar can also decide that she's not going to invest herself in a Touchstone any longer; perhaps more pressing affairs demand her investment, or perhaps a living Touchstone has betrayed the Lunar and driven her away. Whatever the case, the Lunar can spend a point of Willpower at any time to simply cut away her connection to a Touchstone.

Finally, a Lunar can be forcibly disconnected from her Touchstone when an entire lunar month (28 days) passes during which the Lunar finds no need to either protect or avenge the Touchstone, and is not actively engaged in an act of protection or vengeance. The Touchstone no longer needs her, and so her spirit lets go of it to make room for something more in need of her attention.

A Lunar without a Touchstone suffers from the Obsessive Persistent Condition, driving her to find a new Touchstone to anchor her now-incomplete spirit. Also, while the Lunar has no Touchstone, any time she should gain Motes, she gains one Mote less than she would have otherwise.

It's worth pointing out that the death or destruction of a Touchstone doesn't automatically result in its disconnection, as a Lunar is still *very* capable of carrying out acts of vengeance against those who were responsible for the Touchstone's fatal misfortune.

## Gaining a New Touchstone

It's generally easy for a Lunar to pick up a new Touchstone. She just has to identify a place, person, or group as a suitable Touchstone, and then spend one entire chapter (or six hours of downtime) in its presence to solidify the link.

A Lunar can't take up a new Touchstone while she already has one, nor can she reconnect to a Touchstone she's just lost, either voluntarily or involuntarily (although she *can* circle back to it once she disconnects from another Touchstone, as long as at least one entire story has passed in the interim).

## Caste Mark and Caste Scars

Each of the Lunar Exalted possesses a *Caste mark*, a symbol denoting the caste to which they belong. This symbol appears on their brow in silver light when their anima manifests at the Radiant or Burning level. Further, Lunars also bear *Caste Scars*: a series of glowing, silvery tattoo-like markings which appear when their anima manifests at the Burning Level. A Lunar's Caste mark and Caste Scars are normally invisible when her anima isn't manifest, but Lunars can voluntarily cause their Caste mark and/or Caste Scars to appear by concentrating for a turn and making a Willpower roll.

**Dice Pool:** Willpower

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt accidentally triggers her anima at the Radiant level.

**Failure:** The Exalt's Caste Scars appear, shining through any concealment such as clothing, and continues shining for at least several minutes before abating. She suffers a -2 penalty to all Stealth rolls while they are manifest.

**Success:** The Exalt's Caste mark and/or scars appear at whatever level of brightness the Exalt desires, and remain until she reflexively dismisses them or until the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the manifestation is so dramatic that the Exalt gains a +1 equipment bonus to Presence rolls while the Caste mark and/or scars remain visible.

## Shapeshifting

Every Lunar is a natural shapeshifter, capable of assuming a number of different skins. This is no mere work of illusion: when a Lunar shifts, her flesh rewrites itself over a span of a few short, agonizing moments.

A Lunar may pay 1 Mote to reflexively assume any form she knows how to transform into, once per turn. Alternately, she may assume any form she knows how to transform into at no cost as an instant action.

## Natural Form

The Lunar's natural form is her human form: the person she was before Exaltation. The Lunar may return to this shape at any time at no cost as a reflexive action.

## Feral Heart

Every Lunar has a Feral Heart: the animal-shape that lives in her soul. Select an animal of Size 2-7 to serve as the character's Feral Heart.

At any time, the Lunar may shapeshift into the form of her Feral Heart at no cost as a reflexive action. While in her Feral Heart form, she gains the Physical Attributes, Size, Health, and Species Factor modifier to her Speed of the animal in question, as well as any special qualities (such as poison or flight) the animal possesses. The Lunar's Feral Heart appearance is as fixed and constant as her natural form. That is to say, a Lunar with the Feral Heart of a bear will always transform into the same, *particular* bear, rather than becoming a different bear with each donning of her Feral Heart.

A number of sample Feral Heart shapes are provided below. Note that any damage modifier to an attack, even +0, means the attack deals lethal damage. While in her Feral Heart form, a Lunar calculates her Defense based on the *higher* of her Dexterity or Wits.

## Bat

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 1

**Species factor:** 10 (flight only)

**Size:** 1

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	--
------	----

**Health:** 2

**Special:** Bats can see in maneuver and total darkness without penalty.

## Badger

**Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

**Species Factor:** 4

**Size:** 3

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

**Health:** 9

**Special:** Badgers add two extra dice to all rolls to resist toxins and disease.

## Bear

**Attributes:** Strength 6, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

**Species Factor:** 6

**Size:** 7

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+2
------	----

Claw	+1
------	----

**Health:** 11

### Cat (Domestic)

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 7

**Size:** 2

#### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

Claw	+0
------	----

**Health:** 5

### Cat (Great)

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 8

**Size:** 5

#### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+2
------	----

Claw	+1
------	----

**Health:** 8

### Chimpanzee

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 6

**Size:** 4

#### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

**Health:** 7

### Coyote

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 7



**Size:** 3

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
Bite	+0

**Health:** 6

**Crocodile**

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 1, Stamina 4

**Species Factor:** 5

**Size:** 4

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
Bite	+2*

\* When a crocodile succeeds a bite attack it immediately grapples its victim. Grappled victims take a two die penalty to counter grapple a crocodile once bitten.

**Health:** 9

**Deer (Buck)**

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 8

**Size:** 6

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
Horn	+1

**Health:** 9

**Dog (Large)**

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 7

**Size:** 4

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
Bite	+0

**Health:** 7

**Dog (Small)**

**Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 6

**Size:** 2

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

**Health:** 5

Elephant

**Attributes:** Strength 9, Dexterity 2, Stamina 7

**Species Factor:** 6

**Size:** 15

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
------	--------

Tusk	+1
------	----

Trample	+3
---------	----

**Health:** 22

FOX

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 7

**Size:** 2

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

**Health:** 5

Horse

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

**Species Factor:** 12

**Size:** 7

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

Hoof	+2*
------	-----

\* A successful strike from a horse's hoof inflicts the Knocked Down Tilt.

**Health:** 12

**Special:** Horses can lift four times as much as a human with comparable Strength and Athletics.

## Owl

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Species Factor:** 10 (flight only)

**Size:** 2

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Beak	+0
------	----

Talons	+1
--------	----

**Health:** 4

**Special:** +2 on sight and sound perception rolls

## Rat

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

**Species Factor:** 2

**Size:** 1

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	---
------	-----

**Health:** 3

## Raven or Crow

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Species Factor:** 10 (flight only)

**Size:** 2

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Beak	+0
------	----

**Health:** 4

## Snake

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1

**Species Factor:** 2

**Size:** 2

### Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite +0\*

\* Many snakes possess a venomous bite, with Toxicity varying from 3, for weaker poisons, all the way to 10 for the most lethal vipers. This inflicts the Poisoned tilt with Moderate or Grave severity as deemed appropriate.

**Health:** 3

## Toad

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1

**Species Factor:** 2

**Size:** 1

**Weapons/Attacks:**

None

**Health:** 2

## Weasel or Ferret

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Species Factor:** 7

**Size:** 2

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+0
------	----

**Health:** 4

## Wolf

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Species Factor:** 8

**Size:** 4

**Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
------	--------

Bite	+1
------	----

**Health:** 7

## Stolen Skins

In addition to her natural form and her Feral Heart, all Lunars may steal other animal forms and add them to her form library, so long as the animal in question is Size 2-7. All Lunars instinctively understand that they have this capability, and know how to use it. Wearing a stolen animal form works in much the same fashion as wearing the Feral Heart.

Lunars can steal an animal's form through the following methods:

**Heart's Blood:** If a Lunar slays a beast and drinks its blood or eats its flesh, she may thereafter assume its form. The Lunar has to directly participate in the killing of the animal; she can't gain a cow's form by eating a hamburger from a fast-food restaurant.

**The Lunar Rite:** If a Lunar destroys an animal spirit, she gains the ability to don the skin of the animal it represented. The spirit need not be permanently annihilated, but the Lunar must participate in its destruction.

A number of Merits and Lunar Charms may provide additional means of gaining a stolen skin.

## Vengeance Form

In addition to her natural form and Feral Heart, every Lunar has a Vengeance form: a nightmare hybrid of human and Feral Heart, built for no other purpose but violence. A Lunar wearing her Vengeance form gains the following features:

- **Deadly form:** The Lunar's natural attacks inflict lethal damage.
- **Traits:** The Lunar's traits are modified in the following fashion: Strength +3, Dexterity +1, Stamina +2, Manipulation -1, Size +1, species factor 6 (providing Health +3, Initiative +1, Speed +5).
- **Aspects:** The Vengeance form is enhanced with three Aspects, granting special abilities or additional modifiers.

## Aspects

Select three features from the list below. These are permanent enhancements to the Vengeance form.

**Armor:** The Lunar's body is covered in thick scales, a chitinous exoskeleton, or a shell of some kind. She gains natural armor rated 3/1, and has a Speed modifier of -2. A character cannot have both Tough Hide and Armor.

**Aquatic:** The Lunar may breathe underwater, and while in water gains Speed +5.

**Natural Weapons:** The Lunar has claws, fangs, horns, hooves, or some other sort of devastating natural weapon. If she has fangs, she can bite without the need of a grapple. Natural weapons inflict +2 lethal damage.

**Huge Size:** The Lunar's Vengeance form gains an additional +3 Size (for a total of +4 Size, and Health +6).

**Sharp Senses:** The Lunar's senses are preternaturally acute. She adds +3 to Perception rolls.

**Swift Runner:** The Lunar is incredibly quick, and may be able to drop to all fours for bursts of incredible speed. She gains a total species factor of 12, for a Speed modifier of +11.

**Tough Hide:** The Lunar has thick fur or a tough, leathery hide. She gains natural armor rated 2/0. A character cannot have both Tough Hide and Armor.

**Twitch Reflexes:** The Lunar reacts to threats with blinding speed, gaining an additional +3 modifier to Initiative (for a total of Initiative +4).

**Wings:** The Lunar is capable of flight, with a species factor of 10.

## Lunar Charms

Charms are the miracles by which the Lunar Exalted once hunted the enemies of the gods. Lunar Charms tend to embody principles of power, vengeance, and predation: they make Lunars the into the monsters that prey even upon other monsters.

Every Lunar Charm resonates with one or more Lunar Caste. A Lunar belonging to a resonant Caste may buy a Charm for two Experiences. A Charm which doesn't resonate with a Lunar's Caste, on the other hand, costs three Experiences.

Whenever a Lunar Charm references one of her traits as a modifier or basis for its powers, use the rating recorded on the Lunar's character sheet, *not* the rating of the form she's currently wearing, unless the Charm explicitly says otherwise.

## Lunar Charm Index

The following is a quick-reference list of all Charms which resonate with to each Caste:

### Full Moon

- Armor-Forming Technique (p. XX)
- Country Roads (p. XX)
- Breath-Drinking Executioner Attack (p. XX)
- Excellence (p. XX)
- From the Roots (p. XX)
- Halting the Scarlet Flow (p. XX)
- Humble Mouse Shape (p. XX)
- Hybrid Body Rearrangement (p. XX)
- Labyrinthine Lair's Depths (p. XX)
- On Notice (p. XX)
- Ox-Body Technique (p. XX)
- Many-Faced Moon Transformation (p. XX)
- Pedestrian Wolves (p. XX)
- Prey's Skin Disguise (p. XX)
- Scent of the Prey (p. XX)
- Shadow of the Beast (p. XX)
- To the Worms (p. XX)
- Towering Beast Form (p. XX)
- Spider Climbing Technique (p. XX)
- Wound-Mastering Body Evolution (p. XX)

### Changing Moon

- Alone in the Crowd (p. XX)

Ant and Starfish Division (p. XX)  
Calls of the Human Prey (p. XX)  
Cobra Hypnotic Method (p. XX)  
Country Roads (p. XX)  
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Shadow of the Beast (p. XX)  
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## **No Moon**

Banquet of Ravens (p. XX)  
Breath-Drinking Executioner Attack (p. XX)  
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Shadow of the Beast (p. XX)

Towering Beast Form (p. XX)

Truth-Scenting Method (p. XX)

Walking Between Worlds Methodology (p. XX)

## Excellence

**Resonance:** All Lunars

Pushing a powerful surge of Essence through her mind, body, and spirit, the Lunar elevates mere mortal endeavor into the stuff of legends. For a few moments, her efforts are those of a god enfleshed.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Varies

For each Mote spent to power this Charm, the Lunar may enjoy one of the following benefits:

- Select a single Attribute. All dice pools using this Attribute add a number of bonus dice equal to the Attribute in question. This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1 minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Attributes at once, so long as each is paid for separately. If a roll uses two enhanced Attributes, both bonuses apply.
- Select a specific Skill-based dice pool which does not involve an Attribute (such as Essence + Skill). Add a number of bonus dice equal to the lowest-rated Skill in the pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 dice roll.
- When Dodging, the character may add a number of bonus dice equal to twice the character's Dexterity or Wits (whichever is lower) to the Dodging pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 turn.
- Increase the character's Defense by the lower of her Dexterity or Wits rating for 1 turn.

*Example:* A Lunar attempts to discern the location of the spider-like monster creeping up on her. She has Wits 4 + Composure 3, which would ordinarily give her a pool of seven dice. She uses Excellence and decides to enhance Wits rolls, and so she doubles her Wits dice, rolling a total of 11 dice (Wits 4 + Composure 3 + 4 dice from Excellence). If she had spent 2 Motes to enhance Wits *and* Composure, she would have rolled 14 dice.

*All Lunars begin play with this Charm for free.*

## Alone in the Crowd

**Resonance:** Changing Moon



The Lunar touches her prey and whispers something in his ear. “Run” is traditional, but anything will do. From that moment onward, the Lunar and her prey are effectively alone in the world, the resultant pursuit and predation invisible to all others.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Intimidation + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Duration:** Until the sun next rises or sets

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar has only succeeded in giving away her intentions. The target gains the Inspired Condition with regard to escaping from or ambushing the Lunar.

**Failure:** The Lunar fails to occlude her prey.

**Success:** So long as the Lunar actively pursues her prey, it becomes impossible for anyone to notice any indication that the target is in distress or needs help. Even grabbing a police officer by the shirt and screaming in his face will provoke only confusion, laughter, or irritation at the target’s perceived pranking about. For any less-forceful interaction (such as running by at full speed while crying and bleeding, or stopping on a busy street to scream for help), everyone else simply fails to notice the running, crying, bleeding, or screaming. This Charm doesn’t render the target *invisible* – security guards will still stop him from entering restricted areas, for example – it only makes his distress impossible to notice.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Lunar gains the Inspired Condition to stalk and punish her prey.

## **Ant and Starfish Division**

**Resonance:** Changing Moon

The Lunar’s body splits asunder, tearing apart into two identical copies of itself.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Lunar splits off a clone of herself from her own flesh. The clone shares the Lunar’s personality, agenda, memories, Traits, and doesn’t consider itself to be an independent entity – it is, rather, a remote extension of the original Lunar’s identity and being. The clone shares the Lunar’s Charms and other powers, but both bodies must spend resources from a single Willpower and Mote pool, and any injuries inflicted on one of the Lunar’s bodies also appears on the other.

The Lunar may reabsorb her clone by spending a turn in physical contact with it, gaining all of its memories in the process. The Lunar may also cause her clone to denature into streamers of unraveling silver Essence at any time by spending another 1 Mote, which may prove necessary if it is captured, trapped, or otherwise in imminent danger of death, since any damage inflicted on the clone is also suffered by the Lunar.

## **Armor-Forming Technique**

**Resonance:** Full Moon

The Lunar exudes her skeleton out through her pores, hardening it into a shell of defensive plates to protect her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Lunar gains armor with a value equal to (Stamina)/(Resolve). This carapace imposes a -2 penalty to her Speed and Defense.

## Banquet of Ravens

**Resonance:** No Moon

The Lunar can transform another character by feeding them a bit of her blood or flesh, causing them to shapeshift into a human or animal shape from her form library.

**Cost:** 1 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Wits + Essence versus Stamina + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Duration:** Varies

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar fails to transform the target, and cannot shapeshift for the rest of the chapter.

**Failure:** The Lunar fails to transform the target.

**Success:** The Lunar transforms the target into the desired form for one day, plus one additional day per point of lethal damage she suffered in the course of draining her blood or carving out her flesh to feed to the target.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the transformation lasts until the Lunar wills it to end.

If the Lunar also knows Many-Faced Moon Transformation, she may instead inflict one change of her choice upon the target that she could make upon herself with that Charm.

The target may pay one point of Willpower upon falling asleep each evening to extend the duration of the transformation for another day, if they wish.

## Breath-Drinking Executioner Attack

**Resonance:** Full Moon, No Moon

The Lunar locks her teeth into her enemy's flesh and draws out their vital energy, breathing in their Essence and life-force.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever the Lunar succeeds in biting a target, her prey cannot heal damage by any means until her next turn. If she keeps her teeth locked in turn after turn, recovery becomes impossible.

Further, if the target has Essence points (such as a spirit, werewolf, or angel would), then each point of damage inflicted by the Lunar's bite causes the target to lose one point of Essence. Each three points of Essence drained away in this fashion grant the Lunar one Mote.

## Calls of the Human Prey

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, No Moon

The Lunar may refine the subtleties of language from salt, iron, and sinew.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

By drinking a person's blood or eating his flesh (enough to inflict one point of lethal damage), the Lunar may temporarily gain the Language (•) Merit, representing a language her victim knows. She retains this Merit for (Essence rating) days. If she slays the victim in the course of consuming his blood or flesh, she may immediately pay 1 Experience to permanently retain the Language dot.

## Cobra Hypnotic Method

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, No Moon

By maintaining eye contact with her victim, the Lunar may hypnotize them into doing whatever she likes.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Empathy + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim sees through the Lunar's attempt to control his mind, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The Lunar fails to hypnotize the target.

**Success:** The Lunar beguiles the target and may issue a post-hypnotic suggestion. They gain the Hypnotized Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the hypnotic commands can be delayed such that they don't kick in until a specific trigger is met. The Condition's "countdown" doesn't begin until the trigger condition is met.

### HYPNOTIZED

Your will isn't your own. You've been given a set of instructions of no more than two or three sentences in length, and must carry them out to the best of your abilities. If your task has a natural end ("Follow that man, and call me when you find out where he's going.") then you resolve the Condition when the task ends; otherwise, it ends after (Exalt's Essence rating) days. Once you resolve this Condition, you can't quite remember what you did under its sway.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Take more damage (of any sort) than your Stamina. Experience a breaking point while following the command. Complete the task.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Country Roads

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, Full Moon

No one can navigate the Woods as quickly and certainly as one of the Lunar Exalted. The Lunar instinctively finds whatever shortcuts she needs – even impossible ones – to get where she needs to be in no time at all.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Permanent

Sometime after assuming a Lunar Touchstone, the Lunar marks a number of points as being of personal interest, perhaps with her scent, perhaps by scratching a claw-mark down a wall or across a prominent stone or fence post. For Full Moons and Changing Moons, all marked points must be within the territory described by her Touchstone. For No Moons, the marked points must be places of importance to her Touchstone (the Touchstone's home, work place, favorite café, etc). A number of points up to the Lunar's Essence rating may be marked. At any point afterwards, so long as the Touchstone remains attached, the Lunar may activate this Charm to fade away into the shadows, find a shortcut through the Woods, and arrive at a marked location of her choosing within five minutes tops.

## Eyes of the Cat

**Resonance:** No Moon

Attuning her senses to the world invisible, the Lunar may detect the presence of ephemeral beings, and, having detected them, can tear them apart.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

With but a moment's concentration and an instant action, the Lunar can attune her senses to detect the presence of beings in Twilight for the rest of the scene. She can either search for a particular sort of being (such as ghosts, ignoring the presence of spirits and angels), or unveil *all* ephemeral entities. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, she can also dial herself into the same spiritual frequency occupied by ghosts, spirits, angels, or some other variety of ephemeral entity for the rest of the scene, allowing her to interact with them as though they were physically present, including harming them. Of course, this is a two-way street, and the ephemeral being can hit back.

## From the Roots

**Resonance:** Full Moon

Even death is only a small impediment to one of the Lunar Exalted. Where the world may believe they are finished, the Woods remember, and the Woods may bring them back.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Once per story, if the Lunar dies with a Lunar Touchstone attached, she returns to life at the beginning of the next chapter. Full Moons reappear out of the deepest, most obscure part of their territory, crawling up from among tangled roots, black soil, or churning waters, their fur matted with worms and clumps of dirt. Changing Moons reappear at some point in their territory the locals associate with death; usually a cemetery or crematorium, where the Lunar erupts from a grave or kicks her way, steaming, out of the oven, but sometimes it's not that formal. Sometimes they kick down the boarded-over window of a murder house and stagger out into the night. No Moons simply appear from the shadows near their Touchstone, haggard and harrowed, their eyes full of moonlight. The Lunar returns to life uninjured and with full Motes.

Avenging her own death awards the Lunar two beats.

## Halting the Scarlet Flow

**Resonance:** All Lunars

The Lunar's body surges with potent and vital Essence, shrugging off injuries with terrifying speed. Her wounds heal so quickly the process is visible to the naked eye, like time-lapse photography.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

The Lunar heals a number of points of bashing damage each turn equal to half her Essence rating (round up). Lethal damage heals in a mere 30 minutes, while aggravated damage heals at a rate of one point per day. By spending 1 mote, the Lunar may heal a number of points of lethal damage during that turn equal to the bashing damage she would have healed otherwise.

## Humble Mouse Shape

**Resonance:** All Lunars

The Lunar's range of Stolen Skins may include animal forms below Size 1, down to as small as a fly. Additionally, when in danger of death, the Lunar may make an emergency escape in a swarm form.

**Cost:** None or all remaining Motes

**Duration:** Permanent or Reflexive

The expansion to the Lunar's ability to learn Stolen Skins is permanent. If the Lunar possesses any Size 1 forms, she may also pay all of her remaining Motes (ignoring her Mote-per-turn limit) to erupt into hundreds of skittering or buzzing shapes that flee in every direction, later reforming somewhere nearby. Unless every single fleeing body is destroyed, the Lunar's survival and safe escape is assured. This emergency activation isn't possible if the Lunar has no Motes remaining.

## Hybrid Body Rearrangement

**Resonance:** All Lunars

With a moment's concentration, the Lunar may summon just one feature from her library of known forms into her flesh, creating a hybrid form that suits the needs of the moment, such as a winged bull or an accountant with the fangs of a viper.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Lunar may summon a single animal feature drawn from her Feral Heart, Vengeance form, or library of Stolen Skins, producing one of the following benefits with each use of this Charm:

- Armor rated 1/1.
- Speed +3.
- Ability to breathe underwater.
- Natural weapons capable of inflicting +1 lethal damage.
- A +2 bonus to Perception or tracking rolls.
- Wings capable of flight at +3 speed.

All transformations persist until dismissed with an instant action.

## In a Driving Wheel

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, No Moon

The Lunar's vengeance and terror are directed like a scalpel rather than a tornado, leaving behind few traces of the carnage she unleashes – at least until after she has moved on.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence rating) days

The Lunar may activate this Charm while standing in a scene of gruesome carnage that she is responsible for. A shadow passes over any present sources of light, and a moment later when visibility returns, the scene is clean. Bloodstains, corpses, smashed furniture, broken glass, and body parts seemingly vanish. They're not *gone*, of course, not really, but this Charm puts them... somewhere out of the way... such as in a nearby attic, or under the floorboards... and ensures they won't be found until after its duration elapses.

## Invidious Basilisk Riddle

**Resonance:** No Moon

The Lunar makes lingering eye contact with her prey, and poses him a spontaneously-devised riddle whose answer always in some way reveals his guilt in some matter that has drawn the Lunar's ire upon him.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 28 days

The target must immediately drop what he is doing and undertake an extended action to solve the riddle (an instant action using Intelligence + Investigation – Lunar’s Essence, at intervals of one turn, with a target of 5 + Lunar’s Intelligence successes). If the target fails to solve the riddle, he suffers one point of lethal damage and is afflicted with the Blind Persistent Condition in both eyes. The answer will always reveal to the target the reason why the Lunar has chosen to use this terrible Charm against him. If the target puts off tackling the riddle for a total number of turns higher than his Stamina + Resolve, he will automatically fail and be struck blind, as detailed above. An individual can be targeted with this Charm no more than once per story.

## Labyrinthine Lair’s Depths

**Resonance:** Full Moon

Breathing out a cold and shadow-laden freight of Essence, the Lunar tangles together space and darkness, crafting a confusing and deadly maze to confound her enemies.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Survival + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 12 hours

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar’s magic turns back upon her, inflicting the Lost Condition.

**Failure:** The Lunar’s unleashed Essence dissipates into the world without taking root and creating the maze she desires.

**Success:** An area within the Lunar’s Touchstone up to (Essence rating) miles across gains the Maze Environmental Tilt. If the Lunar’s Touchstone is a person, the Environmental Tilt appears in an area centered on their location at the time of its activation. If the Touchstone is a group, it appears centered on whatever locale is most strongly associated with that group (such as a family’s home). The Lunar and her Touchstone are able to navigate the twisted space with no difficulty, but it confounds all others.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Environmental Tilt can persist for as long as the Lunar and her Touchstone remain within the Maze. Alternately, she can give the Maze its normal Duration but also add the Sealed Exits Environmental Tilt.

### MAZE

**Description:** The geography of the affected area twists and turns in on itself in strange ways, making navigation difficult. Doors, halls, and alleys may connect to one another in nonsensical ways, or a simple cubicle farm could become a bewildering rat-run.

**Effect:** Characters attempting to navigate the enchanted area must succeed at an Intelligence + Composure – Essence roll or suffer the Lost Condition.

### SEALED EXITS

**Description:** The enchanted area is a closed system. There are no exits; doors refuse to open, or simply vanish. Alleys are fenced off. Bridges vanish. Elevators take characters back to those floors that are part of the sealed area.

**Effect:** Mundane means of escape from the area automatically fail. Supernatural methods of escape provoke a Clash of Wills.

## Many-Faced Moon Transformation

**Resonance:** All Lunars

The Lunar learns to rewrite the fundamental truths of her nature to suit her plans and desires.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Duration:** Instant or reflexive

By taking a shapeshifting action or series of actions, the Lunar may rewrite her body to suit her needs, one detail at a time. Each action can alter one of the following features: Hair length and/or texture (including body hair); hair color; eye color; skin color; apparent age; height; build and weight; facial or bodily features (cheekbone structures, shape of chin, presence or absence of scars, etc); biological sex (including any intersex configuration). These alterations can be made to the Lunar's true form, Feral Heart, and Vengeance form, but not Stolen Skins.

## On Notice

**Resonance:** Full Moon, No Moon

The Lunar threads a bit of her Essence into a verbal or physical warning as she puts an individual or group on notice that her Touchstone is now off-limits. Should they return after being forbidden, she'll know.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Composure + Essence – supernatural obscurity trait such as Obfuscate or Cover, if appropriate

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence) months

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar's Essence not only fails to stick, but the worrying knowledge that she's blind to a threat to her Touchstone costs her a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Lunar's Essence fails to stick, and she can't track her target.

**Success:** For the rest of the Charm's duration, the Lunar will immediately and instinctively know if one of the individuals she warned off returns to her Touchstone. For Full Moons and Changing Moons this means intruding upon their territory; for No Moons, it means coming within 300 yards of the individual or group they've been warned away from.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Lunar can close her eyes and remotely see and hear what is transpiring during the trespass.

## Ox-Body Technique



**Resonance:** All Lunars

The Lunar may shunt a portion of the damage she receives to other skins that lie dreaming within her flesh, allowing her to survive injuries that would kill lesser creatures.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Lunar's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + (Essence x 3) in all forms.

## Pedestrian Wolves

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, Full Moon

The Lunar locks eyes with someone she has designated as her prey and makes some noise to draw their attention – perhaps she whistles, or taps a cane against the pavement. Some noise, at any rate. Something easy to repeat. Soon, the wolves come.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

Within one turn, a number of wolves equal to the Exalt's Presence rating come prowling out of the shadows. They pace the Lunar, following her for as long as she continues to track or shadow her target, and so long as she continues to periodically whistle, tap, snap her fingers, or otherwise repeat the noise that drew the wolves in the first place. When she stops making that noise, the wolves will depart back into the shadows if their quarry isn't present or has taken refuge in a crowd. If the prey is both present and outnumbered by the Lunar and her wolves, then when the Lunar falls silent, the wolves surge forward and attack, snarling and striking until the prey is dead or they are.

## Predator Grace Method

**Resonance:** Changing Moon

The Lunar may move through urban hunting grounds with the perfect self-assuredness of a jungle cat on the prowl. Cluttered alleys and trash-strewn rooftops are no obstacle when she seeks her prey.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or Instant

The character needs never roll to maintain her balance, no matter how precarious her footing. She also gains free dots in the Parkour Merit equal to her Essence rating; if this would raise her Parkour rating above 5, then each "wasted" free dot due to having already purchased the Parkour Merit instead refunds one Experience. By spending 1 Mote, the Lunar may reflexively land on her feet without taking any damage at the end of a fall, no matter how far she drops.

## Pulse of the Invisible

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, No Moon

Merely by scenting the air, the Lunar can detect the presence of monsters; they smell like her, after all.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure + Essence – supernatural obscurity trait such as Obfuscate or Cover, if appropriate

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar scents the presence of monsters, but can't tell if she's picking up her own scent, or that of a genuine threat. She gains the Paranoid Condition.

**Failure:** The Lunar can't accurately tell if monsters are present or not.

**Success:** The Lunar detects the undeniable presence of monsters, and knows from which individual or individuals that scent originates. She does not, however, know what *kind* of monster or monsters she has detected.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and if the Lunar has encountered this sort of monster (or monsters) before, she recognizes the individuals before her as such. For example, if she has previously had a run-in with vampires, she would recognize a vampire from among a group of other, non-vampire monsters.

Pulse of the Invisible can't detect any monsters the Lunar is totally incapable of noticing with any of her senses, such as a ghost if the Exalt isn't able to detect beings in Twilight (although it could still spot someone possessed by a ghost).

## Prey's Skin Disguise

**Resonance:** All Lunars

Those Lunars who aren't above a bit of light cannibalism may learn to steal the shapes of other human beings (or monsters that appear human) in the same fashion they can wear animal forms.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Lunar can learn human forms as Stolen Skins. Since there are no "human spirits" in the Shadow Realm, only the Heart's Blood method applies. The Lunar can also steal the shapes of monsters that *appear* human or *were* human, such as mages, vampires, or Beasts, but gains none of their powers.

## Scent of the Prey

**Resonance:** Full Moon

The Lunar spits on her target, scent-marking them with her Essence. Henceforth, all animals that encounter the target descend into a state of murderous rage, attacking them on sight.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Resolve + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Duration:** (Essence) days

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** As a failure, and the Lunar can't use this Charm again for the rest of the current story.

**Failure:** The Lunar fails to mark the target.

**Success:** The Lunar gives the target the Prey-Marked Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Charm's duration is doubled.

### **PREY-MARKED (PERSISTENT)**

Something is wrong. Animals start growling as soon as they catch see you, and when they catch you scent, they go wild and attack with everything they have. Just on the way home you were dive-bombed relentlessly by the neighborhood's sparrows, which would be funny if not for the scalp lacerations. Even now, you can hear the neighbor's dog going berserk. It's a Rottweiler.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** The Exalt who laid the curse revokes it; its duration expires.

**Beat:** Your character survives an animal attack.

## **Shadow of the Beast**

**Resonance:** All Lunars

The Lunar's flesh roils, shudders, and disgorges a beast drawn from her library of Stolen Skins, which moves and acts according to her will.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The disgorged beast intuits the Lunar's will and acts according to the purpose for which it was created (such as shadowing someone and reporting back, or tracking and attacking someone); when its task is done, it will return to the Lunar and rejoin with her flesh, and she will gain any knowledge the beast learned while it was abroad on its task. The Lunar loses access to the beast's shape while it's separated from her, and if it is slain or otherwise prevented from rejoining the Lunar, she loses that shape from her form library.

If the Lunar knows Prey's Skin Disguise, she may also disgorge people she has devoured. They retain their former personality and mannerisms, but don't possess any memories or knowledge of their old lives that the Lunar lacks, and are as intrinsically loyal as a beast would be. They are, after all, merely the Lunar's animated flesh.

## **Spider Climbing Technique**

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, Full Moon

The Lunar is a natural climber, instinctively and subtly reshaping her feet and fingers to find better purchase, even going so far as to develop tiny hooks or rough pads for better traction. Alternately, she may force her body to sprout grossly obvious climbing appendages: a nest of spider legs, grasping tentacles, and suction discs sprout from her body, allowing her to anchor even to sheer surfaces or to hang from ceilings.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Lunar permanently enjoys the 8-again benefit on all climbing rolls. Alternately, she may spend 1 mote to sprout obviously inhuman climbing adaptations, which permit her to cling to or move across any surface capable of bearing her weight (including ceilings) at her full Speed without need of a roll.

## To the Worms

**Resonance:** Full Moon

The Lunar curses her target with the lightest of touches and an infusion of Essence. Whenever the victim seeks the cleansing relief of water, nature rebels and afflicts the waters with foul white and crimson worms. The worms are born from the water itself, squirming into existence first as transparent things, but then quickly flushing corpse-pale or blood-red. This happens to any water the target attempts to come in contact with, moments before he does so: a cup of water begins squirming with worms as soon as he picks it up; nightcrawlers pour out of his showerhead, choking out the flow of hot water as soon as he steps into the spray; and if he cannonballs into a swimming pool, he comes up writhing with worms.

The worms are toxic, coated with a slime that is poisonous to the touch.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Survival + Essence versus Stamina + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** One day

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Charm fails to bite, and the victim gains a sudden psychic flash of malice; he knows, somehow, exactly what the Lunar tried to do to him.

**Failure:** The curse finds no purchase, and its Mote cost is wasted.

**Success:** The Lunar curses her victim to beckon the worms. The first time the target calls the worms, he must make a Perception roll to notice them before they touch him. Coming into skin-to-slime contact with the worms (or, God forbid, drinking water clogged with them) inflicts poison with Toxicity equal to the Lunar's Resolve at one-hour intervals, for a total number of hours equal to her Essence rating. In combat, targets gain the mild Poison Tilt.

**Exceptional Success:** The worms will appear from any source of water within ten feet of the target, and squirm toward him, attempting to make contact. They have Speed 1, but are very single-minded.

## Towering Beast Form

**Resonance:** All Lunars

The Lunar's Essence thickens, now able to encompass mightier forms.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

There is no longer an upper Size limit on the animal forms the Lunar may learn and assume as Stolen Skins.

## Truth-Scenting Method

**Resonance:** Changing Moon, No Moon

If she cares to focus her senses, the Lunar can smell a lie.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Whenever someone knowingly lies to the Lunar, she recognizes the lie immediately for what it is.

## Walking Between Worlds Methodology

**Resonance:** No Moon

The Lunar may extend any or all of her senses – sight, hearing, taste, even smell – through the Gauntlet without physically crossing over, spying on the Shadow Realm from the physical realm or vice-versa. If she stands at a Locus, she may, with effort, push herself through the Gauntlet and enter the Shadow directly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Lunar's senses become temporarily lost in the Gauntlet, imposing relevant Tilts such as Blinded and Deafened for the rest of the scene. If she was trying to cross over physically, she becomes caught inside of the Gauntlet for anywhere from a few minutes to several days before eventually being pushed back out into the world she tried to leave, several miles away.

**Failure:** The Lunar fails to extend her senses across the Gauntlet, or to cross from one world to the other.

**Success:** The Lunar extends her senses across the Gauntlet for the rest of the scene, or until she reflexively ends the Charm. She can only have a sense rooted in one world or the other at any given time, so if she stands in the physical world and sees into the Shadow, she is effectively

blind to things happening on Earth. If she is attempting to cross over, she does so successfully, vanishing into the Gauntlet and appearing in the other realm two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Lunar may cross the Gauntlet instantly, or may pull her senses temporarily back from across the Gauntlet to the world she stands in without ending the Charm.

## Wound-Mastering Body Evolution

**Resonance:** Full Moon

The Lunar's flesh learns from that which harms it, adapting to temporarily become immune to a particular kind of damage.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

After suffering damage, the Lunar may reflexively activate this Charm. For the rest of the scene, the Lunar cannot be harmed again by that sort of attack or damage source. If she activated Wound-Mastering Body Evolution in response to being shot, she would become bulletproof. If she activated it after being burned, she would be temporarily immune to flames. If she activated it after having her joints wrenched in a clinch, she would become immune to damage from grapples. If she activated it after being stabbed or cut with a knife, she'd become immune to edged weapons. If she activated it after being savaged by a werewolf, she'd become immune to claws and fangs. Ultimately, the Storyteller is the final arbiter of what a Lunar is or isn't immune to while this Charm is active. Wound-Mastering Body Evolution *cannot* be stacked; activating it again while it's already running simply changes what the Lunar is immune to.

## Lunar Burns

Lunar Essence is slippery, aggressive, transgressive. It's primeval stuff, a searchlight from ancient times. In superabundance it pierces the barriers between worlds. If you're in a Lunar Burn, you hear strange noises at night – *really* strange. The song of the laundry-line as it tries to draw in stray clothes-spirits. The resonant cry of a hunting-horn. Things like that.

The boundaries of reality get thin and slippery in a Lunar Burn. It's easy to take a wrong turn and wind up in the Hedge. When things are quiet, the basement may, for minutes at a time, become a verge into the spirit world. If people don't get lost and wander into another world, then things from other worlds will frequently wander into ours. Sometimes sleepers wake up to find their dreams in bed with them. The Gentry come prowling for amusements. Spirits spill through.

The entire Burn is considered a Locus, with particular rooms or patches of space occasionally becoming Verges.

## Lunar Searing

When a Lunar Burn is Seared away, the world darkens, outlined in glittering moonbeams until everything looks like a laser-projection. There's a choral howl as the darkness becomes darker and the light ever more blinding, until the reaction peaks and breaks. The boundaries of reality

slam back together with resounding finality, though the Gauntlet is left one point lower than it was previously.

Of course, not everything gets left on the right side of that barrier in the Burn's wake.

Every mortal caught in the Sear must roll to resist the tidal wave of Lunar Essence:

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve

**Action:** Reflexive

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The character is transformed into a Chimera.

**Failure:** The character is blown into one of the otherworlds, usually but not always the Shadow Realm.

**Success:** The character rides out the storm of Lunar Essence. Their mind reels, and they suffer a breaking point, but are otherwise no worse for the experience.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but no breaking point occurs, and the character regains all missing Willpower.

## **Chimerae**

A Chimera is indistinguishable from any other Sear survivor in the beginning. It takes a couple of weeks before the symptoms begin to manifest: a persistent discomfort, headaches, sore joints. By the end of the first month, these deepen into persistent miseries with no obvious medical cause. Not long after, a gnawing hunger that never quite goes away joins them.

The cancers begin to manifest after that. Or at least, that's what they seem like under medical examination: tumors that appear, grow, and spread at an alarming, almost impossible rate. But cutting them away doesn't help, and they're not ultimately as malignant as sanity and science would suggest. The Chimera isn't dying.

Something much worse is happening.

By the third month after the Sear, the Chimera's body begins to break down completely. Her tumors become wild, mobile things, roaming about beneath her skin. She doesn't really have independent organs anymore; her anatomy is a strange, shifting web of flesh and bone and sinew that keeps her alive... somehow. Her features begin to sink into themselves, even as new ones appear. She grows eyes where there shouldn't be eyes. Teeth where there shouldn't be teeth. New, vestigial limbs. Left unchecked, the Chimera will eventually degenerate into a flailing blob of roiling, mindless flesh, no longer identifiable as having originally been human.

It usually doesn't get that bad, though, because the hunger intensifies throughout the entire process of degeneration, and at some point most Chimerae act on it. They discover their newly rebellious flesh is a weapon. It can manifest feeding... organs... when in direct contact with another living body.

A Chimera who consumes someone else stabilizes their own body. The flux ceases. Their body firms back up. The chaos of tumors and drifting flesh recedes. Aside from the fact that they've just killed, there are only two problems:

The first problem is that this is only a temporary solution. After a month or so, the flux and the degeneration begins again. They can re-stabilize their form by consuming the flesh of another once more, but the cycle never ends. The Chimera never becomes permanently stable again. Stability requires a steady stream of sacrifices.

The second problem is that their body takes on elements of whoever they ate. Chimerae frequently sport different-colored eyes, oddly patchy skin, ambiguous sexual characteristics. Selecting victims that are close to their own appearance can minimize the scope and impact of the changes, but not negate them entirely. Eventually, the Chimera's phone won't recognize their face when they try to unlock it.

Some Chimerae discover that stability requires living flesh, but isn't discerning beyond that point. Consuming living animals dodges the significant issue of murder, but drastically amplifies the problem of physical alteration. Animals also offer significantly shorter periods of stability before degeneration begins once again. A Chimera who has spent the last year stabilizing himself with stray cats and dogs isn't likely to be able to pass for human any longer.

Oh, and one final problem left behind by Lunar Sears: animals can become Chimerae as well, with exactly the same consequences and cycle of hunger and predation as their human counterparts.

When a Chimera decides to go on the attack, it spends 1 Willpower to manifest bone-claws, fangs, and mouths on one of its attacking limbs or on whatever parts of its body it is making contact with, giving it +2 lethal natural attacks for the rest of the scene.

## Richard Foster

*"Do you want to come back to my place?"*

He should have never let his brother talk him into going camping up in Big Sur. Nothing's been right since that night when the woods seemed to explode with howling and moonlight. Rich hasn't talked to his family in eight months, his neighbors in even longer. An independent illustrator, he stays in his apartment as much as he can, drawing illustrations on commission to cover groceries, rent. Thank God people pay so well for fetish art, especially the furry clients.

Once every six weeks or so, when he can feel the squirming starting under his skin, he hits the clubs. He was shy when this all started. He's not shy now. He's learned to smile through a mouth that no longer remotely resembles his own. He's learned how to make other men feel noticed, desired. He's learned that some people react to a kind of palpable hunger. And then... well, he does what he has to do, to keep this curse at bay, and he throws up into his toilet, and if he screams, he keeps it confined to his dreams.

You'd think word would get around eventually, since men who go home with Rich aren't seen again, but showing up with a new name and face every few months helps.

It's been about six weeks since the last one, and he's got his eye on a boy who shows up nights at the Six and Eagle. He doesn't know the boy is a vampire who also has an eye on him, for much the same reasons.

## RICHARD FOSTER



Richard is a tall man of indeterminate age and oddly rough, discordant features, with medium-dark skin that gets lighter the closer you get to the middle of his torso. He wears long sleeves and high collars to hide this. His hair is blond at the roots, black at the tips.

**Mental Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3

**Physical Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social Attributes:** Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Mental Skills:** Academics (Art History) 3, Computer 2, Crafts (Digital Painting) 3

**Physical Skills:** Athletics 1, Drive 2, Survival 1

**Social Skills:** Empathy 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 1, Subterfuge 3

**Virtue:** Creativity

**Vice:** Fear

**Integrity:** 3

**Health:** 7

**Willpower:** 6

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 9

**Initiative:** 5

**Defense:** 3

# Chapter Seven: The Sidereal Exalted

Guided by omens of uncertain provenance and driven by imperatives they scarcely understand, the Sidereal Exalted are the most subtle of the Chosen, and perhaps the most deeply embedded in the supernatural world. This chapter features all the rules necessary to play one of the Sidereal Exalted (or to use them as antagonists in your stories). Further information on the Sidereal Exalted can be found in Chapter One, while information on the Shattered Annex is in Chapter Two.

## Character Creation

Sidereals follow all the standard steps outlined in Chapter Two. In the fifth step they add the Sidereal template.

## Add Sidereal Template

To transform a mere mortal into one of the Sidereal Exalted, perform the following operations:

### Choose Caste

Begin by choosing your Sidereal's Caste from among Journeys, Serenity, Battles, Secrets, or Endings. These are outlined in greater detail in Chapter One. Your choice of Caste will determine your Bonus Attributes, Caste Skills, Caste Charms, and Divine Gift.

### Bonus Attributes

A Sidereal's Exaltation holds a gift of power within it, crafted millennia in advance to be of the greatest use in the young Exalt's first confrontation with the supernatural. Select two Attributes from the three listed for your character's Caste. Add a dot to each of the two chosen. This cannot raise an Attribute above five dots.

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Bonus Attributes</b>
Journeys	Resolve, Strength, Dexterity
Serenity	Wits, Presence, Manipulation
Battles	Intelligence, Dexterity, Stamina
Secrets	Intelligence, Resolve, Manipulation
Endings	Resolve, Strength, Composure

### Caste Skills

The benefits of Caste Skills are outlined in Chapter Two. Note your character's Caste Skills:

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Caste Skills</b>
Journeys	Animal Ken, Athletics, Drive, Firearms, Survival
Serenity	Crafts, Empathy, Expression, Persuasion, Socialize
Battles	Brawl, Firearms, Intimidation, Persuasion, Weaponry
Secrets	Academics, Investigation, Larceny, Occult, Stealth
Endings	Athletics, Firearms, Medicine, Politics, Science

Then, distribute three dots among your Caste Skills. This cannot raise any Skill above five dots.

## Caste Charms and Favored Charms

You have an easier time learning the Charms that correspond to your Caste. Also, select one additional Caste. You treat this Caste's Charms as though they were also Caste Charms for you for all purposes. These are your *Favored Charms*.

Gain the Charms "Excellence" and "Auspicious Prospects" for free, and then select four additional Charms, at least three of which must be Caste Charms.

## Essence Rating

Your Sidereal character begins with an Essence rating of 1. You can give up five of your Merit points to start at Essence 2, or all 10 to start at Essence 3.

## Divine Gifts

Every Sidereal has a Divine Gift, an intrinsic feature of their Exaltation. Each Caste bears a different Divine Gift.

## Chosen of Journeys: Blessings of the Wayfarer

Every Chosen of Journeys is granted an array of blessings with which to facilitate those travels that destiny demands:

- The Chosen of Journeys almost always know where they are, and certainly have at least a vague idea of how to get where they're going. The character gains the Direction Sense (•) Merit at no cost.
- When the character needs to start up a vehicle – *any* vehicle – she can reach into her pocket, or rummage around in the driver's seat, and find a golden key (or slip of paper with the relevant activation code, or whatever else might be necessary) that will get the vehicle running. If she gives this golden key to anyone else, they will always lose it in a matter of minutes.
- Once per chapter, the Chosen of Journeys may make the Lesser Sign of Mercury as an instant action, granting herself and all allies within (Essence x 10) yards the blessing of speed. For the rest of the scene, everyone under the effect of this blessing adds the Sidereal's Essence rating (to a maximum of +5) to their Speed, or to the Speed of a vehicle they're operating.

## Chosen of Serenity: Blessings of the Celebrant

Every Chosen of Serenity is granted an array of blessings with which to bring joy and peace into the darkness as destiny demands:

- The Sidereal needs only smile to be welcome at any gathering. All Chosen of Serenity gain the Barfly (••) Merit at no cost, even if they don't satisfy its prerequisites.
- When carousing (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 71), the Sidereal needs only two successes to achieve an exceptional success.
- Once per chapter, the Chosen of Serenity may make the Lesser Sign of Venus as an instant action, granting herself and all allies within (Essence x 10) yards the blessing of warm regard. When making a first impression while under this blessing (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 81-82), a character's impression becomes one step better than it would have been otherwise (so that an average impression automatically upgrades to a good impression, for example).

## Chosen of Battles: Blessings of War

Every Chosen of Battles is granted an array of blessings with which to understand and influence the conflicts that destiny demands she provoke or influence:

- There's always another battle on the horizon, and the Chosen of Battles are never caught with their preparations unfinished. The character gains the Good Time Management (•) Merit at no cost, even if she doesn't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 44).
- Once per chapter, the Sidereal may look out over a gathering of people and let an awareness of potential conflict flow through her. Her player may ask the Storyteller "which two people here hate one another the most?" and the Storyteller must give an honest answer, although this Divine Gift doesn't provide context or any further explanations.
- Once per chapter, the Chosen of Battles may make the Lesser Sign of Mars as an instant action, granting herself and all allies within (Essence x 10) yards the blessing of defense. They enjoy +1 armor against the next attack directed at them during the current scene.

## Chosen of Secrets: Blessings of Obscurity

Every Chosen of Secrets is granted an array of blessings that help them tease out those secrets of the night they have yet to learn, and safeguard those they have already discovered as destiny demands:

- The Chosen of Secrets keep their secrets well, by natural caution and instinct. The character gains the Indomitable (••) Merit at no cost, even if she doesn't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 45).
- Once the Sidereal obtains Occult •••, the universe conspires to teach her the art of ancient sorcery. The next time she visits the Shattered Annex, she finds a trove of ancient scrolls and tomes; where once they were incomprehensible and eye-watering, they now make a terrible and ineluctable sense. She gains the Ancient Sorcery (•••) Merit at no cost.
- Once per chapter, the Chosen of Secrets may make the Lesser Sign of Jupiter as an instant action, granting herself and all allies within (Essence x 10) yards the blessing of emptiness. For the rest of the scene, they are immune to all forms of supernatural control over their thoughts and emotions, and their thoughts cannot be read by any supernatural power (though other forms of discerning the character's thoughts, such as keen observation of body language, remain possible).

## Chosen of Endings: Blessings of Finality

Every Chosen of Endings is granted an array of blessings that help them measure and bring about those conclusions that destiny deems timely:

- Chosen of Endings have the comfort of inevitability on their side, and are difficult to rush or fluster. The character gains the Patient (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 46).
- The Chosen of Endings do not know the exact span allotted to their days, but they may act with the certainty that when their time is nigh, they will know. That day has not yet arrived, and so once per story, when the character would die due to marking aggravated damage in her rightmost health box, she instead doesn't die, and heals back a number of Health Levels equal to her Essence rating.

- Once per chapter, the Chosen of Endings may make the Lesser Sign of Saturn as an instant action, granting herself and all allies within (Essence x 10) yards the blessing of doom. The next successful blow each individual so blessed strikes within the current scene, be it with weapons, bare hands, or firearms, inflicts +1 additional damage.

## Certitude

Sidereals no longer use the Integrity trait they had as mortals. They've been exposed to a wider world and much darker secrets, and are no longer shaken to the core by monstrous sights or pedestrian violence. Instead, Sidereals are seized by an absolute conviction, perhaps even a hubris, that as seers granted access to the great secrets of the world, visions of the future, and the urging of destiny itself, their judgment is unerring and infallible. As a result, all Sidereals have the Certitude Persistent Condition.

### CERTITUDE (PERSISTENT)

The cosmos itself guides your steps, and your judgment. When your supernatural abilities suggest a course of action, you must pay one Willpower point to act to the contrary.

**Possible Sources:** Being a Sidereal

**Resolution:** This Condition ends only with the Exalt's death.

**Beat:** Whenever your certainty in the rightness of your direction brings you grief, regret, or a lamentable outcome you could have seen coming had you only stopped to question your course, take a beat. Whenever you refuse to alter course and continue pushing on into a situation that is spinning out of control or dissolving into disaster because you're certain it will all work out in the end, take a beat.

## Obscurity

The nature of Sidereal Essence is one of obscurity, occulting the Exalt from the world's notice. People who don't know her well forget little details about her – her name, what kind of car she was driving, the color of her eyes. Paperwork about her tends to get lost or misfiled. Traces she leaves behind in the world – signed checks, photographs, video footage – goes missing sooner or later. It's not unusual to find an old family photo or birthday card sitting in an obscure corner of the Shattered Annex, swept out of the world by forces the Sidereals don't begin to understand, hiding them for some ancient and forgotten purpose.

All Sidereals gain the Anonymity (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 50) when they reach Essence 2, and it grows stronger over time as their Essence thickens. Unlike the normal Anonymity Merit, which relies on deliberate and stringent effort to maintain its effects, Sidereal Anonymity is supernaturally reinforced, and can't be permanently compromised no matter how conspicuous a paper trail the Sidereal may leave behind.

Essence Rating	Anonymity
2	•
4	••
5	•••
6	••••

## False Destiny

While within the precincts of the Shattered Annex, any Sidereal can rummage about and find an old, discarded destiny that suits her current needs with only a few minutes of effort. These shadowy, gossamer fates are visible and tangible only to the Sidereal Exalted, and it takes only moments to throw one on and tamp it into place. Upon having done so, the Sidereal may wear her false destiny like a cloak, until it becomes convenient for her to discard it.

A false destiny is a disguise of sorts – a “template identity” that overrides and overwrites the Sidereal’s own. She doesn’t need to put any effort into this disguise; a small, bookish woman can easily pass herself off as a large, burly dockworker or a stern father. Those who see her will perceive her as belonging to the destiny she has assumed, and paper over any discrepancies in their head without noticing anything amiss.

There are three restrictions on false destinies. First, the Sidereal may only assume a destiny that relates in some way to her Caste. A Chosen of Journeys might be a bicycle courier, NASCAR driver, airline pilot, or vagabond, but probably couldn’t become a dedicated salaryman. A Chosen of Endings might be an undertaker, widower, foreclosure auctioneer, incipient suicide, or serial killer, but likely couldn’t assume the destiny of a student doing their best in the face of crushing loan repayments.

Second, a false destiny is a template. A Sidereal might become *a chef* or *a bestselling author*, but couldn’t become a *specific, existing* chef or author. She might invent a name for her false destiny, but could not masquerade as Gordon Ramsay or Stephen King.

Third and finally, a Sidereal must stay in character while wearing a false destiny. If the brutal drill sergeant shows compassion, the grieving widow forgets to grieve, or the bicycle courier isn’t in a hurry, the destiny cracks. After developing a number of cracks equal to the Sidereal’s Essence rating, the destiny falls apart, leaving the Exalt revealed as herself.

Sidereals can’t don a false destiny while outside of Spiderland, although they can remove one at any time as an instant action. Once discarded, a false destiny is gone forever.

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Subterfuge + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Until the Sidereal removes the destiny or it develops enough cracks to fall apart

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal not only can’t find a suitable destiny among the cobwebs and shadows of the Shattered Annex, she gets the distinct sense that she is unwelcome in its halls and should soon return to Earth or some other realm. She cannot make another attempt to don a false destiny until she leaves the Annex and returns.

**Failure:** The Sidereal wastes several hours fruitlessly searching the Annex for an appropriate destiny.

**Success:** The Sidereal quickly finds a destiny that suits her intention and purpose, and pulls it on.

**Exceptional Success:** The Sidereal finds a destiny carrying an ancient, dusty glimmer of power within its folds, and regains 1 Mote.

## Caste Mark

Each of the Sidereal Exalted possesses a *Caste mark*, a symbol denoting the caste to which they belong. This symbol appears on their brow when their anima manifests at the Radiant or Burning level. Sidereals can also voluntarily cause their Caste mark to appear by concentrating for a turn and making a Willpower roll.

**Dice Pool:** Willpower

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt accidentally triggers her anima at the Radiant level.

**Failure:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears, shining through any concealment such as headband or mask, and continues burning for at least several minutes before abating. She suffers a -1 penalty to all Stealth rolls while it is manifest.

**Success:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears at whatever level of brightness she desires, and remains until she reflexively dismisses it or until the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the manifestation is so dramatic that the Exalt gains a +1 equipment bonus to Manipulation rolls while the Caste mark remains visible.

## Sidereal Charms

Charms are the miracles by which the Exalted emulate the miracles of the gods that empowered them. The Charms of the Sidereal Exalted attune them to the dictates and flow of destiny, and allow them access to ancient shortcuts and bypasses carved into reality in a forgotten age.

Every Sidereal Charm resonates with one or more Sidereal Caste. A Sidereal belonging to a resonant Caste may buy a Charm for two Experiences. A Charm which doesn't resonate with a Sidereal's Caste, on the other hand, costs three Experiences. Every Sidereal is also able to select a second Caste during character creation. She is also considered to resonate with Charms linked to that Caste, even though it isn't her own Caste, and may likewise buy them for two Experiences.

## Sidereal Charm Index

The following is a quick-reference list of all Charms which resonate with each Caste:

### Journeys

Auspicious Prospects (p. XX)

Celestial Drifter Panoply (p. XX)

Dreaming the Wild Lands (p. XX)

Excellence (p. XX)

Faultless Ceremony (p. XX)

Glory Path (p. XX)

Heartless Maiden Trance (p. XX)

Mirror Shattering Method (p. XX)  
Neighborhood Relocation Scheme (p. XX)  
Never an Empty Alley Technique (p. XX)  
Optimistic Security Practice (p. XX)  
Ox-Body Technique (p. XX)  
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## Auspicious Prospects

**Resonance:** All Sidereals

All Sidereals are intrinsically attuned to the vibrations of destiny, able to pluck guiding omens from the patterns of the world around them: the color of a delivery boy's shoes; the alignment of clouds and power lines and a passing flock of birds; a child's nursery rhyme heard at a certain moment. Any of these things might carry a freight of meaning for the Chosen, speaking to her of destiny's demands.

**Cost:** None

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The world whirls with conflicting omens and auguries. You gain the Confused Condition.

**Failure:** The world has nothing to communicate to the Sidereal.

**Success:** You may ask the Storyteller one question from your Caste list, and they must answer to the best of their ability.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and you regain a point of Willpower as well.

Chosen of Journeys may ask the following:

- Where should I go next?
- Where, if anywhere, does [a person or object other than the Sidereal] need to go?

Chosen of Serenity may ask the following:

- Who here needs my help?
- What do I need to bring into this person's life?

Chosen of Battles may ask the following:

- Should I escalate or de-escalate this situation?
- How can I put [a person or object other than the Sidereal] onto a collision-course with their enemy?

Chosen of Secrets may ask the following:

- Should this information be buried, or brought to light?
- Who here, if anyone, has a secret that needs to be revealed?

Chosen of Endings may ask the following:

- What here, if anything, needs to be brought to an end?
- What here, if anything, must not yet be allowed to come to an end?

Sometimes fate doesn't wait for the Sidereal to consult it. The Storyteller may also, at any time of their choosing, simply tell the player that the omens are gathering and they recognize the hand of destiny at work: that they realize a great journey awaits the person that has just stepped onto the elevator with them, or that a terrible and destructive secret is going to come to light if they do not travel to Toronto with all speed, for example. They must then award the player a beat.

*All Sidereals begin play with this Charm for free.*

### CONFUSED

Your character cannot think straight, either because of some mental power or good old-fashioned cranial trauma. You take a -2 die penalty on all Intelligence and Wits rolls.

**Possible Sources:** A blow to the head, dramatic failure when using some supernatural powers.

**Resolution:** Take half an hour to focus and clear your mind. Take any amount of lethal damage.

**Beat:** n/a

## Excellence

**Resonance:** All Sidereals

The Sidereal brings her actions into perfect accord with the weave of fate. For a few moments, her efforts resonate with legend and prophecy, shouldering aside all opposition.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Varies

For each Mote spent to power this Charm, the Sidereal may enjoy one of the following benefits:

- Select a single Skill. All dice pools using this Skill add a number of bonus dice equal to the Sidereal's Essence rating. This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1

minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Skills at once, so long as each is paid for separately.

- Select a single Skill. All dice pools using this Skill gain the rote quality (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 72). This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1 minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Skills at once, so long as each is paid for separately, but cannot benefit a Skill that also enjoys bonus dice from Excellence.
- Select a specific Attribute-based dice pool which does not involve a Skill (such as Attribute + Attribute, or Attribute + Essence). Add a number of bonus dice equal to the Sidereal's Essence rating. This benefit lasts for only 1 dice roll.
- When Dodging, the character may add a number of bonus dice equal to twice the character's Essence rating pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 turn.
- Increase the character's Defense by her Essence rating for 1 turn.

*Example:* A Sidereal takes a hairpin turn on a mountain road with her motorcycle's throttle all the way open. She has Dexterity 3 + Drive 3 and a specialty in Motorcycles, which would ordinarily give her a pool of seven dice. Since she's using Excellence on the roll, and has Essence 2, she adds two extra dice, rolling a total of nine dice (Dexterity 3 + Drive 3 + 1 die for the specialty + 2 dice from Excellence). Alternately, she could have given her roll the rote quality.

*All Sidereals begin play with this Charm for free.*

## Avoidance Kata

**Resonance:** Secrets, Serenity

Encountering insurmountable difficulties, the Sidereal quickly amends reality to correct the error of her having been there in the first place.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Sidereal is no longer present in whatever dangerous circumstances prompted her to use this Charm (vampires ambushing her in her apartment). Instead, destiny places her somewhere else she might have plausibly been instead (taking a late-night walk in the park). Destiny also conveniently provides everyone with a set of new memories matching the current amended state of reality, although they don't lose their *old* memories of the Sidereal having been present, and consequences of actions that took place before the Sidereal vanished (such as injuries taken or inflicted) are not undone.

## Avoiding the Truth Technique

**Resonance:** Secrets

The Sidereal ties threads of fate connected to the most horrible and unthinkable of things to a statement she knows to be true, making that truth unthinkable. All who hear her speak become convinced that she is lying.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Sidereal speaks, and all listeners become mortally certain she is lying. If they *know* she is telling the truth (for instance, she says the sky is blue, and they can look up and clearly see this is so), they can spend 1 Willpower to resist this Charm. Otherwise, they will disbelieve the Sidereal even if their own knowledge and senses argue otherwise.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Cash and Murder Games

**Resonance:** Serenity

Brutally looping several threads of destiny together, the Sidereal informs the world that one character has dominion over another – generally through fear or desire, sexual or otherwise – and fate acknowledges that this is so.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Intimidation + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence) days

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal fumbles fate's weave, and gives herself the Charmed Persistent Condition, in thrall to the Charm's target.

**Failure:** The Sidereal weaves a useless tangle that only wastes her precious Motes.

**Success:** The Sidereal names a beneficiary and a target. The target gains the Charmed Persistent Condition, and becomes the thrall of the beneficiary. The Sidereal may name herself as beneficiary.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Charm's Duration becomes (Essence) weeks.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

### CHARMED (PERSISTENT)

You've been charmed by some supernatural force, making you subordinate to the will of another character who becomes your regnant. You don't want to believe that anything he says is a lie, and you can't read his true intentions. The regnant adds a bonus equal to the Essence of the one who created this Condition to Manipulation rolls against you, and any Wits + Empathy or Subterfuge rolls you make to detect his lies or uncover his true motives suffer a penalty equal to that same Essence rating. Using supernatural means to detect his lies becomes a Clash of Wills, again against the one who created this Condition.

You want to do things for your regnant, to make him happy. If he asks, you'll do favors for him like he was one of your best friends – giving him a place to crash, lending him your car keys, or revealing secrets that you really shouldn't. You don't feel tricked or ripped off unless you resolve the Condition. It expires normally (without resolving) at the end of the duration listed in the power that created it.

**Possible Sources:** Various supernatural powers.

**Resolution:** The regnant attempts to seriously harm you or someone close to you, you make a significant financial or physical sacrifice for him.

**Beat:** You divulge a secret or perform a favor for your regnant.

## Ceasing to Exist Approach

**Resonance:** Secrets

The Sidereal summons an emerald prayer strip, affixes it to her chest, and ceases to exist. She becomes a different person of her own devising, existing somewhere in the world. She reappears somewhere else, having become that new person, complete with a home, relationships, possessions, and a history to support her new existence.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Sidereal vanishes and ceases to exist, and while she does not exist, magic that attempts to identify her or reveal her location is reduced to a chance die.

The Sidereal's new life may be any manner of intelligent being living on Earth: mortal, Exalt, vampire, and so on. She is transported through the weave of destiny to a place appropriate to begin her new existence. She has 10 dots of Merits supporting her new life. Those around her develop memories and relationships to support the legitimacy of her existence. Thus, if she became a vampire, the Prince of her new city would recognize her and remember having approved her presence; if she took the Mentor Merit then one of the local Mekhet might remember Embracing her; and so forth.

She gains no new powers or abilities from her new life, but her existing Sidereal powers disguise themselves as whatever sort of powers the kind of being the Sidereal pretends to be ought to have. Those around her will ignore any inconsistencies in the Sidereal's existence if she offers up at least a flimsy excuse.

The Sidereal may end this Charm at any time, and it automatically terminates if she enters a Burn or exhibits the Burning Anima Tilt. When this Charm ends, the Sidereal is plucked out of her false life, and teleported back to a place appropriate for her true identity.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Celestial Drifter Panoply

**Resonance:** Journeys

By spending a few moments rummaging through the mess and clutter in her car – or any other vehicle she owns – the Sidereal can find anything that belongs to her, having thoughtfully tossed it into her ride at some previous point. How and when this happened is perhaps best not interrogated, particularly if what she comes up with is, say, blackmail material she last left in a safe deposit box on the other side of the world.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Drive + Essence

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal not only doesn't find what she's looking for, she tangles the skein of fate around her in the process of trying to retrieve it. Gain the Tangled Essence Condition.

**Failure:** The Sidereal doesn't find the thing she's looking for.

**Success:** The Sidereal finds the object she's after in a matter of moments.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal also finds a second object she owns, intuits that it will soon prove useful, and tucks it into a pocket, purse, or the waistband of her jeans. At any point before the end of the current chapter, the player may decide what that object is.

### TANGLED ESSENCE

The Essence flows around you are tangled and snarled, confused, turning inwards upon you and impeding your ability to channel Essence. You suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls including your Essence trait.

**Possible Sources:** Dramatic failure on attempts to manipulate Essence.

**Resolution:** Spend enough Motes to provoke the Shining Anima Condition.

**Beat:** n/a

## Defense of Shining Joy

**Resonance:** Serenity

Taking up fate's threads between her fingers and infusing herself with the Essence of the dance, the Sidereal's every movement becomes the perfect instinctive match of the movements of those who move against her, allowing her to smoothly pirouette through storms of bullets and flurries of savage claws without harm.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Sidereal may now calculate her Defense as (lower of Dexterity or Presence) + Performance, if she desires. After spending 1 Mote, the Sidereal gains the following benefits for the rest of the scene: She may apply her Defense against Firearms-based attacks, and if she spends Willpower to raise her Defense, that increase lasts until the end of the turn rather than only enhancing her efforts against a single attack.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Dreaming the Wild Lands

**Resonance:** Journeys, Secrets

The Sidereal tangles the paths and conjunctions of the natural world around her fingertips, and rearranges them with a series of simple gestures, rewriting the geography of a wilderness landscape or temporarily transforming it into an impossible tangle of conflicting directions. Alternately, the Sidereal may winnow open a path into the thorny purgatory between Earth and Arcadia.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Survival + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal fails to alter the land to her specifications, and her attempt alerts the denizens of the Hedge to her presence and attracts their interest.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to alter the landscape according to her desires.

**Success:** The Sidereal reshapes the land. Select one of the following results:

- Permanently rewrite one major natural geographical feature within two miles. For example, a deer track might lead in a completely different direction, a lake might double in size, or a new streambed might run through a forest. Man-made features such as buildings, fences, and roads can't be altered. The changed geography must still be broadly congruent with the nature of the landscape (so the Sidereal can't produce a forested hill in the desert).
- Twist the area's geography into a tangled, nearly unnavigable nightmare for two miles around her. Everyone the Sidereal doesn't exempt from her enchantment suffers from the Maze Environmental Tilt while trying to navigate the twisted landscape. This enchantment lasts for 24 hours.
- The Sidereal opens a path into (or out of) the Hedge, which remains open for (Essence rating) hours. See **Changeling: The Lost** for more details on the Hedge.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal regains 1 Mote.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as *Auspicious Prospects*, it has no Mote cost to employ.

### MAZE

**Description:** The geography of the affected area twists and turns in on itself in strange ways, making navigation difficult. Doors, halls, and alleys may connect to one another in nonsensical ways, or a simple cubicle farm could become a bewildering rat-run.

**Effect:** Characters attempting to navigate the enchanted area must succeed at an Intelligence + Composure – Essence roll or suffer the Lost Condition.

### LOST

Your character has no idea where she is, or how to reach her target. She cannot make any headway toward her goal without first navigating and finding out where



she is. This requires a successful Wits + Streetwise action (in a city) or Wits + Survival action (in the wilderness).

**Possible Sources:** Dramatic failures on certain rolls, being misled, running in a blind panic.

**Resolution:** Abandoning the goal, successfully navigating.

**Beat:** n/a

## Duck Fate

**Resonance:** Battles, Serenity

The Sidereal senses danger approaching in the weave of destiny, and desperately shifts its threads aside to deflect all disaster or misfortune.

**Cost:** 1 Mote, 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Dexterity + Athletics + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal doesn't avoid danger, and gains the Tangled Essence Condition.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to avoid danger.

**Success:** The Sidereal completely avoids one undesired form of harm, such as being struck by an attack, injured in a plane crash, or humiliated by an insult at a party.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal regains the point of Willpower spent to activate the Charm.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

### TANGLED ESSENCE

The Essence flows around you are tangled and snarled, confused, turning inwards upon you and impeding your ability to channel Essence. You suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls including your Essence trait.

**Possible Sources:** Dramatic failure on attempts to manipulate Essence.

**Resolution:** Spend enough Motes to provoke the Shining Anima Condition.

**Beat:** n/a

## Efficient Secretary Technique

**Resonance:** Secrets

Upon learning this Charm, the Sidereal spits out a small jubilant spider sculpted from emerald Essence. When asked to do so by the Sidereal, it scurries off along the threads of fate to find and retrieve some fact, so long as that information is neither generally lost nor actively hidden. Five seconds later, it whispers its answer in the Exalt's ear. When not in use the spider hides within the character's anima.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Faultless Ceremony

**Resonance:** All Sidereals

When you officiate over a ceremony, your actions impart a meaningful bias to destiny within the purview of your Caste. The world bends in its best attempt to impart happiness and fertility on a couple wed by a Chosen of Serenity; a Chosen of Endings who oversees the conclusion of a dead man's affairs speeds those affairs toward a swift, equitable, and relatively painless resolution; an army sent to war by a Chosen of Battles will find fortune and opportunity on the battlefield, at least up to the point that the influence of happenstance and circumstance can influence its success or failure.

**Cost:** None

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence rating) stories

This Charm is primarily a narrative device, but where it matters, the character's officiation grants a +1 equipment bonus to all actions directly relating to the blessed enterprise. If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## Favorable Inflection Procedure

**Resonance:** Endings, Serenity

The Sidereal may speak a being's name or nickname with an inflection which affirms and completes their sense of being in the world, granting a momentary gift of true inner peace.

**Cost:** None

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Empathy – Resolve

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** As a failure, and the disharmony ringing through fate causes the Sidereal to lose a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to strike the resonance of the target's name.

**Success:** The target immediately concludes any Conditions of anger, sorrow, or upset without resolving them, and becomes calm and satisfied. The cause of their distress passes from their mind, although they can still remember it and become upset again if actively reminded.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal gains a point of Willpower from the satisfaction of seeing a soul at peace.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## Force Decision

**Resonance:** Battles, Endings

When she beholds someone about to make a choice, the Sidereal reaches out and severs all future possibilities save the one she desires.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Brawl + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The branches of possibility split and multiply before your prophet's eyes, losing you in the depths of the future. You gain the Confused Condition.

**Failure:** You fail to influence the target's behavior.

**Success:** The target makes his decision as the Sidereal chooses. The target must be confronted by some manner of clear choice, such as what to order off of a menu, or whether or not they'll cheat on their spouse; the Sidereal cannot force someone goofing around on their phone while waiting for the bus to "decide" to give the Exalt their wallet unprompted.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal gains such a strong sense of the target's destiny that the next Charm they use against him gets a +1 equipment bonus.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

### CONFUSED

Your character cannot think straight, either because of some mental power or good old-fashioned cranial trauma. You take a -2 die penalty on all Intelligence and Wits rolls.

**Possible Sources:** A blow to the head, dramatic failure when using some supernatural powers.

**Resolution:** Take half an hour to focus and clear your mind. Take any amount of lethal damage.

**Beat:** n/a

## Forgotten Earth

**Resonance:** Endings

With a flick of her will, the Sidereal may momentarily sever the connection between herself and the ground.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Sidereal may automatically succeed at any standard jumping attempt (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 71-72), such as to hop a picket fence or leap between the roof of two buildings with only a narrow gap between them, gaining an exceptional success without needing to roll. If she attempts a much more ambitious, superhuman jump – say, to hop from the ground to the top of an 18-wheeler, or to leap from rooftop to rooftop *across a street* – then she may make a jumping roll which carries her (successes) x (Essence + 2) yards.

## Glory Path

**Resonance:** Journeys

Essence enwraps the character's mount or vehicle in a nimbus of yellow light, speeding it along its path and ensuring no obstacle can stand in its way.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Speed of any mount the Sidereal is riding or vehicle she's operating is doubled, and it can navigate any obstacle it must without crash or calamity. Not only are all situational penalties negated, but the Sidereal can jump chasms, drive up the side of buildings, or speed over the surface of water with no difficulty at all.

## Heartless Maiden Trance

**Resonance:** Endings, Journeys

The Sidereal's chest convulses as she swallows her heart. Henceforth she becomes as unfeeling as a stone, and suspends the functions of her body.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Sidereal no longer suffers penalties from wounds, poison, hunger, thirst, disease, fatigue, inclement weather, or temperature. She doesn't need to breathe. She can still be killed if her Health track fills with aggravated damage, but cannot be rendered unconscious or incapacitated. Ending this Charm requires an instant action to restore the Sidereal's heart; until then, she automatically fails all Empathy rolls, and cannot regain Essence or naturally heal damage.

## Holistic Bullet Methodology

**Resonance:** Battles

The Sidereal permanently entangles herself with the romance of the gun, gaining the ability to perpetrate a shootout in any circumstance or situation.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Sidereal never runs out of basic, non-exotic ammunition for any weapon she may have on her person. There's always another magazine tucked into the back of her belt, another few shells in her pocket, or more ammunition to be scavenged from a fallen enemy at her feet. If she's truly

unarmed, then she can cock her fingers and use them to shoot her enemies to death, stopping periodically to pantomime a reload. The Sidereal's bare hands have the traits of a light pistol (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 268).

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as *Auspicious Prospects*, then the Sidereal's bare hands have the traits of a shotgun (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 268). The Sidereal aims with her fist, and must pump her forearm between shots.

## Horrific Wreath

**Resonance:** Battles, Endings

The Sidereal fortifies herself with the Essence of every manner of bane and calamity, every atrocity, every being's worst day all rolled into one. Should she shoot a werewolf, her bullets are silver. Should she strike a vampire, her fists glow with the light of the sun. Should she strike down a changeling, her baseball bat is momentarily wrought from cold iron.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** (Essence rating) + 1 turns

The Sidereal's attacks inflict aggravated damage. If the target has a particular bane, then it is specifically aggravated damage from their worst and most devastating bane, inflicting any additional relevant consequences (such as forcing a vampire to resist blindly fleeing in fear as from fire or sunlight).

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as *Auspicious Prospects*, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Impeding the Flow

**Resonance:** Battles

A casual flick of the Exalt's hand momentarily severs the strands of destiny connecting her to the possibility of harm due to the aggression of others.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

For the rest of the turn, all attacks launched against the Sidereal roll a chance die to hit, no matter what dice pool or modifiers they should otherwise enjoy.

## Impose Nature

**Resonance:** Battles, Serenity

With a simple touch, the Sidereal taints someone else's destiny with her own. They gain a new perspective, experiencing the world as the Sidereal does.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Composure + Empathy + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Duration:** (Essence rating) days

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal fails to influence the target's nature, and gains the Tangled Essence Condition.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to influence the target's nature.

**Success:** The target gains the Sidereal's Virtue and Vice in addition to any similar traits she might possess (such as Virtue and Vice, Mask and Dirge, and so on). This not only grants them new methods of regaining Willpower, but also impacts their personality accordingly.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Sidereal's Virtue and Vice completely replace any similar traits the target might possess for the duration of the Charm.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

### TANGLED ESSENCE

The Essence flows around you are tangled and snarled, confused, turning inwards upon you and impeding your ability to channel Essence. You suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls including your Essence trait.

**Possible Sources:** Dramatic failure on attempts to manipulate Essence.

**Resolution:** Spend enough Motes to provoke the Shining Anima Condition.

**Beat:** n/a

## Life Without Compunction

**Resonance:** Endings, Serenity

Everyone knows that those with the right connections can make legal crimes simply disappear. The Sidereal knows similar tricks with which to bribe destiny to make a *social* crime vanish. Paying a small tithe of her Essence to the universe, the Sidereal renders some social blunder or taboo violation that she or someone else has committed broadly acceptable to those who know of it.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Socialize + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Destiny rejects the Sidereal's bribe and entangles her in a miasma of scandal and ill-regard. She gains the Notoriety Condition.

**Failure:** The Sidereal's bribe fails to sway destiny's course.

**Success:** Nobody much gives a damn about the gaffe, whatever it may have been. Those who are pressed on the issue may make weak excuses or issue paint-by-numbers condemnations because it is demanded of them, but they don't really *care*.

**Exceptional Success:** Not only is nobody bothered that the target has violated social norms, but they somehow comes off as an admirable rebel (i.e. a social critic who makes a bold, daring statement by repeatedly interrupting a lecture by a respected professor, or taking out his dick on a Zoom call). It would be reprehensible if anyone else did it, but in *this* case it's not only okay, it's laudable.

Socially acceptable acts may still be illegal, and unmotivated police are usually still willing to arrest people. If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

### NOTORIETY

Whether or not your character actually did something heinous in the past, the wrong people think she did. This causes disgust or ostracism by the common public. Your character suffers a -2 on any Social rolls against those that know of her notoriety. If using Social Maneuvering, the character must open one extra Door if the target knows of her notoriety.

**Possible Sources:** Rumors and smear campaigns

**Resolution:** The story is debunked or the character's name is cleared.

**Beat:** n/a

## Mark of Exaltation

**Resonance:** Secrets

The Sidereal's caste mark glows with an otherworldly light visible to beings in Twilight, but which is invisible to ordinary people. This light in turn illuminates beings in Twilight to her, and, if needful, permits her to rend them asunder.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

With but a moment's concentration and an instant action, the Sidereal can attune her senses to detect the presence of beings in Twilight for the rest of the scene. She can either search for a particular sort of being (such as ghosts, ignoring the presence of spirits and angels), or unveil *all* ephemeral entities. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, she can also dial herself into the same spiritual frequency occupied by ghosts, spirits, angels, or some other variety of ephemeral entity for the rest of the scene, allowing her to interact with them as though they were physically present, including harming them. Of course, this is a two-way street, and the ephemeral being can hit back.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Mirror Shattering Method

**Resonance:** Journeys, Secrets

The Sidereal opens a book that is older than she is, seats herself within or upon a conveyance, or, lacking those options, stands upon a symbolic bit of wood representing a ship upon the sea, then

strikes the surface of the Gauntlet. The barrier between worlds shatters into ash and foam for a moment, and when it reforms, the Sidereal stands within the Shadow Realm. This Charm may also be used to cross back to the physical world in the same fashion. If the Sidereal uses a vehicle to enact this Charm, she may also transport anyone else in the vehicle across the Gauntlet as well.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + (Drive or Occult) + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal is caught within the churning tides of the Gauntlet for minutes or hours before being spat back out into the real world at some point within several miles. Her point of egress is influenced by the actions of nearby spirits agitated by the disruption of the Shadow Realm, and so the Sidereal is likely to reappear in a place that suits the spirits' agenda or satisfied their petty spite.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to breach the Gauntlet, and reappears in the physical world a moment later.

**Success:** If Sidereal crosses the Gauntlet successfully, appearing in the Shadow two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Sidereal may cross the Gauntlet instantly.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## **Neighborhood Relocation Scheme**

**Resonance:** Journeys, Secrets, Serenity

The Sidereal summons a long cerulean prayer strip and binds it around her waist, where it becomes a band of Essence the color of a clear sky. She connects herself to the destiny of the landscape around her, and then begins to run, dragging the local geography along in her wake until it has been relocated to a more auspicious location.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies

The Sidereal connects herself to all geographic features and buildings within (Essence rating) miles (although she can target a smaller area, if desired), and may drag them somewhere else by walking or running: no other manner of conveyance is acceptable, although she can increase her running speed by as many forms of magic as she may have available. The Sidereal suffers one point of bashing damage each hour until she releases this Charm, which cannot be healed while it remains active.

This Charm isn't destructive. The relocated geography slides smoothly through the world, rerouting existing terrain around itself as it goes, and when it arrives in its new location, it integrates into the existing landscape in a way that makes sense. For example, a borough moved from one end of a city to the other would configure itself so that all of its sewage and electrical



lines are still connected to the grid in a functional manner, and doesn't make complete hash of the city's roads. Likewise, the world "fills in" the missing gap left behind by the Sidereal's efforts with a new geographical arrangement that makes sense for the location, whether that means collapsing surrounding neighborhoods together, or simply creating a new patch of generic parks or woodland.

As far as the world is concerned, the new geographical configuration is the way things have always been; old land surveys and other records reflect as much, and people form new memories of the relocated land having always been where it is now... although they *also* retain their old memories of it having been somewhere else.

If the Sidereal uses this Charm to move a Burn, or drags her portable geography through a Burn, it immediately ignites into a Sear.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## Never an Empty Alley Technique

**Resonance:** Journeys

Wherever the Sidereal may venture, a getaway vehicle is always ready for her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

After a few moments of searching her immediate surroundings, the Sidereal discovers that a car, riding animal, motorcycle, or other useful conveyance that she owns is patiently waiting for her in the nearest space capable of hiding such a thing, and that any necessary keys or codes are on her person.

## Of the Shape of the World

**Resonance:** Secrets

Averting her eyes from the truth that is, the Sidereal invokes a truth she wishes to create.

**Cost:** 1 Willpower

**Action:** Instant

Upon activating this Charm, one course of action the Sidereal is about to take becomes in accord with the demands of fate, regardless of any prophecies or omens to the contrary. Using this Charm adds +3 to any Burn formation roll that may occur at the end of the scene.

## Of Truths Best Unspoken

**Resonance:** Secrets

Settling into meditation, the Sidereal casts her Essence deep into the archives of the Shattered Annex, letting her awareness wind deep, deep, deep into the darkest tangles of destiny's weave, in search of those secrets the future knows, but fears to acknowledge.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Academics + Essence

**Action:** An hour in meditation

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal momentarily glimpses an aborted destiny that has no place in the world. She learns nothing, and gains the Shaken Condition.

**Failure:** The Sidereal's Essence is lost somewhere in the dusty halls of the Shattered Annex.

**Success:** The Sidereal makes a query, and receives an answer as though she had consulted a history book written at the end of time. If she demands a specific, detailed answer, add +3 to any Burn formation roll at the end of the scene. If she demands a clear but un-detailed answer, add +2. If she is satisfied with a vague but useful answer, add +1.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but reduce the Burn modifier accrued by the answer by -2 (this cannot transform the modifier into a penalty to Burn formation).

The answer revealed by a successful use of this Charm is always part of fate's design, like the knowledge gained from Auspicious Prospects.

### SHAKEN

Something has frightened your character extensively. Any time your character is taking an action where that fear might hinder her, you may opt to fail the roll (before you've made the roll), and shed this Condition. This Condition can be imposed by a successful degeneration roll.

**Possible Sources:** Anything sufficiently terrifying

**Resolution:** Opting to fail a roll.

**Beat:** n/a

### Optimistic Security Practice

**Resonance:** Journeys, Serenity

The Sidereal infects the weave of fate with her own generosity of spirit. The universe becomes very protective of her, turning aside all sources of harm.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Sidereal may calculate her Defense using (the lower of her Dexterity or Presence) + Empathy. Other characters that have not been grievously wronged in some way by the Sidereal *always* treat attacking her as a breaking point if they are capable of experiencing breaking points at all.

### Ox-Body Technique

**Resonance:** Battles, Endings, Journeys

Fate protects the Sidereal from fatal injury. Her skin doesn't become any tougher, nor her bones more resistant to breaking. Instead, her injuries are miraculously superfluous. Blades miss her vital arteries. Broken ribs don't pierce her lungs. Bullets avoid major organs. As a result, she can keep fighting long past the point when her wounds seemingly should have killed her.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Sidereal's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + Essence.

## Perfection of the Visionary Warrior

**Resonance:** Battles, Endings

When battle looms, the Sidereal's eyes become filled with blood and starlight. Violence becomes a second nature to her, and her body moves to kill of its own accord.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Sidereal no longer reduces her Defense by 1 for the rest of the turn after applying it to an attack. When Dodging, she is no longer penalized for facing multiple opponents. She may ignore up to her Essence rating in points of environmental penalties to her attack rolls.

## Presence in Absence Technique

**Resonance:** Battles, Secrets

The Sidereal crafts a message or performance and infects someone's future with it. At some point the Sidereal specifies, no matter what the target says or does, their words and deeds will resonate with the Sidereal's intended meanings and connotations, and she *will* deliver the Exalt's message.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Expression + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal fouls her own destiny rather than infecting that of her target. Gain the Tangled Essence Condition.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to amend a correction to her target's destiny.

**Success:** Make a social roll, then specify the circumstance when it will go off, such as "When this vampire next meets the Prince of Sacramento." At that point, the Sidereal's social action deploys through the target's words and deeds. To continue the example, the vampire she tagged earlier, upon meeting the Prince of Milwaukee, unknowingly becomes the vector for a Manipulation + Subterfuge roll to convince the Prince that the tagged vampire is plotting to betray and murder him. Regardless of what the vampire says or does, this is the message their words and actions convey.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Sidereal may make her social roll twice and keep the preferred result.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## TANGLED ESSENCE

The Essence flows around you are tangled and snarled, confused, turning inwards upon you and impeding your ability to channel Essence. You suffer a -3 penalty on all rolls including your Essence trait.

**Possible Sources:** Dramatic failure on attempts to manipulate Essence.

**Resolution:** Spend enough Motes to provoke the Shining Anima Condition.

**Beat:** n/a

## Prior Warning

**Resonance:** Endings

The Sidereal may extend her awareness so that it constantly probes the near future, warning her of impending danger.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is active, the Sidereal gets one minute of advance warning when she is about to be in danger, as well as an awareness of the nature of the danger (“In three minutes, a vampire is going to try to lure you into an alley.”).

Acting to avert the revealed danger is always in accord with destiny’s design, as though it were an omen granted by Auspicious Prospects.

## Rain and Sky Mantra

**Resonance:** Battles, Journeys

The Sidereal’s fingers find the strings of destiny which direct the vast interacting forces that drive weather systems, and adjusts them to her needs.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies

The Sidereal summons an appropriate weather system into being in a matter of minutes: rain, clear skies, high winds, blustery chill. This may be mild, or it may be intense enough to produce an environmental Tilt. If the weather makes sense for the climate and circumstances (a blizzard in Chicago in the winter) then it may last for up to several days. If the weather is aberrant (a sudden rainstorm in the desert) it lasts for only a scene.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate’s demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## Salt into Ash Sleight

**Resonance:** Endings, Journeys

Clapping her hands, the Sidereal pulls together saffron threads of location, happenstance, and urgency, and casts the resultant snarl at a supernatural being. That creature suddenly realizes that

they have incredibly pressing business elsewhere. This isn't a trick or illusion: there really *is* an urgent reason for the target to journey elsewhere. This Charm simply calls that fact to mind. It has no effect on ordinary mortals.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Animal Ken + Essence – Resolve

**Action:** Instant

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** It turns out that the target is, in fact, destined to be exactly where they are, doing what they're doing. They gain a +1 situational bonus on all actions for the rest of the scene, so long as they stay in the same general location.

**Failure:** It turns out the target has no pressing business elsewhere.

**Success:** The target realizes they have urgent, pressing business that demands their presence elsewhere, immediately. If they decide to stay anyway, this knowledge gnaws at and distracts them, imposing a -1 penalty to all actions for the rest of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal intuits where the target is supposed to be and what their business is.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## **Shield of Mars**

**Resonance:** Battles

Tangling her destiny with that of her foe, the Sidereal passes on damage that she might have suffered to the one who sought to inflict it.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Exalt must have just been struck by a direct attack which inflicted damage.

Whatever damage the Exalt should have suffered from the reflected attack is instead dealt to her attacker. Each use of this Charm increases its cost for the rest of the scene by one additional Mote, and adds a +1 modifier to any Burn formation roll that may occur.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, its use doesn't increase the likelihood of a Burn.

## **Shun the Smiling Lady**

**Resonance:** Serenity

Fixing an individual's name or face in her mind, the Sidereal strikes their name out of the book of love.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Subterfuge + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

**Duration:** (Essence) weeks

### **Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The horror the Sidereal failed to inflict on her target rebounds on her, infecting her soul with emptiness and causing her to immediately lose a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to corrupt the target's destiny.

**Success:** The Sidereal afflicts the target with the Loveless Persistent Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Charm's duration becomes (Essence) months.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

### LOVELESS (PERSISTENT)

You are unloved, and unlovable. All Social actions intended to evoke sympathy or affection suffer a -2 penalty, all seduction attempts roll a chance die, and no one can feel romantic love toward you while you carry this Condition. Anyone currently in love with you ceases to love you while this Condition is in effect. If this Condition expires through its duration running out, any feelings of love it severed do not automatically return.

Possible Sources: Pissing off the wrong Sidereal

Resolution: The Sidereal who laid the curse voluntarily revokes it, or else its duration runs out.

Beat: You are rejected by a loved one alienated by this Condition, or gain another Condition or suffer a breaking point due to your alienation and loneliness.

## Subordinate Inspiration Technique

**Resonance:** Secrets

The Sidereal may whisper into the ear of someone unaware of her presence. When she does so, they hear her words as their own thoughts.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## Supernal Awareness

**Resonance:** Endings

The Sidereal filters her awareness of the complex weave of destiny as the present cascades into the future around her. She may sweep the weave of fate for specific disturbances, denoting individuals or phenomena she wishes to locate.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Sidereal's supernal sense extends out to (Essence x 300) yards. The Sidereal sets this sense to sweep for the presence of whatever she specifies – vampires, other Exalted, warding spells, Burns, haunted houses, corpses, murder scenes. If there's anything to detect, then the Sidereal gains a vague sense of what direction she should head in to locate the thing she seeks, although this Charm's of no further use once she arrives at her destination. She might know, upon arriving at a nightclub, that there is a vampire somewhere inside, but that doesn't tell her which person in the club is the vampire... or even if there might be more than one vampire present.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Terminal Sanction

**Resonance:** Endings

The Sidereal calls upon an ancient sanction granting her the authority of fate to call even the gods themselves to answer her audit, and to destroy them if found wanting.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Occult + Essence versus Resistance + Rank

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal fails to establish her sanction, and the effort costs a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to establish her sanction.

**Success:** The Sidereal gains Terminal Sanction over a spirit or ghost that is present. If it is slain while under the effects of this Charm and the Sidereal contributes to its demise, she may choose to either sentence the target to permanent annihilation, or cause it to reform at full power but owing her one service it cannot refuse.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Sidereal regains one point of Willpower if the spirit is destroyed and her Terminal Sanction activates.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, take a beat.

## Underling Invisibility Practice

**Resonance:** Endings

It is the will of destiny that those who consider themselves above the process of fate shall become most vulnerable to it. The Sidereal wraps her destiny in threads of humble obscurity, making herself completely imperceptible to anyone who considers himself superior to her, be it morally, personally, or hierarchically. They cannot even perceive the efforts of others to point out the Sidereal's presence or existence.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

This Charm's benefits cease to hide the Sidereal from someone if she physically interacts with them or gains the Burning Anima Tilt.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Unobstructed Blow

**Resonance:** Battles

The Sidereal's keen foresight allows her to perceive an unbreakable string of Essence between an attack and her opponent. There can be no other outcome save pain and ruin.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

If the demands of fate, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, require that the Sidereal strike down an opponent, then she can opt not to roll an attack at all, instead simply accepting one automatic success. Each time she accepts this Charm's benefits, she adds a +1 modifier to any Burn roll that may occur at the end of the scene.

## Unwavering Well-Being Meditation

**Resonance:** Journeys, Serenity

The Sidereal's calm certainty in her own destiny becomes a shield which deflects unexpected misfortune.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Anyone who strikes at the Sidereal while she is unaware feels the weight of destiny itself weighted against their blow or shot. Unless they possess a power trait higher than the Sidereal's Essence, they must roll a chance die for their surprise attack. If the attacker possesses Integrity or Wisdom and decides to go through with the attack despite the sense of destiny's foreboding, they suffer a breaking point.

## Yellow Path

**Resonance:** Journeys

The shining yellow light of destiny illuminates the fastest – if not most straightforward or safest – path to the Sidereal's destination. So long as they follow her lead, the Sidereal can bring a handful of companions along with her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Survival + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Sidereal loses her way among the winding maze of destiny's threads, and suffers the Lost Condition (see p. XX).



**Failure:** The Sidereal fails to read the omens; or perhaps it is destiny's will that she make her way without guidance.

**Success:** Following the trail laid down by destiny, the Sidereal finds a series of dramatic shortcuts that, if followed diligently, will drastically speed up her journey and guarantee her arrival before any relevant deadline if that is at all remotely possible.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Sidereal *will* make any relevant deadline or arrive on time for her appointment, no matter what. Such paths are incredibly swift, but tend to wind through very strange, very dangerous precincts of reality.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## You and Yours Stance

**Resonance:** Secrets, Serenity

The Sidereal entangles herself in every thread of fate which gives rise to lust and desire. She becomes impossible to recognize: those who behold her see only that which their heart most fervently desires, and know that to harm or deny her is to shatter their own heart.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, anyone who wishes to harm or deny the Sidereal must make a Willpower roll with a penalty of the Sidereal's Essence rating each time they attempt to do so. Failure makes such effrontery unthinkable. The Sidereal lowers the difficulty of all seduction rolls by -2.

If the use of this Charm facilitates fate's demands, as revealed by other Charms such as Auspicious Prospects, it has no Mote cost to employ.

## Wearing Red to a Wedding

**Resonance:** Battles, Serenity

The Sidereal wraps herself in a nonchalant skein of desensitized violence. No matter how alarming her appearance, she seems unthreatening and unworthy of special notice, even if she's covered in blood and openly carrying several high-caliber firearms. Unless the Sidereal actually attacks someone, it seems ridiculous to consider her a threat.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

This Charm's effects are permanent, rendering the Sidereal unthreatening and un-alarming. People will still respond to overt threats, but she suffers a -3 penalty to all Intimidation actions unless she makes a reflexive Willpower roll to suppress this Charm's effects for the rest of the scene.

## Sidereal Burns

An overabundance of Sidereal Essence cracks the world like a broken mirror, fracturing it along the lines of destiny. People in a Sidereal Burn come into direct contact with the workings of the past, future, and present, and are caught up on them like flies in spider's web.

Time and causality become traps for the unwary in such a Burn. Reality suffers bouts of paralytic stasis. The lives of those within the Burn may periodically or consistently reset to the time the Burn was established, in whole or in fragments. The results can look like anything from *Groundhog Day*-style inescapable recursions to fragmented lives where a deceased loved one is still alive, but only within a particular kitchen; or where a person is *and* is not unemployed during different points within the Burn's geography or days of the week.

Sometimes these effects can be escaped by leaving the Burn. Sometimes leaving the Burn proves impossible, as its borders lead endlessly inwards, or reel those who've left back to their bedroom when the clock strikes midnight. Alone of all Burns, Sidereal Burns are *sticky*. Those who flee such a place often trail streamers of mutilated destiny behind them, leaving them subject to its influence so long as the Burn persists.

## Sidereal Searing

When a Sidereal Burn is Seared away, it flares with impossible, intolerable kaleidoscopic light, climbing in seconds from prismatic to pure white before reality is once more fused solid. In those moments, the broken and burning threads of destiny whip through the Burn like snapped tow cables, more than capable of splitting a soul open.

Everyone within the Burn suffers the Blinded Tilt for a turn. Mortals caught in the Sear must roll to avoid being struck by the white-hot threads of burning destiny.

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses all Willpower. If they possess an Integrity trait rated at 4 or lower, they undergo Divergence and become a Cephalist Deviant (see **Deviant: The Renegades**).

**Failure:** The character loses three points of Willpower. If they possess an Integrity trait rated at 4 or lower, they undergo Divergence and become a Cephalist Deviant (see **Deviant: The Renegades**).

**Success:** The character loses a point of Willpower.

**Exceptional Success:** The character makes it through the Sear unscathed.

# Chapter Eight: The Abyssal Exalted

Dredged back from the bleak mystery that waits beyond the grave, the Abyssal Exalted walk the breathing world, ever-aware of the hungry void gaping beneath them. They will feed that endless abyss, or it will reach out through their power to feed itself. This chapter features all the rules necessary to play one of the Abyssal Exalted, or to use them as antagonists. Further information on the Abyssal Exalted can be found in Chapter One.

## Character Creation

Abyssals follow all the standard steps outlined in Chapter Two. In the fifth step they add the Abyssal template.

## Add Abyssal Template

To return a mortal to life as one of the Abyssal Exalted, perform the following operations:

### Choose Caste

Begin by choosing your Abyssal's Caste from among Dusk, Midnight, Daybreak, Day, or Moonshadow. These are outlined in greater detail in Chapter One. Your choice of Caste will determine your Bonus Attributes, Caste Skills, Caste Charms, and Divine Gift.

### Bonus Attributes

An Abyssal partakes of the terrible power of death. She returns from the grave mightier than she once was: stronger, faster, smarter, brimming with a dark charisma. Select two Attributes from the three listed for your character's Caste. Add a dot to each of the two chosen. This cannot raise an Attribute above five dots.

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Bonus Attributes</b>
Dusk	Wits, Strength, Dexterity
Midnight	Resolve, Stamina, Presence
Daybreak	Intelligence, Wits, Resolve
Day	Wits, Dexterity, Manipulation
Moonshadow	Presence, Manipulation, Composure

### Caste Skills

The benefits of Caste Skills are outlined in Chapter Two. Note your character's Caste Skills:

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Caste Skills</b>
Dusk	Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Firearms, Weaponry
Midnight	Animal Ken, Empathy, Expression, Intimidation, Survival
Daybreak	Academics, Crafts, Investigation, Medicine, Occult
Day	Athletics, Larceny, Stealth, Streetwise, Subterfuge
Moonshadow	Computer, Persuasion, Politics, Socialize, Subterfuge

Then, distribute three dots among your Caste Skills. This cannot raise any Skill above five dots.

## Caste Charms and Favored Charms

You have an easier time learning the Charms that correspond to your Caste. Also, select one additional Caste. You treat this Caste's Charms as though they were also Caste Charms for you for all purposes. These are your *Favored Charms*.

Gain the Charm "Excellence" for free, and then select four additional Charms, at least three of which must be Caste Charms.

## Essence Rating

Your Abyssal character begins with an Essence rating of 1. You can give up five of your Merit points to start at Essence 2, or all 10 to start at Essence 3.

## The Mark of Death

Your Abyssal's appearance bears the mark of her return from the depths of the great mystery. Many Abyssals find themselves possessed of a stark and fearsome perfection, all blemishes wiped away. Others gain a kind of predatory beauty: their smile is cruel and lovely, their ears delicately pointed, their eyes red and compelling. Others still are revolting, or terrifying: a permanent stamp of worm-eaten decay settles into their flesh; or they look for-ever like a burned cadaver; or their skin is stretched tight and thin and near-translucent over a stark and grinning skull.

Decide on how death has left its mark upon your appearance, and gain the Striking Looks (••) Merit at no cost.

## Divine Gifts

Every Abyssal has a Divine Gift, an intrinsic feature of their Exaltation. Each Caste bears a different Divine Gift.

## The Dusk Caste: What Can't Be Stopped

Exaltation imbues each Dusk Caste with all the tools necessary to seek out her prey and kill it. In short:

- There is no honor in death. Dusks are instinctively aware of the weaknesses of those around them, and can exploit any opening with only a moment's notice. Every Dusk Caste gains the Cheap Shot (••) Merit at no cost, even if they don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 61).
- The world shrinks and shivers in the face of a Dusk with an eye full of murder. When she attempts to break or destroy something that is standing between her and her prey, the Dusk may ignore two points of Durability.
- When a Dusk's Caste mark appears, it does so with a sound like eight overlapping screams as each arm of the black sun appears. Everyone attempting to inflict violence upon the Dusk who beholds her Caste Mark, or who is even *considering* offering her violence, experiences a surge of bone-deep terror that slows their reactions and makes them feel as though they are struggling in a slow-motion nightmare. If they are at all capable of experiencing fear, and do not possess a supernatural potency trait (such as Blood Potency, Essence, or Gnosis) higher than the Dusk's,

then all attempts to attack her suffer a penalty equal to the lower of the Dusk's Essence rating or highest Caste Skill.

## The Midnight Caste: What Can't Be Denied

Midnights are the most terrible things lurking in the darkness of the world, and their Divine Gifts help them to assert this sovereignty.

- Where others hear only silence, Midnights are surrounded by the echoing whispers of dead gods, offering them guidance. All Midnights gain the Common Sense (•••) Merit at no cost. When they draw upon it, they may add their Essence rating to the Merit's usual roll (so Wits + Composure + Essence).
- The Midnight Caste may, with only a moment's effort, see, hear, speak to, and touch ghosts present in Twilight. She is not vulnerable to being touched in turn unless the ghost has some special ability to allow it to do so.
- Midnights enjoy the 9-again rule on Purification rolls.

## The Daybreak Caste: What Can't Be Understood

Secrets and enigmas fascinate Abyssals of the Daybreak Caste, beckoning them deeper and deeper into the darkness. Under duress, a Daybreak can even become one with the darkness, trading part of herself to its shadows in exchange for survival. The Divine Gift of Daybreaks conveys the following advantages:

- From the moment of Exaltation, a Daybreak possess the capacity to speak with otherworldly beings. She gains the First Tongue (••) and High Speech (••) Merits at no cost, even if she doesn't meet their prerequisites (see p. XX).
- Once the Daybreak obtains Occult •••, the universe conspires to teach her the art of ancient sorcery. In most instances, a truly ancient and inhuman ghost – or even a Chthonian or Kerberos – approaches her and imprints ancient and forbidden knowledge upon her soul. In any event, she gains the Ancient Sorcery (•••) Merit at no cost.
- The Daybreak may reflexively pay one Mote to cause her anima to engulf her in absolute darkness. She ceases to exist, leaving behind a thin slick of plasma, until the sun next sets, at which point she reappears at some location with powerful deathly resonance within 10 miles.

## The Day Caste: What Can't Be Seen

The Day Caste is adept at surfacing from the world of monsters to temporarily walk among the living without giving away her nature. But at the same time, she sinks easily into the shadows at the border of life and death, making it easy for her to spy upon man and monster alike. This grants the following advantages:

- The Day has a natural genius for not exposing herself in the course of her investigations, and gets the Untouchable (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 56).
- The Day may exert herself when using her various miracles to draw close to those she must shadow or investigate without exposing her monstrous nature. By spending a point of Willpower, the Day discounts any Motes she spends that turn as counting toward her Anima Threshold. She may also spend a point of Willpower to suppress any of the passive manifestations of her Charms that would give her away as a monster until the sun next rises.

- Once per story, the Day may hide herself from the brutal vigilance of the Abyss, violating the first, second, or fourth Law without provoking the Maw of the Abyss. The fifth Law remains inviolate.

## The Moonshadow Caste: What Can't Be Broken

The Moonshadow Caste is wrapped in the power of the Laws of the Grave, and may impose their censure upon those who break faith with her. This grants the following tools and advantages:

- Abyssals of the Moonshadow Caste possess a natural instinct for playing their cards close to their chest, even if they don't intend to manipulate or mislead others, and gain the Closed Book (••) Merit at no cost, even if they don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 50).
- Any supernatural being that beholds a Moonshadow's Caste mark is struck with an instinctive awareness that this is the symbol of an envoy or diplomat, empowered by great forces of the grave to bargain and negotiate. What they do with that information is up to them.
- The Moonshadow may spend 1 Mote and 1 Willpower to sanctify any oath, deal, or promise she personally witnesses, scribing the words of the pact on the air with Essence. Anyone who breaks the letter of the sanctified oath suffers the Forsworn Persistent Condition. The Moonshadow cannot revoke an oath once she has sanctified it.

### FORSWORN (PERSISTENT)

You swore an oath and were bound to it. Maybe you didn't mean what you said. Maybe it was a mistake. Maybe you just didn't care. Whatever the reason, you broke that oath, and now it seems like the universe itself has it out for you. Things go wrong, horribly wrong, at the worst possible moment for you, for your ambitions, for the people and things you value. Nothing seems to turn out right anymore. Whenever the Storyteller feels so inclined, she may ignore the results of a Forsworn character's dice roll and impose a dramatic failure instead.

**Possible Sources:** Breaking a sanctified oath

**Resolution:** Suffer a number of Storyteller-imposed dramatic failures equal to the Essence of the Eclipse that sanctified the oath.

**Beat:** The Storyteller drops a dramatic failure onto a roll that otherwise wouldn't have turned out so badly.

## The Laws of the Grave

Abyssals no longer use the Integrity trait that mortals do. Having already experienced the most terrible of fates, their soul has hardened against mere horror, and the capacity to deal yet more death sits easy in an Abyssal's heart. None of these things can unhinge the Exalt's sanity.

Rather than mortal Integrity, Abyssals must answer to the four *Laws of the Grave*. Abyssals are not Exalted with an understanding of these Laws, but grasp each immediately in the moment they are first broken. The punishment for defying any of the Laws is the same: the Exalt must contend with the *Maw of the Abyss*.

These are the four Laws:

**I: You are a nameless thing.** For an Abyssal to speak, use, or acknowledge her former name is against the Law. For an Abyssal to claim a new name as her own is also against the Law. Stealing the names of others is not against the Law. Using a false name is not against the Law. But should the Abyssal answer to a false or stolen name for so long that she comes to feel comfortable with it – comes to consider it her own – then it is also one of her names. And for the Abyssal to have a name is against the Law.

The Abyssal may answer to titles or descriptions (the Old Witch, the Drifter, That Hateful Thing) freely. She may even come to think of such titles as her true name. So long as what she identifies with is not properly a *name*, it does not violate the Law.

All violations of this Law are considered lesser violations.

**II: You must not create life.** To sire a child is against the Law. To bear a child is against the Law. To create sentient life through magic or science is against the Law. Horticulture and animal husbandry doesn't seem to violate the Law. Perhaps plants and beasts are beneath the notice of the Abyss.

All violations of this Law are considered greater violations.

**IV: You must not preserve life.** If the Abyssal perceives that a sentient being is about to die, and takes steps to immediately prevent that death, and succeeds in averting death, she has violated the Law. The Abyssal does not exist to save the living. Again, saving the lives of plants and animals does not appear to violate the Law. Nor does acting to preserve the existence of beings that are animate, but dead, such as ghosts or vampires, or creatures that hang in a nebulous state between life and death, such as Prometheans.

Preserving a single life is a lesser violation of this Law. Saving multiple lives within a single scene is considered a single greater violation.

**V: The grave demands its due.** If 28 days – a full lunar cycle – passes by and the Abyssal has not directly caused the death of either a sentient being, or a being possessed of supernatural power (that is to say, a creature with a supernatural resistance trait such as Blood Potency, Rank, or Gnosis), that Abyssal is in violation of the Law.

Refusing to grant the grave its due is a greater violation of the Law.

No Abyssal currently knows what the third Law might be. It may be that the world has changed so much since the Laws were scribed that breaking it is no longer possible.

No one knows what hand scribed the Laws.

## The Maw of the Abyss

An Abyssal who violates any of the Laws immediately calls forth the Maw of the Abyss. She feels the black jaws of death rising up toward her: a terrible, enervating force. In that moment, she must make a choice: she can stand aside, and let the thing she has called up loose into the world, or stand in its path and bar it from the Earth with her own substance.

An Abyssal who is not in the living world, but rather in some stranger or more conceptual place such as the Shadow Realm or the Underworld, cannot choose to stand aside. The Maw fixates upon her.

### To Stand Aside

If the Abyssal stands aside, then death is set loose into the world. It sets forth, an invisible and malevolent force on the hunt for a victim to satisfy the Abyss.

This is what the Maw of the Abyss does, in the broadest sense: It identifies a victim, and it does its best to kill that victim.

As for who dies: The rising of the Maw of the Abyss is fundamentally a punishment for the Abyssal's violation of the Law. There's a certain cold, pitiless, but not entirely vindictive intelligence to the Maw. Which is to say, its selection of a victim will never be calculated to make the Abyssal's life easier or more pleasant. But at the same time, the Abyss is... patient. Generally, it won't attempt to kill the Abyssal's most treasured loved one the first time it is unleashed. Probably, it'll be someone else. Maybe a useful contact. Maybe a complete stranger whose senseless death will run against the grain of the Abyssal's sensibilities (such as a young child, or a veteran only a single day returned from a tour of duty). The more cavalier and frequent the Abyssal is with breaking the Law and unleashing the Maw, though, the closer the Maw strikes to the Abyssal's heart and hearth; or, if the Abyssal really doesn't care about anyone, the Maw will move on to those whose demise will painfully complicate the Abyssal's life. The severity of the Abyssal's offense also matters. Greater violations of the Law tend to draw more vicious responses than lesser violations.

The Maw can create dangerous or fatal circumstances or accidents by nudging the world around the victim as though using an ephemeral being's Influence (•••) power (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p 130), with a scope of "Whoever and whatever is around the target." If the Abyssal committed a lesser violation of the Law, the dice pool for this Influence is 4 dice. If the Abyssal committed a greater violation, the dice pool is 8 dice. The Maw's options tend to be fairly wide-ranging, from causing a vehicle's brakes to fail, to nudging a nearby vampire on the prowl for victims to notice the target within a crowd. It can exert this Influence a total number of times equal to the Abyssal's Essence rating.

The Maw of the Abyss has no time limit under which it must act, but rarely takes more than a few hours or days to select a victim and go to work.

If the Maw exhausts its Influence and the victim still lives, then they have escaped death's shadow for the time being. The Maw rarely targets the same person again immediately. Death is patient.

Finally, should the Maw succeed at killing its target before exhausting its power to Influence the world, the Abyssal *always* learns of the death somehow (she sees it in her dreams, if no other option is available), and *always* knows that it happened because she set the Maw loose into the world.

## To Stand Fast

If the Abyssal puts herself in the path of the Maw, then it claims a portion of her vitality for itself. The Abyssal's Health rating immediately drops by one point in the case of a lesser violation of the Law, or by three points in the case of a greater violation. She doesn't suffer *damage*; rather, her maximum Health is reduced. Draw a line above the consumed Health point(s) on her character sheet. The Abyssal appears pale, anemic, and in some sense *stricken* while her Health track is reduced in this fashion.

Should the Maw devour all of her Health, the Abyssal dies once again, this time forever, and her Exaltation departs.



## Performing Penance

An Abyssal may atone for a violation of the Law by feeding the Maw of the Abyss with a source of significant power. Destroying a being with a supernatural tolerance trait (such as Blood Potency, Essence, Wyrd, Rank, etc) sates the Abyss. For each dot of the slain or destroyed being's supernatural potency trait, the Abyssal may reclaim one dot of Health she lost by standing fast before the Maw of the Abyss.

If she chose to set the Maw loose upon the world, then no atonement may call the Abyss from its course. She has already made her decision.

## Caste Mark

Each of the Abyssal Exalted possesses a *Caste mark*, a symbol denoting the caste to which they belong. This symbol appears on their brow as a black brand when their anima manifests at the Radiant or Burning level. Abyssals can also voluntarily cause their Caste mark to appear by concentrating for a turn and making a Willpower roll.

**Dice Pool:** Willpower

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt accidentally triggers her anima at the Radiant level.

**Failure:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears as a black brand upon her forehead. Blood weeps from it, dripping into her face and imposing a -1 penalty to all non-intimidation based Social actions while it is manifest. She cannot banish the Caste mark until several minutes have passed.

**Success:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears, and remains until she reflexively dismisses it or until the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the manifestation is so dramatic that the Exalt gains a +1 equipment bonus to Presence rolls while the Caste mark remains visible.

## Caste Beats

In addition to the general Beat triggers detailed in Chapter Three, Abyssals gain a Beat whenever they resolve a conflict with some supernatural force or being in a way that accords with their Caste.

**Dusk Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you kill a monster.

**Midnight Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you establish or reinforce your dominance over a monster or group of monsters.

**Daybreak Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you learn something new about the supernatural world.

**Day Caste:** At the end of a chapter, take a beat if you successfully attended to both your mundane and supernatural concerns.

**Moonshadow Caste:** Once per chapter, take a beat when you change the supernatural status quo into something more to your liking.

# Abyssal Charms

Charms are the nightmares by which the Abyssal Exalted work their will upon the world. Abyssal Charms sometimes mimic the miracles of their Solar counterparts, but draw upon principles of darkness, terror, and death. Just as often, though, they are their own individual manifestations, and they are generally awful things.

Every Abyssal Charm resonates with one or more Abyssal Caste. An Abyssal belonging to a resonant Caste may buy a Charm for two Experiences. A Charm which doesn't resonate with an Abyssal's Caste, on the other hand, costs three Experiences. Every Abyssal is also able to select a second Caste during character creation. She is also considered to resonate with Charms linked to that Caste, even though it isn't her own Caste, and may likewise buy them for two Experiences.

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### Midnight

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## **Excellence**

**Resonance:** All Abyssals

Pushing a powerful surge of Essence through her mind, body, and spirit, the Abyssal elevates mere mortal endeavor into the feats of immortals.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Varies

For each Mote spent to power this Charm, the Abyssal may enjoy one of the following benefits:

- Select a single Skill. All dice pools using this Skill add a number of bonus dice equal to the Attribute + Skill total in question. This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1 minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Skills at once, so long as each is paid for separately.
- Select a specific Attribute-based dice pool which does not involve a Skill (such as Attribute + Attribute, or Attribute + Essence). Add a number of bonus dice equal to the lowest-rated Attribute in the pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 dice roll.
- When Dodging, the character may add a number of bonus dice equal to twice the character's Dodging pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 turn.
- Double the character's Defense before any other modifiers for 1 turn.

*Example:* An Abyssal stabs a werewolf with a silver dagger. She has Dexterity 3 + Weaponry 3 and a specialty in Knives, which would ordinarily give her a pool of seven dice. Since she's using Excellence on the roll, she instead doubles her Dexterity + Weaponry dice, rolling a total of 13 dice (Dexterity 3 + Weaponry 3 + 1 die for the specialty + 6 dice from Excellence). If she had, for some reason, been rolling Essence + Weaponry, Excellence would have only given her three bonus dice.

*All Abyssals begin play with this Charm for free.*

## Artful Maiming Onslaught

**Resonance:** Dusk

Abyssal's attacks maim and rend apart her opponent's body, leaving gory devastation in her wake.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Abyssal gains the 9-again quality on all Weaponry attacks. Whenever she rolls an exceptional success on such an attack, she may inflict up to her Essence rating in the following Tilts to her target: Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened, Leg Wrack. Anyone who witnesses her inflict a number of mutilations equal to or greater than their Composure rating suffers the Frightened Condition.

After an Abyssal learns this Charm, her hair sometimes blows in a wind that no one else can feel.

## FRIGHTENED

The character is terrified of whoever or whatever caused this Condition, and will do anything in his power to escape from it, even if that means abandoning friends and allies. He won't willingly approach the object of his fear or act against it. If unable to flee, he cowers in terror. He may ignore the effects of this Condition for a turn at the cost of a point of Willpower.

**Possible Sources:** Intimidation, various Charms

**Resolution:** The character escapes from the source of his fear.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Bureau-Stalking Shade

**Resonance:** Moonshadow

The Abyssal may haunt the halls of any bureau, office, or other workplace and no one will dare to chase her out. As long as she doesn't do something outlandish to *force* those around her to acknowledge or address her presence, she can sit in on meetings, walk the halls, lurk around the water cooler, whisper to workers over the walls of cubicles, and otherwise linger in an office space without anyone working up the nerve to evict her.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

As long as the Abyssal doesn't cause a significant disruption (such as by screaming at the top of her lungs or attacking a worker in plain sight), mortals cannot do anything to bar her entry or get rid of her without suffering a breaking point. Supernatural beings suffer no such restrictions. Additionally, the Abyssal may permanently ignore up to two points of situational or equipment penalties when attempting to cut through bureaucratic red tape.

An Abyssal who knows this Charm sometimes involuntarily causes plants to die by touching them.

## Cannibalistic Renewal Incitement

**Resonance:** Daybreak

The Abyssal may grant a blessing or curse of terrible, cannibal hunger.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence) days

The Abyssal must touch her target (which may be herself) to activate this Charm. For the Charm's duration, the subject finds the sight and smell of her own species to be... delectable. She's under no obligation to act on these terrible compulsions, but if she does, she finds that for every 3 Health levels worth of appropriate flesh consumed, she heals 2 bashing or 1 lethal damage. If she devours the flesh of a supernatural being, she may heal aggravated damage as easily as lethal damage. The average human body contains about (meal's Stamina x 3) levels worth of edible meat, and those under the effects of this Charm find that their stomach never seems to fill, no matter how much of a cannibal repast they partake in. Once the Abyssal knows

this Charm, all zombies she controls or animates permanently enjoys its benefits, allowing them to repair themselves by feasting on flesh.

Flies sometimes appear around an Abyssal who has learned this Charm, particularly when she is displeased.

## Charnel Servant Summons

**Resonance:** Daybreak

The Abyssal may carefully weave together filaments of her Essence into the higher arts of necromancy, restoring a corpse to a defiled approximation of life.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Abyssal breathes her Essence into a reasonably fresh corpse, raising it as a servant with no choice but to obey her commands to the best of its understanding. The cadaver retains its living memories and personality. It cannot feel pain, and thus suffers no wound penalties. Its existence is sustained by magic rather than any biological processes, and so it gains the Unbreakable (weakness: fire) Dread Power (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 148). Otherwise, it retains its living Traits, though it loses any supernatural powers it previously had. The cadaver cannot naturally heal. It continues to rot and decay, losing one permanent Health level every one to five days, depending on the climate it operates in, until it is reduced to a useless soup of bones and twitching muscle. The Abyssal may end its animation as an instant action at any time she chooses.

An Abyssal who knows this Charm is accompanied by deathly scents: natron, dried roses, fresh-turned earth, perhaps rotting meat.

## Command the Dead

**Resonance:** Daybreak, Midnight

The Abyssal spills her divine corruption into one or more nearby corpses, granting them hunger, something not unlike life, and absolute loyalty to her commands.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence) days

The Abyssal may animate a number of nearby corpses equal to her Essence rating, creating zombies that follow her every command. These zombies use the rules for The Horde found on pages 149-150 of **Chronicles of Darkness**.

Corpses weep and shudder when an Abyssal who knows this Charm draws near.

## Corpse Graft Technique

**Resonance:** Daybreak

The Abyssal may fuse death to life to shore up the debilities of the living, replacing maimed or missing body parts with undead grafts harvested from corpses. These grafts may be in any style

the Abyssal likes, from rotting zombie-parts to complex “artificial” armatures of bone and sinew, to carefully harvested replacement limbs nearly indistinguishable from living tissue save for their pallor.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** Abyssal must roll an exceptional success while attempting to treat a normally-untreatable medical condition, then use this Charm.

Combining blasphemous surgical techniques and the power of her Essence, the Abyssal may repair normally incurable or permanent medical conditions. This Charm can cure diseases such as untreatable cancers or HIV, render supernatural insidious supernatural diseases vulnerable to purification (see p. XX), and undo permanent Conditions such as blindness, or ongoing Tilts like Arm Wrack due to complete loss of the limb by grafting on a replacement that functions as well as the original.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm passes by, shambling, broken... figures... can sometimes be glimpsed lurking or slouching in doorways and alleys in her wake. If someone goes to investigate them, the figures are always gone by the time they can get a clearer look.

## Crouching Gargoyle Stance

**Resonance:** Day

The Abyssal becomes weightless as a ghost, and enjoys perfect balance.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The character needs never roll to maintain her balance, no matter how precarious her footing. By spending 1 Mote, she also becomes near-weightless, and may stand or run upon even the weakest or most insubstantial of surfaces, such as falling leaves, individual threads, drops of rain, or even the surface of water. So long as she continues moving to conserve momentum, she may even run up or across walls or ceilings.

An Abyssal who knows this Charm sometimes casts a shadow much larger than she ought to given the light sources available.

## Crypt Bolt

**Resonance:** All Abyssals

The Abyssal summons up viscid black lightning formed from the memories and passions of the dead, and unleashes it upon her foes.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene



For the rest of the scene, the character may hurl black lightning as standard thrown weapon attacks (Dexterity + Athletics – Defense). These bolts inflict +3 damage, have a range of 20/40/60, and benefit from the 9-again rule.

The weather ever reflects mood of an Abyssal who knows this Charm. When she's pleased with herself, the skies remain cloudy and cool, the winds gentle. Her sorrows bring torrential rains or clinging fogs, and her rages provoke violent storms. She can spend 1 Willpower to still this effect for a day if she wishes.

## Dancing with Blood

**Resonance:** Day, Dusk

The Abyssal moves to an unheard aria of death, matching herself movements to the tempo and rhythm of carnage to bring her through unscathed. When she anoints herself with blood, she becomes truly untouchable.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

When doubling her Defense with Excellence, that benefit lasts for (Essence rating + 1) turns rather than a single turn. Once the Abyssal has inflicted at least one point of lethal damage to a person or monster, she may apply the *higher* of her Defense or Essence rating against Firearms-based attacks for the rest of the scene.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm breaks things, sometimes they bleed. Sometimes maggots spill out. Sometimes spiders crawl out of the cracks.

## Deception-Punishing Stare

**Resonance:** Day, Daybreak

Woe betide those who would attempt to mislead the knights of the abyss. Anyone who intentionally attempts to lie to the Abyssal suffers spontaneous stigmata, bleeding from the eyes, lips, or fingertips.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Whenever someone knowingly lies to the Abyssal, she generates spontaneous stigmata and suffers 1 bashing damage.

Once an Abyssal learns this Charm, her presence distorts any call to worship into a monstrous cacophony—church bells, muezzin hails, etc.

## Distorted Mirror Mien

**Resonance:** Daybreak, Moonshadow

The Abyssal hides her innermost self in a hall of mirrors, reflecting back only the bleakest fears of those who would interrogate her heart.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

All mundane attempts to discern the Abyssal's inner thoughts are reduced to a chance die, while all supernatural attempts to learn anything about the Abyssal's personality, thoughts, or history must overcome a Clash of Wills or automatically fail. Any failed attempt to read the Abyssal's heart provokes a breaking point if the subject is capable of suffering breaking points.

Additionally, the Abyssal's reflection in mirrors, photographs, and camera feeds is unnerving and distorted unless she spends a point of Willpower to suppress the distortion for a scene.

## Earth-Forsaking Stance

**Resonance:** Day

The Abyssal's leaps become as powerful and sudden as a wolf spider on the hunt.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Abyssal may automatically succeed at any standard jumping attempt (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 71-72), such as to hop a picket fence or leap between the roof of two buildings with only a narrow gap between them, gaining an exceptional success without needing to roll. If she attempts a much more ambitious, superhuman jump – say, to hop from the ground to the top of an 18-wheeler, or to leap from rooftop to rooftop *across a street* – then she may make a jumping roll which carries her (successes) x (Essence + 2) yards.

Bats, ravens, moths, and other ill-omened flying creatures tend to gather around the Abyssal, particularly when she stays in one location for a long time, or upon making a dramatic appearance.

## Echoes in Eternity

**Resonance:** Midnight, Moonshadow

The Abyssal's words roost in the hollows of the psyche, haunting those who hear and accept them until all resistance falls away.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Requirement:** The Abyssal must have just successfully used social maneuvering to open a Door via conversation or soft leverage.

Rather than opening a single Door, the Abyssal's efforts open two. If this Charm is used to enhance an exceptional success, then three Doors are opened rather than the usual two, but memories of the Abyssal haunt and harrow any merely mortal psyche subjected to them; if her target has an Integrity trait, then being subjected to this Charm on an exceptional success is a breaking point.

After an Abyssal learns this Charm, her shadow sometimes departs on errands of its own, to return at a later time.

## Exquisite Etiquette Style

**Resonance:** Moonshadow

Drawing knowledge from the memories of the dead, the Abyssal gains a universal sense of etiquette and social currents. She never commits *faux pas* or social gaffes when dealing with unfamiliar cultures or social situations.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is in effect, an Abyssal who simply walks up and says hello to a stranger starts off with an Excellent first impression (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 81-82) rather than an Average one. This makes pushing things all the way up to a Perfect impression fairly easy, rather than a costly matter of bribes and pandered Vices. It's still possible for an Abyssal to make a worse-than-Excellent first impression, or even a Hostile impression if she first encounters another character under truly unfortunate circumstances, such as being discovered standing over the corpse of someone's husband with a bloody knife. This Charm has no power to influence the Abyssal's standing with someone she already knows; it only gets things off on the right foot with new acquaintances.

After an Abyssal learns this Charm, spiders take up the habit of nesting in her clothing. Occasionally one will crawl out of a pocket or buttonhole, or descend on a filament of web from her hair.

## Eye of the Tempest

**Resonance:** Dusk

Letting her Essence rise up to claim her consciousness, the Abyssal perceives her opponents' killing intent as seething crimson arcs and splashes that tell her where their attacks are about to occur. Guided by this knowledge, she rises above death's attempts to claim her.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Abyssal no longer reduces her Defense by 1 for the rest of the turn after applying it to an attack. When Dodging, she is no longer penalized for facing multiple opponents. After spending 1 Mote, the Abyssal gains the following benefits for the rest of the scene: She may apply her Defense against Firearms-based attacks, and if she spends Willpower to raise her Defense, that increase lasts until the end of the turn rather than only enhancing her efforts against a single attack.

After learning this Charm, nearby shapes around the Abyssal which should be random—scatters of fallen playing cards, the impact-web of broken glass, the stains left by dropped food—will tend to resolve into unmistakable skull patterns.

## Fivefold Sensory Exercise

**Resonance:** Day

The Abyssal may sharpen her senses until they're as keen as those of the unquiet dead. She can hear a person's heartbeat from rooms away, read a sheet of paper by letting her fingers trail across the ink on it, and count the hairs on a fly's legs from across a room.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Abyssal gains the 8-again quality on Perception rolls. As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Abyssal may use Excellence to double her Wits + Composure pool for Perception rolls, rather than adding the lower of the two Attributes.

Upon learning this Charm, the Abyssal may optionally ignore all penalties associated with darkness, even in the absolute absence of light, as a permanent benefit. Gaining this benefit transforms her eyes into pits of solid, unrelieved black.

## Flickering Wisp Technique

**Resonance:** Day

When her enemies strike the Abyssal down, they find only shadows and failure – and soon after, death.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 turn

For the rest of the turn, all attacks launched against the Abyssal roll a chance die to hit, no matter what dice pool or modifiers they should otherwise enjoy. Should such an attack result in a dramatic failure, the Abyssal gains an equipment bonus equal to (half her Essence, rounded up) to attack that opponent on her next action.

The area where the character used this Charm periodically flickers with phantom afterimages of the Abyssal for (Essence rating) days afterwards, sometimes dancing in the corner of the eye, sometimes moving through photographs or video displays.

## Glorious Carnage Typhoon

**Resonance:** Dusk

The Abyssal becomes a black wind ravaging through her opponents, leaving only blood trails and screams to mark her passage.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Abyssal may make as many Strength + Weaponry attacks as she wishes, so long as each is directed against a different target that she can reach. Subtract the total number of targets from her attack pool, then make one attack against each target.

Smoke and flames lean away from an Abyssal who knows this Charm and toward anyone that is a target of her displeasure, as though brushed by a wind of murderous intent.

## Haunting Inflection Trick

**Resonance:** Midnight, Moonshadow

The Abyssal's words take on otherworldly importance, like the words of an angel or a voice from a deep black tomb.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Abyssal gains the 8-again rule on all social actions.

After learning this Charm, the temperature sometimes plunges dramatically in the Abyssal's presence, producing anything from cold spots to frozen-over fountains.

## Hideous Phantom Missive

**Resonance:** Day, Daybreak, Moonshadow

The Abyssal whispers a short message and consigns it to the unknowable horror of the universe which devoured her name and penned the Laws that bind her. Those horrors ensure that it reaches its intended recipient.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

When the message's target is next alone, she receives the Abyssal's message. This always occurs by means of a horrifying supernatural manifestation. Possibilities include but are certainly not limited to: the rotting corpse of a loved one lurching out of the closet to thrust a letter into the target's hands; letters of blood beading up on the wall before drizzling down the wallpaper; a hideous car wreck occurs, and the lone mutilated survivor crawls out to deliver the message before dying; a clotted, monstrous voice whispers the message from a nearby drain. When the recipient turns away, runs, blinks, or attempts to summon help, they find all supernatural evidence of the manifestation (a rotting zombie and the gore it tracked across the floor) gone, though purely mundane elements of the message itself (the letter it held) may remain.

The voice of an Abyssal who knows this Charm sometimes echoes in spaces where sound should not otherwise echo.

## Honey-Tongued Serpent Attack

**Resonance:** Moonshadow

Layering entropic Essence into the social milieu, the Abyssal poisons the reputation of one of her enemies.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Subterfuge + Essence – Composure

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Abyssal fail to smear her target's reputation, but her transparent attempts to do so leave others suspicious of her, inflicting a -1 penalty on all social actions against anyone in the target's social group for the rest of the current story.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to establish negative rumors about the target.

**Success:** While this Charm can't ensure that everyone *believes* whatever terrible rumor the Abyssal wishes to spread, success does guarantee that within a day or two, everyone who matters has at least *heard* it. The target gains the Slandered Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the results of success, the target suffers catastrophic damage to his ability to leverage his social assets. Until he resolves the Slandered Condition, the target loses access to a Merit of the Abyssal's choice. This can only disable social Merits like Fixer, Barfly, or Fame, not Merits that describe intrinsic qualities like Iron Will or Closed Book.

Drawings and photographs of an Abyssal who as learned this Charm sometimes... move.

### SLANDERED

Your reputation has been trashed, either because of something you did or because of something people *think* you maybe did. Until you can convince everyone that you didn't do whatever the rumor mill says you did, or at least lay low long enough for everyone to move on to the next thing, you add three extra Doors to all social maneuvering against everyone who has heard about you.

**Possible Sources:** Scandalous behavior, pissing off the wrong vampire, various Charms

**Resolution:** Clear your name, or weather the storm until the end of the current story.

**Beat:** n/a

## Immortal Malevolence Resurrection

**Resonance:** Midnight

The world cannot kill what is already dead.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Once per story, if the Abyssal dies as the result of the actions of anyone other than herself, she returns to life at the beginning of the next chapter with a temporary Aspiration to kill anyone and everyone responsible for her demise. Her body reconstitutes itself regardless of whatever sorry shape it might be in, such that she returns to life uninjured and with full Motes. Each time she passes up a chance to pursue or complete her temporary Aspiration, it counts as a violation of the Laws of the Grave.

After learning this Charm, the Abyssal's face sometimes haunts the dreams of those encompassed by her Aspirations.

## Imprecation of Ill Manners

**Resonance:** Moonshadow

The Abyssal's dignity is as unimpeachable and certain as death itself. Those who attempt to slander her only prove themselves the true fools.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Socialize + Essence – Manipulation

**Action:** Instant

**Requirement:** The Abyssal must have just been targeted by a social action that inflicted an unwanted Condition on her such as Guilty, Notoriety, or Slandered.

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Abyssal not only fails to turn aside the barb, she makes herself feel like a fool with her weak rejoinder and loses a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to reverse the social thrust.

**Success:** The Abyssal neatly turns the tables on her tormentor. She doesn't gain a Condition; the character who tried to place the Condition on her gains it instead.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the flush of success gives the Abyssal the Inspired Condition with regards to doing further social damage to her enemy.

While an Abyssal who knows this Charm is present, the movements of nearby ghosts in Twilight may faintly disrupt smoke, fog, and rain.

## Insensible Corpse Technique

**Resonance:** Dusk, Midnight

Fortified by deathly Essence, the Abyssal wears fatal injuries as tokens of her immortality.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; may be declared *after* an attack is rolled.

The Abyssal allows one attack to strike her, splitting her flesh and shattering her bones without inflicting the least amount of harm. Though the Exalt displays cosmetic mutilation for the next several minutes, no damage is recorded to her Health track.

The attack in question be some sort of physical threat, such as a werewolf's claws or a lightning bolt hurled by a mage; Insensible Corpse Technique can't block a sorcerer's attempt to befuddle the Abyssal with illusions. Insensible Corpse Technique can also be used to ignore harm from momentary environmental threats and hazards such as a collapsing roof beam, but not constant environmental hazards such as a sandstorm or burning building.

After learning this Charm, sometimes when lightning flashes or someone suddenly flips on a light, the most horrific wounds the Abyssal has ever suffered become visible again for a split-second.

## Irresistible Succubus Style

**Resonance:** Midnight

The Abyssal floods a target's mind with the glory and peace of the grave, pacifying his emotions, stilling the turmoil of his spirit, and ultimately making him into her willing and worshipful servant.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Subterfuge + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim sees through the Abyssal's attempt to subvert his heart, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to subvert the target.

**Success:** The Abyssal steals the target's heart. They gain the Charmed Condition for (Essence rating) days.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Charmed Condition lasts for (Essence rating) weeks.

Distant weeping can sometimes be heard when an Abyssal who knows this Charm is present.

### CHARMED (PERSISTENT)

You've been charmed by some supernatural force, making you subordinate to the will of another character who becomes your regnant. You don't want to believe that anything he says is a lie, and you can't read his true intentions. The regnant adds a bonus equal to the Essence of the one who created this Condition to Manipulation rolls against you, and any Wits + Empathy or Subterfuge rolls you make to detect his lies or uncover his true motives suffer a penalty equal to that same Essence rating. Using supernatural means to detect his lies becomes a Clash of Wills, again against the one who created this Condition.

You want to do things for your regnant, to make him happy. If he asks, you'll do favors for him like he was one of your best friends – giving him a place to crash, lending him your car keys, or revealing secrets that you really shouldn't. You don't feel tricked or ripped off unless you resolve the Condition. It expires normally (without resolving) at the end of the duration listed in the power that created it.

**Possible Sources:** Various supernatural powers.

**Resolution:** The regnant attempts to seriously harm you or someone close to you, you make a significant financial or physical sacrifice for him.

**Beat:** You divulge a secret or perform a favor for your regnant.

## Ivory Petal Arsenal

**Resonance:** Dusk

The Abyssal can extend her skeleton through her flesh, granting herself durable armor and razor-sharp weapons.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Abyssal's unarmed strikes inflict +2 lethal damage and gain the 9-again quality. She also gains 1/1 armor.

After learning this Charm, the Abyssal's shadow sometimes distorts into monstrous forms and menaces those nearby.



## Lies That Tell Themselves

**Resonance:** Abyssal

Carving away parts of her listeners' identity with her will and her words, the Abyssal may rewrite the memories of another.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Persuasion + Essence versus Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the Abyssal fail to rewrite the target's memories, she loses herself in her Essence-laden narrative, and briefly has difficulty discerning truth from fantasy. She gains the Confused Condition.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to alter the target's memories.

**Success:** The Abyssal can rewrite either the events of one crucially important event within the target's memories (such as his discovery earlier tonight that vampires are real), or the general narrative of up to two weeks of the target's life (making him forget that he got a speeding ticket and had a fight with his parents over it, instead papering the event over with memories of several uneventful days), so long as the alterations don't rewrite any events the target would consider critical to the current course of his life or identity (like discovering that his boyfriend is cheating on him). He gains the False Memories Persistent Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** Major swathes of the subject's life can be rewritten (such as who he's married to, where he went to school, or whether the Abyssal is a hated enemy or childhood friend). He gains the False Memories Persistent Condition.

Whenever an Abyssal who has learned this Charm is present, those around her sometimes see... *things*... reaching for them in the corners of their vision. When they turn to look, there's nothing there, of course.

### FALSE MEMORIES (PERSISTENT)

The way you remember things doesn't match up with how they happened. You might remember passing out drunk on the night when a vampire attacked you stone cold sober, or staying home sick and watching television rather than witnessing a vagrant strangle a werewolf to death in the parking lot in front of your office. While conclusive proof might lead you to doubt the veracity of your memories, anything less is going to have a hell of a time getting through to you. Being faced with proof that your memories are false is a breaking point if you use Integrity, or a breaking point towards Humanity if you are Exalted.

**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Face proof that your memory is false and succeed at the breaking point.

**Beat:** You trust someone or take a risky action based on your false memories.

## Midnight Smile

**Resonance:** All Abyssals

The Abyssal steepers her flesh in shadowy Essence, gaining the ability to draw sustenance from stolen life.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Blood may now satisfy all of the Abyssal's dietary and nutritional needs. The character can also reflexively grow fangs. These may be neatly pointed incisors in the style of a vampire, a mouth full of jagged needles, or anything inbetween. The Abyssal may use her fangs to drink human blood in order to replenish her Essence. Doing so through force requires a grapple attack; the fangs are a weapon inflicting 0L damage. Doing so through guile necessitates a Manipulation + Subterfuge roll; she may cause her fangs to numb her victim such that they don't realize they're being drained. And of course if the victim assents, no roll is necessary at all. If the Abyssal inflicts lethal damage equal to a mortal's Stamina with her fangs, they gain the Drained Condition.

Drinking an unwilling mortal until they are Drained grants one Mote. Drinking an unwilling mortal to death, or drinking from a willing vessel until they are Drained, grants two Motes. Drinking a willing sacrifice to death grants three Motes and a point of Willpower.

Once in a while, when an Abyssal who knows this Charm is present, things which shouldn't bleed (pipes, paintings, well-cooked meals)... do.

#### **DRAINED**

You suffer from blood loss. He suffers a -2 penalty to any physical actions, and to rolls to stabilize and survive injuries. As well, after any scene where he exerts himself physically, he must a Stamina roll or fall unconscious for an hour or more. The Drained penalty does not apply to the Stamina roll, but any wound penalties do apply. Taking damage, being fed from, or spending Willpower on a physical roll counts as exertion for this Condition.

**Possible Sources:** Being fed upon by a monster.

**Resolution:** All lethal damage healed through normal means.

**Beat:** n/a

#### **Necrotic Breath**

**Resonance:** All Abyssals

A haze of death hangs about the Abyssal, confounding all efforts to cling to life in her presence.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Wounds caused by the Abyssal cannot be healed until (Essence) turns have elapsed.

An Abyssal who knows this Charm is always cold to the touch.

#### **Ominous Portent Exercise**

**Resonance:** Day

The Abyssal instinctively knows when death draws near, making her impossible to take unaware so long as she hasn't totally exhausted both body and spirit.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

While this Charm is active, the Abyssal is scanning for threats with both her mundane and divine senses. When she is in immediate danger, unmistakable omens manifest to warn her: a raven screams her name, maggots squirm from a poisoned meal, or a howling gust of wind blows open an assassin's coat, revealing his gun. She automatically succeeds at all rolls to notice an ambush or sneak attack. This Charm may be reflexively activated in response to a surprise attack rather than in anticipation of one, but doing so adds 1 Willpower to its activation cost.

If the Abyssal possesses the Danger Sense (••) Merit, this Charm is always active at no cost.

When a character who knows this Charm grows solemn or melancholy, flames in her presence burn eerie shades of blue or green.

## Owl Seizes Mouse

**Resonance:** Dusk

The Abyssal's Essence luxuriates in the bloodlust of her foes, and drives her to ever-greater heights to meet and overcome it.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

The Abyssal permanently adds her highest Caste Skill rating to her Initiative modifier. If she spends 1 Mote, she can act first in the current turn regardless of her Initiative rating.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm is in the area, electronic devices sometimes momentarily glitch out to betray her presence. Her face might flicker across a television screen; a text message might briefly change to SHE IS HERE.

## Ox-Body Technique

**Resonance:** Dusk, Midnight

Having already died once, the Abyssal may smile at injuries that would slay a lesser being outright. After being shot in the face or impaled through the heart, she may continue to stand, speak, and kill.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Abyssal's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + (Essence rating x 3).

An Abyssal who knows this Charm is bound by a ban of some kind. She might be unable to walk in the light of the sun with more than a few inches of her skin left bare. She might be unable to cross streets at any speed faster than a slow walk. She might be compelled never to step upon a grave. She might be forbidden to enter any place of worship. She may be required to always

wear mourning garb of some sort. Whatever her ban is, violating it counts as violating the Laws of the Grave.

## Reckless Experiment Acceleration

**Resonance:** Daybreak

The Abyssal can perform medical procedures in moments, flickering lights and sparking machinery slicing her actions into a series of nightmare stills that compress hours of agonizing surgery into mere seconds of real time.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** One extended action

The Abyssal may reduce the interval of any extended action to provide medical treatment (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 96) to 1 turn.

Electric lights flicker and stutter around an Abyssal who knows this Charm. Hallways sometimes also shudder at the passing of a nearby train as well when she is present, even when there are no train tracks within miles.

## Righteous Lion Defense

**Resonance:** Midnight, Moonshadow

The Abyssal's obsessions are scarred indelibly into the doom she brings back with her from the grave; neither threats nor honeyed words nor even hypnosis may turn her from her course.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever someone or something tries to convince or force the Abyssal to abandon or act contrary to one of her Aspirations, she may add (highest rating among her Caste Skills) to her Resistance Attribute for the purpose of not being persuaded or controlled.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm begins to grow short of patience, those paying close attention can sometimes hear the distant sound of a rope creaking against wood.

## Screaming in Silence

**Resonance:** Moonshadow

The Abyssal speaks a small portion of the Greater Key of Unmaking, words scribed in absolute darkness at the lowermost depth of the Underworld which, comprehended in their totality, may unmake a soul. This condemnation shatters the bastion of ego and tears loose the target's soul.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Expression + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Abyssal's attempt to dredge up the most perilous forces of death costs her a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to channel the Greater Key of Unmaking.

**Success:** The Abyssal matches an excerpt of the Greater Key to the weaknesses of a specific person that she is at least somewhat familiar with. The target loses (Abyssal's Essence rating) points of Willpower. Should the target hear the Greater Key of Unmaking while they possess 0 Willpower points, it flays their soul loose from their body, inflicting the Soulless Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Abyssal is able to catch and consume the fleeing soul, and takes a beat.

After learning this Charm, rooms tend to fall momentarily silent when the Abyssal enters.

## Shadow Races the Light

**Resonance:** Day

The Abyssal moves with the speed of a scream, able to flash from shadow to shadow like a living nightmare.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None (for the persistent benefit) or Reflexive (for the 1 Mote benefit)

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 turn

The character's Speed calculation becomes Strength + Dexterity + Essence + 5. If she possesses the Fleet of Foot Merit, double the Speed gained for each dot of that Merit.

By spending 1 Mote, the character may multiply her Speed by 10 for one turn, and also subtract twice her Essence rating from all Firearms-based attacks directed at her during that turn. Lights flicker as the Abyssal snaps from place to place like a film with missing frames.

After learning this Charm, lights also tend to flicker for a moment when the Abyssal first enters a room.

## Soul-Eating Strike

**Resonance:** Daybreak

The Abyssal becomes a devourer of eternal things, a living gateway to oblivion. With nothing more than a glance, ephemeral entities know her to be a force of annihilation, and behave with proper caution.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Abyssal automatically removes one additional Door when attempting to intimidate ephemeral beings. When fighting manifested ephemeral beings, the Abyssal's lethal attacks are not downgraded to mere bashing damage. Finally, when the Abyssal destroys an ephemeral being, she may choose to attempt its eternal destruction, even if it has Essence remaining and would normally reform somewhere over time (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 129).

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence versus Resistance + Rank

**Action:** Reflexive and Contested

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Abyssal not only fails to destroy the being, but the attempt grants it some influence over her; she gains the Open Condition with regard to that being.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to eradicate the target.

**Success:** The entity's Essence is consumed and reduced to absolute nothingness in the still well of the Abyssal's Exaltation. It forever ceases to be.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Abyssal regains a number of Motes equal to the entity's Rank.

Any food or drink served by an Abyssal who has learned this Charm tastes only of ashes.

## Spirit-Hardened Frame

**Resonance:** Dusk, Midnight

Infusing her flesh with the fortifying power of the grave, the Abyssal's body becomes cold and hard as ice. Only the most potent of attacks may do more than inconvenience her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, any attack that does not score an exceptional success inflicts only a single point of bashing damage. Exceptional successes inflict damage as normal.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Abyssal must declare a weakness from the list below:

- Fire
- Silver
- Blessed objects
- Living wood

Attacks incorporating that weakness bypass this Charm's protection.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm grows upset or displeased, food and drink spoil in her presence.

## Spirit-Sensing Meditation

**Resonance:** Daybreak

The Abyssal may thrust any or all of her senses across the Gauntlet without physically breaching it, spying on the Shadow Realm from the physical realm or vice-versa. If she stands at a Locus, she may, with effort, tear her way through through the Gauntlet and enter the Shadow directly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

**Roll Results**

**Dramatic Failure:** The Abyssal's senses become temporarily lost in the Gauntlet, imposing relevant Tilts such as Blinded and Deafened for the rest of the scene. If she was trying to cross over physically, she becomes caught inside of the Gauntlet for anywhere from a few minutes to several days before eventually being pushed back out into the world she tried to leave, several miles away.

**Failure:** The Abyssal fails to extend her senses across the Gauntlet, or to cross from one world to the other.

**Success:** The Abyssal extends her senses across the Gauntlet for the rest of the scene, or until she reflexively ends the Charm. She can only have a sense rooted in one world or the other at any given time, so if she stands in the physical world and sees into the Shadow, she is effectively blind to things happening on Earth. If she is attempting to cross over, she does so successfully, vanishing into the Gauntlet and appearing in the other realm two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Abyssal may cross the Gauntlet instantly, or may pull her senses temporarily back from across the Gauntlet to the world she stands in without ending the Charm.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm is present, ghosts in Twilight may sometimes be very briefly glimpsed in mirrors and still water.

## Splinter in the Mind's Eye

**Resonance:** Day

The Abyssal can flood her Essence with the signature of oblivion, vanishing from sight and awareness completely.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

By ducking into a patch of shadows or an obscure corner for a moment, the Abyssal may shroud herself in anonymity. Nobody who isn't specifically on the lookout for her can notice her; she just seems to be a faceless member of the teeming crowds in an urban environment, or one shadow among many in a rural setting. So long as she doesn't engage in some violent or alarming direct action to draw attention to herself – screaming, firing a gun, smashing a window – people will continue to ignore even things like taking out and assembling a high-powered rifle while sitting on a bus stop bench, or loading a bloody corpse into the trunk of her car. It just doesn't occur to them to care; the Abyssal sinks into the background noise of the environment. Interacting with someone directly (such as by speaking to them) voids this anonymity. If she does something disruptive, or if someone who *can* see her tries to call attention to her, bystanders must make a Wits + Composure roll (penalized by her Essence) to notice her. While the Abyssal enjoys this supernatural occlusion, her immediate vicinity is plagued by very minor, unnerving manifestations reminiscent of a haunting: cold spots, strange echoes, objects moving ever so slightly out of place when nobody's watching them.

By spending 1 Mote, the Abyssal becomes genuinely impossible to notice, even to electronic devices such as video cameras and motion sensors. She's effectively invisible. Even if she does something that leaves blatant evidence of her presence, such as kicking down a door, it still

requires a Wits + Composure roll (again penalized by her Essence) to notice her, and those who *do* notice her will forget she is present after a number of turns equal to their Composure unless they spend a point of Willpower. If she attacks someone, the victim automatically becomes aware of her presence and remains aware so long as her violence persists (but this *only* applies to the victim; everyone else must roll as normal).

## Splinter of the Void

**Resonance:** Dusk

Taking a moment to sight down the barrel of her gun, the Abyssal imbues the absolute truth of her Essence upon the bullet as it rests in the chamber. When she fires, she sends a tiny splinter of absolute annihilation into her target: should it strike true, a black hole opens inside of her foe, tearing them apart before consuming them utterly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; can only be used to enhance a Firearms attack after the Abyssal has accumulated a +3 aiming bonus

A Firearms attack enhanced by this Charm doubles the gun's damage bonus, and automatically inflicts the grave version of the Poisoned Tilt for the Abyssal's (Essence rating) turns.

When an Abyssal who knows this Charm takes any violent or dramatic action, nearby symbols of the sacred (crosses, church windows, prayer shrines, etc) tarnish, shatter, warp, boil, or are otherwise ruined or destroyed.

## Strength of the Grave

**Resonance:** Day, Dusk, Midnight

Deathly Essence suffuses the Abyssal's flesh. She may exert absolute power without regards for the limits of her physical frame.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

As a permanent benefit of knowing this Charm, the Abyssal may use Excellence to double her Strength + Stamina pool for feats of strength to lift and break objects, rather than adding the lower of the two Attributes. The Abyssal permanently adds a bonus to all Strength rolls equal to her Essence or her highest Caste Skill, whichever is lower.

By reflexively spending 1 Mote, the Abyssal may perform one of the following feats:

- Add her Strength rating as a damage bonus to all Athletics, Brawl, and Weaponry-based attacks made this turn.
- Lift and hurl an object far too unwieldy for an ordinary person to use as a weapon, such as a street lamp, motorcycle, or police officer. Any object she can lift, with Size no greater than her (Strength + Essence), can be used as an improvised melee or throwing weapon. Improvised weapons have a weapon bonus equal to the lower of their Size or Durability. Objects with Size greater than 5 deal lethal damage, while those with Size 10 or more deal aggravated damage.

After learning this Charm, nearby glass cracks whenever the Abyssal grows angry.



## Thought-Stealing Echoes

**Resonance:** Day, Moonshadow

The Abyssal can smell the acrid tang of fear in those around her. By further concentrating on someone bound in fear's grasp, she can hear the echoes of whatever that person is thinking at the moment.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

No roll is required to sense someone gripped by fear (i.e. suffering from a Condition such as Shaken or Spooked). Doing anything else while listening to such a person's thoughts imposes a -2 penalty.

Shadows subtly bend toward an Abyssal who knows this Charm when she sits still for more than a minute or so.

## Through Dead Eyes

**Resonance:** Daybreak, Dusk

Cloaking herself in the cold resonance of the grave, the Abyssal may detect the presence of ephemeral beings, and, should it prove needful, rend them asunder.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant or Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

With but a moment's concentration and an instant action, the Abyssal can attune her senses to detect the presence of beings in Twilight for the rest of the scene. She can either search for a particular sort of being (such as ghosts, ignoring the presence of spirits and angels), or unveil *all* ephemeral entities. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, she can also dial herself into the same spiritual frequency occupied by ghosts, spirits, angels, or some other variety of ephemeral entity for the rest of the scene, allowing her to interact with them as though they were physically present, including harming them. Of course, this is a two-way street, and the ephemeral being can hit back.

Anyone who touches the Abyssal while this Charm is active gains the Anchor Condition (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 133) for any ghosts the Exalt interacts with using Through Dead Eyes. This Condition lasts for a number of hours equal to the Exalt's Essence rating.

## Unholy Unwitting Pact

**Resonance:** Moonshadow

Everyone, no matter their integrity, no matter their morals, has a price for which they will bend to the Abyssal's desires. This Charm cuts through to the soul's innermost secrets, revealing that price.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Socialize + Essence vs Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Abyssal not only fails to read the target's innermost desires properly, she disastrously misreads in such a way that if she attempts to act on her conclusions, she'll reduce the target's impression of her by at least one step.

**Failure:** The Abyssal comes up blank.

**Success:** After chatting with the subject for a few minutes and drawing them out enough to get a sense of their innermost desires, the Abyssal learns what would most effectively act as soft leverage (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 82) upon the target.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Abyssal also learns one of the target's Aspirations.

After learning this Charm, doors sometimes slowly creak shut after the Abyssal passes through them, or open before her without needing to be touched.

## World-Withering Method

**Resonance:** Daybreak, Midnight

The Abyssal may focus her Essence into a scalpel that cuts reality asunder, unmaking objects or even concepts.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Occult + Essence – Durability *or* Intelligence + Occult + Essence *or* Intelligence + Occult + Essence versus Stamina + Essence

**Action:** Instant *or* Instant and Contested

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Abyssal's power turns inward upon her, inflicting one level of aggravated damage.

**Failure:** The Abyssal's power fails to destroy whatever she sets it against.

**Success:** The Abyssal unmakes an object whose Size is no greater than (her Essence x 3) or a local abstraction. Successfully deploying this Charm adds two dice to any Burn manifestation roll at the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but using the Charm doesn't aggravate any Burn manifestation roll at the end of the scene.

The Abyssal may target any object within her line of sight up to the Charm's Size limit. If she destroys it, the object fades to black, and then to nothingness.

The Abyssal may target localized abstractions and unmake them, as well. If this would directly impact a creature, then the roll is resisted. These acts of unmaking can't kill a creature outright, or remove some quality necessary to their existence (such as a vampire's agelessness), but the Abyssal *could* remove a lover's tenderness, a singer's harmony, a cop's authority, a sword's sharpness, or a vampire's hunger. She can also erase the pain from a memory, the sensible organization from a bookshelf, the roughness of a poorly-maintained road, or the heat of a hot stove. Only abstractions attached to some distinct local phenomenon may be targeted; the Abyssal can't unmake the progress of time itself, or strike all happiness from the cosmos.

Shadows sometimes crawl across the body of an Abyssal who knows this Charm, regardless of how they should otherwise behave.

## Abyssal Burns

There are no places in the world more haunted than an Abyssal Burn, and few more dangerous for either the living or the dead.

Shadows lay thick and heavy in an Abyssal Burn. Light struggles to illuminate anything. Even a powerful halogen lamp only feebly cuts through the omnipresent murk. Overhead fluorescents are reduced to the strength of candlelight, while neon casts hot, bloody colors far and wide while revealing almost nothing. Scavengers such as rats, ravens, and vultures linger around such a Burn, whether there's anything to feed on or not.

Temporary Avernian Gates bubble up with great frequency within an Abyssal Burn; almost anything that looks like a door or portal could act as one at any time, and they have a perverse tendency to open to the efforts of the living rather than drawing in the dead, drawing a Burn's doomed residents into the echoing depths of the Underworld. At other times, the Gates may open of their own accord, disgorging predators into Twilight.

Perhaps most dangerous of all of its qualities, however, is this: an Abyssal Burn, while it persists, acts as a universal Anchor for any and all ghosts capable of reaching it. Anyone who spends six hours within the Burn also gains a universal Anchor condition until they leave, as do all corpses left within the Burn for more than a minute. Moreover, the tolling of midnight within the Burn nourishes all ghosts within it with a point of Essence as though the living had remembered them.

## Abyssal Searing

When an Abyssal Burn is Seared away, the world goes absolutely black. All lights are extinguished; electrical ones tend to burn out and explode. Even the sun seems to blink out for a few seconds: everyone within the Burn suffers the Blinded Tilt for a turn. It grows cold, terribly cold, and the living feel something intrinsic and precious being torn away from them. Then the light returns, and the Burn is gone.

Every living thing with an intact soul (save for Celestial Exalted and others whose souls are mystically unassailable) caught in the Sear must roll to resist the tidal wave of Abyssal Essence.

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character gains the Hollowed Persistent Condition.

**Failure:** The character suffers her Willpower rating in lethal damage.

**Success:** The character suffers her Willpower rating in bashing damage.

**Exceptional Success:** The character manages to ride out the Burn uninjured.

Any corpses subjected to the Burn (including anyone killed *by* the Burn) permanently gain the Open Condition with regard to any ghost that stumbles upon them.

## HOLLOWED (PERSISTENT)

You have lost your soul, and the place where it ought to be is now a yawning void. You cannot regain Willpower through surrender or rest, and your use of Virtue and Vice are inverted: you may regain one Willpower point per scene by fulfilling your Virtue without having to risk yourself, and regain full Willpower once per chapter by fulfilling your Vice in a way that poses a threat to you. Regaining Willpower through Vice, however, is now a breaking point with a -5 penalty. Even more alarmingly than having your soul incinerated is the empty socket it has left behind. All ghosts that stumble across you treat you as having the Anchor and Open Conditions. You are a walking case of possession, or worse, waiting to happen.

**Possible Sources:** Suffering an Abyssal Sear

**Resolution:** Somehow gain a new soul.

**Beat:** Whenever you lose Integrity because you indulged your Vice, or a ghost takes away your self-control.

# Chapter Nine: The Infernal Exalted

The Infernal Exalted have been dragged into the black undertow of the supernatural world. They have escaped from a strange and empty Hell, half-digested by the apocalyptic force of their Exaltation, transformed into something both hero and monster. This chapter features all the rules necessary to play one of these rarest of Chosen, or to use them as antagonists. Further information on the Infernal Exalted can be found in Chapter One.

## Character Creation

Infernals follow all the standard steps outlined in Chapter Two. In the fifth step they add the Infernal template.

## Add Infernal Template

To transform a mere mortal into one of the Infernal Exalted, perform the following operations:

### Bonus Attributes

An Infernal is partly remade while she merges with and escapes from the Chrysalis Grotesque. The corrupting radiance of Infernal Essence makes her something greater than what she was. Select one of the Low Keys listed below, and then choose two Attributes from the three listed. Add a dot to each of the two chosen. This cannot raise an Attribute above five dots.

<b>Low Key</b>	<b>Bonus Attributes</b>
Brass	Wits, Strength, Dexterity
Iron	Resolve, Stamina, Presence
Wind	Strength, Presence, Composure
Flame	Intelligence, Wits, Resolve
Stone	Wits, Dexterity, Manipulation
Prayer	Presence, Manipulation, Composure

### Infernal Skills

Though Infernals don't have castes, they do gain the benefit of Caste Skills, which are outlined in Chapter Two. Note your character's Caste Skills: Occult, plus four other Skills of your choice. Then, distribute three dots among your Caste Skills. This cannot raise any Skill above five dots.

### Caste Charms and Favored Charms

Infernals do not have Castes. Instead, they pay Caste/Favored prices for all of their Charms. Gain the Charm "Excellence" for free, and then select four additional Charms.

### Essence Rating

Your Infernal character begins with an Essence rating of 1. You can give up five of your Merit points to start at Essence 2, or all 10 to start at Essence 3.

### Divine Gifts

Infernals don't have Castes to dictate their Divine Gifts. Instead, select one Divine Gift from each of three lists: an Imperial Key, Greater Key, and Lesser Key.

## The Imperial Key

Select one of the following benefits for your Divine Gift:

- **The Imperial Key of Emptiness:** Once per scene, when you take lethal or aggravated damage, record it as bashing damage instead.
- **The Imperial Key of the Wasteland:** You may spend 1 Mote and 1 Willpower to bind any oath, deal, or promise you personally witness, scribing the words of the pact on the air with Essence. Anyone who breaks the letter of the sanctified oath is immediately dragged into the Empty City.
- **The Imperial Key of Stillness:** Once you obtain Occult •••, the universe conspires to teach you the art of ancient sorcery. Likely your dreams have been growing stranger for some time leading up to the final revelation that burns the forgotten secrets of antiquity into your soul one night, but it's also possible that a very old spirit might be drawn to your fertile Essence, or that you might be drawn through serendipity to a sorcerous scroll dating back to a forgotten age. In any event, you gain the Ancient Sorcery (•••) Merit at no cost.
- **The Imperial Key of Silence:** You become aware whenever someone speaks your name, and may scribe on the situation in which your name has been invoked. You can see and hear the speaker and his surroundings for the next several minutes.
- **The Imperial Key of Darkness:** You may reflexively pay 1 Mote to cause your anima to flare white and green, and then to immolate you to ashes. Your ashes are carried away on a demon wind, reforming in a random district of the Empty City.
- **The Imperial Key of Loneliness:** You may open any barred portal, no matter how supernaturally potent its sealing, simply by knocking upon it.

## The Greater Key

Select one of the following benefits for your Divine Gift:

- **The Greater Key of Emptiness:** You enjoy the 9-again rule on Purification rolls.
- **The Greater Key of the Wasteland:** By spending only a moment concentrating, you can sense the rough direction and distance to the nearest Burn.
- **The Greater Key of Stillness:** You may use an instant action and pay 1 Mote to detect the location of the nearest natural passage between the Earth and some otherworldly realm, such as the Hedge, the Underworld, or the Shadow. This doesn't tell you *what sort of passage* you'll find, or how to get into it if some special method is required; only where it is.
- **The Greater Key of Silence:** You may exert yourself when using your various miracles to obscure your monstrous nature. By spending a point of Willpower, you discount any Motes you spend that turn as counting toward your Anima Threshold.
- **The Greater Key of Darkness:** You may attune your monstrous heart to the tenor of the bruise and battered Earth, sparing it or scouring it as you see fit. When you contribute to a Burn formation roll, you may choose to either add one die to the roll or subtract one die from the roll.

- **The Greater Key of Loneliness:** You may use an instant action to draw forth a grotesque melee weapon forth from nothingness, such as a fang-edged ax or a sword covered in blinking eyes. This weapon does +2 lethal damage, and has an Initiative modifier of -2.

## The Lesser Key

Select one of the following benefits for your Divine Gift:

- **The Lesser Key of Emptiness:** Your empty heart is near-impossible to read. You gain the Closed Book (••) Merit at no cost, even if you don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 50).
- **The Lesser Key of the Wasteland:** The lonely places of the world do not confound you. You gain the Direction Sense (•) Merit at no cost (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 44).
- **The Lesser Key of Stillness:** From the moment of Exaltation, you have the capacity to speak with otherworldly beings. You gain the First Tongue (••) and High Speech (••) Merits at no cost, even if you don't meet their prerequisites (see p. XX).
- **The Lesser Key of Silence:** Your words and will ring in the hearts of others. You gain the Pusher (•) Merit at no cost, even if you don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 53).
- **The Lesser Key of Darkness:** You know when you stand in the presence of monsters and other strangeness. You gain the Eye for the Strange (••) Merit at no cost, even if you don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 44).
- **The Lesser Key of Loneliness:** Your spirit is a cruel fortress. You gain the Iron Will (••) Merit at no cost, even if you don't meet its prerequisites (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 51).

## Monstrosity

Infernals no longer use the Integrity trait that mortals do. It has been flensed away during their metamorphosis in the Chrysalis Grotesque. Instead, they carry some deformity of the spirit with them, a twisting of body and soul that forever weakens them and bends them out of true. Select your Infernal's Monstrosity from the list below:

### DIVINE IGNITION (PERSISTENT)

Where others have a soul, you have a raging inferno: a divine, primordial tempest that makes you both impassioned and inflammable. You do not enjoy the 10-again benefit when you make Composure rolls, and you suffer aggravated damage from fire as your spirit ignites along with your flesh.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Infernal; certain Infernal Charms

**Resolution:** This Condition cannot naturally resolve.

**Beat:** Whenever you suffer aggravated damage from fire, take a beat.

### OATHCLAD (PERSISTENT)

Your word is your bond, like it or not. You cannot knowingly and intentionally lie or break a promise or compact. If forced to do so, you suffer a number of dice of aggravated damage equal to your Essence rating.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Infernal; certain Infernal Charms

**Resolution:** This Condition cannot naturally resolve.

**Beat:** Whenever you must endanger or badly inconvenience yourself by telling the truth or keeping your word, take a beat.

#### THE FURY (PERSISTENT)

There's a rage in you that never fully abates. When someone belittles or attempts to humiliate you, you must succeed at a Resolve + Composure roll or else seek immediate retribution by the most direct means available. A dramatic failure additionally costs you a point of Willpower, while an exceptional success grants a point of Willpower.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Infernal; certain Infernal Charms

**Resolution:** This Condition cannot naturally resolve.

**Beat:** Whenever you get yourself in trouble by losing your temper, take a beat.

#### THE HUNGER (PERSISTENT)

You emerged from the Chrysalis Grotesque bearing an inhuman and eternal hunger for something... unwholesome. It might be for radiation, human flesh, the act of killing, or even the sensation of physical agony. Whatever it is, obtaining it is difficult or dangerous for you or others around you. Whenever you've gone 48 hours without indulging, suffer a (half your Essence rating, rounded down, minimum of -1) penalty to your Dexterity, Stamina, Resolve, and Composure dice pools.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Infernal; certain Infernal Charms

**Resolution:** This Condition cannot naturally resolve.

**Beat:** Whenever you sate your Hunger, maximum of once per day.

#### BROKEN SOUL (PERSISTENT)

You almost didn't survive your Exaltation at all. The power of your own Essence burns you, making your flesh singe and weep. When your anima flares to the Burning level, you suffer a number of dice of bashing damage equal to your Essence rating.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Infernal; certain Infernal Charms

**Resolution:** This Condition cannot naturally resolve.

**Beat:** Whenever your anima flares at the Burning level, take a beat.

#### LOST SOUL (PERSISTENT)

Whenever you pass through a crossroads—including intersecting city streets—you momentarily become confused, and suffer the Lost Condition.

**Possible Sources:** Being an Infernal; certain Infernal Charms

**Resolution:** This Condition cannot naturally resolve.

**Beat:** This Condition doesn't provide beats, since resolving the Lost Condition provides a beat on its own.



## Caste Mark

Each of the Infernal Exalted possesses a *Caste mark*, though strangely enough they do not have Castes. This symbol appears on their brow when their anima manifests at the Radiant or Burning level. Infernals can also voluntarily cause their Caste mark to appear by concentrating for a turn and making a Willpower roll.

**Dice Pool:** Willpower

**Action:** Instant

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Exalt accidentally triggers her anima at the Radiant level.

**Failure:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears, shining through any concealment such as headband or mask, and continues burning for at least several minutes before abating. She suffers a -1 penalty to all Stealth rolls while it is manifest.

**Success:** The Exalt's Caste mark appears at whatever level of brightness the Exalt desires, and remains until she reflexively dismisses it or until the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the manifestation is so dramatic that the Exalt gains a +1 equipment bonus to Presence rolls while the Caste mark remains visible.

## Apocalypse Form

An imminent eschaton sleeps within the flesh and spirit of each of the Infernal Exalted. It can be stirred to wakefulness in times of need, at the cost of great destruction to the world. This is the Exalt's Apocalypse form: a monstrous transformation that briefly grants her incredible power.

To don her Apocalypse form, the Exalt must take an instant action and spend 2 Essence, 1 Willpower. The transformation lasts for a number of minutes equal to her Essence rating, after which it cannot be assumed again until the sun next crosses the horizon. Donning the Apocalypse form automatically creates a major Burn.

Select the template that best describes the Infernal's terrible transformation:

### Humanoid

The Infernal roughly retains her original size and shape, though she is clearly marked as inhuman through the inclusion of features such as razor-edged wings, digitigrade legs, armored skin, blades protruding from her flesh, and so on. She gains the following traits:

- **Deadly:** The Infernal's natural attacks inflict lethal damage.
- **Modified Traits:** The Infernal traits are modified in the following fashion: Strength +2, Dexterity +2, Stamina +2, Size +1, species factor 6 (providing Health +3, Initiative +2, Speed +5). She calculates Defense with (the highest of her Wits or Dexterity) + Athletics.
- **Renewal:** Donning the Apocalypse form completely heals the Infernal of all damage she might be suffering.
- **Aspects:** The Apocalypse form is enhanced with four Aspects, granting special abilities or additional modifiers.

### Monstrous

The Infernal transforms into something bestial or nightmarish: a centaur made of black glass; a bus-sized wolf formed of surging shadows and blinking eyes; a writhing edifice of wings and tentacles. Some trace of her human features may or may not be present. She gains the following traits:

- **Deadly:** The Infernal's natural attacks inflict lethal damage.
- **Modified Traits:** The Infernal traits are modified in the following fashion: Strength +3, Dexterity +1, Stamina +2, Size +3, species factor 5 (providing Health +5, Initiative +1, Speed +4). She calculates Defense with (the highest of her Wits or Dexterity) + Athletics.
- **Shockwave:** Donning the Apocalypse form unleashes a massive shockwave. All other nearby characters suffer the Knocked Down Tilt unless they're behind cover.
- **Aspects:** The Apocalypse form is enhanced with three Aspects, granting special abilities or additional modifiers.

## Abstract

The Infernal transforms into something amorphous and malleable: a screaming sandstorm; a swarm of thousands of demonic wasps; a cloud of impossible colors, searing radiation, and briefly coalescing tendrils. She gains the following traits:

- **Encompassing:** The Infernal's form encompasses an area with a radius roughly equal to her Essence x 10 yards.
- **Deadly:** Everyone inside of the Infernal suffers the grave version of the Poison Tilt until they can escape, unless they can offer some justification for immunity (such as a vampire not needing to breathe while trapped in an Infernal who has become a poisonous cloud – a protection that wouldn't apply if the Infernal were instead a storm of razor-edged black ice).
- **Intangible:** The Infernal can move or fly at her normal Speed, and can bypass any obstacle it would make sense for her to bypass (such as a living corrosive fog pouring under the crack in a door). She is otherwise intangible and unable to physically act or be acted upon, to attack or be attacked by any physical force. She is still able to speak and perform Mental or Social actions.
- **Living Disaster:** The Infernal's body may manifest up to two Environmental Tilts within itself. Examples include Blizzard, Earthquake, Extreme Cold or Heat, Flooded, Heavy Rain or Wind, or Ice.
- **Aspects:** The Apocalypse form is enhanced with four Aspects, granting special abilities or additional modifiers.

## Aspects

Humanoid and monstrous Infernals may select features from the list below. These are permanent enhancements to the Apocalypse form.

**Armor:** The Infernal's body is covered in thick scales, metal or plastic armor, or a shell of some kind. She gains natural armor rated 3/1, and has a Speed modifier of -2. A character cannot have both Tough Hide and Armor.

**Aquatic:** The Infernal may breathe underwater, and while in water gains Speed +5.

**Flight:** The Infernal is capable of flight, with a species factor of 10.

**Innate Weapons:** The Infernal has claws, fangs, horns, blades, or some other sort of devastating built-in weapon. If she has fangs, she can bite without the need of a grapple. Natural weapons inflict +2 lethal damage.

**Sharp Senses:** The Infernal's senses are preternaturally acute. She adds +3 to Perception rolls.

**Swift Runner:** The Infernal is incredibly quick, and may be able to put on bursts of incredible speed. Increase her Speed by an additional +6.

**Ranged Attack:** The Infernal can project some sort of ranged attack, such as a sonic scream, gouts of radioactive fire, or spines fired from her body. Treat as a weapon with +3 lethal damage and ranges 30/60/120.

**Tough Hide:** The Infernal's body is made of something denser than mere flesh. She gains natural armor rated 2/0. A character cannot have both Tough Hide and Armor.

**Twitch Reflexes:** The Infernal reacts to threats with blinding speed, gaining an additional +3 modifier to Initiative.

## Ground Zero

When an Infernal dies, her Essence erupts as her Exaltation escapes into Twilight (and, soon after, the realms beyond) as a burgeoning Anathema. This immediately creates a major Infernal Burn at the site of her death. If she dies within the confines of a Burn, her death triggers a Sear.

## Infernal Charms

Charms are the miracles by which the Exalted once built empires upon the Earth and banished the enemies of the gods. The Charms of the Infernal Exalted are less wholesome manifestations, warping and despoiling both user and target. Their fundamental miracle is to bring about Hell on Earth.

Infernals lack Castes. As a result, all Infernal Charms cost two Experiences: all Infernal Charms resonate with all Infernals.

## Infernal Charm Index

The following is a quick-reference list of all Infernal Charms:

Ablation of Brass and Fire (p. XX)

Anonymity Through Propriety (p. XX)

Blight Internalization Transcendence (p. XX)

By Pain Reforged (p. XX)

By Rage Recast (p. XX)

Cracked Cell Circumvention (p. XX)

Crowned With Fury (p. XX)

Curse of Forgotten Seas (p. XX)

Demonic Primacy of Essence (p. XX)

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Verdant Emptiness Endowment (p. XX)

Viridian Legend Exoskeleton (p. XX)

Witness to Darkness (p. XX)

## Excellence

Pushing a monstrous surge of Essence through her mind, body, and spirit, the Infernal elevates mere mortal endeavor into diabolical feats. For a few moments, her efforts are those of a devil unbound.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Varies

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Varies

For each Mote spent to power this Charm, the Infernal may enjoy one of the following benefits:

- Select a single Skill. All dice pools using this Skill add a number of bonus dice equal to the Attribute + Skill total in question. This benefit persists for Essence + 1 turns in combat, and Essence + 1 minutes outside of combat. It can be simultaneously active for multiple Skills at once, so long as each is paid for separately.
- Select a specific Attribute-based dice pool which does not involve a Skill (such as Attribute + Attribute, or Attribute + Essence). Add a number of bonus dice equal to the lowest-rated Attribute in the pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 dice roll.
- When Dodging, the character may add a number of bonus dice equal to twice the character's Dodging pool. This benefit lasts for only 1 turn.
- Double the character's Defense before any other modifiers for 1 turn.

*Example:* An Infernal shoots a magician with a police-issue pistol. She has Dexterity 3 + Firearms 3 and a specialty in Pistols, which would ordinarily give her a pool of seven dice. Since she's using Excellence on the roll, she instead doubles her Dexterity + Firearms dice, rolling a total of 13 dice (Dexterity 3 + Firearms 3 + 1 die for the specialty + 6 dice from Excellence). If she had, for some reason, been rolling Essence + Firearms, Excellence would have only given her three bonus dice.

*All Infernals begin play with this Charm for free.*

## Ablation of Brass and Fire

Faced with certain disaster, the Infernal forces the world to suffer on her behalf. When she would otherwise be struck by an attack or suffer injury from an external source (as from roaring flames or a falling roof-beam), she allows herself to be struck but banishes the damage; instead, nearby masonry shatters, pavement explodes, metal dents, furniture bursts into flames.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive; may be declared *after* an attack is rolled.

The Infernal negates the consequences of one attack altogether; it is considered to have missed or been blocked. The attack in question be some sort of physical threat, such as a werewolf's claws or a lightning bolt hurled by a mage; Ablation of Brass and Fire can't block a vampire's attempt to make the Infernal hallucinate terrifying visions of her dead loved ones. Ablation of Brass and Fire can also be used to avoid harm from momentary environmental threats and hazards such as a collapsing roof beam, but not constant environmental hazards such as a sandstorm or burning building. Whatever damage the attack was likely to have inflicted is instead transferred to nearby inanimate objects or structures such as walls, furniture, statuary, windows, the floor, and so on.

## Anonymity Though Propriety

The Infernal wraps herself in a mantle of Essence which devours the attention of the weak-willed, making it feel like an impossible burden to notice the Exalt or interfere in her affairs.

**Cost:** None

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

By acting in concert with those around her for a few moments, such as by walking in lockstep with a crowd, the Infernal may shroud herself in anonymity. Nobody who isn't specifically on the lookout for her can notice her; she just seems to be a faceless member of the teeming crowds in an urban environment, or one shadow among many in a rural setting. So long as she doesn't engage in some violent or alarming direct action to draw attention to herself – screaming, firing a gun, smashing a window – people will continue to ignore even things like taking out and assembling a high-powered rifle while sitting on a bus stop bench, or loading a bloody corpse into the trunk of her car. It just doesn't occur to them to care; the Infernal sinks into the background noise of the environment. Interacting with someone directly (such as by speaking to them) voids this anonymity. If she does something disruptive, or if someone who *can* see her tries to call attention to her, bystanders must make a Wits + Composure roll (penalized by her Essence) to notice her.

## Blight Internalization Transcendence

The Infernal turns her corrosive power inwards, boiling away her limitations and identity to create something else, *someone* else. She infects her body with a hundred aggressive, wasting cancers, with catastrophic radiation sickness, with maladies not yet known or named. Her hair falls out, and then her teeth and nails; her bones become brittle; her skin grows soft, weeps fluid, eventually splits and sloughs away as her new self tears free of the chrysalis of her old body: then she stands revealed, remade, at the peak of her health and power.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

Every 24 hours after this Charm's activation, the Infernal suffers one level of aggravated damage that cannot be healed by any means. If this damage finally succeeds in killing her, then she is immediately reborn with an undamaged Health track. Before that, her player may re-assign all of her Attribute dots in any way desired, so long as the character ends up with the same total number of Attributes as before her re-birth. The Infernal may also be given a different Virtue and

Vice. Finally, the character's appearance can be rewritten, up to and including physical sex, and if she possesses the Striking Looks Merit, its context may be re-defined. She cannot decide to make herself look precisely like someone else; this is a rebirth as a new self, not a form of impersonation.

If any other source of damage than this Charm kills the Infernal while she is weakened by its effects, she is merely dead. Use with caution.

### By Pain Reforged

Though her flesh be bruised and split and her very bones shattered within her, the Infernal will not – cannot – surrender in the face of pain or injury.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal is not incapacitated when her rightmost Health box is marked with either bashing or lethal damage. She also cannot suffer a wound penalty more severe than -1. Within an Infernal Burn, she cannot suffer wound penalties at all.

### By Rage Recast

The Infernal's corruption and fury manifests itself within her flesh, granting her demonic features.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

Select an Apocalypse Form Aspect upon purchasing this Charm. The Infernal may manifest this feature for the rest of the scene by spending one Mote, and *must* manifest this feature once her anima advances to the Radiant Threshold. The chosen Aspect does *not* have to be one normally present in the Infernal's Apocalypse Form.

This Charm can be purchased more than once to gain additional Aspects. Spending a single Mote allows the Infernal to summon as many Aspects as she wishes, but flaring her anima involuntarily activates all of her Aspects.

### Cracked Cell Circumvention

There is no oubliette so deep or dark, no Hell so vast and benighted, that it can hold the Infernal back from seeking her freedom. Entropy bends to aid her in her escapes: locks corrode, ropes fray, and guards grow weary.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal enjoys a permanent +3 equipment bonus to all efforts to escape from physical restraint or confinement, while ignoring all circumstantial penalties. This Charm applies to physical actions (such as attempts to break out of a grapple or pick a lock), social actions (such as to seduce a guard), and mental actions (such as to come up with an escape plan, or determine the weak point in a wall).

## Crowned With Fury

Concentrating her implacable will upon another, the Infernal crushes her target's psyche with a display of her hellish glory. Green flames creep from her eyes and mouth whenever she commands her newly-suborned lackey, forming a blazing crown that burns above her head while she speaks.

**Cost:** 2 Motes, or 1 Mote in an Infernal Burn

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Intimidation + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim throws off the Infernal's attempt to break his will, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The Infernal fails to subvert the target.

**Success:** The Infernal breaks the target. They must choose whether to gain the Charmed Condition for (Essence rating) days, or else the Wretched Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Infernal chooses which Condition to give her target.

### CHARMED (PERSISTENT)

You've been charmed by some supernatural force, making you subordinate to the will of another character who becomes your regnant. You don't want to believe that anything he says is a lie, and you can't read his true intentions. The regnant adds a bonus equal to the Essence of the one who created this Condition to Manipulation rolls against you, and any Wits + Empathy or Subterfuge rolls you make to detect his lies or uncover his true motives suffer a penalty equal to that same Essence rating. Using supernatural means to detect his lies becomes a Clash of Wills, again against the one who created this Condition.

You want to do things for your regnant, to make him happy. If he asks, you'll do favors for him like he was one of your best friends – giving him a place to crash, lending him your car keys, or revealing secrets that you really shouldn't. You don't feel tricked or ripped off unless you resolve the Condition. It expires normally (without resolving) at the end of the duration listed in the power that created it.

**Possible Sources:** Various supernatural powers.

**Resolution:** The regnant attempts to seriously harm you or someone close to you, you make a significant financial or physical sacrifice for him.

**Beat:** You divulge a secret or perform a favor for your regnant.

### WRETCHED

The very universe itself is repelled by the fact that you occupy it. You know this, and so does everyone you meet. Strangers who catch sight of you whisper to one another, speculating about the ghastly social diseases you likely carry, or your doubtless appalling sexual proclivities. The 10-again rule no longer applies to any Social action you take.



**Possible Sources:** Various Charms

**Resolution:** Regain Willpower through your Virtue (or equivalent trait), affirming your self-worth. Otherwise, this Condition expires after the Exalt's (Essence rating) days.

**Beat:** n/a.

## Curse of Forgotten Seas

The Infernal impregnates a weapon she grasps with corrosive Essence drawn from the still, acrid sea that stands silent and forgotten in the guts of the Empty City.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Exalt's Weaponry attacks increase their damage by +1 and inflict a grave version of the Poisoned Tilt for (Essence + 1) turns. This duration stacks if multiple strikes are applied. This Charm's cost drops to nothing when used within an Infernal Burn.

## Demonic Primacy of Essence

The Infernal radiates a kind of quietly horrid apocalyptic authority. Of all the terrible things to walk the earth, she is perhaps the most terrible. Humans find this disquieting, while monsters are humbled in her presence.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

When the Infernal first meets another monster socially, all other things being even, she starts off with a Good first impression by default rather than an Average one (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 81-82). "Monster" here means anyone who is something other than an entirely mundane human or animal, including sorcerers, psychics, ghouls, and those otherwise meaningfully changed by the supernatural, even if they still possess fundamentally normal biology.

Ordinary humans don't start off with a worse-than-normal first impression of the Infernal, but her ominous aura does mean that when she tries to influence them, she must open one more Door than normal.

Finally, the Infernal may attempt social maneuvering against Hostile monsters as though they had an Average impression of her, as her dominating aura overcomes their own sense of hostility and self-preservation.

## Faster Than Sight

The Infernal steps into that lane of perception where terrible futures dwell, things best not contemplated: the slow boiling of the atmosphere, the heat-death of the cosmos, the incipient possibilities of cancer. So long as she keeps herself moving and active, the world chooses not to perceive her, in the hopes that she will pass without turning her hand to it.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

So long as she remains constantly active (by staying on the move or taking actions, and not standing idle for more than three seconds at a time), the Infernal becomes genuinely impossible to notice, even to electronic devices such as video cameras and motion sensors. She's effectively invisible. Even if she does something that leaves blatant evidence of her presence, such as kicking down a door, it still requires a Wits + Composure roll (penalized by her Essence) to notice her, and those who *do* notice her will forget she is present after a number of turns equal to their Composure unless they spend a point of Willpower. If she attacks someone, the victim automatically becomes aware of her presence and remains aware so long as her violence persists (but this *only* applies to the victim; everyone else must roll as normal).

## Freedom Lets Go

Only one thing moves within the Empty City: the wind, brushing its silent fingers across forgotten rooftops and combing through the branches of crumbling silver trees, sweeping grains across silver dunes, unimpeded. Embracing this empty freedom, the Infernal is similarly unimpeded.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Infernal may immediately escape from any form of mental or spiritual influence or control inflicted upon her, be it mundane or magical, by attaching it to one of her Aspirations and then casting that Aspiration away. She doesn't gain a new Aspiration to replace it until the beginning of the next story. If this causes her to drop a Condition, that Condition is considered to end without properly concluding, and gives no beats. She cannot replace a lost Aspiration with a similar or identical Aspiration until at least one complete story has come and gone.

## From Emptiness, Form

Finding a pit of echoing emptiness deep within the corrosive well of her Essence, the Infernal draws her own self forth, creating a copy of herself.

**Cost:** 3 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Infernal's flesh roils and splits, spilling forth cold blue streamers of light as a perfect copy of herself climbs forth from her body. This clone comes into the world naked, utterly loyal to its creator, precisely aware of what it is, and in possession of the same personality and memories as the Infernal. It has the same Traits as the Infernal, but is completely mortal, with no magic of any sort. Alternately, if the Infernal possesses a working uterus, she can use this Charm to impregnate herself. This parthenogenetic child will grow up to be a perfect physical duplicate of the Infernal, but is otherwise a normal human being.

The Infernal can have up to her Essence rating in clones alive and active at once. By reflexively spending 1 Mote, she can cause a clone within her presence to denature into an emerald burst of hard radiation which she absorbs, granting her all of the memories the clone accumulated during

its existence. If the Infernal wishes, she may re-create specific absorbed clones in the future when using From Emptiness, Form.

If the Infernal should ever die while any of her clones are abroad in the world, her Exaltation rises through Twilight like a mobile earthquake and streaks across the universe, investing itself into the nearest clone. This destroys the clone's memories and identity as the Infernal takes over its body. Reincarnating in this fashion reduces the Infernal's Essence rating by 1. If this would reduce her to Essence 0, then reincarnation is impossible.

## Gifts of Invisible Flame

Wheresoever the Infernal walks, Hell walks with her, granting its gifts: sickness, death, a taste of metal upon the tongue. She sees the hidden angles and junctures in the taint of her Essence, and may use them to traverse worlds.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever the Exalt's anima banner advances to the Radiant Threshold or above, she is considered to stand within an Infernal Burn for the purposes of her other Charms. When she stands within a *true* Burn (rather than just her own anima), the Infernal may pay 1 Mote to spot a hidden crack in the structure of the universe that she may step into, emerging somewhere within the Empty City. She can lead through a number of other people, up to thrice her Essence rating, before the crack seals behind her.

The Infernal may also, at any time, spend as many Motes as she desires to make a Burn creation dice pool equal to the number of Motes spent, or to add dice to an existing Burn creation pool. Doing so increases her effective Essence rating for determining the Burn's nature by +1 for each Mote spent.

## Golden Years Tarnished Black

For those lost in the wilderness there is, at least, always the refuge of happier times and brighter memories. Breathing upon her target, the Infernal can deny even this comfort, poisoning such memories with her corrosive Essence until her target's memories become a spiral of inward-pointing thorns and broken glass. Happiness and humor becomes a constantly-shrinking ring of torment, doubt, and self-recrimination. The only escape is in service to the Infernal.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Empathy + Essence versus Composure + Essence

**Action:** Instant and Contested

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Infernal's attempt to taint her target's spirit fails, and they become permanently immune to this Charm. Dramatic failures are not possible within an Infernal Burn.

**Failure:** The Infernal fails to corrupt her target's mind.

**Success:** The Infernal corrupts the target's memories.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, and the Infernal will instinctively know when the target finally escapes her influence.

When a target's memories are corrupted, they gain the Broken Persistent Condition. This Condition abates whenever they obey the Infernal's requests or demands; only in servitude may they once again experience joy.

#### BROKEN (PERSISTENT)

Whatever you did or saw, something inside you snapped. You can barely muster up the will to do your job anymore, and anything more emotionally intense than a raised voice makes you flinch and back down. Apply a -2 die penalty to all Social rolls and rolls involving Resolve, and a -5 die penalty to all use of the Intimidation Skill.

**Possible Sources:** Tremendous psychological trauma, some supernatural powers.

**Resolution:** Regain a dot of Integrity, lose *another* dot of Integrity, or achieve an exceptional success on a breaking point. For the Exalted, regain Willpower through your Virtue twice.

**Beat:** You back down from a confrontation or fail a roll due to this Condition.

### Gravity-Rebuking Grace

Surrounding herself in scything eddies of flaying Essence, the Infernal severs her connection to the earth and becomes a creature of the winds, unbound by gravity or worldly constraints.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Duration:** 1 Scene

The Infernal may automatically succeed at any standard jumping attempt (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, pp. 71-72), such as to hop a picket fence or leap between the roof of two buildings with only a narrow gap between them, gaining an exceptional success without needing to roll. If she attempts a much more ambitious, superhuman jump – say, to hop from the ground to the top of an 18-wheeler, or to leap from rooftop to rooftop *across a street* – then she may make a jumping roll which carries her (successes) x (Essence + 4) yards. Within the boundaries of an Infernal Burn, this Charm is always active for free.

### Green Sun Nimbus Flare

The Infernal seeds her attacks with a cold and terrible fire, that which began the world and which may very well end it. A target struck with this Charm dies from the inside-out as her flesh erupts into geysers of sinister emerald flames.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Essence + 1 turns

For this Charm's duration, all of the Infernal's Brawl and Weaponry strikes inflict +4 lethal damage and gain the 9-again quality, regardless of the weapon being used. If this inflicts more damage to the target than their Stamina rating, they also gain the moderate Poisoned Tilt for

(Essence rating) turns. In an Infernal Burn, this becomes the grave Poisoned Tilt and occurs regardless of the target's Stamina.

## Hellscry Chakra

The Infernal may extend any or all of her senses – sight, hearing, taste, even more esoteric senses – through the Gauntlet without physically crossing over, spying on the Shadow Realm from the physical realm or vice-versa. If she stands at a Locus or within an Infernal Burn, she may, with effort, push herself through the Gauntlet and enter the Shadow directly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Infernal's senses become temporarily lost in the Gauntlet, imposing relevant Tilts such as Blinded and Deafened for the rest of the scene. If she was trying to cross over physically, she becomes caught inside of the Gauntlet for anywhere from a few minutes to several days before eventually being pushed back out into the world she tried to leave, several miles away.

**Failure:** The Infernal fails to extend her senses across the Gauntlet, or to cross from one world to the other.

**Success:** The Infernal extends her senses across the Gauntlet for the rest of the scene, or until she reflexively ends the Charm. She can only have a sense rooted in one world or the other at any given time, so if she stands in the physical world and sees into the Shadow, she is effectively blind to things happening on Earth. If she is attempting to cross over, she does so successfully, vanishing into the Gauntlet and appearing in the other realm two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Infernal may cross the Gauntlet instantly, or may pull her senses temporarily back from across the Gauntlet to the world she stands in without ending the Charm.

## Hollow Mind Possession

Pouring her Essence into a “smart” device, the Infernal seizes the emptiness that exists in place of a true mind and makes it into her servant.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Presence + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** (Essence rating) days

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Infernal fails to control the device, and cannot use this Charm on it again.

**Failure:** The Infernal fails to control the device.

**Success:** The Infernal infuses her Essence into a computerized device, such as a smart phone or car's onboard systems, and renders it into her willing and obedient servant, which will obey her mental commands.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the duration is permanent.

## Hollow Voice Usurpation

The Infernal insinuates her Essence into everything around her that possesses a speaker grille: car radios, television speakers, ear buds, even the sound chips of electronic children's toys. Once commandeered, she may force these objects to broadcast whatever words she wishes to speak.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

The Infernal may usurp anything or everything within one mile per dot of Essence she possesses. This Charm's cost drops to nothing while within an Infernal Burn, but using it for free in this fashion limits its range of influence to the boundaries of the Burn.

## Holy Land Infliction

These are the sacraments of an empty and meaningless Hell: a quiet in which screams echo and linger; idle moments in which great insights may be gleaned by pondering ruin; a taste of metal at the back of the throat; cancers; slow death without dignity or purpose. The Infernal, through the magnanimous exercise of her will and Essence, may fix these qualities within the world, and even grant merciful reprieve from their blessings.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Intelligence + Presence + Essence

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Varies

**Prerequisite:** This Charm must be used within a Burn.

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates into a Sear, and the Infernal loses all of her remaining Motes.

**Failure:** The Burn immediately detonates into a Sear.

**Success:** The Infernal converts the Burn or stabilizes the Burn for a number of days equal to twice her Essence rating.

**Exceptional Success:** The Infernal converts the Burn or stabilizes the Burn indefinitely. It will remain stable for as long as she lives.

Successful use of this Charm either converts a non-Infernal Burn into an Infernal Burn, or "stabilizes" an Infernal Burn. A stable Burn no longer decays, and cannot be triggered into a Sear (though it can still trigger other Burns into Searing if they intersect its boundaries). Furthermore, a small gateway into and out of the Empty City always appears somewhere within every stable

Infernal Burn, usually in an obscure and well-hidden place such as behind an old tarp in a blind alley, or behind a bookshelf. This portal remains for as long as the Burn remains stable.

At any time, the Infernal may exempt a number of people up to thrice her Essence rating from the negative effects of a Burn she has stabilized. She may revoke or transfer this protection at any time.

## Intolerable Burning Truths

The Infernal etches the forgotten truths of Hell onto her heart with the transcendental acids of the Chrysalis Grotesque, carving out taboos she must follow... and cannot be forced to betray.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal elects to adopt one of the absolutes listed below. At Essence 3+ she may adopt a second absolute, at Essence 5+ a third absolute, at Essence 7+ a fourth absolute, and at Essence 10 all five absolutes.

- The Infernal cannot knowingly betray anyone she loves, or any ancestor from whom she descends.
- The Infernal cannot believe anything bad about someone she loves; at most, she could only be convinced they have been duped into taking ill-advised action for the best of reasons.
- The Infernal cannot show mercy to anyone she dislikes or despises.
- The Infernal cannot forgive or believe anything good about someone she hates.
- The Infernal cannot knowingly help someone she hates unless her own life depends on it.

## Knowing the Desolate Heart

People are needful things, walking the world incomplete and lonesome. The Infernal may hear their innermost desires and wants in the empty spaces between their words and her ears.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

By using this Charm in response to someone speaking to her, the Infernal instantly learns their most important and driving Aspiration. This Charm can also be used at a cost of 0 Motes upon prayers received through Penitents Like Scattered Grains, and also costs 0 Motes when used within an Infernal Burn.

## Lady of Silence

The Infernal banishes all sound to the echoing streets of the Empty City, which ring with the screams of her murders, unheard by any living ear.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** Indefinite

Upon activating this Charm, the Infernal makes no sound when she moves, nor strikes, nor kills. Those who scream when she strikes them down do so in silence, as do those who would cry out

in warning. In general, she can mute any sound within 10 yards, so long as she wishes for it not to be. This Charm ends when the Infernal speaks louder than a whisper.

## Life-Denying Hate

The Infernal blesses her enemies with futility, denying them the ability to recover from whatever torments she chooses to inflict upon them.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Wounds caused by the Infernal cannot be healed until (Essence + 1) turns have elapsed.

## Lord of Desolation

The Infernal was reborn in the emptiest and most desolate cellar known to the cosmologists of the Night People: a Hell so barren that even the bones of its very own demons have abandoned it. She cannot be threatened by any lesser landscape.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal automatically succeeds at all Survival rolls to remain safe and fed within barren, desolate, or despoiled environments such as deserts, open tundra, areas of urban blight, or the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. If she attempts to provide similar shelter to a small group of followers, that attempt becomes a rote action.

Furthermore, whenever standing within a place of physical desolation or a place of spiritual desolation (such as an abusive household, an opium den, a prison, or any other place with a prevailing atmosphere of misery, desperation, and hopelessness), all of her other Charms consider her to be within the confines of an Infernal Burn, including the clause of Gifts of Invisible Flame which requires a true Burn.

## Lost Among Black Mirrors

The Infernal dissolves her identity in an internal well of absolute emptiness, emerging as someone else.

**Cost:** 2 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

The Infernal dons a perfect illusion, appearing to be someone else until she uses this Charm again. She can become a copy of real person, or a fictitious individual of her own devising. She can even appear as the person she used to be before the first time she used this Charm. This illusion fools all senses, mundane and supernatural. Deduction may reveal the Infernal for an impostor, but imperfections in the disguise itself never will.

## Mind-Hand Manipulation

The Infernal combines conviction and Essence to bend the world around her to her implacable will. A faint shimmer in the air marks the use of this power as she lifts and moves objects telekinetically.



**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 Scene

The Infernal may lift, move, or interact with anything within her line of sight as though using her own two hands. Her Intelligence replaces whatever Attribute she would normally roll, if a roll is required, and she uses Intelligence + Occult to lift heavy objects. The Infernal's projected force does not come 'from nothing,' and is invisibly tethered to her as though with ephemeral arms. As such, she may use her telekinetic grip to move herself around by doing things like grabbing roofbeams overhead, or pushing against the floor beneath her.

## Nemesis Self Imagined Anew

The Infernal binds herself away temporarily in a yawning pit of absolute emptiness, letting her heart become a black mirror on which her foe's antithesis may be written.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

Select a target within the Exalt's immediate presence when she activates this Charm. At that moment, the Infernal loses her Virtue, Vice, and Aspirations. She gains her target's Virtue as her new Vice, his Vice as her new Virtue, and learns one of his Aspirations and develops a diametrically-opposed counter-Aspiration. For example, if the target has an Aspiration to finish restoring a classic car, the Infernal might develop an Aspiration to destroy the car. If he wishes to gain revenge upon a certain vampire, the Infernal might wish to help the vampire evade him, or even to put him at its mercy.

This Charm lasts until the Infernal activates it again to cancel it or until she fulfills the Aspiration it gave her, at which point she regains her own Virtue, Vice, and Aspirations.

## Nightmare Fugue Vigilance

Embracing her nightmares and binding them away within a prison in her heart, the Infernal transcends the mortal need for sleep or rest.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The character never suffers any penalties for sleep deprivation, nor indeed has any need of sleep. If she does decide to sleep, she suffers vague and troubling nightmares, and must make a Composure roll upon awakening in order to regain Willpower. Dramatic failure costs a point of Willpower, while exceptional success restores three Willpower.

## Ox-Body Technique

The Infernal's body is transformed by her durance within the Chrysalis Grotesque, enabling her to survive grievous injuries. Attacks that should have mortally wounded her instead show up as mere flesh wounds, allowing her to keep fighting long after absorbing an amount of punishment that should have long ago felled any lesser being.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal's Health calculation becomes Stamina + Size + (Essence rating x 3).

## Penitents Like Scattered Grains

As a harbinger of the end of days, the Infernal is a holy figure, and may hear prayers whispered in her name simply by cocking her head and concentrating for a moment.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

This Charm is always active. While within an Infernal Burn, the Exalt may respond to her postulants, speaking a few simple sentences which echo within the worshiper's skull regardless of the intervening distance.

## Phantom Steed

Reaching deep within herself, the Infernal finds a conveyance that expresses her innermost self. Pressing her will into her anima, she shapes this conveyance out of her Essence. In centuries past, this Charm summoned flame-eyed hellhounds and aura-wrought horses with burning manes to carry the Chosen into battle or to speed them to their destination, but in the current nights, it tends to produce cars and motorcycles.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Until the Exalt leaves the conveyance for a full minute

The Infernal manifests a conveyance around herself. Example vehicles can be found on page 98 of the **Chronicles of Darkness** corebook. In the first moments of its manifestation, the vehicle is clearly sculpted from transparent green anima, but over a span of a few seconds it flushes with color and substance until it is indistinguishable from a normal horse, car, or whatever else. When the Infernal's anima flares at the shining or above level, the conveyance's true nature may begin to shine through (emerald flames of Essence streaming out behind the wheels, or the headlights blazing with the cold and terrible light of nuclear fusion, for example).

Because the vehicle is an expression of the character's personality and spirit, this Charm tends to manifest the same vehicle every time; as a result, it can't be used to produce a sports car in one session, and then a motorboat in the next, even if a motorboat would be really useful at that moment. At the Storyteller's discretion, major upheavals in the character's life and psyche may justify changing the vehicle this Charm summons.

## Righteous Lion Defense

The Infernal refuses, with utter and immovable implacability, to permit any force in the cosmos to gainsay her will.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

Whenever someone or something tries to convince or force the Infernal to abandon or act contrary to one of her Aspirations, she may add (highest rating among her Caste Skills) to her Resistance Attribute for the purpose of not being persuaded or controlled.

## Running to Forever

With each footfall, the Infernal banishes both her exhaustion and the grasp of mere earthly physics to the Empty City. Somewhere in its echoing vastness, a foot stamps against a dusty street, and the drag of inertia crumbles a brazen façade. So long as any part of the City still stands, however, the Infernal is tireless and unfettered, and may run it into oblivion.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

So long as she keeps moving, the character becomes near-weightless, and may walk or run upon even the weakest or most insubstantial of surfaces, such as falling leaves, individual threads, drops of rain, or even the surface of water. So long as she continues moving to conserve momentum, she may even run up or across walls or ceilings.

## Sand-Scoured Society Infliction

Hell is red tape, and the Infernal is its master. When she engages with bureaucracy or labyrinthine systems such as courts of law, corporate networks, or government offices, its various impediments fall away before her and she is able to proceed in a mere fraction of the normal time.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

When undertaking any extended action to push through bureaucratic red tape, the interval of rolls is reduced to one minute, no matter how long it should normally be: the Infernal can accelerate her concerns from call-center peon to a direct chat with the CEO in five minutes flat.

## Sandstrike Blast

The Infernal draws glittering silver sands forth from the border of infinity and hurls them through space at gale-force speeds, scouring flesh and bone.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the character may slash at her foes with sudden blasts of sand drawn forth from nowhere, aiming these blasts as standard thrown weapon attacks (Dexterity + Athletics – Defense). These blasts inflict +3 damage, have a range of 30/50/80, and benefit from the 9-again rule. In an Infernal Burn, she may accept a -3 penalty to direct a single attack at up to three targets within 10 yards of one another, summoning forth a powerful explosion of slashing sand.

## Scar-Writ Saga Shield

The Infernal scribes a litany of the pain and hardships she has endured upon her heart and her very bones, fortifying her flesh against harm.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

For the rest of the scene, the Infernal downgrades all sources of aggravated damage into lethal damage, and downgrades lethal damage into bashing damage.

## Seeing is Blindness

The Infernal's attacks shed inky contrails that steal the light from the eyes of her foes.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 scene

Darkness squirms across and darkens the eyes of anyone struck by one of the Infernal's attacks while this Charm is active. They suffer the **Blinded Tilt** (see **Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 281) until the end of the scene.

## Sinners Drowned and Irradiated

The Infernal's anima becomes a churning flux that burns and boils all that enters its embrace, while also poisoning the flesh with deadly radiation. The Infernal and her immediate possessions remain immune to its ravages.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal gains an anima flux effect, exactly like that of the Dragon-Blooded (see p. XX).

## Striking at Nothing

The Infernal glides along the boundary between Earth and the empty abode from which she once escaped, allowing all attempts to harm her to vanish into the liminal space between. In the eyes of her opponents, she seems to flicker as though distorted by an unseen wind, as blades and bullets pass through without harming her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Reflexive

**Duration:** 1 Scene

The Infernal may apply her Defense against Firearms-based attacks. When doubling her Defense with Excellence, that benefit lasts for (Essence rating + 1) turns rather than a single turn. This Charm is always active at no cost while within an Infernal Burn.

## Thoughts Resound in Silence

So long as it is perfectly quiet, the Infernal may hear the thoughts of those around her.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Duration:** 1 Scene

As long as there are no noises louder than ambient air pressure or, perhaps, a gentle wind in the trees, the Infernal may hear the surface thoughts of anyone around her simply by focusing her attention on them. This Charm is constantly active at no cost while within an Infernal Burn.

## Thousandfold Typhoon Hand

The Infernal erupts into a dozen lethal afterimages, seeming to stand and strike everywhere around herself at once. When stillness returns, it is accompanied by blood falling around her like rain as her opponents topple.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Action:** Instant

The Infernal may make as many Strength + Brawl or Weaponry attacks as she wishes, so long as each is directed against a different target that she can reach. Subtract the total number of targets from her attack pool, then make one attack against each target. Within an Infernal Burn, reduce this penalty by her Essence rating.

## Tool-Transcending Constructs

The Infernal shapes whatever tools she finds herself in need of from the invisible wellspring of her own Essence, then allows them to dissipate back into nothingness when their presence no longer serves her.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Instant

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 action

The Infernal never suffers a penalty for attempting to build or repair something without suitable tools. Moreover, when building or repairing something with an extended roll, she cuts the interval between rolls in half. By spending 1 Mote, she may conjure phantom tools from her anima to benefit her for the duration of one roll, granting an equipment bonus equal to her Essence rating, and may cut the interval until the next roll down to 25% of the time it should normally take.

## Vaults of Eld

The ancient vaults of the Empty City stand cobwebbed and bare, their terrible arsenal scattered across the cosmos. At the moment of the Infernal's need, she can reach forth and always find a terrible, infernal relic ready to serve her needs.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal may always, with only a single instant action spent searching her surroundings, find a hellish weapon hidden away in the interstices of reality, and draw it forth. This Charm may produce any sort of weapon from antiquity, such as a sword, spear, or bow, but not firearms or any other modern weaponry. Weapons drawn from the Vault of Eld have a damage modifier one higher than normal.

## Verdant Emptiness Endowment

The Infernal may fill up the hollow and unfulfilled emptiness in those around her with power, realigning the lines of causality to force her will into existence, all at the small cost of abject servitude.

**Cost:** 1-5 Motes

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** Indefinite

This Charm must be used in response to witnessing someone else wish for something they do not have, or to be more than they are: to bemoan their lack of fortune or friends; to pine for skills they don't have, or good looks they were born without. The Infernal may grant the expressed wish, or at least some part of it, by bestowing a Merit whose value is equal to the Motes spent powering this Charm. Alternately, she may grant a permanent equipment bonus to a Skill: +1 for 1 Mote, +2 for 3 Motes, or +3 for 5 Motes. The blessing granted must always correspond to the desire expressed, but it's up to the Infernal how generous she feels like being with the magnitude of her gift.

In exchange for receiving her blessing, the target now owes the Infernal one favor to be claimed at a later date. When the Infernal finally cashes in and makes her demand, the beneficiary instinctively knows that refusal will bring something terrible down upon him. He's right: those who spurn repayment of an Infernal's gift are immediately ripped from the world and thrown into the depths of the Empty City.

An Infernal can only grant someone a number of blessings with this Charm equal to half her Essence rating, round up. She can voluntarily relinquish old blessings by forsaking the favor owed, if she wishes, though once the target has paid his due the blessing is irrevocable. Granted Merits are *not* protected by Sanctity of Merits. If the Infernal chooses to use this Charm in response to prayers heard through Penitents Like Scattered Grains, its cost is lowered by 1 Mote.

## Viridian Legend Exoskeleton

Concrete, stone, wood, iron, glass, and steel all rip themselves loose from the Infernal's surroundings, forming a powerful armored shell around her, fused into place by burning glyphs scribed in some forgotten Hellish tongue.

**Cost:** None or 1 Mote

**Action:** None or Reflexive

**Duration:** Permanent or 1 scene

The Infernal permanently gains a single point of armor. By spending 1 Mote, she gains her Stamina rating in additional armor.

## Witness to Darkness

Reborn amidst a darkness more profound than any earthly night, the Infernal cannot be confounded by mere lack of illumination. She can operate in absolute darkness as though it were the noonday sun. However, such profound affinity for darkness stains the Infernal's soul, making her a thing of shadows and deceit ever after.

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** Permanent

The Infernal can see in the dark. She gains a permanent +2 equipment bonus to all Manipulation rolls, but this bonus disappears and is replaced with a -2 penalty when in bright light (such as under spotlights or direct, unfiltered sunlight on a cloudless day).

## Hellscry Chakra

The Infernal may extend any or all of her senses – sight, hearing, taste, even more esoteric senses – through the Gauntlet without physically crossing over, spying on the Shadow Realm from the physical realm or vice-versa. If she stands at a Locus, she may, with effort, push herself through the Gauntlet and enter the Shadow directly.

**Cost:** 1 Mote

**Dice Pool:** Resolve + Occult + Essence – Gauntlet strength

**Action:** Instant

**Duration:** 1 scene

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Infernal's senses become temporarily lost in the Gauntlet, imposing relevant Tilts such as Blinded and Deafened for the rest of the scene. If she was trying to cross over physically, she becomes caught inside of the Gauntlet for anywhere from a few minutes to several days before eventually being pushed back out into the world she tried to leave, several miles away.

**Failure:** The Infernal fails to extend her senses across the Gauntlet, or to cross from one world to the other.

**Success:** The Infernal extends her senses across the Gauntlet for the rest of the scene, or until she reflexively ends the Charm. She can only have a sense rooted in one world or the other at any given time, so if she stands in the physical world and sees into the Shadow, she is effectively blind to things happening on Earth. If she is attempting to cross over, she does so successfully, vanishing into the Gauntlet and appearing in the other realm two turns later.

**Exceptional Success:** As a success, but the Infernal may cross the Gauntlet instantly, or may pull her senses temporarily back from across the Gauntlet to the world she stands in without ending the Charm.

## Infernal Burns

Infernal Essence is the power of the beginning and end of all things. It is the unchecked power of a furious sun, stripped bare of metaphor and simile, devoid of righteousness justice or life-giving warmth: it is pure, relentless atomic fusion, churning endlessly in a cold and empty void, forever casting off ionizing radiation. When this Essence scars the world, it gives the gift of lingering sickness and death through radiation poisoning.

Those complex animals that are capable of doing so quickly leave the confines of an Infernal Burn. The simpler life-forms that remain – worms, insects, and the like – become prone to catastrophic mutation. Those smaller animals that can't flee soon sicken and die. Plants grow quickly and profusely, but become odd and disfigured, or prone to albinism and gigantism. Their flavor profile is invariably ruined, and those who eat them soon grow sick.

The Infernal Burn constantly sheds a variety of different forms of hard radiation, bombarding those within and sickening them over time. In game terms, a character can safely withstand exposure to an Infernal Burn in brief jaunts, but those who remain in steady residence eventually sicken, and even die if not removed from its confines.

Every four hours, a character is considered to have suffered one interval of radiation exposure from the Burn. Once these exposure intervals exceed the individual's Stamina rating, he takes one point of bashing damage at each interval, which cannot be healed while within the Burn. Exposure time is cumulative for those who come and go from the Burn, with 48 hours away from the Burn being necessary to reset the exposure clock.

Other Exalted add their Essence rating to their Stamina to determine exposure threshold. Infernals are entirely immune to radiation sickness, either from their own Burns or from radiation found elsewhere in the world.

## Infernal Searing

When an Infernal Burn erupts into a Sear, it creates death, not monsters. The entire Sear experiences a terrible blink of blue-green visible light. Those who don't shut their eyes against it can see bones through skin and pipes inside of walls for a moment. Every living thing suffers a catastrophic blast of hard radiation, and must roll to survive it.

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Resolve + Essence

**Action:** Reflexive

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** As a failure, but in the meantime, they also gain the Contaminated Condition. Exalts and other tough supernatural beings suffer five lethal damage, and gain the Contaminated Condition.

**Failure:** The character suffers a lethal radiation dose and is a walking ghost. Within (Stamina rating) weeks they will begin to suffer massive organ failure and die a terrible death. Exalts and supernatural beings who are too tough to die outright to massive radiation doses (such as vampires and werewolves) instead gain the Contaminated Condition.

**Success:** The character suffers three points of lethal damage, and the potential for future health complications, but may ultimately heal and recover.

**Exceptional Success:** The character suffers nothing worse than a single point of lethal damage.

### CONTAMINATED (PERSISTENT)

You've been contaminated with radioactive material, which continues to expose you and those around you to the effects of radiation poisoning. In rules terms, you're a walking Infernal Burn, with an exposure range roughly the size of a hospital room.

**Possible Sources:** Infernal Sear, exposure to catastrophic levels of radiation.

**Resolution:** Enduring thorough decontamination procedures or mystic rites of cleansing.

**Beat:** Whenever you unknowingly expose someone you care about to your contamination, take a beat.



## Hellwalking

During an Infernal Sear, any Infernal caught in the shockwave can, if she desires, allow it to sweep her out of the world, depositing her somewhere within the Empty City. This is the only way to return to the dead and empty Hell of their origins that all Infernals share, though the Charms Gifts of Invisible Flame and Holy Land Infliction offer much more controlled alternatives. Once back in Hell, the only routes back out are through a stable portal created by Holy Land Infliction or by walking once again across the silver sands of the infinite desert at the Empty City's borders. Infernals may lead out a number of followers equal to their Essence rating when navigating the sands, or equal to thrice that number if they know the Charm Lord of Desolation.

## Life in Hell

A number of Infernal powers allow them to hurl or lead people into Hell. Monsters in the Empty City are simply stranded and must make do as best they can, though powerful mages might be able to arrange for an escape, as their versatile mystic arts still function more or less unimpaird. Humans are another matter.

The Empty City is still habitable, with some difficulty. While its sea is empty and its "waters" are actually a potent acid, Hell is not entirely without bounty. A few ancient fountains continue to circulate water through the city, as they have for thousands of years. Abandoned bars where demons once caroused remain stocked with infernal liquor, some of it still drinkable. A few of the gardens of Hell have run to riot, and continue to produce strange devil-fruits whose consumption isn't immediately lethal.

Mortals dwelling in Hell are eventually changed by the experience. After a number of years of survival in the Empty City equal to an individual's Stamina or Resolve (whichever is lowest), the strangeness of the environment overwhelms and breaks them. Their soul shatters, spilling forth some measure of demonic power. A few Infernals have historically tried to watch and document the mortal tribes of Hell, hoping to glean some insights into the Empty City's past by the transformations it inflicts on its latter-day inhabitants, presumably remaking them into something more like its old denizens.

In game terms, a broken mortal inhabitant of the Empty City becomes a mutant Deviant (see **Deviant: The Renegades**), sometimes imbued with powers that make escape back to the mortal world possible.

# Chapter Ten: The Anathema

When one of the Celestial Exalted dies, the immortal core of their Exaltation departs their rapidly-cooling flesh. In the early days of the Earth, it was an invisible departure in which the Exaltation, difficult to detect even with the most refined and subtle of mystic senses, whirled away in search of a new hero to empower according to the dictates of the powers which created it.

That was tens of thousands of years ago. Now the world is cursed, and the Exaltations are clogged with lifetimes beyond counting of accumulated power, which may – frequently do – manifest in one of the Anathema.

When one of the Celestial Exalted dies, their Exaltation unjoins from their flesh and rises into the ephemeral realm of Twilight, where it enters a dormant state, appearing as a glittering shard of banked sunlight, moonlight, starlight, or utter darkness winding in upon itself. In this dormant state, the Exaltation processes the heavy freight of accumulated corruption it has taken into itself through the act of purification, burning away a lifetime of corrosive dross. If all goes well, this process continues for months, years, or even decades; in the end, the Exaltation safely burns away all the evil it has consumed, and then flies forth at the speed of hope to find a new hero worthy of its power.

If something upsets the Exaltation during this maintenance cycle, something terrible is born. The Exaltation's remnant corruption spills out into the invisible mantle of power that surrounds it – its anima field – and catalyzes into a semi-living shell. This shell, known as an Anathema, then sets forth to seek out mortals worthy of Exaltation. The Anathema, however, cannot bestow power upon a host. The Exaltation is trapped within its swollen shell of corrupted power. Instead, it tries to bring the host inside the shell, generally by devouring the screaming mortal's body or soul. This doesn't create Exalts. It creates corpses. Frustrated, the Anathema lumbers on, intent on finding a new hero and trying again.

It doesn't take much to disrupt an Exaltation during its reincarnation cycle. Being inside of a Sear will do it every time, but so will being meddled with by curious ghosts, spirits, angels, magicians, or anyone else who stumbles upon the shard of power in Twilight. Coming into close proximity to an existing Anathema will also trigger the transformation into Anathema.

Destroying one of the Anathema causes its shell to crumble, setting the Exaltation within free to complete its journey and Exalt a new host, but this can be a very tall order indeed. The Anathema wield the power of Exaltation, and can be formidable foes indeed.

## Game Systems

The Anathema come in many forms, but all are ultimately Exaltations and hold an essential core of mechanics in common. Many of these rules are similar, but not identical, to the rules for ephemeral beings found in various **Chronicles of Darkness** sourcebooks.

## Anathema Traits

The Anathema generally resemble living creatures, but aren't really alive. They're often intangible and found roaming the realms invisible, but they aren't spirits, either. Nor are they ghosts, despite forming soon after the death of their last host. Ultimately, the Anathema are a

unique class of beings. Their mind, body, and spirit are all one undifferentiated whole. As a result, they're represented by Traits that differ significantly from those of the Chosen.

## Rank

Anathema don't have an Essence rating the way the Chosen do; Essence requires a mortal host to take root and blossom toward its divine potential. Instead, their raw power is measured by Rank in the fashion of ghosts and spirits, reflecting the sheer amount of supernatural power the wayward Exaltation has gathered around itself to make up the Anathema.

Rank ranges from one to five dots, much as with ephemeral beings, and determines the maximum ratings of an Anathema's Attributes, how many Attribute dots it has, how many Motes it can harbor, how many Charms it manifests, and which forms of Manifestation it is capable of.

Anathema use their Rank as a Supernatural Tolerance trait, and substitute it for Essence whenever they use or are targeted by any effect that calls for it.

Anathema increase in Rank after every 200 years that they remain active, or immediately after gorging on a particularly powerful soul (that of a being with a supernatural power trait rated higher than their current Rank). It's believed that Anathema simply cannot advance beyond Rank 5; the Exaltation at their heart was ultimately meant to reside within a human host, and can only hold a limited (though still incredibly daunting) amount of power around itself while disembodied.

## Effects of Rank

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Trait Limits</b>	<b>Attribute Dots</b>	<b>Motes/Per Turn</b>	<b>Charms</b>
•	5	5-9	10/1	3
••	7	9-14	12/2	4
•••	9	14-22	15/3	5
••••	12	20-30	20/4	7
•••••	15	27-38	25/5	9

## Motes

Anathema are ultimately a deadly crust accreted around the Exaltation at their heart, and that crust catches and retains stray emanations of Essence in the form of Motes. Anathema can spend their Motes reflexively on a one-for-one basis to raise an Attribute for the rest of the scene, but can increase an Attribute by no more than their Rank.

Anathema naturally regain 2 Motes each day at sunrise and 2 at sunset, no matter where they are. Upon consuming a soul, an Anathema regains all spent Motes. Anathema don't generate an anima banner and can't create Burns through Mote expenditure, as they ultimately feed expended Motes back into the core of their Exaltation to empower it, rather than shedding them into the world.

## Attributes and Skills

Anathema don't have the nine Attributes familiar in material characters, but use a simplified set of the Power, Finesse, and Resistance categories mortal Attributes fall into, much like spirits.

When creating an Anathema, look at the Rank chart to determine how many dots are available and what their trait maximum is. All Attributes begin at 1.

**Power** describes the raw ability of the Anathema to impose itself on other entities and the world in general. It is used in all rolls that call for Strength, Intelligence, or Presence.

**Finesse** describes how deft the Anathema is at pursuing its goals with fine control. It is used for all rolls that call for Dexterity, Wits, or Manipulation.

**Resistance** describes how well the Anathema can avoid being acted upon by others, and how easily it is damaged. It is used for all rolls that call for Stamina, Resolve, or Composure.

Anathema don't possess Skills, but don't suffer unskilled penalties, either. They roll the appropriate Attribute + Rank when attempting to act upon others, or Attribute + Attribute for actions like surprise and Perception.

## Willpower

Anathema have a Willpower rating equal to their Resistance + Finesse (to a maximum of 10), but do not have and cannot spend Willpower points by any means or for any purpose; the Anathema are capable of action and even planning, but have no true inner existence, desires, or drive. Being fundamentally hollow, they cannot "reach down deep" when it matters. There are no inner reserves to tap.

## Corpus and Injury

Anathema don't have Health; like ephemeral beings, their body is made entirely from supernatural energy, and as such, they use a similar trait called Corpus. Permanent Corpus is equal to Resistance + Size, and grants Corpus boxes that act like Health boxes, filling when the monster sustains injury. Corpus boxes don't have wound penalties associated with them. Unlike ephemeral beings, Anathema suffer injuries the same as any other being; they don't downgrade lethal damage to bashing unless they have a Charm that grants them that capability. Anathema can't be rendered unconscious or incapacitated by filling their Corpus track with bashing or lethal damage.

Marking aggravated damage in the rightmost box of an Anathema's Corpus track destroys it; it unravels in a burst of anima-colored light, and its unburdened Exaltation finally flies free to seek out a host.

Anathema don't naturally heal from injury, because they aren't really alive. They may "heal" damage to their Corpus by spending Motes to repair their shell. Each Mote spent in this fashion heals two bashing or one lethal damage. Five Motes are required to heal a point of aggravated damage.

## Other Traits

Because they have simplified traits, Anathema calculate their derived traits a bit differently.

**Initiative:** Initiative is equal to Finesse + Resistance.

**Defense:** Defense is equal to Power or Finesse, whichever is lower, + Rank.

**Speed:** Speed is equal to Power + Finesse + a species factor, which is generally 5 unless otherwise noted or modified by a Charm.

**Size:** Most Anathema are Size 5 or 6.

**Language:** Most Anathema can speak, but have no true personality or mind to permit truly meaningful communication. Their speech is always utilitarian, a means to an end, part of their hunting pattern. When they speak, they always do so in the native language of whoever or whatever they're addressing. The Anathema isn't a true polyglot, but rather is reflecting back the subject's expectations of what communication should look and sound like; analyzing and responding to another character's psyche in this fashion is possible thanks to the Exaltation's ability to examine and measure a potential host's heart and soul before joining.

**Integrity:** The Anathema lack any sort of trait analogous to Integrity. If a dice pool calls for any such trait, use Rank instead.

**Virtue and Vice:** Anathema do not have a Virtue or Vice.

**Aspirations:** Anathema have no ambitions or desires, no *thoughts*, really, but they do possess a long-term goal (to find a soul suitable for Exaltation) and are capable of forming short-term plans to pursue that goal.

## Manifestation and Powers

Each different type of Anathema expresses different capabilities for manifestation, travel between realms, powers, and weaknesses.

## The Unconquered

The Solar Anathema are magnificent, angelic beings with stony flesh of alabaster, gold, and subdued scarlet. They often appear humanoid, but may in other cases manifest in a variety of other forms, ranging from the bestial (such as a great white lion with a golden mane) to the abstract (three concentric rings lined with eyes, all rotating and spinning around ten alabaster hands folded together in prayer). These stranger forms are sometimes depictions of their last host's iconic anima, but at other times they seem to have no direct correspondence to the Exaltation's previous bearer. Wings are common, frequently numbering more than two. The one commonality of all of the Unconquered is a feeding aperture somewhere on their form. If no mouth makes itself obvious at first glance, rest assured there is one concealed *somewhere* – perhaps in the midst of all those folded, prayerful hands.

## Behavior

The Unconquered seek heroic souls, and wield terrible and uncompromising power against anything that stands in the path of their quest. Fortunately, they are easily distracted and drawn astray, for they have difficulty discerning resonant Essence or dreams of glory from the true light of a human soul. As a result, Solar Anathema frequently cross Loci into the Shadow at the site of significant battlefields or acts of heroism, or else simply fade into the Astral Realm to investigate some grand and magnificent dream. This rarely ends well for the dreamer.

A Solar Anathema in the Shadow is a powerfully disruptive influence. It constantly sheds fragments of Essence resonant with light, glory, power, and valor, but will not tolerate spiritual parasites nipping feathers from its wings or plucking threads from its robes. Unconquered leave broad trails of torn and sundered spirits in their wake, wandering from place to place, investigating sources of potentially interesting resonance. So long as the inhabitants of the

Shadow give them a wide berth, they have little interest in the doings of spirits. Eventually, one of the Unconquered finds a Locus and slips back into the physical world.

They're much more dangerous when they fall into the Astral Realms. The Unconquered may fly easily between mortal dreams. Unlike mere goetia, Anathema can directly access a dreamer's soul from within her dream-realm; someone devoured by the Unconquered in her dreams awakens without a soul (and suffering the Soulless Condition).

The Unconquered can also carve a hole in an empty dream after devouring its owner, using that to slip into the Oneiros; some even make it into the Temenos, following bright fragments of concept or thought, and may become lost there for years at a time. A few have even followed the dreams of Heroes into the dark waters of the Primordial Dream, to the extreme chagrin of the Horrors that dwell therein. Anathema can intrude into a Beast's Lair as easily as into any mere mortal dream, and while they do not actively hunt the Children, they will defend themselves with all the ferocity and cunning at their disposal if a Beast attempts to expel them before the Unconquered decides to leave on its own. Since Lairs serve as a direct bridge between the Astral Realms and the physical world, they are the most common path the Unconquered use to return from the world of dreams to the Earth.

## Navigation and Manifestation

The Unconquered can cross to and from the Shadow at any Locus by rolling Power + Rank and spending 1 Mote. Success allows them to push through the Gauntlet over the course of a minute, while an exceptional success allows them to cross instantly. Entering the Astral Realms is even simpler; the Anathema grows still, spends 3 Motes, and fades away to reappear in the dream-realm of the nearest sleeping human.

Solar Anathema in the physical world naturally exist in a state of Twilight. When an Unconquered finds a person she deems a potential candidate for Exaltation, it may begin to manifest. This is a painstaking process in which the Anathema impregnates the Essence of its being into a nearby source of crude physical matter, bit by bit. It must spend a total of 6 Motes, and the process can easily take several hours, during which the site of the manifestation grows unnaturally hot and bright. Eventually, the Anathema's body erupts from the ground, or a wall, or wrenches itself out of the side of a city bus, or some other suitably large source of raw, coarse material. It may now begin to hunt down the mortal whose soul caught its attention, who likely left the area during the long process of manifestation.

Returning to Twilight after a successful kill is a much shorter, simpler process; the Unconquered needs only be left unmolested for five full minutes, and it will naturally resume its Twilight state to stalk for a new potential host.

## Special Rules

The Unconquered are set apart from other sorts of Anathema by the following rules:

### Dimmed Senses

Solar Anathema in Twilight are nearly blind. They can see ghosts clearly, and may confuse them for living souls and consume them. They can see spirits, angels, and other Twilight beings as hazy outlines which are of little interest unless they interfere with the Unconquered. Trees, roads, cars, buildings, and other landmarks and objects are little more than vague, desaturated shadows; the Anathema suffer a -3 penalty to all Perception rolls to notice anything about their

environment. Anything with a human soul, by contrast, stands out as a beacon to the Unconquered, and the higher a person's Integrity, the brighter they shine.

Exalts also stand out clearly in the sight of the Unconquered, but are of no interest to them, as they are not suitable candidates for Exaltation.

Anathema in the Shadow or Astral Realms are able to use their senses to assess the ephemera around them with no difficulty, and upon manifesting in the physical world, Unconquered craft physical sensory organs for themselves which work as well as those of any human.

## Size

The Anathema physically swell with accumulated power. Their Size is 5 + their Rank.

## Deadly Weapons

All Unconquered come armed with weaponry of some sort. One might carry a double-edged golden sword, while another might bear wings covered in feathers sharp as razors, and a third could possess wicked claws and fangs. These weapons inflict lethal damage even to ephemeral beings and the undead. Rank 1 or 2 Anathema inflict +1 damage with their attacks, while Rank 3+ Anathema inflict +2 damage.

## Powers of the Unconquered

All Unconquered benefit from the following innate power:

### Guising

When acting within the confines of the physical world, the Unconquered may spend 1 Mote to don a mortal disguise, hiding their alarming true form beneath a seeming of humanity. This is inevitably the likeness of some former host, which they employ to search for and pursue the mortal they wish to Exalt. Setting aside this disguise is a free reflexive action, which is generally only taken when they catch up with their prey or when seriously threatened.

## Sample Unconquered

### Auctoritas

*"<the sound of robes blowing in an unseen wind>"*

There are, in the world, people of great character who rise to positions of authority and power through hard work, fidelity, and loyalty to those who are loyal to them. Union leaders, parish priests, charity organizers: those who get things done, and are looked up to for it. These are the souls that Auctoritas feels are most worthy of Exaltation, and which it most fervently seeks to reward with the ancient power of the sun. Those who have striven against the darkness of the world in spite of everything, and maintained some measure of dignity and respect from their fellows through their trials and tribulations. One night, these people will dream of a great robed figure who will smile with infinite benevolence before lifting them into its suddenly cavernous maw. Then, they will never dream again.

Auctoritas has roamed the Astral Realm for almost 30 years now, dipping in and out of the Oneiros. It doesn't understand why it hasn't yet completed its mission, but its patience and its benevolent need to bestow the power of Heaven is limitless.

## AUCTORITAS

Auctoritas is a genderless figure standing over seven feet tall, draped in flowing robes that hang from its shoulders, bound with golden discs. Its feet are clad in sandals. Its arms do not connect directly to its shoulders, but rather float nearby, open-handed, indicating peaceful intentions. It possesses four of them. Its serenely-smiling face is beautiful and androgynous. Three crowns slowly rotate above its head, and when provoked, these accelerate into slashing weapons that whirl around Auctoritas's form with hurricane speed.

**Caste:** Zenith

**Attributes:** Power 5, Finesse 4, Resistance 6

**Rank:** 2

**Corpus:** 13

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 7

**Speed:** 14

**Initiative:** 10

**Defense:** 6

**Charms:** Demon-Wracking Shout, Iron Kettle Body, Listener-Swaying Argument, Terrible Sun-King Condemnation

**Fides**

*"<two resonating eagle-shrieks>"*

Some people are straight shooters and fair dealers. They conduct themselves as trustworthy and honest, and expect others to follow their example and treat them in kind. These are, sadly, prime prey for many denizens of the world's shadows, and many are the folk who've had their trust and honesty bent into paranoia and bitterness after being used and abused by a monster – whether there was anything supernatural about that monster scarcely matters. More uncommon are those who wear the scars of having their good nature used against them, but who yet persevere in their beliefs and behavior. Those who insist on meeting the world with outstretched hand and open heart, despite having chunks bitten out of both.

When Fides believes it has found individuals such as these, the Anathema's heart swells with pride and admiration until it is fit to burst. These, it believes, are the best hosts for the Exaltation it seeks to bestow: it needs only to examine the particulars and contours of the person's soul, and thence to initiate the joining. Fides is oblivious to the screams of those it so admires as they vanish into its feeding aperture, and inevitably subsides into disappointed confusion when their soul untethers from their brutalized flesh and dissolves within the white-hot maze of its Essence-shell rather than accepting the gift of Exaltation. And yet, Fides soldiers on. If the heroes it meets will not give up in the face of adversity, how can it do any less?

**FIDES**

Fides is a floating woman's head with ivory skin and golden hair, about the size of a compact car. Her eyes are always closed, and an Eclipse Caste mark adorns her brow. She is always flanked by two alabaster gryphons, each with a single wing. The left gryphon's wing is feathered in the rose hues of sunrise, while the wing of the gryphon on the right bears the dim blues and



purples of twilight. The two beasts never move more than a few paces from the head they guide and accompany, ever-ready to bring down potential heroes and feed them into Fides's mouth.

**Caste:** Eclipse

**Attributes:** Power 8, Finesse 9, Resistance 7

**Rank:** 3

**Corpus:** 15

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 8

**Speed:** 22

**Initiative:** 17

**Defense:** 11

**Charms:** Cup Boils Over, Deft Official's Way, Foe-Scenting Method, Phantom Steed, Venomous Rumors Technique

**Virtus**

*"<the boom of approaching footsteps>"*

There is a certain, rare breed of person: the one who values courage over life. The sort of person that will put it all on the line to do what is right, *because* it is right, and who will do so with clear eyes and a straight back. These are the heroes the world needs to stand between the weak and those things with fangs which lurk in the shadows – or so reckons the Solar Anathema known as Virtus. It's a high standard, a very high standard, but one which the vast majority of this Exaltation's previous hosts have lived up to. When Virtus thinks it has found such an individual, it frequently weeps molten-hot tears of joy as it gathers its energies to manifest and attempt a closer analysis. It's been making such attempts since the fall of Constantinople, and not once has it let itself fall into despair at its inability to bestow the limitless power of the rising sun on a worthy mortal. If its hosts can bear up under any hardship, Virtues has resolved itself to do the same.

**VIRTUS**

Virtus stands nearly 12 feet tall, and at first glance seems to be a brutish, naked man made of granite, corded with ropy, thick-veined muscle over every inch of its body, a sun-burst brand upon its chest. When agitated, the truth of its appearance becomes clear; Virtus's "muscles" are in fact a multitude of powerful wings wrapped tight around its limbs, neck, chin, and cheeks, converging upon its chest. These unfurl to reveal the idealized perfection of male youth in the first bloom of adulthood, now surrounded by a halo of wings sharp enough to split granite. The youth's chest is open, displaying a beating heart of molten gold.

**Caste:** Dawn

**Attributes:** Power 15, Finesse 12, Resistance 12

**Rank:** 5

**Corpus:** 22

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 10

**Speed:** 32

**Initiative:** 24

**Defense:** 17

**Charms:** Edge of Morning Sunlight, Heaven Thunder Hammer, Hungry Tiger Technique, Iron Skin Concentration, Iron Whirlwind Attack, Sandstorm Wind Attack, Reed in the Wind, Ten-Ox Meditation, Thunderclap Rush Attack

## Thorn Hounds

The Lunar Anathema are elusive stalkers, moving through the otherworlds as quicksilver shimmers and protean clouds, evoking claws or wings or tendrils from their gleaming ambiguity as need be. In the physical world they are generally indistinguishable from ordinary people or animals until they strike, at which point they rewrite biology on the fly to produce whatever adaptations they require to reach and consume their target.

### Behavior

Thorn Hounds seek out souls in crisis, and haunt the Woods in search of them. Fortunately for embattled mortals the world over, the Lunar Anathema have an easier time locating the Woods than they do potentially worthy souls, and frequently range far afield into the stranger parts of the Otherworld. They spend a great deal of time roaming the thorns of the Hedge, that liminal space between the world of mortals and the kingdoms of Faerie, where they betimes assault the Gentry while transporting their human acquisitions, pick up the trail of escaping changelings, or wander into goblin markets with calamitous results.

### Navigation and Manifestation

Thorn Hounds are able to navigate the Hedge in their native form – a silvery, protean mass – but when they finally slip back into the prosaic world, they find themselves shunted into Twilight. They can move from Twilight into the Shadow at any Locus by rolling Power + Rank and spending 1 Mote, in the same fashion as the Unconquered, but rarely do so. Instead, a Thorn Hound in Twilight generally seeks to manifest immediately, that it might best prowl for mortal souls needful of Exaltation.

Lunar Anathema manifest through commandeering flesh. Whether that flesh is living or dead, human or animal, is a mere matter of exertion. Upon locating a useable source of meat in Twilight, the Thorn Hound spends 1 Mote and an hour of concentration to attempt to attune to it. If the flesh is dead or animal in nature, this process is automatic. If the target is human, then a contested roll of Rank vs Resolve must be made. If the Anathema accumulates more successes, she attunes to her target and may proceed with possession. Claiming a target's flesh requires a number of Motes equal to its Size, plus 1 Mote if the target is dead, in order to jump-start the biological processes once again.

A Thorn Hound which has taken on flesh will continue to use that flesh until it is completely used up and destroyed, at which point the Anathema slips free in its native protean form once again. This process is always fatal for the host, assuming the host was alive to begin with. Even

mystic exorcism leaves behind only an empty husk of flesh, the mind and soul that once dwelled within devoured by the invading Anathema.

The Thorn Hound frequently returns to the Hedge soon afterwards to rest and recalibrate its hunting patterns.

## Special Rules

Thorn Hounds are set apart from other sorts of Anathema by the following rules:

### Borrowed Traits

Thorn Hounds in possession of a physical body have the Traits of their host, keeping only their own Mote pool and Charms. The destruction of a host-body ejects the Anathema back into its native form and also costs it half of its total Corpus.

### Size

Thorn Hounds share the Size of whatever host they're possessing. In their native form, they are Size 5, or Size 6 if Rank 4 or 5.

### Deadly Weapons

Thorn Hounds may manifest deadly weapons from their ephemeral body at will, or conjure them forth by transforming their stolen flesh: tendrils studded with fangs, great gaping maws, entire limbs covered with flexing claws. These attacks inflict +1 lethal damage.

## Powers of the Thorn Hounds

All Unconquered benefit from the following innate power:

### Metamorphosis

All Thorn Hounds possess the Charm Hybrid Body Rearrangement, and their form library is considered to contain any shape that has ever existed upon the face of the world. Furthermore, they may use this Charm at no cost by changing its action type from Reflexive to Instant, and may do so in both their native form (which ripples as the desired features emerge from the depths of the Anathema's quicksilver ambiguity) or while in possession of a physical body (which undergoes a grotesque transformation, rebuilding ribs and lungs into functional wings or building up massive scabs to act as armor).

## Sample Thorn Hounds

### Thymós

*"<a distant lowing, and the scrape of a hoof against stony ground>"*

People vanish into the Great North Woods every year. Why not? It's the sort of geographical feature God put down specifically for people to vanish into: 26 million acres of forest stretching from the boundaries of four New England states all the way up to Canada. Hikers, backpackers, tourists, hunters, kids, hell, even locals who ought to know better: they all step into the woods for one reason or another and just... vanish, never to be seen again.

Sometimes the last thing they hear is a heavy snorting, and the last thing they see is a great black form pushing its way through the branches.

## THYMÓS

Thymós wears the flesh of a great black prize bull, and has clung to this form for almost eighty years, diligently repairing its wounds and returning it to pristine condition after every failed Exaltation, washing off the blood in forest streams, and resuming its aimless circuit of the verdant forest in search of souls in crisis. When it moves to complete its purpose the bull unfolds like a grotesque flower, its fleshy petals covered in flexing and rasping teeth, the better to trap and draw a screaming mortal into its gleaming argent depths. There the flesh is pulped and the soul extracted and consumed. This consummation is always followed by a period of aimless malaise – Thymós has no context by which to understand a failed Exaltation. Happily, a bull’s memory is a fleeting thing, and once it forgets its failure, it moves on to the next hunt.

**Caste:** Undefined

**Host Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

**Host Species Factor:** 12

**Host Size:** 7

**Host Weapons/Attacks:**

Type	Damage
Gore	+2*

\* A successful strike from a charging bull inflicts the Knocked Down Tilt.

**Host Health:** 12

**Native Attributes:** Power 5, Finesse 1, Resistance 3

**Rank:** 1

**Corpus:** 8

**Willpower:** 4

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 11

**Initiative:** 4

**Defense:** 2

**Charms:** Armor-Forming Technique, Cobra Hypnotic Method, Wound-Mastering Body Evolution

**Timoría**

“<silence in the library>”

Last year three students disappeared at the Université de Rouen Normandie, all last seen heading for the campus library. Before that, there were a string of disappearances on the campus of Istanbul Technical University, and three years prior to *that*, the high-profile mystery of a missing professor at the University of Edinburgh.

There exists, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say there *seeks to exist* a library, a forbidden annex that is not part of the world but which seeks endlessly to join it. Sometimes this abyssal archive briefly appends itself to an existing university library, and a few students get lost

in the stacks, never to be seen again, before it disconnects and resumes drifting in the void between is and is-not.

The library isn't really a library at all; it's a supernatural parasite accidentally set free by a cabal of magicians in Austria all the way back in 1598. Much to the abyssal parasite's chagrin, one of the first things it trapped in its winding corridors was the Thorn Hound Timoría. The forbidden annex seeks to draw unwary mortals into its halls that they might partake of the anti-knowledge held in its numerous volumes, becoming infection vectors to spread its paradoxical unreality into the rest of the world.

This never works out. Timoría senses their peril as the library draws them into the Woods, and rushes to empower them, and then there is blood and screaming among the stacks. The two entities have thwarted one another for centuries, and are likely to continue to do so for centuries more.

## TIMORÍA

Timoría prowls the forbidden archive in its natural form; in this supernatural place, it has no need of a host body, and cannot be pressed into Twilight. It approaches as a faint shimmering between the rows, before its hook-studded tendrils slash out and drag its prey through silent masses of study carrels.

**Caste:** Undefined

**Attributes:** Power 8, Finesse 12, Resistance 5

**Rank:** 4

**Corpus:** 11

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 6

**Speed:** 25

**Initiative:** 17

**Defense:** 12

**Charms:** Alone in the Crowd, Armor-Forming Technique, Halting the Scarlet Flow, Invidious Basilisk Riddle, Labyrinthine Lair's Depths, Pedestrian Wolves, Spider Climbing Technique

## Maidens

Of all wayward Exaltations, the Sidereal Anathema may most easily be mistaken for human. They present as unassuming mortals in all realms where they are encountered. This mortal guise is always congruent with the sort of false destiny that might be worn by a Sidereal of the Exaltation's Caste, and it generally carries some emblem of its wing of the Shattered Annex, or dresses in colors corresponding to its Caste. A Maiden of the Journeys Case, for example, might wear a ship's-wheel pin on its breast, or a saffron ascot around its neck, while a Maiden of Endings probably presents as an undertaker, mortician, or grieving spouse, and either wears purple or carries some token like a death certificate or urn, or drives a hearse.

Despite their colloquial name, Maidens are equally likely to appear to be either sex. They're not really men or women, in either case. They have no real organs, reproductive or otherwise. When

cut open, thousands of glowing threads can briefly be glimpsed inside of the wound in the moment before hundreds of spiders come pouring out.

## Behavior

Unlike all other Anathema, Maidens don't hunt and consume mortals. This might owe to the strange, inborn nature of Sidereal Exaltation, but since Maidens are incapable of self-reflection, no attempt to question them has ever borne fruit.

Instead of hunting and devouring would-be heroes, Maidens instead seek to create the circumstances necessary for Exaltation to flourish. Unfortunately, what that means in practice – especially for Sidereal Exaltation – is that that push mortals into contact and confrontation with the supernatural, and vice-versa. They show up and create modest breaches of the vampires' Masquerade; they get people lost in the Woods; they hitchhike, and direct helpful drivers toward compounds where cultists are always looking for a sacrifice that won't be missed. They send heroic souls to their probable deaths in dens of monsters. Perhaps they do this in the hopes of drawing along a free Exaltation to create a new hero. Perhaps they're simply broken and following the few bits of their Exaltation's core programming they can still decipher. Maidens simply shrug and say that what must be, must be.

## Navigation and Manifestation

Maidens navigate almost entirely by omens and auguries, moving about with very little plan or logic. This makes them nearly impossible for other sorts of Chosen to predict, but not Sidereals. Sidereal Charms such as Auspicious Prospects frequently lead the Chosen of Destiny into confrontations with wayward Maidens.

When they're not causing chaos, Maidens don't seem to lurk *anywhere* that men, monsters, or the Chosen can easily reach. Some speculate that when they need to rest and recuperate, they vanish into the higher realities from which mages draw their power.

Maidens are never found in Twilight, the Shadow, or any of the Otherworlds where the Chosen may walk. They enter the world exclusively through botched summonings. Any attempt to call a *thing* forth – when Infrastructure generates an angel, when a cabal of sorcerers summons a demon, when a mad scientist combines salts and fluids and lightning to bring forth life from alchemy – there is a chance for something to go wrong and a Maiden to enter the world instead. After incarnating, the Maiden may remain active for anywhere from several days to several years before eventually vanishing again.

## Special Rules

Maidens are set apart from other sorts of Anathema by the following rules:

### Size

Maidens are uniformly Size 5.

### Armed by Fate

Maidens have nothing in the way of claws or fangs, but if threatened, they can always find something to fight with: a stray bit of pipe, some sharp scissors, a fire ax behind a glass panel. As a result, their attacks uniformly inflict lethal damage, even to ephemeral beings.

## Powers of the Maidens

All Maidens benefit from the following innate powers:

## Subtle Sight

Maidens can always see things in Twilight, and interact with them if they choose to do so. They rarely choose to do so.

## The Lesser Signs

All Maidens are capable of making the Lesser Sign corresponding to their Caste, just as Sidereals do.

## Sample Maidens

### Euphemia

*“You might want to take a look at this.”*

The Night People live in a world of secrets, of things that must not be revealed: where the bodies are buried, who put them there, where the secret passages in the world are, and what dwells there. Euphemia follows the threads of destiny that lead to these secrets, learns them, and shares them about. You're sitting alone in a diner at three in the morning, drinking coffee before your shift, when a bald figure – it's not immediately clear if they are man or woman or neither – slides into the booth across from you. They're wearing green lipstick. They smile, and slide a file folder across to you. “They're not real, of course,” they say, and you know in your heart that isn't true. The photos inside make your stomach churn. You look up, shocked and angry, but you're sitting alone.

Somewhere else in the city, something dead and angry is looking for that missing folder.

## EUPHEMIA

Euphemia sometimes appears as a man, sometimes as a woman, sometimes androgynous. They most frequently wear a heavy, figure-concealing trenchcoat and green makeup, either in the form of lipstick or eyeshadow.

**Caste:** Secrets

**Attributes:** Power 3, Finesse 7, Resistance 4

**Rank:** 2

**Corpus:** 9

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 15

**Initiative:** 11

**Defense:** 5

**Charms:** Avoidance Kata, Avoiding the Truth Technique, Of the Shape of the World, Subordinate Inspiration Technique

Zemrude

*“Come on if you want some, you fucking pussies!”*

It’s a clash for territory. The cops, like everyone else, choose not to know about it, though they know to stay the fuck away from the parking lot between the Best Buy and the wooded lot marked for development next year when midnight arrives. Two groups – two packs – line up, wearing the almost-man form, both convinced they have the best claim to this little bit of the city. They’ve just come to blows with the throaty roar of a motorcycle rises above the snarl of beasts and a man in a crimson jacket cuts through the lot, swinging a chain. It knocks wolf-teeth out of a human mouth. The bike runs over the leg of one of the pack leaders with a wet crunch. The rider howls with laughter as he swerves out of the parking lot, pursued by lupine shapes almost as fast as his ride, and makes a beeline for a crowded biker-bar. Both packs follow, their blood well up.

## ZEMRUDE

Zemrude always appears as a man, though its height, build, and nationality can vary tremendously. Sometimes it’s a biker, sometimes it’s a gangster. It always has a well-tuned, muscular vehicle, and it always wears a red jacket of some description.

**Caste:** Battles

**Attributes:** Power 9, Finesse 5, Resistance 5

**Rank:** 3

**Corpus:** 10

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 5

**Speed:** 19

**Initiative:** 10

**Defense:** 8

**Charms:** Duck Fate, Force Decision, Horrific Wreath, Rain and Sky Mantra, Wearing Red to a Wedding

## The Lawgivers

The Abyssal Anathema are great, slow, terrible things, impossible to mistake for human. They always appear bedecked in shadows and decay, their forms draped in rotting cerecloth, their limbs gnarled and warped. They are slow, the Lawgivers, moving step by leaden step – at least so long as the eye rests upon them. Some bear elaborately carved death-masks, while others have nothing resembling a face at all. Most often their form follows the basic human body plan – upright, two arms, two legs – but not always. A few Lawgivers creep upon a multitude of arms like a spider, or slither across the ground limbless, like a great elongated snake.

## Behavior

Unlike their Unconquered counterparts, the Lawgivers have no interest in living souls, which it is not their provenance to Exalt. Nor are they strongly interested by ghosts, for the most part passing them by without taking any notice. It seems that, trapped within their armored shell as



they are, they are no longer capable of the subtle work of catching a departing soul as it flees through the subtle realms away from a corpse.

Instead, Lawgivers concern themselves entirely with the Law, and with punishing those who break it. The Law, and the Law alone, stands out clearly to their senses, violations of its tenets blazing like a beacon. Unfortunately, they cannot distinguish between those the Law was meant to apply to, and those who should be exempt from its concerns, and punish all equally.

Abyssal Anathema almost exclusively linger in Twilight, only departing into the otherworlds either by mistake or in pursuit of a lawbreaker.

## Navigation and Manifestation

Lawgivers move from Twilight to the physical world only in response to witnessing someone break one of the Laws of the Grave. It doesn't matter who performed the transgression, or whether or not they should in any way be beholden to the Laws: the Anathema isn't capable of making such distinctions. It will hunt a vampire who gives his name to his prey as readily as it will seek to punish a mortal good Samaritan for pulling a child out from in front of a car; and, of course, there are many more mortals to attract a Lawgiver's ire than there are supernatural beings.

Luckily for the world at large, Lawgivers generally only respond to breaches of the First, Second, and Fourth Laws. While nearly everyone is "guilty" of violation of the Fifth Law, Abyssal Anathema are only capable of discerning such guilt by observing a target for a full lunar month, and such circumstances rarely align. They are also little concerned with fresh violations of the Law while already on the trail of a lawbreaker.

Physically manifesting is a laborious process in which the Anathema impregnates the Essence of its being into a nearby source of crude physical matter, bit by bit. It must spend a total of 6 Motes, and the process can easily take several hours, during which the point of manifestation displays rapidly-spreading rot, mold, and decay, until finally the Lawbreaker's form tears itself free from the afflicted wall, street, vehicle, or other surface. It now begins to hunt down and attempt to kill the lawbreaker that lured it into manifesting, who likely fled the area during the long and unnerving process of manifestation. Nothing but its own destruction will now dissuade it from its course.

Returning to Twilight after a successful kill is a much shorter, simpler process; the Lawgiver needs only drag itself into a point of concealing shadows, and it fade back into its natural ephemeral state.

## Special Rules

The Lawgivers are set apart from other sorts of Anathema by the following rules:

### Slow

Regardless of their other Traits, all Lawgivers possess Speed 7.

### Size

Lawgivers are hulking beings, growing larger as they become more powerful. Their Size is 5 + their Rank.

### Deadly Weapons

All Lawgivers come armed with weaponry of some sort. One might carry a rusty, pitted two-handed sword, while another might have fingers like long gleaming razors, and a third possesses great gnarled hands that can crush bone and flesh and stone with equal ease. These weapons inflict lethal damage even to ephemeral beings and the undead. Rank 1 or 2 Anathema inflict +1 damage with their attacks, while Rank 3+ Anathema inflict +2 damage.

## Powers of the Lawgivers

All Lawgivers benefit from the following innate power:

### Implacable

The Lawgivers are slow, hulking creatures, hauling themselves from place to place with shuddering, creaking movements and heavy thumping footsteps. They never stop coming after you, they never hesitate – but the majority of them cannot move any faster than an old man with a cane.

At least not while you're watching them.

When no one is looking at one of the Abyssal Exalted, even if they only glance away for a moment, the Lawgiver may reflexively spend 1 Mote to move itself to anywhere else within 100 yards that nobody is currently looking.

### Undetectable

After a physically manifest Lawgiver has gone unperceived by any living thing for ten minutes, it may spend 1 Mote to cloak itself in a shroud of obscurity. Now nobody who is not actively looking for the thing can see or hear it until it draws within 150 yards of its quarry, at which point its obscuring shroud falls away.

## Sample Lawgivers

### The Hanging Judge

*“<the creak of ropes>”*

Something is killing people in Atchafalaya Bend, Louisiana. At first it seemed senseless: Mort Winthrop found dead in his home, body covered in ligature marks, eyes bulged out in horror; Terry Bryant similarly strangled in an elevator on the way up to his third-floor office. But a pattern's starting to emerge. Whoever is hunting the townsfolk is targeting people who've appeared at the courthouse within the last couple of days – at first for traffic tickets, drunk and disorderly charges, simple misdemeanors like that. Then it targeted a lawyer, and now a witness in a robbery.

Nobody has yet figured out that whoever gives their name while being sworn in is signing their own death sentence, but the children are starting to tell tales of a great and terrible judge walking the streets at night, nooses dangling from his long dark hands.

### THE HANGING JUDGE

The Hanging Judge stands just shy of seven feet tall, buried in layer upon layer of old leather dusters, its face an infinitely deep shadow behind a weather-beaten cowboy hat. Spurs chime on its heels when it walks. It has six arms, and a knotted noose hanging from each. It can throw these ropes as adeptly as any rodeo cowboy, catching and hauling in those who have violated the

Law by speaking their names and leaving their blue, terrified corpses as a warning to other would-be lawbreakers.

**Caste:** Day

**Attributes:** Power 2, Finesse 4, Resistance 3

**Rank:** 1

**Corpus:** 9

**Willpower:** 7

**Size:** 6

**Speed:** 7

**Initiative:** 7

**Defense:** 3

**Charms:** Crypt Bolt, Hideous Phantom Missive, Strength of the Grave

## The Mourner

*“<shuffling footsteps and an obscure weeping>”*

It's a real red-ball case: a crime that matters, all hands on deck, the entire department mobilized. There's a killer on the loose in Akerland, Ohio, and it's killing new mothers and fathers. Word has it the FBI is sending some special outfit in to assist the investigation, some kind of Vanguard special task force thing. Serial killer specialists. It can't hurt. Locals are at their wits' end, without even a single lead other than that the murderer is targeting couples who give birth at Revival Presbyterian Hospital. But security on that building, and even on its digital databases, is now so tight that you'd have to be a ghost to get anywhere near the delivery rooms.

## THE MOURNER

The Mourner stands almost eight feet tall, though it is a bent, crooked thing, bowed almost double as though by the weight of some awful tragedy. The Mourner is buried in layer upon layer upon layer of moth-eaten black raiment, trailing veils and rotting lace from every limb like torn sails. Its very long neck and stringy white hair terminate in an exaggerated mourner's-mask, which constantly weeps a clear greasy liquid that is *not* tears from the eye-slits. The Anathema periodically emits a choked sob; otherwise it does not speak. Nor does it unknot its hands, which constantly worry at one another as it shuffles along, shuffles along.

When the time comes for the Mourner to kill, two gleaming limbs ending in scythe-blades rise from its back and go to work.

**Caste:** Daybreak

**Attributes:** Power 8, Finesse 5, Resistance 9

**Rank:** 3

**Corpus:** 17

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 8

**Speed:** 7

**Initiative:** 14

**Defense:** 8

**Charms:** Charnel Servant Summons, Deception-Punishing Stare, Hideous Phantom Missive, Soul-Eating Strike, World-Withering Method

## The Backwards Man

*"<the crackle of many joints bending in ways they shouldn't>"*

Among all of the Lawgivers, the Backwards Man may be the worst, because it has decided to actively test the world.

You're on a long drive, and it's late. You're low on gas. You pull into a gas station, the lights still on despite that it's well past 11, and head in. You find the clerk near the restrooms. When you see him – God! – you know there's nothing to be done. No way he can live, not with what's been done to his arms and legs. To his ribs. But he's still alive, gurgling there on the floor. Nothing can save him now. But shit, you have to try, right?

What you don't know is that the Backwards Man is waiting, out in the darkness beyond the pumps. Watching. To see if you will get in your car and drive off, or call 911 and attempt to stand in death's path, and put yourself in violation of the Law.

## THE BACKWARDS MAN

The Backwards Man is a rail-thin thing of – despite its name – no real definable gender. It stands over 10 feet tall, with a carved wooden tiki mask for a face and gnarled roots for acting as... something like hair. It has long, long arms, and long, long legs, and these twist and bend in terrible ways nature never intended as it pulls itself along through doorframes and down hallways, its clawed fingers slamming deep into wood and plaster to keep its great, creaking bulk moving. Perhaps you think you can circle back around it; it is so slow, after all. But if you do, then the roots at the back of its head part, and its mask pushes through; and then all of its joints reverse; and the Backwards Man turns itself backwards, and continues to hunt you without the least hesitation.

**Caste:** Midnight

**Attributes:** Power 10, Finesse 11, Resistance 7

**Rank:** 4

**Corpus:** 28

**Willpower:** 10

**Size:** 9

**Speed:** 7

**Initiative:** 18

**Defense:** 14

**Charms:** Command the Dead, Crypt Bolt, Haunting Inflection Trick, Insensible Corpse Technique, Necrotic Breath, Ox-Body Technique, Spirit-Hardened Frame

**Notes:** The Backwards Man's ban, imposed by Ox-Body Technique, is that it cannot shed blood while the sun is shining on its quarry. If it violates this ban, then it immediately returns to Twilight and must let its prey go.