

Printer Friendly ExEssence Manuscript

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Interactive AB

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CHAPTER 1: WELCOME TO CREATION

This chapter is a gazetteer for Creation, Exalted's unique setting. It gives an overview of its history, as well as key locations in which Storytellers may want to set their games.

THE WORLD AND ITS MAKING

Creation is a world of epic passions, heroism, and betrayal. It is the stage for the legends of the Exalted — mortals raised up and granted phenomenal power as the chosen of the gods. It is a world of miracles, where countless gods, elementals, and other spirits dwell alongside mortals, overseeing the world's natural order...or using their power to extort wealth, service, and worship. It is a place where mortal kingdoms rise and fall, drawing strength from stolen magic, wealth, labor, and human cunning.

The Exalted stand between the worlds of spirit and mortal. For all their power, the Exalted are undeniably human, subject to all the joys and pains that humanity brings with it. With their heroism and villainy, they may save Creation from its many enemies, or see it utterly destroyed.

ORIGIN OF THE EXALTED

The Exalted are the Chosen of the gods, imbued with a fragment of their divine patron's own Essence. This power — the gift of Exaltation — magnifies their talents many times over and grants them miraculous abilities to rival and even surpass the gods. Each Exalt is the heir of a grand and terrible legacy left by the Exalted of ages past, but each also has the freedom to write their own legend upon the world.

The Exalted were created in an act of rebellion. The greatest of the gods sought to overthrow their creators, for these ancient titans were cruel, capricious, and dangerous to the very world they had made. Creation was a plaything to them, and the lives of all the creatures in the world were pieces in their games, to be discarded or destroyed on a whim. Because the

gods were bound not to harm their titanic creators, they instead gifted their power to mortal heroes who became the first Exalts.

This was the Divine Revolution, wherein the Exalted and their armies overthrew the titans. In battles that leveled mountains and drained seas, the Exalted managed the unthinkable by slaying their otherwise-immortal foes. For fear of death and the Exalted who brought it, the surviving titans were sealed away in an unbreakable prison for all eternity. At the end of the revolution, the gods took their masters' place in Heaven and rewarded their Exalted champions with dominion over all Creation.

To learn about who the Exalted are and what they can do, read Chapter 2 (p. XX).

THE ARMY OF THE CHOSEN

The first Exalted were made in service of a war, each with their part to play. The numerous Dragon-Blooded, Chosen of the Five Elemental Dragons, would fill the ranks of this army. The clear-eyed Sidereals, Chosen of the Maidens of Fate, would strategize and advise. The infinitely adaptable Lunars, Chosen of Luna, would flit from opportunity to opportunity as irregulars and saboteurs. The Solars, Chosen of the Unconquered Sun, would lead them all — whether from the pulpit or the vanguard.

THE FIRST AGE

Though created for war, the Exalted are not just warriors. They are priests and god-kings, whose words can inspire and uplift millions or calm the fiercest battle. They are sages and sorcerers, capable of building palaces of living glass and raising entire cities into the sky. They are spies and saboteurs, thieves and tricksters — the living embodiments of cunning and secrecy. They are emissaries between the world of mortal and spirit, peacemakers and lawgivers whose light can guide empires to greatness or ruin.

With these seemingly infinite talents, the Exalted built an era of splendor known as the

First Age. It was a time of beauty and bounty as the Exalted tamed the wild land of Creation and brought all mortal kind under their protection. For thousands of years, the Exalted ruled over the world from their paradise-city of Meru, showering those in their domains with the gifts of long life, security, and comfort. This was an age for poets and dreamers, savants and sorcerers; from their palaces, the Exalted created breathtaking art and impossible artifice to enrich and transform Creation.

Beneath the shimmer of the First Age, however, a ravaging darkness crept slowly into the hearts of the Exalted. The time of wonders was also a time of deceit and pride, vanity and bravado, excess and abandon.

THE GREAT CURSE

In the last days of the Divine Revolution, the ancients planted the seeds of their revenge. With their dying breaths, those who were slain in the rebellion levied a powerful curse upon the gods — one that rebounded on their Exalted instead. This Great Curse exists in every Exalt, tempting them to give into wickedness and indulge their vices, to conquer and corrupt, to vent their rage on the world and its people. In the halcyon days of the First Age, the Great Curse stoked paranoia and mistrust, fueled an unquenchable thirst for conquest, and made the Exalted callous to the needs of mere mortals.

As the god-kings of the First Age, the curse took its heaviest toll on the Solar Exalted. It drove them to feats of rage, domination, and pride as they imposed their burning will upon a world that had no defense against them. In the throes of the Great Curse, the Solars of the First Age might smite their enemies with merciless sorcery, cast aside those they loved and trusted, or strike desperate bargains for power and knowledge with Creation's deadliest enemies.

The cruel truth of the Great Curse is that despite its power and impact, it remains a secret. Although its effects are still felt to this day in the

hubris of the Exalted, none know that the agonies so common to Exalted of every kind are anything more than human frailty.

THE SECOND AGE

For fear of Solar cruelty and excess, the Dragon-Blooded — guided in secret by the Sidereals — rose up against their lieges in a massacre known as the Usurpation. Before the Solar Exaltations could empower their next incarnations, they were sealed away, lost to the world for millennia. A handful of Solars escaped this binding only to find themselves Creation's greatest fugitives, hunted across centuries and incarnations by the Dragon-Blooded and Sidereals. The First Age ended as it began, with betrayal and bloodshed.

In the wake of the Usurpation, the Dragon-Blooded claimed dominion over the world. The Lunar Exalted withdrew to the four directions of Creation and built empires of their own, drawing a line in the sand which the Dragon-Blooded could not cross. The Sidereals retreated to Heaven, using a forbidden magic to conceal their involvement in the Usurpation. Thus began the Second Age.

It was a time of conquest and consolidation. The Lunars made war on the Dragon-Blooded from without; internal strife haunted them from within. The great wonders of the First Age fell to sabotage or disrepair. Without their Solar creators to tend to them, Creation's defenses began to falter. Into this dark and bloody time came the Great Contagion, a plague so deadly that it killed nine in every ten. People and animals died by the millions and entire cities were transformed into open graves.

Invasion followed the Great Contagion. The princes of chaos rode into Creation from their Wyld strongholds, preying on the disease's survivors without mercy. Creation survived only by the iron will of a humble Dragon-Blooded officer. She seized control of ancient weapons laid down in the First Age and, with their terrible

power, banished the invaders back to the Wyld. In the wake of her victory, she crowned herself the Scarlet Empress and founded her Realm.

THE REALM AND ITS REACH

Thousands of kingdoms, tribes, and city-states make their home throughout Creation, but none is so vast or so powerful as the Realm. It spans the length and breadth of the Blessed Isle, a land of unmatched bounty and security. From there, its reach extends throughout the four directions of Creation through satrapies and vassal-states that pay tribute to the Realm for the privilege of their continued existence. Even those kingdoms beyond its rule are not beyond its influence, for the Realm holds massive military and economic might which it uses to crush rivals, upstarts, and rebels.

For more than seven hundred years, the Realm has been governed by its Empress and her Great Houses, the powerful clans descended from her consorts and favored children. The word of the Empress is law throughout her empire, giving her the power to topple nations and shape the fortunes of millions to suit her will. She has ruled her Realm for centuries, pitting its many powers against one another for her favor to ensure that none could amass the strength needed to challenge her authority.

But now the Scarlet Empress has disappeared.

None know where she has gone, or if she still lives. A tenuous peace has existed between the Great Houses as they size one another up, ready to seize the throne if the opportunity arises. The Realm, long the greatest power of Creation, now stands at the edge of a civil war — one that threatens the strength and stability of the Dragon-Blooded empire.

THE RETURN OF THE SOLARS

With Creation at the brink of disaster, a new age of heroes has begun. For the first time since the Usurpation, an eclipse darkened the midday sky. The Solar Exalted have begun to incarnate

en masse, freed from whatever prison kept them locked away. This new generation of Solar Exalted carry the light of hope into Creation, bringing with them the promise of a First Age reborn.

But the Solars did not return to Creation alone. In the dark heart of the Underworld, ancient ghost-kings known as the Deathlords have lifted up mortal champions as the Abyssal Exalted. In the prison-city of Malfeas, the demon princes have anointed their own Infernal Exalted, filled with the fury of hell itself. Both were crafted from the stolen Solar Exaltations, corrupted to serve their new, sinister purposes.

Creation will not welcome the return of the Solars and the rise of their wicked cousins. For millennia, the Immaculate Faith of the Dragon-Blooded have demonized all other Exalted as Anathema — heretics who steal power from the gods. Bands of Dragon-Blooded warriors, wise Immaculate monks, and seasoned soldiers track down and slay Anathema in a tradition known as the Wyld Hunt. Even in its current state, the Realm and its nobles hold fast to this tradition, for they know a single rogue Exalt can alter the destiny of entire nations.

THE TIME OF TUMULT

The Realm's instability has created countless opportunities for enterprising merchant-princes and warlords to extend their influence. Rogue gods once cowed into submission by the Dragon-Blooded now rule openly over mortals or extort worship from them in defiance of the laws of heaven and the Realm alike. Exalted heroes of every stripe are seizing the opportunity to build power and prestige: Lunar heroes ready their nations for war, Sidereal powerbrokers work to mend the world's increasingly snarled fate, and newly Exalted Solars take their first steps into a world that will shake at their passing.

This is Creation as it stands today: a land where ancient wonders slumber, calling out to their

long-lost masters from secret caches and dusty tombs. It is a place where the greatest empire in the world, one built on betrayal and slaughter, teeters at the edge of a bloody war between kin. It is an age of sorrow and struggle, where the return of the Solar Exalted may rekindle the light of hope in Exalted heroes across the world or doom all life to an era of unending tragedy.

UNWRITTEN HISTORIES AND THEIR HEROES

The Solars, Lunars, Sidereals, and Dragon-Blooded were made to fight the Divine Revolution, but other Exalted have been created in the ages since. All have made their mark on Creation's history, great or small — though often in mysterious, subtle, or hidden ways.

The Exigents, champions chosen by lesser gods throughout Creation, have always been as varied as their patrons, allying themselves with other Exalted or forging their own legends throughout both the First and Second Age. Since the return of the Solars, the ranks of the Exigents have swelled as gods the world over capitalize on this moment of unrivaled potential. The enigmatic Liminals first emerged from the Underworld in the Second Age to enforce the laws of death, obscuring their exploits from the eyes of the living. A scattering of Alchemical Exalts have been active throughout Creation's history in legends of holy automata made from clay and clad in the six magical materials, though their origins as the Chosen of the Great Maker are unknown to all but the most devoted sages. Finally, the seemingly inexplicable Getimians have fought a guerrilla war against Heaven for 50 years, working to undermine the Sidereals and gods alike.

THE RANKS OF THE INCARNAE

The leaders of the Divine Revolution and patrons of the Exalted rest in Yu-Shan, the heavenly city, ruling all Creation and eternally enjoying the spoils of their victory. There are

hundreds of thousands of lesser gods who serve under the Most High with portfolios great and small.

The **Five Maidens** are Mercury, Maiden of Journeys; Venus, Maiden of Serenity; Mars, Maiden of Battles; Jupiter, Maiden of Secrets; and Saturn, Maiden of Endings. Patrons of the Sidereal Exalted, they serve as the overseers of fate and destiny, of what *will* and *must* come to pass. They keep their own counsel on these matters, preferring instead to gently alter the destinies of others with chance encounters and unintuitive quests.

Considered by some to be the sixth Maiden, **Luna** is a force all her own, goddess of night, luck, iconoclasm, and change. A trickster, she ventures forth from Heaven more than any other, though every Incarna has mastered the trick of being many places at once. Every Lunar Exalted is personally greeted by the goddess, welcoming them into the ranks of her Chosen.

The Unconquered Sun is greatest of the Incarnae, the god of virtue and will, war and enlightenment, and supreme excellence. He is the King of Heaven, the patron of the Solar Exalted, and holds the Exigence, the divine flame that allows lesser gods to Exalt their own champions. In the waning days of the First Age, his Chosen offended him, and he turned his face from Creation as they were killed. Now, he has turned his face back.

The **Five Elemental Dragons** are not accorded among the ranks of the Incarnae, nor are they properly gods, though as the foremost children of **Gaia**, titan of creation, they are considered peers. Patrons of the Dragon-Blooded, they imbued the blood of their champions with the power of perpetual Exaltation. The Immaculate Order venerates the Elemental Dragons as the *Immaculate Dragons*, the apotheosis of spiritual development and the lords of Creation. The Immaculate Dragons are Mela (Air), Pasiap (Earth), Hesiesh (Fire), Daana'd (Water), and

Sextes Jylis (Wood). After the Divine Revolution, the Dragons retreated to the Elemental Poles at the distant corners of Creation, to slumber and reinforce the world. Gaia herself has largely left Creation, though a fragment of the titan remains behind to romance Luna as a consort.

PLACES IN CREATION

No volume could contain all the lands and wonders of Creation. As a flat world, Creation is more than nine thousand miles from its center to the periphery as defined by the five Elemental Poles. Each cardinal direction shows the influence of the dominant Pole through climate, geography, and elemental phenomena. The shifting balance between the Poles drives Creation's seasons.

Use these examples to inspire adventure rather than considering them a complete depiction of Creation. While more information about many of these places is available in other publications, let your imagination run wild and make Creation your own.

THE CENTER

Creation's center is the Blessed Isle, once home to the Exalted Host and to the gods before them. Now the island continent is the seat of the Realm and home to the Dragon-Blooded Exalted of the Scarlet Dynasty that rule Creation's largest Empire. The Pole of Earth rises as a massive mountain that anchors Creation on the endless sea of the Wyld. The Pole stabilizes the influence of the other elements and grants most of the Isle a mild climate that supports bountiful harvests.

The Realm

The Realm is Creation's largest empire, ruling the Blessed Isle and exerting their might against the lands of the Threshold ringing the Inner Sea. The Realm sends Dragon-Blooded to direct local governance and perpetuate the flow of wealth, soldiers, and slaves for the Realm's benefits.

Any who oppose exploitation face the might of the Realm's legions. The Scarlet Empress built the Realm in the wake of the Shogunate's — the former system of Dragon-Blooded rule — collapse, solidifying her control through the Scarlet Dynasty, her extended family by descent, adoption, and marriage.

Slavery in Creation

The enslavement and mass exploitation of people is one of the great evils in the world. With any discussion or portrayal of slavery at your table, the most important consideration is the feelings of the other players in your group. **Exalted** aspires to be inclusive and welcoming to all people. Talk with your group before portraying slavery at the gaming table and consider whether this topic falls behind your Lines and Veils (p. XX).

Reliance on enslaved people for labor, whether war captives, indentured criminals, or generational captives, is present in some form across much of Creation, especially in the South and West. Observing the human costs of exploitative hierarchy and rejecting oppressive systems are part of **Exalted's** themes. Revolutionary reform movements exist across Creation and supporting abolition is an appropriate player's character's motivation. Stories in **Exalted** should never glorify slavery.

The Immaculate Order, the official religion of the Realm, preaches the doctrine of the Perfected Hierarchy, which places the Dragon-Blooded, especially those of the Scarlet Dynasty, at the pinnacle of society. Mortals serve according to their lot in life to achieve elevation through reincarnation. The gods receive worship and reverence in proper measure and must refrain from intervention in mortal affairs. Those who defy the Immaculate Order, especially the Solar and Lunar Exalted, face extermination from the Wyld Hunt led by Immaculate monks wielding powerful elemental martial arts. Through the Immaculate

Order, the Sidereal Bronze Faction lends their aid and guidance to the Realm.

Five years ago, the Scarlet Empress disappeared. Without her guiding hand or a clear heir, the Realm began slowly coming apart. The bicameral Deliberative now reigns by decree through a weak regent. But the Deliberative is an advisory assembly and forum for debate more than an effective ruling council and meaningful legislation is stymied by factionalism. Their most radical decision was to disband the Imperial Legions and divide their power among the Great Houses so no one commander could claim the Throne alone through force of arms. The Realm's bureaucracy, called the Thousand Scales, struggles with overlapping departments competing for resources and authority without the Empress' guidance.

Inspirations

Much like Qin Dynasty China, the Realm served one ruler in a legalistic system, and without her institutions vie for dominance and struggle to continue in any meaningful way. The Realm's reach and politicking are much like early Imperial Rome, as is their martial character and sense of civic virtue. The satrapial system used by the Scarlet Dynasty to control much of the world is like that of Achaemenid Persia.

Great Houses of the Scarlet Dynasty

Each named for one of the Empress' children, consorts, or allies, the Great Houses are sprawling clans that serve the Realm and advance their own interest. The Empress set the Great Houses to oppose each other, leaving her dominance unchallenged as the rest of the Dynasty competed for her favor. The history of fierce rivalry has left the Dragon-Blooded ready to tear each other apart to claim power.

With a culture of military discipline, **House Cathak** is the mightiest Great House. The younger members of the house have adopted

the personal piety of their matriarch Cathak Cainan. He has pledged to support the rightful claimant to the Throne, making his house a key ally or enemy to any would-be Empress.

Glamorous even among their peers, **House Cynis** wields rumor, blackmail, poison, and hedonistic excess as political weapons. They are masters of the Realm's slave trade and control the markets for illicit substances.

House Iselsi is the remnant of a Great House struck from the records after betraying the Empress. Its members pursue revenge against the other houses for the indignities done to them.

Unique among the houses, **House Ledaal** refuses to focus on the politics of the race for the Throne, instead continuing their Shadow Crusade against Anathema corruption, whether found in the Realm or in the Threshold.

Driven by their devout matriarch, **House Mnemon** maintains close ties to the Immaculate Order. Mnemon is the oldest surviving daughter of the Scarlet Empress and the self-proclaimed heir apparent. Renowned as architects for the manses, temples, and public works of the Realm, many Mnemon scions travel broadly and incorporate foreign styles in their work.

House Nellens bears the name of one of the Empress' mortal consorts, which the other houses use as an insult against them. Their strong position within the Thousand Scales and careful cultivation of minor business ventures and alliances maintain the House's wealth and power.

House Peleps controls the might of the Imperial Navy. They have a strong presence in the West, where they may have the opportunity to build a new empire. The people of the Realm see them as dashing, romantic, and heroic, and they have a reputation for fair dealing.

Ostensibly the bankers to the Realm, **House Ragara** lords its wealth over the other houses. They will do anything to claim power in the Realm, including turning to heretical sorceries and blasphemous artifacts.

Despite their powerful military, **House Sesus** relies on spies, saboteurs, assassins, and intrigue to secure their position in the Realm and advance their claim to the Throne.

While their Legions were shattered in battle against the Anathema warlord, the Bull of the North, **House Tepet** maintains their ancient military tradition and ethos of excellence. They will not forgive the other houses that failed to stand with them.

House V'neef is young and dynamic, formed around a favored daughter of the Empress, her family, and outcast Dragon-Blooded adopted by V'neef. They hold great wealth through control of the Realm's Merchant fleet. With the ire of some of the other claimants, the Throne may be their only path to survival.

THE BLESSED ISLE

The Blessed Isle is populous and prosperous. The Dragon-Blooded reap the wealth of the land. Ancient ruins, untamed wilderness, and undiscovered treasures lay scattered across the continent. Demons remain bound from the Realm Before, ghosts haunt old battlefields, and Fair Folk lurk in hidden places.

Cities of the Realm

The Blessed Isle's cities support the economic, military, and cultural might of the Realm and serve as seats for the Great Houses.

As the political, economic, and administrative heart of the Realm, the **Imperial City** grew vast and unplanned beyond its humble beginning as war camps ringing the Imperial Manse. Grand edifices house the Deliberative, the bulk of the Thousand Scales, and representatives of the Great Houses. Embassies from the Threshold, trade houses, Immaculate temples, Legion

barracks, and tenements for artisans, entertainers, and laborers fill the sprawling city. With the Empress' disappearance, the veiled struggles in the city become sharper conflicts as the Great Houses hone their knives in the shadows.

The free city **Arjuf** is a haven for savants, artists, philosophers, and freethinkers from across the Realm. The port teems with Southern traders and everything from cuisine to architecture displays Southern influence. Dragon-Blooded visit Arjuf seeking specialized teachers or guides to the South. House Ledaal's recent dismissal of the elected governor and the appointment of a Ledaal scion to the position foments resentment among the independent-minded populous.

Bittern's dockyards support the Imperial Navy under House Peleps. After decades of urban decay, the city grows once again fed by the plunder of the West. The dragon's share flows to the city's corrupt governor and her cronies. Beneath the city, sea caves and catacombs conceal smugglers, discontents, and old magic. Facing the city atop the jagged Isle of Wrack, the finger-like towers of the Hand of Daana'd serve as the seat of House Peleps.

Untamed Wilds

Rugged mountains, bleak deserts, and impenetrable forests resist the Realm's taming efforts.

The Dragon-Blooded call the Pole of Earth the **Imperial Mountain**. Miles tall, the mountain is visible from anywhere on the Blessed Isle, even if only as a silhouette on the horizon. Wild beasts, mountain spirits, and mad gods roam the slopes where few venture. Remains of ancient cities high on the mountain promise lost wonders to any who finds these relics and survives.

Sorcery once made the **Tarpan Wastes** lush and fertile, but those days have passed and the life-

bringing lakes and rivers of the region are disappearing into the dry earth. Ghosts linger in abandoned towns, forgotten gods wander the desolate landscape, and treasure hunters seek abandoned ruins. The ongoing changes and appearance of new spirits and elementals have disrupted the local spirit courts and Immaculate monks monitor the gods of the region to ensure compliance with Immaculate doctrine.

Adventurous Dragon-Blooded test themselves against the monsters of the **Eseon Forest**. Tales of an ancient manse at the heart of the forest draw explorers, but the path to find it remains unmapped. The forest weaves illusions of branch and shade. Fair Folk occasionally ride forth to hunt the mortals who live too close to the wood.

Dragon-Blooded Beyond the Realm

The Seventh Legion of **Lookshy** is a remnant of the Shogunate. Their militarized society honors orders received centuries ago to defend the Scavenger Lands. They have resisted the Realm's intrusions with Dragon-Blooded might and a dwindling arsenal of First Age artifacts.

Clans Burano and Ophris, once Great Houses, alternate rule over the Empire of Prasad. From their capital in Kamthahar, they extend their reign to control the wealth and lands around the Dreaming Sea. The Pure Way, a heretical local sect of the Immaculate Philosophy, calls for the worship of the Dragon-Blooded as divine.

Courted by the Realm and mortal kingdoms, outcaste Dragon-Blooded are the face of heroism across Creation. Some outcastes organize as families, like the Wanasaan exorcists who battle ghosts in the North, or syndicates, like the Seven Storms Brotherhood of bandit lords in the Southeast. The Realm invites outcasts, sometimes called lost eggs, to serve as soldiers or monks.

Character Concepts

Their relation to the Dynasty defines Dragon-Blooded characters, whether as members of the

Great Houses or Lost Eggs. The Immaculate Order views Exigents as potential servants of the Perfected Hierarchy, while looking at Liminals with wary suspicion, and allowing Sidereals to operate covertly and beneath the notice of most of the Realm. Other Exalted have no clear place in the Realm and are often deemed Anathema — targets of the Wyld Hunt.

The people of the Blessed Isle have dark hair and eyes and a range of light brown skin tones. With their eagerness to adopt foreign Dragon-Blooded, the ruling class of the dynasty are extremely diverse. Cities are cosmopolitan with a mix of people drawn from across Creation.

Archetypes

Warrior: Dueling Master, Imperial Navy Captain, Legion Deserter, Wyld Hunt Monk

Priest: Deliberative Orator, Dynasty Gala Planner, Immaculate Monk, Rebel Firebrand

Savant: Artifact Smith, Geomancer, Heptagram Sorcerer, Heretic Demon-Summoner

Criminal: Black Market Smuggler, Coastal Pirate, Fixer for the Dynasty, Foreign Agent, Great House Spy

Broker: Legion Quartermaster, Matchmaker, Satrapial Advisor, Thousand Scales Minister

Names in Creation

A name helps root characters in Creation. Each direction presents possible inspirations for names to serve as a starting point, but that should not limit your imagination. Creation has a long history of cultural exchange and movement, so you can find any kind of name in any corner of the world and people often blend names from multiple cultures. Another common practice is the use of sobriquets, whether heroic, ironic, or aspirational. Examples include Harmonious Jade, Righteous Endeavor, Smiling Lark, and Seven Devil Clever. Many Exalted adopt a new name after their Exaltation.

On the **Blessed Isle**, typical names among the Dynasty are two to three syllables alternating

between consonant and vowel sounds, such as Ejava, Oban, or Sarissa.

Commoner names tend to take after natural objects, such as Emerald or Wind, or a descriptive sobriquet, such as Crow the Boy or No Legs. **Northern** names draw inspiration from North American indigenous languages along with Gaelic or Scandinavian names. With so much diversity in the **East**, names vary wildly and can come from any source, but East Asian, Eastern European, and descriptive sobriquets are the most common. In the Far East, Nahautl, Quecha, and Spanish offer additional naming conventions. Names in the **South** may come from Arabic, Yoruban, or Amharic languages. While the islands of the **West** have a variety of sources, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Polynesian names remain common inspirations.

THE NORTH

Long winters, meager harvests, and a myriad of threats offer bleak prospects to the people of the North. Overlords who offer protection reap wealth from their labors. Between the bastions of civilization, harsh wilderness and deep snows hide lost wonders of the First Age, hungry ghosts, and Fair Folk. The cold of the Pole of Air dominates, with harsh winters, frozen tundra, and glacial expanses dissolving in the churning sky beyond the edge of Creation.

Whitewall

Whitewall is a city beset by the Fair Folk and the dead. Massive walls of grey marble ring the city. Multistory houses, workshops, public baths, and other buildings, mostly built from the same material, fill the available space, leaving narrow streets. A ghost-haunted shadowland lies to the southeast and stag-horned Fair Folk hunt mortals when the ever-shifting bordermarches (p. XX) draw close. On the rocky taiga, Whitewall offers the only sure protection and by Northern standards, the city is a teeming metropolis. Every year, desperate people indenture themselves to claim residence, safety, and a

chance to prosper. Laborers work the meager fields or mine valuable ores from the mountains. Metalworkers hone their craft, trading their finest work southward. Ennobled margraves grow wealthy from their work.

The might of the Syndics, three mysterious gods of ice and silver who rule the city, protects Whitewall. Their blessings infuse the walls, visible as a faint glow in the night. Their protection extends to the Trade Road that connects Whitewall to Creation. Those who remain on the road are safe from predation. The Fair Folk and the hungry dead snatch the unwary who step off the road. But these bargains for protection come at a price; the Syndics cast out two dozen mortals, usually criminals, annually to sate the appetites of ghost and Fair Folk.

Whitewallers view newcomers with suspicion, especially those who arrive without introduction — they could be monsters trying to enter the city. While the walls keep out most threats, Raksha or dead horrors gain entry through tricks, illusions, or dark dealings. However, the city values outsiders who prove their worth slaying monsters and honors them with feasts and rowdy celebration. Like many Northern cities, Whitewall's remote location and harsh landscape place it beyond the reach of Realm control, but the Syndics maintain friendly relations with the Realm.

Inspirations

Stylistically, the Kievan Rus and Slavic fairy tales offer inspiration for the people and culture of Whitewall, living in the shadow of the Wyld and possessed of a dark and fatalistic sense of humor. The Imperial free cities of the Holy Roman Empire provide aesthetic ideas for the city itself.

Gethamane

Centuries ago, the god-blooded champion Bethan and the ancestors of Gethamane's

people discovered the empty mountain city. Massive carved halls and grand domed chambers lit by glowing crystal offered refuge from the dangers of the North. Ornate carvings of strange plants and animals decorated the walls. As they explored, they discovered a wonder that would ensure their survival: the Sunken Gardens, where edible moss and fungi grew beneath glowing crystal panels. They now inter their dead in the gardens to fuel growth of the life-sustaining food.

Walls of wood and leather subdivide the hewn caverns into suitable living spaces. Clothing is austere and practical. Brightly colored decorations appear only in private spaces. Social clubs meet in public chambers. The mercenary fighters of the Janissary Vault meet in a series of vaulted caves of the same name. The savants of the Philosophy Cell meet for debate in a single small chamber. The heirs of Bethan, by blood or adoption, are the hereditary rulers of the city. Intelligencers report important happenings to the city's rulers.

The Three Temples, massive jewel-encrusted chambers near the mountain peak, induce vivid dreams for those who sleep within. A few take up residence within the temples, compelled by their dreams to create temporary geometric forms using bright inks, colorful sands, and droplets of their own blood. Occasionally, the dreams induce mad terror that cannot be quelled until the afflicted departs Gethamane.

Beneath the city, slick rounded tunnels descend unmapped into the darkness. Horrors dwell in the lightless realm, occasionally emerging to wreak destruction before the Gethamane Guard slays them or drives them back. The city rewards the Guard well for their service. Treasures lost to the ages await explorers who brave the subterranean dangers. These tunnels remain strangely free of the hungry ghosts that haunt places touched by death elsewhere in Creation.

Inspirations

The underground cities of Cappadocia like Kaymakli or Derinkuyu or the Ellora Caves in Maharashtra, India offer inspiration for Gethamane. The Gardens are an engineering marvel not unlike the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, while the Three Temples evoke the "great three" Gelug monasteries (Ganden, Sera, and Drepung) of Tibetan Buddhism.

The Icewalker Tribes

The Icewalkers eschew the comforts of settled life and endure even the harshest winters following the migrations of mammoth, elk, reindeer, and other Northern beasts. When the herds settle, they dwell in collapsible hide-covered huts, which they bury in snow for additional insulation. The Icewalkers trade with settled folk but in lean times, they turn to raiding, leaving behind only corpses and severed heads. Even in the harshest of times, the Icewalkers have strict taboos against cannibalism.

The Solar warlord called the Bull of North brings change to the Icewalkers. Under his leadership, dozens of tribes united for conquest, pushing southward from their traditional lands. The Bull's victory against the House Tepet legions underscores the Icewalker threat in the eyes of their neighbors. But the cost of victory brought the conquest to a standstill while the Bull — and his makeshift army — recover.

Inspirations

Nomadic peoples, like the Mongols or Sámi, offer inspiration for the Icewalkers. As the capital of the Bull's nascent empire, early Khanbaliq provides a model for Plenilune. The Mongol Empire and Yuan Dynasty of China offer some ideas of the divisions of the Bull's empire. The Hanseatic League is a good basis for the Saltspire League.

Plenilune, seized in conquest, serves as the capital for the Bull's empire. The city sprawls on

the banks of the River of Tears, which flows *out* of the White Sea, driven by ancient sorcery.

Towering above the river, the last remaining saltspire manse desalinates the seawater. After the shock of conquest, the barons were initially pleased with the economic vigor the new empire brought their city. Now, they begin to push back against the Bull's ever-increasing taxes. The barons quietly stoke the rising tensions between the Icewalkers and the deeply traditional people of Plenilune. The Bull's rule now unites the cities of the Saltspire League that once rivaled Plenilune's prominence.

Other Northern Places of Note

The **Haslanti League** is a loose coalition of city states in the far North united through their inheritance of lost-wonders of mechanical technology, including repeating crossbows and ultralight feathersteel. The league dominates trade in the region with iceships gliding across frozen sea and airboats plying the Northern skies.

The **Mountain of the Spider King** overlooks the trade routes that connect Gethamane and Whitewall to the rest of Creation. Ruled by the Lunar elder Aum- Ashatra, the mountain is a warren of caves and tunnels. The Spider King demands tribute from the caravans that pass through his territory but offers refuge to the downtrodden.

Fortitude was once the prison city of a long-fallen Empire. The sprawling fortress is now ruled by gangs. Only a heroic death allows them to overcome the curse they believe follows them from birth. From the mineshafts and tunnels beneath the city, a primeval god drives their fatalistic religion.

Character Concepts

Northerners are survivors in a harsh environment. Communities are tight-knit and often wary of outsiders, relying on bonds and tradition to keep themselves safe from the

many dangers that stalk their lands. The Exalted may be champions of their culture, standing against those supernatural threats.

Northerners are typically the palest people in Creation, with skin tones ranging from warm brown to chalky white. Beyond the common varieties of black, brown, red, and blonde, some Northerners have white, silver, or light blue hair. With the scarcity faced during long winters, most people are lean or scrawny. Excess bulk is a sign of prosperity.

Archetypes

Warrior: City Guard Soldier, Fortitude Gang Champion, Freelance Monster Hunter, Nomadic Warrior

Priest: Icewalker Shaman, Immaculate Missionary, Gethamane Priest of the Old Temples, Servant of the Syndics

Savant: Exiled Exorcist, Hislanti Shipwright, Master Artisan, Scholar of Lost Artifice

Criminal: Frontier Scout, Janissary Vault Assassin, Thief of Antiquities, Spy for the Bull

Broker: Ambassador to the Fair Folk, Caravan Master, Clan Emissary, Elk Rider, Itinerant Storyteller, Saltspire Baron

THE EAST

The East is a verdant land of rivers and forests riven by conflict. The most populous region of Creation, the East hosts dozens of metropolises and the vestiges of many more. Protected by the Dragon-Blooded of Lookshy, the Eastern Threshold remains freer of Realm control than any other direction. Dynasts consider the patchwork disparate states no better than squatters in the ruins of the Shogunate, labeling the Confederation of Rivers that unites against them the Scavenger Lands. The appellation strikes close to the truth, and so-called scavenger lords scour the many ruins of the East for treasures of the lost ages. The Eastern climate is seasonal and ranges from temperate to tropical.

The Pole of Wood infuses the land with verdant fertility.

Primeval forests and jungles stretch across the Far East. At the edge of Creation, the trees stretch impossibly tall, supporting village and habitat where bole meets branch.

Nexus

Situated at the confluence where the Yellow and Grey Rivers become the Yanazee, Nexus is a cosmopolitan center of trade, industry, and inequity. The controlled lawlessness of the city funnels wealth to the ruling oligarchy. Built on the bones of a First Age ruin, the city sprawls across the swampy ground and rocky bluff between the rivers. Along both rivers, docks jut out offering berth to the hundreds of trade ships that pass through daily. Canals crisscross the city and the lower districts flood frequently. The wealthy and powerful live in neighborhoods atop the hill overlooking the city. Dug into the rock, a sunless undercity shelters the desperate and dispossessed.

The Council of Entities rules the city through daily decrees and collects fees and taxes from the constant flow of trade that passes through Nexus. The mysterious masked Emissary enforces the true law of the city: *none shall obstruct trade*. For most, security comes from having the coin to pay protectors or having nothing worth taking in the first place.

With its ancient roots, Nexus has mysterious tombs of the Anathema that date back to the Usurpation. In the metalworking district of Nighthammer, the glowing Slag-Tomb radiates enough heat to fuel the smelter built atop it. The Tomb of Singing Blades features a massive crystalline dome surrounded by spinning knives that whirl toward any who approach. Other hidden tombs present esoteric defenses. The Council of Entities forbids interference with the tombs but the supposed treasures draw looting attempts from the daring.

Nexus is the city of **the Guild**, a Creation-spanning network of associated traders, crafters, mercenary companies, and businesses. The nine hierarchs of the Guild meet in an unassuming building near the markets of Nexus where they discuss and set policy that ripples out to affect the flow of coin and trade across the world. Guild caravans offer protection for those who travel with them and pay well for guardians. Many outside the Guild despise the organization for the wealth they reap trading drugs (the soft trade) and slaves (the hard trade).

Inspirations

Nexus is the sprawl and growth of 20th century Hong Kong mixed with Victorian London's industrial desperation layered on top of the canals of Venice.

Great Forks

Great Forks has many names: House of Festivals, City of Temples, or simply Decadence. The high walls surround a city full of temples, theaters, galleries, hospitals, libraries, bordellos, drug refineries, and slave barracks. River trade passing through the city brings silver and revelers.

Three peoples and their patron gods, Talespinner, Dreamweaver, and Dayshield, founded Great Forks. They joined their strength and wit against the threat posed by one of the Deathlords. Now referred to as the Three, the patron gods rule the city by example and decree, overseeing an erudite bureaucracy from their temple-palace at the center of their city.

All manner of spirits, elementals, and gods make Great Forks their home. God-blooded citizens are common and the city even hosts a handful of Fair Folk residents. Hundreds of temples draw gods and their worshippers to Great Forks. The temple district, which takes up a full third of the city, hosts nearly daily festivals featuring parades and music. Mortal heroes compete for the blessing of the Exigence from the many

gods. The Three offer their patronage to Exalted champions willing to face the cities foes.

The greatest threat to the City of Temples comes from the cursed shadowland wastes, where the Contagion dead rotted in haphazard heaps. Fragile grass grows through pale bones and no winds trouble the still air. At the city's founding, the Three drove out the Deathlord called the Black Heron through their cunning. In the following centuries, the Walker in Darkness has claimed the dead place as his own. But the city faces internal threats as well, especially from criminal gods endeavoring to steal the Exigence to Exalt their own champions.

Inspirations

Classical Athens exemplifies the balance of learned citizens ruling a wealthy state on the backs of slave labor. For the City of Temples aesthetic, look to Southeast Asian temples sites like Angkor Wat or Banteay Srei.

The Hundred Kingdoms

On the eastern edge of the Scavenger Lands where the River Province gives way to the great Eastern Forests, a patchwork of minor city-states and petty principalities lays scattered across the rugged countryside. Many are petty autocracies or simple democratic oligarchies, though some have stranger governing practices. Like much of Creation, the lands hide ancient ruins full of lost wonders and hidden threats. On occasion, some imperial-minded power aims to conquer the Hundred Kingdoms; they oft succeed only in uniting them in resistance to conquest.

There Are A Hundred Kingdoms, But This One Is Mine

The diversity of the Hundred Kingdoms intentionally leaves space for Storytellers to define them at the table. Whether you're looking for a principality that fits your character's origin story, a princely patron for your PCs, or lands for your Circle to conquer, the

Hundred Kingdoms can offer the right land for you. The Hundred Kingdoms can also easily offer the kind of story where wandering heroes appear in a new land for each adventure.

Thorns

For generations, Thorns was a loyal vassal of the Realm and the Empress treated them with a light touch. The city was a center of learning and culture with richly decorated libraries, universities, theaters, music halls, and temples to gods of knowledge. The rich and the poor alike partook of Thorns' famed vineyards, and particularly celebrated vintages can still be found across Creation. Instead of bringing strife, the Realm's garrison brought Dragon-Blooded patrons of the arts. Rule passed to the autocrat's young heir a decade ago and with the Realm's urging, he embarked on a ruinous war against the other powers of the Scavenger Lands. The war left Thorns riven by internal strife.

The fall of Thorns was swift. From his fortress atop the crawling corpse-behemoth Juggernaut, the Deathlord called the Mask of Winters watched as his deathknight champions cut down the Dragon-Blooded defenders of the city in an hour. Instead of storming the city, the forces of death set siege. Foul rats devoured Thorns' food reserves. Necromantic disease spread and the skeletons of the infected tore forth from the screaming victims. The pale sky of the Underworld appeared above as a shadowland spread from the wanton death of Thorns' people. After three days, the people of Thorns threw open the gates and begged the Deathlord for deliverance.

Inspirations

Thorns before the fall was a center of culture and learning like Baghdad during the Islamic Golden Age or Prague under Rudolf II, with a rich and diverse viticultural tradition similar to that of Italy or Chile. Now, it is reminiscent of Baghdad after the siege of 1258 — a city of

ghosts and fearful survivors not long for the world.

The Mask of Winters does not rule Thorns directly; he plays the role of advisor to the deathknight who sits as Thorns' autocrat. The Mask and the new autocrat, called the Red Iron Rebuke, engage in diplomacy with neighboring polities, assuaging fears of further aggression and drawing common cause against the threat of the Realm. Life is not easy in the new Thorns — food is scarce, ghosts haunt the streets, the famed vineyards are crushed under Juggernaut, and a palpable pall of despair disheartens the survivors. Yet hope has not been extinguished and the brave resist, sabotaging the Deathlord's efforts and smuggling food in and survivors out to join the community of Thorns in exile in cities across the East.

More Eastern Locations of Interest

Massive redwood trees support the towns of the **Haltan Republic**, built on interconnected platforms in the branches. The green-haired Haltans keep many animals, some of whom speak with human voices. Longstanding pacts with the Fair Folk keep the tree dwelling peoples safe, but offer no protection for those who stand on the forest floor.

The **Linowan** tribes inhabit the lush forests and rich plains of the Silver River basin in the North East and raid the other peoples of the region, saving special enmity for the Haltans. They strive for excellence in all pursuits and reward successes with enchanted masks.

Raksi, the Lunar Queen of Fangs, rules **Mahalanka**, City of a Thousand Gold Delights. She controls the surrounding region with puissant sorcery and her apefolk army. The towering glass and metal ruins near the center of her city contain the Book of Three Circles, the greatest repository of sorcerous knowledge in the Age of Sorrows.

The exorcists and morticians of **Sijan** travel the East and beyond tending to the needs of the dying and the internment of the dead. The city itself is surrounded by vast tombs and mausoleums filled over the long millennia with the dead of every nation. The Sijanese Mortician's Order offer alliance and sanctuary to the Liminal Exalted, whom they view with reverence and curiosity.

Character Concepts

The East is Creation's most populous Direction, and Easterners often exhibit fierce civic pride. Scholars, bureaucrats, and traders are held in high esteem. But many people live under crushing inequity, whether exploited by those in power or driven from their homelands by conflict.

Mercenary work is one path to rise out of the mud, but too many aspiring soldiers pay the price of ambition in blood. Exaltation often inspires the drive to bring change to Creation.

The Scavenger Lands are particularly cosmopolitan; while most peoples have brown skin and black or brown hair, the cities are home to all kinds of people. Further East, bark-brown skin becomes more prevalent, with green or hazel eyes. Hair color varies in shades of brown, blond, red, and green.

Archetypes

Warrior: Gladiator, Guild Mercenary, Seeker of the Exigence, Veteran of the Autocrat's War

Priest: God Cult Priest, Dispossessed Refugee Leader, Sijanese Mortician, Sorcerer-Prince

Savant: First Age Historian, Master Surgeon, Necromancer, Scavenger Lord, Hundred Kingdoms Spy

Criminal: Cat Burglar, Professional Saboteur, River Pirate, Thorns Resistance Smuggler

Broker: Ambassador to the Confederation of Rivers, City Bureaucrat, Emissary of Thorns, Guild Factor

The Dreaming Sea

Far in Creation's South East lies the Dreaming Sea. The Dragon-Blooded of imperial Prasad, pushing outward from their capital of **Kamthahar**, are the latest power driven to conquer the surrounding lands. The sorcerer-princes of **Ysyr**, who rule as perfected tyrants over a people twisted by pervasive magical energies, pursue their own imperial ambitions. The city of **Palanquin**, held aloft by cyclopean statues, hides a portal to a long-lost heaven. The spires of **Volivat** rise from the seafloor, surrounded by a massive sea wall and kept dry by pumps driven by ancient artifice. North of the Sea, two Lunar elders dispute how best to respond to Prasad's expansion from the domain of **Mount Namas**, where a city of ghosts crowns the mountaintop. Tenepeshu, the water dragon queen of the Court of Secrets now rules **Champoer**, called the Nighted City for the permanent shroud of twilight the dragon-queen brought with her. Fair Folk pirates in ships of glass and fire reave the Sea's shores. Grotesque monsters lurk beneath the waves and prehuman horrors devour unwary mortals.

The shores of Dreaming Sea are full of adventure, strange magic, lost wonders of the First Age, and boundless opportunity waiting for Exalted ready to seize the moment.

THE SOUTH

Beyond the mild coastal regions, the South becomes hot and dry, with arid plains, rough volcanic mountains, and expanses of shifting desert sands. Teeming cities thrive on trade while harsh tyrants hold wealth and power. The Pole of Fire sends blasts of heat out over the deserts and spawns storms of weird flame that light the Southern sky with an eerie glow.

Chiaroscuro

The City of Vermillion Glass is the greatest and wealthiest metropolis in the South. While over a million people dwell there today, they occupy

only a small portion of the sprawling First Age megalopolis. Shattered towers of red glass, some standing over two dozen stories, inspire awe in the most jaded traders who arrive daily at the cities bustling port. Savants long ago discovered the secret of re-forging the glass, creating new wonders from scavenged fragments of the irreplaceable material. Glittering roads extend from the city, gleaming under the sun and glowing softly by night.

The Delzahn are the latest peoples to make Chiaroscuro their domain, defeating the petty tyrants who ruled the city two centuries ago. Many Delzahn clans maintain ties with their nomadic cousins who still drive herds across the expanses beyond the city. The Delzahn value honor along strict gender roles, though anyone may declare themselves Dereth to present as their preferred gender. The Delzahn respond with hostility or violence to anyone who disrespect the Dereth. Men wear veils with brightly colored elaborate embroidery that declares their deeds and lineage. Women display their inherent honor through education and cultured self-cultivation.

Delzahn rule passes down the matrilineal line of tri-kahtuns, who manage affairs of the city including law and finance. Her husband, the tri-kahn, leads the military and manages foreign affairs, including keeping the Realm at arm's length. While the city is a nominal satrapy of House Sesus, lavish annual tribute minimizes interference locally. The Realm garrison remains small and though the Immaculate Order is the only official religious authority, many people in Chiaroscuro quietly keep their own gods and practices. True control over the city would be a major boon for any Great House but would face stiff and canny resistance from the Delzahn.

Millennia of conflict and destruction leaves the city riddled with small shadowlands, especially among the unexplored ruins. While salt lines keep the ghosts contained, scholars and

treasure hunters risk exploring these regions of the city for whatever unknown wonders they can recover.

Yet some districts of the city, such as the Plaza of Grandmother Bright, recall what the city was like in ancient times.

Inspirations

The Delzahn are inspired by the Mongols and by the pre-Islamic tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. The city itself draws inspiration from Khanate Baghdad, but also presents the seeming wonders of a ruined modern-day metropolis, replete with shattered skyscrapers of adamant glass.

Gem

Gem escapes the harsh Southern sun on the shaded slopes of an extinct volcano. By tradition and violent repression, the city is the center of the Southern jewel trade. The city extends into lava tubes and chambers in the basalt, offering refuge from the desert heat even on the hottest days. In the Sunken Bazaar, built in the largest of the city's subterranean lava tubes, merchant-slaves buy and sell precious stones, finely crafted firewands, gold and copper from the Firepeaks, and other fine goods. Mercenaries entertain themselves at gambling parlors, liquor-houses, fighting rings, and brothels. Those who wish to keep their dealings away from prying eyes meet in the Sun Market — under the sun on the slopes above the city.

The hereditary Despots of Gem keep their power through phenomenal wealth and the finest mercenary army in Creation. By royal prerogative, and hired arms, the Despots uphold their monopoly on the gem trade. Every precious stone bought or sold in the city must pass through the hands of the Despot's brokers. Other noble families profit from their own monopolies, a privilege leased from the Despot at great cost. If the nobles cannot continue to pay, they lose their status and

another family or merchant house has the opportunity to rise to nobility.

Under Rankar VII, Gem aspires to Empire, claiming suzerainty over the Sabaki Tribes and the Tsavo Cities. Completing the work set down by his forbearers, the Despot turned the raiding Sabaki tribes into his personal army. Raiders at his back, he “politely offered” to guide the prince of Origin. And with the prince's tacit support, the scholars Kandara of the Great Library, demon-haunted Skarth, and the lesser Tsavo cities quickly bowed to Rankar's will lest they face his wrath.

Inspirations

Gem and the Tsavo Cities reflect the cultural diversity of West Africa, drawing particularly from the Songhai Empire.

The Varang City-States

The Varang City-States occupy a region of river valleys stretching from mineral-rich Summer Mountains to the Inner Sea. The cities form a coalition united by shared culture. The Varang astrologers use their understanding of stellar movements to assign a professional caste to every child born. The birth order and status of the child's family contribute to determining the exact caste. In public, sartorial laws require citizens to wear the colors, patterns, and decorations that mark their caste. To ensure the caste-defining charts are accurate, every city has at least one clock tower and several observatories. Varangian mechanists build the finest water clocks, mechanical clocks, and other gear-works in the South. Those whose time of birth is lost, or who reject their assigned caste, become outcastes. Seen as fit only for jobs of little worth, many end up as beggars or turn to crime to survive.

Foreigners in Varangia receive a mixed welcome. Without a clear caste, many Varangians are unsure how to treat them. The merchant castes are more comfortable with

foreigners as luxury goods from abroad are highly sought after. A few Varangians hire foreigners to break the law — being casteless and having no appropriate role in society, foreigners are more likely to kill, steal, and deceive. Many professional assassins, thieves, and spies receive regular work in the city-states from magistrates who would never consider approaching a fellow Varang citizen to break the law.

Inspirations

Varang cultural inspiration comes largely from ancient Mesopotamia and pre-colonial India, with the regimented architecture, scientific instruments, and clockmaking skill of 17th Century Europe. Their interest in astrology is likewise a mix of Babylonian and Vedic influence.

To foreigners, most cities have confusing layouts with the streets aligned to convey cosmic principles. Urim, called the Peacock City for the hundreds of eye-like lamps that light its streets and canals, is the richest of the city-states. A labyrinthine network of haunted catacombs draws treasure hunters and outcasts seeking refuge. In her tomb beneath the city, the preserved Blue Seeress whispers raving prophecies about the gods of Yu-Shan and the death of the stars. Mud-brick Yane with its radial streets serves as the confederation's capital; every seven years, the magistrates of one of the city-states take residence and govern the city. The House Cathak satrap resides in a palace beyond the cities walls but rarely needs to intervene in the orderly satrapy.

Other Southern Points of Interest

An-Teng has long chafed as an apparently servile satrapy of the Realm. They faced devastation at the hands of the Dragon-Blooded during the Usurpation, and surrendered to the Empress' Legions rather than face such destruction once again. In the jungle hinterland,

they ready themselves to rebel should the forces of the Realm falter.

A thousand miles south of Gem, **Dajaz** is a city of revelry, excess, and shady dealings. In the guise of the Benefactors, demons sustain the city, and the endless bacchanalian celebration offers them constant prayer.

Under the leadership of the young Lunar Lukha Palash, the **Bronze Tide** slowly flees the invasion of the Raksha Spear-Empress Bhadri. The Tide is a melting pot for the peoples fleeing the Wyld horde. City-states in the Tide's path resist; they do not realize the true threat still looms to the South.

Character Concepts

Honor, family, and wealth define one's place in society across the South. With fortunes constantly turning, people are meticulously polite to foreign travelers. Many Southern cities are ready to burn with the fires of change — a blaze the Exalted could easily spark in the hot clime. Southerners tend toward darker skin tones, ranging from olive to brown to black. Hair tends to be wavy or kinky and comes in shades of red, blond, and black. Well-kept beards are common among men.

Archetypes

Warrior: Delzahn Cavalry Warrior, Rebellious An-Tengese Prince, Sabaki Raider, Wealthy Caravan Guard

Priest: Dereth Shaman, Immaculate Missionary, Lion-Priest of Origin, Varangian Astrologer

Savant: Explorer of the Ruins, Firewand-smith, Glass-forged, Mechanist, Scholar of Kandara, Skarathi Demon-Caller

Criminal: Guild Smuggler, Jewel Thief, Casteless Varangian Gang Member, Professional Gambler, Sun Market Fence

Broker: Caravan Master, Courtesan Caste Entertainer, Noble Tax Collector, Sun Market Fence

THE WEST

The Great Ocean dominates the West with a hundred civilizations clinging to isolated islands. First Age ruins await exploration on uncharted islands and the seafloor, each hiding treasures and hidden dangers forgotten by Creation. The vast distances across the open ocean limit the Realm's reach, though House Peleps and House V'neef are both establishing a stronger foothold. The influence of the Pole of Water is obvious in the Western Ocean. The shifting nature of water means the tides of the Wyld flow stronger in the West, making the Fair Folk and ever-present mercurial threat.

Wu-Jian

From the Blessed Isle, rocky Wu-Jian is a gateway to the West. The island juts out of the waves, offering respite for vessels making the perilous journey to the greater Western archipelagos.

Over the centuries, the tiny island has been given over to construction, whether the small estates and enclaves of the Realm or the haphazard, towering buildings of the city proper. The stacked timber construction rises more stories than one could consider safe, with the most luxurious apartments of Topside swaying in the wind. The middle districts, called the Shades, are a tangle of interconnected shops, workshops, apartments, and narrow hall-like streets. At the bottom of the stacked construction, the slums of Mud stink of salt and refuse.

Enforcement of the Realm's rule is impossible in the tangled neighborhoods of Wu-Jian, where criminal syndicates and simple gangs hold sway. The Dragon-Blooded focus on the elite enclaves and the critical docks. While a Dragon-Blooded governor nominally rules the city, the House Sesus satrap cultivates influence with the city's prolific criminal elements. Wu-Jian's docks, sprawling outward from the base of the city, cradle hundreds of ships. With House V'neef

and House Peleps reaching West, both houses have a strong presence, and tensions between them are running high.

Most of Wu-Jian is beyond the reach of Realm authority. Gangs, sea spirits, ghosts, and sorcerers control the hidden corners and abandoned warren of chambers within the city. Strength and wit are the only law and many band together for survival and protection. The so-called Thirteen Schools are the mightiest gangs. United by martial arts training, alliances and enmities shift with the tides. While battles between pugilists of the schools are a spectacle to behold, spectators are more likely to flee the collateral damage to the city's makeshift structure. In the deepest reaches, stranger entities hold sway; an exiled Fair Folk trades charms for sips of patron's souls, the restless dead haunt the streets where they lived and died, strange spirits demand sacrifices to the deep, and escaped demons threaten violence.

Inspirations

The structure of Wu-Jian visually resembles an ancient incarnation of the Kowloon Walled City in Hong Kong, and includes rival gangs fighting one another in a similar fashion to the Choy Lay Fut and Wing Chun martial rivalries. The pirate city of Tortuga offers a lawless and unsavory nautical flavor for the island's character.

Skullstone Archipelago

A shadow hangs over the extinct volcanic isles of the Skullstone Archipelago. Despite the nation's wealth, few traders wish to tarry, for on Skullstone, the dead hold status above the living. The Silver Prince, one of the Deathlords, rules from his citadel-city Onyx on Darkmist Island, the largest central island of the archipelago. He teaches that life is preparation for eternity in death. At death, the Black Judges assess the character of the deceased to determine their worth. The Judges induct the worthy into the Skullstone's ghostly nobility. Necropuppeteers embalm and reanimate the

corpses of the unworthy to serve. In recent years, deathknight champions of the Silver Prince have joined the highest ranks of the nobility.

Skullstone derives its wealth from the dead and the sea. Animated corpses work the docks, harvest meager crops, staff the inns, and perform most other labor on the islands. As tireless oarsmen, they propel trade ships and scavenge the sea floor for treasures lost to the breathing. The dead elect representatives to the Elder Council and the living elect the Younger Council. Both councils advise the Silver Prince, though the Elder Council holds greater respect.

The domain of Skullstone grows slowly but inexorably. Skullstone's merchants record detailed reports during their travels to provide insight to their lords. The Silver Prince negotiates canny bargains with his neighbors, building a complex web of debts, favors, and mutual oaths to extend the nation's economic hegemony. He is magnanimous in his dealings, excusing failings to honor aspects of these treaties. He ties the oath-breakers closer to Skullstone until their autonomy is polite fiction and their people clamor for the same chance at eternal life that is the right of Skullstone's citizens. Skullstone remains scrupulously neutral in the broader regional conflicts, thus far avoiding entanglements with the Realm.

Inspirations

Renaissance Venice's focus on lineage, the separation of the nobility from the common people, and close ties between trade, espionage, and foreign policy work as great thematic touchstones for Skullstone. For visual inspiration, look to Mycenaean and Minoran architecture and fashion, though most construction on Skullstone uses volcanic stone.

The Caul

The mountainous, jungle-cloaked micro-continent of Caul is the largest landmass in the

West. The island is sacred to both Lunars and Dragon-Blooded. When the Caul reappeared after centuries of occultation, the Scarlet Empress and Immaculate Order were eager to claim it and the elemental shrine-cities of the ancient pilgrimage. The Realm dedicated the legions to centuries of warfare protecting the pilgrimage routes. With the Empress' disappearance, the Great Houses claimed and recalled the legions. The Lunars of the Silver Pact have seized the opportunity to capture and hold the elemental pilgrimage shrines.

The ancient Lunar Sha'a Oka leads the war against the Dragon-Blooded from Morovath, City of a Thousand Faces hidden in the southern jungles of the Caul. The city's appearance shifts with the phases of the moon, towers glowing during the full moon and taking on a sinister aspect during the new moon. His generals, all mighty Lunars, hold the shrine-cities except Faxai. Sha'a Oka is bound to the Caul, having disappeared and reappeared with the continent. Forces of the Realm claim to have seen him fall in battle numerous times, only for him to reappear leading the Silver Pact forces yet again.

Faxai-on-the-Caul is the last stronghold of the Realm. The walled city is under loose siege from the Lunar forces. Banners from all the Great Houses fly over the city and the Dragon-Blooded put aside their feuds to face their common foe. Yet the Great Houses themselves cannot spare their might for the Caul. And with all eyes on the empty throne, even Faxai does not escape intrigue entirely. The Immaculate Order maintains many temples and shrines within the city.

Without the dedicated defense of Immaculate monks, the city may have fallen years ago.

Inspirations

The shrine-cities establish a sense of ancient wonder, evoking construction like the Harappan civilization of the Indus Valley or early Javanese

architecture. Maori or other Polynesian cultures can provide inspiration for the Caulborn.

The Caulborn, natives of the island, remain apart from the conflict. They dwell across the island, worshipping the land itself. The matrilineal clans follow traditional taboos to keep them safe from the primal spirits and mighty Raksha princes in the wilds. Many Caulborn clans received the blessings of Luna and became beastfolk. Some, like the Kongar lionfolk, serve the Lunar cause. Both forces of the Silver Pact and the Realm use the Caulborn as guides to the island.

Other Western Locations

With rich volcanic soil, the **Wavecrest Archipelago** is the breadbasket of the West. Driven by House Peleps, port cities continue to grow despite the endemic boardermarches. Human sacrifices appease the islands' volcanoes whose strange eruptions show the touch of the Wyld.

The Sea Lords of **Azure** rule the Coral Archipelago and the might of their navy extends their dominion beyond their rainy islands. Seen as conquerors or privateers by most of the West, they value courage, ambition, and bravado.

Somewhere off the Southwestern coast in a shifting sargasso sea lies the shipwreck-city Bluehaven, stronghold of the **Lintha Family**. Renowned for their savagery, tales abound of blue-skinned, gilled pirates who walk on water and rely on sea-demons to pull their mastless ships.

Character Concepts

The Great Ocean unites and divides Westerners. Any who sail beyond the view of their shores put themselves in the hands of Fate and fickle spirits, requiring some mix of bravery, superstition, audacity, and desperation. Exaltation lifts mortals above the basic fears of survival, propelling them to greatness.

Westerners show the touch of the Wyld. While their skin is typically bronze or gold, their hair and eyes come in the shades of the sea at sunset: blue, green, maroon, purple, black and grey. Short, compact builds are common.

Archetypes

Warrior: Azurite Privateer, Caul Pilgrim, Realm Marine, Pirate Hunter, Thirteen Schools Pugilist

Priest: Appeasing Priest, Black Judge of Skullstone, Immaculate Missionary, Heretic Preacher

Savant: Cartographer, Caulborn Shaman, Skullstone Embalmer, Wu-Jian Architect

Criminal: Lintha Pirate Captain, Silver Pact Spy, Wu-Jian Gang-Lord

Broker: Dynastic Explorer, Quartermaster, Skullstone Merchant Emissary, Syndicate Fixer

OTHER REALMS

The world of Creation borders on other, more alien realms. Some realms are hidden away and secret, while others are as vast as Creation and familiar even to mortals.

THE WYLD

Creation is an island of stability in an infinite sea of chaos. During the First Age, the Solar Exalted expanded Creation's shores by forging chaos into reality, then maintained their new borders with order-affirming practices. These borders weakened over centuries without Solar governance, then broke entirely thanks to massive depopulation during a plague called the Great Contagion. Chaos flooded inward and Creation suffered a grand invasion led by the *Fair Folk*. Where the armies of chaos marched, the land grew wild and the laws of Creation broke down.

Once the Scarlet Empress defeated this invasion, vast stretches of Creation still bore chaos' corruption. These *Wyld* lands are mutated and surreal, corrupting any Creation native who stays too long. In *boardermarches*,

closest to stable reality, creatures and communities gradually develop strange features and idiosyncrasies, but the world is largely stable. In *middlemarches*, bizarre prodigies and mutations develop over hours or days, and surreal landscapes shift with the whims and intrigues of the Fair Folk. Creatures too strange and vast for worldly shapes roam the *deep Wyld*, where Creation natives transform rapidly, and the world shifts sickeningly from minute to minute.

The Fair Folk

Sometimes called *raksha* by those in Creation, the fae princes of the Wyld accept “the Fair Folk” as an acknowledgement of their predatory grace. The Fair Folk are Wyld-born entities that mimic the forms and behaviors of Creation natives. They're powerful, capricious, and achingly- glamorous creatures that feed upon dreams and passions. Great deeds and powerful symbols excite the Wyld, so the Fair Folk can survive indefinitely there by engaging in intrigues, power struggles, and grand battles against one another. But Creation-born passions are more real and satisfying, and can sustain Fair Folk outside the Wyld. Some Fair Folk cultivate symbiotic relationships with human communities, but most fae princes don't see the point. Instead, they hunt, lure, or purchase mortals and carve emotions from souls with thoughtless cruelty. Soul- eaten mortals are numb, pliable, and valuable to human slavers, so ruthless merchant princes often strike deals with Fair Folk courts.

Many of the aristocratic fae are inhumanly strong, beautiful, and clever, especially in their areas of expertise. Lavish in wealth and physical comforts, the lords obsess over rivalries, games, and mortals they wish to possess. When the Fair Folk aren't raiding mortal settlements, they wager priceless treasures on games of chance and offer bargains too good for any mortal to pass up. They're cruelly scrupulous, following

customs and expecting courtesies rarely explained to human guests.

The Fair Folk take on forms appropriate to the local Wyld: in the *East*, fae march grand armies into civilized lands and silently abduct stray mortals in the jungle; in the *South*, they stalk the desert as black lions and horseback raiders, their bloodthirst matched by their fascination with clever riddles and puzzles; in the *West*, needle-fanged merfolk drag mortals beneath the bloody waves while masked islanders put trespassers through terrible ritual ordeals; in the *North*, fur- clad sleighriders organize grand hunts for unfortunate mortals while enticing snow-dolls offer warmth in coldest winter. The Fair Folk are infinite in their variety, but they have no purchase over the Blessed Isle, as yet.

Other Fae

Though the Fair Folk consider themselves natural rulers of the Wyld, the children of chaos are variable beyond categorization. Mortals call the many twisted creatures that serve the Fair Folk as foot soldiers and manual laborers *hobgoblins*, for their gnarled and elementally-derived miens. *Unshaped* fae entities more closely resemble storms, phenomena, or locations than creatures.

Massive unique creatures called *behemoths* roam the Wyld to satisfy their strange hungers or serve Fair Folk as steeds. Monstrous humanoid *hannya* prey primarily on other fae and seek to supplant the lords stranded on the shores of Creation. The hannya are most comfortable in the deep Wyld, making those chaotic places dangerous even for the Fair Folk.

Mortals have few advantages over the fae, but Wyld-born entities share a few weaknesses. First, they cannot survive indefinitely outside the Wyld without feeding on emotions or souls. Second, cold iron weapons tear through fae flesh and armor with ease. And third, the fae cannot break their word. Modern cultures in

Creation pass this wisdom on through a thousand different myths and stories.

The Wyld also twists animals, people, and entire communities into new and terrible forms. Some fortunate enough suffer mutation and live relatively normal lives, while less stable Wyld-born creatures — like griffons and manticores — can't reproduce naturally and may sicken and die if taken from lands touched by chaos. Wyld-twisted communities become more like the Fair Folk and raid mortal neighbors for resources and captives, who gradually transform to become like their captors.

Behemoths, Wyld and Otherwise

Though the Wyld is a source of many strange beasts, not all behemoths hail from the Wyld. Other behemoths might be deathless creations of the fallen titans, strange offspring of mismatched spirits, and accidents of nature and sorcery. In the current era, mortal communities know more about how to appease or avoid behemoths than what their origins are.

YU-SHAN

Once, the enemies of the gods dwelt in otherworldly splendor and left Creation's management to the gods. The gods and the Exalted rose up in *Divine Revolution* and overthrew the creators. The Exalted claimed Creation. The gods claimed *Yu-Shan*, the celestial city hidden from mortal eyes.

Yu-Shan — also called *Heaven* — is a continent-sized city in an endless sea of quicksilver. It teems with ten million spirits, a vast bureaucracy dedicated to recording and regulating the activities of all Creation's peoples and spirits. These *celestial* gods define the proper direction of Creation, dictating policies for the practical duties of countless *terrestrial* gods and elementals in Creation itself. While terrestrial spirits live and work scattered across Creation, Yu-Shan's residents enjoy plentiful prayer and comforts unimaginable to mortals...

mostly. In the modern era, millions of gods have lost their positions in Heaven's *Bureaus* to corruption, competition, and obsolescence. These unemployed gods dwell in sprawling celestial slums while their former peers work and reside in uninterrupted opulence.

Doorways to Heaven

Though clever Exalts have a few ways to reach Yu-Shan, most would-be visitors must find gates scattered throughout Creation. Many Yu-Shan gates hide in disused locales, and all enjoy the protection of Celestial Lions, guardian spirits of living gold. Sidereals have long mapped every gate to Creation and can summon a roving portal called the Calibration Gate using specialized sorceries.

The Incarnae

As the greatest of the gods and patrons of the Exalted, the Celestial Incarnae took on the responsibility of managing and leading Heaven's gods. They also claimed the creators' greatest treasure, the *Games of Divinity*, housed in the *Jade Pleasure Dome* at the heart of Yu-Shan. The Incarnae take their leisure in this impenetrable dome, admitting entry to other gods as a rare honor. They do not admit the Exalted, and since the end of the First Age, they have left the Jade Pleasure Dome less and less. The sky above Yu-Shan reflects whoever currently leads in the Games: the sun is usually visible in Heaven, with occasional periods of night dominated by the moon or a specific Maiden's star.

Without Luna's guidance, the Bureaus of Humanity, Nature, and Seasons are rife with corruption and cronyism. Without the Unconquered Sun's sense of justice, the Bureau of Heaven has become bloated with the legislative and judicial power it wields over other Bureaus. Of the Incarnae, only the Five Maidens still show any interest in their managerial duties toward the Bureau of Destiny, and they are notoriously inscrutable.

Heaven's Exalted

Few Exalts may casually and subtly enter Yu-Shan. Many gods still recall the Usurpation and fear the Exalted — especially Solars — might upset centuries-old patterns of nepotism and exploitation. Exalted are useful, however, particularly for meddling with affairs in Creation. Yu-Shan has a small, stable population of Dragon-Blooded informally called Heaven's Dragons that live comfortably thanks to divine freelance and contract work.

The Sidereal Exalted are all nominally salaried employees in the Bureau of Destiny. The Bureau finds, recruits, trains, and employs most Sidereals shortly after their Exaltation. There they consult with the *Loom of Fate* to observe and influence important destinies in Creation.

Older Sidereals are well-established and able to influence Bureau policy. Younger Sidereals receive orders to act as the Bureau of Destiny's hand in Creation and, occasionally, in Heaven. Young Sidereals sometimes struggle with the obvious corruption and inequality in Yu-Shan, as well as their duty to manipulate mortal society for an often-mysterious greater good. For this reason, some Sidereals forsake the Bureau of Destiny and its resources to go *rogue*. Rogue Sidereals wander Creation, directing destiny according to conscience and circumstance, though it puts them at odds with their former peers.

MALFEAS

When the Exalted overthrew the enemies of the gods, some fallen creators surrendered. As the price of their survival, the Exalted forced unbreakable oaths upon the deposed titans, to accept eternal imprisonment and exile from Creation. The enemies of the gods became the *Yozis*, scarred and twisted echoes of their former titanic glory. The Exalted turned the creators' king inside out and made of him the *Yozis'* prison. He is *Malfeas*, also called the Demon City, or simply Hell.

As Heaven teems with ranked and archived gods, Malfeas overflows with demons beyond counting. Malfeas is a brutal, clangorous place, with air that sickens and kills mortals in a matter of days. No map could chart Malfeas, for the fallen king irregularly rages against the torturous confines of his own brass body. In his turnings, massive buildings and city blocks sprout into being and just as easily crush and crash against each other.

Demons

Like gods and elementals, demons are spirits that crave prayer. Demons spring from the natures and needs of the *Yozis* — this doesn't necessarily make them evil, but they are often alien and dangerous to humans even if they mean no harm. A kind demon might not understand a human's aversion to bloodshed, and a demon's definition of cruelty might not make sense to a human.

A *Yozi's* identity is too vast and potent for a single soul to contain. Each *Yozi* has multiple component souls, called *Third Circle* demons, capable of bizarre, world-shaking miracles. Each *Third Circle* demon has seven souls of its own, *Second Circle* demons with power comparable to experienced Exalted and moderately ranked gods. Demons of the *First Circle* are different: each is a member of a demon species created to perform specific tasks or express certain parts of their creators' nature.

By the terms of the *Yozis'* oaths, a sorcerer of sufficient power may summon a demon to Creation. With sufficient focus, the sorcerer can even bind a demon's will — unless it's destroyed or banished back to Hell, a bound demon must serve its summoner for a year and a day, or complete a specific task of any duration.

Cracks in the Prison

Though the *Yozis* can never escape their prison, demons occasionally can. Arcane coincidences and events with occult importance open cracks

that a demon can slip through. The more powerful the demon, the rarer the opportunity for escape, and the less time they can spend in Creation before returning to Hell.

Some cracks allow passage from Creation to Malfeas, but these are difficult to predict. Certain demons can also ferry a human to Hell across the vast desert of Cecelyne, if convinced or bound to do so.

The Yozis

The Yozis are so vast that they rarely notice individual characters, even Exalted. In Hell, the Yozis are usually more akin to phenomena and terrain features than people. Malfeas, for instance, is himself the Demon City, and he is sometimes also the Brass Dancer that passes through Hell, driving all who see him to ecstatic and desperate dance. Ligier, the green metal sun of Hell, is Malfeas' foremost component soul and a peerless blacksmith.

There are many other Yozis in Hell. Here's a small selection:

Adorjan, the Silent Wind, never slows, and wherever she blows, she flays skin from bone. Demons throughout Hell fear her silence, and play music constantly in hopes of warding off the killing wind. She once loved a Solar Exalt, and conceived with him four daughters, who stream alongside their mother in Hell.

Cecelyne, the Endless Desert, surrounds Malfeas in all directions. It is she who makes the laws of Hell. A demon must walk her sands for five days and nights to answer a summoner, so summoned demons leave Malfeas well in advance of their summoning.

She Who Lives In Her Name is a concentric mandala of 99,997 crystalline spheres, each filled with vivid blue flame and each bearing a different name. Those who hear Her whispered names join Her hierarchical chorus and obsessively rebuild the world to match Her perfect order.

The Ebon Dragon is the Shadow of All Things. He forever tests the limits of his prison, for he loves doomed things, even if they are his own efforts. His shadow is the only darkness the Demon City ever knows, and night-loving things creep into the open to celebrate his passage.

Kimbery is the Sea that Marched Against the Flame, a titanic ocean of acid, maternal love, and filial malice.

Oramus is called the Dragon Beyond the World, for he defined in the earliest days what would be Creation and what would not. Eldest of the Yozis, the victorious gods feared even Malfeas could not contain him, and thus caged him inside his own mighty wings.

Sacheverell is He Who Knows the Shape of Things to Come, kept asleep by the combined power of his siblings. He can see the future with perfect clarity, and were he to awaken, he would bind all of Fate to his sight; it is for this reason the Yozis engender his somnolence.

THE UNDERWORLD

Once, the dead passed through *Lethe* to shed the memories of life and be reincarnated, and if any souls escaped this cycle the living didn't record it. Then the Exalted slew enemies of the gods, titans too grand for death to encompass. The murdered creators imagined true nothingness, the *Void*, but could embrace neither oblivion nor *Lethe*. In dying they broke death and became the corpse-titans known as *Neverborn*.

Something else once stood beyond the veil of death, but the *Neverborn* shattered it with their arrival. Since then, the Underworld is a patchwork of half-remembered cultures, gloomy waterways, and the *Neverborn's* horrific, labyrinthine nightmares. Strange creatures exist there, such as the mysterious *ferriers* who offer guidance for trade, and the monstrous *hekatonkhire*, deathly broken remnants of the *Neverborn's* component souls.

The Neverborn orbit the Void as titanic corpse-monuments in the Underworld's heart, unable to give in to the Void and unable to escape its terrible soul-sucking gravity.

Ghosts

Some die at peace, already prepared to embrace Lethe. Those who hesitate or cling to life awaken in the Underworld as *ghosts*. Ghosts leave their bodies and earthly hungers behind, so they crave memories, passions, and living worshipers to maintain their sense of purpose and identity. Some return to Creation, though they are naturally immaterial there. Lethe always beckons, but so does oblivion, and ghosts have a long time to embrace either end.

Ghosts can grow powerful over the centuries, especially if they embrace the necromantic power of the Neverborn. In their desperation to rest, the Neverborn demand the annihilation of all existence, and their raving whispers twist many ghosts into cruelly destructive *specters*. The Neverborn's mightiest servants — the *Deathlords* — were once ghosts of First Age Exalted with the spiritual fortitude to accept eternal contracts with the Neverborn. The Deathlords tyrannize vast tracts of the Underworld, and have recently unleashed the Abyssal Exalted to wage war on both Creation and rival Deathlords.

Shadowlands

When the weight of death grows overwhelming in Creation, when necrosis seeps into a battlefield's or charnel house's very Essence, Creation and Underworld territories collapse into a contiguous *shadowland*. Ghosts are comfortable in a shadowland and can manifest there with relative ease. Though vegetation is often sparse and macabre, mortals in a shadowland can grow enough food to survive. Structures from both sides blend in the collapse, leading to strange but ultimately habitable terrain. Those who can respire Essence describe a shadowland's feel as oily and chilly, growing

more so the closer one ventures to the Underworld.

A shadowland also brings dangers to Creation, from alien entities to specters to Abyssals. Anyone can enter a shadowland, but leaving one is trickier: in daytime, all exits lead to Creation, while at night they lead into the Underworld. The further one gets from a shadowland, the less Creation's and the Underworld's terrains match — mortals can easily lose their way home.

REALM OF THE GREAT MAKER

One of the titans, Autochthon, King of All Craftsmen, sided against his peers in the Divine Revolution and taught the Incarnae the secret of Exaltation. During the First Age, the Great Maker left Creation, taking with him enough humans to create a world and civilization within himself, which residents call Autochthonia. There, he unleashed the full potential of his Exalted, the Alchemicals.

A rare few Alchemicals are scattered across Creation even in the Second Age, the proofs-of-concept to convince the Incarnae that the Exalted could be their champions. Some slumber, waiting for a signal that may never come. Others awaken in this Age with no memory of their original purpose.

CHAPTER TWO: THE EXALTED

This chapter covers every playable Exalt type. These are the mighty champions of the gods, the heroes of creation, and — most importantly — the people you play. There are ten playable Exalt types: **Abyssals**, **Alchemicals**, **Dragon-Blooded**, **Exigents**, **Getimians**, **Infernals**, **Liminals**, **Lunars**, **Sidereals**, and **Solars**. Each has its own unique playstyle, granting the player access to Exalt-specific **Charms**, which begin on p. XX. If this selection seems overwhelming, here's a quick guide to help you decide where to start.

READING THIS SECTION

This following section contains a lot of important information for playing one of the Exalted, which means it presents a lot of things to understand all at once. Some new players may find this overwhelming, so here's a breakdown of what each section represents, and how to read it. Please note that all of the following special abilities will reference the game's core rules. If you want to read those first, go to Chapter 4. It starts on p. XX.

EXALT ADVANTAGES

These are inherent bonuses an Exalt gets for being that type of Exalted. Two of them are special, always-on abilities that change the way the character interacts with certain rules, and the third involves what magical materials (p. XX) the Exalt resonates with. **Resonance** unlocks special **Modes** if they have taken the Artifact Merit (p. XX) of a corresponding material.

CASTE OR ASPECT

Each Exalt type breaks down into a series of subtypes. These flavor how the character interacts with the world, adjusts the way she uses certain rules, and determines her **Anima Effect** as well as how she earns Exalt Milestones (p. XX).

Anima Effects

As a character uses **notes**, she gains **anima**. Anima is a display of raw divine power — an

aura of light or shadow that surrounds them. Anima Effects are broken down into three categories: **passive**, **active**, and **iconic**. **Passive** effects don't turn off — the character has access to its effect at all times. **Active** anima requires the character to have built up two anima before it turns on.

Iconic anima happens when the character has accrued ten anima, and are impressive displays of power. Read p. XX for more information on building and using anima.

The Caste Mark

When an Exalt channels Essence, their power manifests as a sign upon their brow called the *Caste Mark*. As the name implies, these are unique to a particular Exalt's caste, differing subtly in color even between Exalts of the same caste, and are a clear indication to savants and other Exalts of the Chosen's role and purpose. It may be concealed by thick fabric while the Exalt's anima is Dim (see p. XX) but cannot be concealed whenever their anima level rises. For Solars, Lunars, Sidereals, Infernals, and Getimians, the caste mark is a radiant sigil in the color of the Exalt's anima. For Abyssals, the mark appears as a burned and blackened brand, sometimes weeping small trickles of blood.

Alchemicals, though possessed of a caste, do not have Caste Marks; being made of the magical materials, their Exalted status is evident to all who behold them. Dragon-Blooded and Liminals likewise contain all their Aspects within themselves, and do not display Caste Marks. Some rare Exigents possess a caste mark, especially if their patron has an Exigent of a different need and nature, but the majority do not.

EXALTS OF CREATION

These Exalts have their origins in places from or allied with the main body of Creation. If this is your first time picking up Exalted, start here.

Dragon-Blooded are elemental warriors who currently rule the world. If playing an elementally-themed hero or a noble Prince of the Earth seems like your thing, turn to p. XX.

Exigents are unique Exalted of lesser gods. Our example Exigent is **Strawmaiden Janest**. If playing a hearty, two-fisted woman of the earth sounds like a good time, turn to p. XX. This section also demonstrates how to craft your own Exalt type.

Lunar Exalted are witches, tricksters, and monsters. They have the power to shapeshift into any animal or into humans they've hunted, and their inherent magic is equally transformative. If playing a tricky shifter sounds fun, go to p. XX.

Sidereal Exalts maintain the Loom of Fate in Yu Shan. They're in charge of making sure fated things come to pass, but also masters of martial arts. If playing a fighting bureaucrat seems cool, turn to p. XX.

Solar Exalted are masters of human skill, peerless sorcerers, and wondrous craftspeople. They are people without peer whose works and deeds have no equal. If being an exemplar of humanity sounds fun, go to p. XX.

If you are brand new to Exalted, Solars or Dragon-Blooded are the simplest and most straightforward choices.

THE DRAGON-BLOODED

The Dragon-Blooded are the Chosen of the Elemental Dragons. Sometimes called the Terrestrial Exalted, they are the inheritors of legendary power, and their forebears overthrew the Solar Exalted in the Usurpation. Their deeds in the millennia that followed shaped the world as it is today. All over the Creation, the Dragon-Blooded roam without fear, hunting Anathema and forging new legends.

Play one of the Dragon-Blooded if you want to be a scion of the Realm, at the heart of dynastic

intrigue; a soldier in Lookshy's Seventh Legion, defending the Scavenger Lands; an itinerant monk, spreading the Immaculate Philosophy; or a wandering hero, protecting villages from bandits and monsters.

Dragon-Blooded Exalt Advantages

Prince of the Earth: As the only kind of Exalt fully recognized by the Immaculate Faith, Dragon-Blooded find support anywhere. Once per session, the character may select one Merit and treat it as though it had a dot rating equal to her Essence, working its acquisition with the Storyteller. This benefit lasts for the duration of the session.

Ten Thousand Dragons Fight as One: When making teamwork actions, after calculating the total successes to add as dice, add an additional die. Dragon-Blooded may use any Hearth-based teamwork effects from their Charms on any other Exalt.

Resonance: Dragon-Blooded are resonant with all types of jade.

Anima

A Dragon-Blooded's elemental Aspect dictates her anima banner's appearance. It glows with colors associated with that element, and may make the Terrestrial's own Aspect markings stand out more. At the iconic level it's accompanied by related sounds and scents, like crackling fire or crashing waves. When a Dragon-Blooded has five or more anima, all characters within close range must make reflexive Physique rolls at a difficulty equal to the Exalt's Essence plus two or take one level of damage from exposure to raw elemental essence.

Dragon-Blooded Aspects

The five Dragon-Blooded Aspects represent each of the elements.

Air

Air Aspects are idealists, visionaries, scholars, and innovators. They see the potential inherent

in everyone, and view the world as it *could be*. Their blue and white anima banners whirl and billow like stormclouds. At the iconic level, lightning flashes, and birds and dragons glide within.

At the end of each session, Air Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they took an action toward furthering a long-term goal.

Anima Effects

Buoyed by the Wind (Passive): Once per turn the Air Aspect leaps one additional range band vertically or horizontally. She takes no falling damage from short range drops.

Mela's Breath (Active): Subtract two dice from all ranged attacks targeting the Air Aspect.

Eye of the Hurricane (Iconic): Short-term benefits rarely sway the Air Aspect. Add successes equal to the Exalt's Essence on rolls to persuade or inspire a target toward a long-term goal.

Earth

Earth Aspects are implacable foes on the battlefield, standing firm to defend their allies. Stoic and resilient, they believe in strong foundations and sturdy structures, whether they're building a community, an architectural marvel, or an imperial legion. What an Earth Aspect builds *endures*. Their yellow and white animas smell of loam and rumble like the shifting earth. At the iconic level, mountains loom behind them and oxen and rocky dragons plod along in their glow.

At the end of each session, Earth Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they stood their ground against a foe.

Anima Effects

Fury of the Earth (Passive): The Earth Aspect reduces the cost of the knockback or knockdown gambits against Extras (p. XX) to zero. Outside of combat, she may knock an Extra

within short range prone or one range band away without making an attack roll.

Pasiap Still Stands (Active): Add the Earth Aspect's Essence to the cost of grapple, knockback, and knockdown gambits used against them. This cannot make the cost exceed 10.

Unyielding Stone (Iconic): Add the Exalt's Essence to her Soak for the remainder of the scene. The character cannot be targeted with the knockout or knockdown gambits.

Fire

Passionate and dynamic, Fire Aspects' emotions burn brightly. They sear their marks across the world as warriors, politicians, and iconoclasts. Their fiery red, orange, and gold animas smell of smoke or hot metal. At the iconic level, volcanoes erupt within, and dragons and phoenixes cavort in the flames.

At the end of each session, Fire Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if their passionate deeds or speeches influenced a significant character or group to take action.

Anima Effects

Where There's Smoke (Passive): The Fire Aspect's player may ask her Storyteller to reveal two people within close range who harbor grudges or heated emotions. Figuring out the cause of their enmity is up to the character. She gains a bonus die to any social actions to uncover or leverage those emotions.

Hesiesh's Passion (Active): The Fire Aspect gains her Essence in automatic successes on social actions to inspire a crowd or persuade a target to act on his ambitions.

Wildfire Dance (Iconic): The Fire Aspect's fury ignites her weapons. The Exalt subtracts her Essence from the target's soak. The target catches fire and suffers from the burning environmental hazard (p. XX), and increases the difficulty on the resistance roll by the Exalt's Essence.

Water

Calm and relentless Water Aspects adapt to obstacles and wear down stubborn foes. As diplomats, investigators, and naval commanders, they see many paths to a satisfying solution. Their dark blue and sea green animas smell like brine and babble like brooks. At the iconic level, whirlpools churn within, and fish, siakas, and water dragons swim in their depths.

At the end of each session, Water Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they adapted their plans to accommodate a significant change of circumstances.

Anima Effects

Surface Skimmer (Passive): The Water Aspect moves along any liquid surface like it's solid ground — though this doesn't afford her protection from acid or demon-tar — and breathes water as easily as air. She suffers no penalty to move or attack while underwater.

Flow of Daana'd (Active): Add Essence automatic successes to gambits where the Water Aspect attempts to Disarm an opponent or Pilfer an item. When an opponent targets her with a grapple or attempts to Ensnare her, the Exalt adds her Essence to Defense.

Flow Like Water (Iconic): Once per turn, the Water Aspect may roll an attack twice on Step 3 and choose to keep the better result.

Wood

Deeply attuned to the cycle of life and death, Wood Aspects are healers and poisoners, thrill seekers, and beast-tamers. New experiences exhilarate them. Vibrant greens color their animas, which smell of fresh-mown grass and blooming flowers. At the iconic level riotous vines surround them, and forest animals and wood dragons stalk their branches.

At the end of each session, Wood Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they experienced something new and exciting to them with a

significant character or group or their actions fostered change in a significant character or group.

Anima Effects

Natural Immunity (Passive): The Wood Aspect is immune to plant-based poisons, and applies a two-success bonus on rolls to resist other poisons or disease.

Spring of Sextes Jylis (Active): Spend 1 anima on Step 2. Add the Exalt's Essence to Defense against one attack.

Sap of Life (Iconic): Spend 3 Anima to heal one Health level, either that the Wood Aspect's taken, or an ally within short range has suffered, starting with the most severe.

As a Dragon-Blooded, you are a Prince of the Earth, heir to the bloodline of a million heroes tracing back to the Five Elemental Dragons. All Creation respects and fears your heritage. You Exalted during puberty, earlier or later depending on the strength of your bloodline, and have been Exalted for no less than five but up to twenty years.

THE EXIGENTS

The Unconquered Sun considers the petitions of gods in crisis, and to those he finds worthy he grants the Exigence — an Exaltation to be fueled with its recipient's own divine Essence and bestowed on whosoever they may desire. These Exigents take on myriad forms, some singular heroes without compare, others one of many like Exalted. The divine flame is a material thing, and can be stolen, whether by deft hands or bureaucratic trickery. Any god can use an Exigence to Choose a worthy mortal, but few know of the price demanded: to empower a champion, the patron is permanently lessened. For weaker gods, this may mean death outright. There are ways around this: Wun Ja, Goddess of the Shining Metropolis, graciously shares the burden of Exigence with the gods of cities she

has obtained Exigences on behalf of, allowing a lesser deity to survive the process of producing the Exigents known as Architects, the Exalted of Cities.

Play an Exigent if you want to create an Exalted you don't see represented here, if you want to have a close association with a god and champion their works across Creation, or if you want to be unique in all the world.

Strawmaiden Janest

Strawmaiden Janest is an Exigent, the Chosen of a minor god of the harvest named Ten Sheaves. She is one of a kind.

Janest's Exalt Advantages

Autumnal Grimscythe: Janest has a green jade grimscythe called Final Season (an artifact heavy weapon, see p. XX). It counts as her primary Artifact merit, regardless of any other purchased merits. She cannot lose it, and may recall it to her side from anywhere in Creation by spending 1 mote.

Harvest Walker. Spend 2 motes. Janest weaves a cocoon from her anima and vanishes — this takes one turn, and can be interrupted by forced movement or being attacked. In combat, she may move to any other location in the fight. Outside of it, she appears in a field or other rural area within a day's walking distance, in a location chosen by the Storyteller at the start of the next scene.

Resonance: Strawmaiden Janest is resonant with jade.

Anima Effects

Wheat-Speaker (Passive): Janest automatically determines whether land has been cultivated or is possible to cultivate, and what plants grew there as part of agriculture. She gains three bonus dice to any venture roll (p. XX) that involves farming or horticulture. She's also always able to orient herself to the nearest plot of agricultural land, granting three bonus dice to Navigate rolls to get there.

Return to the Cycle (Active): Corpses touched by Janest's anima (out to short range) are swallowed by sudden growth, rapidly decomposing the body and giving rise to fertile soil and new growth sufficient to provide a single harvest, even in the most inhospitable regions. This ensures the corpse will not rise as a hungry ghost and cannot be reanimated by necromancy. She must use an action to apply this effect.

Defender of the Harvest's Order (Iconic): At 10 Anima, add Janest's Essence in automatic successes to attacks against the Fair Folk or other creatures of the Wyld. These attacks deal aggravated damage. She may also summon snares of plant life to aid her, reducing the cost of the disarm, ensnare, pilfer, and pull gambits by two, to a minimum of 1.

At the end of the session, Janest gains an Exalt Milestone if her strength or charm influenced a significant character, or if she initiated or assisted the growth of a person, plant, or animal.

As an Exigent, you were Chosen by a lesser god who petitioned the Unconquered Sun for the Flame of Exigence in response to a great crisis. That god may still exist, gravely weakened yet remaining mighty, or they may have perished to empower your Exaltation. That exigent need, and the god's power and purviews, are what define your own power and purpose. You have been Exalted less than five years.

Creating an Exigent Exalted

Unlike other Exalted, there are no prescribed Charms, Advantages, or Exalted Abilities for the Exigent Exalted. Many Exigents are unique, and even those who are not don't perfectly fit the mold of existing Exalted. Exigents exist to provide a big tent for weird, cool ideas that don't necessarily fit into the bailiwicks of traditional Exalted types, so the process of

creating an Exigent character is also the process of designing an entirely new character type.

To create an Exigent character, begin with a concept — a theme that informs how the Exigent works and what their purpose is. This section breaks down how **Strawmaiden Janest** is built, so players and Storytellers can use her example to craft their own characters.

Step 1: Choose Exaltation Type

Exigents may either be Terrestrial Exalted or Celestial. This choice will decide what kinds of Martial Arts and Sorcery modes the character has access to. See the **Martial Arts and Sorcery** section on p. XX.

Ten Sheave sacrificed himself to empower Janest. She is one of a kind, and cannot pass her power on — and, therefore, one of the Celestial Exalted. Had she been one of many Strawmaidens empowered by the harvest deity, she might be Terrestrial.

Step 2: Choose Exalted Advantages

Select two Exalted Advantages and an appropriate magical material resonance. You may choose an Exigent's Exalted Advantages from other Exalted's Advantages, but only one per type (otherwise, you'd just be a copy). You may also design your own, using the existing Advantages as guidelines, but everyone at the table should be okay with what you write down. Storytellers should not allow players to cherry-pick the best combination of Advantages in order to make a broken character.

Janest's first Advantage is her **Autumnal Grimscythe**, which grants her a special weapon. This advantage fits with her theme of reaping and sowing.

Her second Advantage is **Harvest Walker**. This magical movement effect gives her an interesting movement option in a combat scene, and provides her with a utility benefit outside of it.

Janest is resonant with jade. Green jade has associations with life and growth, so it fits her theme.

Step 3: Define Aspect/Caste and Anima

Some Exigents may have Aspects or Castes that differentiate them from their fellows, like the standard Exalted. Some don't. The choice is entirely up to you. You may choose a Passive, Active, and Iconic effect from among the extant examples, or create your own using those examples as guidelines. Make sure everyone at the table is okay with what you've chosen if you come up with your own.

As above, don't just pick out the most overwhelming combination of options.

Describe what your anima looks like when it's active and when it's iconic. What effects does it have on the world, if any?

As the Chosen of the Harvest, Janest's anima resonates with the cycle of life, and has the following abilities:

- **Wheat-Speaker (Passive):** This grants a strong bonus to very specific things, which are part of Janest's general harvest theme. She might not use them all the time, but when she does they'll pay off.
- **Return to the Cycle (Active):** This makes Janest especially effective against undead foes. Players may want to design something like this which gives them an activated strength against a certain type of enemy.
- **Defender of the Harvest's Order (Iconic):** This increases her effectiveness against another enemy type, and interacts directly with making combat actions cheaper and easier. Iconic anima effects usually do something major with one of the core rules, such as cheapening gambits, reducing soak, increasing damage dice, and so on.

Step 4: Choose Charms

Exigent Exalted have their own Charms, giving them a unique kind of magic with which to

influence the world around them. At character creation, it's fine to take only Universal Charms, or select one or two Charms belonging to other Exalted that also fit your Exigent's theme. Once you've been playing the character for a while and have a grasp on the system, you can start designing your own Charms, either on your own or with your group — though, as above, everyone at the table should be on board with Charms you design.

Janest's unique suite of Charms begins on p. XX. A set of directions for how to create your own, using Janest as an example, begins on p. XX.

THE LUNAR EXALTED

The Chosen of Luna live on boundaries of Creation, traveling in and out of the Wyld as no other Exalt dares. They forged their own castes with magic never seen before or after. Once, they were soul mates to the Solars, and still rage and mourn over the Usurpation. Lunars pass wisdom and lore down through the Silver Pact, presenting a more-or-less united front against the Realm.

Sorcerers of the Pact also seek out newly Exalted Lunars, offering moonsilver tattoos to affirm their chosen Caste. Play a Lunar Exalt if you want to oppose the established powers of the world, you love the free and wild places of Creation, or if you want to be a shape-shifter of a thousand forms.

Moonsilver Tattoos

Lunars use moonsilver tattoos to protect against the warping powers of the Wyld. Any rolled Wyld effect, including Raksha charms, targeting the Lunar's physical body increases its Difficulty by the Lunar's Essence. Unrolled effects fail against the Lunar. Each tattoo is a personal design, and may resemble geometric shapes, animals or other naturalistic features, or mystical runes depending on the Lunar's choice.

Lunar Exalt Advantages

Ten Thousand Forms: The Lunar gains access to an animal shape, representative of their character, during their Exaltation. They also have a mode of Sacred Hunt, which the player chooses at character creation. **Predators** must ritually hunt their target and drink their heart's blood; **Tricksters** must outwit or beguile their target; **Stalkers** must observe and pursue their target (if the target is sentient, that means learning at least one of their Virtues or Intimacies). If the hunt is successful, the Lunar may add this target to the shapes they know.

The Lunar can spend one mote to shift into these shapes. Even shifted, however, they retain a unique Tell such as silver eyes, black nails, or razor teeth — choose this, too, during character creation. A Lunar may start play with as many forms as the player and Storyteller deem appropriate. The Lunar can acquire additional forms throughout the course of the game. While in the form of the animal, the Lunar gains access to the animal's special quality (for example: a jellyfish's ability to sting), plus any other narratively appropriate bonuses or penalties. She uses her dice pools as normal. See the section on animals on p. XX. Transforming into another human grants their appearance and voice but no other special skills or traits without the use of magic.

Transforming into another magical creature (such as a demon or god) requires special Charms (see p. XX).

Passionate Ideals: Once per story, if the Lunar would gain a new Intimacy, she may create it at the Major rather than Minor rating. Furthermore, the Lunar gains an extra die when her roll is supported by a Major Intimacy or Virtue.

Resonance: Lunars are resonant with Moonsilver.

Lunar Castes

The Lunars count three castes of their own making. They all tend to have animalistic anima banners — a wolf howling at the moon, a cobra poised to strike — but the color and radiance of their anima changes with their Caste.

Full Moon

The Full Moon is a warrior to their core, meeting the world's dangers head on through physical prowess and dogged determinations. They might be a warrior king or gloried hero. Their animal form is powerful and strong, such as a bear, bull, or horse. Their Caste Mark is a silver disc, and their anima shines bright and steady as the full moon.

At the end of each session, Full Moon Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they defeated a significant foe in single combat.

Anima Effects

Unstoppable (Passive): Extras (p. XX) cannot deal damage to the Full Moon.

Crushing Might (Active): The Lunar adds her Essence in automatic successes to any Force + Physique roll that is not an attack.

Impossible Vigor (Iconic): The Lunar heals one damage any time they Incapacitate an enemy.

Changing Moon

The Changing Moon is a silver-tongued trickster, relying on cleverness and irrepressible charm to beat their foes. They might be a spy, assassin, or scout. Their animal shape is quick, clever, and often beautiful, such as a fox, cat, or mink. Their Caste Mark is a crescent moon, and their anima is a shifting of silver light and dark blue or purple shadows.

At the end of each session, Changing Moon Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they committed a successful act of espionage or sabotage.

Anima Effects

Silver Tongue (Passive): Extras (p. XX) cannot detect any lie the Changing Moon tells, and accept it as truth no matter how outlandish.

Trickster's Cant (Active): The Lunar adds her Essence in automatic successes to social rolls made to persuade, bargain, or deceive. The Lunar must beguile their target in some regard.

Untouchable (Iconic): In combat, enemies targeting the Changing Moon suffer a dice penalty equal to her Essence. Outside of combat, enemies cannot identify the character as anything other than their animal shape.

No Moon

The No Moon relies on intellect and wisdom. They like riddles and secrets, and challenges clever foes just to prove their superiority. They have a knack for sorcery. Their animal is one of mystical importance to Luna, such as an owl, wolf, or mink. Their Caste Mark is a silver circle, and dark blue and purple shadows cloud their anima, with just a trace of silver light at the edges.

At the end of each session, No Moon Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they saved the day or changed the course of events with an application of wisdom, discretion, or their secret knowledge.

Anima Effects

Unseen Moon (Passive): Extras (p. XX) cannot see or hear the No Moon unless the Lunar chooses to allow it.

Silver Wisdom (Active): The Lunar adds their Essence in automatic successes to Force or Finesse rolls involving observation, study, or the pursuit of knowledge.

Dark Moon's Blessing (Iconic): All mundane efforts at stealth fail in the No Moon's presence. Hidden objects fall from their hiding place. Creatures using Charms to hide must make a Finesse

+ Stealth against a difficulty of three plus the No Moon's Essence. Extras keeping a secret from the No Moon immediately spill it, while non-trivial characters roll Fortitude + Integrity against a difficulty of her Essence or do the same.

Casteless

The Casteless may be newly Exalted, and not yet caught up with the Silver Pact. Or maybe they're an elder Lunar who chooses to remain Casteless. They may have any kind of animal form. Their Caste Mark and animas are ever-changing like the phases of the moon.

At the end of each session, Casteless gain an Exalt Milestone if they successfully executed a clever and daring plan.

Anima Effects

Reflected Moon (Passive): The Casteless chooses a Passive anima effect from another Lunar Caste to use as their own. They can change Passive effect whenever they gain a Personal or Exalt milestone.

Shifting Moon's Reserve (Active): Choose an Attribute + Ability roll iconic to the character. The Casteless always adds Essence in automatic successes to that roll. Choose the Attribute + Ability when this effect comes into play. It cannot be switched until the next scene.

Chimera's Visage (Iconic): The Casteless may waive the usual cost for shapeshifting. While in iconic anima, the Casteless is immune to any affect that would transform her body against her will.

As a Lunar Exalt, you were Chosen by Luna after a period of great struggle and strife, receiving her blessing and unleashing your potential. You likely encountered another Lunar soon after and were invited (but not compelled) to join the Lunar society known as the Silver Pact. You have been Exalted for less than five years.

THE SIDEREAL EXALTED

The Sidereal Exalted are the Chosen of the Maidens of Fate. They are secret agents, dispatched from the heavenly city of Yu-Shan to smooth out tangled fates. With the gift of astrology, they see the future — and weave it to their own ends. They are also the masters of the esoteric Sidereal Martial Arts.

Play a Sidereal if you want to be a powerbroker in celestial politics, a wise advisor guiding your fellow heroes, a genius martial artist, or an oracle working from the shadows.

Sidereal Exalt Advantages

Arcane Fate: After a scene interacting with a Sidereal, other characters forget her appearance, voice, and other defining traits. Instead, they attribute the Sidereal's actions to a passer-by or happenstance. Nontrivial characters may resist with a Difficulty 5 Integrity-based roll. This doesn't affect the character's Circle, characters with an Intimacy towards the Sidereal, or heavenly officials (including other Sidereals).

Weaving Destiny: Spend 1 mote to weave a destiny based on a broad archetype, profession, or social role, granting it to a character with a touch. Once per scene, when attempting a task that resonates with that archetype, the target may transform up to the Sidereal's Essence dice into automatic successes. New destinies override old ones.

The Sidereal may weave a destiny for herself; while active, she loses Arcane Fate, allowing others to remember their destiny's persona. Casting off this destiny reasserts Arcane Fate, causing others to forget the false identity.

Resonance: Sidereals are resonant with starmetal.

Masters of Martial Arts

Sidereal Charms are Fate's toolkit — specific and unusual powers designed by the Maidens to help maintain and repair the wefts of Fate. The Sidereal Exalted perfected mastery over Martial

Arts styles in order to have tools to combat Creation's myriad foes.

Whenever a Sidereal Exalt gains an Exalt milestone (p. XX) she may use it to purchase Martial Arts Charms as if they were Sidereal Charms.

Anima

While active, a Sidereal anima is a bright outline of color based on the Sidereal's Maiden, trailing stardust as they move. At the iconic level, they gain halos inscribed with ancient prophecies and radiate a sense of their Maiden's domain.

Sidereal Castes

The Sidereals are divided into five Castes, one for each of the Maidens of Fate: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Their Caste Marks are the astrological signs of those Maidens.

Journeys

The Chosen of Mercury are wanderers, pilgrims, and explorers, always seeking the horizon. Their animas are saffron yellow, tinged with a sense of far-away places: dust of the road, sea spray, and thunderstorms.

At the end of each session, Journeys Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they solved a problem through a path of least resistance or guided others through unknown or dangerous territory.

Anima Effects

Auspicious Journey Insight (Passive): When meeting a character, the Sidereal may ask a question about their recent whereabouts, previous travel, or origins and get an honest, useful answer from the Storyteller. Additional questions cost one mote each.

Lesser Sign of Mercury (Active): The Sidereal and allies in Close range ignore the effects of difficult terrain, and add the Sidereal's Essence in dice any time they would need to roll for

movement-related actions. These dice do not count towards the cap.

Greater Sign of Mercury (Iconic): Spend 10 Anima. The Sidereal can teleport herself and her Circle or up to her Essence plus four allies to a location she has previously visited, depositing them in a safe spot of the Storyteller's choice.

Serenity

The Chosen of Venus are lovers, poets, and romantics tasked with bringing people together according to Heaven's design. Their animas are deep cerulean, tinged with a sense of romance: rose petals, silk, and wine.

At the end of each session, Serenity Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they deescalated a dangerous or violent conflict or soothed the emotions of a significant character.

Anima Effects

Auspicious Serenity Insight (Passive): When meeting a character, the Sidereal can ask a question about the character's romantic interests, personal vices, or fond wishes and get an honest, useful answer from the Storyteller. Additional questions cost one mote each.

Lesser Sign of Venus (Active): The Sidereal and her allies may transform her Essence in dice to automatic successes on Performance and Craft rolls based on joy, love, or attraction, including Build Power actions.

Greater Sign of Venus (Iconic): Spend 10 Anima. The Sidereal halts all combat within the scene. Participating characters, including other players' characters, may not make attacks, purchase gambits, build power or use military tactics and naval combat stratagems until the Sidereal has had a chance to either flee or speak.

Battles

The Chosen of Mars are warriors, strategists, and firebrands overseeing the ebb and flow of battle. Their animas are bold crimson, tinged

with conflict: the snap of banners in the wind, singing blades, and blood on grass.

At the end of each session, Battles Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if a significant combatant heeded their counsel or wisdom, or their advice or preparation turned the tides of a significant conflict or lead to an acceptable loss.

Anima Effects

Auspicious Battle Insight (Passive): When meeting a character, the Sidereal can ask a question about the character's combat prowess, military goals, or favored strategies and get an honest, useful answer from the Storyteller. Additional questions cost one mote each.

Lesser Sign of Mars (Active): The Sidereal and her allies may transform her Essence in dice to automatic successes on Presence and War rolls to rally troops, devise tactics, and implement strategies, including Build Power actions.

Greater Sign of Mars (Iconic): Spend 10 Anima. The Sidereal distributes 10 Power to her allies, divided as she chooses. If this makes a character exceed 10 Power, the recipient may bank the excess Power as additional damage dice instead, which must be spent before the end of the scene. This does not count towards the dice cap.

Secrets

The Chosen of Jupiter are occultists, sages, and secret-brokers who work in the shadows to uncover forbidden truths. Their animas are dark green, tinged with a sense of the unspoken: shuffling papers, flickering candles, and long shadows.

At the end of each session, Secrets Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they interfered in someone else's affairs or discovered a significant secret.

Anima Effects

Auspicious Secrets Insight (Passive): When meeting a character, the Sidereal can ask a

question about the character's criminal activities, greatest shame, or field of expertise and get an honest, useful answer from the Storyteller. Additional questions cost one mote each.

Lesser Sign of Jupiter (Active): The Sidereal and her allies may transform her Essence in dice to automatic successes on Sagacity and Stealth rolls to unravel mysteries, conduct reconnaissance, or investigate the unknown.

Greater Sign of Secrets (Iconic): Spend 10 Anima: For the rest of the session, actions that attempt to detect, track, investigate, or read the Sidereal and her allies suffer a three-success penalty, and automatically botch if failed. Characters with an Essence equal to or lesser than the Sidereal are compelled to tell the truth, and any attempt they make to deceive the Sidereal or her allies also automatically fails.

Endings

The Chosen of Saturn are healers, prophets, and envoys who serve as harbingers of death and change. Their animas are violet, tinged with a sense of sorrow: whispering voices, crow wings, and cracking frost.

At the end of each session, Endings Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they completed a venture, brought a long-standing problem to a decisive conclusion, or saw a violent conflict to its end.

Anima Effects

Auspicious Endings Insight (Passive): When meeting a character, the Sidereal can ask a question about the character's fears, health, or political ambitions and get an honest, useful answer. Additional questions cost one mote each.

Lesser Sign of Saturn (Active): The Sidereal and her allies may transform her Essence in dice to automatic successes on Embassy and Awareness roles to anticipate danger or assess hostile motivations, or reach a peaceful conclusion.

Greater Sign of Saturn (Iconic): Spend 10 Anima: The Sidereal and her allies gain +1 Overwhelming on **withering** attacks; on **decisive** attacks, Soak cannot reduce their successes below the Sidereal's Essence. Enemies who take damage within short range of the Sidereal may not choose to take a Dramatic Injury. If a dying character is present in the scene with the Sidereal, she may grant them a peaceful death, sending them immediately into their next life.

As a Sidereal Exalt, your Exaltation was destined before your birth, and your life before was filled with strange coincidences and omens of fate. You were compelled to join the Sidereal society called the Fivescore Fellowship, those who serve under the bureaucracy of Heaven. You have been Exalted for less than five years.

THE SOLAR EXALTED

The Chosen of the Unconquered Sun are champions who exhibit great potential and aspire to lofty ambitions. Solar Exalted are warriors, orators, spies, scholars, sorcerers, and engineers. They were the Lawgivers to Creation.

As the Great Curse set in, some First Age Solars grew power-hungry, went mad, or declared war on former allies. The destruction they wrought threatened Creation itself, and the Dragon-Blooded, aided by the Sidereal Exalted, overthrew them. Now, they've returned to the world, ready to save or destroy it.

Play one of the Solar Exalted if you want to be a legendary hero seeking to right ancient wrongs; a religious leader inspiring your followers to improve the world; a sorcerer in search of long-forgotten magics; or an adventurer exploring abandoned ruins and places of power.

Solar Exalt Advantages

First Among Equals: Solar Exalts always win ties, even when there's no clear defender (see p. XX). Solar players' characters win ties against Solar

Storyteller characters; player characters vying against one another use normal tie rules.

Supremacy of Ability: Solars don't pay the mote cost to activate Excellencies.

Divine Resonance: Solars are resonant with all magical materials, especially orichalcum.

Creatures of Darkness

Creatures of darkness are formally designated by the Unconquered Sun. He detests them above all else, deeming them the enemies of Creation. His Exalts excel at many things, but one of their greatest talents is for destroying their patron's enemies: Fair Folk, demons of all circles, the undead and their masters the Deathlords. The ghosts of the dead cannot even bear the touch of the Sun's light, though paths back to the Most High's righteous mercy exist. Abyssals, having sworn fealty to the Deathlords, and Infernals, who draw their might from that of the Yozis, are both considered creatures of darkness; however, despite being classified as undead, Liminals are categorically not.

Anima

When active, the Solar's anima blazes with the sun's golden light, and gusts with hot summer wind. At the iconic level, the banner becomes a brilliant beacon. It swirls with the Solar's personal imagery and illuminates the immediate area in bright sunlight.

Solar Castes

The five Solar Castes represent each stage of the day.

Dawn

The Dawn Caste are mighty warriors, charismatic generals, and genius strategists who fiercely defend their charges and lead armies to victory. Their animas are sunrise-hued: pale yellow, blue, and pink. Morning birds and hunting hawks call within, accompanied by the smell of molten metal. Their Caste Mark is a golden sunburst.

At the end of each session, Dawn Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they fought in a battle or defended an ally.

Anima Effects

Supernal Warrior (Passive): Without needing to roll, defeat up to the Dawn's Essence in Extras (p. XX) every turn, and add the Dawn's Essence in dice to damage against battle groups.

Additionally, battle groups increase the difficulty to resist a rout check by the Exalt's Essence.

Fearsome Visage (Active): The Dawn Caste is a terrifying foe. Add the Solar's Essence in automatic successes to attempts to frighten or intimidate an opponent. Any gambits based on fear or intimidation have their cost reduced by one.

Unconquered (Iconic): At 10 anima, follow any Ranged or Close Combat attack with a secondary attack using a different ability. This attack must target a different opponent.

Zenith

The Zenith Caste are faithful priests and fiery orators, who inspire their followers to strive for justice. They're holy warriors who vanquish the dead and creatures of darkness. Upon their Exaltation, the Unconquered Sun speaks directly to them. Their animas are the brilliant white and gold of the midday sky, streaked with cobalt. At the iconic level, images of bulls, pillars, and other unyielding objects appear. Their Caste Mark is a golden solar disc.

At the end of each session, Zenith Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they inspired a significant character with their words.

Anima Effects

All Eyes Upon Me (Passive): Extras (p. XX) and non-heroic mortals cannot ignore the Zenith's social actions and will do as she asks as long as the request is reasonable. The Zenith gains the

dice bonus from refusing her influence if any target chooses a **hard bargain**.

Purity of Purpose (Active): The Zenith adds their Essence in automatic successes to Presence and Performance rolls, or instantly destroys any undead Extras they can perceive. Add the Zenith's Essence in damage dice against undead battle groups.

Highest of Holies (Iconic): At 10 anima, add the Solar's Essence in automatic successes to attacks against creatures of darkness (p. XX). These attacks deal aggravated damage. The first time the Zenith reaches iconic anima in a scene, any battle group lead by or consisting of creatures of darkness must immediately make a rout check with the difficulty increased by the Exalt's Essence.

Twilight

Passionate in their pursuit of knowledge, the Twilight Caste are traveling scholars, engineers, and sorcerers, seeking to bring wisdom to the world and improve peoples' lives. Their animas reflect the colors of sunset and early evening. At the iconic level, images of tomes and gears swirl within. Their Caste Mark is a golden circle, filled with gold on the top and empty on the bottom half.

At the end of each session, Twilight Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they used their knowledge to help a significant ally.

Anima Effects

Joyous Pursuit (Passive): Reduce difficulty to overcome obstacles while working on a venture (p. XX) involving investigation, research, or planning by the Twilight's Essence, to a minimum of one.

Indefatigable Genius (Active): Add the Solar's Essence in automatic successes to Craft and Sagacity rolls, or to rolls to build Will for spellcasting purposes.

Summoner's Call (Iconic): Spend 5 anima. The Twilight may summon a minor elemental or first circle demon of her choice, instantly calling it to her side. It remains bound to her for the rest of the scene.

Night

The Night Caste are spies and assassins, striking down the unrighteous from the cover of darkness. Where the other Lawgivers' displays of power draw attention, Night Caste Solars are subtle. Shades of gray, violet, and black twist through their pale gold animas. At the iconic level, they flash with the glint of moonlight on steel, and trail shadows in their wake. Their Caste Mark is an empty golden circle.

At the end of each session, Night Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they successfully stole an important item or gained access to a locked or guarded space undetected.

Anima Effects

No One Special (Passive): The Night Caste can dampen her anima, preventing others from seeing it until she wants to be noticed. She cannot suppress her iconic anima.

Cloak of Shadows (Active): The Night Caste wraps her anima around her like a cloak and moves about unseen. Add her Essence in automatic successes to Stealth and Athletics rolls. Anyone who *does* notice her sees only a flickering shadow-visage; it's impossible to discern her identity.

Vanishing Foe (Iconic): Spend 1 anima, After resolving a successful attack, the Night Caste may move instantly to any other location in the scene and gain her Essence in Power.

Eclipse

The Eclipse Caste are diplomats, negotiators, and peacemakers. They mend rifts between nations, de-escalate conflicts, and oversee bargains with the Fair Folk. Their white and gold animas coruscate outward into wispy trails like the corona of an eclipse. At the iconic level,

symbols of peace appear within them, and harmonious voices sing. Their Caste Mark is a golden disc within a circle.

At the end of each session, Eclipse Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they successfully made a deal or defused a conflict between two significant characters or groups.

Anima Effects

Universal Scholar (Passive): The Eclipse may learn Charms from spirits, Fair Folk, and other supernatural beings with the Eclipse keyword (See Chapter 7, p. XX). For 2 anima, the Eclipse may seal an oath between two parties. Those sealed are bound to honor the oath and suffer a two-dice penalty to any subsequent rolls for the rest of the session if they do not.

Esteemed Guest (Active): When the Eclipse negotiates with demons, Fair Folk, spirits, or the dead, they must welcome the Eclipse and entourage and present Exalt with human hospitality. These beings must treat the Circle with pleasantries and respect unless the Exalts act with hostility first. Hostile actions by the opposing party (such as making attacks, threats, or building power) are made at a Difficulty increased by the Eclipse's Essence.

Venerated Witness (Iconic): Everyone in the scene must honor their agreements with other characters in the Eclipse's presence and suffer her Essence in increased Difficulty to all actions taken to go back on their word. For 5 anima, the Eclipse may seal a greater oath between two parties. Anyone who breaks their vow suffers an appropriately grand curse determined by the Storyteller. The other party is aware of when and how the promise was broken.

As a Solar Exalt, you were Chosen for your excellence and potential, and seek to uphold the virtues of the Unconquered Sun. Though you are hunted by the Realm, you have thus far escaped the Wyld Hunt, and have been Exalted for less than a year.

EXALTS OF OTHER REALMS

These Exalts draw their power from forces outside Creation or hold dominion there. It's helpful to know a bit about the setting before playing one, but not required.

Abyssal Exalts are powerful necromancers and emissaries to the dead. They rule over the Underworld as its undisputed masters. If playing a chivalric deathly knight appeals to you, turn to p. XX.

Alchemical Exalted are created beings, some from the faraway world of Autochthonia or some lost to the depths of history. If playing a heroic construct or an alien from a bizarre world sounds fun, turn to p. XX.

Getimian Exalts never existed, but the power of their magic creates them and lets them remember a Creation that could have been. If playing an outsider who remembers a world that doesn't exist excites you, go to p. XX.

Infernal Exalted have demonic power, drawn from the hell-Realm of Malfeas. They want to violently overthrow tyrants and oppressors. If playing a rock star from hell sounds too cool to pass up, go to p. XX.

Liminal Exalts are undead — the product of someone's attempt at resurrection. They are constructs of flesh and bone, who protect the boundary between the living and the dead. If being an undead monster is your thing, go to p. XX.

Alchemicals, Getimians, and Liminals have rules that make using their powers slightly more complicated. Storytellers running the game for new players should check in with them and ask if they find this kind of complexity exciting or frustrating.

THE ABYSSAL EXALTED

The Solar Exaltations stolen by the Deathlords were transformed into the Abyssal Exalted. Each Abyssal was offered their Exaltation at the moment of death, knowing that the only way to

escape their own demise was to become a harbinger of the world's end. They have no names, having cast that identifier into the Void — so most go by their bestowed title. As dark mirrors to the Solars, Abyssals embody the overwhelming and inevitable powers of the Void. They are carnage-bringers, deathknights, and lords of the grim kingdoms of the Underworld, masters of the dark secrets of necromancy, and — sometimes — tragic heroes in search of redemption.

Play an Abyssal if you want to be caught up in the Underworld's ghostly melodrama, pursue knowledge and power with neither hesitation nor scruples, or speak for the dead in a world that would rather forget.

Abyssal Exalt Advantages

Death's Champions: Abyssals are considered undead whenever it is beneficial to them; while they may still be incapacitated by fatigue, hunger, thirst, or asphyxiation, they enter torpor rather than dying, recovering in a later scene. In places touched by death, such as the Underworld or a blood-soaked battlefield, they gain a one-success bonus on any action that evokes fear, sorrow, dread, or acceptance.

Cruel Banquet: Once per scene, an Abyssal may replenish their Essence by inflicting a level of damage *or* committing an act that frightens, subdues, or angers the target. Draining or terrifying a trivial character restores one mote; an elite character restores two; and a powerful character — such as another Exalt — restores three.

Resonance: Abyssals are resonant with soulsteel.

The Gifts of Undeath

Undead creatures no longer need to eat, breathe, or sleep, though they can still willingly engage in these activities. They never suffer penalties from fatigue, exhaustion, or deprivation, and they cannot be affected by

mundane diseases or poisons (though they are able to transmit those maladies to the living). Many undead are considered creatures of darkness (p. XX) and cannot bear the sun's light.

Anima

An Abyssal's anima is a dark wound upon the world, tinged with bruise-blues, blood-reds, and the colors of pox and shadow. At the Iconic level, it erupts into a fearsome symbol of the Abyssal, usually a predatory animal, ghostly figure, or other image of the apocalypse. Sometimes, they swirl with a hint of the color of their Solar Caste counterparts.

Abyssal Castes

The five Abyssal Castes are corruptions of their Solar origins, turned to the service of the Underworld. Their Caste Marks are likewise bleak and blackened versions of their Solar opposites.

Dusk

The vanguard of Death's army, Dusk Castes are warriors dedicated to the singular beauty of slaughter in all its hideous forms. Their animas tend towards pitch black and blood-reds.

At the end of each session, Dusk Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they engaged a significant foe in bloody combat.

Anima Effects

Death is Inevitable (Passive): The Dusk's attacks instantly slay trivial characters without a roll; against nontrivial characters, their **decisive** attacks always inflict at least one level of damage.

Fear Made Flesh (Active): The Dusk can flurry influence actions meant to intimidate, demoralize, or otherwise frighten a foe, reducing the flurry penalty by two on each action. They can also intimidate otherwise mindless targets, such as automata.

The Walking Apocalypse (Iconic): Once per turn, she may respond to an attack on Step 8,

making a counterattack with any combat Ability. If successful, she gains her Essence as a success bonus to damage during Step 5 of her next attack against the target.

Midnight

Priests to the powers of the Underworld and beyond, the Midnight Caste build cults among the living and the dead, preaching the gospel of the Void. Their anima banners show the rich dark blues and deepest blacks.

At the end of each session, Midnight Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they intimidated or coerced a significant character or group.

Anima Effects

Void Prophet (Passive): Once per scene, the Midnight may automatically intuit a character's greatest losses, disappointments, and sorrows, treating these pain points as a Minor Intimacy for influence. Additional uses cost one mote each.

Apocalyptic Voice (Active): The Abyssal gains her Essence in automatic successes on social influence to inspire feelings of fear, peace, despair, or acceptance.

Reveal the Faithless (Iconic): Spend 5 Anima. Characters within the scene suffer a five-success penalty to deceive or hide from the Midnight and her entourage. Those caught lying are infected with a minor disease of the Midnight's choice, even if normally immune.

Daybreak

Geniuses who pursue discovery at any cost, Daybreaks are brutal surgeons, necromancers, and scholars who would unmake the world to better understand it. Their anima banners are a stately gray shot through with the bruise-blues and blood-reds of all the castes.

At the end of each session, Daybreak Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they used their knowledge to provoke conflict with or undermine a significant foe.

Anima Effects

Dark Inspiration (Passive): Once per session, the Daybreak may make a second roll on a Craft or Sagacity venture (p. XX) regardless of if she has already made an applicable roll this scene or session.

Underworldly Lore (Active): Add the Daybreak's Essence in automatic successes to Craft and Sagacity rolls, or to Build Will for necromancy.

Gruesome Epiphany (Iconic) – When her anima reaches Iconic, the Daybreak intuits, reveals, or causes a vital weakness (physical, mental, or emotional) for a character, object, or structure within long range. Until the end of the scene, the Daybreak and her allies double 8s on all rolls to attack or otherwise leverage this vulnerability. She may spend 2 Anima to allow this effect to persist for the rest of the scene.

Day

The Day Caste walk under the light of the sun to do death's work when it is least expected. They are assassins, saboteurs, and spies in the land of the living. Their animas are ethereal grays and blacks, tinged with the colors common to all Abyssals.

At the end of each session, Day Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they committed a significant sabotage or infiltration.

Anima Effects

Walking in Daylight (Passive): The Abyssal may force their anima to remain invisible until they reach Iconic. When their anima is Dim, they gain a three-success bonus to any attempts to conceal their deathly nature.

Grim Caul (Active): The Abyssal gains her Essence in automatic successes on Stealth rolls while her anima is active. It is impossible to determine her identity.

Living Shadow (Iconic): The Abyssal's body becomes immaterial — nothing more than shadow and Essence. She is immune to being

grappled or restrained and can move through solid matter as long as she ends her movement in an open space.

Moonshadow

The Moonshadow Caste are death's courtiers and emissaries, sent into the world to parley on behalf of the apocalypse. Their animas are translucent silver and black sheets, with a faint corona of the colors common to other castes.

At the end of each session, Moonshadow Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they made a deal with a significant character or group or sowed discord between significant characters or groups.

Anima Effects

God of the Ashes (Passive): Like their Eclipse counterparts, the Moonshadow may learn Eclipse-keyword Charms from spirits, fair folk, and other supernatural beings, and seal pacts with the power of the Neverborn. They pay the same anima cost to seal oaths as Eclipses (p. XX).

Speaker for the Dead (Active): While negotiating with spirits, Fair Folk, or ghosts, the Moonshadow and her allies must be given safety and hospitality. Promises or deals made during these negotiations are sanctified; anyone who breaks them suffers immediate misfortune determined by the Storyteller based on the broken oath.

Gates of Death (Iconic): Spend 5 Anima to open a portal to the Underworld within medium range. It leads either to a safe location over which the Moonshadow has authority (such as a manse or her Deathlord's realm), or to an interesting location of the Storyteller's choice. The portal stays open for the rest of the scene or until the Moonshadow wills it closed.

BEGIN TEXT BOX

As an Abyssal Exalt, you suffered an untimely and likely gruesome fate, only for a Deathlord to offer you dark power and immortality moments before your death. The price was your name,

and your obeisance to beings seeking to obliterate all life. Having completed your training and swearing fealty to your feudal lords, you have been a deathknight for less than a year.

THE ALCHEMICAL EXALTED

Legend tells that Autochthon, the King of All Craftsmen who slumbers beyond the reaches of Creation, created the Alchemical Exalts as proof to the gods that Exaltation could be their greatest weapon. Autochthon left Creation long ago, but sometimes, a community in need of a champion finds a hero hidden away in a time-lost vault.

An artificial human made of sacred clay and magical materials, your Alchemical was created before the Divine Revolution and left behind in stasis when Autochthon abandoned Creation.

They might also be a new Alchemical who has ventured into Creation to save their world of industrial horrors.

Play an Alchemical Exalt if you want to be an animated relic from a lost time, a stalwart champion of your chosen community, or a peerless machine with endless and customizable potential.

The Rite of Reconfiguration

Alchemicals acquire Charms as normal, but unlike other Exalted, their Charms are arcane technology. The Alchemical cannot use their new Charms — Alchemical or Universal — until they are physically created and installed. Many Alchemicals cultivate relationships with savants in their community who assist them in building Charms to heighten their power. The Exalt is effectively helpless during the Rite, depending on their attendants, allies, and community for protection. Removed Charms sublimate into raw anima that orbits the Alchemical as a ring of arcane symbols, while Charms to be installed disappear from the anima and appear in the hands of your attendants ready to be equipped.

When you have access to at least two of the following, you can spend a dramatic or recovery scene to retrofit your Alchemical body, equipping augmentations and replacements.

- Ritual space and magical infrastructure, consecrated to your community.
- Trained attendants, accustomed to the Rite's prayers.
- A friend, ally, or confidant to whom you have an emotional connection (Intimacy).
- Sacred reagents, carefully prepared for you specifically.

Alchemical Exalt Advantages

Living Artifact: The Alchemical is a carefully created machine, perhaps closer to an artifact than a living being. She may hold an artifact to take one of its Evocations as her own Charm. If the Evocation has any prerequisites, she must meet those. Once installed, the Alchemical can use the Evocation as if it were an innate Charm, without access to the artifact itself. The Alchemical can only have one such Evocation-Charm at a time, but may switch between existing ones during a reconfiguration. Alchemicals may learn Evocations from their own Artifacts with Exalt Milestones; these are represented as certain technological aesthetics applied to the artifact itself, such as a daiklave developing embedded circuitry.

Community Spirit: The Alchemical has a deep need to find a community that will accept her as their own, and to whose purpose she may lend her strength. This doesn't mean she's fixed in place, as her chosen community may range far such as "orphaned children" or "oppressed laborers." Their believe in her as a guardian, and once she's found them, this awakens a power deep inside her. Design this as a custom effect based around the Exalt's purpose, one that should be tied to her community.

Examples include:

- Increase Resolve by one when someone

- targets an Intimacy towards her community.
- Increase Defense by two when using Defend Other on a community member.
- Add a three-dice bonus to attacks when fighting for the community.
- Whatever it is, it grants a small but meaningful effect. Refer to Bonuses and Penalties on p. XX.

Resonance: Alchemicals are resonant with the material for which they take their Caste name.

Anima

Alchemical animas are the radiant versions of their magical material's hue, given life and energy. Their anima banners show the process of their making, whether it's a great machine, ancient runes, or weird crystal shapes.

Alchemical Castes

Alchemical Exalts come in six castes. Their bodies are made of one magical metal, from which they take their name, in addition to copper, crystals, stone, and whatever else their maker could get their hands on.

Adamant

The Adamant Caste is a teacher, artist, or muse. They prize precision, artistry, and above all efficiency. They refract and refine the spiritual lives of others with calculated performances and inhuman discipline.

At the end of each session, Adamant Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if their spiritual guidance caused a significant character to gain an Intimacy or if it improved the life of others.

Anima Effects

Muse (Passive): The Adamant Caste serves as muse to any one non-Exalt. That person adds the Exalt's Essence in dice to any roll to which the Adamant's inspiration contributes. This immediately raises any Extras (p. XX) to non-trivial characters.

Be More Precise (Active): When an attack targeting the Adamant Caste misses, she may

spend 1 Anima on Step 4 to inflict a success penalty to the attacker's next attack action equal to her Essence. She may do the same on social influence rolls that fail to meet her Resolve.

Guiding Hand (Iconic): The Adamant Caste's allies gain dice equal to her Essence on attack or social influence rolls on Step 3. This costs 2 Anima and lasts until the end of the scene, so long as the Exalt is physically present and not incapacitated. These dice do not count towards the cap.

Jade

The Jade Caste is hard-working and down to earth. Outgoing and social, he finds himself a folk hero without trying. He thrives working or fighting alongside his community.

At the end of each session, Jade Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if sheer hard work overcame a significant obstacle or lead to a victory.

Anima Effects

Friendly Face (Passive): The Jade Caste can befriend any Extra without a roll. His new friend feels immediately inclined to do something for him, like share a plot-important secret or give him the keys to the jail. The player and Storyteller should agree on what sort of important little favor the new friend does.

Hard as Jade (Active): Spend 1 Anima to Add Essence to soak on Step 6, until the start of your next turn.

Stalwart Rock (Iconic): The Alchemical and any allies add half his Essence, rounded up, to soak. So long as he is physically present and not incapacitated, Extras (p. XX) under his protection cannot be harmed. This costs 5 Anima and lasts until the end of the scene.

Moonsilver

The Moonsilver Alchemical is the perfect spy, scout, and assassin. They're agile, quick, and not seen unless they want to. This Exalt protects

their community from dangers no one saw coming.

At the end of each session, Moonsilver Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they infiltrated a secure location or discovered a significant enemy secret.

Anima Effects

Ephemeral Moon (Passive): The Moonsilver Caste can sneak past Extras (p. XX) without a roll. Non-trivial characters who might catch them have to make a Force + Integrity roll at Difficulty 3 in order to remember what they saw.

Quicksilver (Active): The Moonsilver gains their Essence in automatic successes to ambush attacks or attacks from concealment (p. XX), and any attack actions they take when acting before an enemy.

Strike Twice (Iconic): The Moonsilver spends 5 Anima to act again during the same round, whether that's taking social actions, stealth, attacking, etc. This is a full new turn, in which she may take two more actions.

Orichalcum

The Orichalcum Caste is a natural leader and hero. She's forceful and decisive, with a tendency to brashness and dogmatism. She unites her community to repel all outside threats.

At the end of each session, Orichalcum Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they guided a group to victory in combat.

Anima Effects

Radiant Gold (Passive): The Orichalcum can persuade a neutral battle group (p. XX) into accepting her as their leader without a roll. If they already have a leader, the player makes a social influence against difficulty 5. She gains her Essence in automatic successes to attempts to persuade non-trivial targets to follow her lead.

Righteous Scorn (Active): The Alchemical reduces enemy soak by her half her Essence, round up, on Step 7 when she targets them with an attack.

Golden Leader (Iconic): Mortal troops under the Orichalcum's command gain elite drill, and +1 size for the rest of the scene. The Exalt adds her Essence in dice to rout checks.

Soulsteel

The Soulsteel Caste brings justice. He hears tales of a despot or war criminal preying on his community, and sets out to punish them. No matter the distance. No matter their defenses. He finds them, and makes an example of them.

At the end of each session, Soulsteel Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they punish the wicked or assisted another character with vengeance or attaining a just outcome. The player decides what her character deems wicked or just.

Anima Effects

Dark Presence (Passive): The Soulsteel Caste can intimidate Extras (p. XX) without a roll. He gains his Essence in automatic successes to attempts to intimidate or frighten non-trivial targets.

Shroud of Fear (Active): Anyone who targets the Soulsteel with a Close Combat attack must make a reflexive Integrity roll against Difficulty 3 on Step 1 before any other effects are rolled, or the attack fails and must target someone else.

Steel's Rebuke (Iconic): The Soulsteel adds her Force Attribute in automatic successes to any attack and damage rolls she makes. This does not count towards the cap.

Starmetal

The Starmetal Caste is the quiet manipulator, the unseen power behind their community's leader. They always act for the greater good, but has a tendency to think they know better than everyone else.

At the end of each session, Starmetal Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they secretly guided a group's leader to decisions or persuaded a significant character to do things her way.

Anima Effects

Silent Star (Passive): The Starmetal Caste can order Extras (p. XX) in a position of authority to relay her orders without a roll. This doesn't work if the command works against the Extra's interests.

Guiding Light (Active): The Alchemical adds their Essence in automatic successes to Embassy and Sagacity rolls.

When Stars Align (Iconic): Spend 1 Anima. The Starmetal adds half their Essence, rounded up, to both attack and damage rolls for herself and their allies, which lasts until the end of the scene. This does not count towards the cap.

As an Alchemical Exalt, you were created and Chosen by Autochthon as living proof to the Unconquered Sun that Exaltation could be the weapon of the gods. The Great Maker sealed you away before the Divine Revolution thousands of years ago, to await an unspecified hour of need. That time is now, and you have been awakened and part of a community for less than ten years.

THE GETIMIAN EXALTED

A Getimian does not exist until Exaltation. They are discarded destinies, heroes who were never born because their existence was inconvenient to the petty bureaucracy of Heaven. They fight now to remake Creation into the world they alone remember.

Play a Getimian if you want to be an outsider plucked from an unrealized destiny, embittered by a world that does not recognize your glory; a ruthless seeker of self-enlightenment; or a rebel against the hegemony of Heaven.

Getimian Exalt Advantages

Getimian Alchemy: Divide the Getimian's motes into two pools — Flowing and Still. They may reallocate their pools between sessions or during downtime, but must leave at least 1 mote in either pool. When they regain motes, they may choose which pool to restore first. They gain a one-success bonus on rolls with Force when their Flowing pool is larger or with Finesse when Still is larger, and also with Fortitude when the pools are balanced (within 1 mote of each other).

Infected Fate: The Getimian may spend 1 mote to bind a target into her personal Loom of Fate, naming a role in relation to the Getimian, such as bodyguard, business partner, or apprentice.

While acting in that role, the character transforms the Getimian's Essence in dice into successes before rolling; if they act against it, they suffer a one-success penalty. This lasts for one day.

Resonance: Getimians are resonant with starmetal.

Anima

Getimian animas are pale colors mixed with black and white Essence. At the active level, this anima surrounds them, either ever-flowing or perfectly tranquil. At the iconic level, it bursts outwards, becoming a web of unrealized possibilities. Vistas from the Getimian's world can be seen within — as can scuttling pattern spiders, reshaping Creation in that world's image. Spring Castes have cherry-blossom pink scattered through their anima, while Summer Castes display a grass-green color. Autumn Castes' animas have a fallen-leaf orange tint, while Winter Castes' animas are the gray-blue of light reflected on snowfall.

Getimian Castes

Each of the four Getimian Castes embodies a certain kind of destiny which was stolen from the Exalt — and which she is empowered to reclaim. Their Caste Marks display an

astrological sign representing that which vanishes from the heavens, and then returns.

Spring

The Springs are heroic dreamers, warrior-poets, and guardians defined by their unshakable valor. They helped make their world beautiful — and now Creation will benefit from their bold vision.

At the end of each session, Spring Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they inspired a significant character or group with honeyed words or visions of their perfect world.

Anima Effects

Smiling Stranger Allure (Passive): The first time the Getimian meets a character, they immediately develop a positive impression of her and offer any reasonable hospitality. Nontrivial characters can roll Fortitude + Integrity against Difficulty 5 to resist.

Bravery Blooms Wild (Active): Add her total Flowing motes in dice to resist effects that inspire fear. If the Getimian succeeds, she gains a one-success bonus on her next roll against the source.

Better World Proposition (Iconic): When the Getimian's anima reaches Iconic, she names a mission or goal which she believes in wholeheartedly. Characters within medium range must either accept a positive Minor Intimacy towards that goal or suffer a two-success penalty for the rest of the scene as they are wracked with visions of a perfect future.

Summer

The Summers are conquerors, mad prophets, and iconoclasts who upend the old order by their steely conviction. They come from worlds of upheaval, ready to shatter the old ways of Creation.

At the end of each session, Summer Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they brought a significant

character or group under their control or seized control over a dangerous or chaotic situation.

Anima Effects

Impossible Conquest Authority (Passive): Trivial characters cannot ignore or refuse the Getimian's demands, and must either comply or cower. Nontrivial characters can resist with a Difficulty 5 Fortitude + Integrity roll, allowing them to refuse her demands or leave.

Ambition Always Thrives (Active): Add her Flowing motes in dice to resist effects that would slow, paralyze, or restrain the Getimian, including grapples. If she succeeds, she gains a one-success bonus on her next roll against the source.

Charting the Future's Course (Iconic): When the Getimian's anima reaches Iconic, roll Fortitude + Awareness. Once per turn, she may spend one of these successes to pose a hypothetical to the Storyteller and get an honest, useful answer. For example: *How would the queen react if I refused? What would happen if I choose the left door?* Anyone acting on this insight gains the Getimian's Essence in automatic success to their next applicable roll. Insight is limited to the immediate future; it cannot predict long-term consequences, nor can it guarantee the results of a future roll.

Autumn

The Autumns are inspirational war-leaders, healers, and saviors whose wrath is born out of overwhelming compassion. They come from worlds redeemed by their sacrifices; now they will redeem Creation, as well.

At the end of each session, Autumn Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they made a significant personal sacrifice for the sake of others or persuaded a significant character to put others before themselves.

Anima Effects

Thousand Elixir Tears (Passive): Characters under the Getimian's care gain her Still motes in

bonus dice to resist or overcome poison and disease. Once per session, she may pay up to her Essence in motes to heal that many levels of damage from another character.

Love Never Turns (Active) — Add her Still motes in dice to resist effects that corrupt positive feelings or force the Getimian to act against a positive Tie. If the Getimian succeeds, she gains a one-success bonus on her next roll against the source.

Devil-Queen Salvation (Iconic): For the rest of the scene, the Getimian may redirect any attack against a character to whom she has a positive Intimacy to herself regardless of distance. Effects within short range that indiscriminately slay trivial targets under her protection require a Difficulty 3 Force + Integrity roll to succeed.

Winter

The Winters are magicians, demiurges, and powerbrokers who transform society according to their incorruptible temperance. They come from worlds made orderly and grand, with the strength of will to make whole what Creation has set asunder.

At the end of each session, Winter Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they created or enforced order upon a significant character or group.

Anima Effects

Orderly World Insight (Passive): When she first meets a character, the Getimian automatically gains a sense of their status and position in society. Nontrivial characters may roll a Difficulty 5 Finesse + Stealth to conceal membership in a clandestine organization.

Deception Withers Away (Active): Add the Getimian's Still motes in dice to resist illusions and other magic that deliberately confuses or misleads; if the effect has a fixed difficulty, she increases its difficulty by half that amount, rounding up. If the Getimian succeeds, she gains a one-success bonus on her next roll against the source.

Laws of a New Creation (Iconic): When the Getimian's anima reaches Iconic, it burns the world out to medium range. Within this domain, she establishes a taboo — something that must not and *cannot* be done in her presence. This must be a behavior or belief: the Getimian cannot force characters to stop making attacks or social influence actions. Ignoring this requires a Difficulty 7 Fortitude + Integrity roll.

As a Getimian Exalt, you never existed, Chosen and incarnated from a discarded destiny by the combined might of the titans now known as Oramus and Sacheverell before their diminishment and imprisonment in Malfeas. Called into service in a war against Heaven by the rogue Sidereal Rakan Thulio, only you remember your life as a hero in another world. You have existed in Creation for less than five years.

THE INFERNAL EXALTED

Once the victims of injustice and betrayal, the Infernal Exalted stride across Creation seeking brutal vengeance and sweeping revolution. With the Yozis' promises singing in their hearts, and stolen Solar Exaltations crowning them with righteousness, the formerly-downtrodden have become the Green Sun Princes, determined to remake the world in Hell's image.

Play an Infernal Exalted if you want to be a fallen hero on a vengeful quest, an anarchist liberating the oppressed, or a general leading a demon-army.

Infernal Exalt Advantages

Corona of Fury: While the Infernal is at her Critical health level or at four or more anima, the breath of war (p. XX) restores two motes instead of one, and she recovers one mote between actions during social influence scenes or ventures.

Unwoven Coadjutor: An Infernal develops a direct spiritual connection with the Demon City itself. This manifests as a reservoir of demonic

knowledge and will that only the Infernal can access. Once per session, the Infernal may ask up to her Essence in questions to learn about a specific situation, such as:

- Can you tell me the nature of this spirit?
- What strange history happened here?
- What do you know about this place/object?
- What unusual weaknesses does it have?
- What would it take to destroy it?

And so on.

Resonance: Infernals are resonant with orichalcum.

That Hideous Strength

Infernals brim with the raw power of the Demon City. A monster worthy of the ranks of hell lurks just beneath her skin. All Infernals can access the Charm **Devil- Body Incarnation** (p. XX). However, if she does not purchase it as a Charm, she may only activate it once she has reached her last Critical health level. Purchasing the Charm allows her the freedom to transform at any time.

Anima

Every Infernal's anima banner glows with the sickly green light of Ligier, the Demon City's sun. It exposes the flaws in all it illuminates, and causes materials to rot or corrode. Often, they display subtler shades of green and other colors, listed with the Caste. At the iconic level, imagery of the Yozis and the demons who serve them swirl in its miasma. Any demons within long range are drawn to the Infernal's beacon.

Infernal Castes

The five Infernal Castes are twisted reflections of the Solar Exaltations they once were, representing astronomical positions. Their Caste Marks are similar, but different in subtle ways.

Azimuth

War is the Azimuths' orienting principle. Intent on destroying Creation's and Heaven's corrupt

regimes, they lead demon armies to pull tyrants from their thrones. Chosen from among those who suffered from violence and powerlessness, now they conquer, bent on revenge and protecting the weak...or destroying the mighty. Their animas ripple with the glinting tones of brass. Their Caste Marks are an unholy sunburst with eight rays, with the larger diagonal cross rays emphasizing a center without a circle.

At the end of each session, Azimuth Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they led other characters in a bloody battle or their actions caused an outbreak of violence.

Anima Effects

Font of War (Passive): Without rolling, the Azimuth defeats or kills her Essence in Extras (p. XX) per round, and add the Exalt's Essence in dice to damage against battle groups.

Additionally, each time the Exalt damages a battle group, increase the difficulty to resist a rout check by one, to a maximum of five.

Terrifying Visage (Active): Add her Essence in automatic successes on social actions to intimidate or terrify a foe.

Towering Demon Emperor (Iconic): At 10 anima, the Azimuth may transform immediately into Devil-Body Incarnation without paying the cost. Add the Exalt's Essence in successes to Close Combat or Physique rolls for the rest of the scene, so long as she is in Corona of Fury.

Ascendant

Ascendant Castes are charismatic priest-kings and blasphemous missionaries, seeking to expose weaknesses in Creation's laws and undermine its unjust hierarchies. Chosen from those who once condemned as wicked, their insidious arguments and ominous orations worm their way into listeners' hearts. Their animas are full of swirling turquoise greens and shimmering silvers, often with faint tones of cerulean. Their Caste Marks are an empty green

circle with a smaller partial circle cresting over the upper right side.

At the end of each session, Ascendant Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they caused a significant character or group to take extreme action or her own provocative actions caused a significant character to gain or change an Intimacy.

Anima Effects

Shake Off Your Chains (Passive): Extras (p. XX) and non-heroic mortals cannot ignore the Ascendant's social actions, giving in to their violent and rebellious instincts at her behest.

Laws of Hell (Active): Rebuking any authority not of the Yozis, the Infernal encourages listeners to exact justice with their own hands. Add her Essence in successes on social influence rolls provoking characters to acts of rebellion or anarchy.

No Gods, No Masters (Iconic): The Ascendant defies divine hegemony. She desecrates the ground around her out to Medium range, creating an environmental hazard that deals 2 damage per round until her anima falls below 6. While her anima is iconic, her attacks deal aggravated damage to agents of Heaven — including gods loyally serving Yu-Shan, Sidereal agents, and so on.

Horizon

Horizon Castes are sorcerers, savants, and visionaries. Before their Exaltations, Horizon Castes were denied opportunities for education, via slavery, poverty, or oppressive societies. Now, their brilliant minds turn toward achieving the heights they've envisioned. Their animas show this driving fire as ocean green and white flames. Their Caste Marks are an empty green ring on the bottom part, with a closed horizontal line erupting into a starburst.

At the end of each session, Horizon Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they used their knowledge

to interfere with or thwart a significant character's plans.

Anima Effects

Knowledge at All Costs (Passive): Reduce the base number of obstacles the Horizon must overcome on a venture (p. XX) involving investigation, research, or planning by 1, to a minimum of 1.

Principles of Hierarchy (Active): Add the Horizon's Essence in automatic successes for Craft or Sagacity rolls, or to Focus Will for spellcasting.

Power and Control (Iconic): Spend 4 anima to disrupt the Essence flowing through a target. The target adds half the Horizon's Essence (round up) to the mote cost on Charms. They must pay 1 mote for Charms with no cost. If they cannot afford the Charm, they cannot activate it. Additionally, the Horizon can steal Will with a **withering** attack instead of gaining Power.

Nadir

Infernals of the Nadir caste are criminals, iconoclasts, and anarchists. Chosen from those who were once imprisoned — whether jailed, enslaved, or beholden to a rigid family — now they seek to liberate the downtrodden. Bright streaks of blood red whirl around their sea green animas. Their Caste Mark is an empty green circle, with a gap on the bottom closed by two smaller green discs.

At the end of each session, Nadir Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they infiltrate a significant character's protected space or undermine them on a social matter.

Anima Effects

Subtle Enemy (Passive): The Nadir dampens her anima from detection unless she wants it to be seen.

Death's Shadow (Active): The Nadir wraps her anima around herself, passing unseen among Extras (p. XX). Add her Essence in automatic

successes to Athletics and Stealth rolls around non-trivial characters. If she's detected, her identity can't be determined.

Hell's Silent Wind (Iconic): A zone of absolute silence envelopes the Nadir. Enemies in close range can't hear or call out to allies, preventing them from taking advantage of any Build Power actions that rely on sound. Before making an attack, she may spend 1 anima to gain 1 Power, to a maximum of 5 Power.

Penumbra

Ambassadors, spies, and negotiators, Penumbras are chosen from among those who rejected lives of wealth and power after seeing the corruption at its heart. Now, they sow acrimony and distrust among the elite, determined to tear down Creation's broken systems. Their animas are majestic dark greens and imperial purples, with patches of purest black. Their Caste Mark is a pitch-dark disc, limned with fiery green sparks radiating around the mark.

At the end of each session, Penumbra Castes gain an Exalt Milestone if they caused a significant character or group to back out of or break an agreement, contract, oath, or deal.

Anima Effects

Fiend to All Nations (Passive): Like their Eclipse counterparts, the Penumbra may learn Eclipse-keyword Charms from spirits, fair folk, and other supernatural beings (*except* those who hail from Yu-Shan) and seal pacts by the power of the Yozis. They pay the same anima cost to seal oaths as Eclipses (p. XX).

Dealbreaker (Active): Spend 1 anima. The Penumbra's player may choose a social influence effect (p. XX) that the character automatically succeeds at. In addition, when the Penumbra negotiates with demons, Fair Folk, spirits, or the dead, they must treat the Circle with respect unless the Exalts act with hostility first.

Oathbreaker (Iconic): Once per scene, the Penumbra instills a minor Tie of distrust toward a character or concept in a number of people equal to her Essence. Additionally, she may commit two motes to temporarily lift the burden of a sealed oath from a target. Any ill effects the target would suffer from breaking his promises are instead transferred to the Yozis, who shrug off such trivial punishments. The person may defy their oath until the Penumbra withdraws the committed motes.

As an Infernal Exalt, a demon offered you the alien might of the imprisoned titans called the Yozis. Having lived a life of oppression and humiliation, yours is a spirit kindred to their rage. You are fêted by the Demon Princes of Hell and empowered to seek vengeance against a world that has wronged you. You have been Exalted less than a year.

THE LIMINAL EXALTED

Liminals are created with dug-up corpses, dirt, and thaumaturgy, the result of an attempted resurrection. The dead cannot be brought back, but sometimes, a strange force of the Underworld puts something new in their shell when someone makes the attempt. A Liminal might be a child yanked back from a too-early grave by a grieving parent, or the result of a powerful god trying to reanimate a perfect servant. They look like mortals, but their flaring anima reveals their inner monster: patchwork stitched-together skin and necrotic limbs.

Play a Liminal Exalt if you want to be a doll on strings struggling for freedom, a mournful protector of the living from the dead, or if you only find solace in the company of the restless dead.

The Thread of Life

The Liminal stands on the threshold of death. Only an Intimacy (Thread of Life) towards a living being — initially, her creator — keeps her alive. Once that Intimacy breaks, through

neglect (or, if the relationship was abusive, through healing) or because the subject dies, the Liminal starts to decompose, and all living creatures shun her instinctually.

Decomposition reduces the Liminal to a shambling corpse or hungry ghost within one lunar month. They lose another Intimacy per week, and can no longer use Undying. They also decompose cosmetically, per the player's aesthetic choice. The Liminal can still anchor her Thread of Life to a mortal within this time. If she does, decomposition stops and she heals. Liminals of Essence 3+ may anchor themselves to an Exalt within their Circle, or to another powerful entity.

The Liminal always knows when "her" mortal is in grave peril, and when they've passed away. Liminals can sense one another's presence and emotional state, and sometimes sense mortals connected by the Thread of Life; they might also feel this peril. All Liminals feel the impulses of the Dark Mother, the entity that Exalted them, as an atavistic pressure within their minds subtly joining together her children's thoughts and feelings, compelling them with strange urges to keep separate the worlds of the living and the dead.

Liminal Exalt Advantages

Undying: The Liminal resurrects herself so long as her brain remains intact. This takes five days minus the Liminal's Essence, after which the Liminal returns to Incapacitated health. She heals normally from there. A Liminal with access to appropriate body parts, such as the remains of her enemies, can replace missing limbs or organs through necrosurgery and heals at twice the normal rate. Liminals may also replace limbs lost to dramatic injuries in the same fashion.

Undying doesn't work if the Liminal drowns, or lies buried under running water — the former holds true death, and the latter requires someone moving her body before she can regenerate.

Child of Death: Liminals are considered undead. She can interact with incorporeal ghosts as if they were corporeal and may sense ghosts possessing objects or people. Ghosts can see, touch, and communicate with her regardless of language barriers. Her anima powers affect the living and the dead.

Resonance: Liminals are resonant with soulsteel.

Liminal Aspects

Liminals have five aspects. They have no Caste Mark but bear an individual symbol or rune their maker carved on their forehead. The Liminals body changes and exhibits the call of the grave when they spend too much Essence, revealing them to be patchwork corpses. Their anima banners are similarly gruesome, swirling displays of luminous muscle, blood, and soil.

Blood

The Child of Blood is born from lust, greed, and ambition. She is a great orator, painting a future where her audience has exactly what it always wanted. When she spends too much Essence, her skin takes the pallor of the grave, her eyes become blood-red, and dark water drips from her body.

At the end of each session, Blood Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they persuaded someone to act on their greed for power, money, or carnal pleasure.

Anima Effects

Passion's Heart (Passive): The Liminal senses if someone has a Virtue or Intimacy grounded in lust, greed, or ambition. If so, she may spend one mote to determine its exact nature.

Call for Blood (Active): The Liminal adds her Essence in automatic successes on Embassy, Performance, and Presence rolls when inciting lust, greed, or ambition.

Bloodlust (Iconic): The Liminal grant herself and all allies automatic successes to attack rolls

equal to her target's Wound Penalty. This effect persists for the rest of the scene, even if the Liminal is no longer at iconic anima.

Breath

The Child of Breath is born from a moment of regret or repentance. He is a contemplative creature, always looking to the past or waiting for others to act first. Foul winds carrying the stench of open graves pick up when he spends too much Essence. His skin and lips take on a blueish tone, and his voice becomes a raspy whisper.

At the end of each session, Breath Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they punish the wicked or make them repent. The player determines what her character thinks is wicked.

Anima Effects

Depths of Regret (Passive): The Liminal senses if someone has a Virtue or Intimacy grounded in regret or repentance. If so, he may spend one mote to determine its exact nature.

Swift Retaliation (Active): Spend 1 Anima. Make a counterattack on Step 8 and treat it as a Distract Gambit to insult, provoke, or rebuke the target. The Liminal gains his Essence in bonus successes on this attack.

Breath of Regret (Iconic): All enemies who see the Liminal must make a reflexive Fortitude + Integrity roll, difficulty 3 plus his Essence, to strike him. If the enemy fails they must attack someone else, at a dice penalty equal to the Liminal's Essence

Flesh

The Child of Flesh is the product of rage and vengeance. They thrive on aggression and lust, and hates waiting. When they spend too much Essence, the stitches on their skin become more pronounced, the separate parts of their body barely held together while her wounds ooze black pus.

At the end of each session, Flesh Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they defeated a story-important foe in combat.

Anima Effects

Scent of Rage (Passive): The Liminal senses if someone has a Virtue or Intimacy grounded in rage or vengeance. If so, they may spend one mote to determine its exact nature.

Strike the Flesh (Active): The Liminal may subtract up to their Essence in dice from their decisive attack roll on Step 3 and add them as automatic successes on the damage roll during Step 7.

Weakness of Flesh (Iconic): The Liminal and any allies inflict one extra automatic damage on Step 7 during decisive attacks. This rises to two extra damage when they reach Essence 5. This effect costs 1 Anima per round the Liminal wishes to apply it. The Exalt may apply this effect for the rest of the scene, even if the Liminal is no longer in iconic anima.

Marrow

Someone used ancient secrets to make this Child of Marrow, and she has become a creature of curiosity and obsession herself. She likes to observe and analyze, ever prying at secrets. Her body becomes desiccated if she spends too much Essence, her teeth and nails seeming unnaturally long.

At the end of each session, Marrow Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they learned a story-important information or discovered piece of lost knowledge.

Anima Effects

Shining Obsession (Passive): The Liminal senses if someone has a Virtue or Intimacy grounded in curiosity or obsession. If so, she may spend one mote to determine its exact nature.

Hidden Marrow (Active): The Liminal adds her Essence in automatic successes on Embassy, Sagacity and Stealth rolls to ferret out secrets.

Marrow's Riddle (Iconic): Spend 1 Anima. As a simple action, the Liminal may present anyone in the scene with a riddle. The target must roll Force + Sagacity at Difficulty 3 plus her Essence, or stand lost in thought for her Essence in rounds. Puzzling over the riddle may not be part of a flurry. This reverie breaks if someone attacks them.

Soil

The Child of Soil rises from sorrow and yearning. He's introspective, more interested in omens and the secrets of death than in human company. Grave dirt coats his skin when he spends too much Essence, worms writhe in his eyes and mouth.

At the end of each session, Soil Aspects gain an Exalt Milestone if they acted on an omen and successfully avoided danger, created a positive outcome, or helped a significant character.

Anima Effects

Sorrow's Call (Passive): The Liminal senses if someone has a Virtue or Intimacy grounded in sorrow or yearning. If so, he may spend one mote to determine its exact nature.

Written in Soil (Active): The Liminal may use an action to invoke an omen. This adds the Liminal's Essence in dice to the target's next roll. She may use this on herself.

From Dust (Iconic): The Liminal and any allies immediately heal two health boxes when he enters Iconic anima. He may spend one mote to let them heal a third health box.

As a Liminal Exalt, you were Chosen by the Dark Mother, the chthonic entity who dwelled in the cycle of reincarnation before Time began. You are a new entity created from an attempt to bring life from death, answering the silent impulses of your Mother and charged by her to fortify the lines between living and dead. You have been Exalted for at least five years.

THE GREAT CURSE

Heroic acts and magnificent deeds echo throughout Creation, but the Exalted cannot escape the price of power. Curses spat by dying divine monsters in the final moments of Creation's liberation touch the lives of all Exalted, drawing forth their worst natures during times of emotional turmoil and personal strife. Its very existence and nature unknown, but the Great Curse binds the Exalted all the same.

The Great Curse both serves as a connection to the Exalted's origin as warriors in the ancient war against cosmically terrible foes, and as a constant reminder of the potential disaster for power let astray. Perhaps the Chosen overcome future calamity, but they will not do so unmarked by the strain of their power.

RULES

In **Exalted Essence**, certain inciting events cause Exalted characters to express the Great Curse: a stressful or traumatic moment leads to an explosion of distorted and warped behavior by the character.

When an inciting event occurs for a character, the Storyteller, that character's player, or another player at the table can suggest that the Great Curse express itself for the affected character.

INCITEMENT

All characters possess the following conditions to incite the Great Curse:

- A character acts against a Major Intimacy (p. XX).
- A character acts against their Major Virtue (p. XX).

Each Exalt type in this section lists additional incitement triggers, and whether they're predetermined or defined by the player. When one or more of the applicable incitement conditions occur, while the Storyteller or other players may suggest an event is an appropriate incitement condition, it's ultimately up the

character's player. If they do, then their character manifests the Great Curse.

GREAT CURSE MANIFESTATION

Great Curse manifestations exist for each Exalted type. Manifesting the Great Curse doesn't involve the player losing control of their character, but often involves playing an exaggerated form of the character's personality, flaws, and even virtues, as the curse heightens factors that are already present within in the character. Most such expressions of the Great Curse last either a Scene or until the end of the current Session, with certain circumstances causing them to end prematurely.

When a player decides the Great Curse manifests, the Storyteller and player should decide on the appropriate curse manifestation for that moment. This is a choice made each time the curse manifests, and will be different from occasion to occasion. Each Exalt type lists several potential manifestations, but players and Storytellers should feel free to create additional manifestations appropriate to characters and circumstances.

The excesses and extremity caused by the Great Curse can be dramatic and interesting to play out, but this isn't an excuse to ruin other players' time at the table. If everyone at the table enjoys the experience, it qualifies as a personal milestone for advancement purposes.

While the Great Curse affects a character, attempts to challenge their behavior with the Social Influence system count as if they were opposing both a Major Virtue and a Major Intimacy.

Most Great Curse manifestations mark a duration for how long the manifestation will remain, as well as providing conditions under which it will end prematurely.

Abyssals

The Abyssal Exalted walk in unfathomable darkness, but even dire connections to dread

powers cannot shield an Exalt from the Great Curse. Instead, the Curse taints their connection between the Underworld and Creation, often rising to the fore whenever the erstwhile deathknights engage too closely with the warm world of life and light.

All Abyssals possess additional conditions which may incite the Great Curse:

- They attempt to exist amongst the mortals as a member of the living.
- They respond to or accept address by a living name, rather than a sobriquet or title.

When an Abyssal succumbs to the Curse, they experience **Grave Extremity**. Grave Extremities often involve the Abyssal's deathly nature or alienation from the living world manifesting.

Lure of the Tomb (Scene): The Abyssal seeks the solitude of the grave, and removes themselves to whatever sepulcher, burial sites, or charnel fields are available to mediate in motionless silence. In the Underworld, they seek the nearest place empty of ghosts or other animate beings. The Exalt strenuously avoids attempts to interrupt them, and meets persistent interlopers with sudden, dispassionate violence. Lure of the Tomb ends prematurely if the Abyssal is attacked, or if someone they have a Major intimacy to is seriously injured or incapacitated due to their inaction.

Undying Order (Session): The Abyssal becomes obsessed with upholding or spreading the primacy of Underworld hierarchy into Creation. Amongst the dead they establish strict order and obtain the obedience of all spectral entities present, while amongst the living they enforce the rule of the ancestor cults or similar Underworld-centric order. Those Abyssals who do not normally hew to established orders may invent their own ad hoc affairs, often foisting strange and singular demands on whatever horrified adherents are available. Undying Order ends prematurely if the Abyssal is unable

to uphold their responsibilities as a leader to one of their erstwhile subjects.

Macabre Fascination (Session): The Abyssal obsesses over the material of death, pursuing both the physical inspection of interesting corpses and the spiritual inquiry into remarkable ghosts with equal measure. They abandon existing plans or companions to do so, moving into Shadowlands or the Underworld if available. Macabre Fascination ends prematurely if the Abyssal's obsession brings them to physical injury.

Mortality's Shadow (Scene): Unable to stand the gaze of the living but also unable to bear their absence, the Abyssal avoids living creatures' notice at all costs while still staying close enough to monitor life's inevitable slide towards decay. They utilize whatever means necessary to disengage and lurk unseen from mortals and Exalts alike, while still staying close enough to observe them. Mortality's Shadow ends prematurely if such lurking causes a serious setback for the Abyssal.

Infinite Anguish (Session): The impossibly heavy burden of life's pain and continuing struggle descends upon the Abyssal. They indulge in loud and public mourning for the state of the world, conscripting anyone under their power to join them in a continuous and growing funeral procession. Any activity or goals they pursue invariably carry constant references to the great and awful suffering of the world, means and ends both tainted by their realization of the impossible weight of universal misery. Infinite Anguish ends prematurely if the Abyssal is provided concrete evidence of improvement or transcendence in the world.

Alchemicals

From savant-run machine shrines to autonomous sorcerous collectives, communities allow Alchemicals in Creation to thrive. The Great Curse inflames relationships between the Exalts and the communities they

are inextricably linked to, causing rampant and dangerous behavior rooted in the places the Alchemical is most tightly tied to.

All Alchemicals possess additional conditions which may incite the Great Curse:

- A community they have an Intimacy towards is threatened, ignores their advice, or openly disdains their help.

When an Alchemical succumbs to the curse, they are affected by **Crisis Behavior**. The Alchemical attempts to materially protect or alter their communities of interest, focusing on their immediate companions as a proxy community if their actual community is inaccessible. All Crisis Behavior ends prematurely if the Alchemical's actions cause a community they have an intimacy towards to be damaged.

Gathering Procedures (Scene): The Alchemical attempts to supplement a dangerously lacking community with new members, or to create a new community from whole cloth. They will identify and attempt to convince potentially useful individuals to join their expanding or new community, resorting to steadily more extreme methods when rebuffed until resorting to kidnapping or coercion.

Necessary Instruction (Session): The community must be improved through improving its members. The Alchemical lectures, instructs, and teaches even the most learned of leaders and savants, improving both moral conduct and practical behavior. They will not be dissuaded by their pupils being otherwise occupied; what could possibly be more important than improvement of the community via improvement of the self?

Revolutionary Reactions (Session): The Alchemical becomes determined to replace their community's leadership with candidates they see as more appropriate. While they will initially restrict their efforts whatever lawful or

peaceable means they have available, a violent or forceful response from the leadership will cause the Alchemical to similarly escalate their efforts.

Supply Paranoia (Scene): Durable goods and perishable necessities obsess the Alchemical, who must secure larger and larger supplies of both. Even if their community has plenty, the Alchemical stores more and more away in apprehension of some future disaster. The Alchemical will consider laws or property owner's objections only as long as they do not impede the Alchemical's efforts.

Universal Threat Detection (Scene): The Alchemical identifies and prepares to strike against threats to the community. Any theoretical enemy or hazard is a potential target, no matter how unlikely or distant its danger may seem. Should others attempt to dissuade the Alchemical from their actions, the Alchemical may categorize them as threats as well.

Dragon-Blooded

The Great Curse strikes the Princes of the Earth like it does all Exalted, but leaves a somewhat lighter mark on their existence. The Dragon-Blooded still find their Exalted natures roused against them, Elemental Aspects pushing their personalities and virtues to dangerous extremes, but to a lesser extent. Once instigated, they don't have a set duration, and Dragon-Blooded potentially return to normal within the events of a single scene.

Each Aspect possess its own additional condition for inciting the Great Curse.

- An Air Aspects finds their ideals challenged by individual failings or the state of the world.
- An Earth Aspects experiences challenges to traditions or institutions they have relied upon or value.
- A Fire Aspect undergoes extremes of their own emotion and passion, whether due to their

own actions or those of others.

- A Water Aspect confronts dangerous and difficult obstacles which are not soon overcome.
- A Wood Aspect experiences overwhelming sensations, either of their own or by proxy, for those they care for.

Great Curse manifestations for the Dragon-Blooded don't reach the level of a Virtue Flaw, but are rather **Elemental Behaviors** that blend insidiously into the Exalt's life. All the following are examples, but Storytellers and players shouldn't hesitate to develop additional Elemental Behaviors that reflect a character's relationship to their Aspect element.

- Air Aspects may ignore the consequences of heedlessly pursuing their own idealism, or lash out at those who try to moderate their behavior or convince them to take a different course.
- Earth Aspects can become entrenched and unmoving in their positions, if they don't release a sudden explosion of violent or self-destructive emotion against continued attacks on tradition.
- Fire Aspects may become furious dynamos in support of a cause behind the inciting event, or turn that same energy to self-hatred and despair in the case of perceived personal failings.
- Water Aspects tend to attack the obstacles that stymie them with total abandon, utilizing disproportionate, ruthless, or impractical means without hesitation.
- Wood Aspects may pursue greater and greater hedonistic pursuits, glutting on the sensations of overindulgence or even the moldering lows in its wake, or instead envelop those people that surround them in equally overwhelming and nigh stifling attempts to nurture and control them.

Getimians

Heroes from worlds cruelly denied, the Getimian Exalted must endure the loss of entire histories and lives alongside the common tragedies in the Age of Sorrows. Though supernaturally anchored in the Creation that is, exposure to reminders of the lives never lived and potential worlds they've lost will often cause the Great Curse to manifest in dangerous imbalances.

All Getimians possess additional conditions which may incite the Great Curse:

- They are confronted with reminders or material evidence of the world and life that are lost to them.
- They encounter someone who they remember but who does not remember them.

Creation reacts wrongly to them, causing inconsistencies and inconveniences as meals eaten appear untouched, their footprints appear before they take a step, or reality otherwise reminds the Getimian that *they do not belong*.

When a Getimian succumbs to the curse, they suffer a **Catastrophic Imbalance**, influenced by whether their Flowing or Still mode has most recently been dominant.

Desperate Discovery (Still, Session): The Getimian becomes unable to believe the truth they already know. Racing thoughts convince them that some proof of the world as it should be exists, and they are driven to desperately search it out in places or people that should be familiar to the life the Getimian believes they lived. Other activities become unthinkable while they engage in this, whether it involves trying to find proof hidden away in Dynastic vaults, or confronting high members of state who must surely remember them. Desperate Discovery ends prematurely if a character who the Getimian believes they know develops a negative intimacy towards them.

Immanent Bliss (Flowing, Session): The pressure of Creation collapses the Getimian's perceptions: If their alien pasts are an unreliable map of the world, how can they possibly consider the future? The Getimian abandons all attempts to plan, consider consequences beyond the immediate, or devote effort for future results. Instead, they devote their energies to fully embracing and experiencing the current moment, no matter how mundane...or what trouble it may cause them later. They will break bread and discuss gossip with tomorrow's enemies, squander resources painstakingly collected for long term plans in favor of immediate fancies, and insult necessary allies over transient differences of opinion. Immanent Bliss ends if the Getimian causes serious complications for a plan that involves one of the Getimian's intimacies.

Impassioned Fury (Still, Scene): The flaws in Creation-That-Is are unacceptable to the Getimian who knows of a better world, and they seek to remove them, forcefully. They immediately seek to redress social, personal, and even physical flaws in the world around them, the appropriateness of castigating a Guild officer for their greed in the middle of Nexus or danger of seeking to clear river dragons from a village's local waters entirely ignored. Attempting to stop or moderate the Getimian's actions results in avoidance at best and violence at worst.

Impassioned Fury ends prematurely if the Getimian or something they hold a positive intimacy is injured or otherwise has their wellbeing hurt by the Getimian's actions.

Melancholy Fugue (Flowing, Scene): The Getimian respond to Creation's insults by turning inward and still. Overwhelmed with memories and visions of a world lost, of regrets and mistakes that they cannot and could never make right, they ignore the outside world as best they can. If friends or bystanders attempt

to intervene, the Getimian responds either with breathless explanations of what they've lost, or by lashing out violently at disruptive individuals.

Melancholy Fugue ends prematurely if the Getimian or someone they possess an Intimacy towards is injured due to the Getimian's inaction.

Infernals

Even those Chosen by Hell are not immune to the Curse's poisons. Torn between their own unleashed desires and the constrained rage of the Yozis, their monstrous devil body forms burst free as they succumb to Curse-driven frenzies.

All Infernals possess additional conditions which may incite the great curse:

- Their plans or ambitions are directly thwarted.
- They are obviously outmatched or defeated in a contest or challenge.

When Infernals succumb to the Curse, they lash out in **Hellish Eruption**. All Eruptions last for a Scene, the Infernal's devil body mode forcefully activating for the duration. The Infernal may choose how to pay for devil body mode activation as normal.

Throne Toppling Mood: The Infernal refuses to submit to any authority or demands for obedience. They oppose and destroy rulers and states through the most efficacious means available. Throne Toppling Mood ends if the Infernal's efforts result in serious damage to their long-term goals.

Shrine Scorning Tirade: The idea of veneration itself offends the Infernal, both in the abstract and the specific. They act out against public displays of piety, disrupt any organized religion and harangue or even assault available religious figures. Priests and gods receive the brunt of their abuse if present, but failing that, the Infernal will happily desecrate relics, vandalize shrines, and otherwise lay waste to the trappings and architecture of faith. Shrine

Scorning Tirade ends prematurely if the Infernal's actions result in a character who the Infernal has a positive Intimacy towards to reject the Exalt.

Heaven Challenging Thunder: The Infernal demonstrates their supernatural power over the world, employing whatever the most obvious and impressive powers they possess to overawe those in their presence. Anything they do will be accomplished with mystical power, if at all possible: doors will be blown open by bolts of essence, crowds will be dispersed by dread magics, messages will be delivered by carving the earth with summoned demons. Heaven Challenging Thunder ends prematurely if the Infernal's efforts cause major setbacks for their immediate plans.

Luxurious Hoarding Tendency: What is, is theirs. The Infernal desires and attempts to acquire anything of particular value or desirable quality in their presence, and then seek out more.

Treasures they consider priceless and worth killing for one moment are discarded as mere baubles the next, their insatiable avarice always driving them on to the next prize. Luxurious Hoarding Tendency ends prematurely if the Infernal suffers injury due to their greedy efforts.

Tyrannous Hell Presence: That mortals and lesser beings would not join the Infernal's cause is unthinkable. They attempt to coerce, suborn, or otherwise demand support, patronage, or service of mortals and lesser supernatural creatures, resorting to violence in the case of serious opposition. Receiving compliance, the Infernal becomes determined to put their allies and subjects to use, devising taxing and strenuous tasks for their new allies and minions. Tyrannous Hell Presence ends prematurely if the Infernal is bested by those they are attempting to subjugate.

Liminals

The Liminal's Curse inexorably entwines with their unnatural creation. No matter whether they adore, despise, or ignore their creators or subsequent anchors, the Dark Mother's chosen cannot deny the strong pull these living lodestones have on their passions. Similarly, their fraught relationship with the living masses of Creation can also threaten to rise the Curse, as the Liminal Exalted attempt to navigate the boundaries of life and death.

All Liminals possess additional conditions which may incite the Great Curse:

- The Liminal fails to intervene when the life or welfare of their creator or bonded anchor is threatened.

Mortals reject the Liminal due to their unnatural nature and gross construction. When a Liminal succumbs to the Great Curse, they become possessed by **Undying Horror**.

Perhaps because of their unique natures, the curse quickly abates. Once instigated, Horrors don't have a set duration. Liminals are potentially able to return to normal within the events of a single scene, often after companions or local mortals turn against them.

Raging Blood: The Liminal's future desires and passions ride them ragged and bloody. The Liminal will abandon a hunt or present concerns in favor of future ambitions, grandiose plans, and far off goals even if they only exist in flights of fancy or as theoretical constructs. Objections from their friends, mortal law, or threats of physical violence will not stop them as they pursue their goals, inhumanity on full display.

Choking Contrition: Stopping at nothing to make up for past misdeeds, the Liminal atones to the living and the dead who have suffered due to the Exalt's actions or inactions. Their attempts to assuage mortals who the Liminal believes they have failed will take grotesquely overbearing form, as the undying Exalt utilizes

their supernatural abilities to solve prosaic problems in mortal life.

Wounded Soul: Every source of irritation, emotional harm, or physical comfort becomes intolerable for the Liminal. They lash out disproportionately at whatever torments them, unrestrained strength deployed against biting flies or snide nobility alike.

Bone-Deep Musings: Every incidental detail and mundane diversion catches the Liminal's attention. They abandon any manner of focus or haste in favor of pursuing investigations into sensation and common phenomena, their alien nature readily apparent as they are transfixed by water droplets, piglets eating, or the patterns their own blood makes on the ground.

Smothering Despair: The Liminal descends into bleak emotional depths, regret for their past deeds and failures overwhelming them. They will resist all attempts to rouse them to action, even in the face of danger or personal suffering, and will openly display their unliving nature as an action of horrifying self-loathing.

Lunars

The Great Curse calls to monstrosity in the hearts of Luna's Chosen. When emotions run high, Lunars run the risk of giving in to urges which amplify and distort the Lunar's Exalted nature.

All Lunars possess the following condition for inciting the Great Curse

- They experience strong anger they are unable to express or address.

All Lunars possesses an additional condition which may incite the Great Curse, relating to frustrating, stressful, or traumatic situations the Lunar may find themselves in. Lunar inciting conditions often relate to rage and anger, existing as either as its cause or its effect.

Players of Lunar characters should pick one of the following or create their own:

- The Lunar loses something or someone valuable to them.
- The Lunar is deliberately insulted or mocked.
- The Lunar sees victory and success stymied at the last moment.
- A peer or mentor humiliates or rejects the Lunar.
- An adversary causes the Lunar to endure suffering and deprivation.
- Others ignore the Lunar's wisdom and good advice.
- The Lunar's virtue is taken advantage of by the iniquitous.

When the Lunar succumbs to the Great Curse, their **Monstrous Urge** manifests. The worst elements of the Lunar's personality swell, waxing as their suppressed anger and frustration pour forth in a torrent of driven awful behavior.

Bellowing Tyrant Proclamation (Session): All must know the Lunar's majesty and might! Those who do not acknowledge the Lunar's primacy must be put in their place, whether through barbed insults, blatant displays of superiority, or some other means of making the offender submit. Bellowing Tyrant Proclamation ends prematurely if the Lunar suffers a serious setback or meaningful defeat through attempting to provide their obvious quality.

Enraged Behemoth Rampage (Scene): The Lunar's rage provides the solutions for all problems. If anything stands in the Lunar's way? Smash it. If anything disturbs the Lunar's senses? Destroy it. Only people or things to which the Lunar has positive Intimacies escape their wrath, and the Lunar will even try to overawe them into compliance with the Lunar's ire.

Enraged Behemoth Rampage ends prematurely if the Lunar's behavior causes a character who the Lunar has a positive Intimacy towards to reject the Lunar.

Laughing Devil Spirit (Session): A trickster-sage dispensing lessons to the unwary and the unwilling; that's what the world needs! The Lunar provides such a service by subjecting Storyteller characters to what the Lunar sees as instructive disruption, causing problems and chaos that will surely teach lessons to their victims. The Lunar targets the powerful and established with these efforts first; who better to receive such useful instruction? Laughing Devil Spirit ends prematurely if the Lunar's efforts create a major obstacle for them or their entire circle.

World-Ways Scurrying (Scene): The places nearby that the Lunar does not know intimately become intolerable to the Exalt. They will investigate every secluded or hidden space, infiltrate secured compounds and explore cracked foundations to the exclusion of all else. The Lunar will attempt to disengage for anyone trying to waylay or slow them; they have more important business in the unseen places of the world. World-Ways Scurrying ends prematurely if the Lunar's investigations cause physical harm to befall them or something they have a positive Intimacy towards.

Lair Dwelling Beast Frenzy (Session): There can be no safety without ownership, no ownership without safety. The Lunar secures a nearby place against enemies and threats, attempting to cajole allies and loved ones into staying inside boundaries the Lunar considers theirs, while building defenses and sealing off entrances. That others may consider the territory theirs is of little concern to the Exalt; the den must be claimed and protected! Lair Dwelling Beast Frenzy ends prematurely if the Lunar or someone they are trying to keep safe is physically injured in the process of trying to secure the lair.

Sidereals

The Chosen of the Maidens enmesh themselves deeply in the web of fate, and the Great Curse

follows. The Sidereal's connections to other members of their rare fellowship and to their closely held confidants alike can become twisted and perverted by the Curse's influence. With the Great Curse ascendant, feelings of comradeship and intimacy turn into dangerously rampant distortions of the Sidereal's true intentions.

All Sidereals possess additional conditions which may incite the Great Curse:

- When serious difference of opinion or suggested course of action strains the Sidereal's relationship with another Chosen of the Maidens
- When a non-Sidereal who the Sidereal has positive Intimacies towards is exposed to danger or emotional strife.

When a Sidereal succumbs to the Great Curse, a **Dolorous Portent** affects them, usually centering on the Sidereal's relationship to their peers and confidants. All Dolorous Portents end prematurely if the Sidereal's behavior causes an Intimacy to weaken or a negative Intimacy to form.

Sign of Separation (Session): The present circumstances presage disaster and calamity. The Sidereal knows that unless they swiftly vacate the current course of action, point of view, or even physical location, the consequences will be dire. They will try to convince everyone of the importance of deserting the situation, no matter how inappropriate or inopportune the behavior, and potentially resort to coercion or duress to try and force their companions to the Sidereal in their flight.

Placid Tidings (Session): Whatever the pressing issue, threat, or argument, the Sidereal knows that it's the *disruption* it's causing that's the real problem. The Exalt becomes convinced that as long as they can prevent anyone from doing anything rash, drastic, or hasty, everything will

be just fine. Decorum, proper procedure, and agreed upon form become the Sidereal's primary concerns, along with ensuring their companions behave properly. The Sidereal will prioritize preventing disruptive and uncouth behavior through subtle interference or forceful suasion even in the face of evidence that such an approach is ineffective or counterproductive.

The Breaking Hour (Scene): There is a threat, a concern, an enemy: these things are targets. The Sidereal knows that it is the moment to strike, to break the foe or dispute or *issue* through immediate force, and that their allies and loved ones must help guide the strike. Hesitation is death; inaction is anathema. If the Sidereal's friends will not act, the Sidereal will do their best to make them act, going to extreme measures if necessary.

Omen of Occlusion (Scene): Strife, suffering, and difficulty spread like the Contagion from the knowledge of their presence; so it's best to quarantine it. The Sidereal is utterly convinced that her friends and allies already know too much for their own good; strict information security and secrecy are what's required. Distorting the truth, hiding facts and evidence about the source of harm, and outright fabrication are all just different ways for the Sidereal to protect those closest to them.

Annihilation's Augury (Session): The current problem, issue, and enemy are symptoms of a greater problem. There is always another threat waiting in the wings, or another mover providing the impetus for the current disaster. The Sidereal knows this, and the importance of ignoring the transient problem in front of them in favor of dispatching the true problem on the horizon. If their comrades insist on addressing the paltry immediate concern, the Sidereal will either have to lead them after the *true* threat, or take matters into their own hands.

Solars

The Sun's Chosen unknowingly shoulder the heaviest portion of the Great Curse. When their passions become inflamed, their principles challenged, or they reach emotional extremes, the Curse threatens to rise up and cast a great and destructive shadow across all their actions.

All Solar Exalted possess the additional condition for inciting the Great Curse:

- A Solar Exalt acts against a Minor Virtue.

Each Solar also possesses an additional, personal condition which may incite the Great Curse, relating to frustrating, stressful, or traumatic situations in which the Solar may find themselves. Players should determine what their individual characters treat as an additional inciting condition, either by choosing one from the following list, or by working with the Storyteller to make one that makes sense for their character:

- The Solar endures serious insults or disparagement by another character.
- The Solar engages in deceitful or treacherous behavior, or circumstances and companions attempt to push the Solar towards such acts.
- The Solar encounters the needy and suffering, but events and circumstances conspire to prevent the Solar from helping.
- Allies or companions refuse the Solar's advice or leadership and suffer for it.
- The Solar's mistakes present themselves in unavoidable fashion.
- The Solar's companions overindulge in vice and personal gratification despite the Solar's best efforts.
- The Solar's companions prevent the Solar from engaging in their preferred vices.

When Solars succumb to the Great Curse, their **Virtue Flaw** manifests. These cause the Solars to become a source of harm for themselves or others, as the Great Curse amplifies and twists their personalities in the moment.

All-Consuming Grief (Scene): The Solar obsesses over death and injury, to their companions, themselves, and all of Creation. They breathe only to mourn, seeking solitude away from others, and ignoring the outside world when they are forced to endure company. All-Consuming Grief ends prematurely if the Solar is attacked, or if someone they have a Major intimacy to is seriously injured or incapacitated.

Berserk Anger (Scene): The Solar becomes a ceaseless engine of violence. The strike out at anyone in reach, starting with enemies and attackers, but assailing bystanders and rampaging through noncombatants when there are no more foes to slay. They can spare those they have intimacies towards in their frenzy, unless those companions raise weapons or opposition to the Solar's rampage. Berserk Anger ends prematurely if there are no potential victims left, or if the Solar incapacitates someone they have an Intimacy to.

Contempt of the Virtuous (Session): The Solar embodies moral certitude, and woe to anyone who falls short of their expectations. The Solar will admonish and correct those who overindulge, lie, or otherwise fall short of the Solar's moral expectations with all angry condemnation. Should the Solar's instructions be dismissed or belittled, they may use force.

Contempt of the Virtuous ends prematurely if the Solar is provided with reason to doubt the righteousness of their own actions.

Seething Genius (Session): The Solar stops at nothing to work on their long-term projects and aspirations, whether magical constructions or societal revolutions. They abandon immediate concerns and joint efforts in favor of their individual interests and bespoke masterpieces, no matter how impractical or far from completion those efforts are. Allies who object to their conduct will be ignored or actively

belittled. Seething Genius ends prematurely if immediate or short-term problems damage the Solar's long-term efforts.

Imperfection's Scourge (Session): The Solar becomes convinced that their previous works are fatally flawed: Their treaties will lead to war, their magical workings will bring calamity, and their cooking will poison their families. The Solar works ceaselessly to tear undo their past efforts, seeking to destroy what they can and seal away things too durable to break.

Imperfection's Scourge ends if the Solar's disassembly leads to provably worse results or others' suffering.

CHAPTER THREE: CHARACTER CREATION

You need a character to play Exalted. This chapter walks you through all the steps, as well as character advancement.

STEP 0: SESSION ZERO

Before you start working on your character, coordinate with your group (Storyteller and fellow players alike) on the theme, tone, and mood of the campaign. This brainstorming session is typically called Session Zero, and you can find more about it on p.xx in Chapter 5.

STEP 1: CONCEPT

Every character starts with a concept. Exalts are heroes by nature, so you can draw inspiration from popular media. Don't worry about the details — you'll find enough prompts once you go over the other steps. A sentence or two is enough for now: *A smuggler turned hero against an oppressive empire, or a chosen one destined to heal the world's trauma.*

Check with your Storyteller if your concept works, as they might have specific suggestions based on the campaign. Also check with your fellow players. Maybe one of them has a great hook to tie your characters together. Or you discover you have four "introverts with a penchant for sorcery" in the group and decide that's a bit much (or not — maybe this is now a campaign about sorcerers!).

Once you have your concept, pick an Exalt type and (if applicable) Caste or Aspect. Different types of Exalts can and do work together, but the Storyteller may choose to run a game for one type only. or they might decide this is a Creation-focused game, no Abyssal Exalts allowed. Similarly, check with your fellow players — perhaps their Solar has a Dragon-Blooded childhood friend, and wants to establish that as the relationship between your characters.

Chapter Two (p. XX) explains the Exalt types. While you're there, make a note of the three Advantages your Exalt has.

Tamara wants to play an "invincible sword princess" sworn to protect the Kingdom of Ur in the Hundred Kingdoms of the East. After talking to the group and Storyteller, she decides her character isn't just interested in protecting Ur, but all of the East against all manner of threats — colonizing Dynasts, unscrupulous Guild merchants, tricky Raksha, and nefarious Deathlords alike. Obviously, such a grand warrior would be a Dawn Caste. She decides her character needs a suitably heroic sobriquet, and names her Radiant Sun of the East.

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

Most characters play a role in their group corresponding to five common archetypes: warriors, priests, savants, criminals, and brokers. If you're having trouble deciding what you'd like to play, here are suggestions for which Exalt types, Castes, and Aspects fit those roles. Remember that this isn't set in stone: Any Exalt can fill any role, and these may change over the course of a story. A series of Charm and build templates for these archetypes can be found on p. XX.

Warrior: Skilled at arms and combat, these characters are mercenaries, soldiers, generals, brawlers, and bodyguards.

Associated Exalted Types: Dawn Caste Solars, Dusk Caste Abyssals, Azimuth Caste Infernals, Full Moon Caste Lunars, Sidereal Chosen of Battles and Endings, Spring Caste Getimians, Dragon-Blooded Fire and Earth Aspects, Liminal Children of Flesh, Jade and Orichalcum Caste Alchemicals, an Exigent who is a gladiator god's Chosen.

Priest: Holy persons, cult leaders, wandering monks, and hermits, these characters may lead congregations or strive for personal enlightenment.

Associated Exalted Types: Zenith Caste Solars, Midnight Caste Abyssals, Ascendant Caste Infernals, Changing Moon and No Moon Caste Lunars, Sidereal Chosen of Serenity, Spring and Summer Caste Getimians, Dragon-Blooded Fire Aspects, Liminal Children of Blood, Adamant and Soulsteel Caste Alchemicals, an Exigent whose divine patron is the god of a city.

Savant: Scribes, sorcerers, craftspeople, scholars, healers, and explorers, these characters focus on gaining and disseminating knowledge, whether for personal betterment or to gain broader power.

Associated Exalted Types: Twilight Caste Solars, Daybreak Caste Abyssals, Horizon Caste Infernals, No Moon Caste Lunars, Sidereal Chosen of Journeys and Secrets, Autumn and Winter Caste Getimians, Air and Wood Aspect Dragon-Blooded, Liminal Children of Breath and Soil, Adamant Caste Alchemicals, an Exigent who is a forge-god's Chosen.

Criminal: Comfortable among society's underbelly, these characters are thieves, spies, gamblers, assassins, and others who reject social norms or balk at moral codes.

Associated Exalted Types: Night Caste Solars, Day Caste Abyssals, Nadir Caste Infernals, Changing Moon Caste Lunars, Sidereal Chosen of Journeys and Endings, Summer Caste Getimians, Dragon-Blooded Water Aspects, Liminal Children of Marrow, and Moonsilver Caste Alchemicals, an Exigent who is a gambling god's Chosen.

Broker: Couriers, diplomats, businesspersons, and administrators, these characters are social movers and shakers.

Associated Exalted Types: Eclipse Caste Solars, Moonshadow Caste Abyssals, Penumbra Caste Infernals, Changing Moon Caste Lunars, Sidereal Chosen of Journeys and Serenity, Winter Caste Getimians, Dragon-Blooded Air and Water Aspects, Liminal Children of Marrow, and Jade

and Starmetal Caste Alchemicals, an Exigent who is a commerce-god's Chosen.

STEP 2: ATTRIBUTES

Your character has a preferred approach to problems. Three **Attributes:** Force, Finesse, and Fortitude, represent these approaches. Chapter Four, p. XX, explains each Attribute in detail, but in a nutshell your character uses Force to power through a problem with physical prowess or hard logic, Finesse when they use quickness or cleverness, and Fortitude if they endure until it's over.

Take a moment to picture your character under duress, backed into a corner, or standing up to fight for what's right. What do they do? Your answer should be which Attribute is their strongest.

Assign 4, 3, and 2 to Attributes. A rating of five is the pinnacle of human achievement, two is about average for a mortal, and one is just not very good.

Your attributes have no bearing on your appearance. You can be a seven-foot-tall hulking brute and have the Finesse of a classically trained dancer. Likewise, you can be unremarkable but have a such a forceful personality that queens bow before you.

The Radiant Sun of the East is powerful and enduring, but not very subtle. Tamara chooses Force 4, Fortitude 3, and Finesse 2.

STEP 3: ABILITIES

Every character comes with a skill set gained through training and dedication. One character is an excellent hand-to-hand fighter, another runs like the wind, and a third has an unshakable will. Fourteen Abilities represent these skills: Awareness, Athletics, Close Combat, Craft, Embassy, Integrity, Navigate, Performance, Physique, Presence, Ranged Combat, Sagacity, Stealth, and War. Each has a rating of one dot (beginner) to five dots (exemplar). Chapter Four, p. XX, explains all Abilities in detail.

Assign one 5, one 4, three 3s, two 2s, and one 1 to your character's Abilities.

The five-dot rated Ability is what your character does best, maybe even what they're already famous for. Someone who crafted the sword Nyandarr, Bringer of Ten Thousand Deaths, has Craft 5. Unless the sword is useless, but your character spun tales of The Great Sword Nyandarr until everyone believed it — that's Performance 5.

At the other end of the range, the one dot rating represents an Ability your character isn't very good at. Most Exalts are excellent at something once they apply themselves, so this might be a skill they just started. or, for an interesting subversion of the excellent Exalt, it might be that one area that eludes them — perhaps your Exalt wanted to be a singer, but they can't carry a tune and so they went into sword-smithing.

You probably noticed that a spread of eight leaves you with six Abilities at 0 dots. That's okay — those are skills your character has no real experience with. Even Exalts can't be great at everything.

A sword princess must be able to fight above all. As actual princess and second in line to the throne of Ur until her sister — the heir presumptive — ascends and has daughters of her own she also knows a little etiquette. Tamara goes for Awareness 2, Close Combat 5, Embassy 2, Integrity 3, Performance 1, Physique 3, Presence 3, Ranged Combat 4. Had Radiant Sun of the East paid any attention during her lesson, she'd also have Sagacity — but she didn't.

MORE FLEXIBILITY

Some play groups may find applying a fixed array of points for Abilities inflexible. **Essence** presents these values because they are fast and simple to understand. If the group has not played **Exalted** before, starting with the fixed array is recommended. However, players with a background in **Exalted** may want to play more

freely with these points. Storytellers are free to modify the array of points by adding or subtracting the dot values, or to simply add up the total (which amounts to 25 Ability points) and assign them in any order.

When taking this option, Storytellers may want to put a limit on how high Abilities can go, but it doesn't change much if the Storyteller allows characters to begin play with multiple Abilities at five.

STEP 4: CHARMS

Exalts are avatars of Creation's essence, and Charms are essentially their super powers. Chapter 6 (p. XX) lists all Charms in detail.

You start the game with Ox Body Technique *or* an Excellency, and four other Charms of your choice. You can take the Excellency as part of your four chosen Charms if your first pick was the Ox Body Technique, and vice versa.

Beyond that, choose whatever fits your character. You can find a guide to how to pick Charms most suitable to your character on p.XX. If this means rearranging your Abilities slightly to fit the suggestions, you may do so now.

If you chose a Circle of Sorcery as Charm, you can also select Spells. You get one free Spell to go with the Circle. Every Spell on top of that counts as a Charm. The same one-for-one replacement holds for Martial Arts Charms.

Some Charms have prerequisites which you must meet before you can take it. Feel free to go back to Steps one and two, and rearrange your spread, if there's a Charm you really want but currently don't have the right dots for.

Tamara chooses Ox-Body Technique and Bulwark Stance, Excellent Strike, Resolve-Bolstering Declaration and Glorious Solar Arsenal for Radiant Sun of the East. That's two Charms to increase her defensive capabilities, one to enhance her Close-Combat attacks, an Integrity Charm for helping others, and a Solar Charm that lets her summon a blade of sunlight.

STEP 5: MERITS

Your character did not spend their life in a void. They had exploits, impressed people, and maybe found an ancient relic in their pre-campaign adventuring career. These are represented by Merits. Every Merit comes with a dot rating of one to five. Some have a range such as (•-•••), while others jump between ratings such as (• or ••• or •••••). When a Merit adds its rating as dice to any roll, these do not count towards the dice limit.

Pick three starting Merits for your character: a primary, secondary, and tertiary. The primary Merit may have a dot rating of 5-3, the secondary at 4-2 dots, and the tertiary at 2-1 dots. How this applies to each individual Merit is explained within each entry. Some Merits such as Familiar only go to three dots, so you can't choose those as Primary Merit even if your character's beloved dire cat is the most important person in their life. This is a ceiling, not a floor. If a player wishes to use her Primary Merit on Artifact ••• because it is important to her concept, she may. Characters are not required to have a ••••• Merit, unless it suits them.

THIS IS A LOT

It may seem overwhelming or immersion-breaking to allow characters to start with a five-dot Merit immediately. As explained on p. XX, the dot limit on a Primary Merit is the ceiling, not the floor. If this causes difficulty for the table, players may instead choose to take one additional Secondary Merit and one additional Tertiary Merit, rather than one Primary.

Storytellers whose play groups desire more flexibility can instead allow players to assign 10 dots of Merits, with a limit on one five-dot Merit.

Merits enjoy the **Sanctity of Merits**. That means the Storyteller can't just take them away. A third

party won't kill your character's friend (*Allies*) for helping them, and their pet (*Familiar*) won't die in combat. The Storyteller might temporarily take them away if it makes narrative sense, or furthers the plot. Think of a villain capturing your character and taking their magic sword (*Artifact*) away — that's just sensible precautions. or another villain abducting that friend we mentioned, as bait. In the end though, your character should save both of them.

Choosing to offer up your Merit as a Dramatic Injury (p. XX) means that you will either be presented with the opportunity to recover a lost or broken Merit, or acquire a replacement. The Sanctity of Merits does have its limits though. If you send a familiar to spy on the Mask of Winters, or tell that villain to go ahead and kill the friend, it won't end well for them. Use common sense, and heed any warning your Storyteller might give you. If you do lose the target of your Merit dots, you and the Storyteller should work out replacement targets free of charge.

Your Storyteller may restrict Merits at the start of the campaign. If they want the characters to meet while they're down on their luck and alone, it doesn't make much sense for your character to have a small battalion at their back through the *Command* Merit. In this case, ask your Storyteller if your character could gain that Merit later. Alternately, maybe you see a Merit you want, but which doesn't make much sense for your character to start with. A sorcerer starting their quest for the secrets of Creation might gain a *Hearthstone* later. Discuss options with your Storyteller and determine a rough timeline for when your character might have the narrative arc to gain that Merit. You can bank some of your Merit dots now, with Storyteller permission, until you can buy it.

YOU DON'T NEED A MERIT FOR THAT

Essence has a pretty short Merit list. That's because Exalts are awesome all by themselves.

Want your character to have great stamina? Take Fortitude ●●●● and purchase Physique Charms. Want them to speak a thousand languages? That's the Embassy skill. Want them to be a Beastman or extraordinarily tall? Don't need a Merit for that.

You may purchase multiple instances of any given Merit, each applying to a new benefit. For example, Allies (●) would be your God-Blooded friend, and Allies (●●●) your Sidereal friend in the Celestial Bureaucracy. You can take them both as Secondary and Tertiary Allies, and still be able to make Artifact your Primary.

ALLIES (●, ●●●, OR ●●●●●)

Everyone makes friends. This Merit represents a loyal friend or companion willing to put themselves in harm's way if need be.

When choosing this Merit, discuss with the Storyteller what this ally can and cannot do. The daughter of a Goddess of Etiquette won't join in physical combat, but she can help writing a petition to another god. Meanwhile a brash Dragon-Blooded is far more likely to join on a quest. Allies have a life of their own, so cannot be at your character's side all the time. They might also ask your character for favors in return.

- (Tertiary) Your friend is a mortal or minor magical character, such as the daughter of a lesser god.
- (Secondary) Your friend is as powerful as a young Exalt or lesser god (see p. XX).
- (Primary) Your friend is as powerful as n experienced Exalt or greater god (see p. XX).

ARTIFACT (●● TO ●●●●●)

Your character owns an Artifact with a rating equal to this Merit's rating (see p. XX for a list of Artifacts to choose from). This Artifact might grant a Charm via Evocation — make sure to write those down on your Charms list. ● or ●● is Tertiary, ●●● or ●●●● is Secondary and ●●●●● is Primary.

BACKING (●● TO ●●●●●)

Your character has standing in an organization, whether it's the Guild, the Celestial Bureaucracy, or a conspiracy to overthrow the Prefect of Gem.

You define which organization when you purchase this Merit. You add dice equal to this Merit's rating to all rolls made through the organization — for example, when your character exerts influence by leveraging their position. Once per story, they can loan equipment with a total Resource rating equal to the rating of this Merit, provided it makes sense for the organization to have access. A rating of ●● is Tertiary, while a rating of ●●● or ●●●● is Secondary and ●●●●● is Primary.

COMMAND (●●● TO ●●●●●)

(Cannot be tertiary)

Your character commands a militant group, whether they're actual soldiers or zealous cultists.

- (Secondary) Either a Size 3 group with Elite Drill — or — a Size 4-5 group with Average Drill.
- (Secondary or Primary) Either a Size 4-5 Group with Elite Drill — or — two Size 5 groups with Average Drill — or — a Size 3 battle group with Elite Drill and the traits of elite troops.
- (Primary only) Either a Size 5 group with Elite Drill and the traits of elite troops — or — five Size 5, groups with Average Drill — or — two Size 5 groups with Elite Drill.

CONTACTS (●● TO ●●●●●)

Maybe your character has the kind of face that wins trust. Maybe they have the kind of coin that buys friends. Either way, people tell them things — including information they probably shouldn't.

Name a group when you purchase this Merit such as House V'Neef, or the Hastlanti League. When gathering information on a subject, if that group could feasibly know, add dice equal to this

Merit's rating to your roll. The Storyteller can, and should, also have contacts come forth with information unprompted. A rating of •• is **Tertiary**, while a rating of ••• or •••• is **Secondary** and ••••• is **Primary**.

FAMILIAR (• TO •••)

(Cannot be primary)

Your character has a magically bonded animal companion. They understand their familiar, and share its senses. Touching the familiar restores motes equal to this Merit's rating. The familiar's essence replenishes at the start of each session. The familiar ages as your character does, and cannot die of natural causes until they do.

- **(Tertiary)** The Familiar is relatively harmless, such as a cat or hedgehog.
- **(Secondary)** The Familiar can keep their own in combat, such as a horse or tiger.
- **(Secondary)** The Familiar is an exceptional or magical animal, such as a war elephant or talking monkey.

FOLLOWERS (• TO •••)

(Cannot be primary)

Your character's heroic exploits attracted a band of mortal followers. These may be people who travel with the Exalt, but they might also be people who venerate them from afar.

You specify who your followers are — merchants, spies, entertainers — when you purchase this Merit. A higher Merit rating denotes your choice of either better trained followers, or more followers. Your character can set their followers to any task, which they perform with this Merit's rating plus three additional dice for tasks they're suited to (spies spying), or the Merit's rating plus one additional dice for other tasks (spies baking a cake). If your character oversees the work, instead add those dice to your roll. A rating of • or •• is **Tertiary**, and a rating of ••• is **Secondary**.

HEARTHSTONE (••• OR •••••)

(Cannot be tertiary)

Creation teems with elemental, celestial, and abyssal power. Fiery volcanoes, moonlit glades, and dark graveyards are all places where this power may come to the surface. Hearthstones can be Elemental or Celestial, depending on the theme of the connected manse or demense.

A demesne is a natural wellspring of power. Meanwhile a manse is a building, like a palace or fortress, harnessing the natural properties of a demesne. A fiery volcano would be a fire demesne, while a beautifully moonlight glade is a Lunar demesne. A hidden palace inside the caldera, or a home wrought from the glade's trees would be a manse. A hearthstone is a gem grown from this power, corresponding to the essence of the domain — the volcano produces a hearthstone of fire, the moonlight glade a Lunar hearthstone.

You design your domain, decide whether it's a demesne or a manse, and choose a corresponding hearthstone when you pick this Merit. You can find a list of standard and greater hearthstones on p. XX. This Hearthstone likely grants a Charm via Evocation — make sure to write that down on your Charms list. Some greater Manses also provide benefits to certain actions taken within them. Note that down, too.

All Manses come equipped with Hearthstone jewelry of your choice, which allows the Manse's owner to benefit from the Hearthstone, unless it specifically says it must be socketed in a weapon.

You can decide your character owns the hearthstone but doesn't know where the domain is. Alternately, perhaps they control the domain, but its hearthstone is lost. Reclaiming such is a narrative journey, and free with your initial Merit purchase.

- **(Secondary)** Your character owns a demesne or manse, and a standard hearthstone. Your character regains one mote

per hour when resting in their domain. They also regain Essence outside their domain if they wear the hearthstone in an attuned artifact. Your character may make an automatic Awareness check at difficulty 3 to detect essence expenditure within their domain.

••••• **(Primary)** Your character owns a demesne or manse, and a greater hearthstone. Your character regains three motes per hour when resting in their domain. They also regain Essence outside their domain if they wear the hearthstone in an attuned artifact. Your character automatically detects essence expenditure within their domain.

INFLUENCE (• TO •••••)

Your character is a person of renown. They might be nobility, a celebrated war hero, or a venerated philosopher. When they speak, people listen.

You make an applicable social roll to sway people as normal, but your character's words carry much farther. The Storyteller remains the final arbiter of how affected people react. For example, your character makes a speech denouncing the evils of inherited nobility. That may not sway the queen to relinquish power, but it does sow the seeds of rebellion among her people.

- **(Tertiary)** Your character carries sway in a local village or town.
- **(Tertiary)** Your character carries sway in a minor city-state or satrapy
- **(Secondary)** Your character carries sway in a powerful city-state or kingdom
- **(Secondary)** Your character carries sway in an entire region such as the Hundred Kingdoms, or Scavenger Lands.
- **(Primary)** Your character carries sway in an entire Direction.

RESOURCES (• TO •••••)

Exalts don't need money to provide for themselves. They have the skill to earn or create basic necessities. This Merit, however, describes wealth beyond the basics. This need not represent hard cash, but can also mean a stake in a V'Neef shipping company, or standing to call in financial favors. Whenever you're making a check that involves money, such as bribing someone or haggling for equipment, add your Resources dots as bonus dice to the roll.

- **(Tertiary)** A modest flow of cash, more a side hustle than a business, such as being a silent partner in a successful inn or bath house. The Exalt enjoys a modestly comfortably lifestyle – good food, clean rooms, but nothing spectacular.
- **(Tertiary)** This represents either a broad range of investments, or a budding monopoly in a city of choice. They have lofty apartment with two servants. Then can gain audiences with anyone in their line of business by leveraging their economic power.
- **(Secondary)** The Exalt holds a monopoly or impressive portfolio of businesses. The Exalt owns several apartments, or one large estate, and their choice of fine mounts. Then can gain audiences with any leader in their city by leveraging their economic power.
- **(Secondary)** The Exalt has a monopoly or substantial stake in a thrive, wide-spread business. The Exalt owns several estates and a stable full of prize race horses. They can gain an audience with kings, minor satraps and young Dynastic scions by leveraging their economic power.
- **(Primary)** The Exalt is a major business power in one of the Directions. They can outfit a trading ship in the West, or equip an army in the Hundred Kingdoms. They can gain an audience with important satraps and the leaders of Dynastic Houses by leveraging their economic power.

Radiant Sun of the East owns an ancient sword named Sun's Caress (primary Merit: Artifact ●●●●) which once belonged to her previous incarnation. She also has Hearthstone connected to a Manse (secondary Merit: Hearthstone ●●●) in Ur – though technically it's on loan from the Kingdom. As second in line to the throne, she also has Influence ●● in Ur as her tertiary Merit.

STEP 6: VIRTUES AND INTIMACIES

After deciding *what* your character can do, we've come to *why* they do it. What do they believe in, fight for, and — if it comes to that — die for?

Discuss your ideas with the table. Having two character with opposing Intimacies in a group — say, "I never kill" versus "I do whatever it takes" — can be a source of excellent drama, or it can tear the group apart. Talk things through to make sure it's the former.

VIRTUES

Exalted Essence uses seven Virtues: Ambition, Compassion, Courage, Discipline, Justice, Loyalty, and Wonder. Chapter Four, p. XX, explores them in detail.

Choose one to be your character's Major Virtue, and another to be their Minor Virtue. A wide-eyed explorer may have Wonder as their Major Virtue and Courage as their Minor, while a martial artist defending the weak has Justice as their Major and Discipline as their Minor. Don't be afraid to subvert the type. Maybe your wide-eyed explorer wants to be brave, but in actuality they're not, or the defender works for fame more than actual justice, making Ambition rather than Justice their Major Virtue.

If you choose **Ambition**, you must choose a specific thing that drives your character, such as Ambition: Drive the Guild from Nexus, or Ambition: Rule Over the Deserts of the South. If you choose **Loyalty**, you must choose a leader or institution to which you are loyal, such as

Loyalty (House Ragara) or Loyalty (the Mask of Winters). See p. XX for more explanation.

INTIMACIES

An Intimacy is a belief or relationship essential to your character. You choose one Major and two Minor Intimacies — there's no pre-written list. A Major Intimacy greatly influences what your character does and how they behave. A Minor Intimacy also influences your character, but it's not the defining factor in their decision making. All Intimacies must be influenced by their associated Virtue. You can find how Intimacies affect gameplay on p. XX.

Use an "I" sentence to check if a belief works for your character. *I never kill*. Does that sound like something they'd say or think? If so, that qualifies as a good Major Intimacy. If you wanted it to be a Minor Intimacy, *I try not to kill* is better.

Relationships are about attachment, which needn't be to a person. Nor do relationships need to be positive. Nexus (protective), My Sister (rivalry), and The Mask of Winters (burning hatred) are all relationships. A character's Intimacy of The Mask of Winters (burning hatred) may be attached to her Justice Virtue, while My Sister (Rivalry) may be attached to her Courage Virtue. Make sure your Storyteller can work with the Intimacies you've chosen.

Nexus (protective) isn't very interesting if Nexus never comes under threat, nor is *Mask of Winters (burning hatred)* if your campaign is miles away from that Deathlord. On the other hand, an Intimacy might inspire your Storyteller, prompting them to rewrite "a recurring rival" as your character's sister.

The Storyteller has final say in what makes a good, applicable and not overly-broad Intimacy, as per p. XX

If at this point you're struggling to choose three Intimacies: don't worry, you can leave any number of them undefined and pick them during play!

THE GREAT CURSE

All Exalted are touched by ancient curses. The Great Curse drives them to take their Virtues and Intimacies too far. Compassion for the disenfranchised prompts them to kill every authority figure in the village. Discipline turns their heart to uncaring stone.

Refer to p. XX for facets of the Great Curse. You get to choose one of the manifestations when it triggers — you may want to review them now, and pick which one you think is most interesting. You do not have to stick with this choice for the entire game and may choose a different manifestation each time Curse triggers.

The Radiant Sun of the East is brave and fights for her people. Courage is her Major Virtue, and Loyalty her Minor.

Her Major Intimacy is “I protect the people of the East”- associated with Courage, and her Minor Intimacies are “My Sister (close older sister) – associated with Loyalty”, and “Ur (my people)- attached to Loyalty”.

Tamara reads over the Great Curse and thinks that Berserk Anger seems like a fun way to express lashing out when Radiant Sun’s Courage is provoked. When that comes up in play, she’ll choose it.

STEP 7: FINISHING TOUCHES

This is where we fill in the last blank spots on your character sheet.

ESSENCE

All starting Exalts have Essence 1, with a pool of five motes. Check p. XX under Advancement Templates if you’re starting the campaign at a higher Essence.

HEALTH

Your Exalt starts with six Health levels (two 0, two -1s, two -2s and Incapacitated), plus any gained from Ox Body Technique. You can find more on damage and healing on p. xx.

DEFENSE, SOAK AND HARDNESS

Your Defense is Parry Attribute + Close Combat divided by two (round up) or Evasion Attribute + Athletics divided by two (round up) whichever is higher. Add in any Charm effects. See p. XX for Evasion charms, and p. XX for Parry Charms.

Without armor, your Soak is 1, plus another 1 if your Fortitude is higher than 3. If you are wearing armor, add the Armor Soak Value to this total.

Characters start with a Hardness 2 plus any applicable bonuses from armor. Exalted characters add their Essence rating to their Hardness value.

The Radiant Sun of the East is newly exalted, and thus has Essence 1. Tamara adds her Ox- Body Health levels to the usual starting Health. She’s likely to use Fortitude 3 + Close Combat 5 for her Parry, which brings her Defense to 4 before any Charms.

EQUIPMENT

Your character may have any mundane equipment that fits their character concept and background, regardless of their Resources. They also have enough money to pay for food, lodgings, bath services, and so on.

Radiant Sun of the East has a royal steed, a fine leather outfit, a ball gown tucked away at the bottom of her pack just in case, and the usual travel equipment.

SPARK OF LIFE

Now it’s time to fill in the details. What does your character look like? This is Exalted, and your character looks however you want. Do they have any peculiar quirks or strange habits? What about social ties beyond their Intimacies — any family, or old lovers around? Make sure to look to the other characters too — does your character know any of them already, and how is that relationship working for both of them?

CHARACTER CREATION PROCESS

STEP 1: CONCEPT

Design a character concept. Choose an Exalt type and Caste/Aspect.

STEP 2: ATTRIBUTES

Distribute 4, 3 and 2 dots among Force, Finesse, or Fortitude. Add any Advantages granted by your Exalt type.

STEP 3: ABILITIES

Assign one 5, one 4, three 3s, three 2s and one 1 to your character's Abilities. Add any Advantages granted by your Exalt type.

STEP 4: CHARMS

Choose Ox-Body Technique -or- an Excellency. Choose four other Charms. Spells and Martial Arts Charms count as one Charm.

STEP 5: MERITS

Assign dots to your primary/secondary/tertiary Merits. Add any applicable Evocations from Merits to Charms.

STEP 6: VIRTUES AND INTIMACIES

Choose a Major and a Minor Virtue.

Create one Major and two Minor Intimacies.

STEP 7: FINISHING TOUCHES

Write down Essence 1 and five motes.

Health levels: two 0, two -1s, one -2, and Incapacitated, plus any from Ox-Body Technique. Defense: **Parry** equals Attribute + Close Combat divided by two (round up) or **Evasion** equals Attribute + Athletics divided by two (round up) whichever is higher. Add in any Charm effects.

Soak is 1, + 1 if your Fortitude is higher than 3, then add any Armor Soak Value. Hardness is equal to Essence plus two, plus any from armor.

Any mundane equipment that fits your concept. Any artifacts gained from the Merit.

ATTRIBUTES

- **Force:** Physical strength, force of personality, direct logic.
- **Finesse:** Quick thinking, clever words, dexterity.
- **Fortitude:** Physical endurance, vigilance, composure.

ABILITIES

- **Awareness:** Survey a scene, notice details, spot ambushes, and use physical senses. Athletics: Move quickly, balance, dodge attacks.
- **Close Combat:** Fight in close quarters, unarmed or with a weapon.
- **Craft:** Create items, food, structures, or art, including their magical counterparts. Embassy: Navigate social structures and bureaucratic procedures.
- **Integrity:** Withstand mental duress, outside influences, and magical manipulation. Navigate: Find one's way across Creation, and utilize transportation.

- **Performance:** Influence others through artful expression, influence spirits through prayer. Physique: Perform physical feats, resist the environment, illness, and poison.
- **Presence:** Influence others by personal magnetism, persuasion on an individual level.
- **Ranged Combat:** Fight at range with a variety of weapons.
- **Sagacity:** Understand academic and historical teachings, languages, occultism, and medicine. Stealth: Perform unseen actions, pass unnoticed, use disguises.
- **War:** Command others, employ battlefield tactics.

MERITS

- **Allies:** People who take risks for your character.
- **Artifact:** An item of great power.
- **Backing:** Standing in an organization.
- **Command:** Militant followers. Cannot be Tertiary.
- **Contact:** People who serve as informants.
- **Familiar:** A mystical pet. Cannot be Primary.
- **Followers:** Any non-militant followers. Cannot be Primary.
- **Hearthstone:** A powerful gem, tied to a geomantic domain.
- **Influence:** Influence within a location.
- **Resources:** Financial standing.

VIRTUES

- **Ambition:** Your character seeks to accomplish something big. Decide what that is when choosing this virtue.
- **Compassion:** Your character puts others before themselves, and values empathy and selflessness. They uplift the oppressed and cast tyrants down.
- **Courage:** Your character acts in the face of adversity. They are not easily intimidated and rise to meet any challenge.
- **Discipline:** Your character acts with precision and methodical planning.
- **Justice:** Your character strives to do the right thing, and cannot abide by wrongdoing or injustices.
- **Loyalty:** Your character is dedicated to something or someone: an organization, a leader, a country, etc. This is typically not another individual, unless they hold a position of authority.
- **Wonder:** Curiosity, inquiry and a sense of adventure drive your character. They wish to learn all the secrets of Creation.

INTIMACIES

- **Major:** Relationships or beliefs that influence the choices your character makes, and how they behave.
- **Minor:** Relationships or beliefs that influence your character, but do not change their major decisions.

ADVANCEMENT

Characters advance on a milestone system. **Minor** and **major** Milestones are communal. Everyone advances at the same pace, allowing characters to face threats on equal footing. This carries across Exalt types — a Dragon-Blooded and a Solar enjoy the same increase. **Personal** and **Exalt** Milestones are individual, and the Storyteller should make sure each character has a chance to earn Exalt Milestones equally. Milestones can overlap and flow into each other, allowing characters to gain multiple Milestones for the same accomplishment.

GAINING MILESTONES

Exalted Essence has four types of Milestones: personal, minor, major, and Exalt milestones.

A personal Milestone represents a character accomplishing a personal goal, or doing something extraordinary that doesn't affect the narrative arc. Solving the current mystery, defeating a rival, or describing an amazing stunt all count as personal Milestones. The Storyteller should ask characters for their goals at the start of each session to help create (and earn) personal milestones. Even if a character hits several of these requirements, they only earn one personal Milestone per session. If a player attended the game and contributed but did not accomplish a personal goal or perform a radical stunt, Storytellers should still give out a Milestone for attending.

The group should keep track of each personal or Exalt milestone met. Once a total number of personal or Exalt milestones equal to the number of characters has been met, all characters involved gain their player's choice of a Personal or Exalt milestone. Exalt Milestones differ per Exalt Caste, and are covered in Chapter 2 (p. XX).

A minor Milestone is completing a single adventure or story chapter, like discovering the Mask of Winters has been spying on the Circle.

This is a significant story beat, but not the end of the story itself. Minor milestones should happen roughly every other session of play.

A major Milestone furthers the narrative progression, like completing a story arc by battling the Day Caste who infiltrated Great Forks at the Mask of Winter's behest. This is the end of a story.

Using Milestones

- A personal Milestone lets you acquire a new Mode or repurchase a Charm. You may also gain, intensify, or change an Intimacy if the story supports it.
- A minor Milestone lets you pick a new Charm, or increase an Ability by +1.
- A major Milestone lets you increase an Attribute by +1, raise an existing Merit, or pick a new Merit. You may also change your Virtues if the story warrants such.
- Exalt Milestones may be used for the benefit of either a personal or minor Milestone, but must be used for Exalt-specific things — such as acquiring a new Exalt Charm, new Mode, or repurchasing an Exalt Charm. If a character would acquire both in the same session of play, they stack.
- Whenever the Circle increases their Essence, each character may choose another Ox Body or Excellency to acquire for free. This includes starting characters at Essence ratings higher than 1.
- Other effects, such as Charms, may have benefits or triggers that occur on specific Milestones.

Increasing Essence

Characters increase their Essence ratings at significant points in the story. This represents growth and enlightenment, so Storytellers and players should agree that their characters have undergone significant change and thus raise their Essence ratings. Alternatively, a Storyteller may want to progress the power level of the

game along in order to introduce more dangerous challenges. The rate of speed at which characters progress is up to the taste of the table. It is recommended that two major milestones be accomplished between Essence increases, but this is a flexible rule.

ADVANCEMENT TEMPLATES

You may not want to start with beginning characters. If you want to jump straight in at a higher Essence, we've listed a good distribution of points between brackets.

Essence 2

Motes: 7

Attributes: Assign one 4 and two 3s Abilities: Assign one 5, one 4, six 3s, one 1

Charms: 9 Charms

Merits: Pick a primary, secondary, and two tertiary Merits.

Essence 3

Motes: 10

Attributes: Assign two 4s and one 3

Abilities: Assign two 5s, two 4s, four 3s, one 2

Charms: 13 Charms

Merits: Pick a primary, two secondary, and one tertiary Merits.

Essence 4

Motes: 12

Attributes: Assign one 5 and two 4s Abilities: Assign two 5s, four 4s, three 3s

Charms: 17 Charms

Merits: Pick a primary, two secondary, and two tertiary Merits.

Essence 5

Motes: 15

Attributes: Assign two 5s and one 4 Abilities: Assign three 5s, four 4s, two 3s

Charms: 20 Charms

Merits: Pick two primary, two secondary, and one tertiary Merits.

CHOOSING CHARMS

Selecting which Charms a character should start with is perhaps the most daunting decision a

player faces when building their Exalt. This section will help players new to the game decide how to get started, or give experienced players a template to build from. These templates can also be used to make characters quickly for off-the-cuff and one-shot games. The Charms listed in this section are all found in Chapter 6, beginning on p. XX.

Warrior

Here are a few Warrior archetypes for characters to use. Warriors should have **Close Combat** or **Ranged Combat** at 4 or 5.

Stalwart Defender

The Stalwart Defender protects her Circle by having a strong defense and enduring damage. They're willing to put themselves in danger for others.

Additional Ability: Physique 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Ox Body and Bulwark Stance, Iron Kettle Body, Loyal Guardian Defense, or Portentous Warding Defense or Streaming Arrow Stance

Dawn (Solar): Orichalcum Battle Soul Full Moon (Lunar): Relentless Lunar Fury

Earth Aspect (Dragon-Blooded): Dragon-Graced Weapon

Janest (Exigent): Others Before Self

Swift Damage-dealer

The Swift Damage-dealer moves in a flurry of blows, devastating their foes with an onslaught of attacks.

Additional Ability: A second attack Ability at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Close or Ranged Combat Excellency and Arrow Storm Attack, Excellent Strike, No Arrow Wasted or Revolving Bow Discipline

Dusk (Abyssal): First Blood Impulse

Azimuth (Infernal): Vicious Devil-Arms Technique **Orichalcum (Alchemical):** Bone and Steel Destruction

Untouchable Skirmisher

The Untouchable Skirmisher cannot be pinned down, moving from place to place while fighting either at range or in swift, close-combat bursts.

Additional Ability: Athletics 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Close or Ranged Combat Excellency and Guard-Breaking Technique, Monkey Leap Technique, Sharpshooter's Clever Tricks, or Reflex Shot Technique

Battles (Sidereal): Shadow-Piercing Needle

Spring (Getimian):

Flesh Aspect (Liminal): Bloodsick Crimson Barb Priest

Use these archetypes to guide your charm selection for your Priest character. Priests should have **Presence** or **Integrity** at 4 or 5.

Righteous Demagogue

The Righteous Demagogue campaigns for what's right, using the power of their voice to sway the masses.

Additional Ability: Performance at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Presence or Performance Excellency and Glorious Presence Technique, Listener-Swaying Argument, Righteous Lion Spirit, or Stubborn Boar Defense

Midnight (Abyssal): Ghost-Emperor Edict

Ascendant (Infernal): Devil-Emperor Edict

Summer (Getimian): Sleeper-Guiding Whisper

Fearless Leader

The Fearless Leader commands a group of followers, or guides and directs the Circle. Their leadership makes everyone stronger.

Additional Ability: War 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Ox Body and Cat's Puffed Tail, Greatness-Inspiring Aura, Harmonious Presence Meditation, or Underling-Promoting Practice

Zenith (Solar): Dissident-Searing Intent

Soulsteel (Alchemical): Celestial Overseer Concordat

Fire Aspect (Dragon-Blooded): Storm-Calling Strategies

Kindly Healer

The Kindly Healer has a soothing presence. They take good care of others, but especially their Circle.

Additional Ability: Sagacity 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Presence or Sagacity Excellency and Harmonious Presence Meditation, Master Physician Technique, Second Chance Approach, or Resolve-Bolstering Declaration

Serenity (Sidereal): Of Truths Best Unspoken

Changing Moon (Lunar): Sharing Luna's Gifts

Blood Aspect (Liminal): Soft Touch of Hospice

Savant

Savant characters may use these guidelines to help select their Charms. Savants should have Sagacity or Performance at 4 or 5.

Peerless Sage

The Peerless Sage is a font of knowledge — the secrets of Creation compel them to discovery. They're willing to risk danger for their curiosity.

Additional Ability: Integrity at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Sagacity Excellency and Archive Mind Mentality, Harmonious Academic Methodology, Sagacious Reading of Intent or Spirit-Detecting Glance

No Moon (Lunar): Memory-Drinking Meditation

Air Aspect (Dragon-Blooded): Fivefold Resonance Sense

Autumn (Getimian): Here-and-Everywhere Approach

Master of Sorcery

The Master of Sorcery has dedicated themselves to the pursuit of Creation's most dangerous art: weaving spells. They are also well-known as artificers or geomancers.

Additional Ability: Craft at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Sagacity Excellency and Sorcerous Initiation, or Necromantic Initiation, All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight, Spirit-Repelling Diagram, or Will-Bolstering Method

Twilight (Solar): Technique-from-Taste Approach

Daybreak (Abyssal): Life-Mocking Assembly

Horizon (Infernal): Symphony of Sinful Prayers

Implacable Investigator

Nothing gets past the notice of the Implacable Investigator. Whether a treasure hunter, a collector of wonders, or a Magistrate of the Realm, they turn their curiosity towards solving mysteries.

Additional Ability: Awareness at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Awareness or Sagacity Excellency and Crafty Observation Method, Enhanced Senses, Judge's Ear Technique, or Witness Rapport Technique

Adamant (Alchemical): Exhaustive Interrogation Method

Secrets (Sidereal): Efficient Secretary Technique

Breath Aspect (Liminal): Scent of Blood

Criminal

Here are a few Criminal archetypes for characters to use. Criminals should have **Stealth** or **Awareness** at 4 or 5.

Unseen Agent

The Unseen Agent moves through society without detection. They might be a spy, an information broker, or simply a rogue agent for hire.

Additional Ability: Presence 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Presence or Stealth Excellency and Dread Tiger's Symmetry, Enhanced Senses, Flawlessly Impenetrable Disguise, or Suspicion-Allaying Gesture

Moonsilver (Alchemical): Contingency Preparation Axiom

Marrow Aspect (Liminal): Breath-Tasting Ward

Day (Abyssal): Shadow Cloak Technique

Prince of Thieves

Argument, Strange Tongue Understanding or Wise-Eyed Courtier Method

Eclipse (Solar): Impassioned Discourse Technique

The Prince of Thieves is the master of the underworld, networking easily amongst criminals while managing their own illicit empire.

Additional Ability: Embassy 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Embassy or Stealth Excellency and Evidence-Placing Method, Flawless Counterfeit Technique, Illimitable Master Fence, or The Perfect Bargain

Changing Moon (Lunar): Butterfly Eyes Mirage

Nadir (Infernal):

Water Aspect (Dragon-Blooded):

Master Assassin

The Master Assassin is a hidden blade in the night. They might be in the employ of a nation or work as a mercenary. However they earn their keep, they are a killer for hire.

Additional Ability: Close or Ranged Combat at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Ox Body and A Drop Amongst the Ocean, Excellent Strike, Double Distance Technique, or Perfect Shadow Stillness

Endings (Sidereal): Thought-Swiping Distraction

Night (Solar): Shroud of Night's Law

Summer (Getimian): Spatial Disjunction

Broker

Use these archetypes to guide your charm selection for your Broker character. Brokers should have **Embassy** or **Presence** at 4 or 5.

Silver-Tongued Diplomat

The Silver-Tongued Diplomat knows just what to say and when, and understands that a well-placed word is as powerful as any weapon.

Additional Ability: Integrity at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Embassy or Presence Excellency and Deft Official's Way, Listener-Swaying

Changing Moon (Lunar): Predator-and-Prey Mirror

Moonshadow (Abyssal): Wickedness Unveiling Method

Shrewd Merchant

The Shrewd Merchant knows how to make money — whether that's through cutthroat practices or fair trade. They're a Master of Commerce and making a quick sale.

Additional Ability: Sagacity at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Embassy or Sagacity Excellency and Jade Leaves a Trail, The Perfect Bargain, The Perfect Price, or Strange Tongue Understanding

Winter (Getimian): Reality Embellishment Approach

Penumbra (Infernal): Naked Soul Insight

Wood Aspect (Dragon-Blooded): Thoughtful Gift Technique

Fleet Courier

The Fleet Courier delivers: missives, parcels, contraband — you name it. Whether connected to a nation, a legitimate business practice, or a criminal empire, they transport important things from point A to point B.

Additional Ability: Navigate at 3 or higher.

Universal Charms: Navigate or Embassy Excellency, Graceful Crane Stance, Hidden Shortcut Revelation, Illimitable Master Fence, or Trackless Region Navigation

Journeys (Sidereal): Fortuitous Wandering

Starmetal (Alchemical): Insightful Managerial

Aptitude Marrow (Liminal): Tomb-and-Ruin Antiquity Inspection

CHAPTER FOUR: SYSTEMS

This chapter details **Exalted Essence's** core rules. It contains everything a Storyteller needs to know when running a game.

BASIC SYSTEM

To play Exalted Essence everyone will need a set of at least 10 10-sided dice (or "d10s"). In a pinch, rolling 20-sided dice works just as well: treat 11-20 as another instance of 1-10. Players can share dice, or use dice rolling apps on their phones, such as Onyx Dice, or the Storyteller might provide dice for the table. Regardless, everyone will be creating a pool of dice and rolling them.

BUILDING THE POOL AND COUNTING SUCCESSES

The player builds a pool of d10s consisting of Attribute + Ability + any other relevant modifier. Each 7, 8 and 9 that appear counts as one success, and any 10 that appears counts as two. This is called "double 10s." Some special abilities may allow doubling of another number, such as "double 9s" or "double 7s" — in this case, every number from the specified target up to 10 doubles as well. Successes are the metric by which **Exalted Essence** measures how well a character does with whatever task she attempted. Attributes and Abilities are explained in more detail beginning on p. XX. This core dice mechanic builds the fundamental system for all actions characters take in **Exalted Essence**.

DOUBLING UP

Characters might have multiple effects that call for double 9s or double 8s, etc. When there's overlap of two or more identical doubling effects, they double the next number down. So, if a character has two double 9 effects on her social action, she treats the applicable rolls as though she had double 8s. This stops at double 7s.

In the event of two or more *differing* double effects (such as double 9s and double 8s), take the better effect.

ACTION TYPES

Any action a character can perform falls into one of the following categories. Charms, the Exalted's unique special powers, utilize action types heavily.

Reflexive: a reflexive action is something that requires no conscious effort. Noticing oncoming danger, or making idle banter during battle, for example. Reflexive actions do not count towards the total number of things a character can do during her turn.

Simple: a simple action is something that does require thought and effort. It takes up a character's whole action, unless it is part of a flurry. Making an attack is always simple, but a simple action might also be studying ancient glyphs on a ruin, or convincing a bloodthirsty foe to stand down. Sometimes Charms or other effects will note that something requires "an action" — this is the same as a simple action.

Flurries allow a character to take two simple actions. These must be two different actions, so it cannot be two attacks, or two attempts to talk down a foe, but it can be an attack and an attempt at intimidation. When your character makes a flurry, reduce both pools by three dice. This penalty cannot be reduced or ignored unless an effect specifically states so. No matter what, **a character can only take two actions per turn**. This includes actions taken in response to things, like counterattacks (see p. XX).

All actions have a set difficulty, explained on p. XX.

OPPOSED ACTIONS

Opposed actions happen when two or more characters contest each other. This might be two athletes racing or three debutantes trying to outdo each other at a soiree. Opposed actions have no difficulty; all parties involved make rolls as normal and compare the number of successes rolled. The character with the greatest number of successes "wins." In the

event of a tie, favor players' characters over Storyteller characters. If the contest is between players, then the Storyteller should help adjudicate an interesting result with input from the players.

Sometimes **ties** happen, where both parties in an opposed roll have the same number of successes. In this case, ties favor the **defender** which means the character resisting the action. For instance, the guard standing watch as characters sneak past is "defending" against their infiltration attempts. Where the defender is unclear, favor the players' characters over Storyteller characters. If the tie is between two players' characters and there is no clear defender, the two players should work out how they think it would be coolest for the action to resolve, with mediation from the Storyteller.

Unstoppable Force/Immoveable Object

Sometimes two effects both happen uncontested, flawlessly, or without needing to roll. For example: a character might have an effect that allows her to disguise herself perfectly, and another character might have an effect that lets him see through all deceptions. In this case, it creates an opposed roll using the most appropriate pools. In the example: Finesse + Stealth for the disguise and Force + Awareness to see through it. Storyteller characters should use whichever pool is the most appropriate — typically their Primary pool (see p. XX for Antagonist rules).

EXTENDED ACTIONS

Extended actions cover anything a character attempts over a period of time. This period of time might be over several turns of combat while a character frantically tries to disassemble an overheating artifact or over the span of years as a character writes her magnum opus.

These types of actions are called **ventures**. See p.XX.

DETERMINING DIFFICULTY

All actions also have difficulty. This is the minimum number of successes required to achieve whatever the character was trying to do. Some tasks have a pre-set difficulty, determined by a Charm or Artifact's effect. Others require the Storyteller to adjudicate on the fly. Here are some guidelines for figuring out just how hard a roll should be:

Difficulty 1 and **difficulty 2** are beneath the Exalted. Difficulty reducers might bump difficulty down to this level, but if a Storyteller decides that an action requires two or fewer successes, then she shouldn't call for a roll at all. In corner-case situations, a Storyteller might consider calling for a difficulty 1 or 2 roll if the Exalt has four or fewer dice in her pool if the failure would be interesting. Otherwise, there's no need to make a character roll for these trivial things.

Difficulty 3 is a suitable challenge for an Exalt. A difficulty 3 task might be something like stealing the keys off the belt of an alert guard, spotting the insignia of the assassin's guild hired to kill you on a man in a crowd, or breaking encryption with some of the cipher missing. This is the basic difficulty for all tasks in **Exalted: Essence**. **If a roll does not state a difficulty, assume it is difficulty 3.**

Difficulty 5 is a challenging feat for the Exalted. Actions at this difficulty might be: climbing up a smooth surface with no handholds, surgically reattaching a freshly severed limb, or counting the whiskers on a fleeing Lunar in fox form.

Difficulty 7 pushes the limits on what the Exalted can accomplish without aid of magic. Difficulty 7 actions might include: instantly punching through a fortified stone wall, sneaking past a vigilant guardian of Heaven, or translating a text in a language lost to time.

Difficulty 10, most of the time, will not be achievable without Charms. To perform a

difficulty 10 feat without magic borderlines on impossible. This might be: lying to the face of the Unconquered Sun, swimming through the Wyld and coming out unaltered, or successfully recreating an artifact from a fragment of a First Age manual.

Any successes over the difficulty are called **extra successes**. Extra successes may be important to obtaining further information or result above meeting the base difficulty. Some Charms may grant additional effects with extra successes, and extra successes are also important to combat rolls.

Remember that two dice average one success. The Storyteller can estimate the average difficulty a character can meet by halving their pool and rounding down.

If a roll or an effect does not have a stated difficulty, it is always difficulty 3.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Meeting or exceeding the difficulty constitutes a **success**. In the most basic terms, it means the character accomplished her goal. At the Storyteller's option, she may gate additional information behind a certain amount of extra successes. **Example:** *Esme, the Storyteller, calls for an Awareness roll to spot a would-be assassin trailing the characters. She tells them the base difficulty is three to notice the enemy, but additional information is available if anyone gets five successes. Jordan rolls five successes, so Esme informs her that her character notices the glint of a poisoned blade hidden up the assassin's sleeve.*

Failure occurs when a roll does not meet the difficulty. Narrating failure should never be a hard stop, and should never reflect poorly on the competence of the characters. If the group's savant fails to read the inscription on the tomb's door it's because there's too much debris in the way, not because they failed to understand. The Storyteller should then give the players enough

information to enter the tomb, but keep its ravenous guardian a secret.

Botches occur when no dice show successes and some dice show 1s. In this instance, the failure should be dramatic. Bear in mind the existing rules for failure: this should never prevent the story from progressing and should never humiliate or embarrass the character. Even in utter failure, the Exalted are heroes. Instead, offer a hard choice, an entirely unexpected outcome, use up a resource, or put the character in a difficult position.

Margins of Success

Sometimes, a character barely misses the success requirement. Missing by one feels terrible. Treat every two successes a "margin" of success. If a character misses by one or two, the Storyteller should provide necessary information or context to proceed, but the outcome isn't what they'd hoped for.

In the same regard, Storytellers may provide additional useful details if characters hit a number of margins of success above the stated difficulty.

BONUSES AND PENALTIES

In the course of **Exalted** play, many things from the environment to Charms will alter the size of a character's dice pool, or the number of successes she achieves. Bonuses and penalties come in the form of additional dice or additional successes.

Anything that positively impacts the dice pool is called a bonus. This will be noted as "a two-dice bonus" or "a two-success bonus" — as examples. When you see this notation, you know to add two extra dice to your pool, or two extra successes to the final result. Sometimes, a success bonus is noted as "automatic successes." These are the same thing.

Anything that negatively impacts the dice pool is called a penalty. This will be noted as "a two-dice penalty" or "a two-success penalty."

Similarly, when you see this notation, you know to remove two dice from your pool, or two successes from the final result.

Outside of Charms, a situational or environmental penalty should not exceed three.

When calculating your pool first add bonuses, then remove penalties. Add dice bonuses first, then remove dice penalties. After seeing the result of the roll, add success bonuses and then remove success penalties.

Here are a few examples of what might constitute situational or environmental bonuses and penalties:

- **Bonus:** clear visibility, pleasant background music, obvious clues 1 - **Penalty:** driving rain, the cover of darkness, uncomfortable heat 2 - **Bonus:** finely-made tools, advantageous terrain, a detailed map
- **Penalty:** a moonless night, a hostile environment, a furious storm
- **Bonus:** the blessing of a major god, the benefit of Sidereal Astrology, a Charm bonus 3
- **Penalty:** misfortune woven into Fate, the curse of a Deathlord, a Charm penalty

When dice are added to a static value, such as Defense, take half the number of dice and round up. Then add that number to the value. If you add **four** dice to Defense, that Defense rating increases by **two**, as an example.

When to Assign a Bonus or a Penalty

Exalted characters have access to incredible power via their Charms. Why would anyone need to worry about equipment or the environment? The bonus and penalty rules allow Storytellers to add a level of texture to the outcome of rolls outside of adjusting difficulty. If a character attempts something under unusual or pressing circumstances, the Storyteller can apply a penalty instead. This is usually from the environment, or some other external cause of trouble, such as thick fog, a heavy thunderstorm, intoxication, and so on.

Bonuses exist to give characters a little boost for something that might be outside the usual realm of Charm benefits. Charms magically enhance a character's ability to do things or grant them the power to perform superhuman feats. The bonus dice from wearing fancy clothing, having a good idea, or appealing to a Storyteller character's aesthetics feels good and might make the difference between success and failure.

TEAMWORK

Sometimes, a task is too daunting to face alone, and players need to band together to overcome it. When assisting a teammate, choose which Ability you think is most appropriate to help with. Often, this will be the same Ability the character in need of help is rolling, but doesn't have to be. A character with high Physique may offer to lift and carry materials for the character using Craft's building venture, or a character with Presence might pitch in to help with another character's Embassy roll to inspire stubborn bureaucrats to help. Characters must narratively be able to participate in teamwork, and the assisting action should make sense. A character not present in the scene cannot help, for example, and if the crafting venture does not require heavy labor, then a character with Physique may not be of assistance.

Regardless of how you assist, when making a teamwork roll, roll your applicable pool. Any successes you achieve are added as a dice bonus to the assisted player's roll. These dice do not count toward the dice limit, below.

THE DICE LIMIT

Playing **Exalted** sometimes calls for rolling fistfuls of dice, but there are practical limits. When adding dice or successes, follow these rules:

- Any combination of bonuses cannot exceed 10 extra dice added to the pool. In the case of successes, these cannot exceed five. The limit

on dice is separate from the limit on successes, so a character can potentially have 10 bonus dice and five bonus successes.

- If an effect would transform dice into successes, these count towards the success limit. If something increases a static value — such as soak or Defense — treat this as though they were added successes. Therefore, anything that increases a static value above its base value (calculated with derived stats, such as Force + Athletics) cannot increase it above a margin of five.
- Penalties follow the same rule, but in the inverse. A dice pool cannot be reduced by more than 10 dice or five successes. If something would reduce a static value (including difficulty) this cannot be reduced below 1. Anything that breaks this limit will say so in the text.
- Sometimes, an effect will tell you to set a value to another value. For example: *Set Soak equal to Fortitude*. Effects like this change the base value for the purposes of determining how many additional successes a character can add. If two effects like this are in play and would modify the same value (such as Soak) take the higher. These do not stack.
- If an effect adds dice or successes for a repeatable duration, it does not stack unless it says otherwise. For example: if an effect says *add three dice until the start of your next turn*, repeat uses of it do not stack.

MEASURING TIME

Days, hours, and even years pass in the narrative, but **Exalted Essence** structures time passing during play into the following categories: **scenes**, **sessions**, **stories**, and **downtime**. These categories help Storytellers organize the flow of their games, but also put limits on how frequently certain powers or abilities can be used.

Scenes are any amount of time in which a series of related events occur. An entire fight

sequence taking place on a Dynastic villa's rooftop is a scene. Scouring the ancient library for lost secrets is a scene. Grilling the criminal lord about where she has stashed the magically-charged contraband is a scene. Some special abilities may call for a **dramatic scene**. This is a brief montage of whatever action the character is doing, typically over a period of downtime (see below). If all parties involved feel like roleplaying, it can be more in-depth.

Sessions constitute everything that happens during one period of playtime. A session is everything that happens in the game from its beginning to whenever it resolves and all players head home. What happens in a session can constitute a **minor milestone** (see p. XX).

Stories are a culmination of the series of sessions that make up one concrete story beat. If the characters were trying to infiltrate one of the Realm Great Houses and finally have a strong foothold within it, that's the end of the story beat. If the characters were trying to push the influence of a Deathlord from their city and finally drive the last war-ghost from its limits, that's the end of a story. The end of a story always grants a **major milestone** (see p. XX).

Downtime refers to any time that passes in a montage or off-screen. If characters spend hours searching a vast First Age library, those hours pass during downtime. If characters take time between sessions to spend years working on a magnificent artifact, those years also pass during downtime.

Exalted Essence also uses **turns** and **rounds** to measure time, but these units apply to combat only. See p. XX.

ATTRIBUTES

When faced with a task, the player decides how her character approaches it. Attributes also determine the consequences for failure.

Each has a rating of 1 to 5.

FORCE

Approaching an action with physical strength, force of personality, or direct logic.

1: Average — You are not especially strong, logical, or charismatic, but not lacking in any of those traits, either.

3: Capable — You're known for your physical prowess, your sharp intellect or your likable personality.

5: Exceptional — Nothing can withstand your forceful approach, whether through overt, raw might, cutting intelligence and reason, or your irresistible charisma.

Key Concepts: might, forcefulness, directness, aggression, logic, applied research

Consequences: Your equipment breaks; you offend your target; you fail to perceive small details in favor of the bigger picture.

Example of play: Cris, playing Emerald Grasshopper (an Eclipse Solar), wants to convince a Nexus boatman to ferry her circle down the Yanaze river for a much lower price than the laborer is asking. She describes the Solar trying to win him over with a bit of flattery and charm. Wyatt, the Storyteller, suggests this is a Force approach: Grasshopper is using the force of her personality, and it's likely the boatman might be offended by her attempts to butter him up. Cris agrees and adds Grasshopper's Force of 3 to the pool.

FINESSE

Approaching an action with quick thinking, clever words, or dexterous capability.

1: Average — There is nothing remarkable about your speed, wits, or turn of phrase.

3: Capable — Friends and colleagues commend your swiftness, your insight, or your quick remarks.

5: Exceptional — Poets write of your legendary rapier-sharp retorts and honeyed words, your

peerless mental acumen, or your inhuman dexterity.

Key Concepts: quick wit, manual dexterity, delicate approach, honeyed words, reflexes, instinct

Consequences: Your target sees through you; you risk a delay in the swiftness of your plans; you must contend with more obstacles than you expected.

Example of play: Winnie, playing Wicked Silver (an Adamant Alchemical), faces a sealed door in an ancient tomb. Her Circle has already determined that deadly hazards await if doors are not opened properly. She describes Silver extending the mechanisms in her fingers to feel around the frame of the door for any hidden buttons, catches, or levers that she might be able to disarm.

Winnie proposes using Finesse, since this is her character's highest Attribute. Jordan, the Storyteller, agrees and informs her that failure on this roll could cause one of the traps to be partially triggered and thus require the Circle to contend with the additional obstacle. Winnie agrees and adds Silver's Finesse of 4 to the pool.

FORTITUDE

Approaching an action with physical endurance, vigilance, or composure.

1: Average — Your physical durability, perceptions, or ability to stay calm leaves something to be desired.

3: Capable — You have a reputation for being especially hale, observant, or unflappable.

5: Exceptional — Other heroes are envious of your excellent health, your implacable nature, or your unavoidable perceptions.

Key Concepts: grace under fire, spotting trouble, enduring hardship, persistence, labor

Consequences: Your resistance efforts prove ineffective; you lose your patience; the situation spirals out of your control.

Example of play: Denzel, playing Mnemon Karato (an Earth Aspect Dragon-Blooded), wants defeat the demon Sigereth, the Player of Games. She has trapped one of their Circlemates, and Karato volunteers to play for his freedom. The demon offers Karato a game of skill that will last five days, and the Dragon-Blood agrees. Denzel describes his character persevering through the clever demon's constant torment, and striving for success by being patient, steadfast, and refusing to give in to the creature's taunts. He asks if he can use Fortitude for this roll, since he is choosing to endure. Nagomi, the Storyteller, agrees and states that if he fails this roll, Karato will lose their temper and suffer a penalty to another roll. Denzel accepts this consequence, and adds Karato's Fortitude of 3 to the roll.

ABILITIES

Each of the Exalted had a mortal lifetime of training in a variety of different skills. Whether a laborer, a diplomat, a priest, or a career soldier, she has talents and qualities that reflect her life. Abilities cover the specific skills that characters in Creation use to accomplish their goals. Each has a rating of 1 to 5. This section provides examples of the kinds of challenges these Abilities might be used to overcome, as well as any special uses they might have.

ATHLETICS

The character's athleticism and speed. Used for evading attacks as well as moving swiftly across the battlefield.

1: Average — You're light on your feet and sometimes win footraces.

3: Capable — You twist easily away from attacks and most people have a hard time keeping pace with you.

5: Exceptional — You can outrun a team of horses or dodge raindrops.

Special uses: Athletics is used to calculate Evasion Defense (p. XX) and maybe be used to enhance combat movement actions (p. XX).

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Dodge away from a mortal soldier's bowshot. Climb a slick wall.

Difficulty 5: Swim against a riptide. Leap over a house.

Difficulty 7: Evade a Deathlord's curse. Balance on a strand of Fate.

AWARENESS

The character's ability to survey a scene, notice details, spot ambushes, and use their physical senses.

1: Average — You pay attention most of the time, but might miss details when it's important.

3: Capable — You understand that situational awareness is key. Only the smallest details get past you.

5: Exceptional — Nothing escapes your perceptions. You can spot motes of dust out of place.

Special uses: Awareness may be used for big-scale investigation ventures (p. XX) such as solving a crime, or unraveling an ancient mystery.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Picking out small details in a busy scene.

Difficulty 5: Hearing the tones of an assassin's voice over the din of a crowded market.

Difficulty 7: Tracking an enemy by scent after meeting them once.

CLOSE COMBAT

The character's ability to fight in close quarters — both armed and unarmed.

1: Average — You know your way around a weapon or can throw a decent punch, but are not a master of the art.

3: Capable — Foes think twice before engaging you hand-to-hand.

5: Exceptional — Peerless master of your chosen fighting style. Students regularly flock to you and rivals try to defeat you.

Special uses: Close Combat determines your Parry Defense (p. XX) and can be used to make close-quarters attacks in combat. See p. XX.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Disarming an enemy with a flourish.

Difficulty 5: Throwing your blade across a crowded room to pin an enemy to the wall.

Difficulty 7: Wrestle a creature five times your size.

CRAFT

The character's ability to create items, food, structures, or works of art, including their magical counterparts.

1: Average — You're new to the craft. You've made a few nice things, but are still learning.

3: Capable — A practiced craftsperson. You take commissions from important people, and can make your livelihood on your craft alone.

5: Exceptional — A master of your craft. You produce peerless works of art. There's nothing you can't build or fix.

Special uses: Beyond mundane craftsmanship, Craft is used to build magical items such as Artifacts or Manses. See the venture section starting on p. XX.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Forge a fine weapon or cook a perfect meal for your Circle.

Difficulty 5: Craft or repair an Artifact at the secondary Merit level.

Difficulty 7: Craft or repair an Artifact at the primary Merit level.

EMBASSY

The character's ability to navigate and negotiate social structures, large social systems, and bureaucratic procedures.

1: Average — You know how to navigate a bureaucracy and red tape only slows you down

sometimes. When you go to court, you don't embarrass yourself.

3: Capable — An accomplished politician. You know how to network and how to leverage favors.

5: Exceptional — A seasoned diplomat. You know the ins and outs of political intrigue and no amount of bureaucratic confusion can stop you.

Special uses: In addition to being the skill of the diplomat, Embassy also covers a character's ability to speak and read multiple languages. A player may declare they understand a number of languages equal to their Embassy at the start of any campaign, and may learn more in play through study or magic.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Convincing a clerk to grant you clearance without proper paperwork.

Difficulty 5: Restructuring the bureaucracy of a local kingdom.

Difficulty 7: Change a culture's socially acceptable practices.

INTEGRITY

The character's ability to withstand mental duress, magical manipulation, and resist the influence of others.

1: Average — You can turn down a tempting desert or one more drink. You can walk away from a mediocre salesperson.

3: Capable — You easily spot the tell of a liar. Your friends speak highly of your convictions. You cannot be easily persuaded or duped.

5: Exceptional — Unshakeable in your beliefs. The shaping effects of the Wyld barely affect you. Liars and cheats fear you.

Special uses: Integrity increases the difficulty of social actions targeting you (called **Resolve**, see p.XX). You may always use Integrity to **Read Intentions** (p. XX).

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Resist the sales pitch of a Nexus

snake-oil seller.

Difficulty 5: Wade through the edges of the Wyld unprotected.

Difficulty 7: Shrug off the shaping effects of a Solar Circle spell.

NAVIGATE

The character's ability to find her way across Creation, as well as utilize modes of transportation from riding beasts to sailing ships.

1: Average — You can read a compass and a map, and know how to handle a beast of burden.

3: Capable — You've charted dangerous waters and are a keen hand at controlling various vehicles, as well as leading expeditions.

5: Exceptional — Any journey you embark upon is sure to succeed. Even the flying wonders of the lost age are no challenge for you.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Lead your followers to safety through a storm.

Difficulty 5: Lead an expedition through the barren desert or empty tundra.

Difficulty 7: Journey safely into Malfeas, the Wyld, or Autochthonia.

PERFORMANCE

The character's ability to influence others through artful expression, such as oratory, prose, music, or dance - as well as poetry or other written arts. This also covers the character's ability to influence spirits through prayer as well as work with ritual or folk magic.

1: Average — You can carry a tune and sway a few listeners. You've just begun to pick up an instrument, or learn to dance.

3: Capable — You hold spirits in rapt attention with your words. Powerful gods cannot ignore your prayer and offerings.

5: Exceptional — The mightiest gods turn their faces toward you when you perform.

Special uses: Besides being a character's artistic expression, Performance also interacts with prayer, allowing characters to exert magical sway over Creation's gods. This type of prayer can be a venture (see p. XX), depending on how the character chooses to approach it. This Ability may also be used in place of Sagacity to perform any other kind of ritual magic, or interaction with the spirit courts.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Sway an attentive crowd to your cause.

Difficulty 5: Calm a rioting mob with your music or dance.

Difficulty 7: Demand the attention of the Unconquered Sun himself.

PHYSIQUE

The character's ability to perform physical feats, from lifting prodigiously heavy objects, to toiling without stop to resisting grievous injury.

1: Average — You rarely get sick, and physical activity doesn't wear you out.

3: Capable — Even among the Exalted, you're impressively strong. You cannot remember the last time you've felt ill.

5: Exceptional — You sprinkle poison in your tea to enjoy the taste. You weight train with stone pillars.

Special uses: Characters use Physique to perform physical feats of strength as well as resist poison and disease. See p. XX.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Heft a sizeable boulder above your head. Run a mile.

Difficulty 5: Work all day without tiring. Shrug off a virulent disease.

Difficulty 7: Tear down a rampart with your bare hands. Survive a deadly plague.

PRESENCE

The character's ability to influence others by her personal magnetism and persuasion on an individual level.

1: Average — Sometimes people go along with what you ask of them.

3: Capable — Others willingly do what you say. Even your enemies pay attention when you speak.

5: Exceptional — You could demand your way into Heaven.

Special uses: Presence is used to make social actions, starting on p.XX.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Command a city's guards to stand down.

Difficulty 5: Intimidate a Second Circle demon.

Difficulty 7: Demand a favor from a Celestial Censor.

RANGED COMBAT

The character's ability to fight at range with a variety of weapons.

1: Average — You hit your target more often than not.

3: Capable — Your attack finds its mark even against the wind, or in the dark.

5: Exceptional — Your marksmanship is peerless; you could shoot the moon from the sky.

Special uses: Ranged Combat is used to make attacks using bows, thrown weapons, or artillery. See combat, starting on p.XX.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Hit your target on a moonless night.

Difficulty 5: Hit a target using only the sound of their movements.

Difficulty 7: Hit a target within your perceptions while your arms are tied down.

SAGACITY

The character's ability to understand the academic/historical teachings and the ability to comprehend the mystical realities of Creation, as well as medicinal practice.

1: Average — Your peers respect you as a knowledgeable person.

3: Capable — You are a learned scholar, familiar with much of Creation's strange workings. You may also be a sorcerer of some regard.

5: Exceptional — You are a renown sage, capable of curing any disease and well-versed in the mysteries of the world.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Identify the needs of a local spirit.

Difficulty 5: Cure a plague ravaging a city.

Difficulty 7: Solve a forgotten First Age riddle.

Special uses: It is the prerequisite for learning sorcery, as well as curing diseases. Sorcerers use Sagacity to **Focus Will** (p. XX).

STEALTH

The character's ability to perform unseen or underhanded deeds from passing unnoticed to picking locks, or creating disguises.

1: Average — You're a novice criminal. You know how to move silently, and avoid detection.

3: Capable — You can pick any non-magical lock. Your footsteps leave no trace.

5: Exceptional — You're well-known among the underworld. You could slip into the vaults of Heaven unnoticed.

Special uses: Besides disguises and going unnoticed, Stealth may be used in place of Presence or Embassy during social interactions with criminals or criminal organizations. During a fight, a character may use Stealth to hide from her enemies, creating concealment (p. XX).

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Slipping away unnoticed from the gaze of a watchful guard.

Difficulty 5: Create a disguise that fools your closest friends.

Difficulty 7: Steal a forgotten treasure from the Forbidding Manse of Ivy.

WAR

The character's ability to command others (especially in combat), as well as create battlefield strategies and understand their enemies.

1: Average — You have a head for strategy and frequently win when playing tactical games.

3: Capable — Your leadership brings decisive victories, even if outnumbered.

5: Exceptional — Enemies fear your prowess as a general, ready to surrender before the fight begins.

Special uses: War is the Ability used for any kind of mass combat or warfare. The rules for clashing armies begin on p. XX.

Example Difficulties

Difficulty 3: Keep a well-trained squad from routing. **Difficulty 5:** Hold a chokepoint while outnumbered. **Difficulty 7:** Lead an army against a demonic force.

DECIDING WHAT TO ROLL

When determining how to accomplish a task, the Ability stands out as the obvious choice. If a character wants to overhear the caravan guards gossiping about the Guild merchant they work for, that's Awareness. If a character wants to steal a priceless heirloom from a sleeping Dynast's room, that's Stealth. If a character convinces an Immaculate monk to have mercy on her Circle, that's Presence. The greater challenge is deciding which Attribute to pair with the Ability.

Follow the basis of the player's description and don't be shy about asking them how they think their character approaches the situation. The Storyteller then also uses this approach to determine how this might go wrong. Between

these two aspects, you'll be able to create a gripping and engaging scene.

Using Your Best Attribute

You might read this section and think, well, there's no reason not to always use my best Attribute by justifying it any way possible. This is correct. It's fine to always want to use your strongest pool. The Storyteller should veto any suggestions that are a big stretch and is free to dictate that certain rolls must be based on a specific Attribute, but beyond those two corner cases, should not disallow characters to act in their areas of strength. The Exalted are Chosen of the Gods and Princes of the Earth, let them be mighty!

STUNTING

A staple of Exalted play, Essence rewards players for describing their action in a cool fashion. Any cool description is a Stunt. There's no need to write flawless prose, or perform perfect oratory in order to qualify for a Stunt. Just put an interesting spin on how you describe what your character does, to help everyone feel immersed in the action.

A Stunt can be something like: My sword flashes as I swing it downwards and it bites into the armor of my enemy with a singing crash! Or perhaps something like: The glimmer of my anima reflects in the cathedral's windows, as I stare directly into my enemy's eyes and say "You will stand down." Anything more than just declaration of intent counts as a Stunt.

When a player earns a Stunt, they gain two dice that they may cash in immediately to add to their roll. At their choice, they may also hold on to these dice to apply to any other roll during the same scene — theirs or another player's. You may bank as many sets of Stunt dice as you choose, but a player may only benefit from one set of Stunt dice at a time.

Additionally, Stunt dice may be cashed in for any of the following benefits, including any banked

Stunt dice or gifted Stunt dice, though only **one** benefit may apply to any action. A player cannot choose to add dice to a roll *and* select one of these options.

Restore resources: Restore a point of Power or gain a point of Will. Choosing to restore resources can make Stunting feel like a requirement, so be aware when taking this option.

Dramatic Edit: Allow characters to slightly modify the scene, declare items or people who were not initially present, or shift the flow of the action — within reason. This is often part of a Stunt's description. Cashing in Stunt dice for this benefit should mean something impactful happens: an ally arrives in time to aid the Circle, a character remembers they have a much-needed item on their person, the Circle locates a hidden door that will allow them to escape a collapsing room, and so on.

Instant training: allowing characters to instantly learn a new Charm, or acquire a new Merit, within reason. Characters can only benefit from instant training once per session.

All Stunt dice go away at the end of the session, so use them or lose them!

SYSTEM TERMS

This chapter introduces a lot of new system terms. Here's a brief glossary of what these things mean.

Ability: A reflection of a character's trained skill.

Action: Something a character attempts to do, from attacks to persuasion.

Aggravated damage: Magical damage that cannot be easily healed.

Attribute: A reflection of a character's approach to actions. Determines the consequences of failure.

Botch: A dramatic failure with no successes and 1s showing on the dice.

Concentrated attack: Repeat *withering* attacks made against the same target. Reduces *Hardness*.

Damage: The result of a **decisive** attack. Reduces *Health*.

Decisive attack: An attack that deals *damage*. It requires *Power* equal to a target's *Hardness*.

Defense: How difficult it is to hit a character with an attack.

Dice pool: The number of dice a player rolls. Equal to Attribute plus Ability.

Difficulty: How many *successes* are required for a player to succeed on an *action*.

Double (number): Double (number) — such as 9 or 8 — counts that number twice for the purposes of determining *successes*.

Effect: Any mechanical function that interacts with the core systems. Charms, Sorcery, dice from Merits, and antagonist Qualities are all *effects*.

Extra successes: The total number of *successes* above the *difficulty*.

Glurry: Making two *actions* in the same turn. Imposes a -3 dice penalty to both actions.

Gambit: A special *decisive* attack that does not deal *damage* but instead inflicts another condition.

Hardness: The amount of *Power* required to launch a *decisive* attack.

Health levels: The number of hits a character can take before being in danger.

Influence action: Socially interacting with another character. A break down of each action can be found on p. XX.

Intimacy: Something to which a character holds emotional or moral value.

Power: A combat resource that fuels **decisive** attacks.

Reflexive: An *action* that does not take up a character's turn.

Resolve: The *static value* that determines the *difficulty* of an *influence action*.

Soak: A *static value* that determines the *difficulty* of dealing *damage*.

Static value: A value that is not rolled, such as Soak or Defense.

Stunt: Any cool description provided by the player.

Success: Rolling a 7 or higher on a die. Determines how well a character performs an *action*.

Target number: The number on the die required for *success*. Usually 7.

Virtue: A defining principle that guides the character's worldview and behavior.

Withering attack: An attack that builds *Power*.

Wound penalty: A dice penalty equal to the severity of *Health levels* lost.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE

When a character interacts with someone to get them to act in a way that she desires, she uses social influence. Social influence represents anything a character may want to do to another (or multiple other) character such as persuading, intimidating, coercing, seducing, commanding, or any other action to get someone to do what you want without involving direct violence.

Every Exalt has aspects of her life which are the most important to her, and personality traits that define how she engages with the world. In **Exalted**, these are **Virtues** and **Intimacies**. Virtues define what drives an Exalt and how she acts, creating a worldview and defining how she engages with every other part of her life. Intimacies define what the Exalt cares most about in her life. All Intimacies are viewed through the lens of the character's Virtue. For instance, if a character has a Justice Virtue, then her intimacies are often bound up in righting wrongs or seeking revenge and she perceives

everyone in her life as someone to be protected from wrongdoing. Together Virtues and Intimacies define what a character values, and how she acts to uphold those things.

Social interactions are a give and take between character's Virtues and Intimacies, and getting someone to act requires appealing to their fundamental desires.

VIRTUES

Every character has two Virtues, one Major and one Minor. Together, they define how she interprets the world around her. A Virtue isn't just what drives an Exalt to act, it defines what kinds of actions she'll take to accomplish a goal or deal with a situation. Her Virtues color everything she does and explain where her impulses come from and her base reactions to any situation. When choosing your character's Virtues, consider why she has this outlook.

- **Ambition:** The Exalt desires greatness through action. She sets goals for herself regularly and works towards overcoming them. When choosing this Virtue, decide on a large-scale goal for the character, such as *Purge corruption from the Realm* or *Drive the Guild from the Southern threshold*. This goal can be changed during the game when the character accomplishes a major Milestone. For example, Lydia the Dragon-Blooded's Ambition is to become the leader of House Cynas to prove her brother wrong.
- **Compassion:** The character easily puts herself out for the sake of others. She is empathetic to their needs and wants, and often sacrifices her own in order to help others. She cares for the downtrodden, the oppressed, and the meek and makes enemies of the wicked and tyrannical. For example, Rhaetmandius the Infernal's Compassion is driven by his desire to relieve the common people of the burden of oppression.
- **Courage:** The Exalt thrives in adversity, viewing each new challenge as a chance to

prove herself. She values decisive actions, and scoffs at things like impossible odds or dangerous endeavors. She is not easily intimidated, and scorns those who are cowardly. For example, The Gate that Stems the Flow the Abyssal's Courage comes from her deep desire to show everyone she is the best.

- **Discipline:** The character values personal restraint and dedication. She acts with precision and methodical thought using caution to ensure victory. While cautious, she is not cowardly, that would go against her own views of dedication or devotion. She hates rash action and impulsivity. For example, Violet Sky the Liminal's Discipline drives her to resist the advances of wicked necromancers who would turn her from her work of laying the dead to rest.
- **Justice:** The Exalt values the laws and behaves righteously. She cares about doing the right thing above all else and cannot abide wrongdoing of any kind. She feels it is her personal responsibility to punish wrongdoers, seek revenge for crimes, and protect the innocent. For example, Wandering Teeth the Solar's Justice stems from his need to oppose rampant banditry and criminality in and around Nexus.
- **Loyalty:** The character dedicates herself wholly to someone or something that she values. It may be an organization, a leader, a country, or an institution. She values loyalty in others and reacts in kind. She acts for the good of those she is loyal to and abhors betrayal of any kind. For example, Silver Star the Lunar's Loyalty is to the Southern Tribal Confederation for saving her life.
- **Wonder:** The Exalt views the world with a sense of wonder and curiosity. She always tries to discover new things and treats all experiences as valuable for learning. She values learning, discover, adventure, and exploration. She can't stand to see the

destruction of knowledge or the incurious. For example, Amber Rose the Sidereal's Wonder comes from their desire to go new places and find new experiences.

Virtues are defining features that an Exalt isn't going to leave behind or abandon on a whim. The only way to change a character's Virtue is during game and through a story that changes the character's fundamental nature and applies when she accomplishes a major Milestone. The story is likely to happen over time, and cause a gradual shift, and could happen between large time skips. For example, a Loyal character may experience so much betrayal that she becomes disillusioned and shifts her Virtue to Justice. Or an adventurous character with Wonder as a Virtue might encounter so many dangerous situations that she loses her sense of Wonder and shifts instead to Courage. Work with your Storyteller to help decide when these kinds of shifts make sense.

Changing Virtues

While shifting a character's Virtue in play requires a story and time, sometimes you may find that your chosen Virtue no longer represents your character's outlook without even trying. Sometimes you pick a Virtue for your character, but through play realize they are focused on something else entirely. Players should feel free to change out one Virtue for another if it just isn't working for the character without going through the process of shifting a Virtue with story.

Virtues in Play

Exalts are people who act in extremes. Without outside impetus, the character acts in line with her Virtues. Both trivial actions made without thought, and large decisions follow in line with them. She isn't incapable of acting outside of her Virtues, and she might obfuscate her true intentions to manipulate her foes, but it takes outside input for her to even consider acting any other way.

Use your character's Virtues to help decide how to react to most situations. When hung up on an action, how to proceed during a story, or just what to say to a Dynast who is asking your group for assistance, look to the character's Virtues for guidance. You can also use the character's Virtues to help describe Stunts or influence dramatic moments for your character.

INTIMACIES

A character's Intimacies define what she cares most about in life. From her relationships with others to her beliefs and ambitions. Characters start the game with one Major and two Minor Intimacies.

While Virtues drive how a character acts and views the world, Intimacies are concrete people, goals, or ideals that the character values and will act to protect. Intimacies are broken down into two different overall categories based on if it is a person or a concept. These categories help narrow the scope of the Intimacy and give it definition, but do not alter its functionality or intensity.

- **Ties** represent how your character feels about another character. Intimacies define a character, so this is more than just camaraderie for a fellow soldier. It is the love a mother has for her child, or the admiration from a student to a teacher, or the bloodlust one has for his enemy. Reciprocation is not a requirement for ties — a child may hate her mother, or a teacher may care little for his student.
- **Principles** represent your character's goals, ambitions, and personal code. A character might be a pacifist who tries not to hurt others, or a pragmatist who does whatever it takes to get things done. These are her principles.

Intimacies are tied to a character's Virtues, and when describing an Intimacy, the character must decide which Virtue it falls under. It helps describe how the character relates to the Intimacy and what she'll do to defend it. For

example: Amethyst loves her wife dearly and has "Loves Sonya" as a Justice Intimacy. Amethyst believes it is her duty to protect her wife from those who would treat her wrong or stop Sonya from breaking the law herself.

Gaining new Intimacies

As a character grows, she is bound to develop attachments to new people and ideals, and discard those she's grown out of. While her Virtues rarely change without a life-changing event, Intimacies may come and go.

You may gain new, change, or even remove Intimacies as it makes sense for your character and the story. Characters can change their intimacies in the following ways:

- A social influence action may strengthen or lessen the intensity of an Intimacy.
- A social influence action may create or remove a Minor Intimacy.
- Whenever a player feels it is appropriate for her character, she may change her Intimacies. Either by gaining or losing a Minor Intimacy or changing the intensity of an Intimacy up or down. This should come with some story or drama that reflects the change, and should involve consultation with the Storyteller, and usually happens at the completion of a Minor Milestone.
- A player can choose to change an Intimacy out for another one between games with Storyteller approval. If a player finds that her Intimacy isn't good for the story or doesn't fit her current ideals, she can exchange it for something more fitting.
- A character may lose a Major Intimacy through dramatic roleplay, such as the loss of a loved one, or a sudden discovery that shatters a strongly held belief. These losses should be directed through the Storyteller and should make sense. If the character is simply growing apart from the Intimacy, it is better to downgrade it slowly over time.

Love and Loss

Intimacies are not set in stone. People grow apart, find new interests, take up new causes, and fall in and out of love regularly. Players should feel free to upgrade or downgrade an Intimacy's intensity as they see fit or change them out if they become inconsequential to the story or the character. We suggest letting characters downgrade or upgrade Intimacies each time they achieve a Minor Milestone if they wish, but if it just isn't working, players should feel free to change them out as they wish.

Sometimes characters develop intimacies to things due to someone else's actions. This should only ever happen if the player is okay with it, and if the newly enforced Intimacy ever makes a player feel uncomfortable, they should drop it or change it immediately. See Resisting Influence p. XX for rules on what happens when a player doesn't want to accept an influence action and apply those rules retroactively if necessary.

INTENSITIES

Both Virtues and Intimacies have an intensity rating that determines how important that aspect is to a character. Having something listed as a Virtue or Intimacy means that it is important to the character, but when trying to decide how to act or between pursuing one goal over the other, the intensity rating helps.

- **Minor:** These are notable beliefs, relationships, or personality quirks that have some influence over the character, but don't impact major decisions. Minor Virtues are ones that the character acts on without thinking, but when she must really consider her course, she can easily avoid acting on the Virtue. Minor Intimacies are ones that the character cares about but does not factor into every decision she makes.
- **Major:** These are important relationships, beliefs, and drives that influence the way the

character behaves and the choices she makes. Major Virtues are ones that color every decision a character makes, and she has a hard time acting without taking it into consideration. Major Intimacies are important enough to always be on the Exalt's mind, as she considers them before making any major decision.

Characters can have varying intensity Intimacy with either of her Virtues, even if they don't match intensity. Using the example from above, Amethyst's Justice may be her Minor Virtue, but her Intimacy to Sonya is Major. She factors Sonya into every decision she makes, but she doesn't always act for Justice.

INFLUENCE ACTIONS

When one character tries to influence another, roll Attribute + Ability as an **influence action**. The most common Abilities for influence actions are Embassy, Performance, Presence, and War, though the Storyteller is the final arbiter of which Ability fits which situation. Characters have a Resolve against social influence set to **two** modified by the character's Intimacy, Virtue, and Integrity. If the character has at least one dot in the Integrity Ability, her Resolve is set to **three**, and if the Integrity Ability is three or higher, her Resolve is **four** instead. For antagonists who do not have Integrity, set Resolve to **three** if it has an appropriate Secondary trait or **four** if it has an appropriate Primary trait.

A character's Virtues and Intimacies may adjust her Resolve up or down if it is relevant to a social influence action targeting her. When targeted by a social influence action, determine if any of her Virtues and Intimacies are relevant to the nature of the influence. If more than one Virtue, or more than one Intimacy is relevant, choose the one from each category with the highest intensity.

This relevant Virtue or Intimacy modifies her Resolve and determines how hard it is to get her

to act. If the influence would cause her to act out of alignment with her Virtue or Intimacy, it increases her Resolve against the action. If the influence would cause her to act in alignment with it, it lowers her Resolve against the action. Minor intensities add or remove **two** to the character's Resolve. Major intensities change the bonus or penalty to her Resolve to **three**. The minimum Resolve a character has against an influence action is **one**.

For example, if an enemy warlord attempts to convince Amethyst to abandon her pursuit of him to protect her wife, the influence would be in accordance with her Major Intimacy to Sonya, but against her Minor Virtue of Justice. This would remove three from her Resolve for the Intimacy, but add two to her Resolve for the Virtue, creating a net total of removing one from her Resolve against that social influence.

To use a social action, the character declares her intention, stating the general effect from the [list of social actions](#). At this time, declare if the action is targeting a Virtue, Intimacy, both, or if she has appropriate leverage. The player forms a dice pool for the action using an appropriate Attribute + Ability and adding any modifiers. The target's Resolve starts at **two** and gains any appropriate bonuses or penalties from Virtues, Intimacies, and Integrity. On success, the player achieves her stated action and can spend extra successes to purchase additional or greater effects. The target may always choose to resist the social influence.

Breaking it Down

Characters may use social influence in action scenes and during combat, and Charms may modify their use. To know when a Charm could apply, we break the individual steps down into numbered components then tie the Charm's activation time to this. What that means for the player is that you can only declare a single Charm at each step of the influence. The steps are as follows:

- **Step 1:** The player declares her intention for the influence.
- **Step 2:** Form the dice pool for the action using an appropriate Attribute + Ability and adding any modifiers.
- **Step 3:** The target determines if any Virtues or Intimacies adjust his Resolve.
- **Step 4:** On success, the player utilizes extra successes to determine the extent of her influence action on the target. The target may choose to resist the social influence.

When declaring the intentions for the influence action, the player must at that time declare what her intended outcome is. If the target's Virtues and Intimacies come into play, then he modifies his Resolve accordingly. Social actions do not need to target a character's Virtue or Intimacy, though trying to get her to act in accordance with them is easier than not. She describes what kind of action she is taking, such as sweet-talking a judge or intimidating a legionnaire. She then rolls her Ability and if she overcomes his Resolve, her stated goal is successful. If she has additional successes after overcoming the Difficulty, she can use those extra success to create additional effects.

Where it would apply, increase the success of additional effects by the Virtue or Intimacy value. **For example:** Trying to persuade a character to act against her Major Virtue with additional successes increases its cost by two.

Influence Effects

The following are influence actions a character may take against her target. In parenthesis is the cost to buy the action with extra successes on another influence action.

- **Dissuade (2 successes):** You convince your target to stop performing an action she wants to take. Dissuade covers anything from threats, convincing arguments, and acting in a calming manner.
On success, the target refrains from the described action for a single turn. You can

spend extra successes to purchase this again to extend the amount of time the target will refrain from taking the action to a scene. Spending the extra successes a second time will prevent the target from acting for a story.

- **Instill (1 success):** You create a new feeling or belief for the character tied to a character's Virtue. Instill covers actions to convince a character of a truth, inspire her to belief or great emotion, or create fear. Create a new minor Intimacy for the character based on what you've made her believe or feel. This could be anything from a new belief, a strong emotion, a fear of something (or someone), or even a new person she's decided she cares about. The newly instilled Intimacy must be attached to one of the target's Virtues. If you don't know the character's Virtues, then they decide which one the Intimacy is tied to. You may only instill a single Intimacy per social influence action.

A character *may* Instill an Intimacy without attachment to a Virtue (such a temporary Tie of Fear). However, this requires magic such as a Charm otherwise the Intimacy persists only until the end of the session.

- **Persuade (2 successes):** You convince the target to take an action. This action generally targets a Virtue or Intimacy, but if the character has suitable leverage in the form of bargaining, coercion, or intimidation she doesn't need to know her target's Virtues or Intimacies. Persuade covers all types of actions, from threats, sweet talking, or inspiring one to act. On success, the target acts to the best of her ability as long as it does not pose more than a minor inconvenience to herself. You may spend extra successes to purchase Persuade multiple times to increase the level of action a target takes on your behalf.

Extra successes spent on the same action persuades the target to take on a serious task that would pose inconvenience, and even

danger to herself or others. She will not risk serious injury or her livelihood for the task.

Purchasing it a second time persuades the character to risk almost everything to perform the task. She is willing to put everything on the line, going so far as to allowing it to change her life. She won't risk death, but short of that, she's up for the challenge.

A note on surrender: Begging for your life in most cases is a basic Persuade — letting a defeated stranger live is little inconvenience. If the character deems your character a threat to her life or that of an Intimacy, you may need to spend extra successes to convince her to spare the character's life.

- **Read Intentions (variable successes):** You read your target, learning something about her as you do. When taking this action, your character chooses which bit of information she wishes to learn: the target's motives, Virtues, or Intimacies. On success, learn your stated goal. Spending extra successes gives you additional information. For one extra success learn a goal or intention the character has for the current scene. Spend two successes to learn one Minor Intimacy or Virtue. Spend three successes to learn one Major Intimacy or Virtue. The cost of Read Intentions is not modified by the target character's Virtues or Intimacies.

- **Set Up (2 successes):** You create a situation in which the target is more likely to accept social influence from one of your allies. This can come in the form of intimidation through a show of force, playing up the other character's abilities, or displaying lack of empathy for the target. Unlike other forms of social influence, Abilities such as Close Combat, Physique, Ranged Combat, and War work well for Set Up.

On success, remove one from the target's Resolve on the next social influence used against him by a friend or ally. Extra successes

can be used to remove another one from the target's Resolve. A target's Resolve can never go below one.

- **Strengthen (2 successes):** You strengthen an existing Intimacy, taking it from Minor to Major. This cannot be used to strengthen an Intimacy created in the same scene.
- **Weaken (3 successes):** You weaken an existing Intimacy, taking it from Major to Minor, or from Minor to removed completely. You may only weaken a given Intimacy once per scene.

If a character fails on a social action, she can't just retry immediately using the same tactics. The situation must change in some way to allow her to attempt again. She may need to come up with additional evidence to persuade someone or instill a belief, find additional money for a bribe, or increase the stakes. A character may take an entirely different approach, turning from bribes to threats on a failed action, but doing so increases the target's Resolve by two. Otherwise, the acting character must wait until the end of the story to try again, or at least until the circumstances have changed greatly.

Example: *Heather's character, Mercurial Iris (a Nadir Infernal) is trying to help a Dynastic heir escape from her corrupt family's holdings. While attempting to flee, she is confronted by the heir's bodyguard, a towering Earth Aspect, who demands the Infernal reveal the hidden location of his charge. This social roll is made against a Difficulty of 6 determined by adding her three to her base Defense of three from her Major Virtue of Courage. He succeeds with 9 successes. He succeeds on the basic persuasion action, which has her reveal reveals that the heir is no longer in the family home. If he wants the full location of the heir's whereabouts, he needs to spend two additional successes, as revealing that information is a serious risk for the Infernal. He spends those two successes to force her to talk. He then has one additional success which he*

spends to read the Infernal's intentions, which tells him she intends to kill him.

Persuading a Willing Target

It should be easy to get a character to act in accordance with her Virtues or Intimacies, so much so that the players or Storyteller might not feel like it is worth rolling to get the character to act.

A player may choose to have her character act on a persuasion influence action in accordance with a Virtue or Intimacy without a roll. Doing so grants the player Stunt dice for the action.

RESISTING INFLUENCE

Social influence isn't magical, nor is it mind control. Characters may be susceptible to influence, but there are limits to what you can get them to do. When an influence action succeeds, but the target is unwilling to go along with whatever they've been influenced to do, they have two choices: accept a **hard bargain** instead or ignore it entirely.

A hard bargain is a narrative tool that allows a player to resist a social influence at a cost to the character. The Exalt might perform a different related action, suffer a setback, or weaken one of her Intimacies by doing so.

A player can always choose to completely ignore an influence action if she feels it is too far out of her character's nature. If she ignores it, the influencing character does not get any of his chosen influence effects and instead gains his extra successes as bonus dice to another roll in the same scene. These dice cannot be used to reattempt the same influence. The Red Rule and unacceptable influence still apply.

Example: *Heather decides Mercurial Iris would never reveal information about the heir to this guard. The Storyteller offers Heather the choice to **instead** give up the location of the Circle, selling out her friends rather than the character she's trying to rescue. She chooses not to accept the bargain, and the bodyguard gains three*

bonus dice, which the Storyteller chooses to apply to the first combat roll.

Unacceptable Influence

Certain types of influence never work on a character. No amount of oration or debate will make someone commit suicide or turn against their strongest ideals. If a request is so antithetical to the nature and personality of its target, it is **unacceptable influence**. A character targeted with unacceptable influence may reject it outright without granting bonus dice to the influencer, even before the roll. A player may still choose to have her character follow a course of action put forward by unacceptable influence, but only because she thinks it makes sense — the character cannot be coerced into doing it. Some Charms can force a character into certain kinds of unacceptable influence.

The following are examples of unacceptable influence:

- Persuading a character to perform an action above the threshold of successes spent on Persuasion. For example, asking someone to take on a serious or dangerous task without spending extra successes.
- Any influence that would cause a character to kill himself or do something he knows would result in his certain death.
- Asking a character to act in a way that would require her to abandon or ignore her Major Virtue is unacceptable.

The Red Rule

A player-controlled character can only be seduced or otherwise put in a sexual situation if the player is okay with it. Otherwise, such an attempt fails immediately. This is completely up to the player's discretion. Only they can decide if they want their character to be seduced, and applies on an attempt-by-attempt basis — allowing it once doesn't void your ability to deny an attempt in the same scene or even by the same character. If no one in your group chooses

to invoke this rule, that's fine too, but players don't have to watch their character put into a sexual situation if they aren't comfortable with it.

Groups that feel comfortable doing so should allow player characters the full range of their seductive prowess when entangled with Storyteller-controlled characters. But remember, the Storyteller is also a player and actions should also respect her boundaries.

Multiple Targets

Most social influence actions only influence a single character at a time. Sometimes an Exalt may want to sway a crowd or convince a group of soldiers to take an action. When attempting to target multiple targets with an influence action, the Ability roll suffers a three dice penalty.

Because everyone in the group is different with differing Virtues and Intimacies, their Resolve is applied individually. The influencing character rolls her Ability and counts her successes, and each defending character compares his Resolve to the result. If she spends extra successes, she spends the maximum amount of extra successes for the action that applies to the entire group.

She spends extra successes based on the lowest Resolve of the group, but each individual removes successes from the action depending on their own Resolve.

Example: *Danielle is playing Amethyst Blade (a Dawn Solar) who is trying to inspire a group of soldiers to attack. She rolls with a three-dice penalty and nets five successes. Any character with Defense 4 or lower is persuaded to act but will not put themselves in danger. The lowest Defense against the action is 2, and she spends two successes to Persuade the group to go all in and risk injury. The soldiers with Defense 2 act with the full effects of the influence. Anyone with a Defense of 3-4 will act under the base level of*

success. And anyone with Defense 5 or more will ignore the effects of the influence.

Social Actions in Combat

A character may make an influence action during combat as her action. Doing so works the same as it written, though it must make sense. You can certainly shout out a fast set of commands, or even make a quick emotional plea, but a long-winded discussion or oratory takes too long for the fast action in combat.

Influence actions count as combat actions and declaring them starts on Step 1 of combat. Influence actions can be performed as part of a flurry (p. XX).

COMBAT

When diplomacy fails — or was never an option — the only way through a situation is to fight. The rules for combat function as a series of actions in which characters take turns wearing each other down and dealing damage until one side or the other gives up or is taken out.

TIMING

The first thing to consider in combat is timing. Just as other parts of the game are concerned with units of time such as days, weeks, or longer, combat focuses on the immediate units of time that happen between the blows. We break these down into three basic units: scene, rounds of action, and individual turns.

- **Scene:** The time it takes for characters to take turns dealing damage or interacting from start to finish. scenes are often composed of multiple rounds. Often, a full combat sequence will comprise a single scene.
- **Round:** The time in which all characters involved in the combat have a chance to take a single turn.
- **Turn:** The shortest element of time for the combat. When a character takes her action, it is considered her turn.

Turn Order

Whenever physical conflict arises, all characters present in the scene get ready for combat. Even if the Exalt isn't going to take combat actions, she gets a place in the turn order.

Roll for **Join Battle (Appropriate Attribute + Appropriate Ability)** to determine whether the players' characters or the Storyteller characters goes first. Any character from the winning side may act first. Whomever goes first then decides who acts next. Players can choose to go next after another player character, but important Storyteller characters may have the ability to interrupt player order to take their action. Players may nominate Storyteller characters to act next, if this would be an interesting or tactical choice. Whichever side acted first continues to act first for the duration of the combat.

Turning it Up

Initiative determines which side goes first. If the Storyteller characters get to go first, they all act before the players' characters get to act, unless the characters have a Charm that lets them take an action during that phase. When the players' characters go first, only important Storyteller characters can choose to interrupt that turn order and take an action in the middle of players' actions.

For example, if Mercurial Iris, Amethyst Blade, and Emerald Grasshopper gain the initiative to act first in the round, they choose who goes first, and then choose which of them acts next until all have acted. Then the Storyteller characters may act. But, The Unwelcome Visitor from the Grave's Depths is an important Storyteller character who can choose to take his turn after Amethyst Blade takes her action but before Mercurial Iris takes hers.

THE FLOW OF COMBAT

Now that we know who acts, we can talk about the flow of combat. Characters make **withering**

attacks to wear down their opponents and build up **Power** to get an upper hand to then make **decisive** attacks to deal damage to their opponents.

Withering attacks build up Power. These attacks reflect the characters clashing against one another, glancing blows, feints, and the maneuvers that give one character an upper hand over the other. These are serious attacks, but they do not deal direct damage to the opponent.

Decisive attacks utilize the Power built up through **withering** attacks to deal damage. These attacks reflect the characters getting in a lucky shot, staggering the enemy, cutting through armor, or otherwise effectively dealing lasting damage to an opponent.

To make an attack, the character first describes what she is doing and determines stunts. When the player declares a combat action for the character, she must decide if the action is **withering** or **decisive**. The character must have accrued enough **Power** equal to or greater than a target's **Hardness** to make a **decisive** attack. The player forms a dice pool using an Attribute + Combat Ability + additional dice-based modifiers. After the roll, she adds any success-based modifiers then subtracts her target's Defense from her successes. If she has any left-over successes, then she hits.

If the character makes a **withering** attack, she gains 1 Power for meeting the target's Defense, and the extra successes are converted directly to Power. A target's Defense may never reduce a **withering** attack's successes below the character's Overwhelm value on her weapon. On **withering attacks**, the attack ends there unless the target uses a Charm to counterattack.

If the character makes a **decisive** attack, she must decide how much Power to spend before rolling for the attack, and she must spend as much Power as the target's Hardness rating.

Successes on the attack are then added to her spent Power to form a new dice pool for damage which she rolls. She adds any success-based damage modifiers to the result of that roll. The target's **Soak** reduces successes from the damage roll and any left-over successes deal damage to the target. The target's Soak can reduce damage to 0, and a weapon's Overwhelm rating does not apply to damage rolls.

Example: *Marcel, playing Silver Poppy (the Exigent Chosen of Mirrors), decides to make a **withering** attack on his opponent Silas The Bloodied. His dice pool is 9 using Silver Poppy's Force + Close Combat to make a melee attack. Marcel rolls 5 successes and adds one additional success from his medium weapon's accuracy bonus, and subtracts Silas's Defense of 4. This brings his final successes to 2, which go directly into his Power pool.*

Breaking it Down

In basic combat, characters roll dice to attack and subtract Defense then either build Power or roll damage dice to and subtract Soak to deal damage. It's a simple process but Exalts have access to powerful Charms that can greatly modify this process. As such, we've broken down combat into a number of specific steps to let players know if and when they can apply Charms or other abilities. What this means for the players is that you can only activate a single Charm at each step of the combat round. You don't need to memorize it, instead we've provided this handy chart for determining when you can apply your Charms in combat.

- **Step 1:** Declare your action. Declare if the attack is withering or decisive. The character must have accrued enough Power equal to or greater than a target's Hardness to make a decisive attack.
- **Step 2:** Declare defensive action. The Storyteller or the player states their defensive intent and provides an interesting stunt.

- **Step 3:** Determine attack pool and roll dice. Form a dice pool using Attribute + Combat Ability and apply any bonuses or penalties. Roll the dice and apply any success-based bonus or penalties to the result.
- **Step 4:** Apply Defense. The opponent's Defense is a static value for either Parry or Evasion, whichever is higher. Defense subtracts successes from the attacker's roll.
- **Step 5:** Determine damage pool. If the attack is withering, do not deal damage, instead each extra success left over after applying Defense are added to the character's Power. Go to Step 8.
If the attack is decisive, the damage pool is equal to the amount of Power spent + extra successes over Defense + any other modifiers.
- **Step 6:** Roll damage. Apply any success-based bonuses or penalties to the damage result.
- **Step 7:** Apply Soak. Soak subtracts successes from the damage roll. Any remaining successes deal Health damage to the character. Soak can reduce damage to 0.
- **Step 8:** Counterattack, if applicable. This starts the process over from step 1.

Combat Actions

During combat, a character may take a variety of actions to gain advantage, wear down an opponent, or support her allies. These are basic combat actions, that anyone can take on their turn during a combat sequence.

- **Attack:** This is the most common action a character may take, and it is either **withering** or **decisive**. Melee attacks use Attribute + Close Combat and ranged attacks use Attribute + Ranged Combat. Attacks always target enemy characters and cannot be taken against friendly characters — unless the character is being controlled by an enemy or the story dictates such a thing (like characters fighting in a tournament).
- **Build Power:** The character takes a non-combat action to accrue Power. This action

could be anything from a social action to insult an opponent to inspiring others around you. Roll an Appropriate Attribute + Ability against Difficulty 3. Gain one Power plus an additional one for each extra success (see "Building Power without Attacking"). This action cannot be used in a flurry with any other actions.

- **Defend Other:** A character may defend an ally within Close Range. The defending character applies her Defense to any incoming attacks against her ward until the next round. If the attack is **decisive**, the defending character takes the damage and applies her own Soak.
- **Draw/Ready Weapon:** The character unsheathes her weapon or strings her bow, readying herself for action. At the start of combat, a character can take this action as a reflexive action. If a character wishes to change weapons in the middle of a combat, or retrieve a fallen weapon, then she must use this action as a simple action.
- **Full Defense:** The character takes his whole action to defend himself. Until his next turn, add his weapon's Defense. This action cannot be used in a flurry with other actions except social influence (p. XX).
- **Miscellaneous Action:** This action is for anything a character may do within a combat that isn't necessarily combat related. This could be anything from a social influence action, to picking a lock. The action must be something the character could accomplish with just a few seconds to act. The Storyteller is the final arbiter of what kinds of actions may be performed in combat.

Combat Modifiers

When characters are fighting, special circumstances may arise that modify certain actions. Most combat modifiers give penalty dice for certain conditions or change a character's Defense or mobility.

- **Concealment** is any obstruction that interferes with targeting the character within it, but does

not afford specific protection (such as a screen of leaves, or a plume of smoke). It imposes a two-dice penalty to attacks targeting a character within it.

- **Cover:** Characters can take cover from attacks using parts of their surroundings. Cover is either Light or Heavy and adds to the character's Defense against incoming ranged attacks or Hardness against melee attacks. Light cover adds 1 and Heavy cover adds 2. If a character would benefit from **cover** and **concealment**, the player chooses which modifiers she prefers.
- **Prone:** An incoming attack forces the character to the ground. When prone, reduce Defense by two and attacks suffer a three-dice penalty. She cannot take any movement actions other than the Rise movement action to regain her footing.
- **Surprise:** Characters may surprise on an enemy through an ambush or other means of advanced action. Surprise always checks at the start of combat. Usually characters gain surprise with a successful Stealth roll, though the Storyteller may allow other rolls to grant surprise. Surprised characters reduce Defense by one for the first round of combat. When the characters have surprise, Storyteller characters cannot interrupt their turn order for the first round of combat.

DEFENSES

Characters can use **Parry** or **Evasion** to avoid damage from an incoming attack. Each of which is a static derived value. Characters apply the highest of the two values as their Defense value against incoming attacks. When determining the Parry or Evasion value, characters use their highest, most appropriate Attribute (typically Finesse or Fortitude).

Characters can use their Parry Defensive if they are wielding a weapon or are inducted into a martial arts school. Parry is calculated by adding

Attribute + Close Combat then dividing by two (round up) + any bonuses.

Evasion is calculated by adding Attribute + Athletics divided by two (round up) – armor's mobility penalty (if any) + any bonuses.

Some bonuses or penalties specify they apply to Parry or Evasion while others state they apply to Defense, which modifies both Parry and Evasion.

Example: *Marcel calculates Silver Poppy's Defense value. He calculates his Parry Defense as 5 from Fortitude 5 + Close Combat 4 divided by 2. He calculates his Evasion Defense as 3 from Fortitude 5 + Athletics 1 divided by two. Because his Parry Defense is higher, his Defense is set at 5.*

Soak

Characters have a Soak value which determines how resistant she is to damage. While Defense applies to an incoming attack roll and determines the character's ability to avoid or deflect blows, Soak applies to incoming damage rolls.

Soak generally comes from a character's armor and Fortitude. A character not wearing any armor has a natural Soak of 1 plus an additional 1 if her Fortitude is rated three or higher. Add her armor's Soak rating to this value to generate total Soak.

Example: Marcel calculates Silver Poppy's Soak at 3: One from base, one from his Fortitude being at 5 and one from his artifact armor.

Hardness

A character's Hardness reflects how easy it is to overwhelm and wear her down. Hardness is the value an opponent must meet or exceed to make a **decisive** attack against the character. The more experienced a character is, the more Hardness she has.

Characters start with a Hardness 2 plus any applicable bonuses from armor. Exalted

characters add their Essence rating to their Hardness value.

Example: Marcel calculates Silver Poppy's Hardness as 4: Two from base, one from his Essence rating of 1, and one from his artifact armor.

BUILDING POWER

As characters make **withering** attacks, they accrue **Power**. Power is an out of game term that puts a number on the advantage a character holds over her enemies. It reflects maneuvering into better position, testing her opponent's defenses, finding weak spots, finding her own inner strength, and wearing her opponent down until it is time to strike a finishing blow.

Power is a personal character resource that builds throughout the battle and characters spend either to make **decisive** attacks or to make **gambits**. All characters begin with 0 Power regardless of how much they accrued in previous battles. Characters charge their Power by making **withering** attacks using their basic **Close Combat** or **Ranged Combat** pool against their enemy's **Defense**. Each extra success adds 1 Power to the pool, to a maximum of 10. If an action would increase the character's Power pool above 10, the player may grant the extra Power to another character, or for every two additional Power, they may gain a point of anima.

Once a character has accrued enough Power to make a **decisive** attack, she can make real, devastating blows causing true injury to her opponent. An enemy's Hardness determines the amount of Power the character must have (and spend) to make the **decisive** strike. Enemies can have a wide variation on Hardness. A mortal caravan guard might only have Hardness 2, while a Deathlord might have Hardness 10.

The player commits Power on Step 1 and decides how much to spend at that time. She must spend as much as her opponent's current Hardness but may spend more.

Any attack, **withering** or **decisive**, only targets enemy characters. A player cannot build up Power by making **withering** attacks repeatedly against her own allies and Circlemates.

Concentrated Attacks

Characters may make several concentrated attacks on the same target to stagger them, making them easier to damage. If a character is targeted by multiple **withering** attacks in the same round, each additional attack reduces the character's Hardness by 1 to a minimum of 1. This Hardness reduction lasts until the next **decisive** strike against the character, at which point their Hardness resets to normal.

Building Power without Attacking

Characters can build Power without taking attack actions using the **Build Power** action. When gaining Power through non-combat actions, the acting character has the ability to keep the Power generated in her own pool or distribute it to her allies, depending on the action she takes.

Players roll Attribute + Ability against a Difficulty 3. The following actions are ways a character can build power during combat without taking attack actions. The Ability necessary to take the action is listed in parentheses.

- **Prepare (Craft, Sagacity):** The character prepares herself or her allies for an incoming conflict. She may call out a quick set of directions or a combat plan for the next round of combat, or she may adjust or tinker with a piece of equipment to make sure it is performing its best. The character may accrue Power or distribute it to her allies.
- **Focus (Awareness, Integrity, Physique):** The character spends her action centering herself for a strike, focusing on the combat and her

opponent as she watches for an opening. The character may accrue Power for herself only.

- **Inspire (Performance, Presence):** The character shouts out an encouraging word, plays an inspiring tune, or performs some other act or antic to lift the spirits of those around her. The character may distribute Power to her allies only.
- **Rally (Embassy, War):** The character barks out orders, gives commands through the chaos, or otherwise invigorates her allies to battle. Under her command, their actions are more potent than individually. The character may accrue Power or distribute it to her allies.
- **Outmaneuver (Navigate, Stealth):** The character repositions herself, stepping around an enemy, or maneuvering in a way that gives an ally advantage. She may move herself into a hidden location or cover waiting to press her advantage. The character may accrue Power or distribute it to her allies.

Example: *Susanne, playing Rain Falling on a Petal (a Zenith Solar), wants to spur her allies to action using an inspire build Power action. She rolls nine dice from her Force 4 + Presence 5 against a Difficulty of 3. Her anima is in active state, which means she gains one bonus success on the action. She nets 5 successes on the action and grants Silver Poppy 4 Power and the archer who already has a great deal of Power the remaining 1 Power.*

Build Power and the Combat Abilities

You may have noticed that Athletics, Close Combat, and Ranged Combat do not have unique Build Power actions. This is because those Abilities are involved with the basic combat stats, such as attacking, defending, or maneuvering. However, there's nothing stopping an enterprising player from stunting a non-attack action to Build Power with any of these Abilities. A trick shot that grazes an enemy's cheek or making a display of one's impossible speed could be Build Power actions

with Ranged Combat or Athletics, for example. The Storyteller is the final arbiter of what is and isn't allowed, but **Exalted Essence** encourages fun and creativity.

Decisive Attacks

Once a character has built up Power that equal or exceeds her target's Hardness on her turn, she can make a **decisive** attack. She wagers how much Power to spend at Step 1, which must be as much as the target's Hardness, but she can choose to spend more in order to make a more devastating blow. Then she makes an attack against her opponent's Defense as per normal. If the attack is successful, she rolls dice equal to Power Spent + Extra Successes + Any other modifiers. Total up the successes and add any bonus successes from weapon damage at this time. Then subtract the opponent's Soak rating from the total. Any leftover successes are applied to Health levels as damage.

If the attack misses, the character spends one Power and keeps the rest.

Example: Luis, playing Yasuke the Unbending (Zenith Solar), has built up 8 Power, enough to make a **decisive** attack against the Abyssal, Hole-in-the-Sky. She's a dangerous opponent, requiring 5 Power. Luis chooses to risk 6 Power and rolls Force + Close Combat and gets 6 successes, enough to beat her Defense of 4 by 2. His damage pool is equal to 8 dice (2 successes + 6 Power spent). He rolls it and gets 5 successes. She has Soak 3, so he subtracts that from 5, and deals 2 Health levels of damage.

GAMBITS

Sometimes a character wants to do more than just wear her opponent down or deal damage. She may want to push him away or steal an important document out of his pocket. Anything a character does in combat that isn't a basic attack is a **gambit**.

Gambits are special **decisive** attacks that impose debilitating effects, rather than deal damage.

Each **gambit** has Power cost associated with it in parentheses following its name.

The player must decide to use a gambit on Step 1 of the combat sequence and wagers any requisite Power at that time. Determine the attack pool and Defense, then roll as normal. Enemies cannot counterattack a character's use of a gambit. If the attack roll generates enough successes to overcome the Defense, the gambit is successful. **Gambits** utilize additional successes in unique ways, such as providing a duration, adding Power to an ally's pool, or reducing Defense or Soak. On a miss, spend one Power. Using a gambit against an opponent counts as part of a concentrated strike.

A character can perform most gambits with any combat Ability and are limited to the range of that Ability's action. A few have special requirements, such as a weapon that can perform the maneuver the gambit is describing or the use of a non-combat Ability. Anything outside of a normal attack with a standard weapon is called out in the gambit's text.

The following is a list of possible gambits a character might engage in. Feel free to make up your own gambits. To do so, set the Power cost, the effect, and the extra success effect. Remember that the bigger the effect or an effect that would end a combat quickly should cost more Power to perform.

- **Disarm (Defense):** The Exalt removes her opponent's weapon and leaves him open for attack. This gambit requires the use of a physical attack, such as with a melee or ranged weapon, or an unarmed attack. Force the opponent to drop his weapon and give a single ally one Power for each extra Success.
- **Distract (2):** The character throws sand in her opponent's eyes, makes a snide remark, or otherwise takes her opponent off guard. The character may use her Performance or Presence Ability instead of a combat Ability when using this gambit. Decrease the target's

Defense by **one** for each extra Success for the rest of the round.

- **Ensnare (3):** The Exalt moves into her opponent's way, shoots an arrow through his foot, or otherwise corners him making movement difficult. Prevent the target from taking any movement actions. This lasts for one round per extra success. The target may attempt to break free with a successful Force + Close Combat roll versus a Difficulty equal to the extra Successes.
- **Knockback (4):** The character shoves, swings, or causes him to stumble backward away from her. Move the target one Range Band away and decrease his Defense by one for each extra Success for the rest of the round.
- **Knockdown (4):** The character trips her opponent, shoves him down, or puts him off balance so he falls. Knock the target prone.
- **Knockout (Defense):** The Exalt knocks her opponent unconscious or beats him into a stupor. Treat this as a **decisive** attack and roll extra successes as though dealing damage. The damage does not inflict injury, but instead knocks the target out for a number of rounds equal to successes. This knockout damage ignores Soak. Battlegroups (p. XX) increase the cost of this gambit by their Size. Players' characters targeted with the gambit are treated as though they were Incapacitated (p. XX). Another character can wake a knocked out target with a successful Sagacity or War roll.
- **Pilfer (3):** The character steals an item out of her target's pocket or bag. Roll Finesse + Stealth to use this gambit. Take a single non-weapon item from the target and give a single ally 1 Power for each extra success.
- **Pull (4):** The character pulls her opponent towards her from a distance. The character must have a weapon with the Pull Tag in order to use this gambit. Move the target one range band toward the character and decrease the target's Defense by one for each extra success

for the rest of the round.

- **Reveal Weakness (3):** The Exalt exploits or points out a weakness in her opponent's armor, making it easier for others to damage him. Roll an attack against the target's Defense, and on success reduce the target's Soak value by 2 for a number of rounds equal to the extra successes. This gambit may always be used with Craft or War in place of an attack roll.
- **Unhorse (5):** The character unseats her opponent, making him fall from his mount. Knock the target from a mount and choose one: knock him Prone or decrease his Soak by one for each extra success for the rest of the round.

COMBAT MOVEMENT

Nobody fights while standing completely still swinging swords at one another. They circle, maneuver for advantage, close in, fall back, and a variety of other movements that make combat dynamic. A character can only take one move action a turn (even if the move is reflexive), unless she activates a Charm which gives her additional movement. Some movement actions can be used as part of a combat flurry, which will be stated in the action's text.

- **Move:** The Exalt moves one Range band as a reflexive action. This movement is horizontal in any direction, or up only if the character is climbing with equipment. Some Charms may modify this standard move action by changing the direction or how many Range bands the character may move. Swimming or climbing without equipment or other non-standard movement is not reflexive.
- **Aim:** As a simple action, the character stands still and takes aim at a target then makes a ranged attack with a three-dice bonus. This can be part of a flurry. A character may not Aim and use her reflexive move on the same turn.

- **Rise:** The character stands after being knocked prone as a reflexive action. If an enemy opposes the action, it is instead a contested roll using Athletics and the enemy's relevant combat Ability.
- **Rush:** As a simple action, the character moves one Range band towards her target and then makes an attack with a three-dice bonus. This can be part of a flurry. If a character cannot rush a target she moved away from on the same turn.
- **Sprint:** As a simple action, a character moves two Range bands. Mounted characters may take the Sprint action as their reflexive move action, allowing them to move two Range bands instead of one.

Distance

Characters move around a great deal in combat, executing maneuvers to get into better positions and take advantage of the field. Exactly how far a character moves is less important than where she moves in relation to other characters. For this reason, we present distances as abstractions, discussing if someone is close enough to hit, or too far to get to this turn.

We talk about these distances as range bands, which denotes how far someone (or something) is from your character. These are always comparisons and determine the character's position relative to someone else. Your character may be at close range to one character, while being short range to another, and at short range to another in a different direction. The two characters at short range to you may be at medium range to one another.

Again, these ranges are relative, and not specific, so don't worry about trying to keep a map of the field inside your head. Often characters maneuver around the space which can be hard to keep track of. If it is easier, imagine all the players' characters on one side of the battlefield and all the Storyteller

characters on the other. Your opponents are always in the same direction, so you don't need to worry about who is in which direction in relation to each of the characters.

Visual Play Aids

If keeping a mental map of the area feels difficult or unwieldy, the group may use visual aids to help keep track. Because Exalted Essence doesn't use concrete numbers for distances, these visual aids can be anything that helps keep relative distances in mind without needed to be "to scale."

You can use a play mat with rough areas drawn on it or create a map out of index cards. Give those areas rough descriptions written on the play space such as "the teahouse entrance" and "dozens of tables." Players can then use tokens to represent their characters and place them on a card or map. Each card or area represents a single range distance between each other. This allows players to easily judge how far away opponents and allies are without having to draw out intense maps or measure distances.

At **close range**, characters are close enough to quickly engage. They aren't necessarily touching already, but a simple shift of stance or two-step forward will get you there. Melee happens at Close range.

At **short range**, characters are too far apart to swing a sword, but near enough to close the distance with a few fast steps.

At **medium range**, characters are far apart. One would need take a concentrated action to get to the other, and conversations must be shouted to be heard. This is the Range band that covers the maximum distance for thrown weapons.

At **long range**, characters are so far apart that while they can see to one another, they cannot speak without a device or signal. The characters are too far apart to get to in a single movement action without magical assistance, and the only

way to engage in combat is with ranged weapons.

At **extreme range**, characters are effectively so far away from each other that they cannot engage in any meaningful way. They can barely see each other, even the longest ranged weapons cannot reach a target. Combat is effectively impossible without magical assistance.

DAMAGE AND HEALTH

A character's health track represents her physical state of being, how hurt she is, and how much more damage she can endure.

Characters suffer damage during combat, after being on the receiving end of **decisive** attacks. When a character suffers damage, track it by marking off the boxes associated with their Health Levels from left to right.

Each Health Level has a number associated with it. When the box for that level has a mark in it, the character suffers that number as dice penalty to all rolled actions (but not damage rolls). The dice penalty is not cumulative, meaning the rightmost filled Health Level is the dice penalty applied to all rolls, and just that number. Characters start with five Health Levels: one at 0, two at -1, one at -2, and one at Incapacitated. Exalted characters gain extra Health Levels from the Charm, Ox-Body Technique.

These numbers indicate the penalty in dice a character suffers from the pain and distraction of her wound. These are called **wound penalties**. Each Health Level also has a name: Bruised (0), Injured (-1), and Critical (-2). When an effect refers to "Critical Health level" you know that it means her -2 Health Levels, and vice versa.

When a character reaches the Incapacitated Health Level, she has suffered a serious blow. This could be anything from her being placed at the edge of death and needing immediate

medical attention, being put into a compromising position in which the enemy is sure to capture her, losing all hope and being in danger of joining the enemy side, or losing her weapons and armor to the enemy and being left defenseless. Whatever happens, the character is in dire straits and needs her allies to assist her if she wants to get out of the situation. When Incapacitated, the character is set to zero Power, and can still take limited actions, but she cannot build Power for herself, make **decisive** attacks, nor flurry actions.

When a character would take enough damage to bring her to Incapacitated, the player may choose to ignore that damage and take a **dramatic injury** instead. A dramatic injury introduces a different setback for the character other than injury. The player can choose from one of the following effects when gaining a dramatic injury: Take the injury to one of the character's Attributes or Primary Merit. Characters can take a dramatic injury to each of their Attributes.

Attributes with a dramatic injury associated with it impose a one dice penalty to actions using that Attribute until recovered. Dramatic injuries affecting a Primary Merit may cause damage to an artifact or ally, damage social capital, prevent access to a manse, or loss of resources as she throws money at the problem.

Some magical attacks may deal **aggravated** damage. This is a special damage type and should be marked differently when a character suffers it. Aggravated damage cannot be healed through normal means and does not recover during recovery scenes. The only way to heal aggravated damage is using Charms or other magic.

Healing and Recovery

Recovering from injury or a serious blow takes time of dedicated rest and relaxation, or magic. Characters always heal naturally over time, as

long as they spend adequate time resting and recuperating.

Characters clear all their marked Health Levels over the course of recovery scenes. Exalts and other greater beings recuperate faster than normal mortals. This is denoted by a recovery quality: mortals have **lesser recovery** which means that healing wounds and recovering from sickness requires multiple recovery scenes or whenever the characters would hit a Major Milestone whichever comes first. Exalts, demons, gods, and other magical entities have **greater recovery** which allows them to heal in a single recovery scene.

Recovery scenes are scenes in which the characters interact with each other without taking actions that require rolls. These could encompass anything from the characters debriefing about their previous encounter, discussing strategy, or just having fun together. These scenes often happen over the course of several hours or days, but the length of time is immaterial to the recovery.

Recovery scenes do not clear dramatic injuries, as they are a larger setback. Instead, the characters must wait for the injury to recover on its own. Characters can remove one dramatic injury upon achieving a personal Milestone. Players can choose to recover dramatic injuries in any order, regardless of what order they received them.

If the characters are under a time crunch, or a character requires immediate healing or attention, the characters must use magic to heal the damage. When healing this way, damage is healed from most severe to least severe removing marks from the right to the left of the Health track.

An Incapacitated character requires immediate attention, sometimes that's in the form of magic to heal a grievous injury, but it could also entail rescuing the character from the enemy's

clutches or tossing her a new weapon to get back into the fight. While a character is Incapacitated, her allies can take actions to build Power for the Incapacitated character, bringing her from zero up to ten. Once her Power is filled, she is no longer Incapacitated, and her Power is reset to zero again. Characters can use any build power action to assist the Incapacitated character, including using Sagacity to heal her.

Non-Combat Damage

While combat is the most common way a character takes damage, there are plenty of other aspects of Creation that can cause her injury. Not every part of Creation is easy to traverse and welcoming to all who enter.

Non-combat damage deals damage over time while a character is exposed to the threat. This is called the **interval**, and is measured in rounds, scenes, or days. At each interval the effect deals its damage rating in damage to the exposed characters ignoring Soak. Characters can mitigate the damage with an appropriate Attribute + Ability roll against the effect's Difficulty. Success on the resistance roll subtracts one incoming damage, extra successes reduce the damage on a one for one basis. Some effects, such as poisons, have a **duration**, which is how long the effect persists beyond first exposure, measured in rounds, scenes, or days.

- **Environmental Hazards:** Environmental hazards affect all characters in the environment and often deal damage every few rounds. Certain perilous hazards deal damage every round until the characters are free. **Traps** are environmental hazards that characters can avoid using the Awareness Ability to spot them before triggering them. Environmental damage affects a character once per round, either when they enter the source or end their turn within the source.
- **Falling:** Characters who fall a great distance take damage immediately when they fall, and

do not suffer intervals. A fall's damage rating is based on how far the character fell in range bands, increasing by one for each range after close (so one for short, two for medium, etc.). The Difficulty to resist damage from the fall is equal to the fall's damage.

- **Poisons:** Poisons affect a single character and are often administered through ingestion or direct skin contact (such as from a weapon), though some come from injections or inhalation. Poisons often have short durations and aggressive intervals that last only rounds. When a character rolls to resist a poison's damage, she also reduces its duration by the same number of successes.

Example: Mercurial Iris has ingested an aggressive poison that deals 2 damage each round and lasts for 5 rounds with a Difficulty 5 to resist. On her turn, she rolls 8 dice from her Fortitude 5 + Physique 3 to resist the damage and nets 5 successes. She reduces the incoming damage by 1 and suffers 1 damage even though her Soak is 2, but also reduces the poison's duration to 4 rounds. Next round, she will need to roll to resist again on her turn, but the poison's duration will have 3 rounds left, and another successful attempt could eliminate it completely.

Non-Combat Damage Examples

Name	Dam/Int	Dur.	Diff.
Severe heat/cold	1/5 rounds	-	2
Burning Building	2/round	-	3
Lava	3/round	-	5
Severe sand/thunderstorm	1/5 rounds	-	3
Supernatural ice storm	1/5 rounds	-	5
The Silent Wind of Hell	2/A round	-	5
Tainted Food (poison)	1/round	5 rounds	3
Contact Poison	2/round	5 rounds	5

Diseases

Like poisons, diseases affect a single character, but often last for multiple scenes or days and instead of dealing damage at intervals, the

disease impairs the character for its duration, getting increasingly severe at each interval. Depending on how severe the disease is, or if it is mundane or magical in nature, influences the penalties it applies. Untreated diseases can be fatal for mortals, though Exalts are immune to death from mundane diseases.

When a character contracts a disease, determine the severity. After an interval has passed, the player must make a Fortitude + Physique roll against the Difficulty. If the roll fails, the disease increases in severity while successfully resisting the disease reduces its severity, which can cause minor diseases to clear up completely. Each level of disease has a different interval and Difficulty to resist listed in parentheses as (Interval/Difficulty).

Minor (1 Week/3): The disease is relatively minor causing discomfort and pain every now and then. Once per session, the character suffers a two-dice penalty to a physical action. The Storyteller decides when to apply this penalty.

Major (1 Month/5): The disease is a persistent problem, hindering the character's ability to act normally. The character suffers a two-dice penalty on all physical actions.

Extreme (1 Month/7): The disease has progressed to nearly all-encompassing discomfort. The character suffers a two-dice penalty to all actions. This penalty also applies to static values such as Defense and Soak.

Characters can attempt to cure a disease, which prompts the afflicted character to roll against the Difficulty before the interval has lapsed. To do so, the player must make a successful Force + Sagacity roll against a static Difficulty 5 applying extra successes as bonus dice to the afflicted character's resistance pool. The character attempting to cure the disease must have access to materials, medical equipment,

and spend time working on the cure. Without these, the Difficulty increases to 7.

USING PHYSIQUE

Sometimes characters want to deal damage to inanimate objects or lift and throw them out of the way. Any time a character wants to use her raw strength to interact with the environment, this is considered a feat of strength, and uses the Physique Ability.

Exalts are nearly divine beings and can perform impressive feats of strength. Lifting light objects is simple and requires no roll, but lifting heavy objects, such as a fallen pillar or boulder, do require a roll. Even though Exalts are capable of amazing feats, they are still constrained by their physical size, meaning they can't lift entire mountains or stop an ocean, though they can try to turn the flow of a river. In most instances, an Exalt can easily perform any feat of strength she meets the requirements for. If she wishes to heft a stone pillar over her head and hurl it at her foes, she can do so. However, sometimes feats of strength fall into extreme cases — such as forcing a river to flow a different way, or deconstructing a tower brick by brick with one's bare hands. In these instances, treat them as ventures (p. XX). For most feats of strength ventures, the characters will be Acting Under Duress (see p. XX).

Characters can lift, throw, or break anything that is light or flimsy. Once they try to lift or move larger objects, then the player needs to roll for a feat of strength. The type of feat depends on the size and weight of the object placing it into one of three categories: **lesser** for objects at or near the same size and weight of the character, **greater** for objects significantly larger or heavier than the character, and **extreme** for objects far outweighing or outclassing the character. If an Exalt has at least one dot in Physique, she can perform lesser feats of strength without a roll, denoting her superior physical training.

Performing a feat of strength is against a set Difficulty, 5 for standard or 7 for challenging. The Storyteller determines both the Difficulty and success requirement for the feat of strength when the player describes her action.

- **Lesser:** Requirement 1-4. Lesser feats of strength involve lifting, pulling, or breaking items a normal mortal could do with training. Lifting a full-grown person or an anvil over your head or kicking open an oak door (Standard). Lift a full-grown warhorse or bend an iron bar with both hands (Challenging).
- **Greater:** Requirement 5-9. Greater feats of strength involve acts that no mortal could achieve. Lift a yeddim, raise a drawbridge by hand, or punch through a brick wall (Standard). Carry an enormous stone statue on one shoulder, force open a locked and reinforced fortress gate (Challenging).
- **Extreme:** Requirement 10+. Extreme feats of strength are impressive even for an Exalt. Pull an entire caravan chained cart-to-cart, crack a giant boulder in two (Standard). Outpull a team of yeddim, tow an enormous boat away from a waterfall, tear open a crevasse in the earth (Challenging).

When attempting feats of strength to break an object, using a tool that would help in the endeavor grants one bonus success to the action. Using an artifact grants a two-success bonus.

SPECIAL COMBAT

The characters aren't always fighting in the middle of a flowing wheat field, on foot, while clashing swords. Sometimes they are mounted on horseback or fighting across a set of cliffs with a 500-kilometer drop. These special combat scenarios help adjudicate rules for out of the ordinary situations.

Clash

When an opponent targets a character with an attack, the character may choose to take a

special attack called a **clash**. This attack is a reflexive response to an incoming attack, allowing the

character to strike back immediately, resisting the attack in an active way rather than being on the defensive. A clash action happens outside the character's turn but counts as an action. If a character has already acted in the round in which she chooses to make a clash, it uses up her turn in the following round.

The character chooses to respond to an attack during Step 2 of combat as her "defensive action," but instead of defending she makes an opposed attack. Though this is initiated on Step 2, clashes create a unique situation. Treat both characters as though they were acting on Step 1 for the purposes of declaring Charms or other effects. **Once a clash is initiated, only effects that can modify clashes may be applied.** If the attacker has made an invalid choice, she may change her declaration when the clash is declared. This eliminates Steps 2 and 4, effectively replacing them with repeat instances of Steps 1 and 3. After both characters roll, go immediately to Step 5, following the process for a withering or decisive attack as detailed below.

When engaging in a clash, the character rolls an attack against her opponent at the same time as he attacks her. Instead of utilizing Defense, these rolls subtract from each other. In the case of a **withering** attack, this could mean both characters add to their Power pool based on their weapons' Overwhelm ratings. In the case of a **decisive** attack, then only the one with left-over successes may roll to deal damage. The reacting character does not need to respond to an incoming attack with the same type of attack, meaning she can choose **withering** or **decisive** regardless of what is aimed at her. She must still spend Power to make a **decisive** attack though.

A character cannot flurry a clash action with other actions. Additionally, clashes cannot be counterattacked by either participant since

their attacks have both happened simultaneously. A character can only make one clash per round.

Difficult Terrain

Difficult terrain encompasses anything that makes standard combat more difficult. Fighting among craggy rocks, through thick underbrush, between closely packed buildings, amid a dense forest, or across shattered glass all constitutes difficult terrain. The Storyteller determines what constitutes difficult terrain, but anything from thick mud to a packed crowd could qualify.

When attempting to move through difficult terrain, the move action is a simple action rather than reflexive, characters cannot take the sprint action, and rush attempts suffer a three-dice penalty. At Storyteller discretion, the difficult terrain may be easier to take cover, providing the character a one-dice bonus to her Defense.

Grapple

Sometimes characters get into a brawl that devolves into a grasping, scrabbling grapple. Some characters excel at close quarters fighting and prefer to get someone onto the mat to wear them out.

To engage in a grapple, take a standard unarmed **withering** attack action using Force + Close Combat versus the opponent's Defense. If successful, instead of gaining Power, declare a grapple. Both characters immediately make an opposed roll using Force + Close Combat, to establish dominance in the grapple. The initiating character gains her extra successes on the attack roll as bonus dice to her roll. Grapples may not be clashed.

Characters in a grapple reduce Defense by one against anyone not also in the grapple. Characters within the grapple have no Defense against one another and instead make contested rolls (see below). While in a grapple, characters can perform the following actions:

- **Attack:** The characters can make **withering** or

decisive attacks using opposed Force + Close Combat rolls. This action cannot be taken while the dominant character is pinning the other character.

- **Escape:** The character without dominance can attempt to escape the grapple. Roll Finesse + Athletics or Physique as an opposed action against the dominant character's Force + Athletics or Physique. If the character is successful, this ends the grapple.
- **Overcome:** The character without dominance can attempt to gain dominance. Both characters roll Force + Close Combat to re-establish dominance. If this action is taken while the subject of a pin, the character simply escapes the pin, but does not gain dominance.
- **Pin:** The character with dominance can immobilize her opponent, making it easier for allies to attack. Roll Force + Physique and reduce the character's Hardness by one on success. The character may retain this pin on subsequent actions without a roll, but she can take no other actions while maintaining it.
- **Throw (Force):** The dominant character can throw her opponent out of the grapple as a Close Combat **gambit**. Make a melee attack roll as though it were a **decisive** attack. Success moves the opponent one Range band away or leaves her prone. Additional successes are rolled for damage. Do not add Power spent to this damage. This ends the grapple.

Mounted Combat

Characters on mounts enjoy several advantages when fighting opponents on foot. Mounts are more mobile and increase the character's ability to maneuver about the field, giving her the ability to perform the Sprint move action as a reflexive action. Whenever the character takes advantage of this sprint, they then reduce the cost of riding-related gambits by one to a minimum of one. For example, scattering troops by charging into them would be using knockback, driving a lance through an enemy

might be reveal weakness or ensnare, throwing a lasso around a fleeing target is pull, and so on. If the reflexive sprint is used as part of a Build Power action, gain an additional Power.

Additionally, mounted characters gain one-die bonus on melee attacks and increases Defense by 1 when fighting unmounted opponents. Characters using weapons with the Reach Tag negate these bonuses.

If the character is mounted atop an unusual mount, such as a huge hawk or an elephant, she has a few other issues to worry about. While up high, such as on a huge or very tall mount, she cannot make melee attacks on opponents who are not at the same height as her without also having a weapon with the Reach Tag. Opponents on foot without the Reach Tag can attempt to climb the mount using the Athletics Ability at Difficulty 3 to close the distance.

Flying mounts afford the character additional mobility, allowing her to make a standard move action twice as part of a flurry with another combat action, but not another move action. This does allow the character to move into Close Range, attack, and move back to Short Range.

Naval Combat

When out on the ocean (or sailing in a giant contraption, miles in the air), characters may come into conflict not between individuals, but between their vessels. Ship to ship combat flows in the same way as regular combat, except that the crew acts in coordination to attack the ships rather than each other. Unless of course, one crew boards the other's ship.

During a naval combat, characters can take combat actions using the ship to attack the opposing ship accruing power jointly for the ship and making **decisive** attacks that destroy the hull of the other vessel. These attacks use any appropriate ability, typically Navigate. If a character has applicable warfare effects, she

may also use these to modify rolls or actions as appropriate.

A character can also take regular combat actions to make ranged attacks on the crew of the other ship, or to repel boarders. Ships have Health Levels, Defense, Soak, and Hardness and apply their own weapon and armor bonuses, depending on the type of ship. The ship does not act on its own or in the turn order, the characters act for it.

When determining the scale and distance on the water, use range bands as usual, but the distances are relative to the size of ships, rather than humans. A ship can move reflexively once per turn, as a normal character would but when trying to put itself into an advantageous position, it must use the **Position** action.

Characters cannot flurry two ship actions, though they can perform some ship actions as a flurry with other actions. When acting to utilize a ship in combat, characters can choose to take the following actions:

- **Fire Ordinance:** This is a basic attack action using Force + Navigate or Ranged Combat. Ordinance attacks can be either **withering** or **decisive**. This action can only happen twice per round. Characters with Artifact ranged weapons or ranged magic (including spells) can count as ordinances for the purposes of this action.
- **Position:** Characters manning the sails can maneuver the ship into better position. Make a **withering** attack using Finesse + Navigate or War. When positioning, increase the ship's Defense by one until the acting character's next turn. If the ship has oars, this can also be rolled with Physique.
- **Ram (4):** This action is a **gambit**. The characters ram their ship into the other, leaving it vulnerable. The ships become entwined, and the rammed ship's Soak decreases by 1 for each extra success. If this reduces Soak to 0, the ship also takes 1

damage. If the damage as a result of Ram reduces a ship's health below half (round down), it immediately starts sinking. This also allows for the boarding action. A character on the rammed ship must make a Position action to disengage the ships.

- **Boarding:** The character can leave her ship to enter the other as a simple move action, so long as the Ram gambit has been taken. This action can be flurried with a standard attack action but cannot be taken without the aid of magic if the ships are too far apart.
- **Escape:** The ship disengages from the other ships as a simple move action. To take this action, the ship must have enough Power to overcome the opposing ship's Hardness.

Use the tables below to create your vessel. A ship's Defense increases by +1 when the pilot or captain's Navigate is 3, and by another 1 at Navigate 5.

Ship Type

Hull	Def	Soak	Hard	Health
Light	3	2	5	4
Medium	2	3	6	6
Heavy	1	4	7	7

Ship Weaponry

Weight	Ac	Dam	OW
Light	+2	+1	1
Medium	+1	+2	2
Heavy	+0	+3	3

Ship weapons add tags as appropriate, following the general guidelines on p. XX.

Power Exchange

When a character gains Power, it normally goes into her personal Power pool. Some Build Power actions fill ally's Power pools instead, but those actions do not transfer Power from the user to an ally. If a character has Power in her pool, but wants to transfer it to an ally, she can do so as a simple action, but the recipient must be in the

same range band. On the action, the character can transfer as much Power from her own pool into her ally's Power pool as she wants, though this does not let the recipient exceed her maximum Power cap.

This action may be flurried with other actions, including actions that increases the character's Power pool.

WARFARE

Normally, combat reflects small skirmishes between two small groups of characters. Even when Exalts are facing off against hordes of mortals, the standard combat rules apply. When dealing with the concept of warfare, or two armies facing off against each other over multiple battles, the combat rules are less useful in adjudicating who wins the overall war.

Battles and skirmishes are still important, but now instead of having a simple goal of defeat the enemy Exalt, the goals are more strategic, and play into the larger battle. When the characters are facing war, the follow rules can help adjudicate the outcome.

The War

The war itself is represented by a project that has a time scale over days, weeks, or even months. The opposing side presents obstacles for each other to overcome in the project action. This is the high-level aspect of the war, not the day-to-day actions, or even the small skirmishes that make up a full battle. This is the ebb and flow of the tides of war and depending on how well each side does in their individual skirmishes determines how well the war is going for them.

This action is opposed between the leaders of the armies involved. The basic breakdown is as follows:

- The best War Ability rating (or appropriate dice pool divided by two for antagonists) between all leaders present in the action plus one determines the number of obstacles for

the project. This represents the leader's ability to push her combatants into clashes.

- The generals create a strategy, form dice pools, and add any modifiers (which may come from dramatic scenes). This action requires the War Ability with an appropriate Attribute based on the leader's strategy.
- Both sides roll their action to accumulate successes towards the war effort as part of a project action using each other's roll as their obstacles. Whichever side wins in the contested roll wins that skirmish. The time scale for mass combat is at minimum a day, though it could be weeks or months depending on the conflict.
- Whichever side nets the most successes after all the obstacles have been resolved is the victor in the battle. Successes netted on both sides determine the number of troops, land, and resources remain after the fighting.
- When a character commands her troops, she may use their Drill rating as bonus successes to applicable rolls.

Each obstacle roll in the project is modified by environmental factors and actions the characters take between them. The character can perform actions to reduce morale of the enemy army, boost her own troops, or perform espionage or sabotage missions to help her army. These actions are played in short scenes within the overall war creating a backdrop to the action.

If naval warfare is involved, it can use the naval combat rules found on p. XX.

Dramatic Scenes

The various actions characters take to help the war effort happen in **dramatic scenes**. Generally, the characters play through one dramatic scene between each roll for the war, but they may go through more if the Storyteller feels it necessary.

Dramatic scenes in war situations function like any other downtime-based dramatic scene (see

p. XX) with one key difference: the leader, or tactician, for the army decides on a tactic that the characters are attempting as part of the dramatic action. The character who sets the tactic rolls an appropriate Attribute + Ability as an opposed roll against the opposing side's tactic. Whichever side nets the most successes enact their tactic successfully and gains a bonus towards the effort in the ensuing dramatic scene. If the roll is tied, neither sides gains the bonus, unless one of the characters is a Solar Exalt, in which case First Among Equals declares them the winner.

When enacting dramatic scenes, characters may enter the fray engaging in battles or skirmishes, or they may attempt covert operations, sneaking into an enemy camp to steal horses. Whatever the characters do, their actions aid the war effort in some way. Dramatic scenes grant bonus successes to the leader's next obstacle roll for the war project if they succeed. Any character can be the lead tactician in a dramatic scene, and we encourage each character having a chance to lead an operation.

When fighting battles, the characters often find themselves in one of two positions: They are fighting groups or units of troops which use the battle groups rules (see p. XX), or they are

fighting one on one duels between champions. In the case of the first option, one Exalted character may take on an entire unit by herself, or a small team of characters will take on a larger battlegroup led by an elite commander. In the latter case, one character may take the mantle of champion and fight a duel. Either way, these scenes utilize the normal combat rules with whatever bonuses they gain from the tactic decided at the start of the dramatic scene.

War Made Simple

If the players wish to bypass a dramatic scene for whatever reason, you can abstract their characters' contributions to the war effort with a support roll using an appropriate Attribute +

Ability against Difficulty 8 minus their leader's War Ability. Extra successes give bonus successes to the leader's next obstacle roll for the war project.

Example actions include finding reinforcements, reinforcing/sabotaging supply lines, digging trenches, poisoning troops, scouting for troop movements, rallying the troops, or assassinating lieutenants.

The following are some example tactics the characters may attempt along with the benefit for succeeding at them. The dice pool for each is listed in parentheses.

- **Ambush (Finesse + Stealth):** The winning leader tricks his enemy into a trap which he springs at the last minute. For this dramatic scene, the characters have Surprise on the enemy at the start of all combats.

Success on this tactic grants the leader one bonus success + any extra successes from the tactic roll to her next war project action.

- **Back to the Sea (Force + Navigate):** The victorious leader backs his enemy into a place that is impossible to escape from. The enemy may literally have their backs against the sea, or cliffs, mountains, or some other impassible terrain. The enemy has nowhere to go and is desperate. Reduce battle groups' health by five for this dramatic scene.

Success on this tactic grants the leader one bonus success + any extra successes from the tactic roll to her next war project action.

- **Call to Duel (Attribute + Embassy or Persuasion):** The winning tactician calls out the opposing force and demands them pick a champion on short notice. During this dramatic scene, the enemy champion reduces his Soak by one.

Success on this tactic grants the leader four bonus successes on her next war project action. This tactic can only be performed once per war.

- **Demoralize Troops (Force + Embassy or**

- Performance):** The winning tactician figures out a way to intimidate and demoralize the opposing forces. During this dramatic scene, enemy battle groups reduce Accuracy by two, and enemy characters reduce Accuracy by one.

Success on this tactic grants the leader three bonus successes to her next war project action.

- **Espionage (Finesse + Awareness or Sagacity):** The winning tactician leads a small team into the enemy camp to steal supplies, battle plans, and key information to help with the war effort. During this dramatic scene, characters do not fight battle groups any larger than Size 1, and characters gain a two bonus to Stealth Ability rolls.

Success on this tactic grants the leader two bonus successes + any extra successes from the tactic roll to her next war project action.

- **Sabotage (Finesse + Craft or War):** The victorious leader derails supply trains, destroys weapons, or otherwise sabotages the enemy army, causing a major setback. During this dramatic scene, the characters gain one bonus success to Damage rolls made on Athletics or Physique Ability rolls.

Success on this tactic grants the leader three bonus successes to her next war project action.

COMMAND

When an Exalt is in charge of a battle group outside of war scenes or ventures, she does not need to roll to issue orders to her troops. Dots of Command take their action as a separate character during normal combat scenes, and will do as she says. If her commands are especially dangerous, resisted by an enemy, or against the nature of her soldiers, this requires a War roll. For more interactions with battle groups, see p. XX.

ONE-ROLL RESOLUTION

Sometimes, the Exalted encounter obstacles in the form of trivial characters: a nameless prison guard who blocks the way or a stubborn horse-seller who won't budge on price. Rather than roll out the full system to dispatch with this kind of impasse, Storytellers instead may resort to **one-roll resolution**. The Exalt rolls Close Combat or Embassy, and if they get three or more successes, defeat the trivial target. If the consequences of failing this roll would not change the outcome of this story, Storytellers should not call for a roll at all, and allow the player's character to succeed.

VENTURES

Sometimes, a character may want to do something that would take more time or require more complexity than a simple action would reasonably allow. For instance, characters may craft wonders, work to change laws, or even shape the Wyld through will and magic. Activities like these would be uninteresting to play out action by action, especially those that may take weeks or months to complete.

In other cases, characters may do something that would take more than one simple action and must be completed in a limited amount of time. For instance, they might try to solve a complicated puzzle lock before an ancient tomb guardian catches up to them, or engage in a chase that ends in one party catching the other or escaping the scene.

In both cases, the Storyteller may model the activity as a **venture**. This section presents rules that allow Storytellers to create a venture on the fly to represent whatever epic deeds the characters wish to accomplish, as well as a large selection of common, premade ventures for the Storyteller to use. Those examples include:

- Ordinary simple actions under duress
- Crafting objects and structures, both mundane and magical

- Making changes that involve communities, society, and people
- Complex investigations and research
- Rituals and other supernatural workings
- Travel, chases, and exploration

VENTURE SYSTEMS

Whenever a character takes an action that would reasonably require more time or effort than a single roll suggests, one that depends on multiple separate steps, or one that represents a race against time, the Storyteller can fashion it into a venture. Ventures possess the following basic elements.

Prerequisites

Determine whether the character has the right **Prerequisites**: Abilities or other traits necessary to attempt the action. In most cases, they do, even if they have zero dots in an Ability — anyone can *attempt* to perform research or ride a horse. Exceptions are usually actions that require specific supernatural capabilities, such as an anima or possession of a familiar. Example exceptions include crafting artifacts and Wyld shaping, each of which requires a different specific Charm that allows a character to attempt it.

Obstacles

Each roll in a venture represents overcoming an **obstacle** of some kind. Each example venture type starting on p. XX presents its own list of common obstacles, but the Storyteller can adjust them based on circumstances and whether or not the characters have already performed some task that would preclude an obstacle.

Determine the first obstacle that stands between the character and success up front. If someone tries to stop them or they're actively competing, this obstacle can be another person. Otherwise, it's a situation that presents problems or a task built into the process that requires skill and effort to perform. The dice

pool used to overcome the obstacle depends on how the character goes about it, as normal, but each venture type has one or more common pools.

Once the character overcomes this first obstacle, the Storyteller determines the next one. She *can* come up with a list of obstacles beforehand and introduce each one at the proper time, but circumstances may change depending on the Circle's actions and those of other characters, and thus the obstacles may also change. For instance, an opponent may find out about the venture midway through and attempt to interfere.

The Storyteller sets the minimum, or **base**, number of obstacles a venture encompasses at the beginning. This number may increase over the course of the venture as a result of consequences (see below). It may also decrease if the character or Circle accomplishes something significant over the course of their adventures that would reasonably remove an obstacle, subject to the Storyteller's approval, but these accomplishments can't reduce a venture to fewer than one obstacle.

Generally, a venture begins with a base of between two and five obstacles, depending on its complexity. For instance, writing a novel may be relatively simple but time-consuming, resulting in two obstacles with a full story between each one, while a foot race through crowded urban streets takes little time but is full of exciting twists and turns, resulting in five obstacles with just one round between them.

Time Scale

The **time scale** on which the venture takes place defines how often the player can roll to overcome an obstacle — which is to say, make progress on the venture — measured in narrative time. These increments are turns, scenes, sessions, and stories.

The Storyteller determines the time scale up front based on the venture type. For instance, performing in-depth research usually takes place on a scale of scenes (i.e. hours), while a foot race would take place over the course of rounds.

The character is, however, assumed to be spending downtime between intervals on the venture as well. Perhaps they're spending hours in the library in between the scenes the group actually plays out at the table, or spreading the word to recruit members for an army. As a result, each roll is the *culmination* of the downtime work the character has performed since the last obstacle. This means that each roll should take place *during* a scene, at a dramatic moment appropriate to the action.

Players can certainly initiate a dramatic scene specifically for the purpose of making such a roll, similar to dramatic scenes in warfare (p. XX). However, even if a scene has nothing in particular to do with the venture, the player may still roll as long as they can come up with a stunt that allows the character to run across a particular resource or gain an insight that could help them overcome the current obstacle. Alternatively, the Storyteller may allow this to count as a dramatic scene (see below).

Difficulty and Advantages

The Storyteller sets the difficulty of each obstacle roll as it comes up, as normal (see p. XX for how to determine difficulties). If the obstacle is another character, the roll is opposed instead.

If the player succeeds on a roll, they may spend any extra successes on **advantages** based on the venture type. Each advantage costs a specific number of successes. On any venture type, a player may convert extra successes to bonus dice on the roll to overcome the next obstacle on a one-for-one basis, to a maximum of five. On any kind of *opposed* venture, a player may convert extra successes to a dice penalty for the opposition on the next obstacle roll instead on a

one-for-one basis, to a maximum of five. Neither of these basic advantages can result from the venture's final obstacle roll. Each example venture type lists more specific common advantages, but Storytellers can come up with others where appropriate.

If the player fails a roll or chooses to cut corners (see p. XX), the character still overcomes the obstacle in some fashion but introduces a consequence (see below) in the process.

If the player botches a roll, the character doesn't overcome the obstacle at all and must try again at the next interval in *addition* to suffering a consequence. Alternatively, the Storyteller may rule that the botch has rendered the entire venture impossible to complete, imposing one final consequence and ending the venture immediately.

Consequences

Failure on an obstacle roll doesn't mean nothing happens. Instead, the character makes progress as normal, but the failure introduces a **consequence** to the venture or its outcome. The Storyteller decides on its nature based on the venture type. Each example venture type comes with a list of common consequences for its common obstacles. Some consequences are tied to a particular obstacle, such as losing access to a workshop for crafting, which is tied to the "Materials and

Tools" obstacle. Others only affect the finished product or simply get in the character's way at the time.

On any venture type, the Storyteller may add an obstacle to the venture's total count as a basic consequence. This consequence can't result from the venture's final obstacle roll, to prevent a venture from dragging on indefinitely.

If the obstacle on a given roll for any venture type is another character, the Storyteller can't add obstacles as a consequence. Instead, the consequence becomes whatever advantages

the opposition earned with their extra successes.

The Storyteller may rule that a venture has a maximum number of consequences the character can suffer before something worse happens. If the time it takes to complete the entire venture matters because the character is racing against the clock, the Storyteller sets a maximum based on how urgent the deadline is. For instance, if characters are trying to perform an occult ritual before the pursuers right on their heels find them, that venture is extremely urgent! Thus, the Storyteller might set the maximum at only one consequence. On the other hand, if their pursuers are down the street, the situation is slightly less urgent, and the Storyteller may set the maximum at three or four consequences instead. Even if the time scale is long, the venture can be urgent — for instance, a character might need to craft an artifact before a demon forces its way into Creation within the month. That venture could take place on a scale of stories with a maximum of only one or two consequences.

If the player fails the maximum number of rolls, the venture fails outright, and the final consequence is automatically whatever fate the Circle is trying to avoid. In the above example, the final consequence is that they don't pull off the ritual before their enemies find them, and combat probably ensues. The Storyteller doesn't need to roll for those enemies to find the characters — their success or failure is determined by the player's result. However, if the enemies have particular edges that should allow them to act faster than usual, such as tracking Charms or a hunting hound that has the character's scent, the Storyteller can increase the difficulty of the player's obstacle rolls or remove advantages they've earned.

If the venture competes with other characters performing the same activity, such as in a foot chase or weaving competition, the Storyteller

instead makes obstacle rolls for each adversary as well, which oppose the player's rolls as normal; each side is the obstacle for the others on an opposed roll. Whichever side accumulates more total consequences by the time they make the final obstacle roll wins, and the losing side fails the venture. Their final consequence is whatever the opposition chooses to do with their victory.

Results

If the character hasn't failed the venture due to running out of time, losing to the opposition, or botching a roll, then once they overcome or bypass all the obstacles, the venture is complete. The character accomplishes what they set out to do, but must deal with any consequences their efforts generated along the way.

Merits

The possession of some Merits may make a venture easier or less dangerous to complete. For instance, throwing large sums of money (Resources) at a venture almost always helps, while having a cadre of Followers to do grunt work speeds things along.

If the Storyteller rules that the character possesses one or several Merits that could aid in overcoming an obstacle and the player comes up with a stunt to show how they're helpful, the player adds bonus dice equal to their total dots in relevant Merits to that obstacle's roll, to a maximum of five. These bonus dice may stack with any purchased with extra successes from a previous obstacle roll, but both are subject to the usual dice cap.

Alternatively, the player may *invest* one or more dots of relevant Merits, in any combination, into an obstacle to devote more of their resources to the venture, thus diverting them from other uses. A Merit dot invested in a venture becomes unavailable until the character overcomes the next obstacle. Treat their rating in the Merit as

though it were reduced by the invested amount for that duration. Dots invested in a venture don't add bonus dice. Instead, they add bonus extra successes to the obstacle's roll as long as it's successful in the first place, which don't count toward the usual bonus success cap. The player may spend these successes on advantages as normal, or may spend them to negate a consequence at a rate of three successes per consequence.

The Merit must be relevant not only to the venture itself but to the obstacle in question; advantages purchased and consequences negated with successes from invested Merits must make sense for the Merit used. For instance, using Followers to help overcome a "Too Much for One Person" obstacle in a crafting venture makes sense, and investing them to win the loyalty of other notable artisans to negate the "incomplete" consequence does as well. However, using Followers to overcome an "Unstable Demesne" obstacle or gain the advantage of increased mote regeneration while building a manse doesn't work.

Cutting Corners

A character can complete most ventures faster than usual by cutting corners: taking shortcuts to success that result in more severe consequences. Once per session, the player may announce at any time that they want to cut corners on a venture for which they've already overcome at least one obstacle. Doing so allows the player to make their next obstacle roll immediately, even if the required interval hasn't yet passed, in exchange for accepting an automatic consequence from the Storyteller. If the roll fails, the failure consequence stacks — they might be two separate consequences, or they might combine to make a more serious one that's harder for the Circle to deal with. No consequence resulting from cutting corners can add obstacles to a venture.

A player may only cut corners if their stunt reflects a way in which the character could reasonably accomplish their goal within the scene. For instance, taking a shortcut to enlist a mercenary company's help may let them overcome an obstacle to raising an army faster than taking the time to recruit handpicked soldiers would, but in return they owe the mercenaries above and beyond their usual price in exchange for their immediate availability. If the obstacle roll fails, the Storyteller might represent it as a separate consequence — perhaps these mercenaries have a shady reputation, which now sours the Circle as well — or might simply increase the price even more due to poor negotiations or undue leverage, putting the character deeply in debt.

Charms that allow a character to speed up the time it takes to complete a venture, such as Artisan Needs No Tools for crafting ventures, negate the consequences that result from cutting corners unless the Charm says otherwise.

Storyteller Characters and Ventures

Working on long-term projects is typically the purview of the players' characters. After all, the focus of the narrative remains on them at all times. That's not to say that story-important Storyteller characters can't have long-term goals or work on things while they're "off screen." Perhaps a necromancer weaves a dark ritual to raise an army of the shambling dead or a brutal tyrant works to rearrange laws in order to levy punitive taxes in order to fund their arms race. Storytellers should treat these background ventures as progressing at the pace of plot, and in the same amount of time that the players' characters spend on their own pursuits. Charms like **Bureau-Breaking Method** (p. XX) may sabotage these events, and the Storyteller should decide how this impacts its progress

narratively. They do not need to roll to determine any outcome.

TYPES OF VENTURES

Below is a list of the major types of ventures this system can represent, including any special rules that may apply.

If players want to attempt something that fits the description of a venture but doesn't fall under one of these specific types, the Storyteller can create their own using the guidelines above.

ACTION UNDER DURESS

Any mundane simple action can become a venture if a character has to do it in a rush or with a knife to their throat. This is a generic venture type that can encompass anything from quickly breaking out of shackles before the guard comes back to reading a ransom note without losing composure while held hostage at daiklave-point.

The Storyteller sets the base number of obstacles and dice pool based on the specific action. More than most ventures, this type is open to all kinds of more specific obstacles, advantages, and consequences created on the fly; those listed here are highly general to serve as examples or templates.

Venture actions under duress always have an obstacle maximum.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One round

Base obstacles: Varies

Common dice pools: Varies

Common obstacles: Missing Minor Resources (Difficulty 3); Resist Fear/Pressure (Difficulty 3); Outnumbered (Difficulty 4); Missing Crucial Resources (Difficulty 5); Severe Limitation (Difficulty 6)

Common advantages: gain +2 dice on attempts to deal with consequences arising from cutting corners (1 success, maximum +4 dice); call for backup, finding a way to immediately contact Circlemates or other allies (3 successes); create

distraction, automatically gaining surprise if combat interrupts or follows venture (5 successes)

Common consequences: messy rush job reduces effectiveness of **action**; panic and make concessions to foes; leave behind incriminating evidence

CRAFTING

Exalted artists and artisans are known far and wide for their extraordinary skills and wondrous creations. This venture type covers both utility craftsmanship and creative works; this includes performed works such as composing music and playwriting, although the actual performance of these works doesn't fall under its auspices.

Crafting artifacts and manses is a special case that requires purchasing the Wonder-Crafting Initiation Charm (p. XX) and apprenticing with a craftsperson experienced in creating magical wonders for at least one story. The latter prerequisite may be assumed at character creation if the player takes an appropriate Merit to represent it.

Personal-Scale Mundane Items

Crafting personal scale mundane items such as swords, rafts, furniture, ornaments, and the like ordinarily doesn't require a venture, or indeed any roll at all. If a character wishes to craft a chair or a bow, they can simply do it as long as they have the time.

Mundane crafting ventures exist for situations in which the character competes with another, needs to craft something more quickly than usual or with a strict deadline, or is making something for a particular reason other than the existence of the object itself, such as to impress a monarch or gain a reputation.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 2

Common dice pools: Finesse + Craft

Common obstacles: Materials and Tools

(Difficulty 3); Design Flaw or Challenge (Difficulty 4); Competition (opposed)

Common advantages: increase difficulty of feats of strength to break item by 1 (1 success, maximum +3); increase one trait of item by 1 (2 successes, maximum +2); make an additional one of the same item in the same amount of time (3 successes, no maximum); gift item, giving recipient a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (4 successes, maximum one)

Common consequences: altered item traits; limited number of uses; tarnished reputation as an artisan; destruction of some necessary materials.

Large-Scale Mundane Items

Crafting a large-scale mundane item, such as a ship, a building, a defensive wall, a highly complex mechanism, or a large number of smaller items such as an entire armory's worth of swords, always requires a venture.

Prerequisites: Craft 1

Time scale: One session

Base obstacles: 3

Common dice pools: Finesse + Craft, Force + Physique

Common obstacles: Materials and Tools (Difficulty 3); Design Flaw or Challenge (Difficulty 4); Too Much for One Person (Difficulty 4); Infrastructure and Location (Difficulty 5); Structural Integrity (Difficulty 5); Competition (opposed)

Common advantages: increase difficulty of feats of strength to break/damage item by 1 (1 success, maximum +5); increase size or number of item by half again as much as the original plan (3 successes, maximum 2 increases); gift item, giving recipient a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (4 successes, maximum one)

Common consequences: lesser durability; glaring weak spot; incomplete; destruction of some necessary materials.

Creative Works

Like personal-scale mundane items, creative works such as novels, paintings, sculptures, musical compositions, choreography, and the like only require ventures to create if they're doing so with a time limit, as a competition, under duress, or to achieve a greater result than the work itself.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 2

Common dice pools: Finesse + Craft, Finesse + Performance

Common obstacles: Materials and Tools (Difficulty 3); Complexity (Difficulty 4); Competition (opposed)

Common advantages: grants +1 die to social rolls creator's player makes against anyone familiar with the work (1 success, maximum +3); gain a temporary dot of Resources as a profit on the work that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots); make an additional copy of the same work in the same amount of time (3 successes, no maximum); dedicate work, giving recipient a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (4 successes, maximum one)

Common consequences: tarnished reputation as an artist; work offends someone in power; someone else claims credit.

Artifacts

Crafting artifacts is a wonder beyond mortal ability, and always requires a venture. See p. XX for a description of how to design an artifact and p. XX for example artifacts that a character could craft.

If a character wants to build a large-scale artifact, such as a magical ship, the Storyteller should adjust the following elements accordingly.

Prerequisites: Wonder-Crafting Initiation (see below)

Time scale: One session

Base obstacles: 4

Common obstacles: Materials and Tools (Difficulty 4); Design Flaw or Challenge (Difficulty 5); Need to Keep Artifact Secret (Difficulty 5); No Existing Examples/Records (Difficulty 5); Artifact or Materials Coveted or Reviled (opposed)

Common advantages: increase difficulty of feats of strength to break item by 1 (1 success, maximum +5); increase one trait of item by 1 (2 successes, maximum +3); gift item, giving recipient a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (4 successes, maximum one); item has one additional Evocation (5 successes, maximum +2 Evocations)

Common consequences: altered item traits; attracts unwanted attention; Evocation comes with a drawback or increased cost; artifact is sentient and hostile; destruction of some necessary materials; artifact is cursed.

Manses

Crafting manses is like the large-scale version of crafting artifacts, requiring the same Charm and always requiring a venture. See p. XX for an explanation of how to design a manse and p. XX for example hearthstones that a manse can create.

Prerequisites: Wonder-Crafting Initiation (p. XX), a demesne to cap (see p. XX)

Time scale: One story

Base obstacles: 3

Common obstacles: Materials and Tools (Difficulty 5); Too Much for One Person (Difficulty 5); Design Flaw or Challenge (Difficulty 6); Need to Keep Manse Secret (Difficulty 6); No Existing Examples/Records (Difficulty 6); Unstable/Hostile Demesne (Difficulty 7); Manse or Materials Coveted or Reviled (opposed)

Common advantages: increase difficulty of feats of strength to damage manse by 1 (1

success, maximum +5); increase size of manse by half again as much as the original plan (3 successes, maximum 2 increases); increase mote regeneration by 1 mote per hour (3 successes, maximum +1 mote per hour); add one additional Evocation to hearthstone (5 successes, maximum +1 Evocation)

Common consequences: manse is sentient and hostile; manse is cursed; attracts unwanted attention; hearthstone Evocation or mote regeneration comes with drawback or increased cost; destruction of some necessary materials; trapped in manse.

Repairs

Repairing an item, artifact, or manse works the same way as crafting one from scratch, but reduces the base number of obstacles by half (rounded up) and all difficulties by one (to a minimum of one). Every repair venture has one obstacle representing how damaged the item is, with a variable difficulty the Storyteller sets based on the extent of the damage. The Storyteller may rule that something is too damaged to be repaired, although Charms and other magic can get around that limitation.

EMBASSY VENTURES

An embassy venture is one that deals with people and society. Most embassy ventures work on a larger scale, such as an organization or a government, but some embassy ventures may function on more of a personal scale, such as espionage. As long as it makes changes to a community and its members, it's considered an embassy venture.

Obstacle rolls for embassy ventures are usually made during scenes in which the character interacts with one or more of the people involved in whatever group or partnership is involved with the venture.

Lead Organization

Leading an organization requires coordinating groups of people to work toward some common

goal. Accomplishing that goal is a venture that the leader undertakes. Common organizational goals include gaining or generating new resources, acting against another organization, and making local societal changes. A pirate captain might undertake a venture to plunder merchant ships or raid island villages (thus gaining new resources through piracy), while the leader of an athletic team might undertake ventures to defeat opposing teams in a tournament.

This activity is broad to encompass many kinds of goals an organization might have and forms it might take, so in some cases its applicability can overlap with another venture type. For instance, if a caravan master wants to safely navigate an area full of dangerous wildlife, the Storyteller could model it as leading the organization (the caravan), if the player's stunt suggests that they're doing so through wrangling the various merchants, guards, and other caravan members.

Alternatively, the same goal might warrant a long journey venture (p. XX) instead, if the stunt suggests that the character is primarily relying on their superior ability to navigate and travel efficiently, and the rest of the caravan is simply following their lead.

A character can also use this venture to delegate tasks to the organization's members, to be performed without the leader. This way, the character's group can still accomplish goals elsewhere while the Circle is busy adventuring. It can even replace warfare (p. XX) or naval combat (p. XX) scenes if the army or navy engages the enemy without the Circle present.

When acting against another organization, the player's obstacle rolls may have static difficulties representing how powerful, efficient, or resourceful the opposing organization is, or they may be opposed by the rival organization's leader.

Ventures to lead organizations are only applicable when the character is the leader of the entire organization and has free rein to direct it as they see fit. For ventures undertaken as part of a governing body or other larger-scale hierarchy, see “Acts of Governance” on p. XX.

Prerequisites: Recognized authority

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 3

Common dice pools: (Force or Finesse) + Embassy, Presence, or War

Common obstacles: Funds and Resources (Difficulty 3); Infamous Reputation (Difficulty 4); Insufficient Numbers (Difficulty 4); Low Morale (Difficulty 4); Danger to Members (Difficulty 5); Unrest/Internal Conflict (Difficulty 5); Acting Without the Leader (Difficulty 6); Stiff Competition (opposed)

Common advantages: training for members, increasing Drill of their battle groups by one level (4 successes, maximum +2 Drill); gain a temporary dot of Followers as potential new recruits that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots); gain a temporary dot of Backing in a different organization as support from a powerful sponsor that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots); accomplish an additional minor task as part of this venture (3 successes, maximum 2 additional tasks); win loyalty, giving all members a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (5 successes, maximum one)

Common consequences: fractured loyalties; hidden traitor in the ranks; external intrigues; incompetent or overworked members; loss of membership; resources gained turn out to be illicit or blood money; organization’s meddling attracts rivals.

Act of Governance

An act of governance works toward a goal that the character pushes a government or other complex or large-scale hierarchy to fulfill. The

character must belong to the group they wish to sway and hold a position that could reasonably give them enough clout to do it. Acts of governance involve navigating complex politics and bureaucracy to accomplish anything, so if the character is the overarching leader and can simply hand down mandates, use the “Lead Organization” venture instead.

Example acts of governance include passing or enforcing laws; changing policies or verdicts; military or diplomatic engagements with neighbors; mustering an entire navy or army; building infrastructure such as city walls, war trenches, or canals; pushing a measure through quickly; and dismantling or altering the organization’s structure. In some cases, a character may want to accomplish something so drastic that it’s really multiple related ventures, such as doing away with an entire government and replacing it with a new one, or abolishing slavery and changing the country’s infrastructure to run effectively without it.

A Sidereal Exalt can perform an act of governance in Yu-Shan to win a god’s favor or aid, get an important destiny changed, petition the Maidens of Fate for advice, or make a major change to the way an abstract concept or part of nature manifests in Creation through politicking with appropriate gods and departments. Anyone can attempt the latter using Performance instead of Embassy to pray and offer bribes to a god, but difficulties increase by 2; doing so has no prerequisites.

Prerequisites: Embassy 1, Backing 1 (Merit) or an appropriate Command 1 (Merit)

Time scale: One story

Base obstacles: 3

Common dice pools: (Force or Finesse) + Embassy

Common obstacles: Funds and Resources (Difficulty 3), Red Tape (Difficulty 3-5 depending on hierarchy’s complexity), Hostile Public Opinion (Difficulty 4), No Internal Support

(Difficulty 4), Redundancy/Conflicting Policies or Laws (Difficulty 5), Unrest/Internal Conflict (Difficulty 5), Active Opposition or Sabotage (opposed)

Common advantages: expose corruption or conspiracy (false or real) in the ranks, removing one person from a position of power (1-5 successes depending on importance/rank of target, no maximum); gain +1 to social rolls to interact with a foreign institution whose trust you've won (1 success, maximum +3); gain a temporary dot of Backing in this hierarchy as social currency that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots); gain a temporary 1-dot Ally from within the hierarchy as someone in your debt that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 Allies); gain a temporary 3-dot Ally as above (4 successes, maximum 2 Allies); gain a temporary 5-dot Ally as above (6 successes, maximum 1 Ally)

Common consequences: endangerment or loss of privileges or an official position; making a powerful enemy; all operations disrupted and subject to delays; becoming indebted to someone; risk to citizens' safety or livelihoods.

Court Intrigue/Grassroots Movement

Whether the character does it through garnering public support and local influence or through careful maneuvering among noble courts with clandestine deals and bribing officials, they work to make sweeping changes to their society or community without using a position of authority. They might galvanize the populace into a rebellion; pressure the government into doing something through protests, bribes, threats, or blackmail; overthrow the government entirely; maneuver to play kingmaker; sway public opinion significantly; etc.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One session or one story (Storyteller's discretion)

Base obstacles: 2

Common dice pools: (Force or Finesse) + Embassy or Presence

Common obstacles: No Leverage/Social Currency (Difficulty 3); Competition with Existing Bribe (Difficulty 4); Infamous Reputation (Difficulty 4); Under Surveillance (Difficulty 5); Active Opposition or Sabotage (opposed).

Common advantages: someone owes you a significant favor/debt (3 successes, maximum one per indebted character); increase the difficulty of rolls that oppose yours by 1 for the rest of this venture (2 successes, maximum +3 difficulty per opponent); gain a temporary dot of Contacts with an appropriate group that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots)

Common consequences: exposing your true goals to the wrong person; retaliation or slander against your supporters; someone renegeing on a deal.

Recruitment

A character can undertake a venture to recruit people for any kind of group, whether it's building a true organization from the ground up or just gathering like-minded troublemakers for a conspiracy. As long as they're recruiting a group of people for a singular purpose, it counts as a recruitment venture. Examples include hiring a militia or ship's crew, starting up a mercenary or mercantile company, holding auditions for a performing troupe, inciting a mutiny or riot, talent seeking for a project or team, replenishing an army's depleted ranks, or starting a cult.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 3

Common dice pools: (Force or Finesse) + Embassy, Presence, or War

Common obstacles: Funds and Resources (Difficulty 3); Hard Sell (Difficulty 3); Infamous Reputation (Difficulty 4); Dangerous Prospects (Difficulty 5); Stiff Competition (opposed).

Common advantages: specialized recruits grant a +1 dice bonus to all actions the group takes in a particular area of expertise (1 success, maximum +5); gain a temporary dot of Resources brought in by a recruit that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots); increase Drill of recruited battle group by one level (4 successes, maximum +2 Drill); win loyalty, giving all recruits a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (5 successes, maximum one).

Common consequences: inadequate vetting leads to incompetent or traitorous recruits; new group attracts rivals/pits your enemies against the whole group; recruits bring baggage along.

Infiltration and Espionage

Short-term acts of espionage, such as sneaking into a teahouse to eavesdrop on one conversation or posing as a government official to steal some documents, don't require ventures. This venture type is applicable when a character spends a significant amount of time living another life, such as playing the role of a courtesan in a noble's private chambers by night to learn secrets or get close enough to assassinate someone while adventuring with the Circle by day.

Prerequisites: Performance 1

Time scale: One session

Base obstacles: 2

Common dice pools: Finesse + Performance or Stealth

Common obstacles: Damaged Disguise (Difficulty 3); Someone Here Knows Me (Difficulty 4); Telltale Ignorance (Difficulty 4); Suspected/Under Surveillance (Difficulty 5); Caught Red- Handed (Difficulty 7)

Common advantages: gain leverage over someone, reducing their Resolve against you by 1 (2 successes, maximum -3 Resolve); win trust, giving mark a temporary minor tie for you or upgrade existing minor to major for the session (4 successes, maximum one); you may declare

one related Read Intentions action against you this session unacceptable influence with a perfect alibi (5 successes, maximum one action).

Common consequences: outed and exiled or wanted; captured by mark; someone falls in love with false persona.

INFORMATION GATHERING

When characters take their time to gather information, whether to research it in libraries and ancient tombs or seek evidence to solve a crime, the Storyteller can model it with this venture type.

Investigations

Simple investigations, such as searching a ruler's room for incriminating letters or asking around for information about a suspicious person, don't require ventures. An investigation venture is for entire sessions or stories that revolve around a single mystery for which the Storyteller wants to spread multiple leads and clues out for the characters to find one by one. The number of obstacles varies so that the Storyteller can seed as few or as many clues as they like.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 2-5, at Storyteller's discretion

Common dice pools: Finesse + Awareness (observation), Presence (interrogation), or Sagacity (deduction)

Common obstacles: Slightly Old Mystery (Difficulty 3); Evidence Was Tampered With (Difficulty 4); Old Mystery (Difficulty 5); Evidence Was Destroyed (Difficulty 6); Ancient Mystery (Difficulty 7); Deliberate Misdirection (opposed); Reluctant Witness (opposed)

Common advantages: accurate profile of offender, granting +1 to Sagacity rolls related to them (1 success, maximum +3); learn someone's secrets, decreasing their Resolve by 1 against you when you leverage it (2 successes, max -3 Resolve); official authority (false or real), allowing access to one off-limits resource, place,

or information source (3 successes, maximum two uses)

Common consequences: tip off foes to your snooping; accidentally destroy proof; harm your credibility; make enemies of those you interrogate

Research

Research is most often done via books and learning from teachers, but an Exalt might glean knowledge from stranger sources, too. They could visit an abandoned manse to view its ancient murals, perform a ritual to access information frozen in magical crystals, read predictions in the stars, or interrogate a spirit. Sidereal Exalts can peruse the Loom of Fate or requisition records from various divine departments, while Infernal Exalts can force their demonic servants to reveal dark secrets, and Abyssal Exalts can scour the Underworld for lore lost to Creation's history.

Some Exalts might even delve into the murky memories of past lives to dredge up things their previous selves knew.

In many cases, the group will play out scenes like confronting a tomb guardian to access its trove, arguing with Pattern Spiders, or translating ancient tongues. That doesn't preclude a research venture, though, because once those important tasks are done, the character still must take the time to read, find, or otherwise absorb the information.

Ordinary research has no prerequisites. More esoteric repositories or methods may require special skills or magic at the Storyteller's discretion, such as the examples listed above. The base number of obstacles for a research venture is variable depending on the rarity and scarcity of the information the character seeks.

Prerequisites: Variable

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 2-5, at Storyteller's discretion

Common dice pools: Finesse + Sagacity

Common obstacles: Too Much to Sort Through (Difficulty 3); Booby-Trapped Repository (Difficulty 4); Only Partially Preserved (Difficulty 5); Requires Decrypting or Translation (Difficulty 5); Cursed Tome (Difficulty 6); Guarded Repository (opposed)

Common advantages: take notes, granting +1 die to Sagacity rolls using them (1 success, maximum +5); player may ask Storyteller a relevant yes/no question and get a truthful answer (2 successes, maximum three questions); player declares one relevant fact that doesn't contradict what's already known as information the character learns, subject to Storyteller approval (4 successes, maximum two facts)

Common consequences: damage/destruction of source materials; one important thing you learned turns out to be false later; attract enemies for knowing too much; suffer a curse for learning forbidden secrets; trapped in the repository

MAGICAL WORKINGS

Exalts, gods, and other supernatural beings are capable of astonishing feats of magic, but some of those feats require time and effort to reach their fantastical potential. Charms such as Wyld-Shaping Technique (p. XX) and other effects can create ventures with their effects. This venture type includes any project or time-sensitive accomplishment in which the process itself is generated by magic.

Sorcerous workings are another, separate type of magical working venture, detailed on p. XX.

Prerequisites: Charm, Evocation, spell, or ability that creates the venture

Time scale: Specified by the effect that generates the venture
Base obstacles: 5

Common dice pools: (appropriate Attribute) + Sagacity

Common obstacles: Extremely Flashy (Difficulty 4); Materials and Tools (Difficulty 5); Need to Keep Working Secret (Difficulty 6);

Unstable/Hostile Environment (Difficulty 7);
Magic Coveted or Reviled (opposed)

Common advantages: regain one mote (3 successes, maximum 3 motes); observe or deduce an important fact about the magic or its effects (1 success, no maximum); learn one person present in the scene who has the capability to perform the same or a similar working (2 successes, no maximum); conceal the type of magic you work from later investigation, i.e. a Solar Charm won't show as Solar magic unless investigator uses magic and wins opposed Essence roll-off (5 successes).

Common consequences: magical buildup or backlash that causes damage; Charm/effect that generated the working costs one additional mote, Will, or other appropriate resource; working flares the Exalt's anima.

TRAVEL

Ordinarily, traveling doesn't require rolls or even take up a scene, because it happens in the downtime between events. However, if the characters race against time or another traveler, endure harsh terrain, weather, or other elements, risk severe fatigue, or travel under duress, it becomes a venture.

Chases and Races

A chase or race usually takes place on a short time scale and involves multiple participants. Unlike other opposed ventures, a chase or race has a certain momentum to it that potentially makes it harder to catch up once you fall behind.

For the first obstacle, all participants make opposed rolls as normal. Whoever wins among all of them doesn't have to make an opposed roll on the next obstacle; instead, they may choose to roll against an obstacle with a static difficulty, chosen by the Storyteller. Storytellers shouldn't reveal the difficulty before the choice is made, as it's meant to be a tactical decision to either accept the known quantity but risk the opponent rolling well, or chance a difficulty that

could be lower or higher than the opponent's average successes. Subsequent obstacles work the same way unless characters tie on a roll, in which case the next roll is opposed for everyone again.

If all participants don't travel by the same means — for instance, all on foot or all on horseback — then anytime two participants oppose one another on an obstacle roll, the one with the faster means gains one extra success on the roll, subject to the usual cap. If the Storyteller rules that their means are *significantly* faster, such as a Lunar Exalt in cheetah form chasing someone on foot, player's characters always beat Storyteller characters unless Charms or other effects put them on more even footing.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One round

Base obstacles: 5

Common dice pools: Finesse + Athletics or Navigate

Common obstacles: Lost Track of Opponent (Difficulty 3); Poor Visibility (Difficulty 3); Rough Terrain (Difficulty 4); Severe Weather (Difficulty 4); Damaged Mount/Vehicle (Difficulty 5); Dangerous Terrain (Difficulty 5); Urban/Literal Jungle (Difficulty 5); Deprivation/Fatigue (Difficulty 7 – Fortitude, minimum 3); Getting Attacked (opposed)

Common advantages: impress crowd, granting +1 to social rolls with anyone who witnessed race (1 success, maximum +3); grant bonus dice to another competitor's next obstacle roll (1 success per die, or 2 per die not subject to usual cap); impose an additional obstacle on an opponent for the next roll by adding its difficulty to that of the existing one, including opposed rolls (2 successes per 1 difficulty, maximum +5 difficulty's worth of obstacles); deal damage to opponent or opponent's mount/vehicle (4 successes, no maximum); automatically gain surprise against opponent if combat interrupts or follows chase (5 successes)

Common consequences: death/destruction of mount/vehicle; getting completely lost; collateral damage to bystanders or important property; severe fatigue that causes penalties to other actions

Long Journeys and Exploration

This venture type encompasses any journey that would take more than a scene's worth of travel to complete, whether the characters are walking, mounted, sailing, or flying. The number of obstacles varies depending on the length of the trip and how likely it is to get interrupted by threats or complications. Walking along a well-kept road from one village to another is a less fraught prospect than trekking across a desert with limited supplies, for instance.

As usual, long journeys don't require a venture unless characters are on a time limit, such as beating a rival caravan to a port city or reaching a kingdom 100 miles away before its monarch dies, or travel conditions are difficult, such as sailing through a hurricane or living entirely off the land. A trip undertaken solely to explore a brand new place is always a venture.

Even if characters on an extended journey have competition, obstacle rolls are never opposed due to the long intervals and distances at play. If competitors are close enough to directly oppose the Circle, the venture ends immediately and another kind of scene begins, such as combat, naval combat, or a race.

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 3-5, at Storyteller's discretion

Common dice pools: Fortitude + Navigate

Common obstacles: Insufficient Supplies (Difficulty 4); Rough Terrain (Difficulty 4); Severe Weather (Difficulty 4); Unknown Route/Lack of Map (Difficulty 4); Damaged Mount/Vehicle (Difficulty 5); Dangerous Terrain (Difficulty 5); Completely Lost (Difficulty 6); Deprivation or Fatigue (Difficulty 7 – Fortitude, minimum 3)

Common advantages: create accurate map or

travelogue, granting +1 die to Navigate rolls using it (1 success, maximum +5); reputation as reliable messenger, famous explorer, etc. granting +1 to social rolls with those who have heard of you (1 success, maximum +3); gain a temporary dot of Familiar by encountering creature in the wild that lasts for the session (2 successes, maximum 3 dots)

Common consequences: death/destruction of mount/vehicle; getting completely lost; collateral damage to transported cargo; severe deprivation or fatigue that causes penalties to other actions.

CHAPTER FIVE: STORYTELLING EXALTED

You've made your characters, you've decided what part of the world you want to play in, and everyone's excited to start. There's only one thing left to do — play! That means someone has to run the game. If that someone is you, this chapter will help you get started.

THE BASICS OF RUNNING EXALTED: ESSENCE

If you have never run a game of Exalted before, or have never run *any* roleplaying game before: first of all, welcome to an exciting and rewarding aspect of the hobby! Secondly, don't worry too much! Storytelling seems like complicated work, but this chapter will get you up-to-speed on how to run your first session of **Exalted: Essence** in no time.

PREPARATIONS: SESSION ZERO

Before you can organize and run your first session, there are preparations to make with your players. Session Zero is made of those preparations and lays the groundwork for your fledgling campaign. Now is the best time to make sure everyone — players and Storyteller alike — are on the same page.

WHAT KIND OF GAME ARE WE PLAYING?

Start by suggesting basic campaign ideas to your players. Begin with an elevator pitch — a short statement describing the action and emotions your players can expect. Be ready to brainstorm and collaborate even at this point. If you have no idea where to begin, only that you have a group of people begging you to run Exalted for them, turn it around: ask *them* what the game's pitch should be. From there, decide on the content and format.

The Game's Content

Genre, mood and tone can be hard to nail down but there are clues to what your players want. They are usually heard when someone says something like "*I want to play a game where—*" or "*I want to play something with—*" If you are comfortable creating your own hooks and plots,

continue asking questions to narrow down ideal settings and Circle composition.

However, if your players are stumped, or if you are new to running Exalted games, make sure to turn to the list of Story Hooks on p.XX. There are a variety of themes and genres detailed here, complete with ideal Exalt types.

The Game's Format

Some concepts benefit from unusual formats. A game of strange entities invading all of Creation might call for an ensemble, where players guide one cast of characters in one location and another cast in a different location. A generational game of Dragon-Blooded intrigue should make use of time skips. Games with a mission-based format could use rotating parties — which helps when not every player can make every game.

The Circle's Composition

Certain concepts call for certain compositions — you could say the politics of the dead requires a Circle of Abyssals and necromancers; or, exploring past lives means no Dragon-Blooded or Exigents allowed. Keep an eye on whether to emphasize specific archetypes and roles, as well: a heist game by necessity needs at least one criminal, and a campaign of fighting tournaments calls for one or more warriors. And, as Storyteller, you also have final say on what is or isn't allowed, purely by right of being Storyteller. We'll get to restrictions on play a bit later.

What's a Circle?

Like a group of geese is called a gaggle, a group of player-characters is often referred to as a "party" by roleplaying games. Exalted uses the term "Circle" as a broad label for groups of Exalts working together. Some types of Exalts have their own, even more specific names — for example, several Dragon-Blooded together are called a Hearth, Sidereals are a Fellowship, and Lunars are a Pack. Individual Circles can have

their own, more evocative names to describe their history, reputation, or deeds.

Make sure your players understand some overlap isn't a bad thing. Having multiples of one Exalt type, one Aspect or Caste, or multiples of one role doesn't mean the characters are copies of each other — there are enough ways to customize a character to keep everyone feeling unique and useful to the Circle.

For advice on how best to implement hooks and genre based on Circle composition, read *Single Exalt-Type Stories* (p.XX) and *Mixed-Group Stories* (p.XX). Whether you've limited choices to a few Exalts or archetypes, or thrown the doors wide open, your players have some decisions to make. When they narrow down their character, make sure to ask why they've picked what they did: what drew them to this type of Exalt and archetype? Is there an aspect of the character's role, history, or themes they're most excited to explore? Make note of the answer before moving on to the next big decision.

The Circle's Power

Some concepts call for higher Essence ratings. The coming-of-age tale of childhood friends attending the Heptagram together: Essence 1. A Pack of Lunars stalking every Wyld Hunt they find, hoping to rescue their reincarnated Solar mates: Essence 3. A Fellowship of Sidereals racing against time to stop a Deathlord's from dragging all of Great Forks into the Underworld: Essence 5. Refer to the end of the Character Creation chapter on p.XX — there are templates for how to start characters at different Essence levels.

Adding Restrictions

Beyond the needs of your genre or theme, you might want to place restrictions on character types or builds for different reasons: maybe to keep the game simple, maybe to stick to aspects of the setting that are more familiar, maybe to

avoid running certain character types you personally don't enjoy.

If you don't want to deal with a certain Exalt, or even a specific Merit or Charm or Artifact, you are within your rights to tell players those are off-limits for this game. If a player requests similar restrictions, they are also within their rights to do so, though you have the final say. **Exalted: Essence** is not an all-or-nothing game and you can curate it as you see fit.

WHERE IS THIS GAME HELD?

You know what they say: Location, location, location. At this point you should broach the topic of where to *hold* the game.

Tabletop Play

If you're playing in person, on a table, decide where that table will be. This could be someone's home, a game store with space dedicated to play, or a game cafe. Print character sheets and other aids you think your players need, have extra dice on hand, and bring this book or the digital version. Discuss food and travel accommodations for everyone. And, whether game is in someone's home or someone's place of business, remember to be a good host and a good guest.

Voice and Video

If you're playing online using video or voice, decide which platform you'll be using. There are several online tabletop simulators and even more streaming and VOIP software: make sure your players have access to the platforms you choose. Share any digital play aids and find an online dice-rolling program that works for you (or download the Onyx Dice app to your mobile device).

To AP, or not to AP?

Exalted as a game and setting is cinematic and lends itself to storytelling. You might find it a good fit for an AP, or Actual Play: a game played live over a streaming video service or recorded for an audience. Keep in mind an AP is more like

improv acting with rules than it is a game: it requires a slightly different skillset some people favor and some people don't. If you want to give Exalted: Essence the AP treatment, go for it! But be sure to do some research into what performing on camera or mic requires before everyone commits to it.

Related, if you find yourself thinking you'd be "bad" at running or playing tabletop roleplaying games because your favorite APs seem so slick and professional, remember they *are* professionals: they are actors, broadcasters, comedians, etc., often with professional sound and lighting and careful editing. It looks so polished because it *is*! They look like they're playing a game but mostly they're putting on a show. You don't have to be polished, and you don't have to be a professional performer to enjoy a game.

Play-By-Post

If you're playing online with text only, decide which platform you'll be using, and if you intend for the gameplay to be simultaneous (with everyone playing the game at the same time) or asynchronous (with everyone playing game at whenever time they can manage). Chat programs and message boards have been around since the dawn of the Internet, and the only limit on game pacing is how quickly someone can type. Preparations are otherwise the same as a Video or Voice game, but for asynchronous play, find an online dice-roller with a log to keep track of player results.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

During Session Zero, talk about why characters who might normally be at odds are working together. What might make a Sidereal and a Getimian put aside their differences? Do the Solar and the Abyssal remember one another from past lives? If your game begins with everyone meeting for the first time, collaborate with your players on reasons their characters will work together. This may be a set of shared

goals, mysterious orders from higher-ups, an invasion from the Wyld, or whatever other cool ideas the group pitches. Think about things that might happen over the course of their first adventure together to forge and strengthen bonds between them.

If the characters come to the story with their alliance already in place, have the players sketch out some of their backstory. How did the group originally form? What are the characters' connections to one another? Which characters are close, and which ones butt heads? Consider loosely defining a few of the adventures they've already been on, and the roles the characters played in them. These can be just a few words or a short phrase: *The Chiaroscuro Heist*, *That time we gambled with the god of the dice*, *How our Liminal friend got that Tyrant Lizard-hide armor*. The details can come later, through roleplay or as a future plot hook. During character creation, it serves as a way to build up the characters' relationships.

Finally, discuss any friction that might exist between the characters. Players should decide up-front how much they want the various rivalries and enmities that exist between different types of Exalted to be part of the game. Establish some rules at the outset — while tension between player characters can be excellent roleplaying fodder, it can also grow tiresome. "Nobody trusts the Infernal" might be an interesting part of the group dynamic at first, but having to defend your character's actions every session gets old after a while. Check in with your players, and be ready to step in if they need a change.

Once your game is under way, look for opportunities to shine the spotlight on the various characters, and consider having sessions whose theme and mood match their Exalt types. Think about television shows with ensemble casts: Some episodes focus on something happening in a specific character's

life, while the whole team works together to solve that episode's overarching mystery.

STORY HOOKS

Following are some potential genres, story themes, and plot hooks to consider for mixed-Exalt groups. In some cases, we've listed various Chosen or Castes and Aspects that are well-suited for these plots, but they're intended to work for all combinations. Storytellers should use these as inspiration to customize their game to their particular group's makeup.

Wandering Heroes: The characters travel throughout Creation, taking jobs and solving problems in the various kingdoms and principalities they pass through. They fight strange monsters, root out bandits harrying caravans along a trade route, or drive a tyrant from his throne. They might help put a town's unquiet dead to rest, or train villagers planning a revolt.

Consider letting characters take turns selecting who they help next. Storytellers might offer some rumors at the end of a chapter leading to the next job. As the group's legends grow, pleas for help or offers employment may find them wherever they end up. *Liminal Exalted*, *Lunars*, *Solars*, and *Dragon-Blooded*.

Intrigue: The Exalts are drawn into a web of lies and deceit, where everyone has their own agenda and no one is quite who they appear to be. They may be approached by a prince in disguise, attempting to keep an ambitious relative from stealing the throne.

Guild machinations in Nexus might require their intervention. A satrap in a Threshold territory turns to the party when no one around her can be trusted. Intrigue games are also perfect for showcasing Dynastic politics in an all-Dragon-Blooded story. *Night Caste Solars*, *Moonsilver Alchemicals*, *Sidereal Chosen of Secrets*, *Changing Moon Lunars*.

Home Base: Working together, the group adopts a city or neighborhood as its home territory, or builds a community from the ground up. They may operate out of that place, returning to it between adventures, or their presence might draw the curiosity (and the ire) of other powers in the area. *Alchemicals*, *Liminals*, *Abyssals*, and *Lunars*.

Adventure at Sea: Explore the oceans, fighting Lintha pirates and massive sea monsters. Discover islands full of Fair Folk, and underwater cities ruled by seafolk. Engage in naval battles and sail to any port. *Lunar Exalted*, *Water Aspect Dragon-Blooded*, *Starmetal Alchemicals*, *Chosen of Journeys*

Exploration: First Age tombs, ancient ruins, and long-abandoned cities abound throughout creation. Forgotten constructs stir within them, threatening the surrounding population. A sorcerer claims a manse as his fortress, turning its weapons on his enemies. A powerful artifact lays within the tomb, waiting for the person who braves its traps and dangers to claim it. *Solar*, *Abyssal*, *Infernal*, and *Getimian Exalted*, *No Moon Caste Lunars*,

Strange Entities: The Exalted aren't the only powerful beings in Creation. Gods, elementals, demons, and the Fair Folk all have business here, and may be the characters' allies or enemies. *Eclipse Caste Solars*, *Moonshadow Abyssals*, *Penumbra Infernals*, *Sidereals* and *Getimians*, *Exigents*

Fish Out of Water/Hometown Tour Guide: The group visits a region that is home to one of them, but unfamiliar to the rest. An Alchemical brings her companions to Autochthonia, an Infernal provides her Circle safe passage in Malfeas, or a Sidereal leads the party through a gate to Yu-Shan. *Any Exalt Types*

Echoes of Past Lives: The Exalts discover who they were in previous incarnations, and learn what their prior selves built or destroyed. They

may try to set old wrongs right, or have to stop a disastrous plan their predecessor set in motion. New foes turn out to be First Age allies.

Any Celestial Exalted...vs. the Wyld Hunt: Word has reached the Realm of the Exalts' presence in the area, and a Wyld Hunt marches to annihilate the threat.

While this plot places the Dragon-Blooded in the villains' role and works most easily with a party composed of any other Exalt types, it's still possible for groups with Dragon-Blooded characters to participate. They may be Chosen who weren't born in the Realm, or their loyalty to their allies helps them stand up to the Great Houses. *Any Exalt Types*

Journey of Self-Discovery: While Exalted stories often deal with external mysteries, sometimes figuring out who you are is just as vital a story. The Exalts set off on a quest to learn about their makers or their patrons, dragging secrets long-buried into the light. These stories can take place on varying scales — the Exalt might pursue clues in her downtime, piecing information together over the course of several sessions or chapters for a personal epiphany. What she finds might also lead to a bigger puzzle requiring her friends' help, or uncover a conspiracy bigger than she'd ever imagined. *Solars, Liminals, Exigents*

Struggle against fate: Heaven's demands aren't always fair, and sometimes the threads in the Loom of Fate snag. It's up to the Exalts to set destiny back on its course, or rail against it. *Sidereals and Getimians, Adamant Caste Alchemicals, Exigents*

WHERE DOES THIS GAME TAKE PLACE?

Creation is vast, with plenty of room for any kind of story you and your players could want to tell. That said, you'll need to narrow it down based on the genre and theme of your game.

All of Creation and Beyond

Hooks: Wandering Heroes, Adventure at Sea, Exploration, Journey of Self-Discovery

If your game takes place all over, no one location is more important than the others, and the characters spend a lot of time travelling. As such, they shouldn't take location-specific Merits, Intimacies, or other specialties, unless the location they're tied to comes back around a lot:

- **Hearthstone.** Don't get too attached to the Manse! This game takes the Circle far from it.
- **Influence of three or less.** This refers to an area small enough to risk leaving it, and the Merit's benefits, behind.
- **Other location-based specialties.** Discourage Ties to specific locales, and Lunar territory-based Charms like Boundary-Marking Meditation (p.XX).

As for the issue of long travel times, there are a few approaches. You can tweak the Venture system for travel (p.XX) by setting a maximum number of obstacles or reducing the time scale universally. You can also tweak how travel works specifically for the players, by granting them access to custom Charms, sorcery, or artifacts that ease long-distance travel. You can also skim or skip the travel sequences altogether.

You're Going to Need a Montage

The venture system (p.XX) exists to create narrative cost and reward for undertaking extended actions. If there is neither a cost nor a reward to using Ventures in a specific instance, you don't *have* to use it. Use the venture system if success or failure of the venture matters, or if a player wants to use their skills and Charms that interact with it. If success or failure isn't critical, and the players aren't interested in playing out the venture, dictate the progress of the venture in a montage ending with the desired or most likely outcome.

As Storyteller, get yourself *familiar* with the shape of Creation, the sorts of civilizations one might encounter in each corner, and the potential ways to enter one of the other realms. Your goal is to know the largest points of interest in each Direction and realm, and one or two of the sorts of antagonists your player characters might encounter.

Become comfortable enough to make up something that would conceivably fit in the place they're headed — and if you like, take a look at the more in-depth setting information in other books of the line, like **Exalted Third Edition**, **The Realm**, and **Across the Eight Directions**. **Exalted: Essence** paints the vastness of the setting with broad strokes and you are encouraged to fill in the blanks as necessary to suit your story and your players' needs.

A Realm or Cardinal Direction

Hooks: Any, especially Adventure at Sea, Echoes of Past Lives, and vs. the Wyld Hunt

If your game takes place in a cardinal direction, like the great seas of the West, or a special realm like Malfeas, then there are likely a few locations returning throughout the campaign. This is a good sweet-spot for most concepts, and is perfect for relevant, location-specific Merits, Intimacies, and other specialties:

- **Contacts.** Too specific a group and this Merit won't be applicable very often (for example, the Haslanti League doesn't reach far beyond the North).
- **Hearthstone.** The Manse could be a safe house the Circle returns to every few sessions, or the center of their regional operations.
- **Influence of all levels.** Influence 3 or higher is used almost every session, while 1-2 shines in special situations.
- **Other location-based specialties.** Ties to specific locales and Lunar territory-based Charms can provide hooks for special bottle episodes focusing on individual characters' interests.

As Storyteller, become *knowledgeable* about the area your players are exploring. Your goals are to remember the major cities, organizations, and characters, retain some pertinent lore, and be comfortable enough to make up the rest as needed.

A Specific Locale

Hooks: Home Base, Hometown Tour Guide, Intrigue, vs. the Wyld Hunt

If your game takes place in a single location, such as a specific city, kingdom, Heavenly office, or Malfean district, the focus is less on the sight-seeing and more on the cast of characters. This option is great for "dug-in" specialties and other applications of the Venture system, but unless you are willing to accommodate them by having a travel story, characters shouldn't take Merits or the like tied to *distant* locales:

- **Contacts.** As with the Realm or Direction games, keep an eye on the regional limitation. If the locale is a metropolis or important hub, a player could justify finding their contacts here.
- **Hearthstone.** The Manse should be close by if a player wants to use it.
- **Influence of all levels.** If the Influence comes from this locale, it is used every session.
- **Other location-based specialties.** A Lunar's territory should be close at hand or relocated to the game's locale. Ties to distant locations are discouraged.

Make sure to ask yourself what the characters lose access to by staying in this region. If they're in Great Forks at the heart of the Scavenger Lands, or the Imperial City on the Blessed Isle, they won't want for anything. If they're stuck in the Duchy of Lanterns at the far edge of the Hundred Kingdoms, certain material goods and trades might be hard to come by.

As Storyteller, become an *expert* in this small region — its potential antagonists and factions, its industry, common faiths and pastimes,

anything relevant to your game's theme, mood and tone. This intimate part of Creation is your players' focus for several sessions, so don't be afraid to memorize or prepare relevant details. Or, at least, become confident enough in your setting you can come up with what you need on-demand.

WHAT WILL CHALLENGE US?

There can't be a game without conflict. Consider where to start their power curve based on the mood and tone of the game.

And remember, "conflict" does not always equal "combat." Fighting is one of the least dangerous things you can do in Exalted when there's a demon out there trapping the souls of people who lose a board game (for example). Some antagonists are social forces, some are investigators, spies and saboteurs, and all are fearsome in their own ways.

Essence 1 Challenges

At the beginning of the power curve are challenges facing a community or city—a flood, a crime wave, a petty tyrant or an epidemic. These are the ambitions of powerful mortals, spirits and lesser gods, and young Terrestrial Exalted.

Choose antagonists with Intimacies toward immediate or local concerns. Combatants with 4 Hardness are the upper limit of what a starting-level character can face: these include Agents of the Wyld Hunt (p.XX), Guardian Spirits (p.XX), and Young Dynasts (p.XX); they shouldn't have martial arts or sorcery more powerful than the Terrestrial level.

Essence 2-3 Challenges

At the middle of the curve are challenges with the potential to affect an entire region — a blight, a conquering army, a rebellion or a plague. These are the concerns of established Terrestrial Exalts, powerful spirits and young Celestials. There could be important artifacts, wonders, or potent sorcery involved.

Choose antagonists with Intimacies toward long-term or larger-than-life ambitions. Combatants with 7 Hardness are the upper limit of an established character's challenge level: these include the City-Destroying Horror (p.XX), the Proven Vanquisher (p.XX), and the Sidereal Assassin (p.XX); they shouldn't have martial arts or sorcery more powerful than Celestial.

Essence 4-5 Challenges

At the end of the power curve are challenges to threaten all of Creation — the rampage of a Greater Elemental Dragon, civil war among the Great Houses of the Dragon-Blooded, a coup against the Deathlords or another Great Contagion. These are the ventures of ancient Terrestrial Exalts, established Celestial Exalts, and influential gods. World-shaping sorcery and artifacts are almost certainly in play.

Choose antagonists with Intimacies toward ideals and schemes that last generations. Character's face combatants with up to 10 Hardness: these include the Behemoth (p.XX), the Lunar God-Queen (p.XX), and the Militant God (p.XX), but also Solar Circle sorcerers, Void Circle necromancers, and Sidereal martial artists.

Punching Above Your Weight Class

The Exalted are mighty, and the thrill of having power may drive players to want to take on bigger and bigger threats before the suggested Essence level. Be advised that the stronger and more challenging an enemy is, the more the players will need to engage with the system tools. **Exalted: Essence** proves players with a lot of tactical depth — but they need to be aware of all the tools at their disposal. Throwing inexperienced players into a tough fight is a recipe for frustration and we advise against it.

Essence as Pacing

Storytellers should keep in mind that recovering Essence is, first and foremost, a tool for setting the pace and cadence of a game. Barring any

truly exceptional circumstances, a good night's sleep and a hearty meal is going to restore an Exalt's mote pool to full. In fast-paced sessions without the chance to rest between apocalypses, characters have to squeeze every last mote to its utmost potential.

In more leisurely sessions, Essence respiration can help to organize how much a character can realistically accomplish during downtime: An Essence 1 physician who spends one mote to heal a patient has a fairly tight budget, able to use the Charm five times before needing to rest. This also means that she'd dramatically increase her speed if she could transfer her patients to a demesne or other source of ambient Essence. Don't sweat the hard-and-fast numbers in these cases, but do let them give you and the players a sense of how much can be done in a given timeframe.

WHAT SHOULD WE AVOID?

The lore and setting of Exalted are rich, in-depth, and massive. It's okay to not include all of it — you can avoid bits you won't interact with or don't *want* to interact with. If no one is playing an Alchemical and nobody has interest in visiting Autochthonia, then don't feel as though you have to mention either in your game. If nobody has the War skill, and no one wants to tell stories involving mass combat, then don't worry about teaching them about Dramatic Scenes until it becomes relevant.

Related, Session Zero is the best time to have an open discussion with your players about potential content that makes them uncomfortable to the point of no longer being fun.

Discuss safety tools the players wish to use, including the Red Rule (p.XX) and our recommendation below, Lines and Veils.

Draw **Lines** as necessary that will never be crossed, for the topics or content that simply will not appear in this game: for example, if

someone at the table does not want to deal with harm to children, draw the line at portraying this in any way. Draw **Veils** over topics and content that can potentially exist but will never be in the spotlight: for example, if someone would rather not encounter the ubiquitous Fantasy Giant Spider but isn't averse to spiders in general, draw a veil over this.

Remember: The Storyteller can introduce Lines and Veils, too.

Respecting Comfort Levels

Exalted is a many-faceted game, full of action and intrigue and questions about power. It assumes that some degree of violence will happen, and it uses a world inspired by late antiquity as a backdrop. When you talk through your Lines and Veils, make certain to discuss what kinds of things the players are comfortable engaging with. There are certain types of violence that might be repulsive or upsetting to people, while some other folks might want to confront the horrors of the world head-on (see Slavery in Creation,

p. XX). Keep discussion open at your table, and you'll improve everyone's enjoyment of the game.

CREATING CHARACTERS AND THE CIRCLE

With all that out of the way, the preparations most people consider "preparations" can start. Do your best not to come with too many set-in-stone ideas for the campaign — you should learn who your player-characters are and what they're bringing to the literal table.

During character creation, keep an eye out for when to ask the questions in Laying the Foundation (p.XX). Players may already be discussing the answers amongst themselves but prod them for answers to things especially relevant to your game's theme and mood. Take note of their Virtues and Major Intimacies. If they have trouble deciding how to come together as a Circle, we recommend asking

them to all have a subject in common for one Intimacy.

MY CHARACTER BROODS IN THE CORNER

Playing a scowling hardcase — the shadowy guy who broods in the corner — can be fun, but without care it makes it difficult to play with others.

Encourage the player to be flexible with their character concept if it is antagonistic to the other characters: “What if your character isn’t actually a sullen jerk, just shy and misunderstood on account of his scary face?”

If necessary, help steer them toward a compromise allowing them to have fun with the concept without dragging down the game: “Your character is an emotionless mercenary — what if their arc is learning how to form friendships, thanks to the efforts of the Circle?”

And if there isn’t an elegant way to get what everyone wants it may be time to gently suggest the player make a different character: “I’m not comfortable running for a character who acts like this and it sounds like there’s no good option for softening their personality without changing them. What do you think about playing something different?”

Most people don’t want to alienate everyone in the game and at the table, so do your best to find a way to honor their concept without taking the fun out of play for everyone else.

Keep one step ahead, though: character creation doesn’t take long! Have an idea of what to do after this to get everyone warmed up and ready for the first session. You could hold a lightning-quick combat or other rolled conflict, introduce something requiring narrative Charms, or even start with the first session.

WARM UP QUESTIONS

To get everyone in the mood for roleplay and to put your players in the mindset of their characters, wrap up session zero by asking some warm-up questions. Go around the table, have

everyone introduce themselves in-character, and give a brief description of their character, as well as their Major and Minor Virtues. This will give the group a sense of these characters and cement their appearances in everyone’s imagination. If players struggle with coming up with an appearance (not everyone has a picture-perfect mind’s eye), ask a few leading questions: *Are they tall or short? Muscular? Fat? Lean? What color is their hair? Their skin? Their eyes? Tell me something about their outfit. Are they wearing armor? Do they wear jewelry or have tattoos?*

After everyone has describe themselves, ask the players to give you a few details about the section of the world you intend to play in. A one-sentence statement of fact will do — tell them not to overthink it. Write all these down, and use them to flavor the game.

Then, go around and ask the characters questions about each other. This question should be leading and should set the nugget of a relationship between the characters. This can and will change over the course of play, but it helps people get ready to start. Make sure that everyone has something to say about at least one other person.

Example: Alexandria is the Storyteller of a game for Jordan (playing an Abyssal), Parker (playing a Sidereal), and Forrest (playing a Lunar). She asks Forrest, “What do you think of The Fangs at the Throat of the World (Jordan’s Abyssal)? Could she possibly be your bonded mate?” Forrest says yes, he thinks that’s pretty cool — and Jordan agrees, saying it could make for excellent drama. Then, Alexandria asks Parker, “Who do you think is a bigger risk to Fate? Quicksilver Snake (Forrest’s Lunar) or Fangs? What will you do if they prove to be a bigger threat than you imagined?” Parker surprises the table by saying they’re more afraid of the Lunar than the Abyssal, then coyly folds their hands and says they know just the department in Yu Shan to

discuss such a problem with. This discussion continues until everyone has an idea of what their relationships might be like.

THE FIRST SESSION

Your first session is pilot episode, test run, and opening chapter all in one. Start as close to action as possible, stay flexible with your answers to player prompts, and get ready to be a huge fan of the Circle. Here are a few suggestions for how to start your first session strong:

Start en media res. Drop the Circle into the middle of the action with an immediate call for a roll. Set the scene with the details they know about as the roll's results are decided and give them the context for what's happening as they play.

Start with a cutscene. Describe a scene to them setting the tone for their game and foreshadows the events of the first session or story. Write it down ahead of time and read it aloud if it helps.

Start with a question. Pick one character to lead everyone else into trouble. Immediately ask them a leading question, suggesting something happened before the session began.

WHEN TO END A SCENE

Knowing when to end a scene is crucial to maintaining the pace of your game and keeping it on track. That said, scenes are fairly clear within the structure of the game. A scene changes when the setting does — the Circle disembarks at Great Forks and now tries to fast-talk customs. Emerald Grasshopper ends her talk with the Satrap and leaves for her Manse.

Alternatively, a scene has a question to be answered. How does the Circle resist the Dragon-Blooded official's interrogation? Will Emerald Grasshopper escape the Wyld Hunt waiting for her outside? When the question is answered (the official seizes their cargo for inspection; she escapes but barely), the scene ends.

Most scenes lead into another, immediate follow-up (How does the Circle get their cargo of Celestial Wine back? Who is the man with silver tattoos who held off the Wyld Hunt long enough for Emerald Grasshopper to flee?), but when the primary question of the scene is answered or the setting has changed, consider ending the scene and transitioning to the next.

WHEN TO END A SESSION

Knowing when to end a scene is simple — knowing when to end a session is harder. Sessions are planned to take place within a scheduled block of time, and Storytellers feel pressured to fill that time. But it's always better to end early on a great note than to end later in the middle of something without a good sense of closure.

Look for a “bow-tie” moment: an event near the end of your session either answering a big question or asking a new one. Also look for a cliffhanger to leave the players with — something revealed, something about to happen, or something happened and the player- characters have yet to react.

With the rest of your time, you can hand out Milestones (p.XX). Ask each player in turn if their character earned a personal Milestone. Then, ask the group if they think they achieved a minor Milestone. It's unlikely on the first session, but if they achieved a major Milestone, let them know that, too. Once you've been playing awhile — at least one completed story arc — ask the players if they feel their characters have undergone enough character growth to merit increasing their Essence. Alternatively, players may be bored with the current threats and powers they have access to, and wish to progress their power level for the next story. This is fine too.

After this, ask your players for feedback: what they enjoyed about the session, what they want to see more of, and if there's anything they want to change before the next session. And, if you're using it, remind them of the Pilot Episode Rule.

The Pilot Episode Rule

If a player isn't thrilled with how they arranged their skills or how their Charm selection panned out, allow them to rearrange their character sheet before the next session. In extreme situations, if one or more characters aren't gelling with each other or the game's mood and tone, allow players to "recast" their characters and create new ones.

Thankfully, **Exalted: Essence** is not so complicated a player couldn't swap out Charms they're not using or rearrange their stats at *any* time. If you're on your second or twenty-second session, and someone isn't happy with a Charm or Artifact or point spread, it won't hurt to let them adjust it.

CREATING A CAMPAIGN

If you've run an entire first session and are about to start your second — congratulations, you're running an Exalted campaign!

STARTING NEW SESSIONS

Bring tactile or visual materials to game. Exalted does not require battle maps, though a useful map for the players' current location and a "set piece" map for flavor are great assistants. Share Charm cards if players request them. Bring doodads for tracking motes, Power, anima and Will. Advice for using visual play aids is on p. XX.

Put a limit on pre-game talk: when everyone arrives, announce they have 10-20 minutes to chat. At the game start, use an official gesture or ritual: turn on music, change the lights, or simply begin the scene in a grand voice.

Beginning with handouts is a good way to keep everyone up-to-speed on the campaign's progress and set the tone for the impending session. Write letters to their characters (or describe visions from Luna, or a conversation they had with an ancestor in a dream), reminding them of what they accomplished last session, foreshadowing potential consequences, and nudging them toward their

goals. You can also use these letters to start them off with a leading question or give them information only their character would have access to.

ANTAGONISTS ACT OFF-CAMERA

You don't need to simulate all of Creation for your game. All you need to know is, "What do my antagonists want (found in their Major Intimacy), and how are they accomplishing it (dictated by their Virtues)?" Because while your player-characters are working to accomplish their motivations and see to their Intimacies, your antagonists are doing the same, whether player-characters are there to witness it or not.

Come up with four steps or events leading to the moment your antagonist gets what they want. Write them as though your player-characters never intervene. For each step, think of three clues to foreshadow *something* is happening, even if the players can't see it. You can come up with triggers for these steps as you would for player consequences (which we'll explain later), or wait for a dramatic moment to decide the next step is in effect.

Getting your characters involved in your antagonist's plan doesn't need to be complicated. If you took our earlier suggestion during character creation, your characters should all have a subject of one Intimacy in common. It's as simple as creating an antagonist who also shares that Intimacy, but in a Major strength and a context opposite the Circle's. Otherwise, get creative with how your player character's Intimacies interact with the antagonist's motivation. "Emerald Grasshopper's Major Intimacy of 'Everyone should be free to pursue their own destiny' conflicts with the Wyld Hunt veteran's Major Intimacy of 'The Immaculate Philosophy is the only true path,' so—" That said, if you can't think of reasons why at least a few members of your Circle should care about this antagonist's

actions, change your antagonist until they *do* care.

CONSEQUENCES AND CALLBACKS

Keep tabs on actions that could come back to haunt your characters: “Cricket angered the Magistrate.” Remember this doesn’t have to be a thing gone wrong — it could also be things gone right, as your Circle earns the attention of more powerful antagonists with ambitions at odds to their own.

Also keep track of what the *consequences* are, and when those consequences happen. Come up with a trigger: After a number of scenes or sessions, or maybe after a number of failed rolls, or maybe the next time a character gets too comfortable... anything you like. Then create the consequence: “Magistrate brings posse to arrest Cricket.”

Remember to foreshadow: if you drop conflict on your players without warning they will be understandably upset. The session letters are a great way to remind them they’re going to pay for their actions *sometime*. On top of that, think of three clues to the upcoming consequence — players are all but guaranteed to miss two of them. For example: “Written flyers passed out around town calling for able-bodied fighters to assist the Magistrate. Rumors flood local tea house: Magistrate is assembling a posse. Cricket’s local contacts ghost her.”

If your player catches on and tries to stop the consequence from catching them, give them a chance! But always remember your game’s theme, mood and tone. Consequences for player-character actions should always fit your game. A social thriller doesn’t suddenly become a slapstick comedy to get even with its characters.

LETTING CHARACTERS ACT IS MOST OF THE WORK

Keep tabs on where your players are with their characters’ journeys. What arc do they have in mind, or what do they want to personally

interact with? We know this from our Session Zero notes but keep up with any changes and make room for them in your story. In-between managing player-character arcs, haunting them with consequences, and foreshadowing what antagonists are doing... the plot rises.

Keep tabs on where your players are with their groups’ journey, too. Are they happy with the game’s direction? Does the theme still work? Steering the game in a new direction within the mood and tone is easy enough. You can always move on from the home base or settle your wandering heroes in a specific region of Creation. Jumping moods and tones is a bit trickier, however, and if your players are suddenly craving a light-hearted romance when the campaign began as horror, it may be time to wind down and start planning the next game.

ADVANCING IN POWER

Your players likely advance in Essence every other session with fast advancement, every three sessions with typical, and every four with slow.

Advancing in Essence rating also earns new points in Attributes and Abilities, new Charms, and new Merits. These increases don’t spontaneously generate from the player character, but we also don’t require training times. There are a few ways you can choose to handle this in your story:

- The Circle gets a certain amount of “down time” when they reach their next Essence rating, to represent them learning their new power.
- The time between raising Essence ratings is the training time. Advancement is the payoff.
- It’s fine the way it is: They’re Exalts, and suddenly having more friends or being better at Close Combat is the least unbelievable thing they will do all day.

If you have the time, keep track of their milestones for them. Between saving the

Scavenger Lands from advancing armies of undead, mending the wounded heart of the ancient Lunar haunting Luthe, and unraveling the despicable plans of the wretched Ebon Dragon, they *will* forget how many milestones they have achieved.

Occasionally, a new character joins the Circle, either because someone has made a new one to play, or because you've gained a new player. Allow them to start with everyone else's level of advancement. If everyone in the group is Essence 2, 30 Ability points and has 15 Charms, the new character gets the same. There is no reason to make them start at the campaign's original Essence rating unless they specifically request it.

ENDING A CAMPAIGN

When the theme of the game is approaching its answer, or when your players are beginning to make noise about another kind of game they'd like to play, it's time to think of a finale to end your current campaign on.

Ask your players what kind of note they'd like the Circle to go out on—if they want to have a triumphant ending to their work, a tragic one, or somewhere in-between. Also ask them as individuals what ending they'd like for their characters. Depending on the answers, the ending could be next session, or it could still be several sessions away. Put a lot of planning and fanfare into the series finale, at least as much as you did for the series premiere—make it a campaign to remember!

And then, start preparing for your new campaign.

SINGLE EXALT-TYPE STORIES

Games that focus on one specific type of Exalt allow you to explore the themes and stories associated with those Chosen, or move about more freely in regions where their presence is commonplace. Storytellers and players should discuss the themes and character arcs they'd

like to delve into over the course of the campaign. What compelled the group to choose this type of Exalt? Is there a particular genre that matches well with them? What parts of Creation would they like to visit?

Following are some themes, genres, and plot hooks for each of the Exalt types.

Solars: The Solar Exalted are suited to epic tales of heroism wherever they go. Solar stories may focus on learning the secrets of their First Age incarnations and seeking out the weapons they once wielded. They may instead concentrate on their present-day roles as generals and warriors, religious leaders, and nation-builders. The Solar Exalted never shy away from going toe-to-toe with gods, monsters, and other Exalts to protect their followers and uphold their beliefs, which brings powerful challengers to their doors.

Lunars: Tales of the Lunar Exalted often center around their roles as revolutionary heroes and defenders of their chosen people. They seek vengeance on the Realm's Dragon-Blooded and the Sidereals who orchestrated the Usurpation. In addition to being fierce warriors, their stories may showcase the Lunars in their roles as tricksters and witches.

Some Lunars find the return of their Solar mates an opportunity: united, they can devastate the Realm's legions. Others note the Solars' resurgence with caution — the Lunars have lived all these millennia without them, after all; the world and the Lunars themselves have changed much in their absence.

Dragon-Blooded: Dragon-Blooded campaigns lend themselves well to stories about intrigue and political maneuvering, tales of camaraderie on the battlefield, and journeys into dangerous territory to pursue Anathema as part of the Wyld Hunt. Dragon-Blooded campaigns may be generational stories as well, with players portraying their characters' descendants as campaigns go on. Dragon-Blooded themes

include the strength that comes in numbers, family drama, and the passion of the elements. Some Dragon-Blooded characters may want to strengthen the Realm, while others prefer to leave the political machinations to their relatives and travel the world as wandering monks. While the Dragon-Blooded are free to wander many places in Creation, their greatest strongholds are the Blessed Isle and Lookshy.

Sidereals: Games about the Sidereal Exalted often involve their roles as Heaven's agents and the tenders of fate. They are advisors to the Scarlet Dynasty, and for centuries have acted as hidden puppeteers, guiding the world's leaders on the path the Loom of Fate has spun out for them. Sidereals are also superior martial artists, making them perfect candidates for stories focused around epic one-on-one battles. Though they can be found almost anywhere in the world, Yu-Shan, the city of the gods, is their domain.

Exigents: Exigent games can be as varied as the gods who create them. They may have echoes of superhero stories: a regular person gains supernatural gifts, adapts to her newfound abilities, and uses them to protect her patron's followers. They can be intimate, community-focused stories, or facilitate a journey across the eight directions to explore a world that's suddenly full of duties for the Exigent to carry out.

Abyssals: The Abyssal Exalted are darkly romantic figures. They're warrior-poets clad in rotting lace, brooding funerists, and emissaries of the grave. Storytellers may wish to play up those elegiac elements in their games. Many deathknights ride in service to the lords of the Underworld, carrying out their masters' ominous bidding. Other Abyssals reject the deathlords and become anti-heroes. They hold estates in the shadowlands and traverse the Underworld without fear.

Infernals: Games involving the Infernal Exalted often have dark threads running through them. They're anarchists and liberators, exacting revenge upon the world for an unfair and unasked-for fate, sowing discord and chaos as they tear down corrupt power structures. Through acts of war or devious genius, the Infernals free victims of cruel regimes and recruit them to their cause. When Infernals aren't carrying out their machinations on an unsuspecting Creation, they are at home in Malfeas, the Demon City.

Alchemicals: Alchemical stories are also the stories of the communities they protect. They're the defenders of Autochthonia: its cities, its citizens, and the Machine-God who encompasses it. Games for Alchemical characters might involve fending off outside threats and encouraging the populat to band together and fight. Outside of Autochthon's realm, Alchemicals still seek out community, both because they need others to help maintain them and because the need and desire to watch over mortals is hard-wired into their systems. This opens up opportunities for stories about found families, fiercely defending the Alchemicals' communities if they're in jeopardy.

Getimians: The Getimian Exalted are heroes from a life that never was. If the Abyssal Exalted are the Solars' dark mirrors, the Getimians are their Sidereal cousins' ghostly echoes. Their stories lend well to clever revenge and espionage, as they attempt to thwart the Sidereals' plans. They infiltrate Yu-Shan, carrying out acts of sabotage from within. This doesn't have to make the Getimians the villains of their own story — in fact, to many Getimians, they're reweaving the Loom of Fate to include the things that never were but ought to have been. They strive to set the timeline right, even if Heaven's bureaucracy doesn't believe they existed.

Liminals: Liminal campaigns are excellent venues for ghost stories, horror, and dark fantasy. The Chosen of the Dark Mother attend to the dead, both hunting the deceased and ushering restless spirits to their eternal peace. Their stories are also those of outsiders, as the living fear and reject them. Some Liminals carve out their own places in the world, while others choose instead to wander it. Both carry their own kinds of melancholy. Like their namesake, Liminal stories take place in-between: on the borders between life and death, Creation and the Underworld, the Dark Mother's bidding or their maker's influence.

MIXED-GROUP STORIES

Exalted: Essence is intentionally designed to support mixed-group games. Each of the 10 Exalted types has its own special themes and abilities, ensuring that every character has an equal and important part to play in their troupe's story. The Castes and Aspects across the various Exalted types allow for combat-focused characters, spies and assassins, social movers and shakers, sorcerers, bureaucrats, performers, and more, allowing you to put together any combination of Exalts your players are drawn to. Each character may be a different type of Exalt filling a different role in the Circle, or you might have a Dawn Caste Solar and a Sidereal who is a Chosen of Battles as your primary fighters. Both are skilled warriors, but *how* they approach a fight makes them unique.

Once your players have chosen their Exalt and Caste or Aspect, talk to them about what drew them to that combination. Is there a specific facet of their Chosen's theme or backstory they'd like you to bring into the game? Perhaps a Solar's player wants her character to learn something about a previous incarnation. Maybe a Dragon-Blooded character is trying to win his house matriarch's favor so she'll entrust him with an heirloom daiklave. The Liminal might be searching for her missing Maker, or an Infernal

is on a quest to prove an old rival wrong. While these ambitions might not be the primary focus of your chronicle, they provide opportunities for character development and plot hooks.

Additionally, consider where your story will be set. Are any Exalts particularly welcome or feared in those places? Are the characters about to set foot in another Exalt's kingdom? What do people in that region know about the Chosen, and what rumors and superstitions do they believe?

An all-Dragon-Blooded group can move about easily within the Realm's borders, but Solars and Abyssals alike would have to be careful about displaying their powers. Many Lunar dominions would be extremely wary of — or hostile to — Dynasts in their midst. This isn't to say only Dragon-Blooded characters should roam the Blessed-Isle, or that they can never be welcome in the Silver Pact's lands. As the Storyteller, you control how (or even whether) such issues come up during play.

CHAPTER SIX: CHARMS AND SORCERY

This chapter details the special powers that each of the Exalted possess.

WHAT ARE CHARMS?

Charms comprise the magic of the Exalted. They are the special powers wielded by the Chosen that grant them the power to topple the beings that shaped the world itself. Charms separate an Exalt from an ordinary hero. Characters are aware that they have unique abilities or special techniques for dealing with situations far beyond mundane approach, though the term “Charm” is an out-of-game classification. Your Dawn Caste Solar would not say to her Fire Aspect ally, I know many Close Combat Charms but might say, I know the Iron Whirlwind Technique in the same way that real-world martial artists study weapon forms and sequences or the way artists understand medium and method. Charms come naturally to the Exalted through practice and application.

Universal Charms belong to all the Exalted. Any Exalt, from the mightiest Lunar to the newly created Liminal, can learn them. They cover the core competencies that any god-slaying hero should possess.

Martial Arts are also a classification of Universal Charm: short, codified series of techniques that make up a supernatural fighting style taught in formal schools. While any Exalt can learn Graceful Crane Stance, and likely thinks of it as an application of proper balance, a student of Snake Style thinks of it as particular fighting techniques that she learned from a master, or a manual she found, and so on. Mortals and other creatures who cannot use Essence also learn the same Martial Arts styles; it is the application of Essence that shapes them into something truly formidable. An Exalt can learn Crane Style from a mortal master, for example, and teach it to her mundane followers.

Exalt Charms are specific to their Exalt type. They represent that particular Exalt’s expression of their use of Essence. No matter how much an Abyssal desires to learn it, she cannot comprehend the way an Alchemical shapes Essence into Bone-and-Steel Destruction.

MODES

Modes further modify the function of a Charm. Whenever a character purchases a Charm with a mode, they gain the default capabilities of the Charm, plus any relevant modes automatically.

Some Universal Charms have modes that express a particular Exalt’s unique take on that Charms power, while others may have a mode that requires an additional purchase. Should this be the case, it will be noted, alongside a cost. If a Charm does not have a mode relevant to the character, then they gain the Charm as-is. Characters using a Charm do not have to activate the effects of a mode at their option (but most of the time, they’ll want to).

Exalt Modes add a benefit to an existing Charm specific to the Exalt type, further refining its effects for their unique expression of Essence. Most Charms with Exalt modes grant them automatically. Exalt Modes appear most commonly on Universal Charms. Like Exalt Charms, these are foreign to other Exalt types and cannot be copied or taught.

Mastery Modes appear on Martial Arts Universal Charms. They reflect an Exalt category’s understanding of the style’s expression. Like Exalt modes, Mastery modes are attained automatically unless otherwise specified.

Unique Modes are more specific, sometimes requiring a repurchase and sometimes simply changing the function of the charm depending on other circumstances. Dragon-Blooded Charms have **Aura** (p. XX), Getimian Charms are **Flowing** or **Still** (p. XX), and Liminal Charms have **Nature** (p. XX). Each of these adjusts the basic

function of a Charm but is neither an **Exalt Mode** nor a **Mastery Mode**.

Sorcerous and Necromantic Modes modify Sorcery spells. See p. XX.

PRESENTATION FORMAT

Charm Name: The title of the Charm. A Charm name is usually a three-word phrase that describes what the Charm does in an epic and eye-catching way. Charm names are things like *Heaven Thunder Hammer* and *Graceful Crane Stance*. It's up to you whether or not your character thinks of their Charms as discrete, unique techniques with special names, or if they just consider them to be Essence-laden expressions of their own ability. Whatever you think is cool. Each character's relationship with power is different.

Prerequisites: Some Charms require a certain Ability to be at a specific rating, or require the mastery of another Charm, or for Essence to be at a specific level before it can be purchased. If a Charm has any of these requirements, they will be listed. A Charm can have multiple prerequisites, or none. If a Charm has none, that will be noted as well.

Description: The Charm provides a line of flavor text, to help players visualize how their characters might use the effect. Then, it explains the cost of the Charm (if any) alongside when and how it can be used.

Modes: If the Charm has any applicable Modes, they will appear at the end of the Charm's presentation. As noted above, a character gains any modes appropriate to their Exalt type immediately but are not required to use the additional effects. Some Exalt-type Charms have unique modes, which are explained in each section.

USING CHARMS

Motes, an individual unit of Essence, typically fuel Charms. Some Charms involving the pace and tempo of battle may require an expenditure

of Power, while others requiring a certain amount of magical effort may require Anima. Exceptionally powerful Charms might have more than one cost. Unless otherwise noted, using a Charm is a reflexive action. If it creates an action, it will specify. Actions created by Charms count towards the normal action limit unless it says otherwise. Most Charms modify an action taken by a character, which is stated in the Charm's description.

Outside of combat, characters may freely use as many Charms as they can pay for. During a fight scene, **only one Charm may be used per step of combat**. No matter how many fun and interesting Step 1 Charms a character has, she can only use one. Make this declaration when the Step begins. If a Charm has no listed Step, treat it as a Step 1.

Charms must also obey any other rules and restrictions, unless they specifically say otherwise. If a Charm counts as a flurry, then a character cannot use two of them in the same action, even if they would be activated on different Steps. If a Charm adds five successes, a character cannot then add three more from her Artifact weapon unless the Charm specifies that the successes do not count towards the limit.

If an effect says *make a Sagacity roll* or any other Ability without a specified Attribute, this means the player chooses the most appropriate Attribute for the roll (usually their highest). Otherwise, a player must use the Attribute stated in the text.

SPENDING AND COMMITTING MOTES

Charms fueled by Essence have a cost in **motes**. Most Charms cost a single mote, though more powerful effects or effects gated off by higher Essence requirements may cost up to five motes. Motes have three states: **available**, **committed** or **spent**. At the start of play, a character has a number of available motes determined by her Essence rating (see p. XX).

When **committing** a mote, remove it from your available mote pool and set it aside until the duration of the effect ends. You may make a mark on your character sheet or use tokens, beads, or dice to visually represent this. While a mote is set aside this way, it cannot be restored until the effect resolves or the character chooses to end it. If a character runs low on motes, she may always decide to terminate one of her committed effects and regain those resources. Once a mote is no longer committed, it immediately returns to the pool. If she chooses to relinquish that mote, she may not reactivate the same Charm the following turn. If a Charm has no specified duration, it lasts until the Exalt chooses to end the effect.

When **spending** a mote, remove it from your available mote pool. It remains spent and unavailable until the character does something to recover resources. This can be through ordinary rest, a Charm or Hearthstone effect, or by the breath of war (p. XX). Using Essence comes naturally to the Exalted; it is a motion of the soul, as intuitive as flexing a muscle or taking a breath. Through study and practice, they unlock deeper, more esoteric movements.

REGAINING ESSENCE

Many Exalted liken the feeling of restoring Essence to “catching your breath,” and call the process *Essence respiration*. Characters recover one mote at the end of any combat scene and one at the start of every non-combat scene. If characters spend some downtime resting and relaxing between scenes, they recover half their motes round up. A full night’s rest restores all her motes.

In this case, rest entails almost any slow, leisurely pursuit that does not tax the character’s body or mind with worldly cares: A Dawn-caste tactician might count a game of Gateway as restful, but not time spent at her maps devising battle plans. The Circle might share a meal together, or spend time enjoying

each other’s’ company on a long journey. Non-combat scenes include

anything more strenuous, such as travelling through difficult terrain, working a forge, or entertaining prickly envoys from a hostile nation.

Combat is an exception. Characters automatically recover one mote at the end of their turn as the thrill of battle quickens the flame of their Essence into a raging inferno. This is sometimes called *the breath of war* among poetically-minded Exalts, although it is not limited to them: All Essence-wielding characters benefit from this effect, making it difficult to win a fight by sheer attrition. The breath of war only applies when characters fight in earnest, with the possibility of defeat; it does not apply when sparring or dispatching opponents with no hope of overcoming the character.

GAINING ANIMA

A character gains 1 Anima for every mote used on an effect or Charm. It does not matter whether the motes are committed or spent, nor does it matter if the action was successful — paying the mote cost builds Anima. Whenever you mark a mote committed or spent on your character sheet, also mark 1 Anima. The only exception to this rule is motes spent to power Anima effects do not build additional Anima. Characters *must* use motes on effects for Anima to increase — they cannot burn motes from their pool without using them.

Every two points of Anima increases the level of display from Dim to Iconic. At Dim (1-2) the character’s Caste Mark becomes visible. At Glowing (3-4), the character is lit by a soft light. At Burning (5-6) the aura of their anima can light up a room. At Bonfire (7-9) it’s visible from bowshots away. At Iconic (10), it’s visible on the horizon, and it displays an image unique to the character and her personality. At the first three points, Storyteller characters don’t immediately notice unless they have a reason to. Once a

character reaches 5 Anima, they can no longer hide their divine nature.

This overt show of power persists for the duration of the scene, and fades by one level for every scene thereafter unless a character has an effect that allows them to suppress their Anima otherwise.

MULTIPLE ATTACK EFFECTS AND TIMING

Charms and Exalt Advantages that create additional attacks pose a unique mechanical situation. The additional attack resets the Steps of Combat back to Step 1 when it initiates. Characters using additional attack effects may continue to modify these attacks with one charm per Step, as per the normal Charm rules. As always, they must abide by all other restrictions. The additional attacks created do not need to be the same kind of attack. The initial attack may be **withering** and any subsequent attacks can be **decisive** if the initial attack granted the character enough Power to do so.

Even if an effect does not state that it counts as part of a flurry, **a character can never take more than two actions per turn**. For example, the Iconic Dawn Caste Anima effect, **Unconquered**, allows the Solar to make an additional **attack** with a different Ability after resolving an attack roll. This new attack action cannot be used to activate a multiple attack effect.

COUNTERATTACKS AND TIMING

Similarly, counterattack effects create another unique mechanical interaction. Like their multiple-attack counterparts, a counterattack resets the Steps of Combat back to 1 and the attack may be modified following all normal restrictions. A counterattack **always counts as an action** and so therefore must follow the rule that **a character cannot take more than two actions per turn**. Charms may bend this rule, on a case-by-case basis. However, if a character **chooses** to flurry or use a multiple-attack

Charm, she cannot then also counterattack unless the Charm has specific provisions otherwise.

Improvising with Charms

Sometimes, a player wants to use their Charms in a clever and outside-the-box way. Someone suggests using their Essence Bolt to blast a lock off a door in lieu of a lockpick, or using their long-term Craft charms to create a tool on the fly, or any other improvisational use within the spirit of the Charm.

When this situation arises, Storytellers are strongly encouraged to say yes! Using your power in cool ways adds to the joy of playing one of the Chosen. If the suggested improvisational use might turn a Charm into something entirely new, we recommend allowing the off-the-cuff suggestion first, and then working with the player to write a new Charm afterwards.

UNIVERSAL CHARMS

Magic belonging to all the Exalted, Universal Charms are organized by Ability in alphabetical order.

EXCELLENCY

To express the basic competency of the Exalted, all Exalts have the ability to pour Essence into the mundane effort of using a skill. The Excellency adds dice as a reflection of this beyond-mortal capacity.

[Ability] Excellency

Prerequisites: [Ability] 1

Whatever the Exalt attempts, she does so with superhuman ability.

When purchasing this Charm, choose an Ability. Spend 1 mote. This applies on Step 1 during combat. Outside of combat, this may be used to boost passive values. Add that Ability as a dice bonus to an applicable roll involving the chosen Ability. You may add Close Combat dice to Close Combat attacks, or add Integrity dice to Integrity

rolls to resist the sway of a Deathlord, but may not use Stealth dice to add to a Close Combat attack or Ranged Combat to add dice to a Navigation roll. This Charm may be purchased more than once, but you must choose a different Ability every time.

Alchemical, Getimian, Lunar, and Liminal Mode: When purchasing this Charm, also choose an Attribute. If your Attribute is higher than the chosen Ability, you may add it as a dice bonus instead.

ATHLETICS (EVASION)

Flickering Shadow Evasion

Prerequisites: Athletics 2

Attacks strike empty space, the Exalt's dodge so fast as to be nearly imperceptible.

Spend 2 motes on Step 2. On Step 4, roll your choice of Attribute + Athletics, and add your successes to your Defense against the attack.

Flow Like Blood

Prerequisites: Athletics 4 or Close Combat 4

The Exalt moves in time with the flow of battle, slipping between swords with dismaying ease.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt adds one to her Defense against attacks at close range, and steals 1 Power from her attacker when she successfully defends against such an attack. If the target has no Power to steal, he suffers a two-die penalty to his next attack instead.

Onslaught Deflection Technique (Alchemical): Spend 1 additional mote. On Step 2, add the Exalt's Essence rating to their defense against a single attack.

Cunning Prey Reversal (Lunar): On Step 5, if the Lunar successfully defended, she steals half the target's generated Power (round down).

Mongoose-and-Cobra Escape

Prerequisites: Finesse 2 or Athletics 2

The Exalt avoids a blow and leaps away, putting space between her and her enemy.

Spend 1 mote after successfully defending against an attack to move one range band as a reflexive action. This is Step 4 unless modified by the mode.

Sunlight Glinting on Steel (Solar): A Solar shines brightly, stunning onlookers and adding her Essence to her Defense until the start of her next action.

Becoming Water's Envy (Lunar): A Lunar may use Mongoose-and-Cobra Escape even when grappled. Doing so immediately ends the grapple.

Hopping Firecracker Evasion (Dragon-Blooded): A Dragon-Blooded creates difficult terrain between her and her opponent.

Crystalline Foresight (Sidereal): A Sidereal tests the weft and weave of the target's Fate as she evades his blows. On the next turn, when her target acts, she may spend 1 mote and choose to take her action immediately beforehand at any point before Step 3.

Spectral Deception (Abyssal): An Abyssal leaves behind a spectral image of herself while fading into the shadows. The image lasts for one turn, and is real to mundane senses. Make an Outmaneuver roll, and Build Power accordingly.

Skyfire-Seizing Flare (Infernal): An Infernal's spite manifests as a wisp of green flame that detonates just as she leaps away, activating on Step 8. This flame ignites anything flammable and must be resisted as an environmental hazard, difficulty 3, dealing Essence plus three damage against anyone in close range. Each time Skyfire-Seizing Flare is used in a scene, lower its damage by one. Once this reaches zero, this mode cannot be used until the next session.

Vector Improvisation Methodology (Alchemical): The Alchemical gains her Essence in dice to her next Rush attack against the target she dodged.

Water-and-Ice Understanding (Getimian): A Getimian can move one range band in any direction she likes and may do so regardless of obstructions. She may spend an additional mote to move her target in any direction, instead.

Homunculus's Grasp (Liminal): A Liminal may maintain a grapple even while dodging by disarticulating parts of her anatomy.

Reed in the Wind

Prerequisites: Athletics 2

The Exalt moves with grace, flowing around every attack.

Spend 1 mote on Step 2. The Exalt increases Defense by one and gains 1 Power whenever she successfully dodges an attack from a nontrivial foe.

ATHLETICS (MOVEMENT)

Eagle-Wing Style

Prerequisites: Athletics 5, Essence 3

The Exalt's anima lifts them into the air in pursuit of their goals, allowing transcendent flight.

Commit 2 motes. For the scene, the Exalt may fly up to two range bands above the ground. They may engage in aerial combat with other enemies and effortlessly climb surfaces by flying near them. They may ignore any difficult terrain and hazards they are able to fly over.

Flight of the Sparrow (Lunar): *Mighty wings unfold from the Lunar's back.* The Exalt may fly indefinitely at any range above the ground.

Soaring Zephyr Flight (Dragon-Blooded): *The Dragon-Blood surpasses the bounds of gravity soaring through the air on gusts of Air Essence.* Spend 2 anima. While the Exalt soars, they may fly over enemies and afflict them with the wake of their frigid anima. Targets must reflexively resist a severe cold hazard (p. XX). While in Air aura, the Exalt flies as per Lunar Mode.

On Wings of Night (Abyssal): *On wings of black anima or a cloud of deathly Essence, the deathknight takes flight through the night sky.*

The soaring Abyssal treats herself as a mounted combatant for the purposes of purchasing gambits (p. XX). This does not apply if the Abyssal is already mounted. At night, the Abyssal flies as per Lunar mode.

Bonfire Anima Wings (Solar): *The anima becomes like a pair of burning wings that carry her across the sky.* While in combat, the Exalt may fly towards another flying enemy no matter how many range bands above the ground they are and remain at the same height while they battle. If she is no longer fighting, she returns to the ground without harm. At Iconic Anima, the Solar flies as per Lunar Mode.

Graceful Crane Stance

Prerequisites: Athletics 1

The Exalt gains perfect balance, able to stand on wire, a crumbling parapet, or the top of a pine tree without issue.

Commit 1 mote. For the rest of the scene, the Exalt can stand on or run along things too narrow or weak to support them normally, with no chance of falling or breaking through. They never have to roll Finesse + Athletics to avoid falling. Increase the cost of the Knockdown gambit by her Essence.

Spider-Foot Style (Upgrade, Athletics 3): *The Exalt scales sheer surfaces and even ceilings like a spider, feet bound to all things by inertia and Essence.* While Graceful Crane Stance is active, the Exalt may scale sheer surfaces, run across all liquids as if it were solid ground, and even runs upside down along the ceiling. This effect comes to an end when the Exalt stands still.

Mist Over Ice (Abyssal): *The Abyssal drifts over snow and still waters with the weightless poise of ghosts.* The Exalt may walk across water as if it were solid ground and may stand still on its surface without falling through. She leaves no footprints behind

Perfect Climbing Attitude (Dragon-Blooded): The Exalt may carve handholds from stone or

earthen surfaces, allowing them to remain still or for others to climb behind them. Handholds count as exceptional equipment for climbing. The handholds persist while the mote remains committed.

Personal Gravity Manipulation Apparatus (Alchemical): For the duration of the scene, whenever she takes a movement action, “down” is wherever the Exalt wants it to be, within close range. This allows her to walk up walls or stand on ceilings. She may jump from one non-ground surface to another using this Charm.

Lightning Speed

Prerequisites: Athletics 4

The Exalt becomes a blur of motion, anima streaming in their wake as they flash from one point to another.

Spend 1 mote. Double 8s on a movement action involving running or swimming or to any venture roll involving foot racing, chases, or swift escapes. This does not apply to attacks made following a Rush. If used when moving towards an enemy, the Exalt gains one Power.

Racing Hare Method (Upgrade, Athletics 4, Essence 2): *The Exalt moves along the Essence currents of Creation, travelling in sprinting bounds over the terrain.* Spend 2 motes to do one of the following: Move three range bands along the ground as a simple movement action; quickly sprint to a location within a few days, such as a neighboring village or point of interest, to arrive before the end of the scene; once per interval, automatically overcome an additional obstacle on a travel venture using her speed.

Living Wind Approach (Upgrade, Athletics 5, Essence 3): *The Exalt disappears in flash, stepping from one location to another without disturbing the space between.* Spend 1 mote. The Exalt instantly travels the distance she could move with a reflexive or simple movement

action, ignoring any obstacles or hazards between her and her destination.

Winning Stride Discipline (Solar): *Racing against herself, the Solar leaves competition behind.* If the Exalt succeeds on a roll enhanced by Lightning Speed, she may either activate Lightning Speed once again in the same scene at no cost, or gain one Power.

Bellows Pumping Stride (Dragon-Blooded): *The Dragon-Blooded leaves a trail of flames where she runs.* The Exalt may leave a fiery environmental hazard with difficulty 3, Damage 2/round in the Exalt’s wake when using Lightning Speed or Racing Hare Method that affects anyone within close range of the intervening range bands or the Exalt’s destination. Lasts for Essence rounds.

Instinct-Driven Beast Movement (Lunar): Lightning Speed and Racing Hare Method apply to any form of movement in animal form. When in animal form, Lightning Speed additionally grants one automatic success on travel ventures.

Inexorable Advance (Sidereal) or **Unavoidable Problem** (Getimian): Lightning Speed ignores all wound or mobility penalties on an attack as part of Rush action and the follow-up attack against the Exalt’s enemy. She moves instantaneously without crossing the space in between.

Trajectory Enhancement Assembly (Alchemical): The character can move two range bands on a reflexive move action.

Monkey Leap Technique

Prerequisites: Athletics 2

The Exalt leaps with speed and grace, carrying them soaring into the air, or from rooftop to rooftop.

The Exalt may leap vertically one range band into the air as a movement action. Additionally, she may leap forward horizontally to leap across rooftops, move stylishly through the air, and

avoid appropriate hazards and obstacles, bypassing them without a roll.

Soaring Crane Leap (Upgrade, Athletics 4, Essence 2): *Striking an efficacious pose, the Exalt catches the wind to slow a fall.* Commit 1 mote for one scene. While active, the Exalt floats, she may choose to fall only one range bands per round, she is immune to fall damage, and she may use her reflexive movement action to float one range band across while airborne.

Mountain-Crossing Leap Technique (Upgrade, Athletics 5, Essence 3): The Exalt infuses her legs with great spiritual pressure to launch into the sky, surmounting mountains, or striking foes among the clouds. Spend two motes to leap forward three range bands, or two into the sky straight above as a simple movement action which can be flurried. When jumping upward, she may remain at the apex of her jump long enough to take her combat action before falling back to the ground. Upon landing, the Exalt ignores falling damage and craters the ground where she lands, knocking prone all extras within close range and damaging the ground below her.

Effortlessly Rising Flame (Dragon-Blooded): A burst of flame sends the Dragon-Blooded soaring. The Exalt may reflexively rise from prone when this Charm is activated.

Alter Trajectory (Alchemical): The Exalt may change direction while she's in mid-air.

AWARENESS

All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight

Prerequisites: Spirit-Cutting Glance, Sagacity 4 or Awareness 4

The Exalt may gaze into the world's Essence and unravel the patterns of magic that make up Creation. The secrets of Creation's mystical workings, spirit magics, and sorcery are unveiled.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt perceives the presence of Essence, including

dematerialized spirits and borders between worlds such as the Wyld or shadowlands as gauzy distortions. Attuned artifacts appear as though lit from within, and hearthstones burn like embers. Whenever a character uses Essence to power Charms or any other effects, these are always visible to the user as though the character had an active anima. They may make Force + Sagacity rolls to try to understand spirit magics, sorcerous workings and other strange phenomena like those produced by demesnes, the Wyld and the Underworld or to identify the use of a Charm. Such effects may have variable difficulty — typically three plus the creator's Essence or a difficulty modified by the effect's nature and complexity.

Essence Flow Detection (Alchemical): The Storyteller names any unusual fluctuations or strong concentrations of Essence within a day's journey, and the direction from which it's coming. This may indicate the location of a demesne, the entrance to a First Age tomb, or the place where a mighty sorcerous working was cast.

Eye of the Unconquered Sun (Solar): *The Solar's keen eyes burn with power, scouring deception from sight.* The Exalt may see through illusions, magical disguises, and shapeshifting effects that conceal her enemies, adding her Essence in bonus successes to the roll to pierce the deception. Unless stated otherwise, seeing through magical deceptions is a difficulty 5 feat.

Scent of Midnight Dweomers (Lunar): *The Lunar scents magic on invisible winds.* The Exalt may determine the nature of a spirit or fae using this Charm. Disguise magic increases the difficulty. Gain her Essence as bonus successes on a roll to track a spirit scented with this Charm.

Telltale Symphony (Sidereal) or **Forgotten World Echoes** (Getimian): *Essence floes become music or static to the Exalt's ears or revealing spirits and artifacts through tones, echoes, and low hums.* The Exalt gains her Essence in bonus

successes to rolls to detect spirits, artifacts and sorcerous workings. She also gains this bonus on rolls to understand magic that interacts with fate, such as Sidereal and Getimian Charms.

Ambush Sensing Premonition

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

Detecting an ambush before it happens, the Exalt reacts just in time.

Commit 1 mote. This may be used on Step 1 as a simple action which lasts for the scene or reflexively in response to a surprise attack made against the character on Step 4 by spending 1 mote instead. This negates any non-magical bonuses the attacker may have from making a surprise attack.

Prior Warning (Sidereal): The Sidereal may retroactively announce how she prepared for this eventuality. She may reveal a single action taken in preparation, such as grabbing a rope before being thrown overboard or bringing antivenin to a state dinner.

Crafty Observation Method

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

The Exalt surveys the scene, reconstructing what recently transpired there.

While investigating the evidence of an event, roll Finesse + Awareness. Note the number of extra successes. During this scene, you may expend one success to ask one of the following questions. If the total number of successes exceeds the number of available questions, the player may improvise additional questions in the spirit of this Charm. The Storyteller will answer truthfully.

- What happened here?
- What object was integral to the event?
- How many people were involved?
- When did the event take place?
- How can I identify the responsible party?

Heaven's Eye (Sidereal): Sidereal Exalted may ask the following question:

- How has this event disturbed Fate?

Enhanced Senses

Prerequisites: Awareness 1

The Exalt's superior senses grant her additional input about her surroundings.

Each purchase of this Charm upgrades a single sense (sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste). Double 9s on awareness rolls related to the enhanced sense. This Charm may be purchased a number of times equal to the Exalt's Essence.

Evidence-Discerning Method

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

By examining a person's possessions, the Exalt learns about the person.

While examining a target's personal possessions or other evidence associated with them, roll Finesse + Awareness. Note the number of extra successes. During this scene, you may expend one success to ask one of the following questions. If the total number of successes exceeds the number of available questions, the player may improvise additional questions in the spirit of this Charm. The Storyteller will answer truthfully.

- What Intimacy most drives the target?
- What social class does the target belong to?
- How does the target present themselves to others?
- What distinctive trait would I notice about the target if I met them?
- What telltale sign does the target leave behind?

Divine Induction Technique (Solar): Solar Exalted may ask the following question: *Who does the target answer to?*

Jade Leaves a Trail

Prerequisites: Awareness 2 or Embassy 2

The Exalt senses when more powerful people are pulling the strings, and follows the money and favors traded all the way to the top.

Commit 1 mote while investigating a situation. This may be a crime scene, a fraudulent operation, a politician's activities, or other appropriate subject. The character can exchange successes on relevant Awareness or Embassy rolls to ask the following questions, which the Storyteller must answer truthfully. If the total number of successes exceeds the number of available questions, the player may improvise additional questions in the spirit of this Charm.

- Who does the target work for?
- What is not as it seems?
- Who benefits the most from the actions being investigated?
- Has the target recently come into money — an inheritance from a long-lost relative, a gambling windfall, or other lucky find?
- To whom did the target owe any large debts, whether monetary or in favors owed?
- If the target keeps an accounting ledger, is there a *second* one tucked away?

Judge's Ear Technique

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

The Exalt's persistence grinds away lies to reveal the truth.

When another character knowingly lies to the Exalt, he must make a hard bargain: either the Exalt knows the character is lying, or the character reduces all future dice pools for fooling the Exalt by two. This effect may trigger multiple times per scene, and the reductions stack to a maximum of the Exalt's Awareness + Essence. At the end of the story, all reductions are reset.

Sagacious Reading of Intent

Prerequisites: Awareness 3 or Integrity 3

The Exalt may read a text to understand its author, gleaning deep insights from penmanship and rhetoric.

Commit 1 mote for the duration. After spending a dramatic scene reviewing a written text, the

Exalt automatically discerns if any of the writer's Intimacies inform the work and reveals one Intimacy that is most relevant to the work's subject matter. The absence of Intimacies may indicate that the work is a forgery, a copy or that the author did not believe what they were writing. If the writer sought to conceal their feelings, contest with Force + Sagacity.

Discerning Savant's Eye (Solar): This action automatically succeeds unless contested by magic.

Fateful Literary Insight (Sidereal): The Sidereal also learns a fact related to the writing of the work, such as where it was drafted, the emotional state of the writer at the time, or who else was present to see it written.

Spirit-Cutting Glance

Prerequisites: Awareness 3 or Sagacity 2

The Exalt peers into the realm of spirits where invisible beings that dwell, able to strike them with Essence should they come to blows.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. the Exalt can see dematerialized spirits that are present in the scene. The Exalt may attack dematerialized spirits as if materialized.

Demon-Wracking Shout (Upgrade, Sagacity 4, Essence 2): *The Exalt speaks an unutterable word or issues a forceful shout as they attack, pulling a spirit into the physical world.* Spend 1 mote on Step 1. An enemy spirit struck by an attack is forced to become materialized for two turns. Decrease their Hardness by one for this duration, to a minimum of one.

Uncanny Perception Technique (Solar): Whenever a spirit enters within medium range of the Exalt, she experiences a warning sensation that may prompt her to activate this Charm. Spirits using concealing magic must contest against the Exalt's Force + Awareness.

Wayward Divinity Oversight (Infernal): The Infernal can automatically perceive demons and

gods with lower Essence than her own without activating this Charm, though they may not target the spirit with an attack.

Witness Rapport Technique

Prerequisites: Awareness 2

The Exalt's deft questioning and formidable presence draws the truth out of witnesses.

Commit 1 mote while questioning a witness to a crime or other interaction. Trivial characters answer all of the Exalt's questions truthfully. If a non-trivial character attempts to tell a half-truth or leave out information, the Storyteller alerts the player to their obfuscation. This grants the Exalt a bonus success to any further Read Intentions rolls to discern the truth.

CLOSE COMBAT (ATTACK)

Arsenal-Summoning Gesture

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2 or Ranged Combat 2 or Physique 2

The Exalt's weapons and armor respond to her will, flying to her at her call.

When the Exalt takes this Charm, choose whether it applies to weapons or armor. Purchase this Charm a second time to use it on both.

Spend 1 mote to summon your weapon or armor, or 2 motes to summon both. If the weapon or armor in question is within short range, Arsenal-Summoning Gesture is a **reflexive** action. If it is not, Arsenal-Summoning Gesture is a **simple** action. Spend 1 mote to banish your weapon or armor into **Elsewhere**, a non-space where your arsenal waits to be called upon as per above.

Elemental Embodiment Expertise (Dragon-Blood): A Dragon-Blooded may dissolve her weapon in an embodiment of her Aspect's element. When she recalls the weapon, she may do so from any embodiment of her element within medium range, gaining a Power boost equal to her Essence.

Integrated Armory Systems (Alchemical): An Alchemical always treats Arsenal Summoning Gesture as a reflexive action.

Dragon Coil Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Exalt's mighty limbs hold her opponent fast.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. Double 9s on a **withering** attack to initiate a grapple, gain dominance in a grapple or take the **attack** action while grappling an opponent. In a successful grapple initiated by Dragon Coil Technique, a grappled opponent loses two dice on attempts to escape.

A second purchase of this Charm allows the character to initiate grapples with a weapon, so long as it has the Flexible, Improvised, and/or Pulling tags.

Crashing Wave Throw (Solar): When using the **throw** action (p. XX), the Solar may spend Power to boost the damage dice.

Foe-Hammer Technique (Lunar): The Lunar may use the **throw** action to hurl a grappled target at another enemy within close range. When rolling damage dice, apply it against the Soak of both the thrown character and the target. Both characters take any damage rolled.

Excellent Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Exalt's strikes find their mark regardless of any obstacles.

Spend 1 mote on Step 3. Double the extra successes after applying Defense but before any bonus successes are applied. Additionally, remove all penalties hindering a single Close Combat attack.

Impediment to Opportunity (Solar): Add any penalties cleared by this Charm as bonuses to the attack instead.

Someone Else's Fate (Sidereal): If the attack is successful, the Sidereal may spend one additional mote to inflict any penalties she removed through Excellent Strike on the target's next action.

Agony-Empowered Strike (Infernal): If the Infernal waived a three-die penalty or greater, she gains a two-die bonus to her damage.

Fists of Iron Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Exalt throws punches like sledgehammers and kicks like mighty pistons.

At the start of any combat scene, the Exalt may choose that his unarmed attacks count as medium or heavy weapons (p. XX), rather than light. Spend 1 mote on Step 1 to change this as a reflexive action. This does not count as the Exalt's Charm on that Step. When activating this Charm, also choose one tag (p. XX) to apply to the Exalt's unarmed attacks while Fists of Iron is active, excluding Artifact. The tag does not change when the weapon classification changes. This may be used during a clash.

Adamantine Fists of Battle (Solar) or **Claws of the Silver Moon** (Lunar): Spend an additional mote to grant the Exalt's unarmed attacks the Artifact tag.

Writhing Blood Chain Technique (Abyssal) or **Vicious Devil-Arms Technique** (Infernal): Your unarmed attacks gain two tags of your choice when the Charm is activated, and can make attacks out to short range.

Guard Breaking Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2

Her blows send the enemy reeling.

Spend 1 mote on Step 5. On a **withering** attack, reduce the target's Defense by one until the start of the next turn. On a **decisive** attack, reduce the target's Soak by one until the start of the next turn. If the target has Soak 6 or higher,

instead halve the target's soak (round down). This Charm does not stack with itself.

Blinding Glare (Solar): The Solar catches light off her weapon, disorienting her foe. In addition to reducing the target's Defense or Soak, also apply a one-success penalty to the target's attacks until the end of their next turn.

Efficient Strike Calibration (Alchemical): Spend an additional mote on Step 7 to add two dice to the damage of a decisive attack.

Foot-Trapping Counter (Lunar): The target must remain in the same range band as the Lunar until the end of the Lunar's next turn.

Heaven Thunder Hammer

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Essence 2

The Exalt's blows land with devastating force, sending her enemies flying.

Spend 1 mote on Step 7 of a **decisive** Close Combat attack. At the end of the attack, the target is knocked back one range band and falls prone. If the attack inflicted three or more levels of damage, the target is knocked back two range bands instead. This may be used during a clash.

Sledgehammer Punch (Solar, Abyssal): This Charm can be used with a **withering** Close Combat attack, counting extra successes as damage for determining knockback.

Hot on Your Heels (Infernal): The Infernal may spend one additional mote to appear at anywhere within close range of where the target lands.

Banishing Fist (Liminal): When used against an undead character, the target must use a miscellaneous action to make a Difficulty 5 Force + Integrity roll to willingly approach the Liminal. This effect lasts for the rest of the scene.

Many-Attacks Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Exalt blurs into action, attacking with a furious series of blows.

Spend 2 motes on Step 1. After resolving a Close Combat attack, the character makes a second Close Combat attack against the same target or a different one. This attack is treated as though it were part of a flurry. The initial attack does not suffer the dice penalty.

Iron Whirlwind Attack (Solar, Abyssal): The second attack is made without a dice penalty.

Violence Begets Violence (Infernal): Reduce the flurry penalty to one die. If the first attack killed the target or reduced them to a new wound penalty, the second attack gains a one-success bonus.

Octopus and Spider Barrage (Lunar): The second attack may be substituted for any other Finesse-related combat action, instead.

Harmony of Blows (Sidereal): The Sidereal may trade extra successes on the first attack for bonus dice on the second.

Busy Harvest (Strawmaiden Janest): Janest's mode functions as Solar mode.

Swift Counterattack

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

Reading her enemy's movements, the Exalt unleashes a deadly counterattack.

Spend 1 mote and 1 Power on Step 8. The character makes a Close Combat counterattack targeting one enemy who attacked her this round. She must be able to strike her target within the range of her weapon. This is treated as though it were part of a flurry. The initial attack is not penalized.

Ready in Eight Directions (Solar) or **Hundred Razor Circle** (Abyssal) or **Devilish Retribution** (Infernal): The Exalt instead commits 1 mote until the end of the scene, and may make additional counterattacks at the cost of 2 Power each. The additional attacks do not suffer the dice penalty, and do not count towards the action limit.

Foe-Baiting Sidestep (Lunar): As part of the counterattack, as long as the Lunar and her target are within the same range band, she switches places with him. Lower the target's Hardness by one, as though he had been the subject of a withering attack.

CLOSE COMBAT (DEFENSE)

Bulwark Stance

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2

The Exalt moves into a fluid defensive stance, turning away attacks easily.

Spend 1 mote on Step 2. At your choice, either clear any penalties affecting your Defense, or reset your Hardness after a concentrated attack.

Dipping Swallow Defense (Solar, Abyssal Infernal) or Golden Tiger Block (Lunar): Also increase Defense by one.

Flow Like Blood

See p. XX

Heavenly Guardian Defense

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 2

The Exalt puts her weapon between herself and a hazard, blocking the environment itself.

Spend 2 motes. The Exalt applies her Defense against a single instance of a hazard, a trap, a disease, a great fall, or some other source of harm that she could not normally apply her Defense against. She compares her Defense rating to the difficulty of the hazard. If it is the same or greater, she ignores the effects as if she had passed the roll to resist it. Once per session, characters can use a Stunt to improvise with this Charm, allowing them to escape a collapsing building or parry the ground while falling from a great height. If appropriate, mundane weapons may be destroyed by being used to block the environment.

Special: This Charm may be used on any Step, in response to any environmental damage, disease, poison, trap, or similar hazard. It cannot be used against weapon damage or damage

from attacks. It must follow the same rules of activation otherwise.

Loyal Guardian Approach

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4 or Integrity 4

It is the prerogative of the Exalted to stand vigil over those she holds dear, standing between them and all harm.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt may take reflexive Defend Other actions on behalf of another character within close range.

Special: This Charm may be used in response to an attack on Step 2.

Essence Shield (Alchemical): The Alchemical increases their Defense and Soak by one, and adds two successes when shielding another person with the Defend Other action

Sun-and-Moon Dance (Lunar): While defending a Solar, Abyssal, or Infernal, spend 1 additional mote on Step 2 to add the Lunar's Intimacy (p. XX) towards them to her Defense.

Hearth-Defending Vigil (Dragon-Blooded): While defending a member of their hearth, spend 1 additional mote on Step 2 to ignore all penalties to Defense for a single action.

Others Before Self (Strawmaiden Janest): Janest gains one Defense when protecting another, and gains 1 Power if defending a non-combatant. At Essence 2, she may apply this Charm to any number of targets within close range.

Sunlight Aegis Stance (Solar): A Solar adds three to Defense when protecting their ward from a creature of darkness.

Portentous Warding Defense

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Exalt moves with purpose, firmly barring the way of an attack.

When attacked, spend 2 motes on Step 2. On Step 4, roll your choice of Attribute + Close

Combat, and add your successes to your Defense against the attack.

CRAFT

Clever Improvisation Method

Prerequisites: Craft 2

The Exalt sees the potential in all things. Using only the materials at hand, reinforced by her Essence, she pieces together a useful tool.

Spend 1 mote to fashion an item for immediate use in the scene. This must be a simple object: a makeshift pot to cook in, a raft lashed together from logs and vines, or a simple pulley system. The Storyteller dictates what materials are available, and has final say over whether the proposed item can be reasonably crafted. The item holds together long enough to serve its intended purpose before becoming unusable.

The player may use banked Stunt Dice to add a component to the list of useful materials, or to make the item last for a second use.

Efficient Improvisation of Materials

(Alchemical): The Exalt adds gears, screws, or other pieces of her own metallic enhancements to the item. She may use the item up to her Essence additional times.

Many-Hands Techinque (Dragon-Blooded): If the Dragon-Blooded uses components her hearthmate contributed, the item gains an additional equipment tag.

Durability-Enhancing Procedure

Prerequisites: Craft 3

The works of the Exalted weather time and wear more gracefully than mortal creations.

Spend 2 motes when undertaking a mundane craft venture. An object created through this Charm increases the difficulty to break or damage it by the Exalt's Essence, with a minimum of difficulty 3. These objects resist wear and tear, extending their usual lifespan by tenfold — food prepared by this magic endures without spoiling, weapons never need

sharpening and withstand magic that might break them otherwise, and walls stand for centuries beyond mortal craft.

Efficient Crafting Technique

Prerequisites: Craft 2

With an eye for their craft, the Exalt obviates waste and extravagance.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt may reduce penalties from lacking the appropriate tools or workspace for a crafting venture by three.

Artisan Needs No Tools (Solar): At Essence 2, the Solar waives all penalties from inappropriate tools or workspace.

Eternal Embalming Preparation (Abyssal): This Charm may be used to embalm a corpse, preserving it indefinitely against decay.

Stone-Carving Fingers (Dragon-Blooded): While working with earthen materials such as stone or clay, the Dragon-Blooded works with just her hands at no penalty.

Flawless Counterfeit Technique

Prerequisites: Craft 4 or Stealth 3

The Exalt's skill and attention to detail are exquisite; even trained professionals mistake her work for the original.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt spends a dramatic scene creating an exact replica of an item she has available to study. The item must be made from mundane materials and cannot be complex machinery: a statue, a coin, a dagger, or a necklace, for example. The replica looks exactly like the original. Attempts to discover its fraudulent nature are made at Difficulty 7.

At Essence 2, the Exalt matches the flow of Essence through her copy to that of the original. Magical attempts to tell the items apart fail, unless the effect is flawless in which case, roll off (p. XX).

Morale-Boosting Meal

Prerequisites: Craft or Embassy 2

Sharing a meal can build rapport. Cooking a meal for others builds community. The Exalt pours her feelings for her companions into a meal she makes, and brings them closer together.

Spend 2 motes. If purchased as a Craft Charm, the Exalt spends a dramatic scene making a meal for her companions. If taken as an Embassy Charm, the Exalt spends a dramatic scene arranging a meal together: inviting the guests, determining seating, guiding conversation, and the like. For the rest of the session, anyone who partook in the meal may double 9s on a roll of their choice *or* begin the next combat scene with 1 Power.

Shared Network (Alchemical): The Exalts work together as a smoothly-run system. Until the end of the session, Alchemical Exalts who shared the meal may have one extra Alchemical mode installed.

Sweeten-the-Tap Method (Dragon-Blooded): The Dragon-Blood applies this Charm to libations, allowing her and her hearthmates double 9s on social influence actions for the rest of the scene.

Poison the Well (Infernal): Family dinners can sometimes bring out the worst in people. The Infernal chooses two targets at the table and doubles 9s on social actions intended to increase their enmity toward one another.

Quickening the Forge

Prerequisites: Craft 3

Even drudgery knows to give way to a determined Exalt, who works with impossible alacrity.

Commit 2 motes. While working on a crafting venture, the Exalt reduces the time scale by one step.

Supreme Perfection of Style (Solar): Select a type of craft, such as blacksmithing, cooking, or carpentry; you reduce the time scale by two

steps to a minimum of once per scene. You gain an additional field of specialty at Essence 3 and Essence 5.

Blazing Dragon-Smith Arete (Dragon-Blooded): When working with stone, metal, clay, wood or other natural materials, the Exalt reduces the time scale by two steps, to a minimum of once per scene.

Inchoate Wonders Realized (Lunars): The Lunar may reduce the time scale by three steps to a minimum of once per scene, but this progress is undone at the end of the story as castles and swords collapse into foundations and schematics.

Sudden Trap Attack

Prerequisites: Craft 3

Through ingenuity and efficacious planning, the Exalt may craft excellent traps and prepare the battlefield to surprise their foes.

Spend 1 mote. With access to sufficient materials, the Exalt may create or retroactively reveal a trap they have placed in a single range band at up to medium range. This is a one-time environmental hazard that afflicts a single target in the same range band with difficulty 3. At Essence 3, this increases to difficulty 5. Injurious traps deal three damage. If caught in a snare, treat as the target as prone, but they cannot rise without breaking free. It is a difficulty 6 Force + Physique roll to break free from a snare. If retroactively declared, this charm may only be used once per scene unless reset by trapping an enemy successfully.

Bone-and-Sinew Contraption (Abyssal): The Abyssal may construct deadly traps from or hidden within corpses. Viscera and bone transform into snares of entrails and scything osseous blades. The trap may be crafted from a corpse or hidden within one littering the battlefield. If hidden as a corpse, the difficulty of the trap increases by two.

Terrain-Altering Advantage

Prerequisites: Craft 5, Essence 2

With a quick glance, the Exalt sees how she can turn the battlefield itself against her enemies.

Spend 1 mote. On Step 1, the Storyteller lists items or features within short range of the Exalt that could be used to create an environmental hazard or difficult terrain. The player gains two bonus successes on a Build Power roll to prepare. At the start of the next round, the environmental hazard takes effect, lasting one round.

The player may spend Power to keep the effect going, at a rate of 1 Power per round.

Elemental Fury (Dragon-Blooded): The Dragon-Blooded adds her Aspect's element to the hazard in some way. A Fire Aspect may ignite a barrel of spilled oil, or a Wood Aspect might hide uneven terrain beneath a layer of vines.

Wonder-Crafting Initiation

Prerequisites: Craft 2 or Sagacity 2; Hearthstone Merit (manses only)

Learning at the feet of a master, the Exalt unlocks the secret to evoking wondrous power.

The Exalt gains the ability to craft artifacts, given the proper materials and a bit of divine magic; crafting or repairing such an item requires at least one extraordinary or magical material, which is not an obstacle the Exalt can overcome. Each obstacle roll costs 1 mote to make when crafting an artifact.

If the character has the Hearthstone Merit, they can also apply this Charm to building manses. If they obtain the Merit after purchasing this Charm, they gain the ability to build manses then.

A character may only learn this Charm after apprenticing for at least one story with another character who has the ability to craft artifacts or similarly instructive texts.

Every Exalt type has their own unique mode; the following are only examples.

Strengthening Touch (Solar): When making the final obstacle roll to craft any mundane or magical item, spend 1 mote to increase the difficulty to destroy that item by three and add one obstacle roll to any feat of strength venture to do so.

Ruin Resurrection Method (Abyssal): Drawing on the memory of a destroyed object that lingers in the Underworld, spend 1 mote while repairing any mundane or magical item to automatically overcome an Excessively Damaged obstacle of up to difficulty 3. This Charm can also allow reparation ventures to restore objects that would otherwise be beyond repair entirely, as long as enough of the original remains in some form (i.e. the ashes of a burnt letter or the shards of a shattered window).

Follow the Dragons (Dragon-Blooded): Through innate resonance with dragon lines, spend 1 mote while making an obstacle roll to build a manse with an Elemental hearthstone. Whoever bears the hearthstone in an artifact regains one mote per half-hour instead of per hour.

EMBASSY

Bureau-Breaking Method

Prerequisites: Embassy 3

Through ripples in the Essence of human connection, the Exalt may bring the wheels of government to a grinding halt by sabotaging a small portion of the bureaucracy.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt must spend a scene sabotaging a venture or bureaucratic task, using a Force + Embassy roll if necessary. On success, this introduces a number of new obstacles on bureaucratic ventures equal to the Exalt's Essence or the number of successes on the roll (to a maximum of five) whichever is higher. For Storyteller characters, the Storyteller may

decide this makes the venture impossible to complete, and cause it to fail outright.

Indolent Official Charm (Solar): *Through mere speculation, the Solar sabotages their enemies.* The Exalt may sabotage a venture just by speaking about it, whether or not they know it is occurring.

Thrashing Carp Serenade (Dragon-Blooded): *The Dragon-Blood's associates make waves that impede entire operations.* The Exalt may activate this Charm when hearthmates or agents who possess a Major tie of loyalty to them engage in bureaucratic sabotage in their stead.

Gnawing Mouse Malaise (Lunar): *The Lunar poisons armies and ministries from within, sowing chaos and turmoil.* Commit 1 mote while sabotaging an organization the Exalt or one of her shapes holds authority within. For the rest of the story or until commitment ends, increase the difficulty of all ventures undertaken by the target group by two. This ends immediately if it is uncovered that the Exalt was responsible for the sabotage.

Paralyzed Mandarin Infliction (Sidereal): The Sidereal declares an ending to a bureaucracy's usefulness. Officials become either overwhelmed by the futility of their work or paralyzed by frenetic, indecisive planning. Commit one mote for the rest of the story. The Exalt declares the target of the Charm without having to undertake any sabotage. Every venture undertaken by the initial target suffers the same consequences. This effect may be contested with appropriate magic.

Despair-Inducing Failure (Abyssal): *Sabotage begets despair. Failing officials take their own lives before facing their failure.* Commit 1 mote for the story. This increases the difficulty of all ventures undertaken by the target group by two. This ends immediately if it is uncovered that the Exalt was responsible for the sabotage.

Officials involved in the venture will turn up dead each time they fail to overcome an obstacle, their ghosts haunting their offices or homes as a result.

Deft Official's Way

Prerequisites: Embassy 2

The Exalt storms the labyrinthine halls of bureaucracy, cleaving through all that impedes her.

Spend 1 mote while navigating a bureaucracy. The Exalt chooses one of the following effects to apply to a leadership or bureaucratic venture. She chooses this when she spends the mote:

- Once per session, make a second roll on the venture during an interval, regardless of the time scale involved.
- Reduce the difficulty of a venture roll by one to a minimum of one.
- Ignore the results of cutting corners once per scene.

Another Life's Lessons (Getimian): Spend an additional mote. Leveraging secret knowledge from their origin, the Getimian may choose any number of common advantages from the venture to add to their roll, to a maximum of two successes.

Illimitable Master Fence

Prerequisites: Embassy 2 or Stealth 2

The Exalt takes the pulse of economic activity in a city, and fluidly integrates herself into it.

Spend 1 mote and enter a dramatic scene observing a locale's normal economic activity. During that scene, you may ask up to her Essence of the following questions. The Storyteller will answer truthfully.

- Who can I bribe to get what I need?
- What good or service is this market lacking?
- Who's the wealthiest person here?
- Who here is most connected with criminals?
- Where is the best place to do business quietly?
- Once the questions have been asked, gain one

bonus success to acting on the answers.

Jade Leaves a Trail

See p. XX

Motive-Discerning Technique

Prerequisites: Embassy 2 or Integrity 2

The Exalt measures another, and nothing escapes her careful eye.

While interacting with another character, roll Finesse + Embassy. Success grants one question. Note the number of extra successes. During this scene, you may expend one of these successes to ask one of the following questions. If the total number of successes exceeds the number of available questions, the player may improvise additional questions in the spirit of this Charm.

The Storyteller will answer truthfully.

- Does the character feel positively, negatively, or neutrally about me?
- Do the character and I share a Virtue?
- Do the character and I share an Intimacy?
- What haven't I noticed about the character?
- How could I get the character to do what I want?

Wise-Eyed Courtier Method (Upgrade, Embassy 4 or Integrity 4): The Exalt gains access to the following questions.

- Who's really in authority here?
- What do I have that someone here wants?
- What would constitute a grievous faux pas in this circle?
- What grudge is being hidden?
- Who doesn't belong here?

Blood-to-Blood Intuition (Dragon-Blooded): Dragon-Blooded may ask the following question:

- How are the character and I related?

Morale Boosting Meal

See p. XX

The Perfect Bargain

Prerequisites: Embassy 2

The Exalt, regardless of her familiarity with her surroundings, is always at home in a market or among traders.

Commit 1 mote for the duration of negotiations. When bartering or negotiating (making a purchase, forging a peace treaty, etc), the difficulty for any social rolls cannot rise above 5.

The Perfect Price

Prerequisites: Embassy 2

The Exalt weighs the true value of what she offers or desires, not in her own heart but in the hearts of others.

The Exalt intuitively understands the worth of a given object, service, or favor in the estimation of her target. The Storyteller will tell the player what the character would want in exchange for the object in question, or what they would give to possess it. When she leverages this information, she gains one bonus success which applies on Step 4.

Second Chance Approach

Prerequisites: Embassy 2 or Presence 2

The Exalt turns an unfavorable initial interaction into a positive one.

Commit 1 mote. For the duration of the scene, reduce the difficulty of social actions against characters with a negative Intimacy towards the Exalt or her cause by two. The character also double 9s on attempts to instill positive Intimacies towards the Exalt or her cause while the Charm is active.

Strange Tongue Understanding

Prerequisites: Embassy 2

The Exalt contemplates a foreign tongue, bridging the gap between knowledge and understanding.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt may understand basic sentences communicated in a language they do not know. Their understanding is not sophisticated, however. They get by with minimal reading and speech in

a foreign tongue without needing to roll, but complex discussion or literature requires an Embassy roll at default difficulty. The difficulty of being influenced in the translated language is increased by two.

Language-Learning Ritual (Upgrade, Embassy 4): If the Exalt has studied a language for at least four days of downtime or during a dramatic scene, they may speak and write in the studied language with perfect understanding, but their diction is inelegant, they suffer a two-success penalty on social influence rolls using that language. After a week of commitment, the Exalt may learn the language with a personal milestone.

Mingled Tongue Technique (Solar): Both the Exalt and their conversation partner automatically understand one another as though they shared a common language.

Infinite Blasphemy Glossolalia (Abyssal): The Exalt may converse with any creature of darkness as if they both shared a common language.

Blue Vervain Binding (Sidereal): The Exalt may active this Charm on behalf of another character, granting them its benefits instead.

Unshattered Tongue Perfection (Infernal): The Infernal speaks in an ancient tongue that may be understood by all others, but cannot inspire or draw on positive Intimacies.

INTEGRITY

Loyal Guardian Approach

See p. XX

Guarded Mind Meditation

Prerequisites: Integrity 2

The Exalt flenses herself of emotion and expression, shedding her passions to become inscrutable.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt increases her Resolve against Read Intentions actions by her Essence. She gains one automatic

success on social influence actions which take advantage of her lack of emoting. Additionally, she may dim her anima as long as she possesses no more than three Anima. Characters may not make rolls to notice her Caste mark nor tell-tale glow.

Mockery of Mortal Form (Infernal): The Infernal may freely dim her anima so long as she is not benefitting from Corona of Fury (p. XX).

Shifting Silver Masquerade (Lunar): While shapeshifted or disguised, the Lunar may dim her anima as long as she possesses no more than five anima.

Garbed in False Destiny (Sidereal) or **Another Life Deceit** (Getimian): While wearing a resplendent destiny or ensnaring another with Infected Fate, the Exalt may dim her anima as long as she possesses no more than five anima.

Integrity-Protecting Principle

Prerequisites: Integrity 2

The Exalt is the embodiment of order, protecting them from the twisting power of chaotic forces.

Spend 1 mote. For the rest of the scene, the Exalt and their possessions become immune to the twisting effects created by the environment. If used in a venture, this protects the equipment for the time scale between obstacles. The Wyld cannot mutate them or transform their possessions. Against the twisting powers wielded by the fae, the Exalt gains her Essence in automatic successes to resist, or increases the difficulty of being targeted by her Essence. This does not protect them from direct attacks by Wyld creatures or the non-transformative perils of the Wyld.

Order-Asserting Emanation (Alchemical): The Exalt's certainty about how the world *should* be affects the Wyld around her. Creatures of the Wyld who come into close range suffer a two-dice penalty on attack rolls.

Chaos-Repelling Pattern (Solar): Everything within short range is completely immune to environmental twisting effects, the Exalt's allies also gain their Essence in successes to resist enemy twisting effects. This will prevent the environment from twisting around them, creating a small island of stability wherever the Exalt goes.

Chaos-Warding Principle (Dragon-Blooded): The Exalt's hearthmates gain the benefits of this Charm as long as they remain within medium range of each other.

Chaos-Defying Embrace (Lunar): The Exalt may extend this effect to a character within medium range she has a positive Major Tie or Virtue towards or to her Solar mate.

Emerald Hellfire Aegis (Infernal): In addition to the Wyld, the Infernal is protected against the twisting magic of Hell and its demons.

Destiny-Manifesting Method

Twisting effects that alter the mind, body, or soul find less purchase on the Exalted. Whenever the Exalt is unwillingly affected by a twisting effect, fate always provides her with a condition to shatter the effect. No curse is irreversible. While the resolution of the twisting effect is not automatically made apparent to the Exalt, Storytellers should ensure that they become aware of a way to remove the effect before the end of the session in which it is inflicted.

Motive-Discerning Technique

See p. XX

Resolve Bolstering Declaration

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

The Exalt's confidence in her ally's position lends them the strength to stand firm.

Spend 1 mote and name an ally who is the target of a social action. The Exalt makes a declaration in their friend's favor. This may be a simple statement of confidence, like "I trust you to do

the right thing,” or a deeper conversation, whatever feels appropriate to the scene. Increase the difficulty of the social action by two.

Staunch Ally (Dragon-Blooded): On Step 3 of a social action, the Exalt increases her ally’s Resolve bonus from Integrity to two.

Righteous Lion Spirit

Prerequisites: Integrity 4, Essence 2

The deepest passions of the Exalted are the stuff of myth and opera, beyond any other’s ability to corrupt.

Upon learning this Charm, the Exalt strengthens one of her Major Intimacies, making it *unbreakable*. She cannot be forced to act against it by any outside influence — only through her own choice may she betray those feelings. Regaining this effect once broken or changing the targeted Intimacy requires a dramatic action that qualifies as a major Milestone.

Sagacious Reading of Intent

See p. XX

Spirit-Maintaining Maneuver

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

The Exalt’s will is so great, she may cast aside mundane and sorcerous influences over her mind.

Spend 2 motes reflexively on Step 4 to cause an influence action or a psyche effect targeting the Exalt to automatically fail as though the target had not achieved enough successes to overcome her Resolve. Read Intentions actions may not be contested with this Charm. This may only be used once per session.

Stubborn Boar Defense

Prerequisites: Integrity 2

When the Sun and Moon set their course in the heavens, who can convince them to stray?

Spend 2 motes after resisting or refusing a social influence action. Increase the base difficulty of similar influence by two for the rest of the session.

Obdurate Thwarted Destiny (Getimian): Halve the bonus dice (round up) awarded to the influencing character when the Getimian ignores influence.

NAVIGATE

As the Crow Flies

Prerequisites: Navigate 1

The Exalt’s impeccable sense of direction and distance never fails her.

The Exalt always knows the shortest mundane route between where she is and where she wants to be, even if the path is slightly unconventional. This may mean going over rooftops or cutting through a teahouse’s kitchen rather than navigating the city’s busy streets. She may cut corners a number of times equal to her Essence during a travel venture without suffering the consequences.

Finding the Golden Path (Sidereal): Commit 1 mote. Name a destination on the same plane of existence. When journeying towards it, the time scale is reduced by one step.

Beast-Uplifting Harmony

Prerequisites: Familiar Merit, Navigate 3

An Exalt uplifts and empowers her animal companions, helping them become more than they were.

When she takes this Charm, the Exalt may choose up to her Essence of the following benefits for her Familiar; she automatically gains additional benefits as her Essence increases. If the Exalt has acquired multiple Familiars, she may purchase this Charm additional times, applying it to a different familiar.

- The familiar increases one of its current dice pools by two.

- It gains a new dice pool reflecting a strange trick, knack, or ability, starting at five dice.
- The Exalt always knows the familiar's location, condition, and surface thoughts.
- The familiar becomes intelligent and capable of human speech.
- The familiar gains two additional health levels (or three, if the Exalt is a Lunar).
- The familiar gains a significant physical feature, such as wings, venom, or amphibious gills.
- Godly Companion (Sidereal): The familiar becomes a minor god and can travel to and from Yu-Shan on the Exalt's behalf to deliver or retrieve messages and small objects, requiring a dramatic scene in either direction.

Calling the Rider's Companion

Prerequisites: Navigate 3

With a whistle or a gesture, the Exalt summons a faithful companion.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt summons a mount, which arrives as quickly as possible, usually by the end of the scene. She needs no tack to ride this mount safely and comfortably, and reduces environmental penalties to riding-based rolls by two. This mount persists until the end of the session. If the mount is her Familiar, it appears by her side in mere instants.

Fathoms-Fed Spirit

Prerequisites: Navigate 1

The Exalt is at home on the waves, and is inured to the sea's commonplace cruelties.

The Exalt is able to navigate to any port to which she's been to before, removing any venture obstacles involving getting lost. Additionally, she cannot be knocked overboard, even if she's affected by Knockdown or Knockback effects. She may commit 1 mote to reduce environmental penalties or hazards associated with sailing by her Essence as long as she is engaged in the work of sailing a boat.

Hardship-Surviving Spirit

Prerequisites: Navigate 2 or Physique 2

The Exalt is at ease even in the most extreme weather.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt doubles 9s on all rolls to resist mundane heat or cold, including environmental hazards. When foraging for food and water, she automatically finds provisions for herself, her Circle, and up to five other people in any climate, no matter how hostile.

Beast Hide Adaptation (Lunar): While in the shape of an animal native to a region, the Lunar automatically receives the benefits of this Charm at no cost.

Hidden Shortcut Revelation

Prerequisites: Navigate 2

The flow of Essence alerts the Exalt to paths mortal eyes cannot perceive.

Spend 1 mote. The Storyteller reveals the location of any concealed passages, doorways, or portals within long range. Though they're aware of the passage's existence, the Exalt must still fulfill any requirements to use them, whether that's picking a lock or disabling any wards placed upon it. If this passage was hidden by flawless magic, add her Essence in bonus successes to the roll off (p. XX).

Immortal Mariner's Advantage

Prerequisites: Navigate 2

With power, age, and wisdom, Exalts of every stripe come to dominate the seas.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt gains a three-success bonus on all mundane sailing tasks — whether charting a course, repairing a leak, organizing the fleet, or sailing through storms. This does not apply to contested rolls, like boarding parties or ramming attempts.

Blessing the Hull (Sidereal): Characters who attempt to board without permission from the Sidereal, owner, or captain must make a difficulty 3 Fortitude + Integrity roll or be thrown

overboard. This increases to difficulty 5 for entities from beyond Creation such as demons, ghosts, and Fair Folk. If this expels a character, gain 1 anima.

Sea-Devil Insight (Infernal): While aboard a vessel, it is immune to the hazards of Malfeas, such as the acidic waters of Kimbery.

Rider-and-Mount Unity

Prerequisites: Navigate 4

When the Exalted ride to battle, it is as one mind with their stalwart mounts.

While mounted, the Exalt may use her own movement-enhancing and defensive Charms on behalf of her steed.

King-of-Horses Surety (Solar): The Solar's mount cannot be knocked back or prone, and unhorse gambits against the Solar increase their cost by three.

Blood-of-the-Moon Blessing (Lunar): When her mount is attacked, the Lunar may trade one of her own health levels on Step 5, reducing the raw damage by three dice.

Ride the Dragon (Sidereal): Commit 2 motes. The Sidereal's mount transforms into a draconic version of itself capable of flight at twice its normal movement speed. At the end of the scene (or the end of a dramatic journey), the mount is exhausted, suffering a five-die penalty until it has had a full day of rest.

Swift Artillery Technique

Prerequisites: Navigate 4

An Exalted artilleryist defies all opposition—not just the perils of the sea, but the physical limits of her weaponry.

Spend 1 mote in Step 1 of a fire ordinance action. The Exalt reduces all environmental and flurry penalties on her attack by two, and it does not count towards the usual limit of two fire ordinance actions per round, allowing the Exalt to retroactively load or reload ammunition. If no spare ammunition is at hand, she may spend 1

mote or 1 anima to create one from pure Essence.

Trackless Region Navigation

Prerequisites: Navigate 3

The Exalt's understanding of the land is intuitive and unsurpassed, allowing her to survive and find her way with ease.

Commit 1 mote. For as long as that mote is committed, the Exalt reduces penalties to all Navigate rolls by her Essence, and can always find shelter. She treats herself as an advantage while making travel ventures. Even in the harshest terrain, the Exalt does not suffer obstacles based on injury or fatigue while engaging in a travel venture.

PERFORMANCE

Distracting Patter Technique

Prerequisites: Performance 3 or Stealth 2

The Exalt's engaging banter lets her accomplish stealthy feats in plain sight. Every gesture she makes serves the story she's telling; while the crowd's eyes are on her left hand, her right tucks a pilfered object up her sleeve.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt intentionally draws attention to herself — making a speech, telling an involved story, or reciting an epic poem. For the duration of the scene, reduce the difficulty of her Stealth rolls by three. If purchased as a Performance Charm, reduce the difficulty of her allies' Stealth rolls instead.

Partners in Crime (Dragon-Blooded): The Dragon-Blooded keeps the crowd's attention so her partner can do the sneaking. Commit 1 mote and add the Exalt's Performance to her hearthmate's Stealth rolls for the duration of the scene. This does not count towards their dice limit.

Flawless Brush Discipline

Prerequisites: Performance 2

The Exalt may quickly compose a fiery letter or a lengthy manifesto in perfect, elegant script.

Gain double 9s on a single written Performance action. If the message would take minutes to write, it is completed in moments. A detailed report which might otherwise take hours to draft may be written in minutes. The Exalt may copy written work with the same speed.

Signature-Stealing Calligraphy (Upgrade, Performance 4): As long as the Exalt has access to at least one example of the target's writing, they may make a Finesse + Performance roll to make a forgery of their writing. If the writing contains social influence, it uses the same roll. The forgery may only be detected by superhuman or magical senses at difficulty 7.

Greatness-Inspiring Aura

Prerequisites: Performance 4 or Presence 4

When the Exalt walks into danger undaunted, they cannot help but uplift any who follow.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt adds a two-success bonus to **inspire** rolls to build Power. Allies within short range who have a positive Intimacy toward the Exalt may use her Performance or Presence when making their own **inspire** actions, drawing on the Exalt's own eloquence and bearing.

Masterful Performance Exercise

Prerequisites: Performance 2

The Exalt instills her performance with Essence, touching the hearts of all who see and hear.

Commit 1 mote. For the duration of her performance, anyone who wishes to interrupt or otherwise interfere with the Exalt doing so must accept a **hard bargain**. In addition, the Exalt doubles 9s for any rolls relevant to the performance or influencing others with it. The effects last for as long as the mote is committed.

With a repurchase, this Charm may be used with writing, the following effects replacing the above. The Exalt's calligraphy and style are powerful works of art, inspiring respect and awe for the word itself. Any character who wishes to

tear down or otherwise deface the Essence-imbued message must accept a **hard bargain** to do so.

Artful Disengagement (Solar): At Essence 3, Solar may instead commit 2 motes to activate this Charm during combat. Anyone who resists may continue to attack her or her allies only if they incorporate their actions into the Solar's performance. This inflicts a two-dice penalty to their actions. If they refuse to perform, they may make attack actions but cannot gain Power.

Memetic Dogma Discipline

Prerequisites: Performance 3

The Exalt gives a fiery speech, her Essence subtly influencing and directing her audience to spread the word.

Spend 1 mote when making a social influence roll as part of a Performance action. Characters she successfully influences add the Exalt's Essence in extra successes with which to purchase influence effects when spreading the Exalt's message to others.

Poetic Expression Style

Prerequisites: Performance 3

Through careful expressions and subtle movements, the Exalt may communicate through body language alone.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. For each action the mote remains committed, the Exalt may perfectly convey a single sentence to their target non-verbally, such as "open the gates now, or I will return with an army," though this does not allow for poesy, such as "Fill your hands with steel and prepare to dance, you devils!" Suffer a two-success penalty to social influence rolls done this way.

Glance Oration Technique (Lunar): *In human or animal form, the Exalt possesses supremely expressive muscles.* Communicate across a language barrier or in the form of an animal

using this Charm. This removes the success penalty.

Speech Without Words (Dragon-Blooded): *Using hand gestures, body language and other hidden signals, the Terrestrial and their kin maintain perfect communication.* This Charm's effects may be utilized by all hearthmates and her Essence in additional characters to communicate with one another at no extra cost. This signaling may not be noticed without superhuman or magical senses contested by the Exalt's Fortitude + Integrity.

Spirit-Manifesting Word

Prerequisites: Performance 4 or Sagacity 4

The Exalt calls upon her status as one of the Chosen, and demands a spirit appear.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt uses an influence action to demand a spirit materialize, treating the difficulty of the Performance or Sagacity roll increased by the spirit's Essence rather than Intimacies or Virtues. If successful, the target manifests for the remainder of the scene.

Alternatively, a single spirit ally may effortlessly materialize at no cost or without its own magic for one scene.

Soul-Stirring Cantata

Prerequisites: Performance 2

The Exalt's music invigorates the hearts of those around her, urging them to bold action.

Commit 1 mote. Treat all Minor Intimacies belonging to characters who can hear the Exalt as Major Intimacies instead for the duration of the Exalt's performance. All influenced characters are additionally immune to fear-based effects. While using this Charm, the Exalt can't flurry; she must focus on her art.

Subtle Expression Method

Prerequisites: Performance 2

The Exalt knows how to conceal ideas behind innocuous words and incomprehensible ciphers, on the page and in speech.

Spend 1 mote. Through writing or speaking for the duration of the scene, the Exalt may speak in code which can only be understood by a single recipient. Other readers or listeners either perceive innocuous statements or an incomprehensible cipher. Attempts to decipher the message may be contested by the Exalt's Finesse + Performance roll with her Essence in automatic successes. Alternatively, anyone who shares a designated Principle with the Exalt may understand their messages.

Letter-Within-A-Letter Technique (Solar): The Exalt's communiques may only be deciphered by magic.

Cryptic Essence Cipher (Dragon-Blooded): The Exalt may allow any of their hearthmates to automatically understand their communications.

PHYSIQUE (MIGHT)

Armored Scout's Invigoration

Prerequisites: Physique 3

The Exalt's impressive strength and stamina makes her at home in her armor, even in the direst circumstances.

An Exalt with this Charm no longer suffers a mobility penalty from wearing armor, and is as comfortable in full plate as they are in silken pajamas. They suffer no additional penalties for taking physical actions (such as running, climbing, or swimming) while wearing armor.

Ten Ox Meditation

Prerequisites: Physique 2

Pouring Essence into her muscles, the Exalt performs impossible physical feats.

Spend 1 mote. When the character attempts a feat of strength, reduce the difficulty of the roll by her Essence plus one, to a minimum of one. If this reduces the difficulty below the need to roll, the attempt happens automatically.

Thunder's Might (Upgrade, Physique 5, Essence 2): At Physique 5 and Essence 2, the Exalt may

spend an additional mote to attempt a feat of strength that would normally require a venture in a single roll instead.

Triumph-Forged God Body (Upgrade, Essence 3): The Exalt may spend an additional mote to perform a single Extreme feat of Strength without needing to roll.

Physique (Resistance)

Arsenal-Summoning Gesture

See p. XX

Body Mending Meditation

Prerequisites: Physique 4

Circulating Essence through her body, the Exalt wills herself to heal.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt automatically heals one level of damage each at the start and end of each scene, regardless of her activity or exertion. Once per scene, she may spend 2 motes when incapacitated to heal one level of damage, returning to the fight.

Unstoppable Lunar Vitality (Lunar): Reduce the cost to heal and return to a fight to 1 mote.

Thirst for Vengeance (Infernal): When the Exalt spends motes to return to the fight, she also gains 2 Power.

Captivating Battlefield Display

Prerequisites: Physique 4 or Presence 4, Essence 2

The Exalt's incredible display draws all eyes — and weapons — to him.

Spend 1 mote on step 2 and target an opponent who is attacking an ally. The target's attack now hits the Exalt instead. The ally may attack the target on step 8 of this resolution as a counterattack, even if she's already acted this round. This extra attack does not count towards the action limit. She may not augment this attack with Charms.

Iron Kettle Body

Prerequisites: Physique 2

The Exalt braces herself and endures an otherwise lethal attack.

Spend 1 mote on Step 7. Increase the character's total Soak against a single attack by three. Alternatively, the Exalt may apply her Soak against an environmental damage effect that was created by a Charm or other magic.

Adamant Skin Concentration (Solar) or Injury Absorbing Method (Abyssal) or Hardened Devil Body (Infernal): Increase this value by Physique instead.

Stone Rhino's Skin (Lunar): Increase this value by Fortitude instead.

Iron Skin Concentration

Prerequisites: Physique 3

Through endurance training, the Exalt learns to withstand blows that would topple a lesser person.

Permanently increase the character's base Soak by one. At Physique 5, this Charm may be purchased a second time.

Malady-Resisting Meditation

Prerequisites: Physique 2

The Exalt's Essence pervades her body, hardening her against toxins and disease.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt gains her Essence in dice to all rolls to resist poisons, venoms, infectious diseases, and similar maladies. In addition, she may accept a hard bargain to temporarily nullify the effects of whatever she suffers from for her Essence in turns.

Immunity to Everything Technique: At Essence 3, this Charm may be purchased a second time, reducing the difficulty to resist all mundane diseases, venoms and toxins, etc, to one. If the character's total dice pool would automatically succeed, she does not need to roll. The difficulty of all other maladies is reduced by the Exalt's Essence, but must still be rolled, unless this reduced the difficulty to zero.

Ox Body

Prerequisites: None

By virtue of her Exalted health, the character endures greater levels of injury.

The Exalt gains an additional -1 level. This may be purchased a number of times equal to the character's Physique.

Lunar: The Exalt gains an additional -1 and -2 Health Level. This may be purchased a number of times equal to Fortitude.

Liminal: The Exalt gains an additional 0 Health level. This may be purchased a number of times equal to Fortitude.

Abyssal, Infernal and Solar Mode: The Exalt gains their choice of an additional 0 or two -1 Health levels.

Dragon-Blooded: The Exalt gains an additional -2 Health Level.

Getimian and Sidereal: The Exalt replaces the default -1 Health level with a 0 Health level.

Alchemical: If Fortitude is higher than Physique, this may be purchased a number of times equal to Fortitude, instead.

Strawmaiden Janest: Janest gains Ox Body as a Solar Mode.

Power Gathering Temper

Prerequisites: Physique 3

The Exalt's endurance turns a staggering blow into an opportunity.

Spend 1 mote on Step 5. The Exalt gains a number of Power equal to the amount the attacking enemy gained after a successful withering attack or 1 Power for every 2 Power an attacker spends on a decisive attack.

Essence-Gathering Temper (Solar) or Reap What is Sown (Janest): The Exalt also recovers 1 mote for every 2 Power the attacker gains.

Spirit Strengthens the Skin

Prerequisites: Physique 2

When all other defenses fail, the Exalt may infuse her body with ablative Essence.

Spend up to 3 motes on Step 5. Each mote reduces the attack's damage pool by one die. Against environmental damage levels or dice, the Exalt may spend up to 6 motes. In this instance, every 2 motes spent reduces 1 level of damage.

Impenetrable Shell (Alchemical): The Alchemical may activate this on Step 2 and adds her Essence to Hardness when the enemy's weapon matches her Caste's magical material.

Rust-and-Splinters Defense (Abyssal): Mundane weapons used in this attack suffer a two-die penalty until they can be properly cleaned and mended. If Spirit Strengthens the Skin reduces the attack to zero damage, the weapon shatters, instead.

Once Bitten Technique (Lunar): If the Lunar activates this Charm later in the scene against an attack with the same type of weapon, she reduces its total cost by one mote — once one axe strikes her, no other will find her flesh as soft. Artifact weapons are unique for the purposes of this Charm, even of the same general type; no two daiklaves strike in quite the same way.

Rival-Slaying Retribution (Infernal): The Infernal adds any damage dice cancelled by this Charm to her next attack against her attacker.

PRESENCE

Battalion-Breaking Shout

Prerequisites: War 3 or Presence 3

With a battle-cry that could break the resolve of demons, the Exalt robs a group of its cohesion.

Spend 1 mote. Roll Force + War or Presence against a battle group's Resolve. Success lowers their effective Drill by one, or by two if three or more extra successes are rolled. This penalty lasts until a commander takes a difficulty 5 War or Presence based action to restore order.

Demon-Scattering Shout (Solar and Infernal): *The Exalt's scream echoes in the ichor of the devil-kings themselves.* Rallying a demonic battle group is difficulty 7 instead.

Captivating Battlefield Display

See p. XX.

Cat's Puffed Tail

Prerequisites: Presence 1

Like a cat appearing bigger to frighten a foe, the Exalt looms over his enemies.

Spend 1 mote. On Step 1 of a combat action, gain two bonus successes on a Force-based or Inspire Build Power roll. This does not count as her Charm use for that step.

This Charm may also be used during a social influence action, granting two bonus successes on an attempt to Instill, Persuade, or Threaten an opponent.

Dread Tiger's Symmetry

Prerequisites: Presence 3

The Exalt is a singular and terrifying being, awesome to behold. People and animals instinctively shy away from her.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt adds her Essence in bonus dice and gains double 9s on any threatening influence actions. If a character has a Tie of Fear towards the Exalt, add bonus dice equal to its intensity. The bonus dice from Ties do not count towards the limit. Mundane animals and Extras flee from the Exalt outright, unless compelled to remain through training or magic.

Terrifying Apparition of Glory (Upgrade, Presence 5, Essence 3): *The Exalt becomes an icon of terrible majesty that drives her enemies to flee.* At Active Anima, gain double 8s. At Iconic Anima, gain 1 Power whenever an enemy is successfully influenced using this Charm.

Heart-Stopping Mien (Abyssal): *Being terrified by a deathknight can be fatal.* Gain the Exalt's Essence dice in addition to double 9s. When

intimidation succeeds, the Exalt gains 1 Power, and may inflict two dice of damage against the target. This becomes four dice if they possess a Tie of fear to her. Soak does not apply to this damage.

Menacing Predator's Posture (Lunar): *Every detail of the Lunar's bearing radiates predatory menace.* Ties of fear to the Exalt's shapes grant the same benefit. In a predatory animal shape or hybrid form, gain three bonus dice in addition.

Glorious Presence Technique

Prerequisites: Presence 2

Even the least of the Exalted are overwhelming to look upon.

The Exalt doubles 9s on a roll to instill respect, awe, or obedience. If her anima is at the Iconic level, she doubles 8s.

Authority-Radiating Stance (Solar): Until the end of the scene, characters successfully influenced gain a two-dice bonus to resist fear while acting on the Solar's orders.

Greatness-Inspiring Aura

See p. XX.

Harmonious Presence Meditation

Prerequisites: Presence 3

The Exalt embodies magnetism and grace, charming every courtier she meets. No matter her behavior, all people listen when she speaks.

Commit 1 mote for one scene. For the duration, the Exalt may add an automatic success to all social influence, excluding Read Intentions actions. She ignores up to three dice of mundane situational penalties to her social influence actions that arise from her unfamiliarity with customs, fashion, or past actions.

Majestic Radiant Presence (Upgrade, Essence 2): *The Exalt's spirit shines with aspects of glory and terror; enemies hesitate to raise their voice or weapon against her.* Commit 1 additional

mote. Characters attempting to oppose the Exalt socially or physically must accept a hard bargain (p. XX) to do so. At Active Anima, waive the additional commitment.

Blazing Glorious Icon (Solar): *The Solar's glory burns like the sun, an aura impossible to ignore.* At Active Anima, add an additional automatic success on all social influence actions. At Iconic Anima, waive this Charm's cost.

Elegant Tyrant's Majesty (Abyssal): *The deathknight radiates a terrible allure that inspires awe and dread among the living and the dead.* Against the undead, subordinates, or characters with a Tie of fear towards the Exalt, add an additional automatic success on all social influence actions. At Active Anima, this applies to all characters.

Friend-to-All-Nations Attitude (Dragon-Blooded): *At home in any land, Dragon-Blooded draw new allies with ease thanks to their princely reputation.* Gain two dice on an Instill action to give the target a positive Tie towards the Exalt, her hearthmates, or an organization she belongs to.

Irresistible Presence Technique

Prerequisites: Presence 5, Essence 3

The Exalt dominates the will of her target with the force of her soul's presence.

Spend 2 motes to make a special Force + Presence influence action as simple action with the target's Essence added to his Resolve. On success, he is hypnotized for one round, unable to take any actions. As a psyche effect, the Exalt may issue a single instruction in a short, clear sentence which the target will carry out immediately. Afterward, he will have no memory of being commanded. This may only be used once per story.

Mind-Seizing Gaze (Abyssal, Infernal, Solar): The Exalt may issue a number of instructions equal to her extra successes as short, clear sentences

instead. The target remains hypnotized until all instructions are complete.

Listener-Swaying Argument

Prerequisites: Presence 2

The Exalt's passionate arguments can reach even hearts of stone.

Spend 1 mote on Step 4 to reduce the cost of purchasing Persuade and Dissuade to one success. If an Intimacy or Virtue raises the difficulty of the influence, add one additional success on Step 4.

Fulminating Word (Upgrade, Essence 3): When the Exalt argues from the heart, it is nearly impossible to disagree. The target must accept a hard bargain to resist the Exalt's influence — they cannot choose to ignore it.

Impassioned Discourse Technique (Solar): *The Solar argues from her beliefs, persuading with the depth of her emotion.* If the Exalt possesses a Principle relevant to her Persuade or Dissuade action, gain double 9s.

Second Chance Approach

See p. XX

Suspicion-Allaying Gesture

Prerequisites: Presence 2 or Stealth 2

With clever misdirection, the Exalt casts suspicion intended for her onto someone else.

Commit 1 mote for the duration of the scene when encountering someone suspicious of the Exalt. The Exalt deftly misdirects that suspicion, pinning it on another person. This automatically succeeds against trivial and non-magical targets; significant characters (demons, gods, Exalts, etc.) may take a Fortitude + Awareness action, resisted by the Exalt's Finesse + Stealth, to break through the illusion.

Hindward Bulls-eye Brand (Solar): The Exalt chooses a specific target for the suspicions of others, pinning all blame on them without needing to roll. If this would be contested by another flawless effect, roll off (p. XX).

Skein in the Wilderness Pursuit (Getimian): The Exalt conjures a version of her pursuer from her Origin to serve as the person of interest. If her pursuer captures their illusory quarry, they persist for a heartbeat and then fade. When this happens, the Exalt may reflexively make a Force + Presence social influence roll, expending successes only to **instill** or **strengthen** the following Principle: "I question whether reality is real."

Underling-Promoting Practice

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or War 3

The Exalt blesses her underlings with a small measure of her own power, greatly increasing their natural abilities.

Commit 1 mote and designate one of the Exalt's mortal followers, or commit 2 motes and designate a group. Choose a single Ability. For as long as those motes remain committed, the Exalt's underlings substitute the Exalt's rating in that Ability for their own.

Worshipful Lackey Acquisition

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or War 3

The Exalt knows how to leverage her social weight to accrue aides, advisors, and lackeys of all stripes.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt gathers a group of hangers-on to aid her, creating a temporary Tertiary Followers Merit. The Exalt may specify what sort of lackeys she wants (spies, socialites, mercenaries, etc). All lackeys behave as if their Minor Virtue was Loyalty for the Exalt, unless she does something to betray them or otherwise casts them off. If the lackeys are of a type suited to fighting, the Exalt may lead them into combat, where they function as a Size 0 Battle Group with Regular Drill.

At Essence 3, this charm creates Secondary Followers instead of Tertiary Followers. If used to create a Battle Group, this may either create a Size 1 Battle Group with Regular Drill, or a Size 2 Battle Group with Poor Drill.

RANGED COMBAT

Arsenal-Summoning Gesture

See p. XX

Arrow Storm Attack

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3, Essence 2

Blotting out the sun with her volleys, the Exalt routs legions.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a Ranged Combat attack against a battle group. The Exalt increases her damage dice and the Overwhelming value of her attack by the battle group's Size on Step 5. Against battle groups of extras, the bonus damage becomes successes on Step 7, instead.

Cascade of Cutting Terror: A Solar may spend 2 Anima to reduce the target battle group's Defense to 1 on Step 4.

Double Distance Technique

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2

The Exalt's attacks fly far and true.

The Exalt extends the reach of one of her ranged weapons by one range band. This cannot supplement attacks made with pure Essence (such as Glorious Exalted Bolt).

Triple Distance Technique (Solar): The Solar may spend an additional mote to extend the range an additional band, to a maximum of extreme range.

Glorious Exalted Bolt

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2 or Sagacity 2

The Exalt forms a blazing bolt of Essence aligned with their nature to strike their enemies.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. Make a ranged essence attack at short range using either Sagacity or Ranged Combat. Treat as a heavy ranged weapon with short range, the Artifact and Ranged tags. Spend 1 anima to increase range to medium. This may be used during a clash.

Essence Pulse Cannon (Alchemical): The Exalt's forearm transforms into a weapon itself, storing a charge of Essence in its bore. The Alchemical

may use Glorious Exalted Bolt to enact the knockback gambit.

Blazing Solar Bolt (Solar): Spend 1 additional mote to add two bonus successes to damage on a **decisive** attack.

Elemental Bolt Attack (Dragon-Blooded): On Step 7, targets hit must make a reflexive Physique roll at difficulty 3 to resist environmental damage equal to the Exalt's Essence plus two.

Crypt Bolt Attack (Abyssal): *Crackling ebon lightning corrodes armor and withers flesh.* Ignore 1 Soak, and mundane armor is destroyed as long as a **decisive** damage roll generates at least one success. These must be successes on the roll, not successes from the Charm or its damage rating.

Radiant Fury Revenge (Infernal): The Infernal gains a two-dice bonus to damage if she has a negative Intimacy towards the target.

No Arrow Wasted

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3

The Exalt's arrow always hits a useful target, even if it's not their primary one.

On Step 5 of a ranged combat action, if the Exalt's original attack failed to defeat her target's Defense, spend 1 mote and 1 anima. Declare a different target and roll a ranged attack against that target instead. The redirected attack may target Extras or objects in the environment as well as other combatants. This attack cannot be modified by Charms.

Phantom Arrow

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2

The Exalt never need fear exhausting her supply of ammunition, for her Essence is a never-ending font of it.

Commit 1 mote. For as long as the mote remains committed, the Exalt draws ammunition from her anima. This reduces all Ranged Combat penalties by one, including flurry penalties, to a

minimum of zero. No narrative effect can force the Exalt to be out of ammunition.

Holistic Bullet Methodology (Sidereal): A Sidereal may fire literally anything she can pick up from a ranged weapon. While most improvised ammunition functions as normal shot or arrows, certain things (such as a venomous snake) may have additional effects (such as poisoning the target).

Inexhaustible Solar Bolts (Solar): A Solar's anima ammunition adds 1 Overwhelming, and will never strike an unintended target, dissolving into specks of light before contact.

Reflex Shot Technique

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3

The Exalt's instincts align in a perfect moment, allowing her to take careful aim even when she doesn't have the time to do so.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt uses her reflexive Move action while simultaneously taking an Aim action.

Revolving Bow Discipline

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3

The Exalt fires shot after shot with focus and speed.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. After resolving a Ranged Combat attack, the character makes a second Ranged Combat attack against the same target or a different one. This attack is treated as though it were part of a flurry. The initial attack does not suffer the dice penalty.

Trance of Unhesitating Speed (Solar, Abyssal, Infernal): The second attack is made without a dice penalty.

Hunter's Eye Precision (Lunar): The second attack may be substituted for any other Finesse-related combat action, instead.

Many-Missiles Technique (Sidereal): Reduce the flurry penalty on the second attack to one die.

Sharpshooter's Clever Tricks

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2

With a flourish, the Exalt fires a shot or hurls her weapon with intent to distract.

When the Exalt purchases this Charm, choose two of its unique modes. At Ranged Combat 4, you may purchase this Charm a second time to gain an additional mode. Its effects cost 1 committed mote for the scene.

Clever Projectile Technique: Reduce the cost of gambits using Ranged Combat by one, to a minimum of one. The Exalt may use the Distract gambit with Ranged Combat.

Archer's Keen Eye: Reduce all penalties from the environment, poor visibility, or other hazards on Ranged Combat attacks by the Exalt's Essence, to a minimum of zero.

Sharpshooter's Devious Ploy: The Exalt may use Build Power actions with Ranged Combat by making non-attack warning shots or distracting volleys. This action benefits from the weapon's Overwhelming rating, but no other equipment bonuses.

Archer's Centered Focus: The character may Aim and take a reflexive move action, but no other movement actions.

Strange Quiver Trick (Sidereal): The Sidereal transforms her ammunition midflight, granting it two of the following Tags: Artifact, Disarming, Flame, Piercing, Pulling, or Powerful. The Sidereal may commit three motes to gain this effect indefinitely, but chooses a Tag upfront.

Streaming Arrow Stance

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 4

One by one, her projectiles turn away attacks and her warning shots make enemies think twice about getting close.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. While Streaming Arrow Stance is active, the Exalt calculates her Defense using Ranged Combat instead of Close Combat or Athletics. How the character does

this is up to the player: perhaps she blocks with the bow itself, throws weapons to defer foes, or fires arrows that knock other projectiles out of the air, etc.

SAGACITY (KNOWLEDGE)

All Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight

See p. XX

Archive Mind Mentality

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Exalt's mind is as an enormous library, each moment of her life and each lesson she has learned assiduously filed and tracked like so many precious volumes.

The Exalt's memory is perfect, allowing her to recall anything she has witnessed with absolute clarity. This requires only a moment's concentration, though attempts to reexamine past events for clues may require a roll. The player asks the Storyteller for details her character may remember. She may also use Stunt Dice to dramatic edit in details she thinks are appropriate.

Counting the Elephant's Wrinkles (Lunar): A Lunar is always aware if a memory she recounts has been tampered with.

Ancestral Recall (Dragon-Blooded): A Dragon-Blooded may spend an hour of downtime in meditation to recall events from their ancestors' lives, though these details are often hazy. Use a dramatic scene.

The Benefit of Hindsight (Sidereal): A Sidereal may make changes to scenes they recall by dramatic editing with Stunt Dice; for example, if they neglected to open a lockbox, they might do so in their memories instead — revealing information or clues as if they had done so in reality.

This does not materially alter the flow of a scene's events, nor may they harm others within the dream; to do so would cause tremendous harm to Fate, necessitating truly

heroic measures to preserve simple things like causality associated with the event.

Essence-Lending Method

Prerequisites: Sagacity 1

With a touch, the Exalt may share their spiritual reserves with allies.

Spend any number of motes. The Exalt transfers these motes from their pool to a person they are touching. If the target cannot accept all the motes transferred, they have until their next action to spend them before they dissipate. Temporary motes do not increase the target's anima rating.

Wound-Accepting Technique (Upgrade, Sagacity 3, Essence 2): *The Exalt may channel her life force into another through Essence, taking on their injuries.* For an additional mote, The Exalt may instead heal up to her Essence in damaged health levels in her target, taking that damage herself. It is possible to be Incapacitated by this Charm.

Essence Font Technique (Solar): Roll Finesse + Lore against difficulty 3. On success, the Exalt generates three additional motes which may be transferred to the target in place of their own.

These motes dissipate immediately if not transferred.

Dragon-Kin Empowerment (Dragon-Blooded): The Exalt sends forth a brilliant flow of elemental Essence to their kin. This Charm extends to short range with hearthmates. The Dragon-Blooded may instead transfer one anima for every two motes spent. A target cannot gain temporary anima.

Essence-Draining Method (Abyssal): The Exalt may drain up to her Essence in motes from their target instead. In combat, declare this Charm on step 1. This requires an unarmed Close Combat attack.

Glorious Exalted Bolt

See p. XX

Harmonious Academic Methodology

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Exalt is a master instructor able to pass on esoteric truths and incredible talents to their students. Such is their wisdom, they may pass on knowledge that would otherwise take years to learn.

Commit 2 motes for the duration. Treat as a special Research venture with three obstacles and a time scale of scenes each representing a couple days of instruction. Upon completion, the Exalt may select one of the following options for all students:

- Move a single topic from the target's Tertiary Pool to Secondary.
- Add an additional topic to their Tertiary Pool based on one of the Exalt's Abilities.

Additionally, the Exalt may give the target a Minor Intimacy towards the Exalt or change the target's Minor Virtue to one of the Exalt's own Virtues. This Charm may only affect the same students once per story. The Exalt may instruct up to twice her Essence in students.

Flowing Mind Practice: At Essence 2, the Exalt may select two options with each activation.

Legendary Scholar's Curriculum (Solar): The Exalt may instruct a group of students equal to the Exalt's Essence plus Sagacity.

Tale-Spinning Mastery (Lunar): *The Exalt teaches through storytelling, folktales, legends or history.* The Exalt may instruct a group of students equal to the Exalt's Essence plus Finesse if they share a common culture.

Dismissive Scholar's Sniff (Sidereal) or **Red-and-Green Reality Intuition** (Getimian): The Exalt may select an additional option so long as the instructee's Sagacity (or appropriate pool) is less than hers.

Necromantic Initiation

Prerequisites: Sagacity 1

The Exalt has dredged up dark secrets from the Underworld and the Void at its heart — secrets which grant tremendous power.

The necromancer gains the ability to learn and cast First Circle Spells. This Charm can be repurchased at Sagacity 3, Essence 3 to gain access to Second Circle Spells. A final repurchase at Sagacity 5, Essence 5 grants access to Third Circle Spells. Not every Exalt can use every circle; see p. XX.

With each purchase of this Charm, the necromancer also gains a free Spell and shaping ritual.

Sorcerous Initiation

Prerequisites: Sagacity 1

The Exalt has internalized the inner workings of Creation's Essence, giving the power to reshape the world at its fundament.

The sorcerer gains the ability to learn and cast First Circle Spells. This Charm can be repurchased at Sagacity 3, Essence 3 to gain access to Second Circle Spells. A final repurchase at Sagacity 5, Essence 5 grants access to Third Circle Spells. Not every Exalt can use every circle; see p. XX.

With each purchase of this Charm, the sorcerer also gains a free Spell and shaping ritual.

Spirit-Detecting Glance

See p. XX

Spirit-Manifesting Word

See p. XX

Spirit-Repelling Diagram

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Exalt draws forth a blazing diagram of Essence from the universe into a circle which drives lesser spirits away.

Commit 1 mote for a scene as a simple action to draw a circle around the Exalt out to short range. Spirits with Essence equal to or lower than the Exalt's must either become

materialized or flee the circle immediately. These spirits may not attack characters inside the circle when outside of it. The Exalt rolls Fortitude + Sagacity against difficulty 3, increased by the spirit's Essence. On success, treat as if their Essence were lower.

Spirit-Caging Mandala (Solar): The Exalt may instead trap a spirit at short range within the circle for one scene. Trapped spirits cannot move and may only attack characters inside the circle at close range.

Endless Pain Oubliette (Infernal): As the Solar Mode, but cannot trap ghosts. Captured gods and demons increase their wound penalties by one.

Argent Guardian Yantra (Lunar): Repels both spirits and the fae. The circle may be drawn as a line across a single range band.

Seed and Salt Warding (Dragon-Blooded, Janest): *The Exalt lays down a line of salt or germinated grain to keep ghosts at bay.* Commit 1 mote for the session. A line of salt or germinated grain laid by the Exalt is treated as the Spirit-Repelling Diagram against the undead, including walking dead and hungry ghosts.

Spirit-Slaying Stance

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Exalt wounds the very Essence of a spirit, weakening or outright destroying it forever. An Exalted power that even the gods themselves fear.

Spend 1 mote on Step 3 on a decisive attack to inflict aggravated damage against a spirit (god, demon, or ghost). If the Exalt slays a spirit with this Charm, it is unable to reform for a number of months of downtime equal to the Exalt's Essence rating or until the end of the story.

Ghost-Eating Technique (Solar): Destroy motes in the spirit's pool equal to its total health lost. Destroyed motes are considered spent. If slain

by this Charm, the spirit is permanently destroyed.

Spirit-Shredding Attack (Dragon-Blooded): If slain by this Charm, the spirit is diminished. When it reforms, its Essence score is lowered by one. This may be healed as a Dramatic Injury. At Storyteller's discretion, the spirit may lose access to some of its Charms or reflect its diminishment in other ways.

Demon-Drinking Fang (Lunar): Inflicts aggravated damage against both fae and spirits. If slain by this Charm, the spirit is permanently destroyed.

Terminal Sanction (Sidereal): If slain by this Charm, the Sidereal may choose one option: Slay the spirit permanently; bind the spirit in servitude as if they had summoned the spirit (p. xx); let the spirit reform naturally.

God-Slaying Torment (Abyssal): If slain by this Charm, the Abyssal may choose to temporarily hold the spirit from oblivion until the end of the scene to interrogate them, taunt them or hear their final words. Afterward, the spirit is permanently destroyed.

Life-Denying Hate (Infernal): When used against a god or demon, the Infernal may destroy them utterly or inflict a powerful curse upon them; until treated by powerful magical healing, the target cannot dematerialize without the Infernal's approval and has only a single health level.

Truth-Rendering Gaze

Prerequisites: Sagacity 4

The Exalt focuses intensely on an item or a place with a hidden nature, using their Essence to divine function and purpose.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt may automatically divine the purpose and function of a mundane object, a structure, or even the geomancy and advantages of natural terrain. For Artifacts, First Age Artifice and other magical objects and

technologies, make a Force + Sagacity roll against difficulty 5 to achieve the same effect. Success may reveal details like the name of an Artifact, its history and previous wielders or momentous events it may have been involved in. If applicable, add their Essence in dice to a single relevant Craft, Navigate or War rolls based on information gleaned from this Charm.

Wake the Sleeper (Solar): *The Solar draws out an Artifact's power with her touch.* Once per story, as a simple action, success on a roll to learn about an Artifact awakens the first Evocation for the Exalt at no cost.

Elemental Truth Observation (Dragon-Blooded): *The Essence of jade and the elements whisper their truths to the Dragon-Blooded savant.* When studying jade artifacts or terrain that matches the Exalt's Aspect, this Charm automatically succeeds.

Dreaming Wisdom Revelation (Lunar): The Lunar uses mystic practice to realize uncanny insights, after time spent reading animal entrails, interpreting dreams, imbibing psychedelics, following a vision in the Wyld, performing austerities, or similar. The Exalt spends a dramatic scene performing her ritual action, making a Force + Sagacity roll against difficulty 5 to learn about the subject, without inspecting it, visualizing it from afar.

Will-Bolstering Method

Prerequisites: First Circle Sorcery

Harmonizing her mind with another's, the Exalt imparts her own sorcerous power to a spell.

The Exalt may exchange Power granted by an ally into Will, or give Will to an ally in place of Power via the Power exchange action (p. XX).

Blood-Bound Rite (Dragon-Blooded): If the beneficiary is a hearthmate casting a sorcery spell, they gain an additional point of Will. This cannot benefit necromancy.

Wonder-Crafting Initiation

See p. XX

SAGACITY (MEDICINE)

Master Physician Technique

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

Through efficacious treatments, the Exalt may tend grievous injuries and defeat pestilences.

Commit one mote for the duration of treatment. Using appropriate tools, the Exalt may spend a scene treating a patient, accomplishing one of the following effects:

- Treat a diagnosed disease. Treat as a venture with a time scale of a couple days of treatment. Mundane diseases are typically difficulty 3, while particularly deadly, esoteric or supernatural diseases may be difficulty 5 to achieve the same effect. Some supernatural diseases such as the Great Contagion may not be treated by this Charm.
- Treat injuries. Make a Force + Sagacity roll with double 9s against difficulty equal to the total levels of damage in their patient's health track. Success allows the patient to treat the scene as if it were a recovery scene and regain all lost health levels. Aggravated damage cannot be healed by this Charm.

Body-Sculpting Essence Method (Upgrade, Sagacity 5, Essence 3): The Exalt may restore a patient to health in the time it takes to lace boots. Complete a treatment action which would take a scene in a handful of moments. Once per story, unless reset by treating injuries or disease without using this upgrade.

Body-Purifying Admonitions (Upgrade, Sagacity 4): Using precision strikes to their patient's pressure points, the Exalt may force deadly poison from the body. Spend 1 mote. As a simple action, the Exalt may roll Force + Sagacity against a difficulty equal to a poison hazard's damage to immediately cure a patient receiving treatment. Against supernatural and esoteric poisons, increase this difficulty by two.

With a scene of treatment, the Exalt may automatically cure a mundane poison; supernatural and estoeric poisons still require a roll.

Plague-Banishing Incitation (Solar): The Exalt demands the malaise leave the patient's body, initiating a miraculous recovery. When treating a diagnosed disease, the Exalt may roll Force + Sagacity to immediately cure the disease allowing the patient to recover by the next scene. This increases the difficulty of treatment by two.

Gaia's Bounty (Dragon-Blooded): The Exalt adds two automatic successes when using medicinal herbs or exotic flora as tools to treat her patients.

Plague-Halting Gesture (Abyssal): Roll Force + Sagacity against difficulty 3 for mundane diseases or 5 for supernatural ones. On success, the Exalt may choose to immediately halt the progress of a disease, rendering it dormant rather than cure it. For the rest of the story, they may reflexively resume its effects on the target at will.

Plague-Devouring Kiss (Lunar): The Exalt devours a malaise afflicting their patient. The Exalt may roll Force + Sagacity against Difficulty 5 to instantly cure a mundane disease by taking it onto themselves. Against supernatural diseases, the difficulty is 7.

Flawless Diagnosis Technique

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Exalt's expertise reveals the truths of bodies living and dead. By examining a subject closely, the Exalt may flawlessly diagnose what ails them, or discern what lead to their death.

Spend 1 mote as a simple action. Within moments, the Exalt may automatically diagnose a mundane illness, allowing her to determine what the illness is, its typical symptoms and whether it is supernatural or not. For unknown, esoteric, or supernatural illnesses, make a Force

+ Sagacity roll for the same result. Although they may not always know what disease their patient carries, the Exalt will never misdiagnose it.

Alternatively, the Exalt may use this Charm while examining a corpse, allowing her to automatically determine how recently they died, the cause of death, or other unusual qualities of the corpse. If the corpse is unusual, tampered with, or slain through esoteric means, the Exalt must make a Force + Sagacity roll to determine the same result.

If applicable, the Exalt gains her Essence in bonus dice on the next roll to treat the diagnosed illness, or to further investigate the corpse.

Wellness-Restoring Meditation

Prerequisites: Sagacity 5

Through a regimen of therapeutic treatments and excellent care, the Exalt may help their patients recover from even the most difficult injuries.

Commit 1 mote. Over the course of three recovery scenes, the Exalt may assist a patient in recovering from a Dramatic Injury, either through miraculous restoration or wellness training to help the patient incorporate their disability into their daily life. A patient blinded in battle might grow accustomed to operating without sight, or have his eyesight restored through efficacious treatments. The Exalt must dedicate a few hours of downtime per recovery scene to treating the Dramatic Injury with the appropriate tools or description.

Rebirth of Flesh and Ivy (Dragon-Blooded): Ivy and vines spring from the Exalt's anima to set broken limbs and grow casts of bark upon the skin. Scars resemble wood more than flesh, with strands of green woven into tissue. The Dragon-Blooded may apply this Charm to up to her Essence in additional hearthmates.

Price of Mercy (Infernal): The Infernal may commit an additional mote to grant the target

demonic mutations that obviate a dramatic wound, adjusting to these new limbs in a single recovery scene. If they accept, they are in the Infernal's debt and cannot outright refuse her next significant request.

STEALTH

A Drop Amongst the Ocean

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

The Exalt masks her brilliance for a time, disappearing among the crowds of mortals around her.

Commit 1 mote. So long as the mote remains committed and the Exalt remains within or close to a large group of people, she becomes functionally invisible; others can see her, but pass her off as simply "one of the crowd." Awareness Charms and similar powers may allow others to find the Exalt, but she always receives a chance to resist their roll with Finesse + Stealth.

Distracting Patter Technique

See p. XX.

Doubt-Sealing Heist

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

The Exalt leaves no trace when she takes that which is not hers. Yet.

Commit 1 mote when the Exalt successfully steals an object. For as long as the mote remains committed, no one will notice the stolen item is missing.

Flawless Pickpocketing Technique (Solar) or **Thieving Raiton Talons** (Abyssal) or **Faster Than Sight** (Infernal): *The Exalt's movements are so subtle and quick, they may steal with abandon.* An Exalt may steal something even in plain sight without being noticed. This provokes a roll-off (p. XX) if an observer has an effect that would perfectly counter this.

Mine By Right (Getimian): Whatever a Getimian steals has always been the Getimian's possession, and therefore no theft has taken

place (though the authorities may have questions for the whoever was in possession of it before, i.e., the *actual* owner).

Evidence Placing Method

Prerequisites: Stealth 4

Just because the corrupt official has hidden the evidence of his crimes doesn't mean he never committed them. Sometimes, the truth needs a little help coming to light.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt places a piece of physical evidence somewhere in their current location without being observed. If she is placing it on another person, gain three bonus successes on the Stealth roll.

As It Always Was (Getimian): Items the Getimian Exalted place have always existed; increase the Difficulty of attempts to prove otherwise by the Exalt's Essence.

Impeccable Timing (Sidereal): The Sidereal Exalt places her evidence where it will be discovered at the worst possible moment for her target. Gain three automatic successes on a social action to influence a person or group's attitude toward the target.

Flawless Counterfeit Technique

See p. XX

Flawlessly Impenetrable Disguise

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

The Exalt clothes herself in another's garb, or employs trickery to pass as someone she is not.

Commit 1 mote when assembling a disguise. If this disguise is general (a servant, a trader, a soldier, etc.) it remains impenetrable to mortal senses for as long as the mote remains committed. Resist magical senses with Finesse + Stealth. If the disguise is of a specific person, significant characters may attempt to discover the ruse, resisted by the Exalt's Finesse + Stealth.

Eldritch Secrets Mastery (Infernal): The Infernal may hide her nature as a creature of darkness while disguised.

Essential Mirror Nature (Lunar): The Lunar copies the anima (and, if applicable, the caste mark) of a specific kind of Exalted. Until she uncommits this mote, her own anima and caste mark are indistinguishable from that of the target Exalt.

Guise of Humanity (Alchemical): While this Charm is active, the Alchemical's implants and augmentations recede into her body and alter her skin, making her appear like the other people around her.

Perfect Mirror (Solar): A Solar may commit 2 motes to forge a false Essence rating and model small supernatural details, such as glowing skin, crystalline hair, or dragon eyes.

Masque of the Uncanny (Sidereal): At Essence 3, a Sidereal may commit an additional mote to choose a type of spirit, ghost, raksha, or other Exalted as her disguise, gaining a three-success bonus to pass herself off accordingly. Her Charms, anima, and other aesthetics change appearance to accommodate this deception.

Guiding Shadow Shroud

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

The Exalt shares her gifts for subtlety with her more...conspicuous allies.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt may activate her Stealth Excellency, Perfect Shadow Stillness, or similar self-only Stealth Charms on behalf of other characters, helping them to move undetected. If they stay within close range of the Exalt, they reduce penalties to Stealth rolls by two.

Illimitable Master Fence

See p. XX

Perfect Shadow Stillness

Prerequisites: Stealth 2

Quiet the breath. Quiet the heart. Be still. Be silent.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt doubles 9s on all Stealth rolls to remain undetected. If she didn't move on her last turn, she doubles 8s instead. This includes the Outmaneuver Build Power action.

Quiet as Death (Abyssal): While in darkness, the Abyssal doubles 8s, or 7s if she didn't move.

Seasoned Criminal Method

Prerequisites: Stealth 2

The Exalt steps into the shadowy realm of the criminal underworld, wearing deception like a cloak.

Commit 1 mote and choose one of the following modes.

Special: The character gains all of the modes attached to this Charm upon purchase.

Familiarity: Appear to be a member of a criminal organization, allowing her to use any appropriate Intimacies to leverage against members of the organization.

Dissonance: Officials attempting to identify or track the Exalt reduce their Awareness and Embassy pools by two.

Vulnerability: Appear vulnerable, attracting those who would take advantage. Lower the target's Resolve by one whenever you leverage your vulnerability.

Receptivity: Appear to be an interested buyer or patron of criminal activities (drug buyer or seller, gambler, etc). Others will offer appropriate information regarding such activities when asked.

Suspicion-Allaying Gesture

See p. XX

WAR

Battalion-Breaking Shout

See p. XX

Battle Plan Ruminantion

Prerequisites: War 3

The Exalt recalls famous battles she's studied, and shapes her own strategy based on generals of the past.

Spend 1 mote. If a roll during a warfare dramatic scene fails, the Exalt may use this Charm to immediately reroll it. If the reroll result is lower, she takes the higher result of her original roll and increases the successes by two.

In Our Foremothers' Footsteps (Dragon-Blooded)

The Dragon-Blooded share stories of their ancestors' victories. The player whose character is the lead tactician in the dramatic scene chooses another player. They decide on a significant battle both characters' forbears took part in, and the roles those family members played in it. Add the second character's relevant Ability to the tactic's dice pool.

Lessons of the Last War (Infernal): The Infernal remembers how she fought with honor in a past incarnation, and now sees how she could have bucked the establishment instead. Perhaps her conservative choices caused her death, or allowing the enemy to regroup lost her the battle, but the Infernal will make different choices in this incarnation. Add three automatic successes to a Sabotage tactic.

Cunning Warrior Regimen

Prerequisites: War 3

Under the Exalt's instruction, her soldiers learn to seize opportunities whenever they appear on the battlefield.

Commit 2 motes for one week of downtime. With at least five hours of instruction during this week of downtime (which may be used during a series of dramatic scenes), the Exalt may train a battle group, granting them an Outnumber Quality of the Exalt's choice. The Exalt may condense the training to one dramatic scene, but the battle group retains the Outnumber Quality for only a single battle. A group can only

learn one Outnumber Quality through this Charm, or two if they possess Elite Drill.

Wolf's Lair Tactics (Lunar): While fighting on territory they are familiar with (such as their homeland, or an area thoroughly scouted as part of tactics roll (p. XX), the battle group can use the Outnumber Quality even if their Size is less than an enemy's.

Justifiable Precaution (Sidereal): Rather than granting a battle group access to an Outnumber Quality, the Sidereal teaches countermeasures. During a future battle, the group may retroactively reveal the Outnumber Quality they have learned to overcome, becoming immune to its effects.

Fearless Vanguard Technique

Prerequisites: War 3

When the Exalt leads her soldiers into combat, she reveals the hidden depths of their courage and resolve.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. During a dramatic scene, the Exalt's soldiers gain a two-success bonus to Resolve against social influence that would frighten, distract, or confuse them so long as she leads them. If she is present, when her battle groups make rout checks, she gains two successes to the roll, which does not apply to the dice limit. She reduces the penalty to flurry actions to command her troops by 1.

Brave Legionnaire Incitement (Solar) and **Death Before Dishonor** (Abyssal): The Exalt's soldiers treat their Major Virtue as Courage. The flurry penalty is reduced to 0.

Imperial Devotion (Dragon-Blooded): The Exalt's soldiers treat their Minor Virtue as Loyalty to their commander.

League of Iron Preparation

Prerequisites: War 3

The Exalt may quickly train even the most inveterate militia into a fighting force to be reckoned with.

Commit 2 motes for a scene. With a dramatic scene of drilling and instruction, a group of noncombatants or conscripts can be trained to fight competently; they become a battle group of conscripts (p. xx) with Size equal to the amount of people trained and Regular Drill. As an unrolled Recruitment venture, the Exalt may spend a week of downtime or one session involving a dramatic scene drilling a unit trained with this Charm, allowing her to select one of the following benefits. Each benefit provided by this Charm can only be applied to a given unit once:

- The conscripts become soldiers (p. xx).
- Gain one additional Outnumber Quality.
- Designate Loyalty to the Exalt, or a target of her choosing as their Minor Virtue.

Divine Army Supremacy (Upgrade, War 5, Essence 3): *The Exalt may effortlessly forge any army into a divine weapon with words of wisdom and exemplary demonstration.* Training a unit no longer uses one of the Exalt's ventures. She may also train units of spirits, animals or other non-humans, who retain their characteristics but improve their Drill like a regular unit.

Additional benefits may be selected:

- Gain one additional Outnumber Quality.
- Units with Regular Drill gain Veteran Drill. Units with Veteran Drill gain Elite Drill.
- Designate a specialized enemy, such as creatures of darkness (p. XX), the living, fae, or beastfolk. The unit increases their Drill by the Exalt's Essence against that type of foe.
- The unit no longer fears death. They possess perfect morale (p. xx). Requires at least Veteran Drill.

Tiger-Warrior Training Technique (Solar): *The Solar Exalted may transform the feeblest farmer or disloyal bandit into a fighting force to be feared.* With just a single scene, the Exalt may train a unit noncombatants or conscripts to

become soldiers. As additional benefits, the Exalt may select:

- Soldiers become champions with Veteran Drill.
- Gain one additional Outnumber Quality.
- Designate Loyalty to the Exalt, or a target of her choosing as their Major Virtue.

Hardened Killer Training Style (Abyssal): *The Abyssal tempers raw recruits in a crucible of brutality and hatred, refining them into incarnate weapons.* As Solar Mode. Alternatively, the Exalt may put soldiers through a scene of training they will not survive. They arise that night as war ghosts (p. XX) with a Major Virtue of Loyalty to the Exalt.

Lessons of the Winter Wolf (Lunar): *The Lunar's harsh training flenses weakness from her warriors.* Units of beastfolk may select one additional benefit from below when trained. As additional benefits, the Exalt may select:

- Soldiers gain Veteran Drill.
- Gain one additional Outnumber Quality.
- The unit may ignore up to three dice in penalties from deprivation or fatigue.

Auspicious Recruitment Drive (Sidereal): Fate leads soldiers to a Sidereal's command; an army can be easily mustered, though they may not always understand why they march.

Alternatively, the Exalt may recruit people to fight for a cause of her choice, calling together a unit of conscripts with Size equal to the lesser of her Essence or three and Regular Drill. The unit gains one benefit immediately, with the limitation that the Exalt may not designate herself as the subject of their Loyalty Virtue, she may only designate others, the specified cause, or one of her resplendent destinies. The unit gains a Minor Tie of Devotion to their cause; should their goal be achieved, they may disband.

Mouse Conquers the Lion

Prerequisites: War 4

Under the guidance of Exalted tactics, a dozen good soldiers may stem the tide of an enemy legion.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Exalt's battle group treats its Drill as 3 for the purposes of accuracy and damage. It also gains additional Outnumber Qualities of the commander's choice equal to her Essence. Enemies making **decisive** attacks against the battle group suffer a three-die penalty to their attacks and damage.

Panic the Wounded Beast

Prerequisites: Battalion Breaking-Shout, Essence 3

When the Exalt takes the battlefield, enemies flee and fall at every swipe of the sword.

Spend 2 motes on Step 7 of a **decisive** attack against a battle group. The group must make a Difficulty 5 route check, regardless of Drill.

Swinging the Scythe (Abyssal): If the battle group fails its route check, the Abyssal gains one Power, or two if the group had Elite Drill.

Rally the Broken Company

Prerequisites: War 3 or Presence 3

Like hope born amidst tumult, an Exalted commander may restore the fighting spirit of the weary, worn, and wounded.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt makes a reflexive route check on behalf of an allied battle group. Extra successes on the roll are added to the battle group's next attack as bonus dice.

Phoenix Banner Resurgence (Solar): The Solar may spend extra successes to heal the battle group, trading two successes for each level healed.

Auspicious Realignment (Sidereal): The Sidereal may set aside any number of extra successes. Instead of adding to the next attack, they are reflexively rolled the next time the group is forced to make a route check.

Underling-Promoting Practice

See p. XX

Worshipful Lackey Acquisition

See p. XX

ABYSSAL CHARMS

The magic of the Abyssal Exalted focuses on death, penalizing the enemy, and grievous damage.

ATHLETICS

Death Approaches

Prerequisites: Athletics 3

The deathknight bears down on her target with killing intent.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 when the Abyssal moves towards and attacks an enemy, including rushes. On a **withering** attack, the target loses Power equal to the extra successes rolled, rather than the Abyssal gaining Power. She gains 1 Power as though her Overwhelming were 1 and she'd missed, regardless of what weapon she uses. On a **decisive** attack, if she deals any damage to the target on Step 7, they also lose 3 Power.

Ebon Lightning Flash

Prerequisites: Athletics 5, Essence 2

The Abyssal's terrible speed leaves only corpses in her wake.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. Choose a target within the scene who has less Power than the Abyssal. Cross the distance to be within attack range instantly. A withering attack causes the target to lose 1 Power, even on miss, or her choice of 1 mote if she hits. A decisive attack adds her Essence in dice to damage on Step 5. This counts at the Abyssal's movement action for the round. This may be used during a clash.

AWARENESS

Corpse Questioning Technique

Prerequisites: Awareness 1

The Abyssal imbues a cadaver with their Essence, granting enough unlife to speak in

feeble gasps and answer whatever questions they wish.

Spend 1 mote. For one scene, a corpse at close range sits up and speaks, answering any question it knows the answer to honestly in the languages that it knew when alive, though lacking the deceased's personality. The more decayed a corpse is, the greater difficulty it will have answering questions; an ancient skull will only be able to answer yes-or-no questions, while a well-preserved corpse may provide more details.

Wickedness-Unveiling Method

Prerequisites: Awareness or Integrity 2

The deathknight's darkness calls to that of others. Death whispers their misdeeds into the Abyssal's ear.

The Exalt gains double 8s on a Read Intentions action. Each extra success up to the Exalt's Essence plus two allows them to ask one of the following questions:

- How many people have they killed?
- Who did they kill last?
- Who was the last person they saw die?
- Are they feeling guilty about something?
- Who is another murderer that they know?

At Storyteller's discretion, each question answered may reveal a single relevant Intimacy.

Soul-Invading Gaze (Upgrade, Awareness 3):

The whispers of the Neverborn invade the target's mind, binding their soul to the deathknight's for a moment. The Abyssal enters their mind, able to judge the contents of their heart. Spend one mote to Roll Force + Awareness against the target's Resolve. Against ghosts, gain three bonus dice. On success, the Exalt may do one of the following for each extra success: An automatically successful Read Intentions action, Reveal one Minor Intimacy relevant to the Exalt's interests, or discern one of the target's Virtues. For two extra successes,

the Exalt may reveal one Major Intimacy instead of a Minor.

The Exalt may choose whether their presence in the target's mind is subtle or obvious.

Guilt's Spectral Wake (Upgrade, Awareness 4): *The scent of death clings to the living. Killers are revealed by the ghosts in their wake.* Spend 1 mote. Gain double 8s on an Awareness or Integrity roll to locate a concealed killer, such as a soldier, a slave overseer, or a serial killer.

Against mass murderers, generals, or the rulers of warring principalities, gain double 7s instead.

Ghostly Sentinel Technique

Prerequisites: Awareness 4, Essence 2

Wraiths of smoke and spectral metal emerge from the deathknight's outstretched fingertips to watch over distance locations.

Commit up to 3 motes. For each mote, a single wraith appears at close range. The Exalt may see through the wraiths using her senses wherever they are present as if she were present herself, and may use her Awareness Charms through them. She may ignore vision-based penalties to her senses if at least one wraith is not suffering from them.

The wraiths are naturally immaterial, possess a single health level and count as Extras. Should the Exalt conceal herself using stealth, the wraiths are also concealed against enemies who can perceive them. Wraiths can move one range band as their reflexive movement action on the Exalt's turn. They cannot move beyond long range of the Exalt.

Roving Shadow Scouts (Upgrade, Essence 4): The wraiths persist no matter their distance from the Exalt, though moving an individual wraith beyond long range requires the Exalt to use their reflexive movement action.

CLOSE COMBAT

Artful Maiming Onslaught

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2

The Abyssal elevates the infliction of pain to an art form. Each strike leaves a grievous wound that howls with pain for the rest of the battle.

Spend 1 mote and 1 Power on Step 1. A successful **decisive** attack leaves a painful, scarring wound that inflicts a one-success penalty to all actions for the rest of the scene. This stacks up to three times. These count as wound penalties for the purposes of other effects. Only the Exalted heal these scars naturally over time. This may be used during a clash. Gain an additional anima.

Soul-Cleaving Wound (Upgrade, Essence 4): The deathknight's weapon cleaves off part of their foe's soul with a flash of sickly green pyreflame. Victims waste away from spiritual lack. Spend 1 mote and 5 Anima. A successful **decisive** attack adds a five-success bonus to damage if the target does not accept a Dramatic Injury reflecting the wound to their soul. If accepted, in addition to the usual effects, their Essence score is lowered by 1 while the wound heals. If the target's Essence score is lowered to zero, they are rendered comatose and will not heal without the intervention of magic.

Iron Maiden's Kiss

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 3

The Abyssal encases an enemy in a suit of armor forged from screaming souls. Lined with spikes, the phantasmal armor seals shut around the enemy, impaling him. Those slain become grim statues of smoke and metal, or arise as corpse-cataphracts to serve the deathknight.

Spend 2 motes on Step 1. The Exalt makes a Knockout gambit, replacing its effects with the following. She may spend Anima instead of Power on this gambit. Trap the target in a suit of armor for the duration equal to extra successes. For each turn he remains encased in the armor, he suffers two aggravated damage. When the gambit ends, the target must break free from the armor with a simple Force + Physique action

at Difficulty 7. Allies may attempt to sunder the armor at the same difficulty. He may try to move or attack while encased, but at a success penalty equal to the Exalt's Essence. If the Exalt's Essence is equal to or greater than the target, and he dies, the Exalt may resurrect him as a war ghost (p. xx) without the Immaterial tag. Those that swear fealty to the Exalt gain a major tie of loyalty and the Elite tag.

Soul-Drinking Bite

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2

The Abyssal bares fanged teeth to feast upon her victim's lifeblood.

Spend one mote on Step 3 on a **decisive** attack while in a grapple. The attack inflicts two additional dice of damage and causes the target to lose motes equal to the damage suffered. The

Abyssal gains the stolen motes at the same amount up to a limit of her Essence. The Exalt gains one Anima.

Outside of combat, feeding on a willing or helpless victim confers a single mote and inflicts Essence damage. If the Exalt needs sustenance, she may treat feeding in this manner as a full meal and drink.

Blood-Drinking Palm (Upgrade, Essence 2): *The deathknights blows reap a crimson bounty absorbed by her skin.* Pay 1 Power in addition to use Soul-Drinking Bite on an unarmed attack. This may be used during a clash.

Void Avatar Embodiment

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 5

The Abyssal attunes her mind and Essence to oblivion. Necrotic flames wreath her body as she becomes a black silhouette of the void.

Commit three motes at Active Anima. For the rest of the scene, the Exalt doubles 9s on movement and combat actions. Once per round, the Exalt may respond to an attack with a clash without using her action. Success allows her to reflexively move to the range band her

opponent occupies in a flash of Essence. She adds three to her Hardness for the Charm's duration. At the start of each round, gain one Anima. Living enemy battle groups that perceive the Exalt must immediately check for rout with difficulty increased by two, and trivial opponents are compelled to flee.

CRAFT

All-Consuming Entropy Attack

Prerequisites: Craft 3

With a touch, the Abyssal suffuses an object with necrotic Essence. Cracks appear along the surface, limned in ghostly light as the object disintegrates in a flash. Nothing is left behind but acrid dust and memories.

Spend 1 mote. A hand-held mundane object or one of similar size is immediately destroyed. If held or worn by another character, the Exalt must succeed on a Disarm gambit to activate this Charm. For larger or more complex objects, the Exalt may roll Force + Craft at Difficulty 5 to destroy them.

Annihilating Gaze (Upgrade, Essence 3): This Charm can be used on an object the Exalt perceives. The target cannot apply their defense against the Disarm gambit. The Exalt may commit an additional mote to suspend the destruction of an object until they release commitment.

Haunting Monumental Artifice

Prerequisites: Craft 2, Essence 2

Imbued with deathly Essence, necklaces and monuments attract the attention of the dead. Shades may touch these trinkets as if they were still alive, and dwell within buildings to acquire physical form once night falls.

Spend one mote while making an object or completing a mundane Crafting venture. The result is imbued with haunting deathly Essence that attracts the undead to its location. Personal-scale mundane items may be

interacted with by ghosts as if they were materialized. Alternatively, a ghost may conceal herself within the object, even from beings able to perceive immaterial spirits.

Buildings, boats, and similar large-scale objects constructed using this Charm may treat their interiors like shadowlands, allowing ghosts to materialized on the premises at night.

EMBASSY

Ghost-Emperor Edict

Prerequisites: Embassy 3 or Presence 3

The Abyssal may proclaim edicts empowered by the most ancient laws of the Underworld, binding spectral nations and afterlives to their will.

Commit 1 mote. Undertake a venture to alter the mystical laws of the Underworld that a particular group must obey. Success allows the Exalt to create a law which all targets are compelled to follow, suffering the effects of an Eclipse oath (p. xx) if they knowingly violate the law. Laws might include offering hospitality to guests, never striking an enemy without giving them warning, always walking on the left side of the road, etc.

Killing Words Technique

Prerequisites: Embassy or Presence 4, Essence 2

The Abyssal's words carry the entropic power of the void itself. Those who are moved by their words either suffer a subtle, life-draining weakness or spectacular unnatural stigmata that brings death.

Spend 1 mote. This Charm supplements a written or spoken influence, granting double 9s. If successful, the target of the influence must accept either five health levels of damage or a Dramatic Injury reflecting the Exalt's choice of unnatural withering or violent stigmata. Trivial targets may be slain outright. Once per story, unless reset by accomplishing a legendary social goal as a consequence of this Charm.

Soul-Flaying Gaze (Upgrade, Embassy or Presence 5): *The deathknight's gaze alone may slay mortals.* The Exalt gains double 8s and may supplement non-verbal social influence with this Charm.

Reverent Mortuary Witness

Prerequisites: Embassy or Presence 3

Those who pray to the deathknight for guidance may find their prayers answered by a spectral vision or disembodied voice.

Commit 1 mote while present in a place of death. When a worshipper prays to her, the Exalt may visit them as a spectral apparition or as a disembodied voice, able to see, hear and speak as if physically present in the scene. The Exalt may also use this Charm to communicate with her Followers or Command, if she has them. In disembodied form, the Exalt may float up to one range band off the ground, and may be perceived and attacked through magic such as Spirit- Cutting Glance (p. xx), even if disembodied. If the Exalt's real body is attacked, this Charm ends immediately.

Places of Death

Graveyards, battlefields, and sites of mass death all count as places of death. Abyssal manses, demesnes, shadowlands, and the Underworld likewise count.

INTEGRITY

Murder-Saint Dedication

Prerequisites: Integrity 1

The Abyssal hardens her soul against the suffering of the living. She is dedicated to her grim cause.

The Exalt increases her Resolve by two against social influence to instill or strength positive Ties to the living, or to dissuade her from violence against them.

Wickedness-Unveiling Method

See p. XX

NAVIGATE

Stepping Outside Existence

Prerequisites: Navigate 4, Essence 3

The deathknight rips open a vortex of darkness that allows them to travel through the mad somnolence of dead titans to a location remembered by the Abyssal and the Neverborn.

Spend 3 motes. The Exalt creates a portal which they may enter using a movement action, which then immediately disappears. The Exalt reappears at a location they have previously observed nearby (such as a neighboring town, or location of interest). This allows her to travel short distances without need for a venture. During travel they experience disturbing visions and disembodiment, and must roll Fortitude + Integrity against difficulty 3. Failure means the Exalt is disturbed by the visions they witnessed, suffering an emotional three-success penalty to social rolls until the next night.

Journey into Nightmares (Upgrade, Essence 5):

The Abyssal may hold the portal open for allies for up to three turns, who must enter before they do, appearing at the Abyssal's destination. While travelling, living allies must make a Fortitude + Integrity roll against difficulty 7; the deathknight may spend a mote to exempt her Circlemates or allies with an Intimacy to her, and another mote to exempt everyone else. Failure means they must accept a Dramatic Injury representing sanity-rending visions experienced on the journey. The dead must make the same roll as the Abyssal.

Unhallowed Ghost Ship

Prerequisites: Navigate 2

The deathknight calls forth waterlogged wraiths to claim a vessel as her flagship.

Spend one mote while aboard a ship to claim it as the Exalt's own. She may inflict a one-die penalty on anyone who does not have her permission to be aboard. Spectral sailors may serve as her crew in place of the living. They are

immaterial but may interact with the ship to crew it as if materialized.

Mist-Veiled Galleon (Upgrade, Essence 2): *The Abyssal calls forth a chilled cloud of fog to surround her vessel for miles. Commit one mote for a scene to surround the Exalt's vessel with a supernatural mist that inflicts a three-die penalty to vision-based rolls such as Awareness and Navigate at sea.*

Seeking Bleak Harbor (Upgrade, Navigate 5, Essence 3): *The Abyssal may sail Creation's waters following strange currents and dark omens to the bleak harbors of the Underworld. Spend one mote while commanding a ship, the Exalt makes a Finesse + Navigate roll at difficulty 7. On success, the ship may travel to the Underworld, appearing at a point of safe harbor. If the Exalt possesses a positive tie towards a particular place, they may choose to arrive there. If not, the destination is determined by the Storyteller.*

PERFORMANCE

Elegy for the Fallen

Prerequisites: Performance 2

The Abyssal may lead others in a night-time ceremony to honor the dead. This practice may take the form of high ritual, a mournful song or dance, or even a celebratory wake.

Commit 1 mote at night or in a place of death. The Exalt leads a ceremony to honor an individual ghost or a community of ghosts with a group of revelers using a dramatic scene. The ghost increases their pools by three dice and may utilize the Abyssal's Charms. The Abyssal pays the mote cost for the Charms as normal. The celebration must last at least an hour of downtime.

Withering Dirge

Prerequisites: Performance 5, Essence 3

The Abyssal channels deathly Essence into a performance so powerful it may draw the souls

of the living from their bodies. Whether a haunting, beautiful requiem or terrible, discordant screaming, the music leaves no physical marks on those it slays.

Commit 1 mote. For one song, the Exalt makes a Finesse + Performance roll against the Resolve of all listeners, modified by Intimacies and Virtues as normal depending on the content of her song. Rather than persuade the listeners to action, success inflicts one health level of damage each turn the Abyssal performs until the target is Incapacitated. Trivial characters affected die.

Those affected by the song are unable to take any action but listen to the song. Those who resist the song suffer a three-success fatigue penalty as a soul-wearying lethargy overcomes them.

Striking the Abyssal brings an end to this Charm. This is a psyche effect and may only be used once per scene.

PHYSIQUE

Death Needs Nothing

Prerequisites: Physique 5

The Abyssal may ignore the pang of hunger and the siren call of sleep, for they no longer need such things in service of death.

The Exalt does not need to sleep, eat or drink at all, and ignores all penalties resulting from fatigue or deprivation. If she leverages her unliving state to provoke Cruel Banquet, she also gains 1 anima.

Breathless Ghost Emulation (Upgrade, Essence 3): *Like a ghost, the deathknight respire only Essence, transcending the need for air altogether.* The Abyssal does not need to breathe and may ignore suffocation, drowning, or any other detrimental effects from breathing or lack thereof.

Cadaverous Torpor Technique

Prerequisites: Physique 5, Essence 2

The Abyssal Exalted may reach the brink of death, only to return. Death will not come until their oath is fulfilled.

If Incapacitated or opting to receive a Dramatic Injury, spend 1 mote. The Exalt appears as if dead, slain by whatever attack struck them. Only magical senses such as All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight (p. XX) may detect that the Exalt is still alive, contested by their Finesse + Physique. The Exalt must choose a condition under which to revive from this state, such as by midnight, or in the presence of someone they hold a Tie towards, or being delivered to a location they've been to previously. If Incapacitated, they revive with health levels equal to the Exalt's Essence.

Mandate of Death (Upgrade, Essence 4): *Death offers no release for the Abyssal, who disappears into a rush of black mist when struck by the fatal blow.* If the Charm is activated when Incapacitated, the Exalt may choose to disappear, reforming the next session in the nearest place of death. If attuned to an Abyssal-aspected manse or demesne, the Abyssal may choose to reform there regardless of distance, and does so in the next scene. Effects such as Ghost-Eating Technique ignore this Charm, permanently slaying the Exalt.

PRESENCE

Corpse-Commanding Attitude

Prerequisites: Presence 3

All dead things must answer to Death's Lawgivers.

Spend 1 mote. As a simple action, reanimate a corpse within close range as one of the walking dead (p. xx) with a Defining Tie of obedience to the Exalt which cannot be weakened.

Alternatively, spend 1 mote to add the higher of Essence or three dice to social influence with an undead target. Social influence enhanced by this Charm may affect mindless undead.

Death-Pact Ascension

Prerequisites: Presence 4, Essence 2

The Abyssal may offer ascension to the ranks of the honored dead. Those who die in such a pact are assured ghostly existence and will not pass into Lethe unless the deathknight wills it.

Spend 1 mote. If successfully persuaded to undertake a task, the target is guaranteed to leave behind a ghost should they die while completing it. Upon death, the target becomes a nemissary (p. xx) with a Minor Tie of loyalty to the Exalt. As long as this tie is maintained, the ghost cannot be permanently killed, resurrecting after a period of time as if sustained by prayer. Effects

such as Ghost-Eating Technique (p. XX) or Gentle Call of Lethe (p. XX) ignore this Charm. The Exalt may reflexively end this effect at any time. Suicidal tasks are valid targets for this Charm.

Ghost-Emperor Edict

See p. XX

Killing Words Technique

See p. XX

Reverent Mortuary Witness

See p. XX

Skeleton-Summoning Gesture

Prerequisites: Presence 2 or War 2

The Abyssal channels a bolt of dark Essence into the ground or a nearby corpse, raising it as one of the walking dead, swollen with the deathknight's power.

Spend 1 mote. If a corpse is available, it is raised as one of the walking dead (p. xx). It gains the Elite tag for the duration of the scene but persists indefinitely beyond the scene. Afterward, it becomes trivial.

RANGED COMBAT

First Blood Impulse

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 1

Seizing the slightest moment of hesitation, the Abyssal fires a shot or hurls her weapon to strike down unwary foes.

Spend 1 mote when Join Battle is rolled. The Abyssal gains 1 Power and acts first, regardless of the results of any Join Battle Roll. If another player's character also has an ability to act first, they should agree out of character on who takes the first action. The Abyssal gains the Power by using this Charm regardless. During an ambush, increase the Accuracy and Overwhelming value of her weapon by one. Gain an additional anima.

Hundred Paces Bite

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3

The Abyssal's attack devours her target's energy and life-force.

Spend 1 mote on Step 5. On a **decisive** attack, if she deals any damage, she may treat this attack as a valid action for **Cruel Banquet** (p. XX). Alternatively, she may choose to force the target to lose a number of Power equal to the damage rolled before weapon damage successes are applied. She may not choose both.

SAGACITY

Life-Mocking Assembly

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3 or War 3

The Abyssal performs grisly surgeries to infuse the Essence meridians of a collection of corpses with the semblance of life, raising them as loyal undead servants.

Spend 1 mote. Roll Force + Sagacity; for every two successes the Abyssal may raise a battlegroup of walking dead (p. xx), up to the maximum of corpses available. Treat this process as a venture with an interval of two sessions for each point of (Size). If raising a single corpse, the mote is committed, and the process takes one scene.

Corpse-Beast Revivification (Upgrade, Sagacity 4): This Charm may be used on animal corpses.

Reanimated animals gain the Undead and Mindless tags. If the animal possesses the Legendary Size tag, the process takes a session.

Pestilence-Bearing Touch

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Abyssal may wield disease as others wield blades, beginning their spread with but a simple touch.

Spend 1 mote. The next person the Exalt touches is exposed to a mundane disease as if they'd been infected naturally at Major Intensity. The Exalt selects a particular mundane disease which becomes their signature, such as Cholera or the Plague, though they may choose to infect their target with any disease they have cured using Plague-Halting Gesture.

Plague Knows It's Master (Upgrade, Sagacity 4):

The Exalt may spread even supernatural diseases they have encountered and cured. They may ignore all but the penalties afflicted by supernatural diseases.

STEALTH

Stifled Cry Exercise

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

The deathknight smothers her victim's voice and struggle in deathly Essence so that none hear his slaughter.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. As long as the Exalt's target remains within medium range, he cannot speak or make any other noise, and the sounds of their combat are muffled, inflicting a three-success penalty on hearing-based rolls to perceive the combat. This Charm is ineffective against targets with an Essence score greater than the Exalt's.

Atrocity Without Witness (Upgrade, Essence 2):

The Abyssal is a walking nightmare that should not be. No entreaty can convince bystanders to see what is happening before them. If used in an ambush, make a Force + Presence roll against the target's Resolve. On success, everyone at

short range freezes, unable to process what is happening or lend their aid. At the end of the scene or when the effect is ended, they regain consciousness, with no memory of what transpired.

Ineffective against targets with an Essence score greater than the Exalt's.

Shadow Cloak Technique

Prerequisites: Stealth 2

The Abyssal may call upon the shadows themselves to cloak their movement.

Commit 1 mote. Vision-based rolls to perceive the Exalt suffer a three-success penalty. In deep shadows, at night or in the Underworld, increase the penalty by two and extend the effect to everything out to short range.

WAR

Arise and Slaughter

Prerequisites: War 4

The Abyssal raises their hand skyward, causing tendrils of ebon lightning to strike the ground. Corpses struck rise or emerge from the earth to reinforce the deathknight.

Commit 1 mote. If there are corpses buried in the ground or slaughtered on the battlefield, Roll Force + War. Success creates a Size 1 battlegroup of walking dead (p. XX) at out to short range with an additional point of (Size) for every two successes on activation. Alternatively, heal one health level of damage inflicted on a battlegroup of walking dead within short range for every two successes rolled. If the battlefield is littered with corpses to reanimate, gain two automatic successes. These additional walking dead remain for the scene before falling inanimate.

The Risen Hunger (Upgrade, War 5): Whenever the walking dead inflict two damage with an attack, heal one health level. If they have the opportunity to consume the corpses of their enemies, the battlegroup may persist indefinitely after commitment ends.

Shadowed Warfare Methodology

Prerequisites: War 2

The Abyssal warps the Essence of the battlefield into that of death, allowing their spectral armies and sorceries to manifest as if in their native shadowlands. The twilight nature of the land is demoralizing to even the fiercest enemies.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt and their allies to treat the entire battlefield as a shadowland for the duration of the battle for the purpose of materializing and Charms and creates a Demoralize Troops scene. At night, in shadowlands or the Underworld, the roll during that scene automatically succeeds unless contested by magic.

Skeleton-Summoning Gesture

See p. XX

ALCHEMICAL CHARMS

Alchemicals are built to protect their communities. They are the champions of those they have sworn their loyalties to. Whenever an Alchemical uses a Charm for the benefit of her community (as defined by **Community Spirit**, p. XX), she gains 1 anima.

MECHANICAL CUSTOMIZATION

Alchemicals have no restrictions on how many Charms they can learn at any given time. However, she may only have one manifested Evocation on her person at a time as per Living Artifact (p. XX). This requires the character to participate in the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX) to exchange. As stated in Chapter 2 (p. XX), the Alchemical's Charms are physical manifestations and make her obviously a magical thing. Once per story when she opts into the Rite of Reconfiguration, she may

exchange any Charm she knows for a new Charm with similar prerequisites without needing to accomplish a Minor Milestone.

GENERAL

Augmented Attribute

Prerequisites: Any Excellency

Improvements to the Exalt's mind and body allow her to think and move faster than other members of the populat. Her muscles are stronger, her convictions are unshakeable. She moves with utmost grace in her actions and interactions. Her agile mind makes connections that would take mundane mortals weeks, or even years.

Each purchase of this Charm upgrades a single Attribute (Force, Finesse, or Fortitude). On Step 1, the Alchemical treats the relevant Attribute as one higher when adding dice with an Excellency, to a maximum of five dice. At Essence 2, she gains double-9s on rolls involving her chosen attribute whenever she uses the mode on her Excellency.

Portable Utility Compartment

Prerequisites: Any Augmented Attribute

The Exalt is never without the tools of her trade, whether they are hammers and nails, pen and ink, or knives and poisons. Her body has been modified to store them in a limb or within her torso, so they're always available.

Spend 1 mote. A compartment opens on the Exalt's body, and any mundane tools she needs are within. The Storyteller has the final say over what is reasonable.

Out of combat, this Charm adds two automatic successes to a related roll.

In combat, this Charm supplements a Build Power action, adding 2 Power to the result of the roll.

FINESSE

Artificer's Keen Eye

Prerequisites: Finesse 2

As created beings themselves, Alchemicals strive for perfection in their own handiwork. Items the

Alchemical creates as part of a venture count as exceptional equipment (p. XX).

At Finesse 3, you may purchase this Charm a second time to add an additional equipment tag (p. XX) of your choice to weapons or armor the Alchemical creates.

Battle Form Mimicry

Prerequisites: Finesse 5, Essence 2

The Exalt mimics her opponent's movements, using his own fighting tricks against him.

Commit 1 mote. When the Exalt's target uses a Charm to attack her, she may temporarily learn that Charm. Until the fight ends, she may spend 1 Anima plus the Charm's cost to use it on the appropriate Combat Step.

Better Than New

Prerequisites: Artificer's Keen Eye, Finesse 3

The Alchemical restores damaged items to their original state, and adds an improvement of her own.

Gain two bonus successes on a successful roll to repair an item. These successes may be combined with other extra successes to add a new advantage to the object. When the Alchemical takes advantage of this, gain 1 anima.

Bone-and-Steel Destruction

Prerequisites: Efficient Strike Calibration

The Alchemical calculates how much pressure it takes to break a bone and where to hit a breastplate so it will shatter.

Spend 2 motes on Step 3. Gain 2 extra Power on a successful **withering** attack, or halve the target's soak (round up) on a **decisive** attack. For a number of rounds equal to the Alchemical's Essence, reduce the target's Soak by two, reflecting a broken bone or damaged armor.

Contingency Preparation Axiom

Prerequisites: Efficient Planning Matrix, Essence 2

The Exalt maps out all possible problems and complications. When one rears its head, she recalibrates her plan with ease.

Spend 2 motes. When the Alchemical fails a roll, she may immediately make a second attempt at achieving her goal using a different dice pool, signifying a different approach to the problem.

This *must* use a different Ability. If this Charm is used in Combat, it must be used on Step 3, and resets the action back to Step 1. She may use new Charms to modify this new action, but any motes spent on other effects up to Step 3 are expended.

Effective Leadership Algorithm

Prerequisites: Finesse 4

The Exalt recognizes leadership capabilities and uplifts those who will get things done. She analyzes the data and brings together those with the greatest potential.

Commit 2 motes. To enhance a venture, the Exalt spends a day of downtime observing operations within an organization. She processes the data she collects and chooses a small team of the best candidates. These aren't necessarily those in the highest positions — diligent workers, innovative newcomers, and lifelong employees may all be the ideal fit. Until the motes are withdrawn, treat the team as the Exalt's Followers (see **Merits**, p. XX) with a rating equal to her Essence who will carry out tasks relating to their organization at the Alchemical's command.

Once per project, this team can reduce the project's time scale by one degree.

Efficient Planning Matrix

Prerequisites: Finesse 2

The Exalt oversees all facets of a plan and makes adjustments to produce the best results in the shortest amount of time.

Spend 1 mote. When the Alchemical's undertakes a venture, the player may either

reduce the number of obstacles needed to successfully complete the project by one or shorten the time scale of the next interval. The Storyteller has the final say over how much time this Charm removes from the project, or what requirements have been met.

Fine-Tuning

Prerequisites: Finesse 2

The Exalt makes small adjustments and refinements, ensuring that all components are working at their optimum capacity.

Add two bonus successes to a Prepare Build Power action as the Alchemical double checks her or her allies' equipment. Gain 1 anima when the Exalt benefits from this Charm.

Phase Shifting Apparatus

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Exalt examines the Essence around her and changes the density of her body in relation to it.

Spend 1 mote. On Step 4 of a combat action, after resolving the attack roll, the Exalt reflexively moves one range band in any direction, regardless of any other movement taken this turn. This movement happens as though the Exalt were immaterial — passing through walls, traps, and hazards alike with no damage to herself. While this does not cause the attack to miss, it allows the Alchemical to set up for another attack, break line of sight with her attackers, or to flee the scene.

The Alchemical may also use this Charm out of combat, committing 1 mote to turn immaterial for a scene. While in this state, she may pass through mundane barriers no more than two feet thick. She may end the effect at will.

At Essence 3, you may buy this Charm a second time. The Exalt doubles 9s on clashes and rolls to mitigate the damage from an environmental hazard or falling.

Subtle Concept Introduction Method

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Exalt plants seeds of an idea in her opponent's mind. So subtle are her suggestions and so in-keeping with the opponent's own beliefs that, when it begins to bloom, the opponent thinks the idea was his own.

Spend 1 mote. The Storyteller reveals the target's Major Virtue. Double 9s on a subsequent social action to instill or persuade the opponent.

FORCE

Advisor's Sage Instruction

Prerequisites: Perfected Union Patterning, Force 4

When an organization's leadership steps down a poorly-chosen path, it is the Exalt's duty to steer them back onto the correct one.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt substitutes her own agenda for that of the group she's advising. Extras in the scene automatically accept her authority. Add the Alchemical's Essence in dice to social action rolls to persuade non-trivial characters to adopt her cause as their own, doubling 8s. Gain an additional anima.

Celestial Overseer Concordat

Prerequisites: Force 2

The Machine-God charged the Alchemicals with watching over all Exalts, everywhere. They stand vigil over the worlds his hands helped shape, and all the creatures therein.

Spend 1 mote. The Alchemical is aware of the nature of other beings in medium range of herself. These may be mortals, spirits, Fair Folk, gods, other Exalts, and so on. If other Exalts are present, she is aware of what kind of Exalt they are. She may ask up to her Essence in questions about their presence in the scene, including:

- What is their purpose here?
- Are they attempting to conceal their nature?
- Is the person they're speaking with aware of who they are?
- Does their business interfere with my own?

Destiny-Proclaiming Canticle

Prerequisites: Celestial Overseer Concordat, Force 4

The Machine-God's body hums with insight and probability. The Alchemical draws melodies out of its cacophony, their songs echoing throughout the wild places.

The Exalt's Starmetal circuitry helps them to calculate a probable future. Spend 1 mote to weave that prediction into another character's fate. This takes the form of a short statement which must be fulfilled during the current chapter, though the Storyteller has the final say over the statement and its implementation.

If this Charm is used on another player's character, that player may spend Stunt Dice to fulfill the prophecy at a convenient moment. For example, if the Adamant predicted "You will make a powerful ally," her Jade companion might spend her Stunt Dice on a Dramatic Edit to insert a scene where a person she helped out turns out to be the satrap's trusted advisor. Whenever the Exalt or her companions spend the Stunt Dice to make a prophecy come to pass, both the Alchemical and the recipient gain 1 anima.

Exhaustive Interrogation Method

Prerequisites: Force 2

Determined to eliminate inefficiencies, the Exalt draws the truth out of her target.

Spend 1 mote. Double 8s on Read Intentions rolls when questioning a character. For each extra success, the character must answer one question with complete honesty.

Insightful Managerial Aptitude

Prerequisites: Force 2

The Exalt recognizes the strengths and abilities of the workers she leads. She efficiently assigns people to the jobs they're best suited for, and watches as they excel.

Commit 1 mote. The Alchemical names a goal she and her allies are working towards in the immediate scene. For the duration of the scene, reduce the Difficulty of related rolls by one.

Lifesign Detecting Scan

Prerequisites: Force 2 or Fortitude 2

The Exalt is a superior tracker. Clever hiding places and evasion tactics don't fool her.

Spend 1 mote. The Alchemical scans an area out to medium range, looking for her target. She learns their location and distance from her, even if the target is behind cover. If the target is perfectly concealed, gain two bonus successes on an opposed roll to detect him.

Machine-God Protector Mode

Prerequisites: Celestial Overseer Concordat, Battle Form Mimicry, Essence 3

The Alchemical guards the far edges of their domain, striking down all who would harm Autochthon and his companions.

Spend 3 Anima. Gain her Essence in Power after a successful **withering** attack. The Exalt may make a second attack against the same target. This counts as the character's flurry for the turn.

Morale Building Declaration

Prerequisites: Insightful Managerial Aptitude, Force 4

When the job seems impossible, the Alchemical reminds their teams they will persevere through strength, skill, and competence.

Spend 1 mote. Up to Essence people, including the Exalt, gain two bonus dice on rolls to Build Power for the duration of the scene. These don't have to be the same Build Power action for everyone. Outside of combat, this Charm grants two bonus successes on actions, including projects, and may exceed the success limit by up to two. Gain an additional anima.

Omnipresent Guardian Directive

Prerequisites: Force 3

When the Exalt assembles a militia to defend their community, it is the Exalt's job to defend the defenders.

Spend 1 mote. When a battle group the Alchemical is leading is the target of a successful attack, activate this Charm to transfer damage to the Exalt instead.

Perfected Union Patterning

Prerequisites: Priority-Discerning Protocol

The Exalt proposes a logical course of action, tailored to appeal to those beliefs her targets hold dear.

Spend 1 mote. Using what she knows of her target's Intimacies and Virtues, the Exalt suggests a plan. Double 9s on rolls to persuade targets to follow her recommendations.

Priority-Discerning Protocol

Prerequisites: Force 2

Through careful analysis of conversations, actions, and responses to others, the Exalt understands her targets' ambitions and desires.

Spend 1 mote. When speaking to people in positions of power, the Exalt gets a sense of their goals and priorities concerning their organization. Name up to her Essence in targets. The Storyteller must reveal those targets' Intimacies towards the group. This may be a one-word description ("loyalty," "obligation," "disdain," etc.), or a statement ("The Blue Crane Syndicate must prosper.")

Relentless Tracking Protocol

Prerequisites: Lifesign Detecting Scan, Force 3 or Fortitude 3

Once the Exalt is locked on to her target, nothing will stop her from hunting him down.

Commit 1 mote. While the Alchemical is engaged in a venture to track the target, she automatically knows her target's location and direction at the start of each interval. While pursuing her quarry, needing food or rest aren't obstacles the Exalt faces.

Truth-and-Lies Detection

Prerequisites: Force 2

By observing the slightest change in her target's posture and identifying fleeting changes in his expression, the Exalt learns more than her opponent realizes he's let on.

Commit 1 mote. For the duration of the scene, the player may ask whether a Storyteller character's statements are true or false, or what emotion their body language conveys. The Storyteller must answer truthfully.

FORTITUDE

Body Reweaving Matrix

Prerequisites: Reinforced Chassis, Fortitude 4, Essence 2

Tiny, spider-like automatons swarm over the Alchemical's wound, patching and repairing the damage.

Heal 1 Health Level per mote spent, up to the Exalt's Essence plus Fortitude. This is a simple action and cannot be flurried. If a character is incapacitated, she may instead commit 1 mote and generate 2 Power per turn which counts towards the total required to return to the fight.

Identity Obfuscation Matrix

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Exalt's mission requires him to move unidentified through the city. His implants rearrange his features, making him unrecognizable and unremarkable to passers-by.

Commit 1 mote. The Alchemical's appearance changes completely, as dictated by the player. If the character has had upgrades like an extra limb or spider-like legs that are harder to hide, she must commit 2 motes to conceal these features.

A second purchase of this Charm allows the character to spend 1 mote to perfectly mimic another character's voice and inflection.

Lifesign Detecting Scan

See p. XX

Material Resistance Procedure

Prerequisites: Fortitude 2

The magical materials enhancing the Alchemical's body protect her from hazards and attacks based on those same metals and elements.

Spend 1 mote. Add the Alchemical's Essence to Soak against attacks from weapons made of a magical material matching the Exalt's Caste.

Elemental Defense Augmentation (Jade Caste):

Gain Soak against attacks based on the element associated with the Exalt's color of jade: blue for air, white for earth, red for fire, black for water and green for wood.

The Machine-God's Defenders (Adamant Caste): When this Charm is invoked, the Adamant Caste Alchemical declares which magical material to apply its effects to.

Outlier Analysis Method

Prerequisites: Fortitude 2

The Alchemical's synapses make her an innovative and flexible thinker. She considers solutions others dismiss or deem improbable, and find a way to make them work.

Gain two additional Stunt Dice for the Exalt to apply to an Awareness, Embassy, or Sagacity roll where she's solving a problem or applying logic. For example, she may be trying to find a way past a physical barrier with no obvious openings, or seeking a way to bring two feuding families to the negotiating table. If the Exalt gifts these additional stunt dice to a Circlemate or member of her community assisting with the problem or task at hand, gain 1 anima.

Optical Shroud

Prerequisites: Fortitude 2

The Exalt's implants bend light around her, hiding her from view.

Commit 1 mote. The Alchemical disappears from view and gains two automatic successes on Stealth rolls. She cannot be detected by sight-based means. If she makes noise or touches items in the scene, others may be alerted to her presence. This effect lasts for the scene or until the character releases the mote.

Reinforced Chassis

Prerequisites: Fortitude 2

Working with the populat, Alchemicals select hardier upgrades and implants to lead and defend the people in their charge.

Spend 1 mote. On Step 2, add two to the Alchemical's Hardness. If this makes the target unable to make a **decisive** attack, because their Power is now lower than the Exalt's Hardness, they must switch to a **withering** attack instead.

Relentless Tracking Protocol

See p. XX

Terraforming Protocol

Prerequisites: Material Resistance Procedure

The Exalt alters her immediate environment, making the terrain more favorable to herself or hazardous to her enemies.

Spend 1 mote. Ignore penalties imposed by an environmental hazard or difficult terrain for her Essence in rounds.

Alternatively, the Alchemical may commit 1 mote to impose an environmental hazard or difficult terrain in close range of their opponent.

Verbatim Recall

Prerequisites: Fortitude 2

Nothing escapes the Exalt's notice. Every word is evidence.

Spend 1 mote. The Alchemical can not only recall a conversation exactly, she can also repeat it word-for-word, perfectly mimicking the participants' voices and inflections. This affords the Exalt her Fortitude in automatic successes where remembering precise details or

mimicking a specific character would apply. This bonus may exceed the usual limit by a margin of two.

DRAGON-BLOODED CHARMS

Due to the nature of their Essence, Dragon-Blooded Charms have two special cases. First, each Exalt benefits from **elemental aura** while their anima is active. Second, some charms have **hearthmate** effects which apply to any other Dragon-Blood who has an Intimacy to the character forged via Oath of the Ten Thousand Dragons (p. XX).

ELEMENTAL AURA

While the Exalt is in Active anima, she is considered to be in the elemental aura corresponding with her aspect. To enter the elemental aura of a differing element, the Exalt must spend an action attuning her Essence to another element by being close to it: she might touch an open flame, wrap herself in leaves, meditate upon a piece of stone, submerge herself in water, or expose herself to the air. Having done so, she may use this element's aura until the end of the scene, or until she reaches Iconic anima — at which point she may only access the aura of her natural element. Some Charms may have special functions that allow the Dragon-Blooded to switch without communing with the world. Whenever a Dragon-Blooded uses a Charm's special effect to switch to a different Aura, she gains an additional point of anima.

ATHLETICS

Dragon Surmounts the Waterfall

Prerequisites: Athletics 3

The Dragon-Blooded is a legendary swimmer, capable of incredible grace and movement while submerged.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. While this Charm is active, the Exalt may take normal movement actions while submerged. She may use her

reflexive movement action to swim without needing

to roll, but may rush and sprint under water without issue. She may also apply any movement Charm to submerged movement. This does not afford her any protections from drowning.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Water aura.

Safety Among Enemies

Prerequisites: Athletics 5, Essence 3

The Dragon-Blooded forms a tunnel of wind around their enemy's attack, redirecting it towards another target.

Spend 1 mote on Step 4. If a decisive attack misses the Exalt, they may redirect it at another character within range of the original attack. Roll the attack again, which resets steps to 1 but with all the same Charms applied to the original attack steps. The Exalt may expend up to five of the target's Power to inflict damage on the character their attack is redirected towards.

AWARENESS

All-Encompassing Earth Sense

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

The Dragon-Blooded can sense the vibrations of a soldier taking a step as easily as a leaf falling from a branch.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt automatically perceives a hidden danger or concealed character out to medium range as long as they are on the same surface, or no more than one range band above on structures or scenery resting on the ground, such as a roof or a tree branch. If the target is hidden flawlessly, contest it with a roll off using Awareness. The Dragon-Blood gains double 8s on this roll. This may not sense threats which are airborne, waterborne or taking other measures to avoid moving across a solid service. Hearthmates within range may benefit from this enhanced perception.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Earth aura.

Feeling the Dragon's Bones (Upgrade: Awareness 5, Essence 2): By spending an additional mote, the Exalt applies this effect in all directions, rather than just her immediate range band. This also reveals any hidden traps for structures. Double 7s on any contested rolls.

Fivefold Resonance Sense

Prerequisites: Awareness 1 or Sagacity 1

The Dragon-Blooded closes their eyes and stills their mind. By meditating, they may sense the presence of the Elements nearby, scrutinizing their nature.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt meditates for a scene, allowing them to glean information based on the Mode used. The Exalt may receive three bonus dice on a single roll to act on information provided by this Charm. Alternatively, apply the bonus on an Awareness, Sagacity or Navigate roll to detect or track jade, elementals, demesnes and manses, or other forms of elemental magic.

Air: Predict the weather within the next day, sensing impending storms or the direction of the wind.

Fire: Sense nearby fires the size of a bonfire or larger, or pockets of accumulated heat, like from an enemy camp at night.

Water: Sense the qualities of bodies of water, such as salinity, toxicity, the current or disturbances caused by storms and boats.

Earth: Observe geological qualities of the area, predicting tremors or earthquakes. They may also observe the presence of large caverns or underground structures as well as buried things.

Wood: Sense the qualities of the vegetation nearby, and gatherings of living creatures such as animal packs or villages.

Sense-Riding Technique

Prerequisites: Awareness 5, Essence 3

The Dragon-Blood etches an earthly imprint of their Essence onto another living being's consciousness, riding their senses from afar.

Commit 2 motes and choose one target the Exalt can perceive. The Exalt may see and hear through the target as if they were physically present, wherever they go. They use their own dice pools to perceive through the target. This effect ends after Essence + Finesse days, or if the target leaves the same overall location as the Exalt (such as the same town or city). Hearthmates may ignore these limitations.

CLOSE COMBAT

Current Sweeps to Sea

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Dragon-Blood may call upon water from a nearby source or from their own anima to form tendrils around their arms to strike enemies with at range.

Spend 1 mote on step 1. Also spend 1 Anima if there is no large source of water within short range, such as a river or cistern. This creates a lash of water which allows the character to initiate a grapple, as well as access the Pull gambit (p. XX), out to short range. Treat this as an unarmed attack.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Water aura.

Air: If the lash is used to inflict the Knockback gambit (p. XX), decrease the cost by one.

Earth: If the lash is used to inflict the Knockdown gambit (p. XX), decrease the cost by one.

Dragon-Graced Weapon

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

The Exalt blesses her weapon or fists with elemental fury.

Commit 1 mote. For the duration of the scene, the Exalt's weapon is wrapped in an element matching her aura. At Essence 2, she may bless a Hearthmate's weapon with this Charm.

Air: Its attacks are deadly cold. When it deals damage, the target suffers a cumulative -1 die penalty to physical rolls for the rest of the scene, to a maximum of -5.

Earth: The weapon grows heavy with the earth's grace. Increase damage by one.

Fire: Flames surround the blade, empowering the wielder. Increase Overwhelming by one.

Water: The weapon twists and flows. It gains the Flexible tag. If it already has one, gain a bonus die to attack rolls, which does not count toward the limit.

Wood: Reaching vines sprout from it. It gains the Disarming tag. If it already has it, gain a bonus die to attack rolls, which does not count toward the limit.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access any aura.

Drowning Embrace

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 3

While clinching her target, the Dragon-Blood forces her victim to drown on dry land.

Spend 1 mote while the Exalt has dominance in a grapple. She may attempt the Knockout gambit as part of a grapple attack, rather than any other action. Reduce the cost of the gambit by two, and if successful, the target falls unconscious as their lungs fill with water. This does not work on targets that do not need to breathe. At Essence 5, ignore this restriction.

Root-and-Hand Merging

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 2

Roots sprout from the Exalt's skin, and bind the weapon to her.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. While the mote is committed, the weapon gains the Natural tag, and her Defense increases by one while she uses it. She may choose to activate this Charm on Step 2 in response to a disarm attempt. While in Wood aura, this does not count as her Charm for that Step.

CRAFT

Flaw-Finding Examination

Prerequisites: Craft 2 or War 2

The Exalt spots weaknesses in her target's defenses and gear.

When using the reveal weakness gambit (p. XX), reduce its cost by one, to a minimum of one. Hearthmates within close range of the Dragon-Blooded may use her Craft or War in place of theirs when they apply this gambit. While in Earth aura, the Dragon-Blooded and her allies benefitting from this Charm gain two additional dice to applying the gambit.

Passion-Inflaming Artistry

Prerequisites: Craft 3 or Performance 3

The Exalt imbues her work with the passionate Essence of flame.

Spend 1 mote. Create a crafting venture with three obstacles at difficulty 3 and a time scale of once per scene. During each roll, the character may use extra successes on a special advantage, treating it as a future influence roll. When this venture is complete, the Exalt presents her handiwork to her target — a beautiful sculpture, a poem, a handmade meal, etc. Apply the successes applied to this Charm's unique advantage as influence against the target's Resolve.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Fire aura.

Stones-from-Rubble Restoration

Prerequisites: Craft 3

With but a moment's examination, the Dragon-Blooded knows where a broken object's pieces fit.

When the Dragon-Blooded undergoes a repair venture (p. XX), reduce the difficulty of all rolls by one to a minimum of one. If the Storyteller informs the player that the object is beyond repair, the Exalt may spend 1 mote or banked stunt dice to veto this statement, and be

presented with an opportunity to learn how to fix it. While in Earth aura, she does not need to pay that cost.

EMBASSY

Thoughtful Gift Technique

Prerequisites: Embassy 2

The Dragon-Blood diplomat presents her target with the perfect welcoming gift — or the perfect bribe.

When the character offers a gift or a bribe to her target, she gains double 9s so long as the intended social action is persuade or instill (p. XX). No matter the scruples or moral strictures the target character may adhere to, they are never offended by the gift. Where appropriate, the character may also add her dots of Resources to this roll, if a display of wealth would further the cause. While in Fire aura, she may use this Charm to automatically instill a temporary, positive Minor Intimacy to herself, once per scene.

Wind-Carried Words Technique

Prerequisites: Embassy 3 or Performance 3

The Dragon-Blood speaks into the wind, sending their voice afar on subtle currents of air.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt may send a spoken message of no more than a few sentences to a chosen target within the same narrative location (such as a town or city). The message cannot be overheard or intercepted by mundane means. Magical attempts to do are made at Difficulty 7. To reach their hearthmates, the Exalt may send a message much further such as a neighboring city or town.

Dragon's Voice Mastery (Upgrade, Embassy or Performance 5, Essence 3): The target may be in a neighboring location. Hearthmates need only be in the same Direction.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Air aura.

With One Mind

Prerequisites: Embassy 5 or War 5, Essence 4

The Dragon-Blood weaves their mind together with their allies, creating a shared battle-consciousness that transcends language's limitations.

Commit 1 mote. For one scene, the Exalt either forms a bond with one character they can see, or all hearthmates. Participants may communicate telepathically with one another, not limited by range or sight, but must share a common language. If any participant perceives a hidden character, they cannot ambush anyone else in the network. Whenever one of the participants is

attacked, another participant within close range may perform a reflexive Defend Other action. Hearthmates may freely share Power among one another in the network.

INTEGRITY

Granite Curtain of Serenity

Prerequisites: Integrity 2

Calming her heart with the stillness of stone, not even the fieriest words can move the Exalt.

Spend 1 mote on step 2. Against a social influence action that leverages the Dragon-blooded's emotions or would otherwise provoke rage, panic, or terror, increase the Exalt's Resolve by two.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt access to Earth aura.

Oath of the Ten Thousand Dragons

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

The Dragon-Blooded swears a vow of fealty towards someone worthy of their loyalty, and resists all things that would break their bond.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt swears a vow of fealty towards a character they hold a Tie of Loyalty towards, or swears to complete a task on behalf of them. For the purpose of resisting social

influence that would alter that Tie or dissuade them from their task, increase the difficulty by two and treat Loyalty as their Major Virtue if it is not already.

Thicker than Stone (Upgrade, Integrity 4, Essence 2): *For the Dragon-Blooded, the bonds of shared blood are stronger than the division of nations.* When the Exalt witnesses another Dragon-Blooded in danger (physical or otherwise), Spend 1 mote. Instantly form a Minor Tie of loyalty towards the other Dragon-Blooded, or strengthen the Exalt's existing Tie to Major. For the rest of the scene, treat as if the Dragon-Blooded used the prerequisite on the target. The Exalt adds her Essence in dice to the first roll made to support the other Dragon-Blooded in the scene.

Unflagging Vengeance Meditation

Prerequisites: Integrity 5, Essence 2

No one harms the Dragon-Blooded's loved ones and gets away with it.

Spend 1 mote. The Exalt swears vengeance on a target that harmed the subject of one of her major Intimacies, which immediately forms a major Intimacy of hatred towards him. If she already has one, increase its Resolve bonus by one. While in battle against her target, her Soak and Hardness against his attacks increase by one. Resolving the vendetta removes the intimacy and always counts as a Personal milestone.

NAVIGATE

Benediction of the Living Ship

Prerequisites: Navigate 5, Essence 3

Verdant Essence transforms the Exalt's ship into a blossoming, living thing.

Commit 2 motes. Whenever characters take recovery scenes aboard the ship, the number required to heal a dramatic injury decreases by one. For characters aboard with lesser recovery,

they require one less scene to heal. The ship blossoms with fruit and vegetables — during long voyages, the crew and passengers never have to deal with venture obstacles (p. XX) from lack of food or diseases from malnourishment. All members aboard gain a one-success bonus to resist poison and disease while on board. While in Wood or Water aura, reduce the mote cost by 1.

This Charm may only be used once per story.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Wood aura.

Great Heart Companion

Prerequisites: Navigate 3

The Exalt and her mount act as one. Nothing can sever their spirit-deep bond.

The Dragon-Blooded's mount is immune to damage from her anima, and is treated as a hearthmate for the purposes of applying Charms.

PERFORMANCE

Passion-Inflaming Artistry

See p. XX

Wind-Carried Words Technique

See p. XX

PHYSIQUE

Elemental Protection Technique

Prerequisites: Physique 2

The Dragon-Blooded harmonizes their body with one of the five elements, rendering them almost impervious to any harm from it.

Commit 1 mote. Gain two additional Soak and Hardness against attacks made using a single element (such as the fiery breath of an elemental). This always applies to her current aura. The Exalt may lower the damage of any environmental hazards of the appropriate element by two. If lowered to zero, the Exalt may ignore the effect entirely. This effect may only be used once per scene. At Essence 2,

choose an additional element when activating this Charm. At Essence 3, extend this Charm's effect to all hearthmates and her Essence in additional allies. Other hearthmates may activate this Charm to offer protection against multiple elements.

PRESENCE

Entombed Mind Technique

Prerequisites: Presence 5

With a low, droning voice, the Dragon-Blood may lull listeners into a dreamless sleep.

Spend 1 mote. Instead of normal influence, the Dragon-Blood's words force targets to sleep. The target must make a Fortitude+Integrity roll at a difficulty equal to the Exalt's Essence plus two. If they fail, they fall into a deep sleep for the rest of the scene unless roused by allies. If they succeed, they suffer a two-dice penalty to physical actions for the rest of the scene while they struggle with sluggishness. Trivial listeners sleep instantly. While in Earth aura, increase the difficulty of the Integrity roll and the penalty by one.

RANGED COMBAT

Arbor Sentinel Technique

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2

The Dragon-Blooded lowers their bow to the ground and call once-living wood to remember what it was. It grows into a small tree, which blossoms unending flowered arrows.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt's bow becomes a tree which provides them with the benefits of heavy cover, and cannot be disarmed, and provides them with never-ending ammunition. This effect ends if the Exalt moves.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Wood aura.

Fire: This effect applies to firewands, instead. Instead of providing cover, the Exalt's enemies must resist an environmental hazard with Difficulty 4, Damage 3/round.

Earth: The Exalt stomps the earth, causing a pillar to rise from the ground from which to attack their enemies. This vantage point grants a two-dice bonus to Ranged Combat actions and provides light cover. It shatters when commitment ends.

Elemental Burst Technique

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 5 or Sagacity 5, Essence 3

The Dragon-Blooded concentrates their elemental Essence into an explosive tempest of power.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. The Exalt must be able to make a **decisive** attack area of effect (p. XX). The type of damage this deals is based on the Exalt's aura. This may only be used once per scene, reset when the Exalt changes aura. The attack is treated as an artifact ranged weapon, per **Glorious Exalted Bolt** (p. XX).

Air: Lightning arcs from foe to foe. For every enemy hit by the attack, increase damage by one die, to a maximum of her Essence, against each target.

Earth: Boulders smash all enemies from their feet. All targets that suffer any damage from the attack must make a reflexive Fortitude + Athletics roll against the Exalt's Essence in difficulty or become prone.

Fire: Flames bathe the enemy in an inferno. The targeted area catches alight, becoming an environmental hazard that inflicts 2 damage per round. It burns for her Essence in rounds unless extinguished.

Water: Tendrils of water thief weapons from hands. Enemies with less Power than the Exalt are disarmed if they take any damage.

Wood: Poison lashes the Dragon's foes. Any enemies that take damage from this Charm are poisoned and must make Fortitude+Physique rolls at standard difficulty during the start of their turns, or lose two Power.

SAGACITY

Elemental Burst Technique

See p. XX

Fivefold Resonance Sense

See p. XX

Dragon Vortex Attack

Prerequisites: Sagacity 5 or War 5, Essence 5

The Dragon-Blooded calls upon ancestral power to shake the foundation of Creation with a radiating storm of the primal elements.

Spend 3 motes. The Exalt creates a one-time environmental hazard that radiates outward to close range plus additional range bands equal to the Exalt's Essence. The hazard is difficulty 3, inflicting 6 damage, with additional effects based on Mode. Each hearthmate may contribute 1 Anima to increase the Difficulty of the hazard by one to a maximum of 10. Once per story.

Air: Summon driving rain and hail. If they suffer any damage from the hazard, enemies suffer a two-dice mobility penalty until the start of their next turn.

Earth: A target that takes three or more damage falls into a chasm one range band deep and lands prone, suffering damage as if they fell from medium range. Climbing out of the chasm counts as difficult terrain.

Fire: If flammable material is present, the fire continues to burn as an environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 4/round within its range, which burns for the rest of the session. These flames won't burn the Dragon-Blood or any allies spared from the vortex.

Water: A wave washes over enemies with tsunami force. If the targets take damage from the hazard, they are knocked back one range band and fall prone.

Wood: Targets damaged are exposed to a poison with Damage 1/round, Duration (Essence) rounds. The area of the hazard

becomes difficult terrain until the plant growth has been cleared. The Exalt and any allies spared from the vortex are unimpeded by this terrain.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access any aura.

STEALTH

Flowing God-Dragon Stance

Prerequisites: Stealth 5, Essence 3

The Dragon-Blood sheds the restraints of her flesh-and-blood form and becomes a thing of water.

Commit 2 motes. Her body becomes water and sloughs free to restraints and may pass through any obstruction that is not waterproof. Gain her Essence in automatic successes to all Stealth rolls made while in this form, and if she submerges herself in water, she cannot be detected at all. If she activates this Charm while in a grapple, it immediately ends. While in Water aura, this does not count as her Charm activation.

Rose-Among-Thorns Distinction

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

The Exalt makes herself approachable, an underworld type like anyone else.

Spend 1 mote. After the Exalt spends a dramatic scene engaging with criminals and gangsters, she spends this mote to create a temporary minor Intimacy to the group. This Intimacy lasts until the character next reaches a minor milestone and may be leveraged, strengthened, or eroded as normal. While she has this Intimacy, members of the group treat her as one of their own without question.

WAR

Dragon Vortex Attack

See p. XX

Flaw-Finding Examination

See p. XX

Storm-Calling Strategies

Prerequisites: War 3

The Dragon-Blooded darkens the horizon with thunderstorms, gale-force winds or snowfalls that precede their army.

Commit 1 mote. The enacts this Charm as a tactic for a single battle. Enemy battle groups suffer a three-dice environmental penalty on all physical actions taken in combat. Individuals suffer a two-dice penalty instead. Allies are unaffected.

Anathema-Slaying Tempest (Upgrade, Essence 3): The Dragon-Blood commands the skies themselves, calling down bolts of lightning, avalanches and terrible squalls to smite their enemies. If the Exalt possesses 5 Power at the start of a round, they may expend it to inflict a one-time environmental hazard against an enemy battle group with difficulty 5 and Damage equal to Essence + Force, representing a bolt of lightning, avalanche or similar danger.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Air aura.

Ramparts of Obedient Earth

Prerequisites: War 3

The battlefield is clay, to be sculpted in accordance with the tactical genius of the Terrestrial general. They may tear open sinkholes between the ranks of their enemies, wrench up great fortifications of stone from the earth to halt their foes.

Commit 1 mote. The Exalt enacts this Charm as a stratagem for a battle. The Exalt may enact an elemental stratagem with one of the following effects:

Sinkhole: *The Dragon-Blood opens a hole or constructs an obstacle of stone between the enemy ranks.* The ground out to short range around a target battlegroup becomes difficult terrain. The target battlegroup acts last in the round. The battle group's commander may

attempt to oppose this delay, by making an opposed War roll.

Barricade: *The Dragon-Blood wrenches up the earth into barriers and walls to fortify their position.* The Exalt may instantly enact a Back to the Sea action (p. XX) without needing to roll.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Earth aura.

With One Mind

See p. XX

GETIMIAN CHARMS

Getimian Charms, like Getimians themselves, have two aspects: Flowing, and Still. Getimians may activate either Mode of a Charm based on whether or not they are presently Flowing or Still. If the Getimian has a majority of one type of motes, they may access that Mode. A Charm, when used, is always either Flowing or Still; there is no neutral Mode.

MOTES AND THE GETIMIANS

As a reminder, the Getimian Exalted divide their motes into two pools: Still and Flowing. This represents the delicate balance they cultivate through internal alchemy, focusing either on tranquility or dynamism. When they regain Essence, the Getimian can choose which pool is restored first.

GENERAL

Alchemic Power Reserve

Prerequisites: None

When violence breaks out, the Getimian consumes reagents and creates a powerful elixir to aid her allies.

Spend 1 mote. When rolling Join Battle, treat the successes as though it were a Build Power roll. The Getimian creates a dose of alchemical elixir. This potion may be given to any ally within close range as a simple action. An ally consumes

it as a reflexive action and gains the built Power. This transfer may not be used on the first turn.

Fate-Unwinding Denial

Prerequisites: None

The Getimian denies Fate's will, reshaping the outcome of events.

When a target of her social influence chooses a hard bargain, the Getimian may spend 1 mote or a set of banked Stunt dice. The player determines the consequences of the bargain, with agreement from the Storyteller. If the target refuses her influence outright, the Getimian gains two additional dice above the usual. Also, gain 1 anima.

Space-and-Time Understanding

Prerequisites: Essence 3

The Getimian understands the shape of reality, and how to best take advantage of it.

Whenever the character takes any movement action including sprint and rush, she may spend 1 mote to cross the distance instantly and without any trace of her passage. This does not count as her Charm use for that Step. She may bypass obstacles, environmental hazards, difficult terrain, traps and so on with this instant movement. This movement may be in any direction.

Summoned from Time

Prerequisites: Essence 3

The Getimian calls forth allies and resources from a forgotten time and place.

Spend up to the Getimian's Essence in motes. For each mote spent, she instantly summons one dot of a Merit per mote spent. This must follow all Merit rules otherwise. If a Merit cannot be tertiary, the Getimian must spend 3 or more motes. If the Merit cannot be primary, the Getimian cannot spend more than 3 motes on it. The Merit appears in the scene instantly, drawn into Creation from her Origin. It persists until the end of the session, though the

character may use an Exalt milestone to purchase it permanently.

FINESSE

Bent Reality Stance

Prerequisites: Finesse 4, Essence 3

Twisting space to her will, the Getimian makes striking her disorienting and difficult.

Spend 2 motes on Step 2. An enemy attacking the Getimian must be able to make two attacks in order to strike her. If they can, only one attack may apply against her. If they cannot, treat their attack as though it were part of a flurry, but increase the dice penalty by two.

Flowing: If the attack misses, steal one Power from the target. Gain an additional anima.

Still: If the attack hits, gain two Power. Gain an additional anima.

Devil-Queen's Court

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Getimian binds others to her, keeping them close and drawing upon their power.

When you use this charm, choose a number of allied targets equal to the Getimian's Essence + Finesse. This includes any character with a positive Intimacy towards her, any member of her Circle, plus any dots of an appropriate social Merit (like Allies or Followers). Create a pool of dice equal to those characters. These dice do not count towards the dice limit. When the dice are exhausted, this charm's duration ends. The type of mote used frames how these dice can be applied. Dice from this Charm may always be applied against members of her court, and only be used once per scene.

Commit 2 **Flowing** motes. Add dice to any roll involving movement, persuasion, or Close Combat.

Commit 2 **Still** motes. Add dice to any roll involving subtlety, stealth, or precision (including Ranged Combat).

Devil-Queen's Intrigues (Upgrade): At Finesse 4, the Getimian may apply additional Essence to adjust the way she applies her Devil-Queen dice.

Committing 1 **Flowing** mote allows dice from the pool to add or subtract two dice from any one roll made by a member of her court. This occurs during Step 1 in combat.

Committing 1 **Still** mote allows her to sense the members of her court, and eavesdrop on any of their interactions.

Devil-Queen's Majesty (Upgrade): At Essence 3 and Finesse 5, she may instead exchange the collection of significant characters for trivial targets. These characters become secondary Command (p. XX), adding the Getimian's Essence in dice to their primary pool and increasing their Defense and Soak by half her Essence (round up).

Committing 1 **Flowing** mote allows the Getimian may spend one die from her pool to summon a member of her court. They arrive within the scene. Gain her Flowing motes in dice to any roll to influence the target.

Committing 1 **Still** mote allows the Getimian to spend one die from her pool to transport herself instantly to the location of a member of the court. Gain her Still motes in dice to any roll to heal her target or to read their intentions.

Distilled-Emotion Elixir

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Getimian creates an alchemical tincture that bubbles with trapped emotion.

Spend 1 mote. Make a social influence roll as though the character were attempting to instill a minor Intimacy. If successful, this coalesces into an alchemical potion that the Getimian may administer as a simple action to any target later in the story. The target is then affected by whichever effect she chose. She or her target may gain 1 anima.

Flowing: The Intimacy is a Tie relative to passion, fury, righteousness, or indignation.

Still: The Intimacy is a Principle relative to lawfulness, justice, vengeance, or order.

Here-and-Everywhere Approach

Prerequisites: Finesse 4

Twisting reality, the Getimian works more efficiently by being in two places at once.

Spend 2 motes. During any venture roll, the character rolls twice and applies both results. They may not apply additional charms to these rolls. The Exalt may make two different Ability rolls, and may take venture actions that would require her to be in two different locations simultaneously.

Forgetting the Lie

Prerequisites: Finesse 5, Sleeper-Guiding Whisper

Memory is reality, and if the Getimian cannot change the latter, she can most assuredly change the former.

Spend 1 mote and take an influence action. If you use **instill** to create new Intimacies in a target, these do not reflect emotional ties, but rather altered memories implanted in the target's mind.

Flowing: Commit 1 additional mote. The target's altered memory becomes contagious, and he's compelled to spread it; every time he successfully **instills** the Intimacy representing the Getimian's inserted memory, that memory imprints on his target. Targets he infects cannot spread the memory further.

Still: The altered memory is anchored deep within the target's mind. The associated Intimacy cannot be eliminated without the use of powerful magic, unless the Getimian wishes it.

Sleeper-Guiding Whisper

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Getimian shifts reality ever so slightly, making subtle tweaks in the minds of the unsuspecting, in service of a day yet to come when she'll require their aid.

Spend 1 mote and take an influence action, gaining the Getimian's Essence in extra dice. This action creates a shadow Intimacy – which behaves as a normal Minor Intimacy but lasts only for the duration of the scene. After the scene, the Getimian may spend an additional mote to force the target to forget their interaction with the Exalt so long as the target has an Essence equal to or less than the character.

Flowing: You may purchase the **persuade** action for free, as long as you beat the target's Resolve.

Still: You may purchase the **instill** action for free, as long as you beat the target's Resolve. He cannot choose to make a **hard bargain**; resisting this influence action always grants the Getimian extra dice, as if the target chose that option.

Unavoidable Confrontation

Prerequisites: Finesse 2

Warping destiny, the Getimian brings herself into immediate conflict with an enemy.

Spend 1 mote on Step 3. If the Exalt takes the rush action, she may exchange the bonus dice to reduce the target's Defense or Hardness by two. She may not benefit from this Charm if the rush is part of a flurry.

Flowing: Increase the Overwhelming value of her attack by one, on step 5.

Still: If the attack hits, steal 1 Power from the target.

FORCE

Finding the Chorus

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Getimian binds those closest into her personal history for but a heartbeat, letting them see her as she was meant to be.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. Until the mote is uncommitted, all observers gain a temporary Minor Intimacy toward the Getimian.

Flowing: The Getimian inflames the hearts of those around her, drawing them to her comparative coolness. The Intimacy is one of "Love," "Affection," "Loyalty," etc.

Still: The Getimian stills the world around her, making her inner fires seem to rage and burn brightly. The Intimacy is one of "Awe," "Fear," "Reverence," etc.

Icon-Obliterating Passion

Prerequisites: Force 5, Essence 4

The Getimian's surety of self becomes a sword, wielded expertly against Heaven and all its lackeys.

Spend 2 motes on Step 5. If you make a successful **decisive attack** against a god or elemental, you may activate this Charm for 1 mote instead. The Getimian may strike dematerialized enemies. The target must immediately materialize, and cannot dematerialize for the remainder of the scene.

Flowing: If this Charm slays a god, the Getimian hacks the god's connection to the Loom of Fate, redefining reality within that god's purview. This change is commensurate with the god's power; slaying the god of a small river allows the Getimian to redirect its course, while slaying one of the Directional Gods of War allows the Getimian to revive a never-forged empire. All changes made with this Charm are subject to Storyteller approval, and create obvious errors in Fate.

Still: Sever the god from their sources of worship and power, permanently weakening them. If the god is slain, the god fades from the memories of her worshippers, her entreaties to Heaven are lost in the Celestial Bureaucracy's inboxes, and her temples lie cold and empty.

Ideology Redefinition Trick

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Getimian reaches out and snuffs the flames of conviction in her enemies' hearts.

Commit 1 mote for the scene and choose a target the Getimian interacts with socially. The target's Virtues cannot be used to increase the difficulty of social actions against the target, and cannot be applied to other effects. Only one target at a time may be affected by this Charm.

Flowing: Trying to influence the target provokes an uncontrollable anguish. Any actions they take must be flurried.

Still: When influenced, the target's soul reaches for the empty place where those Virtues should be, straining the target's health to the breaking point. She takes a level of damage, unless she succeeds on a Fortitude + Physique or Integrity roll, difficulty equal to the Getimian's Essence.

Perspective-Consuming Grandeur

Prerequisites: Force 4

Tearing down the walls around the human soul, the Getimian infects her target with her own point of view.

Commit 1 mote and name a target the Getimian has interacted with socially and a detail about the Getimian's unreal past — the target now remembers that detail as though it transpired in reality for the duration of this Charm's effect. Additionally, gain the appropriate benefit listed below.

Flowing: Until the mote is uncommitted, the target gains a Major Intimacy toward either the Getimian or something she represents (a unified empire, a religion, etc).

Still: Until the mote is uncommitted, replace the target's Major Virtue with one the Getimian's choice, reflecting who he is in the Getimian's native timeline.

Culture-Hero Usurpation

Prerequisites: Force 5, Perspective-Consuming-Grandeur, Essence 5

The Getimian goes beyond merely rewriting another's heart, and begins to rewrite their legend.

Spend 3 motes and name a target of major renown. Roll Force + Presence against their Fortitude + Integrity. If successful, the Getimian seizes her target's presence and stature in society and consumes it. It cannot be re-invoked against the same target until the end of the story.

Flowing: Once per session, the Getimian may assert that she is responsible for something that her target did, owns something belonging to the target, or take the target's place in a relationship. She pries that history away from her target, gaining a relevant Merit or becoming the focus of a relevant Intimacy.

Still: Once session, the Getimian may name an action the target took, something that belongs to the target, or a relationship the target has with a third party. The named detail fades from memory, with only the Getimian and the target remembering it. Physical objects get lost, or claimed by others who are no longer aware of who it belongs to.

Reality Embellishment Approach

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Getimian taps into her never-achieved greatness, refracting it out into Creation where it nests in the hearts of others.

Commit 1 mote. While the mote is committed, gain two bonus dice for all attempts to influence others. When the Getimian influences her targets, this creates a fluctuating emotional state, based on the Mode: either charged with dynamic energy or inhumanly tranquil.

Flowing: The target character cannot be intimidated for the remainder of the scene.

Still: Name a character and make a statement about her to a third party (which need not be true), which the third party will spread; by the end of the scene, everyone present will have heard it save the named character.

The Filial Chain

Prerequisites: Force 5, Essence 3

Welcoming all into her embrace, even her most dire of enemies, the Getimian makes an aegis and a yoke out of her heart.

Spend 1 mote and choose a target present in the scene. If the target speaks against or opposes the Getimian either in combat or in social interactions, the Getimian may immediately impose a shadow Intimacy of Obligation on the target. While the target has this shadow Intimacy, they can be affected by this Charm's modes.

Flowing: The Getimian may resist influence applied by the target on behalf of others, and if she chooses a **hard bargain**, the target suffers the consequences rather than the Getimian.

Still: The Getimian may redirect influence targeting herself at a character with a shadow Intimacy. The target must resist the influence. If he does not, treat it as a **hard bargain**; either the target takes one damage, or the Getimian gains her Essence in dice to her next action against the target.

Throne-Smashing Ambition

Prerequisites: Force 4, Essence 2

The Getimian shifts reality and turns the world against her target.

When you make a successful **decisive attack** against a target, you may activate this Charm reflexively on Step 5. If you roll any damage, rather than harm the target, this attack afflicts the target with a curse.

Commit 1 **Flowing** mote. Reverse a target's social standing. Troops turn on their beloved general; a prince is forced into exile; a merchant

finds his contacts conspiring against him, etc. This lasts until the mote is uncommitted or the end of the story.

Spend 1 **Still** mote to downgrade social status belonging to the target, as though they'd diminished a relative Merit (for example: diminishing a prince to a duke would count as a reduction in Backing). Players' characters may resist with a Fortitude + Embassy roll, Difficulty equal to the Getimian's Essence. If they fail, they lose access to the Merit until they reach a Major milestone.

Wall-Denying Fury

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Getimian strides confidently forward, obstacles tearing themselves asunder to abase themselves at her feet.

Spend 1 mote and take a simple movement action. This action may be taken in addition to her reflexive movement but cannot be flurried with an attack. The Getimian's forward movement must be towards an obstacle she could not normally pass through. What becomes of the obstacle depends on the mode. Gain an additional anima.

Flowing: The target obstacle detonates violently. At her option, this is an environmental hazard that deals her Force in damage and has a difficulty to resist equal to her Essence plus two. The area becomes **difficult terrain** after she passes through.

Still: The target obstacle reshapes itself, flickering and shuddering as it becomes something else, drawn from the Getimian's Origin. This transformation is permanent.

FORTITUDE

Constant Problem Tactic

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3, Essence 2

The Getimian's presence is a never-ending curse.

Spend 1 mote. Choose a target that the Getimian has either successfully influenced

socially or dealt at least two levels of damage to. The target must contend with the Getimian depending on the mode.

Flowing: This is a step 4 Charm. Whenever the target takes a movement action away from the Getimian, apply this effect. The Exalt instantly moves to be within close range of the target, regardless of the distance her target traveled, even if she used her movement this turn.

Still: The Getimian may make an Awareness roll. If successful, she knows where her target is. Spend the mote, and the Exalt appears instantly in the same scene as the target. She transports only herself.

Courage-Decanting Alchemy

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Getimian expresses her valor, giving it physical form that it might fuel the courage of others.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Getimian creates an Elixir of Courage that may be imbibed by another character, or by the Getimian herself. When someone does so, they gain the effects listed below.

Flowing: When in battle, the character gains a three-dice bonus to Close Combat rolls as long as she is pursuing or upholding an Intimacy or Virtue. If she takes any other actions, they suffer a one-die penalty.

Still: For the purposes of calculating the character's Resolve, treat a Minor Virtue or Intimacy as if they were Major instead, or increase the benefits of a Major Virtue or Intimacy (character's choice) by one.

Folding Space

Prerequisites: Fortitude 5, Essence 3

Collapsing space between two points, the Getimian and her cohorts arrive at their destination in a blink.

Spend 2 motes. The Getimian gathers space between her current location and another

destination within Creation she has previously been either on this timeline or in her Origin and then slingshots herself and her allies there. She may bypass up to her Essence in Obstacles in a travel venture, and declare an advantage from her Origin. Gain an additional anima.

One-on-One Imprisonment

Prerequisites: Fortitude 5, Essence 3

The Getimian binds an enemy to herself, entrapping them in the prison of her presence.

Spend 2 motes and choose one target within short range of the Exalt. This shifts reality, transporting the Getimian and her target temporarily into a bubble of her Origin. For two rounds in combat or for two social influence actions, the Exalt and her target can only affect and be affected by each other. No other environmental or situational bonuses, penalties, or dangers apply, and they cannot be detected or interacted with by any other character. Once this effect ends, the Getimian cannot use this Charm again until the start of the next scene. This may be used during a clash.

Spatial Disjunction

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

Tearing a rift in reality, the Getimian makes approaching her impossible.

Spend 1 mote. Until the start of the Getimian's next turn, treat the space between her and an enemy as either one range band closer or further. If this would put the Getimian out of range of the attack, the target may still roll but suffers a success penalty equal to half the Getimian's Fortitude, round up.

Flowing: This is a Step 3 Charm. If this puts the target immediately into melee range, gain three bonus dice to the attack roll.

Still: This is a Step 4 Charm. If the attack hits, steal 1 Power from the target.

Truth is Relative

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Getimian strips the blinders from others, forcing them to confront the comfortable lies they tell themselves.

Commit 1 mote and touch a target. The next time the target makes a statement or takes action in support of an Intimacy, this Charm's effects activate.

Flowing: The target gains the Exalt's Flowing motes in dice for the action, but afterward must succeed on a Fortitude + Integrity roll with a Difficulty equal to the Getimian's Force. Failure causes the Intimacy to reverse its emotional underpinnings; love becomes hate, desire becomes disgust, ambition becomes apathy, etc.

Still: The target loses the Exalt's Still motes in dice from his roll, and must succeed on a Fortitude + Integrity roll with Difficulty equal to the Getimian's Finesse to prevent the Intimacy from downgrading (if Major) or disappearing (if Minor).

Unforged Masterworks

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Getimian draws on her memories of the world as it should be, and pulls forth — for just a few moments — a shining exemplar of that reality.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Getimian creates an Artifact weapon. This temporary weapon gains a unique inherent ability of the player and Storyteller's design. If she cancels the committed mote and reactivates this Charm in the same scene, the same weapon appears. She may repurchase this Charm to transform the weapon into an Artifact capable of unlocking Evocations. This may be used during a Clash.

Flowing: Every Extra she strikes down with this weapon vanishes and reappears as the Getimian's Origin's version of him. Treat this as a temporary Followers Merit if the Getimian uses this charm on multiple targets. At the end

of the scene, all loyal Extras created by this charm vanish with the Artifact weapon.

Still: When she successfully defends against a **decisive** attack, she may make an influence action against her opponent on Step 8, as if it were a counterattack.

INFERNAL CHARMS

Infernal Charms grant them the power to control destructive energies, hideous transformations, and heaven-defying feats.

Devil-Body Incarnation

Prerequisites: None

The Infernal reshapes herself into a form that reflects her innermost nature — sometimes demonic, sometimes sublime, but always powerful and strange.

Commit 1 mote and spend 2 anima. The Infernal's Devil-Body is built by choosing two of the following benefits when learning this Charm. The Infernal may purchase this again at Essence 3 and again at Essence 5 and choose one additional effect each time.

- You gain a Natural melee or ranged weapon with your choice of weight and Artifact plus one of the following Tags: Balanced, Chopping, Defensive, Disarming, Flame, Flexible, Piercing, Pulling, Powerful, Reaching.
- You radiate an intense emotion that overwhelms characters who approach within short range. Nontrivial characters can resist with a Difficulty 5 Fortitude + Integrity roll or gain a Minor Intimacy based on your chosen emotion until the end of the scene.
- You grow up to twice your normal size, reducing the Difficulty of feats of strength by three. You can't be grappled by smaller characters unless their attempt is supplemented by Charms or other powers, as though you had the Legendary Size quality.
- You can perceive everything out to long range, seeing and hearing through mundane walls, structures, and obstructions as if they weren't

there. Attempts to hide from you suffer a dice penalty equal to your Essence.

- Your transform your surroundings out to medium range into difficult terrain befitting your aesthetic. Allies may move through this terrain unimpeded.
- You gain a special form of movement: flight, swimming without the need to breathe, or the ability to pass through earth and stone.

ATHLETICS

Joy in Violence

Prerequisites: Athletics 2 or Awareness 2

Blood quickens blood, and the Infernal's instincts are attuned to the rush of oncoming battle.

Spend 1 mote when rolling Join Battle. The Infernal takes her turn for the first round of combat before any other characters, including ambushes and other interruptions. This does not reveal hidden characters. If she can perceive an enemy, she must use her turn to attack or approach them. Gain an additional anima.

Skin-Flaying Wind Dance

Prerequisites: Athletics 2

When the Infernal runs, searing Hell-winds surround her.

Commit 1 mote. The Infernal *must* end each of her turns at least one range band away from where she started, and cannot return to previous locations unless forced. While doing so, increase Defense by one. Any character who begins their turn in close range is subject to an environmental hazard (Damage 1, difficulty 3). While in Corona of Fury, difficulty 5.

AWARENESS

Joy in Violence

See p. XX

Naked Soul Insight

Prerequisites: Awareness 4 or Embassy 4, Essence 2

It is the prerogative of the Infernal Exalted to know how best to damn their prey.

Spend 1 mote. Ask the Storyteller a question about the character's deepest desires — their fantasies, wishes, and blue-sky goals. The Storyteller will provide an honest, useful answer; when the Infernal leverages that desire to influence the character, she may ignore the Resolve increase from their Major Virtue.

Witness to Darkness

Prerequisites: Awareness 2

The Infernal's eyes blacken, opening her sight to the secret world of darkness.

Commit 1 mote. The Infernal ignores all penalties based on darkness and gains a three-dice bonus if there is no light source within medium range. Direct sunlight, however, inflicts a one-die penalty.

CLOSE COMBAT

Death of All Happiness

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5 or Ranged Combat 5, Essence 3

Wracking her victim with overwhelming dread, the Infernal wipes all happiness from their mind.

Spend 2 motes and 2 anima on Step 1. If the attack deals any damage, the target loses the benefits of any positive Intimacies for the rest of the session, and any influence from or against them based on joy, peace, love, or passion suffers a three-die penalty. This effect is permanent against trivial characters.

Hideous Hundred-Limb Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 3

The Infernal lashes out at her enemies without mercy or cessation.

Spend 1 mote and 1 Power on Step 1 while Corona of Fury is active. The Infernal may make a Close Combat attack against one target she has not already attacked this turn, which may

include clashes. This does not count towards her action limit for the turn.

Wrath-Stoked Onslaught

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

Wreathing her weapon in emerald devil-fire, the *Infernal strikes a deadly blow*.

Spend 2 motes on Step 6 of a **decisive** attack. The *Infernal* gains an additional die of damage for every 2 Power spent on the attack. While the *Infernal* benefits from *Corona of Fury*, if she spends at least 7 Power, add an additional die of damage. This may be used during a clash. Gain an additional anima.

CRAFT

Claiming the Devil's Due

Prerequisites: Craft 4, Essence 2

Laying hands on an item, the Infernal bathes it into the vicious Essence of Hell.

Spend 1 mote. A mundane object the *Infernal* can touch radiates with wisps of green hellfire for the rest of the story. Characters who attempt to touch, wield, or use it are sickened and suffer a three-die penalty for the rest of the scene. This does not affect demonic characters (including other *Infernals*) with higher Essence than the *Infernal's* own. At Essence 3, she may spend 3 motes to affect a mundane structure instead. Gain an additional anima.

EMBASSY

Golden Years Tarnished Black

Prerequisites: Presence 4 or Embassy 4

With nothing more than a poisonous insinuation, the Infernal transforms happy memories into misery.

Spend 1 mote. With a successful Finesse + Presence or Embassy roll, the *Infernal* may poison a target's memories about a person, place, or group. Positive Intimacies based on the chosen topic are one step weaker than normal, and Minor Intimacies invert entirely, becoming *negative* Minor Intimacies. This effect lasts for

one session, plus another session for each extra success. Gain an additional anima.

Naked Soul Insight

[See](#) p. XX

Our Little Secret

Prerequisites: Embassy 2, Presence 2, or Stealth 2

Wrapping a victim in a web of secrecy, the Infernal ensures the utmost discretion.

Spend 1 mote. The *Infernal* may make a Finesse + Presence, Embassy, or Stealth dissuade roll against a character; if successful, the character cannot discuss, imply, or otherwise communicate anything the *Infernal* has discussed with them in the current scene. Against nontrivial characters, this effect lasts for the rest of the session.

Unbreakable Laws of Hell

Prerequisites: Embassy 4

The Infernal knows the secrets of Hell's bizarre laws — mortal rules are hers to command at her will.

Commit 1 mote. The *Infernal* may strengthen an existing law or rule they know about in their current locale or organization for the session; willingly violating it requires a Difficulty 5 Resistance + Integrity roll, or Difficulty 7 for demons and the *Infernal's* worshippers.

Repurchase at Essence 3 allows the *Infernal* to spend 2 motes to create a law for the scene, rolling Force + Embassy or Presence against all characters present in the scene. These laws are subject to the usual rules for unacceptable influence and can't require characters to perform deliberately impossible tasks.

INTEGRITY

Acquainted with Deception

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

The Infernal has survived the lies of Hell; no other deceptions compare.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Infernal automatically knows when a character is lying, although they do not know which part may be a lie and which the truth. Against lies backed by magic, the Infernal and target make an opposed Essence roll-off to determine whose power is dominant.

Body Obeys Ego

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

So powerful is the Infernal ego that their physique cannot help but conform to their self-image.

Commit 1 mote. The Infernal may suppress one ongoing effect that transforms or weakens her body, such as her wound penalties, dramatic injuries, or forced transformations. While active, this Charm allows her to ignore that effect (and fundamentally similar effects), waiving any penalties and allowing her to act as normal. Once per scene, if in Corona of Fury, the Exalt may spend 1 mote to heal one level of non-aggravated damage.

Broken Silence Laughter Defense

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or Integrity 3

The Infernal's loud and wicked laugh spoils an attack with the force of their manic glee.

Spend 1 mote. On Step 6, the Infernal may subtract one success from a damage roll for every die that shows a 1. If she had not spoken or otherwise vocalized yet in the scene, the mote cost is waived and the attack loses one additional success. Gain an additional anima.

Endless Nightmare Vigilance

Prerequisites: Integrity 3 or Physique 3, Essence 2

The Infernal's ever-burning anger is as restful as any pleasant dream.

The Infernal no longer needs to sleep and is immune to any effect that would force her to sleep. She may shrug off the effects of the Knockout gambit by spending 1 mote. For 2

motes, she may return to the fight from Incapacitated as though her Circle had given her 10 Power.

Inevitable Betrayal Insight

Prerequisites: Integrity 4

It is the burden of the Infernal Exalted to know that all things will betray them, given the chance.

Spend 2 motes when attacked by a character to whom the Infernal has an Intimacy — positive or negative. The Infernal increases her Defense by three and ignores any penalties from surprise or ambushes. Any Intimacy towards that character instantly becomes negative if not already, and the Infernal's next **decisive** attack against reduces their effective Hardness by two.

Will-Crushing Force

Prerequisites: Integrity 3, Essence 3

The Infernal lashes out to maim her foe — not his flesh, but his very soul.

Spend 2 motes and 1 anima. The Infernal makes a **decisive** attack using Force + Integrity against a character at up to medium range, treating her Essence as an accuracy bonus. If successful,

rather than take damage, the target loses access to their Minor Virtue and treats their Major Virtue as Minor. This effect lasts for the rest of the session.

NAVIGATE

Desert-and-Flame Endurance

Prerequisites: Physique 3 or Navigate 3

The Infernal strides free and comfortable, even in the most desolate of lands.

Commit 1 mote. The Infernal is immune to penalties and hazards from desolate environments, like desert heat, arctic cold, and the native perils of Hell. This does not protect from dangers in verdant locales such as jungles, forests, and lush isles.

Oasis-Scouring Malediction

Prerequisites: Navigate 5 or War 5, Essence 5

Spreading their dark influence over a region, the Infernal transforms it into a blighted hellscape.

Spend 3 motes or 5 anima. Roll Force + Presence or Performance to scour the land with the demon-winds of Hell for miles around you, up to the perimeter of a small city. This is normally Difficulty 5, but may increase to Difficulty 7 for areas under magical protection (like a Lunar's domain) or Difficulty 10 for overwhelmingly blessed locations like the districts of Heaven itself. The curse lasts for one year, plus one more for each extra success. During this time, nothing will grow there but scrub grass, and wildlife becomes desperate as even the most docile herbivores transform into vicious carnivores. This increases the Difficulty of rolls to survive in the region by five and inflicts a two-die penalty on gods inside this spiritually-devastated area.

PERFORMANCE

Devil Emperor Edict

Prerequisites: Presence 5 or Performance 5

The Infernal speaks in the language of hellfire; those who fail to hear are doomed to burn.

Spend 1 mote when making an influence roll based on intimidation or authority. If the target refuses a hard bargain, they suffer a level of automatic damage in addition to the dice bonus to the Infernal's next action. This can only be used against a given target once per scene. Gain an additional anima.

Symphony of Sinful Prayers

Prerequisites: Performance 3 or Sagacity 3

The Infernal turns her attention to the prayers of her followers.

Spend 1 mote. The Storyteller describes the state of any characters connected to her through Merits (such as Allies, Followers, Contacts, and Command), describing their general whereabouts, condition, and concerns.

She may then ask a follow-up question and get an honest, useful answer or ask to hear the prayers of a specific character.

Wish-Granting Wickedness

Prerequisites: Performance 5, Essence 3

Hell abounds with thralls who thought to ask for something from nothing — and received it, to their eternal misfortune.

Spend 3 motes to grant a character's fondest wish for wealth, power, or prestige. They gain the benefits of an appropriate Major Merit, with circumstances arranging themselves to grant and maintain the Merit. At the end of the story, the Merit disappears just as inexplicably. A character must accept a hard bargain to refuse having a wish granted, such as giving up an important ambition to avoid temptation. If the character accepts, they are in the Infernal's debt; the next time she makes a persuade roll, he can't refuse by taking a hard bargain.

PHYSIQUE

Ceaseless Demon Hunger

Prerequisites: Physique 2

The Infernal may consume flame, poison, stone, and blade as readily as any repast.

The Infernal may safely consume any mundane substance; it is destroyed the instant it is swallowed, providing nourishment as if it were normal food. If these disgusts or horrifies another character in the scene, gain 1 anima.

Desert-and-Flame Endurance

See p. XX

Endless Nightmare Vigilance

See p. XX

Scars Become Armor

Prerequisites: Physique 4, Essence 2

The Infernal's battered body flares with veins of sickly green fire.

Commit 1 mote. On Step 7, the Infernal increases Soak by one after taking any levels of

damage, or by two if they took three or more damage. This can reduce the total amount of damage to zero.

Venom Blood Revenge

Prerequisites: Physique 4

When struck, the Infernal's corrosive blood sprays forth in a vengeful burst.

Spend 1 mote on Step 8 as a special counterattack. Characters in close range must make a Physique-based roll at Difficulty 3 plus the number of levels of damage inflicted on the countered attack that targeted the Infernal, or suffer four dice of environmental damage themselves.

Viridian Rust Defense

Prerequisites: Physique 3

Covering herself in a corrosive patina, the Infernal strengthens her armor.

Commit 1 mote while wearing armor. The Infernal gains two additional Soak. On Step 4 of Close Combat attack, she may pay 1 Power to destroy a mundane weapon used against her.

While in Corona of Fury, the Infernal may spend 2 motes or 1 anima on Step 6 to forcibly de-attune an artifact or magical weapon. The target loses access to its inherent properties and Evocations until the end of the scene.

PRESENCE

Broken Silence Laughter Defense

See p. XX

Devil Emperor Edict

See p. XX

Joy-Blighting Malediction

See p. XX

Our Little Secret

See p. XX

Ranged Combat Blinded by Hellfire

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2

The Infernal's missile ignites with radiant hellfire, dazzling and disorienting their opponent.

Spend 1 mote on Step 5. During a **withering** attack, the target suffers a dice penalty to all attack actions he takes until the end of his next turn equal to the amount of Power the Exalt generated before her Overwhelming rating is applied. On a **decisive** attack, this applies a dice penalty to all actions and Defense equal to the wound penalty inflicted plus one. This Charm may not be applied on a consecutive turn following the end of the penalty.

Green Sun Nimbus Flare (Upgrade: Ranged Combat 4): A target suffering from the dice penalty cannot benefit from concealment (p. XX) and reduces the Defense boost from cover (p. XX) by one to a minimum of zero.

Death of All Happiness

See p. XX

SAGACITY

Dark Miracle Mimicry

Prerequisites: Sagacity 4, Essence 2

The Yozi made the world and its gods, and so their Chosen are free to pilfer their miracles.

Commit 2 motes. The Infernal copies a magical ability (including spells, Charms, and other Essence-powered effects) from a character in the scene to whom they hold a negative Intimacy so long as the motes remain committed. They must pay its cost as usual. This cannot copy abilities from characters with higher Essence than the Infernal, or abilities based on light, sanctity, or positive emotions.

Inner Devil Unchained

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3, Essence 2

Drawing forth the depravity of their victim, the Infernal transforms them into a lesser demon.

Spend 2 motes when touching a mortal character. The Infernal can transform them, granting the target demonic features. This

grants them a three-die bonus to a specific Attribute + Ability combination — such as Force + Physique to imbue them with the strength of a blood ape, or Finesse + Performance to make haunting music like a devil-harpist. This bonus manifests as hideous, obviously supernatural changes in the target's appearance. A character can only receive the benefits of this Charm once; removing the curse requires magical intervention from a god of healing, sorcery, or Exalted medicine.

Shadow Spite Curse

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The curses of the Infernal Exalted transform bad luck into utter humiliation.

Spend 1 mote. A character making a roll loses one success for every die that shows a 1. Against attacks, use this Charm on Step 2. If this causes them to fail, they do so in spectacular fashion, and suffer a three-dice penalty for the rest of the scene when trying to use social influence to impress, convince, or threaten. Gain an additional anima.

Skin-Twisting Metamorphosis

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

When bent towards mercy, the Infernal may transform a foe, rather than kill.

Spend 1 mote. The Infernal makes an unarmed attack to place a curse upon her target. While doing this, she may use Sagacity in place of Close Combat. On Step 5, instead of inflicting damage, if the Infernal rolls any damage successes she transforms the target, inflicting a three-die penalty to rolls with a chosen Ability — inflicting a withering curse for Physique, a raspy and discordant voice for Presence, luminous skin for Stealth, and so on. Treating this curse requires divine or Exalted medicine, at difficulty 7. Gain an additional anima.

Symphony of Sinful Prayers

See p. XX

STEALTH

Our Little Secret

See p. XX

WAR

Oasis-Scouring Malediction

See p. XX

LIMINAL CHARMS

As creatures of undeath, Liminal Charms are altered by two types of modes: **nature modes** and **aspect modes**. Nature modes shift as the Liminal acts as a thing of undeath, and Aspect modes tie directly into the Liminal's origin. Nature modes may be shifted depending on the actions taken by the character, while Aspect modes are purchased with a milestone as normal. Whenever Liminals spend Health levels on their Charms, they gain anima as though they had spent motes.

LIMINAL NATURE MODES

The Liminal may enter **Blood Nature** if the Liminal has been wounded this turn, if they voluntarily inflict 1 health level of damage on themselves as a reflexive action, or if they are present in a scene dominated by emotions of ambition, greed, or lust.

The Liminal may enter **Breath Nature** if there is a corpse or other remains within short range by drawing its lingering breath into themselves as a reflexive action, or if they spend a scene in a tomb, graveyard, or other place of final rest. A Liminal may only target an individual corpse for these purposes once.

The Liminal may enter **Flesh Nature** by harvesting flesh and bodily material from a corpse within reach as a reflexive action, or by spending a scene in a place of recent death or slaughter.

The Liminal may enter **Marrow Nature** on any round they start with a wound penalty or Dramatic Injury, after spending a scene pursuing their own or a friendly undead character's

obsessions, or after spending a scene in a wholly novel or unknown place to the Liminal.

The Liminal may enter **Soil Nature** if another living creature suffers injury or an undead creature is destroyed in the Exalt's presence, or after spending a scene in a place of rot or new growth.

Whenever a Liminal takes an action to enter a Nature, they gain 1 anima.

LIMINAL ASPECT MODES

For Charms with aspect modes, a Liminal automatically gets the Mode that corresponds to their Aspect, but may purchase the others as upgrades if they wish.

GENERAL CHARMS

Corporeal Reformation

Prerequisites: None

Skin cracks and veins bulge as wounds knit themselves closed. The act of healing and recreation of the self is part of the Liminal's core nature, and they may develop many ways to repair their physical forms.

Once per session, the Liminal may heal up to three Health levels, and ignore the effects of one Dramatic Injury for the scene. Using this Charm is a simple action.

Blood Mode: If attacked by someone who has an intimacy related to the Liminal or while the Liminal is in Blood Nature, spend 1 mote on step 7. Heal one Health Level immediately. If both are true, heal up to two.

Breath Mode: Spend 1 anima when the character defeats an opponent or destroys an undead creature to heal one Health Level. If in Breath Nature, heal an additional Health Level.

Flesh Mode: Once per scene, spend one Health Level on step 1 of a decisive attack. Heal Health Levels equal to the Health Levels successfully done to the enemy. If in Flesh Nature, this may be used a second time in the scene.

Marrow Mode: Spend 1 mote to heal all but Bruised health levels once per scene as a simple action. If in Marrow Nature, this may be done reflexively on Step 8.

Soil Mode: Once per scene, the Liminal may heal one Health Level when they inter, memorialize, or put to rest a deceased sentient creature or person. If they are in Soil Nature, they may do this reflexively, even in combat.

Gravedigger's Elan

Prerequisites: None

The relief and release of properly interring the departed connects the Liminal back to the great cycle of life and death, strengthening them and their course.

Once per session, when a Liminal properly inter a deceased sentient creature or marks their death with an appropriate memorial, they and those who help them may regenerate their Essence in motes and heal one health level of damage.

Blood Nature: The Liminal adds two dice for any social actions upholding or promoting the deceased's major virtue or intimacies until the end of the session.

Breath Nature: Gain the benefit of a tertiary merit possessed by the deceased until the end of the session.

Flesh Nature: Those participating may heal a Dramatic Injury.

Marrow Nature: The Liminal may immediately use the knowledge of the deceased to cut corners on a venture without suffering consequences.

Soil Nature: The Liminal may choose one action before the next sunrise to gain a dice bonus as if they had received a teamwork action from the deceased character.

Last Exhalation of Secrets

Prerequisites: None

The Liminal can wring answers from the dead, shambling corpses, and the feral depths of living souls, stirring the lower soul to speak the truth to the Exalt.

The Liminal may target unintelligent undead or corpses with social actions to ferret out the answer to a specific question. They reply in a wordless exchange of information that only Liminals, Abyssals, and other undead can understand. Such targets don't benefit from any Virtues if they resist, but may still possess meaningful Intimacies. The Liminal may target a deceased individual with this charm only once.

Blood Nature: The Liminal may target places of great passion or violence, which responds as if it was an intelligent character.

Breath Nature: The Liminal may target intelligent living characters, whose lower souls respond in the same way. If successful, the target realizes they have somehow given up information, though not how. A living target may be affected once per scene.

Flesh Nature: The Liminal may target weapons or living animals, which respond as if they were an intelligent character. A living target may be affected once per scene.

Marrow Nature: The Liminal may ask a second question of a valid target.

Soil Nature: The Liminal may target intelligent undead. Those with an equal or lower Essence cannot resist for a single question, while those with a higher Essence never increase the difficulty to obtain information from them with their Virtues.

Life, Death, and Rebirth

Prerequisites: Essence 5

The Liminal opens the border of life and death, Creation and the Underworld; all souls present feel themselves caught in the great flow as the Exalted diverts the flow of Essence and souls to wreak great weal or woe.

Once per session, spend any number of Health Levels as a simple action. For each, select one effect from the list. Effects may be chosen multiple times, targeting characters within short range. Effects that correspond to a Nature the Liminal is currently in may be used once freely.

- **Soil:** Cause a ghost of lower Essence (or a willing volunteer) to return to the cycle of reincarnation, permanently destroying its ghostly form.
- **Flesh:** Heal another character of all Health Levels of damage, or all diseases suffered, or all dramatic injuries.
- **Breath:** Gain all the skills of a present corpse or undead for the scene, gaining two bonus successes on rolls that does not count against the normal cap.
- **Blood:** Cause another character to immediately act according to a Major Virtue or Intimacy of theirs that the Liminal knows of, unless they succeed at a Fortitude + Integrity roll with a difficulty equal to the Liminal's Essence. This is a psyche effect.
- **Marrow:** Gain knowledge of all of another character's Virtues and Intimacies. They may spend one Health per Intimacy or Virtue they wish to conceal.

Scent of Blood

Prerequisites: None

Blood and passion cry out to the Liminal, leading them to whatever wellspring they seep from.

Commit 1 mote. Until the start of the next session, the Liminal gains double-9s for any rolls for tracking or pursuit, and two bonus successes if their quarry are undead, wounded, or have recently killed a living being. If the Liminal has wounded or been wounded by the target, the Liminal cannot lose the trail, barring magical effects on the target's part. Liminal Natures apply both bonus successes and an unshakable trail for targets with virtues or intimacies related to that Nature.

Blood Nature: Virtues or intimacies relating to ambition, greed, or lust.

Breath Nature: Virtues or intimacies relating to regret or repentance. **Flesh Nature:** Virtues or intimacies relating to anger, rage, or vengeance.

Marrow Nature: Virtues or intimacies relating to curiosity or obsession. **Soil Nature:** Virtues or intimacies relating to sorrow or yearning.

Towering Corporeal Pillar

Prerequisites: Essence 3, Undying Body, one other Force or Fortitude Charm.

The Liminal engorges their flesh into an intimidating and mighty mien.

This charm modifies Undying Body, allowing the Liminal to spend a combination of up to 3 Health Levels or anima when they activate it. Each point spent makes their form larger and more powerful, with the following, cumulative effects:

One: The Liminal may immediately inflict three health levels of damage against an extra, battlegroup, or undead with lower Essence who fails an attack against the Liminal as a Step 8 counterattack, and is immune to the effects of the Legendary Size merit.

Two: Mundane weapons lose their tags and bonuses against the Liminal, explicitly including grave weapons and the natural attacks of the undead. The Liminal gains a two-success bonus to damage rolls against extras, battlegroups, and undead.

Three: The Liminal's horrific form can make Close Combat attacks out to Short Range. The Liminal gains a two-success bonus to damage rolls against everyone. At Essence 4, they gain the Legendary Size quality.

True Undeath

Prerequisites: Essence 2

The Liminal's deathly nature overrides her limited mortality, making her completely into an unliving thing.

The Liminal's Undying Advantage now applies even if the Liminal drowned or was buried. As a truly undead thing, she also gains a bonus success whenever she interacts with ghosts or any other thinking undead being. Additionally, she may commit 1 mote and bestow the benefits of this Charm and undeath itself to one ally she can touch for the duration of a scene.

Undying Body

Prerequisites: None

The Liminal's body churns and reconstructs itself, bone and innards shifting to inure them to damage and ready them for battle.

Commit 2 motes for the scene. The Liminal reduces all wound penalties by one, and gains two Soak and two Hardness. All modes cost one Health Level to activate, unless the Liminal is in the respective nature.

At Essence 3 and again at Essence 5, gain an additional Bruised Health level when activating this charm.

Blood Mode: Become flowing blood and constant motion, increasing Defense by one and adding two dice to all Athletics rolls related to movement.

Breath Mode: Become unreal and insubstantial, reducing all Overwhelming values against the Liminal by two, and increasing Power generated by their successful Maneuver actions by two.

Flesh Mode: Become a seething mass of muscle and scar tissue, gaining one additional soak and reducing the cost for the Knockback, Knockdown, and Knockout gambits by two.

Marrow Mode: Become too-long limbs and turn to strange angles, gaining one additional overwhelming and increasing the cost of gambits targeting the Liminal by two.

Soil Mode: Become whispering dust and walking decay, reducing enemy Hardness and Soak by one.

FINESSE CHARMS

Black Wind of Desire

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal can bind individuals together, speaking the name of one into earthen hollows to cast the other into tumbling emotions.

Spend 1 mote. The Liminal chooses a target who they've observed for at least a scene, and speaks their name into a natural earthen hollow or purpose-dug passage. They pick another individual, and their target gains a Minor Intimacy tie towards that individual of either "Confused Feelings" or based on what mode the Liminal uses. A target may only be affected by one use of this charm at a time.

At Essence 2, pay a Health Level to make it a Major Intimacy.

Blood Mode: A tie based on ambition, greed, or lust.

Breath Mode: A tie based on regret or repentance.

Flesh Mode: A tie based on anger, rage, or vengeance.

Marrow Mode: A tie based on curiosity or obsession.

Soil Mode: A tie based on sorrow or yearning.

Bone Deep Body Reconfiguration

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal's body shifts and cracks as it reshapes its internal components to better take advantage of the flow of battle.

Spend 1 mote or 1 Health Level when making a Build Power action. Gain double-9s on the roll and gain three additional Power if the action succeeds.

Breath Nature: The Liminal may spend 1 anima to reflexively Clash an attack this turn.

Marrow Nature: The Liminal may reflexively move a range band when activating this charm,

in addition to their normal movement for the turn.

Death-Sensing Probe

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal's senses spread outwards, dark tendrils of awareness alerting them of any undead or other dangers present.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Liminal becomes aware of the presence of any undead within the scene, including numbers, general location, and type, even if such creatures are dematerialized or hidden. They cannot be surprised by the undead as long as this effect is active. If other living or animate dangers are present, the Exalt knows they are present and general number or size, but not other benefits.

Breath Nature: The Liminal's Focus actions gain double successes on any 9s rolled, and they cannot be surprised by any foes.

Marrow Nature: Ignore up to the Liminal's Essence in penalties to defense.

Honored Memories of Mastery

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal coaxes knowledge and skills from the residual memories of the deceased.

Commit 1 mote for the session. If the Liminal has access to a corpse, they can pick one narrow area of expertise or ability their target possessed in life: Backstreet Nexus Knife Fighting, Haslanti Trade Deals, Chiaroscuroean cooking, or similarly specific deeds. For the duration, the Liminal may double-9s and add their Essence in automatic successes for rolls related to that specific expertise.

Soft Touch of Hospice

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Exalt's presence brings pain and suffering to its conclusion.

The Liminal may spend a recovery scene in discussion and commiseration that cuts through

a character's pain and regret. The character may voluntarily remove a Minor Intimacy. If they do so, they also heal a Dramatic Injury, disease, or other malady afflicting them.

Blood Nature: An affected character may instead voluntarily reduce a Major Intimacy to a Minor Intimacy.

Breath Nature: Once per scene, an affected character may regain 1 mote.

Tomb and Ruin Inspection

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal touches an ancient relic or bit of detritus, its history flooding back to the Exalt as they inhale the unliving breath from the area.

Spend 1 mote as a simple action. The Liminal learns the history of an object or item they touch, from its manufacture to emotionally charged moments of its use. This removes any circumstantial penalties for attempting to use or modify an item, from wielding an exotic ancient weapon to bypassing a complex lock.

Breath Nature: This charm costs 0 motes, but increases anima by 1.

Web of Veins

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal forges connections to each of their allies, sensing the ebb and flow of their companions' lives and providing swift aid through their bond.

Commit 1 mote for the scene and select any number of willing allies present. The Liminal knows their physical and emotional conditions for the scene, including whenever they are wounded or otherwise adversely affected. If a connected character suffers two or more Health Levels of damage, the Liminal may spend 1 mote and 1 Health Level of damage to reduce the damage by one. At Essence 3, spend additional Health Levels to reduce additional levels of damage.

Flesh Nature: Whenever reducing damage for a connected character, gain one Power.

Soil Nature: No mote cost for reducing damage for connected characters.

Weeping Crimson Gaze

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Liminal floods their eyes with bloody Essence, the sanguine vision enabling them to strike the dead and living alike with uncanny accuracy.

Spend 1 mote. The Liminal ignores all penalties for detecting, interacting with, or attacking undead for a single roll. In combat, the Liminal may use this on Step 3 to additionally gain double-9s on attacks, even against non-undead targets. **Upgrade:** At Essence 3, reduce the difficulty an affected roll or the Defense of a target in combat by 1.

Blood Nature: This charm costs 0 motes, but may still generate 1 anima.

Soil Nature: Increase Damage by 1 against already wounded targets.

FORCE CHARMS

Autopsy-and-Dissection Glance

Prerequisites: Force 3

A single look tells the Liminal how a body died and whether or not someone or something has disturbed its souls.

The Liminal instantly knows the material cause of death for bodies they encounter. For instance, they learn a man was stabbed to death from behind in an ambush attack, not that a bandit did it to steal the man's purse. They may spend 1 mote to further know whether the deceased was subjected to any magical effects after death, whether its lower soul has risen as a hungry ghost, and whether its higher soul has reincarnated or not, and gain two bonus success to rolls for tracking or talking to any resulting ghost.

Bloodslick Crimson Barb

Prerequisites: Force 3

Essence infused blood connects coat's the Liminal's weapon and allows them to create a grisly tether to their opponent, preventing them from escaping the Liminal's reach.

Commit 1 mote and spend one Health Level on step 1 of an attack. Bloody essence infuses the Liminal's weapon, granting it the Pulling, Piercing Tags, and Thrown (Short) tags. If it already has the Pulling tag, reduce the cost for the Pull gambit by two; if it already has the Piercing tag, reduce an additional two points of soak, and if it already has a range, increase its range by one band. A target successfully pulled has the barb attached, and cannot move to a range band further away from the Liminal unless they succeed on a Gambit with a Power cost equal to the Liminal's Force. At Essence 2, the Liminal generates two additional Power on **withering** attacks against an attached target.

Blood Nature: Remove the Health Level cost for using this charm.

Flesh Nature: Attached targets decrease Defense by one.

Deathbound Mania

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Liminal's presence suffuses their surroundings, causing the living and dead like to suffer swings in emotion, from terror to euphoria and back again.

Spend 2 motes or 1 Anima. A character attempting to resist Social Influence in your presence must either reduce Resolve by two, or create a Minor Tie of Fear or Obsession to you, as you choose. At Essence 3, they suffer both effects instead.

Blood Nature: Reduce the target's Resolve by your wound penalty.

Marrow Nature: If they choose to create a Tie, you benefit as if you successfully made a Read Intentions social action against them.

Embodied Resonance Transplant

Prerequisites: Force 3, Essence 2

The Liminal integrates a limb or organ from a deceased Essence channeler, and in doing so gains greater mastery over the deceased's magical materials.

The Liminal may spend a scene replacing a limb or integrating an organ from one of the Exalted or other character who is resonant with a magical material. The Liminal then becomes resonant with that magical material, until they choose to replace that limb or organ or lose it through a Dramatic Injury. A Liminal may benefit from this charm up to their Essence times, adding an additional magical material each instance.

Ever-Steady Graveward Heart

Prerequisites: Essence 3, Force 4

The heart pumps roiling blood and essence throughout the Liminal's body, forcing it to rapidly repair damage no matter the cost to long term stability.

Commit 3 motes for the scene. At the beginning of the round, the Liminal heals one Health Level. If this or any other effect would heal the Liminal and they are already at full health, they gain one anima instead. At the end of the scene, the Liminal suffers an appropriate Dramatic Injury from overextending their body's ability to heal. At Essence 5, the Liminal may purchase this charm again, to heal two Health Levels each round.

Muscle-Hemorrhaging Exertion

Prerequisites: Force 3

Muscles twist and bones crack, sinews fray and veins explode as the Liminal pushes their body

far beyond even the monstrous form's normal limits for a moment of unbelievable power.

Spend 1 anima and 1 Health Level. Add three bonus successes to a Feat of Strength or a damage roll on Step 5.

Flesh Nature: Additionally, gain double-9s on the Feat of Strength or damage roll. The Liminal may spend 1 more Health Level to make it double-8s instead.

Soil Nature: The Liminal may spend 1 additional anima to double extra success rolled.

Unliving Industry

Prerequisites: Force 4, Essence 3

Pushing their body beyond the limitations of mortal flesh or corpse animation, the Liminal accomplishes tasks through diligence and pure effort.

Commit 2 motes for the duration of a venture and spend 1 Health Level. Immediately overcome an obstacle with a difficulty of 3 or lower. At Essence 5, remove any obstacle.

Flesh Nature: Take one level of aggravated damage, and remove an additional obstacle.

FORTITUDE CHARMS

Blossoming Clot Ministrations

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Liminal accelerates the processes at work in a body, speeding the healing of the living or turning a corpse into soil and dust.

Spend 1 mote. The Liminal immediately heals a target of a single Bruised or Injured wound level, or transmutes a corpse into soil and dust, preventing it or its lower soul from rising as any sort of undead.

Special: A living target may only be affected by this charm once per day. The Liminal may enter Soil Nature if they destroy a corpse with this charm.

Breath-Tasting Ward

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

Absorbing the pneuma their enemy respire as they attack the Liminal, the Exalt gains a greater understanding of their enemy and their movements.

Commit 1 mote on Step 4. The Liminal learns a Virtue or Intimacy they didn't know their attacker possessed, and the attacker suffers a one-success penalty on attack and damage rolls against the Liminal as long as this charm is active.

Breath Nature: While this charm is active you may spend 1 anima to make a counterattack on step 8 against enemies who are undead or whose major virtue you know.

Cyclic Scythe

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Liminal's body becomes covered in rot and regrowth, a constant tidal shift of death and rebirth which howls alongside their attacks as a hungry black wind.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Liminal may pay one health level on step 5 of an attack to generate three additional Power on **withering** attacks or add three dice on **decisive** damage rolls. Increase all Power or dice bonuses by one at Essence 3 and again at 5.

Flesh Nature: Reduce the cost of all gambits by one.

Soil Nature: Extend the range of all the Liminal's attacks by an additional range band.

Investiture of Flesh

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Liminal hemorrhages life and essence, healing an ally or briefly allowing a ghost to walk amongst the living.

Spend up the Liminal's Essence in motes and an equal number of Health Levels as a simple action. For each mote spent in this way, heal one Health Level on an ally within short range. Alternatively, the Liminal may commit those motes for the scene in order to allow a friendly

ghost to materialize. If they do so, the materialized ghost has Health Levels equal to those the Liminal spent, and will immediately dematerialize if those Health Levels are lost.

Life-Scaffolding Survival

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3, Essence 2

Bones shiver, tearing through muscle and skin as they grow and realign, and veins and arteries reroute to keep the Liminal functioning despite whatever damage has been dealt to them.

Commit 1 mote for the scene and spend 1 Health Level. Reduce all wound penalties by one and ignore the effects of any Dramatic Injuries. Increase Soak and Hardness by the Liminal's wound penalties and increase Defense by one if the Liminal has any Dramatic Injuries.

Blood Nature: Reduce Health Level cost of this charm to zero.

Soil Nature: Activate reflexively on Step 2.

Pain Syphoning Sigh

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Liminal breathes in another's suffering, either to ease their pain or discover their weaknesses.

When making a Social Influence roll, spend 1 mote. Gain three bonus successes for any Read Intentions focused on discovering recent or ongoing sources of pain for the character. You may relieve their pain by taking it onto yourself, gaining three bonus success for any additional Social Influence rolls for the rest of the scene, or choose to exploit it, gaining those successes to any single roll targeting the affected character. You may activate this charm in response to a character divulging their suffering to you outside of a social action. Discovering a ghost or other deceased character's cause of death is always a valid use.

At Essence 3, this effect succeeds automatically unless the target has a charm or other supernatural way of concealing their emotions.

Breath Nature: Reflexively affect a target automatically whose Resolve is lower than your Fortitude.

Soil Nature: Spend a Health Level to heal a Health Level of your target.

Unleash Homunculus

Prerequisites: Fortitude 4, Essence 3

From their own churning flesh, the waters of the underworld, and the black soil of the earth, the Liminal forms a loyal flesh creature, of similar composition to their own.

Spend 3 Health Levels and commit 1 mote. You assemble a creation from your own flesh and essence that will remain intact until destroyed or you end the charm. Your creature has the abilities of one of the following:

- A Secondary Familiar, of any animal or near-animal construction. It's able to conceal its unnatural nature barring close inspection.
- A Champion (p. XX) but possesses your choice of additional capability to its primary die-pool. They can pass as mortal barring supernatural effects.
- Any undead creature, but possess your choice of additional capability to its secondary die-pool. They are obviously a creature of death.

Such creatures are unerringly loyal, and always possess a Major intimacy towards you. If you activate this charm in a shadowland or the Underworld, reduce the cost of this charm by two Health Levels. You may have no more creatures than your Fortitude created by this ability at one time. When the charm ends, the creatures crumble to grave soil, and you gain access to their memories.

At Essence 5, repurchase the charm to raise a legion of such creatures from a shadowland or the Underworld. They count as Secondary Command, and as a single entity for the purposes of this charm.

LUNAR CHARMS

Lunar Charms allow the Exalt to be a silver-tongued trickster, a terrifying predator-god, or a witch lurking at the fringes of society.

SHAPESHIFTING CHARMS

These Charms have no Attribute prerequisites.

Ant-and-Yeddim Wisdom

Prerequisites: None

The Lunar's ability to change shape extends, allowing her become creatures wildly different from her in size.

The Lunar may claim the shape of tiny animals, such as insects or spiders, or the shape of creatures with Legendary Size, granting her a success bonus to all relevant actions (sneaking when tiny, smashing buildings when enormous) equal to the Lunar's Essence.

Chimera-Soul Expression

Prerequisites: None

The Lunar adopts a new shape as her true self, allowing it to intermingle with her extant form.

The Lunar becomes a chimera, having a spirit shape that fuses two or more animals. When you purchase this charm, you have the option of selecting one of the following Modes. This Charm is permanent, and may be purchased more than once; however, each purchase beyond the first must be taken as a minor milestone, rather than personal; hybridizing yourself to such an extent isn't easy.

New Type: If the animal you are hybridizing your true shape with is markedly different, select a different animal type (e.g. Flying, Burrowing, etc). You gain the benefits of that animal type when in your spirit shape.

Double Down: If the animal you are hybridizing with your true shape is similar, add two dice to your animal type's benefit. If the benefit is not rolled, double its effects.

Changing Phases Transformation

Prerequisites: Essence 2

The Lunar's body becomes fluid, allowing her to reconstruct it to better suit the task at hand.

Commit 1 mote. Redistribute your character's Attributes however you desire, so long as each Attribute has at least one dot and no more than five dots. This Charm ends when the mote is uncommitted or the scene ends. While this Charm is active, treat choose an Attribute and treat it as one higher for the purposes of using the Excellency — to a maximum of five.

Hybrid Body Transformation

Prerequisites: None

The Lunar sheds the mask of humanity and becomes an enormous beastfolk-like creature.

Commit 2 motes. Gain one bonus die to all rolls; this die does not count toward the dice limit. Additionally, gain the benefit of your animal spirit shape's special abilities, and add her Essence in automatic successes to all actions that fall within the scope of your animal spirit shape's milieu (dodging for a mongoose, goring for a bull, etc). Your hybrid shape can take on whatever appearance you like, which need not involve a full transformation of your body and may subtly change each time it's invoked.

Deadly Beast Transformation: A second purchase of this Charm allows the character to enter a frenzied, hybrid war form. At her option, she treats her unarmed attacks as heavy weapons (p.

XX), increases her Hardness and base Soak by one, and adds three bonus dice to performing Feats of Strength. These dice do not count towards the limit. While transformed in this way, decrease her Defense by one.

Many-Faced Moon Transformation

Prerequisites: None

The Lunar's visage blurs and shifts ever so slightly as she refines the shape she wears.

Spend 1 mote. The Lunar alters her current shape's appearance, changing the color of hair, skin, and eyes, shifting its build (adding or subtracting subtle changes to its original height and weight), altering or obviating sexual characteristics, etc. These changes last until the Lunar uses Many-Faced Moon Transformation to alter them again.

Manifold Hunter's Tactics

Prerequisites: None

The Lunar broadens her portfolio of methods for stealing others' shapes.

The Lunar gains one other method of learning a shape listed under Lunar Advantages in addition to the one she took at character creation. Each repurchase of this charm grants access to two of the below methods, which the Lunar may invoke by spending 1 mote.

Argent Trickster's Rook: Copy the shape of someone by winning it in a game of skill or chance. The Lunar must make a wager that her target considers of equal value, even if he doesn't believe she *can* steal his shape.

Debt of Borrowed Skin: Copy the shape of someone as payment for a debt they owe to her, so long as the target consents to this form of payment.

Face-Taker's Gaze: Copy the shape of someone for whom you have learned a Major Intimacy by cultivating an intimacy of like subject and intensity.

Heart-Drinking Allure: Copy the shape of someone who has an Intimacy of love or lust towards her (or her current shape) by engaging in an intimate (not necessarily sexual) physical act with them.

Hero's Heart Challenge: Copy the shape of someone by defeating them in a physical contest. The Lunar must gain a Major Intimacy (Respect) towards the opponent. Winning by

cheating is valid, as long as the Lunar isn't found out.

Nest-Raiding Slyness: Copy the shape of someone by infiltrating their home while they're inside it and escaping without being captured while leaving evidence of her passage (stealing a valuable item, carving her name into a wall, etc).

Whispering Heart Revelation: Copy the shape of someone by learning a secret they would do anything to hide. The Lunar retains the stolen shape even if she later reveals the secret.

Mountainous Spirit Expression

Prerequisites: None

The Lunar transforms any of her shapes into an impossibly large beast.

Commit 1 mote. Choose a form the Lunar knows. When she shapeshifts into it, it gains the Enormous Size quality (p. XX) if it does not have it already.

At Essence 2, she increases the size her form can grow to, to Legendary Size (p. XX). If the creature is already Enormous or Legendary Size, increase the cost of the Ensnare, Knockback, Knockdown, and Knockout gambits by two.

At Essence 3, second purchase of this Charm allows the Lunar to apply this to herself, rather than her forms.

FINESSE

Cunning Anglerfish Decoy

Prerequisites: Finesse 3 or Fortitude 3, Essence 2

The Lunar sheds a bit of herself, transforming it into a perfect replica to distract her foes.

Commit 1 mote. The Lunar plucks a hair, spits, sheds a scale, or in some way leaves a bit of herself behind, which transforms into a convincing duplicate of herself. This duplicate cannot take actions, but can appear to, and can avoid attacks using the Lunar's Defense. If successfully struck, the duplicate vanishes. When she creates a duplicate, the Lunar may

reflexively Outmaneuver her foe to Build Power. The Lunar may spend additional motes to summon additional duplicates at a rate of two per mote spent, up to a maximum of her Essence + 5 total duplicates.

Shedding the Spirit's Skin: At Essence 3 or higher, the Lunar may opt to have one or more of her duplicates take the form of another shape in her heart's blood library.

Hungry All-Consuming Cloud

Prerequisites: Finesse 5

The Lunar becomes a swarm of small creatures, moving and attacking as one.

Commit 2 motes. The Lunar breaks down into a swarm of creatures. She gains her Fortitude in temporary Bruised health levels and a swarming attack (use light weapon traits; the Lunar may attack anyone within close range once per turn with a single attack roll). Only the highest **withering** damage roll made grants Power. **Decisive** attacks split Power between all targeted enemies. Subtract one level of damage from all **decisive** attacks she suffers except those with the Flame tag. Human-sized or smaller characters reduce Defense by one against rushes, and any characters engaged in Close Combat with the Lunar must flurry their movement to get away.

Wasp-and-Locust Legion: At Essence 3, the Lunar may repurchase this Charm to allow Hungry All-Consuming Cloud to transform her into a battle group with a dice pool equal to her Finesse + War and base Drill equal to her Essence. She can't benefit from command actions or Charms that aid battle groups.

Hunter-Baffling Quarry's Curse

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Lunar curses another to be mistaken for herself.

Commit 1 mote when you touch a target and roll Finesse + Stealth, Sagacity, or Presence,

opposed by the target's Fortitude + Integrity. Success leaves the victim with a physical mark identical to the Lunar's Tell, which lasts for a number of scenes equal to extra successes plus one. This mark is obvious to all who see it, and the target suffers a four-die penalty to all attempts to disguise himself. Onlookers must succeed on a Difficulty 7 Fortitude + Awareness roll to realize the deception.

Lasting Brand: At Essence 3, the Lunar may keep the mote committed to extend the Charm's duration to days instead of scenes.

False Moonrise Phantasm: At Essence 4, the Lunar may commit 1 mote every time she would increase her anima to displace that increase to a marked target instead.

Laughing Devil Distraction

Prerequisites: Finesse 2 or Force 2

The Lunar cajoles and teases her target, driving them to rage and distraction.

When the Lunar uses the Distract gambit (p. XX), its duration is at least her Essence in turns plus any extra successes. She also gains one bonus success to any Inspire or Rally Build Power action (p. XX) when she stunts using provocation to empower her allies. If she grants four or more Power while benefitting from this Charm, gain 1 anima.

Living Hive Transformation

Prerequisites: Finesse 4, Essence 2

The Lunar's body begins to molt and change as her body partially transforms into a swarm of small animals.

Commit 2 motes for the scene. Expend 1 anima on Step 8 to make a **decisive** counterattack with an unarmed strike or a natural weapon. She discounts the cost of the **decisive** attack by her Essence. She may also make counterattacks against any grapple techniques her enemy uses while in a clinch.

Lunars may reflexively activate Living Hive Transformation when they activate Hybrid Body Transformation.

Predator-and-Prey Mirror

Prerequisites: Finesse 2

The Lunar hides her own nature behind a mask, tricking others into playing their role in nature's bloody game.

Commit 1 mote and choose a Mode. For the duration of the scene or until you uncommit the mote, you may leverage the impression the Mode grants your character as if it were a Minor Intimacy.

Predator: The Lunar presents herself as a natural predator for whoever she speaks to — to a corrupt bureaucrat, she might seem like an auditor; to a humble farmer, a bandit.

Prey: The Lunar presents herself as vulnerable, easy prey. Anyone not familiar with her capabilities will assume her to be an easy mark until she proves otherwise.

Quicksilver Second Face

Prerequisites: Finesse 3, Essence 3

The Lunar's form is as mutable as water, flowing instantly to fit whatever shape she desires.

Commit 1 mote. For the remainder of the scene, treat shapeshifting as a reflexive action, and pay no costs for assuming a form that you have already shifted into previously this scene.

Shadow Talon Execution

Prerequisites: Finesse 4

With the merest cover, the Lunar vanishes from her target's sight and reappears in a brutal flash.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 while benefitting from stealth-created concealment (p. XX). Treat the target as though they had been ambushed (p. XX) regardless of if the action is taken after the first turn. Charms or other powers which negate surprise negate this effect.

Shadow-Hands Casting

Prerequisites: Finesse 3

The Lunar's shadow comes to life, weaving itself into arcane postures as the Lunar attends to other matters.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. The Lunar may flurry a **Focus Will** action with any non-attack action, and ignores the flurry penalty to do so.

FORCE

Beast-Soul Awakening

Prerequisites: Force 5, Essence 3

The Lunar crafts a sacred place that postulants may test themselves against, to be rewarded with Luna's grace if they endure its trials.

The Lunar engages in a venture in a demesne or Wyld place, meditating, etching occult glyphs into the terrain, or engaging in other forms of mystical behavior. She transforms the location into a sacred testing ground, transforming any mortal who successfully completes the testing ground's trial by transforming them into beastfolk of a type specified by the Lunar, granting them the appropriate animal's special abilities. These changes are hereditary, allowing the Lunar to raise entire cultures of beastfolk.

This project begins with a base of two Obstacles, with each Obstacle representing one day. Common Obstacles include gods the Lunar must wrestle or cajole into obedience, ancient debris tainting the ritual purity of the site, or encroachment by others tampering with the area's geomantic Essence flows. The player may elect to add other Obstacles; each additional Obstacle, to a total maximum of the Lunar's Essence, allows the player to add one of the following features to characters who complete the trial:

- Gain +1 Attribute (or add one die to an Antagonist's Primary Pool)
- Gain an Essence 1 non-Shapeshifting Lunar Charm.

- Add a second animal type, creating chimera beastfolk.

Characters who successfully complete the trial also gain all benefits of Sharing Luna's Gifts (p. XX).

Boundary-Marking Meditation

Prerequisites: Force 3 or Fortitude 3

The Lunar claims a stretch of land as her own letting her Essence pervade and empower it.

The Lunar claims a region of land, and defines three qualities about it; for example, *overgrown*, *labyrinthine*, and *dark* for a stretch of thick jungle. Characters taking an action fitting those qualities within the Lunar's territory gain one automatic success. Characters who take action opposing those qualities suffer a two-die penalty. The Lunar may always revoke the benefits of this Charm for a given target, if she is aware of them.

Qualities may change as a result of events in the story (for example, if a blight sweeps through the aforementioned jungle). Once per Major milestone, the Lunar may change the qualities of her

territory. When target characters are benefitted or penalized by this Charm's effects, gain 1 anima.

Dream-Shrouded Wilderness (Upgrade): At Essence 3, the Lunar may socially influence targets who sleep in her territory by entering or sharing their dreams.

Butterfly Eyes Mirage

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Lunar's gaze fascinates her prey, blinding them to their surroundings.

Commit 1 mote when the Exalt makes eye contact with a target, and make a Force + Presence, Performance, or Stealth instill roll. If successful, name one thing in the scene that the target is incapable of noticing so long as the Lunar continues to interact with him (requiring

a reflexive action on subsequent turns if used in combat).

If the Lunar prevents the target from noticing another character, treat it as if that character had successfully established concealment against her victim. If the Lunar prevents the target from noticing a dangerous feature of the surrounding area, the target notices them in time to attempt to mitigate the harm, but not before the absolute last second.

If the Lunar attempts to conceal something the target has a Major Intimacy towards, the target may accept a **hard bargain** to resist this charm.

Grasping Pseudopod Method

Prerequisites: Force 4, Essence 2

Seizing tentacles or entangling pseudopods sprout from the Lunar's body, keeping her hands free while she wrestles an enemy.

Commit 1 mote for the duration of a grapple. The Lunar may flurry miscellaneous actions while participating in a grapple with no dice penalty. She may use gambits, but may not make other attacks, even if she has a Charm that would permit her to do so.

Outside of combat, she may use this Charm to hold a target fast while doing other tasks, including participating in social influence.

Insidious Lunar Transformation

Prerequisites: Force 4 or Fortitude 4, Sharing Luna's Gifts

The Lunar's blood twists and reshapes her target, transforming them into a beast.

Commit 1 mote when you share blood with a target (feeding it to them, blood-to-blood contact, etc) and roll Force + Sagacity or Presence against the target's Fortitude + Integrity. The target is transformed into any animal or human whose heart's blood the Lunar possesses. This transformation lasts for one + Lunar's successes days of downtime, or until the next of the *next* session, but the Lunar may

cancel the transformation before then. Certain Charms or other effects that neutralize curses may also undo the effects of this Charm.

Swine-and-Cattle Spite: With an Essence 3 repurchase of this Charm, the Lunar may use Insidious Lunar Transformation on a target without sharing blood, so long as she possesses a negative Major Intimacy towards the target.

Devourer of Form: With an Essence 3 repurchase of this Charm, the Lunar may use Insidious Lunar Transformation without cost and regardless of range when successfully completing a Sacred Hunt against the target.

Kraken-Arm Lash

Prerequisites: Force 3 or Fortitude 3

The Lunar's limbs elongate into a grasping tendril to ensnare an enemy at range.

Spend 1 mote. The Lunar initiates a grapple out to short range, granting her unarmed attack the Pulling tag (p. XX). Whether or not she gains dominance over the grapple, she and her target are pulled into the same range band.

She may also use Kraken-Arm Lash to perform the Pull gambit (p. XX). Reduce the gambit's cost by one, to a minimum of one.

Memory-Drinking Meditation

Prerequisites: Force 3

The Lunar sifts through the memories of her prey, scenting details and tasting truths.

Spend 1 or more motes when the Lunar completes a sacred hunt to take a human's shape. She also takes one of her target's Intimacies toward an individual character, gaining it at the Minor level. She must be aware of the Intimacy beforehand. As long as she is in the target's shape, she has access to all memories relating to the adopted Intimacy. The Lunar may expend multiple motes when using this charm to gain multiple Intimacies from the same target.

Lifetime-Quaffing Draught: At Essence 3, the Lunar may repurchase this Charm, adding the following to its text: The Lunar may expend 2 motes to gain general access to her target's memories along with the adopted Intimacy instead of only Intimacy-specific memories.

Lessons in the Blood: At Force 4, the Lunar may repurchase this Charm, adding the following to its text: The Lunar may treat memories gained through Memory-Drinking Meditation as a valid source of training for any Ability, Martial Arts Charms, or Sorcery.

Nightmare Scar Memento

Prerequisites: Force 4, Essence 2

The Lunar leaves behind a cruel mark — a fearsome reminder of her prowess.

Spend 1 mote on Step 7. When the target accepts a **dramatic injury** from the Lunar, they also gain a Minor Tie of fear towards her until the injury recovers. If the injury would remove a limb, leave a lasting scar, or caused damage to one of the target's assets, this become a Major Tie instead. The Lunar adds her Essence in bonus dice to any dissuade influence rolls (p. XX) against the character until the injury is healed.

Sharing Luna's Gifts

Prerequisites: Force 3 or Fortitude 3

The Exalt shares their protean Essence with another, anointing him with their sacred blood. His body transforms to resemble one of the Lunar's animal shapes, becoming beastfolk.

Spend 1 mote. The target consumes or is anointed in the Exalt's blood. They increase base Soak by one — representing hide, scales, fur or another mutation. They may add one of the following topics to their Primary Dice Pool: Bestial Combat, Outdoor Survival or Striking Appearance.

Whichever options are not selected are added to their Secondary Dice Pool. Their appearance

and the logical limitations of these actions are based on a single shape the Lunar chooses.

Other Exalted may be targeted by this Charm; however, if undesired (either at the time this Charm is used or at any time in the future), the transformation will fade over a number of days of downtime or a number of sessions (whichever comes first) equal to the Lunar's Essence. Instead of adding a qualifier to their dice pools, they gain a three-dice bonus when acting in accordance with the transformation.

Selkie Mantle Endowment (Upgrade): At Force or Fortitude 4 and Essence 2, the Lunar may spend an additional mote to bless a target with any one heart's blood shape. The target can assume that shape whenever they desire with a Finesse + Integrity, Navigate, or Sagacity roll, difficulty 3.

FORTITUDE

Adder Fang Method

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

Growing dripping fangs or toxic glands, the Lunar secretes a poison or bites with venom.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. While this Charm is active, the Lunar's unarmed attacks inflict poison while deals two damage per round with a duration of her Fortitude in rounds. The target must make a roll to resist the poison at Difficulty 3. At her option, she may instead use a poison or venom from any animal form she possesses. The Lunar may envenom a weapon with her toxin as a simple action.

Scorpion-and-Toad Absolution: A second purchase of this Charm allows the Lunar to instead inflict any poison she is currently afflicted with or has been afflicted with in the same scene with her natural attacks.

Boundary-Marking Meditation

See p. XX

Creation Spanning Passion

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3, Essence 2

The Lunar's Essence reaches far beyond her presence, bound to those she carries in her heart.

If the Lunar has a Major Intimacy toward someone, and that Intimacy is reciprocated, the Lunar may share dreams with the target regardless of her location. Each player may intuit the general location, condition, and emotional state of the other with a successful **read intentions** roll. If the Lunar has a Solar mate, she may *always* share dreams with them, regardless of the intensity or content of their feelings for one another.

Cunning Anglerfish Decoy

See p. XX

Dauntless Yeddim Caravan

Prerequisites: Fortitude 2

The Lunar leads her comrades safely through the most hazardous locales.

While leading a group participating in a travel venture, a Lunar with this Charm may ignore any obstacles related to environmental hazards such as blistering deserts, toxic swamps, stormy seas, and so on.

Outside of a venture, she may commit 1 mote for a scene to grant her allies her Essence in bonus successes to any roll to resist environmental hazards. Gain 1 anima whenever the benefits of this Charm protect herself or another.

Insidious Lunar Transformation

See p. XX

Relentless Lunar Fury

Prerequisites: Fortitude 4

Once wounded, the Lunar enters a berserk rage and draws power from her unending anger.

Commit 1 mote on Step 7. For the rest of the scene, the Lunar reduces all wound penalties or other penalties from pain by one to a minimum of zero. On Step 5 of a decisive attack targeting

her, she may spend 1 mote to per damage die the enemy has in their pool which grants the Lunar one Power, as she empowers herself with rage. If this would cause her to exceed 10 Power, rather than donate it to allies or convert into anima, she may bank the extra Power as bonus damage successes on her next decisive attack against the target.

Sharing Luna's Gifts

See p. XX

Shattered Yoke Fury

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

The Lunar's presence is corrosive of hierarchy, authority, and decorum, giving voice to the oppressed.

Whenever a character makes a **hard bargain** in the Lunar's presence, that character gains an additional option: she may form a Major Intimacy of rage toward the character attempting to influence them. Characters who choose this option must immediately act to express their anger, as if they were successfully influenced with **inspire**. Gain 1 anima.

Spider-Amid-Roses Discernment

Prerequisites: Fortitude 3

To the Lunar's keen nose, toxins are as obvious as cloying perfume.

Whenever the Lunar observes or handles a poisoned object (including food) or interacts with a diseased character, if the poison or disease has not been concealed with magic (such as a Charm) she automatically recognizes its toxic scent. If it has been concealed by a magical effect, the Lunar gains double 8s on any roll to identify it or discern its nature.

SIDEREAL CHARMS

Sidereal Charms harness the strange weavings of Fate, put the Exalt in beneficial positions, or allow her to leverage herself and her allies to further her goals. Whenever a Sidereal uses

Stunt Dice to fuel her Charms, she gains 1 anima as if she had spent a mote.

ATHLETICS

Absence

Prerequisites: Athletics 4, Essence 2

Faced with trouble, the Sidereal remembers: I was never here in the first place!

Spend 2 motes. The Sidereal disappears, retroactively declaring that she was never present in the scene; this can be used to duck out of battle in Step 2, escape a bad situation, or avoid social consequences. Characters forget she was ever there as per Arcane Fate (p. XX). If she has already taken any significant actions in the scene, the cost increases to 4 motes. If all characters in the scene forget her, gain 2 anima.

Invisible Motion

Prerequisites: Athletics 4, Essence 2

All motion is equal for the Sidereal, and neither gravity nor logic may gainsay them.

Spend 1 mote. The Sidereal moves up to one range band in any direction without travelling through the space between. She cannot move through solid walls, but can slip through any other opening, no matter how small. She may take this action even if she has already moved that turn.

AWARENESS

Efficient Secretary Technique

Prerequisites: Awareness 2 or Sagacity 2

For an overworked Sidereal, nothing is so vital as a meticulous assistant.

Commit 1 mote. The Sidereal manifests a fist-sized spider construct which serves a one-dot Ally or Familiar. It gains a two-success bonus on actions to serve as the Sidereal's secretary and answer almost any general question about Creation or Yu-Shan unless the answer is deliberately hidden. The secretary always assists the Sidereal with any action as though it had made a teamwork roll, contributing twice

the Sidereal's Essence in extra successes to the rolls in which it assists. It cannot assist with anything combat-related.

Last Vision

Prerequisites: Awareness 4

Spend 1 mote. The Sidereal may see the last moments of a corpse within medium range. This reveals the character's last scene and always provides at least one important clue or connection. If the corpse is older than a day, this requires a Fortitude + Awareness roll at difficulty 3 for up to a week, 5 for up to a year, and 7 for anything more.

Sometimes, the ending is a very good place to begin.

Spend 1 mote. The Sidereal may see the last moments of a corpse within medium range. This reveals the character's last scene and always provides at least one important clue or connection. If the corpse is older than a day, this requires a Fortitude + Awareness roll at difficulty 3 for up to a week, 5 for up to a year, and 7 for anything more.

Of Truths Best Unspoken

Prerequisites: Awareness 3 or Sagacity 3

The Sidereal may search out misfortune yet to pass — all the better to prepare for it.

Spend 1 mote. Name a character, place, or group; after three hours of meditation in downtime under a starry sky, roll Fortitude + Sagacity. Success reveals the greatest tragedy soon to befall the target. She may spend extra successes one for one to ask additional questions about the tragedy, such as how she can intervene and what price the target would pay to avoid it. On failure, she gets a hint, but no clear direction. These questions may be asked retroactively and the character may use Stunt Dice to dramatic edit taking an action to either prevent this tragedy or enable it. Gain an additional anima when using Stunt Dice this way.

CLOSE COMBAT

Heartless Maiden Trance

Prerequisites: Essence 3, Close Combat 5 or Physique 5, or War 5

The Sidereal shrouds their heart in emptiness, freeing them from mortal fragility.

Commit 2 motes for the session. The Sidereal ignore all penalties from fatigue, disease, poison, exposure, hunger, thirst — even the need to breathe. She also gains one temporary Bruised health level, which heals at the beginning of each scene. In exchange, she cannot benefit from any positive Intimacies or her Virtues, or use influence to appeal to the emotions of others. This Charm cannot be ended prematurely.

CRAFT

Mending Warped Designs

Prerequisites: Craft 2

Smoothing the tangled weave of fate, the Sidereal restores order where it has been split asunder.

Spend 2 motes. Choose a wound, curse, or other effect caused by something beyond Creation, such as a demon, ghost, or Fair Folk. The Sidereal heals one level of damage or repairs one effect. If the effect was created by a character with higher Essence or expended considerable resources, roll Finesse + Craft. Gain an additional anima.

EMBASSY

Cash and Murder Games

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or Embassy 3, Essence 2

The Sidereal weaves fate into an invisible chain between her targets.

Spend 2 motes. Roll Force + Embassy or Stealth as a special influence action against two characters. Success gives each character a Minor Tie towards the other based on a social context of the Sidereals choice — student and teacher, business rivals, and so on. Actions that

support this Tie transform one die into an automatic success, pushing the targets towards the chosen context. Discerning the artificial nature of the Tie requires a Difficulty 5 Fortitude + Integrity roll. When the two targets finally fall into their arranged relationship, gain 1 anima.

End Debate

Prerequisites: Embassy 5, Essence 3

With a single motion like the snip of shears, the Sidereal brings a topic to its inevitable conclusion.

Spend 2 motes. All characters within the scene must end all argument and discussion about the current topic, growing unnaturally silent. The Sidereal, or a character she chooses, is allowed to make one final influence roll to settle the matter. The topic cannot be broached again until the next session (or five days of downtime).

Icy Hand

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or Embassy 3

The Sidereal's touch is cold as the reaper — and all who shirk their duty are wheat.

Spend 1 mote. The Sidereal makes a special Embassy-based influence roll against a character. If successful, he must attend to all his official duties and obligations in good faith for the rest of the session, or the rest of the story for trivial characters. If he accepts a hard bargain to resist, the Sidereal gains the bonus to all actions to track, expose, or humiliate the target for the session, rather than just her next roll against him.

Lover's Oath

Prerequisites: Embassy 4, Essence 3

The Sidereal may sanctify a promise between allies and lovers in the eyes of Heaven.

Spend 2 motes and 1 anima. Two willing characters gain Major Intimacies towards one another which can't be degraded or altered except by the characters themselves. If they are within close range, they may automatically

protect their partner as if they had taken a defend other action. At the start of their turns, they may reflexively exchange Power at up to medium range, or long range as a simple action. This binding lasts for the rest of the story.

Secret Sinecure Agreement

Prerequisites: Embassy 5 or Sagacity 5, Essence 3

Whether a reward or bribe, it is the Sidereal's right to make divine appointments.

Spend 1 mote. The Sidereal offers a new job or portfolio to a god or elemental. For relatively innocuous positions, this happens automatically but for bigger changes, requires an Embassy or Sagacity roll at difficulty 3 to a maximum of 7 for truly meaningful or influential offices in the Sidereal's division. If they accept, the spirit develops any Charms and powers necessary for its role and owes the Sidereal a single, life-altering favor, cashed in at her leisure. Gain an additional anima when the spirit accepts, and another when the favor is called in. Reckless abuse of this Charm can slow the Bureaucracy of Heaven and invites censure from the Sidereal's colleagues.

INTEGRITY

Deferred Wounds

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

Unable to afford any distraction, the Sidereal delays an injury to a more convenient time.

Commit 1 mote. Roll Fortitude + Integrity to send the damage from an attack or other physical ailment such as poison or disease into the future. Three successes delays the effect until the next scene, five successes delays it until up to the end of the session, and seven successes delays it until up to the end of the *next* session. At the appointed time, the Sidereal suffers the effect — hopefully, having made appropriate arrangements.

Indecision is Death

Prerequisites: Presence 4 or Integrity 4

Doubt is a decadence the Sidereal cannot afford; those who cannot choose will be chosen for.

Spend 1 mote when a character considers a **hard bargain** to avoid social influence. The Storyteller provides two hard bargains which the Sidereal chooses between on the target character's behalf. If the Storyteller can't think of an alternative bargain, the Sidereal's player should propose one. If the target refuses influence, the Sidereal may spend Stunt Dice to make it a **hard bargain** instead.

Unavoidable Sorrow

Prerequisites: Integrity 3 or Sagacity 3, Essence 2

Sometimes, the Sidereal must hasten that which is already writ in fate.

Spend 2 motes. The target suffers an immediate interval, rolling to resist damage or avoid worsening symptoms. This doesn't count against the effect's duration. At Essence 3, this Charm can be used on an environmental hazard in the scene, subjecting all targets to an immediate interval of its effects.

NAVIGATE

Fortuitous Wandering

Prerequisites: Navigate 3

The Sidereal is wherever she is needed, and has been there the whole time, thank you.

Spend 1 mote or banked Stunt Dice. The Sidereal may appear in a scene she was not otherwise present in, or travel a short narrative distance (such as the distance between two neighboring towns) in an instant. This is not teleportation, but the retroactive declaration that she was heading there already. If the Sidereal would have normally needed a roll to get into the scene, such as a Stealth roll to infiltrate a fortress, she makes it immediately after appearing — she is definitely *there*, but

might have attracted unwanted attention in the process.

In the Nick of Time

Prerequisites: Finding the Golden Path, Navigate 4, Essence 2

Fate conspires to deliver the Sidereal faster than logic should allow.

Commit 2 motes when you learn about a change in circumstances, such as an impending Fair Folk raid or the fall of the city of Thorns. Regardless of the distance, you and your allies are able to arrive *soon enough to matter* — you might not arrive before an attack begins, but you will be there before it ends, with a chance to turn the tides or minimize damage. If the Sidereal does not have 2 motes available, they may instead pay its cost in stunt dice.

Ordained Bridle of Mercury

Prerequisites: Navigate 3

The Sidereal wraps their target with a ribbon of saffron light, binding them into service.

Spend 1 mote. With a touch, transform a mortal into a Follower or an animal into a Familiar, rated at 2 or 3 dots based on the target's nature and skill. This lasts for the rest of the story unless they are deliberately endangered or mistreated.

Sculpting the Wild Lands

Prerequisites: Navigate 5, Essence 3

With a sigh of yellow stardust, the Sidereal coaxes nature into reshaping itself.

Commit 2 motes. The Sidereal may undertake a special project to reshape natural features such as mountains, forests, and rivers. Unless she wishes otherwise, these changes never create immediate danger. She may spend two stunt dice to reduce the time scale by one for a single roll.

Repurchase at Essence 4 allows the Sidereal to use a shape wilderness project to move a named settlement up to one hundred miles from its original position. Obstacles for moving

large cities are Difficulty 5 or higher, especially if the change is opposed by supernatural characters.

Shape Wilderness Project

Prerequisites: None

Time scale: One scene

Base obstacles: 2

Common Obstacles: Obstinate Spirits (Difficulty 3), Hostile Terrain (Difficulty 3), Tedious Details (Difficulty 4)

Common Advantages: One-die bonus to inspire certain moods (2 successes per die, max three), enhanced/hindered travel or survival (3 successes to increase or decrease Difficulty by 2), uncovered resources (3 successes to reveal a significant resource like silver veins), harmonious spirits (3 successes to lure in or banish a kind of minor spirit)

Common Consequences: Unwanted attention; animal migration; strange appearances; changes aren't permanent

PERFORMANCE

Abandoned Words Curse

Prerequisites: Presence or Performance 4, Essence 2

The Sidereal knots her target's tongue with the threads of Fate.

Spend 1 mote. Make a Force + Presence or Performance roll against a target's Resolve; if successful, the Sidereal strips them of the ability to speak a chosen language until the end of the story or up to one year of downtime (whichever is longer). Targets deprived of all language can still communicate through gestures (but not sign language) at a four-die penalty. Failure on the roll inflicts a die penalty to verbal social interactions equal to the Exalt's Essence.

Nontrivial targets can make a Difficulty 5 Finesse + Integrity roll at the end of each scene to recover a lost language.

Defense of Shining Joy

Prerequisites: Performance 1

The Sidereal moves to auspicious music, weaving song and sword into a single serenade.

The Sidereal may use Performance instead of Athletics to calculate her Evasion. Whenever the character makes a flurry with a Performance action, she may spend 1 mote to negate the penalty. This does not count as a Charm use. Gain an additional anima when she takes advantage of this benefit.

Faultless Ceremony

Prerequisites: Performance 4

The Sidereal draws the eyes of Heaven, parting storm clouds over a festival and forcing assassins to sheathe their blades.

Spend 2 motes. No mundane outside influence will interrupt or spoil the scene. Anyone who attempts to initiate violence must succeed at a Difficulty 5 Fortitude + Integrity roll, although characters are allowed to defend themselves. The Sidereal may spend any number of stunt dice on Step 4 to subtract one success for every set of two stunt dice spent from any attack, explaining how misfortune spoils an enemy's attempts. Gain two additional anima.

PHYSIQUE

Heartless Maiden Trance

See p. XX

Shield of Destiny

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or Physique 3

Grabbing hold of a baleful fate, the Sidereal pawns it off on someone unsuspecting.

Spend 2 motes on Step 4 when attacked to make a Force + Presence or Stealth roll against the current Hardness of a character within Short range. On success, the attack is redirected to that character instead. The Sidereal can transfer exposure to a poison or illness with a Difficulty 3 roll, foisting it on someone else in short range.

Unswerving Juggernaut Principle

Prerequisites: Physique 4, Essence 2

Fate parts in front of the frenzied Sidereal; lesser chains must follow suit.

Commit 2 motes. Announce a destination or goal; while the Sidereal pursues it to the exclusion of all else, she may reroll all dice that do not show successes once per action and cannot be grappled, dismounted, or physically restrained. If she ends this Charm without reaching her goal, she suffers a level of aggravated damage and cannot use this Charm again during the next session.

PRESENCE

Abandoned Words Curse

See p. XX

Cash and Murder Games

See p. XX

Icy Hand

See p. XX

Indecision is Death

See p. XX

Shield of Destiny

See p. XX

Shun the Smiling Lady

Prerequisites: Presence 3

Fate connects all those who love — and the Sidereal can snip those threads.

Commit 1 mote. Roll Finesse + Embassy or Presence against a character's Resolve. Success suppresses any Intimacies based on love towards that character, preventing them from being used in social influence. Nontrivial characters can overcome this effect with a Difficulty 5 Fortitude + Integrity roll, remembering their love for the target for a single action.

Under the Crimson Banner

Prerequisites: Presence 3 or War 3, Essence 2

Those who rally under the Sidereal's banner are empowered to fight back against all who invade Creation.

Commit 2 motes. The Sidereal and allies who fight alongside them gain a Major Intimacy against creatures from beyond Creation such as the Fair Folk, demons, and ghosts. They gain a three- success bonus to resist curses and other shaping effects from such creatures, or increase the Difficulty to curse them by three. If the Sidereal is part of a battle group, they add her Essence in bonus successes to resist rout checks.

RANGED COMBAT

Shadow-Piercing Needle

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3

The Sidereal forges Essence into a crimson needle, holding their foe in place by their shadow.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. If the ranged attack succeeds, the Sidereal also pierces the target's shadow, staking them in place for the scene. They cannot move more than one range band from their current position. As a miscellaneous action, they can make a difficulty 3 Force + Physique roll to claw an additional range band away, or difficulty 7 to break the effect entirely.

Transcendent Hatchet of Fate

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 4, Essence 3

Fate is fickle, and may be shaped into an abhorrent weapon.

Spend 2 motes on Step 7. When making a **decisive** attack, the Sidereal reduce the total damage by up to three levels to instead twist her opponent's fate. One level inflicts a minor inconvenience, such as missing an important meeting; two levels inflicts a considerable setback, like losing a lucrative contract; three successes inflicts a terrible (but never fatal) outcome such as bankruptcy, infamy, or exile. Fate connives to make this come to pass in no

more than one year of downtime, but always by the end of the story.

SAGACITY

Efficient Secretary Technique

See p. XX

Of Truths Best Unspoken

See p. XX

Secret Sinecure Agreement

See p. XX

Unavoidable Sorrow

See p. XX

STEALTH

Name-Pilfering Practice

Prerequisites: Stealth 3, Essence 2

Borrowing even an inch from a target's thread of destiny, the Sidereal absconds with their name.

Commit 1 mote for the rest of the story. The Sidereal makes a Finesse + Stealth roll against the Resolve of a character in the scene. If successful, the target suffers Arcane Fate as if they were a Sidereal and has a three-success penalty on rolls to lead or interact with governments and organizations for as long as the Sidereal commits the mote. Gain an additional anima.

Thought-Swiping Distraction

Prerequisites: Stealth 2

The Sidereal skims her target's thoughts, momentarily blanking out his mind.

Spend 1 mote. The Sidereal makes a Finesse + Stealth roll against his Resolve, with success revealing a brief overview of the topics currently weighing on his mind. This can be used to inflict a two-die penalty on a target within short range; in combat, this is done on Step 2.

Walking Outside Fate

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

Loosening her own strand from the Loom of Fate, the Sidereal steps halfway out of Creation's boundaries.

Commit 1 mote. Characters with Essence equal to or lower than the Sidereal cannot detect her presence; nontrivial characters can attempt a Difficulty 5 (Fortitude + Integrity or Awareness) roll, but even then, they cannot make out the Sidereal's exact identity and suffer a two-die penalty on rolls to attack or track her. If the character's anima exceeds 5, this Charm ends.

WAR

Heartless Maiden Trance

See p. XX

Under the Crimson Banner

See p. XX

SOLAR CHARMS

Solar Charms are expressions of pure skill, bolstered by the power of sunlight and the might of their Virtues.

ATHLETICS

Unfettered Sun Evasion

Prerequisites: Athletics 5

The Lawgiver's impossible speed leaves sun-ghosts in her enemy's eyes.

Commit 2 motes. For the rest of the scene, the Solar cannot be targeted by the Ensnare, Pull, or Knockdown Gambits, and moving through difficult terrain (p.XX) is reflexive.

Blurred-in-Light Technique: At Essence 4, a repurchase of this Charm allows the Solar to name one additional Gambit she can no longer be targeted by. Additionally, any Essence 1 enemies suffer a three-success penalty on Step 3 of all **withering** attacks targeting her.

AWARENESS

Meditation on Rivalry

Prerequisites: Awareness 1

The Lawgiver feels the unexpected stirring of a divine hunch.

The Solar receives divine intuition when investigating an unlawful act. Ask the Storyteller one question from the following list; additional questions cost one mote each:

- What is the criminal's motive?
- How far am I from the criminal?
- Does the crime oppose one of my Intimacies or Virtues?
- What can I do to unravel their plan?

Unconquered Sun's Sight

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

A Caste mark gleams within her pupils at the first sign of deceit.

Commit 1 mote. For the scene, the Solar recognizes when someone uses deception to masquerade as something toward which she has an Intimacy. When the player suspects falsehood, she may ask the Storyteller *Are they lying? Or What is being concealed here?* The Storyteller must answer truthfully. This reveals only the falsehood.

Refracted Light Analysis: The Solar may purchase this Charm a number of times equal to her Essence, each time naming an ally of her Essence or lower, to recognize deceptions related to their Intimacies, as well. Whenever an ally benefits from this Charm, gain 1 anima.

CLOSE COMBAT

Behemoth-Slaying Attitude

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4 or War 2

His essence more than makes up for the difference in mass.

Commit 2 motes. For the scene, enemies with Legendary Size take a three-dice penalty to attack the Solar, and he negates the penalty to **withering** attacks made against such opponents. Battle groups he leads against enemies with Legendary Size increase their Drill by one. Gain an additional anima.

Humbaba-Wrestling Prowess: At Close Combat 5 or War 3, this Charm allows the Solar to

establish dominance in grapples and no longer pay extra for Gambits against enemies with Legendary Size.

Glorious Solar Arsenal

Prerequisites: Close Combat 1, Physique 1, or Ranged Combat 1

He unsheathes a ray of light from the air, solidifying it into a weapon.

Commit 1 mote to summon a weapon or armor of the Solar's choice, made of sunlight, with the *artifact* tag; against creatures of darkness, the weapon deals aggravated damage and the armor has two additional Soak. Gain an additional Anima. Activating this Charm is a simple action.

Perfect Shining Summons: At Close Combat 3, Essence 2, this Charm becomes reflexive.

Golden Champion Glory: At Close Combat 5, Essence 2, activating this Charm grants a reflexive Focus, Inspire, or Rally Build Power action.

Orichalcum Battle Soul

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2

The Lawgiver's attacks flash with golden sparks.

Commit 2 motes when the Solar fights for one of his Intimacies or Virtues. For the scene, his body gains the *artifact* tag, conferring the weapon bonus if unarmed or the armor bonus if unarmored. His **withering** attacks generate two additional Power for a Major inspiration, or one additional Power for a Minor inspiration. Gain an additional anima.

Adamant Soul Enhancement: At Essence 3, repurchasing this Charm allows the Solar to spend 1 Anima at Step 7 to add a one- or two-dice bonus to the damage of a single **decisive** attack, according to the strength of his inspiration.

Star-Cleaving Crater

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4

Her mighty blow sends enemies hurtling through solid walls.

The Knockback and Throw Gambits, and other enemy-relocating effects, move the Solar's target one additional Range band. When the opponent "lands," they must immediately resist an environmental damage effect at difficulty 3 plus the Solar's Essence or take half the Exalt's Close Combat in damage dice (round up) for each additional band beyond the first they travelled. The target may resist this effect with either Athletics or Physique.

At Essence 3, the damage dice increases to Close Combat dice.

CRAFT

Joyous Handiwork Genius

Prerequisites: Craft 2

With a Solar's handiwork, everyday objects can become masterpieces.

Crafted mundane items and creative works are extraordinary by default, granting a two-dice bonus to impressing others. The Solar may improve this bonus using a venture (p. XX) to reflect the time spent on it. This adds an additional obstacle, that if overcome, increases the bonus to three dice which do not count towards the dice limit. Furthermore, spending one mote adds Essence in automatic successes to overcome an Impress Recipient obstacle during a Craft venture, and the Solar gains two additional Anima.

World-Shaming Wonders: At Essence 3, this Charm applies to crafting artifacts and manses, in exchange for increasing the difficulty of keeping these ventures secret by two. The Solar no longer faces tarnished reputation as a consequence of failing a craft obstacle, unless he chooses to cut corners.

Technique-From-Taste Approach

Prerequisites: Craft 3

If anyone can improve on perfection, it's the Solar Exalted.

Name a crafting discipline at Charm purchase. When using a mundane item or construct from this discipline, ask the Storyteller any of the following, spending one mote per question:

- How can this be repaired?
- How can this be improved?
- How can this be replicated?

Legend-Drawing Invocation: This Charm may be repurchased at Essence to 2, and then applies its effects to artifacts and other wonders.

EMBASSY

Vacant Station Scheme

Prerequisites: Embassy 3

The Lawgiver uses an office's flaws against it, for a greater purpose.

Roll Finesse + Embassy as part of a dramatic action to create temporary laws or phantom employees in the target organization. Spend one mote to buy a point of fraudulent Backing in the organization for every margin of success (p. XX). This does not gain the Sanctity of Merits (p.XX).

Red Tape Daiklaive: At Embassy 5, reduce the difficulty of overcoming obstacles in the Solar's ventures by half her fraudulent Backing score, provided the venture aims to somehow improve or degrade the organization. If her venture results in its dissolution or reform, her Backing is revoked. Gain a personal Milestone.

INTEGRITY

Aspect of the Virtuous Warrior

Prerequisites: Integrity 5

She is the Sun's Chosen — she won't allow things like "the laws of reality" to impede her.

When the Solar's stunt serves a Principle (p.XX), the reward is four dice, instead of the usual two. These dice can instead be banked to increase the difficulty of the next social influence

targeting her by two. Gain 1 anima when this Charm is invoked.

Destiny-Manifesting Method

Prerequisites: Integrity 1

His eyes glow with the color of his anima, reinforcing his will.

Spend 2 motes on step 2. Add three to Resolve against Instill and Weaken actions.

Elusive Dream Defense: *The Solar's eyes flare; when the light dims, his resolve has changed him.* At Integrity 5, when the Solar is targeted by a Persuade influence, he may commit the motes to gain the bonus until the end of the scene. The Solar may end this Charm to gain a Major Intimacy opposed to the persuader's intent. The Intimacy fades at the end of the scene and the committed motes become spent.

Sun King Radiance

Prerequisites: Integrity 3

His presence alone inspires others to heroism.

Commit 1 mote. For the scene, gain 2 Power, 1 Anima, or 1 Will each time an ally in the same scene successfully defends against social influence from a nontrivial enemy. Allies with one of the Solar's Intimacies or Virtues in common treat these as Major for the purposes of resisting social influence.

Sun's Rallied Might: At Essence 2, allies in the same scene and sharing his intent may add the Solar's Integrity bonus to their Resolve.

NAVIGATE

God-Bearing Juggernaut

Prerequisites: Navigate 2

When she advances while mounted, light blooms in her wake.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 while the Solar's anima is active. Add the number of Range bands traveled by mount or small vehicle this turn to the Solar's Power, before step 3 of a **decisive** attack. Gain an additional Anima.

Can't Outpace the Sun: A repurchase at Essence 2 allows the Solar to spend 2 motes while her anima is active to add her Navigate in bonus dice to step 2 of a mounted **clash** (p.XX). If her anima is at the Iconic level, add her Navigate in bonus successes instead. If her clash succeeds, her opponent must accept a Minor Tie of awe toward her or accept a **hard bargain**.

Ship-Claiming Stance

Prerequisites: Navigate 1

The Solar's essence paints her ship with a unique golden signature.

Spend 1 mote to claim divine ownership of an unclaimed large vehicle. While the Solar holds a positive Tie (p.XX) to this vessel, it gains a reserve of 2 motes or 2 Will she can use to pay the cost of Charms or sorcery. This reserve refreshes at the beginning of a session, or when she incapacitates an enemy ship.

Ship-Self Awareness: At Navigate 3, commit 2 motes to ensure while the Solar is aboard her vessel it requires no crew and will never wreck regardless of the damage it suffers. This does not render the ship invulnerable, merely unsinkable. A scuttled ship will take on water as soon as she disembarks, falls to Incapacitated, or releases the commitment.

Waves-and-Rivers Ranging

Prerequisites: Navigate 3

Her orders awaken an uncommon savvy in the caravan.

Spend 1 mote. The Solar allows a story-important member of her crew or traveling entourage to use her Navigate rating for one roll. If she has higher Essence, they gain the difference in their Essence ratings in bonus successes. Gain two additional Anima.

Loved-and-Feared Command: At Essence 2, if the crew member has a Tie of respect or fear to the Solar, they may use her Navigate Excellency on this roll without paying its cost.

PERFORMANCE

Phantom-Conjuring Performance

Prerequisites: Presence or Performance 1

She sings a tune and whimsical images dance around her.

Using a Performance or Presence Charm creates phantom displays from ambient essence, supplementing the Solar's actions. Anyone who works the phantoms into a stunt description gains an additional stunt die and may restore a spent mote or gain an additional Anima once a scene.

Rocks and Storms Chorus

Prerequisites: Performance 5, Essence 3

When the Solar lifts his voice, the monsoon pauses to listen.

Spend 2 motes when the Solar activates this Charm as part of a performance. For the scene, or as long as he performs, all environmental hazards, traps, poisons and diseases cease inflicting damage, extending protection to ally and enemy alike. Gods and other spirits who hear this song reduce their Resolve by three. Gain an additional Anima.

Virtue-Shaping Harmony

Prerequisites: Performance 3

The Lawgiver lays his passions bare, fundamentally changing his audience.

Spend 1 mote to activate this Charm at the beginning of a performance to have the audience adopt one of the Solar's Virtues as their Minor Virtue for as long as he performs. At the end of his performance, he may spend 1 Anima to attempt social influence with a three-success bonus to Instill in his audience one of his own Intimacies. This must be attached to the Virtue adopted by the Charm.

Memory-Reweaving Discipline: At Essence 3, instead of one of his Intimacies, the Solar may Instill a belief-based Principle, provided it would not lead to Unacceptable Influence (p.XX).

This ignores the three-dice penalty for influencing multiple targets.

PHYSIQUE

Endurance of a Thousand Cuts

Prerequisites: Physique 3

The flesh she lost was weak — their attacks only made her stronger.

Spend 1 Anima on Step 5. Add the Solar's current wound penalty to her soak for the scene. When her soak reduces an attack's damage to zero, she gains 1 Power.

Blade-Cracking Attitude: *Anima ripples over the Solar's skin from the point of impact. A repurchase of this Charm allows the Solar to spend 1 Anima on step 2 to reduce the accuracy or damage rating of her attacker's weapon by one. Artifacts are dulled until the Solar's next turn; mundane weapons are permanently damaged.*

Glorious Solar Arsenal

See p. XX.

PRESENCE

Dissident-Searing Intent

Prerequisites: Presence 1

The Solar channels the raw force of their virtue into their advance.

Choose one Intimacy or Virtue to benefit from this Charm. When the Solar undertakes social influence in the name of this Intimacy or Virtue, a target who wishes to resist must tithe a number of motes, Power, Anima, or Will equal to the Solar's Essence, in addition to the usual cost. The benefitting Intimacy or Virtue cannot be changed until achieving a personal or Exalt Milestone. Gain an additional anima when the Solar benefits from this Charm.

Enemy-Castigating Solar Judgment: A second purchase of this Charm allows the Solar to force a creature of darkness (p. XX) to tithe motes, Power, Anima, or Will even if they do not

resist. Alternatively, she may spend 1 Anima on step 6 of a **decisive** attack against a creature of darkness to deal aggravated damage.

Hypnotic Tongue Technique

Prerequisites: Presence 3

As the Lawgiver speaks, his words feel unusual and warm in the target's ears.

Spend 2 motes when the Solar attempts to convince a target he has their best interests at heart and roll a special Weaken action with his Essence in bonus successes. Instead of spending successes for the usual effect, he may spend four successes to allow his next Persuade action to benefit from their targeted Intimacy as though it were in accordance with it.

Singular Solar Command: At Presence 5, Essence 3, a repurchase of this Charm prevents the target from using their Virtues to defend against the special Weaken action provided by this Charm.

Suggestion Burned in Light: At Presence 5, Essence 5, the targeted Intimacy is weakened by this Charm indefinitely, or until the target raises their Essence or the completion of a story for characters who do not have an Essence rating.

RANGED COMBAT

Dazzling Flare

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 1

Her anima pours into a single fateful shot.

Spend 1 mote on Step 5 to add a four-dice bonus to the damage of a **decisive** ranged attack. If the Solar's ammunition is magically created by a Charm or artifact, also ignore one point of the enemy's soak. At Essence 3, this bonus increases to five dice, and at Essence 5, it increases to seven dice. Every two dice that would exceed the dice limit become automatic successes. This may be used during a clash. Gain an additional Anima.

Righteous Judgment Lance: Repurchase this Charm. Spend an additional mote to make the

Solar's **decisive** ranged attack deal aggravated damage to a creature of darkness (p.XX).

Glorious Solar Arsenal

See p. XX.

Observer-Deceiving Attack

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 3 or Stealth 3

Wrapped in the absence of light, his movement is imperceptible.

Spend 2 motes. The Solar may attempt a Distract Gambit with a two-dice bonus and immediately follow with a **withering** ranged attack. This attack does not suffer flurry penalties and cannot be countered.

Mist on Water: At Essence 3, victims of this Charm are supernaturally silenced for three of the Solar's turns. He may also commit 1 mote on Step 5 to conceal the direction of his attack and its effects, such as blood or bodies. This effect lasts indefinitely, or until someone successfully notices his work.

SAGACITY

Healer's Boundless Grace

Prerequisites: Sagacity 1

Tending to the weak is enough to restore the Solar's spirit.

Once a scene, every three successes the Solar earns on a successful roll to treat or heal another restores 1 spent mote. This effect fails if the Solar caused the damage.

Risen Sun Renewal: A Sagacity 3 repurchase of this Charm improves the Solar's Power Exchange, allowing him to spend 1 mote to grant three additional Power to an incapacitated ally. Gain two additional Anima.

Wyld-Shaping Technique

Prerequisites: Essence 2, Sagacity 3

With just wits and words, she forces chaos into the shape she requires.

With access to chaotic Wyld essence — usually by immersing herself in it — the Solar may use a

Magical Working venture (p. XX) to create personal-scale and large-scale mundane items, with a time scale in scenes. When selecting advantages, the Solar may choose from the lists under Magical Working, Craft Personal-Scale and Large-Scale Mundane Item. She potentially faces additional, more exotic obstacles, such as Wyld Tides (difficulty 3) or Fair Folk Sabotage (opposed). Items created this way must interact with Creation daily, or risk dissipating into chaotic essence. Gain 1 anima every time the Solar rolls on this venture.

Wyld Cauldron Technology: At Essence 3, the Solar may also create temporary points of a Merit with a Magical Working venture. Each point she wishes to “craft” requires overcoming an obstacle — for example, shaping a 3-point Familiar for herself requires a Venture of at least three obstacles. Cutting corners or failing an obstacle roll represents a flaw in the Merit of the Storyteller choice. This Charm may create dots in any of the following:

- Command
- Followers
- Familiar (maximum of 3)
- Resources

These do not improve existing Merits but represent new instances of the Merit. Maintaining the reality of Wyld-created Merits requires a commitment of 1 mote per dot. The character may solidify these Merits as permanent with a major Milestone as usual.

STEALTH

King of Thieves Spirit

Prerequisites: Stealth 3

Grinning, the Solar reveals items purloined in plain sight.

The Solar may attempt to steal mundane items in use, including weapons or clothes. Regardless of who owns these things, the attempt is never more challenging than difficulty 3. The Pilfer Gambit costs 1 Power. Gain 1 anima if the Solar

successfully flees the scene with the stolen goods.

Disappearing Miracle Method: At Stealth 5, Essence 5, a repurchase of this Charm allows the Solar to spend 3 motes on attempts to steal major wonders, even if they are currently in use — for example, attuned artifacts, the Sun’s Chariot, or Pattern Spiders. The difficulty of stealing these things cannot exceed 7. Successfully stealing an attuned wonder breaks the attunement.

Shroud of Night’s Law

Prerequisites: Stealth 1

The man-shaped shadow compels unwanted observers to avert their eyes.

Commit 1 mote. For the scene, the only people capable of noticing the Solar’s actions are those directly affected by them. This does not guarantee their notice — the Solar may still attempt an action to conceal himself from them.

Vanishing from Mind’s Eye: At Essence 3, the Solar may activate this Charm retroactively by spending 2 motes. He erases his presence from the applicable witness’ memories of events.

WAR

Behemoth-Slaying Attitude

See p. XX

General of the All-Seeing Sun

Prerequisites: War 3, Solar Tactician’s Acumen

For a moment, he sees the engagement from the highest possible vantage.

Commit 1 mote while the Solar commands units in battle during a Dramatic Scene. During the scene, ask the Storyteller up to Essence rating in the following questions.

- What is the best way through or around the enemy?
- Which enemy unit is most vulnerable, and which is most dangerous?
- How can I best protect my soldiers?

- Is something in the battlefield hidden from me?
- What is the enemy commander's next move?

Shrouded Field of War: At War 5, Essence 3, a repurchase of this Charm allows it to block an enemy's magical attempt to determine the Solar's own strategy. If they are allowed to ask questions, he may plant false answers by spending 2 motes each. If they must roll, the roll suffers a two-dice penalty if their Essence rating is higher than his, and a two-success penalty if their Essence is lower.

Solar Tactician's Acumen

Prerequisites: War 1

His presence can be felt like sunlight across the battlefield.

Commit 1 mote. For the scene, the Solar he may flurry Rally with other actions and adds his Essence in bonus successes to this roll when he does so. Gain 1 anima whenever an ally gains Power from a flurried Rally action.

Shelter Under Sun Technique: At War 3, when the Solar commands a battle group while this Charm is active, he may trade Power to negate penalties imposed on the group for one action, at a cost of 1 Power per die penalty or 2 Power per success.

STRAWMAIDEN JANEST CHARMS

As an Exigent, Janest's Charms cling closely to a very specific theme. She is the Chosen of Ten Sheaves, a harvest god, so all her abilities focus on being a hardy woman of the earth and a hero of common people. Use her Charms as examples for how to design the powers of a unique Exigent.

ATHLETICS

Ever-Ready Stance

Prerequisites: Athletics 2

No matter what comes her way, the Strawmaiden is as steady as the sun, moon, and stars.

Spend 1 mote on Step 2. Increase the cost of any Gambits against Janest and the difficulty of any other methods to move her by her Athletics. If used in a field, reduce this Charm's cost to 0 unless Janest has taken Injured health levels of damage, or at Essence 2, Critical health levels of damage.

Seven League Stride

Prerequisites: Athletics 3

When it comes time to travel, the Strawmaiden can cross entire fields in the time it takes to blink.

Commit 1 mote. Janest may move an additional range band and ignore difficult terrain when sprinting or rushing. At Essence 2, she may instead commit 2 motes to reduce the time scale for long distance travel (p. XX) to one round until she fails a roll.

AWARENESS

Bone-Setter's Discernment

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

A glance and a sniff are all the Strawmaiden needs to determine injury or illness.

Spend 1 mote when attempting to diagnose a character's injury, illness, or other malady. If the roll succeeds, Janest may add the extra successes as dice on her next roll to attempt to treat the patient. These do not count against the usual cap. At Essence 2, Janest may commit instead of spending the mote to detect all injury or malady a creature suffers within short range for the scene, and gain double-9s on her diagnosis rolls.

Creation-Embracing Gaze

Prerequisites: Awareness 5, one other Awareness charm

The Strawmaiden regards Creation fondly, and it rewards her with knowing in return.

Once per session, Janest may reroll an Awareness roll, benefitting from any charms or effects the initial roll did without paying for them again. Alternatively, she may Cut Corners

on an Investigation venture (p. XX) once without suffering consequences. Janest may reset usage of this charm by aiding a community without expectation of compensation or payment. Gain 1 anima when Janest benefits from this Charm.

Stalks Have Eyes

Prerequisites: Awareness 3

The living world of plants lends the Strawmaiden their senses.

Commit 2 motes for the scene and touch living vegetation. For the duration, Janest can send her senses through connected or related vegetation (such as a field of grain or copse of trees) out to long range, gaining two bonus successes for Awareness rolls in the area. She can still move her now-insensate body, but suffers a three-die penalty to any rolls she must make that would rely on her body's perception. If she loses contact with the vegetation, this charm immediately ends. At Essence 2, she can displace her senses up to her Essence in miles away with the same limits.

Taste of Familiar Earth

Prerequisites: Awareness 2

The strawmaiden knows the smells and tastes of Creation like the back of her hand.

Spend 1 mote for the scene. Janest's senses of smell and taste sharpen: she can identify characters out to short range by smell, and gains one bonus success to attempts to track a target or use the Read Intentions influence effect. At Essence 2, Janest can determine the provenance of a person or thing by its taste. If Janest has visited that region or is familiar with its food, she can immediately identify where a food, mineral, or other natural product was produced, and if tasting blood, she can determine the origins of a creature or character.

Strawmaiden's Calling

Prerequisites: Awareness 5

No cry for help escapes the Strawmaiden's notice.

Janest automatically knows when anyone within her immediate location cries out for help or to be saved, as well as if it's an individual familiar to her. She may immediately spend 1 mote to roll Finesse + Awareness at standard difficulty and ask one question on a success, plus one more question for every success rolled. Examples include but are not limited to:

- *How far away are they?*
- *What direction should I travel to find them?*
- *Who are they?*
- *What do they need help with?*
- *Are they in danger?*

And so on. Gain an additional anima.

This charm may be repurchased at Essence 4 to extend the range to a significant distance (such as a neighboring town or city).

CRAFT

Bone Germinating Seed

Prerequisites: Essence 3, Craft 5

Mortals flourish with the Strawmaiden's ministrations as well as any crop and twice as feisty.

Commit 3 motes and Health Level for a session. Janest brews beer or other suitable drink from grain and her own blood, empowering mortals (human or otherwise) who drink it. A group of up to a Size equal to Janest's Essence who partake become the Soldier template if their stats were previously inferior, and may gain one Quality agreed upon between Janest's player and the Storyteller. Janest or a friendly character may gain these followers as the Command merit, cementing it next time they reach an appropriate milestone.

Watering Parched Fields

Prerequisites: Essence 4, Craft 4

Fields respond to Janest's call, thirsting for the blood of her enemies.

Commit 3 motes for the scene and spend 1 Health Level by watering a field with Janest's blood. If Janest has taken damage causing her to bleed in the present scene, she may waive the Health Level cost. Any qualifying field out to Long Range becomes hostile to Janest's enemies. Janest rolls Fortitude + Craft, Sagacity or War, and can spend successes to:

- 1+ Successes: Cause the field to alert her to enemies, inflict a die-penalty on any stealth- or sneaking-related and Build Power (Maneuver) rolls equal to the successes Janest spends
- 2 Successes: Cause the field to bog town and entangle her enemies, making them treat the area as difficult terrain.
- 3 successes: Rally the field to attack her enemies, forcing them to treat the area as hazardous terrain inflicting one Health Level of damage on any turn they don't succeed at a difficulty 3 roll to move through it safely.
- 1+ Successes: Increase the danger of any present environmental damage or other hazardous terrain by increasing either its difficulty or its damage per success spent (either to a maximum of 5).

Whisper Sown Wisdom

Prerequisites: Craft 1 or Sagacity 1

What the strawmaiden sows grows healthy, strong, and tall.

Any seeds Janet plants will grow healthy and in great quantities, resisting natural pests, weather, and disease, and producing twice the expected amount of crop or usable material aside from wood. This adds her Essence in bonus successes on all rolls during any long-term agricultural venture. Spend 2 motes to affect an entire field Janest shares with others with this charm, allowing others' plantings to benefit from Janest's blessing.

Spending 2 motes also allows Janest to infuse seeds with blessings of health. Those who ingest them reduce the penalties they suffer from a

mundane disease by one for the next day, and gain a one success bonus on their next roll Interval roll.

Repurchasing this charm at Essence 3 makes blessed plants and fields immune to magical threats, and increases by yield by Janest's Essence. Those who ingest her seeds immediately reduce the severity of mundane diseases by one level, and gain a bonus success against magical diseases.

EMBASSY

Sister to Aurochs

Prerequisites: Embassy 2 or Navigate 2

The strawmaiden converses easily with fellow fieldworkers, be they ploughman or yeddim.

Commit 1 mote. Animals can understand Janice's speech clearly, removing any penalties she might have to social actions towards them. Domesticated animals gain a minor tie towards Janest and she gains her Essence in bonus successes to attempt to command or train them.

Repurchasing this charm at Essence 2 allows Janice to understand animal speech and body language as naturally as her own, and reduces the difficulty and success cost for the Read Intentions action against them by one.

PHYSIQUE

Belle of the Bee

Prerequisites: Physique 5, Essence 2

Always mighty, the Strawmaiden's greatest strength reveals itself when she moves earth and heaven for the people of the land.

When making a Feat of Strength or Build Power roll on behalf of a community (including her Circle), gain two dice if either Janest or the community have a minor intimacy towards each other, or two successes for a major intimacy. These bonuses stack, and do not count against the normal die cap. When honest labor and hard work to aid a venture for a community, Janest

Cuts Corners (p. XX) without accepting a consequence once per venture. At Essence 4, when benefitting from this charm, Janest may ignore the requirements for greater feats of strength.

Fieldhand Hefts the Haywain

Prerequisites: Physique 2

The Strawmaiden excels at honest work, even at enormous scale.

Spend 1 mote. Gain Janest's Essence in bonus successes and dice to a Feat of Strength, which may be used for a Build Power roll. If successful, an ongoing task such as carrying an enormous object, holding up a crumbling building, or holding a behemoth in pace so its nails may be trimmed may be continued indefinitely. Ignore one obstacle during a venture (p. XX). Gain an additional anima.

Giant-Toppling Spirit

Prerequisites: Physique 5, Essence 3

Hard work can solve even the largest and meanest problem.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 when attacking a foe that benefits from Legendary Size, an Outnumber quality, or another size- or numbers-based quality or on Step 2 when defending against them.

Ignore the benefits of those qualities. Against an enormous foe, apply the effects of the knockdown gambit on any successful **decisive** attack that does at least four health levels of damage. This charm allows Janest to grapple a Legendary Size target. Against a battle group, cause a rout check on any **decisive** damage. Gain an additional anima.

Millstone Meteor Technique

Prerequisites: Physique 3 or Ranged Combat 3

Pitchforks, millstones, offended yeddim; there are few things Janest can't heft to good effect in battle.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. Janest may reflexively ready improvised weapons, which gain the Thrown (Short) tag, and lose their accuracy penalty when she wields them. At Essence 2, she may make a Feat of Strength roll as a reflexive Build Power action when readying an impressive object as a weapon.

No Time for Idle Dreaming

Prerequisites: Physique 3

The Strawmaiden does not indulge in idle dreaming when there's work to be done, and will not permit anyone else to divert her industry either.

Increase the difficulty of a magical effect that seeks to entrance Janest's mind or senses or Janest's roll to resist such an effect by two successes. If she successfully resists, she may spend 1 mote to learn useful information, such as the source of the effect its wielder's intent, or how to protect others from it. At Essence 2, this applies to any attempts by Fair Folk or Wyld effects to alter or affect her in any way.

Rough-Spun Hero Raiment

Prerequisites: Physique 2

The Strawmaiden's clothes are comfortable, practical, and often far more protective than they appear.

Janest may treat mundane clothes as Light or Medium armor, chosen when she dresses for the day, gaining one additional Soak if they were made by or for her. This charm may be repurchased at Essence 2, allowing her to commit 1 mote to treat mundane clothes as Light or Medium *artifact* armor. This benefit does not apply if Janest is already wearing armor.

Stalk Blunts the Sickle

Prerequisites: Physique 2

Weapons that strike at the Strawmaiden come away weighted with rust, soil, and the ravages of age.

Spend 1 mote on Step 4. The weapon used in the attack against Janest reduces its damage and Overwhelming values by one. Mundane weapons must be repaired, while artifact and natural weapons require their users to take a simple action to clean them off. This charm may be repurchased at Essence 3 to allow its effects to stack against a weapon used to attack Janest multiple times.

Towering Redwood Form

Prerequisites: Essence 4, Physique 5

Sometimes it is necessary for the Strawmaiden to be a larger-than-life legend in more than a figurative sense.

Commit 3 motes for the scene. Janest gains the benefit of the Legendary Size Quality (p. XX), may make area attacks in close combat and with thrown weapons, and gains double-8s on all rolls for Feats of Strength, and to inspire or terrify. At Essence 5, she may activate Giant-Toppling Spirit for free while using this charm.

PERFORMANCE

Caller of Wind and Rain

Prerequisites: Essence 3, Performance 4 or Sagacity 3

A song to turn the weather fair, a scowl to turn it foul, the Strawmaiden influence extends to even the skies above the fields.

Spend 3 motes and a scene praying, singing, or cajoling the weather. Janest requests a particular sort of weather such as “driving rain,” “clear skies,” or “dangerous winds,” and then make an appropriate Sagacity or Craft roll against standard difficulty, increased by one or two if it’s particularly outlandish for the area. If Janest is set against another supernatural power controlling the weather, she gains her essence in automatic success to the opposed roll. If successful, the weather will change over the course of a day. If Janest has five or more extra successes, she may instead force it to change in the course of an hour, which may have dangerous side effects. On

a failed roll, Janest may not try again for the rest of the session.

PRESENCE

Fieldhand Clarion

Prerequisites: Presence 2

The Strawmaiden wields strong voice to match strong purpose, audible across even the greatest fields.

Commit 1 mote for the scene. Janest’s voice can be heard clearly out to long range, allowing her to ignore penalties for intervening terrain, environmental noises, or targeting multiple characters with Presence-based rolls. Attempts to magically silence Janest must oppose her Force + Presence roll with her Essence in bonus successes. Janest gains double 9s for command or Build Power rolls using Presence. At Essence 2, this becomes double 8s when she commands or fights alongside those protecting their homes.

Simple and Resounding Honesty

Prerequisites: Presence 3

Words of truth come easily from the Strawmaiden’s mouth, but prove much more difficult for others to disregard.

Commit 1 mote for the scene when making a social influence roll that aligns with one of Janest’s intimacies. Reduce the difficulty and cost of the Instill Intimacy action by one for the chosen intimacy. If Janest succeeds, increase the bonus or penalty or acting in-line or against that intimacy by one. If Janest’s social influence roll succeeded, increase the bonus or penalty by two instead. At Essence 2 and Presence 4, Janest may attempt to strengthen such an intimacy in the same scene she created it.

Sweat and Toil Radiance

Prerequisites: Presence 3

There are few things more impressive than the Strawmaiden hard at work, and no sweat, blood, or toil dims her shine.

Janest ignores all penalties to influence or other social rolls due to conditions directly affecting her such as fatigue, wounds, or unkempt appearance. Spend 1 anima to reduce the difficulty and extra success cost of an Influence or Build Power action by one, or two against characters who have also been engaging in strenuous activity (such as combat). At Essence 2 and Presence 5 this Charm may be purchased again. This causes those who engage in strenuous activity in Janest presence gain a minor positive tie towards her unless they spend a simple action to steel themselves against her radiance.

This Far and No Further

Prerequisites: Essence 5, Presence 5

Sometimes it is necessary to draw a line in the loam none may cross.

Commit 4 motes and an aggravated health level for a week of downtime, after working a field during a dramatic scene. This allows Janest to specify a threat which may not cross the field, and then make a Force + Presence roll. This creates a line that can extend around the perimeter of a large city, centered where she activated this charm. If Janest has chosen a mundane natural disaster such as a flood or wildfire, five successes holds it at bay. If she has chosen a supernatural disaster, such as a Wyld-spawned carnivorous mist or the unleashed hellish desert, seven successes stops it at her line. If it is a group or individual, such as a hostile army or an enemy Deathlord, they may not pass unless they have a relevant die-pool which, when halved, exceeds Janest's successes. At the end of the duration, Janest may reactive the charm by spending the cost again (though she does not need to roll again unless she wishes to), but may not heal any of the Health Levels of damaged caused by it as long as it is active.

Vermin Clearing Shout

Prerequisites: Presence 1

Pests and other threats know to flee at the Strawmaiden's voice.

Spend 1 mote when making an Influence or Build Power roll based on intimidation, threat, or a demonstration of might. Reduce the difficulty of the roll by one, or two if the target is an enemy of the community.

At Presence 4, this charm may be repurchased. Janest may commit the cost to make the effect last a scene, and Janest's Influence and Build Power rolls gain an automatic success that don't count against the cap for each of the following that is true of Janest's foes:

- They outnumber Janest and her allies
- They possess great power
- They inhabit positions of influence and affluence. Enemies of the Community

Enemies of the community oppose the welfare and wellbeing of any group or place under Janest's protection. This is based on intent, and not Janest's perception. Many Fair Folk, demons, and unnatural monsters will always be enemies of the community.

NAVIGATE CHARMS

Boundary Marking Meditation

See p. XX. Janest's prerequisites for this charm are Navigate 3, and the region affected should be a rural area, field, or other productive, cultivated land, or the qualities that Janest defines should turn it into one.

Sister to Aurochs

See p. XX

SAGACITY CHARMS

Caller of Wind and Rain

See p. XX

Whisper Sown Wisdom

See p. XX

MARTIAL ARTS

While other Charms express an Exalt's innate power, martial art Charms are specialized

combat techniques that any supernatural creature can learn. Young Exalts usually learn martial arts from tradition-oriented schools or lone instructors, but persistent students or prodigies may decipher a style's secrets through training manuals, oral histories, Wyld-touched dreams, First Age memories, and other unusual sources.

Mortal martial artists can wield the weapons, ethos, and strategies of a given style, but only supernatural beings can learn a style's Charms. To learn a martial art Charm, a martial artist must have *complementary Abilities* that support a style's strategy and philosophy. If a Charm doesn't require specific complementary Abilities, dots from any of the style's complementary abilities can count toward the minimum total. To use a style's Charms, the Exalt must wield weapons with *style-appropriate tags* and avoid wearing *armor forbidden by the style*. A style also grants improved weapon benefits upon learning any of a style's Charms.

Martial art Charms have two unique modes: **Celestial** modes offer benefits for Abyssals, Getimians, Infernals, Lunars, Sidereals, and Solars, while **Terrestrial** modes offer benefits for Alchemicals, Dragon-Blooded, and Liminals. Exigents and other supernatural entities access whatever modes best fit their nature, as decided by the Storyteller.

CRANE STYLE

Crane style emulates the defensive grace of the crane, which warns attackers before punishing their hostility. Crane students practice empathy, philosophy, and debate as rigorously as any form or strike, for a well-placed admonition can halt a foe where fists might fail.

Crane Weapon Tags: Disarming, Natural, Shield.

Crane martial artists prefer weapons that excel at self-defense and render opponents toothless, such as war fans and hook swords. Many martial

artists wield both form weapons at once, backed up with graceful kicks and precise hand-chops. The martial artist's impeccable defense provides the **shield** tag even when unarmed.

Crane Armor: Crane style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Crane martial artists require some combination of Embassy, Presence, and Sagacity.

Empowering Justice Redirection

Prerequisites: Close Combat 1, Complementary Ability Total 2

The Exalt exploits an opponent's aggression.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a **withering** attack against an opponent that attacked the Exalt (or an ally the Exalt defended) since the Exalt's last turn. The Exalt adds one success to their attack roll and gains one additional Power if the attack succeeds. If the opponent's attack succeeded, double the successes and Power granted by this Charm.

Terrestrial: If an opponent attacks a mortal or one of the Exalt's Circlemates, this Charm's effects apply as if the opponent had attacked the Exalt.

Fluttering Cry of Warning

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 3, Empowering Justice Redirection

The Exalt shelters allies with preternatural alertness.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 when taking the Defend Other action. Increase the Exalt's Defense and the defended ally's Hardness by one each until the Exalt's next turn.

Celestial: The Exalt can activate this Charm on Step 2 of an attack against an ally to reflexively defend that ally until the Exalt's next turn.

Crane Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Abilities Total 5, Fluttering Cry of Warning

The Exalt assumes the bearing of the Crane, embodying elegance, not violence.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt's Defense increases by one, or by two against opponents acting in opposition to the Exalt's Virtues. The Exalt's presentation is immaculate, protecting their clothing and hair from stains and tearing. Once per round, when the Exalt successfully defends against a close-range attack, they can spend 1 Power to make a counterattack against the attacker on Step 8.

Celestial: The Exalt can glide horizontally as a reflexive movement action. While gliding, the Exalt can carry one ally they are defending.

Terrestrial: The Exalt can counterattack ranged attacks by redirecting projectiles back to their source. The Exalt uses Close Combat to do so and must successfully defend first. This attack is treated as an unarmed attack out to Long range.

Humbling Enlightenment Commentary

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Essence 2, Complementary Abilities Total 8, Crane Form

The Exalt's greatest weapon is wisdom, wielded with razor-sharp acuity.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a **decisive** attack. When stunting this attack with analysis and/or lecturing about an opponent's fighting style and temperament, add two additional dice to the attack's damage roll. If the attack deals three or more damage, the Exalt may instill a Minor intimacy by educating the opponent. This attack is never fatal, regardless of damage dealt — at worst it leaves an opponent unconscious, with one health level remaining. This may be used during a clash.

Celestial: If the above stunt exploits an opponent's Virtues or intimacies, apply the highest relevant Virtue/intimacy penalty to the opponent's Defense. The opponent can call on other Virtues/intimacies to counter this penalty, but not to increase their Defense.

Terrestrial: If the enhanced attack is a **decisive** counterattack against an opponent's **decisive** attack, the Exalt can use the Power that the opponent spent on the initial attack, instead of spending the Exalt's own Power.

EBON SHADOW STYLE

Ebon Shadow martial artists vanish into shadow and strike when least expected. Though righteous killers designed the style in the First Age, Ebon Shadow style now belongs to knaves and guilds of paid assassins. As the Solar Exalted return, so do memories of Ebon Shadow's grim legacy.

Ebon Shadow Weapon Tags: Concealable, Flexible, Natural.

Ebon Shadow assassins keep hidden blades at the ready and wield tricky weapons like chains and rope darts. They often coat weapons with poison. Unarmed martial artists target weak points with cruel efficiency, giving their unarmed attacks the **piercing** tag.

Ebon Shadow Armor: Ebon Shadow style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Ebon Shadow Exalts require Stealth.

Nothing but Shadows

Prerequisites: Close Combat 1, Stealth 2

The Exalt dominates the battlefield from hiding, fading in and out of sight.

Spend 1 mote on Step 2. Penalize the attack as if the Exalt had concealment. If the Exalt successfully defends against this attack, add a two-die bonus to the Exalt's Stealth rolls until their next turn ends. This may be used during a clash as though it were a Step 3 Charm.

Celestial: If the Exalt successfully defends against the above attack, the Exalt may take an extra reflexive movement action on Step 8.

Terrestrial: While Nothing but Shadows enhances the Exalt's Stealth rolls, the Exalt can hide in plain sight by faking their own death.

Observers suffer a three-die penalty when trying to diagnose or otherwise notice that the Exalt is still alive.

Ebon Shadow Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Stealth 3, Nothing but Shadows

The Exalt's outline distorts and flickers like an inhuman shadow cast by an unsteady flame.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt may calculate Evasion using Stealth instead of Athletics. When the Exalt makes a **decisive** attack from concealment, that attack ignores soak equal to the Exalt's Essence. The Exalt's Anima becomes dark and murky, and if the Exalt dies, their body evaporates into greasy smoke, leaving behind no evidence of their identity.

Celestial: At the end of each round, if the Exalt is hidden from all opponents or has successfully evaded all attacks made against them that round, the Exalt gains 1 Power.

Terrestrial: The Exalt may end Ebon Shadow Form and spend its committed mote on Step 6 of an opponent's **decisive** attack to add their Essence to soak. The Exalt can't re-activate this Charm on their next turn.

Throat-Slitting Shadow Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Essence 2, Stealth 4, Ebon Shadow Form

The Exalt's weapon is shrouded in darkness, closer and deadlier than their opponent can see.

Spend 1 mote on Step 5 of a **decisive** attack. Each extra success on the attack roll converts one damage die into an automatic success. The Exalt can convert up to five dice into automatic successes when attacking from concealment, or two dice otherwise. If this attack kills the Exalt's opponent, the corpse vanishes into smoke as described in Ebon Shadow Form.

Celestial: If the enhanced attack deals damage, the Exalt cuts away part of their opponent's

shadow. The Exalt steals 1 mote, if the opponent has any motes. If the opponent does not, gain Power instead.

Terrestrial: If the Exalt is in concealment, they may fashion a form weapon from their opponent's shadow to wield in the enhanced attack. If the enhanced attack deals damage, the Exalt may keep the shadow-weapon for the scene, or until disarmed.

MANTIS STYLE

Mantis style leverages painful joint-locks and forceful deflections to render opponents harmless. Immaculate monks favor Mantis style as a nonlethal deterrent, but its strong fundamentals give it widespread popularity.

Mantis Weapon Tags: Balanced, Flexible, Natural.

Mantis martial artists wield sturdy, versatile weapons, like batons, kama, nunchaku, and seven-section staffs. When left unarmed, Mantis students use hook strikes — powerful and precise finger jabs — to strike weak points and intercept attacks. While grappling, the martial artist may treat their **natural** attacks as medium weapons.

Mantis Armor: Mantis style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Mantis martial artists require Physique.

Iron-Arm Block

Prerequisites: Close Combat 1, Physique 2

The Exalt diverts enemy hostility with firm block-counters.

Spend 1 mote on Step 2. The Exalt increases Defense by one and doesn't lose Hardness from concentrated attacks until after their next turn. When the Exalt flurries Defend Other action with an attack, reduce the dice penalty to one die.

Terrestrial: If the Exalt successfully defends against an attack with Iron-Arm Block, they may

attempt a Disarm gambit as a counterattack on Step 8.

Crushing Claw Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Physique 2, Iron Arm Block

The mantis catches prey with deadly speed and an implacable grip.

Commit 1 mote on Step 3 when initiating a grapple. If the grapple succeeds, add one success when rolling to establish dominance or pin the Exalt's opponent. While the Exalt dominates the grapple, reduce their opponent's Hardness and soak by two against the Exalt's attacks.

Celestial: While the Exalt dominates the grapple, add the Exalt's Force in bonus successes to contested defense rolls.

Mantis Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Physique 3, Crushing Claw Technique

The Exalt assumes the fabled Mantis stance, arms outstretched and legs ready to spring forward.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. Increase the Exalt's defense and soak by one each. If an opponent has lower Power than the Exalt, or if the opponent is grappling with the Exalt, double 9s on the Exalt's damage rolls against that opponent.

Celestial: When the Exalt deals damage with a **decisive** attack during a grapple, they may end Mantis Form, spend its committed mote, and halve the attack's damage in Step 7, rounding down. This inflicts a wrenching injury that keeps the opponent from using one of their limbs until the scene ends, or until they heal the injury's health levels. The Exalt can't re-activate Mantis Form on their next turn.

Terrestrial: When the Exalt makes a **decisive** rush attack, add three dice to the attack's damage.

Unfolding Retribution Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Physique 4, Mantis Form

The Exalt unleashes countless blows sufficient to wear down the mightiest foe.

Spend 2 motes on Step 1 of a **decisive** attack. Halve the opponent's Hardness and Soak against this attack, rounding down. If the Exalt attacks a grappled opponent, this attack roll gains three automatic successes. This may be used during a clash.

Celestial: If the enhanced attack inflicts damage against an opponent, set the opponent's Hardness to zero as if they'd suffered countless concentrated attacks until the start of their next turn.

Terrestrial: If the enhanced attack incapacitates an opponent, the Exalt regains half the Power spent on the attack, round up.

RIGHTEOUS DEVIL STYLE

The Righteous Devil is a legendary figure who once scoured Creation's frontiers of wickedness and lawlessness. Students from all walks of life embrace the Righteous Devil's duty to judge evildoers. Righteous Devil martial artists who give in to wickedness remain just as dangerous, creating Creation-spanning rivalries.

Righteous Devil Weapon Tags: Flame.

Righteous Devil martial artists wield firewands and other flame-discharge weapons. The Righteous Devil's peerless firewand mastery adds the balanced tag to their attacks. Unlike most martial arts, Righteous Devil style doesn't allow unarmed attacks.

Righteous Devil Armor: Righteous Devil style is compatible with light and medium armor.

Complementary Abilities: Righteous Devil martial artists require Presence and Ranged Combat.

Blossom of Inevitable Demise

Prerequisites: Presence 1, Ranged Combat 2

The Exalt's hands move faster than the eye can follow, raining fire upon the wicked.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 when aiming a firewand attack. The Exalt may either double 9s on damage or extend the firewand's maximum range by one range band. If the firewand requires reloading, the Exalt may also reflexively reload while aiming.

Solar: The Solar may activate this Charm when rolling Join Battle with (Finesse + Ranged Combat). This adds automatic successes to the Join Battle roll equal to the Solar's Finesse or Ranged Combat, whichever is lower. Opponents with lower Join Battle results can't use an interrupt to act before the Solar during the first round of combat.

Righteous Devil Form

Prerequisites: Presence 2, Ranged Combat 2, Blossom of Inevitable Demise

The Exalt dons the majestic and terrible stillness of the Righteous Devil, whom the wicked dread.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. Opponents with Power lower than the Exalt's Force who begin their turn in close range of the Exalt cannot move away from her reflexively, and cannot gain the benefits of cover or concealment. In addition, the Exalt may wield form weapons with Close Combat as if they had the **melee** tag, similar to a staff, club, or spear.

Solar: The Solar gains extra attack dice when aiming: three dice at close range, two dice at short range, and one die at medium range. She increases her Accuracy and Damage by one against creatures of darkness (p. XX).

Burning Judgment Halo

Prerequisites: Presence 2, Ranged Combat 3, Righteous Devil Form

The Exalt rains fire upon the earth and walks through the purifying heat unscathed.

Spend 1 mote and 2 Power on Step 1. The Exalt creates a bonfire centered around them and

extending out to short range. This bonfire is an environmental hazard that deals three damage per round, has difficulty equal to the Exalt's Force, and has a duration of three rounds. The bonfire doesn't harm the Exalt or interfere with the Exalt's visibility but counts as concealment for attacks targeting her.

Solar: The Solar may spend 1 Anima and extend the bonfire out to long range, with damage and difficulty reduced by one for each range band past short range.

Caress of 1,000 Hells

Prerequisites: Essence 2, Presence 3, Ranged Combat 4, Burning Judgment Halo

The Exalt's flame is righteous and won't harm those who repent.

Spend 2 motes on Step 5 of a **decisive** attack against an opponent that's violated the Exalt's Virtues or intimacies. The opponent may repent for their crimes and immediately form an appropriate major Intimacy, then pass out without taking damage from the attack, treating them as though they were Incapacitated. If the opponent doesn't repent, they suffer four dice of aggravated damage in addition to the attack's normal damage. These dice do not count toward the usual limit and ignore Soak.

Solar: An opponent who wishes to repent must also accept an Intimacy of fear, awe, or guilt toward the Solar. If the target is also a creature of darkness (p. XX) all damage dealt is aggravated.

SNAKE STYLE

Snake style emphasizes swiftness and agility over strength. Students learn to target pressure points and express venomous essence through their fingertips. Snake style is most popular in the South and East, but as one of the oldest martial arts in Creation, it has practitioners everywhere.

Snake Weapon Tags: Disarming, Flexible, Natural.

Snake martial artists prefer weapons that can attack from multiple angles, such as hook swords and seven-section staffs. When unarmed, martial artists rely on two-fingered jabs against pressure points and exposed tendons. Their fluid movements give their unarmed attacks the **flexible** tag.

Snake Armor: Snake style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Snake martial artists require Athletics.

Serpentine Evasion

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Athletics 1

Ducking and weaving, the Exalt confounds all attackers.

Spend 2 motes on Step 2. Add one to the Exalt's Defense and two to Soak.

Celestial: If the attacker has less Power than the Exalt, the Exalt may activate Serpentine Evasion on Step 4.

Terrestrial: If the Exalt successfully defends against a **decisive** attack from an opponent with lower Power, the Exalt gains 1 Power.

Snake Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Athletics 2, Serpentine Evasion

The Exalt assumes the sinuous and hypnotic movements of the snake, ready for attack and retreat.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. Set the Exalt's soak equal to half Finesse, round down, before adding soak bonuses from other Charms. Opponents who can see the Exalt suffer a one-die penalty when attacking the Exalt, or a three-die penalty if the Exalt has more Power than them.

Celestial: The Exalt can use a special "Enervate" gambit by targeting pressure points. For 2 Power, the Exalt can disable an opponent's eye (removing their ability to take the Aim action); for 3 Power, an arm (causing them to drop their

weapon or another held object); and for 4 Power, both legs (preventing them from taking a reflexive Move). This effect lasts for the scene, or until an enervated opponent receives medical care at difficulty 5.

Terrestrial: An opponent with less Power than the Exalt loses one soak and one Hardness against the Exalt's attacks.

Uncoiling Serpent Aura

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Essence 2, Athletics 3, Snake Form

The Exalt lashes out with a serpentine ribbon of Anima, striking an opponent from afar.

The Exalt may make unarmed or form weapon attacks out to short range, including clashes.

While in Snake Form, extend this to long range. If the Exalt initiates a grapple with this Charm, they can immediately pull the grappled opponent into close range without needing to utilize the Pull gambit.

Celestial: If an enhanced **decisive** attack damages an opponent, the Exalt may spend 1 mote on Step 7 to poison the opponent with essence. This poison deals three damage per round, has difficulty equal to the Exalt's Fortitude, and has duration equal to the Exalt's Finesse.

Terrestrial: The Exalt may spend 1 mote on Step 3 of an enhanced **decisive** attack to reduce the opponent's soak by three.

TIGER STYLE

Tiger style emulates the strength and ferocity of great cats. Martial artists stalk foes relentlessly and put down weak opponents ruthlessly. Some Tiger martial artists tend toward cruelty or arrogance, while others bear the patient confidence of an apex predator.

Tiger Weapon Tags: Concealable, Disarming, Natural.

Tiger martial artists stay well-armed with brass tiger claws, cesti, and katars. Unarmed martial

artists rake opponents with bare-handed claw strikes. When rushing, a Tiger martial artist may treat light form weapons and **natural** weapons as medium weapons.

Tiger Armor: Tiger style is compatible with light armor.

Complementary Abilities: Tiger martial artists require some combination of Physique and Stealth.

Crimson Leaping Cat Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 2

The Exalt runs down prey with startling speed.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. If the character moves towards an enemy: On a **withering** attack, increase her accuracy by 1. On a successful **decisive** attack, knock the target prone. On any successful rush, steal 1 Power from that opponent. If the character did not move towards an enemy, reduce the cost of the Knockback or Knockdown gambits by 1 to a minimum of 1.

Celestial: If the opponent took the Full Defense action or moved away from the Exalt since the Exalt's last turn, the Exalt can rush an additional range band.

Terrestrial: If the opponent took the Full Defense action or moved away from the Exalt since the Exalt's last turn, the Exalt adds three dice to an enhanced **decisive** attack's damage.

Tiger Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, Crimson Leaping Cat Technique

The Exalt assumes the predatory grace of the tiger, crouched low and prepared to pounce.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. After a successful **withering** attack, gain 2 additional Power on Step 5. Ignore penalties for fighting prone. Whenever the Exalt succeeds on a rush attack, they gain 1 Power.

Celestial: When the Exalt would take damage from a **decisive** attack, they may end Tiger Form on Step 7 (spending the committed mote) and spend any number of Power. For each Power spent, the Exalt gains one soak until the start of their next turn. This does not count toward the usual limit. The Exalt can't reactivate *Tiger Form* on their next turn.

Terrestrial: While the Exalt dominates a grapple, increase the Exalt's soak and Hardness by two.

Angry Predator Frenzy

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Essence 2, Complementary Ability Total 6, Tiger Form

The Exalt gives into raw predatory instinct, refusing to accept any insult.

Commit 1 mote on Step 6 of an attack against the Exalt to declare the attacker "prey." The Exalt can rush an additional range band against their prey. When the Exalt makes a **decisive** attack against their prey, each extra success converts a damage die into an automatic success. The Exalt can convert up to three damage dice this way.

Celestial: Whenever the Exalt successfully attacks their prey, the Exalt steals 1 Power or 1 Anima, if the prey has any.

Terrestrial: Whenever the Exalt damages their prey with a **decisive** attack, the Exalt regains half the Power spent on that attack, round up.

WHITE REAPER STYLE

The White Reaper is a slayer of armies, a long-armed destroyer that decimates foes with each sweep of the scythe. Martial artists learn through brutal experience, for the style only truly shines on the battlefield. The style is distinctive from a distance due to the signature white Anima halos that Exalts bear.

White Reaper Weapon Tags: Balanced, Reaching, Natural.

White Reaper martial artists prefer sweeping weapons like scythes, greatswords, and staffs to scatter foes. When unarmed, the martial artist relies on aggressive, sweeping strikes and leaps to keep opponents off-balance, granting the martial artist's attacks the **reaching** tag.

White Reaper Armor: White Reaper style is compatible with all armor.

Complementary Abilities: White Reaper martial artists require some combination of Integrity and War.

White Reaper Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 3

The Exalt rises into a grim and terrible battle posture, looking down upon foes like grass for the scything.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt doubles 9s on **decisive** damage rolls. Battle groups lower their Defense by two against the Exalt's attacks. Once per round, after dealing damage with a **decisive** attack, the Exalt gains one brilliant white *halo* of temporary Anima.

Halos last for White Reaper Form's duration and count toward the Exalt's total Anima, but can't be spent like normal Anima. Each halo increases the Exalt's Resolve by one. The Exalt can have up to three halos at one time.

Lunar: Each halo increases soak by one. When White Reaper Form ends, the Lunar can exchange their halos directly into Anima.

Bleeding Crescent Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, White Reaper Form

The Exalt's brilliant corona trails their weapon, cutting bloody ribbons across the battlefield.

Spend 1 mote and any number of halos on Step 1. Double 9s on this attack roll, or double 8s if attacking a battle group. For each halo the Exalt spends on an enhanced **decisive** attack, add one

die to the attack's damage, or one automatic success if attacking a battle group.

Lunar: An enhanced **decisive** attack may target one additional opponent per halo spent, calculating damage separately for each opponent. The Lunar must pay Power equal to the highest Hardness of any targeted opponents. This counts as the Lunar's flurry for their turn.

Flickering Corona Barrier

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, White Reaper Form

The shimmering aura surrounding the Exalt protects her from harm.

Spend 1 mote and any number of halos on Step 2. The Exalt's Defense increases by one, plus one per halo spent. For each halo spent, the Exalt also reduces Defense penalties by one.

Lunar: Increase the Lunar's soak by two per halo spent.

Snow Follows Winter

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Essence 2, Complementary Ability Total 6, Flickering Corona Barrier, Bleeding Crescent Strike

The Exalt's brilliant halos bloom with the bright scarlet of fresh blood, then sizzle away, sealing the Exalt's own wounds.

Commit 2 motes on Step 1. The Exalt *must* spend a halo each turn, and this Charm ends when the Exalt can't spend halos. For each halo spent this way, the Exalt heals one health level. While this Charm is active, the Exalt immediately regains any halos spent on Bleeding Crescent Strike and Flickering Corona Barrier.

Lunar: The Exalt's blood-soaked Anima terrifies non-Exalted opponents. The Exalt's Hardness increases by two against these opponents' attacks. Non-Exalted opponents reduce Hardness by two against the Exalt's attacks.

THE FIVE GLORIOUS DRAGON STYLES

The Immaculate Order's signature martial arts make Immaculate monks some of Creation's most fearsome combatants. These five styles resonate with Dragon-Blooded Essence and help the Immaculate Order police unruly spirits.

Air Dragon Style

The Elemental Dragon of Air is elusive, intangible, and omnipresent. She's also devastating in her sudden fury. Immaculate students of the Air Dragon undergo acrobatic training to help them move lightly and silently, and master ranged weapons to challenge spirits from afar.

Air Dragon Weapon Tags: Natural, Thrown.

Air Dragon martial artists wield throwing weapons, though they're just as capable in melee. Thrown weapons capable of returning (such as chakrams and boomerangs) gain the pulling tag. Unarmed Air Dragon martial artists favor hand chops and spinning kicks.

Air Dragon Armor: Air Dragon style is compatible with light armor.

Complementary Abilities: Air Dragon martial artists require some combination of Ranged Combat and Athletics.

Cloud-Treading Method

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 3

The Exalt moves as lightly as a cloud, leaving hardly a breeze in her wake.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt moves over difficult terrain as easily as normal terrain, and can flurry an attack and a sprint action.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood can move over liquid and vapor, as long as they end their movement on solid terrain.

Air Dragon Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4

With a deep cleansing breath, the Exalt assumes the clarity and speed of the Air Dragon.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt ignores environmental penalties to Defense and adds one bonus success to all movement-based rolls. Increase the cost of all forced movement gambits targeting the Exalt by one. When wielding a form weapon with Close Combat, that weapon gains the **balanced** tag.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Air aura.

Dragon-Blooded: Concentrated **withering** attacks don't reduce the Dragon-Blood's Hardness if the Exalt successfully evades them.

Lightning Strike Style

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 5, Air Dragon Form

Lightning arcs from the Exalt's Anima and strikes with explosive force.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. This modifies a **decisive** attack, making it against all characters within close range of a central target within the Exalt's attack range. This attack never harms the Exalt. The Exalt must pay enough Power to overcome the highest Hardness among all targets, and calculates damage for each target separately. This counts as the martial artist's flurry for their turn. This attack cannot be clashed.

Dragon-Blooded: The Exalt may attack a central target one range band further than their weapon's usual range.

Wrathful Winds Roar

Prerequisites: Essence 2, Close Combat 5, Complementary Ability Total 6, Lightning Strike Style

The Exalt unleashes a deafening roar accompanied by hurricane winds.

Spend 1 mote and 2 Power on Step 1. The Exalt's roar creates a one-time environmental hazard that affects all other characters within medium range of the Exalt, including dematerialized spirits. This hazard deals damage equal to the Exalt's Force + Essence, resisted at difficulty 5.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood may extend this Charm's effects to long range.

Earth Dragon Style

The Elemental Dragon of Earth is forceful, but deliberate. Immaculate students undergo extreme training for strength and durability, so they might stand toe-to-toe with unruly gods and Anathema.

Earth Dragon Weapon Tags: Natural, Smashing, Two-Handed.

Earth Dragon martial artists wield weapons with significant impact and reach, such as tetsubos, warhammers, and great axes. Even unarmed they emphasize impact with elbows, knees, and two-handed hammer blows. After aiming, the martial artist may treat their **natural** weapons as medium weapons.

Earth Dragon Armor: Earth Dragon style is compatible with all armor.

Complementary Abilities: Earth Dragon martial artists require some combination of Integrity and Physique.

Stillness-of-Stone Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 3

The Exalt beats an opponent with staggering force, as if wielding the weight of the world.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 when enacting the Knockback or Knockdown gambit. Either gambit costs 2 Power. If the gambit's attack roll succeeds with at least two extra successes, the Exalt may pay an additional 2 Power on Step 5 to enact both gambits at once.

Dragon-Blooded: An opponent struck with an enhanced gambit acts as if they're standing on

difficult terrain until the end of the Dragon-Blood's next turn.

Earth Dragon Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, Stillness of Stone Strike

With slow, deliberate movements, the Exalt crafts a stable stance worthy of the Earth Dragon's grandeur.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt's soak increases by three. The Exalt also adds two bonus dice when using Knockback or Knockdown gambits, or when attacking prone opponents.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Earth aura.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood ignores wound penalties and increases Hardness by one.

Hungry Earth Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Complementary Ability Total 5, Earth Dragon Form

The Exalt slams an opponent into the very earth.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a grapple or **decisive** attack. If the Exalt initiates the grapple or deals damage with the **decisive** attack, the opponent becomes partially trapped in the earth. A trapped opponent can't take movement actions and acts as if prone. To escape entrapment, the opponent must succeed at an appropriate simple action with difficulty equal to the Exalt's Fortitude.

Dragon-Blooded: The Exalt can target immaterial spirits with an enhanced grapple or **decisive** attack. If an immaterial spirit would be trapped in the earth, the spirit instead immediately materializes and can't dematerialize or teleport away for the rest of the scene.

Shattering Fist Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 2, Complementary Ability Total 6, Hungry Earth Strike

Steel buckles before the Exalt's inexorable might.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a destructive feat of strength or a Disarm gambit. An enhanced feat of strength adds five automatic successes. An enhanced Disarm gambit destroys an opponent's mundane weapon or forcibly deattunes an opponent's artifact weapon. A forcibly-deattuned artifact loses access to Evocations and its inherent ability for the rest of the scene unless the wielder succeeds at an appropriate simple action at difficulty 7.

Dragon-Blooded: After defending against a melee attack, the Dragon-Blood may instead activate this Charm on Step 8 to enact an enhanced Disarm gambit as a counterattack.

Fire Dragon Style

The Elemental Dragon of Fire weds abrupt violence and immense self-discipline. Immaculate students perform intense weapon drills to the beat of music, that they might battle with speed and grace.

Fire Dragon Weapon Tags: Balanced, Paired, Natural.

Fire Dragon martial artists traditionally wield paired weapons, such as short swords, scimitars, and daggers. If the martial artist wields a matched pair of form weapons, their relentless attacks grant those weapons the **chopping** tag. When unarmed, martial artists unleash rapid barrages of punches and chops, punctuated with powerful kicks.

Fire Dragon Armor: Fire Dragon style is compatible with light and medium armor.

Complementary Abilities: Fire Dragon martial artists require some combination of Performance and Athletics.

Searing Edge Attack

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 1

The Exalt's killing intent expresses itself through the overwhelming heat of each strike.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1. If an enhanced attack hits, the opponent loses 1 Power or 1 mote.

Dragon-Blooded: If the target opponent's Power is lower than the Dragon-Blood's, they lose 1 Power *and* 1 mote when hit. If they do not have motes, the Exalt gains 1 anima instead.

Fire Dragon Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, Searing Edge Attack

The Exalt's eyes glow with heat as they slip into a deadly, graceful dance.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. If the Exalt makes any **withering** attacks on her turn, decrease the target's Hardness by another 1 after all attacks resolve. When the Exalt successfully defends against **decisive** attacks, the attacker loses 1 Power.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Fire aura.

Dragon-Blooded: Whenever the Dragon-Blood incapacitates a non-extra opponent or routs a battle group, the Dragon-Blood gains 1 anima.

Fiery Blade Attack

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Complementary Ability Total 5, Fire Dragon Form

The Exalt attacks with speed enough to set an opponent alight.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a **decisive** attack. If the attack deals any damage, the opponent catches aflame. This fire is an environmental damage effect which deals three damage per round and has difficulty equal to the Exalt's Force. The fire lasts until someone puts it out with an appropriate simple action at the same

difficulty. Spirits suffer aggravated damage from this fire. This may be used during a clash.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood may target immaterial spirits with this Charm. If an immaterial spirit catches fire, they materialize for the rest of the scene.

Overwhelming Fire Majesty Stance

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 2, Complementary Ability Total 6, Fire Dragon Form

The Exalt's brilliant, burning aura crows even the bravest foe.

Commit 1 mote on Step 2 for the scene. Opponents in close range suffer a three-die penalty when attacking the Exalt, opponents at medium range suffer a two-die penalty, and opponents at long range suffer a one-die penalty. If the Exalt suffers damage from a close-range attack, the searing heat lowers the attacker's Defense by two until the start of their next turn.

Dragon-Blooded: Spend 3 Power to exhale a gout of flame that sears the Dragon-Blood's surroundings out to short range, as a simple action. This is a one-time environmental damage effect that deals three damage and is resisted at difficulty 5.

Water Dragon Style

The Elemental Dragon of Water teaches that all things flow, from fights to essence to blood in the body. Immaculate students learn to block, impede, and redirect these flows, to better exploit every opportunity for victory.

Water Dragon Weapon Tags: Natural, One-Handed, Piercing.

Water Dragon martial artists wield cruel weapons ideal for in-fighting, like tiger claws and wind-and-fire wheels. Unarmed martial artists strike in swift, adaptable combinations of punches, kicks, and claw strikes. These combinations can fit any situation, granting the

martial artist's unarmed attacks the **balanced** tag.

Water Dragon Armor: Water Dragon style is compatible with light and medium armor.

Complementary Abilities: Water Dragon martial artists require some combination of Physique and Sagacity.

Drowning-in-Blood Technique

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 2

With a rapid barrage of strikes, the Exalt redirects blood flow into an opponent's lungs.

Spend 1 mote on Step 1 of a **decisive** attack. If the attack deals damage, the opponent's wound penalties increase by one. As long as the Exalt remains conscious, this effect lasts for the rest of the scene but does not stack with itself. This Charm also redirects essence in a spirit's body — the above penalty stacks up to three times for a spirit.

Dragon-Blooded: If the enhanced attack deals damage, the opponent suffers a secondary pool of damage dice equal to the wound penalty they had before the attack, applied on Step 6. This damage pool ignores soak.

Flowing Water Defense

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, Drowning in Blood Technique

The Exalt flows from every attack, becoming impossible to pin down or bind.

Spend 1 mote on Step 2. The Exalt's Defense increases by one, or by two against attacks that would limit or control the Exalt's movement (e.g. grapples, the Ensnare gambit). If the attacker suffers any wound penalties, increase the Exalt's Defense by one again.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood may use this Charm on Step 1 of any attempt to escape physical constraint. This adds automatic successes equal to Finesse.

Water Dragon Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Complementary Ability Total 5, Flowing Water Defense

The Exalt drops into a rolling stance, allowing offense and defense to flow together.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt adds two bonus dice to attacks against opponents with wound penalties. The Exalt may set soak equal to half Fortitude, round down, before applying bonus soak from other Charms.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Water aura.

Dragon-Blooded: When the Dragon-Blood suffers damage from a **decisive** attack, they may add their Fortitude to soak on Step 7. This does not count towards the usual limit. Once the attack is resolved, this Charm ends and its committed mote is spent. The Dragon-Blood can't re-activate this Charm on their next turn.

Foe-Restraining Whirlpool

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 2, Complementary Ability Total 6, Water Dragon Form

The Exalt's swirling Anima draws opponents inexorably inward.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. Characters who begin their turn within medium range of the Exalt cannot move reflexively, and must flurry an Athletics roll. This affects immaterial spirits as well. Affected spirits materialize immediately, can't dematerialize or teleport away, and must spend 1 Power to move away from the Exalt. Enemies that successfully move decrease their Defense by two until the start of their next turn. Enemies that stay within close range of the Exalt suffer a two-dice penalty to all attacks.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood can end this Charm, spend its committed mote, and spend 2 Power on Step 1 to unleash a shout with the force of a tsunami. This is a one-time

environmental damage effect that extends out to medium range. This environmental effect inflicts four damage and is resisted at difficulty 7. Characters who fail their roll are knocked back one range band as described in the Knockback gambit (p. XX).

Wood Dragon Style

The Elemental Dragon of Wood oversees the cycle of life and death. Immaculate students practice fasting and consume hallucinogenic drugs to discover esoteric mysteries about their bodies, souls, and place in Creation.

Wood Dragon Weapon Tags: Natural, Reaching, Two-Handed.

Wood Dragon martial artists use finger-jabs and wooden-hafted weapons to strike pressure points. They can also wield bows as if they were staffs with the **melee** tag. Wood Dragon Charms aren't compatible with Ranged Combat attacks.

Wood Dragon Armor: Wood Dragon style is compatible with light armor.

Complementary Abilities: Wood Dragon martial artists require some combination of Awareness and Sagacity.

Soul-Marking Strike

Prerequisites: Close Combat 2, Complementary Ability Total 3

The Exalt strikes an opponent's pressure points to inject a seed of essence.

Spend 1 mote on Step 3 of a **decisive** attack. If the attack deals damage, the Exalt invisibly marks the opponent and knows the opponent's rough location for the rest of the scene. The target cannot benefit from concealment or cover while marked. If there is not cover or concealment to benefit from, the target instead decreases their Defense by 1 until the start of their next turn.

Marked spirits find the experience painfully distracting and increase their wound penalties by one.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood can target an immaterial spirit with an enhanced attack. If the Dragon-Blood deals damage, the Dragon-Blood can clearly perceive and attack the spirit while the mark remains.

Wood Dragon Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3, Complementary Ability Total 4, Soul-Marking Strike

The Exalt strikes their own pressure points, bringing their essence into perfect alignment.

Commit 1 mote on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt increases Defense and Soak by one. Against opponents marked with Soul-Marking Strike, increase these values by two instead. On the Exalt's turn, they can spend 1 anima on Step 1 to restore a health level. In addition, wooden form weapons gain the **flexible** tag.

Special: Using this Charm allows the Exalt to access Wood aura.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood can deactivate this Charm on Step 1, spend its committed mote, and spend up to three Power. For each Power spent, the Dragon-Blood or an ally within close range regains one health level. The Dragon-Blood can't re-activate this Charm until after their *next* turn.

Unbreakable Fascination Exercise

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Complementary Ability Total 5, Wood Dragon Form

With sinuous, vine-like movements, the Exalt entrances foes until it's time to strike.

Commit 1 mote on Step 2 for the scene. Opponents with Power lower than the Exalt's Finesse plus one suffer a two-die penalty to attacks against the Exalt. If any opponent in close or short range misses the Exalt with an attack, that opponent must pay 2 Power to move away from the Exalt until the Exalt's next turn.

Dragon-Blooded: The Dragon-Blood may end this Charm on Step 1 and spend its committed

mote to make a **decisive** attack against all opponents within close range. The Dragon-Blood must pay enough Power to attack the opponent with the highest Hardness among their targets, and calculates damage separately for each opponent. This counts as the Dragon-Blood's flurry for their turn.

Soul Mastery

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 2, Complementary Ability Total 6

The Exalt stands at the center of life and death and unleashes the Wood Dragon's ultimate judgment.

Spend 2 motes and 2 Anima on Step 1 of a Knockout gambit. The gambit can target any living, spiritual, or undead entity, even creatures that normally couldn't be knocked out. This gambit cannot ever cost more than 10 Power. If the gambit would knock an Exalt out for five or more rounds, or any other entity for three or more rounds, the Exalt may force a Dramatic Injury or kill their opponent instantly. If the target is capable of taking Dramatic Injuries, the player determines how the target takes the injury instead. If a target has a perfect effect that prevents them from being rendered unconscious, this provokes a roll-off (p. XX).

Dragon-Blooded: If the Dragon-Blood kills a god, elemental, demon, or other spirit with Soul Mastery, that spirit is permanently destroyed. This Charm sends slain living opponents and ghosts directly to Lethe.

SIDEREAL STYLES

Sidereal styles are the pinnacle of martial arts, kept secret from most Exalted. Only Sidereals can develop and fully master these styles, though Abyssals, Getimians, Infernals, and Solars can learn directly from Sidereal tutors. Terrestrial Exalted typically cannot access these Charms without first undergoing some sort of unusual or extraordinary story event as determined by the Storyteller and player. The

style presented below is one of the more common and accessible Sidereal styles.

Prismatic Arrangement of Creation Style

Through the Prismatic Arrangement of Creation, martial artists comprehend, master, and embody the essence of creation's flow through heaven and earth. Martial artists practice subtle movements that seem effortlessly graceful, though in truth their forms express esoteric geomancy and sorcerous essence flows.

Style Weapon Tags: Natural.

Prismatic Arrangement of Creation martial artists fight unarmed, with an economy of motion that belies the powerful essence behind each strike. Whenever the martial artist has one or more Prismatic Arrangement of Creation Charms active, they may treat their **natural** weapons as heavy weapons.

Style Armor: Prismatic Arrangement of Creation style is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Prismatic Arrangement of Creation Exalts require Awareness, Embassy, and Sagacity to unlock their greatest techniques.

Four Magical Materials Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Essence 2, Sagacity 3, any three martial art Charms

With sorcerously-charged stances, the Exalt channels the classical magical materials through their body.

Commit 2 motes on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt chooses one of the following benefits, which they may change reflexively on Step 1 on their turn:

Jade: The Exalt's stances express geomantic power. The Knockback and Knockdown gambits cost 1 Power each. Reduce the cost of any other forced-movement gambits by 2.

Moonsilver: Silvery essence ripples outward from the Exalt's blows. The Exalt can attack

opponents from short range. She may initiate grapples or clashes from this distance.

Orichalcum: The Exalt's skin takes on a golden sheen. The Exalt's Hardness increases by two and their soak increases by three. Her Hardness does not decrease from concentrated attacks.

Starmetal: The Exalt's hair and fingernails bear the gleam and sharpness of starmetal. The Exalt's unarmed attacks gain the **Artifact** tag, with an effective Artifact rating equal to the Exalt's Essence. Increase the Accuracy and Damage values of her unarmed attacks by 1. She gains an inherent artifact property appropriate to her character.

Sidereal: The Sidereal is as unbreakable as the magical materials. If an attack would incapacitate the Sidereal or render them unconscious, the Sidereal may deactivate this Charm in Step 7 and spend its committed motes. The Sidereal remains conscious and negates all damage that would remove their last health level. The Sidereal can't reactivate this Charm on their next turn.

Soul Fire Shaper Form

Prerequisites: Awareness 3, Essence 2, Close Combat 4, any three martial art Charms

The Exalt embraces their place in the world's invisible essence flows, breathing essence as spirits do.

Commit 2 motes on Step 1 for the scene. While in this form, for the purposes of all static value calculations, rolls, or costs, the Exalt treats her Essence as though it were two higher. This does not grant additional motes. Additionally, the Exalt may use a special **Disrupt** gambit.

Disrupt (Essence plus two): Forcibly end a currently-active Charm, quality, or spell affecting the Exalt's target. A disrupted effect's mote cost remains committed until the user's next turn. An already committed mote is spent at the end of this effect. The Exalt must target a

specific quality, Charm or spell, even if the Exalt doesn't know all of the target's effects.

Sidereal: Once per round, when the Sidereal successfully defends against an attack, they can attempt a Disrupt gambit against the attacker as a counterattack in Step 8.

Getimian: Spend an additional mote when making the Disrupt gambit. By enacting the hidden technique, Astrology Interruption Method, the Getimian suppresses the benefit of Weaving Destiny (p. XX) or any Active Sidereal anima effect until the start of her next turn.

Games of Divinity Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 4, Embassy 3, Essence 2, any three martial art Charms

The Exalt channels the addictive allure of the Games of Divinity, embodying perfection beyond the dreams of gods.

Commit 2 motes on Step 1 for the scene. The Exalt calculates Defense with Embassy or Sagacity instead of Athletics or Close Combat. Extras and spirits with Essence lower than the Exalt's can't attack the Exalt. All other targets must flurry an Integrity roll to attack her. Once per round, when the Exalt successfully defends against an attack, they may attempt social influence against the attacker as a counterattack on Step 8.

Sidereal: The Sidereal's **decisive** attacks add two automatic successes damage rolls against opponents with intimacies toward the Exalt.

Prismatic Arrangement of Creation Form

Prerequisites: Close Combat 5, Essence 3, Complementary Ability Total 12, Four Magical Materials Form, Games of Divinity Form, Soul Fire Shaper Form

The Exalt briefly vanishes from existence, then assumes the bearing of one who exists, gaining perfect self-knowledge in the process.

Commit 2 motes on Step 1 for the scene. While this form is active, the Exalt cannot be

ambushed and enemies do not gain the benefit of Stealth-based concealment, and ignores any penalties to Awareness rolls. She may spend 1 Power to cancel an enemy interrupt and take her action instead. While in this form, she may use the form weapon benefits and tags of any other Martial Art she knows as form weapons for any other style's Charms, including this one.

Sidereal: When the Sidereal activates this Charm, she may commit an additional mote to activate any one other form Charm she knows at the same time. She may change the benefits of this form with a flurry on Step 1.

Getimian: When assuming this Form, the Getimian activates Demense-and-Manse Emulation. This brings the Essence of their origin into Creation, manifesting as a five-dot Hearthstone upon their brow, which grants an Evocation and effect that matches the Getimian's personality and thwarted destiny. The Getimian treats anything up to extreme range as their domain.

SORCERY AND NECROMANCY

If Charms are an expression of the Exalted's own Essence, sorcery is the expression of the Essence of the world itself, shaped by a sorcerer's will. Sorcerers are courted by the powerful and feared by the common folk, for they command the essential forces of reality, consort with demons and spirits, and forge impossible wonders that transform Creation. Sorcerers codify these expressions into spells, but also work great feats and projects called sorcerous workings.

Sorcerers are not commonplace across Creation. Rare are those who possess the necessary understanding of Essence to master the secrets of sorcery, and of them, few are willing to make the sacrifices required to initiate into the art. The Exalted are perhaps the foremost practitioners of sorcery, but gods, powerful entities, demons, and talented mortals are capable of wielding sorcerous

miracles - though the process necessary to gain an understanding of Essence always results in that mortal becoming something more than purely human. Across the land, sorcerous academies exist to instill the methods of titanic Essence manipulation of the sort that forged Creation itself.

Sorcery is divided into three circles of understanding and power — First, Second, and Third. In the First Age, these were called the Terrestrial Circle, the Celestial Circle, and the Solar Circle, for the Third Circle was the province of Solars alone. If spoken of at all in the Second Age, sorcerers sometimes refer to these as the Emerald, Sapphire, and Adamant Circles.

Necromancy is the dark mirror of sorcery — many of the same principles of Essence manipulation apply, but necromancy manipulates chthonic energies dredged from the Underworld and the shattered nightmares of the Neverborn. Though a much rarer art than sorcery in this Age and the last, necromancy still has many adherents in Creation, especially among Ghost-Blooded, the children of congress between the living and the dead. If sorcery manipulates life, necromancy forces death and unlife into the world. Like sorcery, necromancy is divided into three circles, called Ivory, Shadow, and Void, respectively. Here too, though, the Exalted persist as the foremost wielders of necromancy; only the Abyssal Exalted and the ancient ghosts known as the Deathlords may master the bleak miracles of the Third Circle.

WHO CAN LEARN WHAT?

Every Exalt can use their Essence to create miracles, but some — those willing to initiate into the mysteries of sorcery and necromancy — come to a deeper understanding of the cosmos. In addition to their usual Charms, they gain the ability to cast Spells of devastating power and near-limitless variety.

Sorcery is an ancient practice, with traditions dating back to the First Age. It draws on the

elemental forces of Creation, the weave of Fate, and the ancient powers of Hell to enact dramatic changes to the world. Sorcerers ascend through three circles of power as they master the art, each purchased as an Initiation Charm.

The art of sorcery has a dark mirror in necromancy. Sorcery may be an act of hubris, but necromancy is a vivisection — the naked world shaped by the tip of a knife. It draws on the power of death, darkness, entropy, stasis, and the grim phenomena of the Underworld. Like sorcery, it is divided into three circles of increasing power and peril, accessed through their own Initiation Charms.

Not every Exalt learns sorcery; it's an art that requires talent, time, and sacrifice. Many Exalts have found great heroism and power elsewhere. Learning sorcerous arts requires great arcane study, but even with their long lives no Exalt can master every Circle of both sorcery and necromancy. Specific Exalted can only learn certain Circles due to the power and nature of their patron. These are guidelines for the Storyteller; if you want a player character to have a special artifact or technique that allows them to use a higher Circle than normal, go ahead! Two such artifacts,

the Emerald Thurible and the Mantle of the First Sorcerer, are presented on p. XX and XX.

Solars may learn Third Circle sorcery and Second Circle necromancy. They are unparalleled among sorcerers in Creation.

Dragon-Blooded may only learn First Circle sorcery. A rare few may learn First Circle necromancy instead, but never both.

Lunars may learn the Second Circles of both sorcery and necromancy.

Sidereals may learn Second Circle sorcery and First Circle necromancy.

Exigents may learn the First Circles. Beyond that level depends on the Exigent; Chosen of sorcery-

inclined gods might be able to learn Second Circle, while a singular Chosen of a god with a *very* particular purview might be able to learn Third Circle. It's rare for a god's Essence to allow their Chosen to learn necromancy, but it does happen among harvest gods and psychopomps, although never beyond Second Circle.

Alchemicals may learn Second Circle sorcery (with initiations typically using a physical object as a focus, such as God-Machine Weaving Engine). Rumors exist of a forbidden way to initiate them into First Circle necromancy.

Abysals, as dark mirrors of Solars, may learn Third Circle necromancy and Second Circle sorcery.

Infernals may learn Third Circle sorcery and Second Circle necromancy.

Getimians may learn Second Circle sorcery and First Circle necromancy. Rumors exist of internal alchemical transformations that allow an inversion of access, granting them Second Circle necromancy and First Circle sorcery.

Liminals may only learn First Circle necromancy. A rare few may learn First Circle sorcery instead, but never both.

Beyond the Exalted, most gods, elementals, and demons can use First Circle sorcery, and particularly strong gods, greater elementals, or powerful demons may use Second Circle. Only the Incarna or the direct fetich souls of the Yozis may use Third Circle sorcery — though not all of either group do. For necromancy, many ghosts and Ghost-Blooded may use First Circle, while ancient ghosts like the Dual Monarchs or the nephwracks — dread spectres touched by the Whispers of the Neverborn — may use Second Circle. Only the Deathlords use Third Circle necromancy.

CASTING A SPELL

Sorcerers and necromancers shape their Spells through raw force of **Will**, sharpening their resolve until the world has no choice but to

conform to their expectations. This requires a **Focus Will** action; the character rolls any Attribute + Sagacity at a default difficulty of 3, adding any extra successes to her current Will pool. A character can hold up to 10 Will at a time, but unspent Will is lost at the end of the scene.

On their turn, a character can use an action to cast a Spell by spending the require Will. This effort drains their Defense by one point for Spells of the first circle, two points for the second circle, and three points for the third. At the start of each of her turns, this penalty lowers by one.

INITIATION CHARMS

At some point in their training, the character's understanding of sorcery or necromancy crystallizes, allowing them to purchase an Initiation Charm. These can be chosen during Character Creation like any other Charm, and offer a chance for the player and Storyteller to establish how the character came to learn their art.

Sorcerous Initiation

See p. XX

Necromantic Initiation

See p. XX

SHAPING RITUALS

No two sorcerers walk identical paths. Even the most devoted students stray from their teachers, discovering some divergence in their understanding of spellcraft. Each time the character initiates into a new level of sorcery or necromancy, she gains a shaping ritual to reflect her particular path to greater mastery.

Unless otherwise specified, each Initiation can only be used once per session. Will generated from shaping rituals lasts until the end of the session and does not count towards the sorcerer's normal maximum.

Blazing a New Path

Players should feel free to work with the Storyteller to devise new Initiation rituals that reflect their character's journey. Most rituals describe a circumstance the sorcerer can use to bank Will in advance, with more Will offered for difficult or inconvenient tasks.

Bargain with Mara

You learned sorcery at the cloven feet of Mara, the demon-queen of love betrayed.

When a nontrivial character expresses unrequited love, admiration, or obsession for the sorcerer, she gains **three** Will.

God-Machine Weaving Engine

A fusion of technology and mysticism manifests as two spinning adamant rings embedded in your forehead, one inside the other, together granting access to reality-altering command protocols.

When the sorcerer incorporates local spirits or other subservient supernatural entities into creating a spell, such as commanding fire elementals into a casting of Flight of the Burning Raptor, gain **three** Will.

Ifrit Pact

You offered three labors to an Ifrit Lord — princes of fire — in exchange for the secrets of sorcery.

The sorcerer gathers strength from burning ritual offerings. Tokens grant **one** Will; valuable sacrifices grant **two**; and exotic, unique, or powerful sacrifices generate **three**.

The Jasmine Gems of Mishiko

The gems holding the thoughts and lessons of the first Lunar sorcerer have come into your possession, teaching you to channel Essence into spells. Mishiko's spirit appears at dawn or dusk to pose a seemingly nonsensical riddle to the sorcerer.

Answering this twilight kōan correctly (or correctly recognizing the lesson it means to

impart) involves a Sagacity roll at Difficulty 3 and grants the sorcerer **two** Will.

Raksi's Teachings

The secrets of sorcery revealed themselves to you under the cruel tutelage of the Lunar Queen of Mahalanka, a fabulous and ruined city of sorcerers.

When a nontrivial character expresses fear of the sorcerer, or upon success of an intimidation roll against them, gain **three** Will.

Soul-Perfecting Elixir

You found enlightenment at the bottom of a cauldron, concocting awareness-expanding potions.

When the sorcerer has the opportunity to retrieve complicated or unusual ingredients and render them into an elixir through intricate procedures, she gains **two** Will.

Student of the Heptagram

You learned sorcery at the Heptagram, the preeminent institution of sorcerous learning in the Realm and the origin of most Realm sorcerers.

Students of the Heptagram learn to recognize dragon lines and the hidden geomantic mandalas in the world, using them to puissant magical effect. When the sorcerer spends a dramatic scene studying the local geomancy of an area, she gains **two** Will.

The Talisman of Ten Thousand Eyes

A great gleaming ruby with ten facets, set in a rune-etched orichalcum amulet, allows you to channel baleful sorceries.

The sorcerer may imbue a fraction of their Will inside the Talisman, banking **one** Will from a Focus Will action to use later. This Will persists until it's used. The sorcerer may also use Evocations of the Talisman (see p. XX).

Theanoan Method

You apply divine numerology and written sigils towards calculating the strange, unintuitive truths of Creation.

The sorcerer gathers strength from arcane mathematics. As long as they're able to inscribe some element of the spell they're casting as a reflexive action, they gain **one** additional Will for every Focus Will action they take to a maximum of **three** per session.

Wyld Wisdom

You wandered the nightmare-tides of the Wyld in search of enlightenment.

When the sorcerer wakes from slumber, her player may ask the Storyteller for a strange taboo — something she *must not do* or, alternatively, *must always do*. The impact of this taboo determines how much Will she gains, up to **three**. If she violates the taboo, she loses all Will and the difficulty of Focus Will actions increases by two for the rest of the session.

The following are examples of necromancy-focused shaping rituals:

Disciple of the Void

An intricate tattoo made of softly-moaning soulsteel adorns your body and recites an Old Law — the principles which governed the Underworld before the Neverborn — to grant you sinister insights.

The necromancer gathers strength from death; use the conditions for the Abyssal Advantage Cruel Banquet (p. XX) but gain Will instead of motes. An Abyssal necromancer may only benefit from one or the other once per scene.

Half-Souled

You forged a small portion of your higher soul into soulsteel, leaving a token physical remnant and a spiritual hollow filled by necromantic energies.

Incorporating the physical representation of your sundered soul into the ritual of casting a spell grants **one** Will.

Skull Diarist

Ancient and inhuman skulls, adorned with necromantic runes, constantly babble with soft whispers and teach you the secrets of the dead.

When necromancer makes a sacrifice of a living thing and anoints the skulls with blood, gain **one** Will for sacrificing minor or trivial creatures; **two** for important personages; and **three** for powerful characters.

Student of the Raiton Academy

You learned necromancy at the Raiton Academy, an ancient and preeminent school based on Nightfall Island.

The Academy gleans arcane insights from understanding the history of death. When the necromancer spends a dramatic scene to understand the funerary customs and overall history of death in an area (plagues, battles, major burial grounds, etc.), gain **two** Will.

Wanaasan Exorcist

The ancestor-ghosts of the West reveal their drowned secrets to you.

When the necromancer spends a scene fully immersed in a body of water to commune with her ancestor-ghosts, she gains **two** Will.

SUMMONING

Sorcerers have the right and the means to conjure powerful servants and allies, binding them to service or to a task. When bound to service, the character becomes an Ally to the sorcerer, obeying their commands to spirit and letter in good faith for up to a month. When bound to a task, the sorcerer names a specific job to be completed, and the character must attempt it to the best of their ability until the task is complete — which can be an exceedingly long time indeed, since hundreds of demons stationed by the Solars still stand guard over the treasures of the First Age, long since forgotten. Necromancers cannot bind elementals or demons, but instead bind ghosts and the ancient unliving things in the Underworld.

Summoning is a venture (see p. XX) requiring many hours of work around a binding circle sealed by various arcane reagents. Elementals can be summoned at any time, but summoning

rituals for ghosts and first circle demons can only be done at night, second circle demons can be summoned only under a new moon, and third circle demons can be summoned only once per year during the five days of Calibration; this prohibition can only be circumvented through extreme acts of will (see common obstacles). As the final obstacle at ritual's end, the sorcerer must make a (**Force + Sagacity**) roll against Difficulty 3 for first circle summonings, Difficulty 5 for second circles, and Difficulty 7 for third circles to break the summoned entity's will and bind them. Binding a target to service or a task contrary to its nature can increase this Difficulty.

A successful sorcerous summoning creates an elemental out of ambient Essence and unmakes it when the service or task is complete or summons a random first circle demon of the specified type into Creation at the sorcerer's circle. A successful necromantic summoning brings a specific person's ghost within the necromancer's circle. At higher levels, the sorcerer must individually summon specific second and third circle demons, while nephwracks and the terrible undead behemoths known as hekatonkheires need only be loosely described by the necromancer to be called forth.

Prerequisites: Sagacity 4, Sorcerous or Necromantic Initiation (one purchase for First Circle demons or elementals, and ghosts; two purchases for Second Circle demons, and nephwracks; three purchases for Third Circle demons and hekatonkheires).

Time scale: One hour

Base obstacles: 4 (including final obstacle)

Common obstacles: Creating Summoning Circle (Difficulty 4); Using Appropriate Ritual Items (Difficulty 3); Detailing the Nature of Service (Difficulty 5); Applying Specific Task Instructions (Difficulty 5); Correctly naming specific ghost (Difficulty 3); Correctly naming Second Circle Demon or ancient ghost (Difficulty 5); Correctly

naming Third Circle Demon or Hekatonkhire (Difficulty 7); Incorrect Celestial Alignment (Difficulty 7)

Common advantages: increase Ally's dice pools upon success (1 success, maximum +3); increase service time (3 successes per month's time, maximum +2 increases); allow for free materialization (3 successes); summoned entity has additional powers (5 successes, maximum +2 powers)

Common consequences: summoned entity is unbound and hostile; binding and personality template are flawed, allowing for bad faith actions; ghost or demon cannot materialize in Creation

UNIVERSAL SPELLS

While some Spells are unique to either sorcery or necromancy, most are shared between the two, albeit with varying aesthetics — when cast through necromancy, a cirrus skiff might take the form of an Underworldly ash-cloud, while a river transformed into fire burns bright white and orange for sorcery and a sickly blue-green for necromancy.

Like Universal Charms, Universal Spells often include Modes which modify their function based on whether they're cast using Sorcerous or Necromantic Initiation. Characters who can use both sorcery and necromancy of the required circle may freely choose which Mode to use.

First Circle Spells

First Circle spells far outstrip the minor magics of even the most talented mortals. They are potent supernatural effects.

Cirrus Skiff

The sorcerer calls down a cloud to serve as their personal ferry.

Spend 4 Will. The cirrus skiff can carry up to 1,000 pounds of cargo and passengers, and travels as fast as a horse. It can fly up to a mile

off the ground, and disappears if the caster travels underground, falls asleep, or is rendered unconscious. When used as part of a travel venture (p. XX), it reduces the number of obstacles by one.

Conjuring the Azure Chariot (Sorcery): This spell summons a bright blue sphere eight feet in diameter around the sorcerer and her possessions. In addition to reducing the number of obstacles, the chariot remains unaffected by any obstacles related to inclement weather. The sphere only persists from dawn until dusk, and may not be cast at night.

Death of Obsidian Butterflies

Sculpting Essence into volant black glass, you unleash a torrent of razor-sharp obsidian butterflies.

Spend 5 Will. Make an attack as a medium ranged weapon that affects every ranged band up to long range, so long as it is within the character's field of perception. This attack reduces Heavy cover to Light and destroys Light cover. The player may optionally treat the character's remaining Will as though it were Power for the purposes of making a decisive attack. The butterflies remain after the spell is cast, creating difficult terrain.

Flight of the Brilliant Raptor (Sorcery): The sorcerer conjures an eagle-sized bird of diamond and ruby flame that possesses the Flame tag. The bird explodes when it reaches a target within long range, making an attack against everything in the target's close range and creating an environmental hazard equivalent to a burning building that persists for three rounds.

Flesh-Sloughing Wave (Necromancy): The necromancer unleashes a wave of ivory light teeming with fanged ghostly creatures, ripping flesh from bone while leaving inorganic structures intact. This wave emanates from the necromancer in every direction up to medium

range, adding the Piercing tag to the attack and ignoring all cover, Light or Heavy.

Flying Guillotine

You make the Sign of the Hooded Headsman, conjuring a barbed silver-bladed chain that flashes towards a target until it wraps around their neck.

Spend 4 Will. A Flying Guillotine manifests as an artifact ranged weapon (long range, +2 Accuracy, +2 Damage, 3 Overwhelming) for a single attack. If this attack reduces the target to Incapacitated, they may not accept a dramatic injury to avoid decapitation. The player may optionally treat the character's remaining Will as though it were Power for the purposes of making a decisive attack.

Hound of the Five Winds

You conjure an enormous wolf from raw air Essence — a fine mount, companion, guardian, and bloodhound.

Spend 3 Will. The Hound of the Five Winds is treated as a predator beast (p. XX), adding tracking to its primary pool. The hound is large enough to use as a mount, immune to fear, and never tires. It also gains a one-success bonus on scent-based tracking rolls. It serves loyally and eagerly for one day before disappearing.

Bone Lion (Necromancy): The necromancer conjures a skeletal lion with diamond-fire eyes. It will not bear her as a mount, but it will serve for up to seven days before decaying, hunting its quarry without rest.

Lightning Spider

Long, barbed limbs of electricity sprout from the sorcerer's back.

Spend 2 Will. The caster can scuttle across walls and ceilings at her usual movement speed and cannot be knocked prone. Where terrain allows, the Exalt can climb around environmental hazards, thereby avoiding damage. This lasts until the caster sleeps or falls unconscious.

Theft of Memory

Placing a crystal on the target's skin, you coax out the memory of a single event or character — trapping it within the shimmering facets.

Spend 3 Will. Make a Finesse + Sagacity or Stealth roll to steal the character's memories of an event or a character in up to the previous year. The standard difficulty is 5, but stealing especially important events or characters increases the difficulty by one, or two if the target has Essence 5 or higher. The target cannot recover the memory until the crystal is destroyed.

Shade Prison Amulet (Necromancy): When used on a ghost, the necromancer may extract up to her Essence times 10 years of memory and explore them while touching the crystal, using Resistance + Sagacity to sift through and find specific details.

The Violent Opening of Closed Portals

You stomp the ground, forcing your Essence into a structure to throw it open to you.

Spend 3 Will. Any portal within a single structure the sorcerer touches or stands inside that is blocked by materials less durable than fine steel is violently destroyed. Windows shatter, wooden doors are smashed to splinters, and even iron bars are blasted from the rock. If there are no barriers to breach, the spell creates one, making a roughly sorcerer-sized hole.

Applying an Area of Effect

When casting a spell that applies to an area of effect (such as all targets within close range), the character rolls once and applies the successes against the Defense of all targets. Then they must spend Power equal to the highest threat. If this varies and the sorcerer cannot afford to pay the Power cost of the highest threat, they are exempt, and the spell targets the next highest. Add the lowest success margin, plus Power spent, plus any damage bonus from the spell and roll once. Apply the total number of

successes against each individual character's soak.

Example: The Lunar Weyna Who-Sees-Much casts Death of Obsidian Butterflies and rolls 12 successes, against four Dragon-Blooded, each with Defense 5 and Defense 4. The leader's hardness is 6, and Weyna has 8 Power. She spends 6 Power, plus the lowest 7 success margin and rolls 5 successes. Flying Guillotine makes that 7 successes. Two of the Dragon-Blooded have Soak 5 and take two damage. The other two have Soak 3 and take four damage.

Second Circle Spells

Spells of the Second Circle perform unbelievable feats from making communication impossible to traveling across Creation in mere instants.

Cantata of Empty Voices

You make the Sign of the Tomb-Harp, creating crystalline entities that sing a deadly song and resonate on a frequency inimical to life.

Spend 7 Will. Every living being within long range of you begins weeping and suffers a -2 penalty to dice rolls and suffers unique environmental damage (1A/round, duration 10 rounds, Difficulty 5) as the piercing song causes deep hemorrhages and internal bleeding.

Silenced Whispered Prayers (Necromancy): Instead of causing damage, the dark harmonies of the Underworld sing once and fall silent, removing any benefits conferred by the Hearthstone Merit for a night and a day. Any prayers made by those within range are stifled as they are uttered, for the same duration.

Hideous Confusion of Tongues

You make the Sign of the Shattered Tower, conveying a contagious linguistic curse to all within range.

Spend 5 Will. A burst of turquoise energy alights on the tongues of everyone within long range as a unique environmental hazard (no damage, duration special, Difficulty 5 to resist with

Integrity). Anyone so affected speaks, writes, or communicates only gibberish from that moment onward, though they do not realize this at first. Moreover, people who hear, read, or witness the glossolalia of those cursed become cursed themselves. The effect lasts for a day since the infliction of the curse (and written items lose their power in this time), though sufferers who originally may find themselves cursed again in turn unless they isolate themselves.

Ivory Orchid Pavilion

A white flower emerges from the ground and shapes itself into a grand palace complex.

Spend 7 Will. The conjured palace provides food and comfortable lodging for up to one hundred guests. Those within its walls gain a two-success bonus against hostile mind-altering effects and ignore all penalties from pain, wounds, or illness. After five days, the palace disappears in a puff of white petals.

Ivory Razor Mausoleum (Necromancy): The palace is a construct of elegant bone. It provides sustenance fit only for creatures of death. Rather than protect against mind-altering effects, the grounds count as a shadowland, allowing guests to enter or leave to Creation or the Underworld at their pleasure.

Shadows of the Forgotten Past

Spectral images play out a farce of what has occurred here before.

Spend 6 Will. The sorcerer can replay any event that has happened at their location within a decade. If they know the event or the period to be replayed, this is automatic; otherwise, this requires an Act Under Pressure venture (p. xx) using Sagacity, with each obstacle representing an hour of sifting and searching.

Golden Shadow Frieze (Necromancy): The necromancer may retrieve an event up to a century old, but can only those that happened

at night, in complete darkness, or within shadowlands or the Underworld.

Wheel of the Turning Heavens

When the sky is dark, you create a brilliant display of Essence in the heavens, distracting all who view it.

Spend 9 Will. When the sorcerer casts this spell towards a darkened sky, it creates a dazzling illusion out of Creation's constellations (or, for necromancy, overlays them with the alien stars of the Underworld). This display lasts for two hours. Any sentient creatures who can perceive the display forget and forgo their current actions, staring in mute awe at the sky. Exalts and other Essence wielders may break free with a Force + Integrity roll, Difficulty 6.

Third Circle Spells

Spells of the Third Circle reshape the face of Creation itself or create atrocities that level cities.

Atrocious Fire Transformation

Even the ocean may burn.

Spend 10 Will. A body of water (or portion thereof) up to 10 miles wide bursts into flame, burning for five terrible hours. The blaze travels downstream on moving water, and the area up to a thousand feet below the surface becomes a deadly boil. The sorcerer is immune to the flames, as is their vessel.

Mirage of Protective Shelter

Pulling a shroud of phantasmagoria across their sanctuary, you protect it from outsiders.

Spend 7 Will. An area up to five miles wide becomes wrapped in powerful illusions. Intruders must make a Difficulty 5 Fortitude + Integrity roll to enter the area or else become hopelessly lost. Even on success, they treat it as difficult terrain and travel at half speed. This adds an obstacle to any travel ventures (p. XX), or applies a significant narrative delay to any Storyteller characters traveling through a

protected area. This protection lasts for up to a year.

Mirage of Anguished Shadows (Necromancy): Rather than difficult terrain, the area endangers intruders with dark phenomena as an environmental hazard (Difficulty 5, 1L/ten minutes).

Rain of Doom

You summon a supernatural storm of vast proportions to blight the land.

This spell requires a magical working to prime the area, which involves tracing a circuit (magically-aided or mundane) around an affected area over the course of a full day. If the sorcerer manages to complete their circuit by dusk of the following day, spend 9 Will. A rain of corrosive venom falls from the jet-black clouds in the sky, while sickly green lightning lashes the ground. The venom falls in sheets from dusk until dawn, creating an environmental hazard within the area equivalent to a severe thunderstorm (p. XX) and inflicting contact poison damage (p. XX) to anyone caught outside. Any material not made of a Magical Material is corroded and permanently destroyed by exposure to the rain; nothing but stunted scrub and strange, poisonous giant mushrooms will grow on the land washed by the rain.

Blood Monsoon (Necromancy): The rain is sanguine, and the lightning is similarly crimson; while the environmental hazard is the same, the sun is blotted out, ghosts become material in the rainfall, and exposed animals become permanently maddened. The land is diseased after the rain stops, while the pools of blood mystically animate and attract undead for miles around.

SORCERY SPELLS

Spells exclusive to sorcery deal in purification, fertility, and life, drawing on Creation's primal elements and raw vitality. As a general rule,

sorcery is also better suited to safely transforming and enhancing the sorcerer and her allies — Creation's living Essence is more mutable and forgiving than the Underworld's.

First Circle Spells

Sorcerous First Circle spells create powerful effects from Creation's natural elements.

Flames of Unyielding Purity

You spread a web of colorless fire that burns only the impure.

Spend 3 Will. Toxins, diseases, and other physical corruptions are burned out at up to medium range, purifying spoiled food or water and sterilizing any wounds. Illnesses are not cured but cannot be spread for the next day. Inherently impure creatures, such as undead or plague-gods, suffer a one-time environmental hazard (Difficulty 3, Damage 1L).

Silent Words of Dreams and Nightmares

Staring into a mirror and brandishing an object linked to another person, you gain power over their dreams.

This spell requires a venture to acquire a scrap of clothing, piece of hair, drop of blood, or similar symbolic link to someone else. After success in the venture, spend 3 Will. The next time the target sleeps, they experience an especially vivid dream created by the sorcerer, making a remote social influence action to incept an idea or belief into their target. The target may not add Intimacies to their Resolve to resist this influence, though they may still add Virtues. The symbolic link burns to ash at the end of the spell, necessitating the acquisition of another one before it may be cast again.

Spoke the Wooden Face

You transform a living tree into a conduit for long-distance communication.

Spend 4 Will. The sorcerer must carve a likeness of her own face into a living tree (this requires no roll). For as long as the tree lives, the sorcerer

may spend a mote to see and hear from the carved image, and speak with her voice through the tree. A sorcerer can create as many wooden faces as she pleases, and a tree can host more than one wooden face; an ancient grove on the Blessed Isle contains many such trees and faces that are now forever silent.

Unbreakable Bones of Stone

You sing the Irresistible Song of Stone, but you do so off-key, prompting local earth elementals to correct the song deep in your bones.

Spend 4 Will. The sorcerer's eyes become granite, her skin becomes ashen and cold, and her weight dramatically increases as her bones turn to stone. Reduce all dice penalties associated with wounds by one (to a minimum of zero); the sorcerer adds two to her soak and her dice pools for feats of strength, and she does not take damage from falling regardless of height.

Wood Dragon's Claw

One of your arms transforms into a twisted bough of vine, muscle, and thorns.

Spend 3 Will. The sorcerer treats her transformed arm as a medium melee weapon with the Natural, Pulling, and Reaching Tags. She can spend 1 mote to extend the limb out to medium range for an action to make an attack or gambit. Lasts until released.

Second Circle Spells

Second Circle Sorcery weaves esoteric magic to facilitate communication over impossible distances, cause feats of incredible destruction, or summon unheard of power.

Magma Kraken

Combining the Prayer to the Kraken with the Sign of the Burning Earth, you cause red strands of volcanic Essence to erupt from the ground, striking at your foes.

Spend 7 Will. You cause the ground within close range to erupt with magma tentacles, writhing

and smashing any who oppose you, with the broken earth making everything up to long range into difficult terrain. This creates an environmental hazard equivalent to lava (p. XX); on the sorcerer's turn, the tentacles may initiate a grapple with a dice pool of 12 against any foe within long range of the original casting point, inflicting environmental damage as long as the tentacle controls the grapple.

Travel Without Distance

Gathering a blazing corona of Essence around yourself, you teleport with a flash of light.

Spend 7 Will. The sorcerer may choose to bodily appear in any location they have seen before within a radius of twenty leagues, whether through their own eyes or through scrying. Besides the necessary time to Focus Will, this teleportation occurs across two turns — one to leave and one to arrive. This spell cannot override certain wardings, which must be renewed every few days. Once per session, the sorcerer may teleport their Circle along with them, so long they're within short range of the sorcerer.

Unity of Dreams

Binding your dreams with another's using the Sign of Mercury, you may communicate while sleeping.

Spend 5 Will. The sorcerer must cast this with one or more participants up to five, who must all be present when the spell is cast. Afterwards, the participants may commune in a shared dream space, communicating while they are asleep regardless of distance. If the participants have Intimacies towards one another, the shared sense of community adds two to their Resolve against influence actions to weaken the intimacy. This effect lasts for five months. At any time when all participants are asleep, one of the dreamers may ask for the others to join him; if all agree, they jolt awake moments later in the

same location as the requestor, though this ends the spell prematurely.

Third Circle Spells

Spells of the Third Circle of Sorcery call upon the powers of things greater than Creation: the most powerful demons of Malfeas, or the strength of the Incarnae themselves.

Chariot of the Blazing Sun

Sending a helix of Solar and worldly Essence to Heaven, you conjure a chariot pulled by one of the Unconquered Sun's own stallions.

Spend 7 Will. The chariot can carry up to one ton of cargo and passengers, and can travel to any point in Creation at rapid speeds, even from other realms such as Malfeas. At the end of the journey, the horse and chariot disappear in a blaze of sunfire visible for miles around. When used as part of a travel venture (p. XX), the total number of obstacles cannot exceed three, and the total amount of downtime spent on the venture is never longer than five hours.

Total Annihilation

Uttering the secret name of Ligier, the fetich soul of Malfeas, you unleash an orb of pure destruction.

Spend 10 Will. The sorcerer may target any location up to extreme range and hurl a fiery crystal sphere of emerald Essence to the location. Anything within long range of *that* location, sorcerer excepted, explodes in a towering verdant blast of energy that destroys anything in its path.

Anyone within that area suffers from a unique environmental hazard (5A/round, duration 10 rounds, Difficulty 12 to resist with Integrity or Physique), while anything within extreme range of the blast suffers a shockwave (1A/round, 2 rounds, Difficulty 9 to resist with Integrity or Physique). Trivial and non-significant characters simply perish. This spell typically results in a smoking crater and shattered countryside.

NECROMANCY SPELLS

Spells exclusive to necromancy deal in the dark secrets of the Underworld and the all-consuming Void. In general, necromancy has an advantage in conjuring and animating minions without the need for rituals and bargains — with only a thought, dust and bones may become a legion of willing soldiers. Transformations and blessings often come with dire prices or undesirable consequences.

First Circle Spells

First Circle necromancy spells create effects from the Underworld's elements, and enable access to that dark realm.

Door of the Dead

Your hands trace a bleeding portal in the air, opening to the lands of the dead.

Spend 4 Will. The necromancer opens a doorway to the Underworld that remains open for five minutes. It leads to a roughly equivalent area in the Underworld chosen by the Storyteller based on the necromancer's current location — though the two worlds are not contiguous outside shadowlands. The location is always safe and secure, at least for the character's arrival — the spell never leads the necromancer into an ambush, or into immediate danger.

Five Gifts

Anointing a willing ghost with five drops of blood, you let them experience the world without senses dulled by death, as if they were still alive.

Spend 5 Will. Any ghost so anointed gains two dice to all dice pools and may manifest within a shadowland for free; this lasts until the next sunrise. They also get an Intimacy (Devotion) towards the necromancer, and remember forevermore the taste of life from the blood, giving the necromancer a one-success bonus on persuade actions.

Raise the Skeletal Horde

With a gesture of upraised arms, you command the dead to rise and obey.

Spend 4 Will. Every corpse, human, animal, or otherwise within medium range without Enormous or Legendary Size animates as mindless dead (p. XX). They count as a battle group with an equivalent number of Command dots equal to the summoner's Essence plus one, though the group may be far smaller in areas that have few corpses, at the Storyteller's discretion. The battle group has Poor Drill, but is Mindless. The walking dead burst forth from topsoil graves or simply lurch to their feet in an action. They crumble to dust at the end of the scene if the spell is cast in daylight, or until dawn if cast at night.

A second purchase of this spell with Second Circle necromancy grants an enhanced spell called **Arisen Dead Legion**, which costs 7 Will, improves Drill to Regular, adds Command equal to Essence plus two, and summons undead from a vast distance, making the availability of corpses a non-issue.

Stones Worn Smooth

Shaping one arm into a spectral claw, you gesture towards a nearby ghost, who is compelled to throw themselves upon your talons. Grasping their pale pink heart, you crush it into a black diamond.

Spend 3 Will. This spell targets a nontrivial ghost the necromancer has bound through a summoning, and they cannot resist. This spell instantly dissipates the ghost (who may reform normally and is still bound to you) and grants the Hearthstone Merit (●●● normally, ●●●●● for heroic or significant ghosts) of Abyssal aspect. This stone confers a base power determined by the nature of the wounded ghost but does not confer Evocations.

Trawling the Dark Waters

Drawing violet threads of Essence from the Underworld, you weave a net across a large area, revealing any ghosts.

Spend 3 Will. This spell affects any unmaterialized ghosts or Underworld denizens within long range. They immediately become visible to the caster; the necromancer may then spend a mote to force all affected to materialize, even if they cannot normally do so.

Second Circle Spells

Second Circle necromancy spells corrupt the elements of the world and twist them toward darkened aspects, or allows fine control over souls and the workings of reincarnation.

Gentle Call of Lethe

You mark a living person's forehead with a stylized cicada and utter the Five Words of Release, binding their soul to the cycle of reincarnation.

Spend 2 Will. You may mark a living person's body and higher soul; when they die, the cicada rune shines again, and they do not become a ghost but are instead reincarnated.

By inverting the rune and painting the symbol with honey, blood, and graveyard earth, this spell becomes the **Rune of Sweet Passing**, ensuring the target will become a ghost when they perish. The necromancer is automatically aware when the target dies, in either case.

Shield of Shattering Bones

Crimson Essence flows to your outstretched hand, then expands outward to touch nearby undead, dispersing any wounds you suffer to their dead frames.

Spend 6 Will. This spell targets a battle group of unintelligent undead up to Size 3 within medium range of the necromancer. Any damage the necromancer would suffer is born instead by the battle group, instantly transferred to them by bands of shining

crimson. A hit from a warhammer would cause a skeleton to shatter, while a sword's slice to the guts instead spills those of a nearby animated corpse. This spell lasts until the battlegroup is destroyed or until the next sunrise, whichever comes first.

Slumber of the Wandering Shade

You sleep while a fragment of your soul is free to walk the world.

Spend 4 Will. The necromancer controls a spectral facsimile of herself while their true body slumbers. This facsimile has only a single mote and suffers the usual drawbacks for being a ghost (p. XX) but is otherwise identical to the character. The player may end this effect automatically, sensing any danger to the necromancer's true body.

Third Circle Spells

Third Circle necromancy calls upon the bleak oblivion of the Void itself.

Barless Gate

You step into a mirror, then explode out of another mirror in a cloud of dark Essence.

Spend 7 Will. This requires the necromancer to know the location of a destination mirror exactly; they need only see it and know that it is there. The necromancer may step through a mirror and arrive at their target location, so long as it is on the same plane of existence (shadowlands count as both Creation and the Underworld).

Inauspicious Citadel

Cutting the Last Sign of the Labyrinth into your own heart, you hurl yourself into a desecrated pit and rise up atop a fortress of black iron erupting from the Underworld.

After success on a magical working to prepare a ritual pit, requiring the blood sacrifice of hundreds, spend 10 Will. This citadel of black iron, basalt, and obsidian is adorned with the mazy marks of the Labyrinth and features every

manner of comfort suitable for housing an army or small city. It functions as a shadowland. The lowest chamber holds a shrine to the Neverborn, rendering the citadel an ideal location for necromantic workings. Besides instantly creating a stronghold on short notice, the citadel contains its own perverted geomancy; it functions as a primary merit Hearthstone with accompanying manse properties. The unique power and Evocation conferred are designed by the player and Storyteller and should fit the character.

A character may only have one Inauspicious Citadel active at any time. Casting the spell in a new location consigns the old, and all within, to the Void.

SORCEROUS WORKINGS

While a spell is a discrete magical effect, sorcerous workings are great feats and projects of sustained supernatural power. As described on p. XX, sorcerous workings are a specific type of magical working venture. Magical workings typically only last for the duration of the venture — a weather-witch's ritual may create an unusually strong and sudden storm on a clear day, for example, but a storm that dissipates normally. Sorcerous workings allow characters to reshape the world permanently and perpetually through their occult skill, enacting blessings, curses, or transformations. Through sorcerous workings, sorcerers may perform all manner of miracle, from renewing the fertility of a barren harvest field, to creating life in a vat of alchemical reagents, to raising a city up from its foundations to rest in the sky.

Sorcerous workings consist of three components: **Ambition**, **Means**, and **Refinement**. Despite the name, necromancy can create appropriately bleak sorcerous workings, and they can achieve roughly similar effects. As a rule of thumb, sorcery is better at healing, nurturing life, or summoning spirits and demons, while necromancy is better at curses

and hexes, manipulating the Underworld or shadowlands, and summoning, creating, and controlling the undead or souls.

Attempting to use sorcery to approximate necromantic effects, or vice-versa, is subject to Storyteller agreement and may result in increased Ambition, Means, or Refinement needed to complete the working.

The Limits of Sorcery

Some things are beyond even sorcery's power. The Unconquered Sun and Luna do not permit themselves to be moved by sorcery, for example, but there are other, more fundamental limits. The purpose of these restrictions is to create a sense of consequence, change, and finality in the world of **Exalted** regardless of personal power; there is no going back and no staying the same.

Immortality Has A Catch: *No one lives forever.* Sorcery or necromancy can make a character immortal or unkillable, but never in an unconditional, guaranteed fashion. There may be periodic rituals or sacrifices necessary to renew the immortality, or a magically removed heart may instantly kill its owner if harmed, or the sorcerer may be vulnerable to death outside of a specific regional area. The more potent the invulnerability, the more dire the means necessary to maintain it.

No Resurrection: *Dead is dead.* A necromancer can bind someone's ghost into their corpse and restore them to a semblance of vitality, or prime a reincarnating soul to perfectly remember their past life; sorcery may transform a dead or dying person into a new form of existence, or imprint memories upon a simulacra or vat-grown clone, but all of these will permanently alter a person in body and soul. The dead cannot truly come back as they were.

No Time Travel: *What happened, happened.* Sorcery can be used to slow localized time to a crawl or create an area of looped time, while

necromancy can shape scattered memories and psychic phenomena to give the dead a voice in the present, but neither can be used to travel into the past or rewrite past events. Sorcery can't be used to see infallibly into the future, though limited rituals of astrology and other auguries exist.

Ambition

After the character has chosen their intention, the Storyteller determines the Circle needed to match the sorcerer's ambition. Without the proper level of initiation, the sorcerer cannot attempt the ambition.

First Circle workings are generally rooted in transforming, enhancing, or weakening pre-existing elements of the natural world, rather than directly invoking supernatural forces. First Circle workings augment the natural properties of a small region or protects it against a mundane threat or nuisance but does not completely overwrite the nature of that area through magic.

Ambition Examples: create or bind magical entities capable of performing mundane chores; create a new, but mundane, form of life; enchant roads to guide lost travelers; work minor magical mutations or physiological alterations, such as changing sexual characteristics or growing wings; instill human-level intelligence in a plant, animal or object; ward a chamber against scrying or mundane intrusion and pests; cause a field to always deliver bountiful harvests or a spring to always produce fresh water; curse a farm, orchard, or family with infertility; create a rift between two realms of existence that allows communication but not transportation; engender the creation of a shadowland in a place of mass death; create a sacred place where the dead may commune with the living outside a shadowland or during the day; or enchant the edge of a shadowland so that it always exits into Creation or the Underworld.

Second Circle workings are outright miracles of supernatural power that rewrite physical laws of nature in a localized area or instill arcane might into mundane objects or beings.

Ambition Examples: Create a telepathic bond between two characters; enchant a town or small city with persistent illusions; ward a chamber against teleportation or other magical intrusion; maintain sorcerous infrastructure; alter weather on a permanent scale, such as extending the length of harvest season by a month every year or making winters exceptionally brutal; transfer memories from a ghost to a living mortal, or vice-versa; instill human-level intelligence in a structure and granting it the capacity to rearrange itself at will; create a new form of supernatural life; curse a family line or a city-state's farms with infertility; open or close a permanent portal between two realms of existence, such as a small shadowland or a faerie ring that leads to the Wyld; access the memories of a soul's past life; hide a living person's fate in the stars of the dead; recreate the memory of a destroyed artifact that can never leave the Underworld; imbue a loyal subject with supernatural might or the ability to channel Essence; cleanse, or imbue, the taint of the Void within a ghost; or enchant a battleground to always form walking dead and hungry ghosts regardless of funerary rites.

Third Circle workings rewrite the laws of reality or create new ones. Their power and scope range from affecting entire cities to adjusting the fundamental laws of the cosmos. It can alter souls, permanently change the boundaries of worlds, or bend time and space.

Ambition Examples: Completely transform a region of land into a different climate, such as transforming deserts into rainforests or mountains into smooth and arable land; create new sorcerous infrastructure; make a city defy laws of reality, such as moving it into the sky or altering its borders so that it is bigger on the

inside; enchant a city-state-sized region to forever change the nature of death within it, such as designating particulars of how souls reincarnate, transforming the dead into elementals, or shunting souls to a custom afterlife; transform the nature of a supernatural being, such as remaking a demon into a god; lay a potent curse on a city, region, or group of people that can only be broken under conditions you specify; or create a potent supernatural being from powerful forces, such as elemental displays or the writhing nightmare narratives of the Underworld.

Means

The Means of a sorcerous working are arcane resources brought to bear on the venture beyond the sorcerer's own power. A sorcerous working *always* requires at least one Means. Each additional Means beyond the first mitigates one consequence of a failed obstacle roll in the venture. The following are sample Means:

Complementary Spells: The sorcerer knows a spell whose purpose is related to the working she is trying to perform.

Cooperation: The assistance of another sorcerer of the same Circle the Ambition requires, or an initiated group of sorcerers using one lesser Circle.

Extra Time: Additional effort and time spent on the working — deliberately increasing the time scale by one increment.

Exotic Components: Rare reagents, rare artifacts, or esoteric materials that anchor the magical effect the sorcerer is attempting. The head of a rare behemoth, an orichalcum lamp burning bright since the First Age, snow from the peak of the Imperial Mountain, or massive salt-diamonds dredged from the bottom of the ocean are all good examples.

Sorcerous Infrastructure: Sorcerous laboratories and cathedrals are the result of

multiple sorcerous workings and innumerable magical ones. In the First Age, they were rare and enabled the creation of unimaginable wonders; in the Second Age, they are all but lost to the world.

Refinement

A powerful enough sorcerer can simply will a city into the air with enough raw focus; getting the city to a specific height, undamaged, unmoved by wind, with a habitable climate and installed safety precautions is a great deal harder. The player and character must account for the individual ventures that encompass a sorcerous working; the more of these completed, the finer and more precise the ultimate result of the working. Refinement ventures contribute towards the overall effect, chosen individually by the Storyteller. A single completing venture will always accomplish the ambition, provided the character has the requisite initiation, but the details and ultimate efficacy of the working are up to the Storyteller. Degrees of detail or specificity to the working requires a total of three ventures to complete, but this still leaves some degree of detail to Storyteller control. Five total ventures will yield whatever precise effect the player wishes.

The Storyteller should spread these ventures out over the course of an adventure or allow the player to accomplish them during downtime. Refinement ventures are short, and often magical workings, but not always; planting a hundred thousand acorns in a barren wasteland will certainly aid in making a forest grow on the spot, and allow an enterprising character to craft groves, meadows, and perhaps even shape the resulting Essence into forming a demense.

Storytelling Sorcerous Workings

Sorcerous workings are meant to be grand feats of magic, but they do take a lot of effort for even a simple working. In theory nothing stops a sorcerer from preparing a five-venture working every time to maximize Refinement, but

practically, this takes up a great deal of time — even abstracted time — and magical resources tied up into individual ventures that can be used for still other ventures or more mundane, practical things. A character seeking to transform a dying comrade into a new form of existence barely has time for one venture, much less four more. Feel free to impose a time and Refinement limit based on the working's necessity.

Still, Storytellers, err on the sides of permission and leniency. Even the single Refinement venture needed to complete the working should roughly accomplish the player's goal without serious, obvious flaws — there's time enough for long-term issues in the working to become apparent later during a more dramatically convenient moment.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ANTAGONISTS

This section details Storyteller characters from familiars to enemies to allies.

WHAT'S AN ANTAGONIST?

Antagonists are characters controlled by the Storyteller. These characters oppose the players' characters, but not always. This section contains rules for any Storyteller character, including allies or summons.

USING THIS SECTION

With this section, the Storyteller can create unique characters on the fly. For guidance on running the game itself, see Chapter 5 (p. XX).

ANTAGONISTS AND PLAYERS' CHARACTER'S ABILITIES

Some Charms or other effects call out specific Abilities to be rolled. Storytellers will note that Antagonists have no such thing. In this case, use the most appropriate pool for the character. When in doubt, go with the character's secondary pool, or tertiary if the roll seems out of character.

Other rules, such as aiding with Incapacitated (p. XX) are designed to keep the heroic protagonists (the players' characters) in a fight longer. Once an enemy has reached Incapacitated, they're out of the scene. If Storytellers wish to use this rule to make recurring villains, they may create it as a **Quality**.

Antagonists that work together with teamwork (p. XX) only add one die for each participating character. The Storyteller is not required to roll for each. Storyteller characters cannot benefit from more than three character's teamwork actions at once.

Antagonists creating their own ventures or doing other "off screen" activity automatically pass or fail any rolls by applying half their pool, round up, against the difficulty. An antagonist with a pool of 10 automatically succeeds at any roll difficulty 5 or lower, for example.

When wounded, if the antagonist has taken half their health (round down) in damage or more, they suffer a **-2** dice penalty to all actions. Antagonists are assumed to heal entirely off-screen between appearances.

Otherwise, antagonists have access to all the same rules as players' characters, from combat modifiers (p. XX) to gambits (p. XX) and so on.

BUILDING YOUR OWN ANTAGONIST

While this section has templates for immediate use, Storytellers may wish to design their own unique characters. Use the following steps.

- **Choose what sort of character it is.** A mortal? A god? An Exalt? Assign Advantages and determine Essence and motes.
- **Choose its areas of focus.** It is a martial character, or social? Decide what sort of actions it takes, like "Rulership" or "Bite Attacks."
- **Assign dice pools.** Use a baseline of 6 dice, 5 dice, and 4 dice. Then, if they are a stronger opponent, increase these values by up to 8 additional dice. If they are weaker, decrease them by 1 or 2. Assign the areas of focus to each dice pool. Two or three for each will do.
- **Determine defensive values.** Choose its Hardness rating by using these examples and the directions on p. XX under Storytelling. Use these templates to create a comparable amount of defense, soak, and health. Adjust any of these numbers by up to 3, depending on how defensive you want it to be.
- **Assign Qualities.** Choose appropriate qualities from the list beginning on p. XX. Most antagonists have two or three, but can have up to six. If the character is an Exalt, they may take Charms instead. Storytellers can distill Charms down to basic functions, such as "Adds 2 to Defense or Soak on Step 2" rather than having to manage the full version.

The templates provided in this chapter detail the character's unique qualities. The Storyteller should assign any other qualities they feel are

appropriate. Animal templates begin on p. XX. Mortal and Exalt templates begin on p. XX. Gods and monster templates begin on p. XX.

MODIFYING THE TEMPLATES

The templates provided in this chapter suggest a base line of competency for that character type. They are not hard and fast prescriptions, and they're not a commentary on the reality of Creation. These templates are suggestions only with numbers tuned towards a Circle with moderate focus in their areas of expertise.

Storytellers should absolutely take liberty with these templates and make them their own. If a table doesn't feel challenged by the character templates as presented, feel free to adjust dice pools and static values by up to +3. Alternatively, if the character template proves to be too punishing, reduce its pools and values by -3.

EXTRAS AND SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERS

Exalted stories, much like action cinema, have dozens of background characters who don't get names or significant story beats. These are also called trivial characters or trivial targets. They are shopkeepers, gate guards, porters, petty criminals, and so on. Overcoming them involves **one roll resolution**. Many anima effects allow characters to do this without needing any kind of roll. Trivial characters who are still potential threats or problems in combat are represented with the Extra Quality (p. XX).

Significant characters occupy an important space in the story whether as allies or enemies. If a character has an impact on the Circle (positive or negative), they are significant. They also have special turn order rules, as seen on p. XX.

ROLEPLAYING SOCIAL THREATS

Creating a threat for your epic heroes to face in battle is often simple: The Storyteller decides what the threat looks like, and then all the cool things it can do. It doesn't necessarily need

attachments or deep motivations. Social threats require the Storyteller to define what makes them tick: their Virtues and Intimacies. Think about what they value and are willing to defend. Note these down as basic ideas which can be fleshed out into full Intimacies during play. Remember, also, capable social threats control resources, have the backing of powerful organizations, or command significant influence over a place or

location. Locking horns with a terrible sovereign in her territory should be as dangerous as plunging into a chthonic monster's lair.

All significant characters have the ability to outright refuse social influence (p. XX). Unless a character *absolutely would never take that course of action*, Storytellers are encouraged to use the **hard bargain** (p. XX) outcome instead. It's far more interesting to put characters in difficult situations than to shut down the encounter entirely.

QUALITIES

Qualities are character traits that reflect the character's person or state of being. Some cost motes. If a character does not have motes, pay the cost in Power instead.

General Qualities

General qualities can apply to any kind of character.

Battle Group: This character belongs to a battle group (see p. XX); every member of the group gains this Quality. Battle groups may take **outnumber qualities** (p. XX).

Durable (x): This character gains soak against environmental effects, the Knock Out gambit, and other non-standard sources of damage by this Quality's rating, to a maximum of 5.

Enormous Size: Withering attacks by individuals against this character suffer a two-success penalty. Knockback, knockdown, Knockout, and Pull Gambits increase their cost by 1.

Extra: This is a trivial character for the purposes of special abilities and charms. Their Hardness is 1, and a single level of damage will remove them from the fight.

Fierce Counter: If a **withering** attack fails to generate 5 or more Power, spend 1 mote to make a decisive counterattack on Step 8.

Frenzied Action: Spend 2 motes to take an additional action. Reduce the cost to 0 if the character has a wound penalty. This ignores action-type restrictions.

Furious Dragon's Ire: This quality applies only to a significant character with the **Heroic** quality or Essence 3 or higher. Whenever the character is outnumbered, they may take additional turns, up to a number of turns equal to the characters in the opposing Circle but may not act twice in a row. When they start an additional turn, reduce the duration of any multiple-round effects on this character by one round.

Heroic: The character is an Exalt, a uniquely exceptional mortal, or something similar. They benefit from being Incapacitated the same way as the players' characters (see p. XX). They can also take Dramatic Injuries (p. XX) the same way the players' characters can, applying them to their pools instead of attributes. They can interrupt the initiative order (p. XX)

Legendary Size: This character is gigantic. Extras cannot hurt this character, and they cannot suffer more than one damage per turn from any attack unless supplemented by magic or from another creature of Legendary size. Mundane weapons lose all tags when used against it. Withering attacks by smaller individuals suffer a three-success penalty against it. Knockback, knockdown, Knockout, and Pull Gambits increase their cost by three. This character always has dominance when in a grapple.

Martial Proficiency: Select a Martial Art (p. xx); they gain access to its Form Weapon benefits.

Mortal masters and prodigies may use the style's first Charm for free once per scene.

Murderous Blow: Gain 2 additional damage when they spend 5 or more Power on a **decisive** attack.

Mindless: Characters with this quality have no reason, fear, or ability to make rational decisions. They are not valid targets for social actions, and battle groups made of them have special rules.

Significant: This character is important to the story; they cannot be killed outright and survive until the Storyteller deems their death important.

Spiritual Combat: Spend 1 mote to attack dematerialized opponents for one round. If the antagonist is unfamiliar with the spirit, suffer a three-die penalty to the attack.

Talismans and Wards: Against a supernatural enemy, increase Defense, Hardness, and Soak by 1. Sacrifice these defenses to shake off possession or other mental effects inflicted by their enemy.

Unstoppable: This quality only applies to a significant character with the Heroic quality. Increase the cost of the Knockout gambit against this character to 10. Once per fight, when this character would be incapacitated they instead regain half their health (round up).

Well of Rage: This character applies all wound penalties as bonuses successes to damage rolls.

Exalted Qualities

Most Exalted qualities mimic Charms. In most instances, the Charm as-written works without needing modification for an antagonist. This section provides a few examples of how to modify ones that don't.

Exalted Opponents

Typically, the most fearsome foes the Exalted will face are other Exalted, whether it's Solars dueling Dragon-Blooded in the Wyld Hunt or

Liminals warring against Abyssals in the Underworld. Exalted always have the Heroic and Excellency Qualities. The Charms featured in Chapter 6 are primarily tuned towards player characters, but feel free to adopt them. To speed things along, assume Exalted opponents have access to the different Qualities in this section, and adapt Charms to fit. Some sample Charms as Qualities are listed on p. XX.

All Exalted opponents automatically gain their Advantages and Anima Effects, as normal.

Defense Against Anathema: Spend 1 mote on Step 2. Increase Defense by 2 against attacks made with non-Jade weapons or by non-Dragon-Blooded magic. Solar, Lunar, Abyssal, and Infernal Exalted never possess this Quality.

Excellency: Spend 1 mote. Add a four-dice bonus to a roll using their Primary Pool, or three dice to their Secondary pools.

Harmonious Academic Methodology: Commit 1 mote. Characters in the same scene as a character with this Quality add four dice to Sagacity rolls involving the antagonist's expertise. Does not count towards the dice limit.

Jade Leaves A Trail: Spend 1 mote. Gain two automatic successes on a Read Intentions roll against a player's character to uncover their participation in an obligation —example: recently bribing an official, being blackmailed, or holding an Intimacy toward an authority figure. The player's character does not need to be present to be targeted by this Charm.

Judge's Ear Technique: When a player's character attempts to conceal truth from this character, spend 1 mote. Make a **hard bargain**: either the character knows the PC is lying, or the PC reduces all future dice pools for fooling the character by one for the rest of the story. This effect may stack up to four times.

Social Qualities

Academic Network: Once per story, provide another character with the expertise they are

looking for — if it is magical in nature where they can *find* the expertise they are looking for. This is not a pro bono service, and may need persuasion. Sometimes this requires a Persuade action, but other times requires payment.

Asset Freeze: This character aids or interferes with someone's social Merits (Backing, Command, Contacts, Followers, Influence, or Resources) by succeeding on a roll with a difficulty of the Merit's rating. Success adds a two-dice bonus or penalty to utilizing these Merits. This effect lasts until the antagonist ends it, the target leaves the character's jurisdiction, or the target takes a dramatic action and makes a corresponding Ability (Embassy, Performance, Presence or Stealth or War) roll exceeding the original successes.

Born to Lead: Summon a Soldier (p.XX) in combat once per scene. If multiple characters share this ability, they may expend it together to summon a size 1, Drill 2 Soldier battle group.

Call for Backup: Once per story, they may request assistance — usually in the form of a Size 1-2 battlegroup of Soldiers (p.XX), sometimes with a Sovereign (p.XX).

Did I Authorize This?: This character may add or remove an obstacle to any venture within their jurisdiction, as soon as they become aware of it.

Experienced Commander: Reduce the difficulty for all rolls to command or Build Power for mortal characters and battle groups by 1.

Frontline Leader: When mortal characters or battle groups generate or give Power to this character, gain 1 additional power.

High-Profile: The consequences for harming or otherwise wronging this character are harder to duck. Up to four times per story, the offender faces an unexpected mundane complication as a result of earning this character's enmity — a one-die penalty to a Merit or specific type of social influence, to represent a mutual friend suddenly going cold, or scandalous rumors

spreading through town. Cancel this effect if the offender offers penance according to the character's Major Virtue. If the Antagonist is a strong supernatural being, these consequences might be supernatural.

Higher Up the Chain: In response to conflict beyond their scope, once per story this character may summon a powerful ally or battle group to assist them — this is usually a Size 1 battlegroup of Champions (p.XX), but sometimes an Exalt.

One More Thing: After a scene spent questioning a target, the character may roll to overcome any source of opposition to appearing in other scenes with them. If she successfully gains access to the

target, the character may commit 1 mote to reduce the difficulty of social influence rolls against them by her Essence for the scene.

Professional Collaboration: Once a scene, a character with the appropriate expertise can complete a venture action (p.XX) or equivalent task on behalf of another. A character with support staff adds a three-success bonus to this action. At Storyteller's discretion, a character with no support may also add this bonus, though this injects a flaw into the final product which does not become obvious until the worst possible moment.

Unshakeable: This character adds 1 to the difficulty of Instilling them with a Principle (p.XX).

Spirit, Demon, and Ghost Qualities

Gods, demons, and ghosts share a common suite of Qualities. A god's **domain** refers to their divine portfolio; demons do not have domains, while ghosts may occasionally treat their bodily or adopted descendants as their domain. Gods use domain charms targeting their domain or individuals interacting with their domain while dematerialized at no penalty or mote cost. However, if a god uses a domain charm on a

target not currently part of their domain they must manifest and pay the normal mote cost.

Divine Excellence: See Excellency p.XX

Divine Strike: Spend 1 Mote or 1 Health Level to make an attack out to Long Range. If the god's domain is applicable to the attack, ignore any penalties to the attack.

Domain's Beneficence: (Eclipse-OK) Spend 1 mote to rally the god's domain to a character's aid for one action, granting them a three-dice bonus to a relevant roll—for example, the Goddess of Intoxicants blessing a single interval of a brewmaster's Craft venture.

Domain's Curse: (Eclipse-OK) Spend 1 mote to rile the domain against a character, inflicting a two- success penalty to a relevant roll—for example, the Goddess of Revenge and Betrayal cursing an assassin's Stealth as he approaches his rival. An Exalt may oppose this with Integrity or Physique versus the god's primary pool.

Durant Aegis: Spend 3 Motes on Step 5. Apply the spirit's Essence as a success penalty to the opponent's or an environmental effect's damage roll.

Hand of Destiny: Once a story, the god may mark a certain part of their domain for personal attention, compelling subordinate spirits to drop everything and work inexorably toward the end result of a project. This Charm reduces the time scale of a venture by a factor of two, to a minimum of completion in one scene. Using this Charm without permission from a superior earns censure from the Bureau of Destiny.

Hurry Home: Spend 2 motes to mystically retreat back to the god's sanctum, a personal spiritual realm with a fixed, normally invisible entrance in the material world.

Immaterial: Spirits, ghosts, and demons are normally dematerialized. Dematerialized creatures cannot mundane influence material creatures, but most mundane attacks can't hurt them, material creatures can't see or hear them,

and they pay one fewer mote to use Charms. To physically interact with Creation, the creature must pay three motes to **materialize**. This makes them visible, vulnerable to physical attacks, and forces them to pay the normal cost to use their Charms. Certain Exalted Charms and other magical effects can also force a spirit to materialize.

Immortal (Ghost): This character does not die when reduced to Incapacitated or more, but reforms near a person, place or object important to the spirit in life by next evening, unless slain with magic capable of killing a spirit. If they are reduced to Incapacitated or more again within a year, the ghost permanently dissipates. *Ghosts always have this Quality.*

Immortal (God): This character does not die when reduced to Incapacitated or more, but instead dissolves into motes and reforms in their sanctum or place of safety over the course of a month unless slain with magic capable of killing a spirit. *Gods always have this Quality.*

Immortal (Demon): Demons of the First Circle die permanently when slain. Characters who are Second or Third Circles reform in Hell; if they are slain with magic capable of killing a spirit, they may be re-created over time in a different form within their Yozi's spiritual hierarchy. *Demons always have this Quality.*

Measure the Wind: Spend 1 mote to know if an individual is a mortal, Exalt, or other supernatural creature, and what kind of Exalt or supernatural creature it is. This penetrates mundane disguises, but not magical deceptions. Sometimes, spirits will recognize an Exalt or other reincarnated being from their previous life, with all the accompanying personal baggage.

Nine Terrors Visage: Spend 1 mote to change shape and form; replicating a specific person in detail requires a primary pool roll.

Principle of Motion: Once per turn, spend 2 Motes or 2 Health Levels to take an additional action. This ignores the action limit.

Ride: Spend 1 mote to inhabit a mortal or a small inanimate object for a scene — which type is chosen when this Quality is taken. For mortals, the spirit shares all of their senses, and may attempt to persuade the character by speaking into their thoughts. The mortal is always aware of a foreign presence unless the spirit has some other magic to cloak themselves. For inanimate objects, the spirit may move or work the object as if they held it in their hands — lifting vases or opening doors and drawers.

Outnumber Qualities

Abilities that rely on weight of numbers and coordination, Outnumber Qualities always benefit battle groups, or two or more individual combatants who possess them in a given Range Band. Any number of different Outnumber benefits may apply, but the same type of Outnumber benefits don't stack.

Individual characters with these abilities count their Drill as the minimum to possess the quality. Unless otherwise noted, these qualities affect targets in Close Range, and don't apply if a battle group is routing.

Brace Line: Enemies Rushing into Close Range with this character suffer from Difficulty 3, Damage 2 environmental hazard.

Deadly Ground: Enemies in Close Range reduce their Defense by 1.

Desperate Assault: When making a decisive attack, this character may spend up to its target's Hardness or its own Size in Health Levels instead of Power.

Formation Attack: Once per turn, a commander may make this character attack with an action, using a War roll or appropriate die pool. This attack benefits from this character's weapon, Drill and Size ratings, and may use either the commander's or this character's Power. A

character used to attack this way may still take their action as usual. A Battle group gains this automatically at Drill 1.

Formation Fighting: Allies gain 1 Soak and the Quality: Durable 1.

Harrier: Allies gain +1 Accuracy and +1 Damage.

Hammer and Anvil: This character gains 3 power when it declares a Rush. Friendly characters making a Rush against an enemy within Close range gain this character's Drill in dice to attack and damage.

Mob Weight: Enemies must treat the range band this character is in as difficult terrain for purposes of movement, while allies may treat it as light cover.

More of Us: If this character doesn't benefit from a commander, they may add 3 dice to their attacks and gain 1 Power at the end of every round.

Opportunistic Threat: This character may take the Exchange Power and be targeted by the Exchange Power action reflexively. A battle group gains this automatically at Drill 2.

Pathfinders: Allies gain an additional 2 Power on successful Build Power rolls.

Spear Carriers: Allies may take the Aim action reflexively once per turn.

Sworn Guard: This character may Defend Other as a reflexive action on Step 2.

Vanguard: When hit by an attack, this character gains their Drill in Power. A battle group gains this automatically at Drill 3.

Supernatural Qualities

These Qualities are typically possessed by behemoths, Fair Folk, God-Blooded, or elementals.

Awe-Inspiring Mien: (Eclipse-OK) Commit 1 mote. The character surrounds themselves in fearsome illusions for the scene — targets who can perceive this character have a one-die

penalty to all combat rolls. Exalts may resist this effect with a difficulty 3 Integrity roll.

Beguile: Spend 1 mote on Step 4 of successful social influence attached to an Intimacy or Virtue, when their target chose to resist. The beguiler feeds on their target's emotion, temporarily reducing the strength of the Intimacy or Virtue: for the scene, Major becomes Minor and Minor is disabled, and the Fair Folk adds a three-dice bonus to their primary pool. Exalts may instead tithe 1 or 2 motes, based on the strength of the targeted Virtue. A character may not Beguile a specific Intimacy or Virtue more than once a scene.

Chilling Touch: Spend 1 mote on Step 3. Reduce the Soak and Hardness of the target by 1 against the attack.

Curse of the Dead: (Eclipse-OK) Commit 1 mote and make a threaten action roll against a target within medium range. Success inflicts a Dramatic Injury representing paranoia and sleeplessness from nightmares. This curse lasts until broken or until the ghost ends commitment. An occultist may break this curse with a difficulty 3 abjuring ritual at dawn using Force + Sagacity.

Elemental: This character is a living embodiment of one of the five elements. Elemental domains are related to physical energies that make up the elementals themselves. Naturally material creatures, elementals enjoy the domain discount when interacting with a target inside or with their natural domain. Fair Folk and God-Blooded may possess this Quality.

God-Monster Body: Commit 2 motes; gain an additional form of movement to avoid difficult terrain, destroy mundane weapons that successfully hit them and deal 1 Health Level of damage when attacked with a natural weapon. Enemies must treat them as one range band

further away when attacking at range or move closer.

Elemental Strike: Spend 1 mote on Step 1. Increase the power generated by a **withering** attack or the damage by a successful **decisive** attack by Essence.

Elemental Vortex: Spend 1 mote. Characters who end their turn within close range suffer a 1 damage/interval elemental hazard.

Fae Nature: Cold iron weapons deal aggravated damage to this character. They don't need to eat or drink. They are incapable of breaking the letter of a promise or oath. By using an action to make a difficulty 5 Integrity roll, Exalts can end one lingering magical effect inflicted on them by this character.

Glamour: Create illusions indistinguishable from reality. In the Wyld, these last indefinitely. In Creation, they last a minimum of one scene and a maximum of the story, depending on their complexity. Glamour cannot create artifacts or other wonders. Exalts may attempt to see through Glammers with an Awareness or Integrity roll, difficulty 5.

God-Blooded: This character is the descendant of a god. They share a simple physical or metaphysical trait with their supernatural parent. Commit 1 mote to add their patron's "Knowledge of Their Domain" and "Manipulating Their Domain" Skills to their Primary Pools for a scene.

Greater Recovery: This character is magical. As an ally, they may participate in recovery scenes. As an enemy, they are assumed to recuperate fully between appearances. Always significant characters (p. XX).

Immortal (Other): This character is protected from death by some external means — a sorcerous working, an external patron, or a Fae-woven narrative of invulnerability. They do not die when reduced to Incapacitated or more; what happens to their body is up to Storyteller's

discretion. Every immortal has a catch, however — a weakness or situation or fate that will permanently destroy them.

Lethal Ground:(Eclipse-OK) When targeted by a **decisive** attack, spend 1 mote on Step 8 to cause an attacker to suffer one health level of damage for every 1 they roll on damage.

Living Disaster: At the beginning of the round, this character gains 10 Power. They may always strike dematerialized targets. Antagonists with Hardness less than 7 may not take this quality.

Thousand Deaths Curse: At 10 Power, spend 1 mote and roll Social Influence against the Resolve of a target within medium range. Success causes the target to lose his action and flee in terror for the rest of the scene. This is a psyche effect and ends when the target takes damage.

Trail of Carnage: After damaging a battle group or defeating an opponent, gain 2 Power. Once per scene, if there are no Extras or battle groups present, reflexively gain 5 Power. Cannot be taken by Antagonists with Hardness less than 6.

Trans-sacral Body: Spend 1 Mote on step 6 to avoid non-damaging effects of an attack.

Virtue-Poison: (Eclipse-OK) Spend 2 motes on Step 1 to supplement either a **decisive** attack or social influence action, suffusing the character's weapon or words with a poison (p.XX) that erodes personality. Virtue-Poison weakens a target's Virtues with an interval of 1 day, a duration of 3 days, and difficulty 5: it first weakens a Minor Virtue, then a Major. Success on the resistance roll negates the effects of an interval. At the end of the duration, the Virtues return to their previous strength.

Wave of Carnage: Once per scene, spend 5 motes to make an area attack out to long range. This ability can be used again if this character spends a round without attacking. Cannot be taken by Antagonists with Hardness less than 6.

Wyld Shaping: Within the Wyld, this character can perform dramatic edits as though they were a player character, spending 1 mote instead of stunt dice. When this is opposed by other Wyld denizens or the Wyld itself, they roll Shaping the Wyld. For 1+ motes, Shape the Wyld performs reality-warping dramatic edits in line with their Defining Intimacy or Major Virtue — Exalts may revise these edits with an Integrity roll, difficulty 3, with each extra success dictating a detail of the edit an Exalt may change or outright deny.

Children of Spirits

While the term "God-Blooded" can be used to refer specifically to someone related to a Terrestrial or Celestial god, it can also broadly refer to someone descended from any kind of spirit, including elementals, demons, and ghosts. The Storyteller can change the benefit of the God-Blooded Quality to reflect this as needed. The child of a flame duck could instead commit 1 mote to gain the skill "Manipulate Fire;" the grandchild of a Neomah might gain the skill "Flesh Sculpting;" a ghost-blooded person may even drop this aspect of the God-Blooded Quality in favor of gaining the Abyssal Deathspeaker's Summon the Dead (p.XX).

BATTLE GROUPS

Exalts fight against or alongside groups of lesser combatants. Ranks of imperial infantry, howling hordes of hungry ghosts, or determined mobs of enraged farmers can become worthy adversaries or useful allies in battle when banded together. These groups of combatants are battle groups.

Rather than tracking every member of a peasant mob, brigand band, or army detachment, battle groups possess a single stat-block and act as a single entity in combat. The battle group's Health Levels function as an abstraction of its numbers and its members' morale, decreasing as combatants become unable or unwilling to fight. When a battle group runs out of Health Levels, it's not because every member of it is

dead, but because its injured and fleeing members are not continuing the fight.

BATTLE GROUP CREATION

First, select an antagonist template to base the battle group on. Note that enemies capable of using Essence or other supernatural abilities will be considerably more dangerous than mundane human or animal enemies. This determines the battle group's basic die pools, Defense, Soak, and weapon accuracy, damage, and defense, as well as any special abilities its members might have. The battlegroup modification does not alter the modified template's Hardness.

Then decide the battle group's size, from a handful of individuals to a teeming army. This determines the battle group's Health Levels and the Overwhelming rating of its attacks, based on the following table.

Battle Group Sizes			
Size	Number of Fighters	HL	OVW
0	A small handful of combatants	7	1
1	A small group, up to a dozen.	10	2
2	A moderate group, up to fifty.	12	3
3	A large group, up to a hundred.	15	4
4	A huge group, up to several hundred.	20	5
5	A full army, over a thousand.	30	5

Choose the battle group's drill: its coordination and discipline. While better-trained warriors are part of elite formations, that's not always the case. It's possible for a unit of poorly organized duelists or fractious champions to have poor drill, or dedicated militia members armed with wooden spears to be superlatively drilled. Drill determines bonus successes for the following:

- Attempts to use miscellaneous actions such as Build Power
- Their leader's rolls to command them, including ventures
- Rout checks And
- Additional attack and damage dice equal to

its rating, which must obey the usual limits.

- Optionally, additional Outnumber Qualities beyond any their base stat block possesses.

Battle Group Drill			
Drill	Mod	Qty.	Route
Poor	0	Mob Weight	Whenever successfully attacked or they suffer damage.
Regular	1	Vanguard	Whenever they suffer damage equal or greater than their size (minimum 1)
Veteran	2	Opportunistic Threat	Whenever they suffer five or more damage
Elite	3	Deadly Ground	Whenever they're reduced to half their maximum Health Levels

Storytellers should feel free to replace, add, or remove Outnumber Qualities to battle groups of differing makeup as appropriate. Battle groups begins with **More of Us** for free, and all groups of Regular Drill or better gain Formation Attack.

ROUT CHECKS

When a battle group suffers a rout check, its commander or another friendly authority figure must succeed on a War or Presence roll as against difficulty 3 as a simple action on the next round. If they fail, the battle group begins fleeing, until an authority figure succeeds at such a roll, or the battle group successfully exits the battlefield. Note Storytellers should feel to apply penalty or difficulty modifiers due to particularly bloody battles, sorcerous enemies, or other factors at their discretion.

Leaderless Troops

Leaderless troops of less than veteran drill are susceptible to routing and fleeing the field. If the Storyteller doesn't intend to have a battle group be leaderless or vulnerable to rout but also doesn't have a commanding character in mind, they should simply include a character based on the same antagonist template as the battle group as their nominal leader.

Mindless Enemies

Battle groups incapable of fear or reason such as some sorcerous constructs and certain undead don't flee from failed rout checks. Instead, they immediately suffer additional damage equal to the unmet Difficulty as their enemies overrun them.

BATTLE GROUP RECOVERY

At the end of a scene, a battle group able to tend to its wounded and regroup recovers back to its full health levels, unless it fled the field or took more than half its total Health Levels in damage. In that case, it loses one size and reduces its maximum Health Levels accordingly.

ANIMALS

Creation is home to many kinds of creatures. In this section are common types with which players' characters might interact, whether as threats, mounts, potential familiars, or helpers and companions. Players can use animals in this section for Lunar forms and their Spirit shapes.

Animal sizes vary widely within those types. Sheepdogs, reindeer, and elephants are all working animals; the differences between them aren't only a matter of big and small, but how nimble they are, and how hardy they can be.

CREATING ANIMALS

In order to represent that variability, stats for animals based on their size are below. Within each animal type are a list of Common Actions creatures in that group might have. To create an animal, select the stats appropriate to that animal's size, then choose four to five Common Actions and distribute them into the Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Pools that best fit the specific animal. If a creature is small but sturdy, like a badger, it's fine use the values for the next size up instead. Feel free to change any values to better reflect the animal you're creating, upping their Hardness or adding or subtracting Health Levels as appropriate.

Tiny Creature

Primary Pool: 3; Secondary Pool: 1; Tertiary Pool: 1

Health Levels: 3

Defense: 3

Hardness: 1; Soak: 0

Special Abilities: Tiny Creatures are hard to spot. Opponents suffer a two-dice penalty on rolls to notice them.

Small

Primary Pool: 3; Secondary Pool: 2; Tertiary Pool: 1

Health Levels: 4

Defense: 2

Hardness: 2; Soak: 1

Medium

Primary Pool: 5; Secondary Pool: 3; Tertiary Pool: 2

Health Levels: 5

Defense: 3

Hardness: 3; Soak: 3

Large

Primary Pool: 8; Secondary Pool: 5; Tertiary Pool: 3

Health Levels: 7

Defense: 4

Hardness: 5; Soak: 4

Legendary Size

Primary Pool: 10; Secondary Pool: 7; Tertiary Pool: 4

Health Levels: 10

Defense: 5

Hardness: 8; Soak: 7

Special Abilities: Creatures of Legendary Size cannot be grappled by smaller opponents, except through magical means.

ANIMAL QUALITIES

Some animals have additional abilities gained by their relationships with humans, Exalts, and gods. Add these to any animal's template to further customize them.

Blessed Creature: This animal has gained the favor of a god. Choose one of its patron's Charms. The animal may use that Charm reflexively. If anyone harms the creature, its patron takes notice, and may appear to express their displeasure or visit a curse upon the culprit.

Familiar: This animal gains the benefits of the Familiar Merit (p. XX).

Magical: The animals' master has trained it to use certain magical talents. Spend motes to activate these abilities. These may be offensive actions, like creating a shockwave with a stomp; or defensive ones, such as strengthening the beast's hide to increase its soak.

Strange Beast: This is an animal out of legend, with abilities beyond what its mundane brethren can perform. The animal gains an Essence rating from 1-5, based on its size, and a mote pool equal to Essence plus four. It gains 2-3 Charms or Special Abilities reflecting its nature.

Trained: The creature has been trained to do its master's bidding. Add two dice to the action it's best at, and grant it one simple special ability. This may be something like "Carries messages to a specific person or location" or "Can detect the presence of magical materials within short range."

What I'm Looking for Isn't Here

This section could not possibly list every creature one might encounter in Creation, or on Earth for that matter. Many of these entries special abilities can serve double duty. The bat's ability to change direction in flight works just as well for a falcon, while a scorpion's sting mechanically works the same as viper's bite, and so on.

Flying

Denizens of the skies, these animals fly or glide through the air. This is a method of transportation and a way to avoid ground-based

predators. For those flying creatures who *are* hunters, flight gives them an advantage over their prey. Their sizes range from tiny hummingbirds to massive great rocs and flying lizards. In the forests of the East, people train them to carry messages. Dynasts train falcons to act as hunting companions, while bandits in the South learn to follow circling vultures toward lost and vulnerable caravans. Larger species, like the Metagalapan Riding Hawk, may also be used as mounts.

Common Actions: Beak Attack, Fly, Dive, Senses, Stealth, Talon Slash, Tracking

Bat: Bats can change direction easily while in flight. Increase Defense by 2 while in flight.

Eagle: Among the most keen-eyed of birds, eagles double 9s on sight-based rolls.

Great Roc: Gain Legendary Size. Great rocs can lift humans and horses in their talons. Double 8s on grapple rolls.

Vulture: Vultures can eat carrion without rolling to resist illness.

Winged Thunder Lizard: Gain an Intimidate pool of six dice, reflecting their horrifying screech.

Swimming

Rivers, lakes, and oceans teem with aquatic life. These creatures move through the water via fins, powerful tails and tentacles, or by scuttling along the ocean or river's floor. From venomous jellyfish to deadly sharks, the waters are as dangerous as they are deep. V'Neef captains on the trade route between the Blessed Isle and Wu-Jian warn of siaka swarming around their hulls. Pirates swap tales of the kraken's ship-breaking fury. Gentler animals exist here, too, such as otters, octopi, and walruses. Some sailors see omens in the markings on whales' tails, while others consider it lucky when dolphins swim alongside their vessels.

Common Actions: Bite, Camouflage, Claw, Grapple, Rush, Senses, Swim, Tail Swipe, Threaten, Tracking

Crab: Fierce defenders, crabs add 2 dice to their Defense Pool.

Jellyfish: Add Sting Attack to the Primary Pool. **Decisive** attacks inflict a venom with 1 damage per round, with a duration 2 rounds with a difficulty 3 to resist.

Kraken: Gain Legendary Size. With its many arms, the kraken doubles 8s on grapples.

River Dragon: Gain Legendary Size. Thirty feet long and with hundreds of teeth, River Dragons lurk in Eastern and Southwestern waters. Once per fight at Power 10, the River Dragon doubles 7s on a **decisive** bite attack.

Burrowing

Burrowing animals dig holes and tunnels in the ground. These passages provide shelter from the weather and protection from predators. Throughout Creation, rabbits, moles, and pangolins create networks of tunnels and warrens. Termites bore holes in wood, while clams settle into the sand. In the South, aardvarks, gophers, and foxes burrow to escape the day's heat. Far to the North, even the massive polar bears dig dens in the snow to nurture their cubs. Insects and sea creatures burrow as well.

Common Actions: Bite, Burrow, Claw, Kick, Senses, Stealth, Tracking

Mongoose: The mongoose is immune to mundane venoms. Increase its Hardness and Soak by one.

Pangolin: Overlapping plate-like scales cover the pangolin. It curls up into a ball to defend itself from predators. Increase its Hardness and Soak by two. On Step 7, the sharp scales cause one damage to the perpetrator after a **decisive** attack against it.

Rabbit: Rabbits are swift, and may make one extra short range leap per turn.

Working Animals

These creatures have been domesticated and are used for labor. Oxen pull plows behind them, while elephants haul logs from the Eastern forests to waiting river barges. Horses, camels, and mules carry their masters from place to place. Cows provide milk, and pigs root rare truffles out of the ground.

Common Actions: Bite, Feats of Strength, Harry, Haul, Herd, Kick, Search, Senses, Stomp, Threaten, Tracking

Dog: Double 9s on rolls related to tracking, herding, and searching.

Elephant: The elephant's thick skin increases its Soak by two.

Horse: Horses are quick to flee from danger. Double 9s on rolls to disengage or withdraw.

Mule: On a successful **withering** Kick attack, the mule knocks its opponent back 1 range band.

Yeddim: Gain Legendary Size. Double 8s on Feats of Strength rolls to haul or carry.

Insects

Millions of insect species inhabit Creation. Some, like honey bees and silkworms, produce materials people use in textiles, trade, and as components in sorcerous rituals. Others are far less benign, destroying crops, or swarming and stinging their enemies.

Common Actions: Dig, Fly, Pincers, Pollenate, Senses, Stealth, Sting

Ant: Ants are intelligent. Gain two automatic successes on rolls to solve puzzles.

Beetle: The beetle's exoskeleton increases its Soak by 1.

Fly: Thanks to its many eyes, the fly doubles 8s on Senses rolls involving sight.

Scorpion: On Step 7 of a successful **decisive** attack, the scorpion inflicts a venom that does

2d per round, for a duration of 2 rounds with difficulty 3 to resist.

Wasp: A swarm of wasps imposes a -1 success penalty to enemies targeting it with attack actions or gambits.

Water Strider: Water striders don't suffer movement/difficult terrain penalties for running across water.

Sneaking

Stealthy animals lurk unnoticed in their habitats. They sneak into other creatures' nests and steal eggs. They mimic competitors' calls, and slink away before anyone notices what they've taken. Some people view these animals as a nuisance: Foxes steal chickens, and crows peck away at crops. Others train these clever companions to aid them in the hunt, or even to snatch precious items from their rivals.

Common Actions: Bite, Cunning, Distract, Flee, Mimic, Senses, Stealth, Theft, Tracking

Cuttlefish: The cuttlefish can camouflage itself, blending into its environment. Rolls to notice it suffer a -2 dice penalty.

Ferret: The ferret can squeeze through any small gap, as long as it can get its head through.

Fox: Clever foxes wait until their prey is most vulnerable to attack. Double 9s on Cunning rolls.

Orchid Mantis: The orchid mantis takes on the appearance of a flower. Increase the difficulty of rolls to distinguish it from others by one.

Possum: When in danger, the possum plays dead. Add two automatic successes on rolls to disengage.

Raven: Highly intelligent, ravens add two dice to Cunning or Distract rolls.

Predator Beast

The wilds of Creation are home to predators of all kinds. Many hunt animals smaller than themselves, or those they can quickly overpower. That may be a comfort when the predator's an owl or a raccoon, but when the

animal is as large as a bear or a crocodile, even humans may become a tantalizing meal.

Common Actions: Beak Slash, Bite, Claw, Dive, Feats of Strength, Grapple, Rush, Senses, Slam, Stealth, Tracking, Tail Attack, Talon Attack

Bear: On a **withering** attack that gains 2+ Power, the bear may reflexively make a grapple attack. This is a new action that counts as the bear's flurry.

Boar: On a successful rush action, the boar may make a goring tusk attack as part of a flurry. The attack doesn't suffer the flurry penalty.

Crocodile: The crocodile's powerful jaw gives it an upper hand when it seizes its prey. It wins ties in a roll to control a grapple.

Death Moa: This carnivorous land bird is bigger than a horse. Its brutal beak attacks can shatter bone. Double 10s on Step 7.

Giant Constrictor: Each round the boa constrictor controls a grapple, it attempts to crush its prey. On Step 7, roll 5 damage dice.

Great Cat: Great cats add 1 Power to **withering** attacks made from Stealth.

Killer Whale: Gain Legendary Size. On a successful **withering** tail attack, enemies are knocked prone.

Wolf: Wolves are pack animals. On Step 3, add one automatic success for each wolf in close range of the target, to a maximum of three successes.

Wolverine: Fierce and hardy fighters, wolverines may attack creatures larger than they are without penalty.

Fast Animals

Being fleet of foot is a defense mechanism for some animals. Deer, rabbits, and gazelles avoid predators by being faster than their pursuers. Others, like falcons, cheetahs, and swordfish use that speed to take down their prey.

Common Actions: Bite, Chase, Claw, Grapple, Run, Senses, Swim, Talon Slash, Tracking

Cheetah: The cheetah attempts to knock its prey off-balance. On a **withering** attack that gains 2+ Power, the target is knocked prone.

Deer: Deer flee at the first sign of danger. Double 8s on rolls to disengage or withdraw.

Falcon: The falcon gains speed during a steep dive, delivering a powerful blow to its prey. On Step 3, add two automatic successes after making a flying Rush.

Swordfish: The swordfish slows down its prey with a slash from its pointed bill. Gain 1 extra Power from a successful **withering** attack.

Strange Beasts

Some creatures have powers beyond what their mundane kin exhibit. These wondrous beings may be blessed by a god, twisted by the Wyld, or have another supernatural origin. While strange beasts may become familiars or mounts, they are not eligible for Lunar shapeshifting forms.

Common Actions: Bite, Claw, Feats of Strength, Fly, Healing, Lure, Run, Senses, Stealth, Tracking

Chillikin: The long-forgotten guardians and playmates of the Lawbringers' children, these monkey-like creatures sense their target's dreams, and shape objects from those visions out of Essence.

Eight-Tailed Mole Hound: In the southern deserts, these armor-plated, eight-tailed beasts hunt in packs. They can burrow through sand as fast as they can run.

Fogshark: Mist-dwelling predators that swim through fog to prey on humans, the fogshark doubles 9s on tracking rolls to follow the scent of blood.

Mouse of the Sun: Companions to the Solar Exalted, Mice of the Sun may perform small, simple tasks for their masters. A mouse may also gain an aura resembling its master's anima

banner; the Solar can spend 1 Anima to allow the mouse to use her anima effects.

SIMPLE ANIMAL FORMS (LUNARS)

The Lunar Exalted take on animal forms and traits via the sacred hunt. Following are some common shapes they may adopt, with a few traits typical of the creature. Lunars may use their animal's special abilities, such as the boar's tusk attack or the falcon's steep dive. Players can use any of the rules above or modify them to better fit the character. Lunars are typically normal animals, and not strange beasts.

Barracuda

Barracuda are predator fish found in the Western seas. Their silvery bodies make them hard to spot in the water, helping them to stalk schools of fish and other prey. They attack in short bursts of speed.

Their mouths are full of many sharp teeth, allowing them to tear chunks from their victims.

Bear

Bears appear throughout Creation. They can run, climb, and swim, and are fierce protectors of their young. Bears can perform Feats of Strength. They excel at grapples, and crush and bite enemies they've clinched.

Camel

Camels can be found in the Southwest. They're well-suited to making long treks across the sands. Camels can withstand the intense desert heat better than other creatures, and can go for up to 10 days without drinking water.

Cat

Cats are nimble and clever. They are stealthy predators and solitary hunters, preying on rodents and small animals. Cats are good climbers, and have excellent vision in the dark.

Frog

Frogs are amphibians, living in Creation's wetlands. They have stout bodies built for hopping. While some are brightly-colored,

others are camouflaged to evade predators' notice. Some frogs can secrete toxins through their skin.

Gorilla

Gorillas inhabit the East, from the mountains to the North, to the deepest Far Eastern jungles, and in the Threshold's lowlands. They are intelligent creatures, and are peaceful unless provoked. They attempt to frighten enemies away with intimidating displays. Forced to fight, a gorilla's sharp teeth are its deadly weapons.

Hawk

The hawk is a bird of prey. It hunts at night and kills prey with its talons. Hawks have extremely sharp eyesight, and can even perceive things beyond the regular spectrum.

Iguana

The iguana is a small lizard. Its coloration helps hide it from predators. Its keen vision lets it see shapes and movement out to long range. The iguana can run extremely fast in short bursts.

Lion

The lion is a large ambush predator. Lions are social animals, living and hunting with their prides. Like their smaller feline cousins, they see well in the dark. Lions stalk their prey, and attack from stealth.

Mantis

A mantis is an insect with a long body and large forelegs, which it uses to grab and hold its prey. Some mantises have wings. The mantis' coloring often resembles leaves or bark, hiding it from predators.

Rat

Rats are rodents found throughout Creation. They live in the wild, but also thrive in human cities and aboard ships, where food is plentiful. Rats are intelligent. They bite when cornered, and may carry diseases. A rat can shed its tail to escape from predators.

Seal

Seals abound in the cold waters of the North. They're fast and flexible swimmers, and have a fat layer that protects them from the freezing temperatures. Seals are carnivores. In addition to excellent hearing and eyesight underwater, they can sense the vibration of fish and other animals swimming nearby via their whiskers.

Spider

Spiders are eight-legged arachnids. Creation is home to thousands of different species, ranging from tiny to the size of large dogs. Their bite may be venomous. Spiders spin webs to catch their prey, and can walk up walls and along ceilings.

Wolf

Wolves are sleek, swift hunters. Working together as a pack, they can bring down much larger animals as prey. Wolves' strong jaws can crush bone. Their howls, used to communicate with other members of their pack, can carry out to extreme range.

MORTALS AND EXALTS

The ordinary people of Creation, and their mighty Exalted counterparts.

AGENT OF THE WYLD HUNT

The Wyld Hunt specializes in hunting anathema: any non-Dragon-Blooded Exalt, or anything else determined to be threats to Creation and the Realm. They are always significant characters, and usually Dragon-Blooded Exalts — well-trained Dynasts or outcastes hoping to earn renown. Whether they are true believers in the Immaculate Philosophy (p.XX) or adventure-seeking opportunists hardly matters. Agents of the Hunt travel in groups of three to five, though one or two may have command of their own battle groups if the situation calls for it.

Primary Pool (9): Combat, Tracking and Investigation; **Secondary Pool (7):** Anathema Lore, Battle Group Tactics, Immaculate Faith; **Tertiary Pool (4):** Disobeying Orders
Resolve: 3

Health Levels: 7

Essence: 2 or 3

Defense: 5

Hardness: 4; **Soak:** 4

Attacks and Qualities

Oath of the Ten Thousand Dragons: This character has sworn an oath to defend their fellow Hunters and see their mission through to the end. The difficulty of social influence to sway them from this oath increases by two.

Opportunistic Threat (Outnumber): (See p. XX)

Weapon: Hunter's Direlance (+2 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +1 Damage, 3 Overwhelming. **Tags:** Reaching, Two-Handed)

Variant: Sidereal Assassin

Wearing a destiny to enable them to work incognito, the Sidereal Assassin is a member of Heaven's Bronze Faction, dedicated to upholding the Dragon-Blooded as rulers of Creation. More often than not, they complete their mission with neither foreshadowing nor fanfare, with no one in Creation the wiser. However, other Exalts have a greater chance of penetrating the Sidereal's arcane fate (p.XX) — their cover is not entirely perfect. Sidereal Assassins work alone by necessity, though important or dangerous missions require them to form fellowships of up to five.

Apply the following adjustments:

- Increase pools and Resolve by 1
- Replace "Immaculate Faith" with "Subterfuge."
- Increase Defense and Hardness by 2
- Essence 3.

The Assassin cannot swear an **Oath of Ten Thousand Dragons**, but adds two to the difficulty of attempts to sway them from their mission.

The Assassin gains the following Qualities, Charms, and an appropriate form weapon:

Martial Proficiency (see p. XX)

Walking Outside Fate: Commit 1 mote. Characters with Essence 3 or less cannot detect the Sidereal's presence. Significant characters may sense them with a difficulty 5 Integrity or Awareness roll, though they still cannot make out the Sidereal's identity and suffer a two-dice penalty to attack or track them.

ARISTOCRAT

Aristocrats are mortals with social specialties. They are trained in negotiation and have numerous resources at their disposal, including secrets, "friends," and cold hard cash. In sophisticated locales, this is a diplomat, a well-paid captain, or a Guild official. In rural or local communities, this is a landlord, a trader, or the heir to an estate. Aristocrats usually favor the Virtues of Ambition, Discipline, and Loyalty.

Primary Pool (6): Dueling, Social Influence;

Secondary Pool (5): Calling in Favors, Throwing Money at It; **Tertiary Pool (2):** Accepting Defeat Gracefully

Resolve: 3

Health Levels: 5

Defense: 2

Hardness: 1; **Soak:** 1

Qualities

High-Profile: (See p. XX)

Well-Connected: (See p. XX)

Variant: Abyssal Deathspeaker

An aristocratic Abyssal Exalt trained in the mediation of disputes between ghosts and the living. Deathspeakers have the support of a Deathlord, and either travel with one or two Exalted bodyguards, or an entire court of death priests (p.XX).

Apply the following adjustments

- Increase pools by two
- Increase Defense and Hardness by two
- Essence 2.

High-Profile inflicts supernatural complications— nearby food rots, animals flee or attack, and nightmares plague the target.

Well-Connected no longer ends if the target leaves the Deathspeaker's jurisdiction. Additionally, the Deathspeaker gains the following Charms and artifact weapon:

Reverent Mortuary Witness: (See p. XX)

Second Chance Approach: (See p. XX)

Summon the Dead: Spend 1 mote to summon a specific lesser ghost as though they were an initiate in First Circle Necromancy (p.XX), though the ghost is not bound to them.

Weapon: Soulsteel Goremaul (+0 Accuracy, +2 Defense, +2 Damage, 3 Overwhelming.)

CHAMPION

Among the greatest of Creation's mortal warriors are elite military forces and handpicked fighters, from chosen clan champions of independent peoples to elite formations assembled by empires. Incredibly well armed, well trained, and often eager to fight, they are dangerous even to Exalts. They are rarely Extras, particularly dangerous in groups, and always desirable allies in a fight.

Primary Pool (9): Athletics and Combat;

Secondary Pool (6): Campaigning and Senses;

Tertiary Pool (4)

Resolve: 3

Health Levels: 5

Defense: 5

Hardness: 3; **Soak:** 4

Attacks and Qualities

Martial Technique: This character's successful withering attacks generate 1 additional Power.

Murderous Blow: (See p. XX)

Weapon: Glaive (+0 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +3 Damage 2 Overwhelming, **Tags:** Two-Handed, Reach)

Variant: Infernal Vanquisher

Killer of kings, wrestler of gods, enemy of empire and authority, the Infernal Vanquisher bears an exaltation bestowed by the imprisoned things in hell. They wield its power in opposition to Heaven and every mundane authority, and upend all order in Creation.

Apply the following adjustments

- Increase pools by one
- Increase Resolve by one
- Add “Spreading Chaos” to primary pool and “Inspiring Emotion” to secondary pool
- Add three Health
- Essence 4

The Vanquisher may exchange **Martial Technique** for any Close Combat Infernal Charm (starting on p. XX).

Weapon: Screaming Hell Chain (+3 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +0 Damage, 3 Overwhelming. **Tags:** Flexible)

SAVANT

Savants are mortals with specialized knowledge requiring training, personal study, or a formal education. They can be city-born scholars, but also naturalists, tomb delvers, smiths and self-taught experts. Their Knowledge Expertise pool should be a specific topic or craft — “Translating Old Realm” works, but “Languages” is too broad. Savants favor the Virtues of Curiosity, Discipline, and Wonder.

Primary Pool (7): Knowledge Expertise; **Secondary Pool (4):** Ad-Hoc Solutions, Endurance; **Tertiary Pool (2):** Anything Outside Their Study

Resolve: 1

Health Levels: 5

Defense: 2

Hardness: 1; **Soak:** 1 (2 for artisans, naturalists, or delvers).

Qualities

Academic Network, Professional Collaboration (See p. XX)

Variant: Solar Historian

Before exalting as a Solar, they matriculated through a River Province university, earning a robust education. Now, with newfound power and motivation, they take a more hands-on approach to their studies, travelling between sites of historical import and lending their expertise on matters relevant to their interests. The Solar Historian prefers to work alone but may have pressed an assistant into their service.

Apply the following adjustments

- Increase pools and Resolve by 2
- Increase Defense and Hardness by 1;
- Knowledge Expertise “First Age Ruins”
- Essence 2.
- Academic Network may be used a second time, but the local area will learn the Historian is an Anathema.
- Using Professional Collaboration when the Historian has no support staff can now grant the three-success bonus without introducing flaws into the final product, but doing this more than twice a story will cause the Historian to Limit Break (p.XX).

Additionally, the Historian knows the following Charm and carries a useful wonder:

All-Encompassing Sorcerer’s Sight (p. XX)

Harmonious Academic Methodology (p. XX)

Translation Crystal (p. XX).

SOLDIER

Whether mercenaries, disciplined militia, or legionnaires in the Realm’s Imperial legions, going to war requires professional soldiers. Carrying decent arms with the skill to use them, professional soldiers fight in groups under clear direction, and are always dangerous in numbers. They are often Extras or part of armed groups.

Primary Pool (8): Following Orders and Group Combat; **Secondary Pool (5):** Campaigning, Maneuver, Single Combat ; **Tertiary Pool (4):**

Resolve: 3

Health Levels: 5

Defense: 3

Hardness: 2; **Soak:** 3

Special Defenses Attacks and Qualities

Formation Fighting (Outnumber), Formation Attack (Outnumber): see p. XX.

Weapons: Infantry Weapons (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +1 Damage, 1 Overwhelming)

Javelins: (+1 Accuracy, +2 Damage, 1 Overwhelming. Close range)

Variant: Young Dynast

Recently graduated from the Realm's institutions, deeply enmeshed in its culture, and determined to leave their mark on the world, young Dynasts represent one of the most dangerous weapons of the Scarlet Dynasty. They have retinues of mortal followers or command formations of soldiers, are never extras, and can be members of battle groups.

Apply the following adjustments:

- Replace primary pool with "Combat" and "Politics" or "Athletics"
- Increase secondary pool by 1 with "Endurance, Inspiring Emotions, Senses"
- Increase Defense and Hardness by 1
- Essence 1

Replace their Outnumber Qualities the following Qualities and Charms. They are armed with at least one artifact weapon.

Excellent Strike (p. XX)

Glorious Exalted Bolt (p. XX)

Hopping Firecracker Evasion (p. XX)

Weapons: Familial Daiklave: (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +2 Damage, 3 Overwhelming)

SOVEREIGN

Sovereigns are mortals with administrative specialties. They can be found organizing villages, tribes, satraps, confederacies — anywhere with enough people gathered to

require a leader, a council, or an advisor. The skills below reflect what they can accomplish with the resources at hand. Skill at Civil Administration does not automatically grant the steel to forge weapons for every villager, but it can arrange for securing it. Sovereigns favor the Virtues of Ambition, Discipline, and Justice.

Primary Pool (8): Civil Administration (militaristic leaders use War Administration);

Secondary Pool (5): Command and Law, Knowing What's Best for the People, Managing the Treasury; **Tertiary Pool (3):** Quick Decisions

Resolve: 2

Health Levels: 7

Defense: 4

Hardness: 3; **Soak:** 4

Qualities

Did I Authorize This?, Higher Up the Chain: (p. XX)

Variant: Lunar God-Queen

A champion of her culture and defender of her territory, the Lunar God-Queen is not just a terrifying warrior but also a capable ruler. She rarely ventures beyond her borders, but that doesn't mean her reach is short — she has the resources and the army to aid or plague a region. The God-Queen is always surrounded by her entourage of elite Beastfolk Soldiers (p.XX), though sometimes she stalks her borders alone on sacred hunts.

Apply the following adjustments:

- Increase primary and secondary pools by 4
- Increase Resolve by 2, Defense and Soak by 3, and Hardness by 5
- Add "Hybrid Form Combat" to primary pool
- Essence 4
- Did I Authorize This? manipulates the God-Queen's territory, allowing her to increase or reduce the difficulty of obstacle rolls by three.
- Higher Up the Chain summons aid from additional Lunars.

Additionally, the God-Queen gains the following Charms and an artifact weapon:

Boundary-Marking Meditation: See p. XX. The God-Queen's nation is defined by three qualities — example: *overgrown, labyrinthine, dark*.

Red-Tooth Diplomacy: Spend 1 mote. Another Storyteller character acts against a Virtue or Intimacy, provided they know the God-Queen subjugated others earlier in the scene. If one of the player's characters opposes the action — the God-Queen rolls Command and Law with a four-success bonus to overcome the opposition.

Weapons: Moonsilver Powerbow (+3 Accuracy, +1 Damage, 3 Overwhelming. Long range) Beastform Claws (+3 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +1 Damage, 1 Overwhelming. **Tags:** Natural)

Beastfolk Soldiers with Hatchets

(+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +1 Damage 2 Overwhelming. **Tags:** Chopping, Dual-Wield)

Size Health Defense Soak Drill Qualities

1 10 3 3 Elite Deadly Ground
Terrain Adaptation

GODS AND MONSTERS

A collection of terrifying supernatural threats.

BEHEMOTH

Living weapons from unfathomably ancient wars. Unreal terrors from the Wyld. Heaven-threatening horrors sealed away for millennia. Creation trembles at their passage, and whatever their origin, only bold actions by great heroes will prevent apocalyptic disaster from following in their wake.

Primary Pool (10): Enduring, Tracking Assailants, Wreaking Havoc; **Secondary Pool (7):** Navigating the World, Resisting Manipulation, Spreading Terror; **Tertiary Pool (4):** Acting with subtlety

Resolve: 5

Health Levels: 30

Essence: 10

Motes: 20

Defense: 4

Hardness: 9; **Soak:** 8

Attacks and Qualities

The Behemoth has up to six Exalted, Outnumber, Supernatural, or Spirit Qualities. As a serious threat, the Behemoth has **Furious Dragon's Ire, Unstoppable**, and a minimum of **Durable 1**. Some behemoths have **Immortal (Other)**, and are fated to never die.

Colossal Presence: This character always qualifies for Outnumber qualities. **Weapons:** Shattering Ire (+1 Accuracy, +3 Damage, 2 Overwhelming. Extreme range) Murderous Caress (+0 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +4 Damage, 3 Overwhelming)

CELESTIAL GOD

More abstract in scope than their Terrestrial kin, Celestial Gods hold positions within Yu-Shan and the Celestial Bureaucracy. They collect a godly salary and maintain an estate in Heaven. While they appear devoted to their domain as an expression of specific concepts (such as revenge and betrayal, intoxication, or gambling), in reality many gods are little more than middle managers who consider their position just a rung on the ladder of upward mobility. Within Heaven they scheme for promotions and usurp each other; many are indolent, and few are above bribery. Employed Celestial Gods co-work with peers of related domains, with Exigents, and with Sidereal Exalted; they oversee subordinate spirits, Terrestrial Gods, (p.XX) and Celestial Gods of lesser Essence. Several are old enough to remember the First Age and hold biases toward different Exalt types as a result, even nursing grudges against individual Exalts across their reincarnations.

Primary Pool (10): Heavenly Politics, Manipulation of Their Domain; **Secondary Pool (8):** Bribes and Blackmail, Knowledge of Their Domain, Loopholes in Celestial Law;

Tertiary Pool (4): Working Hard (or Hardly Working?)

Resolve: 2 (3 for the rare virtuous god)

Health Levels: 7 (10 for powerful or martial gods)

Defense: 5 (6 for martial gods)

Essence: 3 to 5

Hardness: 6; **Soak:** 4 (5 for martial gods)

Attacks and Qualities

Choose one Exalted Quality and up to three Spirit Qualities.

Domain

Hurry Home (p. XX)

Measure the Wind (p. XX)

Weapon: Divine Panoply: (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +2 Damage, 3 Overwhelming)

DEATHLORD

The patrons of the Abyssal Exalted are the undisputed rulers of the Underworld. Each is a centuries-old ghost grown mighty through pacts with the fallen Neverborn, though they take pains to bury this fact within legend. These pacts render the Deathlords personally puissant and proficient in the highest echelons of necromantic workings, and immortal beyond the usual powers of ghosts.

All Deathlords have the following qualities: Immaterial, Immortal (Other), Measure the Wind, Nine Terrors Visage, Significant

All Deathlords additionally possess distinct other qualities:

Eyes of Oblivion: The Deathlord may slay any trivial foe with or those with the Extra quality with the expenditure of a mote. This effect can apply to multiple characters at once; a single mote will slay every valid target the Deathlord can perceive up to Extreme range, though the Deathlord can be selective as to whom their gaze falls upon. If this power is used in the Underworld or a shadowland, a target becomes

a ghost beholden to the Deathlord for one thousand days.

Command of the Dead: The Deathlord spends a mote and gains control of any mindless walking dead they can perceive. This power lasts for a scene.

Feed on the Dead: The Deathlord may drain motes from the Essence of myriad dead it can perceive — typically, one mote per dot of Size. This effect is instantaneous and does not require a roll.

Void Circle Necromancy: Deathlords have mastered all three circles of necromancy and have a vast repertoire of spells. They often have significant necromantic infrastructure for performing necromantic workings (p. XX).

Variant: Necromancer-King

This Deathlord is of an ambitious and martial bent but not completely so, rendering him a ready participant in the war against the living. He is head of a vast army and a far vaster network of spies. Yet he has not neglected his necromantic might, using it to augment his army by reanimating vast hordes and dead behemoths felled millennia ago by Exalted heroes.

Primary Pool (15): History and modern, occult knowledge, perception, social and political manipulation; **Secondary Pool (13):** Combat functions, secondary interests; **Tertiary Pool (9)**

Resolve: 5

Health Levels: 5 to 10 (depending on hardness)

Essence: 7 to 10

Defense: 6

Hardness: 8-12 (as per Essence); **Soak:** 6 (9 for tough characters)

Attacks, Qualities, and Charms

Any appropriate qualities for a centuries-old veteran of Exalted combat.

DEMONS

The residents of Malfeas, the Demon City, demons live in a cacophonous, bizarre society. Each demon is a spirit with a specific purpose — far more focused than gods or elementals. They are stratified into three “circles” or classification of demon with increasing power. All demons possess some degree of intelligence, though **First Circle Demons** hew closer to intelligent beasts while **Second** and **Third Circle Demons** are unique individuals with identities and agendas. They were the losers in the Divine Revolution, and the terms of their surrender allow them to be summoned and bound via sorcery. Each demon’s relationship with Creation is complicated, to say the least. The following templates are frameworks from which Storytellers should build customized demons present in their campaigns.

All demons have the following qualities: Immaterial, Immortal (Demon), Measure the Wind

All Second and Third Circle demons have the **Heroic** and **Significant** qualities.

Variant: First Circle Demon

Sorcerers call upon First Circle demons to perform small but crucial tasks. Examples of First Circle demons include: Blood apes — fierce, bloodthirsty hominids who serve as guards and soldiers; stomach- bottle bugs — beetle-like creatures that mend flesh and devour poison; beauteous wasps — enormous glass wasps who are breathtaking to behold and serve as loyal, flying mounts; living armor — bits of flesh fallen from a greater demon to be worn by the summoner like a second skin.

Primary Pool (9): Area of expertise or purpose, Combat or social function **Secondary Pool (6):** Secondary interest or function; ancient history or senses **Tertiary Pool (4)**

Resolve: 3

Health Levels: 6 to 10

Essence: 1 to 4

Defense: 5

Hardness: 3 to 6; **Soak:** 3 (6 for tough characters)

Attacks, Qualities, and Charms

First Circle demons have any appropriate qualities that fit their purpose. Beauteous wasps may take **fast animal** (p. XX) abilities, while living armor counts as light armor (p. XX), for example.

Variant: Second Circle Demon

Summoners beckon Second Circle demons from Malfeas to perform either one extraordinary, supernatural feat or to serve as an ally or mentor for the year-and-a-day of sorcerous binding. Each is a wholly unique character with personalities and motives. Examples include: Alveua, Keeper of the Forge of Night — her hammer and anvil transform willing mortals into priceless artifacts; Mara, Shadow-Lover — a tutor of sorcery and devourer of souls; Octavian, the Living Tower — hell’s peerless general and conqueror; Stanewald, She Who Surmounted the Omphalos — whose efficacious dances destroy any construct made of stone.

Primary Pool (12): Area of expertise or purpose, Combat or social function; **Secondary Pool (9):** Secondary interest or function; ancient history or senses; **Tertiary Pool (7)**

Resolve: 4

Health Levels: 7 to 12

Essence: 5 to 7

Defense: 5 to 8

Hardness: 6 to 9; **Soak:** 4 to 10

Attacks, Qualities, and Charms

Demons of the Second Circle may have any appropriate spirit qualities. Each has unique abilities based on their purpose. For example: **Stanewald** may spend 3 motes to destroy any earthen wall or construct; **Octavian** always doubles 8s against battle groups; **Mara** grants a unique sorcerous initiation to her student (p.

XX); **Alvua** may spend 3 motes to automatically succeed at a crafting venture to transform a human into an Artifact.

Variant: Third Circle Demon

The most powerful demons, Third Circle demons can only be summoned during Calibration, the five days at the end of the year. They are capable of world-shaking feats and make extraordinarily powerful allies, equals to the greatest of gods. Examples include: **Jacint**, the Prince Upon the Tower — who builds roads with a word or a gesture; **Ligier**, the Green Sun — the beating heart of Malfeas itself, he is a smith without equal; **Orabilis**, the End of All Wisdom — keeper of an infinite infernal library who retains all the world's secret knowledge.

Primary Pool (15): Area of expertise or purpose, Combat or social function;

Secondary Pool (13): Secondary interest or function; ancient history or senses; **Tertiary Pool (11)**

Resolve: 5

Health Levels: 10 to 20

Essence: 8 to 10

Defense: 5 to 10

Hardness: 7 to 10; **Soak:** 4 to 10

Attacks, Qualities, and Charms

Demons of the Third Circle may have any appropriate spirit qualities. Each has unique abilities based on their purpose. For example: **Jacint** may spend 5 motes to instantly craft a roadway from two points of the summoner's indication. **Ligier** can create any mundane object made of brass without needing to roll. He may spend 3 motes to create a hellish Artifact in one dramatic scene. **Orabilis** succeeds on any knowledge-based action without rolling and can answer any question asked of him, though usually with a price.

ELEMENTALS

Spirits of primeval and raw energies, elementals have existed nearly as long as Creation has, as

various species, orders, and entities embodying its natural forces. While individual Gods represent physical and natural features, elementals materially are the powers they exemplify. Ageless but naturally material and vulnerable to death by raw force or mischance, many lesser elementals follow pure instinct, pursuing the dictates of their nature. **Jokun**, guardians of gem and mineral courts, transform into flowing mud and silt to travel through the earth in endless service to their masters. **Greenmaws**, predatory jungle-elementals, hunt for fresh meat and blood to fuel their vegetable bodies. The crocodilian **sobeksis** can't live apart from their watery homes. **Garda** birds live their austere existences beyond the reach of mortals, one of the few truly immortal elementals able to rebirth themselves in endless cycles of fire. **Storm Serpents** embody the fury of uncontrollable weather, amplifying its destructive power before expiring with the storm's end.

Primary Pool (9): Embodying Their Element and Wielding Natural Power; **Secondary Pool (6):** Mastery of Their Natural Habitat and Unsubtle Physical Feats ; **Tertiary Pool (4)**

Resolve: 3

Health Levels: 5 to 10 (depending on hardness)

Essence: 1-4

Defense: 5

Hardness: 3-8 (as per Essence); **Soak:** 3 (6 for tough characters)

Attacks, Qualities, and Charms Domain:

Domain's Beneficence Domain's Curse

Weapon: Elemental Panoply (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +2 Damage, 3 Overwhelming)

FAIR FOLK

Fair Folk, also known as *raksha*, are champions and shapers of the Wyld. They are walking stories, exemplifying their chosen Virtue and defining their existence by their most important Intimacy. Just as denizens of Creation consider

them alien, they find Creation mystifying: for some, it is a blight to be erased, and for others, a source of delightful adventure. Fair Folk take on the appearance of their local climate and culture — fiery hair and garnet skin in the South, flesh like ice in the North, etc. Whichever Virtue they favor, they live its tenets to the fullest, allowing it to dictate every aspect of their behavior.

Primary Pool (7): Embodying Their Virtue, Manipulating Mortals; **Secondary Pool (5):** Dramatically Appropriate Actions, Fair Folk Politics, Shaping the Wyld; **Tertiary Pool (2):** Blending In

Resolve: 2

Health Levels: 8

Defense: 3

Hardness: 4; **Soak:** 3

Attacks and Qualities

Glamour, Virtue-Poisoning, Wyld Shaping (p. XX)

Fae Nature (p. XX)

Variant: Imperial Raksha

The nobility of the Fair Folk is exponentially more powerful and hungrier than their commoner kin. Imperial Raksha seize political power among their kind. They possess a freehold — an area of relative stability — within the Wyld where they hold court. This may be the size of a manor or encompass hectares of protean landscape. The Imperial Raksha commands four or five Fair Folk courtiers, an army of wyld beasts, or a dozen ensorcelled mortals. They may even have Exalts in their employ.

Apply the following adjustments:

- Increase pools by 4
- Increase Resolve by 2, Defense, Hardness, and Soak by 3
- Essence 4.
- Add four Health Levels.
- Add “Melodramatic Combat” to their Primary

pool, and “Hosting and Entertaining” to their Secondary.

- For 1+ motes, Wyld Shaping perform reality-warping dramatic edits in line with their Defining Intimacy and Major Virtue — Exalts may revise these edits with an Integrity roll, difficulty 5, with each extra success dictating a detail of the edit an Exalt may change or outright deny.

Additionally, the Imperial gains the following Charms and a gossamer weapon:

Gossamer Rapier: (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +0 Damage, 2 Overwhelming. **Tags:** Piercing)

GHOST

The shadows of the restless mortal dead often resemble their living selves clad in ethereal essence, though some are marked by their death. Ghosts worshipped by mortal family or bound by occult phenomena occasionally reform once defeated. Typically immaterial, ghosts can interact with Creation when night falls in shadowlands, and must use alternative means to acquire material form. **Ancestors** watch over their families from shrines, tombs or nearby shadowlands, blessing and cursing their descendants. **Nemissaries** learn to possess corpses to touch the world again, acting as spies and agents for more powerful dead. **Mortwrights**, twisted by despair transform into monstrous spirits, hunting through shadowlands in packs. **Hungry Ghosts** arise from improperly buried corpses, hiding from the sun in their body during the day and hunting the living at night. **War Ghosts** are warrior dead who endlessly battle in the Underworld’s great wars. They possess suits of armor to walk Creation.

Natural sunlight will destroy a ghost, leaving them to reform the next night. For this reason, many ghosts retreat to the Underworld, stay within a shadowland, or hide in corpses or possessed objects during the day.

Primary Pool (7): Underworld Lore, Senses, Social Influence; **Secondary Pool (5):** Fighting, Disguise, Haunting; **Tertiary Pool:** 3

Resolve: 3

Essence: 1-4

Health Levels: 5

Defense: 2

Hardness: 2; **Soak:** 1

Qualities and Charms Immaterial (p. XX)

Immortal (Ghost) (p. XX)

Apparition: Commit 1 mote for one scene to become visible but not material. Others may hear the ghost and speak to her, but not physically interact.

Thrashing Ghost Tantrum: Spend 1 mote and 1 Power. This creates an environmental hazard out to medium range around the ghost. Pay the cost on subsequent rounds to sustain it. Alternatively, a ghost may use this Charm to pick up and throw an object out to medium range as an attack. Usable while immaterial.

Weapon: Grave Good Weaponry (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +1 Damage, 1 Overwhelming)

Variant: Nemissary

To make a Nemissary, add the following Charm.

Nemissary's Ride: Commit 1 mote to possess a corpse. Any injuries inflicted on the body do not heal naturally, but also are not suffered by the ghost, unless inflicted using magic that can harm dematerialized spirits. Injury or decay inflicts a three-dice penalty on social influence, which may be mitigated with a disguise.

Variant: War Ghost

To make a War Ghost, apply the following adjustments:

- Increase primary pool by 1 and replace Underworld Lore and Social Influence with Group Combat and Following Orders.
- Increase secondary pool by 1 and replace Disguise with Campaigning
- Increase Defense by 2; increase Soak and

Hardness by 1.

- Add 2 Health Levels.
- Replace Weapon with Black-iron Spears and Shields (+1 Accuracy, +1 Defense, +2 Damage, 3 Overwhelming).

Additionally, the War Ghost has the following Charms:

Forge-born Form: Commit 1 mote to possess a suit of armor. The war ghost gains the possessed armor's Soak. Any injuries inflicted on the armor cannot be healed, but also are not suffered by the ghost, unless inflicted using magic that can harm dematerialized spirits. Armor destroyed by incapacitating the ghost must be repaired before it can be possessed again.

WALKING DEAD

Primary Pool (6): Maul Victims, Grapple, Feats of Strength; **Secondary Pool (4):** Climb Obstacles, Scent Prey; **Tertiary Pool:** 3

Resolve: 1

Health Levels: 6

Defense: 2

Hardness: 2; **Soak:** 3

Qualities

Mindless

Deathly Stench: Within close range of walking dead, roll Fortitude + Physique. On failure, lose 1 Power and take a one-die penalty on all rolls for the rest of the scene from nausea. Only affects the living. Once per character per story.

Weapon: Claws and Teeth (+0 Accuracy, +0 Defense, +2 Damage, 2 Overwhelming)

CHAPTER EIGHT: PANOPLY

This chapter details all the equipment **Exalted** characters need.

BASIC EQUIPMENT

The following tables list standard statistics for weapons and armor found in this book. Successes added from equipment count towards the standard success limit of five. Weapon equipment successes apply only to attack actions.

MELEE WEAPONS

Category	Acc	Dam	Def	OVW
Light	+2	+0	+1	1
Medium	+1	+1	+1	1
Heavy	+0	+2	+1	1
Unarmed	+2	+0	+1	1

RANGED WEAPONS

Category	Range	Acc	Dam	OVW
Thrown	Medium	+2	+1	1
Light	Long	+3	+0	1
Medium	Long	+2	+1	1
Heavy	Long	+1	+2	1

ARMOR

Armor			
Category	Soak	Mob.	Hrd
Light	+2	0	0
Medium	+3	-1	0
Heavy	+4	-2	0

Note: Mobility penalties are success-based and apply to Athletics or Stealth rolls involving movement and Physique rolls where enduring fatigue or the environment apply.

EQUIPMENT STATS

Accuracy: A weapon's accuracy adds successes to the attack roll.

Damage: A weapon's damage adds successes to the damage roll.

Defense: A weapon's defense increases the character's Defense by its rating when taking the Defending Other or Full Defense actions.

Overwhelming: A weapon's overwhelming is the minimum Power generated on a **withering** attack (even if the attack misses). Overwhelming cannot exceed 4.

Range: A ranged weapon's range value is the optimal distance for use with the weapon.

Soak: An armor's Soak value adds to the character's Soak, which subtracts successes from incoming damage rolls.

Mobility Penalty: An armor's mobility penalty reduces the wearer's Evasion rating by the listed value.

Hardness: An armor's Hardness increases the amount of Power required for a character to make a **decisive** attack against the wearer.

Equipment Tags

All weapons have either the **Melee** or **Ranged** tag. Mundane equipment has up to two additional tags. Artifact equipment always gains the **Artifact** tag, and up to two more. Armors have up to two tags, adding **Artifact** if it was purchased as a Merit.

Artifact: Artifacts are ancient weapons and armor with fantastical effects. Artifact weapons increase Overwhelming by two and either Accuracy or Damage rating (player's choice) by one. Artifact armors increase Hardness by one and increase Soak by one.

Balanced: A superbly balanced weapon. It increases its Overwhelming by one.

Buoyant: An armor that is lighter than most. Do not apply movement penalties to swimming.

Chopping: A melee weapon meant to be used in a chopping motion. Chopping attacks decrease the wielder's Defense by one until her next turn. Chopping grants three bonus dice to **withering** attacks or decreases an opponent's Hardness by two for the purpose of making **decisive** attacks.

Concealable: The weapon is easily hidden on the person (Difficulty 1 to do so with Stealth).

Defensive: The melee weapon increases the character's Defense by an additional one when taking the Defending Other or Full Defense actions.

Disarming: The melee weapon reduces the Power cost by one for disarm gambits.

Flame: A ranged weapon that shoots a narrow blast of fire, which can ignite flammable objects. Attacks made at close range with this weapon gain one bonus Damage.

Flexible: The weapon ignores the Defense bonus granted by Full Defense actions. Flexible weapons reduce the cost of the ensnare gambit by one to a minimum of one.

Improvised: A weapon made of anything available. Treat as a weapon of the same size but reduce the Accuracy rating by two.

Melee: This weapon uses the Close Combat Ability to make attacks.

Mounted: The ranged weapon can be used while mounted on a steed.

Natural/Worn: The weapon is part of the user's body and cannot be disarmed, lost, or stolen. If worn, increase the cost of the Disarm gambit by one.

Off-Hand: The melee weapon can be used in the off-hand along with a one-handed weapon. The weapon does not add its Accuracy or Damage rating to an attack, instead when making an attack action as part of a flurry, reduce the action's dice pool by 1 die instead of 3 dice.

One-Handed: A ranged weapon that can be wielded in one hand, leaving the user's other hand free.

Paired: Weapons meant to be used as a set. Successful **withering** attacks generate 1 additional Power.

Piercing: The weapon is especially good at defeating armor. Attacks with this weapon

decrease the wielder's Defense by one until her next turn. Reduce the opponent's Soak on **decisive** attacks by two.

Pulling: Pulling weapons have both a melee and ranged attack element. Make a ranged attack with the Physique Ability. These weapons also allow the character to take the pull gambit (p. XX) as a ranged attack on the target.

Powerful: Powerful ranged weapons deal damage like a heavy melee weapon at close range.

Ranged: This weapon uses the Ranged Combat Ability. Ranged weapons have a standard range band that they are rated for. Attacking a target in a closer range band grants one bonus to the Accuracy rating for the attack.

Reaching: A melee weapon which negates the advantages of mounted combatants (p. XX) and the penalty from enormous size (p. XX).

Shield: A melee weapon that acts to protect the wielder, and allows him to flurry the Full Defense action. Shields have a damage rating one lower than their stated class. So, a medium shield would have a damage rating of 0.

Smashing: A heavy melee weapon meant to unbalance an enemy. Reduce the cost of Knockback and Knockdown gambits made with this weapon by 1 to a minimum of 1.

Silent: Armor that does not make noise when moving. Do not apply movement penalties to silent movement.

Thrown: This weapon can be used with the Ranged Combat Ability or in melee with the Close Combat Ability. Thrown weapons have a standard Range band that they are rated for. Attacking a target in a closer Range band grants three bonus to the Accuracy rating for the attack.

Two-Handed: The weapon must be wielded with two hands, preventing the character from dual wielding or carrying a shield. Two-handed

weapons have damage rating one higher than their stated class. So, a medium two-handed weapon would have a damage rating of 2.

EQUIPMENT EXAMPLES

Use the following examples, if players prefer not to construct gear from scratch.

Light Close Combat Weapons

Cestus/Gauntlets: A studded leather wrapping for the hand, or a series of metal plates to enhance unarmed strikes. Concealable, Melee, Worn, sometimes Paired

Club/Cudgel/Baton: A short length of heavy wood, meant for bludgeoning. Melee, One-Handed, sometimes Improvised.

Khatar: A long blade attached perpendicularly to a handle made to be held in a closed fist. Melee, Piercing, One-Handed.

Knife: A short blade for cutting, up to a foot in length. Concealable, Melee, Thrown, sometimes Paired.

Sai: Three-pronged, fork-like weapons meant to puncture and disarm. Disarming, Melee, Piercing, sometimes Paired.

Short Sword: A short blade up to two feet in length, used as a sidearm. Balanced, Melee, One-Handed, sometimes Off-Hand.

Tiger Claws: A gauntlet or a handle with three blades shaped to resemble raking claws. Paired or Off-Hand, Melee.

Whip: A corded length of leather or other flexible material, primarily used on beasts of burden. Flexible, Melee

Wind-and-Fire Wheel/War Fan: A ring with bladed protrusions, used to slash and disarm. Disarming, Melee, Paired.

Light Ranged Weapons

Bolas/Lasso: Thrown weights of a length of rope, meant to entangle. Mounted, Ranged (Medium).

Chakram/Discus: A disc or ring of bladed metal. Concealable, Ranged (Medium), Thrown, sometimes Paired.

Dart/Needle: A pointed length of metal, meant to puncture or deliver poison. Piercing, Ranged (Short).

Medium Close Combat Weapons

Axe: A broad-bladed weapon used in one hand for chopping or bashing attacks. Chopping, Melee, One-Handed, sometimes Thrown.

Fighting Chain: A flexible length of chain for entangling enemies. Flexible, Melee, Pulling.

Hook Sword: A hooked blade meant for disarming strikes, often in pairs. Disarming, Melee, Paired.

Mace/Hammer: A blunt weapon meant to smash armor. Melee, Piercing, Smashing sometimes Thrown.

Seven-Section Staff: This weapon can have between three and twelve sections, making it a dangerous, flexible weapon used as both a staff and a flail. Disarming, Flexible, Melee.

Shield: A flat piece of wood or metal, meant to deflect blows. Defensive, Melee, Shield, sometimes Off-Hand.

Spear: A sharpened head at the end of a length of wood, used for fighting at reach. Defensive, Melee, Reaching, sometimes Thrown or Off-Hand.

Sword: A popular weapon in a variety of styles, consisting of a long blade, a hilt, a grip, and a pommel. Balanced, Chopping, and/or Off-Hand, Melee.

Staff: A length of heavy wood up to six feet long, used for bludgeoning strikes. Balanced, Melee, Smashing.

Medium Ranged Weapons

Crossbow/Longbow: Either a mechanically fired bow, or a manually powered one. Crossbows require less strength to draw. Balanced, Ranged (Long), sometimes Mounted.

Flamepiece: A single-shot flamethrower, shaped like a pistol. Requires fire dust ammunition. Flame, Ranged (Short), One-Handed, sometimes Paired.

Heavy Close Combat Weapons

Heavy weapons include things like: Great Axes, Great Swords, Great Hammers, Poleaxes, Lances, and Tetsubos.

Use the heavy weapon profile and add the Two-Handed or Smashing tag to axe, sword, mace/hammer, spear, and club.

Heavy Ranged Weapons

Firewand: A rifle-shaped flamethrower. Requires fire dust ammunition. Flame, Powerful, Ranged (Short), sometimes Mounted.

CUSTOMIZING WEAPONS

This section could not possibly contain every weapon imaginable from all the varieties of cultures present in Creation. Players should feel free to design their own using the specifications, above, and any weapon class. A weapon can be a heavy dart, for example, or a light crossbow.

These are examples, not restrictions.

Ammunition?

Exalted: Essence is a game of epic heroic fantasy. Characters are assumed to have come to battle prepared with everything they need. There's no need to nickel and dime players into tracking every single bowshot. However, there's a lot of drama in an archer reaching for her quiver and discovering it's empty at a critical moment.

As an optional rule, whenever a character misses on a **decisive** ranged attack, the Storyteller may request that the player make a reflexive Ranged Combat roll. If this roll fails, the character has run out of ammunition and will need to retrieve arrows, flurry an action to reload, and rely on the magic of her Charms instead.

EVERYDAY WONDERS

Many are the mortal miracle-workers practicing alchemy, geomancy, astrology, warding, weather working, and other crafts. Most often, these minor miracles exploit hidden occult mechanisms in Creation placed by the gods or Exalted of yore, accessed by using the Sagacity Skill via a highly specific method called thaumaturgy. While some thaumaturges ply an honest trade, cold readers and conniving would-be soothsayers out to defraud a mark outnumber them. Below are some common items made through these minor magics:

Maiden Tea (Resources 1): A common name for a variety of herbal drugs that are favorites of concubines, courtesans, soldiers, travelers, or adolescents, maiden tea is useful for anyone who wants to avoid conception. Available across Creation, imbibing maiden tea will temporarily decrease the user's fertility. In stronger doses, it will terminate a pregnancy or even render a user permanently infertile.

Fire Dust (Resources 1 in the South, Resources 2 elsewhere): This highly combustible, brick-red powder can be used as fuel for flame weapons, a vital addition to creation high-temperature metalwork, or — if the reaction is contained somehow — as a potent explosive.

Ghost Flower Tea (Resources 2): Created from leafy flowers that grow in shadowlands, this faintly luminous tea induces sleep produces vivid dreams that allow a user to converse with any ghosts around their sleeping body. Continued use to build tolerance lessens the soporific effect, allowing the user to see ghosts even in their waking hours.

Bright Morning (Resources 3, Resources 4 in the Realm): This purple powder is known as vision dust, and is the result of a mixture of Eastern herbs. This highly addictive, mildly hallucinogenic drug allows the user to see ghosts, spirits, and perceive the flow of Essence. The user crashes after three hour; going more

than a week without using creates potentially lethal withdrawal symptoms of delirium, fever, and severe pain.

Talismans (Resources 1-4): While some occur naturally and others are fakes, many gifted thaumaturges produce charms with varying effects. If they're real, good luck charms protect their bearer from negative effects of a botch once per story. Some charms are meant to create good health, adding one die to all Physique rolls to resist poison or disease. Those charms meant to protect against the walking dead or the Fair Folk cause beings of the appropriate type to suffer a -1 penalty to all dice pools when attempting to affect the bearer.

Age-Staving Cordial (Resources 5): The epitome of the alchemist's art, this small packet of dark red powder created from rare reagents is worth a king's ransom. When mixed with water or wine and taken as a weekly dosage, it extends a person's lifespan by a full quarter of years.

ARTIFACTS

Many and varied are the arms of the Chosen, and the Exalted are capable of forging wonders. Artifacts channel the Essence of the wielder and blend it with that of the world to create unique magics. Below is a small sampling of what a gifted Exalt can create with steel, spell, and hammer.

THE MAGICAL MATERIALS

The universal basis for artifact creation are the magical materials, the six most mystically potent materials in Creation. Artifacts made from these materials often possess their own Charms, known as Evocations, to carry the themes present in the dominant magical material used in the forging and inherent within the rich, storied history of the artifact. As they pass from hero to hero, the caliber and soul of the artifact changes to match the deeds of the wielder, and the Evocations drawn forth likewise change in a subtle but inevitable

manner. An artifact is a mighty tool to be used — and a powerful legacy to uphold — for any Exalt.

While all Exalted may wield any artifact made of any material and draw Evocations from them, different types of Exalted are resonant with the themes and powers of different materials. This resonance determines whether they can add Modes to an Evocation or draw power from a socketed hearthstone; for this reason, most Dragon-Blooded prefer to wield jade weapons, while Abyssals are often heavily armored in soulsteel. Some artifacts may resonate with multiple Exalt types due to special rules or construction; these exceptions will be called out in the artifact's description.

Solars are masters of Evocations and resonate with every material. Exigents may resonate with all materials, with none, or with materials or artifacts requiring a specific component depending on the nature of their progenitor god; the Exigent champion of a sacred grove's god might only resonate with artifacts made from green jade and blessed wood, for example. Certain other artifacts may resonate with a certain kind of Exalt if their construction, themes, or history evoke some sense of sympathy at the Storyteller's discretion; a moonsilver cage made to hold a trilling demon bird might resonate with both Lunars and Infernals, for example.

Orichalcum is a warm, brilliant, golden metal as invulnerable and puissant as the Unconquered Sun. The material carries with it raw power, unshakeable strength, excellence, authority, and channels Essence and sorcerous energies far better than any other material. It also carries themes of harnessing powerful natural phenomena such as earthquakes, floods, or storms. Most orichalcum designs are sunbursts in varying patterns. Other common shapes include animal or demon heads, or suggestions of Solar Caste Marks.

Jade is more common than any other magical material, though still far scarcer than silver. A stone often alloyed with steel, jade comes in five different hues. **Black jade** glitters like the midnight sea, and thematically encompasses deception, illusion, aquatic life, and adaptation. **Blue jade** is sky-blue, ranging from pale azure to cerulean, thematically encompassing winds, cold, ice, rain, lightning, flying creatures, memory, and language. **Green jade** is the hue of fresh vegetation, and carries an affinity for plant life, poisons, fertility, growth, and healing. **Red jade** catches the light with ease, revealing ruddy-red veins and smoky tones; it has affinities for flame, smoke, warmth, revelation, movement, violence, and purification. **White jade** is ivory-hued, with affinities for earth, stone, solidity, harmony, strength, stubbornness, and sleep. Jade artifacts from the First Age abstractly emulate elemental shapes or have representation of various elemental dragons. Post-Contagion jade is typically of much cruder workmanship and generally carved into symbols that venerate the Immaculates.

Moonsilver is far harder than steel and looks like ordinary silver, but shifts and swirls as if alive. It carries themes of transformation and inconstancy, reflection, secrecy, insight, intuition, beasts, and dreams. Designs feature the moonburst, a stylized moon-face that depicts both the full and crescent moon. Other common symbols are animal heads, inward-turning spirals and simple teardrops or other abstract natural expressions.

Starmetal looks like mundane but shining iron that inexplicably catches the light, throwing off a rainbow hue when it does. It is formed of Essence that condenses around the stars in the sky, falling to Creation in incredibly rare meteorites. It carries themes of fate, destiny, luck, time, knowledge, foresight, mysteries, and esoteric things. Starmetal artifacts are typically

minimalist, reflecting the precious rarity of the metal.

Soulsteel is a dark black metal that moans softly. It occurs naturally only rarely; most commonly, it is forged from veins of ore deep within the Underworld alloyed with the screaming souls of the dead. It carries themes of blood, silence, death, darkness, disease, pain, binding and banishing ghosts, or slaying the undead. Soulsteel channels necromantic energies better than any other material. Common designs include death's heads and abstract expressions of violence.

Adamant is formed only under unnatural pressure and heat. A translucent glass-like crystal tinged with a faint blue hue, adamant is dense and harder than any other material. It carries themes of sharpness, fascination, illusion, scrying, logic, order, protection, and extremes of hot or cold. Adamant designs incorporate crystalline elements and appear grown rather than forged.

LESSER WONDERS

Lesser wonders are items that are either purely utilitarian or have expendable uses. They are always a Tertiary Artifact, if taken with the merit. Consumable merits require downtime or a dramatic scene to replenish once their uses run out. Lesser Wonders do not have Evocations.

Cache Egg (Artifact 1)

A cache egg is an ovoid vessel, typically made from jade, that unfurls at its owners touch and allows the Exalt to store their possessions within. The Exalt may stash up to three times their Essence in objects within the egg, regardless of their size, then seal it by committing one mote. No amount of force or magic can pry the egg open while it is magically sealed. For another mote, the owner may banish the egg into the void of Elsewhere — a hidden dimension that no one else can access.

At any time, the Exalt may reflexively open or recall her cache egg and retrieve what is inside. While the egg typically materializes upon release of the committed motes, including the death of the wielder, subsequent reincarnations of a Celestial Exalt may access a cache egg hidden by a prior incarnation. This does not require commitment of motes until the character remembers their prior incarnation hid the egg.

Collar of Dawn's Cleansing Light (Artifact 1)

This stylish collar fashioned of any of the magical materials keeps its wearer perfectly clean. They could roll in a rubbish heap or wade through a Deathlord's gore-mired battlefield and come out without so much as a stain. This grants a two-dice bonus to resist poison and disease, but also to any social interactions where the character's pristine appearance would benefit them.

Eight-Scream Devil Powder (Artifact 1)

Eight-Scream Devil Powder is a reddish dust that comes in folded parchment pouches sealed with the maker's mark. When opened and hurled at an opponent, the powder causes extremely painful stinging and itching — enough to deter enemies from continuing to fight.

To use Eight-Scream Devil Powder, the character makes a gambit requiring three Power and targeting a single enemy within short range. If successful, the target suffers a four-dice penalty to all actions until the end of the scene. Eight-Scream Devil Powder has five uses before it must be replenished.

Hearthstone Jewelry (Hearthstone, any)

Some hearthstones (p.XX) require socketing into a weapon. Others note "while in possession" — in these instances, the manse also comes with a piece of hearthstone jewelry. These take whatever form is most aesthetically pleasing to the player: an amulet, a brooch, a tiara, a circlet, stylish cuff, and so on. These

pieces of jewelry are made out of magical materials resonant to the character. The associate hearthstone must be socketed into its accompanying piece of jewelry in order to confer its benefits.

Silk Armor (Artifact 2)

This armor, spun from the finest silk and threads of magical materials, protects the wearer like armor but looks like nothing more than fine clothing. It increases the wearer's soak by one, has no mobility penalty and does not count as armor for the purposes of martial arts forms. It does count towards the dice limit for the purposes of soak-based Physique Charms. Its innocuous appearance will not provoke any negative social response, the way wearing full armor to a diplomatic meeting might.

Translation Crystal (Artifact 2)

The translation crystal is a large, flat rectangular crystal set in a frame of blue jade and orichalcum. When placed over any text — including any ciphers — it automatically translates it to the ancient language of Old Realm. A character who does not understand Old Realm can commit a mote to read it in their native language instead.

GREATER WONDERS

Typically weapons and armor, these masterpieces of the magical materials are always Secondary or Primary. Players may choose to transform any mundane weapon or armor into its artifact equivalent by granting it the Artifact tag. This is a secondary Artifact, or Artifact 3. They should give it a unique name and detail a sentence or two of its history. There's no need to define its Evocations immediately — those can be added later as the Essence of wielder and artifact grow used to one another.

Devil-Darting Needle (Artifact 3)

Adamant Dire Lance

A diamond-sharp blade shaped like a dragonfly's wing, veined with golden circuitry;

once an ornamental weapon displayed by an indolent senator of the First Age.

Type: Heavy Melee Weapon

Tags: Artifact, Melee, Reaching, Two-Handed
Hearthstone Slots: 2

When Devil-Darting Needle is readied, its wielder cannot be targeted by ranged combat attacks during a round if she has already Rushed or Sprinted (p.XX), or taken other special movement such as those granted by Charms.

Devil-Darting Needle contains the following evocation:

Thread from the Eye

Prerequisites: Finesse 2

When an opponent the wielder has previously targeted with an attack using Devil-Darting Needle moves away from her, she may spend 1 Power to reflexively move one Range band directly toward them if she has the physical means to do so, even if she has already moved this round. This evocation may be used even if her target has concealed themselves, though it does not grant exact knowledge of their location.

Resonant: The wielder's next attack against an enemy targeted with Thread from the Eye ignores half their Defense, if **withering**, or half their soak, if **decisive**.

Fist of Titans (Artifact 3)

White Jade Grand Goremaul

Taller than most men, with a massive head shaped like two bejeweled fists; once wielded by the Nameless Hero during the Divine Revolution to defeat monstrous living mountains.

Type: Heavy Melee Weapon

Tags: Artifact, Melee, Two-Handed, Smashing
Hearthstone Slots: 3

Close combat attacks with Fist of Titans can benefit from Aim actions. Every Aim action builds one charge within the weapon. The

wielder may exchange charges for bonus successes on step 3 of Knockback and Knockdown gambits (p.XX), as well as any other gambits involving overwhelming force. Fist of Titans can hold a number of charges equal to the number of its socketed Earth-aspected hearthstones (p.XX) plus its wielder's Essence Rating.

Fist of Titans contains the following Evocation:

Idol-Toppling Shockwave

Prerequisites: Force 3

Spend one or more charges to supplement a special Knockdown gambit targeting everyone — friend or foe — within short range. Add the number of charges spent both as bonus dice and bonus successes on Step 3 of the gambit. Characters with Legendary Size (p.XX) reduce Defense by one against this attack. Characters who are knocked prone by Idol-Toppling Shockwave lose 1 Power.

Resonant: The wielder may flurry this Knockdown gambit with a **withering** attack against a prone enemy, gaining one additional Overwhelming rating (p.XX) for each charge previously spent on Idol-Toppling Shockwave.

The Emerald Thurible (Artifact 3)

An ancient censer of Malfean bronze worn on a golden chain, redolent with forbidden incense and graven with demonic runes. Does not actually contain emeralds, surprisingly.

Hearthstone Slots: 1

The Emerald Thurible is a unique artifact that aids in demon-summoning. When incorporated into a summoning venture, a sorcerer may summon a demon of one circle beyond what their initiation allows. When filled with the appropriate herbs and incense gathered from the Demon City itself, it reduces all obstacles in the summoning venture by a level of Difficulty.

The Wrought from rune-etched orichalcum, this artifact hosts a blazing ruby with ten facets, each containing a thousand reflections.

Talisman of Ten Thousand Eyes (Artifact 4)

The Talisman allows for initiation into sorcery with an eponymous shaping ritual as its primary power, even for mortal characters. The Talisman reveals its true power only to the Exalted.

The Talisman contains the following Evocations:

Astral Meditation

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Eye aids a character in projecting their senses beyond their body. Any spell or effect that allows her to sense things remotely or project her presence from afar, such as Silent Words of Dreams and Nightmares, may reduce its cost by two motes or 3 Will, to a minimum of zero.

Resonant: The character may bank an additional Will into the Eye, gathered during a remote projection or astral sojourn. This Will exists alongside the base and persists until it's used.

Eye of Crimson Warning

Prerequisites: Astral Meditation, Sagacity 4

The character may double-9s on any Awareness roll meant to reveal an ambush, long-term hidden threat, or innocuous arcane detail that would be overlooked by someone less studious.

Resonant: The character may double-8s on any such roll. When taking a Focus Will action based on the results of an Awareness roll, the character may bank an additional Will into the Eye.

Flying Silver Dream (Artifact 4)

Moonsilver Daiklave

A blade like a silver bird's wing, the hilt warm and comfortable in its wielder's hand; forged in a past era for one who grieved the loss of her Lunar companion.

Type: Medium Melee Weapon

Tags: Artifact, Balanced, Dual-Wield

Hearthstone Slots: 1

When invested with at least three of its wielder's Power, Flying Silver Dream becomes sentient — a separately-controlled character. It gains the stats below, which are all increased by the wielder's Essence:

Primary Pool (7): Melee Combat, Mobility, Defending Its Wielder; **Secondary Pool (5):** Join Battle; **Tertiary Pool (1):** Disobeying Its Wielder's Orders

Essence: Wielder's Essence

Defense: 3

Hardness: 3; **Soak:** 5

Flying Silver Dream may take actions independent of its wielder, tracking its own Power separate from his. It flies freely in any direction but cannot travel farther than short range from the Exalt. If forced beyond that range, it will devote its actions to returning. Flying Silver Dream has a Power track but no health levels — instead, decisive attacks drain it of Power. When Flying Silver Dream reaches 0 Power, it flies back to its wielder's hand, inactive.

Flying Silver Dream contains the following Evocations:

Flickering Moonsilver Protector

Prerequisites: Forging an Intimacy toward Flying Silver Dream

Flying Silver Dream may use the Charms Guard Breaking Technique (p. XX) and Loyal Guardian Approach (p. XX), spending either 2 Power or one of its wielder's motes.

Resonant: Flying Silver Dream has access to the Solar, Lunar, or Alchemical modes of these Charms at your choice.

Eternal Moonsilver Champion

Prerequisites: Flickering Moonsilver Protector, Essence 2

When its wielder fills his Incapacitated level for the first time in a scene, Flying Silver Dream activates with 1 Power. The weapon's Power track cannot be reduced below 1 for the scene, and it gains access to his motes and Anima track, as well as any of his Charms a flying daiklave could feasibly benefit from. If the wielder dies, this effect lingers for as long as the Storyteller deems appropriate.

Midnight Thorn (Artifact 3)

Green Jade Chain Shirt

Rather than the clink of metal, the rings of this chain shirt sound like rustling leaves; a tool of the Scarlet Empress' favored spies, now thought lost.

Type: Light Armor

Tags: Artifact, Silent

Hearthstone Slots: 1

Wearing Midnight Thorn when rolling to establish Stealth under plant-based concealment (p.XX) removes up to three points of penalties from the roll. If the plant-based concealment was created using Razor Bloom Barrier, the bearer may add her Navigate as bonus dice to the roll.

Midnight Thorn contains the following evocation:

Razor Bloom Barrier

Prerequisites: Navigate 3 or Stealth 3

Spend 1 mote to create a razor bloom and throw it within close range. In seconds, the bloom grows into a thick growth of native plant life, providing light cover (p.XX) without penalizing the bearer's Accuracy. The plant growth withers to dust at the end of the scene.

Resonant: The bearer may use Razor Bloom Barrier at Step 8 after an attack damages her. If her attacker is at close range, they must succeed a Finesse + Physique roll difficulty 5 or be knocked prone by the rapid growth.

Orichalcum Hunting Hawk (Artifact 3)

Orichalcum Powerbow

Fashioned in the shape of a swooping kestrel, strung from between the tips of its wings; a gift of love from a Solar artisan to his sky-spirit mate, stolen during the Wyld Crusade.

Type: Medium Ranged Weapon

Tags: Artifact, Ranged (Long) **Hearthstone Slots:** 1

Wielding Orichalcum Hunting Hawk allows the wielder to take Aim actions while leaping, falling, or flying. Also, Charms or other effects that enhance his vertical movement (such as Monkey Leap Technique or Eagle-Wing Technique) carry him one Range band further.

Orichalcum Hunting Hawk contains the following evocation:

Drifting Hawk Tactics

Prerequisites: Ranged Combat 2

After taking Aim or making a ranged attack in midair, the wielder may continue to hover in place until the beginning of his next turn. By spending two Power, he can also drift one Range band up and away from his targets, even if he has already taken his move action.

Resonant: The turn after spending two Power to drift further, the wielder may make a **decisive** attack before landing, spending 1 mote on Step 3 to add successes equal to the number of Range bands between him and his opponent.

Shining Ice Mirror (Artifact 3)

Blue Jade Reaper Daiklave

A minimalist blade, the color of primordial elemental ice; recently unearthed from a First Age tomb beneath a glacier, its last three owners have been found frozen and torn asunder.

Type: Medium Melee Weapon

Tags: Artifact, Melee, Paired

Hearthstone Slots: 1

When Shining Ice Mirror is used in a stunted defense against social influence (p.XX) meant to threaten, intimidate, or overawe the wielder, she increases her Resolve by two.

Shining Ice Mirror contains the following evocation:

Cold Moon Slash

Prerequisites: Close Combat 3

Spend 1 Mote to supplement a **decisive** attack taken at up to short range. Enemies damaged by the wielder's attack also suffer a one-success penalty to Athletics rolls, and reduce Defense by one until the start of her next turn.

Resonant: Enemies affected by Cold Moon Slash can neither flurry actions nor move more than one Range band in their turn.

Volcano Cutter (Artifact 5)

Red Jade Grand Daiklave

A massive, weighty blade carved with dark channels shaped like flames; powered by a fire-aspected manse dedicated solely to its function.

Type: Heavy Melee Weapon

Tags: Artifact, Melee, Reaching, Two-Handed

Hearthstone Slots: 2

Withering attacks with Volcano Cutter grant two additional Power when no 1s appear on the roll.

Volcano Cutter contains the following evocations:

Grand Eruption

Prerequisites: none

Spend 2 Anima to thrust Volcano Cutter into the ground, creating an eruption point at the wielder's feet. This eruption point is an environmental hazard with the stats of a burning building (p. XX), extending through the entirety of his Range band and lasting the scene, or until she uses Pregnant Flame Exhumation or Pyroclastic Holocaust Judgment. When an eruption point successfully damages a

significant enemy or battle group, the wielder gains one Power.

Resonant: The wielder ignores damage from eruption points while she holds Volcano Cutter.

Pregnant Flame Exhumation

Prerequisites: Grand Eruption, creating an eruption point 3 times in past conflicts

The wielder draws Volcano Cutter along the surface of an eruption point to call the power back into her blade, removing the hazard from the battlefield. Her next decisive attack deals two dice of damage for each significant enemy or battle group damaged by the eruption point.

Pyroclastic Holocaust Judgment

Prerequisites: Pregnant Flame Exhumation, reaching iconic anima while holding Volcano Cutter three times in past conflicts

All existing eruption points explode, transforming into cataclysms with a damage/interval of 10/round, difficulty 7. After two of the wielder's turns, they become fields of lava (p. XX) and no longer feed Pregnant Flame Exhumation. This evocation may only be used once a story.

Resonant: The wielder ignores damage from cataclysms while she holds Volcano Cutter.

Mantle of the First Sorcerer (Artifact 5)

A simple and worn greatcloak of red silk, bearing the shadowed silhouette of a feminine form and threaded with hair-thin designs of orichalcum and red jade.

Rumored to be the actual cloak of Brigid, Mother of Sorcery, the Mantle of the First Sorcerer bears her legacy nonetheless. It is one of the most puissant sorcerous artifacts in existence.

Previously, the Scarlet Empress bore the mantle; since her disappearance, the Mantle's current whereabouts are unknown. The Mantle allows a character to purchase a sorcerous initiation greater than normally permitted for

her Exalt type (see p. XX), so long as she meets the prerequisites. This extends to sorcerous workings, allowing for greater Ambitions, but doesn't work for necromancy. The mantle counts as orichalcum and jade for resonance.

The Mantle contains the following Evocations:

Root of All Spells

Prerequisites: Sagacity 3

The Mantle focuses the sorcerer. During a Focus Will action, she may reroll up to three failed dice per action.

Resonant: The sorcerer may treat the Mantle as a repository of Essence and Will; she may hold an additional mote or Will inside the Mantle indefinitely, withdrawing it when needed.

By the Stones of Cinnabar

Prerequisites: Root of All Spells, Sagacity 4

The Mantle reinforces a sorcerous working. The Mantle counts as an additional Means, or the primary Means if the sorcerer has none other.

Resonant: The Mantle also reduces the number of ventures needed for Finesse by one.

Mother of Sorcery

Prerequisites: By the Stones of Cinnabar, Sagacity 5

The character may adopt multiple shaping rituals beyond those of her initiations, opening infinite variety in gathering Will. Each shaping ritual must be learned normally and purchased along with a suitably similar spell.

MANSES AND DEMESNES

A manse is sacred architecture constructed over a place of power: a demesne. Manses can range in size from a road-side shrine able to shelter a single traveler from the rain, to a city-spanning redoubt housing an entire legion. The nature of Creation is that geomantic leylines can and do shift, revealing and dissolving demesnes frequently enough that unclaimed places of power still exist in the present age.

It takes a skilled architect to erect functional manses — while a manse can be its own reward, the ultimate goal is to funnel a demesne's raw energies into a hearthstone. Hearthstones are jewels of crystallized essence, usually produced by the careful design of a manse though rarely formed "wild" in an uncapped demesne. Every hearthstone is as unique as the geomancy that produced it — though they're all roughly the size of a chicken's egg — and, like manses and demesnes, every hearthstone's power reflects one of the five elements, the sun, stars, moon, or Underworld.

PLACES OF POWER

Essence exists throughout Creation — in fact, Creation is *made* of Essence. This power is at its purest form in demesnes and manses, where Essence is so concentrated along the crisscrossing ley-lines of Creation that it warps the world around it, filling it with natural wonders and strange magic. Characters within the grounds of a demesne or manse regenerate one additional mote per scene. Taking a recovery scene within a manse or demense restores all motes.

Although uncommon, some effects can duplicate the Essence-restoring power of a demesne. The Baths of Bahab-Ust are famed in the South for their recuperative powers; while they do not sit on any ley-lines, the baths are stoked with rare herbal reagents. Master thaumaturges sometimes produce elixirs that quicken Essence respiration as well, although the process is unpredictable and the medicine is swift to spoil. Whatever the source, these effects do not stack with the Essence regeneration of a proper demesne or manse — they merely replicate them.

Essence in the Underworld

Previous iterations of *Exalted* have penalized living characters when in the Underworld and vice-versa, making it harder to respire motes and requiring a Hearthstone to recover their

energies when they're not somewhere they should be. This does not apply in **Exalted: Essence** — the living find it uncomfortable to filter the bleak Essence of death through their souls, while the dead are discomfited by the cloying vitality of Creation, but they respire the same rate everywhere. Consider this an incitement: Go somewhere you're not supposed to be and do amazing things when you get there.

HEARTHSTONES

Taking Hearthstone as a secondary merit grants a 3-dot hearthstone with standard power and a potentially useful manse or demesne. Taking it as a primary merit grants a 5-dot hearthstone with greater power and a single evocation, and a powerful manse.

The Freedom Stone (Water, Hearthstone 5)
A stone with the appearance of tumbled turquoise, though its darker veins drift like rainclouds.

Manse Attributes: A multi-tiered palace under a great waterfall; many of the dividing walls are actually curtains of water, and it grows larger in rainy seasons. Its several hidden rooms and entrances grant a three-dice bonus to ventures involving spying, intrigue, and smuggling.

While in possession: Mundane attempts to restrain the bearer slip off, break, or otherwise suffer critical failure within seconds of touching her. This does not affect structures, like prison cells or cattle cars. The bearer also gains access to the following evocation if she meets its prerequisite.

Rain-Grasping Evasion

Prerequisites: Physique 3

Spend 1 mote to replace the Force + Close Combat roll to establish dominance in a grapple (p.XX) with Finesse + Physique. If the bearer fails the dominance roll, she adds three successes to her next escape or overcome action.

Gem of Omens (Sidereal, Hearthstone 5)
A stone of murky blue-gray, with irregular, free-form facets.

Manse Attributes: A high-end chateau in Yu-Shan, richly furnished, with a grand balcony and stunning view of the Loom of Fate. Intended for hosting dinner and Loom-viewing parties for the divine, its impressive design grants a three-dice bonus to ventures (p. XX) involving impressing clients and winning favor.

While in possession: The bearer gains incomplete glimpses of the future, allowing him to use Sagacity in place of another Ability for one roll, once a session. He also gains access to the following evocation if he meets its **Prerequisites:**

Unraveled Future

Prerequisites: Sagacity 4

If the bearer succeeds on the roll granted him by the Gem of Omens, he may replace the result of one other non-combat roll — his or someone else's — with the same number of successes this session.

Gem of the Wind-Blade (Air, Hearthstone 3)
A rectangular prism of sapphire streaked with orange.

Demesne Attributes: An open plain of remarkable flatness, from which the peak of the Imperial Mountain can be seen; the wind gusts here are unpredictable by any means.

While set in a weapon: Increases the maximum range of a thrown weapon by one, to a maximum of long range; or, grants a melee weapon the tag *Thrown (Short)*.

Ivy-Hilt Gemstone (Wood, Hearthstone 3)
A simply polished black agate with lacy green inclusions.

Manse Attributes: A smithy of Shogunate design, overgrown such that ironwood covers every possible surface. Clearing the growth is a

venture (p.XX) that will only deter its return for a season.

While set in a weapon: The bearer may reflexively command vines to creep from the stone and further bind her grip to the weapon, increasing successes required to Disarm her (p.XX) by two.

Jewel of Swift-Strike (Fire, Hearthstone 3)
Rare yellow obsidian chipped into the shape of an arrow.

Manse Attributes: A modern hunting lodge, carved from a delta of obsidian and pumice formed at the intersection of a pyroclastic flow and a river feeding the Dreaming Sea.

While set in a weapon: The bearer rerolls all non-successes on Step 3 of an attack, if he moved at least one Range band immediately before attacking.

Lantern-Soul Diamond (Solar, Hearthstone 3)
A royal-cut diamond of enhanced fire and brilliance.

Manse Attributes: A lighthouse at the shore of the Imperial Sea, chiseled from a single, massive piece of white marble. The door is only visible under the light of a shining Solar caste mark.

While in possession: The bearer may fill this hearthstone with up to two points of Anima, causing it to glow with the color of her anima banner. Points of Anima can be drawn from the hearthstone at any time after to pay the cost of a Charm.

Life Drain Stone (Abyssal, Hearthstone 3)
A black teardrop cut through with opalescent red ribbons.

Manse Attributes: A physician's laboratory in the midst of a field of unmarked graves — constructed of stolen gravestones.

While set in a weapon: Once a session, when this weapon deals at least one health level of damage to a significant character, the bearer heals the highest of their damaged health levels.

Root-of-the-Earth Gemstone (Earth, Hearthstone 3)

A blue-black star sapphire, heavy for its size.

Manse Attributes: A comfortably furnished bunker carved so deeply into bedrock, the pressure is uncomfortable for all but the attuned.

While set in a weapon: When not in his possession, the bearer's weapon becomes unnaturally heavy, requiring a Greater Feat of Strength (p.XX) to lift it. Dragging it at length requires an Extreme Feat. Using this effect to pin a prone character is a Difficulty 3 gambit.

Seven Leaping Dragon Stone (Sidereal, Hearthstone 3)

A flawless orange sapphire that appears freshly-cut.

Manse Attributes: A meditation pyramid of adamant and iron, embedded firmly in the table-top of a five-pointed mesa. Legal attunement requires permission from the Bureau of Manses, and the wait list is eighteen decades long.

While in possession: The bearer gains two Power when she activates a Form Charm.

Twin Crescent Stone (Lunar, Hearthstone 3)
White hecatolite with an unusual, spherical black inclusion — a crescent moonstone.

Manse Attributes: A small Lunar temple atop a treacherously smooth glacier. Each apparent window and doorway is false — however, studying the structure's reflection in the ice will reveal its true entrance.

While set in a paired weapon: The bearer may reflexively create a phantom duplicate of his weapon. This duplicate has the same traits as its original, but none of its magical effects.

APPENDIX

EXIGENTS AND CUSTOM CHARM CREATION

Exalted: Essence provide many charms, both for general use and specific Exalted types. While Exigent Exalted can and should take advantage of Universal Charms, their bespoke nature requires players and Storytellers adapt or create new modified or new Charms and Modes for their use.

CHARM ADAPTATION AND MODIFICATION

The simplest way to provide Charms or Modes for an Exigent character is to adapt them from other Charm sets. This serves as a mechanical example from which to borrow.

Adapted Charms should fit the Exigent's theme and particular Exaltation. For Janest, the Strawmaiden, chosen of Ten Sheaves the Harvest God having a version of Boundary Marking Meditation (p. XX) focused on fields and rural land for her use is a natural fit.

However, giving her a version of the Liminal charm Muscle-Hemorrhaging Exertion to represent the Strawmaiden's impressive physical might may not fit. Muscle-Hemorrhaging Exertion carries with it costs and additional effects very specific to its Liminal nature that don't cleanly map to the ideas behind Janest's Exaltation. Self-destructive acts of brute strength don't fit an Exaltation fueled by community and growth.

Keep in mind the Celestial or Terrestrial nature of the Charm being adapted is important.

Exalted: Essence doesn't rely on a wide gap between Exalt types in general ability, deciding that a Solar Charm should be adapted directly into a Terrestrial Exigent's Charm should involve tightening the scope of the Charm to reflect nature of the Exigent. Janest's general heroic prowess allows her direct access to Iron Whirlwind Technique (p. XX), but a member of a Sword God's numerous chosen of blades might have a more limited version that only functions with specific consecrated blades.

Terrestrial Charms may also be too limiting or specific for a Celestial Exigent's use. All-Encompassing Earth Sense's (p. XX) range and limitations for mobile targets can be dispensed with in favor of Stalks Have Eyes's greater range and bonuses (p. XX).

MODIFICATION

Sometimes, the general capabilities of a Charm or Mode fit an Exigent's theme, but there are small changes desired. When adapting Boundary Marking Meditation, Janest's player changes the Attribute-based requirements for the Lunar charm to Ability based requirements reflecting Janest's charm set. Janest's player also decides that it should play into Janest's focus on fields, cultivated land, and rural communities. The Storyteller agrees, but reminds Janest's player that since Janest is a celestial-level Exigent, the Strawmaiden's version of the charm shouldn't be noticeably weaker or more restricted. The final modifications focus on Janest using the power on an area of cultivated land or using the qualities she defines to make the region more like one.

NEW CHARM CONSTRUCTION

There are many reasons players and Storytellers want to create additional Charms. There may be effects or powers that feel sensible for a particular Exalt that aren't present, or a desire for a character to develop their abilities in a unique way. Or there might be an interest in exploring Exalted capabilities in a way that the game hasn't yet addressed; the potential for exploring the abilities of any single type of Chosen is much deeper than can be met by an entire series of books. Or a player may want to convert favorites from **Exalted Third Edition** content. For more direction, see p. XX.

For Exigent Exalted, there's a more pressing desire to create new Charms. Universal Charms offer a wide swath of capabilities, but by their generalist nature they lack powers that directly

tie into the Exigent's theme. Adapting powers from other Exalt types runs into a similar problem, especially for abilities that should be thematically central.

The following rules outline a useful process for creating and evaluating new powers for the various Chosen.

These rules assume a certain level of good faith on their users' part. Adding new mechanical elements to a game always runs the risk of creating undesirable or unpredictable results, and attempts to "break" the game may certainly be possible. If a new creation unbalances the game or otherwise creates a negative play experience, players and Storytellers should work to revise it to something more acceptable for everyone around the table.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CHARM CREATION

The definitions and expectations for Charms are set on p. XX, under "What are Charms?" This provides basic precepts for Charm creation: Charms typically do one specific thing or linked set of things, rather than offer a wide or nebulous swath of abilities. The way a Charm represents its narrative, in-setting capabilities may have several mechanical expressions, but they all serve the same core idea.

An example: A Charm such as Graceful Crane Stance

Graceful Crane Stance

Prerequisites: Athletics 1

The Exalt gains perfect balance, able to stand on wire, a crumbling parapet, or the top of a pine tree without issue.

Commit 1 mote. For the rest of the scene, the Exalt can stand on or run along things too narrow or weak to support them normally, with no chance of falling or breaking through. They never have to roll Finesse + Athletics to avoid falling. Increase the cost of the Knockdown gambit by her Essence.

...offers a narrative capability alongside two mechanical benefits. The Charm's description is that it provides "perfect balance," which means the user can run along impossibly thin or delicate objects (an explicit ability not normally possible in the narrative), never risks simply falling over (and specifies the mechanical test that might normally provide that result) and gains specific mechanical bonuses to avoid being knocked down (in the form of automatic successes opposing such an effect). All of its effects, narrative and mechanical, work together to express the single idea and capability of "perfect balance."

Charms that provide positive but specific benefits, so as Graceful Crane Stance's perfect balance or Chaos-Repelling Pattern's defense against environmental warping and corrupting effects offer expansive and powerful narrative effects. They grant complete immunity to one set of effects, and then mechanical bonuses against an enemy trying to inflict that condition on them for a sizable duration. Such effects, allowing characters to preserve against specific threats or concerns, should be afforded a wide remit, offering perfect protection against the environment or hostile coincidence, while leaving the possibility open that a specialized or persistent enemy might still be able to affect them.

Chaos-Repelling Pattern (Solar): Everything within short range is completely immune to environmental twisting effects, the Exalt's allies also gain their Essence in successes to resist enemy twisting effects. This will prevent the environment from twisting around them, creating a small island of stability wherever the Exalt goes.

Effects that involve general protection from harm during combat tend to be more specific and limited. Charms such as Bulwark Stance (p. XX) refresh the user's defenses, but won't directly reduce damage from a successful blow,

while Charms like Iron Kettle Body (p. XX) reduce damage but don't make the Exalt harder to hit. If a charm does both, it's usually a capability built through multiple purchases or automatic upgrades. Undying Body (p. XX) is an example of such a charm; its various modes provide additional benefits, but require additional investment of resources.

Charms that give bonuses to attacks are similarly limited. Excellent Strike (p. XX) removes penalties to an attack and increases extra successes if it succeeds, but doesn't provide bonuses in most Modes. Many Attacks Technique (p. XX) offers an additional attack, but doesn't directly boost Power or damage. Other Charms that harm or otherwise inflict an undesirable condition on another character follow these guidelines as well. Charms that fold in additional effects have increasing cost, culminating in powerful multifaceted but devastatingly expensive powers like Janest's "Tall as the Trees, Strong as the Land" (p. XX).

Comparisons and Benchmarks

The existing Universal charms provide useful templates for newly minted Charms. As the baseline for Exalted abilities, they demonstrate what any of the chosen can do if they focus on a given area. When a player wordlessly conveys messages through the movements of crowds, Subtle Expression Method (p. XX) shows that the charm shouldn't concern itself with "will this message be understood by my target?" The player can safely assume that ability is well within Exalted capacity, and either build a Mode into Subtle Expression Method for a crowd-centric variant or use it as a starting point for a separate Charm.

Similarly, a new Charm shouldn't be so powerful or efficient that it's strictly better than a Universal Charm. Giving the Lunar Exalted or an Exigent of Swords "Excellent Strike but it does extra Damage too!" at the same level of availability and cost would obsolete the existing

Charm, and give those Exalts with access to the new Charm a disproportionate advantage in that Charm's area (in Excellent Strike's case, Close Combat.) More powerful attack charms are possible, but not for the same cost and accessibility as Excellent Strike.

When it comes to Charms meant to add raw competency, measure them against the basic Excellency. A Charm shouldn't be replaceable by an excellency; otherwise, why take it? On the other hand, a charm shouldn't be universally better than an excellency, either. Janest's Fieldhand Hefts the Haywain (p. XX) gives a more specific boost than her Physique Excellency that scales more slowly since it's based off of Essence instead of her Ability. On the other hand, it also provides a useful effect narrative effect which allows her to carry a barn indefinitely.

Exalted acting in their areas of strength may have exceptions: Lunar shapeshifting tricks are better than many disguise or stealth abilities, Liminal self-healing puts most Universal medicine effects to shame, and a Chosen of Falcons' flight abilities should be superior to Universal jumping charms. This must be done judiciously and with care that the theme of the Exalted type being created for isn't just being used as *carte blanche* to make uniformly superior charms.

Negative Effects and Offensive Actions

Actions that negatively affect another character, whether through physical harm in combat, mental stress in personal interaction, political fallout in intrigue, or miscellaneous penalties in the wider swath of Creation, should require an opposed roll or overcoming static resistance. In some cases, such as combat or social influence, the general system offers explicit guidance on what to use.

In other cases, especially involving magical curses or unearthly ills, it may be necessary to determine suitable dice pools for the Charm's

user and its potential victim. These should be symmetrical; if the Charm's user gets to use their full Attribute + Ability Roll, the opposing roll should have a similarly constructed pool. Culture-Hero Usurpation (p. XX) provides a useful example of die-pools constructed for enacting and resisting an esoteric effect: stealing the past deeds of a target.

For simple effects, a difficulty instead based on a static number for storyteller characters (usually 3, 5, or 7, based on how difficult or complex the effect is) or Attributes/Abilities for player characters. Because it is harder for a target to use Charms or other active defenses to resist such actions, this should be reserved for effects that are hindrances or inconvenient, rather than truly damaging or awful consequences.

Powers that inflict double-edged effects on a target, such as Intimacies or paired die-bonuses and penalties may benefit from unrolled efficiency; the effect happens, unless the target has a defense against it. These effects should be used sparingly, and for *specific* Intimacies or effects tied to the theme of the Charm and Exalt using it, such as with Black Wind of Desire (p.XX). It is inappropriate to inflict an intimacy of "Avoid doing whatever this Charm's user doesn't like" or paired dice conditions "one die bonus on rolls I approve of; one die penalty on rolls I dislike" as an unrolled effect.

Defensive, Protective, and Ongoing Effects

Defensive effects provide bonuses against certain attacks or threats, fully negate damaging or deleterious effects, or allow a character to avoid an undesirable fate that wouldn't otherwise permit a roll.

Numeric bonuses to general resistance rolls and combat-related statistics should always consider the limits and costs of existing defensive charms such as Bulwark Stance and

Iron Skin Concentration. Other concerns include issues of duration: Any power which enables its user to maintain a uniformly high Soak for an entire combat drastically increases their survivability against most foes, while one that dramatically increases Defense makes it incredibly difficult for many enemies to negatively affect the user at all. Such Charms may define an Exalt's approach to combat. This isn't necessarily bad, but they should come with an appropriately high cost or difficult limitation, to avoid being a thoughtless defense against everything.

On the other hand, defensive Charms with limited uses due to high costs or specific usage riders such as "once per combat," "once per session," or the like make good candidates for effects that allow themselves to break the dice limits. As long as these aren't always-available abilities a character can "turtle" behind, a nearly unbreakable defense is an interesting tool in combat making for potentially dramatic moments.

Dangerous environmental effects, atmospheric physical maladies, and unnatural warping of the body and soul are all excellent choices for preventative Charms that automatically work. The Exalted should be able to survive the rigors of Creation and other realms, and a Charm investment that provides perfect protection against environmental hazards through mote commitment is perfectly appropriate. Such effects shouldn't offer flawless protection against attacks directed at the user by hostile individuals, but instead provide bonuses against such attacks, such as Chaos-Repelling Pattern's bonus against Fair Folk shaping attacks (p. XX). These Charms offer powerful but very specific defenses, and their costs shouldn't be high, usually one committed or spent mote.

Charms that allow the Exalted to escape unwanted notice, influence, or consequences through a roll expand the capabilities of the

Chosen without removing drama from a tense scene. These effects are often paired with expansive effects against extras or other unworthy foes, such as A Drop Amongst the Ocean (p. XX). Because they still involve risk on the user's part, they're inexpensive in terms of spent or committed motes.

CHARM COSTS

As a general rule, if it does one thing it costs one mote. If it does two things, it costs two motes. If the focus of the Charm is notably powerful, it may also cost two motes or one anima. If it breaks any of the limits, it may cost Power or anima in addition to the mote cost.

THIRD EDITION CONVERSION GUIDE

Use this section to help players convert their characters from **Exalted Third Edition** to **Exalted Essence** and vice-versa.

CONVERTING CHARACTERS

This covers the basics of the character sheet.

Attributes and Abilities

Exalted Essence uses a simplified list of Abilities and Attributes, condensing twenty-five Abilities down to fourteen, and nine attributes down to three. The distinction between a character with a high Dexterity but a low Strength can still be represented meaningfully by taking higher Finesse than Force, and a higher Athletics than Physique. You'll note that Archery, Brawl, Bureaucracy, Dodge, Investigation, Larceny, Linguistics, Lore, Marital Arts, Medicine, Occult, Resistance, Ride, Sail, Socialize Survival, and Thrown have been condensed into the smaller Ability list. Here's how to determine where your Ability points should go when converting your character. This applies to conversions to or from **Exalted Third Edition**

Athletics covers the movement aspects of Athletics and Dodge. **Awareness** encompasses Awareness and Investigation. **Close Combat** covers Brawl, Melee and Martial Arts. **Embassy** covers Bureaucracy, Linguistics, and Socialize.

Physique covers the feats of strength part of Athletics as well as Resistance. **Navigate** contains Ride, Sail, and Survival. **Ranged Combat** entails Archery and Thrown. **Sagacity** includes Lore, Occult and Medicine. **Stealth** encompasses Larceny and Stealth. All other Abilities remain the same.

When converting either way, players will want to spread their points among the closest approximation. A **Third Edition** character focused on Melee and Ride easily translates his Abilities to Close Combat and Navigate. An **Essence** character focused on Physique and Sagacity must look at her Charm focus. If she is based on Feats of Strength and sorcery and spirit lore, then she will assign her **Third Edition** character dots of Athletics and Occult.

The simplified Ability list may seem like it makes characters too similar. However, the difference between a bare-knuckle boxer with high Brawl and a sword-wielding princess with high Melee can still be represented mechanically in Essence, even if they use the same Ability to attack. Different weapons, armor, and Charms enable different playstyles. The boxer takes Charms that augment their unarmed attacks, amplify their damage rolls and allow for stronger gambits and grappling, while the sword princess takes Charms to increase her number of attacks, strengthen her ability to defend her allies, and charge enemies down.

This applies to non-combat Abilities too. If a player is worried about her character being too competent at things that they shouldn't be, she can relax. A high Sagacity Wood Aspect healer may have a lot of folksy knowledge, but her focus is saving lives. She'll always be able to do more with healing people than memorizing ancient lore because that's what she bought Charms for.

Merits

The merits present in **Exalted Essence** cover the majority of what **Exalted Third Edition** calls

“story” merits. Each merit’s dot rating should convert to **Third Edition** and vice-versa. If a **Third Edition** character has a number of purchased or supernatural merits, they can simply become cosmetic (such as giant size) or the Storyteller may allow them to apply bonuses (see p. XX) when they would apply otherwise.

Choosing and Converting Charms

Essence uses less to do more. Charm effects are condensed and numbers are trimmed, but they do more individually. Characters converting from **Third Edition** to **Essence** will cut their amount of Charms in half. That's okay; between Exalt and Caste or Aspect Advantages, and the actual effect of Charms in **Essence** typically having the effect of one or more 3e Charms, the difference should feel minimal. If you want more Charms in **Essence**, feel free to take more. Up to three extra per **Essence** level is a good amount.

When converting Charms from **Third Edition** into **Essence**, it's important to look at what effect the Charm has. Some Charms convert better than others because of differing approaches. Certain effects do not exist in **Essence**, such as rerolling specific numbers or initiative crashing, and vice versa, like a lowered dice cap and Building or sharing Power. **Essence** Charms also have a shorter template and a briefer description. Keep this in mind when deciding how to convert Charms.

When looking between an existing Charm list from **Third Edition** and converting to **Essence**, review the section on **General Principles of Charm Creation** (p. XX). This walks players and Storytellers through **Essence**’s approach to Charm design. Together, the table should be able to figure out the best way to carry their effects over. As a general principle, if a **Third Edition** Charm affects initiative, then it should interact with Power. Power is a much more valuable resource in **Essence**, however, so Charms that cost initiative do not need to cost Power unless they also have the Perilous

keyword. Charms that cost anima retain this cost — both systems place equal value on that resource. If a Charm has a Willpower cost, this extra charge can be reflected either by a second mote, one anima, or one power. Do not use Will for this.

Charms that alter probability or raw numbers — such as dice adders, double-9s, rerolling 1s, and so on — do not need to be converted. If players enjoy that kind of effect, convert them as Charms with narrative permissions and no cost. Dice adding is covered under the Excellency, and should not be replicated.

If an effect isn't easily converted or simply doesn't work, consider looking for alternative ways to represent it that captures the spirit of the original. It could use an alternative mechanic, or be broken up into multiple Charms.

Players converting characters from **Essence** to **Third Edition** are presented with a wide swath of options. Feel free to use the increased mechanical specificity and complexity as a chance to refine character concepts. Choose effects that work similarly to the concept and feel of the character’s existing build. For example: if the character is focused a warrior-poet, writing ballads of their exploits on the dueling grounds, but skilled exclusively in unarmed combat in **Essence** their character uses Close Combat and Embassy. In **Third Edition** they'll choose Charms from rawl and Linguistics in favor of Melee or Lore.