

# World Of Darkness

*Princess The Hopeful*

*A Storytelling  
Game Of  
Fighting Fear*



Karya D



# *Princess: the Hopeful*

## *A Storytelling Game of Fighting Fear*



When they told you that you were a Princess, you felt your childhood dream had come true.

Sometimes you want to shake your childhood self, and make her see how much hard work it is to be a Princess.

They showed you how you channel your hope into magic.

You never imagined what magic really was like, how your own doubts could block your powers or turn them against you.

They said you were going to help fix the world.

Some days, you can't even fix your own life.

When you told them how you felt, they said it was OK to take a break.

But it's not OK, because you could never forgive yourself if you let everyone down.



*Princess: the Hopeful* is a fan made roleplaying game for the Chronicles of Darkness. Players take on the role of magical girls (or boys) who one day found themselves granted great magical power and the responsibility to fix all that is wrong with the world. If they can survive the trauma of real battle, learn that not every problem can be solved with a speech about friendship, and endure their enormous workload, then just maybe they can make a difference.



*Princess: the Hopeful* is a collaborative effort of posters on the [RPGnet forums](#). Our special thanks to Cru-ton, Azunth, Michael Brazier, EarthScorpion, Luc "Nickname" French, hazard151, Huitzil, Leliel, Kearin, TheKingsRaven, Naomi Li, MagicSwordsman, Martin Padilla, SaulotTheGentle and everyone else on RPGnet and elsewhere who helped in the development of *Princess: the Hopeful*.

# *Princess: the Hopeful: A Storytelling Game of Fighting Fear*

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*Princess: the Hopeful* is a fan-made roleplaying game for the *Chronicles of Darkness*, published by White Wolf Publishing. The *Chronicles of Darkness* book is needed to use this book. At the time of preparation, that book is available from [DriveThru RPG](#).

The most current version of this book is available at <https://sites.google.com/site/princessthehopeful/>

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# Introduction

*Using whatever strength I had left, I pulled off the covers, and reached for the pendant I had hung on one antenna of the television.*

*"Please come with me, Dusty," I asked of him. "I have to go save the world again."*

—Sailor Nothing

No matter how old we may be now, all of us were once young. The world was unexplored and exciting, full of possibility. What we lacked in experience and wisdom, we made up for in possibility and enthusiasm. We dreamed of fame, fortune, wealth, glory, respect. We wanted to be astronauts, cowboys, firemen, doctors, singers, rock stars, or all of the above at once. After all, we didn't know what was possible ... and that meant ANYTHING was possible. We looked at the world through guileless eyes, felt it as fully and intensely as anyone ever could. When we came to a new idea, we embraced it zealously and whole-heartedly, convinced we'd found the secret that would change the world. When we loved, we were convinced it was the most passionate ever felt; when we hurt, we thought it was a tragedy the likes of which had never been seen. We were convinced that we had the whole thing figured out, that we could make everything perfect if we just had a chance, if the grown-ups would just listen. After all, we could do anything if we put our mind to it. We were fearless. We couldn't wait to grow up so we could grab life by the horns.

And as we mature, we realize the follies of our youth. We learn that our love and pain are not unique, that everyone in the world has gone through the same; this was comforting, but it was also disappointing. We found out that there are no more cowboys, that we didn't have the money or determination for medical school, that we couldn't pass the physical to be an astronaut or that becoming a famous musician is just a matter of luck and we'd probably have to get a job doing something boring, even worse, something LAME. We learned that growing up isn't about suddenly being able to do everything you ever wanted; it's mostly about learning how stupid you were when you were young. We learned from our mistakes and shook our heads, wondering how we could ever be dumb enough to make them in the first place. Our potential was replaced with reality. We found out that no, life wasn't going to be an open book for us. We become jaded, we figure out we're not that special, that the things we love aren't really the best things in the universe, that our fresh new ideas had been tried before a thousand times. Our fearlessness turned out to be recklessness, so we cast it aside. We weren't going to change the world, we were just going to live in it.

Yet even after learning this, we still long for the fire and passion of our youths. Yes, we know that we're not that special and yes, we know the things we believed were silly... but wouldn't it be nice if they weren't? The promises of our youth could never be fulfilled... but it still felt good to think they could, right?

They can. We didn't get wiser when we grew up, we just became more cynical. We weren't stupid back then, and our greatest mistake, our only mistake, was telling ourselves that we were. We stopped putting all of our selves into everything we did because we became too afraid of failing, of letting ourselves get hurt by the effort. So we told ourselves that trying was silly. We abandoned the dreams we had rather than see them fail. We gave in to our fears.

And now it's time to overcome them.

## *A Game Of Fighting Fear*

*Princess: the Hopeful* is a game about the promises of our youth fulfilled, inspired by the *maho shoujo* or "magical girl" genre of Japanese anime and manga. Princes and Princesses are those who haven't given in to that fear of inadequacy and failure. They come from a world unlike the World of Darkness, a better world, a kinder world, a just world. They come from the world we all wished we could make before we knew it was impossible ... and they seek to prove us wrong. A better world wasn't impossible, and it still isn't. As a Princess, power isn't a gift to you, it's a responsibility.

**You can fix problems...:** There's too much we just resign ourselves to. We say, "That's just the way it is," and live with the pain. You don't have to. You can do things, real things, to solve people's problems. You don't

have to feel frustrated. You can be their white knight against the cruel world. Few people have the power to do this and the chance to see the world work the way we think it should is too tempting to pass up.

**But some problems don't want to be fixed.** Life is a Gordian knot. There's not always an easy way to do things, even against apparently supernatural threats. People are complicated and confused. They will often act against their best interests without thinking. Many insist on the status quo because they know how to live with the status quo, and something new makes all of their supposed wisdom worthless.

**Because doing good can be terrifying.** An angel is another kind of monster. Those who do what they believe is right, relentlessly, unapologetic, frequently frightening those around them. It's understandable - you have power and they don't. No matter how kind you try and be, you're taking the decision out of their hands. Not everybody will be thankful. Many will try to destroy you or chain you down. They might be right. They might be wrong. To act, you need the resolution to decide what is what and many will call that inhuman.

**And sometimes the good guys can't win.** You're powerful, but you aren't all powerful. You can't be everywhere at once. You can't account for simple bad luck. No matter how much you want to believe otherwise, you can and will fail. People will die. People will suffer. And because you're in the thick of it, you're going to feel their pain worse than if you stayed at home and turned on the TV. Doing the right thing can be a trial without end.

**But you can't walk away. Because sometimes they do.** Blissful ignorance is no longer an option. You can't hide behind the excuse that there's nothing you can do. And sensitive to the hearts of others, you can't shut out their pain - or their joy. Those rare moments of beauty and happiness are what make the fight worth it. You need to protect that, because without those occasions of hope, life is not worth living. Once your eyes are open to that fact, it's hard to shut them again.

**Sometimes you find rewards where you weren't looking for. Sometimes you find enemies where you didn't expect them.** The world will never be the same after you. You are going to *change* things, even if you're too small for the cosmos to notice just yet. You're a force of chaos, shaking people from the sleep they've been in. Once you start performing your little miracles, people will take notice. Living with and for others means you can't always be discreet. You're different. You're not playing by the rules anymore. You're laying down new rules and once people understand them, they'll try and exploit them, like they did with the old rules. You are a revolutionary force.

**You'll just have to find out for yourself.** In the end, a world of darkness is a world of possibilities. Many of them are not pleasant - we've spent millennia creating societies of light expressly out of fear of them. Under the blanket of night lies an undiscovered country. It might be empty, waiting for you to build your own palaces. It might be flush with danger, patiently lying just out of sight. And it might be hiding the very treasures we've thought were impossible. The darkness, the shadows, the occult - it is like Pandora's Box. In it might lay evils we can't imagine. But slam the lid too fast and you lock away Hope forever.

## *Theme: Fighting Fear*

*Princess: the Hopeful* is a game about making a difference. A Princess can defeat the monster, she can win the election and start instituting reforms, she can rescue the cute boy. However to do it she's going to have to face her fears. The monster isn't a harmless creature from a Saturday morning cartoon: Death is a real possibility, serious injuries are likely nightmares are almost inevitable. The election isn't won with a short speech about hope, it's a dirty campaign where her good name is viciously dragged through the mud. Sometimes the hardest part about being a hero is just ignoring how embarrassing it is to stand up for what you believe in when everyone says you're wrong. A Princess can save the day, but she's probably going to have to stare down her own nightmares to do it.

## *Mood: Exhaustion*

Sure you can solve one problem, but can you solve all of them? Can you find the energy to run for mayor, mentor the people who need it and spend all night fighting monsters? When will you sleep, and when will you have room for some desperately needed me time to think about your own problems? A Princess' magic makes her feel like every problem in the world is her personal responsibility; it's an impossible burden that will wear her mental, physical and even emotional stamina to nothing. The only way she can survive is if she can find friends to support her and allies to share the load.



# How to use this Book

Information on the Nobility, and their obligations are divided into several sections.

[Chapter 1, \*Noblesse Oblige\*](#) provides information on the Nobility, their magic, their culture, and their world.

[Chapter 2, \*Coronations\*](#) explains how to create a Princess character, describes the innate traits of Princesses, and gives several new Merits for them.

[Chapter 3, \*The Power of Love\*](#) describes the Charms, the magical powers the Nobility can develop.

[Chapter 4, \*Fighting Fear\*](#) lists the monsters and antagonists who oppose the Hopeful and all they stand for, the people who are or might become their allies, and places they could travel to.

[Appendix A, \*Embassies\*](#) describes how some Princesses open diplomatic relations with alien things found in the World of Darkness, and how this alters their magics.

[Appendix B, \*Conditions and Tilts\*](#) collects a variety of lingering conditions the Hopeful can produce or suffer from.

[Appendix C, \*Additional Rules\*](#) is a summary of rules from the *Chronicles of Darkness* series of games which are needed to play *Princess: the Hopeful* but not available in the core book.

## Sources and Inspiration

### *Maho Shoujo*

#### *Sailor Nothing*

*Sailor Nothing* is one of the oldest deconstructions, and also reconstructions, of the magical girl genre. *Sailor Nothing* sets itself apart from many of the later deconstructions by showing the horror inherent in the concept of young girls fighting monsters rather than relying on some dark secret at the heart of the magical girl powers. With the focus given to mundane evils, and the importance of friendship *Sailor Nothing* is perhaps the quintessential inspiration for *Princess*. It inspired us when we wrote *Princess*, and we hope it will inspire you as well.

#### *Mai-Otome*

*Mai-Otome* takes the magical girl genre into places it does not normally venture: politics. At heart *Mai-Otome* is about two girls (one a literal princess) forced to grow up by the harsh realities of *Realpolitik*, and in the process learning that being a magical girl is so much more than looking amazing. With friendship, growing up, magical girls and *Realpolitik* *Mai-Otome* serves well as an inspiration for *Princess: the Hopeful*

#### *Puella Magi Madoka Magica*

As one of the most popular *maho shoujo* to be created in recent years, this list cannot be complete without a mention of *Puella Magi Madoka Magica*. The truth at the heart of the *Puella Magi* makes it harder to use *Madoka* for inspiration but around the edges, those *Puella Magi* who never learn the truth, show all the struggles and heartache you might find in a *Princess*.

### *Film*

#### *Brave*

A story about a rebellious princess with a difference. It shows the consequences when a princess rebels against her obligations, that alone makes it a worthwhile inspiration for *Princess: the Hopeful*. The themes of growing up, and the importance of family only sweeten the deal.

## *Coraline*

*Coraline* falls under the archetype of “girls underground” stories. This archetype provides themes for the Dreamlands and for that purpose *Coraline* does not disappoint. Coraline’s adventures help her to grow as a person, and she returns better able to face the real world. Her antagonist also provides the quintessential inspiration for a Warden.

## *Peter Pan*

Another “girls underground story”, *Peter Pan* (the live action film released in 2001) is a brilliant portrayal of what we fear about growing up, and why we overcome those fears. It can serve as an inspiration metaphorically, or more literally to show why living a utopian life in the Dreamlands isn’t always the perfect choice. Not even for Beacons who have no royal duties to call them back.

# Chapter 1: Noblesse Oblige

*I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people.*

—Mahatma Gandhi

## *The Light and the Dark*

That's the thing about morality, it's complicated. Sages and philosophers have debated for thousands of years to answer the simplest of questions. "What is good?", "What is evil?" But is morality always so complicated? Are there not easier questions to ask? For every tough question like "Is it justified to kill one to save five?" is there not an easier question like "Is it justified to kill another for your own personal profit?"

Ask any of the Nobility and they will tell you that of course there is such a thing as objective good and evil. To the Radiant the world they inhabit makes this as clear as daylight. A Princess draws her magic from the Light. A force created by love, friendship, by effort to improve the world or just effort to help a stranger out. The Light probably isn't the absolute axis for all that is good, but if it could think you could say it's making a sincere effort to reach that exulted height. For the Nobility this is enough to point at for proof that good really does exist, because what Princesses compare the Light to is the Dark. The Dark is the Light's opposite in every way. It is a force of banal corruption, it festers where people commit acts of cruelty and inflict suffering on each other. Everything it touches is tainted with its own nature. If left unchecked it would cause an unending torrent of corruption until the Dark finally succumbs to its own nature and starves upon an empty wasteland. The scholars among the Nobility are divided upon one key question about the Dark: its origins. Some say that it is a dreadful alien being, attacking our world through humanity's cruelties for its own sustenance. Others say that we ourselves are the Dark's true origin, our sins created it and we shall forever be haunted by our crimes until such a day as we rise above them.

The contrast between Light and Dark is something every Noble is glad for. For as much as they look to the Light, even the Nobility live somewhere between Light and Dark. Sooner or later every Princess will have to make some tough moral choices; it comes with the job. On a bad day a Princess could find herself trapped for an unconscionable time with no clear answers. Struggling to stitch together some semblance of a moral solution to an impossible problem. On those days the existence of the Light can be the only thing reminding them that good exists, and it's worth fighting for.

## *The Kingdom's Fall*

When the Nobility speak of the Kingdom they refer to at least eight sovereign nations: Alhambra, Andarta, Aztallan, the Confederacy of Four Winds, Crystal Heril, Danann, Gonel and Wen-Mung. There were others, but their names, histories and even their existence are debated with little consensus. Each lived the ideals of the Light in their own way, guided by the Queen who ruled them. None were perfect but by all accounts they were fantastic places to live, prosperous, just, kind and peaceful. Yet for all its Light the Kingdom did not last forever. Even in a world of Light some things are universal, one is the necessity of compromise. A land of individual freedom must accept a lack of organization as its due. Each of the Queens chose what they deemed to be good, and accepted the cost. In time they forgot that this was a matter of preference and believed they alone had chosen the one true way. In their own way each turned rigid and dogmatic, from this simple vice the Darkness gained its first foothold in its eternal war against the Kingdom.

The Kingdoms rallied and drove the Darkness back to whatever terrible domain it came from as they had done countless times before but this time they were blinded by their dogma. Small traces of taint were overlooked, festering as "inevitable drawbacks" of the Light's civilization. Rotting away in secret the Darkness began to grow within the heart of the Kingdom. Its attacks became more frequent, more destructive, and every time it was defeated the same growing rot remained unnoticed. In the end the Darkness broke over the Kingdom like a tidal wave, the armies were routed and the cities fell, still trying to understand how the Darkness' presence was even possible.

Today little remains of the Kingdom. The domains of the five Radiant Queens live on in the Dreamlands, but the warping Gales make it hard to tell how accurate a portrayal it is. If any true records of the Kingdom exists they would be locked away deep within Alhambra's vaults, for of the Kingdom's nations only Alhambra has survived to this day, protected by its Queen's formidable magic deep within the heart of the Darkness.

## *The Long Night and the Dream*

The Darkness cannot create, it can only corrupt. This was always its greatest weakness. Those corrupted however, would retain their ability to create for a while. Among those who were tainted by the Darkness during the Fall were three mighty creatures known as the Red Queen, the White Queen and the Black Queen: the avatars of violence, self loathing and despair. These creatures knew the Light intimately, they knew that even as the Darkness turned upon itself the Light would build something new and wonderful to reclaim its place.

Guided by the Darkness' instinctive opposition to the Light the three constructed a trap deep within the Dreamlands, a mirror to reflect the Light of the world. The trap tricked the souls of the Nobility travelling towards reincarnation and drew them away from Earth. They incarnated within the Dreamlands where wonderful and elaborate illusions clouded their minds, letting them believe they lived and did their duties on Earth even while the centuries ticked away.

The Radiant call this period of history "The Long Night", and the trap that held them is simply called "The Dream". For much of human history the Radiant hardly had any presence at all. Reincarnations have always formed the vast majority of the Nobility and with the reincarnations locked away anyone who Blossomed was most likely alone and untrained. If they were lucky a group of friends might Blossom together. They would do what they can, but standing alone there was little chance of changing the world.

Only the Twilight Queens created any form of continuity for the Nobility during the Long Night. The Lady of Alhambra kept the last survivors of the Kingdom alive. The Seraphic General inducted mortal forces to throw against the Darkness. The Queen of Mirrors searched for her True Heir. The Twilight Queens were a temptation to the Princesses who Blossomed during the Long Night, but they were a temptation because they were so vital - the only constant source of support a young Princess could turn to.

## *The War of Hope*

In July 1969 mankind first set foot on the moon. The hope released by this single event was so great that for the briefest instant the Light shone brighter on Earth than it did in the Dreamlands. In a flash every soul trapped within knew that they were not on Earth as they believed. The five Queens mustered their armies against their jailors and shattered the machinery of their prison. Their victory was swift and brutal, after centuries of imprisonment the Kingdom was once again free.

The effects were far from instantaneous. The first reincarnated Princess to once again Blossom was in 1987 and the second was not until 1994. No one is even sure if the commoners of the Kingdom reincarnate at all, but no one has turned up with accurate memories of a past life in the Kingdom so far. Today the Nobility are still small in number, but they're growing fast with multiple Blossomings a year. At this point they are a minor force in the world, but have had some noticeable successes in areas where Princesses are common. (Blossomings have shown a tendency towards geographical clustering.) The first generation of Princesses have now reached middle age and many have gained positions of prestige and influence. In doing so they have caused a backlash from established power blocks, both mortal and otherwise. The Twilight Queens have also experienced a renaissance, each was active through the Long Night and were perfectly placed to take advantage of the release. New and vulnerable Princesses have been eagerly snapped up by all three sides.

As the saying goes, we live in interesting times.

# *Wearing the Coronet*

## *Blossoming*

Before her magic comes to her, there is little that marks a Noble, even to herself, from the people around her. Nobles-to-be are, as a rule, selfless, generous and idealistic, prone to offer comfort to the suffering and to call their tormentors to account; but there are many people who share those traits without ever becoming Nobles. In these years after the Release, most Nobles-to-be have reincarnated and bear the memories of their prior lives, which come out in dreams or in stories told in child's play; but all children dream, and many invent tales of magical adventure. The true significance of these childhood fancies is clear only after the crisis of Blossoming discloses what the Noble truly is and was always meant to be.

The majority of Blossomings occur in times of great stress and change in one's life. The youngest age that it has been observed is the onset of puberty, but this is rare, and many consider this a mercy, because one so young is ill-equipped, mentally and physically, to deal with the stresses of the life of a Noble. Perhaps the Light is aware that its warriors require a certain maturity to handle the powers it grants, or perhaps one must have a clear enough conceptualization of one's self to be able to transform. Alhambran tales claim that the girl who would become the Queen of Tears Blossomed at her birth, and the delay in Blossomings today is merely a sign of the corruption of the world; but most Radiant Nobles dismiss this as the self-aggrandisement of the followers of Tears, and choose to believe that it has always been this way.

Whatever the reason, there are several broad age bands in which Blossoming commonly occurs. The first of these is from the mid-to-late teens, as the individual establishes their own social identity and goes through the stresses of education. Such Princesses frequently (though, sadly, not always) have their parents as passive support, but must suffer problems with their task and how it interacts with their youth and the demands that society places upon them. Not too many people are pleased with their teenage children sneaking out, and are even less pleased when they find out that the child has been going down to the area of town where the drug dealers hang out, especially on a night when there are later reports of gang violence. At a slightly older age, there are the young adults, typically at university or just entering the workplace. In some ways, they are luckier, because they do not have to face the fact that they're not legally adults; on the other hand, many a Princess has lost her job or been forced to drop out of university due to the stresses and demands of her calling, and unlike younger ones, they don't have the same safety net of family, which means that the issue of rent and bills starts to come up. In recent years, though, there have started to crop up the first few cases of elder Blossoming. The causes of these Blossomings appear to be diverse indeed, and can be anywhere from moving to a new place, falling in love, a messy divorce, pregnancy or becoming a parent, and onsets of mental sickness. Such older individuals frequently have other responsibilities, and try hard to try to cling onto their old life.

And as for the traits that prompt a Blossoming? The Hopeful are even less sure. The individual must not be a creature of the Darkness - but, then again, a few spontaneous Blossomings have been noted among individuals who, of their own free will, managed to cast off the taint. Individuals with the Virtue of Hope, despite the name, do not Blossom in noticeably more numbers than individuals with other Virtues; nor do the Vices seem to have an overall effect. A common theme among Nobles interviewed has been this: when faced with adversity, they chose to respond in a way that reaffirmed their conscience, or faced down something which would have threatened either themselves or others. Many report a feeling that they could "never forgive themselves" if they had acted any other way, as if they would be very disappointed in themselves. In almost all cases, the Blossoming can be linked back to a single "stress point", a single reaction which either immediately, or over the course of days or weeks, led to the Blossoming, although among some of the youngest of the Enlightened appear to lack such a critical event. Such a point is usually linked to their Calling; a Troubadour might inspire her friends to stand up to bullies and, over the next few weeks, start to have odd dreams; or he might be beaten up while trying to rally his fellow immigrant workers against oppressive employers, and in a flare of blinding light, suddenly straighten up in the garb of a knight of old.

## *The Pain of the World*

The first bloom of magic in a Noble is joyous, but soon she realizes the price she must pay for it. We all react to other people's emotions, when someone is happy, or angry, or hurt we feel something in ourselves; but most

people can shy away from suffering, suppress the natural response lest it overwhelm us. Not so for a Princess. To the Nobility emotion is magic. Innocent pleasure, joy and love partake of the Light and give her strength, but hatred, cruelty and pain resonate with the Darkness, and when a Princess encounters them her magic curdles in her heart. The Hopeful *cannot* close their eyes to suffering, and in a World of Darkness there is so very much of it.

As a Princess' magic grows her Sensitivity can quite literally make life unbearable. Simply walking among people batters her with every cruelty, each and every one becomes her personal responsibility. If she is strong enough she can bear the weight, helping to undo the damage she feels makes it all bearable and perhaps one day she will find relief in a brighter future. And as for those who cannot bear the weight, their only choice is to run and hide. Stick to the quiet hours, find a nice walled palace or quiet village somewhere away from all the pain and cruelty.

Shadows are the painful product of Sensitivity, a cancerous train of thought that can grow and spread its tendrils through her mind. A Princess with Shadows upon her soul not only feels sympathy for the cruelties she witnesses, but internalizes them. She suffers flashbacks, at the worst moments she remembers the event that created shadows and feels her confidence fade. If she couldn't help then, why should she expect to do better now? These thoughts become self fulfilling: Because she feels lesser, her magic becomes lesser. It can too easily become the beginning of a vicious cycle: the Princess believes she cannot help, therefore her magic weakens, therefore she has trouble helping people, therefore she believes she cannot help.

Fortunately, this cycle can be broken before it starts. At the moment a Noble sees someone suffer, and feels the Shadows creep into her heart, she can act to bring aid to the suffering soul, or at the very least requital for their suffering. And this is the first purpose for which the Nobility are given their power, after all. Normal humans are often helpless in the face of others' pain; they turn away because there's nothing they can really do. The Hopeful can't turn away, but they are far from helpless.

## *Love is Magic*

The same Sensitivity that can make a Princess falter at suffering also opens her soul to the Light when it shines in others' hearts. By connecting with what's important - her friends and family, or her daily labor for the benefit of other people - a Princess stores power deep within herself. She remembers why life matters and what she fights for, and that feeling fills the gap in her soul. Her emotions return, pure, bright and beautiful. She's ready to face the new day.

Moreover, the mere presence of a Noble scatters a bit of the Light into those she meets, or those she loves. This Echo will soften hearts, allowing an appeal to their better nature, when a Princess is only nearby. But that isn't the whole of it - by performing a noble act, a Princess can inspire those around her with a spirit of emulation. (A great weight of Shadows, though, will twist a Noble's Echo to corrupt, rather than uplift.)

Most of all, when she needs to unlock her true power, a Princess has the ability to Transform. With the simplest effort she pushes her dreams and aspirations outwards from her soul. They flow through her body, transforming her into the woman she always wanted to be. The Nobility often tell each other that Princesses don't do magic, they are magical and Transformation is the proof. In her mundane identity a Princess is hardly recognizable as having any magic at all, but in her transformed identity. Ah, what a difference that is. Magic flows through her body, it is on the level of blood or bone. Her magic makes her stronger, more charismatic, or smarter.

Even her personality is different, but not by much. Part of it is the just the natural result of her magic: She is more confident because she is more capable, she makes more witty remarks because she can think of them faster. Other changes come from the Transformation itself, nothing important changes. Both of her two selves are fundamentally Her. The changes are little things, she uses different phrases and expressions to say the same concepts, her mannerisms are different. Like the changes to her physical body these changes are an expression of the person she wishes to be, drawn from her innermost hopes and made physical by her magic.

## *Charms and Invocations*

When she is Transformed a Noble's magic doesn't just perfect her body and mind; it overflows into powers that are quite beyond mortal ken, magic in the most obvious sense. And yet, to the Noble herself these Charms are no more (and no less) magical than anything else she can do. One of the first things a Princess learns is that she does not *do* magic. She *is* magical. A Charm that lets her take on another's appearance might feel like she's

an actress getting into character. A Charm that unlocks new ways of seeing doesn't feel like she's gotten a sixth or seventh sense, but that she's started to notice things she never paid attention to before. Even blatant magical effects like learning to fly don't feel that different from, say, learning to swim.

An observer might see a Princess jump to avoid a blade then throw a fireball, and conclude that the jump was mundane while the fireball was magical. Yet to the Princess they wouldn't feel that different. She chose to jump and her body reacted, she chose to throw fire and her body reacted. No speaking in Enochian, no need to memorize arcane principles of correspondence or chant spells in her head. The observer might even be wrong; if the Princess put all her hopes and Belief into that jump it could be a more magical action than throwing fire.

So, if magic is not a skill what does it feel like to learn a new Charm? A new magical ability already exists within the Princess as raw potential, she only has to discover it. Practice it until it becomes second nature. Any of us has the potential to read a foreign language, if we practice then over time we no longer see meaningless symbols. We look at the page and see meaning. Even if that's not actually supernatural it is amazing enough that it deserves to be called magical. Learning a Charm is much the same.

A Princess might have the ability to sense ghosts but not to see them, so she practices interpreting her senses until she no longer feels a ghost as a picking on the back of her neck. The symbols are now meaningful, she sees the ghost as clear as you or me. Charms often don't come from a deliberate attempt to produce a specific effect either. A Princess comes across a new problem and tries to solve it, sometimes the solution she reaches is a new Charm: She cannot defeat a Darkspawn in combat so she returns to her Palace to practice her swordsmanship. As she experiments and tries new things she might realize that the deft twist of her wrist she just stumbled upon will slip under her opponents guard, or she might come upon a strike that sets her blade alight.

A Charm can feel like a mental trick she performs in her own head, an attitude she applies to a problem, a new physical ability that came with practice like learning to cross your middle fingers. It could feel like anything, the only constant is that there is always some emotion behind her Charm (though truth be told there's nearly always an emotion behind anything a Princess does), it's not always the same emotion behind the same Charm. Simply that, a Princess must Believe and Feel in her actions for the magic to flow. A Charm that will cause vines to burst forth and entwine her foes will only function if she wants to trap her foes on an emotional level. Which emotions she feels will flavor the Charm: the vines will be more vicious and visibly threatening against a foe she hates and wishes to entwine in battle than when she invokes the same Charm with the excitement of a tough but enjoyable practice match.

Invocations are a different matter. So long as a Queen exists, her philosophies resonate through the souls of everybody who shares her ideals. For those Princesses and Sworn with an innate connection to the Light this resonance allows her to draw upon a measure of the Queen's magic. Through their shared values she feels the reassurance of knowing a trusted authority supports her actions, and through her shared values she channels the magical power of the Queen. Both emotionally and magically her Invocation forges a stronger Charm. The Invocations are a magnification of something we've all felt, of how our beliefs and conviction give us strength. When we fight to save someone we love our love gives us strength, and when a Princess versed in Fuoco fights to save someone she loves the Invocation focuses those same feelings into her magic making her strength all the greater.

## *Dreams of Better Things*

Within her dreams a Princess travels beyond her mind, and into the very soul of humanity. Within the [Dreamlands](#) the hopes and aspirations of mankind take life; they form vast cities, beautiful vistas with all the incomprehensible forms of a dream. The Dreamlands are more than just a metaphor, they are a true world. The inhabitants have lives and hopes, and dwell in functional societies. Many Princesses are surprised to discover something so ordinary amongst dreams and flights of fancy, but is it really so surprising that a Princess' dreams would form after how she sees the world? For the Princess who cares so much about friendship and community when she is awake, what else would she dream about?

Travelling to the Dreamlands offers many practical advantages to a Princess; she can find friends and mentors among the population including the Radiant Queens. Objects of power, often created and traded by Dreamlanders can be formed into Bequests. However the Dreamlands is not just frolicking and sunshine, once it was used by the Darkness to construct a trap for the souls of the Kingdom. Though the trap is broken its creaky machinery and the remnant of the prison's old [Wardens](#) still seek to imprison the Enlightened in a blissful dream.

# *Wardens of the Marches*

If the Darkness had an influence only over the human heart, a Noble's mission would be - well, not easy, but certainly far less dangerous. The Hopeful may be the representatives of the Light on Earth, but the Darkness has servants of its own, humans and beasts corrupted into dreadful monsters; and patches of land rotted out from below when human sins let the Darkness infect them. There are even people who worship the Darkness - who make sacrifices to it in hopes of gaining power, or who preach life-denying creeds to the gullible to spur them to self-destruction.

## *Taint and the Dark World*

The Darkness comes to every place where one person makes another suffer, and where people sink into despair. At sites of enormous cruelty - where depraved scientists performed dreadful experiments on human subjects; where kidnapped girls were sold into sexual slavery; where hardened killers waited to ambush their victims - the call of pain and fear brings it in crashing like a wave of foul water. Lesser evils, if constantly repeated - offices whose managers wield their authority to reduce everyone to quivering bootlickers; streets haunted by muggers who strip passersby of valuables; houses of drunkards and addicts who think of nothing past the next fix; quiet suburbs full of backbiters, talebearers and petty rivalries - let it drift in and build up slowly, like thickening smog.

Quickly or slowly, once the Darkness has its grip on an area, it pulls the virtue out of it. It's just so much easier to slip into habits of cruelty when hope seems far away, when the light in the air is flat and dirty, when everyone seems so coldly indifferent. The Darkness ensures that those who walk where it has touched are blighted and overshadowed; it sows temptations in their path, and tightens its hold if they yield. And as its corruption grows, a Dark World, a ruined mockery of the Earth frozen under a flickering ember where the Sun ought to shine, grows a little warmer as the Darkness brings it the stolen virtue, and the monsters stir and hunger.

## *Monsters of the Dark*

When a place sinks within the Darkness, people soon come to avoid it - if they can. Even if the foul acts that summoned it have for the moment ceased, the presence of the Dark World's Taint unsettles the soul. But it isn't always possible to stay away from a Tainted area. Those who go there, particularly those who remain there, may well grow accustomed to it - especially if they harbor a wish to do themselves the things that brought the Darkness there. These are the Darkened: they have caught a spiritual sickness, the Darkness grows within their hearts.

The infection of the Darkness can be cured, but if it isn't the patient will surely die, either in the body or in the soul. A dying body will rise again to serve the Darkness as a bestial monster: one of the Darkspawn. For the Darkspawn the Earth we know is a hunting ground, but the only true home is the Dark World; billions of them rest there, frozen until stolen life and joy drips onto them from the world above. A dying soul turns what's left into a moral monster, a Mnemosyne: a being still human in appearance, but lacking a conscience, who possesses a keen but mad intelligence and takes joy in inflicting pain.

But the worst monsters that walk the Earth in the Darkness' service are the Cataphractoï, and they rise not from cruelty, but self-destruction. When a man or woman can no longer bear the weight of living, when they slit open their veins or take poison or jump from a great height, their despair may let the Darkness claim what's left of them and raise a Cataphract, a captain in its armies. These dreadful beings are the chief enemies of the Hopeful, for they have not only power in themselves that rivals a Noble's, but an influence over lesser monsters as well.

Rarest and most potent of all are the Dethroned, former Nobility who despaired of their calling, abandoned the Light and fled to the Dark World's shelter. Fortunately, none of them can break their self-imposed exile; the Dethroned are bound within the Dark World, and can go only where the Darkness has spread its Taint. But they are idols for every Dark creature that cross their path, and where they go Tainted places boil with their corrupted worshippers.



## *Iniquitous Mysteries*

Assaults from creatures of Darkness tend to be blatant - any Noble will know what to do when a Darkspawn stalks the streets. More insidious opponents are the cults who bow down to the Darkness and entice people to enter Tainted areas or participate in depraved rites, with destructive doctrines or offers of occult power. Mnemosyne are often expert at founding or spreading these anti-human religions, and at supplying innocuous disguises for them: self-esteem counselors, purveyors of "exotic pleasures", even activists for odd causes, might all be fronts for a Dark cult. And some people don't need a Mnemosyne to find ways to call the Darkness and offer it their service. There are hints of a power of corruption in books on the occult, and in this age many of those books have been electronically scanned and posted on the Internet where any fool can study them.

## *Peers of the Realm*

A Princess who has to face the Darkness alone seldom lasts long; the Darkspawn of a strongly Tainted area, the machinations of an entrenched Dark cult, even the enmity of mundane criminals or armies eventually bring her down. In the Long Night, when Nobles Blossomed so rarely that one was incredibly lucky to meet another, the Hopeful who declined the Twilight Queens' offers of support for service worked for a few years before cracking or being killed. In these latter days, though, the Hopeful meet far oftener; it's a rare Princess who knows no others of her kind, and in some cities there are hundreds of Nobility. No Noble today is forced to bear her burdens alone.

## *Nakama*

No one understands a Noble's mission better than another Noble. The bonds that form between Princesses who have faced down the Darkness together last for a lifetime. In Japanese the word *nakama* means any of "colleague", "compatriot", "friend" or "comrade", or a group of such. Among the Nobility (if they aren't Japanese) *nakama* has a more restricted sense: the small cliques of Nobles who were thrown together (perhaps all Blossoming in the same town, or facing the same great crisis) and have become something very close to a family because of it. They share more than the Hopeful's duty - they intertwine their mundane lives, as well as their Noble calling. As youths they go shopping, see movies, plait each other's hair; as adults they sit for each other's pets and children.

A Nakama can and often does also include the actual families of the Nobles, as well as their *nakama* in the full Japanese sense - people with no trace of magic in them, but who are intimate parts of the Nobles' mundane lives. This is especially true if, as sometimes happens, the mundane companions are brought into the secret of the Nobles' magic and true role.

The primary purpose of a Nakama is to help Nobles destress after the pressures of the job, by providing friends who understand what it means to be a Princess, and occasionally forcing a Princess to get a good night's sleep no ands, ifs or buts while another member covers her responsibilities. For the most part it is rare for a Nakama to sit down and create elaborate plans for improving the world. Most Princesses have strong convictions on the subject and would rather have a supportive friend than long arguments with coworkers. However when Princesses are reacting to a problem, be it the Darkness, the Twilight Queens or something mundane like an earthquake, a Princess' first call to form a team or a task force is often her Nakama. They trust each other, know each other well enough to work well together, and of course they all have each other's phone numbers.

Frequently a just-Blossomed Princess' meetings with her first fellow Nobles aren't left to chance; it's a common thing for the first Princess of a future Nakama to meet an unusual creature in the days before they Blossom - commonly an animal that's clearly tame but not obviously owned, and is more intelligent than other beasts of its kind. The creature will follow or lead the Noble-to-be to a private place, where he speaks, introduces himself, warns her of the new world she is soon to enter, and offers himself as a guide. In the loose network of the Hopeful community these magical teachers and companions are named Shikigami. Once a Shikigami has arrived and befriended his first Noble, he usually becomes something between a boon companion and a mentor to her, and to several other Hopeful in the area who Blossom at about the same time; experienced Hopeful, indeed, have come to expect that, where a new Shikigami appears, multiple Blossomings will soon follow.

## *Sympathizers*

The Hopeful aren't called to oppose the Darkness in only its overt shapes, though it's those that their powers are best for defeating. They also have to disperse the shadow of evil that lies on every human heart; and on that side, Nobles can scarcely act without mundane allies. Unfortunately, while fighting the Darkness in its obvious outbreaks is something every Noble agrees on, the best way of bringing Light into human affairs is a matter of sharp disagreement. Even the Radiant Queens themselves are divided on the ideal form of society. In a particular situation every member in a Nakama might have a different idea of what the trouble really is and how it should be dealt with. So, it's fairly uncommon for a Nakama to work together on any mundane issue; far better for one Princess and three mundanes to cooperate with enthusiasm on a plan they agree on than for four Nobles to reach a grudging compromise.

A common way for Nobles to bring the Light to bear on mundane issues is to work on those issues *as* mundane people. It's a great deal easier, if one wishes to expose official corruption, to become a private investigator or journalist; if to heal the sick, to become a nurse or physician; if to defend the innocent, to join the police or learn criminal law. The Nobles who follow such careers find not only that their magic gains by it, but that their mundane colleagues share many of their views and can sometimes be trusted with knowledge of the Light and Darkness.

A second way to influence the world for the better is through proxies. In the course of their work against Dark creatures and cults Nobles often end up saving ordinary people who happened to be in the Darkness' way - or being saved by such a person's timely aid. One of the Charms the Hopeful can learn allows them to open a mundane's eyes to the Light, if they are willing to oppose the Darkness; these are the Sworn, who can borrow magic from the Nobility. And sheer good luck might lead a Princess to find a person who has seen a glimpse of the Light on their own; these Beacons inspire and uplift their neighbors much as a Noble does, and share their Sensitivity to suffering.

Still another way lies open to the Nobility who combine heartfelt dedication to a cause and the ability to persuade others to support them. Such Nobles may call on the Light to bless their cause and form what the Hopeful call Nations: special sects that, by convincing people to work for a worthy cause, also initiates them into mystical techniques that spring from the Light, as shaped by the Nobles' will. In many ways a Nation resembles the mystery cults that spring up around occult phenomena in the World of Darkness - the main difference, in fact, is that the typical Nation can announce its true purpose to the public, keeping secret only the powers at its disposal.

## *Camaraderies*

A single Princess and her mundane allies can resolve problems on the personal level. A full Nakama can keep the peace for a neighborhood or two. But the really big problems need many hands to tackle - and that's where the larger networks of the Hopeful came from. The first of the Camaraderies were ad hoc alliances of many Nobility to respond to forces threatening whole cities, usually from the Darkness (powerful Cataphracts, entrenched Dark cults, a few Dethroned.) Having once discovered each other, the assembled Nobles quickly saw the advantages of cooperating to face future threats, and of actively searching for other Light-touched, in their own homes and elsewhere.

The most common tasks taken on by Camaraderies are helping with secure communication, discovery and tracking of Darkness, discovery and training of new Hopeful and other light-touched characters, and promotion of resource sharing between members. Security is a frequent concern of Camaraderies because discovery by dark forces can spell disaster for its members, but this depends largely on the themes of the individual Chronicle and should be adjusted to taste. A Camaraderie that has less to fear from discovery can afford to be less paranoid.

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## *Nobles' Jargon*

The Hopeful are for the most part a young culture, and even the parts of it that regularly communicate haven't got any formal body to standardize language. While there is a linguistic legacy that predates the Release, two in fact, one is the Royal Tongue (which many Princesses find cumbersome, or just annoying)

and the other is Alhambran (which many Radiant refuse to use on principle). Consequently the Radiant use a fast changing system of slang, memes and technical terms that vary across geographical regions and even parts of the internet. The language of the Radiant is young enough that most words can easily be traced back to their origin. The special terms we use in *Princess: the Hopeful* are usually used by Princesses in the anglosphere, having been spread across that portion of the internet. Some of the more specific terms are unique to American Princesses.

Terms in Japanese originate from Bonnie Getsuei, an American (and complete japanophile) who forged much of the Radiant community in San Francisco and even provided a common entry point to the online Radiant community for English speaking princesses (presumably actual Japanese Princesses also use their native tongue).

Italian words can often trace their origin to the Queen of Hearts' earliest followers in the United Kingdoms (The Court of Hearts had a late start in America, as the first impressions of that court often clash with America's national ideals. Today few Princesses even remember what the fuss was about) influenced by Andartan culture. Those Princesses chose to use a romance language, and since they didn't want to use French, Princesses everywhere sprinkle their magic with Italian terms.

Greek and Latin words both share origins in the Court of Diamonds; the early Lights were the first to attempt to begin classifying and studying Hopeful magic and related phenomena. This project was split between those who were more influenced by their Queen and wanted to use Greek, and those who were more influenced by human academia and wanted to use Latin. The argument was never settled and various words from both languages have become part of the Princess lexicon, mostly for things a Princess can go a while without encountering as everything else was named through informal, and therefore faster, channels. Exceptionally nerdy Princesses sometimes use Greek instead of the Latin terms or Latin instead of the Greek, and Latin or Greek instead of English, Italian and Japanese terms.

The [Embassy to the Dreamlands](#), perhaps the only lasting Radiant organization to exist through the Long Night, tended to use names taken from people, living, Dreamlander and even fictional (note that the three are rarely distinct categories). Few of these terms are still in use.

Finally English is, obviously, the de-facto language of English speaking Princesses. Anything that did not get a catchy enough name quickly enough is likely to be in English. One unusual, and uniquely American, fact about English is that many Princesses adopt a more "royal" manner of speaking in their Transformed identity, which is to say a British accent ranging from "BBC English" to "not even the Queen lays it on that thick". Princesses who are actually from the United Kingdom usually use their natural accent, though as the British will parody anything some have been known to play up, or adopt, incomprehensible regional accents when around Americans.

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## *The Hopeful on the Net*

The Internet, developing almost congruently with the rise of Blossomings after the Release, has proved an invaluable tool for the growth of Camaraderies. Frequently, Camaraderies will run one or more websites exclusively for the use of its Light-touched members. Sometimes these sites are accessible by the public and the Princesses who use it do so without revealing their nature, discussing magical topics under the guise of more mundane concerns. Sometimes they are completely private, which lets the Hopeful talk frankly, but puts its members at risk if it is ever compromised. Of course, nothing stops individual Princesses from running their own sites as well. The need for communication, education, and simple desire to vent has caused a sprawling magical culture to emerge across a network of blogs, forums, and social networking sites.

Despite this, the Internet still has its dangers. Many Princesses eagerly flock to debates about occult theory or magical phenomena, but a wise Noble doesn't contribute to them. A Princess's emotional understanding of her magic often clashes with more accepted occult principles. The resulting arguments can draw the unwanted attention of experienced supernatural beings who recognize their magical style for what it is.

As useful as the Internet is, it is extremely unusual for it to be a Camaraderie's lone method of communication. Snail mail and phone calls have their own benefits and drawbacks, and nothing can replace face-to-face conversation. Depending on how clandestine they need to be a Camaraderie might have regular meetings where the members show up transformed and vote on policy changes or they might meet in secret in small groups to quickly exchange important information before departing.

## *Finding Darkness*

All Princesses need to keep the Darkness in mind. Even if a Princess isn't focused on fighting monsters or cleansing Taint, the Darkness is a threat to her. Camaraderies provide an invaluable service to Princesses that would rather spend their time healing the sick or re-socializing abused dogs by keeping track of the forces of Darkness.

Members of a local Camaraderie are almost always expected to report every encounter with Dark creatures or new Tainted areas to the Camaraderie, to ensure that knowledge of the enemy doesn't die with them. Sometimes compiling this information and notifying its members is as far as the Camaraderie goes, but they might also dive deeper into analysis and prevention, tracking the movement of Darkspawn, researching Dark cults, and compiling profiles on prominent Mnemosynes and Cataphractoi.

Mapping of Taint is a major part of tracking Darkness. In addition to simply reporting the places they've happened to encounter, Princesses might also scan the news for events that may have caused Taint, go on scouting missions, or use divination magic. Characters with the Taint Awareness Merit are particularly valuable to the cause. Prevention may also be a priority, with the Camaraderie locating places that are likely to become Tainted in the future, and urging members to make appropriate countermeasures.

## *Finding Light*

Early in her career, a Princess's greatest defense is knowledge. Without that knowledge, a newly-Blossomed Princess is especially vulnerable to the monsters lurking in the shadows. Some Princesses are lucky enough to have Shikigami that seek them out before or shortly after their Blossoming to give them the run-down. Others must hope that their peers find them before the Darkness does.

Finding and training new Princesses usually falls to the local Camaraderie(s). Any reports of vigilantism, girls in unusual costume, or displays of magic usually merit immediate investigation. That being said, the Veil can be a powerful thing, and even other Princesses can fail to pierce it. Magic is helpful in finding and recruiting new Princesses, and certain clever combinations of Charms have succeeded in bringing them to the Camaraderie, but nothing is ever certain. Even after contact is made, some new Princesses, especially those that have gotten by on their own for too long, are slow to trust.

A Camaraderie can be especially useful to Princesses who Blossom while still in school. Even when they aren't actually charities nearly all Camaraderies offer volunteer positions, so Noble minors can report their work for them as volunteer hours. Many a late-night excursion has the understandable excuse of staying late to help out, and an adult will back up the teenager's story if necessary. It gives the impression (actually pretty accurate) that one's child has become active in the community, and many families take pride in that.

Alongside finding new Nobility, Camaraderies frequently locate and protect Beacons, Sworn, and Blessed Places. In addition to the moral necessity (they attract the attention of the Darkness nearly as much as Princesses and are less able to defend themselves), the Light-touched are valuable allies and resources. Once it's existed for a few years a local Camaraderie will know of almost all the Hopeful in the city, and many other Light-touched as well - which allows it both to call on all of them in an emergency, and to introduce Nobles with interests in common to each other.

## *Organization and Policies*

As a rule, a Camaraderie's organization is entirely dependent on the circumstances of the setting and the personalities of the Nobility that administrate it. In a low-tension setting, the core of a Camaraderie might be a single Nakama that handles communication and organization while the rest of the city's Hopeful focus on their Vocations but provide assistance when asked. A high-tension setting might give rise to a rigidly organized and secretive Camaraderie where membership is required and Nakama are assigned tasks by their superiors. Some cities may have no Camaraderie at all, while some might have two or more. The following guidelines are only frequently true.

- A Camaraderie's policies are not defined by a single person. Sometimes a single Nakama votes internally, but usually every member has a say. That might mean there are strict rules about voting or that the members discuss it until they can come to an agreement.

- Camaraderies don't have explicit ranks (apart from Princess, Sworn, Beacon, and mundane, and sometimes not even that). Merit, experience, and contribution are usually recognized informally and members in high regard have more pull than others, but this is true of any group of people.
- Camaraderies assign duties to those willing to do them. Only when no one volunteers are nominations called for, and even then Camaraderies are usually reluctant to force the issue, preferring to rely on guilt when withholding resources will likely just hurt others.

## *Mundane Members*

Although Camaraderies are primarily concerned with magical issues, their membership isn't necessarily comprised only of the Light-touched. Anyone willing to pitch in is accepted as a member, whether or not they have magic powers. While membership can be more dangerous and less beneficial for mortals, Princesses have a deep respect for those who would fight the Darkness without magic to defend them.

Regular people who join a Camaraderie usually do so in order to have their time and money directed to the place it can do the most good. They can expect that their concerns are listened to with the same weight as a Princess and can make the same kinds of requests. Often, mundane members are made into Sworn, if such a thing is within the Camaraderie's capabilities and the mundanes have proven themselves.

Some Camaraderies, especially those with a front organization, have employees. Because they aren't usually aware of the Camaraderie's true nature, they're not usually considered full members, but Princesses make sure to pay attention to their troubles and opinions. While some might treat mundanes as second-class citizens, most are aware of this temptation and do their best to resist it.

A Camaraderie's open handed nature extends to other supernatural beings as well. While it would be quite unusual for a blood-sucker to join, it wouldn't be inconceivable. Every World of Darkness game line has characters with the potential to do good and make the world a better place. They're granted the same benefits and duties as any mundane member, though they might be watched with more suspicion at first.

## *Principalities*

An important variation of Camaraderies appeared somewhat later, when the Hopeful applied the principle of mutual aid to more normal issues than intrusions from the Darkness. In several cities the leaders of the first Camaraderie tried to expand its mission to include such issues, and touched off political quarrels and bad feelings that split the Camaraderie or threatened to. The veterans of those early divisions are wiser now; they encourage groups of Nobles who share the same passions to form groups of their own, each to its own issue. At first these groups were also called Camaraderies, and some Nobles still do, but the differences in their objects and structures has led most to use a different name: Principalities.

Unlike Camaraderies, Principalities tend to help members with their Vocations rather than the general duties of a Princess. A large Principality of healers (Mender and otherwise) might put their skills and resources together to assist medical efforts, while a smaller one might tie thespians of various stripes from multiple Nakama to support a community theater. Due to their more mundane aims, Principalities are far more open to mundane members - it's even common for them to appear inside a mundane institution when a few Nobles who happen to belong to it discover each other's presence and decide to collaborate. For the same reason, Principalities are very likely to become Nations so mundane members can benefit from the Light. (Camaraderies generally are not built around Nations, because their goals aren't easily explained to mundane people. Only places where supernatural threats are overwhelming will have Camaraderies that are Nations as well.)

Successful and long-lasting Principalities tend to grow beyond the city where they were founded, and sometimes even beyond the control of the Nobles who created it, as the mundane side of the organization dilutes their supernatural contributions. This is normally a sign of success, as it implies that large numbers of mundane people are being guided by the founders' ideals; but it can lead to trouble if the mundane members interpret those ideas in ways the founders didn't intend.

## *Breaks*

Eventually, there will be disagreements. It's an unfortunate truth of humanity. A group of Knaves disagrees with the rigidity of the Camaraderie's structure breaks off to form a group with a more personal structure. A

Champion, dissatisfied with the return on her investment, founds a Camaraderie for those who agree that all members should contribute equally. Because Princesses are generally pretty good at putting their differences aside and working together, it's important to think about what differentiates separate Camaraderies, whether its philosophical or practical.

## *Founding a Camaraderie*

Creating a Camaraderie, especially in an area without one, is a perfect goal for a Nakama of player characters. They'll need to convince local Hopeful, establish infrastructure, gather resources, and make a name for themselves. Characters forming a new Camaraderie can represent their gradual efforts with the Allies, Contacts, or even Staff Merits, representing the characters they've recruited. Once they've reached a certain point, those Merit dots should be traded for Status dots.

## *Callings*

A Princess' Calling is the heart of her quest to bring light to the world. It determines which oaths are part of her Belief, what duties she performs to regain Wisps, which Attributes are increased when she transforms and to which three of the ten Charm families she has affinity, allowing her to purchase Charms from these families at a reduced cost.

## *The Three Oaths*

Each Calling defines three sacred oaths, listed in order from the most important to the least. If a Princess breaks any of the oaths of her Calling, she immediately reaches a [breaking point](#). Usually, breaking the third oath is a compromise with no modifier, breaking the second is a compromise with a -1 penalty, and breaking the first is a compromise with a -2 penalty. The Storyteller is of course free to adjust the modifiers to reflect the situation in the game.

# Champion

*Be strong for the weak*

Champions epitomize the ancient concept of a hero - those who accomplish. In the Kingdom, they were the defenders and the conquerors, the dragon slayers and the chain smashers. Their counterparts in the Reborn world value strength for altruistic reasons. They serve the weak. Moreover, they enjoy physical accomplishment for its own sake - Champions frequently sprout from athletes, those with a penchant for construction or day labor, and even brawlers. Anyone who loves to push their body to the limit or appreciates the simple need for a sturdy pair of hands makes for a grand Champion.

Given their emphasis on physique, some tend to mistake Champions as simple-minded or naturally violent. Rather, they just look for direct solutions. To them, a problem is something that needs to be done. If they can't find a physical solution, something they can flat out do, then Champions will break the situation down until they can. They cut the Gordian knot, instead of puzzling over it. If there is a weakness that stems from this tendency, it's that Champions tend to be blind to someone's more sublime pain or motivations, but it also makes them refreshingly straightforward and realistic.

## Dreams

Champions dream of victories on a grand level - armies defeated single-handedly, mountains knocked down, rivers wrestled from their paths, buildings held up for days at end. Their exploits are the stuff of Gilgamesh, Hercules, and Samson. But when they dream of the Cataclysm, they see weapons snatched from their hands, their own bodies turning sickly and weak, and dark throngs they overpower and humiliate them.

## Magic

Champions have affinity to the [Bless](#), [Fight](#) and [Perfect](#) Charm families.

Starting Champions get one transformed Attribute dot in either Strength or Resolve.

## Duties

Champions regain magic whenever they perform a task for somebody who physically incapable or overwhelmed and don't have the time and/or resources they need. This can mean doing chores for an elderly neighbor, working for a charity or volunteer effort, protecting a classmate from a bully, or otherwise making a sacrifice of your time and effort for someone else's benefit.

Champions also restore their magic by protecting the innocent. Wiping out a nest of Darkspawn, defending a child from a wild animal, even walking the beat as a police officer can all fulfill a Champion's duties.

## Oaths

**First Oath:** I must never abandon those who need my protection. Even if someone isn't staring down a horrible creature of Darkness right now, the chance remains that they could in the future. If someone needs to be watched over, they need to be watched over, and I can't ignore that need.

**Second Oath:** I shall swear my loyalty to a cause. Might is never the end, only the means. My cause shall determine when violence is acceptable, and for what reasons a sword may be drawn. I may change my cause but I must always have one, and once sworn I must uphold the values and laws enshrined by my cause.

**Third Oath:** I should never back down from a challenge. I am a Champion - I succeed where others may fail, I triumph against overwhelming odds. Unless some greater cause demands my attention, I should never back down from hardship or accept defeat; if I can't win at something, I should train until I can.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Graces:** You want the truth? Ask a Grace. You might not like what you hear, but you probably need to hear it.
  - **Menders:** Fine, you tend the wounded. I'll go get you some patients.
  - **Seekers:** By the time you get done talking about how to kill the bad thing, I will have already killed it.
  - **Troubadours:** Why are you just standing there singing? Hit something!
  - **Vampires:** We have a word for these where I come from - "targets."
  - **Werewolves:** Nice doggy... we're on the same side, remember?
  - **Mages:** Don't make me come over there.
  - **Prometheans:** I feel sorry for you, really, but you have to move on now.
  - **Changelings:** Yes, your life sucks. Now what are you going to do about it?
  - **Sin-Eaters:** If you narrowly escape death, but then make yourself a slave to a dead thing, you haven't really escaped death at all, have you?
  - **Mummies:** You can't remember why you're fighting, I wouldn't want to be you. Not for all your power and immortality.
  - **Beasts:** Spare me the bullshit. Are you going to stop hurting people or are we going to fight?
  - **Mad Scientists:** So, could you show me how to use that thing?
  - **Leviathans:** Keep hitting it, try everything! Something's got to work!
  - **Hunters:** You guys are crazy! How can I help?
  - **Mortals:** My job would be a lot easier if these guys would step up, but some of them just can't. That's why I'm here.
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## *Inspiration*

The Sailor Senshi ([Sailor Moon](#))  
Nagisa Misumi ([Futari wa Pretty Cure](#))  
Buffy Summers ([Buffy the Vampire Slayer](#))  
Shoutan Himei ([Sailor Nothing](#))  
The [Magic Warrior](#) archetype in general



# Grace

*Be light for the world*

If the Cataclysm taught the world anything, it was how to lie. Mortals now wrap themselves in an armor of denial and half-truths to save themselves from humiliation and risk, to appease the majority and avoid the uncomfortable thoughts that keep them up at night. People can't save the world if they can't even save themselves and they can't save themselves if they don't even know how they are.

Graces are the maidens of revelation. In ages past, they were philosophers, priestess, and aesthetics who probed the inmost secrets of existence. They walked between the Astral Courts and prophesied fearlessly in humble villages and grand halls alike. Even in the Kingdom they were greeted with an combination of trepidation and discomfort but none would deny their powerful words. Now they continue their duty, although muted, in the modern world. Graces force those around them to look inside and confront what they find there. They are not malicious and they are not cruel they know there can be pain, but they only want to show everybody what they can already see: the golden light that could shine in all of humanity.

Graces are people people. They like to know people, they like to hear about people, they like to be around people, and they like when people are people. Nothing pains them so much as someone denying their own humanity. Others would describe them as "intrusive" or "presumptuous" always nosing into other people's business and offering advice when none is solicited. A Grace might be written off as naive or idealistic, for all her proselytizing about honesty. They due tend to be outspoken and emotional. They never restrain themselves from speaking what's on their mind or in their heart and might be no strangers to embarrassment because of it.

## *Dreams*

Graces dream of fantastic journeys across the world, witnessing moments of beauty and love unique to civilizations they've never even dreamed of. They walk in the shadows of Divine Idols and sit at the feet of Holy Teachers whose mysterious but weighty words seem to hold all the solutions to their problems, if they could just decipher them. But as the wind turns cold and the stars fall from the sky, the people turn into silent shadows who drift about in a monochrome haze and everywhere she travels is the same unending dusk.

## *Magic*

Graces have affinity for the [Bless](#), [Connect](#) and [Govern](#) Charm families.

Starting Graces get one transformed Attribute dot in either Presence or Manipulation.

## *Duties*

Graces recover their magic whenever they convince someone to open up and act on their virtuous impulses, instead of suppressing them out of fear or shame. This covers situations such as convincing an addict to seek out help, easing the anger between antagonistic relatives, getting a classmate to study for her own sake instead of cheating, or even just helping someone act on their crush.

Graces also refresh their magic by governing an organization or society. Turning a petition into a law, making executive decisions in a company or working as a judge are all sacred duties to the Graces.

## *Oaths*

**First Oath:** Whenever people ask "Why doesn't somebody do something?" - they mean me. I must make sure that things get done and vital needs are met; if no one else takes responsibility and I can do the job, I am responsible.

**Second Oath:** I cannot isolate myself from the people I wish to help, how can I improve their lives if I don't even talk to them about those lives?

**Third Oath:** I must be honest, not manipulative. Mine is the magic to build trust and bring people together, not the power to turn people into tools.

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### *Stereotypes*

- **Champions:** What will you fight for? Me perhaps?
  - **Menders:** You can only do so much by treating the symptoms.
  - **Seekers:** Look as much as you want, I have no skeletons in my closet.
  - **Troubadours:** I'll lead them, you shall inspire them.
  - **Vampires:** Explain to me again how your civilization is anything of the sort.
  - **Werewolves:** I might never know loyalty like you, but your pack has five. In a week I could make fifty friends.
  - **Mages:** Their magic isolates them from their fellow man. Nothing good can come of it.
  - **Prometheans:** You want me to teach you how to be human? Well you've come to the right person.
  - **Changelings:** If you're not careful a faerie can turn your words on you.
  - **Sin-Eaters:** This mythology was stolen from Dragonlance, and it sounds like you wrote this code of honor while you were drunk! Is there nothing of substance to your society?
  - **Mummies:** A leader and a servant, I would like the dichotomy. If only it wasn't so dysfunctional.
  - **Beasts:** I've dedicated my life to helping people unlearn the lessons you teach.
  - **Mad Scientists:** So if I get the institute to apologize for laughing at your research will you destroy the killbots? No? Do you even know what you want?!
  - **Leviathans:** A society is its citizens not its leader. If you don't believe me just look at those monsters.
  - **Hunters:** Defending yourself is admirable, but fighting outside society can lead to dark places.
  - **Mortals:** Stop calling it cheesy when it's true. The power really is inside you if you just believe in yourselves.
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### *Inspiration*

Hinamori Amu ([Shugo Chara!](#))

Madoka Kaname ([Puella Magi Madoka Magica](#))

# Mender

*Save those who cannot save themselves*

All of the Reborn feel the pain of others, but Menders are those who can't bear to live with it. Their first impulse is always to treat pain, either physical or spiritual. These were the great sages and physicians of the Kingdom, who studied the science of the human conditions on levels undreamt by modern science. A good Mender is always looking around to see how she can make those around her better. The Fallen World is like a ravenous beast, they say, and it mangles us all, all the time. Without care, none of us will ever be strong enough to break out of the mire that swallows us whole. Nobody should be made to lie crippled as their dreams run on ahead of them.

Menders are typically described as either motherly or child-like - always blindly over-protective or naively concerned with the problems right before without seeing the big picture. They are natural caretakers. They easily take responsibility for those around them and are quick to worry. Often, they will display great maturity, although they are also frequently overcome by feelings of failure or helplessness in a crisis. Some are even pacifists, although an equal number wish they had the power themselves to punish those who would harm innocents. Their unifying characteristics are a deep respect for life and horror in the face of suffering. The latter may sometimes be a weakness, but the best turn it into an iron resolve.

## Dreams

Menders' dreams are messianic in tone. They see themselves healing the sick and the lame with a touch or consoling those who cry and comforting those who mourn. In the Cathedrals and Temples of the Kingdom, they nurse even the most far gone patients back from the edge. As the skies darken, though, all around them rot in their living graves and beg for death in a resounding chorus deafens the would-be healers' very thoughts.

## Magic

Menders have affinity for the [Perfect](#), [Restore](#) and [Shape](#) Charm families.

Starting Menders get one transformed Attribute dot in either Intelligence or Dexterity.

## Duties

Menders regain magic whenever they provide consolation, comfort, and aid. They can volunteer their time as medical facilities or to provide home care, work as part of emergency hotlines, be a shoulder for someone beset by loss and grief, or do any other number of things to relieve the pain of others.

A Mender can work with machines as well as people, a cut brake line can cause as much suffering as a broken rib. In the end though, it really does come back to suffering. A Mender builds and repairs machines to help people rather than the simple joy of creation.

## Oaths

**First Oath:** I will help all who request it. No matter what, I am here to heal. If anyone requests my aid, I will help them, no matter how I feel about them or what they have done in the past. Now, I don't have to be stupid about it - if a dangerous creature seeks my aid, I can take precautions to protect myself and my friends even as I administer that aid, and I don't always necessarily need to give aid in the particular manner requested. But I am here because people are hurting, and to allow that pain to continue is to betray my Calling.

**Second Oath:** I have a sacred duty to healing, I shall do no harm and respect the autonomy of all my patients. The healer's sacred duties have survived the fall of our kingdom and I am proud to uphold their traditions.

**Third Oath:** I should not suffer any pain to continue. If I see anyone suffering, even if they don't ask for my help, even if they don't *want* my help, even if *I* don't want to help, I should do *something* to mitigate that suffering.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Champions:** Bring the wounded back here, I'll be ready.
  - **Graces:** Stop making speeches about the stars and look at how people live in the gutter.
  - **Seekers:** Seeing the truth isn't enough, you've got to do something about it.
  - **Troubadours:** Just keep their spirits up for me.
  - **Vampires:** Incurable.
  - **Werewolves:** You could do so much good if you'd just let me try and duplicate your cellular regeneration.
  - **Mages:** Give me one good reason you're not curing somebody's cancer right now, just one good reason.
  - **Prometheans:** Bringing the dead back to life... growing replacement souls... it's possible? I need to know more.
  - **Changelings:** Why do those feathers make me think of scars?
  - **Sin-Eaters:** I know you had one miraculous recovery, but as your doctor I must recommend you cut back on the drink, and the drugs, and the unprotected sex.
  - **Mummies:** I could help you remember yourself, why are you only interested in the wands I make?
  - **Beasts:** I've fixed up enough of their students to know the lessons aren't worth the cost.
  - **Mad Scientists:** Do you want to talk about it? Of course I'm not calling you mad!
  - **Leviathans:** I can't decide if they need healing or cutting out.
  - **Hunters:** If you want, I'm willing to listen to why you're so hurt.
  - **Mortals:** No this isn't going to sting, I'm better than that.
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## *Inspiration*

Shamal ([Magical Girl Lyrical Nanoha](#))

# Seeker

*Remember for those who forgot*

The desire to know is universal human trait, embedded in the heart and soul and genetic code of every man and woman on the planet. What isn't common is the will to keep chasing after those answers when things start getting dangerous. That's what sets the Seekers apart. In their previous lives, Seekers were the detectives, scientists, and scholars of the Kingdom. Their dreams of the Kingdom are filled with colleges where the secrets of the universe are revealed and cities where no lie is uttered and not even the smallest misunderstanding is present to obscure the truth. When they dream of the Cataclysm, they see grand libraries and academies burned to the ground, and lies entwined with lies in a web of deception so deep that even the most fundamental truths are uncertain.

Seekers are a varied bunch. Many Seekers act like detectives or journalists, ferreting out crime and deception from the communities under their protection. Others resemble the scientist-heroes or adventurer-archaeologists of the pulp era, braving danger and using the secrets they discover to fight evil and better the world. Some Seekers act as stoic guardians of Things Man was Not Meant to Know, keeping forbidden knowledge out of unworthy hands. A few are tricksters, walking paradoxes who use deception to befuddle their enemies and unearth hidden things. But no matter how they approach their duty, all Seekers share the common goal of unearthing hidden secrets and more importantly, using those secrets to make the world a better place.

Seekers often prioritize mental attributes to aid them in their search for the truth. Resolve is prized by all Seekers to keep searching after the truth despite hardship or weariness. Wits, Larceny, and Investigation are prioritized by Seekers who favor classic detective work, along with Manipulation, Empathy, and Persuasion to tease the truth out of reluctant witnesses or suspects. Those who were scientists or scholars before Blossoming often possess high Intelligence. Subterfuge comes in handy when a Seeker needs to investigate things without creating suspicion.

## *Dreams*

Seekers dream of secrets and discovery. They walk within libraries beyond imagination and delve deep into forgotten temples to uncover the lore of the past. With the knowledge they uncover the people build magnificent edifices and intricate devices that amaze and bring joy to people's lives. Then, a Seeker's dreams turn inwards, the secrets she uncovers speak only of her own failings and the failings of that she holds dear. She desperately searches libraries for answers that do not exist while the darkness creeps ever closer.

## *Magic*

Seekers have affinity for the [Appear](#), [Govern](#) and [Learn](#) Charm families.

Starting Seekers get one transformed Attribute dot in either Intelligence or Wits.

## *Duties*

A Seeker regains Wisps whenever she uncovers new facts or information, and whenever she teaches another something that they do not know. A Seeker could be a scientist or explorer uncovering secrets no man has ever known. She could be a detective or journalist uncovering that which unscrupulous individuals try hard to keep hidden. She could be a teacher passing what she knows to the next generation.

Many Seekers do a little of A and a little of B. A reporter uncovers a political scandal, then she publishes it. A Professor does exciting scientific research, then writes a paper and gives lectures on it.

## *Oaths*

**First Oath:** I must never lie for personal gain. Even if I acknowledge that blabbing about the supernatural would be a bad idea to people who aren't ready, I have an obligation to the Truth and I shouldn't misuse it just to help myself.

**Second Oath:** It is my duty to educate. If I am asked a question I shall try my best to answer honestly and truly.

**Third Oath:** The world is full of mysteries and they should not be left unexplored. I shall work to increase my understanding of the world every day.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Champions:** I understand how you feel, but punching people isn't the solution.
  - **Graces:** If only they asked any questions that actually mattered...
  - **Menders:** I admire your dedication, but you're treating the symptoms, not the disease.
  - **Troubadours:** Stop prattling on about art and actually do something.
  - **Vampires:** Friggin' lying bastards hurting people and lying all over the friggin' place. I hate them.
  - **Werewolves:** Great sources of lore if you convince them not to bite your head off.
  - **Mages:** All that knowledge, all that power, and all they do is squander it.
  - **Prometheans:** Don't blame them for what they are. Who's the bigger monster, the creature or Dr. Frankenstein?
  - **Changelings:** They're full of valuable insights. It's gaining their trust that's the chore.
  - **Sin-Eaters:** They probably have useful information to share. If only we could get them to talk about anything but doom and gloom.
  - **Mummies:** The truth is still there, buried beneath the sands. I could help you find it.
  - **Beasts:** Something isn't right here. If they were created to teach lessons why are they so bad at it?
  - **Mad Scientists:** You'd be surprised how much they know, if they ever bothered to remember there's a difference between what they know is real, what they think might be real and what they think is cool.
  - **Leviathans:** There are some things even I don't want to know.
  - **Hunters:** They're great in a fight, but half the time they keep shooting up what I'm looking for!
  - **Mortals:** People have been lying to you your whole lives. I'm gonna put an end to that, just you wait and see.
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## *Inspiration*

Yuki Nagato ([Haruhi Suzumiya](#))  
Sakura Kinomoto ([Cardcaptor Sakura](#))  
Ms. Frizzle ([The Magic School Bus](#))  
Yuuno Scrya ([Magical Girl Lyrical Nanoha](#))

# Troubadour

*Be inspired by the silent*

The soul is not a silent, static egg that we must shelter from the outside world until the time comes for it to hatch. Troubadours know the truth - the soul is a living, breathing maelstrom and unless we open up and let it out, it can smother to death within us. And the Troubadours have the keys to let it out.

Each Troubadour is a master of some artifice - singing, dancing, painting, sculpting, cracking jokes, or even just folding paper cranes. In their past lives, they were the queens of bards, storytellers and chanters, masters of divine instruments who imparted the wisdom of the ages in grand halls and shady groves. Now their mission now is to set us free from ourselves. Art, the Troubadours teach, gives shape to things that people can't or won't express themselves. Every song or painting or performance lets the silent and unassuming realize and crystallize the beautiful internal forces they otherwise overlook. The people of the Fallen World suffer through with souls buried under the rubble of the Kingdom. The Troubadours are archaeologists of Joy.

Most people would describe Troubadours as people with their heads in the clouds. If they aren't visualizing a statue or planning a new routine or reviewing the forms of a plot, then a Troubadour is admiring the natural art of the world around her - the patterns woven out of everyday life and the people who populate it. Troubadours are vibrant, expression personalities, not shy about baring their souls. Their chosen art tends to consume their life and they want to involve as many people as they can in it. Unfortunately, they are artists first and foremost - they easily get lost in a world of symbols and frequently can't understand people's impatience with their "frivolous" hobbies.

## *Dreams*

Troubadours dream of their own artist ambitions displayed on an epic scale - murals that span cities, songs that resonate to the heavens, whole countries dancing. In these dreams, they are the puppet-masters that make the whole world come to life with their energy and enthusiasm. The Cataclysm descends and they find themselves singers in the land of the deaf, painters in the land of the blind, clowns under the flag of melancholy, wandering a cold world as they starve in rags.

## *Magic*

Troubadours have affinity for the [Appear](#), [Inspire](#) and [Shape](#) Charm families.

Starting Troubadours get one transformed Attribute dot in either Presence or Dexterity.

## *Duties*

Troubadours draw magic from the release of others' souls. Their duty encompasses providing art that inspires or consoles those who otherwise draw into themselves, encouraging and teaching those looking for a way to express themselves, and energizing those around them with their own vibrant talents.

## *Oaths*

**First Oath:** I will use my talents to awaken, not tranquilize. My art must always carry the sting of truth and the spark of life. It must never be used to make people afraid of their own identities or trick them into silence.

**Second Oath:** My art will ever be for my audience. I must not become so wrapped up in my own ego that I forget the people around me. Without the mortals who need it, my art is merely a selfish exercise in solipsism.

**Third Oath:** I will devote myself to art. The Art is my life. As long as I draw breath I shall not cease creating and sharing my art.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Champions:** When you can use it to aim public opinion at a threat to the community, a song is a sharper weapon than a sword.
  - **Graces:** We both tell the truth, I just express it more creatively.
  - **Menders:** Tell me how I can help.
  - **Seekers:** Do you remember your teacher's lecture on the states and their capitals? No? Do you remember that song from Animaniacs? Yeah, it's like that.
  - **Vampires:** You dress yourselves up and act so elegant, but you're really just wearing funeral makeup.
  - **Werewolves:** Such strong emotions, hold still. I need to get this on canvas.
  - **Mages:** I don't understand, if you experienced a revelation like that how can you not be shouting it from the rooftops.
  - **Prometheans:** To literally touch god through your creations...
  - **Changelings:** They're very secretive, but you can see their pain in their art if you know how to look.
  - **Sin-Eaters:** Such a dynamic and energetic people, pity there's no substance behind it all.
  - **Mummies:** I admit it, I'm jealous. My works haven't stood for thousands of years.
  - **Beasts:** I used to tell my little sister monster stories when she was naughty. I still have the books, they never knifed anyone and stole their wallet.
  - **Mad Scientists:** I know how it feels to be inspired, but there's really no excuse for what you did.
  - **Leviathans:** That's just horrible, and maybe just a little bit beautiful. Wait! What am I saying?!
  - **Hunters:** You fight monsters? Without any special powers to help you out? And you win? [bites lip] Do you want my number?
  - **Mortals:** I've got something to show you, I think you'll quite like it.
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## *Inspiration*

Creamy Mami ([Creamy Mami, the Magic Angel](#))  
Princess Tutu ([Princess Tutu](#))  
Fancy Lala ([Fancy Lala](#))  
Lucia Nanami ([Mermaid Melody Pichi Pichi Pitch](#))  
Haruhara Haruko ([FLCL](#))  
The EBA ([Elite Beat Agents](#))



# Queens

It is not known exactly how many Queens and Kings once ruled the Kingdom; of this unknown number only eight still have the power to affect the world. Five are dead, two are living and one is... Transformed. Collectively the five dead Queens are known as the Radiant, for they remain loyal to the Light in spirit as well as word; for centuries the Radiant Queens were trapped deep within the Dreamlands, but now their trap has fallen. From their palaces within the Dreamlands they call out to Princesses, seeking Hopeful agents who will restore the Light upon Earth. The three Queens who were not trapped, but stayed active in the world throughout the Long Night, have all been compromised by the Darkness, or by what they've done to fight it (depending on who you ask) and, taken together, are known as the Twilight Queens.

## Choosing a Queen

It is rare for a Princess to ever agree with her Queen on every single point, and it is almost universal for a Princess to have some affinity for the teachings of several Queens. This can make it hard for Princesses (and players) to know which Court is right for them. Should a naturalist join the court of Diamonds with her fellow women of science, or the court of Clubs with her fellow nature lovers? In all likelihood such a Princess will show her shared ideals by acquiring both the Acqua and Legno Invocations, but the player still has to decide which Queen goes on the top of the character sheet. The answer is which Queen shares her approach to making a brighter tomorrow:

If you believe that ...

- ... self discovery and mutual understanding brings people together in harmony you will always be welcome in the court of [Clubs](#).
- ... clear and careful thought will lead us to a better tomorrow you'll find minds that think alike in the court of [Diamonds](#).
- ... a Princess' role is to build and lead communities into the light then you have a place in the court of [Hearts](#).
- ... spreading good cheer and laughter is the way to heal the world's ills then you'll fit right in at the court of [Spades](#).
- ... the world needs individual heroes led by all consuming passion then you can proudly join the court of [Swords](#).

The Twilight Queens also have an approach.

If you believe that being a Princess makes you the most important and special person in the world, and a utopia is just going to happen because you're around then consider the Queen of [Mirrors](#).

If you believe that the Darkness must be destroyed no matter what it takes you are ready to enlist in the armies of [Storms](#).

Finally the Queen of [Tears](#) would say that if you believe in protecting your people no matter the cost, bring them to Alhambra where they will be safe.

Yet remember that of all the Queens only the Lady of Alhambra rules a kingdom that survives to this day. She asks, and offers, more than any other Queen. A Princess who believes in protecting her people no matter what should still think if she wishes to be a part of Alhambra, and if not she should choose another Queen.

## Practical Magic

Each Queen confers a benefit, unique to her, on the Hopeful who follow her. While this benefit is a supernatural ability, a Noble may use it in either her mundane or transformed states. Nobles with a strong Belief generally find their Practical Magic grows in power.

## *Courtless Princesses*

Princesses who follow no Queen are rare, but they do exist. They lack affinity to any Invocation. They have their own form of Practical Magic; while in mundane form, a courtless Princess may spend a Wisp to activate their transformed dots that apply to an action's dice pool.

## *Changing Courts*

Some of the Nobility discover, in the course of their labors, that the ideas of the Queen they first swore to follow don't fit with their experiences any longer; the philosophy of another Queen is truer to their present character, or possibly none of the Queens seem appropriate and she prefers to live outside the Courts. Should this happen a Princess always has the option to return her oath, and to beg audience with a Queen more harmonious with her new-won principles.

For a Princess, entering a Court is a simple matter of speaking to its Queen and offering fealty. With a Radiant Queen doing so involves a trip through the Dreamlands to her seat. The Queen of Storms speaks in the hearts of all who wish vengeance; any of her followers can tell a Princess how to listen for her and speak to her, and if such are not around a Princess can find the method with independent study. The Queen of Mirrors, disconcertingly, always turns up just when a Princess most wants to find her. Only the Queen of Tears poses a real difficulty; as she never leaves Alhambra, a Princess must travel there to swear to her, which normally involves begging a ride from an outpost. Nonetheless, it's just a matter of time.

*Leaving* a Court is another matter. Recognition that the ideals and principles you fought and worked for in the mission to resist Darkness are mistaken, wrong-headed, unsuited to the problems you must solve, is mentally and morally disturbing; and the more you've dedicated your life and magic to those principles, the more serious the moment of crisis is. When a Princess abandons her current Queen she reaches a breaking point, and makes a [compromise](#) roll, taking a penalty to her dice pool equal to her dots in the Invocation favored by the Queen she's leaving. The effects of the compromise are the same as any other compromise - the Princess leaves the Court whatever the result of the roll turns out to be.

# The Queen of Clubs

**AKA:** The Matron of the Forests, The Queen Mother

**Kingdom:** Forests of Wen-Mung

**Followers' Epithets:** Wilds, Turtles

*In any battle your greatest foe is yourself. You must ask yourself why you fight, what can you hope to gain and is it worth the risk of what you might lose? The enemy who says you cannot back down is none other than yourself, overcome it and look at the other options. You could surrender, often it costs you nothing but an apology and some pride. You could examine yourself, what did you do that lead up to this moment. Why couldn't you live here in peace? If you can learn to live in harmony with your surroundings, isn't that a better result than whatever you could win in a fight?*

*You can't fix the world by yourself, but the best place to start is within.*

The Queen of Clubs leads those Princesses who seek balance and harmony, they believe that a better world can be achieved if we just learned to live peacefully with each other, with the world around us, and most importantly: with ourselves.

## Tales of Wen-Mung

The Queen of Clubs has no palace and wears no crown. Her court travels at a slow walking pace through the forests of Wen-Mung. Wherever they rest their tired feet the trees grow to shelter her from the elements. With nothing but bare soil for a throne the Matron of the Forests welcomes her subjects. Of all the Queens she is the most intimately connected with the eternal cycle of life, death and rebirth. She allows herself to age naturally beyond her early twenties and in her current iteration of the cycle has grown into a slightly plump middle aged woman who radiates warmth and kindness. She wears only clothes gifted to her by the working women of her kingdom and rejects all finery. When she speaks her words are plain but carry the wisdom and empathy of lifetimes.

A good way to describe a conversation with the Queen of Clubs is patient; protracted works too. The Matron of the Forests sees no need to hurry. She lets the Princess speak at her own pace and get to the end of her story before she replies. When presented with a tough problem she likes to work up to it, focusing first on a minor but easily solved parts of the issue. This usually includes coaching the Princess about the right attitude to a problem before fixing the problem itself; though it must be said that the Matron of the Forests sees the first as a vital part of the second.

## Philosophy

The Queen of Clubs asks a question: "The world speaks to us. Have you ever stopped to listen?"

**Through Harmony, Light:** The world is a place of conflict. Not just the obvious conflicts where nation fights nation but also the conflicts that arise from the simple act of existing. The Queen of Clubs teaches her daughters that they and everything in existence has a nature. It is from the struggle to be true to this nature within the confines life imposes that suffering arises. Through introspection and self discovery a Princess can find a way for her nature to exist in harmony with the world and free herself from suffering.

**Things Change, My Dear:** Harmony is not a destination, it is a way of moving with the world. Everything has a nature and change is part of that nature: Water flows, plants grow and planets dance around the stars. With great effort a Princess can maintain a harmony by opposing negative change but this is a false path. The true harmony is effortless. A state of grace where every action moves with the world and every change creates a new harmony free from discord. When the world changes the court of Clubs must move with it, and they shall become greater from the experience.

**Be The World You Wish For:** To the Queen of Clubs the world is the lives and actions of every living being. From this simple truth she forms her final philosophy. Harmony cannot be won through conflict for the very act that claims to create a world free from conflict becomes part of the world. To create a better world a Princess

must become a teacher and a mediator who lives a life of harmony and helps others achieve the same through her example and guidance.

## *Duties*

A Turtle's Duties are to bring things together. People certainly but that's only a small part of it: Man and nature, reason and emotion, city and countryside. The Wilds dream of a world where what were once opposing opposites are now part of a balanced whole.

Champions of Clubs help people directly. They are park rangers and wilderness guides who help people brave the dangers of the natural world so that they may see it's beauty first hand. More than any other Calling it is the Champions of Clubs who earn the epithet of Turtles. In battle they favor defensive tactics and seek to gradually wear their opponents down with a minimum of harm.

Many Graces are environmentalists who seek to preserve natural world and preach the importance of living in balance with our surroundings. Other Graces are mediators without peer who work to bring conflicting parties together in a harmonious balance. The lessons of harmony are not limited to those with an external enemy. The Queen of Clubs teaches that harmony begins with inner balance and many of her Graces are teachers who help their students learn to live in harmony with themselves and the world around them.

In the Court of Clubs Menders are rarely simple healers. Under the Queen's philosophy the disease itself is often a symptom and her Menders teach their patients to live a lifestyle that avoids further sickness. The court's focus on the natural world attracts membership from vets and environmentalists who work to clean pollution. Partnerships between Menders and Graces are common, the Mender deals with the physical symptoms and the Grace teaches a way of life that removes root cause.

Seekers delve deep into the jungle seeking new herbs, undiscovered animals or just beautiful vistas while others travel beyond the borders of earth. Delving into the lore of the Spirit wilds, the hidden half of the natural world, and try and use the lore they find to shape and heal the spirit community around them. A few Seekers blur the lines between Clubs and Diamonds as they work on renewable energy and cleaner technology.

Troubadours are inspired by nature and paint magnificent scenes of the natural world, others work with nature directly as landscapers, flower arrangers or bonsai artists. A surprising number are architects and urban planners who attempt to reintegrate nature with cities in the most literal manner.

## *Background*

Appropriately for a Court so focused on Harmony, the Wilds are often classified into two groups with little conflict or divisions between them. On the one hand you have the naturalists: Everyone from professional park rangers and conservationists to people who really love their pets. They are drawn by Clubs' belief in harmony with the natural world, and often leap for joy when they learn how Legno lets them talk to animals.

On the second hand you have the spiritualists: From gurus and philosophers to pacifistic hippies and suburbanites yearning for something with more meaning than materialism. That is not to say that every spiritual Princess is drawn to the Wilds. The Court of Clubs has its own philosophies which draw students interested in learning about harmony, balance and the quest for inner peace.

When the Court of Clubs gathers it is not rare for a laboratory biologist to talk long into the night with a self taught student of Taoism, each delighting seeing the world through eyes that on the first glance are so different from their own. The Queen herself knows that the two sides are both the inevitable result of each other, and smiles every time one of her sons or daughters experiences the joy of learning so for themselves.

## *Character Creation*

Composure is highly desired among the Turtles to examine their own feelings while it takes considerable Resolve to always keep striving for self improvement. Wilds always put at least some effort into keeping themselves fit, meaning that Physical Attributes are at least average. Most wilds make a point of familiarizing themselves with nature, so skills such as Survival and Animal Ken are common. Athletics come in handy during hiking, swimming, climbing, and otherwise navigating around in the wilderness (or at least the state park). Wilds who

wish to convince others to embrace the natural world often pick up Persuasion and Expression, while those who have a theoretical understanding of nature often possess Science. Wilds interested in spirits often pick up Occult.

Socially the Court of Clubs tends to have fewer dots in Status than Contacts. It is the way of Clubs to co-exist, not control. Circle however is often staggering as the Court's focus on coexistence brings them closer to whoever is around them. It is not unknown for a Wild to count an entire community as their Circle, whether that community is an ordinary suburban neighborhood or a commune built on principles of friendship and love seems to make little difference.

**Heraldry:** In their Transformed state, Wilds tend to be more subdued than other Princesses. White, green, and blue are common colors, although occasionally red, orange and yellow make appearances for those with an autumn theme. Ivy and leaf motifs are also common, with water themes being only slightly less popular. Outfits tend toward the elegant and practical, the Wilds favor tough clothes well suited for the outdoors, but also with a sense of balance that lends grace to their appearance.

## *Practical Magic*

The Queen Mother teaches her students to bend before force and redirect it, rather than stand against it and break. Once a scene, when a Wild is the target of a resisted or contested action, she may spend 1 Wisp to twist her opponent's action in her favor. Her resistance doesn't apply, or she gets no successes in the contest; but if her opponent succeeds, while the action has its normal effect, she imposes an improvised Condition [CofD 76] on him, or takes one herself. The Condition must flow naturally from the situation, and must be approved by the Storyteller, but it works to the Wild's benefit.

High Belief softens the blow from the force the Wild redirects. At Belief 8 she adds 1 to the successes her opponent needs for an exceptional success; at Belief 9 she adds 2, and at Belief 10 she adds 3.

## *Invocation: Legno*

The Queen of Clubs teaches the principles of harmony and inner strength in the form of Legno and the Turtles find it easier to master than any other. Legno encourages a Princess to work with, not against. To find balance not overpower. To defend not attack. It also guides a Princess to seek inspiration in the natural world.

Legno applies at no cost when the target of a Princess' Charm is a living plant or wood, and when her Charm's target is a natural, non-sapient animal. It also applies without cost when a Princess intends to restore things to their natural state, to restrain the reckless and calm the fearful, to defend another from harm, to conserve and cultivate over time, and to influence without drawing attention to herself.

Those who would make use of Legno must live for harmony in all things. A Princess who attempts violence against someone not involved in combat, or who helps another to do so, may not apply the Invocation until the next sunrise. Self-defense, protecting a non-combatant, and using Charms to stop a fight without violence are unexceptionable, but if a Princess gives tactical support to an ally and the ally attacks one who has not begun to fight, she loses access to Legno just as if she had struck the blow herself.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Diamonds:** They seek knowledge only for the sake of knowledge. They build a future with no idea where it leads. Yet we must ask ourselves: Would we have time to contemplate without their agriculture? Would we understand the life of the butterfly without their tables of numbers? Ask them to free us from necessity, our work comes after.
- **Hearts:** They are living in traditions built for the world of yesteryear. Either they can hold the world back or the world can trample them underfoot. It cannot end well.
- **Spades:** Flexible, adaptable they can fit anywhere yet they lack the permanence to ask the same respect of the world. Somehow I don't think that matters to them.
- **Swords:** If you are strong enough, you can move the world, but unless you teach the world to move itself it will always return when you remove your hands.

- **Tears:** The world changed, until you can change with it you will suffer. I would like to help you, but only you have the power to help yourself.
  - **Storms:** When you learn to take every blow the Darkness throws at you, then you will learn to fight without falling to hate.
  - **Mirrors:** You claim that you shall solve every problem yourself by the virtue of your crown, but your claims of strength are to hide from a weakness within. It is an appropriate paradox, in a mirror everything is back to front.
  - **Vampires:** We've all heard the tales, that they are creatures of pure Darkness who run away from the Light's touch. I didn't want to believe them. Then I met one.
  - **Werewolves:** I have heard the howls and seen them from afar. Beware, some beasts are rabid and may bite even a caring hand.
  - **Mages:** I met a man once, who could speak to the trees and sing storms unto stillness. When I tried to talk to him about how much he could help with his power he said: "We are all trapped in this broken world, child". I have not seen him since, but I keep wondering what he meant.
  - **Prometheans:** I met one once. It's been the only time in my life where I was sure I had met something that couldn't belong in an harmonious world. It made me feel ashamed of myself.
  - **Changelings:** Once I walked into a party while walking the woods at night, the fairies were nice and their food nicer. I have dreamed of it every night since.
  - **Sin-Eaters:** Behind their denial of death is a clear understanding that death is a natural part of life.
  - **Mummies:** I can think of no curse greater than an unchanging immortality.
  - **Beasts:** They adapt to new environments by finding justifications to avoid change. Is it any wonder why they bring harm to all they touch?
  - **Mad Scientists:** My biology teacher grew strange fungus-men in his basement. In the end we had to... we had to... I don't want to talk about it.
  - **Leviathans:** They say that there are things that live in the deeps, things that don't belong in this day and age, living lives unchanging from ages past. I can't but hope that the Dreamlands haven't turned us into this.
  - **Hunters:** They came out of nowhere, armed to the teeth and called me witch. Had I not run away I don't know what would I have had to do... or what they would have done to me.
  - **Mortals:** We live the world we want for them so it may come to be. It's not easy, but I believe they are worth it.
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## *Inspiration*

Nausicaä ([Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind](#))

*You can't control the world, but you don't need to.*

# The Queen of Diamonds

**AKA:** The Crystal-eyed One, Lady of Clear Water, The Philosopher Queen

**Kingdom:** Danann Archipelago

**Followers' Epithets:** Crystals, Lights, Hope-Engineers

*Contrary to popular belief, people aren't stupid. It's just that people don't think, or they don't know how to think, or they just didn't have the right facts. If you don't think, you miss all the flaws in your plans. If you don't have all the facts, you make stupid assumptions because you didn't know any better. If you don't think and don't understand the world around you, you'll put all your efforts into a plan that simply won't work. And then things go wrong. Sometimes, they go very, very wrong.*

*That's why thinking and knowledge and education are so important. If you know why a problem happens, you're halfway to solving it. If you think clearly, you can find that solution. And if you educate people, you give them the ability to solve their own problems. By understanding the world, and teaching others to do the same, we can find a way to make it brighter.*

*So. Want to help build a better future?*

The Queen of Diamonds rules from the Academy, and from there she and her servants seek to illuminate the world. She teaches that the Light of Hope is best accompanied by the twin lights of Knowledge and Reason. The Nobles who follow her believe that with those two lights acting as Hope's heralds, they can spread the light far and wide.

## Tales of Danann

From her seat in the Academy the Queen of Diamonds rules the Danann Archipelago. Upon a throne of whale ivory and pearl sits The Philosopher Queen: Regal as a glacier: Six foot tall and adorned with in the latest sleek future-chic fashions of her court. Here she judges the petitions and arguments of her subjects. Her replies are lengthy and explain the facts, theories and reasoning behind every decision. Every word spoken by The Lady of Clear Water is precise and rehearsed, as calm as a moonlit pond.

Those who know the Queen in private see a very different person. Barely reaching five foot stands a young woman just entering her twenties wearing casual clothes, unkempt mousy hair and a tee shirt adorned with an obscure and highly technical joke. She even wears glasses having never bothered to fix her eyesight. Far from the regal Philosopher Queen she stumbles over her words, gushing like a bubbling brook in her excitement over the latest technical and scientific discoveries. When gifted with some unseen device or research from Earth she squees, yes squees, in delight. Among her many friends and frequent one night consorts she values nothing more than someone with whom she can share her boundless passion for learning.

The Lady of Clear Water tends to assume that the sort of Princess who pledges to the Court of Diamonds is the kind of person she can introduce to her private self; she is usually right. When talking to the Queen in her public persona it is best to speak as she does, clear, precise, with a focus on the facts and an explanation of your reasoning. In private talking to the Queen of Diamonds is like sailing down a river; her excitement leads the conversation and the Princess must choose whether to follow or fight the currents to steer the conversation in more practical directions. Some Princesses become tributaries, their own excitement joining with the Queen's to become greater than either alone; it is these Princesses most likely to win the Queen's friendship and the royal favor.

Wherever the Queen travels Plato, her ever-loyal owl, is sure to follow. To her court, and even her close friends Plato is nothing more than her pet and her idea sounding board. In truth Plato is the Queen's spymaster. Among the Academy's denizens the wise owl is second only in intellectual might to the Queen herself and among the strongest magical practitioners.

## Philosophy

The Queen of Diamonds has taken as her motto, *You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

**Through Understanding, Triumph:** Everything has a cause; everything has a purpose; nothing that happens is inexplicable. The servants of the Philosopher Queen take the duty of finding causes, purposes and explanations, and bear it with pride. The Crystals would inquire, as a rule, for the sheer love of knowledge even if no benefit could be expected. Nonetheless there usually is some practical use to the Lights' studies. When they come across a work of the Darkness, the Hope-Engineers analyze it carefully, and reach as complete an understanding of it as they can; then they strike, cut the problem off at the root, and watch it wither away. Analysis is obligatory, since an ill-planned strategy is usually worse than none; when analysis is done, plans must be carried out quickly and thoroughly, for it's intolerable than people be left to suffer a moment longer than they must. The more widely a Crystal has studied, the more swiftly she takes hold of a new problem, to supply its correct solution.

**Guide the River's Path:** When the Crystals discover some problem during their studies - a work of the Darkness, or a simple human error - they are of course obliged to do something about it. The proper Hope-Engineer solves the problem for ever: though a temporary fix or stopgap might be all that's possible, she is not satisfied until the root of the trouble is dug up and killed. Moreover, the full gifts of the Light were always given to few, even in the Kingdom's day, so any solution that requires a Princess' powers constantly is inferior. For that reason (among others) the Lights admire and prize the technology of the modern world. A Charm can cure plagues in one person at a time, but no Princess ever managed to eradicate a plague from the whole Earth - the banishing of smallpox was a feat of mortal science. Such triumphs as that are the Philosopher Queen's model. The elegant solution to any problem is one that sustains itself: design a machine, or an institution, or a code of laws, that anyone can use and everyone will want to use, for that will endure even if magic fails.

**Light Shines Through Clear Minds:** However unusual a fact is, however much a theory encompasses, it has no power if people know nothing of it, or lack the training to understand it. So, the Hope-Engineers take the further duty of education, and of clear communication. Knowledge and reason are invariably good, lack of either a weakness, withholding of them the worst of crimes. A Crystal pushes everyone she has any influence over to learn, to think, to question, and to test everything, herself first of all; and she will not deceive those who listen to her, or tolerate lies from them. And, while she values the wisdom to be gained from time-honored customs and venerable authorities, a Light doesn't assume such wisdom is complete or final, or follow it blindly. Unless faced with urgent peril, Crystals look for the reasons behind any command given to them, and will flout them if no reasons are given; once in authority, a Hope-Engineer analyzes the traditions of her society as thoroughly as she does any other fact before her, and tests them as carefully as she does her own theories. Only thus does the light of reason truly illuminate the world ...

## *Duties*

The Lights' Duty is to use her brain. The Courtiers of Diamonds seek positions where problems can be solved with thought and intelligence alone. Sometimes it falls upon them to personally implement the solutions they conceive. Sometimes society expects them to start at the bottom and "learn the ropes". Whatever situation she finds herself in, the ideal is to earn a Mandate to use her mind.

What Champions of Diamonds lack in combat power they make up for in strategic ability. As much a general than a fighter the Champions of Diamonds has the mind to plan a grand military campaign and organize the logistics of keeping her army fed and battle ready. When battle is joined her quick wits let her adapt to changing circumstances and match her foes gambit for gambit. If so many Champions of Diamonds are seen with shield and spear in hand against the Darkness, that's because so few of them have an army to lead. While her Nakama will benefit from a well thought out plan to raid a Darkened cult, a group of five can scarcely afford to leave their Champion away from the front line.

The Graces in the Diamond Court might not be the best at managing people but they are the best at managing their kingdoms. The Grace's pen closes loopholes in the tax code, defines laws in clear and understandable terms or just balances the national budget. So long as she can keep her head above the confusing tangle of special interests and the reins of policy away from those who pander to badly thought out populism she should have no trouble running a kingdom.

Seekers of Diamonds are perhaps the purest expression of Diamond's Philosophy. They truly believe that knowledge is inherently good and only application can be evil. Deep within their ivory towers the Seekers of Diamonds study everything, from atomic physics to the Twilight Invocations. The future is built on what they discover.



If Seekers of Diamonds are scientists, then her Menders are the engineers. A Mender of Diamonds is more likely to be found in a laboratory researching new cures and vaccines than in the hospital, helping patient after patient. Rather than fixing a broken machine, she will design a new machine free of the fault that broke the first model. The Hope Engineers can be found in research and development teams, developing technological policy, contributing to open source and running crisis response centers.

The Troubadours of Diamonds tend to dedicate their talents in a very specific direction. Their duty is simple: make learning fun! Whether they write a sci-fi epics where the plot hinges on an accurate understanding of science or whether they're the cool chemistry teacher who manages to tie every topic into a practical that ends with something blowing up. When Troubadours of Diamonds are teaching, you might not even know you're being educated.

## *Background*

No matter what cultural or geographical background they come from, the Court of Diamonds were always people who appreciated the importance of thinking things through. Access to education is not nearly as important as some might think, but whether she was educated in a first world university or taught in a third world slum, a would be Light tends to make the most of whatever opportunities she had. The Hope-Engineers recruit heavily from the ranks of teacher's pets, library bookworms and self professed nerds. Professors and PhD students are rarer, most Princesses Blossom before graduation.

Despite their Queen's love of science and technology, it is not necessary for a Hope-Engineer to be (or aspire to be) a scientist or work in a technical field. The Court welcomes anyone who believes in the value of thinking things through. Only around half the Court can be said to work directly in an academic or technical profession, which includes a large crop of librarians, teachers and other educators. Regardless of background, most of the Court sincerely believes in the potential for technology to create a better world.

## *Character Creation*

Intelligence and Wits are both highly prized among Crystals. Intelligence is vital for making sense of data, while Wits is valued for spotting patterns and noticing important details. Many also focus on Composure or Resolve, either to keep their heads clear and emotions under control, or to keep one's mind on the facts no matter how strong their emotions run. If a Light doesn't have Investigation, he tends to pick it up fairly quickly in his efforts to get the facts of whatever problem he's facing. Many Crystals have at least a few dots spread across Computer, Crafts, Academics, and Science. Those who seek to understand the strange things of the World of Darkness often take dots in Occult. Persuasion and Expression also are fairly common, Persuasion for convincing other to follow the plan a Light has made, and Expression for explaining and teaching. Larceny and Stealth see use in getting information that can't be obtained any other way. Of all Nobles, the Crystals are the most likely to learn Firearms.

Socially the Court of Diamonds favors Contacts, for the access to information it provides. Many find themselves joining scientific or engineering projects and a tight community with shared goals can easily lead to both Mandate and Alies. More than any other Court the Hope-Engineers enjoy access to mental Merits. Many have strange abilities such as an eidetic memory or common sense granted to them by their Blossoming; others have studied all their life and have abilities like Encyclopedic Knowledge to prove it.

**Heraldry:** Lights often have a scientific, technological, or futuristic feel to their Regalia. For some, their regalia calls to mind science fiction; computer readouts built into sleeves or gloves, gadgets such as scanners, energy weapons, or palmtop computers, clothes made from metal, plastic, or some strange material that defies categorization. The "superhero" look is fairly common among the Hope-Engineers, with colors tending towards white or the brighter shades of blue. Many Regalia shed light in some manner. Others have a Regalia that call to mind professions of learning; many Lights wear glasses as part of their Regalia, whether or not they normally need them. Some have long coats reminiscent of a lab coat, while others have vests, boots, and practical looking clothing suitable for explorers, archeologists, or others who look to learn things far from a lab. No matter the style, the Regalia of many Crystals features a distinct lack of anything that would be inconvenient or unwieldy a normal costume, despite the fact Regalia doesn't have to obey such rules.

## Practical Magic

The Philosopher Queen exhorts her followers to think and observe at all times. A Crystal may spend 1 Wisp to split her consciousness, allowing her to think about two things at once. She may carry out two extended actions at the same time, provided neither action is physically strenuous. When used this way the Practical Magic expires when both the actions have been resolved.

Alternatively, during a scene she can take one instant Mental action reflexively in a given turn, provided that the action requires no physical exertion or physical tools. (For example, composing a speech, doing calculations, or solving a tactical problem.) In this case the Practical Magic expires at the end of the scene.

High Belief lets the Crystal sustain her doubled consciousness for longer times. At Belief 8 she may make one additional roll when taking exxtended actions; at Belief 9 she may make two, and at Belief 10 she may make three.

## Invocation: Acqua

The Philosopher Queen focuses the lights of knowledge and reason into the Invocation of Acqua, and the Crystals gain mastery of that Invocation more swiftly than any other. It is linked with the virtues the Crystal-eyed holds dear, such as clarity of mind, honesty in word and deed, and deep understanding, and to the emotions of curiosity and wonder. It is also tied to the classical element of water, and to liquids in general. The invoked Charms and upgrades based on Acqua relate to these things and to phenomena connected to these.

Acqua applies at no cost when the target of a Princess' Charm is water or ice, or when she has spent at least one turn studying her target during the scene, and nothing significant has happened to it since. It also applies without cost when a Princess intends to teach someone, to master a body of knowledge, to prove or refute a theory, to discover things previously unknown to anyone, and to carry out a strategy she has previously formulated.

The Invocation aids only those who are open and candid in all their dealings. A Princess who deceives another person in any fashion, be it simple falsehood, sophistry, or material omission, cannot apply Acqua for the rest of the scene, unless the deception is necessary to shield an innocent from harm, or to keep a secret given her in confidence. A Princess may reserve what she knows, if it isn't relevant and no one asks her to inform them, and apply Acqua; she may not, however, cause another to believe what is untrue.

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### Stereotypes

- **Clubs:** You've got some good points, but I have absolutely no idea what you're trying to accomplish.
- **Hearts:** We can learn a lot from the Kingdom, but you can't just imitate its ways blindly and expect them to work today.
- **Spades:** They're excellent when it comes to making you think ... but are they *never* serious?
- **Swords:** When you need a grand, dramatic gesture, call for them. When you need subtlety, call for someone - anyone - else.
- **Tears:** Look, it's obvious - if you didn't live in that dank hole, you wouldn't need to steal the world's hope. Why don't you move out?
- **Storms:** The ones who let their hate and anger control them, I can deal with. They ones who are still rational, I understand - and that scares me like nothing else.
- **Mirrors:** Someone needs to deflate their egos before they get someone killed.
- **Vampires:** You're a problem. I solve problems.
- **Werewolves:** I'll stay out of your way, try and stay out of mine.
- **Mages:** They're dangerous - not because they have fireballs, but because their understanding of reality is fundamentally wrong.
- **Prometheans:** What *are* you?

- **Changelings:** The more I learn, the less sense they make. Thankfully, they don't seem to be an issue.
  - **Sin-Eaters:** They know a lot about working with the dead, but they don't seem to understand how death works.
  - **Mummies:** It sounds like your magic was far better understood than ours. Don't let that be lost to history - teach me.
  - **Beasts:** One of us has studied psychology, educational theory and gets informed consent. The other needs to turn themselves in to the police before I shoot them.
  - **Mad Scientists:** They're dangerous - not because they have death rays, but because their understanding of reality is fundamentally wrong.
  - **Leviathans:** Find wonders in the deeps ... whoever said that can't have known what's really in the deeps.
  - **Hunters:** They do study mysteries, I'll give them that. I wish they weren't so quick to shoot them.
  - **Mortals:** If we can teach them to think, they will make the world perfect.
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## *Inspiration*

Ami Mizuno ([Sailor Moon](#))  
Washu Hakubi ([Tenchi Muyo!](#))  
Tony Stark ([Iron Man](#))  
Watanabe Eriko ([Saga of Soul](#))

*Your heart can show you where you need to go, but only your head can get you there.*

# The Queen of Hearts

**AKA:** The Rose Bride, The Gentle Patroness, The Queen Regnant

**Kingdom:** City-states of Andarta

**Followers' Epithets:** Jewels, Flowers (female), Gallants (male), Rocks (often derogatory)

*Once upon a time, the world was happy and at peace. In the ages when the Light shone clearly, the people trusted their governors the Queens, and the Queens were worthy of that trust; in those ages, the cities blossomed into gardens, and the people sang in joy as they worked; in those ages champions fought bravely, scholars gave wise counsel, judges blended justice with mercy. The world forgot it long ago, but I remember.*

*You're looking skeptical - naturally, these days. People fear and mistrust each other, and become what they fear; one threatens violence because he fears violence, another lies because he doesn't believe in honesty, a third steals because he cannot face poverty. I don't expect you to trust me, right this minute. And yet ... haven't you always wished there was someone you could trust? Someone who knows how we ought to live with each other?*

*Listen, as I tell you how it was, and you'll see how it can be that way again. We have only forgotten the Kingdom - we haven't lost the Light, and as long as we have Light, the Kingdom is not lost forever.*

The Queen of Hearts bids her subjects to restore the Kingdom's spirit to the modern world. The followers of Hearts believe a better world has already been built on the back of principles of civilization and by serving the people as judges, leaders and lawmakers the Jewels believe they can make it better yet.

## Tales of Andarta

The Queen of Hearts rules the city states of the Andarta plains from her palatial estate. Within the Queen presides over her court from a throne of red granite and gold. She is everything a Queen could be. Regal, dignified, just, kind, possessed of a gentle sense of humor and easy upon the eye. Her skin is delicately adorned with ointments and perfume. She is clad in elegant and extravagant styles drawn by the royal tailors from all across the world and history to show the reach of their lieges influence. However she presents herself she is as composed as a flawless diamond, every word and action is deliberate. When she hears the request of her petitioners her court fills with the rustle of paper as an army of clerks search through scrolls and tomes for precedent of similar problems long since solved.

It is easy for a Princess of Hearts to talk with her Queen. She can learn the protocols in advance and be use their predictability for reassurance. She will call the Queen by her title, and the Queen will call the Princess with her title. It helps that the Queen of Hearts can spot nervousness or awe a mile away and deftly puts the Princess at her ease. When the Princess speaks the Queen is an active listener, guiding the Princess with short questions but never taking the conversation until it is her time. In turn she expects the same courtesy from the Princess. While the formality and protocol can make it hard for a Princess to connect with the women beneath the crown; as two crowns talking for the good of their peoples it could not be more ideal.

The Queen of Hearts is a Queen wearing a mask. She is not a woman wearing the mask of a Queen, the few people who have seen her in private all agree she is a queen through and through. No, the Gentle Patroness is a Queen with a crown for every occasion. In times of peace she is a public speaker without peer and a patron of charities and the arts. In times of uncertainty she is a diplomat, a peacemaker and a rock of stability. In times of war she is a warrior-queen, the first to charge and the last to retreat.

Among her titles is The Rose Bride. How the Queen of Hearts gave her own heart to another is a tale sung by bards throughout her kingdom. In her very first life, many many incarnations before she became a Queen, she married a young Prince. Their devotion to each other was so strong that in every life that followed the two fell in love and wed anew. Not once in any of their lives has either been unfaithful to their marriage. Though a diplomat by nature he is known as the Queen's Champion. He does not defend his wife's life, for any foe that can threaten a Queen has nothing to fear from a Noble. He defends the Queen's honor, for in the court of Hearts it is

considered proper that the stronger fighter in any duel takes a handicap. When one is as powerful as a Queen the only possible handicap is to send a Champion to fight in your place.

## *Philosophy*

At the core of the Queen of Hearts' creed is the virtue of trust, and of faithfulness to a trust. The principles of her creed express the need to inspire trust, and to keep intact what has been entrusted. Everything she teaches follows from a single principle: "A crown is a responsibility."

**Flourish in Community:** No one can stand alone against all the Dark, and survive; but people who trust each other prevail against anything evil can do. The Jewels take it upon themselves to weave webs of trust, standing with friends and allies, obeying rulers, and guiding followers; in these webs they hope to catch the fitful gleams of Light that fall into the world and collect them into eternal beacons. They build and tend communities, write codes of law and establish customs for people who have none of their own, or have abandoned the societies they were born in. The ordered community, in which everyone has a role and no one is an exile, is the strongest possible bastion the Light can have.

**Honor Tradition:** Tradition is a trust - a store of wisdom laid in by past generations, to guide us in the present, and be handed on to the future. More than that, traditions are also our shared social identity. The Jewels do their best to breathe life into the rules and customs of the societies they find themselves in, especially the one they're born to. They are reluctant to flout a convention, especially when they don't know the reasons for it. However, the Radiant are here to improve the world, not preserve it as it is, and when the Flowers see a Tradition they cannot condone they seek to replace it rather than remove it. The Gallants often use those Traditions they remember from past lives in the Kingdom when they need a substitute, but they can just as easily borrow something from the neighboring culture (especially if they wish to bring them together) or formalize that awesome party their friends repeat every year.

**Authority Must Be Earned:** A Princess of Hearts, by her nature and training, becomes the keeper of many people's trust; therefore she must be worthy of it, both in her own conduct and in the behavior she tolerates. More than any other Hopeful, Jewels are expected to hold authority and wield it responsibly. When a threat to a whole society appears, Flowers are the ones who rouse its members to action, coordinate their responses, and ensure everyone does what's needed. In ordinary times, Gallants are courteous, friendly and compassionate to all, lest they give anyone pain; but they have their burden, heavier than most, and don't allow themselves to forget it. Moreover, they must not take their position for granted. If her society rejects a Jewel's rule, or deposes her from it, the fault is hers not theirs; and if they proceed to disaster that she would have avoided, her failure to gain their trust is all the more grievous.

## *Duties*

A Jewel's duties can be to build societies, to guard the traditions of the past, or even to stand vigilant at the border, but they always share one common theme. A Jewel's duties revolve around people.

Champions of Hearts lead from the front, they specialize in inspiring and leading their troops. On the battlefield tactical acumen and a strong commanding voice are as important as a good sword arm. Off the battlefield a Gallants must know how to keep moral high and foster a spirit of brotherhood among her troops. If she is skilled at her tasks a Gallants' fighting prowess shows itself through every one of her companions.

Graces of Hearts are sometimes called Hearts of Hearts for the Queen and Calling fit together hand in glove. A Heart of Hearts builds societies, they lay down and exemplify the virtues people aspire too. They are both diplomats and leaders. It's a huge amount of work, but you are expected to have help from your friends.

Menders of Hearts focus on human problems. They are more likely to be counselors and therapists than doctors or nurses. The tools of a Mender are a good common sense understanding of people, words of encouragement and a winning smile.

Seekers of Hearts seek to understand their societies from tip to toe. They can be historians unearthing long forgotten traditions, reporters and bloggers who speak about the lives of their fellows. Yet to the Gallants' understanding is not for its own sake, it is for a purpose. They understand not only the unwritten rules of society, but the purpose of those rules and they use that understanding to purge corruption and fight abuses of the system in all their forms.

Troubadours of Hearts incorporate the themes and virtues of their society into their work. They honor the heroes of old and create monuments to the ideals people aspire to. But at heart their work is simple, through their art the Troubadours bind people together with a strong group identity.

## *Background*

Even before they Blossomed the followers of Hearts often had a lot of respect for the institutions of society. They (or at least their parents) have backgrounds in politics or law. Others cut their teeth with the codes and institutions of the playground or come from tight knit communities whose values fit neatly into the Court of Hearts. A lot of Princesses are attracted to the court because they wish to be one of the glamorous leaders they see among the Gallants, but the Court's belief that leadership is hard work and duty means few stay. However the Court of Hearts does have a number of converts from the other Courts who felt working with mortals and building societies provided a way to work on the big picture their own Courts had lacked.

Regardless of their background Flowers are always OK with the idea of others depending on them. Nearly all have some prior experience in being the responsible one, even if only to a younger brother or sister. While the Court doesn't exactly reject introverts or the socially unskilled it does expect them to work hard to overcome these limitations. Even the Gallants who have prior experience in taking responsibility for another have rarely held another's life in their hands, and they better start preparing for that first time.

## *Character Creation*

Flowers and Gallants try to involve themselves in the lives of people around them, so many have above average Social Attributes. Those who actively strive to lead people emphasize Presence, while those who prefer more low-key or personal means focus on Manipulation. Empathy is a vital skill in order to notice the feelings, undercurrents, and motives of the people a Gallant wishes to help. Socialize and Persuasion are common, allowing a Flower to integrate herself into a group and sway others into doing the right thing and upholding the ideals of the Kingdom (whether they know of the Kingdom or not). Politics is also a common skill, used to improve the local political situation or simply use existing bureaucracies to their own ends. Subterfuge sees occasional use, mainly to keep important information from people who would use it selfishly or to protect the identities of a Princess's allies from those who would persecute them.

Gallants who see merit in the society and political structure of the Kingdom frequently lean Academics to better understand both the society of the Kingdom and the modern world. Many old traditions generally involve art or music of one kind or another, so Expression is fairly common even for non- Troubadours. A Flower often places Mental attributes over Physical ones in order to better understand society and guide the people around her; Champions are the exception here, who emphasize their Physical attributes in order to fulfill their roles as protectors.

Of all the Courts Flowers are the most likely to have social Merits. Allies, Contacts and even Status are common, as are Circle and Mandate, for the Flowers do their best work among existing social structures.

**Heraldry:** Regalia for the Nobles of Hearts strongly favors clothing in traditional styles, particularly formal dress. Elegant ball gowns and elaborate jewelry for phylacteries are very common among the Flowers, as are flowers or flower designs (roses especially) as accents, and pastels, rose-pink or -red, and shades of white. (It's not unknown for this sort of regalia to be mistaken for a wedding dress.) Many Gallants follow the complementary mode of mens' formal wear, appearing in tuxedos, or in white tie, top hat and tails. The more practically minded (usually Champions) go back farther, and model their regalia on styles more archaic but less confining; the swashbuckling Cavalier, the wuxia hero, the knight in shining armor. These turn up on both sexes. In all cases, a Jewel is dressed well, showing off the best appearance of a high and civilized age.

## *Practical Magic*

The Queen Regnant teaches that excellence comes of playing one's part within society. When a Jewel is carrying out her duties to an organization, or actively performing a role which her social context recognizes as hers, she may spend 1 Wisp to achieve an exceptional success on an action with 3 successes instead of 5.

High Belief grants extra dice to her dice pool for the affected action: at Belief 8 the Wisp adds a +1 bonus, at Belief 9 it adds +2, and at Belief 10 it adds +3.

## *Invocation: Terra*

The principles of the Queen of Hearts find their magical expression in the Invocation of Terra, and her Flowers and Gallants learn it more easily than any other. It is bound up with the things the Queen values: mutual trust and peace, the responsible use of authority, sensitive compassion, and punctilious courtesies. It is also tied to earth and stone, especially when it has been refined and properly constructed for human service, as proud cathedrals, elegant jewellery or solid stone walls.

Terra applies at no cost when the target of a Princess' Charm is earth or stone, including all forms of gemstones; and when her target is a non-supernatural human being who gives informed consent to the Charm. It also applies without cost when a Princess intends to resolve a conflict without violence, to make someone or something beautiful, to give requested aid without expecting any return, to coordinate the efforts of several people in a project, or to help a lawful authority in their mandated duties.

Terra requires both decorum and consideration for others. A Princess who is rude or insensitive to another person without cause, or who knowingly breaks a rule of formal etiquette, cannot apply the Invocation for the rest of the scene.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Clubs:** Rough and unmannerly, but their hearts are in the right place.
- **Diamonds:** Those towers of abstract reasoning leave me cold. You can't keep faith with real people by a theorem.
- **Spades:** Yes, I suppose the mayor does deserve to have something happen to him ... why are you giggling?
- **Swords:** Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.
- **Tears:** I don't care about their provenance - the Kingdom was not about bleeding the world to save yourself.
- **Storms:** At least the Swords only risk themselves ...
- **Mirrors:** For the Light's sake, grow up and be responsible for once.
- **Vampires:** Not all traditions are worth preserving.
- **Werewolves:** Herd? Damn right I'm part of the herd. A herd billions strong who've claimed this whole earth. Now tell me, what is your little pack going to do about that?
- **Mages:** You talk about Atlantis a lot but you only ever talk about its magic. What were the people like? Were the citizens content, the rulers just and the judges fair?
- **Prometheans:** They share a culture, even when they haven't met another of their kind. There's something we're not seeing, something important.
- **Changelings:** They had nothing to work with but scars and they built it into a society. Respect them for that if nothing else.
- **Sin-Eaters:** You don't snub death by laughing in its face. You snub death by building something that will last long after you're gone.
- **Mummies:** Our kingdoms have both fallen, but I'm trying to rebuild mine.
- **Beasts:** Teaching is a position of trust and authority. That is why we have so many rules about it, and you broke all of them.
- **Mad Scientists:** How did you convince him to turn himself in... An equation for the human mind? That can't be right, I don't believe it! I won't believe it!
- **Leviathans:** Every city you build eats itself alive, you can't even live with your own family and that's why I'm not afraid of you!

- **Hunters:** If you claim to serve the Light then work in the Light not the shadows.
  - **Mortals:** It's their world, they just need someone to teach them that.
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## *Inspiration*

Queen Serenity ([Sailor Moon](#))

Minky Momo ([Magical Princess Minky Momo](#))

Princess Celestia ([My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic](#))

*We're not calling ourselves Princesses because our childhood fantasies came true. Nobility means something.*



# The Queen of Spades

**AKA:** The Queen of Knaves, The Queen of Thieves

**Kingdom:** Confederacy of Four Winds

**Followers' Epithets:** Knaves, Rogues (affectionately derogatory), Scoundrels (affectionately derogatory)

*Why does everyone think we knaves are lazy? Being a Knave is hard work, last week I had five parties, five! That was a lot of planning, and dancing all night really tires you out. Then I spent all last night watching great stand ups and making notes. I know everyone in school's name, that took weeks of work, I had to write songs to help me remember, and then there's birthdays and everyone's favorite foods and what kind of jokes they like. After all that you have to keep yourself full of energy because any time something goes wrong people expect you to be the fast thinker, and you can't do that when you're tired.*

*But it's all worthwhile when I see my friends smile.*

A lot of the world's problems aren't nearly as hard as we "know" they are. If we could just step outside the box and give ourselves space to look at other ideas, space to breathe, we could accomplish so much. The Queen of Knaves leads a Confederation of Princesses who challenge common knowledge and teach people to laugh at the absurdities of the rules which define them. They do the Light's work with a quick wit, nimble hand and lateral thinking.

## Tales of Four Winds

Drifting above the mountain-side settlements that form The Confederacy of Four Winds the Queen of Spades rules from a palace carved out of the clouds themselves. Blessed with limitless energy the Queen breezes through her palace and amusements trailing courtiers and petitioners in her wake. Her regal presence comes not from her appearance but from her character. She is youthful, yet she possesses a presence that blows from her; carrying with it a sense of confidence and power, the smell of windswept desert sand, spices and the Queen's infectious laughter. Fashion at the royal court is a turbulent affair. The Queen changes her style frequently; always trying to keep one step ahead of fashions. This has memorably led to her occasionally preceding over a court of punks and ravers while dressed in ermine robes.

In conversation with her Princesses the Queen of Knaves breezes from topic to topic; she actively resists her Princess' trying to pin her down to a single topic. It's a game to her and unlike the citizens a Princess is expected to be skilled enough to play. Asking the Queen to stay focused (or worse, get annoyed) is the fastest way to lose the game. If a Princess keeps her wits about her she may discover the Queen has answered all her questions (though not always in the order the questions were asked; and the answers may be hidden in riddles or metaphor). The Queen favors Princesses who play well, any Knave who can adopt her Queen's breezy style of casual conversation and trick the Queen of Knaves into answering a hidden question scores highly indeed.

Her enemies say that the Queen of Knaves was a rebel before her coronation and remains a rebel at heart. Her supporters and citizens ask who better to lead a nation of tricksters, scoundrels and merchants than the Queen of Thieves herself? However the weight of truth travels with these accusations. The Queen is nostalgic for her days as a rebel and frequently leaves her throne unattended to travel her kingdom as a commoner, playing pranks and jokes before departing with the winds. She's infamously responsible for about half the graffiti in her kingdom. Her supporters again retort that what she lacks as an administrator, she makes up for by being the laughing heart of her people.

## Philosophy

The Queen of Spades shows that you can solve any problem with an open mind and a smile.

**Find the Center of the Problem:** The Queen of Spades delights in unorthodox solutions. She has reached infamy for immediately suggesting one sentence solutions to complicated problems and insisting her followers prove it won't work or else carry it out. Many of these suggestions are obviously absurd but it doesn't matter,

their purpose is not to solve the problem. By playing the devil's advocate with a bad idea she forces her followers to question "obvious" assumptions and ingrained dogma and so learn the first of her Philosophies: To look beyond the obvious and the assumed, to question what the real problem is, and to act only when she has found it. If the best answers are obvious after they've been found, then they are already obvious to she who just looks in the right way.

**Free As the Wind:** Power carries within it the seed of tyranny. The Queen of Spades sees no virtue in submitting to the demands of an authority. Moreover, it's wrong to make such demands on those who have promised nothing. If the only way to get a thing done is to hold a blade to someone's throat until they do it, well, that just shows it shouldn't be done, or that you're meant to do it yourself. The Queen of Spades holds it meritorious to frustrate those who oppress and extort service, and to release those who suffer in bondage; becoming free as the wind yourself is necessary, and working to free others is glorious.

**Laughter is the Best Medicine:** You can't change the past, but you can choose how you react to it. Who would prefer to cry than to laugh? To the Queen of Spades laughter really is the best medicine, and a positive attitude is just the thing to get a Princess who's feeling down out the door and fixing her problems.

## *Duties*

Champions of Spades often rely on speed and agility in favor of raw power, if they have a weakness it's a tendency to rely on their ability to avoid a blow and consequently Knaves can't take a hit as well as some other Courts. When fighting alongside other Princesses many specialize in harassing their foes support while their allies fight the main battle. Outside of combat Champions of Spades are peerless scouts and messengers, before the spread of modern communication systems they served as a vital backbone in communication, trade and governance. Their powers of speed and flight made the knaves vital despite their carefree attitude.

Graces of Spades are not the teachers, mentors or diplomats you'd find in the other Courts. They don't want to change the way you think, a Grace of Spades just wants to turn that frown upside down! The life of every party and the first onto the dance floor; everyone has a great time if there's a Grace of Spades around. Graces of Spades are often called upon by their counterparts in the other Courts, especially when they're working with large groups of mortals. It is easier to keep people's attention when they're enjoying being here but it's a double edged sword for the Knaves bring a party atmosphere that can be counterproductive when the Princess is working on serious matters.

Menders of Spades have an unusual focus, but a vital one. They heal the ills people inflict upon themselves. Closer to a teacher than a psychiatrist the Menders seek out those who've internalized harmful views of themselves; whether it's a cruel parent's insults or a demeaning cultural stereotype. They subtly and deftly they force their patents to confront their opinion again and again until they realize at last that it was no more solid than a dark cloud before the sun and vanishes in a puff of wind.

Seekers of Spades are taught to be open minded and to keep there eyes open. Often the answers to the toughest problems is just lying out in the open, just waiting to be seen by someone open minded enough to accept it. In a Nakama a Seeker of Spades is the one to come up with the plan, directing the group to unorthodox but effective solutions, they do their best work with small focused goals.

Whatever medium she uses, a Troubadour of Spades is the mistress of two arts: How to make people laugh and how to make people think. Some are out there day after day in the worst, most deprived areas showing people how to laugh despite it all. Others are renowned for art that looks at old ideas in new ways and finds fresh answers to questions that were long thought solved. The very best combine thought with laughter as peerless satirists who can have you laughing riotously at your ideological foes until you realize the jokes been on you.

## *Background*

The free spirit of the Knaves is usually evident even before they Blossom. The Court of Spades draws its members from various countercultural groups (or as close as it can get given the young age of the average Blossoming), quite a few members were even outright criminals who Blossomed through a heroic effort to turn their life around. Even when they aren't actually members of countercultural groups would-be Spades often have some of the attitude. They are the self proclaimed jokers, slackers and class clowns who fight with authority, usually for the fun of it.

Joining the Court of Spades encourages these traits, but also softens them in its own way. Declaring war upon “The Man” is less of an issue when you can just fly away, and when you can live on magic instead of a nine to five job. Knaves are more likely to make fun of what they see as wrong in society than they are to take up arms, and when they do decide to make a change their approach is often subtle, finessed and sometimes incomprehensible to others. It is usually delivered with a smile.

## *Character Creation*

As befitting a Court built in individualism and independence Knaves can be incredibly varied. Most have high scores in at least two Finesse attributes: Wits to live life outside the normal systems, Manipulation to get away with it. Dexterity isn’t always favored but if it is needed it tend to be high. Skills often emphasize the free spirited lifestyle: Survival to live on your own wits, Streetwise to make a fast buck without getting tied down to a nine to five job. Many Knaves mix Persuasion and Subterfuge to talk their way out of trouble. For Merits many a Rogue’s dashing charm and witty nature leads to a high Circle, which compensates for how her philosophy is at odds with the responsibilities of a Mandate. Knaves often have very broad Contacts, especially Graces for she who throws great parties shall never want for friends. Physically Fleet of Foot and Fast Reflexes come naturally to a practitioner of Aria.

**Heraldry:** The Heraldry of Spades is the light blues of wind, the greys of the clouds and the oranges and browns of falling autumn leaves. The Knaves tend to be very individualistic in their choice of Regalia but light breezy outfits mixed with countercultural symbols are common. So are subtle visual puns for the observant viewer.

## *Practical Magic*

The Queen of Knaves is a friend to the outcast, the downtrodden and the rebellious, and teaches her followers how best to aid them. When a Knave wishes to help someone escape the wrath of an authority, or to persuade an authority to mercy for a transgressor, she may spend 1 Wisp to gain an exceptional success on 3 successes instead of 5. She may use this to help herself, or another person. The authority in question may be a single person, an institution or the general opinion of the public; it must, though, have real power over the person the Knave wants to help.

High Belief grants extra dice to her dice pool for the affected action: at Belief 8 the Wisp adds a +1 bonus, at Belief 9 it adds +2, and at Belief 10 it adds +3.

## *Invocation: Aria*

The Invocation of Spades is Aria, the enviable lightness of being. It is the principle of detachment, the paradoxical unity of speed with forethought, and the laughter in the wind. Aria is taught by the Queen of Spades and her followers learn it easiest of all.

Aria applies at no cost when a Princess is blown by strong winds, moves at running speed or faster, or is at risk of falling from a height; and when the target of her Charm is the air, or other gases. It also applies without cost when a Princess intends to catch someone by surprise, to make someone laugh, to cast doubts, to expose pretensions and humiliate arrogance, and to subvert formal rules of an organization or society.

Aria will not support any assertion of authority over another person. A Princess is free to advise, to persuade, to appeal to friendship, and even to deceive (within the limits of Belief) while using Aria, but if she issues a command she cannot apply the Invocation for the rest of the scene.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Clubs:** Good-natured sort, by and large - except when they’re not. The little groan from a “Let’s go clubbing” joke never gets old.
- **Diamonds:** I probably shouldn’t take *quite* so much pleasure in pointing out when they’re wrong. It’s a rare enough thing that it’s a treat, though.

- **Hearts:** Too static and too reactionary to really quite get it. She sometimes gives the impression she cares more about organizations than the people in them.
  - **Swords:** Passionate and vivacious; oh, what fun!
  - **Tears:** The last part of the Kingdom? Hardly. It's nothing more than a rotting paper-mache mockery of anything that was good.
  - **Storms:** Hate is like a ball-and-chain around their legs. Even if they start bludgeoning people with the weight, they're still trapped by it.
  - **Mirrors:** Look at them, staring into their looking-glasses. Of *course* they only see themselves wherever they look.
  - **Vampires:** They seem to be at the heart of any rotten power structure. I wonder; do they corrupt things, or are they just drawn to such things like flies to meat?
  - **Werewolves:** Discretion is often the better part of valor when a pissed-off eight foot monster is on the prowl. But sometimes you just have to get between them and their victims to draw them off.
  - **Mages:** Look at the puppet-masters, making society dance on strings to their tunes. Never let them catch you with scissors.
  - **Prometheans:** I met a girl made from a hanged woman once. She wandered the world as free as a bird, and no matter where she went people tried to trap her. I was tempted too... I don't like the side of me I showed there.
  - **Changelings:** Tricksters and lawyers to a man. Don't try to beat them at their game of words and promises unless you're sure you're *very* good, or they'll ensnare you.
  - **Sin-Eaters:** I'm not sure what to make of them. It's a little... creepy that things so morbid can be so cheerful.
  - **Mummies:** What would happen if I woke you and commanded you to see the world and decide who you want to be?
  - **Beasts:** Yeah, you're a troll, an internet troll. You're not scary, you're pathetic.
  - **Mad Scientists:** Oh, don't mind us. We're just watching but um, can we like, be the beautiful lab assistants and shout "It's Alive!" or something?
  - **Leviathans:** Um, right, yeah, living in the sky is starting to look like a good idea.
  - **Hunters:** Such a mixed bunch. Some of them are just people; others are as bad as the monsters. Some of them *are* monsters. If you extend the hand of friendship, be ready to pull it back if it looks like they're going to cut it off for use in medical research.
  - **Mortals:** People of the world, cast off your chains!
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## *Inspiration*

Arsène Lupin ([the Arsène Lupin stories](#))  
 Psiren ([Fullmetal Alchemist](#))  
 Meimi Haneoka ([Saint Tail](#))  
 Felicia Hardy ([Black Cat](#))  
 Ikuto Tsukiyomi ([Shugo Chara!](#))  
 Pinkie Pie ([My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic](#))  
 Aladdin ([One Thousand and One Nights](#))

*Lighten up! This will be fine, and if not we'll just run for it.*

# The Queen of Swords

**AKA:** The Brightly Burning One, The Faithful Marshal, The Queen Errant

**Kingdom:** Aztallan Alliance

**Followers' Epithets:** Adventurers, Heroes, Martyrs

*Fire, fire gets a bit of a bad name these days, but fire is really life. Almost every living thing on the planet owes its life to the sun, and we owe everything that makes life worth living to the fire inside us. Life is meaningless if we don't feel anything from it, laughter, hope, wonder, even sadness. Without them what's the point?*

*I guess, what I'm trying to say is. I love you, won't you come on an adventure with me? We'll see the world, try new things and maybe get into a few scrapes on the way. Even if we get burnt, pain is part of life and I wouldn't miss it for the world.*

Just as their magic lets them master the fire without, those who follow the Queen of Swords are consumed by the fire within. They are blazing heroic figures, driven by their passions. They will follow their hearts wherever it leads, even to their own deaths.

## Tales of Aztallan

In the jungles of Aztallan the Queen of Swords dwells in her capital built upon an artificial plateau atop a mighty pyramid. Here the Faithful Marshal rules from an obsidian throne and burns through the royal itinerary in bored and clipped, but supremely competent tones. She is a powerful looking woman, beneath her skin lie defined wiry muscles, her eyes positively smolder with power. Outside the excitement of a crisis the Queen Errant makes little attempt to pretend she wouldn't rather be digging up new insects in the jungle; usually she appears before her court in rugged outdoor wear. The Queen of Swords is skilled at managing her image, she just usually doesn't care; but when it is required (and she always knows when it's required) she'll appear before her court dressed in anything from formal robes to full military uniform. Her household servants quickly follow suit, decorating the palace and statues of past heroes to match. Visiting Princesses are expected to dress and act with appropriate formalities until things return to normal.

The Faithful Marshal treats her Princesses with the same unpolished honesty she treats her court. Though she is never actually rude she won't hide her emotions if she feels the Princess' petition to be uninteresting or something that the Princess should have been able to solve on her own. If the Queen comes to befriend a Princess it colors her public interactions just as much as her private interactions. The Queen of Swords has the unique ability to simultaneously be running her kingdom and relaxing with her friends (or even canoodling on the throne).

Whenever the opportunity presents itself the Queen Errant leaves her throne and wanders her kingdom, righting wrongs, doing odd jobs and exploring the jungles which she claims dominion over. She sleeps rough, or in whichever subject's house is close at hand. While her people are never quite comfortable with their Queen asking for a job (how does one give orders to his own Queen) they have at least had plenty of time to get used to her habits. When she can't get out the palace she enjoys study, gymnastics or spending time with one of her many consorts. It is said that long time residents of Aztallan can tell when the Queen falls in love anew from cities away by watching the wheels of government slowing down. Famously she will not kiss a man or woman unless she is deeply in love.

## Philosophy

The Queen of Swords only ever gave one order. "Whatever you do, do it out of love".

**In the End, Only People Matter:** The Queen of Swords is not one for abstract morality and long Socratic debates about what is good and what is evil. Nor is she fond of formal systems of morality, duty or obligation, referring to them as either training wheels or a crutch. To the Queen of Swords morality can be reduced to a simple idea that everyone with Light in their hearts knows intuitively: If it hurts people then it is wrong. So don't do that. Furthermore the Queen believes that if one does not hold this truth in their heart then no amount of

rules or regulations can make them good, but if a person is at heart good forcing them into an inappropriate social construct can crush their light. And so she teaches her followers to do what's right regardless of the rules, and she trusts them to know what's right.

**Specialization is for Insects:** A Princess of Swords should be able to: Compose a sonnet, survive a shipwreck, design an aircraft, recite the epic poems, win her true love's heart, set a bone, clean a building, cook dinner, give orders, take orders, fight like a gentleman in the arena, fight dirty in the streets. The philosophy is a lot more complicated than just saying you should be able to do everything; rather it consists of two related ideas. The first and simpler is simply to always be broadening your horizons, try new things, learn new skills. The second, like all the Brightly Burning One's philosophies is about people. While she has nothing against relying on another, Queen of Swords teaches that dependence must always be a matter of convenience not necessity. True dependency is a chain, it allows others to force you away from being true to yourself. That path leads away from the light.

**Love Like a Flame:** The Brightly Burning One teaches her followers that they should always have somebody in their life that they love, whether it is their one True Love, a lesser romantic love, bromantic love, brotherly love, sisterly love, parental love or any other form of love. Furthermore she teaches that their love should be like a flame, it should light the way and bring warmth to the Princess and those around her; but she must be aware that like a flame if unattended her love will consume all before dying. The Princess should always know when it is time to let go lest she consume herself. Yet when something threatens her love before its natural time her efforts to protect her love should burn everything in her path, even herself - like a flame.

## *Duties*

The followers of Swords are defined not so much by common duties but by a common approach to duties. They seek positions where they are free to follow their own methods and their own moral compasses rather than toe the line. Many see their duties as much about growing themselves as a person as it is about helping others and so seek to always find a new approach or a tougher challenge to stretch their limits.

Champions tend to find jobs outside of the normal social structures. They're more likely to be a private detective than a policewoman. More likely to specialize in deep sea rescue than be a fire fighter. They boast the most full time Darkspawn hunters of any Court. Champions of Swords are often trained to work independently, having the intelligence to plan, the strength to fight and the charisma to turn whoever is around them into an ally.

Graces often mentor on an individual level, seeking the maladjusted or the outcasts and helping them find where they can belong even if it's just a space within themselves. While often less versed in diplomacy than the other Courts Graces of Swords have some of the best connections to a verity of different cultures on a personal level thanks to the courts wanderlust and tendency to go adventuring. In more than a few cases they have turned someone's life around simply by encouraging them to move to a culture to which they are better suited. Graces who focus on larger scale projects are often exceptional at inspiring the public, but often they lack the skills to direct the passion and energy they provoke.

Menders are more likely to volunteer in a small African village than a major, regulated, hospital, those who work with machines often do the same working in oil rigs or digging wells, or they specialize in obscure but still important technology where their unique skills let them demand to work their way. In both cases they are likely to become experts at doing more without much resources.

Seekers often specialize in fields that blend academic learning with either demanding physical or social requirements. Archaeology in war torn parts of the world, private detectives knowledgeable in both forensic science and the seedy underworld, botanical trips through the Amazon rain forest or they are successors to the great and dangerous explorations of the past delving deep into the Underworld or the Shadow. More social exploits can include living with remote tribes for years or finding other cultures closer to home, no few Seekers of Swords have spent time living with dangerous criminals or supernatural predators simply to learn of their lives.

Troubadours of Swords are like a change on the wind. They breeze into town smelling of foreign and exotic ideas if you travel enough you can be foreign and exotic everywhere. Their art challenges norms but rarely opposes them (though some do take a delight in finding and shaking up repressed societies). She isn't saying the status quo is bad, only that it isn't the only way. Most take the effort to leave behind at least a few people who'll continue in the styles she teaches.

## *Background*

Many members of Swords were adventurers before they Blossomed; they may not have faced terrible danger or performed heroic deeds but from backpacking across Europe to teaching English in China they showed the Court's spirit of adventure and self reliance. Others tapped into a confidence they never had before their Blossoming, when you gain magical powers and a new body that's stronger and smarter than your old one confidence is a natural result. Regardless of when they discovered it, Heroes are comfortable living on their own abilities and often eager for new experiences or just to push themselves further.

Just as the Swords are the most adventurous of the Radiant, they are also the most passionate of the Radiant. Even before Blossoming they thought with their emotions, or really wished they had the confidence to do so. The court is overflowing with incurable romantics and people who are confident enough to follow their hearts into adventure, danger and whirlwind romances. While the Heroes are hardly stupid, they put little emphasis on personal safety when the alternative is an adventure.

## *Character Creation*

Swords favor Intelligence, Strength and Presence equally and most are skilled at combining them in unusual ways to solve unusual problems. Heroes often have one or two dots in a wide variety of Skills to be self sufficient and because of their unusual, transient lifestyles. Survival is common among members who take the title of adventurer literally, as is Streetwise to find one's way around cities from London to Hong Kong. Many Heroes know how to fight, and Persuasion is often favored for finding allies or peaceful solutions.

The Martyrs often favor physical Merits, social and even mental Merits are harder to cultivate with an independent lifestyle. The Retainer Merit is surprisingly common, often representing a Sworn travelling companion. The philosophy of Swords makes it easy to form attachments. However it also teaches that one cannot live forever in another's shadow so Princesses of Swords see this time as almost an apprenticeship where they teach and broaden their companion's horizons with a grand adventure before parting ways.

**Heraldry:** The Court of Swords tend to favor blazing Regalia. Reds, golds and whites are common. While it would not be accurate to call them flamboyant the Heroes wear their hearts on their sleeves. Their Regalia often contains iconography that boasts of virtues they uphold and heroic deeds in their past.

## *Practical Magic*

The Queen Errant teaches that passion overcomes all obstacles. When a Martyr spends Willpower to add dice to a roll, she may also spend 1 Wisp to achieve an exceptional success with 3 successes.

High Belief grants extra dice to her dice pool for the affected action: at Belief 8 the Wisp adds a +1 bonus, at Belief 9 it adds +2, and at Belief 10 it adds +3.

## *Invocation: Fuoco*

The Queen of Swords raises passionate devotion into magic in the Invocation of Fuoco, and the Adventurers learn it more easily than any other. Love, heroism and sacrifice are its fuel, the noblest things the Queen Errant knows. It is equally bound to literal fire, heat and light.

Fuoco applies at no cost when the target of a Princess' Charm is a flame, on fire, or hot enough to burn; and when the target is someone or something the Princess loves. It also applies without cost when a Princess intends to aid a person she loves, to strike at enemies with her full force, to take great risks for great gains, to inspire others to heroic endeavors, and at the culmination of a major campaign.

The Invocation abandons Princesses who abandon their beloved. A Princess who betrays or otherwise injures a person she loves or has loved cannot apply Fuoco until the one she has hurt forgives her for the injury, or until a full lunar month has passed.

Several Fuoco Charms create flames out of the love one person feels for another. The nature of the love determines the color of these flames, and the love's strength fuels their heat. See the [Heartfire](#) Condition when a Princess uses these Charms.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Clubs:** I think after spending so much time trying to be part of everyone else, they've forgotten who they are.
  - **Diamonds:** Good at writing a theory, but unable to take it out of the ivory tower and into the real world.
  - **Hearts:** Sometimes traditions and etiquette are just a crutch. If you really know who you are and what mattered to you then you wouldn't need them. Not like they do.
  - **Spades:** Great for a laugh, just wish they cared more deeply.
  - **Tears:** There's no love in what they do, it's nothing but fear.
  - **Storms:** Find something to love, then fight for it. If you do it the other way around you'll end like these girls.
  - **Mirrors:** You're not supposed to love only yourself.
  - **Vampires:** I think the reason fire hurts them so much is that it reminds them what they've lost. They really are dead. On the Inside.
  - **Werewolves:** If I was sure they wouldn't rage and splatter my intestines everywhere, I'd be their closest friend.
  - **Mages:** I don't care how long your theory is, it's still wrong. If anything is real it's what's in your heart, not magic.
  - **Prometheans:** See! I told you, it all comes down to the same thing. Fire and Humanity.
  - **Changelings:** You loved something so much it let you defeat gods and escape hell. You can't give up now!
  - **Sin-Eaters:** Keeping the flame alive in the face of death; I'd respect that, if I thought it meant anything to them.
  - **Mummies:** I'm only sort of immortal, but at least I'm alive.
  - **Beasts:** "If it hurts people then it is wrong." That's all they do and all they are.
  - **Mad Scientists:** I think they are missing something. I think that they became what they are to try and find it and they're still looking.
  - **Leviathans:** Everyone changes other people just by being near them. If we're all like beautiful stars orbiting each other then these are black holes drawing in and giving nothing back. Pure perfect evil.
  - **Hunters:** HEY! Why the hell are you shooting at *me*!? I'm on your side, here!
  - **Mortals:** I'm going to take you on an adventure and break you out of that shell. Just you watch me.
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## *Inspiration*

Haruka Tenoh ([Sailor Moon](#))  
Nanoha Takamachi ([Magical Girl Lyrical Nanoha](#))  
Billy Batson ([Captain Marvel](#))  
Henry Walton "Indiana" Jones ([Indiana Jones](#))  
Sayaka Miki ([Puella Magi Madoka Magica](#))

*I have no regrets. I'm doing this because I love you.*



# Chapter 2: Coronations

*Therefore I am sure that this, my Coronation, is not the symbol of a power and a splendor that are gone but a declaration of our hopes for the future, and for the years I may, by God's Grace and Mercy, be given to reign and serve you as your Queen*

—Queen Elizabeth II

A Princess is still human, and she is able to use all of humanity's varied and dangerous talents to her own advantage. A Princess is also magical, and she is capable of focusing her hopes and beliefs into all sorts of unique and potent advantages. This chapter and the next present the special rules and conditions which apply to the Hopeful, and the process of creating a Noble character. The Nobility's innate abilities and traits, the Merits available to them and their allies, and the mystical societies called Nations that they can create are covered in this chapter; the Charms that serve as a Princess' most potent tools and weapons are explained in the next.

## Creating a Princess Character

Begin by designing the Princess as a mundane character: allocate Attributes, Skills and Merits, calculate the derived traits, and choose a Virtue, a Vice and three Aspirations. As a Princess, the character gets 3 more Merit dots, for a total of 10, to allow her to have some of the [Merits](#) open to the Nobility. Then, add the Hopeful template.

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*"Do I have to play a girl?"*

*Princess: the Hopeful* usually speaks of the Hopeful as female, mainly because nearly all of our inspirations have girls as their protagonists, and the genre's very name is "magical girl". We would like to emphasize, therefore, that you are *not* required to play a female PC. By default Blossoming has no connection with gender, and a new Noble is just as likely to be a boy as a girl.

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## Calling

The first step in creating a Princess is to choose her Calling. A [Calling](#) is the fundamental way the individual Princess brings hope to the world; her Calling gives the Princess a free dot in one of two [Transformed Attributes](#), and affinity for three families of Charms. There are five Callings available to choose from.

Calling	Attributes	Affinities
<a href="#">Champions</a> : Defenders of the weak and helpless.	Strength	or Bless, Fight, Perfect Resolve
<a href="#">Graces</a> : Elegant and noble, the voices and diplomats of the Reborn.	Presence	or Bless, Connect, Govern Manipulation
<a href="#">Menders</a> : Those who take wounded flesh and wounded hearts and make them whole.	Intelligence	Perfect, Restore, Shape or Dexterity
<a href="#">Seekers</a> : Hunters of truth, banishers of lies, revealers of the hidden.	Intelligence	Appear, Learn, Govern or Wits
<a href="#">Troubadours</a> : Artists and exemplars who inspire greatness in others.	Presence	or Appear, Inspire, Shape Dexterity

## Queen

Once the five [Radiant Queens](#) governed their Kingdoms in the name of the Light; now they are dead but their minds and souls live on in the Dreamlands. From beyond the veil of sleep the Queens mentor the Radiant.

A Princess can accept a position in a Queen's court, a bond of both personal loyalty but also mystical affinity that enhances a Princess' magic.

There are five Radiant Queens that a player can follow.

- **Clubs:** The Queen Mother leads the coven of Princesses who seek to live in harmony with the world.
- **Diamonds:** The Philosopher Queen leads the conclave of progressive-minded Princesses who believe in constantly adapting and refining the Kingdom's techniques.
- **Hearts:** The Queen Regnant leads the court of Princesses who focus on communities, and their place within society, first and foremost.
- **Spades:** The Queen of Knaves leads a confederacy of winking scoundrels and good-hearted rogues who believe the best application of the rules is to break them.
- **Swords:** The Queen Errant leads the company of Princesses who believe that inner strength and passion should always light the way.

In addition there are three Twilight Queens who are not usually available to player characters.

- **Tears:** The Last Empress rules the city of Alhambra, hidden in the heart of the Darkness, and taxes the world of its hope to preserve it.
- **Storms:** The Seraphic General sends her sworn guard to war against the Darkness, and calls on the world to sacrifice everything to defeat it.
- **Mirrors:** The Heiropant knows the true heir to the Kingdom will defeat the Darkness, and the Nobility can accomplish anything if they just believe in themselves.

## *Invocations*

All Princesses draw magic from their Beliefs and hopes, but when a Princess becomes a Queen her beliefs and philosophies echo across the souls of humanity. Any Princess can feel that echo within her own soul and draw on it to enhance her own magic. Each Princess starts with three dots in **Invocations**, one of which must be placed into her Queen's own Invocation. Courtless Princesses have a free choice of Invocations, but they may not place all three of their dots in the same Invocation.

There are eight established Invocations, each favored by a Queen.

- The Queen of Diamonds focuses the lights of knowledge and reason into the Invocation of **Acqua**.
- The Queen of Spades teaches the Invocation of **Aria**, the enviable lightness of being.
- The Queen of Swords raises passionate devotion into magic in the Invocation of **Fuoco**.
- The Queen of Tears has embodied the laws and requirements of her city within the Invocation of **Lacrima**.
- The Queen of Clubs teaches the principles of harmony and inner strength in the Invocation of **Legno**.
- The Queen of Mirrors uses the Invocation of **Specchio** to cultivate those who may be the Kingdom's heir.
- The Queen of Storms distills rage against Darkness into the Invocation of **Tempesta**.
- The principles of the Queen of Hearts find their magical expression in the Invocation of **Terra**.

## *Charms*

Every Princess knows **Charms**, A Princess starts with nine dots in Charms; at least three dots must be for Charms in the families the character's Calling has affinity for, the others may come from any family. A Princess may take upgrades for any Charm she knows; each upgrade costs 1 of her starting Charm dots. She may not take Charms higher than 3 dots, or upgrade a Charm above 3 dots. If she takes an invoked Charm or upgrade, she must have the prerequisite dots in the Invocation. The ten families of Charms are:

- **Appear** Charms change a Princess' appearance, and produce other illusions.
- **Bless** Charms enhance people, pushing their abilities to a peak and bringing their actions to perfection.
- **Connect** Charms trace and use the connections between people, or make and break such connections.

- **Fight** Charms enhance a Princess' ability to fight.
- **Govern** Charms control supernatural powers and those who possess them.
- **Inspire** Charms lift people's hearts, spark their passions, and exhort them to action.
- **Learn** Charms confer knowledge, and reveal what has been hidden.
- **Perfect** Charms grant new personal abilities.
- **Restore** Charms repair damaged objects, heal the injured and tend the sick.
- **Shape** Charms shape materials as you will, or make things out of nothing.

Should the player wish she may use Charm dots to buy transformed traits, after taking her three affinity Charms. A transformed Skill dot costs 1 Charm dot; a transformed Attribute dot costs 3 Charm dots.

## *Inner Light*

A Princess' magic shines out of her soul to illuminate the world. The raw power of her hopes and feelings is represented by her **Inner Light**. A starting Princess has one dot in Inner Light, but she may spend 5 Merit dots to increase her Inner Light to two, or her full allotment of 10 Merit dots to increase it to three.

Among other things, Inner Light allows a Princess to use a few Charms in her mundane state. One of her one-dot Charms is Practical; she may use this Charm without transforming. With Inner Light 2 a second one-dot Charm becomes Practical, and with Inner Light 3 a third one-dot Charm becomes Practical. Only the basic Charms are Practical, not any of their upgrades.

## *Wisps*

**Wisps** are the fuel for a Princess, a measure of both raw magic and emotional energy. A Princess begins with half her starting Wisp pool, as measured by Inner Light, plus the higher of her **Circle** and **Mandate** Merits.

## *Belief*

**Belief** replaces the Integrity trait for Princesses. It measures her confidence that her ideals and principles can survive in the World of Darkness. A Princess begins with one dot of Belief for every dot of Integrity she possessed when she Blossomed. When creating a new character this means she will start with seven dots of Belief.

## *Vocation*

In addition to the three Aspirations of a mundane character [CofD 28] a Princess may take a fourth Aspiration as her **Vocation**. A Vocation must be related to the Princess' Calling, and it should be a task for which the chief benefit, if completed, goes to someone else. A starting Princess may leave her Vocation blank, to be chosen during play when an appropriate goal emerges, if her player doesn't have something in mind yet.

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## *Daddy's Little Princess*

The mahou shoujo genre has a long and proud tradition of child and early teen protagonists. If you wish you can combine Princess with WoD Innocents; the Princess template will function as intended if applied to a character built using the rules in Innocents. Any Charm that uses Science or Academics will use the Study skill instead (or if you prefer, you can split your character's Study dots into Academics and Science upon transformation).

Child Nobles are limited to three mundane dots in Skills unless they have one of the three Prodigy Merits; this limitation does not apply to transformed dots, and the cap on mundane Skills is increased by one at Inner Light four and five. In addition, so long as a Princess has at least one relevant transformed dot, she is considered to be an adult for all rules purposes related to that Attribute or Skill while she is transformed.

The same applies to anyone who has 6+ dots in an Attribute or Skill, such as anyone under the influence of an appropriate Bless Charm. (A complete list of special rules for adult-child interactions can be found at p. 193 of WoD Innocents.) How this manifests is up to the player. A Princess with transformed Composure might acquire adult emotional maturity every time she transforms or overcome her fears through a supernaturally potent child-like sense of adventure.

With a little cunning Nobles can have access to Social Merits that are usually off limits to children. A Troubadour could earn Resources by working as an artist for commission; nobody can see that she's nine years old over e-mail and her work will likely put grown adults to shame. Similar tricks, and if necessary the occasional Appear Charm to disguise oneself as an adult, could allow a Princess to acquire 4+ dots in Allies or Contacts. However, all such Merits must be **limited** to her transformed identity.

All this assumes that the young Noble doesn't become an adult upon transformation. If she does then just treat her in that form like any other grown-up.

## Character Advancement

Trait	Experiences	Trait	Experiences
Mundane Attribute	4/dot	Affinity Charm	1/dot
Mundane Skill	2/dot	Other Charm	1/dot, + 1
Transformed Attribute	3/dot	Charm upgrade	1
Transformed Skill	1/dot	Favored Invocation	2/dot
Transformed to mundane	1/dot	Other Invocation	3/dot
Merit	1/dot	Inner Light	5/dot
Willpower (repurchased)	1/dot	Belief	2/dot

## New and Modified Traits

Becoming a Princess does not just grant you magical abilities, it is a fundamental change to your state of being. Many Princesses use the phrase "Magical Girl" to emphasize this point. A Princess is not a girl who uses magic, she is magical. Magic is as much a part of her as blood or emotions is a part of any human. As a Princess learns grows in wisdom and experience she learns to use her nature to its fullest extent, but also must face its unique drawbacks.

## New Advantages: Vocation and Luminous Experience

The magical powers of the Hopeful come with a general notion of the proper way to inspire hope and conquer fear, represented by their Calling. Nearly every Noble also has more specific goals in mind for improving that part of the world she finds herself in; and in the course of accomplishing such goals, she also deepens her connection to the Light and her fervor for its cause.

To represent this a Princess has a fourth, special Aspiration called her Vocation. Like other Aspirations the Vocation should be phrased as an active achievement, and should be something the Princess can accomplish within the intended scope of play. There are two further constraints on a Vocation: it must be a specialization of the Princess' Calling, and it should be a task for which the chief benefit, if completed, goes to someone else, not to the Princess herself. Each time the Princess makes significant progress towards her Vocation, she takes a Luminous Beat. It's possible for the same event to grant both a normal and a Luminous Beat. In other respects (e.g. social maneuvering) the Vocation has the same effects as the three mundane Aspirations.

Five Luminous Beats become one Luminous Experience. Luminous Experience, once gained, may be spent to raise Inner Light or Belief, to remove dots of Shadows, or to buy the Virtuous Merit [CofD 46]. Luminous Experience may also be used to buy Merits which represent relationships to other people, typically people a Princess meets while fulfilling her Vocation. Of those listed in the *Chronicles of Darkness*, Allies, Contacts, Fixer,

Hobbyist Clique, Mentor, Mystery Cult Initiation, Retainer, Staff, Status and True Friend qualify. Of the Merits listed in this book, [Circle](#), [Mandate](#), [Troupe Magic](#), [Entwined Destiny](#) and [Nation Officer](#) qualify. Mundane characters who have gained Luminous Experience may spend it to raise Integrity or the qualifying Merits which are open to them, or to remove Shadows.

While the personal Vocation is the chief source of Luminous Experience for the Hopeful, it isn't the only one - [Blessed Places](#) give access to new Vocations, and not just to the Nobility; [Nations](#) give a Vocation to their officers, Noble or mundane; and there are a few places in the [Dreamlands](#) where the Light manifests itself in a pure form, and a Princess can gain Luminous Experience by going to those places to examine her soul.

## *Modified Advantage: Virtue*

Under the oppressive dominion of the Darkness, mundane people find it easy to yield to temptation, and cruelly hard to answer the call of their better nature. Hence they may fulfill their Vices on the slightest occasions, but fulfill their Virtues only at moments of great crisis. Not so the Hopeful: while a Princess can still be tempted as easily as any mundane character, the Light shows her ways to follow her higher calling in the small matters of daily life, and she may take heart from them nearly as easily as from her besetting sin.

Thus, the rules for fulfilling Virtue are somewhat different for the Nobility from those in the *Chronicles of Darkness*. (The rules for Vice do not change - only Virtue is altered.) A Princess may regain a single point of Willpower from an act in accord with her Virtue once per scene, without restriction. She may also regain all spent Willpower at most once per session by an act that reflects her Virtue and poses her difficulty, danger or risk, much as a mundane character does.

## *New Advantage: Inner Light*

When a Princess' power first blossoms, it is barely the tiniest of sparks deep within her soul. However, as time passes and the ancient spirit within her awakens, her power begins to shine like a roaring fire, strong enough to support great magics and bright enough to become an invisible presence in the material world. Inner Light is the Hopeful "power level" trait, and gives her Supernatural Tolerance [CofD 70].

As Inner Light increases, it not only gives a Princess more magical ammunition to throw around, but also represents her past life bleeding into her mental and physical world. Characters with high Inner Light experience more vivid dreams about the Kingdom and the Cataclysm and can have physical prowess beyond the limits of mere humanity. High Inner Light also increases the strength of a Princess' [Echo](#), and the number of people affected by it. Finally, high Inner Light makes a character more vulnerable to Sensitivity and Hauntings.

Inner Light	Ability Max <sup>a</sup>	Wisps / Turn <sup>b</sup>	Charm Max <sup>c</sup>	Practical <sup>d</sup>	Sensitivity <sup>e</sup>
1	5 / 5	10 / 1	3	1 / 1	1 Die
2	5 / 5	11 / 2	4	2 / 1	1 Die
3	5 / 6	12 / 3	5	3 / 1	2 Dice
4	5 / 6	13 / 4	6	5 / 2	2 Dice
5	5 / 7	15 / 5	7	7 / 2	3 Dice
6	6 / 7	20 / 6	8	9 / 2	3 Dice
7	7 / 8	25 / 7	9	11 / 2	4 Dice
8	8 / 8	30 / 8	10	14 / 3	4 Dice
9	9 / 9	50 / 10	11	17 / 3	5 Dice
10	10 / 10	75 / 15	12	20 / 3	5 Dice

<sup>a</sup>The highest a regular attribute or skill may be raised using XP. The maximum level of any attribute or skill in normal form is before the slash; the maximum including bonus dots from [Transformation](#) is after the slash.

<sup>b</sup>The maximum number of Wisps a character may have available in their pool and the maximum number they may spend in a single turn.

<sup>c</sup>The highest level at which a Charm may be purchased. Basic Charms do not go beyond 5 dots, but a Charm's effective rating can be increased through upgrades. Inner Light caps the effective rating.

<sup>d</sup>A small part of a Noble's power is available without transforming. The total number of dots in available Charms is before the slash; the highest available level of Charm is after the slash.

## *New Advantage: Wisps*

A Wisp is a mote of virtue and determination, an itty-bitty ember of the Human Spirit given off by positive emotions and general happiness, that Princesses use to fuel many of their abilities. The maximum amount of Wisps a Princess can store, as well as the number she can spend in one turn, is determined by her Inner Light.

### *Spending Wisps*

**Quickened Transformation:** A Princess may spend a Wisp to [transform](#) automatically as a reflexive action, bypassing the usual roll.

**Practical Magic:** A Princess may spend one or more Wisps to activate her [Practical Magic](#).

**Charm Activation:** While transformed, a Princess may spend Wisps to activate Charms; the cost varies with each Charm.

**Holy Shield:** While transformed, a Princess may reflexively spend a Wisp to [resist an injury](#) as she receives it.

### *Call of Duty*

A Princess normally regains Wisps by going out and making the world a better place in a way that fits with her Calling. A Mender could work as a nurse or in a soup kitchen, a Troubadour might perform in public or display her art, a Grace could mentor a youth, et cetera. Once a scene, if a Princess attempts an action related to her Calling duties, before rolling her player may declare that she will regain Wisps from the task. For a simple action, this adds the following results to the roll, beyond its mundane consequences.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess fails so badly that she loses 2 Wisps, instead of gaining any.

**Failure:** The Princess neither gains nor loses Wisps.

**Success:** The Princess regains 1 Wisp for each success rolled on the action. Extra successes [CofD 72] don't add to her Wisps.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess regains many Wisps.

When an extended action fulfills a Calling duty, the Princess regains Wisps equal to the action's required successes if she completes it properly, and loses 2 Wisps if she gets a dramatic failure.

In addition during downtime a player can say that her character spends her time fulfilling her Calling duties, in-between school, family or other commitments. By sacrificing a non-trivial amount of time and energy on an appropriate task, the Princess may make an appropriate roll for that task: Intelligence + Medicine for a nurse, Presence + Expression for a performer, Strength + Crafts to build homes for the poor, and so on. She regains Wisps from this task as above. As a rule of thumb, these tasks should take up roughly an hour of a Princess' time.

If the Princess upholds her duty in a way that honors her Queen's philosophy, she gains 1 additional Wisp from the task, provided she scored at least one success.

Some Princesses focus on a specific way to fulfill their Calling duties; the [Mandate](#) merit represents this.

### *Circle of Light*

Princesses with mundane families and friends often find that spending time with them, sharing their troubles or happiness, refreshes them for the supernatural fight. The [Circle](#) Merit represents these relationships; see that Merit for a full explanation.

### *Inner Strength*

When the chips are down and the situation is dire, a Princess can call upon her own inner reserves of determination and draw out power she didn't know she had. As an instant action, she spends a Willpower point and rolls Belief. This ability can only be used when the Princess is in immediate danger, such as in combat, and

is not meant to be an everyday means of regaining power - a good rule of thumb is, if it doesn't matter that this action is Instant and thus takes up a character's action for the turn, it's probably not dangerous enough to work.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess' will collapses. She immediately takes the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 87].

**Failure:** The Princess gains nothing from her Willpower, but may continue fighting.

**Success:** The Princess refreshes her magic; she regains Inner Light Wisps plus one Wisp per success.

**Exceptional Success:** On top of the Wisps, the Princess surges back into action. On her next turn, she adds a +3 bonus to her dice pool.

## *New Disadvantages: Sensitivity and Shadows*

A Princess is, by nature, sensitive to the suffering of others. When she sees someone in pain, she cannot help but feel it herself; when she witnesses cruel or callous acts that cause suffering in others, the light within her dims and flickers. The sympathetic pain echoes in her mind afterward, as a Haunting; she may continue to see the face of the victim or relive the moment over and over. Food tastes like dust, her favorite music is nothing but a cacophony, and headaches won't leave her. Worse, the most severe Hauntings leave behind a lasting injury to her magic, represented as the Shadows trait.

A starting character has Shadows 0. Dots in Shadows impair a Princess' access to her powers in two ways. First, they are subtracted from her transformation roll, which becomes Belief + Inner Light - Shadows. Shadows also impair a Princess's ability to recover Wisps: all the dice pools she rolls for that purpose subtract 1 die for each dot in Shadows she possesses.

To qualify as a tainting (the name for events a Princess has Sensitivity to) an action must cause suffering in a self-aware being. It's the mental and emotional suffering, not the physical pain, which matters. Damage inflicted on a prepared fighter defending himself generally won't trigger Sensitivity, but the same damage taken by a helpless victim, or one who thought himself safe, will. Similarly, forms of suffering that aren't physical at all, such as deep grief at the loss of a loved one, trigger Sensitivity when the Princess meets the sufferer.

The level of sympathetic pain a Princess feels at a tainting depends on her Inner Light, the moral gravity of the act itself, how she learns about it, and the degree of responsibility she bears for it. When her Sensitivity triggers, a Princess rolls a dice pool of half her Inner Light, rounding up, and modified as follows.

Modifier	Form of tainting
+0	Simple injury: lethal damage, disabling pain, loss of a loved one
+1	Grievous injury: aggravated damage, permanent impairment, betrayal by a loved one
+2	Heinous acts: death, prolonged torture
-1	Tainting is caused by unintelligent beings (e.g. animals, natural disaster)
+0	Tainting is accidental or due to neglect
+1	Tainting was intended to give pain
-1	The Princess hears a detailed report of the tainting from unaffected witnesses
+0	The Princess meets a person suffering from the tainting
+1	The Princess witnesses the tainting in person
+0	Tainter is unrelated to the Princess
+1	Tainter is an ally of the Princess
+2	Tainter is the Princess
9-again	Small group of people suffer due to the taint
8-again	Large group of people suffer due to the taint
Rote	Crowd of people suffer due to the taint

**Dramatic Failure:** As normal failure.

**Failure:** The tainting does not impair the Princess.



**Success:** The Princess undergoes a Haunting. She takes one of the Conditions [Demoralized](#), [Enraged](#) or [Hypersensitive](#). If the number of successes is less than or equal to her current Shadows dots, the Condition resolves the first time the Noble takes a Beat from it. If the successes exceed her Shadows, the Condition lasts until resolved in the stated way, and the Princess also gains a new Shadows dot and the [Haunted](#) Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess gains a new Shadows dot and the Haunted Condition regardless of her current Shadows dots. She may take one of the Conditions Demoralized, Enraged or Hypersensitive, which last until resolved. Alternatively, she may trigger a catharsis to decrease her burdens. She takes one of the Conditions [Abdicated](#), [Maddened](#) or [Magicless](#), clears the Haunted Condition, and rolls her Shadows; each success removes one Shadows dot.

If a Princess' [Belief](#) falls too low a tainting becomes increasingly likely to inflict Shadows or a catharsis: a Sensitivity check achieves an exceptional success on successes of either 5 or the Princess' Belief, whichever is lower.

Resolving Haunted is the simplest way to remove a Shadows dot; once that Condition ends, though, a Shadows dot can't be lost so easily. If a Princess with Shadows regains all Willpower by fulfilling her Virtue, she may remove 1 dot of Shadows as well. A Princess may also spend Experiences to remove dots of Shadows - sacrificing 1 Experience gets rid of 2 Shadows dots.

## *Modified Advantage: Belief (Integrity)*

Being a Princess is not something that just happens at random, a fortunate circumstance that gives you neat-o magic powers to do whatever you want with. You are here on Earth with a purpose: to make the world a better place and bring the Light of Hope to everyone suffering. The existence of the Kingdom proves to you that it can be done, and a Princess's conviction is one of her greatest assets. She works to save the world, because she believes, she knows, the world can be saved. She sides with good over evil because she believes that good will always triumph in the end. She fights not merely because she believes she can win, but because the battle must be fought. If her beliefs begin to slip, as doubt creeps into her mind over her cause or ability, the Inner Light within her is beset by the darkness of the world.

Belief tracks the strength of a Princess's convictions, her belief in herself and her cause. Characters with high Belief are confident, assured, able to draw on their power more readily due to the strength of their certainty. They inspire confidence in everyone around them. Characters with low Belief are wracked with doubt and despair, losing their confidence that the world can be saved and that they have the ability to do it, afraid there is no hope for victory, if there was ever any at all. At first, this is only a minor loss, and characters may believe it healthy to learn of their own limitations and view the world more realistically. As Belief continues to drop, though, hope begins to abandon the character, her powers seem further away, across a widening gulf of gnawing doubt, and she may begin to project an aura of uncertainty and depression on those around her.

The Belief trait replaces the Integrity system from the God-Machine Chronicle. Starting Hopeful characters begin with a Belief of 7, representing idealism and confidence in a world beset by darkness and despair. Should a mundane character Blossom in the course of play, their Belief is equal to their previous Integrity, for psychological stresses suffered before one Blossoms still interfere with one's conviction and confidence after it. The two traits are compatible - in any situation where a character's Integrity would be relevant, a Princess uses Belief instead.

## *Breaking Points*

Though Princesses share many moral concepts and experiences with mundane society, they are necessarily aware of a larger context and a higher purpose. Mundane people find it disturbing to encounter the supernatural, but for one of the Hopeful, whose life the Light has transformed, nothing shakes composure merely because it lies beyond mortal ken. However, firm faith and serene hope that the world can be redeemed and the Darkness driven back are the heart of a Princess' mental balance, and anything which sows doubt or inspires despair may easily break her, where the typical person would be unmoved. Breaking points for Princesses fall into these broad categories:

- The Princess performs an action which violates her conscience, or her understanding of what the Light requires;



- The Princess witnesses a victory of creatures of the Darkness over the virtuous or innocent;
- The Princess discovers good reason to doubt her calling or her prior actions while following it.

During character creation the player of a Princess character should answer the following five questions, and define one of her breaking points from each answer. Players are free to add more breaking points for their characters beyond these, if they should discover any appropriate for their characters; and the Storyteller may declare that an experience falling into one of the categories above is a breaking point even if it doesn't match one of those listed on a Princess' character sheet.

- **What does the Princess believe a world redeemed from Darkness would be like?** Every member of the Nobility has *some* notion of what the world ought to be, and how the Darkness is corrupting it. Even when they can't explain it in words, this vision forms the guiding principle when they transform or call upon the Light. Abandoning this vision will shake her soul, and working against it is likely the worst deed imaginable. Describe the Princess' ideal world, and why in her opinion the real world isn't like that. Failing to live by that ideal defines the first of her breaking points.
- **Who has given shape to the Princess' character and convictions?** A Princess doesn't acquire her principles in a vacuum, any more than an ordinary mortal does. Someone has taught them to her, whether by precept or example - her parents, a brother or sister, a teacher in her school, an enemy (demonstrating what *not* to do), occasionally a long-dead author whose books she found in a library. (Not infrequently a Princess has had several of these; you're obliged to name one, but feel free to give her as many as you like.) Whoever it was, they had certain expectations which the Princess feels she ought to live up to, and she reaches a breaking point if she doesn't.
- **What did the Princess experience that prepared her for her Blossoming?** While Blossoming itself is a joyous moment, it's invariably preceded and inspired by a time of adversity, danger, troubles or strife. Describe the stressful circumstances which led to the character becoming an active Princess. Some Princesses overcome the trouble which brought about their Blossoming; their breaking point should be something that calls their solution into question. Others find their trouble persisting, even with the Light's help, and they have a breaking point derived from that unresolved tension.
- **What did the Princess experience that made her doubt her cause, or her fitness to be a Princess?** This experience can be drawn from any point in the Princess' life, from before or after her Blossoming - or, if you like, from her memories of a past incarnation in the Kingdom. It must, however, be in some respect a failure on her part. Either she had an important goal which through her own fault she did not achieve; or, in a deeper failure, she completed some great project in the Light's service, only to see it wrecked or corrupted. The breaking point reflects the manner of her failure.
- **Who (or what) does the Princess care for, beyond her duties to the Light?** None of the Hopeful can dedicate themselves completely to a single cause, however worthy it might be. The Princess had a life, and certain obligations from that life, before she Blossomed, and she cannot be truly effective for her principles if she neglects these connections. Still, there's always tension between the mundane and the magical aspects of a Princess, and when it flares up her dedication may crack. A threat to whatever the Princess holds most dear in her mundane life, especially if it comes from her magic or the enemies she fights with it, puts her Belief in peril.

## Compromise

Belief	Modifier
8-10	+2
6-7	+1
4-5	0
2-3	-1
1	-2

When a Princess experiences a breaking point, her player checks for a compromise, by rolling her Resolve + Composure with a modifier derived from her current Belief rating. Practical Magic cannot be used on this roll.

The Storyteller also imposes modifiers based on the severity of the breaking point. The chart below applies for the typical Hopeful, but the Storyteller and player should develop their understanding of a Princess' ideals and principles to the point that they can customize a chart for her. The total of modifiers for severity should not exceed +/-5 dice.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess succumbs to despair. She loses a dot of Belief and gains one of the Conditions Broken [CofD 288], Fugue [CofD 289] or [Cynical](#); or invent a persistent Condition with the Storyteller's approval. Also, the Princess takes a Beat.

**Failure:** The Princess' faith is compromised. She loses a dot of Belief and gains one of the Conditions Guilty [CofD 289], Shaken [CofD 290] or [Doubting](#); or invent a Condition with the Storyteller's approval.

**Success:** The Princess' faith is mildly disturbed. She gains one of the Conditions Guilty, Shaken or Doubting; or invent a Condition with the Storyteller's approval.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess passes through the breaking point with her faith and hopes renewed. She gains the Inspired Condition [CofD 289] related to the breaking point.

Modifier	Breaking point
-1	Injury to another, whether accidental or otherwise
-2	Inflicting major hardship on another (lost employment, broken families, serious injury)
-3	Unplanned or reckless killing (manslaughter)
-4	Deliberate killing (murder)
-5	Torture
-1 to -5	Advising an ally to actions that cause them to lose a dot of Integrity (or equivalent)
-1	Neglecting friends or family (once/session)
-2	Abandoning friends or family
-3	Betraying friends or family
-0	Violating the Third Oath of one's Calling
-1	Violating the Second Oath of one's Calling
-2	Violating the First Oath of one's Calling
-1 to -3	Losing a battle against a supernatural force anathema to humanity and the Light (the Dark, the Abyss, the Maeljin, etc)
-2	Meeting one of the Dethroned (once/Dethroned)
-3	Dealing with a supernatural force anathema to humanity and the Light in a non-hostile way short of direct aid
-5	Helping a supernatural force anathema to humanity and the Light against the Light or human beings

Modifier	Relevant circumstances
+1	The Princess is working against a tainting
+1	The Princess is protecting a mundane character
+2	... from a supernatural force anathema to humanity and the Light
+1	The Princess is acting according to her Virtue
-1	The Princess is acting according to her Vice
-1	Those harmed by the action are innocent (have not done the like themselves)

## *Effects of Belief*

As Belief falls, the lash of [Sensitivity](#) leaves deeper marks, as if to replace the Hopeful's fading conscience. A Noble with Belief less than 5 achieves an exceptional success on a Sensitivity check on successes equal or greater than her Belief.

The [Echo](#) of a Noble carries traces of her psyche into everyone she meets, without any conscious effort on her part - indeed, she can no more stop that influence than she can stop breathing. The level of a Noble's Belief and her dots in Shadows control whether her influence works towards the Light, or against it.

## *Falling to Belief 0*

*I used to think that you were a guardian angel, come to answer our prayers... But Lucifer was an angel too, wasn't he?*

—Professor Emil Hamilton, Justice League Unlimited

When a Princess loses her last scrap of Belief, the keystone of her self is shattered. Her soul, scarred and blemished by horror, retreats and becomes obscured even as her Inner Light starts to gutter and fade. Her Phylactery shatters, suddenly age-rotted, and she forcefully de-Transforms, back to her normal identity. Without a Phylactery, she cannot Transform. She is barred from the Dreamlands; the Queens can offer no comfort. Even the Twilight Queens are disgusted by a Noble who falls this far, for Tears sees her as a threat to Alhambra, Storms as just another Dark creature waiting to happen, and Mirrors as a failed True Queen to be discarded.

Many would say that this is enough of a curse; that, stripped of rank and privilege, she is left to wander the Earth. It may be. But that is not the end. Before long she is not merely a fallen Princess but a fallen human, little more than a shuffling husk that drifts through life; something barely recognizable as one who once championed the cause of the Light. Stripped of all drive she may just lie still until she starves, unable to see the point of eating. If she is pushed she will go about her life, she is too empty inside to say no, to say I hurt too much to do this. She is a hollow shell of a woman, lacking the strength to fight for what she believes in, always folding at the least pressure, unable to even cry for help.

In effect, the moment a Princess' Belief falls to 0, she acquires the Soulless [CofD 290] and [Enervated](#) Conditions, and will become unplayable when her permanent Willpower falls to 0. As long as these Conditions persist the Princess cannot transform or use Practical Magic; all her powers are closed to her. Since her soul is just obscured, not actually gone, trying to give the Princess a new soul with magic does nothing for her. Once she loses all Willpower dots, indeed, nothing *can* be done for her. Before that point, other Princesses may be able to guide her back to the Light, if they know her well and can speak to her. The rescuers use the Social Maneuvering rules [CofD 81-84]; the number of Doors they must open equals the lower of the Princess' Resolve and Composure, plus her Shadows dots. If all the Doors are opened, and the Princess spends 3 Experiences, she sacrifices a Willpower dot to remake her Phylactery, her Belief returns to 1, and the Soulless and Enervated Conditions end.

A soul-dead Princess who does not get help from others has one more, most terrible option before her will dies out, one that an intelligent creature of the Darkness can guide her to. These also use Social Maneuvering, with Doors equal to the lower of the Princess' Resolve and Composure (*not* adding her Shadows dots.) If the Dark creature opens his last Door, the former Princess attempts to Transform despite her lack of a Phylactery. She turns towards the Dark to fill the empty void where she once held her Light. She focuses on everything that hurt her, everything that went wrong in her life and focuses on the grief and bitterness they invoke, for in her deranged state even that is better than nothingness. The mad will of a Princess in this state is a terrible thing to behold. She laughs with pure grief, she cries tears of crystal clear despair. Her feelings echo around her, calling pure Taint up from the Dark World and shaping it into twisted reflections of her own life. She even calls the Taint into her own body, fuelling her final Transformation into a being drawn from the depths of her own nightmares.

A Transformation in this manner should not be possible. Properly, it is impossible, for no Princess could do it, none could take this Last Transformation. But those who do so are no longer among the Enlightened, they are no longer even human. They shed their mortal forms, as Darkness rushes into the void within them which the Light once filled, and are both twisted and empowered by this blasphemous process. They wear blackened crowns on monstrous heads; they become the [Dethroned](#).

# Invocations

Invocations are archetypal forces from which the Hopeful learn to draw power. A Princess may buy up to 5 dots in each Invocation. Each Queen favors one Invocation, and the Hopeful sworn to her find that Invocation easier to learn than any other. Due to this intimate tie to the Queens, the Invocations are described under the Queen who favors them. Invocations are deeply intertwined with [Charms](#) - they add to a Charm's power, and many Charms and upgrades can't be learned without studying them.

Learning an Invocation gives a Noble insights that go beyond a Queen's philosophy, unlocking new variations of Charms, or pushing ordinary training to superhuman levels. Each time a Noble buys an Invocation dot, she also gains an upgrade to two of her Charms. She may add both upgrades to the same Charm, or trade one or both upgrades for transformed Skill dots. The upgrades may be general, or require the Invocation the Noble just learned, at a level equal to or less than her new dots. An upgrade that requires any other Invocation may not be learned this way, even when the Noble knows the other Invocation.

## Invoking for Willpower

Aside from adding power to Charms, an Invocation can inspire Nobles who strive to live up to its principles. If the Storyteller agrees that a Princess' actions during a scene reflect the archetype of an Invocation the Princess has learned, and she hasn't broken its ban, the Princess rolls her dots in that Invocation as a dice pool. (This pool cannot be modified in any way - she may not spend Willpower on it, and no magic or Condition affects it.) She may do this once per session, for each Invocation separately. She need not be transformed to use her Invocations this way.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess' recent actions feel a bit hollow; she doubts the ideals that inspired them. Until the scene ends, she may not spend Willpower on actions that reflect the Invocation.

**Failure:** The Princess goes on with her life.

**Success:** The Invocation confirms the Princess' actions. She regains one spent Willpower point.

**Exceptional Success:** The Invocation revives the Princess' flagging will; she regains all spent Willpower.

## Choosing your Invocations

The choice of Invocations is an important one, an Invocation shapes and empowers a Princess' magic. The easiest trap for a Princess to fall into is jump to thinking which Charms she wants. Invocations are not a neatly packaged source of power for any Princess who likes the look of a certain Charm. Rather, an Invocation is the ideals and Beliefs of a Queen given form, resonating in the souls of mankind through the inherent magical nature of a Queen.

When choosing Invocations a player should think about what views and beliefs a Princess shares with a Queen. The more a Princess has in common with a Queen, the more she upholds a Queen's ideals, the brighter the Invocation shines within her. With practice (represented by spending Experiences) she can draw on that Invocation to enhance her magic. The Queen's philosophies can provide a yard stick. A Princess who only follows one of the Queen's philosophies is unlikely to advance beyond one or two dots in an Invocation. Agreeing with two philosophies can reach three or perhaps even four dots. A Princess who broadly agrees with and lives up to all three philosophies can with time master an invocation. (For Lacrima, a Princess is considered to uphold the philosophies if she applies similar ideals to her own friends, family or Nation instead of Alhambra.)

And what of the Twilight Invocations? Not every philosophical ideal of the Twilight Queens is pure evil to be rejected by any right minded Princess. Protecting your nation or opposing the Outer Dark in all its forms are ideas commonly found among the Radiant. So what stops a Princess waking up one morning and realizing she now has a dot of Lacrima? The answer is choice. A Princess who believes in protecting her nation can feel a connection to Lacrima deep within herself and knows she can draw power from it, but she can choose not to. The connection to an Invocation does not shape her beliefs, it is shaped by her beliefs. An Invocation she chooses not to use, or vows to stop using, cannot turn her to the dark side.

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## *Dancing in Twilight*

One of the dirtier secrets of the Radiant is the sheer number of Nobles who, at one point in their life or another, dabble in the Invocations of the Twilight Queens. Dabbling in this case can be anything up to buying two or three dots in the Invocations; more requires a strength of commitment to the ideals of the Queen which is largely incompatible with remaining a member of the Radiant (for one, one's own Queen will tend to object). The truth is that, the flaws in the Twilight Queens are ones which are within the hearts of man as a whole, and so most of the Enlightened have felt the same urges at some point in their life. Note that, however, such dabblers still consider themselves part of the Radiant, and, in the case of those who feel affinity for the Queen of Mirrors, see no contradiction at all in what they do. They still oppose the Darkness, and will fight against the loyalists of the Twilight Queens. One of the greatest topic of debate in the multiple, disparate groups of the Enlightened is how to respond to people who use Twilight Invocations, and whether or not they're doing anything wrong.

The Invocation of *Lacrima*, tool of the Last Empress, the Queen of [Tears](#), is an object of fear and mistrust to the vast majority of the Radiant. It is apparently evil, in a way that neither Specchio nor Tempesta are, because many of its Charms cause Hauntings when invoked, and to many, it is irrevocably tainted by the fact that it has the Charms used to drain Light from the world or transform oneself into a creature of the Dark. But, nevertheless, there are those Princesses who learn it, and who do not follow the Queen of Tears. One of the fundamental things about *Lacrima* is that it can always be used to protect your own Nation, and to a Princess who wants to do exactly that, the expediency of methods means that *Lacrima* can look tempting. When a friend died because you pushed your views on someone and so Legno was sealed off, the universal applicability of *Lacrima* for your Nation starts to look very tempting. The dabblers are typically more experienced, and more able to justify the risks to themselves, in part because the *Lacrima* Charms which dabblers can learn and use tend to create mild Hauntings, and so there's less of an objection. Moreover, there exists a notable sub-faction of the followers of the Queen of Diamonds who specifically learn *Lacrima* for its use in studying the dead and the Underworld, and, aggravatingly to some others, the Queen has even given her support to the practice. Such dabblers often have a strict moral code restricting their use of the Invocations to only using it to study the dead - never to harm, and they point to the gains in knowledge that they have provided to the Radiant; their detractors point out that once the power is there, it can be hard to resist.

The Invocation of *Tempesta*, tool of the Seraphic General, the Queen of [Storms](#) is for most of those who dabble in it, purely a weapon. It is something that is learned as a tool against the Darkness, and it is used for that role. It does not (generally speaking) heal or right wrongs, but it does eliminate the followers of the Darkness and of Alhambra. In Atlanta, in the mid-90s, almost an entire generation of Radiant Princesses knew at least the basics of *Tempesta*. So hard-pressed were they by the Darkness and a major, well-organized Alhambran outpost that it became unofficial policy for elder Enlightened to guide each newcomer towards it, because the universal applicability and raw power of the Invocation in such circumstances was too much of a boon. That large numbers of Nobles in the city were driven towards extremism was viewed as an acceptable price, even if by the end, and the arson of the Alhambran Outpost, there were Enlightened just as callous as the worst of Storms, still officially among the Radiant. For those Princesses in the know, too, *Tempesta* can also be seen as the most moral of the Twilight Invocations, because the innate costs to it, the damage it does to the user, is known, and only affects the self. The common consensus is that it is dangerous, and a sign that a Noble is starting to spiral into extremism, but whether the use of it should be enough to ostracize one of the Radiant is a lot more contentious, especially since in areas where it is done, there are frequently not the Enlightened to spare.

The Invocation of *Specchio*, tool of the Crown's Custodian, the Queen of [Mirrors](#), however, is the most subtle and insidious of the Twilight Queens' influences. In part, it is because of the lack of an overall enemy that the Invocation is linked to; while both the Ravens and the Furies provide a highly visible "there but for the grace of the Light I go" example which other dabblers can keep away from, the egotism and self-righteousness implicitly promoted by the Queen of Mirrors, and the lack of a solid adversary is hard to fight against, especially since many Princesses have tendencies in that direction naturally. Dabblers can slip into following the Queen of Mirrors much more easily, especially since the Queen does not demand fidelity, which means that some elder Radiant are much more harsh in opposing its use. There are those who argue that, unlike *Tempesta* and *Lacrima*, use of this Invocation makes you a de facto follower of Mirrors' agenda. And on the other hand, there are those who count the Queen of Mirrors as among the Radiant Queens,

despite the objections of the other five. Moreover, there is also a faction in the Court of Diamonds who study Specchio for the unique sources of information it provides, or even to study the strange achronal or spacewarping Charms unique to Specchio; once again the Queen has given her consent. These dabblers protect themselves from the risk of madness by carefully rationing their use and taking the time to relax after every use. Of all the Twilight Invocations Specchio might be the easiest to learn, too; all one needs for it is self-belief in one's own cause, and a spark of the brilliance needed to reshape the world. And neither are rare among the Enlightened.

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## *Transformation*

The most essential expression of a Princess' power is the ability to transform. She calls on the magic she's gathered to herself and assumes the form of her "perfected self", an idealized version of herself unfettered by this world of sorrows. Although she can only maintain this immense power for a limited time, a transformed Princess is a force to be reckoned with.

The first time a Princess transforms is called her Blossoming. This is an unconscious act, usually in response to some great need or danger. After her Blossoming, a Princess' Phylactery will manifest; she must have her Phylactery with her later to transform. This is the physical representation of the power sealed away inside of her, and may take the form of any small simple object. Despite its size, a Phylactery is extremely hard to damage; it has a Durability of Inner Light and a Structure of Inner Light + Belief, and takes no damage unless specifically targeted. Also, any supernatural power that targets the Phylactery triggers a [Clash of Wills](#) in which the Princess rolls her Inner Light + Resolve, with the bonus for an effect lasting more than a year. A Princess always knows the location of her own Phylactery and cannot be fooled by imitations, even ones made with supernatural powers; on the other hand, the Phylactery has an unbreakable intimate sympathetic connection to her transformed identity, so anyone who has it can apply magic through that link, until she returns to her mundane self.

The destruction of a Phylactery does not permanently rob a Princess of her powers. If she takes a full turn concentrating, doing nothing else (and losing her defense against attacks) and spends a Wisp and a point of Willpower, the destroyed Phylactery is created anew. However, a Princess can't create a second Phylactery unless the first one has been destroyed - a lost or captured Phylactery is a far worse problem than a destroyed one. Should a Princess lose her Phylactery beyond recovery - for instance, it's been dropped in the ocean - she may destroy it from afar by sacrificing a Willpower dot, then re-create it.

## *The Transformation Action*

To transform herself, a Princess must have at least one Wisp. She may either spend a Wisp to transform effortlessly as a reflexive action, or concentrate on transforming without spending a Wisp and roll a dice pool of Belief + Inner Light - Shadows:

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess' Phylactery dissolves.

**Failure:** The Princess fails to transform and spends the full round.

**Success:** The Princess transforms as an instant action.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess transforms as a reflexive action.

A Princess can return to her ordinary self at any time as a reflexive action. She *must* de-transform if she has no Wisps at the end of a scene, or when she falls asleep (though falling unconscious because her Health track has filled with bashing damage does not force de-transformation.) Also, transformation grows harder to sustain as time passes. When a Princess reaches the end of a scene transformed, or after half an hour spent transformed, she rolls Belief + Inner Light - Shadows:

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess returns to her mundane self and her Phylactery dissolves.

**Failure:** The Princess must spend a Wisp to remain transformed in the next scene, or the next half-hour, and future rolls to remain transformed take a -2 cumulative penalty until she ends a scene in her mundane self.

**Success:** The Princess remains transformed at no cost.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess remains transformed, and need not make this check at the end of the next scene, or for a full hour.

## *Practical Charms*

In her mundane state, a Princess' abilities are almost entirely suppressed, but not quite. A few of her Charms - the total dots and maximum ratings are both set by her Inner Light - remain open to her as Practical Charms, along with the Practical Magic taught by her Queen. A Princess can change which of her Charms are Practical each time she gains a dot of Inner Light; she doesn't have to keep all the Charms she picked before. She's not required to mark an upgrade as Practical when she marks the basic Charm. However, if a Charm or upgrade has prerequisites, she can't mark it as Practical unless she also marks the prerequisites.

## *Transformed Abilities*

While transformed, a Princess has full access to all of her Charms, Practical and not, as well as her Practical Magic. She also gains her transformed Attributes and Skills. Next to each Attribute and Skill on a Princess's character sheet, in addition to the five blank dots normally present, there are another set of dots in parentheses. These dots represent the additional Skill or Attribute dots the Princess has while transformed. Each Princess gains a dot to one of her Attributes while transformed based on her Calling, and may purchase additional Transformed Attributes and Skills by spending Experiences.

While transformed, a Princess' Transformed Attributes and Skills are actually added to her normal Attributes and Skills; this can change Advantages such as Speed, Willpower, Initiative and Health, so record these values for both the mundane and transformed identities. If a Princess takes damage in Health boxes derived from transformed Stamina, she may spend Wisps to heal that damage when she returns to mundane form - if she doesn't do so, the damage wraps around, as per usual for temporary Health. Willpower points derived from transformed Resolve and Composure can be spent only while a Princess is transformed; however, if she has spent them, she can regain them at any time. If a Princess has spent both mundane and transformed Willpower, she regains the mundane Willpower first. If she sacrifices a Willpower dot, she loses a transformed Willpower dot first.

A Princess' total Transformed ability may not exceed the maximum rating for Transformed abilities as determined by her Inner Light. Also, she cannot have more Experiences in Transformed abilities than 3 x (Belief + Inner Light). Her starting Transformed dots count towards this limit. If losing a Belief dot takes a PC over the limit, the player converts the excess dots back to Experiences at the end of the current session.

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### *Optional Rule: Transformed Dots*

As the Hopeful are prone to Blossom as teenagers, who lack the training and knowledge of an adult, the Storyteller may want starting PCs to have fewer mundane Skill dots to represent their youth. If so, at character creation PCs should have the option (or be required) to trade mundane Skill dots for transformed Skill dots, gaining 2 transformed dots for each mundane dot. Transformed dots may not be moved to a different Skill category - Physical dots trade for Physical, Mental for Mental, and Social for Social. We recommend that PCs limit trading to 3 mundane dots in their primary category, 2 in the secondary category, and 1 in the tertiary category.

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## *Holy Shield*

In her transformed state, a Princess can withstand blows that would destroy most mortals, invoking the Light to preserve her. An attack could be turned aside from a vital spot at the last second, grazing her instead of striking home, or could be visibly stopped by a shower of sparks and light. The Princess reflexively spends Wisps at the moment she takes damage; each Wisp spent downgrades the damage from one external source - aggravated damage is reduced to lethal, lethal damage is reduced to bashing, and all but the first box of bashing damage is negated altogether. Holy Shield applies after any Armor the Princess has on.



Holy Shield does not, however, prevent further damage from wounds a Princess has already taken, illness, or dangerous substances. If the Princess is suffering from a personal Tilt or Condition, Holy Shield can't prevent any of its effects, including periodic damage. Holy Shield can resist damage from prolonged exposure to extreme environments, electricity, fires, falls [CofD 96-98] and environmental Tilts or Conditions, but all effects other than damage, like penalties to dice pools, remain in force.

## *Dual Identity*

One aspect of the Hopeful's transformation is subtle but amazingly convenient: the mundane and transformed selves appear to be different people, and those who have seen one of the Princess' forms generally fail to recognize her in the other form. A simple perception roll never reveals a Noble's identity; to discover it requires active investigation, and a reason for suspicion based on her behavior.

Even supernatural senses and tracking abilities are baffled by transformation - a vampire who's tasted one identity's blood doesn't notice any resemblance to blood shed by the other, a werewolf scenting one identity won't recognize the smell of the other. Supernatural sympathy to one of the Princess's forms does not connect to her in the other form, even for those who know her secret; even the Hopeful's own Charms, when modified by Sympathy, respect another Princess's privacy. If a power is currently targeting a Princess through a sympathetic connection, transforming ends the power's effect on her.

Dual Identity partly protects a Princess from being recognized *as* a Princess in her mundane form. When she isn't transformed, a power that discovers the type of a supernatural creature describes her as only a [Beacon](#), and reveals only those powers she can use while mundane. During her transformation, such powers reveal her true nature.

The protection of Dual Identity even extends to direct magical compulsion. If a supernatural effect is used to force a Princess to reveal her mundane identity while transformed, or vice versa, or to probe her mind and extract facts which would connect her identities without her conscious consent, it provokes a [Clash of Wills](#). The Princess uses her Resolve as the effective Charm rating, and gets the bonus for a permanent effect.

Dual Identity does not protect a Princess from being caught while transforming - if someone sees her changing, he'll know who she is thereafter - or from mundane investigation. If the PCs should find it necessary to identify one of the Hopeful, we recommend that the Storyteller use the Investigation system [CofD 77-81] to resolve the identification attempt; the number of Clues needed should not be less than the higher of the Noble's Manipulation or Subterfuge. Some appropriate complications would be offending the Princess in question, or revealing her identity to an authority (or worse, the Darkness.) The [Veiling](#) and [Palace](#) Merits apply against the dice pools rolled to find Clues in such investigations.

## *The Need for Discretion*

The life of a Noble is difficult and dangerous. She must oppose the plots of powerful Dark creatures, along with simple human wickedness that adds to the Darkness's power; she must also form and preserve her ties to ordinary people to keep her sanity and fuel her magic, and protect those people from the things that lurk in shadows. Few Princesses can keep their heads and carry the fight to their enemy when their loved ones are threatened - and the tools of the Darkness are well aware of that. Thus whenever a Noble Blossoms and takes up her Calling, creatures of Darkness will appear, trying to identify, isolate and destroy her. Moreover, supernatural forces and powerful conspiracies fight their own battles beyond the public eye, and a Noble who demonstrates her powers too openly can be pulled into those battles with very little warning.

The general level of supernatural activity in a campaign, and the public awareness of it, is represented by a Tension trait, running from 1 to 10. Usually Tension starts at 1, but the Storyteller can raise it higher for a campaign where the Darkness has already grown strong, or the occult is under special scrutiny. When a PC does something obviously supernatural in the presence of mundane witnesses, or that draws the attention of creatures of the Darkness without defeating them (though not more often than once a scene) the Storyteller rolls Tension as a dice pool, adding bonus dice for acts before many witnesses and shows of great strength.

**Dramatic Failure:** Impossible - this dice pool cannot be reduced to a chance die.

**Failure:** The incident passes without notice; Tension is unchanged.



**Success:** The incident raises concern from Dark creatures, or others with reason to watch for the occult. Tension rises by 1.

**Exceptional Success:** The incident raises alarm. Tension rises by 2.

Lowering Tension is considerably harder than raising it - those who are watching for supernatural activity must be convinced to let the Nobles alone. The Darkness, of course, is an implacable enemy; only a victory in battle will do. Permanently cleansing a potent Tainted area or rooting out a cell of a Dark cult is often enough to remove a point of Tension. Destroying a powerful Mnenosyne or Cataphract who has risen to command most of the Dark creatures in a city should be awarded by removing multiple points at once.

Tension from sources other than the Darkness could be removed in a similar way; sometimes, though, the investigators are benign, or at least not opposed to the Hopeful's mission, and the PCs should choose to reduce Tension by offering cooperation and a modicum of trust. Finally, the simple passing of time may let memories fade, so the Storyteller may, at the end of a story, choose to lower Tension by 1; he may also choose to raise it by 1, to show that supernatural NPCs have been stirring things up.

Tension becomes personally relevant to Nobles who slip up and leave behind evidence linking their mundane and transformed identities, or suggesting their participation in the long war against the Darkness. The **Indiscreet** Condition represents the accumulation of such evidence. When a PC's actions during a scene may rouse suspicion, the player and Storyteller make a contested roll of the PC's Wits + Subterfuge vs. Tension + the PC's levels in Indiscreet. Strongly suggestive clues of a relationship between the identities can add +1 or +2 to the Storyteller's pool; higher bonuses are used for serious breaches, like claiming friendship with one's transformed ID while mundane, or leaving a driver's license where one's mundane ID has never been. On the other hand, the **Palace** and **Veiling** Merits both penalize the Storyteller's pool.

**Dramatic Failure:** Player - resolve the PC's Indiscreet Condition; Storyteller - remove one level of the PC's Indiscreet Condition.

**Failure:** When both rolls fail, the PC's actions pass unnoticed.

**Success:** If the player gets more successes, the PC lulls any suspicions; otherwise, add one level to the PC's Indiscreet Condition. (Ties go to the Storyteller, if his roll succeeds.)

**Exceptional Success:** Player - if she wins the contest, remove one level of the PC's Indiscreet Condition; Storyteller - if he wins the contest, resolve the PC's Indiscreet Condition. Again, ties go to the Storyteller.

The player can choose to resolve Indiscreet instead of attempting the contested roll. When an Indiscreet Condition resolves, an investigator has learned the Noble's secret - at a minimum, that she is not mundane. The Noble must accept one of the **Blackmailed**, **Broken Circle** or **Nemesis** Conditions, or (with Storyteller approval) a similar persistent Condition when Indiscreet resolves.

The Storyteller should take note when a PC has acquired a high level of Indiscreet, as this means a discovery is likely imminent, and drop hints of approaching trouble based on the clues the PC dropped. Depending on which Condition he expects to impose, perhaps strangers pop up looking for someone in the neighborhood, the Noble's friends start asking her awkward questions, or disturbing figures follow her about. Similarly, growing levels of Tension manifest in people's general behavior, as an attitude of suspicion, mistrust, or actual fear of the strange, and reluctance to go out after dark, or unarmed; and in a rising number of weird, unsettling incidents, disappearances and mysterious deaths.

## *Echoes*

The people whom the Light has touched become lesser lights in their turn; echoes of the Light are cast into the hearts of their friends and acquaintances. Any Noble, if her heart is untroubled by the Darkness, can raise an Echo of the Light in the people around her through a symbolic gesture. This will lift the hearts of all who witness it, inspire them with a wish to act on her principles, and (for a short time) help them excel in their attempts to do so. However, a Princess infected by Shadows finds her Echo going wrong, spreading the fear and despair that lies on her heart to those near her, and inspiring them to imitate her darker impulses, instead of her ideals. In addition, Nobles and Beacons (but not Sworn) with a high degree of Belief constantly influence their intimates for the better, while those with scant Belief share their despond with all who know them; **this too** is part of their Echo.

## Raising an Echo

Raising an Echo takes an instant action; the Noble demonstrates, through an expressive action, the ideal closest to her heart - the act must reflect her Virtue - mentally calls on the Light to imbue her act with power, spends a Willpower point and rolls Resolve + Inner Light. (For instance: a Courageous soldier says "Follow me!" and charges into battle; a Patient craftswoman demonstrates the careful use of her tools; a Generous traveler drops a large bill in a busker's hat.) If she succeeds, any witnesses to her act gain the Inspired Condition [CofD 289] for actions related to her Virtue. On an exceptional success, the Noble gains Inspired herself.

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If your Noble PC has a Virtue of Just, and you want her to raise an Echo by declaiming "In the name of the Light, I will punish you!" - you have our blessing.

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As with the other aspects of Noble magics, the tracks left by Hauntings impede and twist the Echo. A Princess whose Belief is less than or equal to twice her Shadows can no longer inspire others towards her Virtue. Instead she may imbue an action that expresses her besetting temptation - an act in accordance with her Vice - with the power to inspire witnesses, using the same system. (For instance: a Violent man starts a fight; a Pessimistic woman declares a situation hopeless; an Arrogant socialite contemptuously dismisses an inferior.)

A Noble may, if she chooses, resist the raised Echo of another Noble, rolling her Resolve + Inner Light reflexively. This roll acts as a contested action against the raised Echo - if the Noble matches or beats the successes rolled for the raised Echo, it doesn't affect her. Also, many supernatural beings possess auras, innate abilities that, like Echoes, influence the people they meet, and a Noble may resist them as she does an Echo from another Noble.

## A Still Small Voice

A Noble's Echo sounds constantly in the hearts of all who know her; as her connection to the Light strengthens, it takes less and less acquaintance with her to hear that Echo and be swayed by it. A Princess' Inner Light determines a degree of [Sympathy](#); any character who has at least that much of a sympathetic connection to her hears and is touched by her Echo. Thanks to the Echo's impairment in mundane form, though, characters who are connected only to a Princess' mundane identity need a stronger level of Sympathy before her Echo can reach them. Consult this table for the degree of Sympathy required.

The strength of the Princess's Belief contends against the Shadows on her heart to determine whether her Echo inspires those who hear it towards the Light, or whispers messages of temptation and despair. As long as the Noble's Belief is more than twice her Shadows dots, the characters who hear her Echo can draw on her Virtue to aid them; if they are acting in accord with the Noble's Virtue, they may apply the 9-again quality to the dice pool for one action. However, if the Noble's Belief is not more than twice her Shadows dots, hearing her Echo instead inspires people to emulate her worst qualities; they may add 9-again to a dice pool, but the action must be in accord with the Noble's Vice. A character cannot benefit from a Noble's Echo in this way more than once per scene, even if he can hear multiple Echoes; and a Noble is never affected by her own quiet Echo.

Inner Light	Degree of Sympathy	
	Mundane	Transformed
1-3	Sensory	Intimate
4-6	Intimate	Known
7-8	Known	Acquainted
9-10	Acquainted	Encountered

[Beacons](#), through whom the Light shines naturally, and [Sworn](#), as vicars of the Nobles and Queen they're vowed to, create a constant Echo like that of a Princess with Inner Light 1 in mundane form. Their Integrity substitutes for Belief to determine which way their Echo works.

One other effect of the Echo must be mentioned: anyone who hears a Noble's Echo is Light-touched enough that Dark beings are attracted to them, though not enough to rouse their specific hostility. No rules are provided for this, but it's the chief reason why creatures of the Darkness show up where the Hopeful are, without necessarily planning to confront

a Princess. At low levels of Inner Light a Noble only draws out Darkspawn who were already in the neighborhood through her Echo. On the other hand, a Noble at the peak of her power touches so many people with her Echo that Dark beings will be drawn to her town from miles away, like a plague of locusts.

## *Merits*

The Nobility are still human, and therefore able to use all of humanity's varied and dangerous talents; they are also magical, and therefore capable of focusing their hopes into a number of unique and potent advantages. Nearly all the Merits available to mundane characters are open to the Hopeful, and several new Merits are detailed here to define a Princess' relation to her personal magic.

Since every Princess has a double life, one mundane, the other magical, a new Hopeful character is given 10 Merit dots instead of 7 at character creation. Almost all the Merits given in the *Chronicles of Darkness* are available. The main exceptions are the Supernatural Merits - if a Noble had talents of that kind before Blossoming, they were in truth hints of her bond with the Light, and the full realization of that bond subsumed them into the Inner Light and Charms. Also, a Princess may not take Vice-Ridden [CofD 46] at character creation; anyone so deeply stained by the Darkness that she has two Vices cannot Blossom. (The opposed Merit, Virtuous, is open to Princesses. Indeed, people saintly enough to have two Virtues are excellent prospects for Blossoming!)

## *Modified Merits*

A few Merits work differently for the Nobility than for mundane characters, or have unusual applications in their case.

### *Alternate Identity*

The inherent ability of the Nobility to transform themselves makes it difficult for them *not* to develop a double life. Therefore the Alternate Identity Merit [CofD 50] is cheaper for them than it is for mundane characters. A Princess may purchase Alternate Identity •• once for just 1 Experience, or Alternate Identity ••• for 2 Experiences, to get her perfected self a set of convincing identification and paperwork. Extra Alternate Identities, beyond the first, cost full price. (Nobles do not get Alternate Identity • for free - their double identities have a [stronger protection](#) from discovery, especially from magical methods.)

### *Mentor*

The Mentor Merit [CofD 51] focuses on relations within mundane or supernatural society. While both of those can be of great help to a Princess, a further option is available to a lucky few: personal mentorship from their Queen. Even though a Queen cannot leave the Dreamlands, she still has such a wealth of power and experience that she would be far beyond a five dot Mentor. However the Queens have many obligations that demand their time besides tutoring a Princess. Therefore when applied to a Queen, the Mentor Merit represents not her skill, but how much of her attention she will bestow upon the character. As a general rule you may assume a Princess gets at least one session with her Queen per week for each dot she has in Mentor (the Queen). A session can be just a few moments before the throne, but at high dots it can be significantly longer.

Even without any dots in Mentor, a Princess is always welcome to attend court, but unless she has important business the Queen will focus her attentions on those who do. When the PCs have an emergency they can usually get a chance to explain and some advice; the amount of time received depends on how serious the emergency is, and whether the Princess should be able to handle it or needs significant help. (Remember that both of these are opinions and two Queens might see the same situation differently. The Queen of Swords considers losing a boyfriend as roughly equivalent to a small crisis. Even her own followers often think that's taking things too far.)

When portraying the Queens the Storyteller should always remember that they have had no contact with Earth for millennia and are consequently out of touch. Therefore no matter how many dots a Princess has in Mentor and no matter how important it is, the Queen of Hearts cannot teach her followers how to navigate the Chinese political system. She simply does not have that knowledge. She can teach the Princess Skills or direct her to appropriate Charms, but it would be up to the Princess to translate that into an appropriate plan of action for the modern day. For similar reasons, a Radiant Queen cannot buy equipment or services on Earth for one of her followers - Resources is not available from a Radiant Queen as a Mentor.

A Princess must follow a Queen before she can place dots in Mentor in a Queen. Neither Storms nor Mirrors will serve as Mentors. A follower of the Last Empress cannot place more than three dots of Mentor into her

Queen - the Queen of Tears' kingdom is under siege and conforms to the normal rules of time, she just does not have enough time to spare. On the other hand, the Queen of Tears *can* give her favored agents modern money or valuable goods.

With one dot a Princess can usually get the occasional snatch of time whenever there is a lull in court proceedings, enough time to talk about recent events or ask questions and get a brief bit of advice.

At three dots the Queen often has your character's name in the royal itinerary for time with her alone, or perhaps group sessions with her Nakama. She has the opportunity to talk at length about her progress in the war of hope and receive private tutoring. She also knows what her queen is like when she has an opportunity to take off her crown, so to speak. Generally speaking a Princess with three dots of Mentor has something special about her that caught her Queen's eye, something the Queen is especially keen to nurture. She may be the only Onceborn in the Court or run the largest Nation among the Queen's followers. Perhaps she was someone the Queen respected in a past life or maybe the Princess works full time as one of the Queen's agents upon Earth and must report in often (This can be especially helpful for beginner players as it both justifies clear goals for the character and advice from the Storyteller).

At five dots your character is spending at least an hour or so with the Queen most nights, and if they don't show up the Queen may even get worried and send one of her other followers to check on the Princess. This level of attention is exceptionally rare and characters who have five dots are either vital to the Queen's agenda or have an exceptionally strong personal connection. Perhaps the Queen believes the Princess might become a Queen herself and has dedicated herself to making sure it happens. The Princess may be the first Ambassador to a concept the Queen cares for greatly. Alternatively the Queen and Princess might have an immense personal bond of friendship, or maybe the character is the Queen's consort (though this is usually only an option for followers of Swords).

## *Retainer*

An experienced Princess can have Retainers [CofD 53] who belong to another Light-touched template. [Beacon](#) Retainers need no special rules, since they're very close to mundane. [Sworn](#) Retainers, however, gain magic from their connection with the Light, and are therefore more capable than a mundane Retainer. When a Sworn becomes a Retainer, add one Invocation dot, and one Bequest dot for each dot of the Merit after the first.

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## *Shikigami as Merits*

As previously mentioned, it's common for a new Nakama to be brought together by a [Shikigami](#), and therefore a Shikigami is often a prominent NPC in a game of *Princess: the Hopeful*. To encourage this, the Storyteller may allow his players to define their characters' Shikigami as a set of shared Social Merits, chosen from Allies, Mentor, Retainer, Staff and True Friend. A Shikigami bought in this way should be designed by the players collaboratively, with the Storyteller's help.

Merits purchased with shared dots are available to any character who contributed at least one dot. However, Merits with limited uses don't allow double-dipping - if a Shikigami is a shared Mentor, for example, only one character can call on him to act as such in each session. If a character dies, or is otherwise removed from play, the dots she contributed are no longer available to the other characters, and shared Merits must be reduced by that amount.

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## *Status*

In the towns and cities that have Camaraderies (many don't, even now) Camaraderie Status normally reflects reputation among the local Hopeful, not an official position; Camaraderie Status 5 implies a Noble spends a lot of time helping and guiding other Hopeful and can expect their gratitude when she's in trouble herself. As a rule, then, that form of Status generally provides services (time donated by local Nobles) and not material or magical resources - Camaraderies haven't been around long enough to build up private funds or collect magical objects. On the other hand, there's nothing whatsoever keeping a Beacon or Sworn from having Camaraderie Status at any level. All that's required is being well-known and generally respected by the local Hopeful.

With one exception, the Hopeful don't have organizations with a regional or global scope, so there's no such thing as a Status for the Radiant or individual Queens - but that exception is a doozy. [Alhambra](#), the seat of

the Last Empress, has a status system of Byzantine complexity, small outposts scattered all over the world, and collections that have been maintained and expanded for millenia. A Noble of Tears, unless she's broken with the City entirely, will have Alhambra Status almost forced on her, and access to the resources of a small city-state that's existed for all recorded history.

A character with Alhambra Status can requisition services, or the temporary use of some Merits. This uses a system like the Resources Merit; the Storyteller sets an Availability rating for things the character can requisition, and she treats her Status as if it were Resources when she asks for them. Availability ratings assume the service or Merit will be assigned on a temporary basis, for a single story. The city assumes she'll return it when done with it, or make amends if it's destroyed or lost. The typical Merits available from Alhambra are Anonymity, Library, Mentor, Retainer, Safe Place and Staff from the CofD core; and Bequest and Mandate from this book.

Alhambra even has Bequests in its stockpile which were made before the Kingdom fell, and can't be replicated now because they used Invocations that no longer exist. These Bequests are far harder to obtain than their power levels would suggest, precisely because they are irreplaceable; the Storyteller should set their Availability ratings at least 2 dots higher than Bequests of extant Charms.

## *Unseen Sense*

Mundane characters can have an Unseen Sense [CofD 60] for the Light or the Darkness. An Unseen Sense (Light) registers the presence of transformed Nobles, [Shikigami](#), [Blessed areas](#), [Images and Bequests](#). It does not, however, recognize a Beacon, Sworn or untransformed Noble as supernatural. An Unseen Sense (Darkness) registers the presence of [Tainted areas](#), and all varieties of [Dark creatures](#) except those under the [Darkened Condition](#).

## *Form-limited Merits*

Fairly often a Princess has Merits which apply only to her perfected self, or only to her mundane self. She might be significantly more attractive when transformed (a fairly common thing, that) or be able to ignore pain and fatigue, or gain a photographic memory. And beyond the people a Noble trusts with her life, almost all her social relationships will be restricted to a single identity.

When a Princess buys a Merit that represents a form of natural talent or specialized training, she may choose to limit the Merit to one of her two identities. If she does this she's refunded a Beat for each dot she purchases. Merits that have two or more levels can be purchased partly for both forms and partly for one; e.g. a Princess can have Striking Looks at one dot for both identities, and two dots when transformed. [Transformed Attribute and Skill dots](#) can be used to meet a Merit's prerequisites, if the Princess limits that Merit to her perfected self; but not, naturally, for Merits she can use in her mundane identity. Finally, Merits purchased for one identity can be expanded to cover both, if the Princess puts in some effort; e.g. a Princess whose perfected body is Fleet of Foot could train herself for running in her mundane body. This costs nothing more than repaying the Beats given for taking a limited Merit: one Beat for each dot.

Merits that represent a character's social position and connections with other people - nearly all the Social Merits qualify - cannot be purchased at a discount in this way; these Merits instead are limited to one identity, unless the Noble's player wants the people in question to know of both her identities.

## *Form-Limited Conditions*

A player may want a Noble character who suffers from a disability while mundane, but whose transformed identity is whole and healthy. The game represents disabilities as persistent Conditions, and it's legitimate for a Noble to have Conditions like Blind, Crippled or Mute only when mundane. As with form-limited Merits, persistent Conditions that represent a physical impairment can be taken for just the mundane identity; their effects lapse during the Noble's transformation, and she can't gain Beats from them while transformed. It isn't possible, however, to limit such Conditions to the transformed identity - transformation never reduces a Noble's capabilities.

Conditions like Notoriety, based on social relationships, naturally apply to only one identity, but may be taken for either. Purely mental Conditions like Obsession, and Conditions related to the Noble's supernatural status, can't be limited to a single form, as the mind and the Light persist through transformations. In ambiguous



cases (Addicted, for example, may be a physical or psychological Condition, depending on the drug) the Storyteller decides whether the Condition can be limited to one form.

## *Noble Merits*

These Merits are reserved to the Hopeful.

### *Circle (●-●●●●●)*

The human mind was not designed for large numbers. When the suffering of millions feels incomprehensible, your character can turn to the small every day problems and triumphs of friends and family to remind herself what she is fighting for. The Circle Merit represents healthy relationships between a Princess and her family, close friends, or mentors, who are ordinary mortals (not supernatural in any way.) The more dots a Princess has, the more or the stronger these relationships are; describe the people your character is intimate with when you buy dots in Circle.

Your character may spend at least an hour in the company of some of her intimates, having a pleasant conversation, helping them with daily chores, or venting her frustrations with the troubles of a Princess' life. After the encounter is over, she regains Wisps equal to her dots in the Merit. Your character can regain Wisps from her Circle at most once a session, or once a day, whichever is longer.

Dots in Shadows weaken the pleasures of good company; a shadowed Noble needs more time with her friends to refresh her Wisps properly. Each dot in Shadows adds one hour to the time your character must spend with her Circle before gaining Wisps - two hours with one dot, three hours with two dots, and so on.

### *Destiny (●-●●●●●)*

Your character's thread stands out in the skein of Fate. Like the hero of an epic she is destined for great triumphs, but she also has a Doom that hangs over her head and threatens to turn her tale into a tragedy.

Each chapter, you have a pool of Destiny equal to your dots in this Merit. You may use a point of Destiny either to gain the rote quality on a single mundane roll chosen before you roll, or to reroll a single mundane action after you see the result of the roll (although you must take the second result.)

**Drawback:** Your character has a Doom. This is the means by which destiny brings her life as she knows it to a tragic end; it either kills her, or leaves her alive and suffering. (See the Fate optional rule [CofD 177] for examples of Dooms.) Whenever you spend Willpower to avoid the Doom, you add two dice instead of three (or +1 to a static value). However, whenever you spend Willpower on an action that will further the Doom but the roll fails, you immediately regain the spent Willpower. The Storyteller is the arbiter of which actions delay or hasten your character's Doom.

### *Mandate (●-●●●)*

Every Calling has its special duties, the means by which a Princess feels is her duty to help the world. Your character has taken one particular aspect of her Calling duties and made it her own; the Light supports her when she intends to fulfill it, and empowers her when she has done so. Describe a regular activity in your character's mundane life related to the duties of her Calling. (For example, a Champion could have a job on the police force, a Mender might be a nurse, a Seeker could post regularly to a blog.) When she regains Wisps by carrying out that activity (as described under [Call of Duty](#)) she adds her Mandate dots to her dice pool.

### *Minor Invoker (●-●●●●●)*

Although your character doesn't believe in its ideals, she has learned enough of one [Invocation](#) that she knows how to use one of the Charms tied to it. Choose a Charm and an Invocation. Your character may ignore Invocation prerequisites up to her dots in the Merit when learning the chosen Charm and its upgrades. The Merit does not stack with actual dots in the Invocation (e.g. Minor Invoker ●● and Aria ● doesn't allow learning a Charm that requires Aria ●●●.) However, whenever the Charm's rules use dots in the Invocation, your character instead uses her dots in this Merit.

A character may purchase this Merit multiple times, each for a different Charm/Invocation pair; it may even be purchased multiple times for the same Charm, if the Invocations are different. If your character gains enough dots in the chosen Invocation to meet the prerequisites for the Charm and all its upgrades that she knows, the Merit dots are refunded as per Sanctity of Merits.

### *Onceborn (●●)*

Your character is one of the rare people who Blossomed, and became one of the Hopeful, without any memory of a past life as a Princess; her soul was never trapped in the Dreamlands, and the bitter memory of the Fall is not hers. This unshadowed innocence grants an unusual level of moral clarity. Your character's Belief begins at 8, not 7. *Available at character creation only.*

**Drawback:** Your character cannot draw on experiences from a past life.

### *Palace (●-●●●●)*

There is a difference between a house and a home. A Palace is not a place to live, though a Princess may live in one. A Palace is a place with such an intimate emotional connection to a Princess that her magic works better there than anywhere else. At one dot, a Palace automatically has the [Consecrated](#) Condition, which lasts indefinitely just so long as the Princess' emotional connection to it remains strong.

Something odd happens to some Palaces, when its mistress deliberately associates her domicile with her mundane self and avoids associating it with her Transformed self. The effects of her Dual Identity seeps into her home, preventing others from connecting it to her transformed identity. At two or more dots, any attempt to find the location of the Palace when searching for the home of its mistress' transformed identity takes a penalty: -1 at two dots, -2 at three dots, -3 at four dots. Searching for her mundane identity's home takes no penalty. Anyone inside the home suffers the same penalty on Perception rolls to notice evidence of the Princess' double life. This is not infallible; a -3 penalty is not enough for her to greet guests in full Regalia, and though she might get away with leaving her magic wand on her desk, don't risk it.

In addition, *any* Princess within the Palace is shielded from curious eyes, with respect to her actions inside it. Every Princess in the Palace gains the benefits of a [Veiling](#) Merit of one dot less than the Palace's dots until she leaves. Princesses with their own Veiling use the better of the two ratings in the Palace.

A Palace may also be a Safe Place [CofD 54], storage for a Library [CofD 46] or Esoteric Armory [CofD 139], comfortable housing or a workshop for a trade, or any combination of those and similar things, but those Merits and equipment are bought separately.

### *Second Calling (●)*

Your character has a personal vocation that leads her to goals outside of her first Calling as a Princess. Choose a second Calling for her; she may recover [Wisps](#) from activities related to that Calling just as well as from activities related to her first, and she may take [Vocations](#) related to the second Calling. She may also take the [Mandate](#) Merit based on the second Calling. She does not gain an extra transformed Attribute dot or affinity to any Charms from her second Calling. No Princess may take this Merit more than once.

**Drawback:** Your character is bound by the [Oaths](#) of her second Calling, just as much as those of her first - both sets of Oaths are breaking points for her.

### *Tomoyo's Touch (●)*

Your character is unusually adept at manipulating her [Regalia](#). Once per turn, she may summon or dismiss pieces of Regalia as a reflexive action, without spending a Wisp.

### *Troupe Magic (●)*

Your character belongs to a nakama who have worked magic together long enough that they can contribute to and support each other. When members of the nakama are together, they may use the teamwork rules on the rolls for activated Charms. However, doing so requires extra time to coordinate; Charms activated with an

extended action double the interval between rolls, and all Charms require a minimum of one minute to activate. The primary actor must know the Charm she wishes to use, but secondary actors need not; however, if they don't know the Charm, secondary actors take a -2 penalty to their dice pool. All actors must apply the same Invocation, if they apply any. Only the primary actor spends the cost to activate the Charm; each actor who applies an Invocation spends the Wisp to do so herself, if it's needed.

**Drawback:** Unlike most Merits, three or more Princesses must purchase Troupe Magic together to benefit from it. Any subset of the nakama with the Merit may use teamwork to activate Charms, but members of different nakama may not, even if both nakama have the Merit.

## *Veiling (●-●●●)*

Some Hopefuls' perfected selves differ so much from their mundane selves that they are excessively difficult to identify, even beyond the norm. Your character is one such; whenever an observer tries to connect her [two identities](#), or she commits an [indiscretion](#), the opposing dice pool takes a penalty equal to her dots in the Merit. Supernatural attempts to discover her nature as a Princess while she is not transformed face a [Clash of Wills](#), in which her dots in the Merit substitute for the Charm rating.

## *Supernatural Merits*

These Merits are *not* reserved to the Hopeful. Like the supernatural Merits listed in the *Chronicles of Darkness*, a mundane character who becomes a supernatural being loses any Merit in this section, allocating the lost dots to other Merits (per the Sanctity of Merits rule.) Becoming a Princess is an exception to this - Merits which are open to the Hopeful are not lost when a mundane character who has them Blossoms.

## *Bequest (●+)*

*Open to the Hopeful*

Your character possesses an object, within which has been bound a Charm. This might have come from within her own soul, to be granted to another or used to boost her own powers, or might have been obtained on a quest to the [Dreamlands](#). Some senior members of the Nobility (such that there are) make a habit of gifting trusted friends with them for, despite the cost, they can give a Princess access to powers that she might not otherwise be able to reach.

A Bequest's base Merit dot cost is equal to the level of the Charm (so, for example, [Charge](#), a Govern 2 Charm, is a two-dot Merit as a Bequest), plus one dot per upgrade, plus one dot if the Bequest is Duty-Bound. For more details on Bequests, see [Images and Bequests](#) and the [Living Image](#) Charm.

## *Dream Travel (● or ●●●)*

Your character can reliably project his mind into the [Dreamlands](#). At one dot, your character begins with an average impression when looking for new entrances to the Dreamlands. At three dots, he begins with a good impression.

**Drawback:** Doors allow travel both ways. Your character is especially *accessible* to astral threats like [Amanojaku](#); powers that open ways to his mind from the Dreamlands, such as [Ivory Gate](#), gain a +1 bonus. Hopefully he has the training or gifts to defend himself. Also, he is vulnerable to the Gales - their dice pool against him has a +1 bonus.

## *Entwined Destiny (●●)*

| Requires not having Vice-Ridden [CofD 46]

*Open to the Hopeful*

Your character was bound to another before she was born, and both events and her inmost will urge her towards a specific role in his life. Choose the nature of your character's relationship with its subject - true love,



rivalry, protection, loyalty, and enmity are all possible, and if none of these fit you may define your own, with the Storyteller's approval. You may also choose the subject's name and general nature, or leave that up to the Storyteller to decide. When the Storyteller judges that your character's actions during a scene reflect her destined role, she regains 1 point of Willpower; she cannot benefit from this, however, if she has indulged her Vice in the current scene.

Entwined Destiny cannot directly influence a person's choices, but Fate will attempt to nudge a character with the Merit in certain ways. For example, if she has an Entwined Destiny of love Fate cannot make her feel love. Instead Fate can and will create coincidences where she and her destined bump into each other in circumstances appropriate for heart to heart talks. If the destiny is natural it can also be assumed that the character and her destined true love are compatible people.

**Drawback:** Denying a destined role is akin to denying yourself. Deliberately forgoing an opportunity to fulfill her role is a breaking point for your character, with a penalty depending on how far her actions depart from what the Entwined Destiny expects of her. For example, if her destined rival challenges her, she must accept; if she discovers her destined enemy's plot, she must oppose it; if her destined ward is in peril, she must rescue him.

## *Royal Tongue (●)*

| Requires Hopeful, [Sworn](#) or [Shikigami](#)

Your character knows how to produce the Royal Tongue. She can use it to enhance her Charms, or to sway a crowd of mortals.

As languages go the Royal Tongue is unique, it is quite possibly the densest language there is. Meaning is conveyed not just by words but also tone and the placement of stresses, two different words could be completely identical except for where it's grammatically acceptable to use them. A monosyllabic prefix or suffix can completely change a word within its conceptual space; the Royal Tongue has over a thousand words for friend, (and just as many for lover or sister or brother) each defines the exact details of the relationship and not only do they all come from the same root word, they all sound like that root word.

The hardest thing to do with the Royal Tongue is speak a straight sentence. Between the grammatical rules and the enormous amount of information in every word a simple sentence like "thank you for helping" would, if translated into English, look like two paragraphs of flowery purple prose about the inherent virtue of teamwork. When asked how such a language came about the Queen of Hearts implies that it was deliberate, the Queen of Spades bursts into laughter and the Queen of Diamonds (who's fluent in, and prefers, most Earthly languages) gives a put upon sigh.

Mundane characters can hear the Royal Tongue but they cannot understand it. Many Princesses swear blind that the Royal Tongue uses magic as well as sound waves as a carrier to pack even more information into each word. The cost of this is that only the Light-touched can understand the Royal Tongue. Beacons can't even speak it. To anyone else it sounds like someone singing in an unknown melodic language. The Royal Tongue can't be recorded either - a Princess who hears a recording of the Royal Tongue catches at best the occasional word, it sounds as though someone has removed 40% of the syllables and all the grammar. This is considerably more confusing than it would be in a normal language.

The most useful aspect of the Royal Tongue is to enhance a Princess' Charms (though some Troubadours insist its use in lyrics and poetry is more useful ... Deep purple prose is an acquired taste.) If your character spends a turn speaking the Royal Tongue, declaring that she will use a Charm on a target, and forcing the qualia, the experience and feeling of what she is about to do, into the musical speech, her activation roll for the power gains the 9-again quality.

In dire situations, an appeal to the Light for aid or a declaration of resolve, when spoken in the Royal Tongue, can strengthen a Hopeful heart. When a Noble draws on Inner Strength, she may add the 9-again quality to her roll by pouring out her heart in the Royal Tongue.

Use of the Royal Tongue is a supernatural ability, and can be detected as such.

## *Taint Awareness (●●)*

| Requires [Beacon](#), Hopeful, [Sworn](#) or [Shikigami](#)

Your character's sensitivity to corruption from the Darkness is so finely tuned that she can perceive it from miles away. Whenever a creature of the Darkness [leaves the Dark World](#) within Inner Light miles of your character (1 mile for a Beacon or Sworn), or the size or Severity of a [Tainted area](#) within that distance increases, your character suffers a sharp pain, a bout of nausea, or something equally unpleasant, which she recognizes as a sign of the Darkness at work. She may roll Wits + Sensitivity to acquire a sense of the direction and rough distance to the Tainted area or the place where the creature crossed over.

**Dramatic Failure:** Your character misinterprets her sense for Taint, and directs her attention to an unrelated location chosen by the Storyteller.

**Failure:** Your character loses track of the taint before she can fix its location.

**Success:** Your character senses where the taint happened within an error of 10% of its true distance from her, or wide enough that she'll need to search for a scene to find the exact location.

**Exceptional Success:** Your character senses exactly where the taint happened; she can walk straight to the place without a pause.

**Drawback:** Each time your character actually enters a Tainted area, her senses are overborne by the place's corruption, and she takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286].

## *Unison (●-●●●●●)*

| Requires [Beacon](#), Hopeful, or [Sworn](#)

Your character has formed a bond with a [Shikigami](#) which allows them to fuse into one being. When the character and Shikigami are fused, the character gains free transformed dots with a value in Experiences equal to twice his dots in this Merit, within his trait caps. Also, if the character lacks a pool of Wisps, fusion supplies one that holds Wisps equal to his Resolve + Presence. However, the Shikigami cannot take actions while fused - he shares the character's senses and may mentally speak to him, but the integrated body is controlled by the character.

Fusing with a Shikigami is quite similar to a Noble's [transformation](#), and uses almost the same rules. It takes an instant action to fuse and the Shikigami must be touching the character; the player does not roll. The Shikigami maintains the fusion, so the player rolls twice his dots in the Merit to sustain a fusion past a scene's end. Dramatic failure on this roll leaves the Shikigami exhausted, and blocks use of the Merit until he has spent a full scene or an hour resting. During a fusion, the character's clothes, body or both gain aspects of the Shikigami's appearance that disguise him, giving the character the protection of [Dual Identity](#).

While the benefits above are automatic, the Shikigami can cultivate the bond to let his partner draw on the Light deliberately. The character may learn Charms with an effective rating up to his dots in Unison, paying Experiences equal to that rating. He may also buy 1 Invocation dot for each dot in Unison, if he otherwise lacks that ability. However, he may use these Charms and Invocations only while fused with the Shikigami - they are really the Shikigami's powers, that require a human partner to activate. If the character permanently loses his partner, the Experiences spent on Charms and Invocations are refunded under the Sanctity of Merits.

## *White Rabbits (●-●●●●●)*

| Requires reliable access to the Dreamlands, such as [Dream Travel](#) • or being Hopeful or [Shikigami](#)

Your character has an especially strong connection to the Dreamlands; when she sleeps she is called to witness prophecies and portents applicable to her life and her goals. To consult the White Rabbits, your character must go to sleep for long enough to reach REM sleep since the last time she did so; nor may the Princess look for White Rabbits more often than once per session. Your character rolls Wits + Empathy - Shadows; if she has not found a Crawlspace entrance near her current resting place the roll is at -2.

**Dramatic Failure:** Your character is called to the Dreamlands by a March Hare, or perhaps even a Black Rabbit, that she mistakes for a Prophecy Rabbit.

**Failure:** No Rabbits appear that night.

**Success:** Your character is called to the Dreamlands by a Prophecy Rabbit and witnesses a prophecy concerning a question or topic chosen by the player. The Princess will receive at least one clue per dot of White Rabbits, though the clue may be hidden behind signs or portents.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the regular benefits your character also gains an instance of the Informed Condition [CofD 289] related to the clues in her prophecy.

Taking this Merit implies a degree of practice in the art of finding a White Rabbit - your character can look for them deliberately. She can also try to find a Memory Rabbit to recover a memory relevant to her current situation instead of a prophecy; the benefits are the same.

The Storyteller is free to introduce White Rabbits for characters without this Merit. Even a Princess without any dots in White Rabbits can experience the occasional prophecy or past-life flashback if it's important enough. See the [Dreamlands](#) section in Chapter 3 for more details on the White Rabbits.

## *Social Merits*

These Social Merits are entirely mundane, open to any character type.

### *Nation Officer (●-●●●●●)*

One of the gifts given to every Noble is the potential to draw people to the service of a good cause, and open their hearts to the Light. Your character has been initiated to the Light in this way; he is an officer in a [Nation](#).

As a Merit, Nation Officer is nearly identical to Mystery Cult Initiation [CofD 51]; each dot in it dictates standing in the Nation, and confers a special benefit to the character. In addition to the standard Mystery Cult benefits, the character also gains the Nation's Vocation, from which he may earn Luminous Beats. Nations may also develop some unusual Merits from their connection to the Light, for which Nation Officer ● is a prerequisite. If your character begins play as a Nation Officer, work with the Storyteller to develop the Nation he belongs to.

**Drawback:** Your character must obey her Nation's Ban. If he breaks the Ban, he immediately loses this Merit and any other merits that require it, and cannot buy them back before the end of the current story. A Nation's Ban is developed along with all its other details.

### *Populist Rhetoric (●-●●●●●, Style)*

| Requires Presence 3, Manipulation 3

Your character has been trained in making friends and influencing people. She might be a politician or a cult leader, even if she is not she sees words as tools to make people do what she wills. Such power can be used for both good or ill.

**Anecdote (●):** Your character brings up a heartwrenching story. Arguing against her is like arguing against Little Orphan Annie. She rolls Presence + Expression - her targets Composure; on a success the target has a -2 penalty to Social dice pools against her on this topic for the rest of the scene.

**Polispeak (●●):** Your character can talk at length while saying nothing. By spouting a never ending stream of ambiguous statements and platitudes she can dodge questions while appearing to give answers. When someone is debating against her, she may reflexively forgo her action for a turn to subtract her Manipulation from her opponents Persuasion or Expression dice pools. This works best at stalling for time or when she can't win a debate and hopes to simply minimise the scale of her loss.

**Catch Phrases (●●●):** People are naturally tribal and like a social chameleon your character can fit in anywhere by spouting catchphrases and speaking with the correct lingo. Once per scene, she may spend a point of Willpower to gain a bonus of half her Subterfuge to all Social dice pools with a certain group of people. This cannot be done if the target group has prerequisites your character does not meet - an adult could not join a teenager only group for example. Using this technique is not declaring loyalty to a group (in fact it's probably best to avoid doing so) but if she's good people will naturally feel more comfortable around her.

**Drawback:** By getting in with a group your character is placing herself outside other groups. She gains an equal penalty to those who dislike the group, for example if she creates a bonus with Republicans she'll take a penalty while talking to Democrats for the rest of the scene.

**Encouragement (●●●●):** Your character can convince people to associate what they like about themselves with herself. You try to treat all people politely, that's not because you're a good person. That's because you're a

Christian/Liberal/Humanist/Feminist/Conservative. Using the same dice pool as for the Inspiring Merit [CofD 51] your character gives listeners a variant of the Inspired Condition; a listener resolves the Condition only for an action in line with his Virtue, but when he does so and your character is engaged in a social maneuver against him, she opens one Door without a roll.

**Rally (•••••):** Your character can play the crowd like a fiddle, alienating and isolating her opponent in an argument. Both your character and her opponent pick a Social merit that gives influence over people (usually Allies, Fame, Mystery Cult Initiation, or Status, though others may be allowed.) The people represented by that Merit must be present, be they in the audience, waving placards outside or posting comments on the blog with the debate). Roll Presence + Persuasion + Merit Dots. Until the maneuver ends, for every (target's Composure + Merit dots - your character's successes) Social rolls the target must spend one point of Willpower not to concede in the face of such hostility. This does not count against the target's one willpower per turn.

***Example:** Gwenaëlle is a columnist having a public debate about obesity with Desmond, the director of public relations in a greedy fast food chain. Gwenaëlle rolls Presence + Persuasion + her Status in the newspaper to fill her next column with metaphors that sound a call to arms. She gains four successes. Desmond has a Composure of 3 and chooses to play his Status 4 in the corporation, getting subordinates to ghost write and give him some emotional distance. Every third roll Desmond loses a Willpower point as his corporate blog is hammered with aggressive comments by Gwenaëlle's supporters.*

## *Regal Bearing (●-●●●●●, Style)*

| Requires Composure 3, Socialize 3

Your character carries herself with an air of sophistication and grace. Whether she rubs shoulders with European royalty or commands respect by walking through the door of an inner city church in Sunday best there's no denying she is noble.

**Figure of Authority (•):** Your character was born to authority and wields it well. Whenever she adds Status to the dicepool of a mundane action she gains an additional die.

**Effortless Elegance (••):** Your character knows every unwritten rule of manners. In a formal situation Socialise specialties also provides their full bonus to Composure, so long at the roll is mundane and not supernatural. On a roll of Composure + Socialise the specialty applies twice.

**Stiff Upper Lip (•••):** A gentleman is not a fancy suit and elocution lessons; gentility is a way of life. At any time you can spend a point of Willpower to lessen the effects of a Condition representing a mundane mental or emotional effect upon your character. For the remainder of the scene any dice penalties that Condition applies to Social rolls are reduced by Composure. This Merit cannot affect Conditions representing a supernatural or physical effect (such as wound penalties or intoxication).

**Dry Wit (••••):** Whether your character looks down her nose at the help or reminds the room that an old family name does not make a pompous buffoon into a gentleman, she does it with such grace and subtlety that nobody can accuse her of impropriety without desecrating their own dignity. Any attempt to tarnish your character's reputation based on her words, but not her deeds, takes a penalty equal to her Expression. This bonus does not apply when her words provide evidence of her deeds.

**Manners Maketh Man (•••••):** Your character radiates authority and poise, she is a pillar of strength in times of chaos. Whenever your character begins Social Manoeuvring with a character who currently has a non-Persistent Condition representing a mundane mental or emotional effect they automatically open a number of doors equal to half their Composure, rounding up. This Merit provides no benefit when the target is suffering from Conditions representing supernatural or physical effects (such as wound penalties or intoxication).

## *Scientific Rhetoric (●-●●●●●, Style)*

| Requires Intelligence 2 and either Academics 3 or Science 3 (or 2 with a specialty in academic methodology or practices)

For your character a debate isn't about winning or convincing others, it's about spreading the truth. Scientific Rhetoric works best against the open minded, even if your character loses the debate she learns something.

**First Principles (•):** Quantum nonsense, pyramid power, “I’m not a doctor but I play one on TV”. People have been using scientific lingo to promote rubbish for years, and to a real scientist it usually sounds ridiculous. As a reflexive action your character may inflict a -1 penalty on anyone making an argument based on science or academics (the fields, not the skills). This does not work if their science is sound; as a rule of thumb, assume that a relevant specialty or three dots in a relevant skill confers immunity, unless the target is consciously misleading his audience.

**Citation (••):** Your character doesn’t need to prove his point, he just points to someone else who has already proved it for him. He may add dots in the Library Merit to Social dice pools, if he has access to his Library and is permitted to fetch books. Internet access is worth +1 die, unless your character has a Library of bookmarks to hand.

**Just the Facts (•••):** A quick tongue doesn’t matter, for the facts speak for themselves. Your character may fall back to established facts, allowing him to reroll one failed Social action per scene, provided it is on a scientific or academic topic.

**Burden of Proof (••••):** Your character stands his ground and insists debate will be decided on the facts. When entering an argument, he may make a contested Manipulation + Persuasion roll (or a Presence + Expression roll when debating in front of an audience). If he wins, everyone involved in the argument, including himself, must use an appropriate Mental Skill (such as Science or Medicine for a debate on evolution) instead of a Social Skill in dice pools connected to that argument.

**Scepticism (•••••):** There is a reason reproducibility is one of the principles of the scientific method. After a social maneuver has opened one of your character’s Doors, he can take the time to double check the other guy’s claims. Is that salesman’s product really the best in its field? He takes an extended research action with a threshold equal to the dice pool used to open the door. If the action succeeds, and the claim in question wasn’t true, that door closes again. Scepticism may be applied only once to any opened Door, and has no effect when the facts support the investigated claim.

### *Spiritual Discipline (●-●●●●●, Style)*

| Requires Composure 3, Academics 2 and a specialty in an appropriate school of thought

Your character is attuned to the spiritual side of the world. She may be a Buddhist monk, a Christian monk, or simply read a lot of paperback philosophy. Her spiritual attunement helps him above the temptations of everyday life. Spiritual Discipline excels at resisting persuasion, it is least effective when directness is a virtue and against those who cannot understand its hidden meanings.

**Unclouded Eyes (•):** Like the fool your character favors the simple explanation. She plays little attention to distractions or complex word games. Ironically this makes her exceptionally hard to fool; all Subterfuge dice pools against your character take a -1 penalty.

**Cessation of Desire (••):** By focusing on the spiritual your character has freed herself from temptations. Mundane social actions gain no benefit from tempting her with her Vice, unless she has gained Willpower by acting in line with it during the current scene.

**Mediation (•••):** Your character speaks peace to the world. So long as she gives her full attention to mediating a conversation all characters involved in it treat their impression as one level higher. As soon as your character stops the impressions return to their usual level. Your character cannot use Mediation on her own social maneuvers.

*Example: Two people with an average impression can roll to open doors once per day, providing that each roll was made while your character is mediating.*

**Koan (••••):** Your character tells a short story or a riddle with layers upon layers of hidden meaning and a kernel of wisdom hidden at its core. During a social maneuver, she rolls Expression + the target’s Wits. On a success the target gains the Informed Condition; however, when they resolve the Condition your character opens a Door. Understanding and following her koan is another step along her path. Koan may be used once on each social maneuver.

**Inner Peace (•••••):** Your character has risen above desire, she could live comfortably on nothing but bread and water. This lack of desire makes it incredibly hard to push her into anything. In any Social action where

your character's only goal is to resist she may roll Composure + Integrity (or equivalent) instead of the usual dice pool.

## *Nations*

As the representatives of an ancient Kingdom, and agents of the Light, the Hopeful may forge themselves and people who look to them as an example into an organized body, dedicated to a common purpose. These are commonly called the Nations. As they rise in a Nation, the members' wish to achieve its purpose opens their hearts to the Light, and they learn ways to draw on it, even if they have no other link to the Light's magic.

## *Nation Building*

From tiny acorns grow great oaks. A Nation begins when a group of people, led by one touched by the Light, swear a vow by powers of good to perform a lifelong work. To the Hopeful and their Shikigami, the technique to give such vows effect is fairly obvious; once she forms the intention to gather a team for some important goal, a Princess will eventually realize how to bind them together as a Nation. Beacons and Sworn have a considerably harder time figuring it out. A Beacon on his own might lead his friends into swearing a proper oath without knowing it and create a Nation by accident; but in general Beacons or Sworn can found Nations only with help from someone with stronger ties to the Light than theirs. (For this reason Nations were vanishingly rare before the Release.)

A PC who wants to create a new Nation during play must do three things. She has to choose an Aspiration or Vocation to "create a Nation dedicated to X", with X being the Vocation of the Nation-to-be, and maintain that Aspiration over the course of a story. (As with other Aspirations the player and Storyteller should include events related to this during the story in question.) She must also convince other characters (at least two) to join her Nation and labor for its Vocation. Finally, at the end of the story, the PC and her compatriots buy dots of the [Nation Officer](#) Merit. Someone must buy a full 5 dots, thus becoming the first custodian of the Nation's occult secrets; usually the PC with the Aspiration takes the role, though this is not required. The other characters participating must buy at least 10 dots (a total of 15 over all characters) for the vows to take effect and the Nation to form. If the PC has persuaded enough people to join her Nation, she resolves her Aspiration before buying the Merit dots.

As explained in the rules for Nation Officer, every Nation is organized around a [Vocation](#), and all characters with Nation Officer •+ gain that Vocation and may earn Luminous Experiences by working toward it. The drawback of this benefit is a Ban, an action the officers are not allowed to take; any character with Nation Officer •+ who violates the Ban promptly loses all Merits depending on their membership.

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## *Nations as Organizations*

If you are using the [organization rules](#) in this book, all Nations have the Mystery Cult Benefit to support their Nation Officer Merit. Merits that depend on Nation Officer are represented by Endowment Benefits. Also, the Nation's Vocation acts as a fourth Aspiration for it, allowing it to regain Morale when it makes significant progress towards it, and it is completely incapable of taking any action which would break its Ban.

An existing organization can be raised into a Nation if the founding character is already an integral part of its operations. Normally such standing in the organization will be represented by dots of Status on the character's sheet, the character's being an Asset for the organization, or both. If a PC has the necessary standing, then instead of finding other individuals to join her she may induce the organization to restructure itself, adding the Mystery Cult Benefit. She must still sustain an Aspiration for a story, and buy all five dots of Nation Officer when the restructuring succeeds.

Storytellers should note that getting an organization to do anything takes considerable time and effort, and changing the way an organization operates is both time-consuming and risky. A PC trying to turn an organization into a Nation should, at minimum, succeed in a social maneuver with that goal - and because a restructure action normally causes a breaking point, any such maneuver starts with two additional Doors.

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## National Endowments

As organizations vowed to a sacred purpose and infused by the Light, Nations may teach further abilities beyond what its officers gain just from their standing. These are represented as supernatural Merits, which all have at least one dot in Nation Officer as a prerequisite. Nations do not automatically offer all of these Merits; part of developing a Nation is deciding which Merits are available. It's fine for a Nation to confer these Merits as benefits of its Nation Officer Merit, if that fits the Nation's character and Vocation.

### *Ceremony (●-●●●●●)*

The character has learned a ritual that calls on the Nation's mystical bond to release a supernatural effect. When enacted, the ritual activates a Charm (set when the Merit is purchased) under the same rules as the [Bequest](#) Merit; the Merit's cost equals that of an equivalent Bequest. However, the ritual will only work if a successful activation will serve the Nation's Vocation in some way. This Merit may be taken multiple times, each for a different Bequest, but only from those Bequests the Nation provides.

### *Mandate (●-●●●)*

Working for the Nation's goal becomes a Calling for all the officers. A mundane character with this Merit may add his dots in it when attempting a mundane task (within the scope of one Skill Specialty) that is relevant to the Nation's Vocation. If a character has a pool of Wisps, tasks falling within the Mandate may also act as a [Call of Duty](#) roll. Nobles may take both this Merit and a personal [Mandate](#).

### *Moral Anchor (●-●●●)*

The Nation sustains its members in the face of adversity. At one dot, when the character reaches a breaking point while trying to accomplish the Nation's Vocation, he applies 9-again to the breaking point roll. At two dots, he applies 8-again. At 3 dots, he applies no quality but gets an exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

**Drawback:** Officers recognize opposing their Nation as a transgression. Violating the Nation's Ban becomes a breaking point for the character, with a base penalty equal to his Nation Officer dots, and the Merit does not apply to the roll.

### *Transformed Attribute (●●●)*

The Light infuses the bodies and minds of the Nation's members, and inspires them to periods of excellence. The character has one [transformed Attribute dot](#) by virtue of belonging to the Nation. Characters may take this Merit once for each Attribute, but only for those Attributes the Nation offers. Moreover, transformed dots cannot raise anyone's traits above the maximum for their template.

If the character is mundane, he spends 1 point of Willpower as a reflexive action to use all his transformed dots for 1 scene. Alternately, if he is currently on the Nation's business, he may roll his Integrity as an instant action, gaining the use of the transformed dots for the scene if successful. Mundane characters can't remain at the peak of their abilities indefinitely; if they have used transformed dots in the previous scene, they must spend a point of Willpower to continue using them in the current scene, even if they are carrying out the Nation's duty.

A character who can transform on her own applies the transformed dots from this Merit to her transformed state, like the ones she buys herself. However, such dots do not count against her global cap on transformed dots.

### *Transformed Skill (●)*

The character has one transformed Skill dot by virtue of belonging to the Nation. Characters may take this Merit twice for each Skill, but only for those Skills the Nation offers. Otherwise transformed Skill dots follow the same rules as transformed Attribute dots.

## *Troupe Magic (●)*

The Nation's mystical bond makes it easy for its members to support each other's magic. The character gets the benefit of the [Troupe Magic](#) Merit with other members of the Nation who have this Merit.



# Chapter 3: The Power of Love

*I never renounce my feelings. True Love can not be taken away by anyone.*

—Sailor Moon

The Charms are the greater magics of the Hopeful. They are divided into 10 families; each Calling has an affinity to 3 of them, learning the Charms within them more easily.

Each Charm has an Action attribute, giving the type of action using it is.

Instant	Activating the Charm is an instant action, taking a turn. The dice pool to roll for the action is noted.
Reactive	Similar to Instant, except that (like a dodge in combat) you can declare the activation before your turn in the initiative order, in response to another person's action.
Full turn	Activating the Charm is an instant action, but it also requires forgoing Defense in the turn you activate it.
Reflexive	Activating the Charm is a reflexive action; it doesn't interfere with your normal action. A dice pool to roll is noted.
Extended	Activating the Charm is an extended action. A dice pool to roll, the time required for each roll, and the threshold number of successes to finish activation are noted.
... and resisted	The Charm has a target, and you must subtract one of his traits from the dice pool.
... and contested	The Charm has a target, who reflexively rolls an opposed dice pool; you must roll more successes than he does for the Charm to take effect.
Permanent	The Charm enhances another ability. No action is required to activate it - if the proper conditions obtain, it just works.

The rules for extended actions are slightly different for Charms. A Charm has to be activated in one attempt; any interruption makes the Charm fail, and near misses don't give bonuses to the next attempt. A Noble does not take a Condition to continue if she fails a roll; instead she takes a cumulative -2 penalty to her dice pool each time she forges on. She does take a Condition on a dramatic failure; her magic's failure generally causes a loss of confidence, so any of the Conditions that come from a [compromise](#) are appropriate. On an exceptional success the Noble may reduce the time interval or the threshold as with mundane extended actions, or she may take the Inspired Condition [CofD 289] related to Charms of the same family (or some other Condition with the Storyteller's approval.)

Other than the permanent Charms, each Charm has a duration, ending when the stated time runs out; and a cost, usually in Wisps. Powerful Charms call for Willpower points; many Charms favored by the Queen of Storms inflict damage on their user, which resists magical healing; and using some Charms favored by the Queen of Tears triggers Sensitivity. A Princess who cannot spend enough Wisps to activate a Charm in a single turn may still use it; it just takes her several turns to do so. She must use her action over consecutive turns to charge up the magic, spending what she can; the Charm activates in the turn when she spends the last Wisp needed.

A Charm with a duration of "lasting" changes its target permanently in a flash of magic; as a Charm it ends immediately. Charms with an "indefinite" duration leave a continuing trace of magic on their target (often a Condition or Tilt) which other supernatural powers can detect or influence. A Charm with a duration of "concentration" needs its user's active attention, and ends if the user spends her turn's action on anything but maintaining the Charm.

Each Charm has a rating in dots, which sets the price and difficulty of learning its basic effect. Most Charms also define upgrades, which modify and enhance their effects; each upgrade to a Charm adds 1 dot to its effective rating. A few Charms have another Charm as a prerequisite; to learn these Charms, a Princess must have learned the prerequisite Charm. Upgrades can also have prerequisites, generally of other upgrades to the same Charm. Finally, a Princess' Inner Light limits the dots she can put in a Charm; a Princess cannot learn a Charm with a basic rating higher than Inner Light + 2, or upgrade a Charm with an effective rating equal to that.

Many upgrades change the cost or duration of their Charm, or add a modifier to the activation roll. Therefore, you are not required to apply any upgrade when using a Charm - the basic effect is always available, at the original cost.

If a Charm is used on a person, a Princess can use it on herself unless the text of the Charm specifically states she cannot.

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### *Freaking the Mundanes?*

The Integrity system [CofD 73-75] states that witnessing the supernatural is a breaking point for mundane humans; does that mean Hopeful magic can break a mundane witness? Unfortunately, yes, it does. The Light is fundamentally benign, but it's still a supernatural power, and no one in the World of Darkness feels safe in the presence of genuine magic, whatever its provenance. Some Nobles theorize that the Kingdom's fall wounded the spirit of humanity itself, to make them fear the mysterious; others note that so much magic in the modern world is wielded by evil monsters that fearing the supernatural is only sensible. Either way, it will take many generations for the Nobility to dispel the fear and distrust of ordinary people for themselves.

However, seeing a Princess in her glory isn't quite the sanity-breaking experience that witnessing other supernaturals can become. Meeting a transformed Princess is never a breaking point. Seeing a Princess change to or from her mundane form is a breaking point, but at a -1 penalty at most. If a Princess uses a Charm to perform an obviously supernatural feat, any mundane witnesses will reach a breaking point, though again at a -1 penalty at most. *Targets* of a Charm may experience a breaking point with a greater penalty, if the Storyteller thinks the situation merits it. No character reaches a breaking point from witnessing magic from the Light more often than once a scene, and any character who is familiar with the Nobility and understands their mission is immune to breaking points from seeing their powers.

Finally, dramatic failures on these breaking points generally don't leave the kind of traumas represented by the Broken, Fugue or Madness Conditions. A more usual result is a persistent Obsession with finding the Noble whose magic inflicted the breaking point. Another possibility, seen in hardened criminals, is being frightened into repentance. If the question should come up in play, we encourage the Storyteller to be inventive.

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## *Charms and Invocations*

Normally, when she activates a Charm, the Princess spends 1 Wisp on top of the Charm's usual cost to apply one of the Invocations she knows - this adds her dots in the Invocation to the dice pool for activating the Charm. (This is a modifier to the dice pool; in an extended action, applying an Invocation does not raise the maximum number of rolls.) Charms that don't require a roll to activate gain power from Invocations in other ways; for example, several permanent Charms allow a Princess to apply an Invocation to some mundane Skill rolls. It is never possible to apply two Invocations to a single dice pool, or to stack Invocations in any other way.

An Invocation can be applied for free (without paying the extra Wisp) under certain conditions, generally when her actions are consonant with the principles of the Queen favoring that Invocation, or the target of her actions has a symbolic link with the Invocation. (For a permanent Charm, the target is whoever or whatever the Princess uses the enhanced ability on.) There is also, for each Invocation, a prohibition that a Princess should not break; if she does, she loses the right to apply that Invocation for a period of time, at least until the current scene ends.

A fair number of Charms require dots in an Invocation to purchase; these are called *invoked* Charms, and are not compatible with any Invocation but their prerequisite. When using such a Charm, a Princess can apply the prerequisite Invocation to gain its bonus (if conditions permit, and she hasn't broken the ban) or she can make the activation roll without any bonus, but she may not apply any other Invocation's bonus. If a Charm does not require an Invocation to purchase it, any Invocation can be applied to it; these are called *general* Charms. There are a few general Charms with upgrades that require Invocation dots - applying such an upgrade converts the Charm to an invoked one - and some invoked Charms with upgrades that require more Invocation dots than the basic Charm does. Upgrades that require different Invocations are not compatible; you may not apply both of them to the same activation of a Charm.

## Opposed Charms: Clash of Wills

Occasionally, Nobles working at cross purposes will use Charms at the same time that can't both succeed. For instance, two of the Hopeful may use the same Shape Charm on the same object to sculpt it in different ways; one Princess may use an Appear Charm to disguise herself while another uses a Learn Charm to see through disguises; or one Noble tries to calm a crowd when another is magically inciting it to riot. More frequently, a Princess will find herself using Charms against the powers of supernatural creatures in such a way that either the Charm or the creature's power must prevail. When this happens the two characters have a Clash of Wills.

The Storyteller resolves both powers according to their descriptions, including any costs and side effects to their users. If both succeed, the two characters make a contested roll; whoever gets more successes has their power go off as intended, while the other works only so far as the winner's power permits. Should the two characters tie the contest, they just repeat the roll until one of them gets more than the other. A Princess' dice pool in a Clash of Wills equals her Inner Light plus the effective rating of the Charm she cast; her Belief modifies the pool, giving the same modifier as for a [compromise](#). The rules for other supernatural beings define the pools they use for a Clash of Wills.

Characters may spend Willpower to bolster the contested roll, but only if they are physically present and aware that their powers are clashing. Certain powers, such as those with exceptionally long durations, are more enduring in a clash. Day-long effects add one die to the clash roll, week-long effects add two, month-long three, and effects that would last a year or longer add four.

## Charm Types and Modifiers

Many Charms follow rules which aren't specific to them, but shared with other Charms; these rules are collected here for reference.

### Sympathy

Some Charms can be used on distant targets, or on multiple targets, by taking penalties to their activation roll. If a Charm's dice pool is modified by Sympathy, the strength of the connection between the Princess and her target affects the power of the Charm. Consult this table for the penalty to the activation roll.

Penalty	Connection	Requires
0	Sensory	You can see the target directly.
-2	Intimate	The target is a longtime friend, a member of your family, one you love deeply, or a prized possession.
-4	Known	You know the target well; or the target is something you own, or something of great importance to you.
-6	Acquainted	You know the target slightly; or the target is something you have used, or something you have some feelings for.
-8	Encountered	You have met the target briefly; or the target is something you have touched.
-10	Described	You have a verbal description of the target, but nothing more.
X	Unknown	You know nothing of the target. No Charm can affect targets without a sympathetic connection.

### Commonalty

If a Charm's dice pool is modified by Commonalty, it can affect all the members of an organization who are currently present at once. If such a Charm is resisted, the member of the organization with the best resistance

trait resists for all members; for a contested Charm, each member rolls to contest individually. The difficulty of extending the Charm over an organization depends on the commitment the members have towards each other, or towards the common goal for which the organization exists. Consult this table for the appropriate penalty.

Penalty	Commitment	Requires
0	Individual	One person, the default.
-1	Dedicated	Everyone to be affected is mutually Intimate, or the organization's goal takes up the majority of its members' time and thought. An established nakama, a family.
-3	Concerned	Everyone to be affected is mutually Known or better, or all the members make significant sacrifices for the organization's goal. A new nakama, the long term employees of a small business.
-5	Interested	Everyone to be affected is mutually Acquainted or better, or the members share an interest in the organization's goal. A social club, employees of a large corporation.
X	Casual	Some of those to be affected have only Encountered each other; the targets are merely a lot of people gathered in one place, with no common interest. No Charm can affect everyone in such groups.

## Longevity

Span of time	Penalty
Within a day	0
Within a week	-1
Within a month	-2
Within a year	-3
Within five years	-4
Within ten years	-5
Add an additional -1 for every additional ten years.	

Some Learn Charms scry across time, revealing events in the past or (for Specchio) the future. These Charms penalize their activation rolls based on the span of time between the Noble and the event she wants to see. Consult this table for the appropriate penalty.

## Sanctuary

Several Charms create long-lasting effects over an area, enchanting it into a Sanctuary. All of these Charms require extended actions to activate, and the threshold of successes required for the actions depends on the size of the Sanctuary. Add the successes listed below to the threshold for these Charms.

Rating	Size of Sanctuary Affected	Successes
X	Just enough room for one person to stand or lie down (Sanctuary Charms can't affect an area this small)	n/a
•	A small apartment or a cabin in the woods; 1-2 rooms	2
••	A large apartment or small remote house; 3-4 rooms	4
•••	A converted church, warehouse or large house; 5-8 rooms	6
••••	A mansion or apartment building; 9-15 rooms	8
•••••	A vast palatial estate, a city block, a skyscraper or a small village	10

Also, the Charms that affect a Sanctuary become easier to activate when the area in question is one the Princess values, and conversely are difficult to use in areas she dislikes or fears. Activation rolls for these Charms should take modifiers similar to the following.

Modifier	Connection to the Area
+5	Exceptionally strong memories of love and safety, such as a childhood home
+3	Strong memories of love and safety, such as a long time friend's home
+1	The Princess, or the Nation she belongs to, owns the property
+1-3	The area is a Safe Place for the Princess (bonus = half the Merit dots, rounding up)
-1	The Princess has never been in the area before
-2	The Princess is trespassing in the area
-3	Strong memories of fear or horror

## *Avatar (Queen)*

Certain powerful invoked Charms require a Noble to summon the essence of a Queen into herself, and let that Queen guide her magic to the exclusion of all others. If a Princess activates a Charm tagged as Avatar, she cannot use any Invocation except the Charm's prerequisite until the Charm's duration expires.

The Queens accept as their avatars only those who uphold their principles and ideals. A Bequest based on an Avatar Charm will not work unless its user has at least 3 dots in the Charm's prerequisite Invocation.

## *Favor (Skill)*

The permanent Charms tagged as Favor (Skill) begin with a simple effect: they allow a Noble to apply Invocations to mundane actions based on the named Skill while transformed. While these Charms can have a wide variety of upgrades, all of them provide one standard upgrade.

**Specialized:** When the Noble concentrates her training in a narrow field, the Light ensures she can't fail. Whenever any Specialty she has in the favored Skill applies to the Noble's action, she may reroll her dice pool after seeing the result. She must accept the result of the second roll.

## *Regalia*

Permanent Charms tagged as Regalia give a Noble the ability to conjure up an item while transformed, or alter her clothing while transformed to meet a need. Such items (and her clothing) are called her Regalia, the emblems, symbols and paraphernalia of her office, her duty, her Calling and her Nobility. A Regalia Charm puts basic tools at the Noble's disposal for a specific task, ensuring that when she has to carry out that task, she never suffers penalties for lacking equipment. It also (unless the Charm says otherwise) allows the Noble to apply an Invocation to her dice pools when she uses the Regalia piece. The combination of these two effects is called the Regalia bonus.

Like Favor Charms, Regalia Charms can have many upgrades, but all of them provide one standard upgrade:

**Quality:** (Stackable 3 times) The Regalia is very well-made and suited to its purpose. It offers an equipment bonus to dice pools related to its proper use. Each time the Noble takes this upgrade the bonus increases by +1. The total bonus from all Quality upgrades is the Quality bonus.

Any piece of a Noble's Regalia can appear on her person, ready for use, whenever she transforms, if she wishes it to. She can switch any number of Regalia pieces into or out of solid existence with a [transformation action](#); the dice pool for this action is the same as the one for full transformation. However, if she returns to mundane form she must dismiss all her Regalia as well. (Marking Regalia as [Practical](#) lifts this restriction; a Noble may summon or dismiss a Practical Regalia piece in either form.) Naturally, pieces of Regalia help a Noble with her goals only when they are in existence - any bonuses they confer are lost if she sends them away.

Each piece of Regalia has a Durability equal to 1 + half the Princess' Inner Light (rounding up) and a Structure equal to its Durability + the Princess' Belief, regardless of its actual Size or composition. Also, because Regalia is part of a Princess' transformed self, any supernatural power that targets a piece of Regalia triggers a [Clash of Wills](#) using the effective rating of the Charm that added that piece. If a Regalia piece is ever destroyed, the Princess may recreate it by the same method used to recreate a destroyed phylactery.

A Princess always knows where her Regalia are and what their state is, even if she forgot in the heat of battle that a piece was destroyed or lost. Like her Phylactery, each piece of her Regalia has an unbreakable Intimate sympathetic connection to her transformed identity. If she has lost a piece, she may recall it to herself with a transformation action. When she does so she may replace all lost Regalia at once, although there is nothing compelling her to do so, rather than leave some lying around.

If the Storyteller agrees, a Princess' player may declare that one piece of her Regalia is the anchor for two or more of her permanent Charms - for instance, a magical staff that shoots fire can be the Regalia for both [Kensai](#) and [Levinbolt](#). Naturally, losing such Regalia pieces removes the benefits of all the Charms tied to them.

## *Appear*

The Appear family of Charms change a Princess' appearance, and produce other illusions. [Seekers](#) and [Troubadours](#) have affinity for them.

### *Life of the Party (Appear ●)*

| [Favor](#) (Socialize)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, innate courtesy and friendliness support her in every social situation.

### *Upgrade: Carousing (Aria ●●)*

The Noble is welcomed in any bar or drinking party while transformed. Actions to detect her as an intruder take her Aria as a penalty; this stacks with the Barfly Merit [CofD 50]. Also, the Noble can get drunk, or high on drugs, and never show it - she keeps her poise and self-control. She may apply Aria to her roll to resist a drug's effects [CofD 96]. (The Charm does *not* help the Princess resist a toxin that does damage.) During a social maneuver, if the Noble and her target are at a social function where people are expected to drink (or take other recreational drugs) she can spend 1 Wisp to improve her impression by one step.

### *Upgrade: Gossiping (Terra ●●)*

When asking for information from her connections, the Noble nearly always finds what she seeks. She may apply Terra whenever she gathers information from her Contacts [CofD 50], no matter what Skill her dice pool uses. If she spends 1 Wisp after seeing the result, she may reroll her dice pool, though she must accept the second result. (Using this ability on a Contact who knows only the Princess' mundane identity is best done over the telephone ...)

### *Light the Way (Appear ●)*

| Action: Permanent

A portion of the Noble's Regalia can, at any time, emit a soft light that banishes the thickest natural darkness. The light source can take several forms - a ring or bracelet, a jewel on her brow, an actual small flashlight, and a saintly halo have all been seen; whatever its form, it illuminates the Noble's path and leaves her hands free. She can bring the light up or douse it reflexively, and set it to shine at any intensity short of full sunlight.

The Noble can also focus the light to a bright, narrow beam into someone's eyes to inflict temporary blindness. This is a normal attack using Dexterity + Athletics, and the target's Defense applies. On a normal success the target is Blinded [CofD 281] in one eye; on an exceptional success he is Blinded in both eyes. Either way, the Tilt lasts for one turn.

### *Upgrade: Dazzling (Fuoco ●)*

The Noble can reflexively make her light burn at a constant eye-watering intensity, blinding anyone nearby who looks at her, by spending a Wisp. Anyone who can see her must succeed on a Stamina + Composure roll,

penalized by the Noble's Fuoco, or be Blinded in one eye until he looks away from her, or she dims her light again, whichever comes first.

## *Twenty Faces (Appear ●)*

### **Regalia**

Action: Permanent

Sometimes, the full glory of the light must be veiled, so that a Princess may walk unnoticed. The Noble can reshape her Regalia into an outfit that helps her fit in; with a transformation action, she is dressed in appropriate "civilian" clothes for the area. The reshaped outfit acts as a basic disguise [CofD 277] and gives the Regalia bonus to all disguise rolls. However, any use of Charms or summoning other pieces of Regalia resets the outfit to the Noble's usual appearance.

### *Upgrade: Beautiful*

The Noble can choose to stand out from the crowd rather than blending in. She may reshape her Regalia into high fashion [CofD 277] suitable for her current venue, or one she's about to attend; the Regalia and Quality bonuses also apply to any roll helped by fashionable clothes.

If she stays within the general theme of her normal Regalia (colors, decoration, motifs etc.) and is recognizable as herself, the Noble may use Charms and other Regalia without resetting her clothes, but doesn't get the benefit of being in disguise.

### *Upgrade: Durable*

The Noble's clothing does not reset if she uses Charms or summons other Regalia. Instead, it flickers, revealing her true appearance for a moment; observers will notice this if they succeed on a reflexive Wits + Composure roll, penalized by her Quality bonus (if any.) The Charm won't help the Noble explain how the person she appears to be has magical powers, or where she got the object in her hands.

### *Upgrade: Masked*

The Noble can change her features dramatically. By spending 1 Wisp, she may alter all aspects of her appearance - ethnicity, height, build, even sex - within the limits of her Size trait. (A Princess with the Giant Merit will always be a very tall man or woman, no matter how this Charm is used; a child Princess cannot look like a full-grown adult, and an adult cannot pass herself off as a child.) She may also, if she wishes, cloak her status as a Noble from magical discovery.

All mundane attempts to identify the Noble fail automatically, and supernatural powers that pierce disguises or reveal supernatural beings' natures (if the Noble concealed hers) start a [Clash of Wills](#). Applying Masked does not give her extra protection from being mundanely detected as an outsider or impersonator, but the Regalia and Quality bonuses still apply.

### *Upgrade: Scaling*

| Requires Masked

When she creates a magical disguise, the Noble can shift her apparent Size to any value between 4 and 6, allowing a child to appear as an adult, or an adult as a child. Her actual Size doesn't change, so the illusion doesn't conform to her body. People unconsciously avoid touching parts of the Noble where appearance and reality don't match, but objects don't; objects passing through the illusion or hitting concealed body parts cause the disguise to reset (or flicker, if the Durable upgrade was used.)

## Unseen Traveller (Appear ●)

| Favor (Stealth)  
Action: Permanent

A Princess usually wants to be seen, to be noticed, to be the one that holds the lantern of Light that is the beacon to guide others. But sometimes, being seen is exactly what you *don't* need, as the Darkness flees from the Light it becomes harder to determine its plan and intent.

### Upgrade: Elusive (Aria ●●)

The Princess is especially difficult to follow, or shake off. When she shadows someone, or is being shadowed, while on foot [CofD 72] her opponent in the contest takes a penalty equal to her Aria, and she may spend a Wisp to achieve an exceptional success on 3 successes.

### Upgrade: Quiet (Lacrima ●●)

The Princess' movements are almost silent. When she attempts a surprise attack, her target's roll to avoid surprise [CofD 88] takes a penalty equal to her Lacrima, and all attempts to locate her by listening take the same penalty. Moreover, she may spend a Wisp to give herself the **Silenced** Tilt for a number of turns equal to her Lacrima.

## Zephyr's Track (Appear ●, Aria ●)

| Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Stealth  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble floats through the world like a breeze, leaving no trace of her passing except by her own will.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes clumsy, prone to slip and make noise when she wants to hide. She takes a -2 penalty on all Stealth dice pools until the scene ends.

**Failure:** The Noble leaves traces of herself behind her as usual.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, gentle puffs of air clean away any traces the Noble leaves in the wake of her movements. Footprints and fingerprints are brushed away; hairs and skin cells float behind her without settling; drops of sweat or blood evaporate. Any attempt to follow her trail or deduce her actions from physical evidence fails.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble can choose to leave false evidence behind her that suggests a person quite unlike herself passed where she has gone.

### Upgrade: Multiple

| Modified by **Commonalty**

The breezes can clear away traces of many people at once. The Noble uses the Charm on the members of an organization she can see, using the Commonalty modifier. If she succeeds, all traces of their passing are erased.

### Upgrade: Scryproof (Aria ●●)

| Cost: +1 Wisp

Even magic is blown awry when used to perceive the Noble. Any attempt to discover what she does during the Charm's duration with a supernatural power provokes a **Clash of Wills**. This applies to scrying from afar, prophetic visions, and divinations of the past.



## *Sweet Fragrance (Appear ●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Composure + Socialize vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble releases a subtle scent into the air around her, that relaxes those who breathe it and inclines them to be friendly. She affects a circular area with a radius up to (Inner Light + Legno) yards, centered on herself.

**Dramatic Failure:** The scent the Noble releases is mildly offensive. She takes a -1 penalty on all Social rolls for the rest of the scene, or until she cleans herself with soap.

**Failure:** The Noble releases no scent.

**Success:** Anyone within (Inner Light + Legno) yards of the Noble who gets fewer successes on their dice pool than her activation successes gains the [Trusting](#) Tilt.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains a +2 bonus on Social rolls against anyone with the Trusting Tilt.

### *Upgrade: Lasting*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble releases the scent continuously for the duration; anyone who comes within her Inner Light in yards until the Charm ends must roll Composure + Supernatural Tolerance, gaining the Trusting Tilt if they get fewer than the activation successes.

### *Upgrade: Subtle (Legno ●●)*

The Noble permeates an object with her fragrance by touching it; the next person who touches or smells it afterward must contest the Charm. The scent fades after someone has breathed it, or when the Charm ends, whichever comes first. If the Noble applied Lasting, the scented object affects everyone who touches or smells it until the Charm ends.

## *Mantle of Authority (Appear ●, Terra ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Politics - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

The Noble claims her authority from the Light to keep her person inviolate and her movements unrestricted. She must show her phylactery to her target to establish her credentials. The Charm fails if the Noble or her target is engaged in combat.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target sees the Noble as a fraud or a lunatic, and will react accordingly.

**Failure:** The target sees nothing significant about the Noble's phylactery.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, the target assumes the Noble has diplomatic privileges. He will not try to search her or detain her, no matter what she's been doing, though if she lacks permission to be where she is, he may escort her out. The target also will not initiate combat with the Noble unless ordered to do so by his superiors, though he will respond if she attacks.

**Exceptional Success:** The Charm's effect persists for a full day before it ends.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. The member with the highest Composure resists for the group.

## *Face of Lover's Alarm (Appear ●, Specchio ●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Wits + Empathy  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 attack

One would not threaten a loved one, would they? And as the Queen of Mirrors teaches, the True Heir will be beloved by all. This Charm is activated in response to an attack; the Noble must be able to apply her Defense against that attack.

**Dramatic Failure:** The attacker sees through the imposture and is outraged. His attack gets a +2 bonus.

**Failure:** The imposture has no effect on the attacker.

**Success:** The Noble's appearance blurs to resemble one beloved by the attacker. The Noble's Defense against the attack increases by her Specchio, as the attacker reflexively pulls his blow.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble unconsciously impersonates the beloved's mannerisms for the rest of the scene; she reminds the attacker so strongly of his beloved that he finds it hard to injure her. He takes one level of the Lover's Alarm Tilt: any attack he makes on the Noble has a -1 penalty to its dice pool. Levels of the Tilt can accumulate up to the Noble's Specchio.

The Charm relies on the empathy and the goodness of the target. Against a target with no Integrity or equivalent trait, such as a Darkspawn or an animal, the Charm fails to activate.

## *Upgrade: Universal*

Cost: +1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 turn

The Noble appears to everyone in the form of their first love. She may activate the Charm with this upgrade once per turn to protect herself from all her foes. For that turn, any attack on the Noble is penalized by her Specchio, even if her Defense doesn't apply against it. If she achieves an exceptional success, anyone who attacks her gains a level of the Lover's Alarm Tilt. The Noble cannot use the Charm on a single attack before it expires.

## *Upgrade: Inviolate (Specchio ●●●)*

Cost: +1 Willpower

The shock of his beloved appearing in the middle of a fight is so great that the attacker's blow hits the wrong person. The Noble may choose any other person within range of the attack to become its new target in her place, except the attacker himself. If no such person exists the upgrade has no effect.

If the Noble applied Universal, she must spend 1 Willpower to redirect each attack.

## *Phantom (Appear ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Expression - image's Size  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble forms a Wisp into an illusory object. The illusion affects only sight, and material objects pass through it without stopping. The Size of the image can't exceed the Noble's, but within that limit she can show any image she is capable of imagining.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Charm fails with a burst of light and a loud crack, alerting anyone nearby who could see or hear to the Noble's presence.

**Failure:** No image appears.

**Success:** The Noble creates the image she desires, somewhere within her sensory range. The image remains until the Charm ends. By concentrating on it, the Noble may move and alter the image with mundane actions, using Wits + Expression as the dice pool. The Storyteller may require a different Skill for some actions (e.g. Subterfuge when an image is meant to deceive.)

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble manipulates her illusion deftly. Her mundane actions to control it gain a +2 bonus.

### *Upgrade: Dancing*

The Noble may create an image that moves without her conscious attention. When her concentration lapses, the image continues to act on the instructions she last gave it.

### *Upgrade: Glowing*

| Requires [Light the Way](#)

The Noble can make her illusions give off light, just as her Regalia does with Light the Way. As long as she is concentrating on an image, she may vary the light coming from it reflexively, independently of her personal light. If she has upgraded Light the Way, she may apply all that Charm's upgrades to the image's light as if it were her own.

### *Upgrade: Consecrated*

The Noble may sustain a Lasting illusion with the blessing of a Consecrated area. Doing so keeps the illusion intact until the [Consecrated](#) Condition ends, but limits its movements to the area covered by the Condition.

### *Upgrade: Singing*

The Noble may create an illusory sound, or add sound to an illusory image. A sound without an image seems to come from a point the Princess can see, which she can move while concentrating.

### *Upgrade: Solid*

The image becomes substantial. As long as it lasts it has a degree of solidity, as well as a firmness and texture appropriate to what it depicts. However, just because it projects an image of solidity does not mean it *is* solid; the image shatters if force is applied to it (by kicking an illusory wall, for example) or with it (an illusory wrench won't tighten or loosen a bolt).

### *Upgrade: Thinking (Acqua ●●)*

| Requires Dancing

When the Noble releases her concentration, in addition to providing the illusion with further instructions she may grant it a measure of adaptability. For each dot of Acqua she may instruct the image to react to one condition, altering its behavior in response. For conditions that require senses to recognize, the illusion has a Perception dice pool equal to the Noble's.

### *Upgrade: Multiplied (Aria ●●)*

| Requires Dancing

The Noble may create multiple distinct images with a single Charm activation. She can make one additional image for each dot of her Aria. The Noble can try to control more than one image at once, but takes a -2 penalty to her dice pool for each image beyond the first. If she applies Singing, each image may have its own sound and images can be replaced with sounds.

## *Upgrade: Scented (Legna ●)*

The Noble may create an illusory scent, or add scent to an illusory image or sound. If the image is Solid, she can give it a taste as well. A scent without an image seems to come from a point the Princess can see, which she can move while concentrating.

## *Upgrade: Painted (Terra ●)*

The Noble may create an illusory surface which covers and disguises an existing object. Applying this upgrade adds 1 to the image's maximum Size; however, the image's shape must be fairly close to that of the object it disguises. The Noble may disguise part of an object if she wishes, or the whole exceeds her Size limit. The image is bound to the object and moves with it, though the Noble can still change it while concentrating on it.

## *Unlimited Object Works (Appear ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Larceny  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

The Noble creates magical duplicates of an object on her person. The Charm may be used on any object the Noble is carrying and can conceal from mundane observers in her Regalia. (Often this limits targets to Size 2 or less, but anything in the Noble's [Miss Poppins' Bottomless Bag](#) is expressly a valid target - even if the bag isn't open.) The object must also be cheaply priced; its Availability rating may not exceed one third of the Noble's Inner Light, rounding up. Also, the Charm can't copy a copy made by a previous use of it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The magic damages the targeted object; it loses a point of Structure, bypassing its Durability.

**Failure:** The Noble fails to create a duplicate.

**Success:** A copy of the target object materializes in the Noble's hand. The copy works just like the original (guns fire, phones make calls) with respect to its mundane properties. However, it lacks any supernatural properties of the original, other than being a supernatural creature's bane. The copy dissolves at the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** The copy does not vanish for one full day.

## *Upgrade: Reflected (Specchio ●●)*

The Noble may use the Charm on an object's reflection, to take it out of the mirror. The reflection is like a copy made by the basic Charm, except that it's a mirror image of the original; text is reversed and the grip may be uncomfortable. Neither the original item nor its reflection appear in mirrors while the Charm lasts.

When applying Reflected, the Noble is not limited by either the Size or the Availability rating of the duplicated object; she can copy any object of Size up to the Size of the mirror showing its image. However, the mirror's quality modifies her dice pool: Surface of water, reflection is weak and inconstant (-2), Tin foil (-1), Modern mirror (0), Reflection is especially clear, mirror is highly valued (Resources 3+) or of great sentimental value to someone (+2)

## *Wallflower (Appear ●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Stealth vs. Wits + Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble fades into the background and falls beneath everyone's notice.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble makes herself memorable without realizing it - all Perception rolls to notice her take a +2 bonus for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble is no more forgettable than usual.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, other people don't pay attention to the Noble. No matter how odd her appearance or behavior might be, nobody notices her or remembers her as more than a generally person-shaped blur. Anyone the Noble speaks to, touches or otherwise interacts with is immune to the Charm as long as they keep her in view; and if the Noble activates a Charm, or does something that draws attention (like shouting, or doing gymnastics) everyone around her may become immune, if they beat her successes in the contested roll. However, their immunity lapses if they look away from the Noble.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble becomes almost impossible to perceive, whatever she does.

### *Upgrade: Multiple*

| Modified by [Commonalty](#)

The Noble can conceal other people in numbers. She uses the Charm on the members of an organization she can see, using the Commonalty modifier. If she succeeds, all the members are difficult to notice or remember, except to each other and herself.

### *Upgrade: Traceless*

The concealment extends to recording devices - video cameras show only a human-sized distortion in the air where the Noble is, and microphones record meaningless noises (like the adults' voices in "Peanuts") instead of her voice, unless she deliberately speaks into them.

### *Upgrade: Veiled*

Using another Charm does not automatically attract attention to the Noble, though again the direct effects of the Charm are not concealed.

## *Speaking Eyes (Appear ●●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Persuasion  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The movements of the Noble's body are saturated by meaning. She uses the Charm on a single character who can see her.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble destroys her natural ability to communicate. All her Expression rolls take a -2 penalty for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble's gestures convey no special meaning.

**Success:** The Noble can convey the most complicated thoughts to her target with a turn of the head, a twist of the hand, or a facial expression, as quickly as with normal speech; the target will understand her intent even if he shares no languages with her, as long as they can see her. Nobody else looking at her will understand her meaning; indeed, unless onlookers examine her carefully (succeeding on an Intelligence + Investigation roll) they won't realize that she is "saying" anything at all. The Charm does not help the Noble understand the target.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may combine her gestures with her speech. Her Expression rolls to communicate with the target gain a +2 bonus until the Charm ends.

### *Upgrade: Collective (Acqua ●●)*

| Modified by [Commonalty](#)

The Princess can convey her thoughts to members of an organization that can see her, using the Commonalty modifier. Those not in the organization will not understand her gestures.

## *Masquerade (Appear ●●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy vs. target's Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

Instead of changing herself, the Noble changes how another perceives her.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes totally transparent to her intended target; for the rest of the scene, in contested Subterfuge rolls with him she always gets a dramatic failure.

**Failure:** The Noble's disguise must stand the target's inspection unaided.

**Success:** The target cannot see through any disguise that the Noble assumes or role that she enacts; in all contests of Subterfuge for this purpose between them during the current scene, the target automatically gets a dramatic failure. The Noble cannot use Masquerade to impersonate a specific person the target knows or has met - she is limited to a generic role. Masquerade ends if the Noble uses any other Charm.

**Exceptional Success:** The target is blinded to flaws in the Noble's disguise for a full day.

## *Upgrade: Familiar*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble can try to impersonate someone her target knows. The target does not automatically fail this contest, but the Noble takes no penalty from the target's familiarity with the person she imitates, and she adds her successes on the activation roll as a bonus to her side of the contest.

## *Upgrade: Social (Aria ●●)*

Modified by **Commonalty**

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use Masquerade on members of an organization, applying the Commonalty modifier. Each member contests the roll independently.

## *Upgrade: Veiled*

The Noble may use other Charms without ending Masquerade, and the target will not notice their manifestations - he perceives the direct effects of the Charms, but will not trace them back to her.

## *Flash of Brilliance (Appear ●●, Specchio ●)*

Action: Reflexive

Dice pool: Presence + Subterfuge

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 action

To an Heir, mundane history and trivia often seem so... trivial. Shouldn't an Heir's magic be proof enough of their genius? This Charm enhances any action with the goal of convincing others that the Noble is well-informed about some topic.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's action is an automatic dramatic failure. Whatever she says, the audience perceives only foolish ignorance of the topic.

**Failure:** The action is neither helped nor hindered.

**Success:** The Noble passes herself off as an expert. If her roll for the action fails, treat it as having one success; if it succeeds, treat it as an exceptional success. Listeners will remember hearing only the things the Noble said that were appropriate to the topic, but will believe the full speech conveyed an accuracy and understanding appropriate to the result of the roll. The Charm affects only what the audience hears; dictation, recordings, and so on capture only the actual speech, although listeners will not realize it until the Noble is done speaking.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's apparent mastery of the topic prevents anyone from challenging her claims. If her action succeeds, listeners must spend 1 Willpower to dispute anything she says on the topic for the rest of the scene.

## *Goccia Astrale (Appear ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Crafts  
Cost: 2+ Wisps  
Duration: variable

"I can't be in two places at once!" is an all-too-common complaint from just about anyone; the Hopeful especially find it necessary to be two people at once, when mundane obligations interfere with fighting a supernatural incursion. With this Charm a Princess can partly resolve such dilemmas, by making a facsimile of her mundane self that moves and speaks, and can pass as herself if not examined too closely.

The Noble applies the Charm to a mass of material that she can shape barehanded, or else a quantity of fluid, of roughly Size 2. (Applying some Invocations allows unusual choices of material - see the table for examples.) Infusing this material with Wisps, she transforms it into an Astral Droplet: an exact physical copy of herself just before her last transformation, wearing identical clothing. The Droplet has the same mundane Attributes and Skills as its creator, and access to all her memories as of the time of its creation. However, it lacks energy and imagination; it does not get 10-again on any dice pool, or any other quality that allows rerolling dice, cannot spend Willpower, and has neither Virtue nor Vice. The Droplet is also fragile - a single point of damage of any type is enough to dissolve it into the stuff it was made of and glimmers of light. Finally, the Droplet has none of the Noble's Light-derived powers, even Practical Magic.

Invocation	Suitable Droplet material
Acqua	Water, ice, or snow
Aria	Fog, smoke, strong wind
Fuoco	Fire, ashes
Legno	Grass, leaves, twigs
Terra	Dirt, gravel, clay
Lacrima	Shadows (the Princess' own, say)
Tempesta	Acid, the Princess' blood
Specchio	The Princess' reflection (the Droplet is reversed left-to-right)

The Droplet's basic duration is 30 minutes for each activation success. The Noble may choose to extend the duration by spending more Wisps than the minimum of 2 - each extra Wisp doubles the time before the Droplet disintegrates, cumulatively. She cannot, however, spend more Wisps for this purpose than half her Inner Light, rounded up. She may choose the total number of Wisps spent after the activation roll, though she must spend at least 2. She may end the Charm prematurely by touching the Droplet and concentrating for a turn. A Noble cannot create a second Droplet before the first Droplet dissolves - the Charm just fails if she tries.

By default the Droplet is an automaton which follows any instruction given to it which does not pose a threat of physical harm, and otherwise stays wherever it is put; it takes no action on its own. If the Noble applies an Invocation to the Charm, the Droplet formed has some initiative and the rudiments of a personality; in the absence of clear instructions it follows the tenets of the applied Invocation, to the extent allowed by the knowledge and abilities the Noble possesses.

## *Upgrade: Integrated*

It's often useful to know what your double has been doing during your absence. If the Noble dissolves her Droplet prematurely by touching it and concentrating, she can recall to memory a description of the actions the Droplet took and the events it saw and heard. A roll to recall any detail of the account is at -2 in addition to any other penalties.

## *Upgrade: Lifelike (Specchio ●●●)*

The Lightbringers are able to put reflections of their minds and wills into the Droplets they make ... though "shards" or "fragments" may be a better choice of words. When the Noble applies Lifelike, the Droplet gains a nearly-human initiative and will; it has the Belief dots, Virtue and Vice of its creator, gets 10-again on its dice pools, can benefit from other qualities that permit rerolls, and may spend and regain Willpower (though it begins with none.) The first time the Noble creates this Droplet, its personality exactly matches her own (including any derangements) and aside from the physical reflection they can't be told apart.

**Drawback:** By creating a Lifelike Droplet a Noble actually divides her mind in two. The Droplet's personality does not vanish when its body dissolves; it continues within the mind of its creator, in a state rather like sleep, until she makes another Lifelike Droplet. At that moment it wakes and inhabits the new-made body. As a creation of Specchio the Droplet believes in its excellence and right to rule, but it can only exist as a mortal shadow of its creator. This soon becomes irksome, if not intolerable.

Each time the Noble applies Lifelike, she must make a breaking point roll (with Specchio's drawback in force, if she used the Invocation) with a penalty of -2 if she currently has a Condition from an earlier compromise, and -0 otherwise. Instead of the normal results, if she fails, the Droplet's desire for independence comes to the fore, and it will do what it can to avoid dissolving and reintegrating with its creator. It can lengthen the Charm's duration by spending its own Willpower; it may spend 1 point each day for this, which adds 24 hours of continued embodiment. (The Droplet cannot do this if the Resolve + Composure check succeeds.) Just what the Droplet does is up to the Storyteller, but it should not try anything that involves a breaking point.

If the Noble applies Integrated and Lifelike, all her memories since the Droplet's first creation become available to it on the same terms as its are available to her after she dissolves it. Other than that, neither personality can remember what the other has done.

## *Goosedown Lullaby (Appear ●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Presence + Expression vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble sings softly and soothingly, lulling those who hear her into drowsiness and sleep.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble sings only herself to sleep. She takes the Lullaby Tilt.

**Failure:** The song is pleasant but lulls nobody.

**Success:** Anyone who is within the Noble's Inner Light in yards while she sings, and can hear her song, must reflexively contest the Charm; those who lose the contest take the [Lullaby](#) Tilt. The Noble may continue singing (using her action) in the turns after activating the Charm to lull new arrivals, but each character affected contests the Charm only once. Once she stops singing, no one else will be affected.

**Exceptional Success:** Anyone who becomes Insensate thanks to the Charm cannot be awakened for the Noble's Presence in hours.

## *Upgrade: Parakeet's Echo*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The song continues to resound after the Noble stops singing it. For the rest of the scene, whatever she does, anyone who approaches her reflexively contests the Charm, and takes the Lullaby Tilt if they lose the contest.



### *Upgrade: Feather-brained*

The Noble sings an earworm of a song, that those who hear it can't stop thinking about. If she applies this upgrade, those who lose the contested roll take the [Earworm](#) Tilt, instead of Lullaby.

### *Upgrade: Quoth the Raven (Lacrima ●●●)*

The Noble's song saps the wills of those who listen. Characters who took the Lullaby or Earworm Tilts from the Charm replace it with Beaten Down [CofD 87] instead of Insensate.

### *Upgrade: Tarring Tune (Tempesta ●●●)*

The Noble makes a noise that drills into a hearer's skull. For each turn she spends concentrating, everyone within the Charm's area of effect save herself takes one level of the [Phantom Damage](#) Tilt, and characters who lose the contested roll are Deafened [CofD 281] in both ears for Tempesta turns. If she applies Parakeet's Echo, the Noble can create the painful noise as an instant action for the rest of the scene.

### *Hallowed Hearth (Appear ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute of quiet contemplation and recollection/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#)  
Dice pool: Composure + Empathy  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 day

A Noble's home is their castle, even if it isn't formally a palace. Drawing upon the sanctity of her own memories, she wraps the senses of intruders in confusion, serving to protect and serve this place.

When the Noble reaches the threshold, any action to enter the target Sanctuary by force, or to observe events in it from outside, requires an exceptional success. At a story level, intruders get the feeling that this is a boring, mundane place. People who try to break in or spy in from the outside will likely get bored quickly, and give up because there is nothing of value here, because they can't find what they're looking for or even (especially if they suffer a dramatic failure) become convinced that they must have got the wrong address and occupants.

### *Upgrade: Misfortunate*

To those who wish ill, a place of good memories can only drive them further into self-inflicted misery. All characters who enter the Sanctuary without permission from the Noble gain the [Nervous](#) Condition, resolving when they leave the Sanctuary.

### *Upgrade: Consecrated*

When the Noble stands in [Consecrated](#) ground, she may intertwine the Charm with that Condition. Doing so extends its duration - the Charm ends when the Consecrated Condition does. The Sanctuary affected is the entire Consecrated area, so the Noble must get enough successes to affect all of that area.

### *Road Crew (Appear ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Expression - desired equipment bonus  
Cost: 3 Wisps  
Duration: 1 session

Sometimes a Princess needs help to impress a crowd. The Noble creates a small crew of assistants to help her pull off a truly amazing performance. When activating the Charm the Noble chooses a mundane task related

to performing or creating art that her crew can help her with, and sets the bonus she wants the crew to give her. She can have only one crew active at a time.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble creates several humanoid figures but has no control over them. They immediately run riot, and while not malicious they can be very very annoying and are certainly inappropriate to the Noble's wishes. Think clowns not shock artists. They have a dice pool for making mischief equal to the Noble's on the chosen task.

**Failure:** The crew doesn't appear.

**Success:** The Noble creates several assistants. The crew acts as equipment for the chosen task, giving the specified equipment bonus to the Noble, or to anyone else she tells them to help. However, they carry the Volatile Condition [CofD 102] - at least one will dissolve if their principal fails an action they helped with.

**Exceptional Success:** The crew doesn't flake out when their principal blunders. They don't carry the Volatile Condition.

Assistants are solid but only when it relates to their assigned task; an actor would be able to interact with props, and wear costumes, but would not be able to fetch a cup of coffee. A cunning Princess might still be able to use them for other roles, she might ask her troupe to dance around waving their arms in front of her enemies face while she hides, or attack foes who don't realize the backup dancers cannot hurt them. (Assume a 1 die pool on any social actions, mental and physical tasks fail automatically). If an assistant takes a single point of damage, even bashing, he vanishes into a puff of smoke or glitter.

## *Words on Water Writ (Appear ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Resolve + Expression  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 day or 1 week

By meditating over an object she touches, the Noble inscribes a portion of her memories into it. She may choose to record either one scene or one hour, and must succeed on an Intelligence + Composure roll to recall the scene correctly.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble immediately forgets the memories she tried to record, taking the Amnesia Condition. [CofD 288]

**Failure:** No memories are inscribed.

**Success:** For a full day, anyone who touches the target object remembers what the Noble experienced during the time she recorded from her point of view. The memory is perfect while the person keeps contact, but will fade normally when he releases it. Traces of the memory remain even after the Charm ends, but require the Psychometry Merit [CofD 58-59] or similar supernatural powers to recover. A second use of the Charm on the same object overwrites the previous memory or its traces.

Alternately, the Noble may set the memory to be remembered only by a specific person. If she does so, anyone other than the person she designates, or herself, who touches the object notices nothing. Supernatural powers face a [Clash of Wills](#) to read her experiences or detect their existence.

**Exceptional Success:** The recorded memory remains clear for a full week.

## *Upgrade: Distant*

Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble may send her memories to objects she cherishes from afar, applying the Sympathy modifier.

## *Upgrade: Enduring (Acqua ●●●)*

Cost: +1 Willpower  
Duration: indefinite

By spending a point of Willpower, the Noble makes her recorded memory last until the object is destroyed.

## *A Host of Furious Fancies (Appear ●●●, Aria ●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Subterfuge - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 turn

The Princess conjures a host of illusionary attackers on any target she can see clearly. Their attacks can do no damage, but the target may waste their attention defending against non-existent foes.

**Dramatic Failure:** The swirling of the host leaves the Princess dizzy and confused. She immediately takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286].

**Failure:** No attackers appear.

**Success:** The target is thoroughly distracted by the host's attacks. He halves his Defense for the rest of the turn.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's attention is drawn wholly to the illusionary attackers. He takes the Stunned Tilt, losing an action to flailing about at random.

## *Only a Flesh Wound (Appear ●●●, Fuoco ●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Medicine - marked Health boxes  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 or 2 scenes

The Noble sends her fire into her target's blood, giving strength to overcome his wounds.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble inflicts a burning sensation. Her target takes levels of the [Phantom Damage](#) Tilt equal to her Fuoco.

**Failure:** The target is not affected.

**Success:** The target ceases to perceive any pain from wounds; he gains the [Numbed](#) Tilt.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's Numbed Tilt lasts until the end of the next scene.

## *Upgrade: Invincible (Fuoco ●●●)*

Cost: +1 Willpower

The Charm conceals not only the pain of the target's wounds, but any visible sign that he has been wounded. Until the Numbed Tilt fades, he appears to be totally uninjured to mundane examination, and magical diagnosis triggers a [Clash of Wills](#). Further, if all his Health boxes fill with lethal damage, the target does not start bleeding out until the Tilt ends; the illusion serves to bind his wounds. However, the target will not notice any injury he suffers short of aggravated damage.

## *Know My Pain (Appear ●●●, Tempesta ●●)*

Action: Full turn and resisted  
Dice pool: Resolve + Intimidation - target's Composure  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

There are those who would tell you that pain is bad, and to be avoided at all costs. They are weak. Pain is a tool, just like any other. It is not only useful, but even necessary, to use it against those who would try to stop you.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble gives pain only to herself. For the rest of the scene she suffers a -1 penalty to all her actions.

**Failure:** The target ignores the Noble's pain.

**Success:** The target takes levels of the [Phantom Damage](#) Tilt, equal to the number of boxes with damage of any type on the Noble's Health track or his unmarked Health boxes, whichever is less.

**Exceptional Success:** Phantom damage from the Charm seems lethal; the target is incapacitated automatically if the last box of his Health track is filled with phantom damage.

### *Upgrade: Intimate*

A part of the injury the Noble suffers from her target returns to him. Whenever a target of the Charm damages the Princess further, she may spend a Wisp reflexively to inflict 1 damage on that target, of the same type as what he inflicted. Unlike the initial damage, this is fully real, and remains after the Charm ends.

### *Upgrade: Shared (Tempesta ●●●)*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use Know My Pain on members of an organization, applying the Commonalty modifier; every member takes phantom damage. The member with the highest Composure resists for the whole group.

### *Upgrade: Veiled*

Any evidence of damage the Noble has taken is concealed. She appears to be totally uninjured to mundane examination, and magical diagnosis triggers a [Clash of Wills](#). This does not affect her actual state of health - she still suffers wound penalties if she takes enough damage. Moreover, if she loses a body part, the Charm doesn't appear to restore it; it only makes the loss seem like an old, fully healed wound.

### *Strike False (Appear ●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Intimidation  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble goes through the motions of attacks, creating the appearance of danger without inflicting actual harm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's attacks are real, but she is convinced they are not, and does not realize otherwise until the Charm ends.

**Failure:** The Noble's attacks remain unchanged.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, whenever the Noble deals damage with her magic (through either Charms or Regalia weapons) she instead inflicts the [Phantom Damage](#) Tilt, adding levels equal to the damage she would otherwise have done.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may choose whether to inflict normal or phantom damage for each attack.

The Noble may end the Charm early as a reflexive action, which removes all the Tilts it created.

### *Upgrade: Suggestive*

Cost: +2 Wisps

The Princess counterfeits her magic so well that a mere suggestion of an attack creates wracking pain. Until the Charm ends she can produce an illusion of any Charm she knows whose sole effect is dealing damage, or an attack with a Regalia weapon, without paying the cost for that Charm or attack. The illusion resolves as if it were the real effect, and inflicts the Phantom Damage Tilt if successful.

## *Imaginary Friend (Appear ●●●●, Aria ●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge vs. Wits + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble creates the illusion of a man or woman, especially crafted for a single person.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target becomes deeply suspicious of the Noble; for the rest of the scene all her Social rolls aimed at him take a -2 penalty.

**Failure:** The Noble fails to create the illusion.

**Success:** The Noble chooses a role for the illusion; the target perceives a person who behaves appropriately for that role in the present situation, according to the target's beliefs. However, if she doesn't beat the target's successes, he realizes that this person is an illusion within moments. If she does get more successes, the target will treat the imaginary person as fully real, and respond to it as to a person of the role the Noble chose. No one else - including the Noble - will see or hear the illusion; she has no control over its behavior.

**Exceptional Success:** If the Noble remains within earshot of the target, she learns what he believes the illusion said and did from his reactions, without possibility of error.

## *Reverse Ideology (Appear ●●●●, Specchio ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Larceny  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

A mirror turns left to right, up to down, depending on how you hold it; a Noble of Mirrors can do the same, disorienting everyone nearby while keeping a clear head for herself.

**Dramatic Failure:** Woo, trippy - the Noble sees the world spinning and flipping around her at flickering speed. She takes the Insensate Tilt.

**Failure:** People near the Noble may feel dizzy for a moment.

**Success:** Everyone in the scene perceives the world as flipping into and out of its mirror image. The Noble imposes the [Reflected](#) Tilt on the area; all characters involved in the current scene, except the Noble herself, are affected by it.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may protect a number of characters up to her Inner Light from the Reflected Tilt.

## *Closed Space (Appear ●●●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Composure + Stealth vs. Wits + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

Many foes of the Hopeful care nothing for collateral damage and will use powers that wound or kill bystanders to bring a Noble down. Thus it's often necessary to separate a fight from those not involved in it - indeed, to remove it from mundane reality. This Charm may be used only in combat.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes unable to perceive anyone else involved in the fight. However, she is still apparent to them. She takes the Blinded Tilt [CofD 281] in both eyes for the rest of the scene; though she isn't actually blind, for the purpose of fighting she might as well be.

**Failure:** Characters involved in the fight feel a moment's dizziness.

**Success:** Every character who has declared an intent in the fight and loses the contested roll vanishes into a parallel world that contains no people or animals but themselves, but does have accurate copies of all structures, objects not in someone's personal possession, and vehicles not being driven. Their own possessions and vehicles they're driving go with them. Characters return to the mundane world when the fight ends, or when they withdraw from it, or fill their Health track with lethal damage; objects and vehicles return when the character who brought them does. Everything that returns appears in a safe location, as close as possible to where they were. Objects from the parallel world can't be taken to the mundane world - they vanish if anyone tries.

The Charm's parallel world comes into existence when the Charm is activated and vanishes when it ends; it's simply a copy of the mundane world near the Noble. (Some Nobles who were fighting at high speeds claim that the parallel world starts to look different from reality if you go far enough, but as they were occupied at the time their accounts aren't reliable.) However, it does interpenetrate the mundane world. The affected characters register as supernatural (of their own type, or transformed Nobles if mundane) to beings that can detect such who are in the mundane place that corresponds to their own location. Furthermore, a being who can scrutinize magic (as with the Charm Reflected Light) will, if he uses that ability on an affected character and wins a [Clash of Wills](#), pop into the parallel world as if he'd been included in the Charm. Other than this, no character in the parallel world can influence anything in the mundane world, and from the mundane world, only supernatural powers specifically aimed into the parallel world can affect anything in it.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble can choose a number of characters in the fight other than herself, up to her Inner Light, who will *not* vanish into the parallel world. She can use this to divide her foes, or to send an ally on a side mission while keeping an opponent busy.

## *Garden of Bright Images (Appear ●●●●●)*

Requires [Phantom](#)

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#) + duration in hours

Dice pool: Intelligence + Expression

Cost: (Sanctuary rating) Wisps

Duration: 1 or more hours

The Noble decorates her surroundings with a beautiful glamour. She chooses an area to affect and a time for the glamour to last when she starts working on the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble deceives only herself; she sees the area transformed according to her intentions, but everyone else sees it as it really is.

**Failure:** The Noble loses control of her magic; she must accept a Condition to continue making the illusion.

**Success:** When the Noble reaches the threshold, the appearance of every nonliving thing in the targeted area is transformed to match a theme the Noble chooses. (For instance, "formal ballroom", "open bazaar", "African jungle" and "undersea grotto" are all valid themes.) Permanent fixtures are always changed; she can choose whether to change people's possessions, but cannot affect some possessions and not others. As long as the Charm lasts, the changed objects look, sound, feel and even smell like what they appear to be; observers may make Perception rolls to spot something wrong with the illusion, but they take a penalty equal to the Noble's successes.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may reduce the threshold or interval, or make the illusion impenetrable to all mundane senses.

## *Upgrade: Palatine*

Duration: indefinite

The Noble may take advantage of a [Consecrated](#) Condition. When she does so, the illusion covers all the Consecrated ground and lasts until the Condition expires or she dismisses the Charm; treat the duration as 0 when calculating the threshold.

## *Bless*

The Bless Charms enhance people, pushing their abilities to a peak and bringing their actions to perfection. [Champions](#) and [Graces](#) have affinity for them.

Several Bless Charms add dots to Attributes. Unless otherwise noted, dots from these Charms don't contribute to Charm activation rolls, or any roll to activate a supernatural power.

### *Small Providence (Bless ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Streetwise  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 day

The Noble (or one she helps) finds, and obtains, that one thing she was looking for, at a surprisingly low price. No single person may be the target of Small Providence more often than once a session.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's finances are thrown into disorder. For the next week, the Availability of any equipment or services she wants counts as one dot higher.

**Failure:** The target gains nothing from the Charm.

**Success:** The target of the Charm gains one instance of the [Bargain](#) Condition. The Condition ends without resolving when the Charm expires.

**Exceptional Success:** The target of the Charm gains two instances of the Bargain Condition. Both will end when the Charm expires.

### *We Rely on You (Bless ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Empathy - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: indefinite

A few words of encouragement can inspire anyone to scale the heights. No single person may be the target of We Rely on You more often than once a scene.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble loses her confidence. She gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290].

**Failure:** The target is unmoved by the Noble's exhortation.

**Success:** The Noble gives the target a mission and the confidence to accomplish it. He gains the [Blessed](#) Condition, with 1 banked die for each activation success.

**Exceptional Success:** The target becomes very capable when carrying out his appointed task.

### *Upgrade: [Queen]'s Commission (Invocation ●)*

This is actually a set of upgrades, one for each Queen. If the mission the Noble gives her target is in accord with the Invocation tied to the upgrade, the Blessed Condition has two banked dice, not one, for each activation success. Any mission for which the Invocation would apply at no cost qualifies, and others may with Storyteller approval - except for Mirrors' Commission. For that upgrade, the assigned mission must glorify the Noble, not her target.



## *Sea-Foam's Touch (Bless ●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Academics  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: indefinite

Truth is an ocean, from which the Noble draws a few drops.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's memory for facts becomes confused. She takes the [Stumbling](#) Condition, applied to a Mental Skill and lasting for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble draws up nothing but irrelevant trivia.

**Success:** The target immediately gains the [Insightful](#) Condition on a topic of the Noble's choice.

**Exceptional Success:** The target learns a broad survey of knowledge. His Insightful Condition applies to two topics of the Noble's choice. The Condition still applies to just one roll, but the roll can be relevant to either topic.

## *Stop, Children, What's That Sound (Bless ●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Composure - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

*There's something happening here; what it is ain't exactly clear ...*

By speaking a single word, the Noble sends another person into a state of extraordinary alertness.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's voice becomes impossibly loud, to her ears alone. She takes the Deafened Tilt [CofD 281] in one ear for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The target pays no attention to the Noble.

**Success:** The target becomes alert and watchful. He takes the Alert Tilt: all his Perception rolls, including rolls to avoid surprise, take a +2 bonus. The Tilt wears off when the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The target gains a +3 bonus from the Alert Tilt.

## *Upgrade: Everybody Look*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on all members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. The member with the highest Resolve resists for the group. If the activation succeeds all the affected characters take the Alert Tilt.

## *Steady Resolve (Bless ●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Resolve + Persuasion  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

With a reassuring word, the Noble hardens another's resolve in the face of magical manipulations. The Charm may not be used on anyone currently affected by it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble loses her confidence. She gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290].



**Failure:** The target is unmoved by the Noble's exhortation.

**Success:** The target takes the Indomitable Tilt: whenever the target contests a supernatural power that affects his thoughts or emotions with Resolve, he adds 2 dice to his roll. When the target resists such supernatural power with Resolve, the user of that power subtracts 2 dice from his roll. The Tilt wears off when the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The bonus and penalty from the Tilt each rise to 3 dice.

### *Upgrade: Calm*

The Noble's reassurance also helps her ally remain calm. The target applies the Tilt's bonus when contesting with Composure, and the Tilt's penalty when resisting with Composure, against supernatural powers that affect thoughts or emotions.

### *Bejewelled Visage (Bless ●, Terra ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

An odor of trust enfolds the one the Noble blesses, smoothing his path in society.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes convinced that everyone she meets disapproves of her. She gains the [Nervous](#) Condition, lasting until she fails in or abandons a social maneuver.

**Failure:** The target gains no help from the Charm.

**Success:** If the target begins a social maneuver before the Charm expires, the impression [CofD 81] for that maneuver moves one step upward.

**Exceptional Success:** The target is unusually adept in the first steps of the social dance. In a social maneuver influenced by the Charm, his first roll to open a Door has a +2 bonus.

### *Touch of Grief (Bless ●, Lacrima ●)*

Action: Reactive and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Intimidation - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Wisp, Sensitivity check  
Duration: 1 action

The Noble's gaze brushes another with cold despair. The Charm is activated at the moment its target takes an action.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble is struck by remorse, and gains the Guilty Condition [CofD 289].

**Failure:** The target is not affected.

**Success:** The target's action is cursed. The Noble either inflicts a -2 penalty to his dice pool, or strips the 10-again quality from it.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble strips 10-again from the target's action and inflicts a -2 penalty.

### *Count No Cost (Bless ●, Tempesta ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble gives her target the gift of total focus on a goal.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target strains his muscles and nerves without accomplishing anything. He takes 1 point of bashing damage.

**Failure:** The target is neither helped nor harmed by the Charm.

**Success:** The target gains the Obsession Condition [CofD 290] with respect to a goal of his choice. The Condition is resolved only when the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The target may keep the Condition as long as he wishes, but cannot shed the obsession before the Charm expires.

## *I'm the Best! (Bless ●, Specchio ●)*

Action: Reflexive and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Wits - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 action

Others might say that they are the masters of their fields. But, simply, the Enlightened of the Queen of Mirrors know this to be false. They can't be better. This Charm can be used to enhance any contested action against an opponent who has a higher dice pool than they do.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's roll in the contest is an automatic dramatic failure.

**Failure:** The Noble has to win the contest normally.

**Success:** Each success removes one dice from the target's pool, and adds one dice to the Noble's pool. The number of dice transferred is capped by the Specchio rating of the Noble; such glorious victory comes from one's own strength, after all. This may not reduce the target's pool to less than zero.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble makes her victory look easy. She gains an exceptional success in the contest with 3 successes instead of 5.

## *Upgrade: Truly*

Stackable 3 times

On actions where this Charm is used, once the dice transfer has been applied, the Noble may then add +1 to their own pool, as if it were coming from a specialty in "Defeating (opponent's name)".

## *Upgrade: Triumphantly (Specchio ●●●●)*

The limitation that the target must have a higher initial dice pool than the Noble is now waived. In addition, if the foe is reduced to a dice pool of zero, the Noble may reflexively spend a Willpower point to force him into a dramatic failure.

## *Better Together (Bless ●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Presence + Socialize vs. target's Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

The Noble turns common knowledge and training into a bond among the people near her. The Noble may use this Charm on a person she can touch, when the target is in the company of at least four other people, and he and the others all have at least 2 dots in the same Skill. The target may choose not to oppose the Charm. The Noble may not use the Charm on anyone already under its effects.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes flustered and distracted when the target can see her. She takes the [Nervous](#) Condition, which resolves when she has left the target's presence for at least one scene.

**Failure:** No bond forms between the target and the other people present.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, the target has the benefits of the Hobbyist Clique Merit [CofD 51], related to the Skill he shares with the others who are present. The benefit is limited to one Skill at a time; if more than one clique can be formed around the target for different Skills, the Princess chooses a Skill as she activates the Charm. The target needs the help of at least four clique members to get the benefit; the Charm does not end if the clique disperses, but it has no effect unless five members including the target are working together.

**Exceptional Success:** The Charm grants its benefits to the target until the next sunrise.

## *Intuitive Flash (Bless ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Academics  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble grants knowledge and ability to someone within sight. For each success, the target gains one temporary specialty in a Skill of the Noble's choice. If the Charm is used on anyone currently benefitting by it, the activation with the most successes takes precedence.

### *Upgrade: Expert*

The Noble may grant a deep understanding of a subject. She may use an activation success to give her target, temporarily, the Area of Expertise Merit [CofD 44] for a specialty - which can be one he knew already, or one granted by the Charm.

### *Upgrade: Serendipitous*

The Noble may give her target the ability to apply his new knowledge in unusual ways. She may use an activation success to give her target, temporarily, the Interdisciplinary Specialty Merit [CofD 45], if he has the prerequisites. The required specialty can be one the target had already, or one granted by the Charm.

## *Touch of Fortune (Bless ●●)*

Action: Reactive  
Dice pool: Wits + Occult  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble grants a blessing of good fortune to a person she can see.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble loses her confidence. She gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290].

**Failure:** The target gains no help from the Charm.

**Success:** The target gains the **Fortunate** Tilt, blessing a number of rolls up to the activation successes. A Noble may cast Touch of Fortune at the same moment another person acts to bless that action.

**Exceptional Success:** The target gains the Fortunate Tilt for many rolls.

### *Upgrade: Well-timed*

The target's good fortune comes when most needed. Before the target makes a roll, he declares whether the Tilt will affect it. The number of rolls affected does not change.

### *Upgrade: Strong*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble grants a stronger blessing: the target gains the Greatly Fortunate Tilt.

### *Upgrade: Perfected*

Requires Strong  
Cost: +3 Wisps

The blessed actions become deceptively easy; the target gains the Perfected Tilt. Strong and Perfected cannot both be applied to the same activation.

### *Light's Aegis (Bless ●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Strength + Medicine - target's Stamina  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble extends a portion of her mantle over another person that she can touch, granting him the power to ward off injuries. The Charm may not be used on anyone currently affected by it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble mishandles her power and injures herself. She takes 1 resistant lethal damage.

**Failure:** The target is unprotected by the Charm.

**Success:** The target has limited access to the Noble's Holy Shield. He takes the Aegis Tilt: each activation success allows him to downgrade the damage from one source just before he suffers from it as a reflexive action. The Tilt stacks with the innate Holy Shield if used on a Noble; both may be used against an attack.

**Exceptional Success:** The target gains a strong protection from injury.

### *Upgrade: Saving*

Cost: +2 Wisps

The Noble's protection lets her target survive against impossible odds. If the target takes enough lethal or aggravated damage to fill his Health track while under the Aegis Tilt, he does not bleed out or die; instead, after a minute, the damage in his last Health box downgrades to bashing damage, and he wakes. Recovering from injuries in this fashion ends the Aegis.

### *Mastermind (Bless ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Composure - plan's equipment bonus  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: until plan resolves

With her impressive analytic abilities, the Noble prepares a near-infallible plan for herself and her friends. Using this Charm requires at least an hour of studying the problem which the plan is meant to solve, and the Noble must take part in the planned endeavor.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's plan is disastrous. At a critical moment, one of the people following it suffers an automatic dramatic failure, ruining the plan and putting the group in peril.

**Failure:** The Noble prepares a plan that confers no magical benefit, and also carries the Fragile or Volatile Condition. [CofD 102]

**Success:** The Noble creates a plan, as if she had succeeded in the Build Equipment action. [CofD 101-102] In addition to the normal benefits of a plan, the characters following it may treat a failed roll made with its help as if they had rolled one success. This can be done once during the plan for each dot of the Noble's Acqua.

**Exceptional Success:** The plan is almost foolproof. Add 1 to the number of failed rolls that can be converted into successes.

## *Fists of Jade (Bless ●●●, Terra ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Occult  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble wraps a friend's hands in a holy aura that cuts the flesh of servants of Darkness.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target acquires the inflexibility of jade. All his Dexterity-based dice pools take a -1 penalty until the scene ends.

**Failure:** For a moment, the target feels spiritually cleansed.

**Success:** The target acquires the mystical purity of jade. His flesh has the same effects on [creatures of Darkness](#) that jade does until the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The Charm guides the target's hands. He also gains a +1 bonus when attacking a creature of Darkness.

### *Upgrade: Armed*

The target's holy aura spreads to his weapons. A weapon in his hands acts on Dark creatures as if made of jade. The aura comes from the target, not the weapon, so it fades from a weapon when he releases it; however, it lasts long enough for a thrown object or a bullet to hit its target.

### *Upgrade: Multiple*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Willpower

The Noble may give a jade aura to all the members of an organization in her presence, using the Commonalty modifier.

## *Charms of Enhancement (Bless ●●●, Invocation ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: varies by Charm  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

With the aid of one of the Radiant Queens, the Noble raises a person to heights of ability normally beyond them. Each Queen teaches a different version of this Charm, with her favored Invocation as a prerequisite; these versions must be learned as separate Charms. Each Charm of Enhancement affects its target in a parallel way:

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble blights the trait she meant to boost. The target takes the [Blighted](#) Condition, taking 1 dot from the Attribute the Noble chose.

**Failure:** The target is not enhanced.

**Success:** The target gains the [Enhanced](#) Condition: the Noble adds the activation successes, up to her dots in the prerequisite Invocation, to one of the target's Attributes. Any traits derived from that Attribute are recalculated. Each Charm can enhance the Noble's choice among three of the Attributes.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the normal effect, the target adds a +1 bonus to dice pools based on the enhanced Attribute.

No Charm of Enhancement can be used on a target currently affected by that Charm. Each Charm uses a different dice pool, and is limited to a different set of Attributes.

- **Drawn by the Moon (Acqua):** Roll Intelligence + Science; the Enhanced Condition raises one Mental Attribute.
- **Wind-Borne Grace (Aria):** Roll Presence + Expression; the Enhanced Condition raises one Finesse Attribute.
- **Stoke the Furnace (Fuoco):** Roll Strength + Persuasion; the Enhanced Condition raises one Power Attribute.
- **Forest Sanctuary (Legno):** Roll Stamina + Survival; the Enhanced Condition raises one Resistance Attribute.
- **Crown Jewels (Terra):** Roll Manipulation + Persuasion; the Enhanced Condition raises one Social Attribute.

### *Upgrade: Grand*

The Noble may add dots to all three of the Attributes that the Charm can enhance in a single activation. She distributes her successes across the Attributes; she still cannot add more than her dots in the prerequisite Invocation to any one Attribute.

## *Tendril of Nothing (Bless ●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation - target's Composure  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower, Sensitivity check at +2  
Duration: 1 scene

The void can seep into every mind. Give in, it says. Do not resist. Give up, and let your sorrows drown you.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble lets the void only into her own mind. She takes the Broken Condition [CofD 288]; if not resolved before then, the Condition expires at the next full moon.

**Failure:** The target is not affected by the Charm.

**Success:** The stillness of the void settles into the heart and mind of a foe. The target takes the [Blighted](#) Condition: he loses 1 dot from one of his Resistance Attributes for each success. The Charm cannot reduce any Attribute to less than 1, but it may reduce two or all three of Stamina, Resolve and Composure with 1 use. If the last box on the target's Health track fills with aggravated damage, the Charm ends just before he dies. When the Charm does end, the target's Attributes return to their normal values. The Charm may not be used on anyone currently affected by it.

**Exceptional Success:** The void terrifies the foe, showing him the foolishness of standing up to the Noble. In addition to the other effects, he takes the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 87].

## *Avenger's Might (Bless ●●●, Tempesta ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Resolve + Brawl  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 resistant lethal damage  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble binds fury into someone's flesh.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target's nerve fails when he faces battle. If violence starts during the scene, he takes the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 87].

**Failure:** The target fights normally.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, whenever the target takes a violent action, he reaches an exceptional success on three successes instead of five. Inflicting an injury obviously counts, but violence also includes destroying items, and most uses of the Intimidation Skill.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the other effects, the target gains a +1 bonus on all his violent acts.

### *Upgrade: Cooperative*

| Modified by [Commonalty](#)

The Noble may bind rage into all the members of an organization she can see, applying the Commonalty modifier.

## *Blessings Be Upon This House (Bless ●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 30 minutes/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#) + number of Blessings

Dice pool: Presence + Crafts

Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: Inner Light days

The Noble appeals to the Light to bless the place she stands in and the people who enter it, and dedicates time and sweat to make it both beautiful and inspiring. The Charm is invoked on an area where the Noble is working. If it succeeds, the area becomes a [Blessed place](#) for the duration of the Charm. The Noble must set both the boundaries of the area (and hence its Sanctuary rating) and the Blessings she wants it to grant before she starts working on the Charm.

Without upgrades, the Blessings open to the Noble are limited to Skills and Specialties she knows herself (and for Skills, only up to her dots in them), her own Virtue, and Calm. Each of the Radiant Queens has her own preferred variation of the Charm, learned as an upgrade tied to the Queen's Invocation.

If the Noble invokes the Charm on a [Consecrated](#) area, it automatically becomes tied to the Condition, and will last until the Condition ends. The Noble must apply the Charm to the whole of a Consecrated area to link it with the Condition in this way. The Charm cannot be used on any part of an area already under its effects. It also cannot be used on any area with active [Taint](#), and will end instantly if anywhere under its effects becomes Tainted.

### *Upgrade: Study (Acqua ●●●)*

The Noble prepares the area for use as a place of learning or study. She catalogs shelves of books, sets up laboratory equipment, or connects computers into a network. By applying Acqua to the Charm, she may create a Blessing that enhances a Mental Attribute, a Mental Skill beyond her own knowledge, or a two-Attribute roll in which one of the Attributes is Mental. She may also protect people from mental deterioration by creating the Integrity Blessing.

### *Upgrade: Carnival (Aria ●●●)*

The Noble makes the area welcoming for the clever, deft and cunning. She puts up tents for a carnival, or sews costumes and decorations for a haunted house. By applying Aria to the Charm, she may create a Blessing that enhances Wits, Dexterity or Manipulation, a two-Attribute roll based on one of those Attributes, or the Skills Computer, Crafts, Investigation, Larceny, Stealth, Streetwise or Subterfuge (beyond her own knowledge.) She may also protect people from the assaults of real magic by creating the Resistance Blessing.

### *Upgrade: Arena (Fuoco ●●●)*

The Noble prepares the area for competitions between the worthy and displays of excellence. By applying Fuoco to the Charm, she may create a Blessing that enhances Intelligence, Strength or Presence, a two-Attribute roll based on one of those Attributes, or the Skills Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Firearms, Weaponry, Expression or Persuasion (beyond her own knowledge.) She may also grant people greater determination by creating the Willpower Blessing.

## *Upgrade: Grove (Legno ●●●)*

The Noble cultivates the area into a tranquil garden. She takes the appropriate supplies (ie, plants, seeds, soil, water, etc.) and makes a grove that instills peace, confidence, and competence. (Most Nobles who take this upgrade follow the lead of Bonnie Getsuei and make serene Japanese-style gardens, with cherry blossoms constantly floating through the air, but that isn't required.) By applying Legno to the Charm, she may create a Blessing that enhances Resolve, Stamina or Composure, a two-Attribute roll based on one of those Attributes, or the Skills Crafts, Medicine, Survival, Animal Ken, Empathy or Socialize (beyond her own knowledge.) She may also speed recovery from all wounds by creating the Health Blessing.

## *Upgrade: Ballroom (Terra ●●●)*

The Noble prepares the area for a formal social occasion. She prepares the courses for a banquet, or sets up decorations and musical instruments for a dance. By applying Terra to the Charm, she may create a Blessing that enhances a Social Attribute, a Social Skill beyond her own knowledge, or a two-Attribute roll in which one of the Attributes is Social. She may also discourage people from breaking the peace of the occasion by creating the Defense Blessing.

## *Peaceable Kingdom (Bless ●●●●●, Legno ●●●●)*

**Avatar** (Clubs)

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Intelligence + Animal Ken

Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: 1 scene

The Queen of Clubs' avatar is guardian and teacher of the beasts. The Noble undergoes a second transformation on activating the Charm, assuming traits that suggest a large and powerful animal - typically a lion, though bear-like and eagle-like miens are known, and there are rumors of one Hopeful who evokes a dragon. The change always suggests a king or queen of beasts, and the peril and majesty of the natural world; any mortal seeing the Noble is somewhat shaken, and she gains +1 on all Intimidation rolls against them until the Charm ends.

However, the main effect of the Charm is on beasts who see it. Any natural animal that can perceive the Noble when she activates the Charm has its Intelligence raised by 1 dot, becoming sapient. Further, the animals affected gain instant fluency in her native language, and the Charm grants them the ability to speak it comprehensibly if they have any ability to vocalize at all. The Noble may use Social Skills on the animals as she would with mortals, and gains a bonus on such rolls equal to her activation successes. When the Charm ends, the animals return to their former non-sapient state. If the Noble uses the Charm twice on the same animal, it remembers everything that happened during the first use.

## *Sheltered by Her Hand (Bless ●●●●●, Lacrima ●●●●)*

**Avatar** (Tears)

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Resolve + Empathy, modified by **Commonalty**

Cost: 1 Wisp, 1 Willpower, Sensitivity check at +3

Duration: 1 scene

To preserve her city and her subjects is the first principle of the Queen of Tears, and those who incarnate her are able to guard their allies from all harm. A Noble uses this Charm to protect members of an organization she belongs to or has influence over - the subjects of Social Merits such as Status and Allies are eligible, and in a pinch the Connected Condition [CofD 288] will do.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble fails utterly to protect her allies, and is crushed. She suffers the effects of the Broken Condition [CofD 288] for the rest of the scene.



**Failure:** The Noble cannot protect her allies. The Charm fails.

**Success:** The Noble undergoes a second transformation that drains all the color from her body and Regalia. All members of the target group who can see this transformation feel a breath of cold pass over them, penetrating through all clothing for a moment. Until the Charm ends, the transformation expands and substantially modifies the Noble's Holy Shield. The Shield activates automatically whenever anyone affected by the Charm suffers an injury, spending as many Wisps as necessary to prevent as much damage as possible; while the Charm is active the Shield is not limited by the Noble's maximum Wisps per turn. She must pay the cost of the Shield in full when it activates. However, the Noble may draw Wisps for her Shield out of her surroundings, draining hope from the land to preserve her people. For each Wisp the Noble drains from her surroundings to power her Shield, the Storyteller rolls 1 die; the area gains 1 point of Taint, focused where the Noble stands, for each success on this roll.

While the transformation lasts the Noble is in enough danger to use Inner Strength, and trade her Willpower for Wisps. The Charm ends if the Noble runs out of Wisps and neither draws Wisps from her surroundings nor uses Inner Strength.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble touches the determination that has sustained the Queen of Tears in her mission. She gains +2 on Inner Strength rolls until the Charm ends.

**Drawback:** The Queen of Tears perpetually mourns for the lost Kingdom, and the sacrifices that must be made to sustain its remnant; her avatar bears the burden of her grief, and may be crushed by it. At the end of each turn in which the Noble's Holy Shield activated, the Princess must roll Resolve + Composure to resist the Queen's grief.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Queen's grief overbears the Noble; the Charm ends immediately, and the Noble collapses. She takes the Immobilized Tilt [CofD 284] until the scene ends.

**Failure:** The Noble's will falters. Future rolls to resist the Queen's grief take a -1 cumulative penalty.

**Success:** The Noble withstands the Queen's grief. Future rolls to resist it don't change.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble recovers lost ground; reduce the penalty on future rolls to resist by 1, to a minimum of -0.

## *Connect*

Connect Charms trace and use the connections between people, or make and break such connections. Only [Graces](#) have affinity for them.

### *All Together Now (Connect ●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 session

In the face of a crisis a Noble takes charge, with a few quick commands and a hastily tied knot in the web of interpersonal connections. If the Noble uses the Jury Rigging action [CofD 102-103] to unite bystanders into a temporary organization, she can activate this Charm to resolve the action as if she had built the organization normally.

### *Beginner's Luck (Connect ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Dexterity  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 roll

If a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing badly. When the Princess assists in an instant teamwork action, she may activate this Charm instead of rolling the relevant dice pool. Each success on the activation roll becomes a bonus die for the primary actor. The Princess can also use Beginner's Luck for 1 roll in an extended teamwork action. Any bonuses or penalties on the relevant dice pool also apply to the activation roll, and a dramatic failure penalizes the primary actor's roll as usual.

### *Upgrade: Enduring*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

When assisting in an extended teamwork action, all the Princess' rolls are Intelligence + Dexterity instead of the relevant dice pool.

### *Upgrade: Guided*

Do not apply penalties on the dice pool to the activation roll.

### *Upgrade: Twinned*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

When the Princess activates the Charm, she also rolls the relevant dice pool, and adds successes from both that roll and the Charm. The pools are separate; any bonuses and penalties apply to both.

## *Fair Welcome (Connect ●)*

| Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Socialize  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 day or 1 week

The Noble can strike up a conversation with nearly anyone she meets, and learn many things from an hour of polite talk.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes convinced that everyone she meets disapproves of her. She gains the **Nervous** Condition, lasting until she fails in or abandons a social maneuver.

**Failure:** The Noble gains no new acquaintances from the Charm.

**Success:** The Noble adds 1 dot to her Contacts, naming a group with members she can currently see for the new dot. She can gather information from that group for 1 day, following the normal rules for information from Contacts.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble can gather information from the group for 1 week.

### *Upgrade: Friendly*

| Modified by **Commonalty**  
Cost: +1 Wisp  
Duration: until resolved

The Noble may befriend a specific organization, applying the Commonalty modifier, when she knowingly meets one of its members. Succeeding with the Charm gives her the Connected Condition [CofD 288] with the targeted organization, instead of a Contacts dot.

## *Illuminatus (Connect ●)*

| **Favor** (Politics)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, the secrets of the wealthy and powerful in her community cannot be hidden from her.

### *Upgrade: Inspirational (Fuoco ●●)*

When an organization the Noble knows well is dispirited, she stirs up zeal for the cause. She may spend 1 Wisp after one scene or hour spent encouraging its members, to remove one level of the [Discontented](#) Condition from that organization.

### *Upgrade: Influential (Terra ●●)*

Organizations shift their policies when the Noble drops a word in the right ear. When beginning a social maneuver with an organization, she may spend 1 Wisp to open one Door without a roll.

### *Laying Down The Line (Connect ●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#)  
Dice pool: Resolve + Larceny  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: variable

A Noble is a creature of divisions; between Light and Dark, Transformed and mundane, Hope and despair. Drawing a line on the ground, she separates one area from another, and so becomes aware of anything that breaks that line. The Charm is used on an area with a boundary - natural (c.f. a stream), legal (c.f. a property line), spiritual (c.f. Consecrated ground) or just marked out for the purpose (c.f. a chalk line, string run along posts). The boundary must, however, be physically marked in some way, and the Noble must walk its whole length while activating the Charm.

The Charm has a special duration. On a boundary marked out so the Charm can be used on it, it lasts one scene. If used on an existing boundary, the duration is increased to one day. If used on the edge of Consecrated ground the Charm lasts as long as the [Consecrated](#) Condition does. Also, if the physical mark showing the boundary is destroyed at any point along the boundary the Charm ends.

When the Noble reaches the threshold, until the Charm ends she knows reflexively whenever an unauthorized person is trespassing in the protected area, no matter where she might be at the time. She will also know when the Charm ends, and why. Who is authorized to enter the area depends on the local laws; the Noble will not notice the entry of the area's owner, or of police with a search warrant.

### *Upgrade: Illuminated*

Cost: +1 Wisp

Reaching out, the Noble sketches the bounded area in her mind, painting the delineation in liquid light. She does not require a physical mark for the boundary, and destroying a boundary mark (if present) does not end the Charm. However, the boundary is, to transformed Princesses, creatures of the Darkness, and any being that can see magic, a glowing line, thus telling them that there is something supernatural going on.

### *Upgrade: Unnatural*

The Noble calls on a higher law when she walks the bounds. She may redefine who is authorized to set foot within the protected area, excluding any character who fulfills one of these conditions: a supernatural being (as in, not a mundane human); a Light-touched character; or a creature of the Darkness. The Noble may choose only one of these - she cannot set a boundary to warn her when Light-touched and Dark creatures cross it.

An area protected by an Unnatural boundary will not alert the Noble to intrusions that violate local laws. However, an area can be protected by multiple instances of this Charm, as long as each instance detects a different group. Using the Charm on an area already enclosed, wholly or partly, takes a -1 penalty for each instance already in effect.

### *Upgrade: Sheltered (Lacrima ●)*

| Requires Unnatural

The subjects of the Queen of Tears often want to be warned of the approach of her ancient enemy. The Noble can set the area to warn her when a follower of Storms is in it: Nobles, Sworn, [Stormwracked](#) and [Goalenu](#).

### *Upgrade: Righteous (Tempesta ●)*

| Requires Unnatural

The soldiers of the Seraphic General often want to be warned of the approach of her ancient enemy. The Noble can set the area to warn her when a follower of Tears is in it: Nobles, Sworn, and citizens of [Alhambra](#).

### *The Naked City (Connect ●)*

| [Favor](#) (Streetwise)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she easily evades the nets and snares laid by the authorities, and those who live outside the law know her for a friend.

### *Upgrade: Bargaining (Aria ●●)*

If the Noble needs something that can't be bought openly, a touch of magic leads her to the right dealer. When she wants to procure illegal equipment or services [CofD 277-279] she may spend 1 Wisp to reduce the time needed to find what she wants; one week is cut to one day, one day to one hour.

### *Upgrade: Listening (Terra ●●)*

There are eight million stories in the naked city, and the Noble can hear them all. When she uses Streetwise to find information, she may spend 1 Wisp to reroll her dice pool after seeing the results, though she must keep the second roll. During an investigation, if the Noble uses Streetwise to uncover a Clue [CofD 79] she may spend 1 Wisp to add an extra element to the Clue.

### *Open Heart (Connect ●)*

| [Favor](#) (Empathy)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she radiates kindness and trustworthiness; those she meets take her as a natural confidant.

### *Upgrade: Distant (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble's knowledge of people allows her to predict their actions while they are absent. She may use Empathy to extrapolate what someone known to her is doing or has done while out of her sight, as an instant action. She takes a Sympathy penalty on this roll, and may apply Acqua to it. The Storyteller gives the Noble's player one clue to her target's behavior for each success.

### *Upgrade: Startling (Aria ●●)*

The Noble easily sees when people are on the edge of violence. She may use Empathy to read the emotions of all the people around her as an instant action, and may apply Aria to the roll; if she succeeds, and anyone

present starts a fight, she adds her successes to her Initiative. The Noble can't do this after a fight starts - she needs a few moments of calm to look for signs.

### *Upgrade: Deep (Terra ●●)*

The Noble can read people's desires, hopes and fears as easily as most people can read faces. When she uses Empathy to understand a person, she may apply Terra and spend a Wisp to turn her successes on the roll into bonus dice for all Persuasion attempts on that person for the rest of the scene.

### *Mercury's Blessing (Connect ●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Expression  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

With a touch of the hand and a look in the eye, the Noble may converse with anyone in the world. She touches her target to activate the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's speech and writing become incoherent. She takes the [Stumbling](#) Condition, applied to a Social Skill other than Animal Ken or Empathy, and lasting for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns no new language from the Charm.

**Success:** The Noble acquires a basic understanding of the target's native language until the Charm ends, as if she had a dot in the Multilingual Merit for it [CofD 46].

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess speaks her new language felicitously, charming her audience. She gains a +1 bonus to Expression dice pools when speaking the target's native language.

Mercury's Blessing may be used more than once in a scene, but only to acquire more languages; the Charm does not improve fluency with languages a Princess already knows.

### *Upgrade: Fluent*

On a successful activation, the Noble becomes fully fluent in the target's language, as if she had the Language Merit [CofD 45] for it. She may use the Charm to increase her fluency in languages she knows from the Multilingual Merit.

### *Upgrade: Lasting*

Cost: +1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 day

The Noble's magical fluency persists for a full day from the moment she gained it.

### *Upgrade: Literate (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble can converse with the absent, if they have left a record of their thoughts. She may apply the Charm to a written text in a language she doesn't know; if successful, she understands the language that text is written in until the Charm ends. Audio recordings are also valid targets for the Charm. The Noble must read a text or listen to a recording to use the Charm on it.

### *Upgrade: Overflowing (Acqua ●●)*

If a person speaks more than one language, the Noble can learn them all. For each success rolled, up to her Acqua, the Noble gains a basic understanding of one language her target knows and she does not. If she doesn't

she speaks the target's native language, she must learn that one. If the target has both the Language and Multilingual Merits, she learns the languages from Language before those from Multilingual. If she applies Fluent, she becomes as fluent in all the languages she learns as the target is.

### *Upgrade: Teaching (Acqua ●●●)*

The Noble can use the Charm in reverse, granting her target the ability to speak a language she knows.

### *Cherish (Connect ●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Occult - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: indefinite

A person she's met, a place she's been - these fix themselves in a Princess's heart, to be recalled later. The Noble uses this Charm on a target within sight, to grant herself temporary sympathy to it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble cannot use any Charm through a sympathetic connection to the target until she sees it again.

**Failure:** The Charm has no effect.

**Success:** The Noble gains the [Cherishing](#) Condition in its standard form with respect to the target, improving her sympathetic connection by one step for each activation success (to a minimum of Sensory.)

**Exceptional Success:** The connection lasts for several Charms, though it frays each time the Noble uses it. The Noble gains the strong form of the Cherishing Condition.

### *The Right Word (Connect ●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble can read the hearts of those she meets, discovering what they most desire and what she can do to help them reach it. At the start of a social maneuver with a person, the Noble may activate this Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble is led to believe the target has an Aspiration which is, in fact, repugnant to him. If she offers to help him achieve the spurious goal, add one Door to her social maneuver and lower the impression by one step.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target's desires. The social maneuver proceeds normally.

**Success:** The Noble learns one of the target's current Aspirations in the course of her first attempt to open a Door. She may appeal to that Aspiration after the first attempt resolves, whether it succeeds or fails. If the target has a [Vocation](#), or any other trait similar to Aspirations, the Noble can discover it instead of an Aspiration.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble learns two of the target's Aspirations (or Vocations, or similar traits) as she tries to open her first Door.

### *Upgrade: Convincing*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble knows just how to appeal to her target's wishes. When she appeals to an Aspiration revealed by the Charm during the social maneuver she used it, she opens two Doors instead of one.

## *Upgrade: Collective*

| Modified by [Commonalty](#)

The Noble can discover Aspirations of an [organization](#) when she begins a social maneuver on it. Her roll to activate takes the Commonalty penalty for the organization's officers.

## *Upgrade: Charismatic (Fuoco ●●)*

| Requires Convincing  
Cost: +1 Willpower

A Hero's charisma sweeps those she meets into her wake. After she appeals to an Aspiration revealed by the Charm during the social maneuver she used it, the Noble may reduce the penalty for forcing the remaining Doors by her Fuoco, to a minimum of -0.

## *Upgrade: Amicable (Terra ●●)*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

By offering aid, the Noble establishes herself as trustworthy. After she appeals to an Aspiration revealed by the Charm during the social maneuver she used it, the Noble improves her impression by one step as well as opening a Door.

## *You're Only in Trouble if you Get Caught (Connect ●●, Aria ●●●)*

| Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Composure  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

Sometimes, one must learn to lose, to give up, and, to put it bluntly, to run away. By using magic taught by the Queen of Thieves a Knave may escape from her past, and those who would use it to track her down with magic. Each activation success reduces the Noble's sympathetic connection to a chosen subject by one degree. If she gets enough successes to reduce a connection to Unknown, she breaks it altogether.

In addition, the Charm counteracts any hostile attempt to alter the Noble's emotional state (such as certain fear-causing Caligines, the Vampire Disciples of Majesty and Nightmare, and certain applications of the Mind Arcanum, to name but a few). If more successes are rolled on the activation of the Charm than the hostile power, it is rendered ineffectual.

## *Upgrade: Partners in Crime (Aria ●●●●)*

| Cost: + 1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on a person she can speak to. The target must give their consent for such a thing to occur, although it need not be knowing; they can express a desire to no longer be scared by a childhood memory, if only in passing.

## *Upgrade: Band of Thieves (Aria ●●●●●)*

| Requires Partners in Crime  
Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: + 2 Wisps

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization who can hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier. Only those members who consent to the change are affected.

## *Love Conquers All (Connect ●●, Fuoco ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Empathy, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

When two people who love each other are together, there is very little that can stand in their way. But lovers can't be together all the time, and of course many will face hardships without their beloved to help them. To a Princess, this distance doesn't matter. She knows she's never alone and has her beloved to help her.

Before rolling to activate the Charm, the Noble chooses a dice pool: either an Attribute and Skill, or a pair of Attributes. The Charm may not be used when the Noble is under its effects.

**Dramatic Failure:** Thinking of the beloved distracts the Noble and hinders her in her tasks. She takes a -2 penalty whenever she uses the dice pool she meant to enhance for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The beloved is spiritually present, but can't help.

**Success:** The beloved sends aid to the Noble through their sympathetic link. The Noble gains the [Blessed Condition](#), with 2 banked dice for each activation success. These dice may be added to actions using the chosen dice pool. The Condition ends, taking any unused dice with it, at the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble chooses a second dice pool; dice from the Blessed Condition may be added to actions that use either pool.

## *Upgrade: Mutual (Fuoco ●●●)*

The Noble's beloved can get whatever help he needs, all he needs to do is ask. Both the Noble and her beloved may use the dice from the Blessed Condition.

## *Beast Speaker (Connect ●●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Animal Ken  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can speak to any animal, and understand its replies.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble cannot understand the targeted animal; all Animal Ken rolls involving it are reduced to a chance die for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The animal does not understand the Noble, and behaves as it normally would.

**Success:** The animal, and any other animal of the same species, understands what the Noble says to it, and will answer questions to the best of its ability, until the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The animal is well-disposed towards the Noble - it will volunteer information and is easily persuaded to help her out. Her rolls to influence the animal gain a +2 bonus until the Charm ends.

## *Ivory Gate (Connect ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Socialize  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 night's sleep



The Noble binds her mind to another; when they next fall asleep they will share their dreams. The Charm grants both the gift of lucid dreaming for the night and clear memories the morning after. To open an Ivory Gate a Princess needs permission from the target, and the pair must sleep close enough to touch.

Once open, an Ivory Gate allows the dreamers to share a journey through [Crawlspace](#). The dreamer with the better impression level leads the journey, and the Doors are set from her traits. Either dreamer may open Doors by herself, or the dreamers may use teamwork actions to do so. If the dreamers don't make it through Crawlspace before one wakes up, either may resume the journey the next night, but travel separately unless the Princess uses Ivory Gate again.

Another, fairly obscure, use of an Ivory Gate is to invoke it on oneself. This might seem a waste of good Wisps, but it's useful when the Charm is made into a Bequest, for then it lets a Beacon or Sworn travel in the Dreamlands whenever they wish to. Also, while a Princess is within her own Crawlspace and under the effects of a self-applied invocation of Ivory Gate, she will be able to navigate from her Crawlspace into a regular dream (and yes, she can bring others too but they don't benefit from lucidity or clear memories unless Ivory Gate is invoked upon them). An expensive but effective cure for insomnia.

### *Upgrade: Distant*

| Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble opens an Ivory Gate from afar, applying the Sympathy modifier. The next time both she and the target are asleep at the same time, both will dream of being together in the target's current location, looking for a Crawlspace entrance. The Noble must have prior permission from the target to use the Charm.

### *Upgrade: Horn Gate (Specchio ●●)*

The Noble calls the soul of an unsuspecting dreamer, and creates a gate into his dream without his consent. To apply Horn Gate the Noble must be in the Dreamlands. The Charm creates a Crawlspace passage for the target to her current location, with Doors set from the target's traits. Both the Noble and the target may open Doors as usual, though they can't use teamwork; both start with an excellent impression. Once the Crawlspace is open, the Noble and any Dreamlander who happens along (such as [Amanojaku](#) looking for a host) can walk freely into the target's dreaming mind, and the target can go - or be taken - to the Dreamlands. Note that unless the Noble applies Distant her physical body still needs to be next to her target.

### *Whispers from Afar (Connect ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Socialize, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

What need is there of speech between you and those you love? The Noble uses this Charm to communicate with another person; if he is not present, the Sympathy modifier applies. If the target has Wisps, he can share the activation cost; both the Noble and the target spend 1 Wisp, and the target does so reflexively.

**Dramatic Failure:** For the duration, the Noble imagines the voice of her target is speaking to her; what it says is what she generally expects him to say, but it chooses the most distracting moments to speak. She takes a -2 penalty on all Wits-based rolls.

**Failure:** The Charm has no effect.

**Success:** The Noble can speak directly to the mind of her target, without using her voice, and the target can reply the same way. The Charm conveys only sounds that the Noble and the target could actually speak; so, for example, if one thinks in a language the other doesn't know, he hears the words but cannot understand them. On the other hand, anything said is heard as clearly as if the two of them stood together in a quiet room. The first time someone is the target of this Charm, he must roll Resolve + Composure to learn how to speak through the link (and, possibly, to persuade himself that he isn't imagining the voice in his head.)

**Exceptional Success:** In addition, by concentrating the Noble and the target can share a memory. The one who has the memory makes a memory roll [CofD 30] to recall it; whatever she recalls passes over the link, and the other makes a memory roll to retain the information. This takes an instant action from both characters.

### *Upgrade: Party*

| Cost: 1 Wisp/person

The Noble creates a channel of voiceless speech among several people. She can speak to any or all of the targets' minds, and they can speak to her and each other in the same way. A target who has Wisps can pay her part of the cost.

### *Upgrade: Borrowing (Aria ●●)*

The Charm's link between minds carries sensations. Anyone in the link can make a Perception roll at a -2 penalty to borrow the senses of another person in the link for a brief moment, seeing what the other sees and hearing what she hears in that moment.

### *Up in Smoke (Connect ●●●, Aria ●●●)*

| Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Larceny, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble summons and banishes objects in puffs of colored smoke. She can move an object of Size up to her successes between her current location and a place she knows of; the Sympathy modifier applies to the other place, not to the object, so she can't summon an object that's been moved since she last saw it. Also, to send an object somewhere the Noble has to be carrying it, and when she takes an object it ends up in her hands; the Charm can't be used on anything the Noble can't lift.

### *Upgrade: Shuffled*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble can take an object from one distant place and send it to another with one activation. Apply the worse of the Sympathy modifiers for the two locations.

### *Upgrade: Treasured (Aria ●●●●)*

The Noble can summon an object to herself, no matter where it has been moved; apply the Sympathy modifier for the object itself. She still cannot send objects to another place without a connection to the place.

### *Hymn to Orpheus (Connect ●●●, Legno ●●)*

| Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Expression - targets' Composure  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: concentration

In the myths, the songs of Orpheus were so beautiful that all the natural world came to hear them. The Noble can, in a small way, emulate him. When she has a natural animal within sight, she sings or plays music pleasing to it, and all the animals of the same species who hear the song gather together to listen. The Charm ensures that

the music can be heard anywhere within 100 times her successes in yards; natural acoustics may carry the song further, at the Storyteller's discretion. (Note that while only animals of the same kind as the target are certain to come, anyone and anything with ears *can* follow the music if they like.) Once they arrive, the summoned animals will stand or lie near the Noble, quietly listening, as long as she performs; when she stops, the Charm ends and the beasts revert to their normal behavior in the following turn.

### *Upgrade: Calling (Legno ●●●)*

| Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble may perform for an animal that is not within sight, provided she knows it well. Apply the Sympathy modifier to the chosen target; animals of that species will come to hear her.

### *Ferryman's Shroud (Connect ●●●, Lacrima ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Composure + Athletics  
Cost: 2 Wisps, Sensitivity check  
Duration: lasting

The Queen of Tears has granted the Noble the freedom of her city. To use this Charm, the Noble must be in complete darkness; light bright enough to see by, from any source, makes the Charm fail.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble touches the Dark World through her magic instead of Alhambra. The Sensitivity check for the Charm adds 2 dice, and the Noble cannot use the Charm again for one full day.

**Failure:** The Noble stays where she is.

**Success:** The darkness the Noble stands in thickens to an utter negation of light for an instant; then the ground vanishes and she falls, splashing into the black salt lake of [Alhambra](#). The Charm is generally considerate enough to drop her near a shore, where she can reach dry land in a single turn. It doesn't, however, have to leave her in a specific place within the city; she may have to walk an hour or two to reach the district she wanted.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble appears in Alhambra, at the nearest shore to the place she wants to be.

The Charm will not take anyone *back* from Alhambra - the Queen of Tears does not wish anyone to leave her who has not proven their fidelity to the true Kingdom.

As an incidental benefit, those who learn this Charm can light lamps in Alhambra as its citizens do.

### *Upgrade: Driven*

| Cost: +1 Wisp/every 5 points of Size above 5

The Noble can drive a vehicle into Alhambra, carrying along all its contents. She takes a penalty on the activation roll of -2 for 5 points of the vehicle's Size exceeding 5; that is, a Size 10 vehicle takes a -2 penalty, a Size 15 vehicle takes -4, and so on. As with the basic effect, the vehicle must be in darkness to travel, and will arrive over water; most Hopeful using this Charm travel in boats.

### *Upgrade: Returning (Lacrima ●●●)*

| Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble may use the Charm to travel from Alhambra to a place she knows well; apply the Sympathy modifier for the destination. As with the basic Charm, the upgrade only works in complete darkness (and in Alhambra that carries risk; see the rules in that section.) On the other hand, activating the Charm to leave Alhambra never triggers a Sensitivity check.

## *The Nick of Time (Connect ●●●●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Persuasion  
Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

When all seems lost, the Noble reaches across time to send out a call for aid, and bends fate to guide her allies swiftly to her side.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble feels a sudden crushing sense of abandonment. She must make a compromise roll, at a -3 penalty.

**Failure:** The Noble cannot reach any of her friends.

**Success:** The Noble may use any of her Social Merits that represent her relationships with other people to call for help with her current troubles, even if it's physically impossible for her to reach them - distance, lack of a phone, and imprisonment are no obstacle to her need. Messages from her travel back in time, if necessary, to find her friends and allies, and fate ensures that anyone she calls will reach her with aid before the current scene ends. These magically supported calls count as normal uses of the Merits for the current session; if the Noble has used up her favors from an Allies Merit, for example, the Charm won't give her more.

Furthermore, the Noble can reach out to NPCs she has encountered before during the campaign who were well-disposed to her and, if the Storyteller agrees, declare that they have been guided by fate to a place where they can and will help her out during the current scene. That warrior lodge of Darkspawn hunters the Noble met in the uncharted heart of the Amazon rainforest? Turns out they knew an international secret society of monster hunters who can arrange transportation and they'll show up in the heart of London ready to fight. The chef she saved from bankruptcy? Well an army marches on its stomach. The Charm cannot do the impossible, but it is very powerful magic and can accomplish the improbable.

The extent of the help that previously encountered NPCs are ready to provide is limited; they count as a single temporary Allies Merit with a rating equal to the Noble's activation successes. The Merit vanishes at the end of the session, whether used or not.

**Exceptional Success:** The extra successes are their own reward.

## *Mirror Walk (Connect ●●●●, Specchio ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Athletics, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 3 Wisps  
Duration: lasting

A simple trick but a very useful one. The Noble targets two mirrors before stepping into one and out the other. Both mirrors must be large enough for her to fit through. Sympathy is measured to the mirror she will step out of.

The Charm *cannot* cross between realms. This may not be used to gain either egress or entrance to Alhambra, nor may it be used to exit or leave the *hisil* of the shapeshifters, the twisted thorn-world of the fae-folk, or any other such hidden place. However, should a Princess find herself in any of these alternate worlds, it may be used for transit within them.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble enters the mirror, but gets lost. She rolls Wits + Composure each turn after using the Charm; when she succeeds, she emerges from the mirror she left.

**Failure:** Nothing happens.

**Success:** The Noble transports herself to the target mirror.

**Exceptional Success:** When the Noble emerges, she may immediately move up to her Speed, even if she had to move to reach the mirror she left.

## *Upgrade: Leading*

| Cost: +1 Wisp per additional person

The Noble can now lead others through mirrors. Each extra person or 5 Size points of equipment costs an additional Wisp.

## *Upgrade: Searching (Specchio ●●●)*

| Cost: +1 Willpower

The Noble can use a sympathetic connection to a person, place or object to find a mirror near them, then step out of that mirror, applying the Sympathy modifier for the connection. She arrives at the nearest mirror to the target that's large enough to pass through, if there is one within (Inner Light x50) yards; if there isn't the Charm fails.

## *Upgrade: Umbral (Specchio ●●●●)*

Everything within a Tainted area gains a double in the Dark World, if it's left in place long enough; in one sense, the Dark World is itself a mirror. A mistress of the magic of reflections can find mirrors inside that world-spanning mirror. If a mirror has been left within a [Tainted area](#) for at least a day, and is large enough to be a valid target for the Charm, the Noble may use it to pass to the equivalent point in the Tainted area's image in the Dark World, or vice versa. The first activation of the Charm for this purpose on any given mirror takes a Sympathy penalty of Described, as the Noble has never seen the actual mirror she's going to. The Charm will not take a Princess to or from any part of the Dark World but the image of the area the target mirror is in.

## *Charms of Entwined Destiny (Connect ●●●●, Invocation ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 30 minutes/roll, threshold = Noble's Willpower  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Occult, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 month

In a lengthy ceremony, invoking all she knows of him, the Princess weaves the thread of her fate into another's, becoming an exemplar in his life of one of the Radiant Queens. Each Queen teaches a different version of this Charm, with her favored Invocation as a prerequisite; these versions must be learned as separate Charms.

When she reaches the threshold, the Noble gains a form of the [Entwined Destiny](#) Merit with the target until the Charm ends, with all the benefits and drawbacks of that Merit. The five versions of the Charm each confer a different form of Entwined Destiny:

- **Better Living Through Education (Acqua):** Mentor. The Noble gains Willpower when she has taught the target something important, and reaches a breaking point if she passes up an opportunity to educate.
- **Manic Pixie Dust (Aria):** Gadfly. The Noble gains Willpower when she exposes the target to unusual situations (for him) or alters the pattern of his life in a benign fashion, and reaches a breaking point if she ignores a chance to do so. Doing the target permanent harm does *not* fall under the Destiny.
- **Red String of Fate (Fuoco):** Lover. The Noble gains Willpower when she has furthered the target's love for her, and reaches a breaking point if she misses a chance to do so. The love in question need not be erotic or marital, but it must involve mutual affection and trust.
- **Under Ursa's Star (Legno):** Guardian. The Noble gains Willpower when she rescues the target from harm, and reaches a breaking point if he is harmed when she is present.
- **Great Expectations (Terra):** Sponsor. The Noble gains Willpower when her target's social standing improves, and reaches a breaking point if she lets a chance to help him rise go by.

Conditions gained from failed rolls should complicate the Noble's relations with the target. If the Noble fails to activate the Charm, she cannot use it on the target again for 1 week.

## *Upgrade: Proxy Invocation (●●●●)*

The Noble can weave the thread of another person's life. The threshold for doing so is the Willpower of the person being given an Entwined Destiny, and the Sympathy modifier is either the Noble's connection to that person, or to the Destiny's subject, whichever is worse. If the person being given a Destiny is not willing to accept the role the Charm gives him, the Charm fails.

## *Upgrade: Taut*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The thread that ties the Noble to her target pulls them together. The Noble and her target are linked by an intimate sympathetic connection, regardless of the connection they had before. Their original level of Sympathy returns when the Charm ends.

## *The Old Allegiance (Connect ●●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

| Action: Extended, 30 minutes/roll, threshold = target's Willpower  
Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 month

It is right and proper, the Last Empress teaches, for the Nobility to reward those who serve the Light, and punish those who refuse to serve. In a lengthy ceremony, invoking all she knows of him, the Noble weaves the thread of another person's fate, calling him to assist her in her labors.

When the Noble reaches the threshold, the target's fate makes him a loyal servant of her Nation, if she has one, until the Charm ends. In a fashion similar to the [Entwined Destiny](#) Merit, the target gains Willpower when his actions serve the Nation's interests, and reaches a breaking point when he flouts them to serve another goal. When the Noble does not have a Nation, the target's destiny instead pushes him to serve Alhambra and the Queen of Tears; he gains Willpower when his actions further Alhambra's survival and reaches a breaking point when he could have helped the Last Empress but declines to do so.

Unlike the Radiant Queens' Charms of Entwined Destiny, it is perfectly possible to use The Old Allegiance on an unwilling target. It is however a compromise to do so, with a -3 penalty to the roll. Further breaking point rolls may be called for if the Noble takes advantage of people she has woven a destiny for. As a general rule, it doesn't count as consent if they're only saying it as a result of an artificial destiny.

## *Upgrade: Collective (Lacrima ●●●●)*

| Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Willpower

The Noble may bind many members of an organization to her goals at once. When she reaches the threshold, all the members of the target organization who see her are affected. The Charm is modified by Commonalty of the target organization, instead of by Sympathy; the threshold is the highest Willpower of those present who can be affected.

## *Ultimate Fidelity (Connect ●●●●, Tempesta ●●●)*

| Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = 11 - Belief  
Dice pool: Resolve + Occult  
Cost: 1 Willpower dot  
Duration: indefinite

The original Sworn Guard and the One-Who-Became-Storms swore this oath when they stood before the gates of the last city of the Kingdom, alone against the hordes of the Darkness. And they retain it. The Alhambrans

know nothing of it; why would those treacherous curs know anything about loyalty or devotion? This was an oath of the Army of the Kingdom, not the soft weaklings who betrayed it from within. Outside observers suspect that the Goalenu Ban may have evolved from this Charm, baked into their very essence by their death in its service.

When using the Charm, the Noble chooses one of her Aspirations to elevate into her Cause. The Aspiration must not be a trivial or simple goal; for example, “Kill the six-fingered man who killed my father” is a valid target, while “Buy some milk from the shops” is almost certainly not. The Noble repeats her Aspiration over and over again, drumming the words until they become all-consuming. The Charm is complete when the scars blossom across her chest, spelling out the Cause for all who would see. The Noble gains an [Entwined Destiny](#) Merit aimed at advancing the Cause; finding a list of men with six fingers, finding which one he is, finding where he lives, watching his routines, breaking into his house, and attacking him would all be actions which would benefit from this. In addition, the Noble cannot be dissuaded; she doubles her appropriate Resistance Attribute against any attempts, whether mundane or supernatural, to prevent her from fulfilling the Cause. This covers things like torture, which would double Stamina, just as much as Composure might be used against magical mind-control or mundane persuasions.

However, the Cause consumes those who have willingly sworn it. When faced with a choice between advancing or fulfilling the Cause, or taking another action, the Noble rolls Resolve + Composure. If she fails, she may perform the other action; otherwise she must continue with the Cause, and ignore the other situation, even if it would seem to be more important to an objective observer. This obsession replaces the normal drawback of the Merit; the Noble doesn’t suffer a penalty to her actions if she does manage to set the Cause aside.

Once the Cause has been accomplished, the Noble regains the Willpower dot lost when swearing to it. If it becomes impossible to attain the Cause for any reason (say, the six-fingered man dies before they can get their revenge), not only does she not regain the Willpower dot, she must roll Resolve + Composure, with each success inflicting one point of resistant aggravated damage, as her soul tears itself apart in coruscating flames that erupt from her mouth and burn at the tongue that swore an oath it could not uphold.

### *Upgrade: Proxy (Tempesta ●●●●)*

Cost: 2 Wisps from the Noble, 1 Willpower dot from the target

The Noble may use the Charm to seal another person to a Cause. The target is affected as if he had cast it himself.

### *Standing on a Pedestal (Connect ●●●●, Specchio ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 30 minutes/roll, threshold = target’s Willpower

Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion, modified by [Sympathy](#)

Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: 1 month

In a lengthy ceremony, invoking all she knows of him, the Noble weaves the thread of another person’s fate into hers, giving him opportunities to prove himself worthy of her.

When she reaches the threshold, the target gains the [Entwined Destiny](#) Merit with her until the Charm ends, with all the benefits and drawbacks of that Merit. The target’s Entwined Destiny makes him a seeker for the Noble’s approval; she can choose what kind of favor he is destined to seek. He may be a romantic suitor, and fulfill the destiny when he earns a sign of her affections. He may seek her social favor, and fulfill the destiny when she compliments him on his apparel, or invites him to a party. He may even seek her intellectual favor, and fulfill the destiny when she publicly approves of an idea he had. The general rule is that the target gains Willpower when the Noble chooses to bestow a sign of her approval upon him, and reaches a breaking point when he refuses an opportunity to seek the Noble’s favor. He does not suffer when he makes a genuine attempt, regardless of how the Noble reacts.

Unlike the Radiant Queens’ Charms of Entwined Destiny, it is perfectly possible to use Standing on a Pedestal on an unwilling target. It is however a compromise to do so, with a -3 penalty to the roll. (It is not a compromise to use the Charm on targets who already desire the Noble’s favor.) Further breaking point rolls



may be called for if the Noble takes advantage of people she has woven a destiny for. As a general rule, it doesn't count as consent if they're only saying it as a result of an artificial destiny.

### *Upgrade: Collective (Specchia ●●●●)*

| Cost: +1 Willpower

The Noble may bind many favor-seekers to herself at once, if they are all present; the Charm is modified by Commonalty of the target group, instead of by Sympathy.

### *Upgrade: Taut*

| Modified by **Commonalty**

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The thread that ties the Noble to her target pulls them together. The Noble and her target are linked by an intimate sympathetic connection, regardless of the connection they had before. Their original level of Sympathy returns when the Charm ends.

If the Noble applies Collective and Taut, she becomes a member of the target group for the purposes of Commonalty Charms, instead of improving her Sympathy with any of them.

## *All the World's a Stage (Connect ●●●●●, Aria ●●●●)*

| **Avatar** (Spades)

| Action: Instant

| Dice pool: Manipulation + Expression

| Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower

| Duration: 1 scene

The Queen of Spades' avatar is a subtle spirit, influencing the actors on the stage without being an actor herself; the stage manager isn't part of the play, after all, even if she makes it all happen. If all the world's a stage, then no one should notice the theatre's manager, right?

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble thinks the Charm worked. Initially she takes the Insensate Tilt [CofD 285] and spends her time giggling to herself; if brought out of that, she replaces it with the Drugged Tilt [CofD 281] as if under a generic narcotic. Both Tilts expire when the scene ends, returning her to sobriety.

**Failure:** A gust from nowhere swirls around the Noble, leaving her disheveled.

In a scintillating gust, the Noble's body dissolves, flaking away into the air with a soft chuckle. Blue and white streamers track the motion of her wind-body, weaving in and out in the breeze with a soft radiance which glows brighter the faster she moves. If she is still, she's almost invisible, only noticeable by the chill feel of the air and the breeze that stirs the area. While in this state, the following abilities and changes to the Noble's status apply:

- She is in the state of Twilight, and may not be harmed by anything which cannot reach into this realm.
- Likewise, she cannot interact with the mortal world, except by using a Charm or a power that normally allows touching things in Twilight.
- While stationary, she is almost completely invisible (-5 to Perception rolls to notice her). When she moves, others may make an unmodified Perception roll to notice her, and if she runs, they add her Inner Light to that roll; but she cannot be identified.

**Success:** However, these benefits are secondary to the main purpose of the Charm. Until the Charm ends, the Noble has a pool of floating bonuses available to her, which can store one bonus for each dot of her Aria. This pool begins empty, and as an instant action, the Noble may roll a dice pool of any Finesse Attribute + Aria and keep the result as a bonus. She can apply stored bonuses reflexively to any action undertaken by someone she can see, either adding or subtracting dice as she pleases; once applied, a bonus is used up.



The Noble resolidifies when the Charm expires, and any unspent bonuses are lost.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may store two extra bonuses in her pool.

## *Fight*

The Fight Charms enhance a Princess' ability to fight. Only [Champions](#) have affinity for them.

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### *Fighting Styles*

Just because a Princess is firing rainbows from a cheerleading baton doesn't mean she can't benefit from a few days training down at the firing range. Nobles can use the Fighting Merits, including the Fighting Styles, with their Regalia weapons, and mix the maneuvers of Empty Hands with Merits that expand unarmed fighting. Weapons must be compatible with a Fighting Style - for example, Light Weapons [CofD 63] requires a weapon with Damage 2 or less, so a Kensai weapon upgraded to Damage 3 can't be used with that Style.

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## *Empty Hands (Fight ●)*

### [Regalia](#)

Action: Permanent

Many of the Hopeful have weapons in their Regalia, but some prefer to fight barehanded. A pair of fighting gloves, hand wrappings, or bracers becomes part of the Noble's Regalia. The Regalia bonus may add extra successes equal to her dots in the applied Invocation to an unarmed attack [CofD 89-90], or the same number of extra dice, but not both on the same attack.

### *Upgrade: Binding*

The Regalia piece takes the form of spools of ribbon, reels of fishing line or stretching cords. When the Noble uses Restrain during a grapple, she may tie up her opponent with Regalia cords, which have the normal Durability of her Regalia, and leave the grapple.

### *Upgrade: Crushing*

The Noble's fists swing like hammers, and her grip crushes like a vise. She may choose to do either lethal or bashing damage with her unarmed strikes and Damage moves in grapples.

### *Upgrade: Locking (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble knows how to put opponents out of action quickly. When she applies Acqua to a grappling roll and wins the contest, she may use Hold and Restrain as a single maneuver.

### *Upgrade: Disarming (Aria ●●)*

While grappling, the Noble can maneuver objects on her person or her opponent's with startling speed. When she applies Aria and wins the contest, she may use Control Weapon and either Damage or Disarm as a single maneuver.

### *Upgrade: Blistering (Fuoco ●●)*

During a grapple, the Noble's skin and clothes grow hot to the touch. In each turn that she applies Fuoco, her opponent automatically takes 1 bashing damage, in addition to any results of maneuvers that turn.

### *Upgrade: Entrancing (Legno ●●)*

The Noble's opponents, if once they touch her, find it strangely hard to do anything that would really injure her. During a grapple, in any turn the Noble applies Legno, her opponent cannot use the Damage maneuver.

### *Upgrade: Unbroken (Terra ●●)*

The Noble stands unmoved, and her hold is almost impossible to escape. During a grapple, in any turn that she applies Terra, her opponent cannot use the Break Free maneuver.

### *Upgrade: Draining (Lacrima ●●)*

The Noble's mien unsettles anyone who comes too close. During a grapple, in any turn that she applies Lacrima, her opponent must roll Resolve + Composure. If he fails that roll, he must spend 1 Willpower to use any maneuver except Break Free. The Noble triggers her Sensitivity the first time this happens during a scene.

### *Upgrade: Shattering (Tempesta ●●)*

The Noble can casually break bones and dislocate joints. She may forgo extra successes when applying Tempesta to an unarmed attack; instead, if the attack damages her opponent, she inflicts either the Arm Wrack [CofD 280] or Leg Wrack [CofD 285] Tilt on him.

### *Upgrade: Flirting (Specchio ●●)*

Touching the Noble's body inspires sudden, and quite distracting, desire. During a grapple, in any turn the Noble applies Specchio, her opponent must roll the worse of his Resolve + Composure and Strength + Brawl dice pools.

## *Kensai (Fight ●)*

#### **Regalia**

Action: Permanent

A melee weapon becomes part of the Noble's Regalia, manifesting her courage and faith. Attacks with the weapon use the normal dice pool for melee combat. For anyone but the Noble, the weapon's Initiative penalty is -1 and its minimum Strength is 1. For the Noble herself, both are 0 - as an extension of her will, the weapon obeys her desires as well as her own hands.

By default the weapon's Damage is 1, but the Noble may apply an Invocation to her attack to increase its Damage by her dots in that Invocation for one turn. (She may apply the normal Regalia bonus to an attack instead of increasing its Damage.) In addition, each time she attacks with it, she may choose to inflict either bashing or lethal damage. Infusing her weapon with magic takes a few moments; applying an Invocation to an attack imposes an extra -1 penalty to Initiative.

### *Upgrade: Forceful*

Stackable 3 times

The Noble's weapon strikes with great force. Each time the Noble takes this upgrade, she may add 1 to her weapon's base Damage. Doing so increases its minimum Strength by 1 and Initiative penalty by -1 for all wielders except the Noble. She may add or remove levels of Damage with a transformation action.

### *Upgrade: Guarding*

The Noble's weapon pushes attackers away or deflects their blows. Using it adds +1 to Defense.

### *Upgrade: Inexorable*

The Noble's weapon may move slowly, but it can't be stopped or avoided. The Noble may transform her weapon, taking a -2 Initiative penalty. In return, those she attacks with it use only their Attributes as Defense from it; they don't add any Skill. She may switch between this form and the basic form with a transformation action.

### *Upgrade: Precise (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble places her strokes with marvelous accuracy. If she applies Acqua, she may ignore up to her Acqua in penalties from aiming at a specified target [CofD 92] on top of the Invocation bonus.

### *Upgrade: Sharp (Aria ●●)*

Like the wind, the Noble's weapon slips through gaps in her target's protections. If she applies Aria to an attack, the weapon gains Armor Piercing at a rating equal to her Aria.

### *Upgrade: Burning (Fuoco ●●)*

The Princess' weapon grows hot in battle, scalding those it hits. If she applies Fuoco to an attack, it gains the 9-again quality, and acts as fire against beings vulnerable to it.

### *Upgrade: Clinging (Legno ●●)*

The Noble's weapon becomes a vine, whip or chain, and wraps around her opponent's flesh, as tree roots burrow into the earth. She can use the weapon in a grapple, and may apply Legno to her grappling maneuvers as long as she controls the weapon. The weapon's Damage is added as bonus dice to her grappling rolls [CofD 89]

### *Upgrade: Stunning (Terra ●●)*

Strikes with the Noble's weapon have the force of avalanches. If the Noble applies Terra to an attack, and the target takes damage from it, he also takes the Knocked Down [CofD 285] Tilt.

### *Upgrade: Draining (Lacrima ●●)*

The Noble's weapon draws shadows to itself, unsettling anyone with the bad luck to touch it. If she applies Lacrima to an attack, and the target takes damage from the attack, he must roll Resolve + Composure, and loses 1 point of Willpower if he fails. The Noble triggers her Sensitivity the first time this happens during a scene.

### *Upgrade: Berserk (Tempesta ●●)*

The Noble's weapon's blows come so furiously that they catch their targets by surprise. If she makes an all-out attack with the weapon and applies Tempesta to the attack, she doesn't get the normal +2 bonus; instead the target loses his Defense against the attack.

### *Upgrade: Cinematic (Specchio ●●)*

The Noble's fighting style lets her beat a foe without a scratch or bruise marring her features. If she applies Specchio to an attack, she also adds her dots to her Defense against any attack her target makes on her that turn. Her Defense against other attackers is not affected.

### *Levinbolt (Fight ●)*

Regalia

Action: Permanent

A ranged weapon becomes part of the Noble's Regalia, delivering the force of her will from afar. It can appear as nearly anything; wizards' staffs, futuristic pistols, and daggers that fly back to the hand are all known examples. The Noble chooses either Athletics or Firearms as the Skill for using her weapon when she learns the Charm. The Skill chosen for the weapon determines its range. An Athletics Levinbolt is an aerodynamic missile of Size 1 and must be thrown at its target [CofD 90]. A Firearms Levinbolt has a flat range of 30/60/120 yards. A Levinbolt weapon generates ammunition as the Noble fires it, and never needs reloading. The Noble may spend 1 Wisp when attacking with her weapon to fire a short burst instead of one shot.

For anyone but the Noble, the weapon's Initiative penalty is -1 and its minimum Strength is 1. For the Noble herself, both are 0 - as an extension of her will, the weapon obeys her desires as well as her own hands. By default the weapon's Damage is 1, but the Noble may apply an Invocation to her attack to increase its Damage by her dots in that Invocation for one turn (instead of adding dice.) In addition, each time she attacks with it, she may choose to inflict either bashing or lethal damage. Infusing her weapon with magic takes a few moments; applying an Invocation to an attack imposes an extra -1 penalty to Initiative.

### *Upgrade: Forceful*

| Stackable 3 times

The Noble's weapon strikes with great force. Each time the Noble takes this upgrade, she may add 1 to her weapon's base Damage. Doing so increases its minimum Strength by 1 and Initiative penalty by -1 for all wielders except the Noble. She may add or remove levels of Damage with a transformation action.

### *Upgrade: Multiple*

| Stackable 2 times

The Noble's weapon allows automatic fire. With one purchase, spending 1 Wisp allows the Noble to fire three short bursts or one medium burst. A second purchase lets her fire short bursts at no cost, and spending a Wisp lets her fire two medium bursts or one long burst. As with mundane firearms, one turn of covering fire is equivalent to one medium burst.

### *Upgrade: Long*

| Stackable 3 times

The weapon's range doubles each time the Noble takes this upgrade.

### *Upgrade: Freezing (Acqua ●●)*

The weapon's shot is a sliver of cold, draining the heat from its target. If the Noble applies Acqua to an attack, and her target takes damage from it, he also suffers from the effects of a cold extreme environment [CofD 97] at level 1 for turns equal to her Acqua. The shot stacks with cold from other sources, but not with itself - a second shot to the same target just replaces the first.

### *Upgrade: Gusting (Aria ●●)*

The weapon's shot arrives with a gust of wind that hurls the target off his feet. If the Noble applies Aria to an attack, and her target takes damage from it, he also suffers the Knocked Down Tilt [CofD 285]; if he hasn't acted this turn he may roll to remain standing as the rules for ending the Tilt allow.

### *Upgrade: Burning (Fuoco ●●)*

If the Noble applies Fuoco to an attack, and her target takes damage from it, she may spend 1 Wisp reflexively to set the target on fire. This inflicts the **Burning** Tilt at Intensity 1. The fire is mundane, being only supernatural in its origin.

### *Upgrade: Soothing (Legno ●●)*

If the Noble applies Legno to an attack, and a target takes damage from it, a dose of an opiate enters his bloodstream, and he must roll his Stamina + Resolve - the Princess' Legno. If he fails, he gains the Drugged Tilt [CofD 281].

### *Upgrade: Piercing (Terra ●●)*

The weapon's shot is adamant, and breaks lesser material in its path. If the Noble applies Terra to an attack, it becomes Armor Piercing [CofD 94-95] at a level equal to her Terra.

### *Upgrade: Draining (Lacrima ●●)*

The weapon's shot assaults the will of the target if it strikes home. If the Noble applies Lacrima to an attack, and the target takes damage, he also loses 1 point of Willpower. The Noble triggers her Sensitivity the first time this happens during a scene.

### *Upgrade: Irradiating (Tempesta ●●)*

The Noble may increase the Damage of the weapon's shot by inflicting resistant damage on herself. 1 level of bashing damage adds +1 to Damage, and 1 level of lethal damage adds +3. The Noble chooses whether to take bashing or lethal damage for each attack.

### *Upgrade: Trickshot (Specchio ●●)*

The Noble's weapon fires a bolt of pure light in an impossible shot. She might aim over her shoulder with a mirror, ricochet the bolt several times to her target or shoot a target 100 yards away from the hip. She ignores up to her Specchio in penalties for long range, specified targets, concealment and similar modifiers.

## *Palladion (Fight ●)*

#### **Regalia**

Action: Permanent

The Noble adds a shield to her Regalia, standing steadfast in battle. The shield is Size 2 and, like a mundane shield, protects the Noble from close and ranged attack. In any turn she doesn't use it as a weapon, the Noble adds the shield's Size to her Defense and applies its Size as a concealment penalty against ranged attacks. When used as a weapon, the shield does Damage 1 and, for anyone but the Noble, requires a Strength of 2 and applies -2 to Initiative. The Noble ignores both; for her the shield is an extension of her arm. The Noble may not use the shield as a weapon if she has used it for Defense or concealment during the current turn.

In addition, the Noble can apply an Invocation to her shield, making it easy to maneuver. If she attacks with the shield, applying an Invocation adds its dots to her dice pool. If she defends with it, she adds her dots to either her passive Defense or her Dodge dice pool for one turn. A bonus from the Quality upgrade is applied the same way.

### *Upgrade: Durable*

The Noble's shield withstands even the most forceful blows. Its Durability equals 1 + her Inner Light.

### *Upgrade: Enlarged*

The Noble can enlarge her shield with a transformation action. If she does so, the shield becomes Size 3 and does Damage 2 when used to attack. The required Strength rises by 1 and the Initiative penalty increases by -1 for all wielders except the Princess.

## *Upgrade: Towering*

| Requires Enlarged

The Noble can make her shield large enough to conceal her completely. When she does so, she can move at half Speed to use her shield as opaque cover against ranged attacks [CofD 92]. When not so used the shield is still effectively Size 3.

## *Upgrade: Soaring*

The Noble can fling her shield, spinning it toward an enemy. The throw follows the normal rules for throwing objects [CofD 90] except that the Noble can throw the shield regardless of her Strength and may apply an Invocation to her dice pool. The shield is aerodynamic when the Noble throws it, though not for anyone else. Throwing the shield counts as using it as a weapon.

## *Upgrade: Slick (Acqua ●)*

The shield is coated with ice or a film of oil, making it nearly frictionless, and the Noble can use it to pull her enemies out of position. When she applies Acqua to improve her Dodge pool, any close attacker who hits her (gets at least one success before dodging is considered) has his blow slide off the shield, exposing him to counterattack; if the Noble uses her next action to attack him, she reduces his Defense by her Acqua.

## *Upgrade: Thunderous (Aria ●)*

The shield reverberates when struck, with a crash of thunder. When the Noble applies Aria to improve her Dodge pool, any close attacker who hits her must succeed on a Stamina + Athletics roll, penalized by her Aria, or take the Deafened Tilt [CofD 281] in both ears from the noise blasting through his skull. If she applies Aria to an attack with the shield and does damage, her target must make the same roll to avoid deafness.

## *Upgrade: Tangling (Legno ●)*

The shield becomes a burr that can trap whatever strikes it. When the Noble applies Legno to improve her Dodge pool, any weapon that hits her gets tangled in the shield and wrenched out of the attacker's hand. Unarmed attackers have their striking limb trapped, giving them either the Arm Wrack [CofD 280] or Leg Wrack [CofD 285] Tilt until they spend an action extracting the limb.

## *Upgrade: Acriid (Tempesta ●)*

The shield corrodes anything that strikes it. When the Noble applies Tempesta to increase her Defense or Dodge, any weapon used against her that does no damage loses one point of Structure, bypassing its Durability. Unarmed attackers take one lethal damage as the corrosive eats into their striking limb. Applying Tempesta to an attack with the shield adds 1 to its Damage.

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## *Damage is Damage*

Regalia weapons, and the weaponless combat of [Empty Hands](#), are the Noble's willingness to hurt another, or to defend another, made manifest. They are, thus, as magical as she is, and count as supernatural damage - powers that downgrade or ignore mundane weapons don't apply to them. The form the weapons take isn't otherwise significant; a Princess may have a sword of the purest silver in her Regalia, but it will not be of any extra help when fighting a werewolf (except possibly for the ability to bluff that you have real silver); contrariwise it will not be stopped by that anti-silver forcefield the werewolf bought off a mad scientist.

Invoked upgrades can change this rule - after applying the Fuoco upgrade Burning a Noble's Kensai weapon both cuts and burns. It acts as a bane to a vampire, but a defense against fire will block it, as will a ward against blades.

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## *Lightning Charge (Fight ●, Aria ●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 turn

The Noble runs as swiftly as lightning to meet an enemy. When she makes a charge [CofD 92] the Noble may activate the Charm to keep her Defense.

## *Willow's Wisdom (Fight ●, Legno ●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 attack

The Noble turns her foes' momentum against them. When she Dodges [CofD 88-89], if the Noble reduces a close combat attacker's successes to 0, she may activate the Charm to inflict the Knocked Down Tilt [CofD 285] on that attacker.

## *Courteous Parry (Fight ●, Terra ●)*

Action: Permanent

A smile and pleasant voice disarms a Princess's attackers, or a calculated remark at the right moment throws them off-balance. When the Noble transforms, she may choose for her Dodge to subtract successes equal to her Manipulation from the attack instead of rolling her Dodge dice pool, if the attacker has a roughly human mindset. Unfortunately, social acumen doesn't do anything to inhuman foes; against an animal, a spirit and similar beings the Noble's Dodge dice pool is twice her Athletics, not adding an Attribute. She may switch back to normal Dodging with a transformation action.

### *Upgrade: Instinctive*

Using social talent to evade injury becomes almost a reflex. When the Noble transforms, she may choose to set her Defense to Manipulation + Athletics against attackers with a basically human mind. The drawback, as before, is that against inhuman attackers her Defense is Athletics alone. She may return to normal Defense with a transformation action.

## *Danmaku Dance (Fight ●●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can bend her perception of time to anticipate attacks aimed at herself, even from afar. From the moment she activates the Charm until the scene ends, the Noble applies her Defense against Firearms attacks, unless she is currently prone, in cover, or in concealment. Moreover, she can't be surprised [CofD 88] - she automatically wins the contested roll. *Danmaku Dance* may be activated when someone shoots at or ambushes the Noble.

### *Upgrade: Dodging (Aria ●●)*

If the Noble concentrates, she can elude even continuous streams of bullets. While the Charm is active, she may use Dodging to reduce damage from covering fire [CofD 90] as if it were an attack.

## *You Might Hurt Yourself (Fight ●●)*

Action: Reactive and contested  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Larceny vs. Defense  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

People ought to know better than to swing heavy or sharp objects around. When a foe close enough to attack has a tool or weapon in hand, and is about to use it (on herself or anyone else) the Noble activates this Charm. She must have both hands free.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble leaves herself wide open to her target. If he attacks her in the next turn, she cannot apply Defense.

**Failure:** The Noble misses her catch.

**Success:** The Noble takes hold of the target's instrument and pulls it away, just before he does whatever he meant to do. The object moves to her possession.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's theft is so well timed that the target actually tries to carry out his intention without the necessary tool. He gets the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286].

## *Upgrade: Replacing (Aria ●●●)*

The Noble places new equipment into her target's hand as deftly as she removes the old. If the new equipment is similar (such as replacing a gun with another gun loaded with blanks) the target will attempt their original action using the new equipment. Otherwise the target notices the switch in time to change his action, unless the Noble rolls an exceptional success.

## *Your Guardian Angel (Fight ●●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: successes in turns or 1 scene

*I will never let you fall, I'll stand up with you forever*

A true Heroine gladly risks her life to save another from harm. The Noble uses this Charm on someone she can see; she cannot use it on herself. She also cannot use it on anyone who is currently using it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble is struck by dizziness and loses strength, as if suffering a high fever. She takes the moderate form of the Sick Tilt [CofD 286]. The fever fades if the Noble rests long enough to reduce the penalty to 0.

**Failure:** People wishing to attack the target are not influenced.

**Success:** Everyone who can see both the Noble and the target realizes that she has put him under her protection; those who wish to harm him must first defeat her. For turns equal to the activation successes, any character who attacks the target cannot apply Defense against an attack from the Noble until their next action.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's protection lasts for the rest of the scene.

## *Upgrade: Everyone's Angel (Fuoco ●●)*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp



The Noble offers her protection to members of a group that she can see, applying the Commonalty modifier for that group; while the Charm lasts, anyone who attacks a member of that group loses his Defense against the Noble until his next action.

### *Safety in Stillness (Fight ●●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Composure + Brawl  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble stands unperturbed by the assaults of many foes. After activating the Charm, her Defense is not reduced until she has taken (1 + her successes) attacks in a turn.

### *Shield Wall (Fight ●●, Terra ●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Presence + Weaponry  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 attack

The Noble stands firm as a rock and holds the line together. When one of her companions is attacked she may shout a warning, direct a fighter to their ally's aid or parry the blow herself. The Noble may activate the Charm when someone makes a close combat attack on a target within her Inner Light in yards. She may not use it against attacks on herself.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's clumsy move exposes her to attack without helping her ally. Her Defense takes a -2 penalty during the current turn.

**Failure:** The Noble's parry is not effective.

**Success:** Each activation success reduces the damage from the attack on its target by 1, to a minimum of 0.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's parry confounds the attack so much that its target doesn't notice it. The ally's Defense is not reduced by the countered attack.

Any single attack can be parried by at most one activation of Shield Wall, even if (*especially* if) multiple Nobles are trying to direct the defensive line.

### *Spite Strike (Fight ●●, Tempesta ●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Intimidation  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 attack

None may strike a Fury without reprisal. When the Noble is attacked, she may forgo her Defense and activate Spite Strike. If she takes damage from the attack, the attacker takes damage of the same type equal to her activation successes, or what he inflicts on her, whichever is greater. The Noble must actually take damage - if she mitigates any of it by spending Wisps, or if the attacker fails to inflict any damage, the Charm fails.

### *Seraphic Fury (Fight ●●, Tempesta ●●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 resistant lethal damage  
Duration: 1 attack

The Noble channels fire and fury through her veins into the flesh of an enemy of the Light. Her weapon seeks the heart and severs arteries. She may activate the Charm when she attacks a creature of the Darkness, before making the roll. If the attack hits the creature, it does aggravated damage. The Charm stacks with permanent Charms, but not other activated Charms.

### *Upgrade: Discretionary (Tempesta ●●●●)*

The Noble judges for herself who the Light's enemies are. She may use the Charm when attacking anyone - her enemy need not be a creature of the Darkness.

### *Befriending (Fight ●●, Specchio ●●)*

| Action: Permanent

The Queen of Mirrors wants everyone to get along, in service to the True Queen. Isn't that nice? Sadly, violence is sometimes necessary, but violence should always serve a higher cause, and bind people together. If the Noble inflicts the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 280] on an opponent or forces him to unconsciousness, then in the next social maneuver she attempts with that opponent her impression level improves by one step.

### *Upgrade: Slap Slap Kiss (Specchio ●●●)*

Prove yourself superior, the Heirs say, and those you defeat must admire you. The Noble may spend 1 Wisp when she bests a foe to give him the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] aimed at herself. This overrides and deepens the Charm's normal effect.

### *One Woman Warband (Fight ●●, Specchio ●●●)*

| Action: Reactive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 turn

What's more impressive than flamboyantly taking down an opponent without a scratch? Flamboyantly taking down ten opponents. When this Charm is activated the Noble's Defense is reduced to twice her Specchio (if her Defense is already less than this, it's unchanged.) However, when facing multiple attackers, every attack after the first *increases* her Defense by 1 rather than decreasing it. She may improve Defense with Willpower as normal.

### *Upgrade: Countered*

At the end of the turn the Noble may make one counter attack with a dicepool equal to the number of people who attacked her this turn.

### *Certain Shot (Fight ●●●)*

| Requires [Levinbolt](#)  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 attack

The Noble enchants her Levinbolt to make its shot curve in flight and hit her target, even if her aim was off. She may activate the Charm when she attacks with her Levinbolt weapon. If she does, a normal failure on

the attack roll does damage to the target equal to the weapon's Damage rating. The target must be within her weapon's long range for the shot to damage it.

If the target can apply Defense against firearms, he can dodge the enchanted shot, and an attack that gained no successes can be dodged automatically - but the target must spend his action dodging to avoid the shot entirely.

## *Load Cartridge (Fight ●●●)*

Requires [Empty Hands](#), [Kensai](#), [Levinbolt](#) or [Palladion](#)  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: until transformation

Sometimes the Darkness isn't the only enemy a Princess faces. Happily most supernatural threats are vulnerable to certain objects; and when a Princess must oppose such a threat, she can transfer those objects' special properties to her own weapon. The Noble holds a small amount of her opponent's bane in her dominant hand - enough to fill her palm - and activates the Charm; doing so materializes her Regalia weapon from one of the prerequisite Charms, and combines the bane with that weapon. Until the Noble next transforms it, or returns to mundane form, the weapon and attacks made with it affect supernatural beings just as the bane does. The bane itself transmutes to inert dust with no useful properties.

Each use of this Charm combines a bane with one piece of Regalia. Regalia pieces already under its effects cannot be combined with another bane.

## *Refutation in Arms (Fight ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Requires [Empty Hands](#), [Kensai](#) or [Palladion](#)  
Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + (Brawl or Weaponry) - target's Defense  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The attacks of a fighter fall into patterns, and the Noble can read those patterns. When she wields her Regalia weapon and faces another in close combat, she may activate this Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble misreads her foe. For the rest of the scene, she takes a -1 penalty to all attacks against him, and she cannot use Refutation in Arms again.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing from her foe's movements.

**Success:** The Noble understands her foe's style of combat. She gains the [Studied Fighting](#) Tilt against him.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble understands her foe completely. Her bonus from the Studied Fighting Tilt begins at +2.

The Noble can gain a bonus from this Charm against only one target at a time; if she uses it again before the scene ends, the first use of the Charm ends immediately.

## *Flash Step (Fight ●●●, Aria ●●●)*

Action: Reactive  
Dice pool: Wits + Athletics  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble dodges her foe's attack so swiftly that, by the time it lands, she's somewhere else. She may activate Flash Step whenever she can Dodge an attack.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble trips over her own feet. She loses Defense against the attack she was avoiding.

**Failure:** The Noble stays put, and defends against the incoming attack normally.

**Success:** The Noble moves up to her Speed times (1 + activation successes) in yards; if this takes her out of the attacker's reach, the attack misses. On her next action, anyone she attacks is surprised and must equal or exceed her activation successes on a Wits + Composure roll to apply Defense against her.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble moves in the blink of an eye. On her next action, Defense does not apply against her attack.

## *Tangling Vine (Fight ●●●, Legno ●●)*

Requires [Empty Hands](#)

Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Strength + Brawl - target's Defense

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: concentration

A net of brambles grows in the Noble's hands, and she throws it at a target [CofD 90]; the net is not aerodynamic. If she succeeds, she entangles the target in the net, and the brambles grapple him [CofD 89-90]. The Noble may spend her action in the next and subsequent rounds maintaining the grapple, and may use any move except Take Cover. If the target Breaks Free, or the Noble takes any action other than maintaining the grapple, the Charm ends. If she uses Restrain, the brambles remain after the Charm ends; the target must break them to end the Immobilized Tilt, and they have Durability equal to her Legno.

### *Upgrade: Thorny*

If the Noble applies this upgrade, the net grows sharp thorns; the Damage move in the grapple inflicts lethal damage.

### *Upgrade: Wide*

Stackable 3 times

Cost: +0-2 Wisps

The net is broad enough to ensnare more than one person. Use the autofire rules [CofD 90]. The first purchase gives the net the bonus of a short burst. The second purchase adds 1 Wisp to the cost, and allows the equivalent of a medium burst. The third purchase adds 2 Wisps to the cost, and allows the equivalent of a long burst. The Noble must use the same move on everyone caught in the net; if a move doesn't apply to a target, it's wasted.

## *Salted Wounds (Fight ●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Requires [Kensai](#)

Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Strength + Medicine - target's Stamina

Cost: 2 Wisps, Sensitivity check

Duration: until damage heals

When the Raven has wounded an enemy with her Kensai weapon, she increases the pain from all his injuries. The target must have damage inflicted by the Noble's attack with her Kensai weapon. Salted Wounds does not work on anyone already under its effect.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble relieves the target's pain; he immediately heals one point of bashing damage.

**Failure:** The target feels a moment's sharp pain from the wound the Noble gave him.

**Success:** The target has been wounded in a fashion that's exquisitely painful. He acquires the [Salted Wound](#) Tilt, linked to the leftmost Health box filled by damage from the Noble's Kensai weapon.

**Exceptional Success:** Pain from the wound stops the target dead. He also takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286].

## *Seven at a Blow (Fight ●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 combat

Once the Noble has fixed her purpose, lesser opponents cannot impede her. The Noble may activate this Charm at the start of a combat, provided that all those opposing her are mundane humans, natural animals or Darkspawn, and her intent is not to kill anyone. When she does so, the fight must be resolved with the Down and Dirty Combat rules [CofD 87], no matter how many foes there are, or how well they are equipped. The Charm fails, and combat is resolved normally, if any opponent is a supernatural being other than Darkspawn.

## *Nova Strike (Fight ●●●●, Fuoco ●●●●)*

Requires [Levinbolt](#)  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Strength + Science - blast radius in yards  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 attack

The Noble conjures a ball that explodes in a gout of consuming fire. She may activate the Charm when she attacks with her Levinbolt weapon, and sets the explosion's size at that point, taking a penalty to her dice pool equal to its radius in yards.

**Dramatic Failure:** The ball explodes in the Noble's hands. The Charm has its normal effect, centered on her.

**Failure:** The Noble fires Levinbolt normally.

**Success:** The Noble loads her Levinbolt with an [incendiary bomb](#). When she throws or fires the bomb, her attack doesn't resolve normally; the Noble rolls just to see if the bomb goes where she wants it to. Instead, an explosion goes off centered where the bomb lands; its Blast Area is what she chose for it, and its Damage and Force are both equal to her Fuoco. The incendiary effect starts fires of Intensity 2.

**Exceptional Success:** The incendiary is hot enough to melt metal. It starts fires of Intensity 3.

## *Strength of Ten (Fight ●●●●●, Terra ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Expression  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 turn

Blows delivered by the Noble's friends become steps in a great dance, and her strike against a foe is its culmination. The Charm may be activated only during combat. For each activation success, add the successes rolled for a mundane action by one character on the Noble's side of the fight as a bonus to her dice pool in the next turn, provided that her action that turn is a mundane attack. If the Noble does anything other than attack a foe as her next action, she gains no benefit from the Charm. She must choose whether an eligible action is part

of the attack before the player for that character rolls. If a character rolls a dramatic failure on an action that's part of the attack, the Noble takes a -4 penalty to her dice pool.

## *The Finest Hour, the Last Hour (Fight ●●●●●, Tempesta ●●●●)*

**Avatar** (Storms)

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Resolve + Composure

Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower, 1 resistant aggravated damage

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble draws upon the dedication and resolve the Seraphic General displayed during the fall, and recreates her own lesser version of that courage.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble is overcome with a feeling of utter futility and defeatism. She takes the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 280] and is considered to have broken Tempesta's ban.

**Failure:** The Noble cannot focus.

**Success:** The Noble enters a combat trance, a tranquil fury or even a screaming hysteria. In this state she is one of the most powerful and terrible combatants known to the Radiant. She gains the following benefits:

- Any damage caused by the Noble is aggravated, even if she doesn't want it to be.
- She gains temporary Health boxes equal to her Resolve + Inner Light.
- Every time the Noble kills someone she believes is a follower of the Dark, she regains all her Willpower. Followers of the dark include: Darkened, Darkspawn and all related creatures, Princesses and Sworn of Tears, Alhambran citizens, and anyone the Noble has a good reason to believe to be any of the above.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble develops such a strong aura of violence and power that mortals (including Darkened and Darkspawn, but not stronger creatures of the Darkness) whose Willpower is lower than her Inner Light must succeed on a Resolve + Composure roll or flee in terror, gaining the **Terrified** Condition.

**Drawback:** Once this Charm is active the Noble loses all her mental faculties unrelated to combat - she simply cannot conceive of not fighting. Until the Charm ends she cannot stop fighting as long as one foe remains standing.

## *Govern*

The Govern Charms control supernatural powers and those who possess them. **Graces** and **Seekers** have affinity for them.

### *Consecrate (Govern ●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = **Sanctuary**

Dice pool: Presence + Occult

Cost: 3 Wisps

Duration: special

The Noble blesses the ground she stands on, and dedicates it temporarily to her Queen and the Light. The Noble needs to cleanse and purify every part of the area she wishes to dedicate; this can be as simple as giving it a thorough spring cleaning, or it can be an elaborate rite for casting out evil spirits, depending on the Noble's cultural background. However, if she applies an Invocation, the method of purification invokes the relevant Queen and must use symbols appropriate for her.

The Charm also requires a representation of the Noble's Phylactery to be somewhere in the area. This can be as slight as a sketch of it done in felt tip on paper and taped to the underside of a table, or as intricate as a

carefully woven tapestry with its image part of the decorations. There can be multiple such representations. However, if all such representations are destroyed or removed from the area, the Charm automatically ends.

When the Noble reaches the threshold, the target Sanctuary gains the **Consecrated** Condition for 1 day. The Noble may continue working to extend the Charm's duration:

- Threshold = 1 day
- 2 \* threshold = 1 week
- 3 \* threshold = 1 month
- 4 \* threshold = 2 months
- 5 \* threshold = 3 months
- Each additional multiple extends the duration by another month.

If an area is already Consecrated, the new Charm will not take effect until the Noble reaches enough successes to exceed the remaining duration of the previous Consecration. (For instance, if an area will be Consecrated for five days, the Noble must reach enough successes for a week's duration, after which the area will be Consecrated for a week.) If any part of an area is Tainted, the Charm automatically fails, and if any part becomes Tainted while the Consecration remains, the Charm immediately ends.

### *Upgrade: Purifying*

The Noble may Consecrate a Tainted area. The Taint will always overcome this Charm given enough time, but it can allow the Noble some vital breathing space. Add the Taint's Severity to the threshold; when the Noble reaches it:

- The Taints' Curses go dormant.
- The Taint will not attempt to corrupt nor will it cause Hauntings for characters with Sensitivity.
- The Taint no longer provides access to and from the Dark World.

Even though the Taint is suppressed, later uses of Consecrate still must overcome it to extend the Consecrated Condition. Also, the Taint shortens Consecrate's duration: each multiple of the threshold adds just one day to the Charm's duration. When Consecrate expires the effects of the Taint return; the Noble may invoke Consecrate again to extend the Condition, but this only delays the inevitable.

### *Upgrade: Sanctuary*

Several Charms have special benefits when cast upon Consecrated ground. When Consecrate is invoked with Sanctuary, all Charms that interact with the Consecrated Condition are immune to being dispelled while that Condition remains.

It is important to note that Consecrate itself can be dispelled, or removed by other methods, and this upgrade offers no protection against that.

## *Dreaming Vision (Govern ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can perceive natives of the **Dreamlands** who have escaped to the waking world. If she spends a Wisp, for the rest of the scene she sees any Dreamlanders present in Twilight Form, and can make Perception rolls to notice Manifestation Conditions related to a Dreamlander in her vicinity. Physical objects still block her sight, so a Dreamlander can hide behind - or inside - such objects to evade her.

Entities from the Astral Realms who somehow get to Earth are also disclosed by the Charm.

## *Upgrade: Touching*

By spending an additional Wisp, the Noble shifts her flesh partly into Twilight, allowing her to touch or attack Dreamlanders, and they her, until the Charm ends. All of her regalia (including weapons and armor) are carried into this state with her, and Dreamlanders are valid targets of her Charms.

## *Upgrade: Spiritual (Legno ●)*

| Cost: apply Legno

One of the Wilds may attune herself to the presence of spirits. If she applies Legno instead of spending a Wisp, the Noble sees spirits in Twilight Form, and can make Perception rolls to notice Manifestation Conditions related to a spirit, or the presence of a locus [CofD 126]. She cannot see Dreamlanders and spirits at the same time. Applying Touching makes the Noble tangible to spirits, not Dreamlanders.

## *Upgrade: Ghostly (Lacrima ●)*

| Cost: apply Lacrima

A follower of Tears can part the veil and see into the great beyond. If she applies Lacrima instead of spending a Wisp, the Noble sees ghosts in Twilight Form and objects made of ghostly ephemera, and can make Perception rolls to notice Manifestation Conditions related to a ghost, a ghost's Anchor [CofD 133] or an Avernian Gate [CofD 136]. She cannot see Dreamlanders and ghosts at the same time. Applying Touching makes the Noble tangible to ghosts, not Dreamlanders.

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## *What About Angels?*

Readers may wonder why there isn't an upgrade to perceive the third type of ephemeral beings described in the *Chronicles of Darkness*. We left it out, along with any other explicit reference to the God-Machine, because in our opinion it's not possible to add the God-Machine to a game of *Princess: the Hopeful* without turning it into the centerpiece of the story. A campaign in which a nakama discovers the God-Machine and tries to do something about it could be an excellent thing, but we would need much more than a few Charms to do justice to it.

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## *Forgotten Lore (Govern ●)*

| Favor (Occult)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she throws light on strange and horrifying mysteries.

## *Upgrade: Spiritual (Legno ●●)*

The Noble has unusual insight into the behavior of the spirits. During any research action involving a spirit, including summoning or exorcising it [CofD 139], the Noble may spend 1 Wisp to reduce the successes she needs by her Legno.

## *Upgrade: Underworld (Lacrima ●●)*

The Noble has a great understanding of the needs of ghosts. During any research action involving a ghost, including summoning or exorcising it, the Noble may spend 1 Wisp to reduce the successes she needs by her Lacrima.



## *Living Image (Govern ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Inner Light + Intelligence  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

Certain artists among the Hopeful have found a method to infuse the Light into their art, and make it bring forth magic. This Charm allows a Princess to embed another Charm into a work of art she has made with her own hands, so that it takes effect not when she casts it, but when another person studies or appreciates the art. The crafting of the artwork is integral to the use of Living Image - the art means, is about, the Charm embedded in it, and a wholly or partly finished work on another subject cannot carry the intended Charm. Making a valid target for Living Image is a mundane extended action, with a threshold of 3x the rating of the Charm to be placed in it.

To be embedded in a work of art, a Charm must be targeted at a single person who is physically with its user. The Sympathy and Commonalty modifiers make a Charm incompatible with Living Image, and animals, objects or areas cannot understand art in a way that Living Image will recognize. In addition, the Charm must be cast directly; a Noble may not use one enchanted artwork to prepare another.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's magic goes out of control and ruins the artwork. She must recreate it from the beginning, using new materials.

**Failure:** The Noble fails to prepare the artwork. Further attempts to use the Charm on it take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Success:** The artwork becomes a valid target for the Charm it's based on. When that Charm is used on it, the artwork gains the [Waiting Charm](#) Condition, which will resolve when a person next experiences the art in the proper way - a painting must be looked at, recorded music must be listened to, etc. When the Condition resolves the suspended Charm immediately takes effect on the person experiencing the art. Damage to the artwork ends the Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** The artwork is a perfect expression of the Charm to be held inside it. Anyone using that Charm on it has 9-again on the activation roll.

As part of learning this Charm, the Noble also learns how to recognize another Hopeful's enchanted artworks, and discover what they do without discharging them. Analyzing an artwork prepared for Living Image (which includes Bequests) is a mundane extended action with a dice pool of Inner Light + Intelligence, an interval of 5 minutes/roll, and a threshold equal to the rating of the Charm the artwork expresses. Reaching the threshold answers one of these questions:

- Which Charm the artwork is based on
- Which Living Image upgrades were applied during its making
- If it's Duty-bound, what task creates the Waiting Charm Condition

### *Upgrade: Copied*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The magic in the Noble's art may flow through copies of that art. When the original artwork has the Waiting Charm Condition, it resolves when a person next experiences any duplicate of the original, as well as the original itself, and the delayed Charm takes effect on that person. Normally copies must be exact - any imperfection or degradation in the copy breaks its connection to the original; however, the Noble may take a penalty of -2 when activating Living Image to let it work through imperfect but recognizable copies (photos or digital images of a visual work, re-recordings of an audio work, etc.)

Applying Copied makes Living Image compatible with Charms modified by [Sympathy](#). For those Charms the Condition resolves when the intended target experiences the art, in either a copy or the original. No other audience can trigger the embedded Charm.

## *Upgrade: Performative*

The Noble dispenses with solid materials - she can weave magic into pure meaning, while delaying its effect. In the course of a performance or conversation, the Noble must tell her intended target both what will happen when the suspended Charm takes effect, and what action or situation will release it. She can be as cryptic ("When all eyes turn toward you, you'll find the strength to carry on") or as direct ("Hey, jackass! Try stealing someone's purse again, and you're going to get set on fire!") as she wishes. She activates Living Image as she speaks, and the Charm she wants to delay immediately afterward.

If both Charms succeed, the target gains the Waiting Charm Condition. It will resolve at the first opportunity that fits what the Noble tells the target - a vague and cryptic description may release the Charm at a quite unexpected and inconvenient moment. Dramatic failure distorts the Noble's magic, giving her a [Hypersensitive](#) Condition that expires when the scene ends.

Performative is not compatible with Copied, but applying it does make Living Image compatible with Charms modified by [Commonalty](#). For those Charms, the Condition resolves when any member of the target organization fulfills the stated conditions, and the Charm affects all members who witnessed the performance. Also, Performative doesn't require a target to understand what the Noble says, so it can be used with Charms that apply to animals, objects or areas - though she still has to speak to them.

## *Upgrade: Instructive*

| Cost: +2 Wisps

The Noble's art becomes not an expression of her magic, but a guide for others to enact it themselves. When she gives the artwork the Waiting Charm Condition, the Noble pays for the Charm but does not roll to activate it. Instead, when a Light-touched character experiences the art, he becomes aware that magic lies within it, ready to release. If he chooses, he can resolve the Waiting Charm Condition to make the activation roll, using his own traits rather than the Noble's. Characters who aren't Light-touched can't resolve the Condition. The Noble specifies which upgrades, if any, are applied to the Charm when she embeds it; the activator chooses its target and controls its effects.

Instructive is not compatible with Copied or Performative. Because the activator can direct the embedded Charm, applying Instructive makes Living Image compatible with any Charm, including those that need no roll to activate. A permanent Charm, if embedded, confers its benefit on the activator for one scene.

## *Upgrade: Bequeathed*

| Requires Instructive  
| Cost: +1 Willpower dot

The Noble turns her art into a free-standing object of power. The object she crafts becomes a [Bequest](#); anyone with the ability to pay the Charm's cost can do so to give it the Waiting Charm Condition, or to activate the Charm directly, if they are touching it. A Bequest does not have to be studied or appreciated to work its magic, and need not be art (as normally understood) at all; it's simply used, like any mundane tool.

## *Upgrade: Duty-bound*

| Requires Bequeathed

By fulfilling a special duty, the Bequest's owner can catch raw power from the Light to empower it. When the Noble creates a Bequest, she can specify a task to be completed. A character with the Bequest on his person who performs that task can impose the Waiting Charm Condition on the Bequest without paying any Wisps. All other costs for activating the Bequest's Charm must still be paid.

The difficulty of the specified task depends on the Charm's effective rating. Bequests based on 1-dot Charms can be primed by an action taking as little as a turn. Bequests based on 3-dot Charms usually require a scene or two to prime. Bequests based on 5-dot Charms require at least a session to prepare.

## *Upgrade: Empowered (Specchia ●●●)*

### | Requires Bequeathed

When creating a Bequest a Chosen can embed a gem created by [Enduring Beauty](#) as a source of power. If she does so the Bequest has an equipment bonus to its activation roll equal to the Availability rating of the gem she used. Analyzing the Bequest will reveal the details of its Empowerment but anyone with experience of Bequests will have little trouble figuring it out.

By pressing an Empowered Bequest to the forehead of the gem's original owner, the owner's beauty may be restored; doing this destroys the Bequest beyond repair.

The question that haunts many Nobles is whether using such tools is an endorsement of their creation. Knowingly using an Empowered Bequest, unless a Princess has reason to believe the gem at its heart was created consensually, is a compromise with a -1 penalty to the roll.

## *Reflected Light (Govern ●)*

### | Action: Permanent

While the Noble is transformed, her senses are opened to the influence of magical powers. Whenever a supernatural power, whatever its source may be, is initiated by or actively affects a being within 10x Inner Light yards of the Noble (or on her directly) she becomes aware that something magical is taking place, though she can't tell what it was. Any supernatural concealment of the effect, its origin or its target defeats the Noble's reflexive perception automatically.

In addition, each time she notices a magical effect, the Noble may make a reflexive mundane Wits + Occult roll, and if successful perceives the basic facts about it: what it is affecting, the type of the being who used it, and (if it's initiated within her range) where that being is. Identifying a power from the Light or Darkness is instinctive for all the Hopeful; other types of supernatural, however, must be learned from experience. (For example, the Noble can tell that all vampiric Disciplines have the same origin, but she won't know that they're vampire powers unless she sees a known vampire using one.)

Finally, if she suspects its presence, the Noble can deliberately look for traces of hidden magic near her. This is an instant mundane unrolled action, and reveals the targets of any active supernatural effects within her range. Unlike her passive sense, this active scrutiny provokes a [Clash of Wills](#) with supernatural concealments. Any effects she notices, the Noble can reflexively examine as above.

## *Upgrade: Light-Attuned*

The Noble can distinguish powers that come from the Light. When she rolls for information on an active Charm, she learns the Charm's function and what Invocation (if any) was applied in the casting. She will recognize by name any Charm and upgrades she knows herself or has seen in use before.

## *Upgrade: Dark-attuned (Tempesta ●)*

The Queen of Storms teaches the Nobility to recognize the works of her enemies. When she rolls for information on an Umbra or Caligo, the Noble learns exactly which power the Dark creature used.

## *Charge (Govern ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Empathy  
Cost: none  
Duration: lasting

By touching someone (or something) with a pool of Wisps, the Noble transfers some of her own Wisps to the other pool. She gives 1 Wisp for each success, up to her normal Wisps/turn limit. She cannot give more Wisps than the target can hold.

### *Upgrade: Accepted*

The Noble may take Wisps from others, if they are willing to give them. If the target consents, the Noble takes 1 Wisp for each success, up to her normal Wisps/turn limit.

### *Upgrade: Distant*

The Noble can send Wisps to any person she can see; she need not touch them. With Accepted, she can take Wisps from those she can see as well.

### *Upgrade: Anonymous*

Requires Distant  
Modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on people who are not present, applying the Sympathy modifier.

### *Upgrade: Resonant (Legno ●●)*

The Noble can convert between Wisps and spirit Essence at a 2:1 ratio, in either direction, allowing her to share her reserves with spirits. Nobles cannot store Essence - she must give converted Wisps to a spirit, and transform taken Essence into Wisps.

### *Upgrade: Stolen (Lacrima ●●)*

Requires Accepted  
Cost: + Sensitivity check

The Noble can take Wisps from the unconsenting. Subtract the target's Resolve from the activation roll. Moreover, unless she applies Distant or Anonymous, the Noble must already have a hand on her target; if she needs an instant action to touch him, the Charm does not work.

### *Upgrade: In Memoriam (Lacrima ●●)*

The Noble can convert between Wisps and ghost Essence at a 2:1 ratio, in either direction, allowing her to share her reserves with ghosts. Nobles cannot store Essence - she must give converted Wisps to a ghost, and transform taken Essence into Wisps.

### *Gold Abhors Ebon (Govern ●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

Invoking the Light's authority, the Noble drives off a being of the Darkness. This Charm is used on a [Creature of the Darkness](#). If the Noble wins the contest, the target cannot approach her and does his best to avoid her; he immediately takes the [Fearful](#) Condition, with her as the source.

### *Upgrade: Searing*

Cost: +1 Wisp

If the Noble wins the contest, the target runs from her in a blind panic - he immediately takes the [Terrified Condition](#).

### *Upgrade: Ruling*

Inhuman monsters must acknowledge the Noble's authority. She may use the Charm on ephemeral beings, such as ghosts and spirits; they contest it with Resistance + Rank.

### *Upgrade: Majestic*

| Requires Ruling  
| Cost: +1 Willpower

All those with power bow to the Light. The Noble may use the Charm on humans with supernatural powers that aren't derived from the Light. This includes anyone with a major or minor template, and anyone with powers they would lose if they gained a template, except for Beacons, Sworn and Hopeful.

### *Upgrade: Fearsome (Lacrima ●●)*

| Cost: + Sensitivity check

The Queen of Tears claims the right to rule all the world, mortals, Nobles and supernaturals alike. The Noble may use the Charm on humans without supernatural powers, and on Beacons, Sworn and other Hopeful.

### *Light Over All (Govern ●●)*

| Action: Permanent

The force of the Noble's will banishes ghosts, spirits, demons, and other possessing or haunting entities. When she attempts an abjuration [CofD 140] her roll gains the 9-again quality, and she may apply an Invocation to her dice pool. The Charm's benefits apply both to abjuring ephemeral beings and to abjuring Tainted places.

In addition to modifiers from Belief, Virtue and Vice, when the Noble abjures an ephemeral being, the following modifiers apply:

- +3: The entity was never human, and is anathema to reality (Abyssal entities)
- +2: The Noble knows the entity's real name.
- +1: The entity was never human, but is not anathema to reality (Strix, spirits); or was human, but thinks nothing like a human (Darklings and Mnemosyne)
- 0: The entity was once human, and still thinks in somewhat human ways (ghost using Possession, Vampire with Dominate 5, Amonajaku)
- -2: The entity is human, and thinks like a human (Thaumaturges, Psychics, Mages, Witches)

### *Upgrade: Brilliant*

The Noble may spend 1 Wisp to add her Inner Light to her dice pool for an abjuration.

### *Upgrade: Friendly (Legno ●)*

By applying Legno to an abjuration, the Noble may befriend an ephemeral being instead of banishing it. Instead of suppressing Conditions relevant to the entity, a success gives the Noble the Connected Condition [CofD 288] to the entity. On an exceptional success, until the Condition ends the entity treats harming the Noble or anyone under her declared protection as a violation of its ban. Attacking or betraying the entity will resolve the Connected Condition immediately.

### *Upgrade: Caustic (Tempesta ●)*

The Noble may take resistant damage to add bonuses to her dice pool for abjurations. 1 bashing damage gives a +1 bonus; 1 lethal damage gives a +3 bonus.

### *Seed of Light (Govern ●●)*

Action: Extended, (20 - Willpower) minutes/roll, threshold = 3 \* seeds made

Dice pool: Dexterity + Expression

Cost: 1 Willpower, 1+ Wisps (special)

Duration: lasting

The Light exists within the world, within the hearts of all men. However, with will and effort, the Hopeful may calcify Wisps into gem-sized, imperishable Seeds, proof against the ravages of chance. Each Wisp spent on the Charm forms a separate Seed. The Princess does not have to decide how many Seeds to calcify beforehand; after spending the Willpower, she starts to concentrate on her pool of Wisps. Each three successes accumulated allows the Princess to transform one Wisp into a Seed, and she may roll a number of times equal to her dice pool, or until she runs out of Wisps. Extra successes are wasted.

The shape of a Seed is a profound expression of its creator's soul, and is heavily influenced by the Invocation (if any) applied in its making. (Applying Legno, for instance, often creates Seeds in the form of living, unchanging flowers - roses, in particular.) Any character examining a Seed, if they make a Wits + Occult roll, can recognize a Seed as coming from the same hand as one they've seen before.

To recover the Wisp from a Seed, a Noble must bring it into contact with her phylactery, and spend a minute in concentration. No actions may be performed while doing this, and the Noble is at -3 to all Wits-based rolls, so deep is their focus. The Seed glows, and becomes incohesive, melting into their soul, and adding the Wisp to their pool. If the Noble's Wisp pool is full, the Seed vaporizes and releases the Wisp into the air, where it dissipates.

As tiny fragments of solidified Light, Seeds are incredibly alluring to [creatures of the Darkness](#). Any such creature can consume Seeds to regain Willpower, gaining one point of Willpower per Seed eaten. The Darkened can smell out Seeds kept in quantity - they gain a cumulative +1 bonus to all Perception rolls to notice a person carrying Seeds for each Seed above the carrier's Composure, and tend to aim first at opponents carrying the most Seeds. Moreover, any location where large numbers of Seeds are stored will tend, by seemingly random chance, to attract more Darkspawn to it, drawn by their hunger. For this reason, Alhambran outposts, where they store their misbegotten gains, tend to either be very heavily protected, or to try to move them back to their rain-soaked city as fast as possible. And for the same reason, servants of the Queen of Storms have been known to use captured Seeds as Darkspawn bait.

A [Bequest](#) based on Seed of Light creates Seeds from Wisps in its holder's pool.

### *Upgrade: Bereaved (Lacrima ●●●)*

The production of Seeds by Alhambrans occurs on an almost industrial scale... or, at least, so they would wish. Nevertheless, in their raids on the Rebellious Provinces, they have learned secrets of their construction. Reduce the time per roll to (10-Willpower) minutes; if this reduces the time needed to 0, the character may roll once per turn.

As a side effect of applying this Upgrade, the Noble may remove the unique traces of her identity from the Seeds she makes. Instead, the Seed forms as one of the seals of the Kingdom, the crown of the Queen of Tears prominent on it. The production of such a Seed is frequently used as a test of identity by an Alhambran outpost sent a new Noble, and documents and packages sent between groups are sealed with wax imprinted with this mark. This leaves unmistakable magical traces, which a character with Lacrima 1 or higher, or the ability to see auras, can detect with a Wits + Occult roll, making forging the seal harder.

### *Upgrade: Militant (Tempesta ●● or Fuoco ●●●)*

One cannot simply wait for the Light to diffuse into one's soul! All of existence is a war against the Darkness, and no soldier of the Seraphic General should be caught without her arms! When creating the Seed, the Noble

may choose to make it release its energy quickly. If Tempesta was applied, the Wisp can be recovered from the Seed as a reflexive action, at a cost of 1 resistant lethal damage, with no more than skin contact with the Seed. There is no limit to how many Seeds can be tapped in this way per round, beyond the limits of one's well-being.

The followers of the Queen of Swords are less rash, but no less aware of the dangers of the world. By applying Fuoco, they create Seeds that release their Wisp as an instant action, and inflict 1 resistant bashing damage when released. A Noble can learn either the Fuoco or the Tempesta version of this upgrade, but not both.

### *Light's Riposte (Govern ●●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Reactive and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Occult - target's Stamina  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

Those who cast hostile magics at the Noble shall suffer for their temerity. When she is the target of a supernatural effect that she recognizes as such, she may activate the Charm. For each success rolled, the magic's user takes 1 bashing damage.

### *Upgrade: Lethal (Fuoco ●●)*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble's rebuke grows harsher; for each success rolled, the target takes 1 lethal damage.

### *Magical Eyes (Govern ●●●)*

Requires [Reflected Light](#)  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Inner Light + Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble heightens her occult awareness and mixes it with her mundane senses, so that she may see all forms of magical power.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble confuses her senses and falls into trance, fascinated by her new perceptions. She takes the Insensate Tilt [CofD 285].

**Failure:** The Noble's senses are not extended.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, the Noble can see, hear and smell magic. Any supernatural power that her sense from Reflected Light detects is manifest to her eyes; if she sees such a power while it's active, she learns everything her sense for magic could tell her and does not need to roll. (The sense itself still works for anything she can't see, as long as it's in range.) If the Noble's senses have been extended by other magics to let her perceive other places, Magical Eyes let her notice supernatural phenomena there as well. Moreover, Magical Eyes provokes a [Clash of Wills](#) with any supernatural concealment applied to things the Noble can see.

In addition, the Noble's perception recognizes quiescent magical power as well - supernatural beings and empowered objects stand out from the background, even when they're doing nothing unusual. When such a being or object comes within the range of her sense from Reflected Light, the Noble becomes aware that it has supernatural traits. If she wishes, the Noble can take an instant mundane action, rolling Wits + Occult, to examine a person or object within her range; she identifies a being's type and gets a rough idea of his magical strength (measured by his Supernatural Tolerance), or identifies an empowered object's source of power and a rough idea of its potency. As with Reflected Light, this information is in terms of similarity to things the Noble has seen before, and an effect which conceals a supernatural being's nature defeats the passive sense, but starts a [Clash of Wills](#) with active scrutiny.

If the Noble's Reflected Light is Light-attuned, she recognizes the Calling of any transformed Nobles she chooses to examine; she also recognizes a [Blessed place](#) automatically, and learns its Size and Beauty by exam-



ining it. If her sense is Dark-attuned, she can tell if a Dark creature she recognizes is Darkspawn, a Mnemosyne, a Cataphract or a Dethroned; she also recognizes a [Tainted place](#) automatically, and learns its Size and Severity by examining it.

The commingling of her senses blurs out the details of mundane things for the Noble; all her Perception rolls not related to magic or magical things take a -2 penalty until the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble keeps a clear head. Her Perception rolls take no penalty.

## *Ofuda (Govern ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 5 minutes/roll, threshold = 4x strength  
Dice pool: Presence + Crafts  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble imbues an object with the power to repel a type of supernatural being. She chooses the type of being, and the strength of the repulsion, when activating the Charm. As long as the Charm lasts, any character of that type coming within (2x Inner Light) yards of the imbued object reflexively rolls Composure + Supernatural Tolerance - the Charm's strength. Failing the roll gives the character the [Fearful](#) Condition, focused on the imbued object and the area within the given radius of it; on a dramatic failure the character gains the [Terrified](#) Condition instead. Either Condition ends when the Charm does. If the imbued object is destroyed, the Charm ends.

### *Upgrade: Exemption*

The Noble may allow a number of trusted individuals, up to her Inner Light, to bypass her protections. Alternately, by adding Commonalty to the roll she may allow members of an organization to enter unbarred. The Noble may change who is permitted and who is not after the Ofuda is created by casting Ofuda again while touching the Imbued Item. This will not change the strength of the defenses.

### *Upgrade: Sanctuary*

The Noble may intertwine an Ofuda with [Consecrated](#) ground. This both extends its range to cover the entire area, as measured by its [Sanctuary](#) rating, and extends the duration until the ground is no longer Consecrated or until the imbued object is destroyed.

An Ofuda invoked with Sanctuary must be built into the physical structure of the Consecrated ground it protects, even if only by nailing it to the wall. If it is removed from the Consecrated ground the Charm ends.

### *Upgrade: Lasting (Legno ●●+)*

Stackable 4 times  
Cost: +1-4 Wisps  
Duration: 1/2/4/8 x Inner Light hours

The Ofuda wards the area for a long time. The first purchase of this upgrade extends the Charm's duration to the Noble's Inner Light in hours, if she spends 1 more Wisp. Each subsequent purchase allows spending 1 more Wisp to double the duration. The Noble may purchase the upgrade up to her Legno - 1 times.

## *Privy Counselor (Govern ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = 3x Dreamlander's Inner Light or Rank  
Dice pool: Inner Light + Presence  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: indefinite



To escape the [Dreamlands](#) for good, one must either be reborn, or bind oneself to one of the Hopeful as a [Shikigami](#); but some Princesses are able to grant Dreamlanders temporary leave from their beautiful prison. The target of the Charm must be a Dreamlander who has come to the waking world and is currently in Twilight Form - generally the Noble has just gone to the Dreamlands to find a willing Dreamlander, and led him back through Crawlspace to her body. When she reaches the threshold, the Dreamlander becomes Fettered to herself, exactly as if the Dreamlander used the Fetter Manifestation [CofD 133].

The Fetter lasts until the Noble next sleeps; at that point the target returns to the Dreamlands, unless he or the Noble spends a Wisp to extend his stay for another day. An exceptional success during the Charm's activation may be used to prolong the target's stay; he need not spend Wisps to remain for the Noble's Presence in days. The target may use the powers given them by the Urged Condition on the Noble. Actors and stars roll Intelligence + Empathy to read their host's surface thoughts, and use any appropriate Social Skill to urge the host to act. In lieu of Influences, an actor or star may contribute to the host's actions using the teamwork rules.

### *Upgrade: Animal Companion*

| Cost: +1 Willpower

The Noble can bind Dreamlanders into material vessels, allowing them to act independently. She must find an animal, or sometimes a doll or plush toy, in the waking world who bears some resemblance to the Dreamlander she wants to bind - the closer, the better - to serve as his vessel. When she reaches the threshold, the Dreamlander is Fettered to the vessel instead of herself, and gains access to the Possess Manifestation for that host alone. Actors and stars who have Possessed a vessel use their own Attributes and Skills, except the Physical Attributes, for which they use the vessel's.

It is somewhat difficult to use a vessel who is larger than a Noble can easily carry; the Noble takes a penalty when applying the upgrade of -1 for each point of the vessel's Size above 2. And for some reason, it's impossible to use a vessel who could be mistaken in any circumstances for a human being. Dolls or figurines in human shape must be Size 2 at most to serve as a vessel; the Charm fails completely on any larger figure.

The Dreamlander must still spend a Wisp each time the Noble sleeps to sustain the Fetter to his vessel. If the Dreamlander vows himself to at least one Noble while possessing his vessel, he merges with the vessel and the Charm ends, leaving the merged entity a Shikigami.

**Suggested modifiers:** vessel resembles Dreamlander (+1 to +3), vessel significantly unlike Dreamlander (-1 to -3), vessel is not a living being (-2)

### *Upgrade: Dreaming Exile (Specchio ●●)*

| Cost: +1 Wisp and 1 Willpower

The Noble can bind a Dreamlander into the body of a human whose mind is currently elsewhere, projected in a Dream Form. To use this Charm the Noble and the Dreamlander must be at the waking end of a fully open Crawlspace passage. When she reaches the threshold, the Noble applies the [Usurping](#) Manifestation Condition to the Dreamlander, turning him into an [Amanojaku](#).

Making an Amanojaku is a compromise, normally at a -4 penalty.

### *Spirit's Friend (Govern ●●●, Legno ●●)*

| Requires [Forgotten Lore](#) with Spiritual

Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion - target's Resistance

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: 1 scene or indefinite

The creatures from the spirit world are alien and dangerous, but they need not be hostile. The Charm is used to influence a spirit.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble offends the spirit; it either attacks her or runs from her.

**Failure:** The spirit is not influenced.

**Success:** The spirit feels an attraction to the Noble. It takes the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] linked to her, lasting until the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The spirit is strongly attracted; the Swooning Condition lasts indefinitely.

### *Upgrade: Influenced*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble's person becomes attuned to the spirit's Influence. As long as the spirit remains under the Swooning Condition, the Noble is Resonant with it [CofD 135] and all the spirit's powers that require the Resonant Condition will work on her.

### *Capitation (Govern ●●●, Lacrima ●●)*

| Requires [Charge](#)

Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Resolve + Intimidation - target's Resolve

Cost: Sensitivity check at +2

Duration: lasting

All humanity ultimately owes allegiance to the Kingdom-which-is-Alhambra. Though they may not follow their oaths, it is still possible to extract the taxes rightfully owed. The Noble can extract hope and joy from a mundane human, converting them into Wisps for herself. After at least fifteen minutes of uninterrupted conversation, during which she touches her target at least once, she activates the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target becomes deeply disturbed by the Noble. She takes the Notoriety Condition [CofD 290] related to him.

**Failure:** The Noble gains nothing from the target.

**Success:** The Noble taxes the target's hope. She gains 1 Wisp and rolls the target's Integrity, gaining 1 more Wisp for each success on that roll. However, the target gains an instance of the [Tainted](#) Condition (or, if he has [Sensitivity](#), undergoes a Haunting.)

**Exceptional Success:** As for normal success, and the target becomes captivated by the Noble, and wants to talk to her again. He gains the Spooked Condition [CofD 291] linked to the Noble.

### *Upgrade: Anonymous*

| Modified by [Sympathy](#)

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on people without touching them or speaking to them, applying the Sympathy modifier. She still needs to spend fifteen minutes thinking about a target before she can activate the Charm.

### *Upgrade: Enervating (Lacrima ●●●)*

The Noble can choose to tax people's energy. If she applies this upgrade, the target loses a Willpower point and the Noble gains Wisps equal to his Resolve, instead of the normal result.

### *Upgrade: Seeded*

| Requires [Seed of Light](#) with Bereaved

Cost: +1 Willpower

Applying this upgrade converts the Wisps gained from the Charm directly into Seeds, instead of adding them to the Noble's pool.

## *Resting Place (Govern ●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Presence + Occult  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: Inner Light in days

With access to both a ghost and any object a Raven can bind a new anchor for the ghost. This is temporary and only with great and constant effort can a Noble keep a loved one on this plane, more commonly it is used by the Followers of Tears to position their ghostly retainers where they can be of greatest service to the Last Empress.

It should be noted that the defenses around Alhambra prevent ghosts from crossing the boundary of the fortress city, even if they have anchors on both sides.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble offends the ghost; it either attacks her or runs from her.

**Failure:** The ghost is not anchored to the object.

**Success:** The object gains the Anchor Condition [CofD 133] linked to the ghost for a number of days equal to the Princess' Inner Light.

**Exceptional Success:** The ghost finds manifesting near the object an easy feat. The new anchor gains the Open Condition.

## *Purgation (Govern ●●●, Tempesta ●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 5 minutes/roll, threshold = Severity of the closest Taint Focus  
Dice pool: Resolve + Occult  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 resistant lethal damage  
Duration: lasting

The Noble invokes the power of the Queen of Storms to scour away the Darkness with blood. To use Purgation, the Noble cuts herself and drips blood from the cut onto a [Tainted area](#). As she continues to invoke Purgation the blood writhes and boils, channelling the endless fury of the Queen of Storms. When she reaches the threshold the nearest Focus immediately catches alight with green fire. This destroys all the Curses associated with that focus.

The green fire that is created by this Charm is mostly mundane. It spreads or dies like an ordinary fire, it does however burn in both the Tainted Place and the [Dark World](#) beneath it. The fire created by Purgation is Intensity 2, but against creatures of the Dark or the physical structure of the Tainted place it acts as Intensity 3. The initial Size of the flame based on the Size of the focus. It only lasts one turn unless something other than the focus catches alight. If the fire does spread, and it reaches the border of the Tainted place, any flames that cross the border will be completely mundane orange fire.

If the Noble is interrupted she must begin the Charm from scratch; her spilt blood bubbles and boils, evaporating in seconds.

## *Forced Vows are No Vows (Govern ●●●●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Resolve + Occult  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

Many supernatural beings have the power to give a promise the force of a natural law, calling on Fate itself to punish an oathbreaker. And all too many of those abuse that power, gaining great advantages from the promiser

and giving mere crumbs in return. The Light has empowered the Noble to correct such injustice. This Charm is used on a person who has sworn a supernaturally enforced oath; the target must not have broken the oath yet.

**Dramatic Failure:** The oath's enforcer regards the Charm as a breach of promise. The target suffers all the consequences of breaking the oath, and the Noble reaches a breaking point.

**Failure:** The oath remains in force.

**Success:** The Noble begins negotiating with the oath's enforcer. The negotiation is an extended Social action with an interval of 1 turn/roll; the Storyteller sets the threshold. If the action succeeds the Noble can rewrite the terms of the oath, or cancel it altogether. A rewritten oath can't set terms beyond the power of the being who sealed the oath; the new terms must be ones the target could have sworn to and be bound by when the old oath was made.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble becomes a very persuasive negotiator; she gains a +2 bonus to her rolls in the negotiation.

**Modifiers:** The Noble doesn't know the oath's real terms (-1 to -3), the Noble has tried to alter the oath before (-2 for each previous failed attempt)

## *Unweaving (Govern ●●●●)*

Action: Reactive and resisted  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Occult - target Charm's effective rating  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: lasting

To unravel magical defenses, to unpick a curse upon a beloved little sister, to tear apart a hostile Charm flying at you. There are many reasons why one Noble might need to unweave the Charms of another; this Charm allows her to do so. Unweaving may be used against another Charm when it activates, or on a Charm already activated after several minutes of close study.

The Noble can also unweave the dreadful powers learned by Dark creatures. Unweaving may be used against an activated [Caligo](#), either when it activates or while it's in effect. Permanent Caligines and Umbrae can't be unwoven.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble strains her own magic. She gains a [Hypersensitive](#) Condition that expires when the scene ends.

**Failure:** The target Charm is unaffected.

**Success:** The Noble disrupts the target Charm. If it was in place its duration ends immediately; if it's being activated, it fails automatically.

**Exceptional Success:** A Charm intercepted as it activates has an automatic dramatic failure. Otherwise, the Noble gains insight into the Hopeful who created the target Charm, gaining the Informed Condition [CofD 289] for tasks related to her.

**Suggested modifiers:** the target Charm is cast on a human (including Sworn and Princesses) (+2), the target Charm is cast on something other than a living being (-2), the Princess knows a Charm from the same family (+1), the Princess knows the target Charm (+3), the Princess applies an emotionally appropriate Invocation, such as *Fuoco* to unpick magic that turns love to loathing or *Acqua* to remove a curse of ignorance (+2), the Princess applies an elementally appropriate Invocation, such as *Acqua* to extinguish a magical fire (+2), the Princess applies an emotionally or elementally inappropriate Invocation (-2)

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## *Disciplines, Contracts and Gifts, Oh My!*

Can a Princess unravel a Gift, or unpick a Contract? Well no. By default a Princess can only use Unweaving on magic created by Princesses, the Dark and other things found in the Princess books. Even when a Gift is mechanically similar to a Charm they are metaphysically different enough that a Princess cannot unpick the threads and end the magic.

This is true, unless you, the Storyteller, decide it is not. Allowing Princesses to undo the magic of others is certainly an advantage over other creatures, but if all the players are Princesses or the other creatures are given an equivalent ability to undo Charms this might not be a problem. You might choose to allow Unweaving to work against all forms of magic, at say a -2 penalty for targets unrelated to Princesses (waive the penalty if the Princess belongs to an appropriate Embassy).

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## *Accept Fealty (Govern ●●●●, Invocation ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = target's Willpower  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion  
Cost: 1 Wisp/roll, 1 Willpower dot  
Duration: lasting

With this ceremony, the Princess swears a mortal into the service of the Queen she follows. When she reaches the threshold, the target becomes one of the [Sworn](#), with the traits and drawbacks of that template. The target must understand what he is doing, and do it voluntarily; on an unknowing or unwilling target, the Charm fails. It also fails on mortals steeped in villiany; the target must not have Vice-Ridden [CofD 46]. Each Queen has a different version of this Charm, and a Princess can learn and use only the one for her own Queen.

A [Bequest](#) of any Queen's version of Accept Fealty fails to work unless used by someone loyal to that Queen who has at least 3 dots in her Invocation. Thus a Beacon cannot use any such Bequests, and Sworn or Nobles cannot use a Bequest attuned to any Queen but their own, and not even that except after long study of their Queen's magic.

## *Publican (Govern ●●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Requires [Charge](#)  
Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#)  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Politics  
Cost: (Rating of Sanctuary + 1) Wisps, Sensitivity check at +2  
Duration: indefinite

The Princess has a commission to collect the tax of hope rightfully owed to Alhambra from a territory in the Rebellious Provinces. The Charm affects an area, which the Princess must walk through and study carefully to activate the Charm.

When she reaches the threshold, the area gains the [Tax-Farmed](#) Condition, making it possible for her to extract Wisps from it. The activation dice pool is modified if the target area is Tainted or Blessed: each dot of a [Tainted](#) area's Severity gives a -1 penalty, each dot of a [Blessed](#) area's Beauty gives a +1 bonus.

### *Upgrade: Anonymous*

Modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

After the Princess has created the Tax-Farmed Condition, she may draw Wisps from the target area without visiting it, applying the Sympathy modifier to her dice pool. She must still be in an area to activate the Charm on it and create the Condition there.

### *Upgrade: Seeded*

Requires [Seed of Light](#) with Bereaved  
Cost: +1 Willpower

After the Princess has created the Tax-Farmed Condition, she may convert the Wisps drawn from the target area directly into Seeds, instead of adding them to the Princess' pool.

## *I am Become Light (Govern ●●●●●, Fuoco ●●●●●)*

**Avatar** (Swords)

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Resolve + Intimidation

Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: 1 scene

The Princess' Regalia shifts into garments of pure Light, flowing cloth of sunlight, and garbed like this with a pure heart, she may walk among things not of the light, and know that they are the ones at the disadvantage.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess' phylactery shatters, and she reverts to mundane form. The normal procedures for obtaining a new phylactery must be followed.

**Failure:** White light scintillates from the Princess' clothes, but there is no further effect.

**Success:** The Princess goes through a second transformation, her normal Regalia replaced with ones of even greater purity. The shift releases a burst of the Light that burns away magics alien to it; all activated supernatural powers not of the Light currently extant within a radius of Inner Light + successes yards must win a **Clash of Wills** or be dispelled. Powers that did not require activation remain intact. Further, for the duration, the following rules apply within a radius of Inner Light + activation successes yards of her person:

- The area is illuminated by true sunlight, acting as such for all mystical purposes (e.g. a vampire will take damage as long as he remains there.)
- All activated supernatural powers not of the Light must win a Clash of Wills to affect anything in the area. Powers that do not have an activation roll are not affected, but anyone in the area benefiting from one or more such powers suffers a -1 penalty to all rolls.
- All **creatures of the Darkness** reflexively roll Resolve + Composure, penalized by the activation successes. Characters that fail this roll gain the **Terrified** Condition, focused on the Princess; on an ordinary success they gain the **Fearful** Condition; only an exceptional success leaves them unfazed by the Princess' light. If a Tainted area is close by a Terrified creature of the Darkness will probably flee to the Dark World through it.

**Exceptional Success:** The extra successes are their own reward.

## *Inspire*

The Inspire Charms lift people's hearts, spark their passions, and exhort them to action. Only **Troubadours** have affinity for them.

## *Animal Fair (Inspire ●)*

**Favor** (Animal Ken)

Action: Permanent

The Princess becomes a friend to birds and beasts when she transforms; through a combination of smell, sound, or visual cues, the animals take her for one of their own.

## *Upgrade: Trusted (Legno ●●)*

No matter how strange, exotic or frightened the animal, a Princess knows how to deal with it safely. She can reduce penalties to an Animal Ken roll by up to her dots in Legno.

## *Upgrade: Primal (Tempesta ●●)*

Animals instinctively recognize their betters, and a Princess can seize upon that instinct. When the Princess tries to frighten an animal into obedience or flight, the animal's dice pool to contest the Princess takes a penalty equal to her Tempesta.

## *Fire on the Mountain (Inspire ●)*

### Regalia

Action: Permanent

*But sit down in that chair, right there, and let me show you how it's done.*

A musical instrument becomes part of the Noble's Regalia, on which she plays beautiful, captivating music. The Regalia bonus applies to performing on the instrument or composing for it. There are variations of this Charm built on every performance art; these give Regalia appropriate to the art they're based on (e.g. a beautiful pair of dancing shoes, a choker for a classical singer or actor, a handheld microphone for a pop singer) and apply the Regalia bonus when used to perform that art.

The Noble's skill with her instrument lets her put strangers at ease with her. If she opens a social maneuver by putting on a performance, her first impression on her subject will be good unless her past history with him has left him hostile.

### *Upgrade: Inspirational*

The Noble may use her art to direct her Echo toward a more specific inspiration. If she performs on her instrument for at least one minute before trying to [raise an Echo](#), the Noble gains two benefits: first, she spends a Wisp, not a Willpower point, to raise the Echo; second, the Inspired Condition gained by her audience is based on the meaning of her performance, not her Virtue or Vice. (To inspire people as she intends, the Noble needs to succeed on a mundane Wits + Expression roll.) However, the Echo raised in this way can't be used to resist another Echo or aura, and only those who listen to all of the performance are inspired by it.

### *Upgrade: Magical*

Requires Quality

The Noble weaves her magic into her chosen art. She can add her instrument's equipment bonus to her Charms to offset a Commonalty penalty, if she incorporates playing the instrument into the Charm activation. The instrument's bonus will not reduce the Commonalty penalty to less than -0; if a Charm doesn't take the Commonalty modifier, the instrument provides no benefit.

### *Upgrade: Sentimental*

The Noble may use her art to tune her Echo, producing a specific mood in those who can hear it. If she performs on her instrument for at least one minute and spends a Wisp, all characters who hear her [quiet Echo](#) become aware of the emotional state her performance evokes. (To send the emotion she wants to convey, the Noble needs to succeed on a mundane Wits + Expression roll.) This can be used both to influence her direct audience, as they can benefit from her Echo on actions consonant with the emotion she expresses, and to send signals to her distant friends.

If a character happens to be using a supernatural power that reads emotions or probes minds on the Noble at the moment she spends the Wisp, the flood of passion from her performance overwhelms him and disturbs his concentration. While the pulse doesn't interfere with the power, he takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286] from the psychic overload.

## *Hear Me, O Muse (Inspire ●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Intelligence + Expression

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 action



The Princess calls on the Light for inspiration. Each activation success grants a +1 bonus to a mundane action that creates something new. Eligible actions include (under Crafts) making a work of art; (Expression) writing a poem or story, or acting a part in a drama; (Subterfuge) creating a disguise; and (Socialize) organizing a big social event. If the action in question is extended, the bonus applies to all rolls until the task is complete, or the Princess turns her attention to something else; she loses the bonus if she stops the job partway, and doesn't get it back if she resumes it.

### *Upgrade: Cooperative*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

When others assist the Princess (she is primary in a teamwork action) they gain the same bonus on their rolls as she does.

### *Razzle Dazzle (Inspire ●)*

| Favor (Persuasion)

Action: Permanent

*Show 'em the first rate sorcerer you are*

When the Noble transforms, she has a honeyed tongue; people readily listen to anything she chooses to say.

### *Upgrade: Skeptical (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble keeps her head when others try to confuse her. When a character uses social maneuvering against her, she may apply Acqua once during the maneuver to add her dots as additional Doors. In other Social actions, if anyone tries to use fast talking to persuade her of anything (including but not limited to the Fast-Talking Merit [CofD 50]) she may apply Acqua as a penalty to the fast talker's dice pool.

### *Upgrade: Blathering (Aria ●●)*

The Noble's voice has a hypnotic undertone that leaves people nodding in agreement without really understanding what they agreed to. In any contested Persuasion action, the Noble's opponent takes a penalty equal to her Aria, and she may spend 1 Wisp to achieve an exceptional success on 3 successes instead of 5.

### *Upgrade: Preaching (Fuoco ●●)*

Crowds respond easily to the Noble's words. When she uses social maneuvering against a group [CofD 83] or [organization](#), she may spend 1 Wisp to open a Door. She may open a number of Doors up to her Fuoco this way during one maneuver.

### *Upgrade: Bargaining (Terra ●●)*

The Noble perceives the natural flow of a negotiation, and steers ably past all obstacles to a deal. During a social maneuver where her goal is a mutually beneficial agreement with the target, she may spend 1 Wisp to open a Door without rolling. She can open a number of Doors up to her Terra this way during one maneuver.

### *Upgrade: Seductive (Specchio ●●)*

The Noble has a gift for flirtation, and for tempting people into indiscretion. During a social maneuver where her goal is to seduce the target, she may spend 1 Wisp to open a Door without rolling. She can open a number of Doors up to her Specchio this way during one maneuver. The Noble can also add Doors, up to her Specchio, when she's the target of a seduction; each Wisp she spends adds one Door to the seducer's maneuver.



## Stare Master (Inspire ●)

Favor (Intimidation)

Action: Permanent

To her opponents, the Noble's eyes feel like the stare of a thousand predators, and the aura she exudes is like a great beast stalking her prey. No wonder they become more... cooperative.

### Upgrade: Third Degree (Acqua ●●)

When she questions people who keep secrets, the Noble adopts a cold, clinical manner that almost forces tongues to loosen. When she interrogates a person [CofD 71] and applies Acqua, she may spend 1 Wisp after seeing the result of her roll to reroll her dice pool, though she must accept the second result.

### Upgrade: Staredown (Fuoco ●●)

The Noble assumes such a ferocious aspect that her enemy hesitates to strike her. When she tries to inflict the Cowed Condition on someone, her target's dice pool in the contest takes a penalty equal to her Fuoco dots, and she may spend 1 Wisp to reach an exceptional success on 3 successes.

### Upgrade: Berserk (Tempesta ●●)

The Noble works herself up into a state of pure rage that terrifies all onlookers. She may spend 1 Wisp reflexively to add her Intimidation dots to her passive Defense for turns equal to her Tempesta. Each time the Noble takes damage while her Defense is boosted, add one turn to the boost's duration for each source of damage. The bonus does not apply to the Noble's Dodge pool.

## Carry On, My Wayward Son (Inspire ●●)

Action: Full turn

Dice pool: Presence + Expression

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: indefinite

The Noble puts on a performance that grants confidence to a single listener. She cannot use the Charm on herself, and must interact with her target for at least a minute before the Charm activates.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble undermines her own confidence. She gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290].

**Failure:** The target may be pleased, but he isn't helped.

**Success:** The Noble's influence steadies the target in his tasks. He gains the Steadfast Condition [CofD 291].

**Exceptional Success:** The target's will is refreshed; when he resolves the Condition, he also regains a point of Willpower.

### Upgrade: Collective

Modified by Commonalty

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. All members present gain the Steadfast Condition.

## *Fighting Evil by Moonlight (Inspire ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Expression - target's fatigue penalty  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

*Fighting evil by moonlight, winning love by daylight ...*

School, friends, royal duties, sleep: choose three. If a Noble has chosen to skip on sleep then a Troubadour can inspire her to keep going through the night, or day as the case may be.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble feels her energy drain away. She becomes as exhausted as her target, taking the same fatigue penalty, and must immediately roll to stay awake.

**Failure:** The target remains as sleepy as he was.

**Success:** The target does not take penalties from [fatigue](#) for the rest of the scene, no matter how long he's been awake. The Charm doesn't remove the fatigue itself, but only defers it - any roll the target makes to stay awake is delayed until after the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** A bit of energy remains with the target after the initial jolt fails. Reduce the target's fatigue penalty by 1.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. The character with the highest Stamina among the targets resists for the group.

## *For the First Time (Inspire ●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = 3x Skills enhanced  
Dice pool: Composure + Expression  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

*...at least I've got a chance.*

Doing something for the first time can be scary, but with a stirring performance the Noble banishes those fears. The Noble chooses one or more Skills which (presumably) her target doesn't have; she must accumulate 3 successes for each Skill she selects.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes convinced that she can handle any challenge the world might throw at her. She takes the [Overconfident](#) Condition.

**Failure:** The Noble blunders while performing. She may either abandon the Charm, or accept a Condition and continue.

**Success:** When the Noble reaches the threshold, the target may ignore unskilled penalties on actions using the chosen Skills for the rest of the scene. Some actions (e.g. flying an airplane) impose an unskilled penalty on anyone lacking an appropriate specialty; the Charm removes that penalty too, so if a young Noble has a pressing need to fly an airplane this is the Charm to know.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may reduce the threshold or interval, or give her target a flash of insight into the chosen Skills, represented by the [Insightful](#) Condition.

## *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. The same Skills are affected for all members.

## *You Must Remember This (Inspire ●●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Reflexive

Dice pool: Intelligence + Composure

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 year

*The fundamental things apply as time goes by.*

Words the Noble speaks long remain in the memory. When she is speaking to the target, or guiding his attempt to learn something, she may use the Charm to help him remember what she's saying. The Noble may use the Charm to help herself remember, but to do so she must still repeat the facts she's memorizing aloud. She takes a -1 penalty for each prior use of the Charm on the same person during the same session.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's memory of the matters she was talking about goes blank. She takes the [Stumbling](#) Condition on a Skill relevant to her topic, lasting for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The target's attention wanders.

**Success:** The target indelibly remembers what the Noble just said. Until the Charm ends he does not have to recall the Noble's statement. He takes a +2 bonus on rolls to remember the scene when she said it.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gives her target a flash of insight into the topic she spoke about, represented by the [Insightful](#) Condition.

## *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Princess may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. The threshold is set by the target with the highest Composure.

## *Giggle at the Ghostie (Inspire ●●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Wits + Empathy - target's Composure

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 scene

Bullies, tyrants, even the horrors of the Dark - all these lose their terrors if you can just show them their absurdity. The Noble may use this Charm on a single person within sight.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes frightened of the target, taking the [Cowed](#) Condition, and cannot use the Charm on him until she resolves it.

**Failure:** The target retains his ability to frighten.

**Success:** All attempts by the target to inspire fear or awe take a penalty equal to the activation successes. The penalty applies both to mundane use of Intimidation, and to supernatural powers that frighten or overawe, if the target rolls to activate them.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's attempts to frighten are greatly impeded.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by **Commonalty**  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization whose members can see her, applying the Commonalty modifier. The member with the highest Composure resists for the group. If the Charm succeeds, all the members take the penalty; on a dramatic failure, the Princess is penalized when opposing any member.

### *Upgrade: Swift (Aria ●●)*

The Charm becomes Reactive; the Noble may use it when a target tries to frighten or overawe, and imposes the penalty on that attempt if she succeeds.

### *Fight Song (Inspire ●●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Presence + Expression  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble puts on a performance that makes her listener indomitable in battle. She cannot use the Charm on herself, and must interact with her target for at least a minute before the Charm activates.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble undermines her target's confidence. He gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290].

**Failure:** The target may be pleased, but he isn't helped.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, the target continues fighting as long as he stays conscious. He cannot gain the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 280], no matter how badly wounded he is.

**Exceptional Success:** The target rushes joyously into combat - add the Noble's Fuoco dots to his Initiative when a fight starts.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by **Commonalty**  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, using the Commonalty modifier. All members present are immune to Beaten Down.

### *Peace on Earth (Inspire ●●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Resolve + Persuasion vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

Give me peace on Earth. With their focus on harmony and understanding the Wilds are never entirely comfortable with controlling another's opinions. Rather than making another want peace a Noble of Clubs might use this Charm to prevent violence, allowing her to pursue peace in more traditional ways: with hearts and voices.

This Charm cannot be used if the Noble has attacked anyone or used a combat Charm within the Scene.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble manages to cast the Charm on herself. She suffers the effect of an ordinary success.

**Failure:** If the Noble does not get more successes, the target is not hampered.

**Success:** If the Noble wins the contested roll, the target takes the Peace-Bound Tilt: any action he attempts which would injure someone else fails automatically, as he suffers from a brief lassitude that stops his movements. The Tilt ends if the target is himself attacked, or if the Noble tries to injure anyone.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble also gets a flash of insight into why her target wishes to fight. She gets +1 on Social rolls against the target where that knowledge is relevant until the Peace-Bound Tilt wears off.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by **Commonalty**  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier. Each member contests the effect independently.

### *Some Enchanted Evening (Inspire ●●, Terra ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Composure + Socialize  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

With a bit of coaching, the Noble grants her target perfect poise and instinctive courtesy.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target can't help but offend everyone he meets; he has a -2 on Socialize rolls until the scene ends.

**Failure:** The target must deal with the social situation with his natural training.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, the target can move in any social milieu with no effort, and follow any code of etiquette as if born to it. He gains a +2 bonus to all Socialize rolls, and if he begins a social maneuver he raises his first impression by one step. However, if he is deliberately rude to anyone the Charm ends prematurely, and his next Socialize roll is automatically a dramatic failure.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's bonus to Socialize rises to +3.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by **Commonalty**  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier.

### *Queen's Sorrow (Inspire ●●, Lacrima ●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Intimidation vs. target's Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp, Sensitivity check  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble speaks to another, and drains his strength of conviction.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble undermines her own conviction. She gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290].

**Failure:** If the Noble does not get more successes, the target is unmoved by her words.

**Success:** If the Noble wins the contested roll, the target takes the Depressed Tilt: he cannot spend Willpower to add a bonus to his dice pools. The Tilt ends if the character regains at least one Willpower point.

**Exceptional Success:** The target is disturbed for a considerable time. At the end of the scene he gains the Shaken Condition.

### *Upgrade: Heavy (Lacrima ●●●)*

The target's depression is deeper. If he loses the contested roll, the Depressed Tilt also stops him from spending Willpower to improve his Defense or resistance to supernatural powers.

### *Now I'm a Believer (Inspire ●●, Specchio ●●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: indefinite

*... I couldn't leave her if I tried*

How can you *not* love the Heirs, the darlings of the Light? If you don't, the Heir will show you the error of your ways. The Charm is used on a single person that the Noble can see.

**Dramatic Failure:** Thoughts of the target occupy the Noble's mind constantly. She gains the Obsession Condition [CofD 290], focusing on capturing the target's affections. She cannot use *Now I'm a Believer* on the target until she sheds her obsession.

**Failure:** If the Noble does not get more successes, the target feels no special attraction for her.

**Success:** If the Noble wins the contested roll, the target falls for her; he gains the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] focused on her.

**Exceptional Success:** The target is deeply enthralled. He also takes the Obsession Condition, focused on capturing the Noble's affections.

### *Upgrade: Lasting (Specchio ●●●)*

Cost: +1 Willpower

If the Noble wins the contest, the target's Swooning Condition becomes persistent. The normal resolution for the Condition still grants Beats, but the Condition resolves only when the Noble repudiates the target, betrays him, or attacks him (inflicting at least 1 lethal damage.)

### *Don't Stop Believing (Inspire ●●●)*

Action: Full turn

Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion - desired bonus

Cost: 1 Wisp, 1 Willpower

Duration: 1 day or indefinite

The Noble's performance revives in her target memories of lost innocence, which protect him against the sight of horrors. The Noble must interact with her target for at least a minute before the Charm activates.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble only reminds herself of her past failures. She reaches a breaking point, rolling at a -2 penalty.

**Failure:** The Noble revives no memories in her target.

**Success:** The target gains the [Shield of Innocence](#) Condition, giving the desired bonus when resolved. The Condition ends without resolving after a full day.

**Exceptional Success:** The Shield of Innocence Condition lasts until the target ends it.

## *Look Into the Future (Inspire ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = target's Willpower  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion  
Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: indefinite

*Tell me what you see. I really need to know now, is there a place for me?*

The Noble delivers a stirring performance about the future she wants to build, and her audience's place in it. Through her art she inspires people to help build that future.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble shakes her confidence in her goals. She takes the [Doubting](#) Condition.

**Failure:** The Noble blunders while performing. She may either abandon the Charm, or accept a Condition and continue.

**Success:** When the Noble reaches the threshold, the target gains a fourth Aspiration, in addition to the three he already has. (A PC has the option of accepting or refusing the new Aspiration.) The Aspiration must reflect the goals of the Noble, as explained during her performance, and should also reflect the target's abilities; the players of the Princess and the target should work together to choose an appropriate Aspiration.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may reduce the threshold or interval, or give the target calm and firm purpose; he gains the Steadfast Condition [CofD 291].

The Aspiration created by this Charm lasts until it is fulfilled, or the target chooses to abandon it. Under no circumstances can anyone gain more than one Aspiration at a time from *Look Into the Future*.

## *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization that can see or hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier. The threshold is the highest Willpower among those affected. Different members need not gain the same Aspiration.

## *Such a Lonely Word (Inspire ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Expression  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

*But I don't want some pretty face / To tell me pretty lies / All I want is someone to believe*

A student of Acqua must tell the truth, but mere honesty doesn't convince everyone. The Noble can clothe the truths she speaks with magic that makes her honesty clear to all.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble achieves the opposite of her intent: those who hear her assume she lies. She takes a -2 penalty on Social rolls to communicate or persuade people for the rest of the scene, and may not use the Charm again until then.

**Failure:** The Noble's words are as convincing as usual, no more and no less.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, no one who hears the Noble can question her sincerity. Any claim she makes will be taken in exactly the sense she intends to express, if a hearer can understand it at all, and the

hearers will know beyond doubt that the Noble means every word of it. This can help the Noble open a Door in a social maneuver, or grant up to +2 dice on Social actions with people who might otherwise doubt her.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's honesty makes people inclined to trust her generally. In addition to the normal effect, she has a +1 bonus on all Social dice pools until the Charm ends.

**Drawback:** If the Noble breaks Acqua's ban (that is, attempts to deceive anyone) the Charm ends immediately and the person she spoke to recognizes her deceit for what it is.

## *On With the Motley (Inspire ●●●, Aria ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Subterfuge, modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: successes in turns

Sometimes it's necessary to provide a spectacle to draw people's attention away, while an accomplice does the real work. The Noble uses this Charm on the members of an organization who can see her, applying the Commonalty modifier for them.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble can't get attention from her targets to save her life. For the rest of the scene, her Social actions aimed at the targets take a penalty equal to her Aria.

**Failure:** The Noble fails to distract her targets.

**Success:** For one turn per activation success, and as long as the targets can see the Noble, their eyes remain fixed on her and everything else slips from their notice. Outside of combat, the targets must succeed on a Perception roll to notice the presence of any other person or object beyond the most generic description (e.g. man, woman or child; car or truck; chair, desk or table) and anyone who actively conceals themselves will succeed automatically.

The Charm is less effective during a fight, when people are keyed up and attentive, but even then the targets must pass a Perception check to notice anyone who doesn't attack them. However, the Noble herself can't avoid attention - any use of Stealth or attempt to conceal herself immediately ends the Charm.

**Exceptional Success:** The targets perceive nothing but the Noble. Their Perception rolls are penalized by her dots in Aria.

## *Chariot of Fire (Inspire ●●●, Fuoco ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

*Bring me my bow of burning gold! Bring me my arrows of desire!*

The will of a person the Noble can see becomes nearly insurmountable. When the target spends a Willpower point to add to a dice pool, the bonus is increased by an additional +2 (to a total of +5, normally), and when the target spends a Willpower point to increase Defense or a Resistance Attribute, increase it by an additional +1 (to a total of +3.) The target can benefit from the Charm once for each success rolled. People affected by this power clearly appear to be surrounded by a burning aura of pure fighting spirit, and onlookers who see it can remember it clearly, but it simply doesn't seem unusual - as if that's what any normal person in a fit of passion looks like.

### *Upgrade: Intense*

The target gains a further +1 when spending Willpower, for a total of +6 dice, or +4 to Defense or a Resistance Attribute.



## *Upgrade: Rapid*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on a distant target, applying the Sympathy modifier.

## *Soothe the Savage Breast (Inspire ●●●, Legno ●●)*

| Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Animal Ken - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

With soft persuasion or a sharp command, the Noble makes a beast heed her.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target animal turns hostile, and will attack the Noble if it can.

**Failure:** The Charm has no effect.

**Success:** The Noble forms a deep bond with the target animal. She gains the Bonded Condition [CofD 288] with it, which will last until she or it dies.

**Exceptional Success:** For the rest of the scene, the Noble gains a +2 bonus on all rolls to influence or persuade the animal, on top of her bonus from the Bonded Condition.

## *Upgrade: Swarming*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble can use the Charm on a whole swarm of creatures, if none of them exceed Size 1: insects, small birds, or rats. This can create the [Swarm](#) Tilt. All the animals in the swarm must belong to the same species. The Bonded Condition resolves when the majority of the affected animals have died.

## *Rally Round the Flag (Inspire ●●●, Terra ●●)*

| Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Expression  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

With a great shout, the Noble brings a panicked or riotous mob to its senses, and keeps it in order with her presence.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble panics, taking the [Fearful](#) Condition with respect to any person present who seems threatening.

**Failure:** The people near her pay no attention to the Noble.

**Success:** Any character who can see or hear the Noble recovers from any violent emotion they were undergoing. Temporary Conditions such as [Maddened](#) and [Terrified](#) end immediately; persistent Conditions that generate rage or fear lapse until the scene ends. Furthermore, while the affected characters are in the Noble's presence, any supernatural power that creates rage or fear in its target must win a [Clash of Wills](#) against the Charm to influence them. Finally, if a combat is in progress, any character who shares the Noble's intent may, once in the scene, apply the effect of the Steadfast Condition [CofD 291] while the Noble is present.

**Exceptional Success:** Affected characters gain a +2 bonus to resist attempts to enrage or frighten them.

The Charm does not calm a supernatural being who is inherently prone to rage or fear; it can't, for example, stop or suppress a vampire's frenzy or a werewolf's Death Rage. However, it does remove Conditions created

by supernatural powers that produce rage or fear, though depending on the power the Noble may need to win a Clash of Wills to do so.

### *Upgrade: Inherent (Terra ●●●)*

The Noble can use the Charm to bring a vampire in the midst of frenzy, a werewolf in Death Rage, or a supernatural being in similar plights back to sanity. She must concentrate the Charm's power on her target, who contests with Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance. If she wins the contest, her target snaps out of his enraged or panicked state. All penalties on attempts to influence the target in his madness apply to the Noble's activation roll.

### *Comfortably Numb (Inspire ●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy vs. target's Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 2 Wisps, Sensitivity check at +2

Duration: 1 scene

Those who follow the Last Empress sometimes have to make the hard decisions; the Queen of Tears shows them how to remain undisturbed, impassive and numb in the face of a harsh necessity. The Noble uses this Charm on a person who can see and hear her. The target must have Integrity, Belief or a similar trait (e.g. vampires and mages are valid targets, but werewolves aren't.)

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble suddenly loses confidence in her principles; she gains the [Doubting Condition](#).

**Failure:** If the Noble doesn't win the contest, the target is not protected from breaking points.

**Success:** If the Noble wins the contest, the psychic shocks that the target experiences, no matter what their source, don't reach him until the Charm expires at the scene's end. Each time the target would reach a breaking point in the current scene, record the size of the dice pool he would roll, but *do not* roll it - the target continues unaffected. When the scene ends, the target makes a single breaking point roll, using the smallest dice pool of those recorded during the scene, as the Charm's protection is withdrawn and the psychic stresses the target faced return.

The Charm does not blunt a Noble's Sensitivity - Hauntings will ravage her as usual, if she experiences any.

**Exceptional Success:** The Charm soothes the target's mind even as it expires. The target gains a +1 bonus on the breaking point roll he makes when the scene ends.

### *She's So Fine (Inspire ●●●, Specchio ●●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Presence + Socialize

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: 1 scene

*Then underneath this big umbrella she walked in the waiting room / I just had to tell her though it might have been too soon*

With her dramatic entrance, all eyes turn adoringly towards the Noble.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble draws no attention, and feels compelled to try harder. She takes the [Drama Queen Condition](#).

**Failure:** The Noble's entrance passes without remark.

**Success:** The Noble becomes the center of attention, and universally admired. Any onlooker who sees her, unless he has a Composure greater than her activation successes, takes a -2 penalty on Perception rolls to notice anyone but her; further, the Noble has a +2 bonus on all Social rolls against such people.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may choose one person in the room who has been influenced by the Charm; that person gains the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] toward her.

## *Jumping Jack Flash (Inspire ●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = bonus dice given  
Dice pool: Presence + Expression, modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: indefinite

*You were born in a crossfire hurricane. And you howled at your Ma in the drivin' rain. But it's all right now.*

The Noble puts on a performance that inspires people to the heights of their abilities - and beyond. The Charm is used on the members of an organization who can see and hear the performance.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's performance is *awful*. She gains the Notoriety Condition [CofD 290] with respect to the people she used the Charm to help.

**Failure:** The Noble must take a Condition or let the Charm fail.

**Success:** When the Noble reaches the threshold, the targeted people all gain the [Blessed](#) Condition, with the desired number of bonus dice. The mission is related to the organization's Aspirations.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may reduce the threshold or interval, or add bonus dice equal to her Presence to the Conditions she gives.

## *No Choice, No Hope (Inspire ●●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Requires [Queen's Sorrow](#)  
Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Intimidation - target's Resolve  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower, Sensitivity check at +3  
Duration: indefinite

The Noble's voice acquires the blighting and consuming quality of the void, sapping the wills of those who hear it and bringing them under her sway for a time.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target is outraged by the Noble's attempt to destroy his confidence. She cannot use the Charm on him for a full day.

**Failure:** The target is unaffected.

**Success:** For each activation success, the target loses a point of Willpower, feeling drowned in apathy. If the Charm takes his last point of Willpower, the target gains one level of the [Tranced](#) Condition, linked to seeing or hearing the Noble. The target's first trance begins immediately.

**Exceptional Success:** The target gains the Tranced Condition even if the Charm does not take all his Willpower.

## *Upgrade: Collective (Lacrima ●●●●)*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on the members of an organization who can hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier. The member with the highest Resolve resists for the group. On a dramatic failure, all the people targeted are immune to the Charm for a full day.

## *Consumed With Hate (Inspire ●●●●, Tempesta ●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion - target's Composure  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 resistant lethal damage  
Duration: Tempesta turns or 1 scene

With only a few words, the Noble can cause a person's rage to boil over, driving him uncontrollably to lash out. The Charm grants no ability to dictate the object of the target's anger - he goes for whatever, in his mind, is the greatest threat or obstacle to him - so it would be wise to either use the Persuasion skill to influence the target before casting this Charm, or get the hell out of the area very soon after casting.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble goes too far in her rhetoric; the target sees her as a crazy person he needs to get away from.

**Failure:** The Noble fails to incite the target's rage.

**Success:** For turns equal to the Noble's Tempesta, the target takes the Berserk Tilt: he gains +2 on all rolls to inflict violent harm on another, and suffers a -1 penalty to all other rolls.

**Exceptional Success:** The target takes the Berserk Tilt for the rest of the current scene.

## *Upgrade: Collective (Tempesta ●●●●)*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on the members of an organization who can hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier. The member with the highest Composure resists for the group.

## *Wearing a Heavy Crown (Inspire ●●●●●, Terra ●●●●)*

[Avatar](#) (Hearts)  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion, modified by [Commonalty](#)  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

To be the Queen of Hearts' avatar is to become the leader people need, the leader the people may one day deserve. The Noble assumes that role and leads any who will follow to greatness. This Charm is used on members of an organization who are willing to work at the Noble's direction, or towards a goal that she has set. She can let others come up with plans (what leader doesn't have advisers?) but the final decision of what the members do must rest on her shoulders alone.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble proves herself unworthy of leadership and may not apply Terra again for (11 - Belief) days.

**Failure:** The Noble cannot claim a crown. The Charm fails.

**Success:** The Noble undergoes a second transformation; a heavy crown appears upon her brow. Her words and appearance stiffen the resolve of her subordinates; while carrying out her plans, the targeted people substitute the Noble's Presence for their Resolve. Derived traits such as Willpower aren't affected, but dice pools based on Resolve and resistance to supernatural powers are.

Also, when the targeted people are working as a team to carry out the Noble's plans, each secondary actor adds dice equal to the number of actors on the team or the Noble's activation successes (whichever is less) to the dice they contribute to the primary actor's roll. (For example, in a team of 3, the 2 secondary actors can contribute up to 3 dice, for a total of 6, beyond the dice from their rolls.)

**Exceptional Success:** The first time the targeted people succeed in an action taken at the Noble's command (in a team or alone) they regain a point of Willpower.

**Drawback:** The Noble's Sensitivity rolls gain the 8-again quality when either the victim or the perpetrator is a member of the target group. In addition, if following her advice causes any member to lose Integrity, the Noble reaches a breaking point, rolling for compromise at a penalty of at least -3.

## *Learn*

The Learn Charms confer knowledge, and reveal what has been hidden. Only [Seekers](#) have affinity for them.

### *Data Wizard (Learn ●)*

[Regalia](#)

Action: Permanent

A portable computer becomes part of the Noble's Regalia. (When this Charm was first discovered the computer usually looked like a modern laptop or notebook; in recent years Nobles get smartphones.) The Regalia bonus applies to mundane Computer actions using the computer. It can store data in practically unlimited quantities, includes a camera, microphone and speaker, has adapters to connect to any computer networks available where the Noble lives, and reads from or writes to all common forms of removable media she can find. The Noble still has to supply passwords to gain access to a network, or else defeat the network's security.

### *Upgrade: Recording*

The Noble can link her own senses with her computer. With a reflexive action, she can start or stop recording everything she sees and hears, exactly as it appears to her eyes and ears. She may record her perceptions as long as her computer is physically manifested. She can stream the record to other computers, too, but setting up such streaming connections takes at least an instant action.

### *Upgrade: Assisting (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble's computer monitors networks constantly, looking for scraps of data she might need. As an instant action, the Noble may roll Acqua + the computer's equipment bonus when confronted by something outside her normal experience. Success means her computer's trawl for data has found a relevant article or post on the Net, and brings it to her attention; the Storyteller must supply a useful fact or detail about the issue at hand.

If the Noble has access to the Net where she is, she may spend 1 Wisp to start her computer on a focused search for relevant information. If a roll of Acqua + the computer's equipment bonus succeeds, the computer gathers enough data to give the Noble the Informed Condition [CofD 289] after several minutes of study. The computer stores the data locally, so the Noble need not read it immediately, but she does have to take the time to read it before she may resolve the Condition.

The computer is limited to information that is available to the general public through the Net, or is on computers the Noble already has access to. If the only relevant information available must be paid for, or can't be read without supplying an ID, the computer will tell the Noble so.

### *Upgrade: Traceless (Aria ●●)*

The Noble can gain access through her computer to any computer or network she knows of, without cables or radio signals. By spending 1 Wisp, she can hack into a computer over a sympathetic connection to it, modifying her dice pool for the task by [Sympathy](#). The Noble must always defeat the computer's security to connect to it, even if she knows the proper passwords, as she isn't logging in normally; on the other hand, a sysadmin contesting her hacking attempt cannot trace her address, unless he has an appropriate supernatural power. (Ordinary tracing tools usually return an address that constantly changes.)

## *Keen Observation (Learn ●)*

| **Favor** (Investigation)

Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she becomes keen-eyed, missing no detail when she fixes her attention.

### *Upgrade: Alert*

The Noble's keen perception becomes a matter of reflex. Whenever an Invocation applies *at no cost*, the Noble adds it to her Perception rolls based on sight and hearing. If more than one Invocation applies at no cost, the Noble uses the highest of them. She may also apply an Invocation when listening for a target while blind or in darkness.

### *Upgrade: Unerring (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble cannot be led down false trails of evidence. When she is leading an investigation, she may spend 1 Wisp to change a Tainted Clue [CofD 80] into an Incomplete Clue. She may do this a number of times equal to her Acqua during a single investigation.

### *Upgrade: Intuitive (Aria ●●)*

The Noble can guess the solution to a mystery based on slim reeds of evidence. When she is leading an investigation, she may spend 1 Wisp to combine three Incomplete Clues into one normal Clue. She may do this a number of times equal to her Aria during a single investigation.

### *Upgrade: Close (Legno ●●)*

Clues and anomalies in a scene disturb the Noble's sense of the harmony of things, drawing her attention to them quickly. When she examines a scene [CofD 71] and applies Legno, she may spend 1 Wisp after seeing the result of her roll to reroll her dice pool, though she must accept the second result.

## *Liberal Artist (Learn ●)*

| **Favor** (Academics)

Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she remembers her schooling and reading in her favorite fields with a crystalline clarity.

### *Upgrade: Memorious*

The Noble's memory for general facts grows nearly as sharp as her knowledge of her chosen subject. While transformed, she may apply an Invocation when memorizing [CofD 30] or recalling her own experiences.

### *Upgrade: Librarian (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble finds what she wants in a library as easily as in her own home. She may spend 1 Wisp once during an extended Academics action to add additional rolls, one for each dot of Acqua, above what her Attribute + Skill allows.

### *Upgrade: Autodidact (Fuoco ●●)*

The Noble burns through books and records at great speed, acquiring knowledge of a field rivaling a true scholar's for a short time. When she is transformed and building a repository [CofD 100] the Noble may spend a

Wisp. As long as it exists, the Noble may apply Fuoco to her actions when the repository provides its equipment bonus. For anyone else, the repository acts as normal equipment.

The Noble may keep a number of these repositories up to her Fuoco at a time; once she reaches her limit, she must discard a repository before using Autodidact again.

## *Natural Philosopher (Learn ●)*

**Favor** (Science)

Action: Permanent

The Light illuminates secrets of the natural world.

### *Upgrade: Inspired (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble knows her way around a lab. She may spend 1 Wisp during an extended Science action to reduce the number of successes she needs to reach her goal by her Acqua.

### *Upgrade: Kitbash (Aria ●●)*

The Noble applies her knowledge of science to assemble devices at high speed. When she builds physical equipment using the Science Skill [CofD 101] and applies Aria, she never needs more time than the basic penalty on her roll in turns.

## *Passion's Light (Learn ●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Unrolled

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble perceives the emotional state of the people around her as a wash of color around their bodies, their aura. She can make Perception rolls to notice people in the throes of strong emotion, or of emotion significantly unlike what other people present are feeling (e.g. deep gloom at a party, or satisfied pleasure at a funeral.) She can also detect the emotions of people (or stranger beings) who are hiding or in Twilight. Supernatural powers that conceal emotions or auras oppose the Charm - if the Noble looks for people so disguised, it triggers a **Clash of Wills**.

Like the supernatural Aura Reading Merit [CofD 56] Passion's Light need not manifest as a visual perception, though that's the most common form; murmuring voices is nearly as frequent among the Nobility. If a Noble's player likes, the Noble's version of the Charm can appeal to any or all of her senses.

### *Upgrade: Revealing*

The Noble can gain detailed information about a person by examining his aura closely. When she does so, she may roll Wits + Empathy - the target's Composure.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the **Misled** Condition. The Storyteller gives a false or misleading answer to one of the questions below; the Noble will believe the answer unless confronted with clear evidence contradicting it. The Charm will not reveal the true answer to that question during the current scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing from her scrutiny.

**Success:** The Noble learns the answer to one of the following questions.

- What is the character's most prominent emotion?
- What is the character paying the closest attention to?



- Is there anything here the character feels strongly about; if so, what sort of feelings does he have?
- Has the character's current emotional state been altered, chemically or magically?
- Is the character a supernatural being; if so, what type of being is he (among those the Noble has seen before?) A transformed Noble's aura, for instance, appears to shed light in her vicinity - things and people near her reflect her current color, in addition to any aura they have themselves. Vampires have a washed-out or faded aura; shapeshifters' auras show intense, saturated colors; mages move in a twinkling cloud of sparks. None of the Hopeful, as yet, have read the auras of other types of supernatural beings and recorded a description.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble learns the answer to two questions.

Examining the aura of a person whose aura has been magically disguised also triggers a Clash of Wills.

## *Quicker Than the Eye (Learn ●)*

**Regalia**

Action: Permanent

All too often, a vital secret is locked away somewhere that a Seeker has no legal right to go, and her sole recourse is to open the locks without a proper key. The Noble adds a set of lockpicks to her Regalia, to aid in her quest for knowledge. The Regalia bonus applies to mundane Larceny actions to open mechanical locks. As long as the Noble isn't pressed for time, she can open any mechanical lock without a roll.

### *Upgrade: Electronic*

The Noble's lockpick set includes digital picks. She can't open digital locks without rolling, but the Regalia and Quality bonuses do apply when she opens such locks.

### *Upgrade: Calculated (Acqua ●)*

Swiftiness is often the key to victory, but timing may well serve the same purpose. Whenever the Noble applies Acqua to her Larceny rolls at no cost, she may elect to use Intelligence in place of the normal Attribute.

### *Upgrade: Concealed (Aria ●)*

A Noble may not want to attract undue attention when the situation calls for it. When she applies the Invocation to a Larceny roll, attempts to notice her action take a penalty equal to her Aria.

### *Upgrade: Skeleton Key (Aria ●●●)*

The Noble molds her lockpicks into an exact duplicate of a lock's real key. She can spend 1 Wisp to open or close a mechanical lock in a single turn, without rolling. If she has Electronic she can do the same to a digital lock. The picks stay shaped to fit that particular lock and no other until the Noble spends another Wisp to turn a different lock; they can't be used as equipment until reset by a transformation action.

## *Scent Falsehood (Learn ●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Wits + Subterfuge vs. target's Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble smells a lie as another in her hearing speaks it.



**Dramatic Failure:** The Charm fails, but the Noble believes it has worked, and thus will believe the target implicitly, unless and until he says something she knows is not true.

**Failure:** The Noble does not win the contest; the Charm fails, but she is aware of the failure.

**Success:** The Noble wins the contest. Whenever the target says something he doesn't believe, the Noble perceives the falsehood automatically. The Charm detects only literal untruth - omissions, evasions, equivocations and honest opinions don't register. Factual assertions made in conscious ignorance do register as false.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's nose catches subtle misleadings as well as direct falsehood; when the target's statements are true but significantly incomplete, she will know that something has been left unsaid.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on the members of an organization who she can see, using the Commonalty modifier. Each member contests the Charm independently.

### *Upgrade: Unwitting*

When the Noble detects a lie, she rolls Wits + the activation successes on the Charm as a reflexive action. If she succeeds, she gains a hint of the truth the target is concealing; on an exceptional success, she learns exactly what the target knows of the subject of his lie.

### *Upgrade: Alert (Aria ●)*

When the Noble detects a lie, she gains additional insight into the liar's motive for deception. For example, she could smell the difference between a lie told out of envious malice and one told out of fear, or tell the difference between a sleazy propagandist and a dedicated, noble spy.

### *Upgrade: Guilty (Terra ●)*

When the Noble detects a lie, the liar experiences a strong pang of guilt, and finds it far harder to deceive again. He takes a penalty equal to the activation successes on all Subterfuge rolls for the duration. Further lies in the scene do not increase the penalty.

### *Upgrade: Melancholy (Lacrima ●)*

When the Noble detects a lie, the liar *knows* his deception has failed, and any further lies are pointless. He must roll his Composure, and loses a point of Willpower if he fails.

### *Upgrade: Righteous (Tempesta ●)*

When the Noble detects a lie, she may punish the liar with impunity. If she attacks the liar as her next action, he may not apply Defense to resist the attack.

### *True Names (Learn ●, Terra ●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Wits + Socialize vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: lasting

A Princess of Hearts understands the importance people attach to the names they wish to use. To activate the Charm, the Noble greets the target when meeting them in person. A target who wants to hide his name contests the Charm reflexively and unconsciously.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble cannot call the target by his right name. For the next 24 hours, she will use a wrong name for the target when addressing him or talking about him, and no correction will stick in her memory. In a social maneuver on the target during this time, the Noble's impression worsens by one step.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing about the target.

**Success:** The Noble learns her target's name. If the target has more than one ID, the Noble learns the name of the ID closest to the target's heart, the one used by their close intimates. That name, and the target's face, remain in the Noble's memory indefinitely; she needs no roll to recall either in the future.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's friendly manner puts her target at ease. If she begins a social maneuver on him in the current scene, her impression improves by one step.

Using the Charm on a transformed Noble gives the name of her transformed ID, not her mundane name. Similarly, if the target has a power similar to the Nobility's dual identity, the Charm finds the name of the ID he's currently using. Once the Noble has learned someone's name from this Charm, she cannot use it on him again.

## *Second Glance Wrongness (Learn ●●)*

Requires [Scent Falsehood](#)

Action: Reflexive and contested

Dice pool: Resolve + Composure vs. [Clash of Wills](#) pool

Cost: none

Duration: 1 turn

Sometimes magic gets you good. The Nobility are all too aware of that. Sometimes your mind can be wrapped in irrational fear by the Darkspawn hanging from the ceiling, pale-faced, sometimes the warrior of Storms can drive you into a frenzy, some things can pass by invisible. Nobles learn, though, to listen to the subtle wrongness that they get when their senses are being messed with, and it's possible to stoke the radiance within, to burn away the clouds that fog the mind. Whenever the Noble's mind is influenced or controlled by a supernatural power, and her actions are limited by it, the Charm activates.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble is so utterly fooled by the deceit that her mind is rendered susceptible to follow-up blows. The Charm will not activate until the next time the sun has risen.

**Failure:** The Noble acts within the limits of the power that influences her.

**Success:** A distorted perception wavers for a moment, showing what it conceals; an imposed emotion falters, revealing the Noble's true feelings; a compulsion falls slack, and is disclosed as instilled by another. The effect reasserts itself before the Noble's next action, but she may spend 1 Willpower point to bypass it for that action - penalties don't apply, compulsions don't restrict her.

**Exceptional Success:** The power holding the Noble's mind slips. During her next turn, she ignores its effects on her, without spending Willpower.

## *Upgrade: Meditative (Legno ●●●)*

The Noble can sink her thoughts into tranquility, allowing the foreign influence on them to wash over her without guiding her behavior. On a successful use of the Charm, the Noble may reflexively roll Composure + Legno to bypass the effect on her; if she succeeds on that roll, she is free to act. She may continue rolling to stay free on subsequent turns until she fails. However, she cannot spend Willpower for any reason on any turn where she bypasses the effect.

## *Upgrade: Hungry (Lacrima ●●●●)*

The Darkness around Alhambra is hungry, eroding substance despite the best efforts of the True Kingdom to tame it. The Hopeful of that city learn to do the same to effects that would control them. Each successful use of

the Charm inflicts a cumulative -1 penalty to the opposing dice pool, making it easier to bypass the effect later. If the Noble gets an exceptional success or the opposing dice pool gets a dramatic failure, the effect is broken for good.

### *Upgrade: Furious (Tempesta ●●●)*

The Noble can break free of mental slavery through sheer force of hatred. If she spends Willpower to bypass the effect, the Noble can keep herself free of it by going berserk - each turn she spends either engaged in violence or running toward a target of violence extends her freedom by another turn. If she takes a non-violent action, the bypassed effect resumes on her next action.

### *Questing Mind (Learn ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Investigation, modified by [Sympathy](#)  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

Like a bird to its nest, the Noble finds her way unerringly to the object of her desire. The Charm may be used on anyone or anything the Noble has a sympathetic connection to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble gets an entirely wrong idea of her target's location. Until the scene ends or she actually sees the target, she is convinced he is somewhere chosen by the Storyteller that is not where he really is.

**Failure:** The Charm has no effect.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, the Noble knows the direction and rough distance from herself to the target.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble retains her fix on the target's location for 1 full day.

### *Upgrade: Guided*

| Cost: +1 Willpower

Instead of a direction and distance, the Noble learns a possible route to her target from where she is. The route she learns is the quickest available (which likely isn't the safest) and will update itself as the target's location and conditions along the way change, until the Charm ends. The Noble remembers the final route, but it can become invalid after the Charm ends.

### *Upgrade: Visionary*

When finding the target, the Noble also gets a moment's glimpse of him and his surroundings.

### *Upgrade: Watchful*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble can delay the Charm's activation until a described situation occurs, creating a [Waiting Charm](#) Condition on herself. The Noble's description must involve the target, and is limited to the physically measurable; for instance, "this person is wounded", "that object is taken from the building it's kept in", or "this room is forcibly entered" would all work.

### *Upgrade: Passionate*

| Requires [Passion's Light](#)

The Noble may use *Passion's Light* on her target until the Charm ends to perceive emotional states near him (or it) or probe his aura. If she applies Watchful, her description can include the emotions of the target or people near him. She may not use *Passion's Light* to read emotions or auras near herself and her target at the same time.

## *Weight of Memory (Learn ●●)*

Action: Full turn

Dice pool: Intelligence + Crafts, modified by [Longevity](#)

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: lasting

While scrutinizing an object she is touching, the Noble catches a glimpse of the emotional impressions left behind on it by a significant event in its past. The Noble can choose how far back she wants to look, setting the Longevity modifier before activating the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the [Misled](#) Condition. The Storyteller describes an event that never happened; the Noble implicitly believes that it did. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Princess must discover her mistake by other methods.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing from her scrutiny.

**Success:** The Noble has a vision of the most emotionally intense event the object was involved in within the Longevity period. The Storyteller describes what happened, and how the object was involved. For each activation success, the Noble may ask one question from the following list, which the Storyteller must answer truthfully.

- What was the chief emotion inspired by the event?
- When did the event happen? (The Storyteller gives a timespan to the first unit - hours in a day, days in a week, etc.)
- Who was involved in the event? (The Storyteller names one person, or describes him if the Noble doesn't know his name, each time she asks this.)
- Did the event cause the growth of a Tainted or Blessed area? (The Storyteller says which, if either.)

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble learns a great deal about the event.

**Modifiers:** Object is only vaguely tied to the event (-2), event caused a breaking point or Haunting (+2), Noble has seen other events from the object (-1 per event seen)

### *Upgrade: Lasting*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The vision the Noble receives includes the context of the significant event. She sees a full scene of events, to which the key event serves as a climax. The time it takes her to experience this scene is the same as the time it originally took, and while the vision lasts she enters a meditative trance, only vaguely aware of her immediate surroundings; she forgoes Defense until the vision ends. If something happens near her, the Noble rolls Wits + Composure - 3 to end the vision prematurely; if she takes damage, the vision ends immediately. The Noble can't ask questions about the key event before she sees it.

### *Upgrade: Blessed*

The Noble can scrutinize a [Blessed](#) area, looking for the good deeds that created it. Such events, to her perceptions, call out across the gulfs of time; she doesn't add the Longevity modifier. The Noble finds events that contributed to the Blessed area in reverse chronological order. When viewing an event, she may also ask these questions:

- What Blessing did the event create? (The Storyteller gives one Blessing each time she asks this.)
- What area did the Blessed place cover when the event happened?

If the Princess begins looking for a **Vocation** related to the event she viewed, she adds +2 to its Beauty to determine the time required.

### *Upgrade: Tainted*

The Noble can scrutinize a **Tainted** area, looking for the sins that created it. As with Blessed, she doesn't add the Longevity modifier, and finds events in reverse chronological order. When viewing an event, she may also ask these questions:

- What Curse did the event create? (The Storyteller gives one Curse each time she asks this.)
- What area did the Tainted place cover when the event happened?

The next time the Princess is Haunted inside the Tainted area, the dice pool takes a -1 penalty. This is not cumulative.

### *Pierian Spring (Learn ●●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Empathy - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

As the Noble contemplates a person near her, she learns how much he has drunk from the wells of knowledge. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the **Misled** Condition. The Storyteller gives a false rating for one or more of the target's Skills, and the Noble believes the target has the stated ratings. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into her target's education and mental training. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- One of the target's Mental Skills or specialties
- A Merit representing knowledge (e.g. Encyclopedic Knowledge) or access to knowledge (e.g. Contacts, Library)
- The name or description of one person who taught the target something of importance to him (e.g. the advisor for his doctoral thesis)
- The name or description of one person whom the target educated, significantly forming their mind and character

The Noble may ask questions about more than one person in a single activation. She may use the Charm on this target again, but later activations during the scene take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains considerable insight into her target's mental training.

### *Upgrade: Personal (Acqua ●●)*

The Acqua Invocation favors any exercise of the intellect. The Noble may look for insight into the target's character and abilities, so far as these resonate with the Acqua Invocation or the credo of the Queen of Diamonds, or flaws which impair his reason. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- The target's Intelligence, Wits or Resolve
- Any Mental Merit the target has

- A Condition on the target that can impair the use of Mental Skills

## *For Want of a Nail (Learn ●●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
 Dice pool: Wits + Empathy - target's Resolve  
 Cost: 1 Wisp  
 Duration: lasting

As the Noble watches a person near her, the moments when his life took strange turns become apparent to her. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the **Misled** Condition. The Storyteller describes an event involving the target that never happened, and the Noble believes the event took place. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into the drastic changes her target has undergone. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- The time and place of an event that turned the target's life to a course he did not expect
- One detail of what happened during that event
- The name or description of one person who was involved in that event

The Noble may ask questions about more than one event or person in a single activation. She may use the Charm on this target again, but later activations during the scene take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains considerable insight into events that changed the target.

## *Upgrade: Personal (Aria ●●)*

The Aria Invocation favors those who can handle surprises, good or bad, with a smile. The Noble may look for insight into the target's character and abilities, so far as these resonate with the Aria Invocation or the credo of the Queen of Spades, or of magics distorting his character. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- The target's Wits, Dexterity or Manipulation
- A Skill or specialty that helps the target live in the shadows, or by his wits: Computer, Investigation, Larceny, Stealth, Streetwise or Subterfuge, or one appropriate specialty of any Skill
- A Merit that helps the target live by his wits, such as Danger Sense or Unseen Sense
- Whether the target is currently affected by mind-altering supernatural powers

## *Love's Beacon (Learn ●●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
 Dice pool: Intelligence + Empathy - target's Resolve  
 Cost: 1 Wisp  
 Duration: lasting

True love illuminates the beloved. The Noble examines a person near her to learn something of the people he most cares for. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the **Misled** Condition. The Storyteller describes a vision that gives a quite wrong idea of the target's affections, and the Noble believes the vision. Further uses of the Charm on

the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into her target's loves. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- The name or description of one person the target loves
- The nature of the target's love - marital, romantic, familial, comradely, etc.
- How the beloved feels about the target, to the best of his knowledge
- Where the beloved is most likely to be, again to the target's knowledge
- One of the target's Aspirations (or equivalent traits)

The Noble may ask questions about more than one person in a single activation. She may use the Charm on this target again, but later activations during the scene take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains considerable insight into her target's loves.

### *Upgrade: Personal (Fuoco ●●)*

The Fuoco Invocation is brightest in people's loves, but the fire prized by the Queen Errant burns in more than the bonds of affection. The Noble may look for insight into the target's character and abilities, so far as these resonate with the Fuoco Invocation or the credo of the Queen of Swords. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- The target's Virtue
- The target's current Willpower
- The target's Intelligence, Strength or Presence
- A Skill or specialty that helps the target live heroically or adventurously: Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Weaponry, Expression or Persuasion, or one appropriate specialty of any Skill
- A Merit that helps the target live heroically or adventurously, or persuade others to do so (e.g. Inspiring)

### *Scent of Irises (Learn ●●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Empathy - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble learns how much her target is at peace with himself, and what might disturb that peace, by examining him carefully. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the [Misled](#) Condition. The Storyteller describes an act the target really has no objection to performing; the Noble believes the target will refuse to perform that act. Alternately, the act described can be one the target won't do, in which case the Noble believes that he will. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into her target's moral scruples. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- The target's Vice



- The target's Integrity (or equivalent trait)
- One of the target's breaking points
- The name or description of one person or thing which the target would risk bodily harm or moral degeneration to protect

The Noble may ask questions about more than one person in a single activation. She may use the Charm on this target again, but later activations during the scene take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains considerable insight into her target's moral scruples.

### *Upgrade: Personal (Legno ●●)*

The Legno Invocation blesses a calm mind, an enduring body, and communion with all living things. The Noble may look for insight into the target's character and abilities, so far as these resonate with the Legno Invocation or the credo of the Queen of Clubs. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- The target's Resolve, Stamina or Composure
- A Skill or specialty that helps the target live harmoniously in any situation: Crafts, Medicine, Survival, Animal Ken, Empathy or Socialize, or one appropriate specialty of any Skill
- A Merit representing physical health (any Physical Merit with a Stamina prerequisite) or mental stability (e.g. Common Sense, Meditative Mind)
- The name or description of one animal the target cares for

### *No Man is an Island (Learn ●●, Terra ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
 Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy - target's Composure  
 Cost: 1 Wisp  
 Duration: lasting

*No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main ...*

The Noble sees what links her target to the mass of his society when she examines him closely. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the **Misled** Condition. The Storyteller describes a vision that associates the target with an organization he has no connection to, and the Noble believes the vision. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into her target's social standing. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- An organization in which the target has Status, and the degree of that Status
- A Mystery Cult the target belongs to, and the degree of his Initiation
- The name or description of the target's immediate superior in his organization
- The name or description of the target's Retainer, or a person immediately subordinate to the target in his organization
- One of the Skills known to the target's Staff

The Noble may ask questions about more than one person in a single activation. She may use the Charm on this target again, but later activations during the scene take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains considerable insight into her target's social standing.



## *Upgrade: Personal (Terra ●●)*

The Terra Invocation favors all aspects of human sociability. The Noble may look for insight into the target's character and abilities, so far as these resonate with the Terra Invocation or the credo of the Queen of Hearts. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- The target's Presence, Manipulation or Composure
- One of the target's Social Skills or specialties
- Any of the target's Social Merits

## *Quid pro Quo (Learn ●●, Lacrima ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Persuasion - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

All from the Rebellious Provinces serve the Queen of Tears; ignorance as to how is for the Noble to rectify. As the Noble scrutinizes a person near her, she learns how his cooperation may be obtained for the good of Alhambra. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to. When activating the Charm the Noble must concentrate on a specific goal, and learns only information related to that goal.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the [Misled](#) Condition. The Storyteller describes an action the Noble could take which would in fact perplex or offend the target; the Noble believes he would favor her if she took it. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble discovers how the target can help her attain what she requires, and what could persuade the target to do so. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- One action the target can perform which would help the Noble achieve the goal
- How many Doors the Noble would have to open in a social maneuver aimed at getting the target to take such an action
- An offer the Noble could make during such a social maneuver which would open a Door without rolling
- One action the Noble can take to improve her impression level with the target

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble learns a great deal about how to make her target help her.

**Modifiers:** The goal of the desired action is a Vocation (+3); the goal is helping Alhambra's interests (+2); the goal is an Aspiration (+2); the goal is a duty of the Noble's Calling (+1); the goal is purely personal (-1); the Noble doesn't really care about the goal (-3); the Noble has used the Charm on this target earlier in the scene (-1 per prior use)

## *Upgrade: Acta Non Verba (Lacrima ●●)*

The Queen of Tears demands of her subjects all that they can perform. The Noble can probe her target's character and training, looking for traits Alhambra has need of and weak spots that can draw him into its service. Instead of concentrating on a single goal, the Noble may ask questions from the following list.

- A Skill, specialty or Merit the target has that the Noble can't reliably obtain
- A Skill, specialty or Merit the Noble has that the target can't reliably obtain
- The target's Vice
- One of the target's Aspirations (or equivalent traits)

Also, on an exceptional success the Noble may forgo all questions to discover instead a way to inflict the Leveraged Condition [CofD 289] on her target.

## *Tisiphone's Call (Learn ●●, Tempesta ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Empathy - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

Injuries must be discovered and avenged. When examining her target closely, the Noble learns how he has suffered, and who to pursue with Furious justice. The Charm's target must be a person close enough for the Noble to speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the **Misled** Condition. The Storyteller describes a false vision of the target being injured, by people who are actually innocent, and the Noble believes the vision. Further uses of the Charm on the target won't clear up the Condition - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of her target. She may not use the Charm on this target for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into her target's enemies and tormentors. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- The name or description of someone who has harmed the target - physically, mentally or socially
- The nature of the harm done to the target
- Where the person who harmed the target is most likely to be, to the target's best knowledge
- The name or description of a creature of Darkness the target has encountered

The Noble may ask questions about more than one person in a single activation. She may use the Charm on this target again, but later activations during the scene take a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble gains considerable insight into her target's enemies.

## *Upgrade: Personal (Tempesta ●●)*

The Tempesta Invocation encourages all attempts to fight injustice. The Noble may look for insight into the target's character and abilities, so far as these resonate with the Tempesta Invocation or the credo of the Queen of Storms. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- The target's Strength, Dexterity or Stamina
- A Skill or specialty that makes the target a good warrior or avenger: Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, Weaponry, Stealth or Intimidation, or one appropriate specialty of any Skill
- A Merit that helps the target on the field of battle (e.g. a Fighting Style)

## *Mirror Mirror (Learn ●●, Specchio ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Inner Light + Investigation, modified by **Sympathy**  
Cost: 1 Wisp or 2 Wisps  
Duration: successes in turns

With this trick a Princess of Mirrors can look into one mirror and see out another. Sympathy is measured from the mirror she's seeing out of, not the one she looks into. The Noble is limited by the quality of the two mirrors used, a low quality mirror that gives a bad reflection gives a low quality image.

If the Noble spends a second Wisp, her own image appears in the mirror she sees out of; this can be used to show pictures or writing to anyone at that mirror.

### *Upgrade: Listening*

The Noble hears sounds through the mirror she sees out of. If a mirror gives a bad picture it also gives bad audio. If she spends a second Wisp any sound she makes is heard at the other mirror; this can be used as an untappable telephone.

### *Upgrade: Distant (Specchio ●●●)*

The Noble names a target and sees her from the viewpoint of the closest mirror or reflective surface. If no surface is available the Charm fails automatically and the Noble knows why. With this upgrade Sympathy is measured to the person she is targeting.

### *Introductions (Learn ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy - description penalty  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: indefinite

Sometimes you have to go looking for just the right person. The Noble activates this Charm to find a person who is unknown to her, but fits the description of someone she needs to meet. The more specific her description is, the harder the search will be - each characteristic it includes imposes a -1 penalty. She may not use the Charm while she is affected by a previous activation.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble learns how to find someone who satisfies all her requirements; however, if she follows the plan, her target will take offense when she finds him. Social rolls against him start with a -2 penalty, and social maneuvers begin with a hostile impression.

**Failure:** The Noble cannot discover any plan that will lead her to someone matching her description.

**Success:** The Noble sees a sequence of omens which will guide her to someone who satisfies all her requirements. If she follows the signs (AKA the Storyteller's instructions) she will certainly meet the person in question at some time in the current session.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition, she will meet the person in favourable circumstances and create an initial impression one step higher than she naturally would have.

### *Upgrade: Proxy*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble acts as an intermediary, using the Charm on a person she can touch, though not on anyone under its effects. The Charm affects the target exactly as it would if he activated it himself, except that the Princess sees the omens and must interpret them for the target.

### *Upgrade: Meet Cute (Specchio ●●)*

When the Noble follows the omens, she and the person she's guided to both take the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] for each other at the moment they first meet.

### *Moving Finger (Learn ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Inner Light + Investigation  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble mentally describes an object. She becomes aware of the location of the nearest object matching the description within 25 \* the activation successes in yards; no matter how well it is concealed, she can find it as an unrolled action. The description must be phrased in terms of the object's composition and form, not its significance or intended use. For example, "audiotapes", "letters in my father's handwriting", and "weak places in the wall" all work; "incriminating evidence", "letters about my father", and "something that will help me escape" do not. A Noble can find only one object at a time; if she activates Moving Finger when she already has it active, the first use ends immediately.

### *Upgrade: General*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble becomes aware of every object matching the description within range. She can find objects matching only one description at a time.

### *Upgrade: Significant (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble may describe an object by its meaning. For example, she can find documents about a specific subject in a wall of file cabinets, or search the scene of a murder for clues to the killer's identity.

The presence of Taint, and the property of being a focus of Taint, is considered part of an object's meaning, so applying Significant allows the Charm to find a Tainted area's focus.

### *Living Index (Learn ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

| Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Resolve + Academics  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 5 minutes

A library is a treasure house of knowledge, but sometimes one needs a special key to unlock it. The Noble uses this Charm when she has access to a library (or other collection of information.) She falls into a light trance, in which the totality of information contained in the library appears within her mind.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's mind drowns in the flood of data. She takes the [Stumbling](#) Condition on a Skill related to the facts she was looking for, which ends when she next sleeps.

**Failure:** The information in the library runs through the Noble's mind without leaving a trace.

**Success:** The Noble sifts key facts out of the flood. Each activation success reduces the threshold for her next extended action using the library by 1 success. If the threshold to find a piece of information becomes 0 or less, the Princess learns that information during the trance.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble retains a great deal of information. Her dice pool for her next extended action using the library gains the 9-again quality, if she didn't have that benefit already.

As long as the trance lasts the Noble stands or sits without moving or seeing her surroundings; she takes a -2 penalty to Perception rolls and Defense, and if she takes any action or suffers damage the Charm fails. The Noble cannot use this Charm more than once per scene, and if she uses it twice before doing research, she loses all benefits from the first activation.

### *Perfect Sight (Learn ●●●, Aria ●)*

| Action: Reflexive and resisted  
Dice pool: Wits + Composure - target's Dexterity  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 action

For a moment, the Noble sees a chink in a target's defense, and strikes swiftly.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target's Defense against the Noble's next attack is doubled. If his Defense does not apply, the attack is reduced to a chance die.

**Failure:** The Charm has no effect.

**Success:** Reduce the target's Defense against the Noble's next attack by the activation successes, to a minimum of 0.

**Exceptional Success:** If the attack inflicts damage, the target's Defense against all attacks is reduced by 1, until his next action.

### *Upgrade: Allied*

Modified by **Commonalty**

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble discloses the target's weak spot to members of an organization she belongs to who are present, applying the Commonalty modifier. Until the target's next action, his Defense against any member of the organization is reduced as if it came from her.

### *Genius Loci (Learn ●●●, Legno ●●)*

Action: Extended, 5 minutes/roll, threshold = **Sanctuary**

Dice pool: Composure + Occult

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: 1 scene

Places, especially buildings, have their own sort of life; as they age and people care for them, they acquire a distinctive spirit and a voice that speaks in creaking boards or rustling leaves. With careful attention and a touch of magic, the Noble can rouse a place's spirit and listen to its voice. When activating the Charm, the Noble meditates inside the place she wants to listen and speak to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble rouses the place's spirit, but offends it. Until she leaves it, a curse of ill luck dogs her; all her actions suffer a -1 penalty. If she returns at any time during the next day, she suffers the same penalty until she leaves again.

**Failure:** The Noble cannot hear the place's spirit yet.

**Success:** The Noble makes progress in waking the place's spirit. When she reaches the threshold, the spirit is fully roused and communicates with her in a fashion only she understands (patterns of creaks, flickering in the lights, etc.) For the rest of the scene the Noble may use her Social skills to converse with the location as with a person.

A place's spirit should have a somewhat definite personality, getting stranger as its relative power (age, fondness, etc.) grows; a recent home may offer full collaboration if one deals with the woodworm infestation, while an ancient library may refuse to answer simply because no member of the nakama has a membership card. (The Storyteller should however try to avoid making impossible demands.)

**Exceptional Success:** The place's spirit finds the Noble agreeable. Her Social interactions with it gain the 9-again quality, if she didn't have that quality already.

Note that some other supernaturals have powers that rouse a place's spirit, or compel it to service, while there are places - loci or verges - where the spirits are already wide awake. Using this Charm in such places is perilous; awakened free spirits, hearing the Noble's call, may stalk her with predatory intent, while bound spirits will warn their masters of her presence.

### *Upgrade: Tsukumogami (Legno ●●●)*

The Noble can also rouse the spirits of movable objects. The threshold for an object equals its Size. A dramatic failure penalizes her actions if she has the object on her person or within her sight.

## *Unearth the Foundations (Learn ●●●, Terra ●●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Composure + Empathy, modified by organization's [Commonalty](#)

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: lasting

The Noble's social senses are so delicate that she can see how an organization is put together just by watching its members at work. When observing an organization's members who are engaged in one of its projects, or when talking to members about their organization, the Noble may activate the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble takes the [Misled](#) Condition. The Storyteller describes a trait (among those the Charm can detect) the organization does not really possess; the Noble will believe the organization has that trait. Further uses of the Charm on the organization won't reveal anything that refutes this false belief - the Noble must discover her mistake by other methods. She may not use the Charm on the organization for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble learns nothing of the organization. She may not use the Charm on it for the rest of the scene.

**Success:** The Noble gains flashes of insight into the organization's structure and capabilities. The Storyteller must answer one question about the following subjects truthfully for each activation success:

- One of the organization's open Assets, with identifying information
- One of the organization's Interests, and the person overseeing that Interest
- One of the organization's Benefits
- A person with acknowledged authority or significant influence over the organization as a whole, e.g. 4+ dots in Allies, Mystery Cult Initiation or Status in that organization

The Noble may use the Charm on the organization again, but later activations during the same day take a cumulative -1 penalty. The Charm reveals the traits most relevant to the members the Noble is observing or speaking to first, so the Storyteller may refuse to give answers that aren't related to them before the facts about them are all disclosed.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble learns enough about the organization to plan a perfect approach. In her next social maneuver against it, she improves her impression level by one step.

## *Upgrade: Private (Terra ●●●)*

The Noble can discover the organization's current plans, its general mindset and its current troubles and weaknesses. Add the following to the list of subjects the Noble may ask about.

- One of the organization's current Aspirations
- The organization's Vice or Virtue
- One of the Conditions currently on the organization (including [Secret](#))

## *Reflected Portents (Learn ●●●, Specchio ●●●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Composure + Investigation, modified by [Longevity](#)

Cost: 1 Wisp, 1 Willpower

Duration: 1 turn

How does the Queen of Mirrors know who is the true heir? Simple, she can see the future. Or maybe not, since none of her many True Heirs fulfilled their supposed destiny. Regardless of the truth surrounding the Lightbringer's mysterious Queen, it is a fact that the Invocation of Specchio unlocks powers of precognition beyond the dreams common to all Enlightened.

To perceive the mysteries of time and space the Noble decides which question she wishes to ask. She also needs a mirror positioned so it reflects the subject of her question and invokes the charm. The Longevity modifier is measured to the future event the Noble asks about; because of this the Storyteller should always roll for Reflected Portents. A smart player can learn much from just the modifier.

**Dramatic Failure:** Guided by Fate, or perhaps an unwelcome hint from her own subconscious the Noble sees a horrifying vision, such as the brutal murder of a close friend. Like all prophecies it's not guaranteed to come true, but she still needs to make a Sensitivity roll.

**Failure:** The future remains unclear, either nothing happens or the Noble gets a completely accurate vision of a clear blue sky sometime in the future. Or the depths of space, or tv static.

**Success:** After a few moments the mirror fades to reveal a vision of the future. The player asks one question per activation success which the vision will answer. There is no sound but the vision is as good as the mirror's quality. Anyone looking at the mirror (which doesn't have to be the Noble, if she's holding a hand mirror facing someone else) can see the vision.

Visions revealed in Reflected Portents are entirely true and accurate, but may nevertheless change for the future remains in flux. Strange beings move outside of Fate, time travellers occasionally change history, even the Noble's vision of the future may introduce new variables into the timeline; perhaps allowing her to escape a horrible fate.

**Exceptional Success:** Extra Successes are their own reward.

The Noble can only invoke this Charm on the same event once per day. Additionally she cannot learn anything from the past or the present, defined as the current scene. If the Noble asks about a past or present event roll as normal. On a success reveal that it has already happened but give no further details. If the question has multiple answers, such as asking "Who will I marry?" for someone likely to marry many times, choose the soonest event, favoring big and *noticeable* events over others in the same time period, defined by the dicepool modifier.

### *Upgrade: Listening*

The Noble adds audio to her mirror. A low quality mirror that gives a bad reflection also gives bad sound.

### *Upgrade: Distant (Specchio ●●●●)*

| Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble can prophesy about a distant target, applying the Sympathy modifier. That modifier stacks with the Longevity modifier.

### *Upgrade: Pastward (Specchio ●●●●●)*

The Noble can see events that have already happened in her mirror. The time elapsed since the event shown in the mirror determines the penalty. On a dramatic failure, the vision in the mirror is entirely wrong and the Noble will believe it was correct until shown clear evidence to the contrary; her Sensitivity is not triggered.

All questions the player asks must be answerable by a vision of *one* past event. The question "Who murdered Miss Daisy?" will show the murderer in the act; "Where is the murderer now?" won't be answered, because what the murderer is doing now is a different event.

### *Dire Warning (Learn ●●●●, Fuoco ●●●)*

| Action: Reactive  
Dice pool: Wits + Composure  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

The Noble sees a vision of immediate catastrophe, with barely enough time to stop it. The last actions taken by other characters in the current scene, up to the activation successes or the Noble's last action (whichever



is less) did not really happen; they occurred only in a prophetic vision. A shouted warning allows a character whose action was “undone” to choose a different action when their turn comes. If an action is not affected by the Noble’s foreknowledge, because all the relevant circumstances are unchanged, its result is the same as the “vision” of it; do not reroll the dice. If the Noble’s last action was undone, the Charm’s use replaces that action in the real order of events; if not, the Charm’s use is her action in the current turn.

## *Zone of Truth (Learn ●●●●, Terra ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Investigation  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble enchants her immediate area, making deception impossible. This Charm affects an area with a radius of Inner Light x 10 feet.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Charm affects only the Noble herself; until the scene ends, she answers questions as if she’d gained an exceptional success.

**Failure:** Everyone in the affected area can say what they wish, regardless of its truth.

**Success:** Anyone in the affected area with a Composure less than or equal to the number of successes rolled - including the Noble - find themselves incapable of knowingly saying a falsehood (lying) or making statements without knowledge of or regard for the truth (bullshitting) for the rest of the scene. Affected individuals are unaware magic has been used on them, unless they have some ability that allows them to detect it; someone trying to tell a lie or bullshit finds themselves blurting out the truth or “I don’t know” instead, though after a few times they’ll probably realize something’s wrong with them and clam up.

**Exceptional Success:** All affected individuals must roll Resolve + Composure when asked a question, and will answer it truthfully if they fail - they can’t remain silent. The Charm will not prevent someone from making statements they erroneously believe to be true, or statements that are technically true but misleading.

## *Books in Running Brooks (Learn ●●●●●, Acqua ●●●●)*

**Avatar** (Diamonds)  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Academics - penalties for obscure topics  
Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

*... finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything.*

The Queen of Diamonds is a scholar without peer, and her avatar has all knowledge at her fingertips.

**Dramatic Failure:** A big chunk of the Noble’s memory temporarily vanishes. She takes the Amnesia Condition [CofD 288] for a full day, covering a period chosen by the Storyteller.

**Failure:** The Noble remains a simple, uninformed mortal.

**Success:** The Noble’s memory instantly fills with information on the things, people and places she encounters, arranged in the fashion she finds easiest to understand. Until the Charm ends, the Noble may carry out research without access to a library, and requiring only 1 turn per roll.

Moreover, for each activation success there is one topic that the library in the Noble’s mind definitely covers; she can give herself, or someone who listens to her, the Informed Condition [CofD 289] on any of those topics as often as she likes while the Charm lasts. The only limitation on the choice of topics is that they must be knowledge that is available to all of humanity; the Noble is of course free to discover new knowledge but her starting point, her library, is common knowledge. In practice this covers just about any topic the Noble is likely to be interested in, except for inner details of the supernatural and uncharted jungles or deep ocean trenches.

**Exceptional Success:** The extra successes are their own reward.



When the Noble activates the Charm, her eyes appear to become depthless azure pools (without affecting her vision in any way) and the immediate area is dimly illuminated, as if by moonlight reflected on water.

## Perfect

The Perfect Charms grant new personal abilities. [Champions](#) and [Menders](#) have affinity for them.

### *Barrier Jacket (Perfect ●)*

#### [Regalia](#)

Action: Permanent

A Princess is always properly dressed. Of course, the proper dress for battle is usually armor. The Noble may alter her Regalia into protective clothing that grants her 1/1 Armor, covering her whole body. She may return to her unprotected but transformed state with a transformation action. The armor from Barrier Jacket does not stack with mundane armor, but it can stack with Charms or other powers that grant Armor in a less tangible form.

The Regalia bonus increases the Noble's general (but not ballistic) Armor rating by her dots in the applied Invocation for one turn. Each Quality upgrade improves the Armor by +1/+1 before applying an Invocation. Infusing her armor with magic takes a few moments; applying an Invocation to Barrier Jacket imposes an extra -1 penalty to Initiative.

#### *Upgrade: Fluid (Acqua ●)*

The Noble's armor blunts the force of bullets. When she applies Acqua to her Barrier Jacket, she adds her dots to both her general and ballistic Armor.

#### *Upgrade: Sonic (Aria ●)*

Instead of wrapping herself in armor, the Noble can sharpen her reflexes and enhance her ability to evade attacks. When she applies Aria to her Barrier Jacket, she may increase her passive Defense or her Dodge dice pool by her Aria, instead of increasing her Armor rating.

#### *Upgrade: Fireproof (Fuoco ●)*

The Noble's armor can resist fires. During a turn in which she applies Fuoco to her Barrier Jacket, damage from fire does not bypass it, and fire damage exceeding its Armor rating is downgraded to bashing.

#### *Upgrade: Healing (Legno ●)*

The Noble's armor soothes bruises and knits wounds together. When she applies Legno to her Barrier Jacket, she may split her dots between improving her Armor and healing herself. Each dot used to heal removes 1 point of bashing damage.

#### *Upgrade: Saving (Terra ●)*

The Noble's armor protects her in the last extremity. When her last Health box is filled with bashing damage, applying Terra to her Barrier Jacket keeps her conscious. Moreover, if her Health track fills with lethal damage, she may apply Terra to avoid the point of damage each minute even if she is unconscious.

#### *Upgrade: Fearsome (Lacrima ●)*

The Noble's armor gives her an ominous presence, promising doom to her foes. Once per turn, she may apply Lacrima reflexively to block an opponent's close attack on her. The opponent must roll his Resolve +

Supernatural Tolerance - the Noble's Lacrima; if he fails, he cannot attack the Noble that turn, but doesn't lose his action. The Noble triggers her Sensitivity the first time her armor prevents an attack during a scene.

## *Celestial Dance (Perfect ●)*

| Favor (Athletics)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she moves with the grace and speed of an Olympian gymnast. (Detailed rules for tasks covered by Athletics may be found in [Athletic Feats](#).)

Although Athletics is used to calculate it, Defense is not an action, and Celestial Dance does not improve it. However, the Noble may apply an Invocation to her Dodge pool after doubling her Defense.

### *Upgrade: Swift*

| Stackable 3 times

The Noble moves a little faster than a normal human can, and avoids the strokes of her enemies. She adds +1 to her Defense, Speed and Initiative each time she takes this upgrade. At the start of a foot chase [CofD 84-85] the Noble reduces the successes she needs to pursue or evade by 1 for each time she took this upgrade.

### *Upgrade: Floating (Acqua ●)*

Water and ice are the Noble's allies; she moves in liquid or on slick surfaces unimpeded. In an area with the Blizzard [CofD 281] or Flooded Tilts [CofD 282] the Noble reduces the Tilt's penalty to Physical actions by her Acqua. In an area with the Ice Tilt [CofD 284], the Princess suffers none of its effects - she can move at full speed, and takes no penalty to Physical actions. Moreover, she may spend 1 Wisp to add her Acqua to her Speed and Initiative for a scene, as long as she is swimming or stays within a Blizzard, Flooded or Ice Tilt.

### *Upgrade: Weightless (Aria ●)*

The very air bears the Noble up whenever she leaves the ground. When she jumps and applies Aria to the roll, she multiplies the distance she travels by (1 + Aria) instead of adding Aria to her dice pool. When she falls [CofD 97] she may spend 1 Wisp reflexively to slow her fall; she takes no damage unless she reaches terminal velocity, and a fall at terminal velocity inflicts bashing, not lethal damage.

### *Upgrade: Heaving (Fuoco ●)*

The Noble can lift and throw objects of great weight. She may apply Fuoco when lifting or pushing an object to increase her effective Strength by her dots, and adds her Fuoco in yards to the short range of her thrown objects [CofD 90]; her medium and long range increase in proportion. Moreover, she can spend 1 Wisp to throw an object she has lifted, even if its Size exceeds her Strength.

### *Upgrade: Gripping (Legno ●)*

In high places, the Noble cannot put a hand or foot in the wrong place. When climbing, she reduces penalties from a sheer or slick surface by her Legno dots. If she falls while climbing or within reach of a surface, she may roll Dexterity + Athletics to grip the surface and stop her fall altogether; a fall from a climb, if stopped, is only 10 feet. Moreover, if she spends 1 Wisp, her hands and feet hold fast to any surface; she can move along walls and ceilings as easily as on floors.

## *Speed Racer (Perfect ●)*

| Favor (Drive)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble is at the wheel, a car responds to her directions almost as if it were alive.

### *Upgrade: Undented*

The Noble fends off blows to her vehicle as if it was her own body. She may reflexively spend 1 Wisp to reduce damage to a vehicle she is driving; after subtracting Durability, the vehicle takes only 1 point of damage if it takes any. If a source of aggravated damage hits the vehicle, she may spend 1 Wisp to subtract its Durability from the damage done, or 2 Wisps to reduce the damage to 1 point.

### *Upgrade: Tracking (Aria ●●)*

The Noble can easily keep track of other cars when she's behind the wheel. When she is shadowing someone, or being shadowed, while driving [CofD 72] her opponent in the contest takes a penalty on his roll equal to her Aria, and she may spend a Wisp to achieve an exceptional success on 3 successes.

### *Upgrade: Supercharged (Fuoco ●●)*

The Noble coaxes her vehicle's engine to perform beyond its normal ability. She may spend 1 Wisp to apply a number of modifications to the vehicle she is driving [CofD 99] up to her Fuoco, chosen from +1 dice modifier, +5 Speed, removing the Slow Acceleration tag, and adding the High Acceleration tag. The modifications last until the Noble stops driving the vehicle. The vehicle's total modifications (installed or Charm-added) are limited to twice the Noble's Crafts dots.

### *Upgrade: Undaunted (Fuoco ●●)*

| Requires Undented and [Barrier Jacket](#)

The Noble sheathes the vehicle she drives in her own armor. If she activates Barrier Jacket while driving a vehicle, it also adds the Jacket's general Armor rating to the vehicle's Durability, and the Durability of any part of the vehicle. Applying Fuoco to her Barrier Jacket (but not other Invocations) adds the Noble's Fuoco dots to its Durability for one turn. If her Jacket is Fireproof, the vehicle's fuel will not burn anywhere except in the engine; applying Fuoco keeps the vehicle from combusting, no matter how intense the fire.

The Jacket vanishes (removing both her personal armor and the vehicle's Durability boost) if the Noble stops driving the vehicle, or when the scene ends.

## *Woodland's Bounty (Perfect ●)*

| [Favor](#) (Survival)  
Action: Permanent

When the Noble transforms, she walks through a wilderness as if it were her own home.

### *Upgrade: Arctic (Acqua ●)*

The Noble may dance in a snowstorm as if it were a cool spring day. She reduces the effective level of an extreme cold environment [CofD 97] by 1 for each dot in Acqua while she is transformed, and the Extreme Cold Tilt [CofD 282] does not affect her.

### *Upgrade: Tropical (Fuoco ●)*

For the Noble, the heat of noonday in a desert is no more than a mild caress. She reduces the effective level of an extreme heat environment by 1 for each dot in Fuoco while she is transformed, and the Extreme Heat Tilt [CofD 282] does not affect her.

## *Upgrade: Fasting (Legno ●)*

The Light sustains the Noble in barren wilderness and keeps her body pure. She may apply Legno to her rolls to resist the effects of [fatigue](#), drugs, poisons and diseases. Moreover, if she spends 1 Wisp, she does not require food or water as long as she stays transformed; she does not take damage from [deprivation](#) or progress towards taking such damage, and she can heal any deprivation damage she's already taken.

## *Upgrade: Tracking (Legno ●●)*

The Noble's nose grows sensitive, nearly as much as a dog's. She may apply her Legno to Perception rolls based on smell and taste, and to rolls to smell out a target while blind. Also, she is able to track things by scent - she can follow trails over hard ground, that most people can't even see, and she can take scents from people's clothing, giving her a equipment bonus to track them. Scent tracking is a contested action using Wits + Survival vs. Wits + Composure; it can also be resolved as a chase [CofD 84-86].

## *Penetrating Eye (Perfect ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Crafts - Durability  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble looks through solid objects, seeing what lies beyond them. When activating the Charm, she chooses a Durability level.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Charm works too well; the Noble looks through everything, and sees nothing properly. She takes the Blinded Tilt [CofD 281] as if blinded in one eye.

**Failure:** The Noble sees normally.

**Success:** Objects with a Durability less than or equal to the level the Noble chose become transparent to her eyes whenever she wishes to see what lies behind them. (This reduces the benefit of opaque cover [CofD 92] to the same as transparent cover.) If the Noble wants to look through two or more objects at once (say, a wardrobe and the wall behind it) the sum of all the objects' Durabilities can't exceed the level she chose; her vision stops at the first object that would take the combined Durabilities over the limit.

**Exceptional Success:** Add 1 to the level of Durability the Noble can see through.

Note that thin sheets of material, such as paper, most fabric or metallic foil, have Durability 0.

## *Read the Wind (Perfect ●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The air touches all things. Flowing and all-encompassing, it feels the shapes of objects by where it is not.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes sure that something is watching her. She gains the [Nervous](#) Condition.

**Failure:** The Noble is limited to her normal senses.

**Success:** The Noble enjoys a reflexive knowledge of her surroundings, up to a range of 5x her successes in yards. This applies to 360 degrees around her. This ability is not sight, but an additional sense. The additional sense has a resolution of about 1/2" (2 centimeters) and the Noble knows the shapes, sizes, textures and positions of all objects in the area within that level of detail. It does not provide color; a book appears identical whether filled with profane words or chick-lit, although in the former case, a Wits + Crafts roll may be permitted to identify the characteristic texture of human skin binding the book.

The sense only works if air-currents can flow between the Noble and an object; she can't use it to perceive what is in an air-tight box, although the fact that the draft coming from the floorboards is actually the result of an underground dungeon may be useful. The sense provides no advantage when the Noble is not immersed in a gas (most commonly air); being under water is probably the most common case of this. Her rolls to avoid being surprised by people in range of the additional sense ignore penalties from lack of vision - darkness, fog, or just having her back turned.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's new sense makes her eye especially acute. She gets a +2 bonus on all Perception rolls until the Charm ends.

## *Beauty is Talented (Perfect ●, Specchio ●)*

Requires Striking Looks •  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: successes in turns

Don't you know that beautiful people are just better than you? Pretty people are stronger, faster, smarter, more talented than regular people.

**Dramatic Failure:** If she isn't more talented, the Noble must not be beautiful ... for the rest of the scene, she gets no benefit from her Striking Looks, even on dice pools the Merit normally helps.

**Failure:** The Noble's Striking Looks affect just the dice pools they normally do.

**Success:** For one turn per success the Noble can add her Striking Looks bonus to any roll. In situations where Striking Looks usually applies this Charm does not stack the bonus with itself.

**Exceptional Success:** While the Charm lasts the Noble gains an additional +1 bonus to dice pools her Striking Looks normally apply to.

## *Hang By a Thread (Perfect ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Strength + Athletics  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble creates long vines, ribbons or woven lines that tie themselves to any surface she hurls them to.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble entangles herself in the cords she creates. She takes either the Arm Wrack [CofD 280] or Leg Wrack [CofD 285] Tilt (in the one-limb form) until the scene ends.

**Failure:** No cords appear.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, the Noble can extend some part of her Regalia into cords of considerable length. She can throw a cord at a target, using the rules for a thrown weapon [CofD 90] but with a short range of (Strength + Dexterity + Athletics) \* 2 yards; if she hits, the cord attaches itself to the target with roots, hooks, knots or glue. The cords can stretch out to the Noble's long range when thrown, plus a yard or so of slack, and are always attached to the Noble. If anyone tries to cut a cord, its Durability and Structure is that of her Regalia; it will disintegrate if successfully cut.

Once a cord is attached, the Noble can detach it as a reflexive action, or change its length by up to twice her Speed instead of moving. If the cord is tied to a fixed structure or an object too heavy for her to move, reeling in the cord pulls the Noble toward it, and she can swing from the cord while carrying anything she can lift without effort. If the cord is attached to a object she can move, reeling it in pulls the attached object toward the Noble. If the cord is attached to a character, reeling it in brings the Noble and her target together; if both try to stand still each reflexively rolls Strength + Athletics, and the contest's loser moves toward the winner (reroll ties.)

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's cords grow longer and lighter. Her short range when throwing them is (Strength + Dexterity + Athletics) \* 3 yards.

## *Valiant Mind (Perfect ●●)*

| Action: Permanent

The Noble is the captain of her soul; she does not allow anyone to violate it. She may use a transformation action to raise or lower a shield against attempts to intrude into her mind. While the shield is up, any supernatural powers that read, alter, or communicate with the Noble's mind provoke a [Clash of Wills](#). If she realizes her mind is being attacked, the Noble may apply an Invocation to her dice pool in the Clash.

## *Upgrade: Entrancing (Legno ●●)*

The Noble's thoughts fascinate those who probe into them, leaving them blind and deaf to the outside world. The Noble may choose to lose the Clash of Wills to draw the intruder into a net of entrancing images, giving him the Insensate Tilt [CofD 285]; while the intruding power takes effect, its user does nothing but contemplate the Noble's inner harmony until the Tilt lapses.

## *Upgrade: Terrifying (Tempesta ●●●)*

The Noble's rage consumes those foolish enough to transgress into her thoughts. She may set her shield to fill her with fury when a supernatural power tests it, and inspire deadly fear in the intruder. If the Noble wins the Clash of Wills, she may reflexively accept the [Maddened](#) Condition, focused on the character who used the power, to inflict the [Fearful](#) Condition on him, focused on herself. Both Conditions fade when the scene ends, without resolving.

## *Wreathed in Flame (Perfect ●●, Fuoco ●)*

| Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Presence + Athletics  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: successes in turns

Passion for her beloved ignites in a fiery nimbus, burning anyone who interferes with the Noble.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble sets herself on fire; the Charm's nimbus burns her once as it would burn what she touched has she succeeded.

**Failure:** The Noble sheds a few sparks that go out without igniting anything.

**Success:** The Noble chooses someone she holds in affection. For one turn per success, her flesh and anything she wears or carries is a source of flame, of a color and Intensity set by the affection's nature and strength (see the [Heartfire](#) Condition for details.) Anyone and anything that touches the Noble is burnt as by a torch-sized fire of the given Intensity [CofD 98] as is anyone or anything she touches that was not on her person when she used the Charm. The Noble may try to touch an opponent in combat to burn them, instead of attacking them, but an attack does not burn her target even if she damages him.

**Exceptional Success:** The nimbus burns as hotly as a bonfire.

## *Upgrade: Banked*

The Noble can temporarily suppress the flames, allowing her to handle things without burning them.

## *Upgrade: Granted*

The Noble can turn someone else's passion into an aura of flame. She must know of someone the target holds in affection; when she touches him, he gains a fiery nimbus exactly as if he had activated the Charm himself.

## *Upgrade: Wild*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The fires leap with the Noble's strikes; each time she successfully damages an opponent in close combat, he is burnt as if she had only touched him.

## *Composed Come What May (Perfect ●●, Terra ●●)*

| Action: Permanent

Elegance is not a pretty gown and tasteful jewellery; it's a state of mind and the Noble knows how to be elegant when up to her elbows in mud. Any sensory effect that would grant her a negative situational modifier to social rolls is reduced by her Composure. A Noble who is covered in blood (-5) and has Composure 2 will only take a -3 penalty.

This Charm does not prevent a Noble from looking bad, it merely allows her to overcome its effects with grace and poise. Additionally because elegance is a state of mind a Noble must be in the right state of mind to use this power. If she cannot justify her appearance then she cannot benefit from this Charm. Being covered in mud because you were searching for a missing child and didn't have time to change is fine; turning up in dirty clothes because you'd rather sleep in than wash isn't.

## *Empty Heart (Perfect ●●, Lacrima ●)*

Action: Full turn

Dice pool: Stamina + Persuasion

Cost: 1 Wisp, Sensitivity check at +2

Duration: 1 scene or 1 night

The Noble becomes a being of Darkness, a manifestation of the Void. Her skin becomes sallow, her hair either whitens or darkens, depending on how light it was to begin with, and her pupils expand to fill the entire eye, making her look unhealthy but undeniably human.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble only attracts the Darkness. She reaches a breaking point, at a -2 penalty.

**Failure:** The Noble's appearance shifts as above for a few seconds, without further effect.

**Success:** The Noble takes the [Darkened Condition](#), with all its benefits and drawbacks, except that she keeps her normal Sensitivity and suffers Hauntings when it is triggered. The Condition ends without resolving at the end of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** The Darkened Condition ends at the next sunrise.

## *Upgrade: Umbral (Lacrima ●●-●●●●)*

| Stackable 7 - Belief times

If the Noble has dots in Shadows when she uses the Charm, she may assume [Umbral](#) up to her current dots. Each time she takes this upgrade, the Noble learns a new Umbra; she may choose freely among the Umbral she knows when using the Charm. The first and second purchases require Lacrima 2, the third and fourth require Lacrima 3, and any further purchases require Lacrima 4.

## *Best Defense (Perfect ●●, Tempesta ●)*

| Action: Permanent

The best defense is a good offense. When the Noble transforms, she may add power to her muscles, striking harder and moving more swiftly; she applies Tempesta during her transformation to add her dots in it to her Strength, and recalculates all derived traits.

Best Defense is not compatible with Barrier Jacket, or any other supernatural effect that gives Armor; it is also not compatible with any other supernatural effect that increases Strength. The Noble may dismiss or restore her augmented Strength during a transformation action, as she does with [Regalia](#); she need not apply Tempesta to dismiss her Strength, but must do so to restore it.

## *Persistently Peachy Pretty Perfect (Perfect ●●, Specchio ●)*

| Action: Permanent

The Noble is so stunning the universe itself cannot bear to mar her exquisite form. Any sensory effect that would grant her a negative situational modifier to social rolls, if her Specchio is equal to or greater than the modifier, is automatically nullified. For example a Princess with Specchio 2 is sprayed with mud by a passing car. Since this only gives a -2 penalty it is magically prevented, not a drop of mud sticks to the Princess. This effect protects the Noble from humiliation on all five senses, she won't smell of mud, nor will her skin feel muddy to the touch.

Only the effects on appearance are protected. A Noble with Specchio 5 might be able to walk through miles of raw sewage and still look and smell fresh as a daisy afterwards but she is not protected from catching horrible diseases.

## *Outrace the Sun (Perfect ●●●)*

| Requires [Celestial Dance](#) with Swift

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Dexterity + Athletics

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can reach the speeds of a car on the open road.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble trips over her own feet and falls. If in battle, she takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286].

**Failure:** The Noble moves normally.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, the Noble follows the rules for vehicles when moving [CofD 98-99]. Her safe Speed is (Strength + Dexterity + Athletics) x10. She rolls Dexterity + Athletics to keep control of her movements whenever a driver would roll Dexterity + Drive to control a vehicle; her Dice Modifier, when that applies, is -1. If the Noble collides with another object she can be the light object in the crash. If the Charm ends, and the Noble is moving faster than her normal running Speed, she takes bashing damage equal to one-tenth her current Speed and is Knocked Down [CofD 284] by the sudden stop.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess gets up to speed as quickly as a sports car. She gains the High Acceleration tag until the Charm ends.

## *Upgrade: Royal Chariot*

The Noble can grab other people and drag them along behind her; the wind of her passage lifts them up, rather like kites on a string. The Noble may take along a number of people up to her Strength dots. The people dragged along form a human chain with the Princess in the lead, and as long as each person in the chain keeps his grip, the whole chain is safe. However, each time the Noble has to roll to control her movements, each person behind her must also roll Dexterity + Athletics. Anyone who fails this roll, and anyone behind them in the chain, loses their grip and is thrown free, with the results of a sudden stop. If the Noble crashes everyone she carries is thrown free.



## *Naiad's Paths (Perfect ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Requires [Celestial Dance](#) with Floating  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Resolve + Athletics  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

In all its forms, water will support the Noble wherever she might wish to go.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Charm stops working when the Noble is standing on a particularly deep pool, dropping her into the water (or somewhere as inconvenient as that, at the Storyteller's discretion.) The Noble cannot use the Charm again for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble gains no ability to walk on liquids or atop snow.

**Success:** As long as the Charm lasts, the Noble walks on the surface of any liquid, or along the top of a snowbank, as if it were solid ground, without sinking in. Running water can throw the Noble off balance or carry her with it; the Storyteller may call for Athletics actions to stay upright in white water, for example, if the Noble tries to walk on it. The Noble may end the Charm prematurely if she wants to get under water. If she uses the Charm while submerged, the Noble will rise to the surface at her maximum running Speed.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble can turn the Charm on and off during the scene without ending it, walking on water or swimming in it as she pleases.

## *Feel the Burn (Perfect ●●●, Fuoco ●●)*

Requires [Celestial Dance](#) with Heaving  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Strength + Stamina  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble shatters even the sturdiest objects with her forceful blows.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's muscles cramp, burning with pain. She takes the Arm Wrack Tilt in her dominant hand, lasting for the rest of the scene, and can't use the Charm until it wears off.

**Failure:** The Noble's strength is unaffected.

**Success:** The Noble's muscles burn with energy. Until the Charm ends, whenever she damages an object, she ignores points of its Durability up to her Fuoco.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to the normal effect, all the Noble's rolls to break, lift or throw objects gain the 9-again quality.

## *Adaptation (Perfect ●●●, Legno ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Survival  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: until detransformation

To live is to change; to be perfect, one must change often. Wherever the Noble may go, she changes as she must to be in harmony with her surroundings.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble strains her body or gives herself an allergy; she takes the Sick Tilt [CofD 286] and may not use this Charm for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble does not adapt.

**Success:** For each success, the Noble gains one of the following benefits until she returns to mundane form.

- She subtracts one from the effective level of an extreme environment (this may be taken up to 4 times.)
- When resisting disease, drugs, poison or fatigue, she adds +2 to her roll (this may be taken twice.)
- She doubles the time that she can hold her breath (this may be taken up to 3 times.)
- She swims in water at her full Speed on land.
- Her skin and clothes take the color of her surroundings; Perception rolls to notice her take a -2 penalty.
- In a social setting, she behaves properly by instinct; she gains a +1 bonus to Socialize dice pools (this may be taken up to 3 times.)
- She can walk untouched on streets stalked by human predators; mundane characters must spend a Willpower point to initiate violence on her.

**Exceptional Success:** Extra successes are their own reward.

## *Royal Stature (Perfect ●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: (change in Size + 1) Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can assume titanic sizes, or shrink herself until she is no bigger than a mouse. When she activates the Charm, the Noble may alter her Size to any value, from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 3 dots more than her natural Size. When the Charm ends the Noble returns to her natural Size; she may end the Charm at any time with a transformation action, or by reactivating it. The cost of activating the Charm is always measured from the Noble's current Size.

Changing one's Size modifies several other traits; see [Size Changes](#) for details.

## *Wings of Air (Perfect ●●●●, Aria ●●●)*

Requires [Celestial Dance](#) with Weightless  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Athletics  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble is wrapped in the air's gusty embrace, and takes to the skies as a leaf on the breeze.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes horribly dizzy and confused. She gains the Lost Condition [CofD 289] and cannot use the Charm until it's resolved.

**Failure:** The Noble remains earthbound.

**Success:** The Noble begins to fly, simple as that. Her Speed in the air equals 5 + Strength + Dexterity + Aria. The Charm keeps her afloat until she touches a surface that can bear her weight, then ends leaving her properly balanced. If the Noble is airborne at the end of the scene, she drifts downward until she touches a surface, and takes no damage from the fall.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble can rest on solid surfaces without ending the Charm; no matter where she goes, she can fly until the end of the scene.

## *Upgrade: Fairy Dust*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble wraps the air's embrace around her friends to bring them with her. She may take along a number of people up to her Strength dots. The people dragged along form a human chain with the Noble in the lead, and as long as each person in the chain keeps his grip, the whole chain is safe. However, anyone who lets go starts to fall, along with anyone behind them, and is not protected by the Charm.

If the Noble hasn't reached her passenger limit, she can try to catch someone in mid-fall. She must be within her flying Speed in yards and succeed on a Dexterity + Athletics roll, with a penalty of -1 for each turn the other person has been falling, to bring them into the Charm's protection.

### *Upgrade: Sonic Rainbow*

While flying the Noble may spend a Wisp to increase her speed enormously, at the cost of precision. If she does so, she uses the rules for [Outrace the Sun](#) while she flies. Returning to her regular flying speed costs nothing but the time it takes to decelerate.

### *Skinchange (Perfect ●●●●, Legno ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Animal Ken - difference in Sizes  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: until detransformation

A mysterious wolven tongue invites. Wouldn't these ears suit you? Would not this proud long snout assist you in the hunt?

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's body contorts painfully. She takes bashing damage equal to her Legno and cannot use the Charm until that damage is healed.

**Failure:** The Noble remains in her own shape.

**Success:** The Noble assumes the shape of a beast. Her mundane Physical Attributes become equal to those of a normal animal of that species, while her Mental and Social Attributes, and her Skills, remain unchanged. The Noble's transformed dots still apply, and she gains the animal's natural abilities and attacks, and the ability to communicate with other animals of the species. She may also activate Charms in animal form.

The Noble cannot, however, speak any human language except the Royal Tongue unless the animal is able to mimic human speech (like a parrot); she takes penalties on any task that calls for hands, unless the animal has them (like a monkey) or capable manipulators (an octopus' tentacles); and her Regalia are transformed away and unavailable. Finally, any object she picked up after transforming out of mundane form does not change with her.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble retains the ability to speak a human language while in beast form.

The Noble may change into the form of any animal she can touch. She may also commit an animal's form to memory by carefully studying it for at least a minute, and change to that form later; she can memorize a number of forms up to her Legno, and forget a form to learn a new one.

She subtracts the difference between her normal Size and the animal's Size from the activation roll when using the Charm. She may remain in beast form as long as she can remain transformed normally, and may end the Charm at any time with a standard transformation action or by returning to mundane form.

### *Upgrade: Legendary (Legno ●●●●)*

The Noble doesn't need to touch an animal or study it herself to assume its shape; she can extrapolate a form from others' descriptions of the beast. To accomplish this feat the Noble must succeed on a mundane Intelligence + Animal Ken roll, and take a -2 penalty to the Charm activation. If she commits an extrapolated form to memory she may resume it without penalty.

The Noble can also assume the shapes of animals which are extinct, or which never existed outside of myths and legends. The dice pool for such beasts is Intelligence + Science. However, she cannot become an animal

with supernatural powers (other than her own) - she can't turn into a fire-breathing dragon without a separate Charm that creates a blast of fire.

## *Caryatid's Kiss (Perfect ●●●●●, Terra ●●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Survival  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

With a shout, the Noble's flesh and clothes become beautifully-sculpted, flawless marble, and she continues the fight as an animated statue.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble changes into an immovable stone statue. She takes the Immobilized Tilt [CofD 284]; breaking free requires cracking the stone, which has a Durability equal to her Terra. Fortunately the stone also provides cover, and if any damage from an attack reaches the Noble through the stone, the stone cracks and releases her.

**Failure:** The Noble keeps her normal flesh.

**Success:** Despite being stone, the Noble still speaks, thinks, and acts normally, but does not need to breathe or eat; her Speed is halved, and her weight is multiplied by five. She gains dots of general Armor equal to the activation successes, which stack with any Armor from other sources, magical or mundane. Any damage dealt to the Noble by a mundane weapon is downgraded to bashing damage, and she takes no damage at all from being engulfed in fire or exposed to radiation.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's stone body moves as gracefully as if it were flesh. Her Speed is not reduced.

## *Shadowmask (Perfect ●●●●●, Lacrima ●●●)*

Requires [Empty Heart](#)  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Resolve + Stealth  
Cost: 2 Wisps, Sensitivity check at +4  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 night

Wrapping herself in the darkness in which the only true remnants of the Kingdom reside, the Noble becomes a true, immaterial figure of shadow. Glowing eyes may glare from the head of the figure, or it may be a featureless mask. Occasionally, long-lost stars twinkle within the cut-out from the universe, before being swiftly extinguished. Certainly, there is no way that she could be mistaken for human.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble only attracts the Darkness. She reaches a breaking point, at a -4 penalty.

**Failure:** The Noble is not changed.

**Success:** The Noble becomes a living figure of shadow for the rest of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble may become a figure of shadow until the next sunrise, changing between that form and any others she possesses as if it were her transformed state.

As a figure of shadow, the Noble is immaterial; only beings who can touch things in Twilight can get any grip on her, and she passes through material objects like a ghost. She may do damage to people or objects by moving part of herself through them; resolve this as a close combat attack, rolling Strength + Lacrima. The target's Defense reduces this pool, and Armor (or Durability) cancels successes, as with a normal attack. If she hits, she deals bashing damage ... and the target loses 1 Willpower point. The Noble cannot touch or move any material things without magic, or interact with them in any way other than damaging them. She can still speak, however; when interacting with mundane characters, she applies her Lacrima as a bonus to Intimidation rolls, and as a penalty to all other Social dice pools.

A light source is painful to approach or pass through; the Noble must roll Resolve + Composure to do so. Moreover, any source of damage based on light or heat (e.g. fire, industrial lasers, and some magical attacks)

damages her as if she were material. If she ever takes more than 3 damage at once from one source, the cloak of shadows shreds and she must immediately return to a solid form; she also loses 1 Willpower point from the psychic shock. This ends the Charm unless she got an exceptional success, and even then the Noble may not assume the shadow form for 1 scene or during the daytime.

Until the Charm ends, the Noble gains the **Darkened** Condition, whether or not she is currently in shadow form. She does not, however, gain Umbrae as she would if she used Empty Heart, and she may not use Empty Heart before Shadowmask ends.

## *One Perfect Woman (Perfect ●●●●●, Specchio ●●●●●)*

**Avatar** (Mirrors)

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance, modified by **Commonalty**

Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: 1 scene

The true heir to the Kingdom, according to the Queen of Mirrors, is a living personification of the Light itself - her word becomes truth, her actions mighty, her presence a bastion of hope across the land. Mirrors' avatar, who may be that heir someday, can assume the heir's attributes for a time, when her followers need her. The Noble uses this Charm on members of an organization over which she has some influence or authority, none of whom are Hopeful; the member with the best Composure rolls to resist.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble offends her targets. She gains the Notoriety Condition [CofD 290] applying to Social dealings with them.

**Failure:** If the Noble does not win the contest, she gets no more charisma than she had already.

**Success:** If the Noble gets more successes - even just one - she gains a personal presence and magnetism that sways all who see or hear her; she has the benefits of Striking Looks ●● and Royal Tongue until the Charm ends. (If she has Striking Looks or Royal Tongue already, these effects don't stack with them.) This magnetism is even stronger on the people she targeted; they perceive the Noble as a paragon, the epitome of beauty and charm. When dealing with them, the Noble gains a +5 bonus on any roll to which Striking Looks applies, instead of the Merit's bonus.

In fact, the attraction is so strong that the targets will, if the Noble desires, surrender their drive and determination to her. The Noble may spend the targets' Willpower points as if they were her own, or convert their Willpower into Wisps at a 1:1 ratio. She may take Willpower from any one person up to her margin of success on the activation roll. Points taken in this way must be spent immediately; the Noble cannot use them to refill her personal Willpower or pool of Wisps. Targets reduced to 0 Willpower are crushed by a profound awareness of their inferiority and obligation to the Noble - nothing they might do could equal what this paragon accomplishes in a moment. (Whether they'll feel the same once they've recovered some Willpower is up to the Storyteller.) Taking Willpower from anyone without permission is a compromise with a -3 penalty.

**Exceptional Success:** The charisma granted by the Charm persists even after it ends. At the end of the scene the Noble gains the Connected Condition [CofD 288] to the organization she enchanted.

## *Restore*

The Restore Charms repair damaged objects, heal the injured and tend the sick. Only **Menders** have affinity for them.

## *Friendly Gremlin (Restore ●)*

Action: Full turn

Dice pool: Dexterity + Crafts

Cost: 1 Wisp/success

Duration: variable

Soon after airplanes were invented, flyers began to speak of gremlins, small spirits who liked to sabotage planes. While no one has ever seen a real gremlin, as far as the Hopeful know, a Princess-mechanic named this Charm after them, as it preserves the delicate mechanisms of aircraft (and other machinery) in perfect working order, keeping the local gremlins friendly. The Noble uses this Charm on any machine with multiple moving parts. Friendly Gremlin cannot be used on a machine currently under its effects.

**Dramatic Failure:** The machine develops a fault, and loses 1 point of Structure. The Noble can't use the Charm on it until it's repaired.

**Failure:** The machine is not affected.

**Success:** The machine gains the **Fortunate** Tilt, blessing a number of rolls made to operate it up to the activation successes or Wisps spent (whichever is less.) Neither the Noble nor the operator chooses which rolls gain the benefit - the "gremlin" blesses the next set of rolls made, no matter when or by whom, to operate the machine.

**Exceptional Success:** The target gains the Fortunate Tilt for many rolls.

### *Upgrade: Helpful*

| Cost: 2 Wisps/success

The gremlin's help is more effective. The machine gains the Greatly Fortunate Tilt for one roll per activation success or 2 Wisps spent (whichever is less.)

### *Upgrade: Perfected*

| Requires Helpful  
| Cost: 3 Wisps/success

The gremlin makes it nearly impossible to fail when using the machine. It gains the Perfected Tilt for one roll per activation success or 3 Wisps spent (whichever is less.)

## *Ministering Angel (Restore ●)*

| **Regalia**  
| Action: Permanent

The Noble adds a first-aid kit to her Regalia. The Regalia bonus applies to medical care in the field. It also allows the Noble to stabilize a character whose last Health box has lethal damage with an instant unrolled action.

### *Upgrade: Surgical*

The Noble can give medical treatment equal to a hospital's, wherever her patient may be, pulling any tools she needs out of her kit. She may downgrade damage to a patient in the field as if she were in a hospital [CofD 96] with the same dice pool, interval and threshold, and applies both Regalia and Quality bonuses.

### *Upgrade: Calming (Acqua ●)*

The Noble remains calm and rational in a crisis, and her calm mind and clear instructions help bring back others from panic. When she applies Acqua to a Medicine roll she may ignore up to her Acqua in situational penalties for stress, panic, loud noises, disgust and other similar distractions. If she is the primary actor in a teamwork Medicine roll, she may spend a Wisp to apply her Calming presence to every secondary actor.

### *Upgrade: Humorous (Aria ●)*

For the Noble, laughter is truly the best medicine. If she makes a patient under her care laugh, she may spend a Wisp to give the rote quality to his next Stamina + Resolve roll to resist damage from disease or poison.

### *Upgrade: Numbing (Legna ●)*

The Noble carries a supply of anesthetic in her medical kit. When used on a patient the anesthetic gives a +1 bonus, stacking with the Quality bonus. The Noble can also use the drug on an unwilling target, though this requires a Dexterity + Weaponry attack roll. Normal success gives him the Drugged Tilt [CofD 281], and exceptional success gives the Insensate Tilt [CofD 285]; the Regalia bonus applies to the roll, but the Quality bonus does not.

### *Call Back Yesterday (Restore ●, Terra ●)*

Action: Extended, 5 minutes/roll, threshold = 1 per 20 years of object's age  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Crafts  
Cost: 1 Wisp per 5 Size points of the target  
Duration: lasting

To the Flowers, nothing that is past is gone forever, and anything can be restored if only a fragment remains. By painstaking inspection of an object that has suffered the ravages of time - wear, rust, corrosion or neglect - and some judicious scrubbing, the Noble can remove every trace of time's passage from it, bringing it back to the condition it was in when newly made. The threshold for the Charm is set by the object's age; an item made less than 20 years ago needs 1 success, one made up to 40 years ago needs 2, one made up to 60 years ago needs 3, and so forth. The Charm does not fix damage to the object, as represented by lost Structure points; if a Princess uses it on a damaged object, the damage is transformed into hidden structural flaws, and the penalty for damage that exceeds the item's Durability remains.

**Suggested modifiers:** appropriate tools (+equipment bonus), major parts missing (-1 to -3)

### *Upgrade: Selective (Terra ●●)*

The Noble can restore an object to the state it was in at any time during its existence. The threshold is now set from the number of years the Noble actually takes away (or adds) but is calculated at the same rate of 1 per 20 years.

### *Warmed by Hate Alone (Restore ●, Tempesta ●●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Wisp, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 12 hours

The Noble can call upon her hatred of the Darkness to keep herself warmed against the most bitter and tainted chills. While the Charm lasts, the Noble may ignore a part of the curses on [Tainted areas](#); with respect to her, the effective Severity of any Taint is lowered by her Resolve + Tempesta. A Fury's Practical Magic enhances the Charm's effect - applying Storms' Practical Magic reduces a Taint's Severity by the Noble's current wound penalty, on top of the Charm's basic effects.

At a Resolve + Tempesta of 6 or more the Noble can comfortably survive the environment of the Dark World, though she gains no protection from the many more active dangers in that physical hell. She is not affected by the [Extreme Taint](#) Tilt until the Charm ends.

### *Balm (Restore ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Medicine  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting



The Noble lays hands on a person's flesh, and minor injuries fade away. For each activation success, the target heals 1 bashing damage.

### *Upgrade: Crippling*

The Noble can force broken bones to knit. With a normal success, she may remove from her target one personal Tilt that disables a single organ, such as Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened or Leg Wrack. With an exceptional success she may remove two such Tilts from her target.

### *Upgrade: Great*

More serious wounds close and knit under the Noble's ministrations. For each activation success, the target heals 1 lethal damage.

### *Upgrade: Miraculous*

| Requires Great  
| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble's hands bring relief from the most horrible forms of injury. The target heals 1 aggravated damage. If the Noble gets an exceptional success, the target heals 1 aggravated damage and downgrades 1 other aggravated damage to lethal damage.

### *Upgrade: Showered*

| Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble may use the Charm on a distant target, applying the Sympathy modifier.

## *Sure Hands (Restore ●●)*

| Action: Instant  
| Dice pool: Dexterity + Crafts  
| Cost: 1 Wisp  
| Duration: 1 action

Broken things return to their proper form under the Noble's hands. Each activation success grants a +1 bonus on a mundane action to heal or repair something damaged. Eligible actions include (under Crafts) repairing an item, (Medicine) healing wounds, or (Computer) recovering data from a crashed computer. If the action in question is extended, the bonus applies to all rolls until the Noble completes the task or abandons it; the bonus is lost if she leaves the repairs unfinished.

### *Upgrade: Leading*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

When others assist the Noble (she is primary in a teamwork action) they gain the same bonus on their rolls as the Noble does herself.

### *Upgrade: Swift (Aria ●)*

The light-fingered Knaves repair things with deftness and speed. When the Noble uses the Charm for an extended action, she divides the time interval needed for a roll by 2 for each dot of Aria, cumulative (1/2 time for Aria 1, 1/4 for Aria 2, 1/8 for Aria 3, and so on) to a minimum of 1 minute per roll.



## *Bath of Souls (Restore ●●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Presence + Empathy - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

The Noble brings someone lost in madness back to rationality for a time. Bath of Souls suppresses any Condition that reflects a disordered mind, from the mild (e.g. Spooked) to the extreme (e.g. Broken.)

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's intervention makes matters worse. The target takes the Shaken Condition [CofD 290] and the Princess cannot use Bath of Souls on him until it's resolved.

**Failure:** The target's mind remains in disorder.

**Success:** The Condition is suppressed. A temporary Condition ends without resolving. A persistent Condition doesn't end, but all its continuing effects cease to apply until the scene ends. Meeting a criterion that resolves or otherwise ends the Condition will do so with the normal effects.

**Exceptional Success:** The Condition is suppressed for a full day.

### *Upgrade: Deep*

The Noble's intervention brings her target to a high lucidity. If she succeeds, the target gains the [Shield of Innocence](#) Condition, with a +1 bonus to breaking point rolls. The Condition ends without resolving when the Charm expires.

## *Mesmerize (Restore ●●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy vs. target's Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

By speaking a few words, the Noble helps a person remember something they have forgotten.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble buries the memory; the target's attempts to remember it are automatic dramatic failures for the rest of the session. The Noble cannot use Mesmerize on him for a full day.

**Failure:** The target fails to remember.

**Success:** The target remembers the fact or event the Noble wanted.

**Exceptional Success:** For the rest of the session, all the target's attempts to recall a memory take a +2 bonus.

### *Upgrade: Deep*

The Noble can fix something on the surface of a person's mind ... or bury it deep, where it can't be recalled. On a normal or exceptional success, she can choose to affect the target as a dramatic failure normally does.

## *Flame in the Heart (Restore ●●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: indefinite

By touching a person, the Noble ignites a flame from the warmth of their affections for another. Taking fire in this way does not affect the target's emotions, just as lighting one candle from another doesn't put the first

candle out. The Noble must know the subject of the target's affections when she activates Flame in the Heart; she can't simply take "the person he feels most strongly for", without knowing just who that is.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target becomes sure that he has somehow offended the one he feels for. He takes the Guilty Condition [CofD 289] and the Noble cannot use Flame in the Heart on him until it's resolved.

**Failure:** The flame the Noble takes goes out a few moments later.

**Success:** The target gains the [Heartfire](#) Condition, connected to the subject of his affections.

**Exceptional Success:** Add 1 to the Intensity of the fire that sustains the Heartfire Condition.

A Noble may maintain a number of Heartfire Conditions at once equal to her Inner Light.

### *Upgrade: Fueled (Fuoco ●●)*

The Noble may add fuel to a kept flame, increasing it to torch-sized (base damage of 1). She can then use the flame once as above without snuffing it; the use reduces the flame to candle-sized again.

### *Jury Rigger (Restore ●●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Extended, 3 turns/roll, threshold = target's Size

Dice pool: Wits + Crafts

Cost: 1 Wisp per 5 Size points of the target

Duration: 1 scene or 1 hour using the device

With a few tools and enough duct tape a Noble of Swords can get anything running, at least for a time. To repair a device she requires basic tools and vaguely appropriate replacements for any missing pieces: for a car, for instance, she could use cheap alcohol for missing petrol, several packs of AA batteries to replace a car battery, a circular piece of wood for a missing wheel and lots and lots of duct tape for structural damage. When the Noble reaches the threshold, the device gains the [Jury-Rigged](#) Condition.

If the activation fails, the Noble's crude repairs collapse into a pile of junk, damaging the machine further. Remove a quarter of the device's Structure.

**Suggested Modifiers:** Simple machine (+2), appropriate tools (+equipment bonus), proper replacement parts (+2), very inappropriate parts (-2), complicated problem (-2), exceptionally complicated machine (such as trying to patch up a circuit board) (-4)

### *Purify (Restore ●●, Legno ●)*

Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = Toxicity + 1)

Dice pool: Resolve + Medicine

Cost: 1 Wisp

Duration: indefinite

The Noble destroys a poisonous substance within her patient's body with nothing more than a caress. When the Noble reaches the threshold, the continuing effects of the foreign substance end immediately. For a drug (in a dose too weak to cause damage) the threshold is equal to the penalty to resist the drug's effects, plus 1; for a poison, it's the poison's Toxicity + 1. If the Noble reaches the needed threshold before, or in the same turn as, a poison would inflict damage, that damage is prevented.

### *Upgrade: the Plagued*

Cost: +1 Wisp

By spending Wisps in quantity, the Noble can cure mundane diseases. The threshold for this application equals the threshold the infected target must reach to throw off the disease himself, plus 1; if the target has accumulated any successes on his rolls to beat the disease, subtract those successes from the Noble's threshold. The target is cured when the Noble reaches the threshold.

## *Upgrade: the Corrupted (Legno ●●●)*

Requires the Plagued  
Cost: +1 Wisp, 1 Willpower

Even supernatural illnesses (such as mental damage from the destruction of one's daimon, infestation with Abyssal bloodworms or spiders, a plague conjured by a vengeful wizard, or psychological addiction by a vampire's Vinculum) yield to the Noble's ministrations. The Toxicity of these diseases generally equals the potency of the effect that inflicts them - the ST sets a threshold for maladies that aren't rated for potency. Purify cannot remove a supernatural template.

## *Memento Mori (Restore ●●, Lacrima ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Occult  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble can call ghosts and give them aid and succor. If she touches a ghost's anchor, she helps it to manifest; her activation successes become bonus dice on the ghost's Manifestation dice pool. She can also heal minor wounds to a Materialized ghost's Corpus; for each activation success, the ghost heals 1 bashing damage.

## *Upgrade: Loving*

The Noble can heal more serious damage to a ghost; for each success, the ghost heals 1 lethal damage.

## *Upgrade: Grieving (Lacrima ●●)*

Requires Loving  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble heals the most grievous damage to ghosts; the ghost heals 1 aggravated damage.

## *Upgrade: Sharp*

The Noble can fuel the ghost's Numina; the ghost regains 1 point of Essence.

## *Upgrade: Distant*

Modified by [Sympathy](#)

The Noble may use the Charm without touching the ghost or its anchor; she applies the Sympathy modifier to an anchor to help the ghost manifest, and to the ghost to heal it. Moreover, the ghost need not be Materialized before the Noble can heal it.

## *Their Blood Cries Out (Restore ●●, Tempesta ●●●)*

Action: Extended and resisted, 1 turn/roll, threshold = target's Willpower + successes from time elapsed  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp, Reckless Condition  
Duration: 1 scene

The Queen of Storms knows that mortals forget their sufferings in time, and teaches her dedicated followers a way to repair this flaw. The Noble may use this Charm on a person who has recently been injured, physically, mentally or socially. On reaching the threshold, the target's emotional state returns to where it was when he

discovered the injury, and his memories of events since then seem vague and unimportant. The threshold for activation depends on how long ago the injury was; matching the target's Willpower reaches an injury in the past week, and each success above that doubles the interval.

Until the Charm ends, the target takes the **False Memory** Condition at a level of the Noble's Tempesta, which gives him a -2 penalty to resist any suggestion that he revenge himself upon those who injured him. He cannot recall anything his enemy did in apology, or any penalty he paid - if restitution was made to the target's satisfaction, the Condition suppresses his memory of it. The modifiers apply to whoever the target believes injured him, even if he is mistaken.

Bringing back someone's outrage at an injury inspires the Noble to outrage herself, and makes her careless. On reaching the threshold, the Noble takes the **Reckless** Condition.

### *Upgrade: Collective*

Modified by **Commonalty**  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may use the Charm on members of an organization who can hear her, applying the Commonalty modifier. The injury done must have been to the organization, or to people as representative of it, as far as the targets believe; that is, the targets must believe that people were injured because they belonged to the organization, and not for any other reason. As with the basic Charm, this belief need not be accurate. The member with the highest Composure resists for the group.

### *Stitch (Restore ●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Strength + Crafts  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble swiftly repairs damage done to a single object she can hold or touch.

**Dramatic Failure:** The item is damaged further by the Noble's bungled magic. It loses 1 point of Structure, and the Noble cannot use Stitch on it until it's repaired.

**Failure:** The item is not repaired.

**Success:** For each success rolled, the item regains one point of Structure, up to its normal maximum.

**Exceptional Success:** The repairs leave the item in top condition. On top of the repaired damage, it gains the **Fortunate** Tilt for one roll when used for its intended purpose.

### *Stain Removal (Restore ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Requires **Bath of Souls**  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Resolve + Occult  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: lasting

The Noble may cleanse the first stage of corruption by Tainted areas.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble exposes herself to corruption. She immediately makes a Sensitivity check.

**Failure:** The target remains Tainted.

**Success:** For each activation success, the target removes one level of the **Tainted** Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** The target can ward off psychic stress by remembering the Charm's cleansing. He gains the **Gale-touched** Condition.

## *Choke It Down (Restore ●●●, Tempesta ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 resistant lethal damage  
Duration: lasting

Followers of the Queen of Storms don't have time to atone for their actions or aid those in need; there's far too much killing to do. The Shadows of all the pain they see, a great deal of it caused by themselves, haunt their dreams and waking lives, but this only serves to make them angrier. They swallow the pain, armor themselves in total denial, and allow their guilt to eat at them - literally - rather than confront it.

The Charm is cast when the Noble goes to sleep; it may only be cast once per night, and only works if the rest is sufficient to regain a Willpower point. Her dreams are haunted by the echoes of the suffering she has seen, and in these dreams she lashes out, destroying those in pain for daring to hold her back on her righteous mission. Upon waking, as well as regaining a point of Willpower, she loses one dot of Shadows.

## *Freed By Burning Hate (Restore ●●●, Tempesta ●●●)*

Requires [Their Blood Cries Out](#)  
Action: Reactive and contested  
Dice pool: Presence + Empathy vs. [Clash of Wills](#) pool  
Cost: 0 or 1 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: special

Those who follow in the path of the Queen of Storms know that the world will always seek to hold her in chains, to imprison her so that the misdeeds of the world will be permitted to hold her and others captive. But the Queen of Storms shows her how to break those chains, and how to break them in others. With a snarl, the bonds of the mind are broken.

The Noble may use this Charm on anyone currently affected by a supernatural power that alters their emotional state. If she is affected by an applicable supernatural power she may use this Charm on herself. The Charm costs 0 Wisps (just the Willpower point) when the Noble uses it on herself, and 1 Wisp plus a Willpower point if used on another person.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble succumbs to the power she opposed. She cannot use Freed by Burning Hate against the power or the creature who used it for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** If the Noble does not win the contest, she fails to defeat the power.

**Success:** If the Noble gets more successes, the power's effect is overridden by a feeling of intense, nauseated rage, and the target suddenly becomes aware that someone has tried to violate his mind. Any Condition created by the power is replaced with the [Loathing](#) Condition for the power's user.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's hate overwhelms him. He immediately attacks the creature who violated his mind, and takes the Insane Tilt [CofD 285] while doing so.

The Charm lasts as long as the effect it destroys would have, for it is built on the fragments of that effect. If the power's user cancels or removes the effect himself, the target's rage immediately dissipates.

If the Noble uses the Charm on a target whose emotions are not being influenced, she pays the cost but nothing happens. If she uses it on a target subject to more than one eligible effect, the Charm breaks the least potent, and among effects of equal strength it breaks the one with the shortest remaining duration.

## *Somebody Else's Problem (Restore ●●●, Specchio ●●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Composure - Shadows  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

No matter how many of her Heirs fail spectacularly the Queen of Mirrors never shows pause in her tireless endeavors. Some speculate that she wants her chosen to fail, those who know of this Charm often give a different reason. They say that unable to bear the weight of so many failures she has chosen to forget about them and so she crafted a Charm to do just that. Only those Nobles with memories of the Palace of Looking Glass itself remember that the Queen of Mirrors was once the Hierophant-Queen. With her Mirrors and spyglasses she could see across time and space and often saw secrets best forgotten; hinting that there was once a more noble purpose to this Charm.

Somebody Else’s Problem erases the user’s memories. It’s as simple as that. This Charm can take the weight of Sympathy off a Noble’s shoulder, for what she does not know cannot hurt her. The most common use of this Charm is to instantly end a Haunting by forgetting all about the action that caused it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble completely messes up her own mind. Choose one wide ranging topic like “Academics”, “my family” or “Connect Charms”. The Princess gains the Amnesia Condition [CofD 288] on everything about that topic. The Condition wears off at the end of the scene.

**Failure:** Nothing happens.

**Success:** The Noble erases everything she remembers of the last few minutes, up to at most 3 minutes for each success. The memories are not just suppressed, they are gone as though they had never existed. The Noble knows only that she has erased her own memory. No magic or psychological technique will let the Noble regain her memories; however, she is not prevented from forming new memories about the topic.

The effects of all Sensitivity rolls during the forgotten time are nullified, including Hauntings and Shadows. Somebody Else’s Problem cannot give free dots of Belief, but erasing all memory of a Belief Compromise will allow a Noble to buy back lost Belief with exp. This is purely an OOC rule, but the Storyteller is free to explain it as valuable life experiences being erased if she wishes.

**Exceptional Success:** No further benefit.

*Upgrade: Retroactive*

The Noble may erase her memories up to one day after they have formed. The maximum time erased by a single use remains the same, but she can now use multiple invocations to erase longer periods. Some Nobles use the extra time to write notes to themselves, but knowing what happened is no substitute for experiencing it.

*Regenerate (Restore ●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Medicine  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

Threshold	Injury
3	Tilts: scarring, missing tooth, lost finger joint
6	Restoring lost function: 1 lost Attribute dot, paralyzed limbs
9	Full replacement of small organs: eye, muscle, skin, etc.
12	Full replacement of large organs: arm, leg, stomach, etc.

The Noble may restore the permanently injured to their original full health. Regenerate can cure any Tilts and Conditions caused by physical disability, and restore Attribute dots lost from physical damage. The threshold depends on the extent of the damage (the Storyteller should use the table provided as a guide.) Any opposition from the target makes Regenerate fail; active cooperation isn’t needed, so Nobles can use Regenerate on unconscious targets, but a conscious refusal frustrates the Charm.

The Noble may use Regenerate to remove a Goalenu graft and restore the organ it replaced. In this case the target’s Revelation subtracts from the activation roll. Rolling a dramatic failure causes the target’s Goalenu parts to regard the Noble as a servant of Darkness, and she can never use Regenerate on that target again.

## *Reclaim (Restore ●●●●, Acqua ●●●)*

Requires [Bath of Souls](#)

Action: Extended and resisted, 10 minutes/roll

Dice pool: Presence + Medicine - target's Resolve

Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: lasting

The Noble restores a shattered mind to sanity. Reclaim removes a persistent Condition that affects a person's mental state. Mild Conditions, such as Obsession, are easy to banish, requiring around 5 successes. Conditions like Broken, Fugue and Madness that resolve when a character's Integrity changes are harder, calling for at least 10 successes. Reclaim requires a conscious target, but not a cooperative one; if the target does cooperate, the Princess does not subtract their Resolve from the roll.

### *Upgrade: Grand*

The Noble may use Reclaim to cleanse the [Darkened](#) of their tainted powers. For this use, the activation roll takes a -1 penalty for each of the target's current [Umbrae](#). The Noble takes this penalty even if the target is cooperating (and if he doesn't, she must subtract his Resolve as well.) Getting 10 successes removes one Umbra from the target. Failing a roll and continuing triggers the Noble's Sensitivity, and adds the number of the target's Umbrae to her pool. A Darkened target with no Umbrae can be returned to full humanity with 10 successes.

## *Disenchant (Restore ●●●●, Aria ●●)*

Requires [Mesmerize](#)

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Manipulation + Occult vs. [Clash of Wills](#) pool

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

The Noble sets her will and knowledge against a supernatural power that is distorting a person under her hands.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's own magic becomes unreliable in the presence of dark powers. She takes the temporary [Hypersensitive](#) Condition.

**Failure:** If the Noble does not win the contest, the target remains bound by the supernatural power.

**Success:** If the Noble gets more successes, the supernatural power cannot affect the target in any way for the rest of the scene. The power is not removed, only suppressed.

**Exceptional Success:** The supernatural power is suppressed for a full day.

## *Resuscitate (Restore ●●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = target's Health

Dice pool: Presence + Medicine

Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 permanent Willpower dot

Duration: lasting

The Noble is able to stave off another's death and return him to life - though the experience is not a pleasant one, nor does it come free. The target must have died within the current scene, or the Charm fails. The sheer mental and emotional exertion required, and the traumatic process of dying result in the loss of a dot of Willpower for both the Noble and her target, and the ebbing of his life force causes his highest Attribute (if there is a tie, she chooses) to be reduced by one dot. He returns to life with a number of Health boxes equal to the activation successes filled with lethal damage and the rest filled with aggravated, and a -3 penalty to all

actions due to the Reaper's grasp upon him. Each week of rest and recuperation without any strenuous activity reduces this penalty by one.

If the Noble gets an exceptional success, the target doesn't lose a dot from his highest Attribute.

## *The Earth Shall Bloom (Restore ●●●●●, Legno ●●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 15 minutes/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#)

Dice pool: Stamina + Survival

Cost: (Sanctuary rating) Wisps, 1 Willpower

Duration: lasting

The Noble draws out every substance within a plot of land that is inimical to life, and restores it to its original state of fertility. When she reaches the threshold, any pollutants or toxins present in the targeted area - ranging from oil slicks through chemical wastes to radioactives - which are not in living beings separate from the earth and water, and are gathered to a point near the Noble (who should have a container ready to receive them.) Water in the area becomes safe to drink; the soil is ready to be seeded; plants and animals that were coated in noxious stuff are cleaned.

The Charm extracts substances only from soil and water, not from solid rock, so it can't be used as a substitute for mining. On the other hand, it removes *all* toxic substances, which includes pesticides, so using it on a farmer's fields might lead to insects eating the crops. Finally, the Charm can't make the land better than its natural state; poor soil remains poor even when toxic wastes have been leached out of it. (Compared to the dangers of toxic wastes, though, merely infertile soil is much to be preferred.)

## *Long May She Reign (Restore ●●●●●, Lacrima ●●●●●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Composure + Occult

Cost: 5 Wisps, 1 Willpower dot (if successful)

Duration: lasting

This rare and powerful Charm is the source of the [ghost Princesses](#) who dwell within Alhambra and serve its Queen. Because of the enormous political power and prestige it brings the Protectorate of Amethyst guard all knowledge of it jealously.

The target Noble must be at death's door, but must not actually be dead. For instance, a Noble with a Health track filled with lethal and aggravated damage is a valid target for the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** Instead of creating a ghost, the Noble accidentally kills the target.

**Failure:** The Noble may try again at a -1 penalty, if the target still lives.

**Success:** The target dies, and rises again as a ghost Princess. Long may she reign over us.

**Exceptional Success:** The target loses a dot of Shadows just before she dies and rises.

The Noble using the Charm always spends the Wisps to activate it; she sacrifices a Willpower dot only if the Charm succeeds.

## *Shape*

The Shape Charms shape materials as you will, or make things out of nothing. [Menders](#) and [Troubadours](#) have affinity for them.

## *Always Prepared (Shape ●)*

[Regalia](#)

Action: Permanent



The Noble adds a multi-tool to her Regalia. The Regalia bonus applies to any Crafts action that does not require heavy equipment to attempt, including the making, repairing and upgrading of physical tools with the Build Equipment action. [CofD 100-102] In a pinch, the multi-tool can be used as an improvised weapon, doing lethal damage; the Regalia bonus applies to this use, but the Quality bonus does not.

### *Upgrade: Toolsmith*

When extensive work requiring heavy machinery is called for, the Noble can whistle up just the right gadget out of thin air. She spends 1 Wisp to create a tool no larger than Size 5, or 2 Wisps for a tool up to Size 10, which will allow her to carry out a Crafts action for which proper equipment is not available. The Regalia and Quality bonuses apply to the action the tool is made for. When the action resolves, the tool disintegrates into a cloud of sparks.

### *Upgrade: Sparking (Fuoco ●)*

The Noble's multi-tool includes a lighter that never runs out of fuel. She can start a fire with a candle's Intensity just by touching the fuel with her tool. If she needs more intense heat she can spend Wisps; each Wisp increases the resulting fire's Intensity by 1 step, up to the level of a chemical fire.

### *Bubble Shield (Shape ●)*

Action: Reactive  
Dice pool: Stamina + Crafts - shield's radius in yards  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 turn

The Noble manifests a protective shield around a circular area. She may create the shield around any area within sight, taking a penalty on the activation roll equal to the area's radius in yards, and may do so in response to any action taken by another character within her line of sight.

The Noble may forgo her Defense for a turn to create Bubble Shields as reflexive actions during that turn; if she does not do so, using the Charm takes her action for the turn.

**Dramatic Failure:** The shield fails to appear, and the Noble leaves herself open to attack. She has -2 to her Defense this turn; if she sacrificed Defense, she loses her action this turn.

**Failure:** The shield does not appear.

**Success:** The shield appears, taking the form of a spherical section with the area's radius. It will not cut through any solid object; if it encounters one it will stop at the object's surface. If there are no obstacles the shield simply forms a perfect sphere. The shield is not subject to the force of gravity - as long as it exists, it stays exactly where the Noble created it.

The shield blocks both movement and attacks through itself, in either direction, until the Charm ends. Unlike normal objects the shield has no Durability, but it has a Structure of 3x the activation successes; attacks made on targets on its other side are absorbed by the shield until the last Structure point is gone. (Should this happen the shield breaks, ending the Charm.) Damage in excess of the shield's Structure passes through to the intended target normally.

**Exceptional Success:** The shield will take a great deal of punishment before breaking.

If a Noble uses Bubble Shield to protect the same area as her next action, the new shield replaces the old with no gap of time.

### *Upgrade: Adamant*

The shield behaves like a normal material, with Durability and Structure both equal to the activation successes. It provides transparent cover [CofD 92] against all attacks that must pass through it, in either direction, but does not absorb such attacks. Removing the shield's last point of Structure breaks it and ends the Charm, as before.

## *Upgrade: Lasting*

| Duration: Inner Light turns

The shield endures for several actions before it must be renewed.

## *Upgrade: Partial*

The shield can be shaped to cover parts of the circle, without surrounding the whole area; it can also be shaped as a flat plane.

## *Upgrade: Rainbow (Acqua ●)*

The shield manifests as an iridescent film, which bends light and hides the things inside it. It acts as concealment, imposing a penalty equal to half the Noble's Aqua (rounding upwards). If Adamant is also applied, the shield instead provides opaque cover against attacks that pass through it.

## *Upgrade: Mobile (Aria ●)*

The Noble can create shields around a person or object. When she does so the shield remains centered on her target as long as it exists, no matter how the target moves.

## *Upgrade: Unbroken (Terra ●)*

If the shield meets a solid surface it will extend along that surface as a coating instead of stopping at it, taking the shape with the least area. For instance, if made in a room, the shield will coat the floor and enclose any furniture or people standing on it.

## *Upgrade: Beauteous (Specchio ●)*

Like a brilliant pearl, the shield gleams richly in the light of the Noble's soul. Against such beauty, who dares raise a hand? All sapient or sentient beings must pass a Resolve + Composure roll, with a penalty equal to the lower of the Noble's Inner Light or Specchio Invocation, to break the shield or attack anyone through it.

## *Wellspring (Shape ●, Acqua ●)*

| Action: Instant

| Dice pool: Dexterity + Science

| Cost: 1 Wisp

| Duration: lasting

The Noble draws fresh water out of the earth. If she is not touching solid ground, the Charm fails.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble becomes desperately thirsty. She takes 1 bashing damage from dehydration, which does not heal until she finds something to drink.

**Failure:** The ground stays dry.

**Success:** For each activation success, 1 pint of pure fresh water wells up from the ground.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble creates a lot of water.

## *Upgrade: Purified*

Other liquids turn into fresh water as the Noble stirs them. Each success turns 1 gallon of liquid into drinkable water. The Noble need not be touching the ground to change an existing liquid.

## *Upgrade: Flavored*

The Noble may create any liquid that is safe for humans to drink. Each success draws up 1/2 pint of the drink she desires. If she applies Purified, each success transmutes 1/2 gallon of a liquid into something drinkable.

## *Upgrade: Oily (Acqua ●●)*

Requires Flavored  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble may now create any organic compound that is liquid at current temperatures, at the same rates as Flavored. For this purpose, a chemical is “organic” if it’s either produced by a living organism, or contains carbon and no atoms of a metallic element. The Noble takes a penalty on her dice pool equal to the Availability rating of the liquid she wants to create.

## *Bubble Wrap (Shape ●, Aria ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Survival  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: Inner Light minutes

A Princess needs to breathe, but fresh air may not be always available. When this happens, she may just make her own.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble doesn’t manage to weave an adequate protection. She takes the [Drowning Tilt](#), and can’t attempt to cast this Charm again until it’s resolved.

**Failure:** The Noble fails to create a bubble sturdy enough for her purposes.

**Success:** The Noble weaves a sturdy, clear bubble around her head with her magic. The construct magically filters the surrounding atmosphere so that inside its protection the Noble can always enjoy a breath of clean, fresh air. At the moment the Charm would end, the Noble may reflexively spend a Wisp to lengthen its duration by Inner Light minutes without rolling to reactivate it.

**Exceptional Success:** The bubble is woven so well it lasts an extra minute initially, and each time a Wisp is spent.

## *Upgrade: Puff Up*

Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble is so proud of her powers she can make the bubble swell! By paying an additional Wisp when activating the Charm she can extend the area it covers to a radius up to Aria yards, centered on herself. The Bubble does not prevent the movement of anything but harmful gases, and anything else can harmlessly enter and leave its confines.

## *Joy Buzzer (Shape ●, Aria ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Science  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

Breaking through haughty pride is often a daunting task, but fortunately many tools exist to help. Some of them happen to be more... physical than others.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble manages to shock herself. She takes bashing damage equal to her Aria and cannot use the Charm again for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The Noble doesn't build up a charge.

**Success:** The Noble gives her body a charge of static electricity, and can control when and where it discharges. She has a pool of charges equal to her successes, and may release a number of them up to her Stamina into anything she touches. Normally this is an instant unrolled action, but it can be combined with a touch action if used on a moving target. The charges are basically harmless but quite distracting to a living being; a targeted person or animal takes a -1 penalty on their next action for each charge they receive, unless they happen to be electrically grounded. Someone who *is* insulated will be shocked the next time they ground themselves, and take the penalty then.

Alternatively, if an object would actually benefit from receiving a jolt, the Noble can use her charges to add a bonus to actions involving that object. Used this way, each charge spent gives a +1 bonus to a single action.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble can produce powerful jolts. She may release up to her Stamina + Aria charges in a single touch.

The Noble can carry up to her Stamina times her Aria charges of electricity at a time, usually from multiple activations of the Charm. Any successes in excess of this limit discharge into the Noble herself, penalizing her next action.

### *Upgrade: Jolting*

The Noble can concentrate her charges into a current strong enough to hurt. When she touches a target, she rolls one die for each charge she releases; the target takes 1 bashing damage for each success on this roll.

### *Upgrade: Quick*

The Noble can deliver a shock with only a passing thought. She may release charges as a reflexive action, though she cannot do so more than once in a turn.

## *Fire's Warm Kiss (Shape ●, Fuoco ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Survival  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

Fires under the Noble's hands burn without consuming their fuel.

**Dramatic Failure:** The targeted fire flares up and spreads swiftly. Either its Size or its Intensity increases by 1 step.

**Failure:** The fire continues to burn normally.

**Success:** Until the Charm ends, reduce the target fire's Intensity by 1. Things ignited by the fire, but separated from it, burn normally. The Noble may use Fire's Warm Kiss repeatedly on one fire, until its Intensity drops to 0. If a fire's Intensity is 0, it cannot ignite anything and feels merely warm to the touch, though it still sheds light. It can even be scooped off its fuel source, held in cupped hands, and poured into a container, like a liquid with the consistency of thick syrup. Fire so treated ignites its container once the Charm wears off, or goes out after 1 turn if the container is not flammable.

**Exceptional Success:** The fire's Intensity drops to 0, turning it into the warm, glowing liquid form.

## *Nature's Harvest (Shape ●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Survival  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

The Noble coaxes a plant to produce its harvest ahead of time. If she isn't touching a plant reasonably near maturity or at least large enough to produce its crop, or if anyone has used the Charm on the plant within the past season, the Charm fails. (The plant must also have adequate soil and not be severely deprived of water or sunlight, but it need not be in season.)

**Dramatic Failure:** The targeted plant wilts. Short-lived plants die; trees lose their leaves and may get dead branches.

**Failure:** The plant yields no harvest.

**Success:** When used to obtain edible fruits, nuts or berries from appropriate trees and bushes, each activation success subtracts two successes from the threshold of the Noble's next attempt to forage for food. However, successes exceeding the plant's Size have no effect. Alternatively, it's quite possible to use the Charm more frivolously (e.g. to produce lots of flowers) or productively (to get lots of acorns from an oak tree or other appropriate seeds, for example), at the Storyteller's discretion.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble's next attempt to forage for food gains the 9-again quality.

The crops are guaranteed to stay fresh for at least one day per dot of Legno unless some supernatural effect gets in the way. Nature's Harvest does not harm the plant.

### *Upgrade: Ascending*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The plant grows under the Noble's touch, even if it began as a mere seed; it achieves up to the activation successes or its natural maximum in Size, whichever is lower, over the same number of minutes, and produces the expected harvest in the process. (The plant's growth will generally be limited by available soil for its root system.) Once the Charm is complete, the newly-grown plant remains a normal plant of its species, although it's advisable to water it well if one wants to keep it around.

### *Upgrade: Miraculous (Legno ●●)*

| Requires Ascending

The plant no longer requires adequate soil, sunlight, or anything else as long as there's enough room for its base to be planted in the earth. However, the Charm's magic will only sustain the plant for Legno minutes after its growth is complete - if it doesn't have enough water and room to grow, it obviously won't last long.

### *Upgrade: Transfigured (Legno ●●●)*

| Requires Ascending  
Cost: +2 Wisps

At the Noble's discretion, the plant produces any crop she needs regardless of its actual species. She can grow oranges from an apple tree, apples from a pine tree, or roses from a barrel cactus if she chooses. A single activation produces a harvest of just one species of plant.

### *Painting Roses (Shape ●, Terra ●)*

| Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll  
Dice pool: Wits + Crafts  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: lasting

With a touch the Noble makes something explode in a riot of color. She can affect a Size up to her dots in Terra and may do anything from simple blocks of color to a masterpiece, if she has the skills. The effects of this charm last as long as average quality paint.

This Charm is best used for leaving marks and clues in the field or making art. Some Nobles of Spades, politely described as urban artists, dip into Terra with this Charm to avoid the suspicions of carrying spray paint around.

## *Corrosive Grasp (Shape ●, Tempesta ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Brawl  
Cost: 1 Wisp, 1 resistant bashing damage  
Duration: 1 scene

The index finger of a single hand (the Noble's choice) secretes a powerful, sharp-smelling acid until the Charm ends.

**Dramatic Failure:** The acid only burns the Noble's hand. She has the Arm Wrack Tilt [CofD 280] until the damage she took to activate the Charm heals.

**Failure:** Although the Noble's hand may smell vaguely vinegary for a while, the acid isn't concentrated enough or has too high a pH to have an effect.

**Success:** The acid can be used to get an equipment bonus of the activation successes for any action where it is appropriate. For example, in an interrogation, the ability to scar with acid can be used to get a bonus to Intimidate, while when opening a lock, the ability to dissolve the hinges gives a bonus to Larceny.

**Exceptional Success:** No additional bonus, beyond the extra successes.

## *Miss Poppins' Bottomless Bag (Shape ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Noble adds a securely fastened bag or pouch of some kind to her Regalia. Activating the Charm unlocks the bag for a scene, during which it can be used freely. The Noble may store any number of items in the bag indefinitely, as long as each item is small enough to fit through the opening, and is light enough for her to lift without help. The Size of an object being stored or removed cannot exceed half the Noble's Inner Light (rounded up), unless she applies an Invocation when she unlocks the bag. If she applies an Invocation, she can store objects of Size up to her dots in the Invocation; the objects are the Charm's targets, so to apply an Invocation at no cost, all the objects stored or removed must be costless targets for that Invocation.

Putting an object in the bag is an instant unrolled action. Taking an object out is also an instant action, and succeeds automatically as long as the number of items in the bag is less than Inner Light + Larceny. If the number equals or exceeds this limit, the Noble must roll Wits + Larceny to find the right item in among the clutter; she takes a penalty on this roll of -1 for each item in the bag over Inner Light + Larceny.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble finds nothing in the bag, and is so occupied with searching that she loses her Defense for 1 turn.

**Failure:** The Noble pulls out the wrong item.

**Success:** The Noble takes out the item she wanted.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble finds the item immediately; she removes it as a reflexive action.

Items that are put into the bag are safe from harm and protected from loss, as they are bound to the Noble rather than the bag itself. However, they aren't held in stasis; food will spoil if kept long enough. Moreover, while the bag is closed air can't get into it, so anything living will suffocate if trapped inside when the bag locks. Should the Noble herself die all items in the bag are lost. With the appropriate supernatural power it is possible to steal from a Noble's bag, but doing so subtracts (Resolve + Inner Light) from the activation roll.

### *Upgrade: Enlarged*

| Stackable 4 times

Add Inner Light again to the maximum number of items that can be put into the bag safely.

### *Upgrade: Deepened*

| Stackable 2 times

Add 1 to the maximum Size of the items that can be put into the bag.

### *Upgrade: Stretched*

| Cost: +1 Willpower

The Noble can stuff a very large object into her bag. Double the maximum Size of items the bag can normally hold; the Noble can put one object up to that Size into the bag at a time. As long as that object is in the bag, the Noble can't put anything more into it, or take anything else out - the large object must come out first. If the bag locks before she takes the large object out, the Noble must apply Stretched again to remove it.

### *Upgrade: Lightened*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble can lift extremely heavy objects, for just long enough to drop them into her bag or pull them out. Add the Noble's Inner Light to her Strength when checking whether an object being stored or retrieved is too heavy for her to move.

### *Upgrade: Ordered (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble arranges the contents of her bag in careful order. She may choose a number of objects in the bag up to her Acqua; when she applies Acqua to take those objects from the bag, she finds and withdraws them without a roll, no matter how many other things are stored inside. She may rearrange the objects within the bag, putting a different set on top, as an instant unrolled action.

### *Upgrade: Conjured (Aria ●●)*

The Noble can pull things kept in the bag out of thin air. When she applies Aria to take something from the bag, it appears in her hand as a reflexive action, ready to be used in the same turn. The object so taken returns to the bag again just before the start of the next turn. (This allows weapons that give a bonus to Defense to do so even after they've been used to attack.)

### *Tool Whispering (Shape ●●)*

| Action: Instant and resisted

| Dice pool: Wits + appropriate Skill - object's Size/2

| Cost: 1 Wisp

| Duration: concentration

The tools of a Noble's craft are so eager to serve her desires that she may operate them from afar. The Noble uses this Charm on a single object that she can see; the Skill she uses to activate it is the one used normally to operate that object (e.g. Computer for electronics, Drive for a vehicle, Firearms for guns, and so on.)

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble's occult force mishandles the targeted object and breaks it. Remove 1 point of the object's Structure.

**Failure:** The object remains inert.

**Success:** The object animates, responding to the Noble's will. As long as she concentrates, she may take mundane actions that manipulate the object's internal mechanisms - pushing buttons, flipping switches, turning knobs, and so forth. She cannot pick the object up, or directly move it from its location; actions which require that fail automatically. Thus, the scope of possible actions depends on the complexity of the target object. A simple tool with no moving parts can't do anything; a gun can be made to unlatch its clip, or to fire, but can't be aimed; a car can be made to start its engine and drive itself; a computer can be operated almost normally, except for plugging in cables and peripherals.

The Noble cannot control the object if she loses sight of it, and the Charm ends when she stops controlling the object. If someone else is using the object at the same time she controls it, that starts a [Clash of Wills](#); a mundane operator uses the same dice pool for the Clash as he does for operating the device.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble controls her tool with great skill. Her mundane actions to control it gain a +2 bonus.

### *Upgrade: Charged*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The modern world runs on electricity, but when that's lacking, the Noble can create a few sparks to get it moving. When the targeted object is a machine powered by electricity, the Noble may turn an extra Wisp into the power it requires, so it will run with a dead battery or while unplugged during the Charm's duration. However, a dramatic failure when activating the Charm overloads its circuits - remove points of Structure equal to the Noble's Inner Light.

### *Upgrade: Dancing*

| Cost: +1 Willpower  
| Duration: 1 scene

The targeted object, once animated, will carry out the Noble's wishes without her conscious attention. The Charm does not end if the Noble stops concentrating on the object; during any turn when she does not control it, the object repeats whatever action she most recently used it for. The object can't adapt to changed circumstances, and will continue mindlessly repeating itself until the Noble controls it again or the Charm ends.

### *Upgrade: Forceful*

| Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble can now lift, push or pull the targeted object without touching it, as easily as she manipulates it; while she does so, the object is surrounded with a visible sign of her attention, such as a glowing halo, a heat shimmer, or a swirl of dust or leaves. The Noble can move the object remotely with the same Strength that her muscles give her, and at a Speed up to her own running Speed. She may also throw the object with a standard Athletics action, although doing so immediately ends the Charm.

### *Upgrade: Thinking (Acqua ●●)*

| Requires Dancing

When the Noble releases her concentration, in addition to providing the object with further instructions she may grant it a measure of adaptability. For each dot of Acqua she may instruct the object to react to one condition, altering its behavior in response. For conditions that require senses to recognize, the object has a Perception dice pool equal to the Charm's activation successes.



### *Upgrade: Free (Aria ●●)*

The Noble may set her will not on a solid machine, but on the air that surrounds her. Until the Charm ends, she can manipulate *any* object that she can see, as long as operating that object is covered by the Skill she used to activate the Charm. The Princess cannot manipulate more than one object at a time; when she moves to a second object, the first is no longer animated.

### *Touch of Frost (Shape ●●, Acqua ●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Crafts - target's Defense  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

A touch of the Noble's hand or foot chills her target to the freezing point. The Noble may use the Charm on a person or object.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble freezes herself, not what she touches; she suffers from the effect of an ordinary success, at a level equal to her Acqua.

**Failure:** The target is chilled briefly, but suffers no impediment from it.

**Success:** The target's temperature immediately drops below freezing. A person suffers from the Extreme Cold Tilt [CofD 282] for the rest of the scene, taking a penalty equal to the activation successes (to a maximum of -5.) A solid object is encased in a thin layer of ice, and any attempt to use it during the current scene is penalized by the activation successes (maximum of -5, again) as the user's hands slip off it.

**Exceptional Success:** A person targeted by the Charm is chilled to the point of frostbite. In addition to the penalty, he takes a single point of lethal damage. A targeted object is damaged if the Noble's Acqua exceeds its Durability - warping from the sudden chill removes 1 point of Structure.

The cold created by the Charm will yield to warm emotions as well as physical warmth. The Extreme Cold Tilt on a person ends if someone who loves the target warms him with her body for 1 turn per activation success. [Heartfire](#) flames melt an ice coating or warm a person immediately.

### *Upgrade: Wide (Acqua ●●)*

The Noble can coat the place she stands with ice. On solid ground, the Charm coats a circle with a radius of 5 yards per activation success with ice, creating the Ice Tilt [CofD 284] in that area. If the Noble is standing or swimming in water, the Charm freezes the water without trapping her, making an ice platform thick enough to bear her weight (though it has the Ice Tilt) with a radius of 1 yard per activation success.

Except in subfreezing temperatures any ice the Charm creates starts to melt at the end of the scene; ice coatings vanish immediately, ice platforms can last several minutes before breaking up.

### *Spray of Embers (Shape ●●, Fuoco ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Weaponry  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: concentration

A cloud of sparks and embers sprays from the Noble's hands, enveloping and burning whatever she chooses.

**Dramatic Failure:** The embers spray back on the Noble; she takes her Fuoco in bashing damage.

**Failure:** Sparks fly, but go out without burning anything.

**Success:** The embers form a cloud, imposing the [Swarm](#) Tilt on a circle centered on the Noble. With one success the cloud has a radius of one yard; each success above that doubles the radius. It moves at the Noble's Speed, and may go anywhere she can see, condense to inflict more damage, or spread out again. Anything

that extinguishes a fire will damage the cloud. The Noble never takes damage from the embers, even in the midst of the cloud.

**Exceptional Success:** The embers retain a lot of heat - anything within the cloud (except the Noble) takes lethal damage from it instead of bashing.

## *Hedge Magic (Shape ●●, Legno ●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Survival  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: successes in turns

The Noble makes a dense thicket grow, which entangles anyone who tries to cross it.

**Dramatic Failure:** Any plants within the Noble's Inner Light in yards wilt. She cannot use Hedge Magic again for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** No thicket appears.

**Success:** The hedge-wall springs up, covering an area of the Noble's Legno x10 square yards somewhere within sight. It has a Durability of 2 and a Structure of 2x activation successes.

**Exceptional Success:** The hedge-wall is extremely thick. Its Durability rises to 3.

Anyone who damages the hedge with a close attack or tries to go through it gets tangled in the branches, taking the [Tangled](#) Tilt. Against ranged attacks, the hedge provides opaque cover [CofD 92]. When the Charm expires, the thicket wilts, losing all its Structure and releasing anyone tangled in it.

### *Upgrade: Binding*

The hedge actively tries to catch those who assault it. Anyone tangled in its branches has to break them by main strength (Strength + Athletics - Durability) to escape.

## *Darkling's Treasure (Shape ●●, Lacrima ●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Occult vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Wisp, Sensitivity check  
Duration: 1 scene

By brushing her hand across an object, the Noble makes it deeply attractive to the servants of the Darkness. Once they scent it, they will go to any length to possess it, and ensure no one else touches it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble turns herself into a lure for creatures of the Darkness. All such creatures within Inner Light x 100 yards know where she is for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** When a creature of the Darkness gets as many or more successes on its roll than the Noble's activation successes, he is interested in the object, but not obsessed.

**Success:** The object calls to all [creatures of Darkness](#) within a radius of Inner Light x 100 yards. Each such being contests the Charm independently; any who lose the contest will try to take the object for himself, possibly fighting other beings to possess it.

**Exceptional Success:** The compulsion is almost irresistible.

### *Upgrade: Trapped (Lacrima ●●)*

The target object inflicts pain on any Darkened being who does manage to touch it. The compulsion on these beings changes - instead of keeping the object, they try to destroy it. Darkened beings who have not touched the object are still drawn to possess it. The Charm ends if the object is destroyed.

## *Barricade (Shape ●●●)*

Action: Full turn and resisted  
Dice pool: Stamina + Crafts - object's Size/2  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble strengthens or weakens the material of an object. The Charm will not work on an object already affected by it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble produces the opposite of her intent. If she meant to strengthen the object, it loses 2 Durability; if she meant to weaken it, it gains 2 Durability.

**Failure:** The object's Durability isn't altered.

**Success:** The Noble changes the object's Durability, either adding or subtracting her activation successes. The material returns to normal when the Charm ends.

**Exceptional Success:** The successes are their own reward.

## *Crucible (Shape ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = object's Structure  
Dice pool: Strength + Crafts - object's Durability  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: lasting

The Noble molds, bends, and twists the object under her hands as if it were soft, wet clay, converting it into exactly the tool she requires. The Charm alters a single object of Size no larger than the Noble's Inner Light, or a portion of a larger object which falls within that limit, and which the Noble can touch. If she reaches the threshold, the target object is reshaped into whatever form the Noble wishes it to have; the material composition and the Size of the result remain the same. The resulting object may be a mechanism (including e.g. levers, springs, gears) if the materials are strong enough to make one. However, tools powered by electricity can't be made by the Charm - parts of such tools are possible, but only if those parts are in themselves purely mechanical.

The Noble may try to make equipment of high quality, that confers an equipment bonus for a specific task. This increases the threshold - for each +1 bonus, add successes equal to the object's Durability to the threshold. The Noble must choose the desired bonus before starting the activation. If she fails to activate the Charm, she mangles the target object into uselessness.

## *Upgrade: Powered*

Requires Science ●●  
Cost: +1 Wisp

The Noble understands electrical circuitry well enough to duplicate it in the tools she makes. If the target object has the necessary mix of conductors and insulators, she can use the Charm to make a tool that runs on electrical power.

## *Ice Sculptures (Shape ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = object's Availability rating  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Crafts  
Cost: 1 or 2 Wisps  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble freezes water she touches, to turn it to a useful tool made of magically hardened ice. When she has water or ice at hand, the Noble spends just 1 Wisp to make her tool; if water is lacking, though, she spends 2

Wisps to condense and freeze the water vapor in the air around her into the item she requires. The tool created when the Noble reaches the threshold must be an object normally made from hard plastic or metal; it has a Durability of 1 and a Size of her choosing, up to her Acqua. If she gets successes beyond the threshold she may use them to give the tool an equipment bonus, at a rate of +1 per success (maximum of +5.)

Except in subfreezing temperatures, the tool melts at the end of the scene, becoming no more than a block of ice. In subfreezing temperatures it can last indefinitely, but if used after the scene ends it will break on a dramatic failure. Fire, of any Intensity, bypasses the tool's Durability, melting it quickly.

### *Upgrade: Cloth-of-Snow (Acqua ●●●)*

| Duration: until sunrise

The Noble spins small water droplets into a fabric of snowflakes and ice crystals, cut and sewn into clothing (or anything else made of cloth that she requires.) Though apparently more fragile than the usual items the Charm makes, cloth-of-snow actually lasts longer; it stays intact until the next sunrise after it was made, no matter what the temperature may be. Except in subfreezing weather, though, cloth-of-snow will dissolve promptly at dawn. (Nobles who don't wish to be abruptly half-naked and soaking wet at the end of a long night are well advised to remember this.)

### *Upgrade: Architecture (Acqua ●●●)*

| Cost: +(Sanctuary rating) Wisps

| Duration: until sunrise

The Noble can create walls, arches, even whole buildings of hardened ice, given only time to concentrate. For structures exceeding her Acqua in Size, she rolls once every 15 minutes (instead of once a turn) and adds the successes required for the [Sanctuary](#) rating of the final structure to the threshold. The resulting blocks of ice have a Durability of 3, though fire still bypasses that.

The nature of the Charm strongly encourages the resulting building to assume an ornate Art Deco style of architecture, with icicle spires, snowflake lacework, and sixfold symmetry. The walls and floors are thick enough not to melt quickly, so even in the hottest weather the structure remains intact until the next sunrise. However, except in subfreezing temperatures the thing does begin melting at that point. After the first sunrise meltwater makes the building slippery, imposing the Ice Tilt on and inside it. After the second sunrise the building becomes unsound, reducing its Durability to 0, and any object resting on it removes 1 point of Structure for every 50 pounds of weight it has, each turn it remains. After the third sunrise the building collapses of its own weight, if it hasn't already fallen apart.

### *Upgrade: Unmelting (Acqua ●●●●)*

| Cost: +1 Willpower

| Duration: indefinite

The Noble enchants the ice she creates to remain unmelted even under the heat of a summer sun. For practical purposes, the object made by the Charm acts as if it's in subfreezing temperatures at all times, regardless of the actual temperature. The Charm will end, however, if the object is placed in a fire, and of course the ice will then melt and destroy the object.

### *Strength of the Tides (Shape ●●●, Acqua ●●)*

| Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = radius affected in yards

| Dice pool: Resolve + Athletics

| Cost: 2 Wisps

| Duration: concentration

The Noble takes control of a body of water within sight, making it flow and push as she wills. The Charm controls a circular area of water with a radius equal to the threshold in yards, to a depth of 1 yard; left in that shape, it lifts and moves everything inside it with a Strength of 1. The Noble may gather the water into a taller mass of smaller radius to concentrate its power; each halving of the radius quadruples the water's depth or height, and adds 1 to its Strength. She may also move the water in a wave or spout, carrying along whatever floats in it; the water's top Speed is 8 if moved this way. The Charm does not create water - if the Noble gets more successes than she needs to control all the water available, the extra successes have no effect.

### *Upgrade: Violent (Acqua ●●●)*

The water becomes violently agitated, creating smashing waves and sucking undertows that batter anything caught within it. Each turn, the Noble may choose to inflict bashing damage equal to the water's current Strength on everything in or floating on the water.

### *Upgrade: Free (Acqua ●●●●)*

Cost: +1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can release the water, do other things, and take control of it again. In any turn she is not shaping the water, it flows to its natural level, dropping anything it was lifting that doesn't float.

### *Mist's Protection (Shape ●●●, Aria ●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Stealth  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: successes in turns

The Noble summons a thick fog that conceals her presence.

**Dramatic Failure:** The sky is clear and cloudless. The Noble cannot use Mist's Protection again for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** No fog appears.

**Success:** A volume of radius equal to (10x Inner Light) yards, centered on the Noble, gains the [Fog](#) Tilt. In strong sunlight or moderate wind the cloud disperses in (activation successes) turns; in calm, cloudy weather, it may last as long as the Storyteller wishes.

**Exceptional Success:** The fog expands to fill a radius of (15x Inner Light) yards.

### *Salamander (Shape ●●●, Fuoco ●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = fire's Size  
Dice pool: Resolve + Survival  
Cost: 2 Wisps  
Duration: concentration

The Noble takes control of a body of fire within sight, directing it as she wills. The Charm controls a fire of a Size (considered as an object) equal to the threshold. This may be a portion of a larger fire; you don't need to control an entire forest fire if your goal is to hold back the closest flames. The Noble may push her controlled fire in any direction she wishes, but it can only travel along a solid surface. She may also shape it into complex shapes by rolling Dexterity + Crafts. However it is still fire: making a fire walk out of the hearth in the shape of a lion is a neat party trick, but if it touches something flammable the fire will spread.

If the fire is separated from all sources of fuel when the Charm ends it is extinguished; otherwise it ignites the surface it's standing on when the Noble loses her concentration.

## *Upgrade: Free (Fuoco ●●●●)*

Cost: +1 Willpower

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble can release the fire, do other things, and take control of it again. When she doesn't control the fire, it ignites the place she left it if that's possible, and may spread at the Storyteller's discretion.

## *Dryad's Favor (Shape ●●●, Legno ●●)*

Requires [Nature's Harvest](#)

Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = plant's Size

Dice pool: Strength + Survival

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: lasting

Trees swing their branches, vines bend into trellises, to serve the Matron of Forests' need. The Charm causes a single plant, or a group of plants that are each no larger in Size than the Noble's Legno and within Inner Light yards of her, to animate and twist into a shape she wishes. The plant (or plants) move into the desired arrangement when the Noble reaches the threshold.

The Noble can even have the plant uproot itself and move to a new spot - its Speed equals the Noble's Legno, and it will move for a number of turns up to the activation dice pool. The Noble may also cause a part of the target plant no larger in Size than her Legno to detach itself from the rest of the plant after it's been shaped into equipment for a single task. The result must, naturally, be an object which could be made mundanely out of the targeted plant(s).

## *Earthquake (Shape ●●●, Terra ●●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Strength + Brawl - area's radius in yards

Cost: 2 Wisps

Duration: 1 scene

The Noble claps her hands, then touches them to the ground, and the earth buckles and shakes, pitching wildly and throwing her enemies off-balance.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble only jolts the ground under her own feet. She takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286].

**Failure:** The earth does not move.

**Success:** The earthquake strikes a circular area of radius equal to the penalty taken to the activation roll in yards. Everyone in that area, except the Noble, immediately takes the Knocked Down Tilt [CofD 284] and reflexively rolls Dexterity + Athletics; those who fail the roll take the Stunned Tilt as well. For the rest of the scene, the area has the [Broken Ground](#) Tilt.

**Exceptional Success:** The ground in the target area buckles and great shards of stone poke out from the earth, providing anyone who wants to take cover behind them substantial (-3) concealment, in addition to the other effects.

When the Charm ends, the ground slides back into its normal configuration. If the Noble is underground, she gets an exceptional success with 3 or more activation successes, not 5.

## *Upgrade: Sheltering (Terra ●●●)*

People the Noble chooses, up to her Inner Light, do not take the Knocked Down or Stunned Tilts when the earthquake strikes.

## *Diamonds are Forever (Shape ●●●, Terra ●●●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Science - object's Availability  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

A Princess of Hearts can always find a noble gift. The Noble can transmute the substance of small objects into minerals of her choice - earth, sand, rock, even precious stones. The penalty to her dice pool equals the Availability of the object after the Charm takes effect; it's much harder to turn things into jade than granite. The Charm's target must be an inanimate object of Size 1 or less, made of a nearly homogeneous material, that the Noble is holding in her hands.

**Dramatic Failure:** The object explodes into jagged shards. The Noble takes 1 lethal damage from fragments in her hands.

**Failure:** The object is unchanged.

**Success:** The object is transmuted into the desired mineral.

**Exceptional Success:** The object is transmuted into a perfect example of the desired mineral. If the mineral is valuable, the Availability of the object's final form is one dot higher.

## *My Home is My Castle (Shape ●●●●)*

Requires [Bubble Shield](#)  
Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#) + shield's Durability  
Dice pool: Resolve + Crafts  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 or more scenes

The proverb says "An Englishman's home is his castle," but sometimes a castle has to withstand a siege. The Noble activates this Charm on Consecrated ground to protect it from invasion, meditating at a symbol which sustains the [Consecrated](#) Condition. When she reaches the threshold, a translucent curtain rises from the boundary of the Consecrated ground, enclosing the area in a dome of hardened light. The dome's Structure equals the threshold of the Charm, and its Durability is the threshold minus the Sanctuary successes; it provides transparent cover against all attacks that pass through it.

Once during a scene, the Noble may spend 1 Wisp as an instant action to sustain the dome for another scene. This does not repair any Structure lost to damage, but if someone has managed to punch holes in the dome the spent Wisp will close them. The Charm ends, and the dome vanishes, when it loses the last point of Structure, or the Noble doesn't spend a Wisp to sustain it.

## *Upgrade: Hidden (Legno ●●●)*

Applying this upgrade moves the Charm's protection from the boundary of the Consecrated ground to the buildings on it. Any structure permanently attached to the area with the Consecrated Condition - no matter how indirectly - has its Durability increased by the amount the dome would have had (the threshold - the Sanctuary successes) and adds an equal number of Structure points. The extra Durability and Structure remain as long as the Noble sustains the Charm and the affected objects are still attached to the Consecrated ground.

## *Upgrade: Garrisoned (Terra ●●●)*

Modified by [Commonalty](#)

The Noble names an organization when she activates the Charm, and applies the Commonalty modifier for that organization. Those members of the organization who stand in the Consecrated ground when the dome

appears can walk through the barrier easily - it parts when they touch it, and closes when they walk away. Moreover, if any of these members has a pool of Wisps, he can spend Wisps to sustain the dome just as the Noble can, though the Charm can't be extended for more than one scene at a time (extra Wisps beyond the first in one scene have no effect.) The Noble may walk through the dome if, and only if, she belongs to the organization she named while making it.

### *Upgrade: Enduring (Lacrima ●●●)*

Cost: +2 Wisps  
Duration: indefinite

The Last Empress protects her people with enduring walls. By spending additional Wisps, the Noble causes the barrier to last until the Consecrated Condition supporting it ends. She also may (and should) cut passages through the barrier when making it, to let people enter and leave the area.

### *Upgrade: Expedient (Tempesta ●●●)*

Cost: +(Sanctuary rating) resistant lethal damage

A Fury can put up an impenetrable shelter anywhere, even the enemy's home ground. If the Noble draws sigils of protection in her own blood around an area she wants to protect, she may activate the Charm to make a barrier around that area without Consecrating it. The Noble must bleed enough for 1 resistant lethal damage per dot in the area's Sanctuary rating to draw the sigils properly.

### *Little Deuce Coupe (Shape ●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = modifications + 1  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Crafts  
Cost: 3 Wisps  
Duration: Inner Light scenes or hours

The Noble gains the freedom of the open road. As she meditates, shapes of metal, glass and rubber appear around her and assemble themselves; when she reaches the threshold, a vehicle stands next to her, ready to be driven.

The vehicle's quality depends on the threshold the Noble chose. With a threshold of 1 the Charm creates a motorized scooter (dice modifier of -5, Size 7, Durability 2, safe Speed of 60). Each +1 to the threshold lets the Noble apply 1 modification to the created vehicle from the table on [CofD 99]. The Noble can't make a vehicle that's physically impossible, so she must respect the limits on each trait; but she may add as many modifications as she likes, without regard to her Crafts dots. A Noble with Automotive Genius [CofD 47] may add modifications equal to her Crafts dots on top of those from her chosen threshold.

When the Charm ends, the vehicle will decelerate from its current speed to a standstill at a rate of 10 Speed/turn, then dissolve into a cloud of sparks, dropping its contents on the ground where it stopped. If the Noble is in it at this time, she may spend a Wisp as an instant action to keep the vehicle in existence for another scene or hour.

There is a variation of this Charm, popular among Nobles of Clubs, that summons a riding beast; it uses a dice pool of Dexterity + Animal Ken, and Automotive Genius doesn't help the Charm, but it's otherwise identical. The steed is treated as a vehicle, except that it has 2/2 Armor instead of Durability, and a Durability modifier grants it +1/+1 Armor. A Noble may not learn both versions of the Charm - she can either make modern vehicles or summon beasts, not both.

### *Upgrade: Large*

Stackable 3 times  
Cost: +1-3 Wisps



The Noble can make a larger vehicle by spending more of her magic. The first Large upgrade lets her spend 1 Wisp (above the base cost) to raise the base Size of the created vehicle to 11, before any modifications. The second lets her spend 2 Wisps to raise its base Size to 15, and the third lets her spend 3 Wisps to raise its base Size to 19.

### *Upgrade: Weatherproof*

The vehicle protects its riders from harsh conditions. For one modification, the vehicle acts as basic survival gear [CofD 273] for the driver and all passengers. For two modifications, the vehicle gives the benefits of advanced survival gear against one type of extreme environment. The vehicle's protection stacks with any personal protection a rider has.

### *Upgrade: Seacraft (Acqua ●●●)*

The Noble may use the Charm to create a boat. If the boat is at least Size 10, she may spend two modifications to convert it into a submarine.

### *Upgrade: Aircraft (Aria ●●●)*

The Noble may use the Charm to create an airplane. The safe Speed of an airplane is doubled after all modifications are applied; however, an airplane must reach half its safe Speed before it can take off. Also, nearly all jurisdictions require airplanes to stay in radio contact with air traffic controllers, to prevent in-air collisions, so the Charm provides a radio in the airplane for this purpose. Finally, the airplane will not automatically land itself when the Charm ends, though its engine stops working, and it won't vanish until it reaches the ground.

### *Upgrade: Mecha (Fuoco ●●●)*

The Noble may use the Charm to create a giant humanoid robot, with a cockpit for herself and passengers. The Speed of a mecha must be divided by 10 after all modifications are applied, and uses the rules for characters' Speed, not vehicles'; the High Acceleration modification may not be applied. However, the Noble may add equivalents of any Regalia Charms she knows to the mecha for one modification per Charm added.

The mecha does not roll, but walks, and can jump or climb over obstacles that block a car. For the purpose of athletic feats or combat, the mecha has the Strength of the Noble, plus a bonus from its Size equal to the Strength bonus from the [Size Changes](#) table. It takes damage as an object, and provides opaque cover to its driver and passengers.

### *Upgrade: Off-Road (Legno ●●●)*

The Noble may use the Charm to create a vehicle that travels over rough ground or planted turf without difficulty. When driven over dirt or plants, the vehicle leaves no trace of its passing; plants are not crushed, and dirt takes no tracks. Indeed, for one modification, the vehicle will actually promote the growth of plants it passes over, and sow grass and flowers in bare soil.

### *Upgrade: Diplomatic (Terra ●●●)*

Mundane people recognize the Noble's vehicle as owned by an authority, and are reluctant to impede it. As long as the driver obeys traffic regulations, no one will stop or search the vehicle. This doesn't let the vehicle pass into secured areas that need specific authorization to enter, but it will protect the driver and passengers from people looking for them.

### *Upgrade: Stealthy (Lacrima ●●●)*

The Noble's vehicle runs quietly and is easily overlooked. Perception rolls to notice it and attempts to follow it by sound take a penalty equal to the Noble's Lacrima.

### *Upgrade: Ramming (Tempesta ●●●)*

The Noble's vehicle breaks down any obstacle impudent enough to stand in its way. In any crash [CofD 99] the Durability of the object the vehicle hits is reduced by the Noble's Tempesta, to a minimum of 0.

### *Upgrade: Inviolable (Specchio ●●●)*

The Noble may create a vehicle so beautiful that no one can think of damaging it. Anyone trying to avoid a collision with the vehicle gains a bonus equal to the Noble's Specchio on their dice pool, and anyone trying to damage it takes a penalty equal to her Specchio. The vehicle's driver is affected whenever his driving maneuver may result in a crash.

### *Breath of Boreas (Shape ●●●●, Acqua ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = 5  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Science + weather modifier  
Cost: 3 Wisps  
Duration: 1 or more scenes

The North Wind blows and winter comes at the Noble's call. When she reaches the threshold, the temperature rapidly falls below freezing in a circle of 1 mile radius centered on the Noble, creating the Extreme Cold Tilt [CofD 282] within the circle. The cold snap lasts for the rest of the current scene. The Noble is not protected from the weather she has summoned (not, at least, by this Charm.)

Furthermore, for every 3 successes the Noble accumulates over the threshold, she can tune the weather further to her liking, adding one of the following effects.

- **Biting:** The chill goes deep into people's flesh. The Extreme Cold Tilt inflicts a -1 penalty immediately. The Princess can apply this effect up to 5 times.
- **Icy:** Freezing rain falls in the area, coating all surfaces in ice. The Ice Tilt [CofD 284] applies throughout the affected area.
- **Snowing:** Snow falls in great quantities, imposing the Blizzard Tilt [CofD 281] throughout the affected area.
- **Duration:** The weather, and the tilts it creates, last for another scene.

Current weather conditions modify the activation roll: cold extreme environment (+ level), other extreme environment (- level), already snowing (+3), thick clouds (+1), or clear sky (-1). The Charm cannot be used more than once a day in a single area.

### *Upgrade: Loyal (Acqua ●●●●)*

The Charm encloses the Noble in a bubble of warm air, protecting her from the cold she has invoked. The Noble takes no penalties or damage from the extreme environment, and if she wishes she can suppress any or all Tilts imposed by the Charm within a radius of Inner Light yards of herself, or reimpose them, as an instant action. Each Tilt can be suppressed or released independently.

### *Call Down the Thunder (Shape ●●●●, Aria ●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = 5  
Dice pool: Strength + Science + weather modifier  
Cost: 3 Wisps  
Duration: 1 or more scenes

The Noble raises her hands to the sky and summons the wrath of a storm. Once she reaches the threshold, the sky fills with dark clouds and rain starts to fall in a radius of 1 mile, building in seconds to a downpour (the

Heavy Rain Tilt [CofD 283]) that lasts until the Charm ends. In freezing weather the clouds release snow instead of rain, creating the Blizzard Tilt [CofD 281]. The Princess can't change the temperature with this Charm.

Furthermore, for every 3 successes the Noble accumulates over the threshold, she can apply one of the following effects. She may wait to choose which effects to apply until the turn she needs one.

- **Heavy Winds:** The storm buffets everyone caught in it, impeding their movements. Until the Charm ends, the area has one level of the Heavy Winds Tilt [CofD 283]. The Princess can apply this effect a maximum of 3 times.
- **Hailstones:** As an instant action, the Noble rolls her activation dice pool; in a circle with a radius of 20x Aria yards centered on a point within sight, hailstones strike everything exposed to the sky, doing 1 bashing damage for each success. If the Noble is inside the circle, she takes the damage along with everything else within it.
- **Lightning:** As an instant action, the Noble rolls her activation dice pool; a bolt of lightning strikes one target within sight, doing 1 lethal damage for each success. General armor reduces this damage.
- **Duration:** The Charm, and the Tilts it creates, last for another scene.

Current weather conditions modify the activation roll: already raining or snowing (+3), thick clouds (+1), clear sky (-1), or drought (-3). The Charm cannot be used more than once a day in a single area.

### *Upgrade: Uplifting (Aria ●●●●)*

The storm guides itself to help the Noble who summoned it. The Tilts it creates don't affect her, and hailstones don't strike her if she calls them to the place she stands. Moreover, she can apply accumulated successes for another effect:

**Speed:** The storm winds always blow at the Noble's back, carrying her more swiftly to her destination. She adds +1 to her Speed and Initiative until the Charm ends. She can apply this effect a maximum of 3 times.

### *Travel in Style (Shape ●●●●, Legno ●●●)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Composure + Crafts - number of people to shelter  
Cost: 2-6 Wisps  
Duration: until 1 hour after sunrise

Nobles of Clubs often travel in the wilderness, but like their namesakes, the Turtles carry a shelter with them. The Noble chooses how many people to provide shelter to when she activates the Charm.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Noble faints, and can't be awakened for at least eight hours.

**Failure:** The Noble waves swatches of cloth about with no result.

**Success:** Lengths of brightly colored cloth whirl from the Noble's hands, before settling on wooden scaffolding. Once the cloth stops moving, the Noble stands within a tent large enough to accommodate everyone she wanted to, with the proper number of camp beds, a central fireplace for cooking, and a side chamber for calls of nature. The tent flaps, if tied shut, can't be opened from the outside, and despite its apparent fragility the tent's fabric has a Durability equal to the Noble's Legno.

When the flaps are tied, the interior swiftly comes to the climate of a warm spring day; any environmental Tilts due to the weather cease to apply inside the tent. Moreover, the Noble can spend extra Wisps to protect the interior from the worst that nature can do: the third and subsequent Wisps she spends to activate the Charm reduce the effective level of an extreme environment [CofD 97] by 1 step each within the tent.

**Exceptional Success:** The tent's outer surface is camouflaged. Perception rolls to notice its presence take a -2 penalty.

The tent will tremble when the rays of the dawning sun reach it, then fold up and vanish when the last occupant leaves it or one hour has passed. Anyone still inside at the end of that hour is unceremoniously dumped onto the ground where the tent rested.

## *Enduring Beauty (Shape ●●●●, Specchio ●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll, threshold = target's Health + Supernatural Tolerance + dots in the Striking Looks Merit  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Larceny  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

Beauty is the only true constant in the world, the Queen of Mirrors knows. Not personal beauty, for that can fade and die, but the beauty that comes from righteousness and enduring strength. It is the calculus of rule that inspires her to take beauty from fools who might waste it, and use it for the betterment of the world. The Noble learns to peel the beauty from others, and craft it into valuable gems. These gems also have metaphysical potency, and can be used to aid other Charms. This Charm must be used against a target who is asleep, or otherwise incapacitated or restrained. Each time the Noble rolls, her target takes 1 point of bashing damage; a sleeping target reflexively rolls Wits + Stamina - 3 and wakes if they succeed.

If the required number of successes are attained, the Noble peels the metaphysical beauty away from the face of her target, which comes away like a thin layer of skin, then coalesces into a gem. If the target had no dots in the Striking Looks merit, the gem is a cheap stone, dull and lacking lustre, equivalent to Availability 1. If they had one dot, it is attractive and valuable, a moderate value sapphire, emerald or ruby (frequently matching the color of their eyes) equivalent to Availability 2. If the Noble is lucky enough to find someone with two dots, the gem is a diamond almost without compare, equivalent to Availability 3. An individual targeted with this Charm loses all dots in the Striking Looks merit, if they had any, and gains the [Forgettable](#) Condition. The effects on appearance are not obviously magical; even the most beautiful target is recognizable as themselves after this is used, merely... lacking the gleam of beauty they once had.

The gems produced are metaphysically potent. When holding one in her hand, a Princess may, reflexively, cause it to crumble to dust, destroying it utterly. It adds a number of dice equal to its Availability rating to any one roll of hers which is in line with the Specchio Invocation. Any Princess can use them for this purpose. In addition, a Princess with [Seed of Light](#) can use that Charm to turn a gem into a number of seeds equal to its Availability rating. If the gem is returned to the person it was stolen from, it need only be pressed against their forehead to restore their former beauty.

Unless used on a consenting target, using the Charm is a compromise with a -2 penalty.

## *Master Mason (Shape ●●●●●, Terra ●●●●)*

Requires [Crucible](#) with Powered  
Action: Extended, 15 minutes/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#) + Availability  
Dice pool: Presence + Crafts  
Cost: (Sanctuary rating)+2 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: lasting

The ground under the Noble's feet trembles, rumbles, and finally erupts into a great building of steel, brick, stone and glass, with water pipes, electrical outlets and every modern convenience. The Noble must accumulate enough successes to match both the size of the building, as measured on the [Sanctuary](#) scale, and its quality as a residence or working space, as measured by Availability [CofD 100]. The Charm is not limited to houses, but can build any structure of comparable size - say, a road, bridge, dam, stadium or theater.

The Noble may not use this Charm unless she is standing on solid ground, devoid of any intact man-made structures and large enough to accommodate the final building. If she wants any plumbing and power outlets in the building to work, she must connect them to water systems and electrical mains that run nearby. Any furnishings in the building are integral with it, made of the same materials and immovable.

## *Through the Looking Glass (Shape ●●●●●, Specchio ●●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Occult  
Cost: 3 Wisps, 1 Willpower  
Duration: indefinite

The Noble enters the world behind a mirror.

**Dramatic Failure:** The mirror breaks into hundreds of glass shards. If the Noble was in the reflected world, she returns to reality, but anything else brought in is lost.

**Failure:** The Noble remains where she was.

**Success:** The surface of the mirror vanishes, allowing the Noble to enter (or leave) the reflected world.

**Exceptional Success:** The Noble regains the Willpower point she spent to activate the Charm.

Inside the reflected world is an exact reflection of everything the mirror can see. This does mean that any text is backwards and climbing into a funhouse mirror is... weird. The objects inside a mirror are entirely immovable and indestructible: the only way to affect them is to affect the real object they are reflections of. Real items the Noble brings with her behave as normal. Any person or item she brings into the mirror world casts an intangible reflection back into the real world.

Inside a mirror any area that cannot be seen by that mirror (from any angle) is nothing more than solid glass that stretches on for infinity, or until the next place visible from that mirror. The Noble can carve out holes in this glass; it takes her five minutes to remove one cubic yard of glass, which dissolves into vapor shortly afterward. Doing this creates a little hidey hole invisible from the outside world, perfect for storing weapons and valuable Bequests or bringing boyfriends you don't want your mother to know about. The holes last until the mirror is destroyed or moved. Once either occurs nothing, not even returning the mirror to its original spot can recover any stored items. No one knows what happens to a person lost this way but it probably isn't pretty.

While inside the mirror any area that usually can be seen by that mirror but cannot due to circumstance (say someone's thrown a blanket over the mirror in the real world) is covered by pure darkness that numbs all five senses. This however is not any more dangerous than normal sensory deprivation and some Nobles even make use of it for such.

Two mirrors reflecting the same area will lead to the same reflected area, though parts of it may well be separated by walls of glass. This area is safe until the last mirror is removed. However two mirrors set up to reflect each other can be quite dangerous. While inside the mirror world one can use the second mirror to recursively enter a second mirror world. Some Nobles use sequences of mirrors as elaborate "passwords" but the risk of being lost forever in an ever deeper chain of worlds means most stay far away.

Exiting the mirror world normally requires using this Charm a second time. In an emergency the Noble can simply jump through the mirror to leave the reflection, which has the usual effects on her of jumping through glass. (Smashing the mirror before jumping would send the Noble to wherever it is things stored in hidey holes go when the mirror is moved.)

### *Upgrade: Secure*

By spending 1 Wisp the Noble can fix a mirror in place. It gains Durability equal to her Specchio against both damage and being moved. This Durability does not apply if the Noble deliberately jumps through the mirror to leave the reflection, but it does cover accidents.

### *Upgrade: Leading*

The Noble can now lead others through mirrors. Each extra person or five Size points of equipment costs an additional Wisp. The Noble does not have to go first, or even enter herself. It is acceptable to push someone through with the intent of trapping them.

# *Images and Bequests*

A Princess' power comes from within, it comes from her hopes, her emotions and her Beliefs. This has its advantages, and its disadvantages, just as any other source of power you could care to name. A Princess who believes in the rule of law might be unable to use magic that works outside the system. A Princess who believes in careful thought and planned action might be unable to call upon magical intuition. Not everybody has a power deep within them, Beacons and Sworn do not.

The [Living Image](#) Charm circumvents a major disadvantage of Hopeful magic, that a Princess must be transformed to use it. The Charm can be used either to evoke a Charm but delay its effects until the Princess needs it, or to make a [Bequest](#) that anyone with a tie to the Light, however faint, can use to summon power. With Charm images the Nobility can use magic in their mundane identity; with Bequests they are able to trade Charms, pass their powers on to the next generation and equip teams of trained Sworn with potent magics.

Bequests based on permanent Charms have no cost, and apply their Charm's effect to a Light-touched person wearing or using them. Bequests based on activated Charms release the Charm's effect when the user pays the Charm's cost. Bequests based on activated Charms become primed (gaining the [Waiting Charm](#) Condition) when the user pays the Charm's cost (which can be done reflexively, unless the Charm calls for an extended action to use); the Condition resolves when the user makes the activation roll. A user can prime and activate a Bequest in the same turn. If a Bequest is Duty-Bound, its user can prime it without spending Wisps by carrying out the task its maker set for that purpose; any other resources the Bequest requires must be spent to prime it.

If a Bequest is based on an upgraded Charm, every upgrade included in the Charm applies every time the Bequest is used, and the user must pay the upgrades' cost in full - a Bequest, unlike a Charm, is not flexible. If the user has an Invocation that's compatible with the Bequest's Charm, she may apply it when activating the Bequest, with the same effect as it would have on the Charm. When a Bequest opposes another supernatural power, the [Clash of Wills](#) dice pool equals the user's Inner Light + the Bequest's Charm rating, modified by the user's Belief or Integrity.

Any of the Hopeful, whether transformed or not, may recognize a Bequest as such; she rolls her Inner Light + the Bequest's Charm rating the first time she touches it in a scene, recognizing it if successful. Beacons and the Sworn may do the same, rolling 1 + the Bequest's Charm rating.

# Chapter 4: Fighting Fear

*I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.*

—Nelson Mandela

The Radiant wish to create a better world, standing in their way is everyone who benefits from the world being just as it is. The most obvious, and common, threats they face come from the Darkness: the Darkspawn, and the tainted areas they lurk in, where human evil has worn holes into the fabric of reality itself. In the same category are cults that feed the Darkness to gain temporal power. Most terrifying of all are the Dethroned, Nobles who have given in to the pain and despair that surrounds them. They are tragic, and monstrous.

Sitting half way between allies and enemies are the followers of the three Twilight Queens. The Queen of Tears rules Alhambra, the last city of the Kingdom, impossibly still standing as a bastion of light within the very heart of Darkness. Her followers harvest the hope and joy from the world, sucking away our dreams to buy another day of life for the Grand City - a life none of them pretend is happy or worthwhile, but one that must be maintained because the alternative is too terrifying to contemplate.

The Queen of Storms is a being utterly consumed by her rage at the depredations of the darkness, and all thought, mercy, and virtue is incinerated by her white-hot fury. Her Princesses and servants are living vessels of pure Fury, so single-minded in their pursuit of punishment and revenge that they are blind to the sorrow and ruined lives they leave in their wake. Leading the charge are the terrible Goalenu, fragments of the Queen given form to fight the Darkness.

The Queen of Mirrors is an enigma. Those who have seen her sometimes describe a silver-haired woman, with eyes as bright as the full moon and an infectious crescent-grin of a smile. But most often they say she looks like the one she meets, their chiral twin... apart from her grin and her eyes, which are always silver. They say she makes a body of mirrors from ancient manor houses, of glass from sky, of moonlight and water and silver, and walks among mankind, looking for Princesses of unusual talent and drive and skill and will. They say she's looking for the True Heir to the Kingdom.

The Dreamlands lie beyond the wall of sleep. Nearly all the Princess were once trapped there, the Radiant Queens and mystic treasures may be found there; they reflect the hopes and very soul of humanity, but are not safe. The Wardens patrol for souls carrying the Light, hoping to return them to a blissful prison, while the Amano jaku steal mortals' identities to taste of life on Earth.

And then there is mundane humanity in all their variety and legions - and while most of them are not enemies at all, too few are ready to be allies, and truly banishing the Darkness will be impossible without them. Finally there are those the Nobility work with or protect: the Beacons on whom the Light shines brightly, the Sworn who vow themselves to Noble service, the Shikigami who guide the newly Blossomed, and the Blessed Places that great deeds of virtue have sanctified.

## *Tainted Places*

*You can feel it in the air all around. This place chills you to the bone and squelches underfoot with rotting damp and the stench of mildew. The sounds don't carry right, the city outside felt so distant. Even your feelings for your dead parents, your rage and hate for their murder, even they feel distant.*

*Casually you slide your knife across your wrist, your blood wells up like liquid green fire. The drops fall and the stinking rotted boards catch light as you pray to your Lady of Cleansing Flame. When a place is this far gone there's nothing to do but burn it, and it burns so beautifully in emerald fire.*

The ruins of the concentration camps. A house on an island where 10 people were killed one by one by a sadistic murderer. An abandoned apartment where the worst gangs always gather. A hidden temple where a dark wizard sacrificed people for infernal power. These are the Tainted places, where the evil that men do has lingered. Some are well known, while others are forgotten. The one thing they all have in common is that the Darkness was - or is - strong there, and it doesn't want to leave.

A place becomes Tainted when someone commits a grave sin there, meant to make others suffer, or else when vicious and cruel acts become routine and customary there. The very substance of the area is bruised by minor sins, cut or torn by major ones, and the Darkness comes quickly to infect the wound and open it farther. Each Tainted area steals away some ability (native talent or training) from those within it who act for innocent and virtuous reasons, while leaving the evildoers' faculties intact; by doing so, the Darkness makes it easy to commit acts like those that first Tainted the place, and hard for anyone to resist. And each time someone yields to temptation, the Taint deepens, and its malign influence steals more faculties from the innocent. Finally, staying within a Tainted area slowly drains the hope and life out of people even if they do nothing at all; a part of the Darkness stays in them afterward, trying to seduce them into joining it.

Anyone touched by the Light feels a shadow of fear, grief, ennui or despair when they stand within a Tainted place; the more experienced learn to recognize in that shadow a spoor of the Darkness. When a Beacon, Sworn, Shikigami or Noble first enters a Tainted area, and at the start of each scene in a Tainted area, the Storyteller rolls a dice pool of their base Sensitivity + the Severity of the Taint. If successful, the character realizes that the area has been Tainted.

## *Creating Taint*

Tainted areas are represented with two factors: their size, and the severity of their curses. The Size of a Tainted area is measured on the [Sanctuary](#) scale - the smallest Tainted sites, at Size 0, would fit within a small walk-in closet; the largest ever found, at Size 5, covers the whole of a large estate roughly the size of the Pentagon. Size also affects the Darkness's grip on the Tainted area; in an area of Size 0 a single act of resistance might banish the evil influence, while the largest Tainted sites yield only after long, sustained purification. A Tainted area's Severity measures its power to corrupt people, and limits the degree to which an innocent's actions are impeded there; it is rated in dots, and is rolled as a dice pool. Finally, a Taint also has a Hold track, that has a number of boxes equal to its Size + 1. This records any progress made in purifying the area of its Taint; most methods of doing so mark off boxes on the Hold track. When the last Hold box is marked, the Taint's Severity drops by 1, and all the Hold boxes clear. If the Taint's Severity drops to 0 the area is cleansed of Taint entirely. Taint recovers its grip if nobody resists it until a curse fails; clear 1 Hold box on each day when no Hold box has been marked.

The growth of Taint in an area resembles somewhat the process of moral degeneration in people; the farther a place has gone into the grip of the Dark, the less any single sin seems to matter. The level of morality the sin breaks, and the current Severity of the Taint, set how much a sin adds to the local Taint; consult the following table. A dot of Severity costs 1 point. A dot of Size costs points equal to the new value of Size (1 point to raise Size from 0 to 1, 2 points to raise from 1 to 2, and so on.)

### *Taint Growth (points)*

Class of sin	Severity				
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+
Bullying, petty theft, threatened violence against the defenseless	0*	0	0	0	0
Grand theft, deliberate injury to the defenseless	1	0*	0	0	0
Mass property damage (e.g. arson), negligence causing serious injury	2	1	0*	0	0
Negligence causing death, deliberate serious injury to the defenseless	3	2	1	0*	0
Murder, torture, rape	4	3	2	1	0*
Two or more of murder, torture, and rape on the same victim; mass murder	5	4	3	2	1
0* means that a single act at that level gives no points, but repeating it many times can build up to a point eventually.					



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## *Taint and Sensitivity*

The acts that create Taint are not quite the same as those that trigger [Sensitivity](#). Sensitivity responds to people in pain, whatever the cause may be. Taint, however, responds to the intent to cause pain, regardless of whether the intent was successful. For example, an accidental fire that destroys a house and kills its residents will trigger Sensitivity (people died) but not create Taint (nobody meant to start the fire.) And contrariwise, an arsonist whose fire gets put out before it destroys a building creates Taint (due to his intent), but doesn't trigger Sensitivity.

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For each dot in Severity, the Storyteller selects 1 curse. A Taint sustains exactly as many curses as its Severity (really, the curses are the Taint) and if cleansing removes a Severity dot, it also removes a curse. Curses are penalties inflicted on people within the Tainted area, which apply while they remain there, *unless* they form an intention to do harm or allow the stress of the Taint to disturb their mental balance. Actions which create Taint at any level of Severity, even the lowest, never take penalties from a curse, but when a character's purposes are good or innocent, and he keeps his intention pure, the Taint opposes him. It also tempts him - if a character fails a breaking point while within the Taint, the curses may cease to impede him for a time... and the character may gain the [Tainted](#) Condition. Moreover, everyone in a Tainted area is aware, if only subconsciously, that yielding to temptation will mollify the curses on the place.

A curse can produce any one of the following list of effects. A Tainted area can inflict any curse any number of times, within the limit of its Severity.

**Attribute:** Dice pools that include one Attribute take a -1 penalty.

**Skills:** Rolls of two Skills take a -1 penalty; or, rolls of one Skill take a -2 penalty. An Attribute + Attribute dice pool, such as Perception, may be treated as one Skill.

**Specialties:** Three types of tasks, each of the scope of a specialty, take a -1 penalty. These can be stacked, with one type taking -2 or -3.

**Defense:** Characters with good general intentions are vulnerable to mundane assault. Reduce their Defense by -2, to a minimum of 0.

**Health:** The Taint steals vitality; blood clots slowly, wounds will not close. All injuries suffered inside it are worsened by one point of Health. This curse may not be applied more than once.

**Resistance:** Characters with good general intentions are vulnerable to supernatural powers. Reduce either Resolve or Composure by -1, to a minimum of 0 (not both - pick one) when the Attribute is used to resist a power.

**Speed:** The Taint steals motion and force. Reduce Initiative and Speed by -1.

**Willpower:** The Taint steals the will to act. Reduce Willpower by 1 dot. Willpower points in excess of dots remain, but can't be spent. Characters with 0 Willpower take no action of their own volition, unless the action would be a breaking point - taking such an action releases them to act normally for a scene.

**Corruption:** Breaking point rolls within the area take a -1 penalty.

**Vice:** The Taint reinforces base desires. Each level of this curse applies to one Vice. Anyone within the Tainted place may fulfill that Vice in addition to their own, but only if their action can create Taint. If the indulger's own Vice is one the Taint has cursed he regains two Willpower by fulfilling it in this way. As always a character may only regain Willpower through Vice once per scene.

**Terror:** Characters with good intentions experience a nameless, sourceless fear. All such characters gain the Shaken Condition [CofD 290] at the start of a scene in the Tainted area. This curse may not be applied more than once.

Beyond its curses, a Tainted place disturbs anyone who remains in it for long, especially if they fall to slumber. Anyone with an Integrity or Belief trait who sleeps in a Tainted area long enough to regain Willpower has horrifying nightmares, and must make a breaking point or compromise roll immediately on waking (though they still regain the Willpower.) They take a penalty on the roll equal to the Tainted area's Size.

## *Foci*

Within each Tainted area is at least one *focus*: the original site of the wound, from which the infection spreads. When a single sin Taints a place, the focus of the Taint is almost always just where the sin was committed; when the Taint comes from long practice of corruption, its focus appears where the wickedness is most often done. Because the Taint originates there, the focus of a Tainted area is especially dangerous to touch, but it is also the weakest point of the whole area; a direct attack on the focus has a good chance of banishing the Taint from it entirely. Touching a focus is a breaking point for all characters with Integrity, and a compromise for characters with Belief; both apply a penalty equal to the number of curses emanating from that focus.

As the Size and Severity of Taint grow, the diversity of sins contributing to the Taint creates more than one focus - a good rule of thumb is to have as many foci, and types of sins, as the lower of Size and Severity/5. If a Taint does have multiple foci, the Storyteller distributes its Severity among the foci and decides which curses emanate from each focus; destroying one focus only affects the Severity and curses tied to that focus.

## *Corruption*

Taint, once established in an area, infects the people in that area if given an opportunity to do so; anything that deranges the mind or soul lets the Darkness take root there. Whenever a mundane character reaches a breaking point while in a Tainted area, in addition to the normal consequences, make a corruption check for him. The dice pool equals the Taint's Severity, minus the sum of the character's Resolve and Composure. If this number is 0 or negative, roll a chance die as usual.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character sees the Taint's corruption for the horror it is and rejects it, and the Taint's hold on the place weakens. He gains the [Sight of the Pit](#) Condition, and the Taint checks one Hold box.

**Failure:** The character is uncorrupted. He suffers only the effects of the breaking point.

**Success:** The character's mind and soul are undermined by the Darkness. The character gains an instance of the [Tainted](#) Condition, but removes all effects of the area's curses for the rest of the scene.

**Exceptional Success:** The Darkness deeply corrupts the character. The character gains two instances of the Tainted Condition, but removes all effects of the area's curses until he leaves it.

Characters with [Sensitivity](#) (Princesses, [Beacons](#), [Sworn](#) and [creatures of Darkness](#)) cannot be infected by Tainted places, but the attempt gives them pain nonetheless. They make a corruption check when they roll for a breaking point or compromise, with these effects:

**Dramatic Failure:** The character throws off the corruption without effort. She is wholly unaffected.

**Failure:** The character is Haunted; roll her base Sensitivity dice pool to determine the severity. (Dark beings do this to check for Shadows gain - they suffer no other effects from a Haunting.)

**Success:** The Darkness' strength deepens the Haunting; add +1 to the character's Sensitivity pool for each success.

**Exceptional Success:** The Darkness' strength greatly deepens the Haunting.

An Anger Haunting instills an obsession with cleansing the area of Taint, and penalizes all actions not directed to that end. In addition, whatever the results of the roll, a Light-touched character also gains the [Sight of the Pit](#) Condition when a Tainted place tries to corrupt him.

## *Inviting Corruption*

There are always people willing to sell their souls for power, and being corrupted by Tainted areas is a path to power ... but a slow one. Those who are ready to sink into depravity at once can find, in moldering books or Internet sites on black magic, a host of rituals meant to summon the powers of darkness into the ritualist's body or soul - and if performed in a Tainted area, some of them will *work*. While the effective rituals vary widely (their discoverers come from every country and culture that ever existed) they have two points in common: they all include profound blasphemies against what the discoverers held sacred, and at their climax they require a human sacrifice.

A typical ritual for inviting the Darkness into oneself takes about an hour to complete, and must be done within a Tainted place. Only a mundane human can perform it, and he must murder in cold blood another mundane human, or a being touched by the Light, during the ritual's course. Many rituals mention that sacrificing the innocent, virtuous or holy is pleasing to the dark gods, which will lead them to favor the supplicant; though none refer to the Light's servants by name, it's unquestioned that the Darkness responds well to their deaths.

At the end of a ritual, the ritualist rolls Resolve + Occult - Integrity, applying modifiers as appropriate.

**Dramatic Failure:** The ritual works too well - the ritualist's flesh decays with unnatural speed, killing him in a few minutes of horrible torment. At the next nightfall his corpse rises as a Darkspawn, with whatever traits the Storyteller sees fit to give it.

**Failure:** The ritual fails. The ritualist checks for a breaking point and Taint corruption as a human.

**Success:** The Darkness claims the ritualist for its own; the ritualist immediately gains the **Darkened** Condition, and checks for a breaking point and corruption as a Dark creature.

**Exceptional Success:** As for normal success, plus the ritualist gains a Shadows dot on top of any gained from the corruption check.

**Modifiers:** Powerful Taint (+1 per 5 Severity dots), victim is Virtuous (+2), victim is Vice-Ridden (-2), victim is Sworn (+1), victim is Hopeful (+1 per 2 Inner Light dots), victim's Integrity/Belief is 8 or more (+1 for 8-9, +2 for 10), victim's Integrity/Belief is 3 or less (-1 for 2-3, -2 for 1)

## *Cleansing Tainted Places*

Several methods are known for breaking the Darkness' hold on a Tainted place, and patching the frayed reality it leaves behind. When the place is small and the Taint weak, all that's often needed is to ask some people with strong minds to stay there for a few days. Even an average person may wash away a dot of such Taints (Severity 4 or less) by inadvertence, when it tries to corrupt him and fails utterly. These Taints survive only in areas that are seldom visited, or when found and cultivated by cults of Darkspawn. Tainted areas strong enough to overcome most people's resistance, though, call for more deliberate techniques.

### *Abjuration*

A rite of purification, similar to those that banish ephemeral beings, can shut off the Darkness from a Tainted area for a little while. The abjurist rolls Resolve + Composure, contested by the Tainted area's Severity. The abjurist's Integrity, Virtue and Vice modify the roll as they do for abjuring a ghost or spirit [CofD 140]. If the abjurist wins the contest, all the curses of the Taint are suppressed for one full day, or until someone commits an act that creates Taint within the area (whichever comes first.) On an exceptional success, the abjurist becomes a bane to all creatures of Darkness as long as the area's curses remain suppressed.

### *Purifying Foci*

A Tainted area is anchored by its foci and every focus has a cause, a flavor to the sins that Tainted the ground. Opposing the prime causes of a Tainted place acts as a bane to the Taint; the foci can be purified and the curses lifted. If a place was tainted by bullying and cruel enforced social isolation a character could host a speed dating event or a party. (It is strongly recommended to use abjuration to suppress the Taint before hosting a social event in a Tainted area.) If a place was Tainted by crime it can be used as the headquarters of a neighborhood watch.

Removing Taint in this fashion uses a system similar to social maneuvering. Impressions of the Tainted area set the time needed for a roll; the times are the same as those in social maneuvering. The initial impression depends on how much the purifier knows about the Tainted area's general character and history; simply reading newspapers and listening to locals' stories is enough for an average impression, but each step upward requires deeper and harder investigation.

The purifier chooses his dice pool for each roll based on his best guess of the Taint's nature. The pool can (and should) change from one roll to the next. A successful roll checks off one of the Taint's Hold boxes, and

a exceptional success checks off two; a failure imposes a cumulative -1 penalty on future rolls, and a dramatic failure also lowers the purifier's impression by one step, forcing him to retreat and change tactics. If the impression ever reaches hostile, the purifier has failed; all Hold boxes clear, and he can't purify the Tainted area until it has changed in either Size or Severity. The purification succeeds when every Hold box has been checked.

If two people try to purify a Tainted place at once, treat one purifier as an assistant to the other, using the rules for teamwork actions. The purifier who begins first becomes the primary actor; if both begin at the same time, the purifier with the better impression takes the lead.

## *Destroying Foci*

Finding the focus, or foci, of Taint in an area allows a more direct, if destructive, tactic to cleanse the Taint: one has only to destroy whatever is at that spot. The first step is discovering the sins that were committed in the area, and which Tainted it. When the area is still in use, this is often a simple matter of observing the place. After it's abandoned, as deeply Tainted areas usually are, a variety of investigative methods may be used: sifting physical evidence on the site, questioning witnesses to the sins, reading old records, and so on. Foci of Taint are always fixtures: a spot on the floor where a man's lifeblood spilled out, an outcropping of hard rock in a forest, a streetlight with a burned-out bulb that's never replaced. Once a focus is found, the cleaning crew must make some drastic alteration to the fixture, sufficient to make it unrecognizable to anyone who knew it when it was first Tainted. Reducing it to dust and rubble is the simplest way to get rid of the Taint, though it is possible that the neighbors or the police will object.

Whenever one of a Tainted area's foci is mutilated or destroyed - usually, though not always, by someone's deliberate action - roll the Severity dots tied to that focus. The number of successes on this roll is the Severity of a new focus for the Taint; remove any curses tied to the destroyed focus, and add a number of new curses equal to the new figure. (Yes, it is possible for raw destruction to leave behind a focus stronger than the one you destroyed. Brute force can be clumsy.) Bonuses and penalties to this roll include: structure of the focus is left intact (+2), remains of the focus are scattered outside the Tainted area (-2). The Storyteller may just add the new Severity to other foci in the Tainted area, if there are any, instead of adding a new focus.

## *Dreams of Sin*

Occasionally, the Hopeful find a Tainted area for which the sins that created it simply cannot be undone or redeemed - perhaps all the guilty and their victims are dead, and there are no people left whom the Taint has corrupted. In these areas, the long persistence of the Taint gives it a character of its own, distinct from the Darkness from which it comes; such Taints have, in fact, a kind of awareness, and their malign influence almost seems purposely aimed at bringing out the worst in anyone who enters them. That awareness, though, gives the Hopeful a way to defeat them. In a process quite similar to entering the Dreamlands, they can walk through the area and search out the malignity, eventually falling into a dream in which the Tainting sins are continually re-enacted. When a Princess reaches this state, she purifies the Taint from within: protecting the dream-victims, stopping the dream-sinners, persuading the dream-people to cease their evil practices.

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## *Taint and the Dreamlands*

It's quite possible to find entrances to the Dreamlands within a Tainted place, if you know how to find them elsewhere. It is, however, decidedly *unwise* to take a nap in a place where Darkspawn may show up at any moment. Moreover, it poses a real risk to the Dreamlands themselves. The Princess' body is exposed to the Taint while her mind travels in the Dreamlands, so she will have to make a corruption check if she sleeps long enough; and if she suffers a Haunting because of it, the Taint actually spreads to her current location in the Dreamlands. Darkspawn can use such Taint as a bridge into the Dreamlands, sending images of themselves to kidnap and torment Dreamlanders, and to widen the breach with more sins ...

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Any character with Sensitivity can try to enter the dream of a Taint as a simple action; the base dice pool is the Taint's Severity. If the character has been Haunted thanks to exposure to this Taint, the bonus for investigating the Taint applies. It isn't easy to enter a Taint's dream, though - simple success gives information, but an exceptional success is needed for a full communion with the Taint's awareness.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Taint bites into the character; make a corruption check for her. Also, she can't enter the Taint's dream until she has had a full night's rest outside the Tainted area.

**Failure:** The Taint's awareness does not respond. The character gets nowhere. She may try again in 30 minutes, but she takes a cumulative -1 penalty.

**Success:** The character learns the location of the nearest focus for the Taint in the area, if she didn't know it already. She may try again in 30 minutes, and removes all penalties from previous failures.

**Exceptional Success:** The character enters the Taint's dream. To an observer, she falls unconscious where she stands.

Once within the Taint's dream, the character perceives the Tainted area as it was while the sins that created it were committed. At the start the dreamer is a bystander, watching phantoms of the people involved; as long as she remains on the sidelines, where none of the people involved would have noticed her if she had been present, nothing definite will happen in the dream, though there is always a feeling of impending doom. The dreamer may use this preliminary time to slip through the scene looking for clues, signs and portents; she'd better be careful, though, because while there always are small hints pointing towards the crimes to come, discovering the hints has a good chance of beginning the crimes' re-enactment, with the dreamer pushed into a dangerous role. The dreamer's task here is to identify the key players in the drama before it starts, and choose her moment to intervene. All the Taint's curses apply to her, at this and all later stages.

Eventually the dreamer finds and pulls a trigger for the dream proper. In essence this means that the Taint has noticed the Princess. The Taint notices anything that's unusual to the narrative, including attempting to help a victim or entering restricted areas that the Taint knows only one person should enter. The Taint's attention is also attracted by anything that strongly suggests the dreamer should be suffering though she is not, such as stepping inside an inactive torture device. Of course, doing the blindingly obvious, such as opening fire with a machine gun, will attract the Taint's attention. Unless the player has done something unimaginably silly, like lock herself into an obvious death trap, the Storyteller should avoid making triggers that are inescapable death. When the Princess trips a trigger, the phantoms solidify and begin to act out their parts. Once solidified, the people appearing in the dream will behave as the original people would have, if the Princess had been present. Therefore, the Storyteller should provide stats for them as if they were normal characters. However, the Taint influences them much as it does the Princess, and rather more strongly; dream characters follow the rules for Moral Inversion and Tainted Heart in the Darkened template, even if their originals were not Darkened - and even if they were supernatural beings.

***Example trigger:** The Princess finds a padded cell with a mummified corpse, the walls look slightly eaten. She walks in to investigate. The door slams shut and locks behind her and she is suddenly feeling very hungry. To escape this situation, the Princess might have the ability to pick locks, smash down doors or a friend in shouting distance who can open the door from the outside.*

As with purifying foci outside the dream, each focus has a specific key task that resolves it. (Any attempt to resolve a focus will trip a trigger and involve a Princess in the narrative, if she hasn't done so already.) Inside the dream, the task that resolves a focus has something to do with the place where the focus rests in reality - a critical object, or person, will be found there, or a critical event takes place there. The Taint invariably opposes all attempts to resolve its foci, by penalizing anyone attempting the key tasks and giving bonuses to any character opposing them. The difficulty of resolving a focus should correspond to the Severity dots tied to it.

***Example tasks:** Find a letter written by an inmate, and make sure it's properly mailed and not destroyed. Release a murder victim from her restraints and persuade her to escape. Recover or destroy letters kept by a blackmailer.*

Bashing damage the dreamer takes fighting in the Taint's dream is real only within the dream - if she is forced to unconsciousness she falls into normal sleep. Lethal or aggravated damage, however, is quite real, appearing as heart attacks, strokes, paralysis, and other invisible wounds. Willpower or Wisps spent are gone for real, but the effects of Charms are confined to the dream. If the dreamer manages to leave the Tainted area within the dream, she awakens; though the Taint will twist the dream to keep her from doing so - it likes having Sensitive people around to torment! Finally, the dreamer may choose to awaken when she resolves a focus, and always awakens when she resolves the last focus remaining and the Taint is gone.

# Sample Tainted Places

## Mary Ann's Bathtub

After a breakup with her boyfriend of four years Mary Ann ran herself a nice hot bath, poured herself a glass of wine, and slit her wrists. Four years of emotionally manipulating her vulnerable boyfriend condensed into one single act, tainting the bathtub. When they came for the body it was cleaned up of course, the tub was bleached and washed until it gleamed and not a drop of blood remained but cleaning isn't enough to remove Taint. If they wanted to do that they should have replaced the tub.

Even to this day, no matter how hot you run the water the porcelain always feels uncomfortably cold against your flesh. Lying in for a good soak comes with feelings of loss and distance from the people you care about.

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**Size:** 0 (just a bathtub)

**Severity:** 2

**Focus:** The tub itself. *Curses:* Composure -1, Empathy -2

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## The Utility Shed

In 1925 at Ellinson Junior high there were repeated incidents of students disappearing from campus... when the number reached 6 the school had almost closed down, but finally they discovered that the man behind it was in fact the school's janitor who had kidnapped, sexually assaulted and murdered the girls here.

This place was briefly much more powerful, but after the police took the bodies and buried them, stripped the shed down looking for evidence, as well as destroying the murder weapon this place has lost most of its curses. But perhaps they should have destroyed it entirely, since the shed remains a popular location for students to sneak a cigarette or an illicit tryst. That doesn't make it a good location though; at best the Taint makes things uncomfortable and clumsy, at worst, well, neither sweetheart is likely to feel very good about what the other gets up to.

Usually no one stays long enough to actually risk becoming Tainted themselves, but one repeat truant hid there just a few too many times. She's currently running on the rush, being in that shed makes her feel strong in a way nothing else ever did. She doesn't know why, but she knows she can grow the taint and is looking for ways to do just that.

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**Size:** 1

**Severity:** 5

**Focus:** The shed itself. *Curses:* Terror, Defense -1, Composure -1, Perception -2 (People outside the shed have trouble noticing anything within), Memory rolls -2

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## White Picket Lane

White Picket Lane always was a superficial place, a place where appearances counted for more than substance. Then it turned spiteful. The correct appearances became ever narrower. Those who did not fit in were passively aggressively driven away. The Taint is mild, but widespread.

Today White Picket Lane doesn't feel that different from normal. The minor amount of Taint is not enough to compete with the lovely climate and obsessive cleaning performed by the residents. On the surface the people would sooner be seen dead as impolite, keeping up appearances is everything; but peel back the surface and you'll see that the residents have become embroiled in constant games of one-upmanship, false smiles and social backstabbing.

White Picket Lane has few Darkspawn but many Darkened, most are in the mold of the [Malicious Gossip](#).

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**Size:** 5 (an entire neighborhood)

**Severity:** 5

**Focus:** A corded telephone that Susan spends much of the day using to spread gossip. It can be found in Susan's home office. *Curse:* Composure -1, Willpower -1

**Focus:** An ordinary wicker chair Gabrielle uses when hosting the weekly Stitch 'n Bitch. One of the cases where the insult is entirely justified. *Curse:* Socialize -2.

**Focus:** Lingerie that Bree wore when she seduced Tom to get revenge on Lynette. Bree thinks she's lost it, but in reality she was able to tell what it had become and so hid both it and the truth from herself. It can be found down the back of Tom's washing machine. *Curse:* Vice (Ambitious).

**Focus:** A gold pendant Mike bought for Mary when they were having an affair. If Mary isn't wearing it then it can be found in her jewellery box. *Curse:* Vice (Corrupt).

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## *The Dark World*

Beyond the fields we know, just outside the field of vision, in the sins of mankind and the slow rot of entropy, there is another place. A place where the streets are ruined and the crash of rotting concrete as it falls from gutted buildings is just a whisper. A place where the sun is a faint red dwarf, barely brighter than the other stars in the blackened sky, and the moon is a void in the night's sky which devours light, warping the twisted skies of this place around it. A place where the air hangs still and chill, where nothing lives and everything rots. A place where frozen Creatures of the Darkness, bereft of their contaminated life, line the streets, like corpses.

Welcome to the Dark World. Few among the Enlightened have been here more than once, but they feel its presence. Tainted areas connect to this place, like arterial wounds pumping light to this place, and in such areas, the Darkness within stirs to light. Its Taint leaks into the world, and in return, the sleeping monsters wake, and begin to make their way to the real world. This is the main source of [Darkspawn](#) - for men and women are not yet evil enough that they can be made in the numbers which Princesses encounter - and it is the secure bases used by [Mnemosyne](#) cult-leaders and [Cataphracts](#) dark generals. And from within the depths of the Dark World, [Dethroned](#) howl at the blackened sky, the fallen Nobles and near-gods to monsters, and the Darkspawn shiver, for there are things that even monsters fear.

There are ways to the Dark World. All creatures of the Darkness possess the innate capability to both enter and leave it. Some of them can grab human men and women, and take them to their place as playthings and meals; certainly, all can take corpses, meaning that some people are forever lacking closure for a disappeared loved one. Certain blasphemous rituals and powers can open wider holes, and it is under these circumstances that a Princess may find herself in this cursed place. But, certainly, it should be understood that the Dark World is a terrible place, that nevertheless must be acknowledged for it is the source of the most dire threats that the Enlightened must face.

## *The Nature of the Dark World*

The perpetual bane of Princesses who wish to understand this place is that, as creatures of the Light, they are not welcome here. Most of the knowledge which has been gathered comes from those who have dabbled in Lacrima, for it grants the ability to temporarily become a Creature of the Darkness, and that way it is possible to reach that place. Moreover, defectors from Tears have bought more hard-earned knowledge, from aeons of the Alhambran attempts to maximize the light they can steal from the world. Some knowledge has also come from the Queen of Storms, who hates that place in all its manifestations, and teaches her followers ways to cauterize the wounds in the world which are Taints. Knowledge is scarce, but some facts have been established, which are generally reliable enough to be used as rules of thumb.

Firstly, in most places, and certainly around Taints, the Dark World looks like the real world, reflected through a mirror darkly. The worst images of a post-nuclear apocalypse Earth do not equal this place of rot and cold and damp and decay, but they do at least provide some fuel to the imagination. Imagine your house, your street, every place you know and love. Now, kill all the plants, and leave their rotting, slimy remains to



smear the frozen earth. Let water pool in very corner and every recess, freeze and melt, freeze and melt, over and over again, until the damage has cracked and weakened everything once solid. Let the buildings crumple from neglect, staying just upright enough to endanger those who go in them, and fill the air with the scent of decay. Make it eternally cold, a cold which bites at the soul and fills one with melancholy. And let it exist like this forever, always at the end of all things, never quite permitted to end. Around a Taint, things are lighter, warmer, less soul-crushing. And that's where the Dark's monsters are awake.

This is the Dark World, even before the more supernatural elements are bought in. And those are there en masse. Outside of Taints, all the worst Dark-tainted dregs of humanity sleep, dead, undreaming, for even Creatures of the Darkness cannot survive in this hellish place. It is a massacre of monsters, the hunting dogs of the Darkness betrayed by it, too. Sometimes fogs of Darkness come down from the void of the moon, and rot and corrode everything they touch, leaving empty scars on the landscape behind them. Sometimes Dethroned - who, alone, perhaps due to their former connection to the Light, can wake sometimes - pass through, and the Darkspawn are twisted into the figments of their insane dreams, along with the landscape. Sometimes everything freezes and the air snows down, in a moment of bitter purity, for the frozen air rots and melts almost as soon as it reaches the ground. And then there are the Other places, drifting through the sky and through the land, which do not mimic the world as we know it, but may be something that the Darkness is digesting. Some say that they're remnants of the Kingdom. Other say that they're other worlds. And as one gets further from the nearest Taint, things get stranger. More viscous, as if the world is melting. Maybe the Dark World is only a real place when it leeches light, but if that's true, where do the Darkspawn sleep when a Taint is not around?

Some Princesses have claimed that this is the future, this is what the world will be like just before the Darkness wins. Even if they're not right, it's a good metaphor, at least.

## *The Nobility in the Dark World*

Entering the Dark World is almost suicide for most things. Even Creatures of the Darkness must cling to areas around Taints, if they wish to retain agency and free will, monsters huddling around a campfire. Mortals are doomed. But sometimes the Nobility find themselves in this place, and a few points should be noted.

Firstly, the Dark World is dangerous. This has been said before, but it bears repeating. It is not the Dreamlands which, for all that they were intended as a trap, have an allure and an elegance and a certain safety to them. They are not even like the stranger otherworlds which some Embassies can reach, for even in the place of the spirits that the members of the Ephemeral Embassy can reach, not everything is a foe. In the Dark World, everything, without exception, wants you dead. Even the world will seem to contort to kill a Noble within it, roads collapsing and buildings crumbling on their heads. Away from a Taint-lightened area, the entire World steals energy from every living thing in it, imposing the [Extreme Taint](#) Tilt. And that ties into the second point, which is...

Secondly, they know where you are. Technically, this isn't quite true. Technically, it is merely the presence of the Transformed self which alerts the creatures of the Darkness in the Dark World. However, as previously noted, given that everything around you wants you dead, going unTransformed is not an option for anyone but the most subtle and sneaky of the Nobility. Moreover, evidence suggests that, although it is not a common thing, the mere proximity of a Transformed self for extended periods can wake the Darkspawn in an area, like a Taint does. Therefore, the Noble can be tracked like a beacon of Light by the things that are awake and so will face frequent attack, but they cannot rest, for resting will wake more Creatures. This gives it a feel like a survival horror film, with a depth and intensity few of the Enlightened will have felt before.

Thirdly, it's hard to get to, and can be hard to escape. Although Enlightened can't normally get into the Dark World, they can get out at a Taint. This means, if you're diving into a single, known, Taint to rescue someone, it can be possible, for the Darkspawn will tend to stay within the Taint, as to remain active. But Mnemosyne and Cataphractoi are smarter, and if they take someone - often as a lure - they won't just keep them in the obvious Taint. They'll move them, force Darkspawn to freeze to death to set up a position in one of the areas away from a Taint. And many of the ways getting there are sins against Belief, or just traps.

Why would anyone go there? That's a very good question. Some among the Enlightened hold that there is never a good reason to go there. Ever. Even if a loved one is taken, at least they will probably die quickly. Most cannot be so cold-hearted. And that is the most common reason by far; rescues, which all too often turn into revenge when they find the person already dead. Some believe that there are secrets within the Darkness, a way to destroy Alhambra - which hides within the Heart of the Darkness, lost Queens trapped in the Dark World,



secrets, even the remnants of the other cities in the Kingdom which it too so long ago. And to date, few of those explorers have returned alive, and even fewer with anything worth the losses to them and their hollow eyes.

The Darkness has such places. Let it keep them, and concentrate on stopping it taking anything else.

## *Creatures of Darkness*

*"By my honor, I can't recall the last time I was in a fight like that! No moral ambiguity, no hopeless battle against ancient and overwhelming forces! They were the bad guys, we were the good guys, and they made a very satisfying sizzle when they felt my light."*

The creatures that live in Darkness, and emerge from [Tainted Places](#) hunting for scraps of light and warmth, were once creatures of flesh and blood; many were men and women. The infection that comes of staying in a Tainted place twists mortals out of the human shape, and tempts them with offers of occult power if they consent to being twisted farther.

## *Systems*

All creatures of the Darkness share some abilities, and a few weaknesses. A Dark being's Virtue is greatly weakened, and he feels called to exemplify his Vice, as normal people are called to fulfill their Virtue. He may regain only one Willpower point by fulfilling his Virtue, though he may do so once a scene and without risk to himself. In addition, he may regain Willpower from Vice in the same way, and may regain all Willpower once per session by fulfilling his Vice with an act of great depravity. Anything that would be a breaking point for a mundane character is likely to qualify for a full refresh of a Dark being's spent Willpower.

When another suffers from a Dark being's acts, or those of his intimates, the Darkness' grip on him tightens, and its presence offers him power. The character has a form of [Sensitivity](#), and rolls it under the same conditions that the Hopeful do. Unlike others with Sensitivity, his base pool is 0 dice, and he never takes a Condition from a Haunting, but he gains a dot of Shadows if he rolls more successes than his current Shadows rating or achieves an exceptional success.

Most Dark beings have ceased to think or feel as humans do, and wholly lack the Integrity trait or any equivalent. They have no breaking points and are capable of doing anything without turning a hair. Those Dark beings who *do* retain Integrity lose the trait if they fail a breaking point roll at Integrity 1.

A Dark being's flesh cannot bear the touch of jade. He takes 1 lethal damage per turn as long as a piece of jade is in contact with his body.

A Dark being knows a Tainted area for what it is the moment he enters one, and can estimate the depth of its corruption. As an instant action, he may learn the Severity rating of the place he's in, the location of the Taint's foci, and the Size of the area affected. (The same sense allows him to recognize [Blessed Places](#) and assess their Size and Beauty, though Dark beings prefer to avoid those.) Further, a Dark being can sometimes benefit from Taint. While actions done with good intentions are penalized by the Taints, for any task he attempts with an intent to harm, a Dark being reverses the relevant curses' penalties to bonuses. Finally, a Dark being can step between the Tainted area and its image in the [Dark World](#).

## *Entering Darkness*

In the long ages since the Kingdom fell, the Darkness has bled a great deal of substance out of the world we know; and while most of it has been consumed, and is gone past recall, the part that remains uneaten still keeps the general shape of the world it came from. In the annals of Alhambra, this crepuscular otherworld is named "the Lost Provinces"; the Radiant Hopeful who know of it just call it the [Dark World](#). Only Darkspawn subsist there (you can't say they *live* there, really) but when they stand in a Tainted place, any creature of the Darkness can go there, and return.

When trying to cross, a Dark being rolls the Severity of the Tainted area + their Willpower - the highest Integrity (or equivalent) of all people in the Tainted area or its Dark World image; he adds his Shadows rating, if any, to this pool when going to the Dark World, but subtracts his Shadows rating when coming from it. (The

being's Integrity, if he still has any, is not excluded from consideration for this roll - if his Integrity is highest among those present, subtract it from his pool.)

**Dramatic Failure:** The clumsy attempt weakens the Darkness' hold; mark off one of the area's Hold boxes.

**Failure:** The Dark being fails to cross.

**Success:** The Dark being vanishes from or appears within the Tainted area. Anything he is wearing or carrying travels with him.

**Exceptional Success:** Reality trembles from the Dark being's passage. Everyone in the Tainted area who is not a creature of the Darkness makes a corruption check.

## *Darkened*

Darkened are the earliest form of Darkspawn. They are still human, but infected by the Darkness. The Taint flowing through a Darkened's veins dulls virtuous thoughts and transmutes cruelties into fine delights. As the Darkened sinks further into depravity the Taint grows, warping their mind and body. Yet until the final moment the Darkened remains a human infected by Taint, and infections can be cured. This infection of Darkness is represented by the [Darkened](#) Condition.

## *Dark Warping*

The Darkness offers those in its grasp opportunities to gain power by sacrificing their consciences, their connections to uncorrupted humanity, and in some cases their bodily integrity. When a character with the Darkened Condition loses an Integrity dot from a breaking point, he may allow the Darkness to remove from his mind the perception that events such as this are wrong or unnatural - the character will never lose Integrity from that particular breaking point again. In exchange, the Darkness twists the character in body or mind; the character gains an [Umbra](#), granting him a strange ability combined with a drawback that isolates him. Alas, while Umbrae protect one from being disturbed by specific breaking points, they also corrupt the psyche in general; each Umbra a character has applies a -1 penalty to his breaking point rolls.

The full price of Umbrae comes due when a Darkened character either frees himself of the Condition, or loses the last scrap of his soul to Darkness. On resolving the Darkened Condition, each Umbra a character has instantly converts into a point of aggravated damage. Characters with Umbrae (even one Umbra) who lose their last dot of Integrity die the next time they sleep. Their bodies, suffused with Darkness, decay swiftly, becoming variously desiccated, putrefied, or transformed to a black ectoplasm. Within a day, the corpse reanimates and becomes a new Darkspawn; this creature has all the traits of the dead (and the same character sheet) but, as a rule, is bestial, unable to form a connected train of thought.

## *Darkspawn*

The commonest fate of a Darkened character is to become a Darkspawn. Vicious beings whose minds have been eroded by the Darkness until they are little more than beasts driven by cruel sadistic instincts. The Darkspawn are by far the most common creature of the Darkness for the stronger and more intelligent varieties are rare, and the Darkened are, sadly, often just a brief transitional state between an innocent human and a Darkspawn. Most Darkspawn search out Tainted areas, haunt them, and try to drag others into them, or else stalk the people they knew in life.

Darkspawn have the powers and weaknesses of creatures of the Darkness. As animalistic creatures Darkspawn calculate Defense from the higher of Wits and Dexterity.

## *Mnemosyne*

More dangerous creatures of the Darkness than the animalistic Darkspawn do exist. One such are the Mnemosyne; these are Darkened who reach Integrity 0 without gaining a single Umbra. Their bodies have not

shifted to welcome in the Darkness, so they retain their lives and intellects. While not Darkspawn themselves, they can organize and direct the Darkspawn; and being utterly without scruple, they invariably direct their minions to commit acts of monstrous depravity.

As the most human creatures of the Darkness Mnemosyne often specialize in manipulation, many live on Earth preferring to sow suffering in their own quiet way. The reason is simple, they retain enough of their former selves to yearn for the luxuries of Earth (even as they work to corrupt everything they desire) and for all that a Mnemosyne delights in its supernatural abilities, it knows that against the Radiant it is unlikely to survive a direct fight. And so it hides, and it spreads its Taint through cults and subtle manipulations.

While Mnemosyne have no Umbrae, their warped minds do connect them to the Darkness, and nearly all of them draw on this connection to gain dreadful supernatural abilities, the [Caligines](#). What's worse, they are able to train other creatures of the Darkness in these techniques. It's dismayingly common for a Mnemosyne to found a cult that teaches people to meditate for hours in Tainted areas, thus Darkening them, and then teach the new Darkened Caligines and send them off to use them.

Mnemosyne have the powers and weaknesses of creatures of the Darkness.

## *Cataphractoi*

Cataphractoi (singular; Cataphract) are intelligent creatures of the Darkness, above the bestial Darkspawn in comprehension, and sometimes mistaken by the ill-informed for a Mnemosyne. Indeed, those who have only encountered Darkspawn before tend to conflate the two, because they are both intelligent, albeit in a warped manner. However, their origins are rather different. A Cataphract does not need to have been a man or woman tainted by the Darkness. Instead, a human must come to accept, in their heart of hearts, that despair is better than hope, that the evil of men is all that humanity can ever aspire to, and that there is nothing of value in the world. Too often, these are the people who have seen the horrors of the world and who have nothing to live for. If hell is the absence of light, of goodness, of anything worthwhile... then these people know hell. And if they die in that state - and sometimes they will just lie down and cease to breathe - then, sometimes, at the moment of death, their soul inverts and all the horror and emptiness and cold and silence of the Darkness comes rushing into this empty soul, and a new Cataphract opens their eyes, the space behind their eyes flooded with the void. There are Cataphractoi who are aware of how they form, and will take people and subject them to tortures to break them, just so they reach that empty point.

Initially, they appear like the human they once were (although many acquire inhuman traits as time passes), save for the fact that, if one holds their gaze too long, their pupils appear to *writhe*, as if something was trying to get out. In a feat of irony, the Cataphract clings to the memories and recollections that the human rejected, because it is aware, at an instinctual level, that they are all that distinguish them from the formlessness of the Outer Darkness. As a result, they display a painful mockery of their former behavior, a simulacrum that would be pathetic if it were not the fact that it's a monster collecting tiny model soldiers and painting them, or who has their ex chained up in the "marital home" in the Dark World that she dragged him to. It's pathetic because... they don't get it. The tiny model soldiers are painted in clashing colors and the Cataphract will use blood if they can't get their hands on paint (or, frequently, because all their paint has dried up because they couldn't remember to close the lids); the "lovely home" that she cleans over and over again is in the Dark World, and so the mildew-soaked carpet won't come clean no matter how much she scrubs. Despite all this, it means that they can... well, not function, per se, in society, but they can at least walk down the street without mauling people to death, and possess higher level thought and planning, which means that more than one Princess has dubbed them "the Generals of the Darkness". And that is something that must not be forgotten; they may be the hollow shells of what were once men and women, but now they are only creatures of the Darkness.

Cataphractoi have access to both Caligines and Umbrae, and invariably possess [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#), dominating every Darkspawn they encounter. In addition, flooded as they are with the Outer Darkness, they possess the capacity to shed the limits of human form imposed by their false memories, in a sort of "false Transformation". While a Transformed Princess is still human, with only a veiling illusion preventing others from seeing her as she is, no such condition applies to the Cataphractoi, and their forms plumb the depths of monstrosity. Dark-skulled, two-headed hellhounds the size of a car, silhouettes of walking void, spectral blots of stillness and silence; all of these can be forms that a Cataphract might take. A Cataphract's transformation is an instant action, and lasts for the rest of the scene. The transformation grants it transformed dots, Umbrae, and Caligines that it does not normally possess; usually these powers add to its combat prowess. The transfor-

mation is trying for them and their mimicry of humanity, though; it costs them a dot of Willpower. A Cataphract recovers one Willpower dot lost in transformation after a full month without using that power.

Cataphractoi have the powers and weaknesses of creatures of the Darkness.

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### *Merit: Dark Palace (●-●●●●●)*

Not all touched by the Dark can hide themselves among the mortals who live in the light lit world. Some Mnemosyne can blend in, but few Cataphractoi can hide the Darkness in their eyes for long. Certainly Darkspawn can't pass as normal and even Darkened occasionally have to flee when their tainted vices attract too much attention.

With the need to hide deep within the Dark World it's unsurprising that occasionally the Darkness' pitiful victims like to tidy the place up just a little bit. This is usually basic, if that, few touched by the Darkness really have the mindset for long term DIY projects. However some Mnemosyne or Cataphractoi have learned to twist the Dark World, replacing the tumbled down reflection of the real world with something entirely different - occasionally even pleasant looking on the surface.

A Dark Palace can only be built beneath a Tainted place and has a Size no larger than the Tainted place on the [Sanctuary](#) scale, at least if its builders want to be able to live in it. The dots in the Merit set the area that the character has claimed, again on the Sanctuary scale.

**Special:** Trust does not come easily to the Darkspawn, but when it does it is possible to build a shared Dark Palace, with each member contributing Merit dots towards the Palace.

Any character with a Dark Palace can apply the Safe Place Merit [CofD 54] to the Dark Palace to protect it from other Darkspawn who might try to occupy it without leave. This does not defend the Dark Palace from creatures of Darkness entering the Palace from the world of light; to do that, Safe Place must be taken again, applied to the Tainted area above the Dark Palace.

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## *Umbrae*

The following list of Umbrae should not be taken as comprehensive; the Darkness has many ways to distort its servants. Each Umbra confers a benefit, balanced by a drawback.

If an Umbra opposes another supernatural power, the character's dice pool for the [Clash of Wills](#) equals his Shadows.

### *Animate Shadow*

The character's shadow develops a mind of its own and serves them as a familiar. The shadow is treated as an ephemeral being (though not of the types in the *Chronicles of Darkness* book) with the following traits.

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**Rank:** 1

**Power:** lowest of the character's Intelligence, Strength and Presence

**Finesse:** lowest of the character's Wits, Dexterity and Manipulation

**Resistance:** lowest of the character's Resolve, Stamina and Composure

**Size:** The character's

**Influence:** Shadows 1

**Numina:** Innocuous, Telekinesis (appears as the shadow reaching for the thing it moves)

**Manifestations:** Twilight Form, Discorporate

**Max Essence:** 10

**Ban:** The shadow will indulge the character's Vice whenever an opportunity offers. Being a shadow it is limited but makes up for that by stooping to rather petty acts. The shadow of a greedy man will swipe loose change. The shadow of a lusty woman will take any opportunity to pinch a cute hunk's bum. The character may roll Composure as an instant action to restrain the shadow - it will do nothing for one turn per success.

**Bane:** Direct sunlight, when the shadow is out of its natural position.

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The shadow cannot speak. Its default shape is a silhouette of the character. It moves by crawling along the ground or across the walls, but always remains attached to the character's feet. It regains 1 Essence per day from its attachment to the character, and 1 Essence when the character does something that can create Taint. If damaged to the point of losing all its Corpus, the shadow hibernates in the character's body, invisible to everyone.

**Drawback:** The character has a shadow that commits petty sins and impertinences unless strictly watched, or (if the thing was disincorporated) casts no shadow at all, which will draw notice.

### *Cold Flesh*

The character's skin turns cold, as if they have poor circulation. They are now immune to all penalties from extreme cold, and will not suffer damage from it, no matter how low the temperature gets.

**Drawback:** The sun's touch is now painful against their chilled skin. Being in direct sunlight is now an extreme environment for the character [CofD 97] at a level equal to their current Shadows, to a maximum of 4. Strong sunscreen and clothing that wraps one's whole body serve as survival gear against sunlight, reducing the effective level.

### *Corruption of Blood*

The character's blood, spittle and sweat are laced with necrotic fluids. He need only touch someone barehanded to inflict a moderate Sick Tilt [CofD 286]; if he injures someone with his natural weapons (even bashing damage) he inflicts a grave Sick Tilt. Moreover, when the Sick Tilt ends (or immediately, outside of combat) an infectee must roll Stamina + Resolve, penalized by the character's Shadows (for a moderate sickness) or his Shadows + Stamina (for a grave one) once an hour to avoid taking lethal damage equal to the character's Shadows, a number of times equal to the character's Stamina.

**Drawback:** The character's fluids are always necrotic. He cannot touch anyone without infecting them.

### *Faceless in the Crowd*

The Darkness begins to subsume the character's identity. People just ignore them. All individuals are at -3 to even notice them, and must roll Intelligence + Composure each time they want to remember them, failure producing a description of "Well... he... I think it was a he... was sort of tall? Maybe?" Mechanical and electronic records are not affected.

**Drawback:** This applies to all rolls to notice or remember the character ... not just their present life, but their past deeds, before they gained this Umbra. Childhood friends forget their names, old acquaintances don't recognize their faces, neighbors are startled on noticing them in a home they've owned for years.

### *Grip Onto Your Fear*

The flimsiest Darkspawn's grip can become the unheeding grasp of death once it locks its palm around you, and woe to the ones who panic, for the darkness feeds off of their despair. When the character is in a grapple, he gains a +2 bonus to the Hold and Restrain moves. Against an opponent with the Shaken Condition, the bonus is +3. In actions that involve gripping an object, the character gains a +1 bonus, and attempts to remove an object from his grasp take a -1 penalty.

**Drawback:** The character's hands, while normal to the eye, are repulsive to the touch. His palm could always be sticky with sweat, rough as if covered in wood chips or cold as ice. Only thick gloves can stop the sensation of disgust in those he touches. In any Social rolls against a person the character has ever put a hand on, he suffers a -2 penalty; in social maneuvers against such people, the character must open one extra Door.

## *Hollow as a Shadow*

The character becomes hollow and empty within, with effort they can twist themselves to become hollow and empty without as well. The character may shift into or out of Twilight. They roll Stamina + Composure as an instant action to shift between the two states. It is not uncommon for Darkspawn with this Umbra to forget how to become solid.

**Drawback:** When you're hollow you're hollow. The character always feels unsubstantial, like they have little to offer and don't belong. In any stressful social situation where others are not directly paying attention to them, such as preparing to enter an interview room, the character must roll Composure; on a failure they shift into Twilight and must remain there for the rest of the scene.

## *Hunger Means Nothing*

The character is immune to deprivation from dehydration or hunger. They no longer need to eat, nor drink; though they can, they gain no benefit from it, nor do they taste anything.

**Drawback:** Quite apart from the fact that they can never eat again, the character wastes away. They reduce their Health by one box, and look too thin, like a cancer patient, or (some more cynical Princesses might remark) a top fashion model.

## *Light is Dark*

The character's eyes transform; he now sees by the absence of light. Complete darkness is for him what bright light is for normal people, and he suffers no penalty from low light.

**Drawback:** Contrariwise, bright light is to him what complete darkness is for normal people - the character is blind when directly illuminated, and takes penalties for any task that requires looking at things that give off light. Characters with this Umbra are forced into a largely nocturnal existence.

## *Miasma of Madness*

The character exudes a colorless, odorless mist with a radius of Presence + Shadows. Anyone breathing in the mist must make a Resolve + Composure roll or spend a Willpower point to prevent the mist from clouding their mind. Any one affected suffers from the Insane Tilt [CofD 285] for the rest of the scene.

**Drawback:** The character is not immune to the mist. They must make the same roll or spend a Willpower point every scene, or gain the Insane Tilt.

## *Roteater*

The character can eat anything, up to and including broken glass, and will suffer no more than one point of bashing damage as the "food" goes down. Anything less resilient than metal will be digested; things undigested will be passed, again causing no more than 1 point of bashing damage. They also receive one dot of the Hardy Merit for free, ignoring the normal prerequisites for it.

**Drawback:** Of course, with such a universal diet, one can always have... preferences. In this case, whenever they are hungry or thirsty, the character must succeed on a (Resolve + Composure) roll or else spend 1 Willpower not to eat any rotting meat or drink any stagnant, dirty water they see. They suffer a penalty on this roll equal to the Size of the rotting meat. Darkspawn with this Umbra almost always have [Grotesque Bulk](#), and tend to make themselves larders of hung corpses (which need not be human; the first sign may well be all the pets going missing) in case they get peckish.

## *Scuttling Spider's Sense*

The character becomes hypersensitive to sounds and changes in air-pressure, so sensitive that he gains a limited kind of precognition. He can't be surprised [CofD 88] and applies his Defense against Firearms attacks.



**Drawback:** People move constantly in a hundred small ways, every twitch, every breath could be a threat and the character can't keep up with all of them. When in the same room with more people than their Composure the character starts to get panicky. After Resolve minutes he takes the [Terrified](#) Condition, with other people as the source of his fear. Other creatures of the Darkness don't trigger this blind panic and are never the source of the Condition (though objectively they're far more likely to be dangerous to the character!)

### *Sound of Silence*

The character's hearing becomes exceptionally acute. They gain +3 to all hearing-based Perception rolls.

**Drawback:** So acute, in fact, that they are deafened by their own voice. They cannot speak above the level of a soft whisper. This, as might be guessed, makes day-to-day life rather hard. They cannot drive a motorcycle, or attend concerts while in this state. Should they go to a supermarket, they must use the self-checkout, to avoid clamorous small talk with the girl at the checkout counter.

### *Subsumed by Another Shadow*

Whenever the character comes within (Willpower + number of Umbrae) yards of a Darkspawn, he reflexively and automatically rolls Presence + Resolve, contested by the Resolve + Composure of the Darkspawn. The character makes this roll separately for each Darkspawn he meets, but no more often than once a scene. If the character gets more successes, the Darkspawn believes him to be its natural superior, and will seek to protect him as best it can, and gratify what it thinks are his desires. It will continue to do so until it has been separated from the character for (Willpower + number of Umbrae) hours; after that, it forgets the character's existence.

The character can try to give his servant an order as an instant action; the dice pool is Presence + Composure, and the order can have no more than (successes) conditions (so, "Break the light" is one, while "Break the light outside" is two.) By default, a Darkspawn servant will also use all its powers/abilities to prevent others from seeing it, but it will break cover if an order requires it. The one order it won't obey is to leave and not return.

**Drawback:** Of course, most people don't really want vicious Darkness-beasts following them around. Darkspawn servants consistently assume that their master wants them to do harm, and will kill or wreck anything that seems to be an obstacle, or even inconvenience, for him. Any expression of dislike for somebody, even for a trivial reason (being pushed aside by a passing stranger, say) might inspire the Darkspawn to deliver his severed head to the character's doorstep. In addition, most Darkspawn aren't the prettiest of things, and being followed by monsters that don't seem to show themselves to others is quite nasty on the psyche.

Darkspawn that possess this Umbrae are immune to its effects; they are not going to serve another, and will often attack anyone or anything else which possesses it. Moreover, they seem prone to retaining a worrying cunning quite unlike human intelligence; the limited use of language (enough to call out "help me" in a normal voice while trying to lure someone in), tactics (send weaker ones to make a noise outside while it and the stronger ones it controls come in through the roof), and the ability to control other Darkspawn make them notably more dangerous, especially since there is no way, on sight, to tell them apart.

### *Subtle Tongue*

Devious cunning becomes easy for the character, as the nothingness and antipathy for form of the Darkness enters through the mouth. All Manipulation-based rolls, except for activations of supernatural powers, are at +1; this is increased to +3 if the character is lying.

**Drawback:** Correspondingly, forthright openness becomes hard. All Presence-based rolls, again except for activations of supernatural powers, lose the 10-again quality; on a dramatic failure, targets become convinced that the character is lying to them.

### *Tainted Allure of Vice*

There is something... fascinating about the character which calls to mortal souls; a sick, degrading allure to its presence which draws others closer. The character gains the Striking Looks •• Merit [CofD 54] as the entire way they move, speak, act becomes attractive, even if they do not change much physically. Darkspawn with this Umbra retain some allure and do not become ugly, instead gaining a beauteous depravity in their inhumanity.

**Drawback:** ... and it brings out the worst in others, for it is a guilty pleasure that wracks at the soul. At the time of purchase, the character chooses a Vice (Cruel, Treacherous, and Violent work well here.) As soon as the bonus dice from the Umbra apply to a Social roll against a person, that person gains the [Vice-Ridden](#) Condition with the chosen Vice (if that is already their Vice, there is no effect). The Vice gives Willpower only if indulging it harms, subjugates, or degrades the character in some way; for nearly everyone this behavior will be a breaking point. In packs of Darkspawn, ones with this Umbra are right at the bottom of the pack, because they suffer the indignities of their “peers” just as much as they had in life.

### *Thief's Touch*

The character's fingers are quicker and more nimble, subtly guiding the character in dark deeds. All Dexterity-based rolls to get into places without being detected, bypass security systems, or make a convincing forgery gain the 8-again quality.

**Drawback:** The character is always the first to be suspected of any wrong doing, even if he made a clean getaway or is innocent.

### *Caligines*

The Darkened and creatures of the Darkness can choose to twist themselves even farther, drawing on the Darkness for supernatural powers, the Caligines. Each Caligo is rated in dots from 1 to 5; to learn a Caligo a character spends 2 Experiences per dot. While a Darkened character still has Integrity, learning any Caligo is a breaking point with a -5 penalty, and using many of them is also a breaking point - the descriptions note which. (Naturally this is an issue only for Darkened characters.)

Several Caligines are so simple to learn that a Darkened person can acquire them spontaneously when the Darkness cracks his soul. In what follows these Caligines are tagged with the keyword Umbra. Characters may take a Caligo with this keyword as an Umbra; this lowers its rating by 1 dot, and makes it into a permanent, costless feature of the character, accompanied by a drawback.

If a Caligo opposes another supernatural power, the character's dice pool for the [Clash of Wills](#) equals his Shadows + the Caligo's rating.

### *Variable-dot Caligines*

#### *Dark Dreams (●-●●●, Umbra)*

Action: Full turn  
Dice pool: Wits + Shadows  
Cost: Forgo Willpower gain from sleep  
Duration: One night's sleep

The Darkness is everywhere there is sin or vice or absence, and some of this knowledge is fed into the character's brain. When they go to sleep, the character may forgo regaining Willpower to receive an oracular dream. The results of the Caligo are identical to those of the White Rabbits Merit at an equal number of dots, though the dream has nothing to do with the Dreamlands.

**Umbra:** The dreams come unwillingly, and every night. As a result, the character never regains Willpower from sleeping again.

#### *Diminutive Size (●, ●●● or ●●●●●, Umbra)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene



The character twists and shrinks, often becoming animalistic or insectoid. At 1 dot, the character becomes Size 4; at 3 dots, he becomes Size 3; at 5 dots he becomes Size 2. See the table in [Size Changes](#) for the modifiers the character's new Size applies to his traits.

**Umbra:** The character's Size is permanently reduced, and the modifiers from this always apply. People will often treat the character as a child or (at 5 dots) a talking doll, and many tools built for adult humans are unusable. A Darkspawn with this Caligo often shows more animal cunning than the simple brutality of its peers by virtue of Darwinian necessity. Many seek powerful protectors like Cataphractoï or Mnemosynes and earn their keep as spies or scouts.

### *Encacogen (●●-●●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Shadows + Occult - local Gauntlet Strength or target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -2  
Duration: 1 scene

The Darkness within a Tainted area doesn't just eat away at the material world; it reaches into the world's spiritual shadow as well, giving birth to spirits of special malevolence. The character has learned to open a road into that twisted image of a Tainted place and bring forth ephemeral allies to the cause of spreading hatred, misery and despair.

At two dots, the character may enact a ritual (taking at least 10 minutes) that makes a passage between a Tainted area and its reflection in the Shadow, creating the Shadow Gate Condition [CofD 136] at the site of the ritual. The ritual will work only in a Tainted area, for it blends the Dark World with both realms to weaken the Gauntlet.

At three dots, the character learns a variation of the previous ritual that exposes a person or object to the influence of the spirits that attend a Tainted area. Like its predecessor the ritual works only in a Tainted area. A successful use inflicts the Open Condition [CofD 134] on its target, attuned to any spirits that have a natural Resonance with the area it was performed in. The Condition fades when the scene ends, unless the spirit applies a Manifestation that locks it in place.

At four dots, the character knows how to consign his target to an evil spirit, and fuse the two into a single supernatural creature. The ritual to expose a person or object may now inflict the Controlled Condition [CofD 133] on top of Open, allowing a spirit to Claim the target immediately.

### *Grotesque Bulk (●, ●●● or ●●●●●, Umbra)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

The character swells and bloats, becoming gigantic. This Caligo increases the Size of those who use it; the 1-dot version adds 1 to Size, the 3-dot version adds 2, and the 5-dot version adds 3. See the table in [Size Changes](#) for the modifiers the character's new Size applies to his traits.

Grotesque Bulk and Diminutive Size are not compatible - a character cannot use both at once.

**Umbra:** The character's Size is permanently increased, and the modifiers from this always apply. The character has problems getting through doors and standing up in normal rooms; clothing has to be custom tailored.

### *Loathsome Weapon (●-●●●●●, Umbra)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

The character can transform a part of his body into a lethal weapon - his mouth grows into a muzzle full of fangs, or his fingers stiffen into knife-like claws. At 1 dot the altered body part is a lethal weapon with 0 Damage; each dot after the first enlarges the body part further, and adds 1 to its Damage. The altered part is razor-sharp, and has the Armor Piercing quality at a level equal to the Caligo dots. The character need not grapple to attack with the altered part, even if that would be necessary before the alteration (as bites often are.) A character may take multiple Loathsome Weapons, with each one affecting a different part of his body. The body part cannot be used for anything but attacking foes while it is changed: a character with a changed mouth cannot speak intelligibly, one with changed hands cannot grasp or manipulate objects. The body part reverts to its normal shape at the end of the scene.

**Umbra:** The body part is permanently altered and never changes back.

## *Night Air* (●-●●●●●)

Requires [Corruption of Blood](#)

Action: Full turn and contested

Dice pool: Presence + Shadows vs. Stamina + Resolve

Cost: 1-5 Willpower, breaking point at -3

Duration: Indefinite

In the past people feared the dark itself just as they feared what it may hide. They believed it the source of illnesses, the pathogens striving in the absence of light. With the advances of modern science, they were proven wrong... or perhaps their fears held some merit after all, for some Darkspawn bring plague wherever they go, and where they have gone, no shade or evening is safe.

The character releases the necrosis in his blood and sweat into infectious vapors that spread throughout a darkened area. Everyone who breathes the vapors must contest the Caligo. The character affects an area with a [Sanctuary](#) rating up to the number of Willpower points he spends to activate Night Air, and may spend points up to the dots he has gained in the Caligo.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character is infected by his own necrosis. He immediately takes the grave Sick Tilt, and must roll to resist the disease just as anyone whom he infects must.

**Failure:** The vapors produce nothing more than an upset stomach or runny nose in the infected.

**Success:** Anyone failing the contest is infected by the character's necrosis, as if he had touched them.

**Exceptional Success:** Those whom the vapors infect suffer as if the character had attacked them.

The vapors remain infectious just as long as the area where the character released them is unlit; in any well-lit place they denature and dissipate instantly. (Thus, if the character is illuminated, Night Air does nothing whatsoever.) Also, the vapors cannot pass through an airtight seal or an illuminated area. Each person exposed to the vapors rolls only once to resist them, whether infected or not.

## *Shadowblade* (●-●●●●●)

Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Crafts + dots in Shadowblade - levels of Shadow-Worked

Cost: 0 or 2 Willpower, breaking point at -1

Duration: indefinite

If he can feel the Dark World, the character may imbue Darkness into an object to make it an instrument of pain, or bend shadows around his will into a weapon. The character must be able to Enter Darkness where he currently is to use this Caligo. The character can work on any object up to Size 5 that he can easily carry; or, if he has nothing he wants to remake, he may spend 2 Willpower to conjure a dagger out of shadows and the local Taint.

The Caligo uses the rules for the Build Equipment action [CofD 101-103] except that the equipment bonus is a number of levels of the [Shadow-Worked](#) Condition applied to the object. Also, each level of that Condition weakens a material object, removing 1 point of Structure. If an object is down to its last point of Structure

the Caligo cannot be used on it. A knife made of shadow and Taint has Structure equal to its levels of Shadow-Worked, but 0 Durability.

### *Vile Gobbets (●, ●●, ●●● or ●●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: Indefinite

The character grows a new organ within his body that, with some effort, produces missiles to hurl at his foes. The form the missiles take varies; acidic spittle, tumorous growths that tear off, and hardened feces have all been reported. By spending 1 Willpower and concentrating for a turn, the character creates 3 missiles for each dot of his Shadows, stored inside the organ that makes them; this is its maximum capacity. Each missile is an aerodynamic thrown weapon of Size 1 that breaks into powder or goo when it hits.

At 1 dot, the missiles are blunt objects and have a Damage of 0. At 2 or 3 dots, the missiles have edges, are made of acid, or have some other dangerous quality; at 2 dots they have Damage 1, at 3 dots they have Damage 2. At 5 dots the missiles become small [explosives](#); their Blast Area equals the character's Speed, their Damage equals his Strength and their Force equals his Shadows.

### *Voidblast (●●● or ●●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: Indefinite

The character draws forth the Taint within him to create blasts of cold emptiness that drain Light from those they hit. By spending 1 Willpower and concentrating for a turn, the character creates 1 blast for each dot of his Shadows, held within his body; this is his maximum capacity. Each missile can be fired as a ranged attack, using Dexterity + Firearms, with a range of 20/40/80 yards.

At 3 dots, the blast strikes a single target. Each success on the attack roll inflicts 1 bashing damage and 1 level of the [Listless](#) on the target. At 5 dots the blast is an [explosive](#); its Blast Area equals the character's Speed, its Damage equals his Resolve and its Force equals his Shadows. However, it does only lethal damage at ground zero, bashing damage in the primary blast, and no damage in the secondary blast. Characters caught in the explosion, even the secondary blast, take the Listless Tilt at a level equal to the final damage. A character who already has the Listless Tilt takes the worse Tilt if it's inflicted on him again.

### *Zombie's Flesh (●-●●●●●, Umbra)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

The character pulls his blood away from the outer layers of his flesh, and calls upon Taint to harden them; his skin takes on the waxy pallor of a corpse embalmed for burial. This hardening preserves the character from nearly all forms of injury. At 1 dot, the character downgrades damage from mundane sources; he takes only bashing damage from things that do lethal damage to a normal human, and lethal damage from sources that do aggravated damage to humans. Each dot after the first gives the character +1/+1 Armor for the whole body on top of downgrading damage when he activates the Caligo. Both effects stack with mundane armor. However, the Caligo also inspires revulsion in normal people who can see his skin - the character suffers a -2 penalty on all Empathy, Persuasion and Socialize rolls for interacting with anyone but creatures of the Darkness.

Zombie's Flesh gives no protection against the effects of jade on the character - quite the reverse, in fact: he cannot roll Integrity to avoid damage from jade while the Caligo is active, and if jade is used as a weapon against him, it always does lethal damage. Zombie's Flesh also doesn't downgrade damage from a supernatural source.

Armor from the Caligo does subtract damage from all sources, including jade and magic. The character's flesh returns to normal at the end of the scene.

**Umbra:** The character's flesh is permanently corpselike, and the social penalties apply at all times.

## *One-dot Caligines*

### *Avoid All Eyes (●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Wits + Shadows  
Cost: none  
Duration: 1 scene

The character blurs in the sight of all witnesses; no one who sees him can tell exactly where he is. He adds his activation successes to his Defense for the rest of the scene. If an attack bypasses his Defense (as firearms usually do) the attacker still takes a penalty equal to the activation successes; this penalty stacks with other forms of concealment. *Avoid All Eyes* may be used only once in a scene.

### *Darkness Enfolds (●, Umbra)*

Action: Permanent

The first and most simple rule of the Darkness is that it must consume all Light. And how better than from the very souls of the Light's servants? The character reflexively senses the presence of all Light-touched characters and objects - Blessed Places, Nobles, Shikigami, Sworn, Beacons and Bequests - in his immediate proximity. Moreover, by concentrating (an instant, unrolled action) he can locate and identify any such beings that are present. Powers that conceal a Light-touched being's nature defeat his passive sense automatically, but concentrating starts a [Clash of Wills](#) with such powers.

**Umbra:** Recognizing the Light at work inspires the character with deep hatred which he cannot conceal. If the character does find a Light-touched being with this power, he must take the Obsession Condition [CofD 290]; he is obsessed with destroying the person, place or object that the Light has touched, by whatever means come to hand. This power is responsible for many of the Darkness's most cruel attacks.

### *Defiling Touch (●, Umbra)*

Action: Permanent

The character has bound himself to the Darkness, and it reaches through his evil acts with special virulence. When he commits an act that [generates Taint](#), the amount it creates is read from the row on the chart one step lower than its true level.

**Umbra:** The character needs the Darkness around him, as an alcoholic needs his drink. If he leaves Tainted areas for more than one scene, he takes the Deprived Condition [CofD 288], which resolves when he returns to a Tainted area or successfully generates some Taint where he is.

### *Enervation (●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: none  
Duration: instant

The character steals will and energy from others, leaving them listless. While touching a target's skin with his bare flesh, the character may steal 1 point of Willpower from the target, adding it to his own pool. If the target tries to avoid him, the character must roll Dexterity + Brawl to touch him, avoiding any part of the target's body

covered by armor - this imposes a penalty for specified targets [CofD 92] Any Willpower points stolen when the character's pool is full are wasted. A target with no Willpower points is immune.

## *Gathering Shadows (●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Animal Ken + Shadows  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -1  
Duration: Shadows turns

When the character calls, other Darkspawn gather to him.

**Dramatic Failure:** For the rest of the scene, any bestial Darkspawn the character meets either attacks him or runs from him.

**Failure:** No Darkspawn respond to the summons.

**Success:** Every bestial Darkspawn within (activation successes \* 100) yards, and in the same world, goes where the character is if it can move at all, and remains within walking distance of him for turns equal to his Shadows.

**Exceptional Success:** The character can claim one of the Darkspawn he summoned as a servant. He gains the Bonded Condition [CofD 288] to one bestial Darkspawn.

Intelligent Dark creatures within the affected area automatically know who used Gathering Shadows and where he was when he activated it, but are not compelled to respond to the summons.

## *Hear Darkness Slither (●, Umbra)*

Action: Permanent

The bitter irony of light is, most everything casts a shadow in it. And, as darkness is a gate to the World beyond, due training or the Dark World's corruption may allow creatures connected to its vileness to notice when it moves.

The character's uncanny sense allows him to hear when shadows cast by creatures or objects change position. When rolling to avoid being surprised [CofD 88] or to find an opponent while blinded [CofD 288] the character adds his Shadows dots to his dice pool, unless the person he's listening for does not cast a shadow.

**Umbra:** Any moving shadow, including the character's own, seems to him to be an incipient threat. Every so often his control slips, and he jumps away from (or attacks) a soft slithering that none but he can hear. The character suffers the effects of the Madness Condition [CofD 289] whenever he is not in complete darkness, far away from anything that casts a shadow.

## *Open Hellmouth (●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: Shadows turns

When the character enters a Tainted area from its image in Darkness, he opens a wide breach through which his servants can follow him. If the character spends a Willpower point as he uses [Entering Darkness](#) in the Dark World, then for a number of turns equal to his Shadows any other entity that leaves the Dark World from the same place he did gets a bonus on its roll equal to the character's successes on his roll. The character does not get the bonus himself if he Enters Darkness again, and if Open Hellmouth is used again before the last activation expires, the second activation supersedes the first.

## *Shadow Cloak (●)*

Action: Permanent

The character fades into shadows, unnoticed by anyone unless he steps into the light. When no part of him is directly illuminated, the character adds his Shadows to mundane Stealth dice pools, and Perception rolls to find him automatically fail.

### *Taste of Sin* (●)

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Empathy + Shadows  
Cost: none  
Duration: Instant

The character may assess another character's psyche. Each success on the roll reveals the target's Vice, one of the target's breaking points, or the presence of a Condition such as Guilty, Embarrassing Secret, Obsession or Addiction and a general description of its cause. The character may assess each target once a day. If a person has the Vice-Ridden Merit [CofD 46] or has a second Vice for any other reason, the character knows it on first seeing him, without a roll.

A psyche that hasn't bent under the horrors of the World of Darkness, or one that did bend but has sprung back, gives real pain to the character if he tastes it. Using the Caligo on a target with Integrity of 7 or more is a breaking point for the character, at a penalty of -1 for each point of Integrity above 6. If a person has the Virtuous Merit [CofD 46] or a second Virtue for any other reason, the character cannot come within five feet of the person unless he succeeds on a Resolve + Composure roll at a penalty equal to his Shadows, or spends a Willpower point.

### *Voice-Eating Hunger* (●)

Action: Permanent

The Darkness is eternally silent. Within the depths of the Dark World, there is no noise but what outsiders bring with them, and what little the creatures of the Darkness retain from their old lives. The Darkness takes that too, in time. This Caligo enhances a character's natural attacks. Whenever he injures a target or damage an object, the target also gains the [Silenced](#) Tilt for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled on the attack.

As a passive benefit from knowing this Caligo, the character only makes sound when he wants to, giving him a Stealth specialty in "Moving Silently".

### *Void Magic* (●)

Action: Permanent

The Dark World is always hungry, especially for magical power, and it readily feeds on power directed at those it touches. The character has Supernatural Tolerance equal to his Shadows.

### *Two-dot Caligines*

### *Bogeyman* (●●)

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation + Shadows vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -1  
Duration: concentration

The character wraps himself in the deepest fears of those around him. As long as he concentrates, others see him as whatever they dread most.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character only appears ridiculous, like a man dressed in a Halloween costume. He cannot use Bogeyman for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** Nobody is frightened by the character's appearance.

**Success:** Everyone who sees or hears the character, and who gets fewer successes on the contested roll, gains the [Fearful](#) Condition, centered on him. His appearance is continuously frightening; newcomers catching sight of the character reflexively contest the Caligo, and gain the Condition if they lose the contest.

**Exceptional Success:** Onlookers who lose the contested roll gain the [Terrified](#) Condition, centered on the character.

Bogeyman lasts as long as the Darkened concentrates on keeping it going, or until the end of the scene; if the Darkened does anything that uses his action for a turn, the witnesses' unnatural fear of him fades away.

## *Burying the Crime (●●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = Tainted area's Size + Severity

Dice pool: Intelligence + Occult + Shadows

Cost: 1 Willpower

Duration: Shadows in days

Sometimes a Tainted place has to be hidden for a little while, lest agents of the Light find and purify it. At other times a creature of the Darkness may wish to remove its fellows from a Tainted area. Using this Caligo within the area serves both those ends. When the character reaches the threshold, the curses of the Tainted area he stands in go dormant, and its image in the Dark World does not provide shelter. The targeted area is not a valid target for any power that affects Taint until a moment chosen by the character, though this moment must come within a number of days equal to the character's Shadows. At that moment the area's curses and image return.

The Caligo may be used in either a Tainted area or its Dark World image. If the [Consecrated](#) Condition is applied to a Tainted area while its curses are suppressed, the return of the curses will destroy or erode the Condition. [Taint Awareness](#) does not react to the Caligo's expiration; the Taint is not removed, only suppressed.

## *Dark Thoughts Consume (●●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Intelligence + Expression vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -1

Duration: 1 turn or 1 scene

People are, on occasion, mistaken to hold a bad personality, weakness, outdated tradition or flawed ideal dear. They are fond of them, take solace in them. But sometimes, the attacks come from the inside. Dark magic prompts the target's own vileness to disturb their imagination, and the traits they went far to protect to stab them in the back. The creature of the Dark gives them clues, encouragement, *ideas*, to pain the unfortunate soul to place their trust in what never warranted any. The Darkness within them betrays them, for absolute evil knows no friend nor loyalty.

**Dramatic Failure:** The thoughts intended to scare awaken happiness and joyful memories, or they are so unscary while obviously intended to frighten, the target finds them funny. The target regains a point of Willpower.

**Failure:** The target is mildly perturbed, but not distracted.

**Success:** The target is rattled by dark thoughts spawned of their own worries and anxieties. At the Storyteller's choice, the target either has a psychotic fit (the Insane Tilt [CofD 285]), is bemused to the point of ignoring his surroundings (the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286]) or loses interest in what he was doing (the [Listless](#) Tilt, at a level of half the character's Shadows, rounded up.)

**Exceptional Success:** The target freezes in place or collapses from sheer dread and despair. They gain the Insensate Tilt [CofD 285].

All Tilts created by Dark Thoughts Consume resolve normally, once imposed.

**Modifiers:** For the character: Integrity 8-10(-2), Integrity 6-7(-1), Integrity 2-3(+1), Integrity 0-1(+2), the character knows the target(+Sympathy). For the target: Integrity or equivalent is 4 or lower(+5-Integrity), the target has a form of Sensitivity(-2), the target already has one or more of the Tilts listed(-1/Tilt), the target has the Shaken Condition(-2), the target has Shadows(-1/Shadow dot)



## *Enervating Hex (●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Crafts + Shadows - object's capacity for Willpower  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -1  
Duration: indefinite

The character converts an object to a sink for others' will and energy, applying the [Enervating Hex](#) Condition to it. The Caligo uses the rules for the Build Equipment action [CofD 101-103]; a normal failure always applies the Fragile Condition, triggered only by attempts to remove Willpower from the object. If the object has other uses, Fragile will not spoil it for those - it removes only the Enervating Hex.

## *Evil Influence (●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Persuasion + Shadows  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -1  
Duration: 1 scene

The sight of the character rouses the Darkness in one's heart, and inspires impulses to crime.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character is totally unpersuasive. He takes a -1 penalty to all Social dice pools for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The character is about as convincing as usual.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, all the character's actions to induce other people to perform acts that cause suffering (anything that would trigger a Princess' [Sensitivity](#)) get bonus dice equal to the character's activation successes. If a suggested action accords with a target's Vice the character gets a further +1 bonus die.

**Exceptional Success:** The character is amazingly good at persuading people into sin.

## *Grasping at Shadows (●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Brawl - target's Defense  
Cost: none  
Duration: concentration or 1 scene

With a sweep of a hand or foot, the character catches hold of an opponent's shadow. If the target is not casting a shadow (for instance, he isn't illuminated) the Caligo has no effect.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character cannot use Grasping at Shadows for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The target feels a momentary weakness, but is not otherwise affected.

**Success:** The target gains the Insensate Tilt [CofD 285]. He remains in this state as long as the character keeps hold of his shadow. The character must remain close enough to touch him, and have one hand free - any action that requires both hands or requires leaving the target removes the Tilt. The Tilt also ends if the target takes damage, as normal.

**Exceptional Success:** The target gains the Insensate Tilt for the rest of the scene, even if the character releases his shadow. Taking damage still ends the Tilt.

## *I Have You Now, My Pretty (●●)*

Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene



The character develops some grotesque power that allows him to capture his foes: arachnid like web spinners, fast growing tentacles or a dark sorcery that conjures rusty bloodsoaked chains out of shadows and fears. Whenever he grabs an opponent [CofD 89] the character may activate this Caligo; his roll to grab and all rolls he makes while grappling that opponent get a bonus equal to his Shadows from the webs, tentacles, chains etc. that materialize in his hands. Moreover, the character can use these bonds for a Restrained maneuver - they will remain solid until the end of the following scene, and have a Durability equal to the character's Strength.

### *Nowhere Untouched (●●)*

| Action: Permanent

The Dark World exists everywhere, gnawing at all that is real. With Nowhere Untouched, the character may use [Entering Darkness](#) outside of Tainted areas; all he requires is a place large enough to stand or sit in, and which is not currently lit - a deep shadow will do. Anywhere there's enough light to read by, the character still needs Taint to cross over. He cannot cross reliably from the Dark World outside a Tainted area, only to it.

When crossing in unTainted areas, the character treats the local Taint as 0, using Willpower alone as the base of his dice pool; Integrity and Shadows modify the roll as usual.

### *Scapegoat (●●)*

| Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Shadows - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: indefinite

Throw mud enough and some will stick ... and servants of the Darkness know just where to throw it, and how to make it stick. To use this Caligo the character publically accuses another person of something heinous or humiliates and mocks him.

**Dramatic Failure:** The audience sees the character's words only as proof of his bigotry and barbarity. He gains the Notoriety Condition.

**Failure:** The character's scorn falls flat; no one joins him in condemning the target.

**Success:** The audience believes the character's denigration and regards the target with mistrust. The target gains the Notoriety Condition [CofD 290].

**Exceptional Success:** Even the target half-believes that he has somehow transgressed. He also gains the Guilty Condition [CofD 289] related to what the character said about him.

### *So Many of Me (●●)*

| Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Subterfuge + Shadows vs. Wits + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene or 1 day

The character throws his own appearance onto anyone who resembles him. To use this Caligo the character chooses some feature of his physical appearance that others might use to describe him. This feature may be permanent (e.g. black hair) or temporary (e.g. wearing a baseball cap) and can be as specific or general as the character wants.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character is incredibly obvious. For the rest of the scene all his attempts to hide or disguise himself, even supernaturally, fail automatically.

**Failure:** The Caligo does nothing.

**Success:** Anyone who loses the contested roll perceives everyone else present in the scene who shares the feature that the character chose as the character. In addition, if the character successfully conceals his

chosen feature, anyone affected by the Caligo cannot recognize him as himself. The illusion extends to all senses, including supernatural senses, but affects only those who can see the character. Also, it does not affect reasoning; the victims can be persuaded of the character's identity.

**Exceptional Success:** The character can (but need not) sustain the illusion until the next sunrise.

## *Three-dot Caligines*

### *Blood Diamonds (●●●)*

Action: Extended, 1 hour/roll, threshold = [Sanctuary](#)  
Dice pool: Intelligence + Shadows  
Cost: (Rating of Sanctuary) Willpower, breaking point at -2  
Duration: indefinite

When the character sees a place that uplifts the heart, a beautiful landscape or a grand monument, the Darkness whispers to him of ways to claim its virtue for himself, and turn it into cash. This Caligo exploits an area; before activating it the character must establish a legal claim to the area, a right to make use of it, or a strong influence over its owners. The time to activate is spent carefully surveying the area and listening to suggestions from the Darkness. The activation dice pool is modified if the target area is Tainted or Blessed: each dot of a [Tainted](#) area's Severity gives a -1 penalty, each dot of a [Blessed](#) area's Beauty gives a +1 bonus.

On reaching the threshold, the character learns a way to profit from the area by desecrating and ruining it; he imposes the [Strip-Mined](#) Condition there.

### *Call the Black Dog (●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Shadows - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -2  
Duration: indefinite

The character deprives his target of the comforts of nightly rest, by sending a shadowy hunter to pursue him in his dreams. He has to touch the target to use the Caligo.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target's dreams withstand all assault; the character can never use Call the Black Dog on this target again.

**Failure:** The target has a nightmare when he next sleeps, but it does not affect him further.

**Success:** The target gains the [Dream-Hounded](#) Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** The hunter is persistent; the target's roll to escape the dreams takes a -2 penalty.

**Suggested Modifiers:** The target has had the Caligo used on him within the past month (-1 for each use)

### *Flesh of my Flesh (●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Shadows  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: instant

When all is reduced to an empty bleakness such trifling things as property will hardly matter a bit. In a Dark world you have far more important things to worry about than someone trying to steal your money, your goods, or your flesh.

With this Caligo the character can heal himself of physical injury, replacing damaged flesh with stolen flesh. Every success heals 1 bashing or lethal damage, provided the character has some spare human flesh; bashing

damage is healed first. Some stitch new flesh to old, but most simply eat and push the stolen flesh through their veins to where it's needed. The flesh must be consumed or acquired in the current scene and fresh enough to safely eat (which can be very old if the character has the Roteater Umbra). If the character takes flesh from a living person they must eat one point of lethal damage's worth of flesh to heal one lethal damage or three bashing damage. With some sort of bite attack the character may reflexively swallow after a successful attack to stock up.

### *Handful of Dust (●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion + Shadows vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -2  
Duration: (activation successes) weeks

The character utters a sentence that blights the confidence of one to whom he speaks.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character cannot use Handful of Dust for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** If the character does not win the contest, the sentence means nothing to the target; there is no effect.

**Success:** If the character wins the contest, the words haunt the target, condemning him as incapable and worthless. The target gains the [Stumbling](#) Condition for a number of weeks equal to the character's net successes; the character chooses the Skill affected by the Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's will breaks. In addition to the Condition, if currently in combat with the character, the target gains the Beaten Down Tilt [CofD 280].

### *Sin Whisperer (●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Shadows - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -2  
Duration: until Condition ends

The character infects a victim's psyche, inflaming and spying on his target's worst impulses. He must speak to the target without interruption for a minute or so to use the Caligo.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target resists the psychic infection - the character can never use Sin-Whisperer on this target again.

**Failure:** The target is not affected.

**Success:** The target gains the Addicted Condition [CofD 288] with respect to actions that accord with his Vice. The target may resolve the Condition normally, or try to purge himself by accepting the Deprived Condition for a number of days equal to the character's successes without resolving it. Each time the target follows his Vice, the character makes a Perception roll reflexively to learn what the target did; he learns as much as he might have gleaned from a Perception roll if he had been present.

**Exceptional Success:** The infection is both deep and persistent; there are no further effects.

The character can infect only one person at a time with Sin-Whisperer; until the current infectee recovers, the Caligo fails automatically when used on anyone else.

### *Skinmask (●●●, Umbra)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Stamina + Subterfuge + Shadows  
Cost: 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

The character can physically reshape his body to create a perfect disguise.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character's body escapes his control, fluxing constantly into obviously unnatural features. He is Immobilized [CofD 284] and must use the Caligo again to remove the Tilt before the scene ends.

**Failure:** The character's body returns to its normal shape.

**Success:** The character can change his ethnicity, sex, height, weight and appearance; given a reference to work from he could mimic a real person. However, he cannot change his Size or overall body plan; a human cannot shift to look other than human, and a Darkspawn that naturally resembles some sort of canine will always resemble a four-footed animal. Further, if the character has any Caligines or Umbrae with a drawback that affects his physical form, he cannot mask that drawback: a character with Hunger Means Nothing will always look thin and starved. The best he can do is adopt a disguise where looking starved makes sense or wear a thick padded coat to hide the thinness of his body.

No mundane effort can see through the change to the character's true appearance (though if he's mimicking a real person the impersonation can be detected normally); a supernatural power that pierces disguises will start a [Clash of Wills](#).

**Exceptional Success:** The disguise is unnaturally convincing; any attempt to recognize it as a disguise, whether mundane or supernatural, takes a -2 penalty.

**Umbra:** The character no longer has a fixed appearance. He must activate the Caligo at the start of every scene, or suffer the effects of a dramatic failure. Also, if the character is asleep or unconscious he suffers the effects of dramatic failure until he wakes. The first activation in a scene is reflexive, and costs nothing; later ones work normally.

### *Such Pretty Eyes, I Think I'll Keep Them (●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested

Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation + Shadows vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Cost: 1 bashing damage, 1 Willpower

Duration: until Condition ends

The Darkness knows that a touch of evil lies in every heart, and a hint of envy blinds every eye. This Caligo makes use of that truth, allowing the character to see through another's eyes. Some creatures of Darkness use this to spy through their enemies' eyes, others use it on their own minions to help lead and organise their assets. To use this Caligo the character smears a drop of blood on the eyes of his target.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character sees through the target's eyes, just for a second, but he sees not images but the target's viewpoint. If the target's Integrity is higher than the character's Integrity - Shadows he sees himself for what he truly is and gains the Guilty Condition [CofD 289].

**Failure:** Nothing happens.

**Success:** The character gains the [Stolen Sight](#) Condition, focused on the target.

**Exceptional Success:** The target forgets that the character put blood in her eyes, and does not know the character can spy through her.

The character may have up to Intelligence + Shadows people tagged with the Stolen Sight Condition at any one time.

### *Walk in Darkness (●●●)*

Action: Instant

Dice pool: Athletics + Shadows

Cost: none

Duration: 1 hour

Beyond the images of Tainted places, the form of the Dark World distorts away from that of the land it came from. Those who dare to travel in the Dark World, if they have learned this power, find paths that lead from one Tainted place to another, far more swiftly than any road in the world of light.

The character must use Walk in Darkness in the Dark World. If he succeeds, the landscape of the Dark World has shifted, opening a path from his current location to the place he wants to go that is significantly shorter than the smallest distance between the places they are images of. Each activation success cumulatively doubles his effective Speed in the real world for the next hour, or until he next leaves the Dark World, whichever comes first.

### *World-Corroding Entropic Touch (●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Unrolled  
Cost: 1 lethal damage, 1 Willpower  
Duration: 1 scene

Within the Darkness, all things shatter and break. Taking the Darkness into her flesh, the character imbues himself with that alien property. For the remainder of the scene, the character inflicts 1 point of damage per turn to any object he touches, ignoring any Durability it has. The ground under his feet melts in his black, stinking footsteps, his clothes turn to dust on his back, all his hair flakes away and dies, and trails of dark ooze streak down his face as his tears hiss and boil on his skin. In a grapple, he does 1 point of aggravated damage per turn to the other grappler. When attacking with a natural attack, one level of damage is upgraded to aggravated damage, no matter what the original kind of damage done was.

This Caligo can be converted into a permanent condition, in which the effects are permanently on, and cannot be deactivated. There are deep pits in the Dark World which form where Darkspawn who know this Caligo are trapped, for even when trapped in dormancy they still corrode the ground below them, until they fall at last into utter Darkness and are seen no more.

### *Four-dot Caligines*

#### *Dance, Puppet, Dance (●●●●)*

Requires Non-bestial  
Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = target's Durability  
Dice pool: Crafts + Shadows  
Cost: 2 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: until target disintegrates

The character instills a part of his will and the corruption of the Dark World into an object, urging it to an unnatural life. When he reaches the threshold, the target object animates; it will obey any order the character gives to the letter. The animated object follows the rules of the Claimed Condition [CofD 133] as if an ephemeral being had melded with it. The Power, Finesse and Resistance of the "being" begin at 1 apiece. The character may apply successes past the threshold to improve the object's traits. One success gives one of the following:

- Add 1 to the object's Power, Finesse or Resistance.
- Add +1 to the object's Speed and Initiative.
- Give the object 1 dot in either [Grotesque Bulk](#), [Loathsome Weapon](#) or [Vile Gobbets](#).

The Caligo ends when the object disintegrates from decay of its Physical Attributes.

#### *Drink Pain Like Wine (●●●●)*

Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Presence + Persuasion + Shadows vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: indefinite

The character preaches a creed of suffering and cruelty, and instills his words with a dreadful power to convince one who listens to them. He must spend five minutes in conversation with the target to activate the

Caligo. If he wins the contest, the target gains the [Vice-Ridden](#) Condition; the character chooses the second Vice that the target will gain from the Condition.

### *Everyone Dies Alone (●●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Shadows - target's Composure  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: indefinite

The character offers to show the target a vision of the hatred and despair that lies under everything she loves. He can activate this Caligo without any knowledge of the target, but the more he knows of her and the people she loves, the easier it is for him. This Caligo creates a false vision, it does not require an actual betrayal to function.

**Dramatic Failure:** The target sees a vision that reminds her of how much her friends need her, renewing her will to fight. She regains one Willpower. If the target is a Princess, if she prefers she may instead reflexively roll her (Belief - Shadows), gaining one Wisp per success.

**Failure:** No vision appears.

**Success:** The target sees a vision of a friend or loved one betraying her. Depending on the character's successes this may be as simple as insulting her behind her back or a deadly betrayal that puts her life in jeopardy. Etched into her mind by dark magics the target can't help but believe it's true; she gains the [False Memory](#) Condition at a level of the character's successes. While the Condition lasts she has a -2 penalty on all Social dice pools related to the friend (if the target is a Princess this may include regaining Wisps from her Circle) and teamwork actions with him.

**Exceptional Success:** The penalty from the target's False Memory Condition rises to -3.

**Modifiers:** The character does not know the target's name (-3), the character chooses a specific person to show, who is the target's friend (+3)

### *Hope's Eclipse (●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Strength + Survival + Shadows  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: 1 scene

The character may summon the deadly chill of the Dark World to swallow up the light and hope around him.

**Dramatic Failure:** The area is covered in total darkness for a single turn; when it lifts, the character is gone, fallen into the Dark World.

**Failure:** People in the area feel a momentary chill, and the light flickers.

**Success:** The character may impose any one of the [Extreme Taint](#), Ice [CofD 285] or [Poor Light](#) Tilts throughout the current scene. If he imposes Extreme Taint, each activation success past the first subjects characters to an hour's exposure to its effects, penalizing their actions.

**Exceptional Success:** The character may impose two Tilts from the list.

### *Oblivion's Sign (●●●●)*

Action: Extended and resisted, 1 turn/roll, threshold = target's Willpower  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Shadows - target's Resolve  
Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: indefinite

The character invests an image or a verbal phrase with the will-destroying quality of the void, and forces another person to see or hear it. When his victim sees or hears the trigger again, he follows orders without

question. When the character reaches the threshold, the target gains the [Tranced](#) Condition, with a trigger of the character's choice and at a level of his Shadows; this overrides any Tranced Condition the target had before. If the character fails, any Tranced Condition already existing on the target ceases to influence him, and the character cannot use Oblivion's Sign for a full day.

### *One of Us (●●●●)*

Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Manipulation + Shadows - target's Presence  
Cost: 3 Willpower, breaking point at -2  
Duration: indefinite

The Darkness embodies and shelters all those things that have no place and deserve no place. With a little effort, things outside its benevolent hands, in or out of the Light, can be drawn in and welcomed to the fold. If their former "friends" turn on them, well... that just proves they weren't real friends in the first place. This Caligo is used on a being with supernatural abilities within sight of the character; mundane characters and creatures of the Darkness are immune to it.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character only exposes his inner night to the otherworldliness of his target. He loses two dots of Shadows if targeting one of the Radiant or other beings of the Light, or one if targeting any other type of supernatural creature.

**Failure:** The Caligo brushes up against the target's supernatural nature, but runs off like rainwater.

**Success:** Motes of Darkness infest the target's powers, laying in wait. The next time the target uses a supernatural power of any kind, they gain the [Walking Stain](#) Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** Being treated like a creature of Darkness inspires some sympathy for the devil in the target. All creatures of Darkness capable of making social maneuvers improve their impression level with the target by one step until the Condition ends.

### *Out of the Depths (●●●●)*

Action: Permanent

The character extends his senses into a Tainted area from its image in the Dark World, allowing him to watch and listen without being perceived. The ability is automatic - the character sees and hears whatever happens in the Tainted area above his location as if he were there. His senses also extend into the Dark World from a Tainted place, letting him see and hear its image.

If the character also has [Nowhere Untouched](#), his senses extend into any area where he could enter the Dark World, and he can use [Entering Darkness](#) to cross to those areas as well as from them.

### *Twisting the Bane (●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll, threshold = 2x Severity of focus  
Dice pool: Presence + Occult + Shadows - Severity of focus  
Cost: 2 Willpower, breaking point at -4  
Duration: until next sunrise

Taint, the Mnemosyne say, only anticipates the final state of the world under Darkness. With this Caligo, the character calls up a different aspect of that final state in a Tainted area; while touching the Taint's [focus](#), he prays to the powers of Darkness. On reaching the threshold, the character may change 1 curse emanating from that focus. The area's Taint remains altered until the next sunrise, and then returns to its original curses. The character may use Twisting the Bane for a number of times per week equal to his Shadows.



## Five-dot Caligines

### *Crafted with Love and Care (●●●●●)*

Requires Non-bestial

Action: Extended and resisted, 1 minute/roll, threshold = target's Integrity + Resolve

Dice pool: Presence + Crafts + Shadows - target's Composure

Cost: 2 Willpower, breaking point at -4

Duration: indefinite

Ingredients: One helpless captive held fast, Darkness fresh from the Dark World, tears and raw material. Plastic or burlap will do. With this profane Caligo the character physically creates some kind of doll around the victim, trapping their body and their mind. On reaching the threshold the wrapping sinks beneath the victim's flesh. Only supernatural senses, and curiously a canine or feline's sense of smell, can detect anything wrong. If the character fails the wrapping remains nothing more than inert material which can be easily removed.

Dolls created by this power have the target's original Physical Attributes, the **Darkened** Condition and the Umbra **Tainted Allure of Vice**. They are also entirely mindless and act as the people around them expect them to act. They even use the Mental Attributes, Social Attributes and Skills of those around them - if a gourmet chef expects a Doll to cook his steak at exactly 550 degrees, it will. Being entirely mindless Dolls do not have Integrity and so cannot reach breaking points.

Killing a doll kills the person trapped within; this counts as killing an innocent, which constitutes a breaking point for anyone but the truly depraved.

Barring an external influence there is no transition from a Doll to other types of Dark Creature. So long as the Doll exists there is a possibility to break the curse with magic. Of course, this is only a drawback from the Darkness' perspective.

### *The Demon Within (●●●●●)*

Requires Non-bestial

Action: Extended and resisted, 5 minutes/roll, threshold = target's Resolve + Composure

Dice pool: Manipulation + Empathy + Shadows - target's Composure

Cost: 2 Willpower, breaking point at -5

Duration: until target wakes

The character removes the Vice from his target, gives it a separate body, and turns it loose. The target must have the Immobilized Tilt [CofD 284] or the Caligo fails. When he reaches the threshold, the target falls unconscious and a dense black smoke boils off of him, gathering into a human figure that somewhat resembles him. By default the unleashed Vice has the same traits as its owner, except Integrity and Virtue, which it lacks altogether. The character can apply successes past the threshold to increase the Vice's Physical Attributes, or to give it **Grotesque Bulk**, **Loathsome Weapon** or **Zombie's Flesh**, at the rate of 1 success per Attribute dot or Caligo dot. The Vice draws Willpower from its owner, and regains Willpower by indulging itself; as it lacks Virtue and does not sleep, no other way of gaining Willpower is open to it.

The Vice is likely to carry out any requests the character makes; on any Social rolls regarding it, the character adds his Shadows to the dice pool. (This stacks with **Evil Influence**.) If the character asks for nothing, the Vice does what its owner would do if he lacked a conscience. The Vice remains embodied until its Health track fills with damage (of any type) or its owner wakes up, at which point it dissolves into the black smoke that formed it and dissipates. The target cannot be wakened before the end of the current scene, and will wake after a full night's sleep (though without recovering Willpower); within those limits, the time the target stays asleep is at the Storyteller's discretion. If the Vice does anything while free that is a breaking point for its owner, he rolls once when he wakes, using the penalty for the worst sin the Vice committed.



## *I am Your Master (●●●●●)*

Action: Extended and resisted, 1 day at sunset/roll, threshold = highest Resolve among the targets + the number of targets  
Dice pool: Presence + Intimidation + Shadows - targets' highest Resolve  
Cost: 1 lethal damage per target, 1 Willpower per roll, breaking point at -5  
Duration: indefinite

A taste of the true Darkness in the heart is enough to break a beast to the will of someone stronger for life. To begin using this Caligo, the character feeds a measure of his own flesh or blood to the Darkspawn he wants to influence, enough to do 1 lethal damage per Darkspawn. He need not remain within sight of his targets after the first night; the process works from within. Once this is done, the character spends 1 Willpower at sunfall each night and rolls reflexively.

While the Caligo is in progress, the Darkspawn will obey verbal orders the character gives them during the hours of darkness, to the best of their abilities, but they won't risk their lives, and they return to their normal activities when the sun rises. Giving an order follows the same rules as the Umbra [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#).

After reaching the threshold, though, the Darkspawn become fanatically loyal; they will continue to carry out an assigned task until it's complete without regard for day or night, and will fight to the death if so ordered. They will attack anyone who tries to break their master's control, doing as much damage as they can (making all-out attacks, spending Willpower, etc.) until either they or the other is dead. In addition, the character can give his servants orders mentally, without speaking aloud, and adds his Shadows to the roll.

If the character fails or abandons the Caligo, his control over his servants breaks. The Darkspawn now desire nothing more than to feast upon his flesh again, and seek him out to kill and eat him. They know exactly where their former master is for a number of nights equal to their Wits; if the character evades them longer than that, they lose the trail.

If the character gains an exceptional success, the bond between master and servant becomes a source of power. One of the Darkspawn affected adds 1 dot in a Physical Attribute; the master chooses the Darkspawn and the Attribute. The new dots remain as long as the character's control persists.

## *Profanation (●●●●●)*

Action: Extended, 10 minutes/roll  
Dice pool: Shadows + Severity of focus  
Cost: 2 Willpower, breaking point at -5  
Duration: indefinite

The Dark wants to Taint everything, and its servants can channel it towards the best places to infect with a well-timed murder. At a Tainted area's [focus](#), the character prepares a weapon or tool for murder. Each success transfers 1 dot of the Taint's Severity from the focus into the weapon, with an associated curse; the character chooses which curse to take. While stored in the weapon, the Taint is inert - it doesn't register to Sensitivity, and doesn't affect anyone's dice pools. However, if the weapon is used to take the life of a non-Darkened, intelligent being, the place the murder was done immediately becomes Tainted with all the curses stored in the weapon, plus the points of Taint added by a murder in cold blood. The extra points expand the new Tainted area's Size as far as possible.

Each time the weapon does damage to anyone or anything without taking a person's life, 1 dot of the stored Taint escapes from it and returns to the Tainted place from which it came. If the weapon is destroyed before it takes a person's life, the stored Taint disappears entirely.

## *Shadow Step (●●●●●)*

Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Dexterity + Shadows  
Cost: 2 Willpower, breaking point at -3  
Duration: 1 scene

In the dark, all places are alike. The character can move from one unlit place to another without crossing the intervening space.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character cannot escape the light. For the rest of the scene he cannot use [Entering Darkness](#), and all his Stealth rolls are reduced to a chance die.

**Failure:** The character can only move normally.

**Success:** For the rest of the scene, if the character is standing in an unlit location, he may move to any other unlit location within (1 + activation successes) times his Speed in yards. This replaces his normal movement for the turn. No obstacle can block his motion; the character seems to dissolve where he stands and reforms at his destination in less than a second. However, light enough to read by will block the Caligo - if any part of the character is illuminated he must move normally, and if an unlit area is not big enough to contain him he cannot move to it.

**Exceptional Success:** The character may treat a Tainted area as if it were unlit throughout; light within a Tainted area does not block the Caligo.

## *Undying Heart (●●●●●)*

| Action: Permanent

The character cuts the heart out of his body and hides it far away. As long as the heart remains safe, the character cannot be killed by anything less than complete destruction of his body.

If the character's health track is filled with lethal damage he will not begin to bleed out, and does not require medical care to begin healing, though he still falls into coma. *Undying Heart* does not increase the character's ability to heal; it only provides infinite time for the healing process to take hold. If the character's health track is filled with aggravated damage, he's still dead.

If the heart is destroyed, the character dies instantly. If the character retrieves his missing heart he may sacrifice the *Undying Heart* Caligo, and all the Experiences invested in it, to instantly heal to perfect health. However, if any other creature of Darkness finds the heart, they may eat it for a free dot of Shadows (which destroys it, and kills the character.)

## *Venom of the Soul (●●●●●)*

| Action: Instant and resisted

Dice pool: Presence + Shadows - target's Stamina

Cost: 1 Willpower, breaking point at -4

Duration: lasting

Those whom the character has killed by his own hand are marked: with the taint in himself, he desecrates their bodies and consigns them to the Darkness. When a foe has taken lethal damage from the character's natural weapons or one of his Umbrae or Caligines, and that foe is bleeding out or dead, he becomes a valid target for this Caligo. The character must use the Caligo within an hour of the target's death, but need not be anywhere near the target when he does so.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character's flesh corrodes as the taint on his soul manifests. He takes 1 point of aggravated damage.

**Failure:** The target is not corrupted.

**Success:** The character pushes one dot of his Shadows into the target; he loses that dot, the target dies (if alive) and the corpse corrupts into a new Darkspawn. The Darkspawn has the same traits as the target did when it was alive, the innate abilities of Darkspawn, 1 dot of Shadows, and all the Umbrae that the character had when he activated the Caligo. It also gains [Loathsome Weapon](#) 1 (as a bite) and [Zombie's Flesh](#) 1 as Umbrae, and *Venom of the Soul*, but no other Caligines.

A character who currently has no Shadows dots can still raise a Darkspawn by sacrificing willpower; he loses 1 Willpower dot when *Venom of the Soul* activates, and the Darkspawn rises with 0 Shadows.

**Exceptional Success:** The Darkspawn rises as a terrifying fighter; it gains [Loathsome Weapon](#) 2 and [Zombie's Flesh](#) 2.

# Example Dark Beings

## Deluded Vigilante

Given a choice the Darkness doesn't do Virtue. Sometimes it doesn't have a choice, sometimes the only hook it has is a person's Virtue so the Darkness does its best to twist that Virtue right around and back into Vice again.

The Deluded Vigilante always wanted to be someone special with cool powers. Not to be superior or to abuse them, but to do something positive and interesting with their life. This wouldn't be a problem except that powers they got came straight from a realm of pure evil. They think that they can use their powers for good, protecting the night from hidden threats be it crime or Darkspawn; as their name implies they're deluded. Their powers isolate them from humanity and tempt them into pouncing on flimsier evidence with ever increasing brutality.

The Darkspawn created when a Deluded Vigilante falls often resemble urban legends. Mysterious killers who hunt down anyone who commits a seemingly innocent "crime".

Fortunately Deluded Vigilantes consider themselves on the side of the angels. If the Princess arrives soon enough this makes it easier to talk some sense into them, offering powers that aren't inherently evil - such as becoming Sworn and a couple of Bequests - usually works.

The possibility of an undeluded vigilante exists, such an exceptional individual would almost certainly have at least 7 Willpower and could be a great ally if the Princess needs to work with powerful Taint or the Dark World. Though even then such potential is probably put to better use as a Sworn.

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**Type:** Darkened

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2

**Skills:** Crafts 1, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Stealth 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 5, Size 5, Defense 4, Initiative 5, Speed 12

**Integrity:** 4

**Vice:** Violent. Brutal justice.

**Virtue:** Just. A typical expression.

**Umbrae:** [Faceless in the Crowd](#), [Dark Dreams](#) 1

**Caligines:** [Shadowblade](#) 1

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## Invisibles

A common form of Darkened, though you wouldn't be able to tell - few people without magic might be able to spot them even when they look for them. The Invisibles are Darkened people who were overlooked to begin with. Most were homeless, the mentally ill, and others who society might pretend don't exist until they had no choice but to shelter in a Tainted Place; but some were middle class folk who just had nothing noticeable about them.

As the Darkness takes hold what little social life they had is lost to them as their friends stop calling them to the few meetings they'd have normally gone to, their love life lost its modest little sparkle, and all which remains of them is destined to slowly die as they are stripped of any self-esteem, living with an ever decreasing sense of purpose. Or they might learn to abuse their Darkness-given assets to commit crime, and plummet deeper into depravity.

---

**Type:** Darkened

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 1, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 1, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

**Skills:** Crafts 1, Investigation 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Stealth 4, Persuasion 1

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 3, Size 5, Defense 3, Initiative 5, Speed 10

**Integrity:** 5

**Vice:** Petty. The Invisibles' lives lack any trait outside normalcy, and they cling to any minor achievement they can claim credit for.

**Virtue:** Humble. The Invisibles expect little of life – just don't threaten what little they have left to hold dear.

**Umbrae:** [Faceless in the Crowd](#), [Hollow as a Shadow](#)

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## *Malicious Gossip*

Humans are social creatures, they easily learn the importance of forming a coherent group with a cultural identity. Like most things to do with humanity it has both its good side and its bad side, and like most things to do with humanity it can be corrupted by the Dark. Conformity becomes the goal instead of the means. Relationships become a way of scoring points. People outside the group become "the enemy".

Malicious Gossips rarely become true Darkspawn, their sins are just too... petty. Slander and malicious gossip rather than serial murders and gruesome torture. They remain as Darkened putting on a smiling face and living their lives. The communities they call home tend to be cesspits of petty one-upmanship (even if they remain pretty or idyllic on the surface), either because they dragged it down or because every better community saw through them and sent them packing. Living alone of course was never an option.

---

**Type:** Darkened

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Skills:** Academics 1, Computer 1, Investigation 2, Occult 1, Politics 2 (Neighborhood), Athletics 1, Drive 1, Stealth 2, Empathy 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 2, Socialize 3 (My People), Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2 (slandorous gossip)

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 4, Size 5, Defense 3, Initiative 5, Speed 9

**Integrity:** 5

**Vice:** Envious. It isn't enough to succeed, others must fail.

**Virtue:** Peaceful. The Gossip has no stomach for violence.

**Umbrae:** [Subtle Tongue](#), [Tainted Allure of Vice](#) (Treacherous)

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## *Serial Killer*

The Darkness pushes everyone it infects to become as wicked and cruel as it is. Sometimes it strikes paydirt and creates a Darkened as bad as any Darkspawn, a monster that delights in the ultimate crime of murder. Darkened serial killers are rare though, and certainly rarer than Darkened who face the full wrath of the law after their first murder or even on charges of attempted murder before anyone died. The Darkness pushes its victims to peruse their vice with reckless abandon, to engage in brute sadism, and to erode their Integrity. None of these traits create a calculating and precise killer who can get away with repeated murders.

However the stats below represent an exception, someone with the willpower to contain their urges until their tracks are covered and skills to have a successful career of murder ... at least until their own crimes reduce them into a simple Darkspawn.

If you want your antagonist to have a longer career, or a longer backstory, you can upgrade the Umbrae to Caligines [Shadowblade](#) 1 and use these stats for a Mnemosyne.

---

**Type:** Darkened

**Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Presence 1, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Skills:** Academics 1, Investigation 2, Occult 1, Athletics 2, Drive 2, Larceny 3 (homes), Stealth 3, Weaponry 3 (against non-combatants), Animal Ken 1, Expression 1, Intimidation 3 (isolated situations), Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 7, Size 5, Defense 4, Initiative 6, Speed 9

**Integrity:** 4

**Vice:** Hateful. He has a favoured type of victims.

**Virtue:** Patient. A good crime takes time and planning.

**Merits:** Anonymity 3, Untouchable 1

**Umbræ:** [Defiling Touch](#), [Loathsome Weapon](#) 1

**Caligines:** [Shadow Cloak](#)

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## *Corpse-Eaters*

Survival... needing to survive can bring out the best in people, it can bring out the worst in people but some say what it does is bring out the truth in people. Sometimes it would be best if the truth remained hidden. Eating human flesh when you're starving isn't enough to make a Darkspawn, it's not even enough to make a Darkened but when the ground's already Tainted by whatever sins put a human being into such a position, when the Darkness already has a hold. Some people get a taste for human flesh, and if the supply dries up they'll take matters into their own hands.

Corpse-Eaters still look human, under the thick layer of filth and the accumulated results of terrible table manners. Then they open their mouths, stretching their human looking lips back to their ears and unhinging their jaws to reveal a mass of broken stained teeth in all shapes and sizes three layers deep.

---

**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Resolve 5, Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 3

**Skills:** Athletics 2, Brawl 2 (grapple, bite), Stealth 2, Survival 3, Intimidation 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 9, Willpower 8, Size 5, Defense 5, Initiative 6, Speed 9

**Umbræ:** [Roteater](#)

**Caligines:** [Loathsome Weapon](#) 2 (jaws), [Flesh of my Flesh](#) 3

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## *Cradlesnatchers*

Grotesque fat sloshing around within drooping folds of loose skin. It's the voice in the cupboard, the presence under your bed. It's every mother's worst nightmare: The Cradlesnatcher. They pass like a shadow of silence and leave behind empty beds and broken families. In life Cradlesnatchers were the servants of organized crime and politicians everywhere. The briber and blackmailer who corrupted or at least neutered the innocent so they could not oppose their employers, though even those scum of the earth would pale in horror if they saw what they would have eventually become.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 4, Dexterity 1, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2

**Skills:** Politics 1 (School) Science 1 (physics of light), Athletics 2 (Squeezing into things), Brawl 3 (grap- ple), Stealth 4 (Bedroom, Moving Silently), Survival 2 (The Dark World), Intimidation 2 (Children)

**Derived Traits:** Health 9, Willpower 5, Size 6, Defense 5, Initiative 3, Speed 11

**Condition:** [Fearful](#) (of dogs, cats, and being under a blanket)

**Umbræ:** [Light is Dark](#), [Faceless in the Crowd](#)

**Caligines:** [Void Magic](#) 1, [Nowhere Untouched](#) 2, [Grotesque Bulk](#) 1, [Zombie's Flesh](#) 2, [Voice-Eating Hunger](#)

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## *Duskhounds*

Were Duskhounds human who warped into canine bodies, or dogs who grew into grotesque parodies of their masters and mistresses? It's impossible to tell for sure, for the hounds' bodies lie somewhere halfway between man and beast. In mind though, there is no question. Duskhounds are half wolf, and half pure evil sadism. They are pack hunters who have no need to eat, only a love of the pain and suffering they inflict. In combat Duskhounds fight like wolves; one monster will keep their targets attention and fight defensively while others circle around to strike. They favor quick attacks to inflict Tilts then fall back before retaliation. Duskhounds will use this strategy even against obviously inferior foes, for cruelty's sake if nothing else.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Presence 4, Manipulation 1, Composure 1

**Skills:** Investigation 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 4 (Jaws), Stealth 3 (in darkness, moving silently), Intimidate 3 (growl)

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 4, Size 5, Defense 6, Initiative 4, Speed 14

**Merits:** Fleet of Foot 2, Martial Arts 1 (Focused Attack)

**Umbræ:** [Hunger Means Nothing](#), [Light is Dark](#), [Loathsome Weapon](#) 2 (jaws), [Scuttling Spider's Sense](#)

**Caligines:** [Voice-Eating Hunger](#) 1, [Shadow Step](#) 5

Duskhound packs always have a leader. The pack leader has the Umbræ [Grotesque Bulk](#) 1 and [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#), and the Caligo [Open Hellmouth](#), in addition to the listed traits.

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## *Filthcrawlers*

Filthcrawlers are large slimy centipedes that in many ancient cultures were associated with spiritual filth for their ability to spread Taint. Physically they are a bit larger than most centipedes with a distinctive red head. Individually they're not much of a threat to a Princess or even a mortal. Their only weapon, a poisonous bite, cannot penetrate a thick boot, let alone a Champion's supernatural armor, and they have no more durability or fighting skill than a common centipede. All that taken into account, a wise Princess will not underestimate Filthcrawlers. If they do manage to bite skin their jaws contain a deadly supernatural toxin, and their poisons create Taint as they chew upon furniture, buildings, and whatever they can get their little jaws on. Worst of all, with their tiny size they find it very easy to sneak out of a Tainted place in search of a new home to corrupt.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 0, Wits 0, Resolve 1, Strength 1, Dex 2, Stamina 1, Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 1

**Skills:** Brawl 1, Stealth 3

**Derived Traits:** Health 3, Willpower 2, Size 2, Defense 2, Initiative 3, Speed 6

**Umbræ:** [Corruption of Blood](#), [Light is Dark](#), [Loathsome Weapon](#) 1, [Roteater](#)

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**Caligines:** [Defiling Touch 1](#), [Diminutive Size 5](#), [Gathering Shadows 1](#), [Night Air 1](#), [Nowhere Untouched 2](#), [Walk in Darkness 3](#), [World-Corroding Entropic Touch 3](#)

The Filthcrawlers' version of Gathering Shadows summons only other Filthcrawlers, but brings them in from miles around - it consistently calls in a swarm of the creatures.

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## *Heartleeches*

Sometimes, when a new Darkspawn tears itself out of someone who has betrayed all they love and given everything in the name of their own hubris, the corpse is left behind, putrid and rotting. Instead, that traitor's tongue squirms free, sprouting centipede-like legs of wispy shadow, and crawling around far, far too quickly. Such beings, Heartleeches, are the epitome of the madness of paranoia and the terrible things that mistrust does to a man, for no-one even remembers them when they're gone. Small, globules of inky darkness roiling off them, they find sleeping people, and whisper into their ears, filling their dreams with Darkness. Some say that they can even crawl down the throat of a sleeper, and whisper from within their gut, in the mad, senseless burbling of the Beyond, but that is just paranoia in its own right. Right?

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 1, Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 5, Composure 4

**Skills:** Investigation 1, Athletics 2 (Scuttling), Brawl 1 (Trying to Escape), Stealth 5 (Bedrooms), Survival 3 (The Places No-One Thinks To Look), Animal Ken 3 (Inspiring Fear), Empathy 4 <sup>1</sup>, Intimidation 2 (Inspiring Paranoia), Persuasion 4 (Everyone Dies Alone)

**Derived Traits:** Health 4, Willpower 5, Size 2, Defense 6, Initiative 8, Speed 8

**Umbræ:** [Light is Dark](#), [Faceless in the Crowd](#), [Scuttling Spider's Sense](#)

**Caligines:** [Diminutive Size 3](#), [Avoid All Eyes 1](#), [Everyone Dies Alone 4](#)

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## *Lickermen*

Long of arm and hunched over are the Lickermen, those among the Darkspawn which hunt for the innocent and sup from the taste of violation. They are shrivelled, like a long-dried, starved corpse, their leathery skin loose around their too-small bones, and a vile, blackened tongue as long as a man's arm protrudes from a mouth otherwise sewn up with stitches of their own bone. Examination reveals that they are sexless; whatever they were before they were monsters is gone. As they pass by, they wuffle, like some kind of tracking hound, and they are often used for that purpose by Mnemosynes and Cataphractoi who want a stalking hound which is mostly reliable. In combat, they will flee against anything they think they cannot beat, but will gleefully attack anyone alone, especially children under the age of seven, and individuals with an Integrity of 8 or higher. They do not eat the body, however, for they cannot open their mouths; it is the destruction of innocence that they seem to feed off.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 5, Resolve 3, Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

**Skills:** Craft 1 (Improvising Weapons), Investigation 2 (Lost Things), Physical Skills: Athletics 3 (Climbing), Brawl 2 (Tongue), Stealth 4 (From Surprise), Survival 1 (The Dark World), Animal Ken 1 (Inspiring Fear), Empathy 3 <sup>1</sup>, Intimidation 2 (It's Behind You)

**Derived Traits:** Health 4, Willpower 5, Size 4, Defense 8, Initiative 5, Speed 8

**Umbræ:** [Diminutive Size 1](#), [Hunger Means Nothing](#)

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<sup>1</sup>Only for the purposes of negative emotions and judging someone's psyche; 0 otherwise



## *Shadowpuppets*

They say all evil needs to win is for good people to do nothing. Well evil won here and it won because the good person who was Tainted simply did nothing. For convenience they turned a blind eye to the curse that surrounded them, the living shadow that delighted in others suffering.

Perhaps they still find it convenient, they still don't need to worry about the shadow. They don't need to worry about anything any more. Now the shadow thinks for both of them, but then the Princess sees a flash of recognition, terror and guilt deep within the glassy zombified eyes. Not so convenient then.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

**Skills:** Investigate 1 (shiny things), Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Larceny 5 (Sleight of hand), Stealth 5 (just a shadow), Survival 2, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 6, Willpower 4, Size 5, Defense 8, Initiative 2, Speed 12

**Umbrae:** [Animate Shadow](#), [Cold Flesh](#), [Hunger Means Nothing](#), [Light is Dark](#)

**Calignes:** [Zombie's Flesh](#) 5, [Loathsome Weapon](#) 1 (claws)

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## *The Shadow*

**Attributes:** Power 2, Finesse 3, Resistance 2

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 7, Willpower 5, Size 5, Defense 3, Initiative 5, Speed 5

Other traits as under [Animate Shadow](#).

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## *Shadow-wraiths*

Not all Darkspawn were once people, in fact most were not. Shadowwraiths are formed not from people, but from their little mementoes. Sometimes when a prized possession is lost within a Tainted place or the Darkworld the memories, the humanity, invested in such an object can give form to the Taint. It becomes twisted and corrupt, a hungry creature of the Darkness.

Shadow-wraiths are immaterial beings and have the simplified traits of such beings, such as ghosts and spirits. The Hollow as a Shadow Umbra allows them to materialize more easily than a spirit, and much more so than a ghost.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Power 6, Finesse 2, Resistance 4

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 9, Willpower 11, Size 5, Defense 6, Initiative 6, Speed 13

**Umbrae:** [Hollow as a Shadow](#), [Light is Dark](#), [Roteater](#)

**Calignes:** [Avoid All Eyes](#) 1, [Enervation](#) 1, [Loathsome Weapon](#) 3 (claws)

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## *Dr. Arnow*

*Needs must be met, I merely provide a service.*



Mr. Arnow as he was called was a fine upstanding Victorian gentleman. By fine and upstanding we wish it to be understood that he had a great deal of money. He was in fact the rotten scum of the Earth. A man who saw his fellow humans as nothing more than a resource, and a slum lord who treated his tenants in the most awful manner. His cruelties tainted his tenancies and through that, himself.

At first Mr. Arnow delighted in his status, believing he held vast powers at the tips of his fingers. All too soon he learned that he could never master the Darkness, instead the Darkness had already mastered him. Now a Mnemosyne called Dr. Arnow he resides in the Dark World and sends his Darkspawn servants to capture victims from the world above as parts for his Dolls. Every Doll he creates is another chance for people to fall to temptation, to Darkness.

Dr. Arnow is old (though a good chunk of his life was spent frozen in the Dark World) and powerful, but he is a coward at heart and prefers to avoid direct involvement.

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**Type:** Mnemosyne

**Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Presence 2, Manipulation 5, Composure 5

**Skills:** Academics 2, Crafts 5 (dolls, flesh), Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Brawl 2, Firearms 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 3 (Psychological manipulation), Persuasion 3 (Psychological manipulation) Subterfuge 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 11, Willpower 8, Size 8, Defense 2, Initiative 10, Speed 17

**Shadows:** 4

**Vice:** Ambitious. Money no longer has any meaning for him, but power is always the sweetest currency. By spreading Vice and Taint he increases the Darkness' power and thus the portion of it delegated down to him.

**Virtue:** Patient. Moderation is the key, don't overplay your hand. Find a method that works, than stick to it.

**Merits:** Dark Palace 2, Safe Place 2 (He's twisted his small corner of the Dark World into a Victorian dollmaker's workshop.)

**Caligines:** [Grotesque Bulk](#) 5 (He's ludicrously tall but thin and spindly), [Zombie's Flesh](#) 3, [Handful of Dust](#) 3, [Everyone Dies Alone](#) 4, [Void Magic](#) 1, [Enervation](#) 1, [Enervating Hex](#) 2, [Grasping at Shadows](#) 2, [Shadowblade](#) 3, [Such Pretty Eyes, I Think I'll Keep Them](#) 3, [Dance, Puppet, Dance](#) 4 (He sends puppet dolls to attack), [I am Your Master](#) 5, [Taste of Sin](#) 1, [Crafted with Love and Care](#) 5

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## Dewain

*A lie is such a blunt tool, I find a well placed truth to be far more dangerous.*

Dewain does not seem like much, a crippled African man in his late teens who speaks with impeccable manners. This is his greatest defense, he slides beneath notice. Unlike many of his peers he has no power base to defend him from Princesses or even mortals, only by avoiding attention does he survive.

Behind the mask is the banal evil of the Darkness. A born sociopath even before he first encountered Taint, the Darkness has eroded the edges of his personality, leaving behind something simple and directed. Once he manipulated for personal gain, now he manipulates people simple simply because he can. The worse atrocities he can push people into, the better. His usual method is simple, tell the right person the right truth and watch the fun begin.

Wherever he travels, Dewain is always accompanied by his maid Tamila.

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**Type:** Mnemosyne

**Attributes:** Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1, Presence 2, Manipulation 5, Composure 3

**Skills:** Academics 2, Investigation 3 (Horrific Truths), Medicine 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 4 (Telling the right truth), Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 6, Willpower 5, Size 5, Defense 3, Initiative 6, Speed 2

**Shadows:** 2

**Vice:** Cruel. Hurting people because why not.

**Virtue:** Honest. Dewain scorns deception - his voice is his only weapon, and people must trust his words to be hurt by them.

**Condition:** Crippled [CofD 288]

**Caligines:** [Void Magic](#) 1, [Nowhere Untouched](#) 2, [Walk in Darkness](#) 3, [Taste of Sin](#) 1, [Evil Influence](#) 2, [Sin Whisperer](#) 3, [Drink Pain Like Wine](#) 4, [Such Pretty Eyes, I Think I'll Keep Them](#) 3, [I am Your Master](#) 5

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## Tamila

*You are working too hard again, I'll run you a bath and cook dinner.*

Tamila was one of the first things Dewain used his dark powers for. Even before he became a Mnemosyne he sought out powers that would give him control over others, the Caligo I Am Your Master. With it he sought out Darkspawn to make his own. Tamila was the first he found, and the one he kept by his side when he began his current subtle way of life. When Dewain found Tamila she was nothing more than an animalistic monster in human flesh, but he's trained her beyond that. Now she serves as a one woman domestic staff, bodyguard and pushes the wheel chair.

Tamila is a striking African woman who wears an increasingly tattered maid's uniform at all times.

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**Type:** Darkspawn

**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 5, Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 5

**Skills:** Crafts 2 (Domestic), Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Stealth 2, Survival 1, Weaponry 4 (Polearms), Intimidation 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 9, Willpower 10, Size 5, Defense 7, Initiative 12, Speed 17

**Shadows:** 4

**Vice:** Violent. Tamila is still a dangerous brute, enjoying nothing more than ripping into flesh.

**Virtue:** Loyal, to Dewain. For a Darkspawn being the right hand of a successful Mnemosyne is about as good as it gets.

**Merits:** Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 2, Iron Stamina 3, Striking Looks 2

**Umbræ:** [Roteater](#)

**Caligines:** [Grasping at Shadows](#) 2, [Shadowblade](#) 3, [Loathsome Weapon](#) 2 (jaws), [Flesh of my Flesh](#) 3, [Vile Gobbets](#) 5

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## The Boogymen

*I am the who when you call who's there?*

The Boogymen is not the strongest Cataphract, though he is one of the strongest Cataphractoi. The Boogymen is not the oldest Cataphract, though he is one of the oldest Cataphractoi. But the Boogymen is the worst Cataphract because in his reign of terror he has a special focus. Children.

For over two thousand years he has ruled one kingdom or another in the Dark World, drawing minions and winning their loyalty with bread and circuses: an unending supply of young children to torment and consume. It hasn't all been fun and games, no matter the culture, no matter how much people disbelieve in the supernatural. If you target children their parents are going to come after you.

Aided by the priests of Nox the centurion Cornelius led his legionnaires into the Dark World and slaughtered the Boogyman's citizens. The shamans from a dozen native American tribes joined together to send an unending swarm of maggot spirits to devour the Boogyman's kingdoms. The Caliphs' greatest scholars created alchemical fires and the Japanese crafted swords of pure jade. In time every kingdom the Boogyman has founded fell to those it preyed upon but the Boogyman itself survived, fled deep into the Dark World to found its kingdom anew.

Whenever the Boogyman creates its kingdom he builds it to look as much like the world above as he can, but with hidden and grotesque traps in every corner. He builds with a particular focus to schools, playgrounds parks or homes - places children are likely to know well. This as much as everything he does is a cruelty, it blurs the nice safe division between the Dark World and Earth for any child to escape. Children do escape too, the Boogyman finds the sweetest sensation is hope breaking apart and so he plays fair and gives children hope. He always has a soft spot in his heart for the children who try to keep their companion's hope alive, if they fail he keeps them apart from the others. He tries to turn them into a Mnemosyne and set them to destroying the hope they once protected.

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**Type:** Cataphract

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Strength 4+2, Dexterity 3+2, Stamina 4+2, Presence 4+4, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Skills:** Crafts 5 (The Dark World), Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Occult 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Stealth 5, Survival 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 4 (Children), Persuasion 3 (Followers), Subterfuge 4

**Derived Traits:** Health 10+2, Willpower 7, Size 6, Defense 6, Initiative 6+2, Speed 13+4

**Shadows:** 8

**Vice:** Cruel. It's simple really, all he wants is to make children suffer.

**Virtue:** Persistent. He pursues children without rest; driven out of one kingdom, he goes on undaunted to the next.

**Umbræ:** [Cold Flesh](#), [Grotesque Bulk](#) 1 (loathsomely fat and sweaty), [Hunger Means Nothing](#), [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#), [Zombie's Flesh](#) 5

**Caligines:** [Avoid All Eyes](#) 1, [Bogeyman](#) 2, [Void Magic](#) 1, [Nowhere Untouched](#) 2, [Walk in Darkness](#) 3, [Enervation](#) 1, [Grasping at Shadows](#) 2, [Taste of Sin](#) 1, [Voice-Eating Hunger](#) 1, [Such Pretty Eyes, I Think I'll Keep Them](#) 3, [I am Your Master](#) 5

**Transformation:** Add [Loathsome Weapon](#) 2 (claws).

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## *Maria the Cleaner*

For most of her life Maria was just a face in the crowd, a number on a spreadsheet; her only misfortune was to be an immigrant working as a housekeeper for a politician. A minor bureaucrat in the immigration service, wishing to embroil her employer in scandal, "lost" the records proving her to be a legal immigrant and issued an order for her deportation. Although the resulting furor did not, in the end, remove the politician from office, it consigned Maria to years of official persecution. The stress of fighting a rigged system, combined with a neurochemical imbalance, led to Maria's suicide and rebirth as a Cataphract.

The monster that thinks it's Maria has trouble remembering what it's supposed to be doing. It knows it's supposed to clean, but the details elude it. Consequently it directs its minions to "clean" different houses throughout both the Dark World and on Earth. Inhuman monsters know nothing of sanitation, so their attention looks closer to a ransacking. If her minions fail to clean to her standards then their punishment is brutal. Maria's criticism resembles a physical enactment of self-loathing, but directed against Darkspawn it makes an effective way of whipping her minions into shape. Maria can essentially beat Caligines into her minions, for Tainted is the closest to clean in her Dark-addled eyes. Also, Maria remembers that business hours exist but she can't remember what time they are, so like most Dark creatures she prefers to operate at night, which means people are usually at home when the monsters come knocking at their door.

A town cursed by Maria's attention finds itself the target of a vicious campaign of terror and Tainting targeting the homes of the richer residents, the sort who can afford to hire domestic help. Other servants of the

Darkness, even those that fear enslavement to a Cataphract's will, often move in to colonize the Tainted Places that Maria creates and forgets about. If not dealt with quickly, Maria's presence can lead to a rapid escalation of both the Darkness and the Stormwracked.

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**Type:** Cataphract

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2+3, Strength 2+2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3+1, Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

**Skills:** Academics 1, Crafts 3 (Domestic), Athletics 1, Drive 1, Firearms 2+1, Larceny 2, Stealth 2+1, Survival 2+1, Weaponry 2+1 (polearms), Empathy 2, Intimidation 3+2 (subordinates), Streetwise 2

**Derived Traits:** Health 8+1, Willpower 4+3, Size 5, Defense 4, Initiative 5, Speed 10+2

**Shadows:** 3

**Vice:** Hateful. The justified anger Maria felt when she died has congealed into a toxic hate that latches onto any convenient target.

**Virtue:** Patient. Like the tortoise Maria believes that slow and steady wins the race.

**Umbrae:** [Light is Dark](#), [Sound of Silence](#), [Scuttling Spider's Sense](#), [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#)

**Caligines:** [Shadowblade](#) 3, [Vile Gobbets](#) 1, [Voidblast](#) 5, [Open Hellmouth](#) 1, [Defiling Touch](#) 1, [Burying the Crime](#) 2, [Walk in Darkness](#) 3, [Twisting the Bane](#) 4, [I am Your Master](#) 5, [Profanation](#) 5

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## *Dr. Goldstein (the Ring-Eater)*

*Don't leave. We can't leave until we figure out what the problem is between you two. Pay no attention to the rattling.*

—Cataphract

*No seriously, it's a good idea to get away from here. I said get away. \*demonic\* GET AWAY!!!!*

—Dybbuk

Once, he was a shrink. He's pretty sure of that, even if his memory isn't so good. He used to be the person failing marriages went to before the divorce lawyer, and he was good at it too - not the best, but he was regularly referred to by other, successful customers. The fact that they appreciated him was probably good for his sanity, too - Ishmael Goldstein himself had struggled with borderline personality disorder and depression for most of his life, a product of his parents' own relationship difficulties being visited on their son. Eventually though, everyone fails, and for Ishmael, it couldn't have happened at a worse time in his life. His own wife had begun to cheat on him, his daughter grew distant for reasons he couldn't explain, and to top it off, the failed treatment happened to be that of a city councilman, meaning Ishmael was facing losing his medical licence to make his patient happy. Caught in a spiral of self-loathing and feelings of rejection, Dr. Goldstein came home, kissed his sleeping wife, locked himself in the guest room, and proceeded to follow in the footsteps of many psychiatrists and BPD sufferers before him - with a bottle of sleeping pills.

The Darkness had other plans for him. Thus, even as Ishmael's soul left his body, an infinitesimal fragment of the Outer Dark, drawn by his daughter's recent Blossoming, filled the vacuum left behind. Now an enigmatic, cerebral Cataphract with a soft, too-white smile and a penchant for nibbling the flesh off the ring-fingers of his victims, Dr. Goldstein has a new practice in the Dark World, kidnapping couples he sees in the midst of even the tiniest, most inconsequential argument for "therapy" in his Palace of Dark Delights. A very composed and lucky few able to keep up the appearances of "working through their difficulties" to his satisfaction and are returned to their homes, likely to face a life of traumatic stress from there on, but alive, and unDarkened. Those who are too panicked to coherently address - or even remember - the "issues" he sees or too quickly for his liking (he noted that on occasion, patients will lie to keep up appearances) are killed and returned to Earth, their ring fingers nothing but bone ... or worse, implanted with Shadows, so that they may "understand where your counselor is coming from". They become ticking time bombs, the Darkness slowly devouring their capacity for love ...

... Except for some reason, there's two Dr. Goldsteins. One is the font of Dark energies wearing his skin, and the other is, in fact, the real Ishmael Goldstein - or at least, his unusually cognizant phantasmal afterimage in Twilight. Normally, it doesn't happen due to the corrosive effect the Darkness has on forming anchors, but

on rare occasion, a Cataphract whose death was almost perfect for forming a ghost - the proper design for the house, the method of death enabling one's soul to get cold feet, attachment to the physical plane - will have his own ghost rise from the grave, as was the case with Dr. Goldstein. Needless to say, the shock of finding himself floating above his bed was nothing compared to finding his body had apparently decided to get up without him (after that, realizing it was a monster born from a force of entropy disincarnate was almost a relief). Always a fairly calm man in between his BPD-induced stormy moods however, Ishmael logically deduced that what God wanted to remain on Earth for (though he wasn't a devout person before, being unliving proof of an afterlife tends to change your mind) was to stop the monster now wearing his body like a coat (and given how ghosts work, destroying Dr. Goldstein the Cataphract will probably resolve Ishmael's unfinished business and allow him to move on to the afterlife). The *problem* with this is that, due to Ishmael's religious convictions about what a ghost is, he has become a *dybbuk*, the Jewish version - one noted for its inability to communicate with the living. While his powers of possession are most useful in warding away potential victims - he's saved dozens of lives by faking seizures and leaving evidence of the Ring-Eater's hunting grounds - there's really not much he can do other than make windows rattle - and the Cataphract is aware of his presence.

Thankfully, one of the rules about exorcism is that one needs Integrity to do so - something Darkspawn are in short supply of. But Dr. Goldstein is clever. *He* may not be able to rid himself of the dybbuk, but someone else might. Say, a gullible Noble or two ... or three ... or a nakama ...

**Appearance:** Dr. Goldstein - or more accurately, the Darkness wearing Goldstein's flesh - is the archetypal shrink: chubby, besuited in tweed, and with kind, inquisitive eyes that usually have sunglasses to disguise his distinctive pupils. He also tries to be unassuming as possible - partially out of habit from the living Dr. Goldstein, mostly because drawing attention to himself begins to show certain... *oddities*. His teeth look more like porcelain than enamel, his slight girth like well-embalmed dead weight and the fact that his shadow is occasionally missing. Like many serial killers however, Dr. Goldstein is very good at diverting attention from his more unnatural qualities, right up until he feels he has no choice then to activate a False Transformation. What is his true form, devoid of humanity? A round, squat, squamous thing with many eyes and many limbs, with a great maw in his belly, inside of which pulses a constant storm, always ready to be vented outwards in a destructive gale of black magic.

The Dybbuk, on the other hand, doesn't have an appearance to begin with - Ishmael believed the dead were possessing spirits, and that has been represented by him being nothing so much as a great mist, with lights akin to that of an amoeba's organs scattered about him. He doesn't even have a real voice when he's possessing someone, either - instead, they become a more frantic, more demented version of themselves that is constantly twitching, as if trying to leap out of their own skin ... unless one develops an effective means of communicating with him (see below), in which case he uses whatever means are available (telekinetically moving the wedge of an Ouija board, misting over a mirror before drawing letters in it) to communicate extremely laconic, straightforward messages (in particular things like D-O-N-T-T-R-U-S-T-M-Y-B-O-D-Y and W-E-A-R-I-N-G-M-Y-S-K-I-N, if he thinks his contactees asked a question that allows him to segue into that). This does not require Numina - rather, it's the Essence released by the rite allowing him to work around his lack of a voice, more like a form of ghost Sign.

**Storytelling Hints:** Dr. Goldstein is meant for two purposes. Firstly, he is meant to play with PCs expectations of ghost stories - just imagine how priceless the looks on their faces will be when they realize the mysterious, body-hopping ghost is actually the good guy, and their patron is a monster who, quite simply, should not exist. The second is to provide a definite end to any debate over whether the Cataphract is the same person whose body was animated by the Darkness - a definite no. The Cataphract's soul is long lost to its body, even to the point of possibly forming a ghost, and what's left is simply a dark spirit, wearing the previous occupant's body and memories like a human suit. Sun Protection Factor 3000.

For his part, Dr. Goldstein does his best to look like the victim, ordering his Animate Shadow to create poltergeist activity that seems directed at him, using his Caligines (especially Call the Black Dog - he's learned how to manipulate it so that the dreamer is hunted by something of Goldstein's choice, such as a bloodthirsty ghost) to subtly put his dupes on the wrong course, and attempting to confuse the issue of what a dybbuk actually is. Of course, the Ring-Eater is still a Darkspawn, and does whatever is within his power to fulfill his purpose - "fixing" relationships. His minions are under standing orders to find problems for him - they deliberately go about ruining the relationship between couples (stealing mementoes, delaying dates, erasing memories of anniversaries - that sort of thing), which they then show to him. For his part, Dr. Goldstein is aware of the fact that he is the cause of many relationship difficulties, but to his Darkness-spawned mind, he is simply provoking troubles that would have happened anyway and are to be nipped in the bud (no one said a Cataphract's arguments were *sensible* ...)

By contrast, Ishmael may not be able to communicate normally, but he does his best to use his hosts to direct player characters to information about Jewish ghost lore. He doesn't actually know if the old rituals and ceremonies will work, but he believes the Cataphract to be the source of legends of *shedim*, the grave-haunting demons of Semite myth, and thinks it's his best shot. It won't work the way he intends, but given what *does* happen, it's likely he won't be too upset. Thanks to the Darkness wearing away at the barrier between worlds, trying to exorcise Ishmael using Catholic-inspired rituals of denial or similar "cast thee out" exorcisms is a *very bad plan* - besides quite possibly sealing one of the few controls on a young Cataphract's growth in the Underworld, it also forms a portal there, as per the rules in *Book of the Dead*. Naturally, Dr. Goldstein will attempt to fool any well-meaning priests into doing so, knowing that even if the exorcism fails, he will quite possibly have a potential threat on an impromptu *nekyia*. On the plus side, the stabilizing effects on the corpus of ghosts the Underworld has will allow the Dybbuk to manifest as a human with perfectly normal speech, likely to beat some sense into the trapped exorcist before attempting to help guide them out to fix their mistake.

On the other hand, rituals meant to *appease* ghosts, such as Chinese wandering ghost offerings or, appropriately enough, Jewish exorcism rites, have a rather different effect than normal. Firstly, Ishmael does not contest the roll - remember, he *wants* the rite to succeed so he may somehow weaken or destroy the Cataphract. Rather, the Darkness within the Ring-Eater subconsciously senses the attempt to communicate with his wayward soul and rolls Resolve + Composure to resist, which manifests as a rather different "feeling" than the Dybbuk (imagine the lightless depths of an underground lake as compared to a well-lit freezer). The contest is resolved as normal, with failure on the part of the exorcist meaning that the Cataphract becomes aware of the attempt - he will attempt to persuade the exorcist that the Dybbuk is beyond help, and failing that, attempt to either kill her or flee. If and when the exorcist wins, every net success allows Ishmael one minute of coherent, two-way communication. If nothing else, the exorcist will likely realize she hasn't been told the whole truth.

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### *Dr. Goldstein, the Ring-Eater*

**Type:** Cataphract

**Attributes:** Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 2+2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Presence 4, Manipulation 5, Composure 2

**Skills:** Occult 3, Academics 4 (Psychology), Investigation 2 (Psych Profiling), Medicine 3 (Pharmaceuticals), Athletics 1, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Empathy 4 (Psychological Diagnosis), Intimidation 3 (Creepily Serene), Persuasion 5 (Break The Cutie), Socialize 2 (Lowering Psychological Defenses), Subterfuge 2

**Merits:** Meditative Mind 4, Dark Palace 3 (His offices as reflected in the Dark World), Safe Place 1 (the reflected offices)

**Derived Traits:** Health 8, Willpower 5, Size 5+3, Defense 4, Initiative 4, Speed 11+2

**Shadows:** 5

**Virtue:** Generous. The Ring-Eater honestly believes he is helping people avoid the utter despair of loneliness that led to his creation.

**Vice:** Pessimistic. The Ring-Eater also honestly believes that even the slightest faults of character will doom a relationship without his counsel. He invariably puts the worst construction possible on anything his clients say.

**Umbræ:** [Animate Shadow](#), [Dark Dreams](#) 1, [Subtle Tongue](#), [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#), [Tainted Allure of Vice](#)

**Caligines:** [Avoid All Eyes](#) 1, [Bogeyman](#) 2, [Handful of Dust](#) 3, [Everyone Dies Alone](#) 4, [Enervation](#) 1, [Energizing Hex](#) 2, [Call the Black Dog](#) 3, [Shadowblade](#) 3, [Such Pretty Eyes, I Think I'll Keep Them](#) 3, [Taste of Sin](#) 1, [Flesh of my Flesh](#) 3

**Transformation:** Add [Hollow as a Shadow](#), [Miasma of Madness](#), [Grotesque Bulk](#) 3, [Zombie's Flesh](#) 3 and [Voidblast](#) 5 (from the storm in his heart).

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### *Ishmael the Dybbuk*

**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 4, Finesse 2, Resistance 4

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 9, Willpower 8, Size 5, Defense 2, Initiative 6, Speed 11

**Essence:** 15

**Integrity:** 6

**Manifestations:** Twilight Form, Fetter, Possess

**Numina:** Dement, Host Jump, Innocuous

**anchors:** Dr. Goldstein's offices in the Dark World, his house (still lived in - since Ishmael is usually hanging around Dr. Goldstein and doesn't possess the inhabitants, it's only slightly morbid due to the deathly Essence saturating the area).

**Virtue:** Generous. Dr. Goldstein was indeed an ideal psychiatrist. He was very kind in life, and he remains so in death - even if he can't exactly do much now other than save people from his possessed body.

**Vice:** Pessimistic. When Dr. Goldstein was alive, he suffered from a creeping sense of self-loathing, combined with a tendency to demonize people close to him for every perceived fault and slight (and begging for forgiveness by said people when he came to his senses). Sometimes, the Dybbuk wonders if his path is an attempt to prove to himself he isn't completely worthless. (The Ring-Eater has reduced this Vice to a caricature.)

**Ban:** Ishmael cannot cross a doorway to which a *mezuzah* is affixed, or on which the prayer *Shema Yisrael* has been written.

**Bane:** Jade (shared with the Ring-Eater.)

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## *Cults of the Darkness*

The Darkness may corrupt your soul and melt your mind down to a bestial being of sin and hunger but it does offer power. The temptation of power has always attracted people, from sinister and powerful sorcerers to easily duped fools. When the opportunity presents itself those who have access to the Dark's power often try to become its gatekeepers, demanding loyalty and servitude in exchange for access to Tainted places and the secrets of Caligines.

Some cults are devout practitioners of fringe beliefs, others are cynical organizations designed to accrue power and wealth for their leaders. Cults worshipping the Outer Dark are exclusively of the latter variety. Whatever creed of sin and hopelessness they preach, it is merely a tool for controlling the lives of the cultists or luring in fresh recruits. Many Dark cults aren't exactly well run and they can be almost transparent in promising immoral power to their members (and if people aren't tempted, locking them up in a Tainted area often takes care of those pesky morals). Such cults rarely last long, even without a Princess around the police usually take care of them, or victims of the cultists become [Stormwracked](#) and avenge themselves.

It is usually Darkened or Mnemosyne who lead the Dark's cults for both are human enough to interact with people and human enough to desire power and luxury.

Status in a cult of the Darkness is represented by the Mystery Cult Initiation Merit [CofD 51]. Becoming a creature of the Darkness (usually by gaining the [Darkened](#) Condition) is required to advance to four dots in the Merit.

## *Broken Dreams Society*

Pain. Sadness. Suffering. Misery. None may escape these things completely.

The Broken Dreams Society preaches that one should *seek them out*. Embrace them. The Society is a Darkness-influenced organization that idolizes suffering, elevating it as the only genuine noble thing in human life. Happiness is a sham and only through suffering do we experience reality and have the opportunity to grow. Its temples are built on Tainted places, its leaders seeking out to spread misery and indoctrinate more and more people into the fold.



Members are always on the lookout for those who are suffering from a tragedy or another, and don't know how to deal with it. In some cases, members actually arrange for tragedy to happen (their beliefs allow them to rationalize it as being for the victim's own good - "real" pain being preferable to "fake" happiness). They then approach the prospective recruit, telling them how they bounced back from their own sob stories, and mention the Society that helped them find meaning in their own darkest hour. They are encouraged to attend society meetings, where they are met by sympathetic members who "know what it feels like", and offer moral support at first. But, step-by-step, indoctrination begins.

Slowly but surely, the prospective members are exposed to the Society's ideology and taught to define themselves by their suffering. At the same time, they are encouraged to participate in exercises where they inflict physical pain upon themselves; the official purpose is to become stronger by learning how to handle the pain, but as time progresses, the self-torture becomes harsher and harsher. This encourages them to rationalize and justify their involvement with the group.

As indoctrination progresses, the recruits are eventually taught to see happiness as a sham, and to dismiss as unreal anything that isn't based on misery. Their self-torture progresses to become emotional in nature, as they are encouraged to willingly abandon their dreams and cut ties with loved ones... except where doing otherwise would serve the Society's goals. Some of the more promising members are selected to join the Society's inner circle, and are brought to one of its "temples". The latter are always located in Tainted areas; with enough time, those brought there become Darkened.

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### *Initiation Benefits*

- New recruits are shown how to torture their own bodies, to steel them for the pain of living. The knowledge applies for torturing others too; the recruit thus gains a free Intimidation specialty in Torture.
  - Full members are partly hardened against physical pain; they receive one dot of Iron Stamina [CofD 48] free of charge.
  - Promising members start a course of study within a temple, learning to expose others to the reality of pain. On completing it they gain the Vice-Ridden Merit [CofD 46] granting a Vice of Cruel.
  - The inner circle of the Society are expected to take students/victims. They have three dots in Retainers [CofD 53] allocated as the player wishes.
  - The Society's leaders know a mystical phrase which shows its hearers, ineluctably, that nothing of them is true but their pain. They receive the Caligo [Handful of Dust](#) free of charge, without the Shadows required for it (though that usually isn't an issue.)
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### *Pleasure Principle*

"Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." Civilization, laws, morals - all these are cages. The free man, the true man, is a barbarian, a wolf who walks the world, taking what he wishes, stalking the sheep who stay fearfully within their fenced pastures. Those who build the fences are predators too, just cleverer hypocrites than the honest wolves who break them. So says the Pleasure Principle, who will help anyone who asks to shed their inhibitions and indulge all their appetites.

For this cult, the early stages of recruitment are fairly easy. They fish regularly in the clubs and bars where people go to drink themselves blind and find sexual partners whom they can forget the morning after, baiting their hook with offers of nights of pleasure beyond what most ever experience. While the claim is not untrue - the Pleasure Principle does know how to stage an orgy - the cult's masters carefully study anyone who accepts their invitation, looking for the vices they keep secret from the world. Once these are identified, the cult arranges situations to tempt the prospect, break down his sense of shame, and keep him coming back for more. Tainted places with the right kind of curses come in handy for staging these.

Deeper initiation reveals more and more of the cultist's life outside the Pleasure Principle to be a foolish self-imposed crippling of what he ought to be: an illimitable appetite. The bonds of the criminal law, of conscience formed in childhood, of friendship and family, all must yield to naked desire. Those who accept this doctrine are brought to live in the cult's Tainted houses of pleasure. For those who balk when they hear it ... well, there's always blackmail. No one gets far enough to learn what the Pleasure Principle is about without



doing something they were once ashamed of, and if they insist on wearing a leash, the cult is happy to hold its other end.

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### *Initiation Benefits*

- For the recent recruit, the Pleasure Principle is a constant party with hints of depravity to add spice. Regular attendance gives a recruit a free Socialize specialty in Seduction, Carousing, Debauchery, or some other kind of sensual indulgence.
  - Junior initiates are taught to assess people's weaknesses and exploit them for social advantage. They gain the Pusher Merit [CofD 53] free of charge.
  - Those who fully accept the Pleasure Principle can feast on others' reserves of will; caresses, or more intimate relations, become opportunities to feed. Even if they haven't yet become Darkened, trusted and established members can use the [Enervation](#) Caligo.
  - The higher ranks of the cult define themselves by their appetites, and easily insinuate themselves among those who share it. The free specialty they gained from the first dot becomes Interdisciplinary [CofD 45] and they gain a variant of the Barfly Merit [CofD 50] tied to places where that specialty commonly applies.
  - The masters of the Pleasure Principle can bring out anyone's darkest desires, given a few moments alone with him. They gain the [Sin Whisperer](#) Caligo free of charge.
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### *Sodality of the Harpuiai*

"Behind every great fortune there is a crime," and that crime ought to be punished. Let anyone who has profited from a sin be shamed, disgraced, held up to scorn, outcast; the Sodality of the Harpuiai gladly bear the duty of humiliating them and driving them into the wilderness. Secretly they know that to be wealthy or successful, to be learned or trained, even to be born with an unusual talent - in short, to be in any way better than some poor wretch born in squalor - is to profit from a crime; all are guilty, so any may be punished.

The Sodality named itself after the wind-spirits of Greek myth, who were divine punishers and torturers. Its methods are as bodiless as a wind, and as cutting: the members are masters of rumormongery, spreading scandal, and judicious character assassination. Those with the ill luck to cross the Sodality soon find themselves the subject of malicious tales, coming from almost any direction and untraceable to its source. If they are only moderately unlucky they will be baseless (though hard to refute); but the Sodality has an unnerving nose for the embarrassing or humiliating truth.

In prior decades a cult like the Sodality would have faced great difficulties in establishing itself, but the rise of the Internet has given this cult incredible opportunities for expansion and recruiting. These days a Harpuai need only log onto a forum where college students go to discuss the latest political cause and drop a few honeyed suggestions, and dozens of prospects will fall over themselves to learn from the Sodality. Demonstrating the heady power of destroying an opponent with a few whispered words leads to personal meetings with the fascinated recruits, where the credo that advantage as such is criminal and should be punished can be thoroughly taught.

The effects of this doctrine, when believed and followed, are not pretty. Sodality members are far more inclined to defame and sabotage the work of other people than to attain excellence on their own merits (since to have merit is itself proof of complicity in crime) and therefore consistently alienate themselves from anyone who does not share their beliefs. Older cultists, self-deprived of any healthy aspirations, take pleasure only in denigrating the "guilty", blight their environment with Taint, and fall to the Darkness almost without noticing. Among Dark cults, the Harpuiai are unusual for not seeking out Tainted areas to live in - and alarming, because they seldom need to. Taint permeates their homes just from what they usually do.

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### *Initiation Benefits*

- Good prospects for the Sodality learn the delicate art of verbal knife-work. They gain a free Expression specialty in Damaging Reputations.

- Full initiates have been trained to look for the small but telling detail that exposes a shameful secret. They gain the one-dot version of the Trained Observer Merit [CofD 46] free of charge.

- Senior Harpuiai have not only mastered character assassination, but can apply it to a host of problems; they acquire the Area of Expertise [CofD 44] and the Interdisciplinary Specialty [CofD 45] Merits, both for the Damaging Reputations specialty they gained at the first dot.

- When the Darkness first enfolds Sodality members, it grants them insight into the crimes of others. They gain the [Taste of Sin](#) Caligo free of charge.

- The oldest members of the Sodality of the Harpuiai can destroy a reputation with a single accusation. They gain the [Scapegoat](#) Caligo free of charge.

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## *Upas Covens*

Throughout the world there are folk tales of people bargaining with evil spirits to gain power over their neighbors. While the vast majority of those tales are no more than paranoid fantasies, a few are accurate. The Upas Covens are a network of old families whose ancestors learned to summon devils and damned ghosts (or so they thought) from places made unholy by murder. They have handed down their secrets, father to son, mother to daughter, for centuries, and refined what they knew into an anti-theology that worships the Darkness.

The Covens' normal practice is to search for Tainted places, buy the properties, build shrines to the dark powers they venerate on them, call to any spirits across the Gauntlet that feed on the Tainted resonances, and bargain with the creatures who answer. As the cult has no qualms about deepening a Tainted area's curses, or using their spirits' powers for commercial or political gain, the Covens accumulate wealth and enemies at fairly quick rates; they tend to arrive somewhere as refugees from "persecution", build up a fortune over a few generations by ruining rivals, only to have their demon-worship exposed, forcing them to flee again.

The Covens recruit strictly by inheritance. It is possible for outsiders to join the cult by marrying in, but the family elders won't approve a marriage unless the bride or groom already has an interest in black magic. To compensate for this the Covens go to great lengths to make sure their children follow the family tradition, participate in the rituals, and make pacts with the cult's pet demons. Children of a Coven who escape becoming Darkened before their maturity are rare, and every generation has produced at least one Mnemosyne.

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### *Initiation Benefits*

- Children of the Covens are taught the basics on evil spirits from their infancy, and new in-laws are drilled on the subject. They gain a free Occult specialty in Tainted areas and their spirits.

- The Covens have a traditional system of apprenticeship; each family member is tutored by a more experienced elder, who is also supposed to be their advocate within the cult. They gain one free dot in Mentor [CofD 51] to represent this tutor.

- The Covens expect a good general grounding on the supernatural from their adult members. Those who pass their apprenticeships have learned enough to gain a free dot in the Occult Skill.

- Senior members of the Covens can reliably use the central rite of the cult to summon spirits in Tainted places. They gain the [Encacogen](#) Caligo at two dots, free of charge.

- The Covens' elders cultivate the twisted spirits of Taint, trading favors with them regularly. Each elder has three dots of Allies (Tainted spirits) [CofD 50] that they can call on like mundane Allies. They may exchange their free Mentor dot from the second level of initiation for a fourth dot in this Merit; most elders do so, as their tutors are now peers, or dead.

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## *The Dethroned*

*They had been watching the warehouse for hours when the Darkspawn came. It wasn't an attack, no, they were running. The Darkspawn ran straight into the firing lines in a blind panic.*

*In moments monsters were reduced to smouldering corpses in a rain of noble magic. Then the Princesses saw what the Darkspawn were running from.*

*It was enormous, taller than the warehouse and tearing the building apart like tissue paper as it strode forward. Its body was human, with its flesh peeled away exposing muscles intertwined with unearthly clockwork. Its movements stuttered in an unnatural mimicry of human grace. It gave out a scream of screeching metal, the sound staggered the Princesses. In its cry they felt its despair, impotence, and something else.*

*"My God. That thing's a Princess!"*

The Dethroned are born from suffering, and from their birth they'll create little else. It's not as if she plans it, for all intents the Dethroned are incapable of planning anything. No, things just happen around her. A fallen Noble is like a poisoned wound, spreading toxins through the Dark World. Her very presence twists the Darkness around her until it reflects the events and pain that led to her fall.

## *The Nature of the Fallen*

When a Princess calls upon the final transformation, the Darkness corrupts each of her innate traits into a mockery of itself. Her Inner Light trait inverts, becoming an Inner Night trait, which acts as Supernatural Tolerance and limits her abilities - though to the transformed maximums on the [Inner Light table](#).

The Charms the ex-Princess once knew are lost to her. Instead, her Inner Night draws her deeper, body and soul, into the substance of the Dark World, which both gives her power over that world and its inhabitants, and imprisons her within it. Each dot of Inner Night grants a Dethroned a Chain, a power to command either her land or her subjects. The Dethroned also develop black magics called Hexes that project their corrupted power into other forms.

Where she once had Wisps, the Dethroned now has Clouds, fragments of misery and despair that fuel her Chains and Hexes. Inner Night determines both the maximum Clouds she can keep, and the number she can spend in a turn; the limits are identical to those Inner Light sets for Wisps. The Dethroned have two standard ways of regaining spent Clouds, and several Hexes grant additional ways to regain them.

- Merely by existing, a Dethroned constantly remembers the pain and grief that led her to abandon the Light. She regains 1 Cloud each night at midnight.
- Witnessing (or causing) the suffering of others confirms a Dethroned in her choice to cleave to the Darkness. Her Inner Night gives her a [Sensitivity](#) dice pool, identical to that given by Inner Light. Each time the Dethroned is present at a tainting, she rolls this pool, with all modifiers that apply to the tainting; for each success, the Dethroned regains 1 Cloud.

It must be noted that although the Dethroned have become creatures of the Darkness, they do *not* have the Darkened Condition or any of the powers being [Darkened](#) can confer. In particular, they fell into the Dark World at the moment they became Dethroned, and lacking the power to Enter Darkness, they cannot leave that world.

## *Chains of the Fallen*

All Dethroned are bound to the Dark World until they die, and all are given authority over it; but the amount of that authority varies with their supernatural strength. As Inner Night rises, new Chains manifest.

### *Fortress of Regrets (Inner Night ●)*

Even in their fallen state, every Dethroned retains their natural authority, and extends it over the part of the Dark World they now must reside in. The first Chain, the Fortress of Regrets, is that part of the Dark World which a Dethroned claims for her own. It is warped by the memories of her sins, failures and losses of faith, so anyone inside the Fortress is walking through an endlessly repeated allegory of her fall.

The Fortress has all the traits of a [Tainted Place](#), but it isn't reflected in the world above - it's sustained by the Dethroned herself, and only her death will banish it. Its Size is equal to the smaller of the Dethroned's

Resolve and Composure, and its Severity equals the Dethroned's Inner Night. The curses within the Fortress reflect the circumstances of the Dethroned's fall, and encourage others to follow her example.

A Dethroned can move her Fortress just by walking through the Dark World while concentrating; when she approaches its boundary the Fortress shifts ahead of her. No other power can move the Fortress or alter its curses. If the Dethroned moves her Fortress into a Tainted area's image, its curses stack with the area's own Taint, but its Size and Severity don't.

### *Companions in Misery (Inner Night ●●)*

The second Chain expands the authority of a Dethroned from her Fortress to the creatures of Darkness that shelter within it. Any Dark being who enters the Dethroned's Fortress or meets her in person changes their goals and loyalties, becoming a willing supporter of her despair and hatred; her whim is their law. At the moment a creature of Darkness meets the Dethroned, or after the creature has spent a scene in the Dethroned's Fortress, the Dethroned's influence twists the creature's will. It's this power which makes intelligent Dark beings very wary of the Dethroned - they imagine themselves to be masters, and don't wish to lose their autonomy.

**Action:** Reflexive and resisted, Dethroned's Presence + Inner Night - target's Resolve

**Dramatic Failure:** The creature proves indomitable; it immediately gains the Steadfast Condition.

**Failure:** The creature keeps its selfhood for now.

**Success:** The creature accepts a role in the tale of the Dethroned's fall; it takes the [Dethroned Follower](#) Condition.

**Exceptional Success:** The creature barely recalls its life before meeting the Dethroned. The Dethroned Follower Condition lasts for one week per dot of Inner Night after it leaves the Dethroned's Fortress.

### *Gates to Lamentation (Inner Night ●●●)*

With the third Chain, the Dethroned perceives the light of hope that shines (compared to the rest of the Dark World) in the images of Tainted areas. In her fallen state, however, even that dim light's a painful reminder of what the Dethroned lost. She lashes at it, drives it from the land it illuminated, and claims that land for her own.

While within the image of a Tainted area, the Dethroned may tear off a small part of her soul, and plant it into the Tainted area to claim it as a Gate to her Fortress. It costs her 1 Cloud to claim a Gate, which she can't recover until she relinquishes her claim by taking back the part of her soul she planted in it. (That is, her pool of Clouds shrinks by 1 for each Gate she claims.) While her claim remains, the Dethroned's Fortress combines its curses with the Gate's - every curse on the Fortress applies within all its Gates, and every Curse on one Gate applies in the Fortress and every other Gate.

The Dethroned's soul fragment changes the appearance of a Gate, layering the symbols of the Fortress proper over the existing geography. It also creates gateways, roads or passages which don't exist in the world above, leading to the Fortress and to its other Gates. No matter what the real distance between the areas these gates link, any character who finds one may pass through it, reaching the other side in a single turn - a considerable convenience for those in the Dethroned's service. However, the fragment of a former Noble's soul also opens a path from the world above for the Light-touched: anyone with Sensitivity can try Entering Darkness into or out of a Gate.

### *Spawn Darkchild (Inner Night ●●●●)*

Every Dethroned constantly molds the stuff of the Dark World to reflect her memories; the fourth Chain, though, lets a Dethroned impart a semblance of life and motion to the Darkness, and creates servant for herself, Darkspawn who never were alive. Many a Princess has realized the first sign that a Dethroned is in the area is often the similar Darkspawn who start entering the world.

The Dethroned can create a Darkspawn as an instant action, spending one Willpower point. The newly made monster takes a turn to get its bearings, before it begins to act independently; it automatically has the Dethroned Follower Condition. It will not be intelligent. The Darkspawn created this way will reflect the De-

throned's fall in some fashion, and most Dethroned will make two to four distinct "species" of Darkspawn, each reflecting a specific role in her perpetual tragedy.

### *Welcome to My Personal Hell (Inner Night ●●●●●)*

With the fifth Chain the Dethroned can use their corrupted power to invade the world above, though fortunately even they can't hold territory for long. When the Dethroned is in one of her Gates, she may spend 4 Clouds to collapse the entire Tainted area above into its Dark World image. Anyone moving out of the Tainted area ends up in the Dark World near its image. People outside the Tainted area in the world above can still enter it, but cannot retrace their steps. The worlds separate again at the end of the scene; if they haven't left, the Dethroned remains in the Dark World, creatures of Darkness can choose which world they end up in, while all other characters return to the world above.

### *Recalled Torment (Inner Night ●●●●● ●)*

Any of the Dethroned will interpret current events as a recapitulation of her personal tragedy. With the sixth Chain, though, she can make her companions share her interpretation, even when it bears no resemblance to the truth. The Dethroned may spend 1 Cloud as an instant action to create a belief in everyone who currently has the Dethroned Follower Condition from her. The belief must be about a matter of fact, so it can't convey an order to her followers; and it must harmonize with the Dethroned's past before she fell. (For example, a Dethroned could create the belief "the intruders have come to burn me as a witch" if she had faced witch hunters in life.) The belief is unshakeable for at least one scene; after that, each character affected will believe it until shown convincing evidence of its falsehood.

**Drawback:** The Dethroned makes her followers believe as she wishes only because she has persuaded herself. The belief she creates is fixed as firmly in her mind as in those of her companions.

### *Call of the Pit (Inner Night ●●●●● ●●)*

A potent Dethroned cannot be separated from her domain against her will, and no part of it can escape her presence. The Dethroned may call on the seventh Chain to merge her body into the substance of the Dark World, swim as a distortion in the earth to any location within her Fortress, and emerge again, rebuilding her body from its foundations. Merging with the earth is an instant unrolled action that costs 1 Cloud within the Fortress and 2 Clouds elsewhere; returning to flesh takes another instant action and another Cloud. While merged the Dethroned may not take any action except emerging. However, no attack or power can reach her except through a sympathetic connection.

### *Mistress' Care (Inner Night ●●●●● ●●●)*

The boundary separating a Dethroned from the beings under her rule becomes porous with the eighth Chain. When a being that gained the Dethroned Follower Condition from her takes damage or falls into distress, the Dethroned reflexively makes a Perception roll. On a success, the Dethroned becomes aware of her follower's situation, understanding it as well as the follower does itself.

The Dethroned's power to create beliefs also expands; she may use Recalled Torment to inform her followers of a task she wants done. Everyone with the Dethroned Follower Condition who can understand the Dethroned's desire must try to complete the task as if it were part of their assigned role, until someone has actually done so.

### *Despondent Labyrinth (Inner Night ●●●●● ●●●●)*

Under the ninth Chain, the Dark World's decayed substance tamely reshapes itself in obedience to the Dethroned's will. The Dethroned may spend 2 Clouds as an instant action to transform the terrain and buildings of her Fortress, or of a Gate, into almost any shape she desires, and move characters and objects within it to arbitrary places in the reshaped area. There are a few limits on this power: the Dethroned can't reshape an area more than once per day, she can't create impossible terrain or unsound buildings, and she can't make any part of the area impossible to get into or escape from. Characters in the area when it's reshaped must succeed on an

extended Wits + Survival roll with a threshold equal to the area's Size to understand the changes and navigate the area properly.

Reshaping a Fortress is permanent. A Gate stays reshaped while the Dethroned claims it; when her claim lapses, the area reverts to an image of the world above it in weeks equal to its Size. If the Dethroned uses Welcome to My Personal Hell on an area, then reshapes it, both worlds are reshaped identically.

### *All Hope Abandon (Inner Night ●●●●●●●●●●)*

The final Chain turns the grief of a Dethroned into a blight that can infect almost anyone. Companions in Misery is able to inflict the Dethroned Follower Condition on any mundane character who is not under the Light's protection (a Beacon or Sworn is safe, as are supernatural beings), if they are in its area of effect for long enough. Further, for this purpose only the Dethroned's Fortress extends into the world above her Gates. The few Dethroned with this ability invariably spawn whole cults of Dark worshippers whenever they surface, which thankfully is not often.

### *Hexes of the Fallen*

No two Dethroned develop their tainted powers in exactly the same way, apart from their Chains. Each Hex is a separate power, and a Dethroned can have any Hex.

#### *Bind Familiar*

The Dethroned can claim another Dark being as an extension of herself, to act as her agent beyond the Dark World. Doing so costs her 3 Clouds, and she must succeed on a roll of Presence + Inner Night - the target's Resolve. Once claimed as a familiar, a Dark being gains a pool of Clouds (which is initially empty) and access to some of its mistress' Hexes; when using a Hex it has an effective Inner Night of 1. (Hexes that are available to familiars will say so in their descriptions.) However, it has the [Dethroned Follower](#) Condition *permanently* - the Condition cannot resolve or end. Familiars are usually sent out of the Dark World to spy and gather Clouds for their mistress.

Whenever a familiar is with its mistress, the Dethroned can consume part or all of its flesh to restore her power. Consuming a familiar is a normal Bite attack [CofD 89] except that it does lethal damage to the familiar. Each point of damage inflicted transfers one Cloud from the familiar to the Dethroned, and if the familiar dies from the attack the Dethroned gains all the Clouds left in its pool.

#### *Blast*

The Dethroned can wound enemies at a distance with a dark magical blast. The blast is a Firearms-based attack with a range of 10x Inner Night yards that never takes range penalties; its Damage is 0, and its Initiative modifier is also 0. (Like normal weapons, the blast does lethal damage when it hits.) The blast costs the Dethroned nothing but its action for the turn. The Dethroned can spend Clouds either to increase the blast's Damage (adding +1 for each two Clouds spent) or to give the blast autofire - 1 Cloud for a short burst, 2 for a medium burst, and 3 for a long burst or covering fire.

#### *Covetous Form*

With a hair of coiling serpents or a body of grasping vines the Dethroned can reach out in every direction at once. She may apply the autofire rules to any attack using Brawl.

#### *Cry of Anguish*

A Dethroned exists in eternal torment and some have learned to use their suffering as a weapon. The Dethroned spends a point of Willpower and rolls Inner Night + Presence + Intimidation vs. Composure + the target's Inner Light - her Shadows; if she wins the contest, the target's Sensitivity triggers, adding dice to the pool equal to the margin of success. Cry of Anguish only works on characters who draw power from the Light (Beacons, Sworn and Hopeful); anyone else reacts only to the sound of someone in pain.

## *Infectious Madness*

The fallen Noble sings out a song of madness and despair. She spends up to 5 Clouds, and rolls Presence + Expression - the highest Composure possessed by a non-creature of the Darkness in the area. On a success, whenever a character reaches a breaking point during the scene, they roll at a penalty of at least the number of Clouds the Dethroned spent.

## *Kiss of a Princess*

The Dethroned can bind a Cloud into a mundane character. She rolls Inner Night + Presence + Intimidation; the target contests with Composure + Integrity. If the Dethroned wins the contest the target immediately gains a level of the [Tainted](#) Condition. In addition the Dethroned may regain Clouds through her victim; whenever a tainting takes place in the target's presence the Sensitivity of the Dethroned activates. If the Dethroned is a [Misery Glutton](#) she may also benefit from the victim's misery as per the rules for that Hex.

The Dethroned may end the Tainted Condition at any time, and reclaims the Cloud she bound into the target if she does so. Otherwise the Condition resolves or ends in the usual way. The Dethroned cannot regain the spent Cloud by any means for as long as the Tainted Condition remains. If a Dethroned knows Kiss of a Princess her [familiar](#)s will as well.

## *Mark of Torment*

The Dethroned can hex someone to become a magnet for suffering much like they have become. The Dethroned spends two Clouds and rolls Manipulation + Expression vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance. If the Dethroned wins the target gains the [Tainted Allure of Vice](#) Umbra, with a Vice of the Storyteller's choice. Using Mark of Torment does not turn the target into a Darkened, the Dethroned is able to inflict an unwanted Umbra on a mere mortal. The Mark of Torment remains until the Hex is removed with counter magic. Charms that remove Umbrae or Charms that undo lasting magical effects will eradicate the Hex.

If the Dethroned knows Mark of Torment, its [familiar](#)s will as well.

## *Misery Glutton*

The Dethroned are everything a Princess should not be, and they draw mindless strength from that. Whenever a character reaches a breaking point in their presence, the Dethroned regains 1 Cloud if the character fails the roll. Whenever a character spends their last Willpower point, the Dethroned regains a point of Willpower. Should a character, through their own free will or otherwise, commit suicide in her presence, the Dethroned regains all spent Clouds *and* all spent Willpower.

If a Dethroned is a Misery Glutton her [familiar](#)s will be as well.

## *Misery Voyeur*

Misery loves company, and the Dethroned finds her existence easier to bear when others suffer as she does. Whenever anyone with power from the Light is within the Dethroned's line of sight and makes a Sensitivity check, the Dethroned gains one Cloud for each success they roll.

## *Monstrous Size*

The Dethroned has swelled into immensity. Her Size is 10 (increasing Health), and her other traits are modified as under [Size Changes](#). Dethroned may take this Hex more than once; each instance after the first adds +4 to her Size, and modifies other traits accordingly.

## *One Thousand Weeping Eyes*

The fallen Noble is keenly, painfully aware of events that mirror her own fall. If anyone commits a similar action within (Inner Night) miles of the Dethroned's location (in either Earth or the Dark World) she is instantly



aware of it. This Hex does not imply she reacts in any particular way, though more than a few Dethroned mindlessly lash out when their unnatural senses are triggered.

## *Regeneration*

Oozing void seeps from every wound, scabbing over as a protective layer against the blows of the light. The fallen Noble regains either one point of lethal, or two points of bashing damage per turn as a reflexive action. Bashing damage heals first, lethal only being removed when there is no bashing damage in her Health track.

## *Swarming Horror*

Even the integrity of the body is not sacrosanct to the Darkness. The Dethroned no longer has a single body, instead existing as a swarm of radius (Inner Night + current number of unfilled health boxes). She follows all the normal rules for swarms.

## *Toxinous Kiss*

The Dethroned perpetually surrounds herself in a haze of polluted emotions and her own sins. Everything within Inner Night yards of her is exposed to a Toxicity 3 poison, resisted with Stamina + Resolve + Inner Light. Should she kiss someone, which requires her to be in control of a grapple, the spiritual poison is far more acute, and its Toxicity rises to 7.

## *Unceasing*

The fallen Princess is perpetually alert and awake, unable to sleep or dream. She never takes penalties for tiredness, and as a roleplaying note, will always be aware and twitchy, never letting her attention slip. Any powers which would cause her to lose focus or cease to pay attention automatically fail.

## *Unnatural Senses*

What is mundane darkness to a creature like this? All penalties to actions based on poor visual conditions are reduced by three, to a maximum of 0.

## *Redemption*

So long as someone cares for you then redemption is always possible, but sometimes, it's really hard. A Dethroned is too far gone to redeem herself, it will need someone to carry it for that first step on the way.

After a Dethroned is defeated – its health must be filled with lethal damage or worse – but before it is swept away on the formless currents of the Darkness (about ten minutes) any Princess can try to reach out to it through Sensitivity. This is an extended action with a dice pool of Belief; each roll takes one minute of concentration, and the Princess accrues one Shadow per roll. If the Princess reaches the threshold of the Dethroned's Inner Night, the Dethroned feels that somebody understands its suffering. The soul of the fallen Noble departs from its tainted body and takes up residence deep in the Princess' soul.

From this point on the Princess simply has to remove the Shadows she gained while catching the Dethroned's soul. She may not use Charms that remove Shadows, such as [Choke It Down](#), while she is carrying a Dethroned within her soul. Overcoming the Shadows upon her soul is easier said than done when she's probably collapsing under the emotional weight of the Dethroned's unceasing grief (not to mention rolling chance dice for transformation and Wisp recovery), but if somehow she does ever remove all her Shadows then when she next falls asleep she will see for the first time the face of the one she's sacrificed so much for. Together they will climb through the Crawlspace, travel through the Dreamlands, at the edge of the Light itself they will say their tearful goodbyes before the redeemed departs.

As for what happens next? Who can say. Perhaps the redeemed soul will have a chance to make up for what she has done in her next life, perhaps she hangs up the crown that grew too heavy and moves on to some manner of afterlife? As for the rescuer, unless she wants to leave her life behind to enter the Light she'll have to get



back to her royal duties the next day. But redeeming a Dethroned does grant two dots of Belief, as well as fully refreshing her Wisps and Willpower.

## *Sample Dethroned*

### *The Witch in the Woods*

Her memories come in snatches. She remembers being cast away from her village for her magic. She remembers trying to raise two children alone in the forest, sometimes she can even remember their faces. She remembers relying on her magic to feed her family, she remembers hating her magic for making her an outcast, and she remembers her magic failing her because she hated it. Sometimes she can almost remember enough to ask why she ate her own children, but most of the time she can't even remember why you wouldn't.

The Witch in the Woods dwells deep within the Dark World, she lives in a log cabin deep within a (small) forest that looks like a washed out watercolor. She puts up a good pretense of being able to think, but it's all a script, eternal and unchanging. She lures Darkspawn to her, and sometimes living children, she attempts to take care of them as a mother should but it never lasts. In the end she always eats them alive to keep them safe deep within her own Tainted body.

In battle the Witch is a deceptively dangerous foe. Though she appears as a frail old woman the Witch can take an enormous amount of damage. If she is significantly injured she is likely to call Darkspawn to her aid, disgorging the strange malformed children that she has eaten. More serious wounds can cause her to disgorge into a swarm, as severed body parts return to life to defend themselves and to stitch themselves back into a whole. If the fight is going her way the Witch is likely to see her attackers as her own misbehaving children, and offer to forgive them if they apologize (and she will, until one day she eats them for their own good) but if the fight turns against her she will recast her attackers and begin begging them to spare her because she has a family.

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**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 2

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Stealth 1, Weaponry 4 (Knife)

**Derived Traits:** Health 11, Willpower 6, Size 5, Defense 3, Initiative 6, Speed 15

**Vice:** Violent (She will do anything to protect her children)

**Virtue:** Hopeful (Her children may not have much, but she tries to keep their spirits up)

**Inner Night:** 5

**Hexes:** [Cry of Anguish](#), [One Thousand Weeping Eyes](#), [Regeneration](#), [Swarming Horror](#), [Unceasing](#)

**Fortress Curses:** Strength -1, Stamina -1, resisting disease -2, Health, Vice (Gluttonous)

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# The Queen of Tears

**AKA:** The Ever-Flowing One, Lady of Alhambra, The Last Empress

**Kingdom:** Alhambra

**Followers' Epithets:** Handmaidens, Esquires, Ravens (derogatory)

*Have you ever really looked at the world? Not casually, I mean, really looked at it? It's broken. It's flawed. People fight each other in stupid, pointless wars. Everyone just want to hurt each other, and there's no rhyme or reason to it. But you know it too, don't you? Everything was better in the Kingdom.*

*And I follow its Queen.*

*Alhambra is out there. I've seen it. The Kingdom is not dead, it has survived, under the guidance of the Ever-Flowing One. She's not a ghost in a Darkness-made dream-world, not a monster who'd burn the world. She cries for what the world has become. She's kept the Kingdom safe for thousands of years, and she asks our service to help her, so that the last parts of what which was once glorious don't fade. I give mine willingly. Sometimes it hurts, what she asks us to do. I know it makes a few people suffer, but it's only a lesser sacrifice, for the greater good. Because we need to save the Kingdom, need to keep it safe and hidden and safe... and then, maybe one day, we can get all of world back under the guidance of the Queen, and we won't have to have wars any more and... and no-one will hurt anyone.*

*I really hope so.*

The Queen of Tears is unique - she is the only known, still-human survivor of the Kingdom who remains to the modern day. For uncounted aeons she has dwelt in [Alhambra](#), the last remnants of the capital of the Kingdom, and ruled it from where it hides, within the heart of the Darkness. Her domain holds off the Darkness with Light stolen from the world, bringing misery and sorrow to the so-called "Rebellious Provinces", and though she weeps for what she does, she will never stop, because she will do anything to protect her city, and so she teaches her followers, native Alhambrans, and Princesses from the outer world lured into her service, alike to do the same.

## Tales of Alhambra

In the center of Alhambra's noble quarter the Queen of Tears holds her court upon the roofs and battlements of her palace. As she speaks her eyes are constantly inspecting the defenses of her city for weakness. Once the Lady of Alhambra was considered the world's great beauties but no longer. Her bronzed skin has faded and become pale under the dim Alhambran light. Her dark brown eyes, once hailed in song and poetry, have become dull and liquid with never ending tears that mingle with the rains. She has discarded all the adornments and embellishments of royalty for dark purples and blues of mourning worn above her armor, for Alhambra is a city under siege. One hand always grips Ever Dutiful, her simple naginata that has defended Alhambra from countless threats. The Lady of Alhambra is quiet and softly spoken, when she speaks the whole court falls silent and strains their ears.

The only people the Queen will pause her endless vigil for is her fellow Nobles, she receives them in private and in the presence of those she calls her almost-equals she promptly allows herself to fall to pieces. The endlessly crying Queen turns hysterical as she unburdens centuries of unceasing sorrow upon the Princess and begs her for help. Even the most composed Grace, knowing what to expect is swept away by the flood of emotion. Dedicated Radiant Princesses have been known to become a Handmaidens from this display, either out of guilt or because they saw a possibility of redemption when they looked behind her composed mask.

## Philosophy

The archives of Alhambra are filled with texts and teachings from the products of uncounted numbers of scribes, analyzing every word of the Queen (and she seldom speaks, now), and building a philosophy, a faith around it. You could spend ten lifetimes, and only scratch the depths of paper, the bottom layers eaten by Dark-Things where no light could reach. But at heart, the principles of Alhambra are remarkably simple.

**Alhambra Must Survive:** Alhambra is the Kingdom. The Kingdom is Good. The Kingdom is the Light. The Kingdom must be Protected. Alhambra must remain unchanged and true to the Kingdom. Anything done in the name of Alhambra is done in the name of the Light. If Alhambra falls, the Darkness wins. This is fundamental and unchallengeable dogma.

**There Is No Price Too High:** This is the vital corollary to the first principle. This is what leads to the draining of Light, and the horrors that result. Every action which which furthers the cause of Alhambra is not only good, but *mandatory*. This is the hardest part of the Alhambran cause for many Earth-born Enlightened; the idea that they serve the last remnants of the Kingdom is both romantic and admirable, but they blanch at the idea that they must hurt Earth to allow a rain-drenched city in the heart of the Darkness to survive. But this goes beyond the actions of Alhambra, and into the mind of the Queen of Tears. She, and those who internalize her, will do whatever it takes to protect their Nation, no matter what it involves, and she would do it if she led a small charity in Tokyo just as much as she does as the Lady of Alhambra.

A few Princesses of Tears have asked why the Queen does not simply leave the bubble-realm, and stake out a claim of the real world. If they were very lucky, no one heard them ask it.

**Subdue the Rebellious Provinces:** Protecting Alhambra is protecting a way of life, the last bastion of the Kingdom's civilisation. Alhambra keeps its legacy safe for all of humanity. Thus Alhambra's final philosophy: to share the Kingdom's glory with the darkened world. For the majority of the history of Alhambra, this has been little more than a principle, much akin to the White Queen's promise of jam tomorrow. "We will reconquer the Rebellious Provinces, the rest of the outside world, and impose the peace of the Queen upon them, restoring the Kingdom," promise the Alhambrans, "... only not right now."

Attempts have been made, of course; there are tales of strange castles ruled by pale figures from Beyond the Fields We Know in medieval England, and of white-skinned lords in Central America before Cortez, but they all failed, partly because the lack of Alhambran comprehension of the sheer scale of the outside world, partly because of the self-destructive draining of the Light from their lands, and partly because there is always the clay and green-fire of Storms waiting for them. Officially, although it is of course desirable, it is also a waste of resources which could be used for the city.

But as it stands, in the modern day, this sentiment is undergoing a revival. The Queen of Tears has an unprecedented number of Handmaidens and Esquires, and there is a strange coalition forming, between young, idealistic Enlightened from the outside world who want to restore the Kingdom, and the cynical, ambitious high-ranking field operatives of Alhambra who, although still loyal, have grown used to the wonders of the outside world, and *want* them.

## *Duties*

As the Princess of the only remnant of the Kingdom still alive the duties placed upon the court of Tears are further removed from the ground than the subjects of any other Queen. It is common for even young and inexperienced Princesses to lead a small number of Sworn retainers. Alhambra still holds to old social ideas and any Princess who swears loyalty to Alhambra is guaranteed status and luxuries, but the city lives under a constant threat of destruction and even the most important citizens must do their part for survival. A Princess' status means that she can normally push her way onto choice assignments in whatever area of her Calling she desires.

Champions of Tears fight in Alhambra's cautious, even conservative manner; they specialize in using their magic to control the battlefield and curse their foes.

Graces of Tears are bureaucrats, their job is to keep the city functioning despite all the hardships they face. Out in the Rebellious Provinces Graces tend to be given the largest commands, up to and including running entire Enclaves where they direct Sworn and even other Princesses to tax hope for Alhambra.

Alhambra runs on magic, and it is the Menders of Tears who keep that magic running. In Alhambra they serve as a one Calling worker caste, they are not denied prestige so much as frequently overlooked. So long as nothing is going wrong, it is easy to take the Menders for granted.

Tears' Seekers would perhaps be more accurately called spies. They serve Alhambra as infiltrators, blending into the Rebellious Provinces to find undefended targets ripe for taxation. In established enclaves the Seekers keep an eye on Alhambra's enemies, making sure the forces of Tears can vanish back into their city before retaliation strikes.

The Court of Tears is somewhat of a loss for what to do with Troubadours. There is only so much art you can create on the subject of Alhambra's glorious past before creativity and artistic integrity demands you experiment. Unwilling to endorse new thoughts and ideas Alhambra actually uses its Troubadours as Champions, it turns out that Troubadours magic is actually very good at battlefield control. Unsurprisingly the Troubadours themselves are not happy about this.

## *Background*

There are two broad categories of followers of Tears. The first of these are the young, inexperienced ones. They are found by Alhambran operatives shortly after Blossoming, or are drawn to the Queen of Tears in their dreams, perhaps renewing old oaths, and so are inducted to Hopeful society via Alhambra. Their point of view is rather different from the majority of Princesses, because they have internalized the philosophy of Tears; they are usually true believers, serving the Kingdom, who found them and trained them. Likewise, instead of a largely-self-taught mess of other Radiant Princesses, they *know* they are the Handmaidens and Esquires of Tears, and so are far more well informed about the technical matters of the Hopeful than Princesses years their senior. Some followers of Diamonds are mildly concerned by how much terminology of the Radiant comes from defectors from this time, and worry that the influence of Tears might be seeping into the paradigm.

The other kind are usually older, and broken by their duties among the Radiants. Tears offers support, help, mortal Sworn to aid you, and can, above all, guarantee safety and support. Many underestimate the influence that a simple "You are doing the right thing" can do to someone whose will is flagging; Tears does not. Likewise, the families of Princesses too frequently become targets in the War of Hope, and Alhambra offers *sanctuary*, somewhere safe and away from enemies, taking in guests of the Princesses who serve them. That these guests can become hostages is something that it would be tactless to say.

In addition, there have been a few Blossomings in Alhambra itself since the Release. This is viewed as a great blessing itself, and would tend to be more of one, if they did not have a regrettable tendency to be of the "guests", those relatives and loved ones of other Tears Princesses given a refuge from the Provinces, or worse, rebels and non-conformists, rather than loyal Alhambran citizens.

## *Character Creation*

The Queen of Tears does not discriminate based on grounds of physical fitness or social abilities. She is the Last Empress, after all, and all the Hopeful should serve her. With that said, there are remedial training facilities in Alhambra for any Noble who cannot carry out their tasks, and, notably, for teaching them the Alhambran language, so they can actually interact with the natives. For the duties that they must carry out, though, the Queen desires most high Resolve and Composure. It is a shame that so many of those experienced Princesses, who have served another Queen but who are now called to her are often lacking in those Attributes. It is one of the reasons that she prefers young, newly Blossomed Princesses, who can be molded into the proper, Kingdom-trained Nobility that they should be.

**Heraldry:** The official colors of Alhambra are dark purples and blues (but never, ever black), and white. The Queen still mourns for the lost Kingdom, and so should her followers, after all. Bright colors are correspondingly condemned, because there is such a thing as *taste*. Veils are not uncommon, and garments are oft-times long and flowing, like how the water cascades from the roofs of the Plaza of Dignities.

One might expect the Alhambrans to have strict codes for the form of Regalia, but actually it has been long-held tradition that the Regalia is the innermost expression of the Hopeful's soul, and it would be wrong to interfere with that. Now, with that said, there are certain standards of propriety, but at most, a Princess who breaks them and parades around in hotpants, a tank top and an unbuttoned jacket will only suffer informal censure, as long as the color is correct for formal events. The Regalia of a follower of Tears, especially out in the Rebellious Provinces, is just as flexible as that of a Radiant Princess in its manifestations.

## *Practical Magic*

The Last Empress expects her agents to receive a proper deference, and for others to comply with their requirements. If a Raven chooses to force Doors [CofD 83] in a social maneuver with a Goal that serves her

Nation or Alhambra, she may spend Wisps to offset the penalty from the remaining Doors. Each Wisp spent adds a +2 bonus to the roll.

High Belief (a rarity in the Court of Tears) increases the Raven's authority: at Belief 8 the first Wisp spent adds +3, at Belief 9 the first and second Wisps add +3, and at Belief 10 the first Wisp adds +4 and the second adds +3.

## *Invocation: Lacrima*

The Invocation of Lacrima is the principle embodied and founded by the Queen of Tears, and which her Handmaidens and Esquires find come naturally to them. It is conceptually linked to several things, including ghosts, silence, the element of void, "necessary" actions, and all things connected to these, allowing Invoked Upgrades and Invoked Charms to be based around it. Princesses loyal to Tears are encouraged to attune to this Invocation as fast as they can, because most of their signature Charms require it, and use of Lacrima inures them to their actions. However, many non-Tears Princesses have been known to dabble in it, especially more mature ones, who have founded Nations, and have begun to feel the echoes of the devotion that the Last Empress feels towards her own. This will make them suspicious, especially to younger, more idealistic Princesses, but there is an acknowledgement that it happens sometimes, and so such dabblers should be watched, but are not automatically followers of Tears.

**Lacrima has the unique disadvantage that many of its Charms expose the user to the Darkness.** This is counted as part of their activation cost, and so may not be bypassed. The cold, hard necessities of Lacrima wear down at the soul, sharpen its response to spiritual pain, and smother it in uncaring void through which no joy can be felt. As a result, many Lacrima Charms are marginally more powerful than their equivalents from other Invocations, because of the greater cost paid to use them.

Lacrima applies at no cost when a Princess touches a ghost's anchor, or is within Alhambra or the Underworld; and when the target of her Charm is a ghost. It also applies without cost in times of true desperation, when failure means death or ruin, and when a Princess intends to act on behalf of the Queen of Tears or her subjects, or in the interests of her own Nation and its members.

The Invocation does not resonate with those who will not do everything for those they protect, who show any moral compunctions in the deeds needed for survival. If a Princess' situation is such that her present goal can be reached at the least cost to herself and her Nation by a compromise of her Belief, and she chooses another course of action, she cannot use Lacrima for the rest of the scene, and for a further number of scenes equal to the penalty on her breaking point roll for that compromise.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Clubs:** Delusional. The strength of the Kingdom always lay in its cities, not the wilds, and she will only weaken us against the Darkness.
- **Diamonds:** It is a shame to see such brilliance going to waste, frittered away.
- **Hearts:** So close. So very close... and yet so far.
- **Spades:** Insubordinate curs! Born traitors who serve someone who shows no regard for the burdens of leadership!
- **Swords:** With their loyalty, Alhambra could be rendered safe, and the Rebellious Provinces pacified - but they will not be loyal.
- **Storms:** Monsters. They may once have been the loyal army of the Kingdom, but now they're nothing less than crazed beasts who try to thwart our every effort!
- **Mirrors:** Hubris-filled egotists. To think that anyone but our Lady could be a True Queen... it makes me sick!
- **Vampires:** We are *nothing* alike.
- **Werewolves:** Beasts. Keep away, and do not carry out operations in the savage areas they claim. It's easier in the long run.

- **Mages:** Avoid. Do not let them know of you. Do not let them find you. There are tales of the Dragon.
  - **Prometheans:** Walking corpses, fuelled by some kind of fire? Clearly some kind of Darkened, if they actually exist.
  - **Changelings:** Why should we care, as long as all they do is hide?
  - **Sin-Eaters:** We know about ghosts in Alhambra. But these things aren't quite normal ghosts possessing people.
  - **Mummies:** Just another rebellious province time has turned to dust. Only Alhambra is eternal.
  - **Beasts:** Before Alhambra's rise they kept us alive at the cost of our humanity but now we have our Lady to teach us. She scoured them from the Earth and when Alhambra is restored she'll do it again.
  - **Mad Scientists:** They'd tear the world down just to see what would happen if they did. Despicable! Despicable yet very dangerous.
  - **Leviathans:** No! It can't be! They were said to be extinct! They can't be back! They can't... not again.
  - **Hunters:** Rebels from the Rebellious Provinces. Why am I not surprised?
  - **Mortals:** Why won't you see? It's a necessary sacrifice.
- 

## *Inspiration*

Homura Akemi ([Puella Magi Madoka Magica](#))  
 Taylor Hebert ([Worm](#))

*Ignorance of the law is no excuse - you are all subjects of Alhambra.*

# Alhambra

*Depression is the inability to construct a future.*

—Rollo May

There is a city there, and it will stay there until time stops.

There are houses, high-arched, broken stone washed clean by thin teary rainwater, and people in coarse clothing. The servants of the city wear their jobs constantly: the stern high priestess and her crystal scales serve the Parrot, and the hard-edged man wields a baton and straightens his military shoulders in the name of the Hyena. The poor are unadorned, because one lesson of Alhambra is that beauty must be earned.

Walk down the street and pass through half the people you meet, like smoke. The younger ones speak archaic dialects of the city's tongue, while the older ones mumble glossolalic half-words; though Alhambra strives to ensure that its language changes as little as possible over time, the weight of years without a beating heart takes its toll.

The streets are silent. Nobody will talk to you as you pass by, but to duck their heads and continue on. They glance up very seldom, except to check that the lamps are all lit; a lamp in Alhambra invites citizens to look up, just once, to make sure that the starved green holy light they produce is still bright. They never linger too long on one lamp, because to keep looking is to see the vacant sky and the faint impression of buildings, far away. The light only shines so far, and maybe this time, when you look up, something made from feather-shadow and the bones of birds will drop on you from above. It could happen, if you keep looking up. So you look down.

Welcome to Alhambra. Try not to think about the sun. It will only make you homesick.

## *The City*

Alhambra exists on the inner surface of a bubble, nearly six miles in diameter. Roughly half the surface is covered by a saltwater lake, out of which rise a number of islands, made of what appears to be black volcanic rock. One seldom sees that rock, however, because nearly every acre above the waterline has been built over, in an intricate maze of streets and courtyards winding between houses faced in brick, granite and marble, and lit by green-burning lamps set on iron poles. Above the buildings and the lake, in the bubble's center, clouds form and dissolve constantly, and let fall a rain of slightly salted, but still potable, water; water that tastes almost exactly like human tears. The rains move around Alhambra on a remarkably regular schedule, on a cycle of 24 hours and 10 minutes; the city keeps time by this cycle, not by the days and years of Earth.

The lamps in Alhambra are its only source of light, and they are kept burning constantly ... for darkness, within the bubble, is more than a mere absence of light; it is a destroyer, eating away anything left within it. Moreover, any place left unlit for long tends to spawn Darkspawn monsters, which resemble shadows of the things (or people) caught within the darkness. The monsters invariably seek out any and all lights they can, and destroy whatever lights they reach. Every Alhambran is taught from childhood to fear darkness as one fears death; every Alhambran learns, from a very early age, how to light the lamps that burn in every street and room in the city, and as part of his schooling serves a term in the lamplighter squads that patrol the city and keep the lamps burning.

The city streets appear, at first, to be thronged with people. A visitor soon notices, though, that most of the crowd are faded or washed out, and a few are barely present - they cast no shadow, and pass through other people like ghosts. As it turns out, that's because they *are* ghosts. Roughly four out of five of the figures one passes in the street on any given day are of the "venerable" or "departed", for nearly all Alhambrans whose bodies die remain as ghosts to oversee and advise their living descendants. Memorial prayers to one's departed ancestors are a point of honor and pride in Alhambra; to have the venerable of your household always substantial and active is a mark of piety.

Those aware of how ghosts behave on Earth will be surprised by Alhambra's departed. For one, while they usually *prefer* to remain near the places or people they knew in life, they aren't *bound* to them as Earthly ghosts are to anchors. They do not, in fact, have anchors at all; Alhambra's departed regain Essence only from being remembered by the living. Being remembered, fortunately, is much easier for the venerable, as they need not take time or effort to manifest - they are always Materialized, and even tangible as long as they have even 1

point of Essence. (There is no such thing as Twilight in Alhambra, and thus no way for a ghost not to manifest.) Finally, the departed never have the Manifestations that allow a ghost to take over a living person (e.g. Fetter and Possess) and there is good reason to believe that those Manifestations don't work inside the city.

## *The Language*

As far as can be determined, the day-to-day language spoken in the closed sphere which is Alhambra is a hybrid tongue, despite the claims of the inhabitants of that place. Linguistic drift is inevitable, even though imposed stasis, and there are an incredible number of concepts and ideas that exist in the modern day that are widely agreed to have not existed in the cultural purity of latter days of the Kingdom. It has picked up words from modern English, from Revolutionary French, from Han-Dynasty Chinese and from Ngurai-illam-wurrung, and a hundred other dialects which have existed throughout the millennia the last remnants of the Kingdom have stood in their rain-drenched realm. Moreover, it contains sounds, especially in the emotional words, which resemble the shapeless glossolalia of the Royal Tongue, which violate the normal structure and flow of the language.

The base of the language has some noted similarities with the language of the Kofun culture, including a logosyllabic writing system, and similar grammatical and noun-formation structures, yet it also has some differences such as a rare use of color to make minute clarifications that appears to be adapted from the Royal Tongue. Some think the similarities are just a coincidence, there are a lot of languages after all.

The later words, clearly alien to the root language and most likely absorbed from Alhambran agents returned home, are molded to fit into the standard structure, including the imposition of the dual grammatical genders, the animate and the inanimate, meaning that, even with the influx of modern words from the developments of the previous century, their structure fits into the rigid grammatical structure which the rest of the language is composed of. The linguistic divergence, too, is notable; many of the living inhabitants of the city would have problems understanding the elder shades which haunt the place, let alone the dictates from the Queen.

Like any language, modern Alhambran may be learned as a one dot Merit. However Old Alhambran is treated as a distinct language which must be learned separately.

## *The Orders*

Under the law of Her Ever-Flowing Majesty, the people of Alhambra are divided into nine great chivalric Orders, whose knights and officers direct the city's affairs. Each of these carries the name of a bird or beast of Earth - an ascription dating to the Kingdom's day, and therefore never altered, though not one Alhambran in a thousand knows anything about the animals for which the Orders were named. (There was a tenth Order, in the days just after the Fall, and children told to recite the Orders' names always list it last ... but no one belongs to it now, so no one but children thinks about it. Even the ghosts of its members ceased to appear many centuries ago.) Each also has a representative at the Queen's court, appointed by Her Majesty to carry Her word to the city as needed.

### *Order of the Parrot*

#### *Representative: Mistress (Master) of Ceremonies*

A tragedy ancient in Alhambra relates the tale of a boy and girl of the City, who loved without the knowledge of their ancestors. Because they lived on islands separated by a strait, and the boy was a strong swimmer, the girl took up a lamp and shone a beam across the water, making a clear path for her lover, when they wished to enjoy one another. One night, however, the girl's mother found the lamp and turned it away when the boy was in mid-strait; the boy was never seen again alive, and when the girl learned what had passed she plunged herself into the strait to join him. To this day the monsters that breach the water in that strait look almost human, and sometimes even beautiful. The lesson drawn from this tragic tale - in Alhambra, every tale has a lesson, or it isn't told - is stern: never grasp at love untimely. Court within the rules of courtship and the knowledge of your elders; follow the established ceremonial rites of the City in love as in all other things, for else the Darkness rises.



It is truly said that the only god or goddess worshipped in Alhambra, apart from the Ever-Flowing Herself, is Ceremony; the Order of the Parrot, first in precedence of the nine knightly Orders, bears more resemblance to monastic orders on Earth than to the warriors the title of “knight” suggests, and its head the Mistress of Ceremonies, who bears no weapon but an orb of crystal and a measuring rod, is a hierophant not a general. While the substance of most things done in the City is the province of the other Orders, the proper time, place and manner for all actions whatsoever is set down in the records of the Parrots, and the Order is ready at any time to counsel the perplexed citizen on the path of proper conduct. Moreover, as keeper of the calendar the Mistress of Ceremonies tells all Alhambra of the proper times and methods to celebrate the City’s past, so that the ongoing work to establish the City’s rule in the rebellious provinces is not allowed to obscure the goal of bringing the Kingdom back in truth.

Lest there be any in the City who neglect the proper way of things, the Order of the Parrot has the duty of teaching every child born in Alhambra between the ages of six and thirteen those things which every subject of the Kingdom must know: the city’s history and poetry, mathematics, rituals and etiquette, and the threat of the Darkness. It is they who set the rota of the lamplighter squads, sending their charges into otherwise deserted buildings with fuel cans and cleaning rags to keep them in order; and while a Spotted Hyena is normally in charge of a squad, in case of trouble, a Parrot is expected to accompany his students if he is capable.

### *Alhambra’s Calendar*

Alhambra uses a calendar that, by tradition, was invented in the later days of the Kingdom. It is basically lunisolar, with 12 months of alternating 30 and 29 days in a normal year; 123 years out of 334, a 13th month of 30 days is added, to keep the start of the year on the first new moon after the spring equinox. This calendar would be quite accurate, if Alhambra counted the months in Earth’s days; alas, the “day” of the calendar is the cycle of the rains, so the months and years drift out of sync with the real planetary movements by more than 2 days each year. This does not trouble the Order of the Parrot; the cycle of festivals in the Kingdom’s capital is far more important than the seasons in rebellious provinces.

### *Order of the Beaver*

#### *Representative: Serene Architect*

Even in a city as unusual as Alhambra, the necessities must be taken care of. The Serene Architect is responsible for Alhambra as a physical city. Her order manufactures the raw materials the city is built from in charmed furnaces, and fashions them into the streets and buildings that form Alhambra.

Architecture in Alhambra is defined by two constants; the near omnipresent rains and the need for constant light. Buildings are built with large sloping roofs and large open drains can be found on every street to carry the rains away. Indoors Alhambrans use large open plan spaces to maximize the spread of light, what furniture they use is often set into the walls or at floor level – mats instead of tables, cushions instead of chairs – to avoid casting shadows. Only important buildings can afford to light narrow corridors, and even then only when they are needed for defense.

### *Refineries and Furnaces*

Scattered through the islands and neighborhoods of Alhambra are the refineries. These are, from the outside, square towers of black basalt, five stories high - the only places in the city where the rock of the islands appears undisguised. It’s within these towers that the precious luminous oil collects, from which the refining masters distill the fuel for Alhambra’s lamps. All the curious devices in the Redoubts that drain light and virtue from our world are focused on the clouded crystals kept in the upper floors, which sweat honey-gold glowing nectar into porcelain vats. The refiners crack the oil with an alchemical process, developed shortly after the Cat-aclysm, that separates it into the rarefied spirits of lamp fuel and a gum-like taffy, which they mold into blocks. These blocks, like lamp fuel, will burn, but produce heat instead of light.

Furnaces of various sizes, from half a man’s height to a large room, dot the neighborhoods of Alhambra. These are all built to the same plan: a ring chamber filled with taffy blocks from the refineries, around a shaft

driven into the ground covered by a hatch, which lets into a room above that can be sealed off. The hatch can be opened and closed by a lever outside the upper room.

The purpose of these furnaces is a strange magic that creates the stone and metal from which the city is built. Samples of the stuff desired are placed within the upper chamber, which is sealed, leaving it in darkness; then the hatch above the shaft is opened. This lets the Darkness, lying thick under the hatch, spring out to attack whatever is in the upper chamber. But, when the first sound of the shadow-beasts attacking can be heard, the taffy blocks are ignited, bringing the upper chamber to a red or yellow heat. When enough time has passed to melt everything within, the hatch is closed, the upper chamber's seals are broken, and the substance left inside (now multiplied several times) cools off. The corpses of shadow-beasts that come from other darknesses are usually melted in this way as well.

Construction and maintenance of the furnaces and refineries is the Serene Architect's most important duty, and the Beavers also control the furnaces' use - logically enough, as they have the most need by far for the stone and metal made in them. Use of the refineries, however, is the province of the Order of the Vulture, thanks to the same Writ that gave the accountants the duty of harvesting hope from the Rebellious Provinces; the animus between the two Orders provoked by that Writ is perennial and shows no sign of fading.

## *Order of the Pelican*

### *Representative: Premier in Craft*

In every society there are jobs that can only be done by people with years of skill and experience. In Alhambra these jobs, the doctors, the master craftsmen, the bankers, they all belong to the Order of the Pelican. The Pelican is in many ways something of a historical anomaly, it is the miscellany of the Orders. In many ways the Pelican is more of a special interest group protecting its members interests from being drowned out by the more focused Orders. The Premier in Craft, officially chosen for being the best craftsman in Alhambra, is something of a career politician.

For all that it is an oddity, the unusual design of the Order is perhaps the only way it could function. There are some tasks that require a certain flexibility of mind, even in the rigid environment of Alhambra. The Pelican never formed the rigid hierarchies found in the other orders, partly because skill as a doctor does not qualify you to manage craftsmen, but mostly because the Pelicans felt that they didn't spend years studying medicine to go into management. Instead they form their own smaller hierarchies under the umbrella of their Order, hierarchies small enough to still have the flexibility craftsmen require.

## *Order of the Tortoise*

### *Representative: Vicegerent of Ages*

The Order of the Tortoise blend the role of librarian, archivist and castellan. Like their namesake, the Order makes its home in a fortress on the same square as an imperial palace. Behind its enormous Charmed walls they archive millennia of records from all walks of Alhambran life and they drill themselves hard to defend those documents. They are scholars and librarians who are mostly interested in their work. You could call them reserved, even shy, but if they must they'd lay down their very lives to protect their archive.

Of all the orders, few can claim the prestige that is given to the Order of the Tortoise. In Alhambra, history is everything. The present is bleak, the future is more of the same, but the past, the past is glorious. As the keepers and trustees of Alhambra's history the Order of the Tortoise is considered the closest thing to that glorious history, save for the Lady of Alhambra who was alive even in those glorious times.

It would therefore break an Alhambran's heart to know that if any order were to doubt the righteousness of their civilization it is the Tortoises; deep within the very heart of their fortress they keep their greatest treasure, documents and artifacts that predate the Fall: treatises on philosophy, codes of law and the diaries of people who would deplore Alhambra's sad and parasitic existence. Those few who have read these prized texts, like their namesakes, withdraw into their shells and hide their doubts deep in the heart of Alhambra.

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## The Fall

The Alhambrans boast in a thousand ways of the Kingdom's rise and glory, but none will speak of its fall; so it's very difficult to learn how Alhambra came to be. Throughout the city, in fact, only one memorial of that event is known to exist: a bronze plaque, mounted in the Observation Room at the top of the highest tower in the Queen's palace in Alhambra. The tale inscribed on that plaque runs:

*In the final days of the Kingdom, the minor courts turned from the Light to contend with one another, and to resist the efforts of Her Majesty the Ever-Flowing to impose order and peace upon them. None now can say who was the first to use monsters of the Darkness as weapons in these battles; but those who did were inevitably betrayed, as are all who think to master Darkness. Their lands became the monsters' bastions, their peoples (if they were fortunate) were killed or (if less blessed) changed into abominations and sent to conquer other courts in turn.*

*Some few Queens, realizing the world's peril at last, came at the invitation of Her Majesty the Ever-Flowing, with their subjects and armies to this, the eternal city Alhambra. Here they prepared to carry war into the lands taken by Darkness, under the command of the Seraphic General, the first of all Queens after Her Majesty the Ever-Flowing. From the gates of the eternal city the armies set forth, and within a day's march the swollen horde of abominations fell upon them and broke them.*

*Her Majesty the Ever-Flowing, with her loyal knight commanders, looked out from this place and saw the Seraphic General rise from the field of battle, transmuted into a living storm; they knew in that moment that all the world save Alhambra was lost forever. In this place Her Majesty the Ever-Flowing and her knight commanders performed the Grand Sacrifice of Inversion, enveloping the eternal city within a perpetual ward and shield, so that the last refuge of the Light would be preserved undimmed.*

*The wisdom of Her Majesty the Ever-Flowing shall illuminate the cosmos forever.*

—translated from Old Alhambran by Opal Star Cuyler, Knight Lieutenant of the Order of the Ghost Owl

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## Bequests

The Tortoise stores more than just documents, their treasuries serve as Alhambra's central repository for Bequests; this makes the Tortoises perhaps the best armed group in Alhambra, and the order is drilled daily in use of the various magical items they stockpile. All in case they are ever called to fight in defense of their archives.

The most valuable Bequests in Alhambra are those that date back to the Kingdom themselves, some of which still contain a spark of Invocations that have long ceased to exist. Most of these Bequests are far too valuable to actually use, for they contain unique and irreplaceable magics that cannot be duplicated in today's day and age. Three of these lost Invocations are detailed here.

- The principles of *Fulmine* were one of contrasts. They were sensual, yet serene. They were giving, yet also took. Fulmine gave the power to enhance the senses and experience from another perspective. The most powerful Fulmine Bequests can temporarily transform a Princess into other types of supernatural beings, and even transfer all a Princess' powers to a mortal for a short time.
- The Invocation of *Metallo* emphasized humility, hard work, a practical approach to magic, and sacrificing one's own goals and desires for the good of others. Metallo Bequests often specialize in domestic tasks, with powers that aid in farming, cooking, homemaking and other aspects of everyday life. It is the only lost Invocation that is regularly used within Alhambra; these powers are just too useful to forsake.
- *Vuoto* was an Invocation of forethought and judgement. Its Charms could guide you down the right path, and even predict the outcome of an action. Masters of Vuoto could see across time and space, and rarely made a decision in ignorance.

## *Order of the Spotted Hyena*

### *Representative: Marshal of the Virtues*

The Hyenas are one of the most prestigious Orders; their members are both Alhambra's army, and its police. It is the Hyenas whose strong sword arms guard every Enclave within the rebellious provinces, and who patrol every district of Alhambra in search of Darkspawn. The Marshal of the Virtues boasts that his men are the best of Alhambra, and this claim has some merit for in a city under siege the Queen of Tears has granted her Marshal a royal writ of conscription: the Hyenas have the first pick of each new generation as they leave the Parrots' school. The right of conscription causes the inevitable conflicts, other orders fear being starved of talent and even attempt to hide the abilities of promising individuals until they are past the age of recruitment. Like so much else in Alhambra there is no chance that this shall change, even if it is divisive the defense of Alhambra must come first.

Because of Alhambra's perpetual manpower shortages the soldiers of the Spotted Hyena are trained as light skirmishers; their drills cover both the *ars militaris* and *ars magica* and specialize Alhambra's military for urban conflicts both in Alhambra itself and in the cities of the rebellious provinces, where most taxes can be collected. The Hyenas favor working in small squads and using their magic to control the terrain or establish defensive positions, they also train hard on how to evacuate back to Alhambra with a minimum threat to resources or the all important Wisps Alhambra's operatives harvest.

## *Order of the Otter*

### *Representative: Steward of the Household*

*There once was a man, of noble birth but undistinguished occupation who nonetheless reveled in his work. He often encountered six people, his equals in birthright but revered for their different occupations. The six alike oft mocked the man from the height of their seats. Why would one choose such a menial job as gathering food? And so they offered to take him under their wing and work with one of them, but met with his refusal they shrugged and went on, for food was aplenty and the sun always shone.*

*And yet, one day, the Night fell. The six panicked, for they knew not where or how to find nourishment! So they turned to the little man for assistance, and so he answered their pleas: "You mocked me and called me a knave from the height of your seats, yet you come running my way when it now suits your fancy. My only request therefore is this: I want to stand among you, equal in birth and importance, and you shall never forget who has helped you during this time of duress."*

*The six were appalled, such boldness! But their strength would soon wane, and who knew what lurked in the night, and so they accepted him among their group.*

*Thus, the six became seven.*

This old Alhambran tale, of whom many different tellings exist, has a twofold purpose. Firstly, it is a cautionary tale, telling one of the basic morals of the city: in the Darkness, nothing is free. Only the mercy of Her Everflowing Majesty has no price, for she herself already paid it herself.

Secondly, it has been unofficially adopted as an allegorical retelling of the Order of the Otter's creation. The Order's history is an interesting one, for it can be said to be both the oldest and youngest of the city. Some of the oldest ghosts still inhabiting the City claim to have heard of stories of groups with similiar goals to the Otters being active before the Fall but, as any Tortoise will be quick to point out, no official recording of such activities taking place during the Kingdom can be found in their archives.

The Order's job is to procure the means for the city's continued sustainment, and their main means to do so is by harvesting the Lake of Tears, for which they thank their Queen daily. The Steward of the Household oversees both the gathering process and the distribution, and in this respect some find a third meaning to the old tale: never run afoul of an Otter. For they are the ones that best know the depths of Alhambra's wilds, and their skill in herblore is unmatched by all but the most experienced Pelican. For this reason, the lesser Stewards

seem to hold a strange amount of hold in the city, for nobody wants to displease one of the people who may very well decide of their family's foreseeable future.

The Alhambrans draw their daily meals from the lake. A few feet below the surface begins a layer of weeds strongly resembling kelp, among which swim a host of fish, pale white or ink black. Fleets of small boats row out constantly with nets to trawl the lake, bringing up weeds and fish, both of which the Alhambrans eat. The weeds are tough and stringy, the fish turn rubbery when cooked, and both taste strongly of salt, but they're edible and plentiful enough. Oddly, in any place where the weeds can be found, no one has ever found a bottom to the lake. The plant stalks continue downward into unlit depths, as far as any diver has dared to go, without ever reaching soil. Few divers have dared go far, of course, since the darkness is just as hostile under the water as it is on land, and Alhambra's usual lamps are extinguished by water. Those reckless (or desperate) enough to plunge beneath the weeds come back corroded and battered, or not at all.

## *Order of the Ghost Owl*

### *Representative: Fool of the Summit*

*Once, long ago, before the Darkness consumed the world outside, a foolish man decided to climb a vast pile of stone; so vast, that its peak was concealed by rainclouds. Still, step after step, he climbed, until he reached the top. But he had climbed long enough that, head in the clouds, he was sure that there must be another step. So he fell down, and broke every bone in his body, and died. Do not try to exceed your station in life, children, or you too shall die.*

From this story, told to Alhambran children, comes the traditional role of the Fool of the Summit. Face painted like a skull (to remember that first, dead Fool), dressed in black, white and red, the Fool holds a position much akin to that of a court jester and devil's advocate combined. Their job is to observe proceedings and they are tasked to provide distractions, through silent mummery and witty commentary alike. Their life depends on their ability to keep others entertained, for if they are boring (or, worse, unfunny), the best that can happen to them is a honor duel. The worst does not bear thinking of. They are tragic figures, forced to break the minor social conventions of Alhambra in pursuit of a tradition which mostly dooms them.

However, notably, the Fool does *not* have any immunity to ramifications from his comments. He is not granted freedom to mock anyone, and must always consider the complex ramifications of any of his remarks on any member of the court. As a result, a Fool who manages to survive any time is almost inevitably a laconic figure, a master of the double-entendre and the loaded statement. In a sense, it is their weakness that gives them strength, because they are a pathetic figure, below the attention of any true aristocrat to eliminate for anything but an overt insult, and too many will take killing a Fool to be an admission that their insinuations are grounded in fact. The greatest art a Fool can manage is to make ones target humiliate themselves, slowly goading a chosen target through passive-aggressive remarks and subtle insinuation until an improper outburst results, and the consequences fall upon their target's head.

And in that, the Fool's true purpose is revealed; for one who cannot withstand the jibes and insinuations of a Fool, will not be able to resist the temptations of the world outside nor the whispers of the Darkness, and are thus unworthy of their status. Fools of the Summit are chosen from the Order of the Ghost Owl, whose remit is the discovery of hidden weakness, both within the city and in the rebellious provinces outside it. Lesser Fools walk in every neighborhood, observing and satirising as they go, and many Alhambrans believe these are the whole of the Order; in fact, though, many citizens belong to both that order and another, and report suspicious behaviors to the Ghost Owls' officers in secret. Those who wear the skull mask are honing the arts of social assassination in preparation for the most delicate mission: being sent to a land under the Darkness to root out secrets of Alhambra's enemies.

## *Order of the Vulture*

### *Representative: Bearer of Eternal Flames*

Once it grows past a certain size every civilization seen so far has required some form of central organization and governance. This in turn requires resources, the administrators must be fed, paid, and supplied with

ink and parchment. Alhambra uses one of the more common methods: taxation, and it is the Order of the Vulture who tax Alhambra's citizens and advise its Queen on economics and matters of the royal treasury.

But Alhambra needs something far more than it needs mere currency, to survive Alhambra needs hope. Under Alhambran law all of Earth is governed by Her Majesty, the Queen of Tears. It was therefore a simple decision to say that instead of being taxed in money, the provinces will be taxed in hope. The Vultures, delighted by the expansion of their duties and prestige, eagerly accepted their Queen's decree. When the forces of Alhambra steal into the Rebellious Provinces to collect their taxes they do so under the banner of the Vulture. They may travel with a guard of soldiers from the Hyena and travel to a target suggested by the Ghost Owl, but it is the Vultures who started it all with their dispassionate tables of numbers saying how much they must tax for Alhambra to survive another year, and it is also the Vultures who sit at the top of every Enclave, and at the bottom doing the physical work of collecting Wisps.

## *Order of the Raccoon*

### *Representative: Inspector General*

For many years it was questioned why Alhambra needed an Inspector General at all; only Alhambra's dislike of change kept the Order alive. The reason is simple enough, the Order of the Raccoon deals with the strange and the unusual, they investigate anomalies and create plans for contingencies that fall far outside Alhambra's standard operating procedures. Consequently Alhambrans often fear and distrust the Raccoons as a representation of everything they fear.

For all of the Long Night the Order of the Raccoon were underfunded, understaffed, and a (sometimes self selected) dumping ground for those whose out of the box thinking was unwelcome in the other Orders. They spent their time wargaming unlikely situations, sometimes just plain wargaming, writing plans for bizarre and often completely fictional threats, and wondering if anybody was going to file an anomalous phenomena report this month. But since the Release, the Raccoon's star is rising. Alhambra's immediate post-Release strategy was based on one of the many plans generations of Raccoons had been dreaming up for exactly this situation. As the world begins to notice the Nobility even the quiet Alhambrans are finding it harder to hide, and it is the Raccoons who are called to investigate reports of all the strange weirdness that is beginning to cross paths with Alhambra's operatives on Earth. If anything, now that the Raccoons are symbolic of actual changes rather than potential they are liked even less than before.

## *Order of the Peacock (extinct)*

### *Former Representative: Blessed Merrymaker*

Entertainers, revellers, perhaps even pop-stars. Once the Order of the Peacock provided leisure and relaxation to all of Alhambra. Now they are no more. Alhambra is a city in mourning, revelry it was considered distasteful under such circumstances and so the Order was suspended on a temporary basis. The last entertainers died millennia ago still on paid leave; now all that remains of the Order are some old ghosts still entertaining empty auditoriums.

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### *Story Seed: Novus Ordo Pavonis*

A movement begins in Alhambra to reconstitute the Order of the Peacock, and name a Blessed Merrymaker to head it. Alhambran agents on Earth are taking interest in the arts here, with a view toward importing examples, or even imitating them. Might this be a lever to start the city's redemption, by teaching them the meaning of joy and fun?

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## Judiciary

Careful readers will note that none of the Orders is dedicated to resolving disputes between citizens, nor what is and what isn't legal.

There exists a code of laws, with the usual items (no stealing, no murder, etc.), but the most important item is that any of the Orders (but usually either the Spotted Hyenas, Raccoons, or Vultures) may, with a proper Writ signed by The Queen, do whatever is ordered on the Writ.

How a member of an Order goes about getting a Writ is ambiguous; you talk to the next person up in the chain of command if you think you or one of your underlings needs one (going above your CO's head, unless you can't find them or the matter involves them personally, is heavily frowned upon), and sometimes the Writ comes down. Sometimes the Writ comes down at the request of another Order; sometimes, the Writ comes down without anybody asking for it.

If you need binding arbitration of any other kind of dispute, you just go to the Order who covers your dispute. Food? Go to the Otters. Who owns a particular bit of land? Beavers. Who owes what to whom when? Vultures. Criminal matters? Spotted Hyenas. And so on. Each Order has Arbiters who hears cases; but note that the Queen can, at whim, override any Arbiter. (When a corrupt Arbiter is discovered, expect the Ghost Owls to get her to do so. Otherwise, the Arbiter's word is usually final; wasting the Queen's time is against the law, such as it is.) Just don't expect an Arbiter to resolve a matter hinging upon an ambiguity in the law anywhere near fast, as millennia upon millennia of records and precedents take time to work through, and most such judgements are pronounced *years* after they have been taken for consideration. The Tortoises and Parrots still have a committee going over where the school records of Tortoise-members should be stored, and this argument has been going on for longer than Alhambra's own written records can reliably tell.

## Darkness Visible

When a part of Alhambra is not lit, by the lamps or any other source of light, anything in that area is gradually destroyed. At the start of each turn a dark area exists, the Storyteller rolls 1 die for each 10 square feet left unlit; each success on this roll inflicts 1 bashing damage to something within the dark area. People will suffer first, then other living things; once nothing alive remains, the attacks begin destroying objects, up to and including the walls. On an exceptional success, a shadow-beast emerges from the dark area into the light, and immediately attacks the nearest light source. (If there are two separated dark areas in a scene, the Storyteller should roll separate pools for each area.)

Each time a character activates a supernatural ability in Alhambra, the Storyteller rolls a dice pool equal to the number of times such abilities have been activated in the scene so far, including the current time (so on the first activation, roll 1 die, on the second activation roll 2 dice, and so forth.) For each success on this roll, a lamp is extinguished - start with the nearest lamp still burning, then the next closest, and so on. Moreover, anyone who activates a supernatural ability within a dark area suffers an immediate attack: each success on the roll for snuffing lamps also inflicts 1 bashing damage on that character, and an exceptional success summons a shadow-beast.

Any Alhambrian, and anyone who has entered the Queen's service, can relight an extinguished lamp automatically as an instant action, as long as it has fuel and is undamaged.

While dark areas in Alhambra aren't fully Tainted, they are close enough to the Darkness that being in one counts as entering a Tainted area for anyone with the [Tainted](#) Condition.

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### *Story Seed: Power of the Atom!*

When electric lighting spread throughout the Rebellious Provinces, the Order of the Beaver took an avid interest - with lights that didn't depend on the Wisp harvest, the greatest threat to Alhambra could be banished forever! Unfortunately it didn't pan out. The city has no rivers, or even large streams, that can be dammed and used to run a generator, and no coal or oil exists underneath its ground. Fuel for a power plant would have to be imported, or created in the furnaces; and the traditional lamps proved to be more efficient than created coal.

Now, though, an enterprising Beaver who wants to revive the electric light project has been researching nuclear power plants. Uranium is much more energetic than coal and oil, and if *that* can be made in a furnace... Of course there's no natural uranium ore in Alhambra either, so some will have to be procured from the Rebellious Provinces.

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## *Shadow-beasts*

These creatures resemble shadows of the things, animals or people caught in the darkness from which they emerge, dull black, lacking in detail, and sometimes weirdly distorted. They are [Darkspawn](#), with all the powers of Dark beings, and invariably have the Umbra [Light is Dark](#). Although that Umbra leaves them blind in most ways under lamplight, shadow-beasts have the Darkspawn's innate sense for [Wisp Seeds](#), and with that sense they can also find any store of lamp fuel (which the Alhambrans refine from Seeds.) Worse, drinking lamp fuel allows a shadow-beast to regain Willpower, as if the stuff were still a Seed - a full lamp holds enough to give a shadow-beast 1 Willpower - so the beasts routinely smash lamps to guzzle the precious fuel...

### *Junkpile shadow-beast*

**Description:** A jumble of wooden boards, painted black, that suddenly throws itself at anyone who comes too close, wrapping them up in rubble. It's fairly weak, preferring to avoid or frighten off people capable of harming it, but will lash out if cornered or if a lamp is brought within its reach.

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**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 2

**Skills:** Brawl 3, Stealth 2 (ambushes), Intimidation 4

**Derived Traits:** Health 6, Willpower 4, Size 4, Defense 3, Initiative 5, Speed 10 (species factor 5)

**Umbrae:** [Light is Dark](#)

**Caligines:** [Avoid All Eyes](#) 1, [Bogeyman](#) 2

**Attack:** Grapple, 0 Damage, 5 dice

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### *Child shadow-beast*

**Description:** A child-sized figure dressed in a black version of the Lamplighter uniform, with nothing but a suggestion of human features for a face. Usually, when first found, it's collapsed itself into a flat shadow, and returns to solidity only when everyone has dropped their guard. Even when solid, it's hard to hurt; its flesh yields to any blow, then puffs out again like a pillow. Sometimes it asks, in a high piping voice, "Why did you leave me here in the dark?" - a question that fills one of its hearers with dread.

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**Attributes:** Intelligence 1, Wits 5, Resolve 3, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

**Skills:** Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Stealth 3, Intimidation 4, Persuasion 3

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 7, Size 3, Defense 6, Initiative 9, Speed 11

**Umbrae:** [Hollow as a Shadow](#), [Light is Dark](#)

**Caligines:** [Avoid All Eyes](#) 1, [Bogeyman](#) 2, [Handful of Dust](#) 3, [Zombie's Flesh](#) 2

**Attack:** Fists, 0 Damage, 5 dice

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### *Warrior shadow-beast*

**Description:** A hulking beast on two legs, with a long knife-claw for one hand and a net of kelp strands in the other. It's a deadly fighter, killing without compunction; and it dominates lesser shadow-beasts, ordering them into battle with a tactical cunning beyond most Darkspawn.



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**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 5, Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 5

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Firearms 3, Weaponry 4 (knife-claw), Intimidation 5

**Derived Traits:** Health 10, Willpower 10, Size 5, Defense 8, Initiative 9, Speed 16

**Umbrae:** [Light is Dark](#), [Subsumed by Another Shadow](#)

**Caligines:** [Avoid All Eyes](#) 1, [Bogeyman](#) 2, [Zombie's Flesh](#) 1, [Loathsome Weapon](#) 2, [I Have You Now, My Pretty](#) 3, [Voidblast](#) 3

**Attack:** Knife-claw, 1 Damage, 11 dice

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## *Supernatural Beings in Alhambra*

### *Vampires*

Alhambra never has sunlight, only clouds, rain and lamps, so vampires in the city can walk the streets without fear. Due to the lack of a normal day-night cycle, they instead spend the point of Vitae to wake 24 hours (from their point of view) after they enter the city.

The blood of those who have spent excess time in Alhambra (more than [Willpower + Inner Light] days) is peculiarly unnourishing. Vampires only gain 2 Vitae for every 3 points of lethal damage inflicted, rounding down. In addition, they are at -2 to all Fear Frenzy checks, for as long as it remains in their system.

It is rumoured that, sometimes, Mekhet draugr, especially Careful Predators (see Night Horrors: The Wicked Dead, for more details), hide themselves so deep in the shadows that they enter the body of the Darkness, and are, maybe, swept (in torpor) along its currents, before being washed up in Alhambra.

### *Werewolves*

The most notable thing about Alhambra, from the point of view of the Uratha, is that it lacks a Shadow. As a result, they cannot step sideways (as there are no loci, and, anyway, there's nothing to step sideways to). Any Rites which specifically require a spirit to empower them do not work; all other Gifts and Rites function as normal.

The flesh of those who have spent excess time in Alhambra (more than [Willpower + Inner Light] days) is peculiarly unnourishing. Werewolves only gain 1 Essence for every 3 points of lethal damage inflicted, rounding down. In addition, they are at -2 to all Death Rage checks, for a scene.

### *Mages*

Mages can make their own way to Alhambra. Using a spell similar to Outer Channel [Summoners 144] requiring Space 4 and Death 4, the Awakened can obtain a sympathetic link to the place. Once they have a personal sympathetic link, a Mind 4, Death 4, Space 4 spell can be used to project their mind there (the projection appears in Twilight), or Death 4, Space 5 to open a portal there. Either way, the extended ritual must be conducted in a place of darkness, and snuffs lamps that light the arrival point. The same portal spell can also be used to leave, and snuffs lamps that light the departure point.

No natural source of Mana exists in Alhambra ... but the raw liquid from which the natives distill fuel for their lamps will act as Tass. Roughly 1 gallon of the substance yields 1 point of Mana, if set alight. The distilled lamp-fuel cannot be used this way. The raw liquid is the most valued thing in Alhambra, and stores of it are kept under close guard.

To Mage Sight, the substance of Alhambra is a solidified void that waits to consume all life, light and hope - a perception that disturbs the mage who receives it. When a mage has Mage Sight up on entering Alhambra, or casts a Mage Sight spell in Alhambra, he rolls Resolve + Composure.

**Dramatic Failure:** The resonance underlying the city so shakes the mage's mind that he takes a -1 penalty to all actions until he leaves Alhambra.

**Failure:** The mage takes a -1 penalty to all actions until the spell ends.

**Success:** The mage is disturbed, but can function unimpaired.

**Exceptional Success:** The mage is impervious - not only does he not take penalties to his actions, he can renew the Mage Sight spell without rolling Resolve + Composure for the rest of his stay in Alhambra.

## *Prometheans*

No Promethean has ever entered Alhambra ... which is a very good thing. A Promethean's Wasteland extends through Alhambra once every minute, and its effect for every type of Promethean is the same: every lamp in the area affected goes out, leaving the Promethean in a spreading zone of darkness that batters at his body, and pours out a pack of shadow-beasts to smother more lights.

Since there is no sun, Prometheans don't gain Pyros at sunrise in Alhambra (not that they would live so long.)

## *Changelings*

The Hedge does not exist in Alhambra, any more than the Shadow does, so changelings cannot enter the Hedge from the city. All the other abilities of changelings work as normal.

## *Sin-Eaters*

Sin-Eaters will certainly notice a strong similarity between conditions in Alhambra and those of the Underworld, and may conclude that the city is a Dead Dominion with the Queen of Tears as its Kerberos. Even if this is true, however, there's no passage between Alhambra and any part of the Underworld, and there are no Avernian Gates or Graveyard Gates in Alhambra. Moreover, no supernatural power that opens a gate to the Underworld will work within Alhambra.

## *Mad Scientists*

A Genius needs Apokalypsi 4 to find Alhambra and Skafoi 4 to reach it. A Genius can't power the lamps with Mania, but she can make them burn brighter by adding her Mania. A Genius or Mane trying to Calculus Vamp an Alhambran gets only 2 Mania per 3 dots of Skill.

## *Ghost Princesses*

*She sits in an empty palace, the tapestries are moth eaten and threadbare. The floor is covered in dust, no one has been this way in years. In a ghostly whisper she answers petitions from courtiers and subjects long departed from their mortal coil. And yet she carries a presence about her, she still radiates with the power of her magic. The Princess is dead but her subjects still need her. Long live the Princess.*

Princesses do not naturally form ghosts; the cycle of reincarnations draws the royal soul onwards with a gentle call that cuts the threads of anchors. To the followers of [Tears](#) this is a problem - ghosts are useful and the ghost of a Princess is more so. With the powerful Charm named [Long May She Reign](#) they can help a Princess remain on this plane after death and continue her duties to Alhambra.

In most respects the ghost of a Princess is much like any other ghost; all the rules for ghosts [CofD 122-140] apply to her. However, she is consistently more powerful than ghosts tend to be outside the Underworld, thanks to her ties with the Light in life. Every ghost Princess is self-aware and retains her memory, and has a Rank of at least 2; a Princess with an Inner Light of 6 or more in life rises as a ghost of Rank 3. Moreover, ghost Princesses retain lucidity equal to one of the living - they have the Belief trait, suffer breaking points, and may improve their traits without going to the Underworld. The person who cast the Charm on her is always an anchor for a ghost Princess, as are the people in her Circle and things or places associated with her Mandate Merit (if any), and the Storyteller may give a ghost Princess more anchors than these. Ghost Princesses generally have Influence: Anchors 2 and the Image and Materialize Manifestations at minimum, gaining more if their Rank rises.

When it comes to Numina, the ghost Princesses again are atypically powerful. Instead of picking from the list of Numina, a ghost Princess knows the Charms she knew in life as Numina, substituting her Rank for Inner Light, an Attribute + Rank for activation rolls (or Attribute + Attribute when the Charm uses two Attributes) and Essence for Wisps at a 1-to-1 rate in the activation costs. A ghost Princess also keeps Invocations she had while alive, and may apply them whenever a Charm allows it, spending 1 Essence instead of 1 Wisp to do so, except when the Invocation is free. Ghost Princesses cannot learn more Charms or Invocations on their own, and have none of a living Princess' innate abilities other than their Charms - though they always count as transformed, and thus may use Charms at any time.

The Banes of ghost Princesses vary widely, usually related to what the Princess hated or feared in life (although, due to the affiliation of most of them with Alhambra, creatures of Darkness are a distressingly common type of Bane.) However, all ghost Princesses share a Ban among them, inherited from the Charm that creates them. All possess [Sensitivity](#) and are subject to Hauntings, as they were in life; the dice pool for the roll begins equal to the ghost's Rank. The Shadows a ghost Princess has at the moment of her death become permanent and cannot be removed by any means.

As a royal ghost acquires more Shadows from Hauntings her pure form loses its shining light; her Corpus becomes marked with signs of obvious decay and Darkness while her mind grows cracked and damaged. Each Shadows dot adds 1 to the points of Essence a ghost Princess must spend each day to remain active, and when she finally acquires a number of Shadows equal to her Belief, she experiences a crash similar to what happens when a living Princess falls to Belief 0. For most this just means that as their Willpower fades their Corpus fades along with it and quietly dissolves into motes of Light until they run out of Willpower and pass on, but an unlucky few have become Dethroned.

Unlike the living, a ghost Princess cannot cleanse herself of Shadows unaided. The [Protectorate of Amethyst](#) are responsible for caring for the ghosts of departed Princesses; they keep them in walled luxurious palaces far from any sight that might trigger their Sensitivity, and when a ghost is called to perform royal duties for the Last Empress the Protectorate endeavors to travel with the ghost to keep her safe from infection by the Darkness.

# The Queen of Storms

**AKA:** The Seraphic General, Lady of the Cleansing Flame, The Dragon-Slayer

**Former Kingdom:** Gonel

**Followers' Epithets:** Seraphim, Furies, Sworn Guard, Crazies (derogatory)

*The world hurts. The world always hurts. The Darkness is everywhere, subtly writhing in the night and in the hearts of corrupt bastards, and those fucking parasites in Alhambra make the world a worse place just by existing.*

*So we burn it out. We burn it all out. When some bastard takes children, we're there to make sure he dies and make sure that the Taint he leaves doesn't get to spread. We're not soft-hearted fools like the so-called 'Radiant', who prattle on about hope and self-belief and innate kindness and the like. The world is stinking and wretched and corrupt, and, like a cancer, the evil must be excised. By any means necessary.*

*It's better to light a fire than curse the Darkness, after all.*

*Because the Kingdom was betrayed from within. We were all betrayed. Our Queen gave her life protecting something which wasn't worth protecting, and we now know that you can flap around talking about the Light all you want, but what the world needs is for all the bastards to die. They all deserve to die. And we're willing to give our lives to do so. We won't compromise, and if we die, we'll keep on fighting. Even in the face of the end of the world.*

*Even after the world ends, we'll keep fighting by our Queen's side. We'll keep on fighting until the Darkness is ash.*

The Queen of Storms was once a mortal woman, but is one no longer. As the hordes of the Darkness closed in on the last city of the Kingdom, she led the fight back, at the head of an army. And they were slaughtered. Transcending her mortal flesh as rage burned her alive, since the Fall of the Kingdom she, and her followers, have sought to cleanse the Darkness, and the traitors of Alhambra, from the world no matter the cost. She was not trapped in the Dreamlands, and she has raged and she has fought all this time. The forces of Storms are composed of mortal cultists, those who the world has taken everything from, and is backed up by strange ghost-like beings, which build bodies for themselves out of flesh and clay; now, with the Release, Nobility join their ranks.

## Tales from the Darkness

Deep within the Dark World there is a storm that never ceases. Green fire scorches the sky. Bolts of thunder split mountains and carve the ground open. The wind sings hymns of defiance. The clouds are formed of people in their millions, they burn with rage hot enough to warm the frozen heart of the Darkness. Wherever this Storm travels, it leaves nothing but ash.

The Queen of Storms died during the fall. She died faithful to her duties, she died untainted, and she died fighting. In her final battle she burnt herself to ashes with the fury of her rage and the power of the magics she channeled against the Darkness. Her body was destroyed, her mind was consumed by hate, and her soul was transformed. The Queen has become the very embodiment of Tempesta. She battles the Darkness itself within its world; she exists deep within the soul of any who knows hate and rage within their hearts. Every feeling of rage is a petition for the Queen, all hatred is a prayer, and the requests of those who feel hate at the Queen's ancient enemies are granted. The Queen bestows her powers and her favor on all who would take up her banner and fight for her cause.

## Philosophy

Let the scholars of Alhambra mumble over the vague pronouncements of the Traitor Queen. The commands of the Seraphic General are clear, and she gives them to everyone in her service.

**Death to the Darkness:** This is perhaps the simplest order given. Kill the Darkness. Kill Darkspawn, kill Darkened, kill Mnemosyne, kill Cataphracts, burn Tainted locations to the ground and salt the earth so that no one returns to them. Of course, when it's your sister, who became Darkened through no fault of her own, it's different for you. Not for the Queen of Storms. Every Darkened is a potential Darkspawn.

**The Flesh Is Weak:** This principle has rather more depth than might at first appear. It is simultaneously a warning, a message for self-improvement, a threat and a caution. It warns that human beings, whether mortal or Enlightened, cannot always maintain the level of dedication needed to save the world, and so that must be remembered, so that flagging souls may be spurred on further. It is a message that followers of Storms are weak physically, and so should strive to improve themselves, so that they may continue to fight better, by training and by, if they have access, Goalenu-made Grafts. It is a threat, because failure will not be tolerated. And it is a caution, because followers of Storms frequently push themselves harder than their bodies can stand, and so they will learn that they hurt themselves.

And finally it is a promise, for those who die from use of Tempesta Charms; they transcend their weak flesh, and join with the Queen in her eternal battle. One day, the heralds of Storms promise, when enough souls have joined their Queen she will vanquish the Darkness and scour its every trace from all the worlds that ever were, are and will be. Only then will the Sworn Guard know rest.

**Burn the World to Save the World:** The final statement is one of their purpose, and, again, it is both instruction and warning. Although the nature of their powers is such that they frequently cause collateral damage, it does not matter, as long as they are doing it to save the world. The opposite also stands; they are not like the Traitor Queen of Tears, and they do not drain the world for their own selfishness. Even in the rage-filled mind of the Queen of Storms, burning down an apartment to destroy the Tainted Site within it is completely different from random violence. Collateral damage is acceptable - indeed, even meaningless - but if it doesn't hurt the Darkness (as filtered through her warped perspective), it's *wrong*.

## *Duties*

If asked, the Radiant will tell you that the duties of the Seraphim are summed up in a single word: Fight. Fight the Darkness until your last breath leaves your body, and then fight on until it's purged from the world. This is essentially true, but it does gloss over the details. The "duties" of a Fury are the complex byproduct of her burning hate and the practical advantages of their Calling. Among young Enlightened and fresh recruits, the hate is bright like actinic lightning. All of them fight. Champions are the purest expression of the purgatorial violence of Storms' call, but they are not alone. Graces empower and boost themselves and any allies they have with destructive hatred, ramping emotions up so they fight to the very last. Menders are armored titans whose control of their environment and their own bodies makes them surprisingly effective fighters. Seekers blind foes with illusions and hunt down targets who try to flee into Twilight, their magic homing in on the Darkness' weaknesses. Finally, Troubadours control the battlefield with magic and illusions, and as heralds of Storms' rage leave scenes of battle as a warning to those who would oppose them.

Older Furies tend to be a little more cynical about matters - or, rather, the ones who survive longer are the ones who are more mentally flexible. They are still driven by hate and rage, yes, but the burning emotions are banked, waiting. When they need them, fresh fuel is thrown onto the fire and they flare to terrible life, but until then they are better at thinking in the long run. The icy cold rage of an experienced Seraph is a terrifying thing to behold. Time and hatred has worn away any last inhibitions, and taught her every dirty trick. A young Fury might not care about collateral damage, but kicking down the door gives people some sort of warning, while a bomb does not. Experienced Furies can appear from nowhere in a whirlwind of destruction and vanish, leaving only the bodies of their enemies to mark their passing.

Unlike the five Radiant Courts, the Furies are not alone. Mortals who hate the Darkness may become Sworn to the service of the Seraphic General, and they can become allies and even companions to a Princess of Storms. It is among these cells, especially if multiple Seraphim are in a single cell, that more conventional Calling-based roles start to emerge. Champions take to the front, using their abilities to tie down the strongest opponents so their weaker allies are free to fight. Graces often gravitate to the unenviable task of trying to organize the cell, though most find it far easier to express their calling on the front line, blessing their allies and countering their enemies' magic. A Mender often finds a specialty in arms and armaments and on the battlefield she heads where the fighting is thickest, taking the blows others cannot. Of all the Callings Menders are the closest to the terrible [Goalenu](#), learning to maintain and repair Vessels and acquire the parts - one way or another - to construct fresh

ones. Seekers make expert scouts and trackers, and when they find their foes the fury of the Storm is rarely far behind. A rare few have the will to overcome both Tempesta's demands and their own hate, to scout and depart unseen. If you meet such a Seeker, fear her. Troubadours turn their hatred and combat into a macabre work of art, inspiring their allies in battle. When the fighting is over the more rational Troubadours use their skills to hide the Cell's presence from the investigations righteous battle invariably spawns.

## *Background*

For those who are called to the Queen of Storms from their Blossoming, one thing is frequently true. The world has treated them badly. Many of them were exposed to the World of Darkness before their blossoming, and the Seraphic Legion counts a notable number of former Hunters among it; some have retained their links, and both offer support and request assistance from their own allies. Others have broken homes, or anything else which would have exposed them to the things that people do. The Queen of Storms, for all her flaws, offers a home to such people, enables them to get back at the things in the world.

One of the notable things about the Queen of Storms is the sheer number of Twiceborn who join her ranks. In some ways, it is not surprising. The Twiceborn, those among the Hopeful who Blossomed in the long years before the Release, never knew the Kingdom. They are those who fought a desperate struggle against a world of darkness, and died. While those among the Kingdom-born can call upon their memories of a better time, the Twiceborn have seen the things that lurk in the shadows, and moreover many of them have served Storms in another life. Her call is the call of familiarity.

Disturbingly to the forces of the Radiant Queens, there are also those among the Seraphim who are not merely bereaved or distressed. There are those who appear to have logically thought about the state of the World of Darkness, and decided it is better that it burn than it be smothered in Darkness. Worse yet, this ideology can be attractive to inexperienced Princesses, especially since Storms can provide money, and training, and allies from the networks, and so such more-rational members tend to accumulate groups of younger Princesses, in the same way that the more experienced among the Radiant do. This is obviously a threat, but on the other hand, such cells are more willing to deal with the Radiant if doing so will aid them in the destruction of the Darkness. In such areas, Storms can become an uneasy ally, which usually lasts until the levels of collateral damage becomes unacceptable for more moral individuals.

Likewise, among the Radiant, there is a public perception that the Queen of Storms is the one of the Twilight Queens who gets the most defectors. In part, it is because of the relative publicity of such defectors (Tears tries to hide, and Mirrors isn't quite as loud as an explosion), but it is also true that the Queen of Storms offers much to a certain type of Noble. When one has seen too many friends (and then their replacements, barely out of childhood) die, when one has seen the Darkness come back and ruin everything you've worked for, when one has had enough of vague platitudes from Queens who live in the Dreamlands and don't know what the world is like... well, then Storms, with its cells of organized mortal cultists, and its simple mission to destroy the Darkness no matter the cost, starts to sound awfully tempting.

## *Character Creation*

The Queen of Storms not only admires strength, but demands it. Seraphim tend to have above-average Physical Attributes, with Stamina prized, because it allows them to keep going longer and absorb the negative consequences of the use of the Tempesta Invocation better. In addition, both Presence and Resolve are prized; the former is the force of will needed for a soldier, and the latter the ability to keep going, no matter the odds against you. And for individuals particularly deficient in these, there is always the option of Goalenu Grafts, which can boost attributes, but at a cost ...

**Heraldry:** The colors of the Seraphic Legion are steel grey, brilliant acidic green, and white. These colors are proudly displayed, and mandatory; they are the Last Legion, who remain loyal to the idea of a Kingdom betrayed by its leaders. From this background, some would expect the clothing of Seraphim to tend to the militaristic and armored. In fact, although some have a certain harshness of trim, the peculiarities of the Tempesta armor Charm, Best Defense, mean that their garb is based around permitting as free movement as possible. Short skirts and shorts are common among both genders (although Princes prefer to call the skirts "kilts"), and where the clothing is not militaristic, it instead takes on elements of antiauthoritarian counter-cultures.

## *Practical Magic*

The Seraphic General sustains her acolytes in battle; the Furies can shrug off blows that would put down any lesser fighter, and strike all the harder as their own flesh bleeds. In either Transformed or mundane state, a Princess of Storms may spend 1 Wisp. For the rest of the scene, she reverses wound penalties into bonuses (-1 becomes +1, -2 becomes +2 -3 becomes +3) and does not check for unconsciousness if her last Health box fills with bashing damage.

When a Fury has Belief 8 or 9, the -1 wound penalty changes to a +2 bonus. When she has Belief 9, the -2 wound penalty changes to a +3 bonus. When she has Belief 10, all three wound penalties change into +3 bonuses.

## *Invocation: Tempesta*

The Invocation of Tempesta is the principle embodied and founded by the Queen of Storms, and which her Enlightened find come naturally to them. It is conceptually linked to several things, including anger, acid, radioactivity, martyrdom, cleansing and sterilising, and all things connected to these, allowing Invoked Upgrades and Invoked Charms to be based around them.

**Tempesta has the unique disadvantage that many of its Charms inflict damage upon the user.** This is counted as part of their activation cost, and so may not be bypassed. Damage so inflicted is Resistant, and so may not be healed by magical means of any kind, as the rage and hatred of Tempesta burns at the Enlightened body and soul alike. Because of these costs, many Tempesta Charms which have such a price are more powerful than equivalent ones which lack such painful payment.

Tempesta applies at no cost when a Princess has taken enough bashing damage to suffer wound penalties, or any amount of lethal or aggravated damage; and in the midst of violent storms, earthquakes, explosions or other widespread devastation. It also applies without cost when a Princess is fighting servants of the Darkness or agents of the Queen of Tears.

Those who would use Tempesta must be merciless and swift, striking without hesitation and never showing fear. Displays of mercy to those who have wronged the Princess or those she protects or loves, or retreating from battle, render this Invocation inapplicable until the sun next rises. (Pulling back from a foe for tactical advantage is acceptable; fleeing or refusing to fight is not.) If the target spared is a servant of the Queen of Tears or the Darkness, the Invocation cannot be used until the Princess's final health box is filled with damage, for their flesh cannot channel these powers until the weakness has been forced out through pain. (A Princess may injure herself to regain use of Tempesta; in fact, such penance is expected and encouraged among the Furies.)

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### *Stereotypes*

- **Clubs:** So... when're you actually going to do something useful, then?
- **Diamonds:** You're real smart. Now look at the real problem.
- **Hearts:** The kind of cattle who followed the Traitor Queen into betrayal.
- **Spades:** Yeah, let's go prank the Darkspawn on Fifth, who're there because some fucker killed his kids. That'll make things better.
- **Swords:** We kinda get them. They just need to focus on the real problem.
- **Tears:** You're in with the Darkness! Your Queen is a traitorous bitch! So just die already!
- **Mirrors:** Arrogant blind self-righteous bastards.
- **Vampires:** Bloodsucking parasites. The world will be a better place when you are all ash.
- **Werewolves:** Sometimes... I just want to smash everything, too.
- **Mages:** How the fuck did you *do* that!
- **Prometheans:** They're like the Goalenu, I think. I saw one tear something that looked like a Darkspawn apart.
- **Changelings:** Keep out of our way.

- **Sin-Eaters:** Huh. I see a dead person who isn't dead anymore.
  - **Mummies:** Priest, I gain nothing from your death. Send your god against the Darkness and I shall let you live.
  - **Beasts:** Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, and hate makes me strong. You want my fear, monster? Take it and choke on it!
  - **Mad Scientists:** Who cares how the fuck this works, we can nuke Darkened from orbit with it.
  - **Leviathans:** I'm not running, not even from a fucking god. I hope I fucking give you indigestion.
  - **Hunters:** They get it, you know. We're like them.
  - **Mortals:** FUCK! How can you just sit back and... argh!
- 

## *Inspiration*

Frank Castle ([The Punisher](#))

Damon and Mindy McCready ([Kick-Ass](#))

*It doesn't matter if I die, just how many I take with me.*



# Goalenu

**AKA:** the Chimerical Barons of the Lady of Storms, the Knights of Proteus, the Sworn Guard

*A man strides down the street, in a long, greenish-blue coat and broad-brimmed hat. He keeps both covering him as best he can. If you could see his flesh, you could see the cracks of green fire which spread out from his joints, skin cracked and dried as this shell weakens. He walks, legs overly stiff, past the shops, and towards the school. The color is being drained from the surface of everything around him, leaving a fine grey ash layered all around.*

*The woman in the bar catches your eye, and you walk over to introduce yourself. You realize your mistake in the alley outside, when the woman with the flirty, bright green eyes unhinges her jaw to an impossible level, revealing the burning green fire which she has in place of a heart. He seemed a little distracted when he got home, your wife says to the police, after the atrocity which the thing wearing your shape commits at your office, the next day.*

*It's not even vaguely human, that thing. It, if you had to describe it, most resembles some unknown animal thing, covered in oil with harsh light reflecting off, but the animal is invisible. There's nothing there but the reflections and the shimmers and the glimmers and your torn off leg, jammed into a man-sized doll of wet clay and stolen flesh. It's building itself a new vessel.*

## Background

There is a tale that the Knights of Proteus tell themselves. As the Kingdom fell, a squad of knights, sworn only to the service of the Kingdom, not the corrupted and weakened leaders, held the gate against the tide of the Darkness which swarmed and writhed around the city. They were true, they were faithful, and they held to their oaths. While She Who Would Become [Tears](#) cowered in the keep, playing with the Darkness and inviting it in, the burning green light of the weapons of the Sworn Guard, led by the woman who would become the Queen of [Storms](#), fought off the Dark, even as they died from the power that they were channelling. One by one they fell, from the fiends that they fought, or as their bodies collapsed, burned to empty husks. Soon, only the Queen-to-be was left, and the play took its final, tragic act.

But the other members of the Sworn Guard, though their bodies were dead and their souls blasted by the powers they were wielding, would not give up the fight. They would see every single trace of the Darkness burned from the world, even if they had to reduce the world to ash. They had sworn it; it would be so. They would see the traitors who had betrayed the Kingdom, from within and without, dead and more than dead. They had sworn it; it would be so. To this day they remain, in communion with their Queen and each other, and sometimes sally out to destroy the enemy when the General or her living servants discover it. And as the centuries pass, and others bring fire to the Darkness, the Sworn Guard adds recruits to serve their cause beyond death.

## Description

When not in a vessel, a Goalenu often looks like a stormcloud forced into the shape of a man - grey or black smoke, lit from within by green flickers - or a shimmering distortion of the air, outlined in ghosts of color. It is always taller than most mortals, never less than six and a half feet, and usually more than seven feet tall; it always has a generally human body plan, with two arms, two legs and a head; and its bulk is such that, were it substantial, it would be taken for a bodybuilder. But a Goalenu is never quite substantial, even when it has fully materialized, and the glimmers and flickers that delineate its form sometimes shift when the Guard itself is still, showing eyes on its hands or a face in its stomach.

A Goalenu's speech and behavior show an odd combination of monomania and absent-mindedness. In moments of direct threat, or when a spawn of Darkness is present, the Guard focuses wholly on the enemy's destruction; at other times it grows a bit forgetful and indecisive, needing a few moments' thought to recognize old acquaintances. Goalenu have even been heard talking to - rather, arguing with - themselves, when they thought no one else was in earshot. To those who have questioned them about this, the Goalenu explain that they are "many by birth, one by the General's will" and that to those who fight the General's war, death is promotion to a post of greater trust. And in proof of this, Goalenu who lead a cult of Stormwracked very often remember, in

detail, the lives of cultists who have died in the cause ... suggesting that the deceased are now one with it, ready for the eternal war.

## *Systems*

The Goalenu are ephemeral beings, and use the rules for such [CofD 122-140], but they are not ghosts, spirits or angels of the God-Machine; they are formed of a different type of ephemera. The typical Goalenu is Rank 2, with the Attributes and Essence pool appropriate to that Rank, and has a Size of 5 - somewhat larger than most humans, but not gigantic. Though Goalenu are living avatars of Tempesta they retain enough of their human nature to be affected by any magic that works on human souls, and their version of Essence is practically identical to a Princess' Wisps, in that powers which transfer Wisps work just the same way on their Essence. (Thus in what follows, we speak of Goalenu spending and regaining Wisps or Essence indifferently.) Contrariwise, powers that specifically affect ghosts or spirits don't do anything to the Goalenu. A Goalenu forced into hibernation drifts slowly towards anyone pledged to the Seraphic General within its range; if a Goalenu runs out of both Wisps and Corpus, it disincorporates, returning to the train of the Queen of Storms.

Unlike ghosts or spirits, a Goalenu can have Skill dots, but these only matter when it animates a vessel - it never uses them directly. Goalenu retain the Virtue and Vice they had in life. Courageous is rather common, due to the mentality required to kill yourself through overuse of your powers, rather than surrender; as is Righteous, out of their desire to see the Darkness, no matter its form or how it conceals itself, destroyed. Meanwhile, Hateful and Arrogant are common Vices; the former from their desire for vengeance, while the latter from the fact that they follow the only true Queen of the Kingdom, the only one who did not betray them to the Darkness and isn't an imaginary spectre, futilely whispering into the wind.

Goalenu are tied to things and people that resonate with the Tempesta Invocation. All of them have the Influence: Tempesta 2 - they automatically regain 1 Wisp per day when in the presence of the [Stormwracked](#), or a human who knows the Invocation, or whose mind is fixed on vengeance; or when they are close to an unoccupied vessel. Also, once per day, when a Goalenu fights servants of the Darkness or agents of the Queen of Tears, or is in the midst of great destruction, it rolls Power + Finesse as an instant action and regains 1 Wisp for each success. It can do this at any time during combat, or immediately after a combat ends. A Goalenu's sense for Essence will find both servants of the Darkness and people loyal to the Queen of Storms, and it never mistakes its fellow warriors for the creatures it is pledged to fight. Goalenu suffer from Essence bleed like other ephemeral beings, but are safe from it when within five yards of a Resonant (Tempesta) Condition.

The Sworn Guard of the Seraphic General all share a bane: they must avoid anyone who has unjustly taken grave injury from the hands of another and refuses to take vengeance, and touching such a one dissolves their cloud-like corpus. Both the injury and the refusal to avenge are necessary - Goalenu may safely approach people who have never suffered, and often seek out those who wish for revenge but dare not take it. Moreover, one who has been hurt several times must have forgiven or forgotten all the hurts to ward a Goalenu away. Even one shadow of anger or resentment is enough to let the Sworn Guard come. On the other hand, each Goalenu has its own ban, as long as it exists separately from its Queen. Often these bans relate to the Tempesta ban; some Goalenu cannot stop fighting any foe before they or the foe are down, others must pursue anyone who spills human blood (not their own) in their presence without provocation. Some, though, especially those of high Rank, have strange, inexplicable bans - the Baron named Badegisel has been seen to stop entranced by music from a church organ.

Goalenu have the Manifestations Twilight Form, Materialize and Animate Vessel (a variant of Claim unique to them.) Goalenu of higher Rank than 2 learn more Manifestations, but all have the basic three. No Goalenu may use Disincorporate, as that would return them to their Queen prematurely. Likewise, they cannot use Claim, and while they can use Possess, creating the Possessed Condition inflicts a point of lethal damage on both the Goalenu and the host, and so, frankly, most of the Chimerical Barons would rather build themselves a man, with blond hair and a tan, than wear the skin of a mortal in that painful fashion. To accomplish that, all Goalenu have the Craft Vessel Numen (also unique to them); as for other Numina, they like to use Blast to harry enemies and Implant Mission to instruct allies.

## *The Craft Vessel Numen*

Craft Vessel is an exceptionally unusual Numen, only ever found among the Goalenu, and (if you are to believe them) taught directly to the first of their kind to take upon new bodies of ephemera by the Queen of

Storms herself. The vessel is a construct, of flesh and clay in varying proportions, which provides a host which can contain the essence of the Protean Knight, and unleash its powers to the full. Indeed, it is not quite a body, but more of a weapons system, fuelled by the Essence of the Goalenu, and manifesting it to ends that the ephemeral creature could not have reached on its own.

The Goalenu requires two things before the ritual construction can start; flesh and clay. In order even to start, moreover, the Chimerical Baron must be able to manipulate the material world, generally through use of the Materialize Manifestation; other possibilities are Possession of a convenient mortal, or Influences over Flesh and Clay. When the pieces are gathered together, the Goalenu spends 2 Wisps and begins an extended roll of Power + Finesse, one roll per hour. It must reach a threshold equal to its Power + Finesse + Resistance to craft the vessel properly.

Not all vessels are made alike. Although certain constraints must be followed (the heart must be flesh, torn from a human chest, while the brain must be replaced by a tiny sculpture, of the self-image of the Chimerical Baron), for all other things there is a wonderful degree of flexibility in their creation. Flesh and clay may be merged almost without limits. The face of that woman is wonderful, but her body? Well, let's just say that a much better job could be done. And it has been found that the way the essence of the Goalenu fuels the Vessel changes depending on whether certain major organs are flesh or clay. It comes at a cost, though; vessels which are mostly clay are more resilient to the vitriolic sun that lives within it, but far less able to pass for human, while the opposite is true for the ones which are mostly flesh. The appearance of the vessel is averaged out over the parts; one which is entirely flesh, apart from the brain, is almost identical to a human, perhaps with a little cold skin, while a vessel of clay (apart from the heart) is an exquisitely painted china doll, squatting at the bottom of the Uncanny Valley.

### *The Animate Vessel Manifestation*

Once a Goalenu has finished crafting a vessel, it may proceed to inhabit it. The vessel must be Open to the Goalenu - which it is immediately after crafting finishes, for turns equal to the Goalenu's Finesse; after that it drops back to Resonant (Tempesta). The Goalenu spends 3 Wisps to dematerialize its corpus and infuse its substance into the vessel, which applies the Goalenu's Vessel Condition to it. When in a vessel, the Goalenu still gains Wisps from its Influences, but cannot use them otherwise, or any Numina or Manifestations. Instead it uses the advantages and powers inherent in the vessel.

Before being animated, a vessel has the nine Attributes of corporeal characters, with values determined by the materials used in the crafting. Each of nine organs in the vessel are linked to an Attribute. An organ from a human's flesh gives the vessel dots in the linked Attribute equal to what the human had while alive; an organ molded from clay gives the vessel 1 dot in the linked Attribute. Because flesh from a superior person is so much more effective, some vessels are made from a truly horrendous number of individuals (rather than just the one who contributed the heart), as the Goalenu, often using Storms-serving cultists, finds the best people to claim each organ from. And, although you can survive the loss of an arm, you certainly can't survive the loss of your spine.

### *The Goalenu's Vessel Condition*

The Goalenu distributes its Power dots across the vessel's Intelligence, Strength and Presence; its Finesse dots across the vessel's Wits, Dexterity and Manipulation; and its Resistance dots across the vessel's Resolve, Stamina and Composure. After this is done, the vessel's Resolve, plus the number of clay organs used to craft it, must exceed twice the Goalenu's Rank. Derived traits are calculated normally. The vessel's Skills are those of the Goalenu. An animated vessel also has a Revelation track, initially with a number of dots equal to the vessel's Resolve + the number of Clay organs - 2x the Goalenu's Rank as a spirit, to a maximum of 10 dots.

Vessels do not heal naturally. All damage done to them remains forever unless repaired by the ritual of [Ritual: Potter's Sacrifice](#), which Goalenu cannot perform for themselves, or by a supernatural power that directly heals damage. Powers that restore the Structure of an object will heal bashing damage in a Goalenu at a 1:1 ratio; lethal and aggravated damage require powers that heal a living being for that type of damage.

All vessels have 9 powers named [Reprisals](#), each linked to an organ, which cost Wisps and/or Revelation to activate. Spending Revelation fills in dots on the track; when the last dot of Revelation is filled, the vessel reduces the track's length by 1 permanently, and empties the remaining dots. 2 Reprisals are common to all

vessels (linked to the heart and brain) while the other 7 have a choice between 2 powers, depending on whether the linked organ is flesh or clay. There are rumors of other powers (what an organ cast out of iron does, for example), but flesh and clay are the only materials used regularly by the Goalenu.

Each clay organ increases the vessel's initial Revelation by one, but imposes a -1 to its Social rolls. Some clay organs provide persistent bonuses, which are noted in the Reprisal entry for that part.

As Revelation dwindles, the Vessel's basic inhumanity grows more obvious. Some effects always appear; others appear when the Goalenu uses a Reprisal, and last until the end of the scene.

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- **Revelation 8+:** The Vessel appears wholly human.
  - **Revelation 7:** After using a Reprisal, the Vessel's eyes change color; they now have green irises.
  - **Revelation 6:** The Vessel's eyes always have green irises. After using a Reprisal, they become a brilliant green. Those familiar with the Goalenu can roll Wits + Occult, at -4, to notice this.
  - **Revelation 5:** The Vessel's eyes are always brilliant green. (Those familiar with the Goalenu can roll Wits + Occult, at -4, to notice this.) After using a Reprisal, babies, animals, and, oddly, car alarms in the area all start wailing in terror. The source of the disturbance can't be located, though.
  - **Revelation 4:** The Vessel's presence terrifies animals; none will dare to attack it. Just walking down a street sets all the dogs howling. After using a Reprisal, its eyes glow green, and anyone can roll Wits + Composure to notice this. Even if you're not familiar with the Goalenu, he had *glowing eyes*, man!
  - **Revelation 3:** The Vessel looks slightly sick and pallid, the flesh around the joints raw. When it touches things, there's a slight discharge of static electricity. After using a Reprisal, its skin cracks when it bends, and a network of fine green lines can be seen across them. If a good look can be got, the Vessel's certainly supernatural; most Vessels at this point wear heavy clothing to conceal the cracks.
  - **Revelation 2:** There is a greenish cast to the Vessel's features, as if it's nauseous or ill from some disease. Its lips are cracked, and the bits where clay and flesh merge are now clear to the sight, forcing it to wear long garments to cover up. After using a Reprisal, the environment chars and flakes around the Vessel. Where it stands, the pavement cracks, and ash accumulates in the corners; ash that no-one left. Touching it is like touching a weak electrical source (2 bashing).
  - **Revelation 1:** The Vessel's skin is bone dry, and if it's dark, the eyes radiate a slight light... and so does the mouth, when open. It's spread to the environment, too; things around it slowly bleach, like in intense sunlight, and there's a thin layer of ash, like cigarette ash, covering surfaces left unwatched. After using a Reprisal, the Vessel has no eyes any more, just blazing green holes into an inner sun. When it opens its mouth, green light spills out. Everywhere the skin bends, it is cracked like broken clay, light glowing through. Lightning crackles off it; anyone who touches it takes the same damage as someone who touches mains electricity.
  - **Revelation 0:** The Vessel explodes, as if it had used the Reprisal [Let There Be Light](#).
- 

**Causing the Condition:** The Condition is created by a Goalenu using its [Animate Vessel](#) Manifestation.

**Ending the Condition:** The Condition is permanent until the vessel is destroyed, by damage from outside or the Goalenu's Reprisals.

## *Partial Vessels*

The Goalenu can use the [Craft Vessel](#) Numen to graft clay or flesh organs into a human being's body, and the [Animate Vessel](#) Manifestation to empower it, thus giving that person access to the corresponding [Reprisal](#). The new organ also transforms the person it's grafted into; one of his Attributes, the one associated with the grafted organ, is replaced by whatever value the Goalenu gives the organ in the crafting. Craft Vessel's threshold to make a grafted organ drops to the highest of the Goalenu's Power, Finesse or Resistance, and when it uses Animate Vessel the Goalenu may spend Wisps above the activation cost to boost the Attribute linked to a clay organ at a rate of 1 Wisp/dot. The Attribute replaced by grafting a vessel organ cannot be raised further with Experiences.

Goalenu cannot replace a human's heart or brain, so they can't replace a human's Resolve or Intelligence, or grant the Reprisals [Let There Be Light](#) or [Ever Glowing Sun](#).

A human with a grafted Vessel part initially has a Revelation track equal to his own Resolve, plus the number of Clay parts in him. He takes -1 on all Social rolls for each Clay part. If his Revelation track is reduced to 0, all the grafted parts simply shut down. All dice pools involving the associated Attributes drop to 0; replaced limbs support no weight, replaced eyes leave you blind, a replaced tongue leaves you mute, replaced lungs suffocate you, and a replaced spine inflicts paralysis. Unlike a Goalenu, though, a human can regain lost dots of Revelation - by concentrating for a full round and taking 1 lethal damage, he gets back 1 dot of Revelation, up to his original maximum.

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### *Merit: Goalenu Graft (●●●●)*

| Requires [Stormwracked](#) Initiation, [Sworn](#) to Storms, or Princess following Storms

A Goalenu has replaced one of your organs with part of a Vessel. You gain access to either the flesh or clay Reprisal for the replaced organ. When you take this Merit, you may buy dots in the associated Attribute, ignoring the limits of humanity, and even those of your Inner Light score if you have one. You may not buy any dots in that Attribute after taking this Merit. You follow all the rules given above. You may take Goalenu Graft once for each Attribute, except Resolve and Intelligence.

If you have the Tempesta Invocation, you may invoke it when activating a Reprisal to add your dots in Tempesta to the dice pool.

**Drawback:** In addition to the other disadvantages mentioned above, if you try to break the Ban of Tempesta, the parts grafted in you will oppose your intentions, either by shutting down, or by attacking any servant of Darkness you are inclined to spare. In the latter case, they *will* use Reprisals if that will hurt the enemy, and you have the necessary resources, taking no regard for you. If you have Tempesta, they add your dots in it to the Reprisal dice pools for free.

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### *Flesh and Clay: Reprisals*

Activating a Reprisal requires a roll of the Goalenu's Rank + the associated Attribute. In a [Clash of Wills](#), the Goalenu uses the same dice pool.

**Dramatic Failure:** The shell of the Vessel weakens, as the unconstrained power of the activation proves too much for the clay and flesh. The character erases the final dot of their Revelation track, reducing it by one. Those with [grafts](#) suffer something worse; not only do they reduce the size of the Revelation track, but they also suffer one point of lethal damage for each graft they have, as their flesh rejects it.

**Failure:** The Reprisal fails to activate. The Wisps and the Revelation are wasted.

**Success:** The Reprisal activates as desired.

**Exceptional Success:** The extra successes are their own reward.

Organ	Attribute	Flesh Reprisal	Clay Reprisal
Heart	Resolve	<a href="#">Let There Be Light</a>	n/a
Brain	Intelligence	n/a	<a href="#">Ever Glowing Sun</a>
Eyes	Wits	<a href="#">Taken Revelation</a>	<a href="#">Cleansing Fire</a>
Right Arm	Strength	<a href="#">Honesty of Purpose</a>	<a href="#">Rip and Tear</a>
Left Arm	Dexterity	<a href="#">Betrayal of the Betrayers</a>	<a href="#">Immaterium</a>
Legs	Stamina	<a href="#">The Hunting Beast</a>	<a href="#">Unstoppable</a>
Tongue	Manipulation	<a href="#">Flesh Over My Flesh</a>	<a href="#">Veil of Ignorance</a>
Lungs	Presence	<a href="#">Venomous Words</a>	<a href="#">Storm's Vengeance</a>
Spine	Composure	<a href="#">Killing Words</a>	<a href="#">Unseen Hunter</a>

## *Ever Glowing Sun*

Requires Clay Brain  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Rank + Intelligence  
Cost: 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

The Goalenu sacrifices some of the vessel's integrity for fuel. It regains 1 Wisp per success rolled.

## *Taken Revelation*

Requires Flesh Eyes  
Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Rank + Wits - target's Resolve  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 0 - 2 Revelation  
Duration: instant

The Goalenu locks eyes with the target, dissolving memories with a single vitriolic thought, before letting the solution return to their own mind, to be studied at will. One memory per success is taken; the Chimerical Baron knowing it in full, and the target permanently losing access to it. The Goalenu may select an area of knowledge, or may just choose to take memories important to the target; either way, the Storyteller decides which memories exactly are taken. Any character may only suffer this Reprisal once per week, regardless of the source.

A Goalenu may spend 1 Revelation to inflict the [Fearful](#) Condition on the target for a week, or 2 Revelation to inflict the [Terrified](#) Condition for a day. The source of the fear is something prominent in the memories that were stolen.

## *Cleansing Fire*

Requires Clay Eyes  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Rank + Wits  
Cost: Wisps equal to the blast radius in yards, 0 or 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

The Goalenu closes its eyes, and when they open, they provide a sight into an inner green sun. Success on this Reprisal creates an [explosive](#); its Blast Area equals the Wisps spent, and its Damage and Force equal the activation successes. The explosive is also an incendiary, starting fires of Intensity 3.

The blast of green light may then be "thrown" as an aerodynamic grenade would be, but using Wits + Composure to target, rather than Dexterity + Athletics. The Goalenu may choose to accept one Revelation to make the explosive as a reflexive action, thus permitting them to fire on the same turn that they create it; if not, making the explosive is an instant action.

Vessels with this Reprisal cannot suffer the Blinded Tilt [CofD 281] from a non-magical source, and always retain dim vision even if blinded with magic (-3 to all rolls).

## *Honesty of Purpose*

Requires Flesh Right Arm  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Rank + Strength  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 0 or 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

The vessel is a supreme unison of flesh and clay and Light and ephemera. What lesser object, composed of only inanimate matter, can stand against it? This Reprisal enhances an attack against an inanimate object.



When resolving damage, the Durability of the target object is counted as 0, meaning that all damage is inflicted directly to Structure. A Goalenu with this Reprisal active may punch their way through a bank vault, or through a ritually sanctified Alhambran gate, with no signs of effort.

If the Goalenu takes 1 Revelation when activating this Reprisal the blow against the object also counts as a Killing Blow, with dice converted directly into successes. This may only be used against mundane inanimate objects, or those belonging to servants of the Darkness (actual [Creatures of Darkness](#), and Alhambrans, including Princesses of Tears).

### *Rip and Tear*

Requires Clay Right Arm  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Rank + Strength  
Cost: 1 Wisp, 0 or 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

The Goalenu's blows leave grievous wounds. This Reprisal supplements an attack, and adds the activation successes to its Damage; moreover, the vessel reduces the penalty for inflicting the Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened and Leg Wrack Tilts by the activation successes, to a minimum of -0.

If the Goalenu takes 1 Revelation when activating this power, the attack does aggravated damage.

Vessels with this Reprisal do lethal damage with unarmed attacks.

### *Betrayal of the Betrayers*

Requires Flesh Left Arm  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Rank + Dexterity  
Cost: 1 Wisp, 0 or 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

The Goalenu strikes with blinding speed. This Reprisal enhances an attack. Its target must succeed on a Wits + Composure roll to apply Defense against it, just as if it were delivered from ambush.

Once per scene, the Goalenu may take 1 Revelation when activating this Reprisal. If the target fails the Wits + Composure roll, the attack becomes a Killing Blow.

### *Immaterium*

Requires Clay Left Arm  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Rank + Dexterity  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 1 or 2 Revelation  
Duration: instant

It has been believed that man was created from dirt; flesh from clay. But the Chimerical Barons have shown that both clay and flesh are but a shell for the spirit. Raising their arm to the skies above, hand clenched, the vessel tears itself apart into a cloud of blood and sand, reforming in another location within sensory range in (10 - successes) turns. The Goalenu is not aware of what happens when so dematerialized, and may require a Wits + Composure roll to be able to act on the turn they reappear, if the situation has changed drastically in that time.

If the Goalenu takes 2 Revelation when activating this Reprisal, it can reform anywhere within its Dexterity in miles. In that case, the delay until reformation is increased to (10 - successes) minutes. The Goalenu may not use this option if leaving its current location would break its Ban.

Vessels with this Reprisal add +3 to their Speed.

## *The Hunting Beast*

Requires Flesh Legs  
Action: Instant  
Dice pool: Rank + Stamina  
Cost: 1 Wisp, 0 or 1 Revelation  
Duration: time of chase

You cannot run. You cannot hide. The Chimerical Barons are ready for you, and you will not escape them. This Reprisal enhances any kind of physical chase [CofD 84-85] whether vehicular or on foot. The Goalenu becomes tireless and gains a Speed equal to 1 + their target's (unless it was already higher) for the chase's duration, increasing the opponent's required successes by 3. On an exceptional success, the Goalenu's Speed increases to twice the opponent's, raising the opponent's threshold by 5.

If the Goalenu takes 1 Revelation, it controls the terms of the chase, whatever the circumstances; it automatically has the Edge in every turn.

## *Unstoppable*

Requires Clay Legs  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Rank + Stamina  
Cost: 2 Wisps, 0 or 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

Death did not stop the Last Guard of the Kingdom. Why would you believe that you can? Whenever the vessel is attacked, it may activate this Reprisal. Each success on the activation roll downgrades 1 point of aggravated damage to lethal, 1 lethal to bashing, or cancels 1 point of bashing damage.

If the Goalenu takes 1 Revelation when activating the Reprisal, the damage from that source is capped at 1 point, of whatever kind it was, instead of being downgraded. This works against environmental dangers just as much as it does direct attacks (in which case the Goalenu must activate this power once per damage increment); few things are more horrifying than a Goalenu climbing out of the vat of liquid metal you just pushed it into.

Vessels with this Reprisal cannot suffer the Knocked Down Tilt.

## *Flesh Over My Flesh*

Requires Flesh Tongue  
Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = Size of shape (usually 5)  
Dice pool: Rank + Manipulation  
Cost: 3 Wisps  
Duration: indefinite

A Vessel is but flesh and clay. Why should it not be able to welcome more flesh into itself? Why should it not use this new flesh as a mask, so that which must be done may be.

To use this Reprisal, the Goalenu must consume a human being, cramming bloody meat into their mouth, inflicting 1 lethal damage for each success rolled. The flesh itself is not digested, but burns to smoke and a fine white ash which is exhaled by the Goalenu (characters who take a flesh tongue [graft](#) may also need grafted lungs, to avoid damage from this). Once the target number has been reached, the vessel shifts and flows, transforming into the person consumed. Physically, they are identical, except for the fact that the vessel still suffers from the visual effects of low Revelation. The social penalty for clay organs does not apply when disguised in this manner. However, the Goalenu does not gain any of the target's memories, and so may suffer notable problems if it tries to impersonate its victim. The Goalenu may switch between its true form and its current disguise as an instant action. A Goalenu may only have one disguise at a time; if it consumes another person, it loses the older disguise.

If the Goalenu wishes to use Reprisals without ruining the disguise, it must take 1 additional Revelation whenever it activates one, on top of any other cost. If it fails to do this, the layer of stolen flesh crackles and burns away like charred meat, and access to the disguise is lost.



## *Veil of Ignorance*

Requires Clay Tongue  
Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Rank + Manipulation vs. targets' Resolve  
Cost: 1 Wisp/person affected  
Duration: 1 scene

The Goalenu's rage overwhelms and bewilders those who see it. To use Veil of Ignorance, the Goalenu must spend 1 Wisp for every person in its line of sight. Each person who rolls fewer successes than the Goalenu believes the Vessel is a normal human being for the rest of the scene, and cannot afterward remember the Vessel's appearance. This automatically conceals all the effects of a low Revelation bar.

Vessels with this Reprisal reduce their penalties on Social rolls from clay organs by 2; taking a clay tongue, that is, reduces the Social penalty by 1, net, instead of increasing it.

## *Venomous Words*

Requires Flesh Lungs  
Action: Instant and contested  
Dice pool: Rank + Presence vs. targets' Composure  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: 1 scene

The Goalenu incites its hearers to madness. Everyone who hears the Goalenu speak and rolls fewer successes than it does gains the Insane Tilt [CofD 285].

## *Storm's Vengeance*

Requires Clay Lungs  
Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll  
Dice pool: Rank + Presence  
Cost: 1 Wisp/roll, 1 Revelation  
Duration: 1 scene

The Goalenu summons the fury of its Queen. As it accumulates successes, the sky fills with thunderclouds, and rain and high winds buffet everyone and everything standing. The Reprisal applies the Heavy Winds Tilt [CofD 283] within a radius of 50 yards times half the Goalenu's accumulated successes, to a maximum of 250 yards (10 successes.) The wind's rating is highest within 50 yards of the Goalenu, equal to half the Goalenu's successes; for each step of 50 yards farther away, the wind's rating drops by 1. The vessel itself is not impeded by the storm in the least. The violent weather endures for the rest of the scene.

Vessels with this Reprisal are immune to inhaled toxins. They do require oxygen, but toxic gases don't affect them.

## *Killing Words*

Requires Flesh Spine  
Action: Instant and resisted  
Dice pool: Rank + Composure - lower of target's Wits and Manipulation  
Cost: 1 Wisp  
Duration: instant

The voice of the vessel corrodes those who listen to it. The Goalenu uses this Reprisal by speaking to a target - usually it utters threats, but a simple greeting is enough to carry the venom if it wants to be subtle. Each success inflicts 1 bashing damage on the target. The damage manifests as an unexplained weakness. Victims must be able to hear the Goalenu; unconscious people cannot be affected by Killing Words.

## Unseen Hunter

Requires Clay Spine  
Action: Reflexive  
Dice pool: Rank + Composure  
Cost: 1 Revelation  
Duration: instant

Vessels with this Reprisal walk through any barrier, and strike from an intangible ambush. The Goalenu converts its vessel into ephemera of its own type, sending it into Twilight; or returns it from that state to materiality.

## Let There Be Light

Requires Flesh Heart  
Action: Extended, 1 turn/roll, threshold = remaining unmarked health boxes  
Dice pool: Rank + Resolve  
Cost: The vessel's destruction  
Duration: instant

The cataclysmic energy contained within the vessel is released all at once, in one, terrible explosion. Raising its face to the skies, the Goalenu sings out, a scream of hate and rage and betrayal in the Royal Tongue, as they crack and glow, before finally, exploding. That is not the end for them, though, for the newly freed Goalenu is ready to continue its war.

When the target number is reached, the vessel becomes an incendiary [explosive](#) and goes off. It has a Damage and Force equal to the Goalenu's Rank and a Blast Area equal to the number of unmarked health boxes the vessel had remaining. This happens whether Let There Be Light was activated, or the Goalenu merely had its Revelation emptied through use of powers. However, if the activation was deliberate, then, in the middle of this inferno, the unbound Goalenu appears in the Materialized Condition, ready to wreak havoc on those who survived the blast. If the Vessel's Revelation ran out, the blast throws the Goalenu into Twilight Form.

## Stormwracked

*In his dreams he stands upon a plain covered in the legacies of war from all eras. Ruined buildings pockmarked by cannonfire and machine-gun bursts rise up beside ruined statues of Egyptian kings. Damaged arms and armor from a hundred centuries lie where they fell, tanks beside horse-barding and stone axes, trenches dug for crossbowmen. There are never any bodies, but the dried splatters of blood tell their own tale. Above it all is the Storm. The wind screams hymns to her rage. The lightning branches like fingers to pummel the ground. She cries out in a voice made of the screams of dying women and horses and the staccato beat of automatic weapons. She promises and demands vengeance, vengeance against the monsters who took his family.*

Wherever the Darkness treads it creates its own enemies. The Darkness is cruel, it hurts, it tortures, and it leaves behind friends and loves weeping over broken bodies. Their tears turn to hate, their rage spurs them to action. All across the globe individuals take up arms against the Darkness and fight. They fight under the banner of the [Seraphic General](#).

A Queen is more than just a person with immeasurable magical power. A Queen's power resonates in the heart of everyone who follows her ideals. Through this her followers unlock new potential: Princesses can apply Practical Magic and enhance their Charms with Invocations, Mortals can become Sworn and so unlock a measure of the Light's power.

Of the Queens none have demonstrated such a strong connection to their followers as the Queen of Storms. She goes beyond resonance, she exists in every heart that echoes the ideals of Tempesta, even those who have not learned her Invocation. To the Lady of Cleansing fire every feeling of hatred is a petition and she judges them all, if the anger is strong enough and directed at her ancient enemies she will ask those who feel it to fight in her name. In return she offers potent weapons.

No one knows why the Queen of Storms alone is able to do this. Perhaps it is because her transformation unlocked new abilities, maybe it's because she has no other way to interact or possibly the consolidation of many souls into a greater entity has made the Lady of Cleansing Fire stronger than the other Queens. Her followers of course don't care either way.

## *Stormwracked Cells*

Those who have heard the Queen of Storms have a variation of Mystery Cult Initiation [CofD 53] although the mystery cult of the Seraphic General is not a singular monolithic organization. It's a loosely organized network united more in purpose than anything else, and for all that they all share the goal of destroying the Darkness their methods, customs, rituals and reasons all differ. Even in the same city where it's not unknown for multiple Stormwracked cells to operate at the same time each individual cell is likely to believe that they are the only ones fighting the Darkness in the service of the Storm.

Following Tempesta's ideals makes for an effective but short career as a hunter of all things Tainted; meaning that most die in battle before they have long enough to think about recruitment and long term strategy. The tactics used by the Stormwracked tend to be loud and noticeable, though a few small groups can blend into the background of crime statistics as Stormwracked cells grow in size they inevitably draw the attention of law enforcement and anti-terrorist task forces, effectively putting an upper limit on the size of Stormwracked organization.

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### *Initiation Benefits*

- New recruits to the Seraphic General's cause gain one free dot in Stormwracked Dreams. This is a Merit similar to [White Rabbits](#), but the prophecies and portents come from the Queen of Storms, not from the Dreamlands; and the Queen, being who she is, always sends information about Dark tainted monsters to be killed. The Stormwracked may buy more dots in Stormwracked Dreams if he wants, but it isn't required. They are also Resonant with Tempesta [CofD 135], which allows them to support a [Goalenu](#) if one is sent to them.

- The Queen of Storms guides her servants in battle once they have proved themselves. The Stormwracked gains a free dot in the Improvised Weaponry Style [CofD 62] when they have the prerequisites for it.

Note that many Stormwracked of this rank are also [Sworn](#); though they typically lack the Bequests and Hopeful support that the Sworn of the Radiant Queens and Alhambra enjoy they still have a few advantages over the average human. While it's not unknown for mundane people to serve the Seraphic General in some capacity, no mundane will ever gain greater authority than this without Swearing themselves into the Seraphic General's service as one of her soldiers.

- The Sworn Guard has been fighting the War of Hope for millenia, and the Queen of Storms whispers in their ears how to find the Darkness so it may be purged. Those of the Guard find others who hear the voice of the Seraphic General can hear these shreds of sighs, screams and conversations lost in the fury of the Storm, granting them the Unseen Sense (Darkness) Merit. [CofD 60]

- Few Furies grow old and experienced enough to reach this rank, but those that have have grown very familiar with the Darkness, while also gaining a better understanding of the Queen of Storms and the advice she offers. Senior cell leaders gain a version of Encyclopedic Knowledge [CofD 44] related to creatures of the Darkness, the Queen of Tears, and the Goalenu, and automatically know how to summon one of the Chimerical Barons and what they require to sustain themselves.

Although some Furies of this rank have grown influential and well known among Hopeful society as the leaders of a large network of Stormwracked cells (and to the local government's anti-terrorism units), most simply lead a single cell that is more successful than usual.

- If any Stormwracked survived long enough to rise this high, the Queen of Storms would certainly take a personal interest in him. The most likely blessing for her to grant is to send him a Goalenu as a bodyguard and advisor; this Goalenu would act as a three-dot Mentor [CofD 53].

Finally, the Stormwracked may benefit from Royal Favors - the Queen of Storms herself works magic through them, burning their flesh to power it. Once per story, the player of a Stormwracked may ask for a Royal Favor. The Queen (represented by the Storyteller) responds by activating a Charm, either general or Tempesta-invoked, rated at dots no higher than the character's Stormwracked initiation. The Stormwracked does not pay the normal cost of the Charm or roll to activate it - instead, the Queen chooses the number of activation successes for the Charm, and the Stormwracked takes 1 resistant lethal damage for each success. If the Charm requires no roll to activate, the Queen inflicts 1 damage for each dot of the Charm. Yes, the Queen has killed Stormwracked who asked for her favor, when she thought truly potent magic was called for; it is no small risk to summon the personal attention of Tempesta's incarnation.

### *Ritual: Potter's Sacrifice*

Requires Stormwracked Initiation •, Sworn to Storms, or Princess following Storms  
Action: Extended, 1 minute/roll  
Dice pool: Dexterity + lower of Craft and Medicine  
Cost: 1 Wisp or Willpower, plus any damage transferred  
Duration: instant

The follower of Storms kneads a quantity of freshly dug clay with his bare hands in a bowl that has been consecrated to the Queen of Storms. (This bowl is made when learning the ritual, and no one can use another person's bowl. If it's destroyed, the follower cannot use Potter's Sacrifice until it is replaced.) As he works, his own blood and life pass into the clay, converting it into the raw stuff of a [Goalenu](#)'s vessel, which is then molded into a vessel's wounds to cure them.

Before the kneading starts, the follower declares how much damage, and the type of damage, the clay is intended to heal. Aggravated damage to a vessel must be healed completely before any lethal damage, and all lethal damage must be healed before any bashing damage. The follower must accumulate successes equal to the amount of damage healed, of all types; for each success rolled, he takes 1 damage of the type being healed (first aggravated, then lethal, then bashing.) Aggravated and lethal damage appears as bleeding from hands and wrists; if the follower heals only bashing damage, it appears as bruises on hands and arms.

When this step is complete, the follower molds the clay into the vessel's body, represented by further rolls. He must accumulate successes equal to the Goalenu's Rank to complete the repair, over those that inflicted the damage. The vessel gains no benefit from the clay until the last success is earned. The follower does not take damage during this stage of repair.

Two or more people who know Potter's Sacrifice may use it cooperatively, as a teamwork action. The primary actor takes all damage; if he is incapacitated or killed by it, a secondary actor may take over as a new primary and finish the repair.

# *The Queen of Mirrors*

**AKA:** The Hierophant, The Crown's Custodian, The Child Queen

**Former Kingdom:** Crystal Heril

**Followers' Epithets:** Lightbearers, Heirs, Brats (derogatory)

*Come on! Just a little bit more! You can do it! I'm leading you, and you don't want to let me down!*

*Yeah, see, I was just a 13-year old, wandering ignorant and doing silly things. But then I started having these odd dreams, and I found I could do these strange things that I could never before. I was really scared at first, but this really pretty lady with silver eyes told me about what I was, and how the Light had chosen me to lead it, how it was destiny. Everyone's just got to work together, and follow my orders, and we can beat the Darkness do it forever. I believe in you, you see, so that means you have to believe in yourself. It's your duty to fight for the Light.*

*And when we rebuild the Kingdom, everything won't just be okay again, it'll be better.*

Although the Queen of Mirrors is reckoned as one of the Twilight Queens by the Radiant Queens, this is not such a universal opinion among the Enlightened on Earth. The Crown's Custodian certainly rejects such a title, and in fact claims the so-called Radiant Queens to be nothing more than echoes, memories of Queens. In some areas, Princes and Princesses of Mirrors are welcome among the Radiant, for there is a desperation for allies, and far too many among the Radiant hold dual allegiance, not seeing the contradiction in such split loyalties. Some are thankful that the followers of Tears and Storms cannot seem to do the same, while others view that as the true cancerous nature of Mirrors showing through, reflecting and stealing the magnificence of others, while contributing nothing themselves.

Darker secrets lurk within the heart of Mirrors, though. It has been noted that sometimes the psyches of her followers are as fragile as the glass and silver that she is named for, that they lack the resilience of the other followers of the Light. Some blame the stresses that the Heirs impose on themselves, the constant self-expectations, while others suspect something darker, that gazing into a mirror too long, and, worse, modelling yourself after it, cannot be good for a mind.

## *Tales from Behind the Mirror*

None are ever invited to the realm of the Hierophant Queen, save each Prince and Princess of Mirrors who visit but once in their dreams, when she reveals their future to them. The Last Empress may sit in the Heart of the Darkness, weeping as the voices of her hidden city wash over her, and the Seraphic General may ebb and flow to the hate of men, but the Hierophant is self-cursed to be alone, in her tower of reflections as she gazes out beyond the edges of eternity, searching the future. No eyes save hers gaze upon the secrets hidden in the Hall of Future Reflections, which surrounds and protects her inner sanctum. No other living soul has looked into the Lunargent Speculum, which once stood in the courtyard to her temple-palace, for all those pure of heart to gaze into and see glimpses of their own future, joys to be enjoyed and terrors to be prevented. And what is within her personal quarters, where the motifs of silver and mirrors are broken to show her innermost heart, is completely unknown, unseen even in the dream-flickers that have mapped out clues of her hidden place. According to some readings of Prophecies, there may be hidden paths within the Dreamlands for a wandering Noble to wander that lead to the Queen's Realm, for "... in quicksilver chance lies the Edge and the Sleep, and the Heart Turned Without may find the Lady of Reflections within her recursions by following the smile of the rainbow." If this is true, there have been no confirmed reports of anyone ever meeting the Queen of Mirrors within her hidden place, save her followers - and they do not return to it.

Instead, the Queen of Mirrors contacts those who serve her and those who she would speak with by other means. To those who have caught her eye, every reflective surface is a means of communication. Like a fleeting ghost she takes the form of the reflections, whose eyes gleam silver, and who talk in the voice of the mimicked. Those reflections are bound to the mirrors, though, and when she must risk herself in a Darkened world - and she does not like to do that often - she can weave herself a false body. She casts neither shadow nor reflection nor does her voice echo, and like her servitor-priests she can wear many faces. In that form she wanders the

world, observing and sometimes acting - though the false body is little more potent than a mortal, only a tiny fragment of her imperial might - and though she does not like to interfere for both fear of Darkness and ruining her own prophecies, there have been times when she has broken her self-imposed restriction. The destruction of a false body does not kill her, but it has been observed to weaken her capacity to act in the real world in the short term, and so she does not often take risks - not if there is another way.

## *Philosophy*

The philosophy of Mirrors is a simple ideal: an ideal of self exultation that reflects a Princess's own light back at her, dazzling her eyes so that she may be spared the painful sights of Sensitivity.

**The Mandate of Light:** It's all in the name: *Princess*. The Lightbringers know that as royalty they possess the divine right of queens. No earthly authority is above them for they derive their mandate from the Light itself.

**Modesty is a False Virtue:** A Blossoming is not a random occurrence. It's a rare event that only affects the best of humanity and bestows ability beyond mortal men and women. Trying to be just another of the masses is neither honest nor helpful. No matter the circumstances, one of the Enlightened should use her natural brilliance to take the lead. Anything less is a waste of their talents and a disservice to everyone who is depending on them. It is their duty to take charge, and therefore it is the duty of everyone else to acknowledge that duty, and aid them in that goal. They're only trying to help, after all.

**Hard Choices Imply You're Not Looking Hard Enough:** Throughout her life every Princess will come across a situation which seems hopeless. No matter what she does someone is going to get hurt and all she can do is accept responsibility, take tough choices and look for the least of many evils. To a Noble of Mirrors this is defeatism and laziness of the worst order. Of course there is a good solution! It is their duty to never accept defeat, never look for the least-evil outcome but instead to throw everything they have into the search for a solution without sacrifice. The very idea that they accept the death of one person to save five more is abhorrent! They should save all six, and they will, because they have justice on their side!

If only the World of Darkness didn't put so many hard choices in their way, and respected the fact that they're fighting the good fight...

## *Duties*

One might imagine that the Court of Mirrors duties revolve around becoming the True Heir, maybe fulfilling an ancient prophecy or two. In fact the Queen of Mirrors is quite clear that becoming the True Heir isn't something you accomplish. You just be yourself and it will happen, because the True Heir is destiny.

Consequently the Court don't really have formal duties, they are allowed to go at their own pace. Take some time off for dating. Having permission, and a philosophical justification, to get some much needed sleep once in a while is perhaps the most tempting reason to join the Court.

## *Background*

Like the other Twilight Queens it is possible to divide the Heirs into those who were once among the Radiant and those who were not. Those who left the Radiant for the Lightbringers tend to have been among the best. They were the leaders of their Nakama, they were martyrs who went above and beyond for the least of people and they were isolated. They had to stand brave while their allies were allowed to be scared, they gave expecting nothing when others could ask for help in return and they couldn't cope. The Hierophant told them that it was OK to think of themselves. That they could still make a difference, the biggest difference of all, without such self sacrifice and hardship. Like a drowning man grabbing a lifebuoy they took her philosophy and her quest. She in turn showed them how to build a mirror around their souls reflecting the light inwards.

As for the others. It would be nice if there were a uniform background that drew the newly blossomed to the Hierophant, but, sadly, that is not true. The followers of the Radiant Queens may call them hubristic and shallow, but the Lightbearers can have been the nerdy boy sitting in the back just as much as they can have been the queen bee socialite prior to their Blossoming. They come from all socioeconomic brackets, and can be driven by an urge for respect and dignity never known before just as much as arrogant entitlement. Many of them,

after the Blossoming, though, have an odd duality of self-belief and neediness; they can believe in themselves, but they need others to see them be self-reliant. They are people who need other people around, even when they are in charge.

Perhaps the most tragic aspect of the Queen of Mirrors is that she seems to have a particular allure for the youngest Blossomings. It is unclear whether they find her more attractive than any of the other options, or whether she specifically believes that they are more likely to be the True Heir to the Kingdom, but too many of those precious Blossomings have been lured to her. The Queen of Mirrors is already tempting for the idealism of many Enlightened, with her promises and her easy solutions and self-belief; how much worse must it be for the young mind, suddenly exposed to Sensitivity and given power?

## *Character Creation*

Followers of Mirrors favor flashy and impressive actions over subtlety and favor Power over Resistance and Resistance over Finesse. Lightbringers typically cultivate skills that focus on what their fellows deem important. When they maintain a level of self awareness the Heirs tend to favor Manipulation and Wits to manage underlings and make the quick decisions leadership requires. No matter where they find themselves grace and dignity are always key for a leader so more successful Lightbringers have good Composure. While all members adore the spotlight the court is divided between those who can lure others into their vainglory and those who only think they can meaning that Presence tends to either extreme.

A socially successful Princess of Mirrors tends to attract sycophants or distant but fawning crowds but few true friends meaning that while she may have dots in Retainer or Allies, Circle tends to be low. Since they base their Transformed self on how they wish to be seen by others, Striking Looks limited to the transformed identity is common. Those who take the Mandate of Light literally may attempt to cultivate White Rabbits to better speak with the light itself. Destiny is not common, but Heirs are more likely to have it than other Nobility, for the Heiropphant looks for Princesses who have been marked by fate.

**Heraldry:** Like any true egotist the courtiers of Mirrors care very deeply about other people's opinions. They care about how other people look at them. Nothing reflects this truth more than their Transformed appearance. When a Princess adopts the ideals of the Court of Mirrors her Transformed appearance stops reflecting how she sees her true self and embodies how she wants others to see her. There is certainly a lot of room for variety, she may wish to appear powerful, intelligent, beautiful, pure or pious but at heart she is reflecting the ideals and standards of those who surround her.

When she is reflecting mortal culture rather than that of her fellow Hopeful this can make the Princess of Mirrors seem almost ordinary; the most popular cheerleader at school simply doesn't stand out in a Nakama of gallivant knights and the nobility of future civilisations. Their iconography tends to compensate as hard as it can within the rigid confines of social normality. Expensive designer clothing, jewellery and subtle hints of the superhuman. At least one Princess of Mirrors glows softly.

## *Practical Magic*

The Heirs of the Crown's Custodian are always at their very best. They can assume their transformed self at any time with a reflexive action and remain Transformed indefinitely. Power is there for a reason, not to be hidden. In fact it requires deliberate effort to become mundane; a Princess of Mirrors must make a Transformation roll to resume their normal form, much as a normal Noble would have to do to Transform. A high Belief score has no effect on an Heir's Practical Magic.

## *Invocation: Specchio*

The Invocation of Specchio is the principle embodied and founded by the Queen of Mirrors, and which her favored find comes naturally to them. Specchio is usually turned inwards, more than any other Invocation it can propel a Princess upwards to monumental heights, the abilities it grants tend to be flashy and showy but no less effective for them. Fittingly Specchio can sometimes be inverted as though looked at through a mirror, though less common to making the Princess better than others it can also be used to make others worse than the Princess.

**Specchio has the unique disadvantage that its power leads to madness.** When a Princess invokes Specchio her mind becomes a bit like mirror glass, prone to crack at the first blow - she takes the [Unbalanced](#) Condition, if she doesn't have it yet. Every use of the Invocation leaves her Unbalanced, even when it applies at no cost.

Specchio applies at no cost when the target of a Princess' Charm is the Princess herself; it also applies at no cost when the target is a literal mirror constructed for purpose, when the Princess intends to set an example, to convert others to her cause, to impress others, when failure would lead to humiliation or embarrassment, to focus attention on herself or to prove how unique and special she is.

Those who would use Specchio are expected to be the shining light for the world, the Invocation does not resonate with Princesses who show humility, who deny or attempt to downplay their own accomplishments, or let others shine brighter. Even on a simple disagreement the Princess must prove herself correct, or at least convince the crowd, or else she loses access to this Invocation until the next day.

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## *Stereotypes*

- **Clubs:** Wasting your life where no one but the beasts can see you, how does that help anyone?
- **Diamonds:** Maths class is BOOORING!
- **Hearts:** Formality and protocol. You wouldn't need any of that if you were as good as me.
- **Spades:** What's the point of a joke if people don't realize how funny you are?
- **Swords:** You know, your bravery and... stuff is pretty cool. But I think you should do it this way instead! Chop-chop!
- **Tears:** Why are you wasting your life defending a city? You're more important than a city.
- **Storms:** You fight, and then you die. Get someone else to die, royals are too important.
- **Mirrors:** No, you're *not* the True Heir! / am!
- **Vampires:** Creature of the night, begone in the name of the Light! Unless you're one of the hot ones that I can save, of course!
- **Werewolves:** You're the archetypical wild man, filled with raw animal strength and passion. How on earth did you make that look savage and unattractive?
- **Mages:** Years of study, and you can't even do magic in front of people? You got the boring powers.
- **Prometheans:** God, is that thing ugly.
- **Changelings:** You're hiding, that means you're scared. Now me, I'm not hiding from anything!
- **Sin-Eaters:** Sweet party. Real nice... um, death-theme. And the... ghosts. And... um. I have to go.
- **Mummies:** Stop worshipping it! It's old and ugly. I'm the one you should be worshipping!
- **Beasts:** I'll vanquish you and show the world how awesome I am!
- **Mad Scientists:** You can't show them all with a death ray, there'd be no one left to be shown. It's a good thing I came along, clearly you need my help.
- **Leviathans:** Um, eww! I think it's trying to talk to me.
- **Hunters:** I'm glad someone's trying to do something, I think I'll make you my knights.
- **Mortals:** Don't worry everything will be perfect, you just have to do every little thing I say.

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## *Inspiration*

Libby Chessler ([Sabrina the Teenage Witch](#))  
The evil cheerleader archetype in general

*Why don't you let me do that for you ... you could at least be grateful, commoners!*



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## *What's so Bad About These Girls?*

When talking about the Heirs asking what is so villainous is a fair question; and in truth even the Radiant don't always consider the Lightbearers among their enemies. Unlike the Ravens – who steal hope to let Alhambra live another day – and the Furies – whose crusade against the Darkness often kills innocent bystanders – the Lightbearers don't do anything that's blatantly immoral. While nothing prevents a Princess of Mirrors from being a bad person, most rarely sink to anything worse than vanity and general bitchiness.

The truth is that while the Brats aren't evil, their views are completely impractical and can often get people hurt. A Radiant Princess when called to defend a village against a raid might train the people into a militia, she knows that some will die in battle but their sacrifice will keep the village safe. In contrast a Brat would tell everyone to relax and let her protect the village single-handedly with her "unstoppable" magic, so no one needs to sacrifice anything. When it inevitably turns out that she cannot fight one hundred people alone, the untrained villagers are slaughtered.

Even when it is not a matter of life and death, the Lightbearers thrive among the sort of idolization that causes one to rely utterly on the Heir; then inevitably the Court's impractical philosophies causes the Brat to fail everyone who placed their trust in her.

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# *The Dreamlands*

*I can't go back to yesterday because I was a different person then.*

—Alice

The home of the Radiant Queens, a land of infinite adventure and wonder that, for every Princess, lies just beyond the wall of sleep ... and that had, once, entrapped the Hopeful in webs of illusion, drawing them away from the real world's pain.

## *The Trap*

The monstrous armies that conquered the Light's Kingdom in the age before history were led (or so modern Princesses assume) by subtle and devious generals who wished to secure the Darkness' victory for all time. They found a way to prevent the return of Princesses, the Light's most capable servants, by constructing a trap for their souls, deep within the mind and soul of the world. The trap was a mirror, reflecting the Light shining on the world; it drew to itself the souls of the Princesses who died in the Kingdom's fall, and enfolded them within an imaginary world where they could dream of fighting Darkness and defeating it, without disputing its sway over its new conquest.

And the trap worked, possibly beyond its makers' expectations: not only were the Princesses of the Kingdom's day drawn into the dream and held, but so was everyone whom the Light touched and empowered in all the long ages since. And as the millennia passed, the illusion grew and ramified, reflecting the thoughts and dreams of every human alive, but shaped by memories of the captives into a new Kingdom, governed as the fallen Kingdom was by a council of Queens, and surrounded by a wilderness where monsters bred and made war.

## *The Release*

And then, everyone within that imaginary land was struck by revelation: they knew, quite abruptly, that they were dreaming, and life in a truer reality lay open to them. Many of them took the opportunity immediately, returning to the bodies of infants just conceived; and these were born, and grew, and flourished, and before long they Blossomed, becoming the first Princesses of the modern age. And as they Blossomed, the new Princesses discovered that the lands of dream they had left to become human again still existed; for gates to those lands stood open to them whenever they slept, and the souls they left behind welcomed their visits, begging for news of the waking world. Many more souls have followed those first pioneers; new Princesses are born and Blossom every year.

Naturally, the Hopeful wondered what it was that revealed the Dreamlands' true nature to its inhabitants. Over the decades since the Release, speculations have been floated, arguments proposed and refuted. It's now generally believed that the key event was the first landing on the Moon in July of 1969. The Queen of Diamonds argues that the Dreamlands are in some metaphysical way linked to the Moon, that their property of reflecting a more fundamental reality is tied to the Moon's appearance of shedding light that in fact is reflected from the Sun. And so, in her opinion, when a human foot trod the lunar surface, by proving the Moon to be not luminous in itself, it also proved the Dreamlands to be not real in themselves ...

## *Entering the Dreamlands*

*Have you been half asleep and have you heard voices? I've heard them calling my name.  
Is this the sweet sound that called the young sailors? The voice might be one and the same...*

—Rainbow Connection

Although the Dreamlands no longer trap Light-touched souls after they die, they call out to such souls in sleep, and - almost, but not quite, inaudibly - to everyone not in the Darkness' grasp. Hearing that call is easiest when one of the horrors or cruelties which dot the World of Darkness has touched you; a mundane person

whose life is presently happy pays no attention to dream-promises of a world where virtue can triumph and often does. Those with any Sensitivity hear the promises intermittently; once they've Blossomed the Nobility hear them every night, and nearly all of them follow the paths leading to the Dreamlands.

The journey begins in a reverie; at rest in a safe and familiar place, you find yourself drifting half-awake, giving half an ear to familiar noises, and then - you notice something. It isn't dangerous, but it doesn't belong. You're in your back garden, say, and a passing rabbit pulls a smartphone out of his coat pocket to check the time; you've gotten up in the middle of the night for a glass of water, and there's a light on inside your closet. So you investigate (who wouldn't?) and find a passageway. It's a bit difficult to get through in some way - the rabbit went down a burrow that's very big for it, but pretty cramped for you; the closet has an extra door in the back that opens *just* wide enough for you to squirm through it - but you instinctively feel that the passage will lead somewhere wonderful, if you can but follow it long enough.

Then, if this is the first time you've seen a passage like this, you probably wake up. But you'll have the dream again, and the next time you'll make an effort, get through the opening and find a labyrinth, filled with curious mementos that remind you of things you'd mostly forgotten. But you mustn't stay to remember, you have somewhere to be; so you go on until something stops you - a steep cliff you have to climb, an iron gate with an intricate puzzle lock, a guard in knightly armor barring the only door? Probably you wake again before you solve that obstacle, but you'll meet it again another night. And after that obstacle, or maybe two or three, the cramped corridors or narrow paths open up and past one last door you see a wide sky ... and then you have arrived, and discover the Dreamlands.

Collectively the passages from the waking world to the Dreamlands are called Crawlspace, largely because almost all of them force dreaming travelers to crawl for a large part of the way. Entering and navigating Crawlspace is much like social maneuvering, in which the dreaming character is considered to be persuading herself. The impression level - thus, the time the dreamer needs to reach a Door - varies with the dreamer's awareness of the Light and her state of mind. A wholly mundane character initially has a hostile impression, and needs unusual circumstances even to begin the journey. A character with Sensitivity or the [Dream Travel Merit](#) has an average impression; a Princess has a good impression. (With an average or good impression, a journey to the Dreamlands begins as a series of linked dreams, occurring weekly or daily; with an excellent or perfect impression the Crawlspace can be traversed in a single night.) A character who currently has the Shaken or Spooked Conditions improves her impression by one step, as does one who has recently gained a dot of Shadows (that is, if she hasn't tried to reach the Dreamlands since gaining the Shadows, raise her impression one step). However, a character not deliberately seeking out the Dreamlands (as, for instance, before she knows they exist) worsens the impression by one step.

The entrance to Crawlspace a dreamer finds, and the successive obstacles she meets along the way, are Doors, erected by her subconscious awareness that she's leaving her responsibilities behind her and might not be able to return (for while the Dreamlands cannot imprison anyone now, that remains the purpose of their construction.) The number of Doors standing in her path begin equal to the lower of her own Resolve and Composure. Any relation between the dreamer's Virtue, Vice or Aspirations and the goal of getting to the Dreamlands has the same effect on the Doors and impression level as for a social maneuver. Safe and careful travel opens Doors in sequence with ordinary actions, as for opening Doors in social maneuvers. An impatient dreamer *can* try to force all remaining Doors in the passage with a single action, and even gains a bonus if that action is a breaking point for her, as for forcing Doors in social maneuvers.

From the outside, by the way, a journey into the Dreamlands looks just like falling asleep, or just being asleep. Those who are awake when they look for an entrance will nod off where they are, or wander sleepily to their bed, at the moment that (from their viewpoint) they find what they're looking for, and open the first Door on the path. The inadvertent travelers - those taking their first trip not knowing what they'll find, and those summoned by a White Rabbit to hear a message - they are already sleeping, and just begin to dream of their passage.

Once found, a Crawlspace passage continues to exist as long as the dreamer remembers it, and vanishes if she forgets it. (One Princess had a doorway in the depths of her bedroom closet, which faded while she went to university. A few days after coming home, when she needed to visit the Dreamlands, she remembered the old door and there it was.) Thus once the dreamer has stood at the Dreamlands' border, walking the path there again is a simpler matter whether she turned back or went on. Each successful trip down a Crawlspace passage either removes one Door the next time the dreamer takes that passage, or improves her impression level for that passage by one step; these modifiers are cumulative, though the number of closed Doors in the passage

are never less than one, and the impression level cannot rise above perfect. Failed trips and hard leverage add Doors as their analogs in social maneuvering do, and those modifiers are cumulative too.

A Crawlspace passage normally leads to a district in the Dreamlands that reflects the dreamer's physical location or social context in some way, and be fairly close to (but not actually in) a house or village where the people are hospitable. A dreamer who has become familiar with other parts of the Dreamlands, however, can move their Crawlspace's exit to another district. To do this she must pass more obstacles, adding Doors to her journey; the number depends on her [sympathetic connection](#) to her intended destination. Add 1 Door when the dreamer has Intimate Sympathy, 2 Doors for Known Sympathy, and 3 Doors for Acquainted Sympathy. After being moved in this way, the passage stays where the dreamer put it. (A Princess always has Intimate Sympathy to the seats of her Queen, her [Nation](#), and her [Embassy](#) within the Dreamlands.)

Dreamers can try to wake themselves as long as they still remember they are dreaming. If a dreamer stands at the exit from Crawlspace she took to reach the Dreamlands, this is easy. She need only walk back down the passage; no roll is required. If she's been traveling for many experienced days, though, that means just as long a journey back. A dreamer also has the option to move her Crawlspace's exit to her location. This is similar to opening Crawlspace and uses the same system, with two changes. First, the impression level for summoning an exit is excellent, giving one roll each experienced hour, but a failure means the dreamer cannot wake again for a full experienced day. Second, the obstacle isn't the dreamer's reluctance but the Dreamlands' seductive illusion. This is easily overcome when the dreamer's memory of waking life is clear - the default number of Doors is only 2 - but each Galemark the dreamer has gained adds another Door to the total.

Crawlspace entrances are not truly physical passages, though they appear as such; they are in fact mnemonic devices. Thus one dreamer cannot use another's entrance - in fact, she can't even see another's entrance without help. The Nobility and Shikigami, though, have a special status in the Dreamlands that allows them to help other dreamers find an entrance where they've already opened one. Senior Princesses very often guide the newly Blossomed into the Dreamlands to acquaint them with their inheritance and their peers. From the outside this looks much like hypnosis; the guide talks to her companion in low pleasant tones, establishing a rhythm and describing the entrance and the passage beyond it, until the companion falls into reverie. After a few minutes of this the guide rolls Presence + Empathy.

**Dramatic Failure:** The companion snaps out of the reverie. Her impression level for entering the Dreamlands from this location worsens by one step.

**Failure:** The companion drops off to sleep, or wakes up. She does not enter Crawlspace.

**Success:** The companion finds the guide's Crawlspace entrance and opens it. The number of Doors to pass is set from the companion's traits, but the guide's help opens one Door without a roll. Also, during this passage only, the companion uses the guide's impression level.

**Exceptional Success:** The guide's help is especially effective. The companion opens two Doors without rolling.

**Modifiers:** the companion is sleepy (+1), the companion drinks hot chocolate or warm milk (+1), the companion's impression level here is average (-1), the companion's impression level here is hostile (-3)

Exits from the Dreamlands are as personal as entrances, but a Noble or Shikigami can help dreamers leave the Dreamlands just as they help dreamers enter; the system is the same.

## *Dream Forms*

A character entering the Dreamlands leaves his physical body behind in a trance; his mind and soul acquire a new "Dream Form" while projected beyond her body. Characters in Dream Form follow different rules for Attributes and Health. They have the three Attributes of ephemeral beings instead of the nine Attributes of physical beings. For mundane characters, the Power of the Dream Form equals Intelligence, its Finesse equals Wits, and its Resistance equals Resolve. The Dream Form's Health depends on the dreamer's will and potential; it equals Resistance + the character's Attribute cap. Losing Dream Health imposes wound penalties just as losing standard Health does. A character who's "killed" in Dream Form wakes in his physical body, and takes the [Soul Shocked](#) Condition.

The relationship between time in the Dreamlands and time in waking life is strangely variable; it seems to depend much more on the density of one's experience than on any objective clock. So, for instance, an exciting

fight can consume half an hour in the real world's time, but appear to last only five minutes or so; but a long journey through safe districts might compress a full day's experience into only an hour of dreaming time. (As a rule of thumb, an event in the Dreamlands takes as much time in the waking world as it would take the *players* to roll the dice and figure out what happened, while the time it takes in the Dreamlands is what it would require in real life.) There are even cases of Princesses parting in the Dreamlands, and finding on their next meeting that one has experienced a few hours packed with incident, while the other has been traveling for days ...

A Princess can enter the Dreamlands in either a mundane or transformed Dream Form, and change between them with transformation actions as if awake. In mundane form her Attributes and Health use the same rules that mundane characters do. While transformed, a Princess adds the highest of her transformed Intelligence, Strength or Presence dots to her Power; the highest of her transformed Wits, Dexterity or Manipulation dots to her Finesse; and the highest of her Resolve, Stamina or Composure dots to her Resistance. In addition, her Dream Health equals her Resistance + her transformed Attribute cap. Maintaining one's Regalia in the Dreamlands is a good deal easier than it is in waking life. A Princess rolls to remain transformed only once every day, by the Dreamlands' clock. A dramatic failure on that roll, however, has a more serious consequence; even after the Princess recovers her phylactery, she cannot transform within the Dreamlands for a full experienced day after her failure.

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### *Who can enter the Dreamlands?*

Theoretically, any mundane person can find Crawlspace passages and travel to the Dreamlands as they sleep. In practice it takes both an appropriate Vice and a Condition of mental disturbance for a mundane character to find his first Door, and appropriate Vices are rare. (A Vice like "nostalgic", yearning for an unattainable ideal and scorn for the present, would be appropriate.) Nearly every visitor to the Dreamlands who isn't Light-touched has been guided there by someone else.

The Dream Travel psychic power and the Dream Travel thaumaturgical ritual (both from Second Sight) grant the ability to find Crawlspace passages, if it occurs to the psychic or thaumaturge to look for such a thing. Characters with either ability use the rules above, and start with an average impression level. It is worth noticing that most psychics and thaumaturges have no greater connection to the Light than mundane people. The Dreamlands trap is not targeted at them, and they have no subconscious warnings when entering the Dreamlands. To them the Crawlspace looks very different: it resembles the door to wherever they strongest associate with feelings of home, safety and security. Stepping through the door they find themselves in an idealized memory of that place.

Mages have their own ways to investigate the collective thoughts, dreams and aspirations of humanity, which they call the Astral Realms, and a fair number of them know how to share or alter the dreams of individuals. A mage can combine these powers to follow a Princess into the Dreamlands: once he has succeeded in entering her mind, meditating as if in a demense or Hallow guides the mage through her Crawlspace to the Dreamlands where she entered it. However, if the Princess returns before the mage does, the closing of her Crawlspace forces the mage violently back to his body and inflicts the Soul Shocked Condition on him.

Unfortunately the careful mental discipline mages use to explore the Astral Realms is directly contrary to the drifting reverie that makes Crawlspace passages visible; mages cannot enter Crawlspace on their own. That doesn't mean mages can't enter the Dreamlands; only that if they can, they do it by another route. If any mages have found such routes, they aren't telling.

Changelings can walk through and reshape dreams, when they are personal to the dreamers. The Dreamlands, though, aren't private, but shared among all those touched by the Light. A changeling can observe them through a sleeping traveler, and even join the dreamer there, but trying to shape the Dreamlands imperils his sanity. Entering or leaving the dream of a Dreamlands traveller resolves normally, and the dream's Intensity is found as for a normal dream. Analyzing the dream, however, reveals it to be "prophetic" - this is a warning not to meddle that most changelings know to heed. A changeling who disregards the warning and changes the dream, or who alters its Intensity in any way, arouses the Dreamlands' defenses: the [Gales](#) come howling through him, scrambling his perceptions and memory. The changeling suffers a breaking point against Clarity, taking a penalty equal to his successes when changing the dream.

The Beasts (from *Beast: the Primordial*) walk between supernatural realms with remarkable ease, and their nature as embodied nightmares makes the Dreamlands especially amenable to them. If a Beast suc-

cessfully uses Under the Bed on a character in the Dreamlands, he appears next to the character's Dream Form and may choose to stay there rather than continue to his Lair. Any Beast who knows of the Dreamlands may open a Primordial Pathway to a location within them, at the same modifier he uses for places in the Temenos. And Beasts can make Chambers in their Lairs from places in the Dreamlands just as they do in the waking world.

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## Topography

The Dreamlands often change quickly as one travels. There's a feeling that the Foundation is below, and - below is consistent. Apart from that all bets are off. Despite appearances ranging from bizarre to normal places within the Dreamlands often seem to reflect places on Earth, or the popular idea of places of earth, or (more strangely) places found only in novels, or ideas, or concepts. Even odder is that regardless of how normal or how bizarre the places look, a visitor can (eventually) learn to understand how they work. A city might look like it was designed by a collaboration between M.C. Escher and Dr Seuss but it still has a government, an economy, trade with nearby settlements, residents with homes, jobs and families. With lots of time and effort a Princess can learn how it all works. Just as she can learn what it reflects from Earth, and even discover new things about what it reflects.

A further oddity of these reflections is that, while they frequently contain things with writing on them, the writing never looks like the text that would appear in the reflected place. In minor cases, Princesses might find a discarded fast-food box, but the script on it is flowing and cursive, elaborately decorated in gold leaf. In more extreme cases, everything is written backwards, or there are never any vowels, or the scripts are from another part of the world entirely. Less obvious is that these reflections are chock full of houses. Wherever the Princess travels she will occasionally catch a glimpse of a door, window or a snatch of a wall in the corner of her eye only to realize it was just a tree and a trick of the light. If the Princess really looks, the dream domains can seem to be built of nothing but houses folded in on each other in defiance of any sane geometry. Scholars are divided as to whether these houses are merely a representation of some human's connection to the place or concept this Dreamlands domain is reflecting. Or if these houses are physically a person's soul, visible everywhere in the Dreamlands they have an emotional connection too. Regardless, the question is academic. There is no way to open them and people almost never come out, they simply exist. These strange houses are unrelated to the dwellings used by Dreamlanders, which are much less mysterious and easy to enter.

Sometimes you can stumble across one man's neuroses writ large across the landscape (while most other humans never even feature), while in other places you can walk along a stairway made of light, up into the heavens to walk along the surface of a Mars covered in unknown ruins inscribed in runes which do not resemble the Royal Tongue. You may stumble across a town which appears almost like the real world, save that none of the brands match, and the streets are filled with a parade of strange, eternally dancing figures of bronze. A Princess could be walking down a quiet forest path only to turn a corner and find herself facing an elegant renaissance city where the buildings all merge together into a solid block that gently curves away from the ground. Or she might find arriving at a quiet country village where the people are friendly, the sun is shining but the buildings look like cubist art and the inhabitants seem to have stepped from the scrapbook of a slightly drunk dada artist. One Nakama found a cursed area, almost overshadowed by the Darkness, where the sharp-fanged folk ritually consumed their victims. Only one made it out alive, the monsters dragging the others to their altars and eating them in a way that killed them in the real world, hunks of flesh torn out of their sleeping bodies, in the name of the "Red Word".

The wild districts where these things can be found are all, however, many days' travel from the lands the Radiant Queens govern - the Dreamlands' cartographers say that one moves outward to find them, and inward to return to the Queens' seats. The most confusing thing about navigating the Dreamlands is that "inward" and "outward" have no simple relationship with the ordinary three dimensions of space ... and there are any number of districts that lie at the same north/south and east/west position, but further inwards of other districts. Very often the traveler finds that one pass through a ridge of low hills leads to a pleasant valley, while another pass a mile to the east opens on a wide plain cut by a great river, which runs just where the valley ought to be, and isn't. Dreamlanders say their home is folded on itself; north/south, east/west and up/down they call the *traveling* directions, and in/out is a *folding* direction. There is a second folding direction, called *deosil*/widdershins, along which one travels by moving around the Queens' seats - *deosil* keeps them on one's right, *widdershins* keeps it on the left.

The distance outward from the Queens' seats has an importance in the Dreamlands beyond the way it allows districts to overlies each other. In the lands under their authority, the mysterious, reality-bending Gales blow with little force, and the geography is not just Earthlike but almost stable. The border marches, where the Queens' subjects travel and trade but do not stay, have Gales of moderate force; new buildings sometimes spring up overnight, towns and districts might appear or rearrange themselves. In the most distant lands, the Gales blow wildly, falling still for a moment only to burst anew with immense force. It is here that the traveler may find herself walking through a man's nightmare, magnified to a country of dread. It is here, also, that she may find a space grown strangely thin and tenuous, where objects can sometimes vanish while her back is turned; or a place jumbled with curios and wonders brought together, though by no obvious means, from every corner of the world. There are tales of monstrous or alien things to be found in the far outward districts: a redoubt of [Alhambra](#) in a district haunted by Darkness; a waste of ash and cinders where [Goalenu](#) mold porcelain figurines that hunt with burning green eyes; a snow-capped peak, topped by a fortress made of clockwork ticking away in a slow rotation, from which gray-robed figures gaze through telescopes at the Dreamlands' stars.

## *The Gales*

The Dreamlands reflect the combined hopes, thoughts, feelings and aspirations of mankind. The risks of travelling such a place should be obvious: Humanity's thoughts change on a daily, nay, a second by second basis. Against such a tide as all of humanity, what can one mind do to remain static? Any Princess who travels too far from the stable regions of the Dreamlands risks being blown away, transformed as just another fleeting thought in the vast collective identity.

While a character remains in the Dreamlands, the Gales will try to alter her. This uses the rules for an extended action: the threshold equals the character's Willpower dots, and the interval is once each day experienced in the Dreamlands. The dice pool, rolled by the Storyteller, is the character's base Sensitivity + Shadows dots (roll a chance die if this pool is 0.) Add +2 if the character is in the border marches, and +5 if he's in the wild districts. Unlike a standard extended action, the number of rolls is uncapped.

**Dramatic Failure:** The character withstands the Gales. All successes are lost, and the Gales cease to affect her for her Resolve in experienced days.

**Failure:** The Gales push the Princess off-balance, scattering odd thoughts and scraps of imagined memories in her mind. If the character doesn't have the [Gale-touched](#) Condition yet, she acquires it now; if she does have that Condition, resolve as a dramatic failure.

**Success:** If the accumulated successes reach the threshold, the Gales' force envelops the character, body, mind and soul, catches her up in a chaotic whirl, and commingles some of the Dreamlands' essence with her spirit and self. The character gains a level of the [Galemark](#) Condition, partly adapting from a mere visitor into a permanent settler in the Dreamlands.

**Exceptional Success:** The Gales overwhelm the character. Reduce the interval for all following rolls (if any are needed) by 6 hours.

## *Galemarks*

Galemarks track a character's progress along a path that ends with her as indistinguishable, even to herself, from a Dreamlands native who has nightmares of an unhappy world, overshadowed by fear and despair. The effects of a Galemark are threefold. First, the character's Dream Form changes - in both mundane and transformed identities, she gains a new, exotic physical feature. The change reflects what the character has seen and done in the Dreamlands: if she travels much among trickster foxes, she becomes foxlike, with pointed ears or a pelt. Galemarks don't always turn characters into fantastical beings - many places in the Dreamlands have inhabitants who could pass for normal in waking life - but a character with several Galemarks always looks very unlike her waking self.

Second, the Dreamlands weaves the character into its history and society. As a character gains Galemarks, the chorus members she meets are likely to "remember" past encounters with her, or "recognize" her as a native of a particular district in the Dreamlands, or refer in some other way to a history that (before the Gales marked her) never really took place. Dreamlands locations sometimes change physically to support the false history, too. The life invented for the character is internally consistent - once a part of it is established further Galemarks don't alter it. The invented events bind the character into the Dreamlands and impede her efforts to awaken.



Third, and strangest, the character's own memories twist, and she finds that she also knows the details of her imaginary past which the chorus members know. Moreover, as her knowledge of that life grows, her memory of waking life becomes disjointed, surreal and incoherent, as if it were the dream. Each Galemark is attached to one of the character's Willpower dots, starting with the leftmost and moving right. When the character spends a point of Willpower from a dot with a Galemark, she temporarily assumes the role the Dreamlands have given her, abandoning thoughts of the waking world as fictions of no importance. This delusion lasts for the rest of the current scene.

When a character gains Galemarks equal to her Willpower, marking all her Willpower dots, the last of these effects becomes permanent - she ceases to believe in the waking world's reality, just as the actors disbelieve. The Gales' work is complete, and the character no longer checks for Galemarks; on the other hand, she also loses the power to open ways into Crawlspace, and therefore cannot wake up on her own. Only another character can rescue her, by tracking her down in the Dreamlands and opening Crawlspace for her.

The change to the Dream Form from a Galemark, naturally, does not appear on the character's physical body. However, the mental changes persist in waking life, and the Dream Form keeps its change during later journeys in the Dreamlands.

## *The Darkness*

The Dreamlands reflects all of humanity, once you leave the Queen's domains this includes the bad as much as the good. Whenever the Dreamlands reflects a bad part of Earth, be it a reflection of a city that includes a reflection of the crime ridden ghetto, or a reflection of a historical period including long past atrocities, visitors can find [Tainted Places](#), Darkened and even [Darkspawn](#).

This is not the Darkness Princesses remember from Earth. It is a lesser Darkness (or perhaps a greater Darkness: Is the darkness in the back of every man's mind worse than the monster of rotting shadows attempting to eat you?) Regardless of such debates, Dreamland equivalents of Tainted places, Darkened, Darkspawn and all the rest can be found in the Dreamlands. Build them as normal Dreamland natives, including whether they are a Chorus, Actor or Star then add the Darkened, Darkspawn or other template.

Regardless of which Darkness is "worse" the Darkness in the Dreamlands is closer to the Princess' psyche. Any Sensitivity roll caused by the Darkness, be it Darkened, Tainted Place, Darkspawn or other has the 9-again quality.

The only other noteworthy difference is that there is no Dark World within the Dreamlands. So few humans have ever experienced it (and fewer survive) that it is not a part of the Dreamlands. The Tainted places within the Dreamlands do not permit entry to a Dark World. It is still possible for a Darkened to use the Enter Darkness ability, but it functions more like a slow teleport between two Tainted spots.

## *The Light*

In Dreamlands domains that reflect something strong and positive it is possible for the Princess to come across a manifestation of the Light itself. This either requires a lot of luck, or an extended action to track it down. Once the Princess finds a manifestation of the light she may choose to bathe her soul in it, which has one of two effects: The Princess may regain all her Willpower; or, the Princess gains 1 Luminous Experience.

But there is a danger, the longer the Princess spends in the Light the harder it is to return to the grubby shadowy mortal world where her duties lie. The Princess' Sensitivity dice pool increases by 1 die if she regained Willpower, and by 3 dice if she gained a Luminous Experience. After a number of days equal to her increase in Sensitivity the Princess' Sensitivity returns to normal. If the Princess touches the Light again before this time not only does the timer reset, it stacks with any further benefit she may gain.

## *White Rabbits*

A White Rabbit, in the jargon of the Nobility, refers to any time when the Princess is called to the Dreamlands. Her subconscious mind detects a change within the Dreamlands and sends a signal a White Rabbit - to alert the conscious mind. The creaking lures of the Dreamlands trap, and the resulting spontaneous appearances



of Crawlspace passages, are not considered White Rabbits but this is just an arbitrary quirk of the definition chosen by Enlightened scholars.

Quite a few Princesses really do see white rabbits (sometimes straight out of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*). This appears to be a result of the Princess' unconscious associations, caused by Enlightened scholars using the term White Rabbit for the phenomenon.

### *Prophecy Rabbits*

A Prophecy Rabbit calls the Princess into the Dreamlands to witness an event that foretells the future on Earth. The Princess is fully present in the Dreamlands and may interact with the portentous events she witnesses in all the normal ways: She might investigate to uncover more clues, or perhaps try to derail the event in the Dreamlands. This doesn't actually help, but it can feel very good.

If two or more Princesses are experiencing a prophecy about the same event, they are both are in the same place within the Dreamlands and can simply start talking to each other, debating the vision or making plans. In essence, this can be considered another clue both Princesses learn from the dreams; something along the lines of "This other Princess cares about the same issue, perhaps you could work together?"

How Prophecies work is unknown. It is generally accepted that the Princess is reacting to a pre-existing event in the Dreamlands but what causes those events is a mystery. The two most popular theories are the clairvoyant model and the analytical model. The clairvoyant suggests that every human has microscopic traces of psychic abilities which when combined in some sort of shared unconscious -- like the Dreamlands -- becomes effective on a practical level. The analytical model also sees the pooling of human talent and knowledge at the cause, but argues rather than psychically foretelling the future humanity simply predicts it using knowledge and reasoning.

### *Memory Rabbits*

Unlike most White Rabbits a Memory Rabbit leads a Princess not into the Dreamlands, but deep into her own Crawlspace. The Princess' subconscious mind is signalling her conscious that she has forgotten some vital information and calls her deep into her own mind and soul to fish it out. Most Memory Rabbits lead to memories from a past life, the ordinary human processes of memory are usually sufficient for most memories gathered in this incarnation (and even stronger memories from before). In game terms a Memory Rabbit functions as an alternative result when a player uses the [White Rabbits](#) Merit. If the Storyteller believes she can provide clues in a more interesting way by going to a memory from the Princess' past life than a prophecy in the collective dreamscape of mankind then she is free to do so. Memory Rabbits can also be used to justify buying Skills or Charms when the Princess knew them in a past life.

### *Royal Rabbits*

Trapped within the Dreamlands the Queens cannot affect Earth, but they can affect the Dreamlands and a Princess' subconscious can notice such changes. The Queens have gotten quite good at making the precise changes needed to create a Royal Rabbit that summons a Princess to wait upon her liege.

Royal Rabbits typically manifest in some way appropriate to the Queen, such as a white rabbit wearing the royal colors and carrying a letter of summons stamped with the Queen's seal.

### *Black Rabbits*

Black Rabbits are spoken of in hushed terms, their mere existence makes the Princess question her own mind and doubt her visions. It goes like this: If the Princess followed a Prophecy Rabbit to the dreamlands and saw a woman in green and white tearing through her home town she might conclude that she better deal with any Princesses of Storms before it's too late.

Now what if this happened in reverse. Someone with access to the Dreamlands (such as a Princess of Tears) wants the Princess to go after local Furies. She could travel to the Dreamlands, dress in green and white and attack. The destruction in the Dreamlands would alert the Princess: A fake Prophecy Rabbit, a Black Rabbit.

Now it's not easy, the Dreamlanders will defend their home and the deception is only as good as the skill of the one who crafts it. This doesn't mean it hasn't happened, it has. Many times.

## *Empty Rabbits*

Empty Rabbits are almost as mythical as Black Rabbits. Sometimes a Princess' intuition is simply wrong. She follows a White Rabbit to the Dreamlands and finds nothing more than a mad tea party or a highly symbolic heap of nonsense. Some Princesses believe Empty Rabbits do not exist, that when a Rabbit looks Empty it actually means the Princess has overlooked some vital clue pointing to one of the other Rabbits. But how would you tell?

Empty Rabbits rarely have an impact on the story, but sometimes Princesses can confuse a Prophecy Rabbit for an Empty Rabbit, or an Empty Rabbit for a Prophecy Rabbit.

## *March Hares*

While not as mythical as Black or Empty Rabbits the March Hares are considered to be the most unsettling of all the Rabbits. A Princess who follows a March Hare travels deep into her own Crawlspace and comes face to face with a deep division in her own psyche. She may do battle with her own madness or sit down for tea, scones and high brow debate with both sides of the ethical dilemma that has puzzled her all week.

In game terms March Hares are simply an excuse for more roleplaying. A Princess who wins a battle with her own derangements is not cured, but she understands what the madness means to her and might be energized to raise her Belief or seek therapy (or less inclined if she lost the fight). Facing her own dilemmas gives screen time to the Princess' thoughts and feelings, and maybe even some character development. March Hares can even be used when under the effects of hostile magic: If the Princess has had her memories suppressed, then when the magic wanes going into her own Crawlspace to fight the spell and unlock the memory vaults is a more dramatic way to reveal the stolen memories than just saying the spell has worn off.

Since March Hares are at heart a way to give screen time to important moments of a character's internal conflicts the player is always entitled to forgo the dice and choose the result they prefer.

## *Places of Note*

### *The Forests of Wen-Mung*

#### *Domain of the Queen of Clubs*

Wen-Mung is the largest of the Queens' Kingdoms, and the most sparsely inhabited. Yet no matter how far you are from the nearest inhabitant sings of people are everywhere, colorful paper talismans and wind chimes adorn every tree. Even the animals show subtle signs of domestication: That rabbit wears a little bow, there's a deer with decorated antlers, this wild horse has a braid in her mane.

When the Princess finds the people they are a hardy folk who live in harmony with the forest. They build their homes between or around the trees natural clearings are rare and reserved for important buildings like village halls or temples and farm strange plants; as productive as wheat yet growing up the side of trees like ivy. The villages are simple, designed to be easily built for the people are occasionally nomadic. If the rains fail to come or disease begins to spread they'll build again elsewhere. Only important buildings such as temples are stone, and even these can be abandoned, left to wait patiently until they are needed once again.

Most of the population is employed in agriculture or forestry. Individual communities are usually entirely self sufficient. Though most residents possess only a basic education many have impressive practical intelligences and a versatile array of skills useful to their daily lives. While they don't show any animalistic behaviors, they do occasionally show animalistic skills: After being asked for directions, a young farmer sniffs the air before pointing with confidence. An old woman clicks her tongue as she walks, only by looking closely does one realize it's because she's blind. It would appear that as much as the forest itself has become slightly tame, the people have taken just a slight touch of the wild into themselves.

Wen-Mung exports food and timber and rarely imports anything. Centuries of a trade surplus have given the Queen of Clubs an enormous financial reserve, she considers it prudent to let it grow no matter how many

times her accountants try to explain to her what she'd do to the economy if she ever spent more than a fraction of it. The other Kingdoms consider Wen-Mung a perfect neighbor, it's quiet, respectful and exports at great prices.

## *The Danann Archipelago*

### *Domain of the Queen of [Diamonds](#)*

The Danann Archipelago stretches for over a hundred islands. Most are either densely populated or uninhabited with the populated islands growing in the only direction they can: Up, in magnificent towers of ivory and glass. Sleek hydrofoils and flying wing aircraft surround the islands in a never ending dance of motion. Danann has a subarctic climate, the inhabitants consider central heating among the greatest miracles of technology. Cooned in their artificial climate they prefer sleek future-chic fashions.

The people are a contented lot and welcoming to outsiders, although they tend to posture about their intelligence and education in front of foreigners. The observant visitor will quickly notice that everyone is either engaged in their pet scientific or creative projects, or they are obviously at leisure. The Queen of Diamonds had pretty much every necessary job replaced by machines long ago freeing the population to focus on the sciences and the arts. Though not quite the post scarcity society promised by futurists it's as close as most Princesses are likely to experience.

With an abundance of free time and ubiquitous communication technology the locals often form social groups based on common interest. Be it pre industrial music, advanced mathematics or abstract philosophy. Even though most people belong to several such groups the largest or most dedicated groups often develop residential clusters to be closer to their friends and any museums, concert halls, bulky equipment or social spaces they've appropriated or built. Though the Queen does not officially take part in this system, the topics she is most interested in technology and the physical sciences gravitate towards her. A vast academy of science, technology and academics has formed around the royal palace (Technically beneath, she lives in the penthouse).

Danann is an extroverted nation, the fisheries and hydroponics cannot keep up with the population and so the economy depends on foreign trade. They export technology, technicians, engineers and offer advanced education to citizens of other Kingdoms in return for food and raw materials. Danann has formed an odd friendship with the Confederacy of the Four Winds, another leisure filled Kingdom heavily built around foreign trade; they do dislike admitting that their most advanced aircraft cannot match the Confederacy's mastery of the winds.

## *The City-states of Andarta*

### *Domain of the Queen of [Hearts](#)*

Andarta is a land of flowing fields, peaceful rivers and gentle hills. The people are equally divided between urban and rural. No matter where you travel the architecture is ornate and beautiful. Even the smallest farming community is built of solid stone with masterly carved decorated touches. Following the paved roads or aqueducts to the cities reveals unsurpassed architecture splendour, from marble clad defensive walls to streets so clean they sparkle in the sunlight. The people too are fit looking and healthy who always manage to look sharply dressed and spotlessly clean, even when coming home covered in mud from a hard days work in the field.

The Queen of Hearts loves everything in its proper place, and she has made her mark on her Kingdom. Andartan life is an organized one. The government is feudal with cleanly defined hierarchies. The trades and professions are organized into guilds. Stability is both prized and abundant, it leads to a sense of confidence. People know what's expected of them, how to deliver it, and who will help them if they get a little over their heads.

Social roles in Andarta are well defined, but social mobility is high. A simple farmer would be expected to obey his superiors but she would also have many opportunities to advance her position, she could become a skilled artificer, a scholar or a self employed merchant; advancing her position and earning new rights and responsibilities. Foreigners would quickly notice that while social climbing clearly does grant new rights Andartans never use the word, a noble doesn't have the right to give orders, they have the responsibility to govern. This is the direct influence of the Queen, she only ever uses the word responsibilities, her subjects usually take the hint.

Andarta is the most introverted of the Kingdoms. While they are not quite xenophobic they are highly resistant to new ideas and find it uncomfortable when foreigners don't fit their expectations. They possess the

common courtesy to hide it of course, as a people Andartans are socially gifted, to anyone not as talented as the locals at reading people Andartans come across as trying too hard to be welcoming.

## *The Confederacy of the Four Winds*

### *Domain of the Queen of [Spades](#)*

The Queen of Spades calls the Four Winds her home, a vast snow-capped mountain range. Actually four mountain ranges all smooshed together to the amusement of geologists. The population is predominantly urban and take great care on the placement of their cities, seeking out sun-facing river valleys with warm prevailing winds. Transportation is handled almost entirely by a wide variety of airships, balloons and gliders, from a very young age the inhabitants learn to pilot enormous kites. For a few specialized tasks the giant mountain spiders are domesticated, favored for their prodigal strength and peerless climbing abilities.

The nation is a mercantile, trade is the backbone of the economy. The Confederacy also has a large amount of artisans and craftsmen who specialize in delicate hand crafted arts and crafts, for the Confederation lacks the resources to compete in manufacturing. The Confederates take delight in foreign trade and the exotic wonders it brings to their homes. Enormous bazaars wind through the city streets. Stalls carry all manner of exotic goods and services from the five Kingdoms and the wider Dreamlands. The people are colorful and passionate. Any customer is a beloved friend. Hagglng is a social requirement filled with blistering insults against the quality of the goods and blatantly nonsense stories about starving kids to feed. As soon has money is exchanged they are once again true friends.

The Confederacy is an anarchy, organized on an ad-hoc basis by its residents. Admittedly the organization is somewhat haphazard and ramshackle. Along with the weekly general assemblies, anyone simply tells friends and strangers they are hosting a meeting and if people are interested word will spread. Everyone gets together then they go home and decide if they agreed with the consensus or if they plan to ignore it. Those who have the talent to get things done will lead the way and those who disagree, lacking that talent themselves, are unable to hold the kingdom in an argumentative paralysis. Reputation is supremely important. The unofficially officially unofficially non-binding congresses which discuss issues of national importance tend to meet wherever the Queen's palace has drifted to this month to take advantage of her wisdom. Somehow, everything that needs to be done gets done in a timely manner.

Of all the Kingdoms, the Confederacy is the most extroverted of them all. As masters of the winds no kingdom can match their mobility, their love of the foreign and exotic sends a steady stream of merchant airships beyond the five Kingdoms to trade with the wider Dreamlands.

## *The Aztallan Alliance*

### *Domain of the Queen of [Swords](#)*

Aztallan is a land of lush rain forest, ever-blue skies and above all an enormous golden sun. The rain forests are hot, humid and teeming with life. They are also very dangerous to the unprepared traveller and unsuited for any population beyond small tribal societies. The Aztallani have overcome these limitations in their usual direct manner, by constructing enormous stepped pyramids and dwelling high above the rain forest. Houses, commerce and even farming all take place atop massive artificial plateaus. Aqueducts and bridges stretch for miles above the rain forest.

The people are a rugged independent sort, but loyal unto death to those who've won their trust. Self sufficiency is still a respected way of life and the more formal economy is dominated by small businesses and independent artisans who provide services to the local community. The cities often look less like a zoned metropolis than a large collection of individual towns and villages that grew into each other, usually because that's exactly what they are. Government is distributed and decentralized with local government at the level of town or city district being the most relevant to the average citizen's life.

The larger organizations and the government are best described as a meritocracy with posts decided purely by a person's skills. It is considered a sign of untrustworthiness if people know the identity of a candidate they might hire, it is suspected that they will choose their friends or family and to be fair with the Aztallani ideals of personal loyalty they probably would. "Not even for the Queen's consort" is a common way of declaring integrity, you can guess how the term originated. Since they often work alone or in small groups many Aztallanis have

a wide variety of skills, this attitude is carried on to the larger organizations. It is not uncommon to see one person with two or more vastly different jobs.

As a society Aztallan shows the same self sufficiency and independence that its people do. While welcoming to outsiders the kingdom usually waits for foreigners to come to it. One noticeable exception is adventurers: bright young Aztallani often undertake a mission to develop or prove their merits. All forms of merit are valued but adventurers dominate the international perception of Aztallan as they are the largest group to wander beyond their homeland.

### *Saint Francis' City*

In the middle of a wide field beneath an eternally sunny blue sky, cooled by gentle breezes travellers may catch sight of Saint Francis. The saint is dressed in the humble brown robes of a monk and sits unmoving on a simple wooden chair, at a simple wooden desk, endlessly copying "Bibles" that actually contain a rough mixture of political speeches, travel guides and local news. All from San Francisco of course. Saint Francis is also three hundred feet tall.

As he writes Saint Francis supports an enormous bright red kite tied to his right shoulder by a tail that looks like someone took several golden gate bridges and wrapped them around each other like the threads in a length of twine. To this enormous kite several more kites are anchored, and to those even more. On and on in an enormous widening cone of many colored kites, all interconnected by a labyrinthine network of bridges, cable cars and even subway tunnels hanging from the undersides.

This is Saint Francis' city, an enormous metropolis built onto the backs of thousands of kites. In many ways it is an exaggeration of the perception of San Francisco. In other ways it's as nuanced as the original but places the popular perception front and center so it cannot help but color a visitor's impressions. In the more tourist and commercial areas it seems every other building is a coffee shop where locals debate politics and recite amateur poetry or music. There is normally at least one parade every day.

### *The Foundation*

The Foundation is a mystery. As far as can be discerned the entire Dreamlands is built upon its surface. As one approaches the borders of the Dreamlands the Foundation becomes exposed to the eye. It appears differently to every traveller but always gives the impression of being some form of stability in contrast to the wild unknowable places outside the Dreamlands. While a city-dweller might see a mighty concrete tower run through with pipes, wires and air-conditioning outlets a Princess from a remote desert dwelling tribe might see The Foundation as the edge of a lush oasis abruptly shifting into endless desert sands. Past The Foundation is a place usually called Beyond, or Outside. Beyond is a mystery to the Nobility. Like The Foundation Beyond appears differently to every viewer but it always has a feeling of vastness; of infinite wonder and potential. Yet Beyond also feels of danger, not hostility or anger but the impersonal danger of a storm wrecked sea or the harsh desert sand. Looking Outside is a very personal experience as awe, fear, wonder and desire flow through the Princess. Each will discover for herself which emotion dominates.

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To give you some examples of what the Foundation and Beyond might look like here is how each Queen perceives it.

The Queen of Clubs sees the Foundation as the edge of a simple grassy clearing surrounded by enormous forests that comprise Outside. The forests are so dense and thick she cannot see more than a finger's length Beyond the Dreamlands. The Queen of Clubs is neither awed nor scared of Beyond. She simply accepts that it is something greater than herself, and so makes peace with it.

The Queen of Diamonds sees the Foundation as the beaches of her youth. Beyond lies a calm sea at night time. A perfect velvet black that mirrors the enormous stars and planets in the sky Outside the Dreamlands until you cannot tell where the sea ends and the sky begins.

The Queen of Hearts sees the Foundation as a marble tower. It is carved with a relief of people climbing to to the top over one another in a mass of humanity. They show nobility with the strong helping the weak, the old and the infirm. As they crest the top of The Foundation the carved faces show expressions of dignified triumph over adversity. Beyond The Foundation lies nothing more than simple barren rocky hills. The Queen claims she can sometimes see movement down there, and that it makes her feel uncertain like nothing else.

The Queen of Spades sees the Foundation as the undercarrage of an enormous airship holding the entire dreamlands aloft. With a practiced eye she judges and concludes that all is ship-shape and airworthy. To this Queen Beyond looks like a vast plain of clouds drifting far bellow, if there is a ground further below she has not seen it.

To The Queen of Swords the Foundation looks much like her homeland. The crest of an enormous pyramid; beyond which lies vast rain forests. The Queen claims to have spotted signs of ruins and signs of inhabitation.

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No matter the appearance of the Foundation, it is always adorned with strange writing in every imaginable language, linguistic subdivision and even every imaginable appearance: From typed to archaic and cursive. Princesses can read the Foundation, or at least the parts in the languages they know, but they can learn nothing from it. Like a million voices talking at once the Foundation is just too much to understand. It's unknown if there even is something too be understood. Sometimes strange mists are released from the Foundation, a Princess who inhales them can comprehend any language created by humans (including the Royal Tongue and Alhambra) until she next leaves the Dreamlands. If she dedicates the nights sleep to memorization and spends the exp she may retain a language permanently.

### *The Lighthouse*

The five Queens have been curious about the Foundation and Outside ever since they were first noticed shortly after the Release. The Lighthouse is a small Danann outpost built in the retro rough stone styles that pre-dates the Queen of Diamonds' Coronation. Within is accommodation for a few scholars and some scientific equipment. It also has some mild fortifications; looking Outside makes a lot of Stars nervous (Actors can't see Outside at all). The torch itself is usually only lit if the Queen of Diamonds is present, not everyone sees Beyond as permanently night time.

### *Inhabitants*

There are at least three different types of beings native to the Dreamlands. They were named by a theatrically minded Princess as the *chorus*, the *actors*, and the *stars*. The chorus, from all appearances, are less independent people, than representatives of a concept or archetype; they move about or speak, which distinguishes them from parts of the landscape, but the things they say and do fall into easily predicted patterns. However, all chorus members have power over something integral to the archetype they reflect, and there are a few who can reshape any part of the Dreamlands' substance into the thing they favor.

Members of the chorus are built as ephemeral beings [CofD 122-140] that regain Essence as spirits do, by feeding from Resonant Conditions tied to their Influences. Since they are beings of reflected Light, their Essence is basically the same as a Princess' Wisps, and powers which transfer Wisps work just the same way on their Essence. (Thus either word, Wisps or Essence, may name their fuel.) They lack Integrity, but have a Virtue and Vice and regain Willpower by acting in accord with them. Chorus members can, however, have decidedly strange Virtues or Vices, especially when the concept they're linked to is not human. Finally, because everything in the Dreamlands is as ephemeral as they, chorus members never have Manifestations - for practical purposes, anywhere in the Dreamlands they are always Materialized at no cost.

Actors, in contrast, are fully realized people, with minds, memories, desires and aspirations. They differ from the stars (and the Princesses) in only one way: the Release passed them by. Many of them are unaware that a waking world exists, and nearly all who are told of it refuse to credit it. The stars, finally, are the souls drawn into the Dreamlands who have not chosen to follow the Princesses, or (as with the Five Queens) apparently cannot be reborn. Many actors and stars can wield strange powers, and those who were once living Princesses and inhabitants of the Kingdom still wield the Charms they knew in life.

Actors and stars are built as playable characters, most often mundane or with the Hopeful template (though the Storyteller is free to use any supernatural template from other World of Darkness games, if he wants an atypical NPC. If the players find themselves in a castle containing reflections of every fictional vampire - from Count Dracula to Count von Count - and you own *Vampire: the Requiem Second Edition* there is nothing wrong, and a lot right, with using the rules from it.) However, their bodies are like the Princesses' projections into the Dreamlands, formed of dream-stuff, so they have the Attributes and Health of a Dream Form. Moreover, losing the last box of Health doesn't kill Dreamlanders permanently; they gain the [Soul Shocked](#) Condition, are



incapacitated until it resolves, and then begin to recover their Health. A Dreamlander's body must be destroyed completely, reduced to powder or ashes, to kill him for good. (Given the purpose of the Dreamlands, even that probably doesn't destroy an actor or star forever; the soul presumably remains, preserved by the Dreamlands' power, and is eventually reborn in a new body. But since a reborn soul doesn't remember any prior Dreamlands lives, just a past life in the Kingdom, there's no proof that such rebirths happen.)

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### *Dreamlanders on Earth*

Any Dreamlander - chorus, actor or star - can go through a fully open Crawlspace passage into the mind of the dreamer who opened it, if they discover its existence. Normally, though, there's not much point to doing so; the Dreamlander can't wake the dreamer, perceive the physical world around her or leave her body. Worse, if the dreamer wakes the Dreamlander is trapped inside her mind and wanders through her subconscious until the dreamer opens Crawlspace again. But there *are* ways for an actor or star to escape to the waking world.

Dreamlanders learn the Charm [Ivory Gate](#) to speak to dreamers they have met and befriended; they gain its Distant upgrade for free when they take the Charm, and must apply that upgrade to use it at all. [Privy Counselor](#), in a Dreamlander's hands, can be used only within a dreamer's mind at the entrance to her Crawlspace, with the dreamer as its target, and the dreamer may contest the Charm with Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance. The Animal Companion upgrade, if applied, Fetters the Dreamlander to a nearby suitable animal or object instead (the one with the largest positive modifier.)

If forced by other Charms or stranger magic to exist outside a dreamer's mind, a Resonant Condition or a protective Manifestation, Dreamlanders outside the Dreamlands are subject to Essence bleed, losing 1 Wisp (or other fuel point) each hour.

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### *Tengu Pirate (Chorus)*

To mankind the seas have always represented the great unknown. Infinite possibilities lie just beyond the next horizon, but the seas also carry the danger of the storm, and pirates. Who doesn't love a good pirate story?

Tengu pirates have congealed out of stray ideas from Japanese mythology, sword and sorcery, and fantasy tinged pirate stories. They're not particularly powerful or populous, but despite their small number they always travel in crews looking for ships full of booty to plunder, preferably shiny objects. When they do find a prize, they isolate the ship using their ability to influence wind, then fall from the sky, attacking sailors and stealing what they can in the confusion. While they can and will kill if necessary, most of the time they are happy with just stealing whatever they can before retreating.

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**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 3, Finesse 7, Resistance 4

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 9, Willpower 10, Size 5, Defense 4, Initiative 11, Speed 20 (species factor 10)

**Influences:** Wind 2

**Numina:** Blast (guns), Firestarter (incendiary bombs), Pathfinder, Speed, Stalwart

**Ban:** Tengu pirates feel compelled to steal shiny objects.

**Bane:** Mackerels.

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### *Trickster Kitsune (Actor)*

In times long ago foxes and humans lived close together on the islands of Nippon and kitsune became a staple of Japanese mythology. They were messengers of the Kami, they would adopt human guises to become guardians, friends or lovers ... and of course to play tricks on humans. Kitsune can be found in regions of the Dreamlands that reflect Japanese mythology, folklore, or pop-culture. Trickster kitsune can of course be found in all these places, but tend to form a larger proportion of the kitsune population in areas that are also influenced by Western folklore, where it's nearly universal for folklore to portray foxes as tricksters.

Trickster kitsune are usually more mischievous than truly dangerous but they can prove a real threat if they feel threatened. Conversely, they can become precious allies to people they grow fond of. Most are Actors, but some Princesses among the court of Spades have been able to convince a Trickster that there is a real world and thus recruit it as a Shikigami.

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**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 4, Finesse 6, Resistance 3

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 5, Willpower 8, Size 2, Defense 6, Initiative 8, Speed 19 (species factor 7)

**Influences:** Luck 2

**Numina:** Blast (foxfire), Firestarter, Hallucination, Innocuous, Mortal Mask

**Ban:** Trickster kitsune must stand still as long as someone grabs their tail.

**Bane:** The teeth of a hunting hound.

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### *The Jack of Diamonds (Star)*

*Fools can be important... and knaves and tarts too.*

The Jack of Diamonds, Jack to his friends, is something of an enigma among the Courtiers of Diamonds. He works for his image, rarely mentioning his background except to give vague and slightly contradictory hints about his dark and troubled past. It is generally accepted that he was once a living Prince who after some trauma has chosen to remain in the Dreamlands rather than reincarnate.

It is no secret that Jack is loyal to the Queen of Spades, not the Queen of Diamonds. In fact it would be rather hard to miss it, his official role in the court is the ambassador from Spades. Jack's unofficial role, and most of his time, is playing devils advocate or perhaps court jester, the distinction is fluid. While Jack makes no research or discoveries of his own he can bring theories and philosophies crashing down with a well aimed sentence.

With his friendly nature, sharp mind and quick wit Jack is a popular member of the Court. He is respected for his mind, his sense of humor and his ability to speak almost entirely in bizarre metaphors or aphorisms (which is only partly intentional, his mind isn't all there). They do however wish he wouldn't use his wit against them so often. In this Jack is a microcosm of how the Court of Diamonds sees the Court of Spades.

For his dress Jack prefers brightly colored tasteless suits, enormous bowties and a straw boater hat. He is never seen without some sort of staff decorated with a symbol of randomness: An enormous die, an endlessly spinning coin, a playing card.

### *Alan Raymond and Mary Radcliffe (Stars)*

*Deer fools of the audience, I and my assistant, who is making that curious gesture with her face and palm...*

Alan Raymond is alternatively the darling and the laughing stock in the court of Diamonds; an unquestionable genius and the inventor of the Charming Engine, an enormous programmable computer that is (somewhat) capable of casting Charms automatically. The whole Court of Diamonds is simultaneously awed by his creation and put off by his peerless ability to burn bridges, sabotage his own career and rarely complete a project because he got distracted by a possible change or improvement. Alan's drive, quirks of personality and inexplicable hatred of music come from autism.

Mary Radcliffe is Alan's partner in science and one of the few people who has figured out how to work with him; using sardonic quips and her corn cob pipe to release her frustration before they can build up. Though Mary is obviously delighted to work on the Charming Engine many in the Court wonder if being on the cutting edge is worth Alan's company. In truth Mary sometimes worries who else would put up with her - though she controls it far better her mind has far more severe disorders than Alan's. Mary suffers from medication resistant bipolar disorder tied to powerful visual-auditory hallucinations. She can usually suppress her disorder through pure mathematical logic (which only works because of the Dreamlands...) but heightened stress, attempting to think artistically or just going too long without engaging in complex mathematics may cause a relapse. This has



left her with a lasting love-hate relationship to poetry and occasional regrets that she cannot study music, the most mathematical of the arts.

Together they attempt to improve the Charming Engine, dive into theoretical mathematics, cause no end of problems for themselves through their respective issues and occasionally have thrilling adventures researching the various cities and towns that reflect computer science or mathematics.

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### *The Charming Engine*

If a player character manages to get hold of a Charming Engine (which isn't easy - there's only one made, building a second is an extended Intelligence + Crafts action with a threshold of 30 and an interval of a month) it can be forged into an eight dot Bequest (Acqua must be used when casting Bequeath). The Duty-Bound upgrade is required for a Charming Engine to function and is included in the price. A Charming Engine also requires connection to the water mains for coolant; the waste water is drinkable and can be used with the built in tea maker.

Once a Princess is in possession of a Charming Engine she can create programs for it using a variation of the Charm [Living Image](#) that uses a dice pool of Intelligence + Computer. Again, Acqua must be applied. These programs have no Size, can't be removed from the Charming Engine, and cannot be Duty-Bound or Empowered. Because the Charming Engine is a prototype, several design short-cuts mean that it can only cast Acqua Charms or general Charms Invoked with Acqua.

A Charming Engine can be instructed to cast a series of Charms in a given order, and use simple if-else logic based on the success or failure of the previous Charm. (Future versions will be Turing complete). However they take roughly twenty times longer than a Princess would. Even an instant action takes a whole minute before anything happens. Generally the Charming Engine is considered merely a proof of concept and not for practical use.

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### *Duncan Kingdom (Star)*

*With all the steam at my command!*

They say the candle that burns twice as bright burns twice as fast. Duncan Kingdom certainly did both. One of the earliest Princes to Blossom after the return, Duncan was a founding member of the modern Embassy to Machines and a stylistic icon among the hammer men. He reached the rank of Ambassador before dying after single combat with a Dethroned. After underestimating his opponent Duncan was defeated and temporarily lost the ability to transform. Undeterred he gathered some of his old gadgets and improvised a few new ones for round two, fighting his rival to mutual destruction, not bad for a Mender. As he was dying in hospital the Queen of Diamonds requested that he spend the beginning of his afterlife in her court so he could mentor Emissaries to Machines.

When he's not mentoring Machinists Duncan enjoys building aircraft and ships, trying to see just how big he can make them. He favors big grey iron hulls and large amounts of aesthetic coal smoke. The man himself wears Victorian suits, a top hat and is permanently chomping a large cigar. On occasion he will venture forth from the court to rescue a favored student who has gotten in trouble somewhere in the Dreamlands, he prefers to travel on a vehicle of his own design that looks roughly like the engine of a steam train converted to travel off road. It makes an entrance.

### *The Emperor (Actor)*

The Emperor is the undisputed monarch of Saint Francis' City. He is the servant, and master, of Saint Francis himself. A blue eyed all American boy dressed up in full imperial regalia to match Napoleon at his most fabulous; ruling from a golden throne backed by an enormous marble eagle. His clothing is a reflection of The Emperor's nobility and virtue, not his fashion sense. He is in truth a kind, humble man devoted to the good of his city who divides his time between the affairs of government and wondering the streets, speaking to his citizens and helping them with daily issues. He travels alone and unarmed, but all of Saint Francis' city is his bodyguard.

It is hard to fight in the Emperor's presence, he softly asks you to put your weapons away. It costs 1 Willpower to enable yourself to fight for the scene. This cost is waved if you or someone you wish to protect is attacked.

# Wardens

*"Of course I'm your mother Button, it's not the sort of thing you forget."*

*You know this is a dream, but you're starting to forget what wasn't. Your quest to find the holy ace, and your friends Benny the Bear, Herick the Repentant Knight, and Cedric the Priest. That's real and this is an illusion woven by the evil Lidia? Or is it your school and your friends Rachel, Amanda and Lacy. But how can anything so unrealistic as sending kids somewhere they hate every day be real? It's starting to get scary, you hope your friends would rescue you soon (but which friends?)*

*That's not right either, you're a heroine. You should be rescuing yourself. Why are you thinking like this? There aren't any guards here, it should be easy to escape. You just need to get your... Your what? Why is it so hard to remember things?*

When the [Dreamlands](#) Trap was formed its builders knew better than to rely on it lasting forever. They placed powerful guards to watch over their prisoners, endlessly adjusting the illusions and dreams to keep the souls of the kingdom in a satisfied slumber.

Upon the Release the Radiant Queens saw the Wardens for what they are. They summoned their armies and rode against them, slaughtering them in countless masses. Yet some Wardens survived, far too many Wardens survived. Fleeing to the wild regions of the Dreamlands they lie in wait for the opportunity to fulfill their dark purpose.

Today the Wardens are scattered far and wide upon the face of the Dreamlands, yet they are unbroken. They remember their purpose and yearn to fulfill it. When they see one carrying the Light walk the realms of sleep they will stop at nothing to imprison her in a blissful dream for all eternity.

The Wardens are members of the chorus, normally of Rank 2, though they can be of any Rank. They have Influence over the [Gales](#) - a Warden instinctively knows that its purpose is to keep people within the Dreamlands until they forget whatever life they had beyond them. The effects of this Influence at each level are as follows; as all of them control thoughts or emotions of sapient beings, every use of the Influence is contested.

- **Strengthen:** The Warden strengthens the Gales locally. Every dreamer who comes within Rank x 3 yards of the Warden and loses the contested roll during the Influence's duration adds the Warden's activation successes to the Gales' next roll to inflict a [Galemark](#) on them. A dreamer subjected to this effect more than once in a day adds the highest modifier among the activations.

- **Manipulate:** The Gales that blow through the Dreamlands change the memories of visitors, making them believe they have always been a part of the Dreamlands. From the perspective of the Wardens this is good, but it does not go far enough. The Gales give the visitors a past within the Dreamlands, the Wardens wish to give them a future, a reason to stay. The Warden uses its Influence against a Galemarked dreamer to alter the effects of the Galemarks in small ways.

For the duration, and while the dreamer remains within Rank x 3 yards, the Warden develops a situation out of the dreamer's Gale-created history which will, it hopes, tempt the dreamer to stay or keep her from leaving. It does this by defining new truths about the people and places in that history - with a minute's full concentration, the Warden establishes one new fact. At this level the Warden can't introduce new characters or make radical changes in any existing characters, and it can't invalidate any existing facts or events; but it can find plausible developments from what the Gales have already established, and declare a scenario to its advantage has taken place.

- **Control:** The Warden is able to make drastic changes in a Gale-created history at this level. For the duration, and while the dreamer remains within Rank x 3 yards, the Warden introduces new people, places or objects into the dreamer's imaginary past, or alters the existing people in radical ways.

The Warden still cannot contradict anything in the dreamer's established Gale-marked history. If a Princess remembers that she ran away from the palace where she grew up to escape her cruel father then a Warden cannot add any fact that would make the Princess' father nice. However, it *could* declare that her father has been overthrown by the Princess' noble brother, who loves her dearly. It could do so with Manipulate only if the loving brother already exists; with Control, it can invent the brother whole-cloth and sketch a backstory

for him that explains why he did nothing about the father's cruelties before (say, he'd been sent to a boarding school for several years.)

•••• **Create:** The Warden summons the Gales for a psychic assault. It chooses a single dreamer, close enough for it to attack, to receive the force of the Gales. If the Warden wins the contest, the Gales roll to mark the dreamer once every minute, until the duration lapses, she gains a Galemark, or she escapes the Warden's reach. A Galemark created by this level of Influence is controlled wholly by the Warden - it can create any events whatsoever, limited only by consistency with existing Galemarks.

••••• **Mass Create:** The Warden becomes the center of a reality-warping vortex. Every dreamer within Rank x 3 yards of the Warden who loses the contested roll is subjected to the effects of Create for the duration, unless they escape from the vortex. (Often the Warden combines all the Galemarks made by a Mass Creation into a single history involving every affected dreamer, so if one of them awakens the others will tend to pull her back into the illusion.)

The Wardens have no interest in anything outside the Dreamlands, so they never learn Manifestations. Their favorite Numina are Innocuous and Mortal Mask; for them the latter is a near-perfect disguise, allowing them to shadow a dreaming traveler without raising suspicion. However, no Numina are barred to the Wardens except the ones that affect only the material world.

## *Sample Warden*

### *Prince/Princess Charming*

Prince Charming is a Warden who specializes in getting romantically entangled with his targets and making them choose between his love or their real life, if he can't sweep them off their feet so fast they forget they have a real life at all. Prince Charming can appear in any form that his victim finds attractive, animal, mineral or vegetable, but usually he favors an ordinary man or woman. He has an instinctive knowledge of people's romantic inclinations and preferences and prefers to set the mood before his first meeting. Depending on his victim's preferences he may arrange for his own rescue, run an inn under a romantic moon or ride up in shining armor to recruit nobles to his quest.

As a Warden Prince Charming isn't able to feel genuine romantic affection and so he pushes hard before his victims see through his shallow mask. If he's on a quest the danger and post danger adrenaline fueled romance come one after another without time to rest. A more traditional royal romance swings from feast to parade to ball without pause. Even questioning this frantic pace is enough to make Prince Charming fear he is losing his latest victim, causing him to overcompensate either by creating emergencies or turning to emotional blackmail.

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**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 2, Finesse 4, Resistance 2

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 7, Willpower 6, Size 5 (usually), Defense 2, Initiative 6, Speed 11 (species factor 5)

**Influences:** The Gales 3, Infatuation 1

**Numina:** Emotional Aura, Implant Mission, Mortal Mask, Rapture

**Ban:** Prince Charming cannot allow his current victim to leave him of her own will. He pursues anyone who does so to the limits of his ability, until he suffers disincorporation.

**Bane:** Butterflies and butterfly wings.

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## *Amanojaku*

*It was obvious if you knew what to look for, thought the Princess Gwendolin as she watched the librarian. Nobody was that much of a stereotype: the clothing, the glasses, the hair bun, the ridiculous over-reaction to the slightest noise. It looked like it was very good at its job too, every*

*book was exactly in its place, every student got exactly the material they needed. There was only one problem.*

*"I hope you enjoyed working in a real library, but you have to give that body back now."*

Once the Radiant believed that the Amano-jaku were a unique being, a strange mental parasite that resided within the [Dreamlands](#) seeking the opportunity to possess human bodies. Now they know better, Amano-jaku are just Dreamlanders whose desire for a physical body is stronger than their ethics. Some are ordinary Dreamlanders who became obsessed with getting closer to the real concept that they reflect. Others are inhabitants of the Kingdom who wish to return to life, but fear the partial loss of self inherent in reincarnation. Rumor has it there's even a Brat or two.

Most Dreamlanders consider the Amano-jaku to be criminals who dabble in profane magics. Consequently most can be found in the wild regions of the Dreamlands, far from Dreamlander law and the eyes of the Radiant Queens. Others can be found among the brightest cities of the Dreamlands, lurking in the shadows as criminals have always done.

## *Escape*

Since the Release, doorways, windows and cave mouths can be half-seen everywhere in the Dreamlands, in the corner of one's eye or half-hidden behind a boulder. For most Dreamlanders these passages vanish if sought for, turning out to be shadows or optical illusions; for the Hopeful, they become real, and open into Crawlspace. In truth, though, these mysterious doors are the places where some human's dreaming soul, yearning for the Light's touch without knowing it, drifts against the bars of the Hopeful's old prison. An Amano-jaku can wrench one of the doors open, enter the dream of the mortal that lies behind it, and search it for his soul.

To open the path to someone's soul, Amano-jaku use magic similar to the Horn Gate variant of the [Ivory Gate Charm](#), but without that Charm's requirement for proximity or sympathetic connections; if the magic succeeds, the Amano-jaku works his way down the Crawlspace passage. Amano-jaku tactics range from subtle insinuation, disguising themselves as normal dream figures to reach the dreamer's self, to brutal pursuit, warping the dream into a terrifying nightmare (forcing Doors always appears as the latter.) The Amano-jaku rolls to open Doors by the Dreamlands' time, which makes the impression level mostly irrelevant - though reaching a hostile impression forces the Amano-jaku out of the dreamer's mind and closes the gate.

At the end of the path the Amano-jaku finds the dreamer's consciousness. Here the dreamer has a chance to resist the invading entity; he assumes Dream Form and confronts the Amano-jaku within a dreamed landscape. Play this out as a normal scene - many Amano-jaku prefer violent assaults, but some employ deception or seductive promises. If the Amano-jaku loses he must retreat to the Dreamlands and the passage closes; if he wins, he forces the dreamer up through Crawlspace to the Dreamlands. Occasionally Amano-jaku have the luck to find a Crawlspace passage that's standing open, because the owner has come into the Dreamlands already. When this happens there's no need for magic to open the way - the Amano-jaku just walks down the passage to its end.

Whether the Amano-jaku finds the path to it or makes one, he needs one further magic to take possession of a vacant body: the Dreaming Exile version of [Privy Counselor](#). Success with that Charm gives it the Usurping Condition, below.

Amano-jaku cannot possess anyone but mundane characters and the Light-touched. They can take over people with supernatural Merits, but may use only powers that are open to the Nobility. The Amano-jaku cannot gain supernatural Merits while bound to a host, either.

It's quite possible for an Amano-jaku to use Dreaming Exile to bind other Dreamlanders into vacant bodies; in fact, Amano-jaku almost always work in gangs where only the leader knows both the necessary Charms. Hence the majority of Amano-jaku found in human bodies are chorus members, put there by someone else's magic.

## *Usurping Manifestation Condition*

The Amano-jaku with this Condition has ejected someone's mind into the Dreamlands and is possessing the vacated body. The Amano-jaku has access to the host's memories and abilities. Initially, however, he has some trouble using them properly. Use the host's non-supernatural traits - Attributes, Skills, Merits and advantages - except for Willpower; the Amano-jaku keeps his own Willpower. At first, the Amano-jaku takes a -3 penalty on Physical Skill rolls and a -4 penalty on Mental and Social Skill rolls.

To the host's traits, though penalized, an actor Amano-jaku adds some of his powers: Inner Light, Wisps, and Practical Magic. Most Amano-jaku follow no Queen and are limited to the Practical Magic of the courtless ... but some of them follow [Mirrors](#) and have her Practical Magic instead. Actor Amano-jaku also have the ability to spend Willpower when in danger to gain Wisps, like the Princesses' Inner Strength. Chorus Amano-jaku may not use Influences or Numina, but are protected from Essence bleed.

Finally, the Amano-jaku can transform his host. The Amano-jaku's transformation lasts for one scene and changes the host into a physical duplicate of the Amano-jaku's Dreamlands form, with the same Attributes, Skills, Merits and advantages, except for Health - the transformed host retains his original Health track, and any damage suffered. The Amano-jaku also gains full access to his Charms by transforming. In effect, when the Amano-jaku transforms, switch from one character sheet to the other; the two have nothing in common but Willpower and Health.

As time passes, and the displaced mortal has the Dreamlands' [Gales](#) blowing through him, the Amano-jaku settles in. Each time the host acquires a [Galemark](#), his appearance shifts, taking on some feature of his possessor. And each time this happens, the penalties the Amano-jaku take while enacting his part are reduced by 1, to a minimum of -0; and the Amano-jaku's appearance shifts, taking on a feature of his host. Eventually, the Amano-jaku and his host look, not identical, but like close relatives.

While in possession, the Amano-jaku functions as the host's soul, and supernatural powers that apply to the soul apply to it.

**Causing the Condition:** The Dreaming Exile upgrade to [Privy Counselor](#).

**Ending the Condition:** The Amano-jaku abandons the host body, and the host's soul returns to it.

## *Banishing Amano-jaku*

Amano-jaku return to the Dreamlands at the death of their hosts, though they take the [Soul Shocked](#) Condition from the death throes. Short of that, they can be forced out by a successful abjuration. Unfortunately this does not restore the host's soul to his body; the host falls into a state akin to coma. The Amano-jaku reappears in the Dreamlands near the host's location there, but as long as the host's soul is in the Dreamlands, the door into his mind and body stands open there, and any Dreamlander may enter it and possess the host again after a day's passing. Indeed, the original Amano-jaku may do so, if he waits long enough. On the other hand, if the host is free in the Dreamlands, and is still aware of his waking life, and if he finds the door to it, his entering the door will restore him completely.

Many Princesses, having more skill in navigating the Dreamlands than in exorcism, prefer to banish Amano-jaku from the Dreamlands side; they search out the door into the host's dreamscape, then enter it to do battle with the possessor there. If a Princess opens a Crawlspace entrance next to an Amano-jaku's host, she can find her way through Crawlspace to the host's Dreamlands exit as if she had Intimate Sympathy to the place. Past the door, the Princess appears next to the Amano-jaku, ready to negotiate or fight for the host's freedom. Once the Amano-jaku has been forced out (or left on its own), guiding the host's soul back to his body is then a simple matter of Dreamlands travel - though finding him might not be, if the Gales have been at work for long.

Finally, an Amano-jaku can return to the Dreamlands voluntarily whenever the host sleeps, and end the possession by guiding the host's soul back through the door himself. Few Amano-jaku will do this, however, unless threatened with the death of their vessel - and killing a vessel is murder, as long as the host's soul still exists.

## *Gates of Polished Horn*

Once upon a time, a band of Amano-jaku found, or made, an object of power to help them in their hunts. The nakama who finally tracked them down named the thing the Gate of Polished Horn, and made sure it was destroyed. Unfortunately the Amano-jaku who used it had learned how to duplicate it elsewhere, and other Gates have been built since.

A Gate of Polished Horn does not look like a gate, though it is made of a substance very like horn, with the color of aged ivory, maybe. It is shaped as an obelisk, roughly twice as tall as a man, and carved with eye-twisting designs. When an Amano-jaku has successfully bound himself to a person's body, and the host's soul is

reasonably close to the Gate, *everyone* in the waking world who sleeps when the Amano-jaku is nearby dreams of the Gate; anyone using *Ivory Gate* from the Gate's vicinity has perfect impressions to reach them. Bands of Amano-jaku that acquire a Gate of Polished Horn exploit this property ruthlessly. Once one of their number has taken over a body, his companions seize the host, carry him to the Gate, and imprison him. Meanwhile the possessing Amano-jaku lives in the waking world impersonating him, and all who sleep near him - most likely, his family and intimate friends - dream of lands near the Gate, where the other Amano-jaku in the band can hunt and possess them in turn. The first band of Amano-jaku with a Gate had captured nearly fifty mortals before it was destroyed.

Overuse of a Gate of Polished Horn can lead to what is tentatively referred to as a Gatecrash. An entire region of the Dreamlands collapses, sending its inhabitants falling into Twilight. The Dreamlands usually repairs itself soon enough, but this is little comfort for the Dreamlanders trapped outside their native realm or for the people scared and panicked Dreamlanders end up possessing. The most recent (and therefore well known) Gatecrash was in 1992 when the Dreamland city of Crystal Tokyo fell into the actual city of Tokyo. Even today there are still Beacons with harmonious human and Dreamlander gestalt personalities fighting for the Light with Bequests forged from the wreckage.

## *Sample Amano-jaku*

### *Officer Doe*

In the Dreamlands there is a city where lost things go. The residents' hearts ache for homes that never existed. It is a sad and lonely place, few of the residents bother to make a home, fewer still ever leave. Officer Doe was once a resident of this city. He was not lost himself but was an emanation of a closely related concept: detectives who find missing people. In a long career Doe did not close a single case for that is the nature of The Lost City, nor did he find this unusual until the day he met an Amano-jaku. When the Officer learned of Earth he saw it as an escape from a life suddenly revealed to be meaningless.

Like most Amano-jaku Doe tends to favor people with a connection to the concepts they represent. Partly that's a reason of practicality, many Amano-jaku prefer to do their deeds in secret at home rather than brave the dangerous wilds of the Dreamlands. Partly it's because most of them want to do something related to their concept when they get to Earth. For Officer Doe it's the practical advantages. He is part of a band of Amano-jaku in possession of a Gate of Polished Horn and Officer Doe is the pointman. As a missing persons detective in the Dreamlands he is as suitable as an Amano-jaku can be to take over a missing persons detective in the real world. Currently he is in the body of one Samantha O'Reilly, a respected detective from a long line of police officers. With her position on the force Officer Doe has been able to deflect investigations, keeping the missing missing and providing bodies for his cohort.

As for Samantha, she's making a reasonable go of her predicament, all things considered. She escaped her captors and is applying her detective skills to her new surroundings. Samantha is actually somewhat glad this happened to her, she considers it a second awakening that revealed the hidden truths of the world. Sadly her optimism is misplaced for the Gales are slowly blowing her mind away.

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**Rank:** 2

**Attributes:** Power 3, Finesse 3, Resistance 4

**Derived Traits:** Corpus 9, Willpower 7, Size 5, Defense 4, Initiative 7, Speed 11 (species factor 5)

**Influences:** Loss (the emotion) 2, Clues 1

**Numina:** Innocuous, Pathfinder, Seek, Stalwart

**Ban:** Officer Doe must stop and make detailed notes every time somebody starts talking about evidence in a missing person case.

**Bane:** Family homes. Not any home will do but a home that has been lived in by the same family for at least three generations. Something so profoundly tied to being a home is alien and painful to Officer Doe's nature as a being who is fundamentally a reflection of being lost. Prying up a floorboard or unscrewing a



pipe makes an effective weapon until it loses its symbolic connection, which usually takes months. Luckily for Doe, Samantha is the first of her family to live in her apartment.

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## Organizations

Ultimately, the World of Darkness will not truly change until people have changed - ordinary people, with no hint of the paranormal about them; people just like the ones you see in the street every day; the people who close their eyes to any hint of the strangeness and wonder of the world, because too much of it is perilous to notice. Every Princess learns in time that she must understand and persuade ordinary people if she wants to push back the Darkness.

But no man is an island, and no one stands completely alone. Everyone acts not just by and for themselves, but in cooperation with others; the most magnificent things ever done are the work of thousands of hands. To accomplish her mission, a Noble cannot limit herself to one person at a time; she must deal with the organizations in which, through which, they live and act.

## Traits

Organizations are composed of people; as an organization brings more people into the fold, its influence in the world and the scale of its activities grows. The people who work for or with an organization, carrying out its most important tasks, are represented as *Assets*. Each Asset represents a single character; they have a specific area of competence and a rating of 1 to 5 dots in that area. An Asset's ability may be one of the standard Skills, but it doesn't have to be; expertise within a narrow specialty or training that cuts across several Skills are legitimate for an Asset.

Assets can be hidden, which allows an organization to use them for actions without revealing its intentions to the public. For each hidden Asset an organization has, it must also have an instance of the [Secret](#) Condition tied to it; ending that Condition by any means discloses the Asset, removing its hidden quality.

The organization's core skills, the abilities of those members essential to its routine activities, are represented by *Interests*. An Interest has the same description as an Asset: a specific area of competence and a rating of 1 to 5 dots in that area. However, Interests are more important than Assets, because they are the source of the organization's income. It's possible for an organization to promote some of its Assets into core members, which converts some of its Asset dots into Interest dots; or to spin off some of its operations into a subsidiary, which converts some of its Interest dots into Assets.

Most organizations have special qualities that aren't Assets or Interests, but add to their capabilities nonetheless in other ways. These are represented as *Benefits*, and a sample of possible Benefits appears below.

## Rank

Rank	OP Max	Scope (geographic area)	Morale	Commonalty
1	20	Small town, city neighborhood	4	Dedicated
2	45	Small city, large fraction of metropolis	5	Concerned
3	75	Major city, plus suburbs and outlying towns	6	Concerned
4	110	US state, province, small nation	7	Interested
5	150	All of the US or EU, large fraction of continent	8	Interested
6+	N/A	Anywhere on Earth	N/A	

An organization's *Rank* is a rough measure of its size, its power, and its scope; as with ephemeral beings, organizations of Rank above 5 enter play only as story-defining events and plot devices. The Rank of an organization is calculated from its Assets, Interests and Benefits, in the form of organization points (OP): each dot in an Asset equals 1 OP, each dot in an Interest equals 3 OP, and each Benefit equals 2 OP. The organization's Rank is the smallest in the Rank table with an OP Max larger than the total OP for its traits. An organization

which gains enough traits to raise its total OP beyond the maximum for its current Rank rises to the next higher Rank; contrariwise, if an organization loses enough traits that its total OP drops below the maximum for the next lower Rank drops to that Rank.

Rank determines whether an organization is complex enough that it needs specialists to manage its affairs, and therefore whether the Status Merit [CofD 54] applies within the organization. This change takes place at Rank 3: below that Rank, standing within the organization is represented instead as the Allies Merit, while at and above it the important members will have Status. Rank also determines the geographic area - the Scope - in which an organization can act at its full strength. Outside of its home grounds an organization's members are unfamiliar with the local conditions, lack some of the resources they rely on, and may well be ill-at-ease. Find the smallest area in the table that includes the organization's home and the place where it means to act. If the Rank for that area is larger than the organization's Rank, all its actions at that place take a penalty equal to twice the difference in Ranks.

***Example:** A street gang in Oakland, CA is Rank 1; on its own turf it acts with no penalty, in other parts of Oakland it acts at -2, across the Bay Bridge in San Francisco it acts at -4, and if it needed to get something done in Los Angeles or Sacramento it would act at -6. The Oakland Police Department is Rank 2, so it has no penalty anywhere in Oakland, takes a -2 penalty in other cities of the Bay Area, and is at -4 elsewhere in California.*

Finally, Rank controls the **Commonalty** penalty that applies when a Princess uses Charms on members of the organization. These Charms can be aimed at only members represented by the organization's Interests, or more broadly to affect members represented by both Interests and Assets; the former uses the penalty given in the Rank table, while the latter worsens the penalty by one step. Commonalty penalties grow steeper as Rank rises because organizations lose focus as they expand; more diversity of Interests means members have less in common, and less of the mutual intimacy that Commonalty Charms exploit.

## Advantages

The *Morale* trait represents the organization's mutual loyalty and sense of mission, and its ability to resist pressure from outsiders. It is derived from Rank, though Benefits can adjust it. Like Willpower, Morale is composed of both dots and points, and Morale points can be spent and regained just as characters spend and regain Willpower. Organizations have a Virtue and a Vice, and can regain Morale points by fulfilling its Vice or Virtue. Once per session, if its actions reflect its Vice, an organization regains one point of Morale; twice per story, if its actions reflect its Virtue and create serious difficulties or risks for it, an organization regains all its spent Morale. In addition to this, organizations also have three Aspirations, defined much like a character's, to represent their current plans, and each time an organization achieves one of its Aspirations it regains a Morale point.

Organizations have no analogue to Health, Defense, Initiative, Size or Speed, as they lack even the tenuous materiality of ephemeral entities, but they can be damaged. Other organizations (or single characters!) can lure away their Assets, attack an Asset by means legal or criminal, or even attack each other's Interests directly. If an organization loses its last remaining Asset or its last Interest dot, it ceases to exist.

Finally, organizations have breaking points; most organizations define these in the same way mundane characters do [CofD 29-30]. When an organization reaches a breaking point it rolls its Morale dots, with the appropriate modifiers, to determine the results.

**Dramatic Failure:** The organization is badly shaken, shedding members and assets. It loses one of its Assets or one Interest dot, and gains one of the Conditions **Bankrupt**, **Factious** or **Mutinous**. If the breaking point occurred because a Secret was exposed, the organization may gain **Outlawed** instead.

**Failure:** The organization's members lose heart, and some leave it. The organization loses one of its Assets or one Interest dot, and gains one of the Conditions **Indebted**, **Insubordinate** or **Discontented**. If the breaking point occurred because a Secret was exposed, the organization may gain **Indicted** instead.

**Success:** The organization weathers the breaking point with only minor distress among its members. It gains one of the Conditions **Indebted**, **Insubordinate** or **Discontented**. If the breaking point occurred because a Secret was exposed, the organization may gain **Indicted** instead.

**Exceptional Success:** The organization comes through the breaking point invigorated, and confirmed in its overall goal. It regains a point of Morale.



## *Credit*

*Credit* represents the organization's disposable assets - cash flow, credit lines and favors not yet called on. The system assumes that under normal conditions, an organization has just enough income to pay its operating expenses (e.g. wages for employees, office rent, maintenance for tools, etc.) Organizations spend *Credit* to undertake actions other than earning their income.

- Organizations have a pool of *Credit* equal to the total of their Interest dots (though this can be lowered by Conditions) and refill this pool as part of earning their regular income. An organization regains all spent points of *Credit* at the start of each week, up to the size of its pool.
- Organizations can gain *Credit* more quickly by going into debt, pushing their members to extreme efforts, or neglecting important maintenance. An organization may roll any Interest + any Asset once a week, gaining 1 *Credit* for each success. (This can give it *Credit* exceeding its pool.) However, actions such as these put stress on an organization; each time an organization gains *Credit* by this means, it reaches a breaking point, rolling with a penalty equal to the Asset it used.
- In an emergency, an organization can sell off property and discharge employees for a quick infusion of cash. By sacrificing an Asset, an organization gains *Credit* equal to the Asset's rating. This can give it *Credit* exceeding its pool. Organizations can't sacrifice part of an Asset for *Credit*; it's all or nothing.
- An organization may give *Credit* to another organization, either outright or as part of a deal. Deals should be represented by a Condition like *Connected* or *Leveraged* on one of the organizations.

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## *Credit, Resources and Equipment*

The Resources Merit represents a character's disposable income, which is very similar to *Credit*, so we define an exchange rate between them: 1 point of *Credit* is considered equipment with an Availability of 3. Any character with Resources of 2 or more can therefore acquire *Credit* and take actions which call for spending it. Resources 5 grants a character a pool of *Credit* like an organization's, which can hold 5 *Credit* at once and refreshes weekly.

However, the conversion doesn't run the other way. An organization can't spend *Credit* to obtain equipment or services directly; instead, it's assumed to have a budget for such things equivalent to the Resources Merit at a level equal to its Rank, for any purpose *except* buying *Credit*. If an organization needs equipment with Availability too high for that budget, it can take an instance of the *Indebted* Condition to lower the Availability by one dot for that purchase.

In addition, organizations can usually acquire or build the equipment that they use in their normal activities. If a piece of equipment, or a service, falls within the scope of an organization's Interest, and its Availability is less than or equal to its dots in that Interest, then its members can procure it just as a character with an appropriate Skill could. And when an organization sends an Asset into the field, it can use the rules for building equipment [CofD 100-102] to give the Asset custom equipment of any of the five types listed; its dice pool is the Asset's rating + a relevant Interest. However, the organization may not provide more than one piece of equipment for each Interest it has to each Asset it sends.

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## *Actions*

An organization can become involved in play at character level, through its normal staff for routine matters, or through Assets for tasks of importance. Within its home ground, an organization has an equivalent to the Staff Merit [CofD 54]: when one of its Interests is relevant to an action, a member of the organization may appear and carry it out at any reasonable time, gaining a single success. An organization may spend *Credit* to send its staff outside its home ground; for each step upward in Scope needed to include both the organization's home and the place it wants to act in, it must spend 1 *Credit*. Once sent to a location, staff members remain for one day, then return home, unless the organization spends the necessary *Credit* to send them again.

Staff work is enough for routine jobs, or when no opposition appears. For delicate matters, though, an organization has to commit Assets. In any location where the organization has staff (its home ground and anywhere it's spent *Credit* for that purpose) it may also spend 1 *Morale* to send one of its Assets, and it can do

so repeatedly until it runs out of Assets or Morale. Each Asset, once they arrive, acts as a separate NPC. If the Storyteller hasn't worked up an Asset's traits as a character, he should use the Asset's rating + an Interest of the organization for their dice pools. However, if an Asset acquires a debilitating Condition or takes lethal damage during play, the organization immediately takes the [Insubordinate](#) Condition tied to that Asset; if the Asset dies the organization loses them.

The activities of an organization are seldom obvious to the general public. Only the people directly concerned and others with a reason to be interested will, as a rule, notice when an organization takes action. When an organization uses an Interest to act, the target of the action notices it automatically; any other organization with dots in a similar Interest may roll that Interest + the rating of the Asset used in the action - the appropriate Scope penalty, noticing the action if they succeed. Unless the organization takes the [Secret](#) Condition, anyone noticing the action also learns its identity and the Asset it used. (When an organization sends two or more Assets to a location, use the highest rated Asset in this roll. Either the action itself, or all Assets sent, must be hidden by Secrets to conceal the organization's hand in it.) Characters can learn of an organization's actions by witnessing them, with a Merit - Allies, Contacts, Mentor or Status in a relevant field are obvious, and a Storyteller may allow others - or by straight research using appropriate Skills, such as Politics, Streetwise or Socialize.

## *Blocking*

Within its home ground (and only there) an organization can use its resources to stop an interloper from interfering. It spends 1 Credit to create a block, which may be against another organization's Interest or Asset, or a character's Allies, Contacts, Mentor, Resources or Retainer Merit; it must use an Interest relevant to the Interest, Asset or Merit it wants to block, with a higher rating in dots. Once it does so, the target organization or character cannot use that trait within the organization's home ground for the rest of the session. An organization can block with each of its Interests at most once per session. Taking the [Secret](#) Condition for a block hides the blocking organization's identity. The breaking point penalty equals the rating of the Interest used to block.

Symmetrically, a character with a relevant Allies or Status Merit may use the blocking power of those Merits against an organization's Interest or Asset.

## *Social Maneuvers*

Organizations can be the targets of social maneuvers. The number of Doors for a maneuver aimed at an organization, before any modifiers are applied, equals its Morale. To gain soft leverage on an organization, one must offer it Credit. The amount of Credit needed depends on the organization's size - one must offer Credit equal to its Rank to tempt an organization. The offered Credit may represent cash, equipment, services or highly favorable terms on a contract - for game purposes it doesn't matter which. (A character who wants soft leverage on an organization can acquire Credit with his Social Merits, most often Resources; see the [Credit, Resources and Equipment](#) sidebar.)

An organization must spend 1 Credit to begin a social maneuver. Taking the [Secret](#) Condition for a social maneuver hides the maneuvering organization's identity and that of the Assets it uses. The breaking point penalty begins at -1, and worsens by -1 for each failed roll during the clandestine maneuver.

## *Attacking an Organization*

The operations of an organization can be disrupted, hoping to deprive it of income, lure away important staff, or depress its morale. This is an extended action, with the purpose of pushing the organization to a breaking point. The threshold for the action is the target's Morale, plus the level of the penalty on the target's breaking point roll if the attack succeeds; the time per roll is one day. Characters can use many methods to put stress on an organization; for example, an attack might take the form of violent assaults on an organization's membership (rolling Strength + Weaponry or Brawl), a lawsuit claiming large damages (Intelligence + Academics) or a boycotting campaign (Presence + Persuasion).

An organization must spend 1 Credit to initiate an attack on another organization. Taking the [Secret](#) Condition for an attack hides the attacking organization's identity and that of the Asset it uses. The breaking point penalty begins at -1, and worsens by -1 for each failed roll during the clandestine attack.

**Dramatic Failure:** An organization strains its own resources, leaving its target unaffected. It reaches a breaking point with a penalty equal to the one it tried to inflict. Characters suffer the usual results.

**Failure:** The attack runs into an obstacle that requires special effort to overcome. To continue attacking, an organization must spend 1 Credit and 1 Morale point, or accept a -2 penalty to its dice pool. Characters must take a Condition to continue.

**Success:** When the attacker reaches the threshold, its target reaches a breaking point.

**Exceptional Success:** The attacker may choose any of the usual results (for an organization, the rating of the Asset used functions as the Skill) or it can press the target so badly that they resort to desperate measures; in that case, the target acquires the Secret Condition. The breaking point penalty for this Secret equals the Asset's rating. Anyone investigating the attack may discover the target's Secret.

## *Investigating Secrets*

Uncovering another organization's secrets naturally uses the rules for investigations [CofD 77-81]. Identifying the organization responsible for an action hidden by a Secret Condition normally requires Clues equal to the penalty for the breaking point the organization will reach if the secret is exposed; if more than one Secret Condition is related to an action, use the largest penalty. Investigators must have noticed an action, or learned of it afterward, to begin investigating it.

An organization must spend 1 Credit to open an investigation. An investigation is normally done discreetly - neither the target nor anyone else notices it, unless the investigator makes a mistake - so an organization doesn't take the Secret Condition to hide it.

## *Acquiring Assets*

The organization makes an offer to a character to become one of its Assets. This is a social maneuver on the prospective Asset, and the organization must know of the character to perform the maneuver. If the Asset has been developed as a character, use his traits to resolve the maneuver. Otherwise, the base number of Doors for the maneuver is the Asset's rating, and the Storyteller chooses a Virtue, Vice and Aspirations for the Asset.

If the target is already an Asset of another organization, and the acquirer is acting openly, the patron organization may make counter-offers at the start of the maneuver to worsen the impression level. This can involve a rolled action, tempting the Asset's Vice, or soft leverage. If the patron manages to lower the impression to hostile and keep it there, the maneuver fails before it starts.

Taking the **Secret** Condition to acquire an Asset hides the Asset from anyone researching the organization. The breaking point penalty begins at -1, and worsens by -1 for each failed roll during the clandestine maneuver.

## *Mergers and Splits*

Organizations can merge with each other, pooling their resources and expertise to expand; or an organization can separate a major part of its operations into a daughter organization. Convincing another organization to a merger requires a social maneuver. When the target agrees to merge, the initiating organization gains all its Assets automatically. However, to gain the target's Interests and Benefits, the organization must make painful adjustments. It reaches a breaking point for each Interest gained, with a penalty equal to the dots in that Interest; and another breaking point for each Benefit, with a penalty equal to the targets former Morale. These breaking points can be avoided, but the organization loses the traits it doesn't roll for.

Splitting an organization is much less difficult - the organization just gives some of its Interest dots, Assets and Benefits away, making a new organization out of them. The new organization becomes ready to act one week after it is formed, though its parent loses the traits used to form it immediately. Neither merging nor splitting can be done in secret, so the Secret Condition does not apply.

## *Recruiting/Training*

The organization looks for new recruits, or improves the skills of its current members. The action takes four weeks to complete, and costs the organization 1 Credit. When the action is complete the organization gains a new 1-dot Asset, relevant to one of its existing Interests, or adds 1 dot to the rating of an existing Asset. The action's target is the organization itself, and the relevant Interest is the one best related to the affected Asset. Taking the **Secret** Condition while recruiting or training hides the affected Asset, if it was not hidden already.

An organization may not initiate a second recruiting action while it has one in progress, nor may it begin reorganizing or restructuring while it is recruiting.

## *Reorganizing*

The organization merges one of its Assets into its supporting staff, promotes staff members to a subsidiary Asset, or transfers people from one Asset to another. The action takes a week to complete, and no roll is required. Each reorganization exchanges 3 dots of Assets for 1 Interest dot, in either direction, or moves 1 dot of one Asset to another Asset, and costs the organization 1 Credit. Multiple Assets may be affected by one reorganization. The target of the action is the organization itself, and the relevant Interest is the one which gains or loses the dot. Transferring a dot between Assets isn't relevant to any Interest, and thus is concealed from other organizations. The Assets and Interest affected must be plausibly related - for example, a medical clinic Asset can be reorganized into an Interest in medicine, but not one in computers. Taking the [Secret](#) Condition while reorganizing hides the affected Assets.

An organization may not initiate a second reorganizing action while it has one in progress, nor may it begin recruiting or restructuring while it is reorganizing.

## *Restructuring*

The organization radically alters the way it operates, so that it can gain or lose a Benefit. This is an extended action, with a time per roll of one week and a threshold of the organization's Morale. Each roll costs the organization 1 Credit. Restructuring cannot be done clandestinely; the Secret Condition does not apply.

**Dramatic Failure:** The restructuring fails and leaves the organization in disarray. It reaches a breaking point with a penalty equal to *twice* its Rank.

**Failure:** The restructuring runs into an obstacle that requires special effort to overcome. To continue, the organization must spend 1 Credit and 1 Morale point, or accept a -2 penalty to its dice pool.

**Success:** When the organization reaches the threshold, it may either acquire a Benefit or sacrifice one. Each use of Restructure exchanges one Benefit for two dots of Assets; multiple Assets may be affected by one use. The organization also reaches a breaking point when it reaches the threshold, with a penalty equal to its Rank.

**Exceptional Success:** The organization may choose any of the usual results (the rating of the Asset used functions as the Skill) or it can ignore the breaking point it would otherwise take when the action succeeds.

An organization may not initiate a second restructuring action while it has one in progress, nor may it begin recruiting or reorganizing while it is restructuring.

## *Benefits*

Benefits represent any unusual traits the organization has, allowing it to carry out actions outside the scope of other organizations of their Rank.

## *Admired*

The organization is widely respected, and sets an example for many people who have no connection with its activities. It has a +2 bonus on all rolls during a social maneuver. However, its excellent reputation makes any immoral actions taken on its behalf more shocking if they become public; when the organization resolves a Secret Condition, it takes an additional -2 penalty on the resulting breaking point roll.

## *Branch Office*

| Stackable

The organization exists in two (or more) widely separated locations; each purchase of this Benefit gives one additional home base. When assessing a Scope penalty, measure from the nearest branch office to the target's

location. If a raise in the organization's Rank puts two branches into one region, the organization may open a new branch elsewhere or replace this Benefit.

### *Bureaucratic*

The organization follows strictly defined procedures in nearly everything it does; this makes it easy for its employees to substitute for each other, but leaves it inflexible in unusual situations. It can carry up to its Rank instances of [Insubordinate](#) that are not tied to an Asset; these instances penalize no actions, and the organization may resolve them by deliberately failing any action.

### *Conspiracy*

The organization is built as a secret society - members are grouped into cells and generally can't even identify anyone outside their own cell; communications are anonymous if possible, and make much use of encryption. All of its activities are difficult to trace; investigations of its actions or Assets add its Rank to the number of Clues needed. However, its operations are slow and cumbersome. Any extended action the organization attempts doubles the time between rolls.

### *Criminal*

The organization commits felonies as a matter of course; either its main purpose is against the law, or it has no qualms about breaking the law to achieve them. When it resolves a [Secret](#) Condition, it gets a +2 bonus on the resulting breaking point roll. Agents developed as characters often have dots in Larceny or Streetwise.

### *Endowment*

#### | Stackable

The organization possesses supernatural relics or techniques, which it makes available to its agents. These are normally represented as one or more supernatural Merits (e.g. the Endowment Merits of the conspiracies from *Hunter: the Vigil*); agents of the organization normally have some of those Merits, and qualified members may learn them. An Endowment may also confer minor supernatural abilities on qualified members, which is balanced by a drawback (e.g. the privilege of a changeling Entitlement.) An organization with multiple Endowments teaches more powerful Merits, or a greater variety; a typical agent should have 3 dots of supernatural Merits for each Endowment the organization has.

### *Enthusiastic*

The organization's members throw their hearts into its business. Treat its Rank as 1 step higher (maximum 5) when calculating its Morale.

### *Fortified*

#### | Stackable

The organization has secured itself against theft or violence. It has an HQ within its home ground where its Assets can hold off attack, and where it can keep sensitive information; this HQ acts as a Safe Place [CoFD 54] for all its members and Assets, rated equal to the number of times the organization takes the Benefit. When an organization has [Branch Offices](#), each office is secured to the same level as its HQ, and grants the same benefits to its Assets.

### *Insidious*

The organization can make you an offer you can't refuse ... or at least, will be sorely tempted by. During a social maneuver, if the target accepts soft leverage from it, the organization opens one Door without rolling in addition to raising the impression. Agents developed as characters should have dots in Empathy or Persuasion.

## *Jetset*

The organization has ways to get its members where they're most needed at a moment's notice. Treat its Scope as one step higher for the purpose of sending staff or Assets to a location.

## *Legendary*

The organization has a leading role in prominent conspiracy theories, and most people dismiss rumors of its activities (and possibly, at low Rank, its existence) as paranoid ravings, not to be taken seriously. Anyone noticing one of its actions learns the Asset's identity as usual, but does *not* learn the organization's identity; only deliberate investigation will reveal the Asset's connection to their sponsor. [Secret](#) Conditions are unaffected by the Benefit.

## *Mystery Cult*

The organization holds an esoteric doctrine and teaches its members secrets unknown to the common man. It offers the Mystery Cult Initiation Merit to the membership. If the organization rises to Rank 3, members may take Status in it to represent authority over its mundane operations, Mystery Cult Initiation to learn its occult doctrine, or both; either Merit may be a prerequisite for the other, or the two may be independent, at the organization's discretion.

## *Obscure*

The organization conceals its operations from the public eye. Other organizations treat their Scope as 1 step lower (minimum 1) when trying to notice its actions. Agents developed as characters normally have dots in Stealth or Subterfuge.

## *Otherworld Gate (world)*

### | Stackable

The organization controls a gate to one of the otherworlds in the World of Darkness - the Shadow, the Hedge, the Underworld, etc. - and knows how to open it reliably. It may take actions in the world on the far side of its gate at a penalty of -2 to its dice pools, stacking with scope penalties. An organization may remove this penalty by opening a Branch Office in the otherworld. Each purchase represents a separate gate.

## *Prepared*

The organization trains its members to be prepared for every contingency. During any non-combat scene involving its Assets, the organization can use the Build Equipment action [CofD 101] once for each Asset to deliver equipment suitable for the Asset's current task. The time needed for the equipment to arrive is at the Storyteller's discretion, but it must be available to the Asset before the scene ends. The equipment can belong to any of the five listed types.

## *Regulator (Interest)*

### | Requires 1+ dots in the Interest, stackable

The organization is an acknowledged authority over an Interest, and can shut down other organizations' activities within it. It may block with the Interest over a wide territory; treat its Scope as one step higher for this purpose. An organization may take this Benefit once for each Interest.

## *Sacred*

The organization is a major focus of its members' spiritual and moral lives, and their faith in it will stand a great deal of strain. It can carry up to its Morale + Rank instances of [Discontented](#) before it has to take [Mutinous](#) instead.

## *Too Big to Fail*

The organization is generally thought to be essential to the integrity of society; should it dissolve, the result would be (in the opinion of most) a collapse of civil order. Therefore, it is allowed to run up larger debts than most organizations manage. It can carry up to its Rank instances of [Indebted](#) when its pool of Credit is reduced to 0, before it has to take [Bankrupt](#).

## *Untouchable*

The organization protects its secrets carefully; often it can take reprisals against those who look into its affairs. Any Clue discovered during an investigation of one of its secrets takes the Incomplete tag [CofD 80] unless the investigator gets an exceptional success.

## *Well-Informed (Interest)*

| Requires 1+ dots in the Interest, stackable

The organization collects and sifts data within its field of interest from a network of informants. It notices actions taken within the Interest as if its Scope were 1 step higher. Agents developed as characters will have dots in at least one Mental Skill related to the Interest. An organization may take this Benefit once for each Interest.

## *Conditions*

Organizations regain a point of Morale whenever they take a Beat from a Condition, or resolve one.

## *Bankrupt (persistent)*

The organization is so far in debt that it has great difficulty raising funds. Every roll to gain Credit takes a -2 penalty.

**Resolution:** The organization sacrifices an Interest dot, or gets an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The organization fails on a roll to regain Credit.

## *Discontented*

The organization's members entertain real doubts of its current direction, and may be easily persuaded to a change in policy. When the organization is the target of social maneuvering, it may opt to open one Door for the maneuvering party without a roll, or raise its impression of that party by one step. An organization can stack instances of Discontented up to its Morale; if it reaches the limit, a new instance of the Condition converts to [Mutinous](#).

**Resolution:** The organization opens a Door or raises an impression, as stated above.

## *Factionous (persistent)*

The organization's Assets are prepared to abandon it, and only untrained people are available to replace them. It cannot make counter-offers when another organization tries to acquire one of its Assets, and the threshold for a direct attack is reduced by its Rank.

**Resolution:** The organization loses Assets with dots totaling its Rank or more to another organization, or gets an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The organization is attacked by another organization.



## *Indebted*

The organization's expenses exceed its income. Decrease its pool of Credit by 1. An organization can stack enough instances of Indebted to reduce its pool to 0; if it reaches the limit, a new instance of the Condition converts to **Bankrupt**.

**Resolution:** The organization spends 2 Credit to discharge its debt.

## *Indicted*

The organization's secret activities have come to light, and inspired a general suspicion. When it attacks another organization, tries a social maneuver or sends Assets to a location, and does not accept a **Secret** or use a hidden Asset, it takes a -2 penalty on all its dice pools. The Condition ends without resolving if the organization gains **Outlawed**.

**Resolution:** The organization makes restitution for the wrongs it did, or otherwise clears itself of suspicion.

## *Insubordinate*

One of the organization's Assets is unwilling (or unable) to carry out the tasks the organization needs from him. Any dice pool using that Asset takes a -2 penalty, and he cannot go into the field. The organization may choose to fail in an action using the Asset to resolve the Condition. If all Assets are currently Insubordinate, a new instance of the Condition converts to **Factionous**.

**Resolution:** The organization deliberately fails in an action using the Asset, as explained above.

## *Mutinous (persistent)*

The organization's members have lost faith in their leaders, and listen to nearly anyone who sounds halfway plausible. When the organization or one of its Assets is the target of social maneuvering, remove Doors equal to its Rank. Also, the **Commonalty** penalty for the organization worsens by one step.

**Resolution:** The organization fails a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The organization is maneuvered into an action opposed to its Virtue or Aspirations due to this Condition.

## *Obsolete (persistent)*

Some of the organization's resources no longer yield income. (There are many ways this can happen - the last ores are removed from a mine; a new regulation makes a factory unprofitable to run; industrial wastes poison a tract of land; a new invention makes the organization's products obsolete.) One of the organization's Interests does not generate Credit; lower its pool of Credit by its dots in that Interest.

**Resolution:** The organization must retool and adapt, abandoning its old methods. Resolve the Condition when the organization no longer has any dots in the affected Interest, by reorganizing or sacrifice.

**Beat:** The organization gains Credit by using the affected Interest.

## *Outlawed (persistent)*

The organization exists outside the protection of the laws, and is being pursued by enemies. It cannot operate openly without putting its agents into great danger. When it attacks another organization, tries a social maneuver or sends Assets to a location, it *must* accept a **Secret** Condition or use a hidden Asset.

**Resolution:** The organization sacrifices an Interest dot or hidden Assets with total dots equal to or exceeding its Rank.

**Beat:** The organization takes a Secret Condition with a penalty of -3 or more.



The organization has done something it wants to conceal - from the public, its rivals or its own members. If the secret gets out the organization will face penalties ranging from boycotts and street protests through disaffected employees to legal proceedings. The Condition doesn't cover trade secrets, or confidential data (organizations are expected, and sometimes obliged, to keep those from the public), just unsavory or illegal actions. This Condition may be taken multiple times, each instance representing a different secret; each Condition is tied to a previous action or a hidden Asset.

A Secret tied to an action conceals the organization's identity and the identity of the Asset it used from anyone who learns of the action. A Secret tied to an Asset likewise conceals the organization's identity and that of the Asset, but from those who learn of *any* actions taken with the Asset. Anyone who wants to penetrate this concealment must [investigate](#) an action the Condition protects.

Once another party learns the Condition's secret, he may expose it at any time, or the organization may do so itself. When the secret becomes public (no matter how) the Condition resolves, and the organization reaches a breaking point. If the Condition is tied to an Asset, the penalty for the breaking point equals the Asset's dots. For Conditions tied to actions, the penalty depends on the action's results.

If the organization loses the last dot in an Asset tied to a Secret Condition, that Condition ends without resolving.

**Resolution:** The organization's secret is exposed.

## *Shining Hearts: Beacons*

*Dear Diary*

*I had the dream again. The one with me and Sir Rufus on a quest for the Heart of Earth that I always used to have when Alison bullied me. It made me feel much better, just like it always used to do.*

*Maybe I had the dream because everyone's being so mean and shunning Jane. I should just talk to her, if I can make it through the Swamp of Sadness I can talk to one girl no matter what anyone else tells me!*

The Light of hope is far from unique to the Radiant; it belongs to all mankind. In the millennia of the Long Night mankind built civilisations and made wonders in the arts and sciences. It was regular humans who achieved the impossible and walked upon the moon, bringing a new dawn to end the Long Night. The Beacons are people whom the Light illuminates somewhat more brightly than most. Some Princesses say that in a better world everyone would be a Beacon. Some (usually the same people) say that in the Kingdom everyone was a Beacon.

A Beacon has a strong sense of hope, morality and idealism that radiates outwards. That's all it takes - there are no astrological portents during their birth or inexplicable transformative events, only a person with a heart full of hope, empathy and kindness. Their presence encourages people to make the best of themselves. The effect is subtle enough that it could be taken as nothing more than the force of personality, if a Princess' magical sight did not show that Beacons carry a tiny spark of the Light.

Most Beacons don't ever discover their supernatural potential. They live ordinary lives, and if they tend to be popular people surrounded by loyal friends or unusually sensitive to acts of cruelty that's only what you'd expect to happen when someone is extraordinarily kind and emphatic. But Beacons do have their magic and their curses. Given the chance the Outer Darkness will go out of its way to kill a Beacon, and a Beacon carrying Shadows becomes vulnerable to the trap within the Dreamlands. Fortunately, as they entered the Dreamlands far from the Radiant Courts where the Wardens were strongest, many Beacons escaped the Wardens' notice and instead discovered the strength to face problems in the waking world through their nocturnal experiences.

Princesses usually keep an eye out for Beacons. If they seem in trouble they'll offer help before the Beacon's light is crushed. There is a pragmatic reason to keep an eye on Beacons: they are disproportionately likely to

Blossom and being ready to ease a new Princess into her role can make a world of difference. Even if that weren't so, though, the Hopeful would seek out Beacons anyway, just for the pleasure of their company.

## *Beacon Traits*

Because of their optimism and Inner Light, Beacons find it easier to keep their balance when confronted with horror; they gain a +1 bonus on breaking point rolls, except when their own action was the breaking point.

Like the Hopeful, Beacons are vulnerable to [Sensitivity](#), with a base pool of 1 die. This makes it possible for them travel to the [Dreamlands](#), though they may not be aware of that before gaining dots of Shadows.

Beacons create a [quiet Echo](#) similar to the one a Princess creates just after Blossoming, affecting everyone in their immediate presence. Alas, the Echo also draws attention from the Darkness much as a Princess does just after Blossoming.

Beacons can recognize [Bequests](#). As they have no Wisps, they cannot use a Bequest, unless its power requires no Wisps, or it is Duty-Bound.

## *Beacon Character Creation*

Beacons follow the standard rules for mortal character creation in the *Chronicles of Darkness*. In addition they start with a few extra character traits.

- Beacons begin play with the Virtuous Merit [CofD 46] for free.
- Like the Nobility, a Beacon is naturally guided by the Light to help his neighbors and improve the world. Like the Nobility, therefore, Beacons begin play with a personal [Vocation](#), on top of Vocations from the sources available to mundane characters. There are no restrictions on the Vocation's goal, except that it must be suitable for an Aspiration, and that the benefit of completing it goes to someone else. A Beacon may take a new Vocation whenever he resolves his current one.
- Beacons begin play with three Luminous Experiences (from previous work towards Vocations) which should be spent immediately on traits.

## *Loyal Knights: the Sworn*

Wouldn't it be nice if everyone was a Princess? If nobody could commit cruelty without suffering from Sensitivity? If encroachment of the Darkness could be beaten back by the magic of billions? If wishes were Blossomings then everyone would be a Princess already, but the Nobility know it's no good wishing for a better world. You have to roll up your sleeves and get to work. Even if there is no way to force a Blossoming, a Princess with the [Accept Fealty](#) Charm can create a Sworn.

The Sworn fill many roles. Sometimes a Princess is impressed by a Mortal (or a Beacon) and offers them magic. This is an significant investment: not only must the Princess invest a portion of her power to create a Sworn, but she must make Bequests to provide the Sworn with Wisps and any Charms she wishes to offer. Other Sworn work closely with the Nobility. A team of Princesses who notice a gap in their skills could seek out a new member who has the mundane abilities. The powers of a Sworn and a few Bequests can provide the magical skills.

Some Princesses create Sworn for special tasks. Consider if you will a Princess who creates Bequests that grant intuitive insights into the working of legal codes and hands them out to a think tank drafting a complex new social justice law. If it works a simple investment could have an enormous long term payoff but such plans are risky. The Princess usually ends up running against one or more of the vested power groups within the World of Darkness.

Other Princesses just like to share their magic with people. Granting the powers of a Sworn to a beloved friend or family member can help another understand the Princess' new life and preserve the bond between them. It is unfortunately not that uncommon for a friend or family member to be jealous and giving them some power can help smooth things over. A Princess who worries for her loved one's safety can do worse than giving them the power to run away at superhuman speeds, or to work the magical defenses around their shared home.

In Alhambra Sworn have served as a vital and prestigious pillar of society. The kingdom of Tears possesses vaults filled with Bequests, some dating back to the Kingdom itself. As they reuse old Bequests it requires a far smaller investment to equip a new Sworn and so Alhambra depends on Sworn, Bequests and magic much as we depend on technology.

The armies of Storms also make much use of Sworn, who seem to form spontaneously from ordinary people who hold Tempesta's fury in their hearts. These Sworn seem to be self sufficient, but lacking Bequests their powers are limited.

The rarest kind of Sworn is an deliberate attempt to redeem someone by using Sensitivity to show them the truth of their actions. This is rare not only because creating a Sworn is a significant effort, but also because no one can become a Sworn without giving full and informed consent. Still people who believe their actions to be just may well consent to Sensitivity.

## *Sworn Traits*

Every Sworn follows one of the eight Queens. They draw upon their Queen's magic, the power of the Queen's Invocation granting them their abilities. Sworn invariably have one dot in their Queen's Invocation, and may purchase more dots in that Invocation with experience at the out-of-affinity rate. They can apply the Invocation when they use Bequests and invoke it for Willpower. Sworn may also use their Queen's version of Practical Magic.

Sworn can recognize and use [Bequests](#). Sworn have a weak connection to the Light, which gives them a pool of Wisps, holding a number of Wisps equal to their Resolve + Presence. They may spend these Wisps on Practical Magic or to activate a Bequest. Like Beacons, Sworn create a [quiet Echo](#) similar to the one a Princess creates just after Blossoming, affecting everyone in their immediate presence.

Sworn do not, however, gain Wisps as the Hopeful do, by carrying out tasks important to a Calling, nor can they spend Willpower while in danger to regain Wisps. Any Princess of the same court can give Wisps to a Sworn from her own pool in a ritual confirmation of the oath, up to her Wisp/turn limit; that ritual requires a minute to perform, and the full concentration of both parties. The [Charge](#) Charm will also give Wisps to the Sworn, and an Accepted Charge Bequest can transfer Wisps to its user. (Such Bequests are highly prized among followers of Tears and Storms, who lacked Hopeful allies until recently, but have ways to gather Wisps without them.)

Finally, a Sworn can gain Wisps if he has a Princess (of any court) as a close friend, by spending time in mundane activities with her; that is, Sworn are allowed to take the [Circle](#) Merit for relationships with the Hopeful. They roll Empathy + Circle (- Shadows) to check if they regain Wisps from an encounter with Circle members. (Sworn are valid targets for a Princess' Circle, though not for another Sworn; indeed, Sworn tend to be among the most treasured of a Princess' Circle, for they share the duty towards the Light and are all-too empathetic to the troubles of Sensitivity.)

Their connection to the Light also makes Sworn vulnerable to [Sensitivity](#), with a base pool of 1 die. This makes it possible for them to travel to the [Dreamlands](#).

## *Sworn Character Creation*

Sworn follow the rules for mortal character creation, though they are forbidden to take the Vice-Ridden [CofD 46] Merit. They begin play with 1 dot in their Queen's Invocation, and a total of 4 dots in Bequests, for free.

## *Leaving Court*

Like a Noble, Sworn are allowed to [return](#) their oaths, if they discover another Queen is closer to their ideals, or wish to withdraw from the Nobility's fight. This is as psychologically difficult for the Sworn as it is for the Hopeful; a Sworn who returns his oath reaches a breaking point, with a penalty equal to his dots in the Queen's Invocation. Once he's left, he loses his Invocation dots and is refunded all Experiences he spent to buy them (that is, 3 Experiences for each dot after the first.)

Leaving the Queen's service returns the former Sworn to the status of a mundane character. His pool of Wisps and quiet Echo vanish, he can't recognize, transform or use Bequests, and his Circle Merit ceases to work.

A faint flicker of the Light remains in his soul for a short time, which a Princess can re-ignite: if it's used on him before the end of the current session, [Accept Fealty](#) costs a Willpower *point* and a Wisp for each roll.

## *Small Advisors: Shikigami*

In the years since the Release, when the Nobility Blossom often enough that a small high school may easily have a nakama of three or four attending at once, it's a common thing for the first Princess of a future nakama to meet an unusual creature in the days before they Blossom - commonly an animal that's clearly tame but not obviously owned, and is more intelligent than other beasts of its kind. The creature will follow or lead the Noble-to-be to a private place, where he speaks, introduces himself, warns her of the new world she is soon to enter, and offers himself as a guide. In the loose network of the Hopeful community these magical teachers and companions are named Shikigami. Once a Shikigami has arrived and befriended his first Noble, he usually becomes something between a boon companion and a mentor to her, and to several other Hopeful in the area who Blossom at about the same time; experienced Hopeful, indeed, have come to expect that, where a new Shikigami appears, multiple Blossomings will soon follow.

As no one has heard of Shikigami appearing during the Long Night, the Nobility have every reason to believe that all Shikigami come from the Dreamlands. Many of them, indeed, were explicitly sent from the Dreamlands, with a mission from a Radiant court to convene a new nakama and teach them what the Light's servants most need to know. Other Shikigami lived normally, for Dreamlanders, until they saw visions and portents that showed them people in a distant land who needed them; when they followed the visions they found themselves in the waking world, near the Hopeful the visions showed them. And there are some Shikigami who were made that way by magic - a Princess in her full power journeyed to the Dreamlands, made a friend there, and used a [Charm](#) to bring that friend into her waking life. All of these Dreamlanders, once they arrive in waking life, anchor themselves to the animal or doll which they thenceforth animate, and vow themselves to one or several Hopeful. There are a few Shikigami who say nothing of their origins, but no one seriously believes that they're anything but Dreamlanders.

All Shikigami can speak intelligibly, move about, and manipulate objects as dexterously as a human, even if their vessels could not. (Stealth rolls may be required to do so in public without drawing attention.) They all possess to some degree an oracular gift that grants flashes of insight relevant to their companions' problems; the ones who followed visions of their nakama are strongest in that gift. But the most significant ability of the Shikigami is a subtle thing: merely by existing, he creates a strong mystical link among all of his nakama, through which a Noble's magic can travel.

## *Shikigami Traits*

Shikigami are supernatural beings tied to the Light, and perceive the supernatural terrors in the World of Darkness in the same way the Nobility do. They have Belief, not Integrity as a mundane character does. They are also vulnerable to Sensitivity, with a base pool of 1 die, and have a full [Echo](#) like a Noble's, with an effective Inner Light of 1. Their quiet Echo reaches out to Sensory and Intimate sympathies.

A Shikigami's bond with Nobles not only links him profoundly to them, but also draws them together. Every person who has bonded with the Shikigami has an Intimate [sympathetic link](#) to him, and to every other person to whom he is bound. This web of sympathy makes the Shikigami and his Hopeful a [Dedicated organization](#).

As natives of the Dreamlands, Shikigami can return there whenever they wish, and serve as a guide for others as well. They begin with a good impression for entering and navigating Crawlspace, like a Princess. Moreover, Shikigami can guide others into the Dreamlands as a Princess can, and if they do so for a Princess they're bound to, they can help her pick out a path. A Shikigami's help makes the rolls to open Doors in Crawlspace teamwork actions, with the Shikigami as a secondary actor.

Shikigami cannot remain on Earth for long unless they are bound to at least one Noble, or to a Nation. When a Shikigami is not bound to anyone, he must roll Resolve + Composure each time he goes to sleep, with a -1 penalty for each time he's made that roll before. If he fails that roll the Shikigami returns to the Dreamlands, never to wake again; his vessel returns to the ordinary creature or object it used to be.

It's possible for a Shikigami to become [Sworn](#). If he is, a Shikigami has an additional option when buying a [Bequest](#); he may add 1 Merit dot to the Bequest's cost to make it an intrinsic ability. A "Bequest" of this type

is part of the Shikigami; if it's permanent its effect always applies, and if it's activated the Shikigami can use it at will.

## *Shikigami Character Creation*

Shikigami follow the rules for mortal character creation. Not being human, they have a number of additional traits and limitations.

- Shikigami begin play with Belief 7.
- Shikigami are normally quite small - small enough for a girl to carry in her arms - and thus physically weak and frail. A Shikigami's default Size is 2; unless he buys the [Large](#) Merit, Physical Attributes may not be his primary category, and his Strength score cannot be more than 1. He also has the modifiers applying to characters that have shrunk to Size 2 from the table in [Size Changes](#), except those for Attributes.
- Shikigami are aware of the Light and the Darkness, and wherever either one has a strong presence they will take notice. A Shikigami begins play with [Unseen Sense](#) (Light) and Unseen Sense (Darkness), generally manifesting as a sensitive nose. (A Shikigami's ability to sniff out Bequests does not let them use one - becoming Sworn is required for that.) In addition, Shikigami begin play with 1 free dot in [White Rabbits](#) to represent their oracular talents.
- Shikigami may spend their starting Merit dots on almost any Merit open to mundane characters, and a few special Merits reserved for them. Shikigami are forbidden to take Vice-Ridden, Giant, Small-Framed and any supernatural Merit except some which come from the Light. At present these are [Royal Tongue](#), [Taint Awareness](#) and White Rabbits. (A Sworn Shikigami may take [Circle](#) as human Sworn do.) Social Merits are highly unusual for Shikigami, and Storytellers should require special justification to allow them at character creation - after all, people in the World of Darkness tend to be suspicious and wary when they meet a talking animal.
- Some Shikigami have a second, larger and stronger form for those occasions when physical violence is necessary to protect their friends. Shikigami may buy [transformed Attribute and Skill dots](#) as Nobles do, though they get none for free, and may take any of their Merits as form-limited, including the Merits reserved to them. They may not break their trait caps. A Shikigami with a second form uses a [transformation action](#) to reach it. He lacks a phylactery, so a dramatic failure instead inflicts the Stunned [CofD 286] Tilt.

## *Shikigami Merits*

Shikigami use these Merits to define the advantages they gain from their small, nonhuman forms.

### *Claws and Teeth (● or ●●)*

- | Requires Shikigami; for ●, Size 3 or more

The Shikigami has claws, sharp teeth, or other innate weapons that can draw blood. His unarmed attacks and Damage moves during a grapple do lethal damage. At 1 dot, the damage rating of these attacks is 0; at 2 dots it rises to 1.

### *Doll (●)*

- | Requires Shikigami

The Shikigami is very small indeed - his Size is 1, and he has the non-Attribute modifiers of characters who have shrunk to that Size. Doll and [Large](#) are not compatible.

### *Innocous (●)*

- | Requires Shikigami

The Shikigami is very good at fading into the background, or passing as a normal animal. Perception rolls to notice him take a -2 penalty.

### *Keen Sight, Hearing or Smell (●-●●●)*

| Requires Shikigami

The Shikigami can perceive with one major sense significantly better than a normal human. Add the dots in the Merit to all Perception rolls based on the relevant sense. The Merit also allows at least one feat of perception impossible for humans, such as an ability to track by scent, pick out one conversation in a crowded room, or recognize a face from the next city block.

### *Large (●-●●●●●)*

| Requires Shikigami

The Shikigami is larger than usual. Each dot in this Merit adds 1 to his Size, and applies the non-Attribute modifiers of characters who have shrunk or grown to that Size. With any dots in the Merit, Physical Attributes may be the primary category. At Size 3, Strength is capped at 3 dots; at Size 4 and 5 the cap rises to 5; at Size 6 and 7 the cap rises to 7.

### *Wings (●● or ●●●●)*

| Requires Shikigami

The Shikigami can fly. At 2 dots his Speed in the air is the same as it is on the ground; at 4 dots, he has +5 Speed when flying. While flying the Shikigami can't get the leverage to exert his full strength; his Strength is halved when rolled in a dice pool or for lifting and pushing objects.

## *The Gift of Unison*

Some Shikigami are capable of becoming a symbiotic partner with a Light-touched human, temporarily combining into a single being with powers that neither they nor their partners can reach alone. Shikigami with this ability normally seek out Beacons to protect them from the Darkness, or rather to give them enough power to protect themselves. Some have allied with Sworn, having met their partners through a strong Camaraderie. And there are a few whose partners Blossomed under their care.

A Shikigami can take a version of the [Unison](#) Merit for humans called *Gift of Unison*, altered by the change of viewpoint. When the partners fuse, the Shikigami's player controls the human character, who is designed as a Light-touched human with the same number of Experiences as the Shikigami, plus free transformed dots based on the Merit dots and a pool of Wisps. If both partners happen to be PCs, the fused character uses the human's traits, and gains transformed dots worth twice the sum in Experiences of both the human's Unison dots and the Shikigami's Gift of Unison dots. Charms and Invocation dots that depend on the fusion are capped by the larger of the two Merits.

Shikigami can form bonds with more than one person at a time. The Storyteller may permit a Shikigami PC to take Gift of Unison multiple times; each instance represents a different human partner.

## *Blessed Places*

HERE MEN FROM THE PLANET EARTH FIRST SET FOOT UPON THE MOON  
JULY 1969, A.D.  
WE CAME IN PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND

The classroom of an inspirational teacher. A humble yet gifted artist's studio. The best, hardest working hospital in town and the underfunded free clinic opening against the odds in the most deprived area. A truly



welcoming and tolerant church. The laboratory tirelessly working on the latest disease to evolve and the library that preserves wisdom of ages gone by. These are the Blessed places, they stand on a legacy of the very best of humanity.

Anyone touched by the Light - any Beacon, Sworn, Shikigami or Noble - feels her heart lift when she arrives in a Blessed area, though she may not realize why. The Storyteller rolls a dice pool of her base Sensitivity + the Beauty of the place; if the roll succeeds the character notices the Light-touched quality of the place she enters.

## *Creating a Blessed Place*

Blessed places are formed when attempts to improve the world are performed with true passion and great skill. This can be as general as making something beautiful simply for the sake of beauty or as specific as helping one single person. A single but extraordinary act can create a Blessed place all by itself while others are formed by gradual accumulation.

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### *Blessed Area Growth (points)*

Action	Beauty				
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+
Selfless and genuine attempt to help others.	0*	0	0	0	0
... that inspires witnesses.	1	0*	0	0	0
... that directly improves a small town or village, or a small institution.	2	1	0*	0	0
... that directly improves a city, or a large institution.	3	2	1	0*	0
... that directly improves a country.	4	3	2	1	0*
... that directly improves the entire world.	5	4	3	2	1
0* means that a single act at that level gives no points, but repeating it many times can build up to a point eventually. Actions that involve significant personal sacrifice count as one step downward in this table.					

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Blessed places have two attributes, their Size and the Beauty of their Blessings. The Size of a Blessed place is measured on the [Sanctuary](#) scale. The Beauty of a Blessed place measures how powerful and numerous its effects are; each dot in Beauty supports one Blessing. Larger Blessed places are also more resilient; a Blessed place has a Hold track with a number of boxes equal to their Size +1. Most methods to damage the Beauty of a Blessed place mark Hold boxes. When the rightmost box is marked reduce the Beauty by one, remove one Blessing and clear the Hold track. Blessed places recover from damage if left alone; clear 1 Hold box on each day that no Hold box is marked.

When creating a Blessed place the Storyteller should first imagine the person or people responsible. An artist motivated by his love of art? A scientist dedicated to discovery? A good Samaritan? See where their actions fall on this rough guide to how much Beauty may be created. A dot of Beauty costs 1 point; a dot of Size costs points equal to the new value of Size (1 point to raise Size from 0 to 1, 2 points to raise from 1 to 2, and so on.)

A Blessing can produce any one of the following list of effects. A Blessed place can grant most Blessings any number of times, within the limit of its Beauty. No Blessing will assist actions that would cause a breaking point, in either the one performing them, their targets or a witness.

**Attribute:** Dice pools that include one Attribute have a +1 bonus.

**Skills:** Rolls of two Skills have a +1 bonus; or, rolls of one Skill have a +2 bonus. An Attribute + Attribute dice pool, such as Perception, may be treated as one Skill.

**Specialties:** Three types of tasks, each of the scope of a specialty, have a +1 bonus. These can be stacked, with one type taking +2 or +3.

**Defense:** The Blessing protects from mundane assaults. All rolls to attack or harm others take a -2 penalty.

**Resistance:** The Blessing protects from hostile magic. Increase either Resolve or Composure by +1 (not both - pick one) when resisting or contesting a supernatural power.

**Health:** The Blessing aids recovery from wounds. All characters heal damage in half the usual time, if they remain in the Blessed area. The Blessing does not apply to characters who heal with supernatural powers, such as vampires or werewolves, and does not stack with magical healing. This Blessing may not be applied more than once.

**Willpower:** The Blessing bolsters the will to act. All characters gain one temporary Willpower dot while in the Blessed area. Characters who have lost their souls [CofD 290] and Princesses who have fallen to [Belief 0](#) have the Enervated and Thrall Conditions suppressed while they remain in the Blessed area; both Conditions return in full when a soulless character leaves.

**Integrity:** The Blessing protects from psychic stress. All characters gain +1 to breaking point rolls not caused by their own actions.

**Virtue:** The Blessing encourages the better side of human nature. Each level of the Blessing applies to one Virtue. Anyone who acts in accordance with that Virtue while in the Blessed area regains 1 point of Willpower, though at most once per scene. This is independent of personal Virtue - if a character's own Virtue matches the Blessed one, he may regain Willpower from it in either way.

**Calm:** Characters with good intentions feel calm, alert and confident in the Blessed area. Any character who meditates in the Blessed area gains the Steadfast Condition [CofD 291]. This Blessing may not be applied more than once.

## *Moments of Grace*

Beauty	Time Needed
0-4	2 weeks
5-9	3 days
10-14	12 hours
15-19	4 hours
20+	1 scene or hour

Those who spend time in a Blessed place often find their thoughts turning to things they could do to spread Light in the world. Any character (mundane or supernatural, it makes no odds) who remains in a Blessed place long enough may take a [Vocation](#); a Princess may take one on top of the Vocation she already has.

Such a Vocation, once accepted, remains until the character fulfills it, or either gains or loses a dot of Integrity (or the equivalent, for a supernatural being.) Vocations from Blessed places aren't replaced when fulfilled or lost. The Vocations given by a Blessed place are inspired by the deeds that gave the

area its Blessings, not by a Princess' Calling, so they must be tasks that emulate those deeds.

The time a character must remain in a Blessed place until he may claim a Vocation from it depends on the Beauty the place has. Leaving the Blessed area for a few minutes is fine, but if a character leaves for a scene outside the area the clock resets and he has to start over. A Princess adds her base Sensitivity dice pool to the area's Beauty when consulting this table.

## *Protecting Blessed Places*

Every Blessed place is a treasure, and any nakama with knowledge of one is sure to do their best to protect it. So what do they need to protect it from?

## *Taintings*

Taint and Blessings cancel each other out; Taint weakens or even destroys the Beauty of a Blessed place forever. When a [Tainting](#) is committed within a Blessed place roll its Beauty - the amount of Taint created (as per the rules for Tainted areas;) on a failure the Beauty decreases by the amount of Taint created. If there is any excess taint it forms a Tainted place.



## *Symbolic Opposition*

Every Blessed place has a cause, some beautiful thing people did that has left its mark on the area. Actions which directly oppose this cause can cause the beauty to decay.

**Example:** *Harriet is a true artist whose only motivation is to make the world a better place by creating things of beauty. Her dedication turns her studio into a small Blessed place. If her studio passed on to another artist who saw art merely as a way to get money and prestige - going against everything Harriet believed in -- then this could degrade and ultimately destroy the Beauty of her studio.*

As a general rule assume that every successful roll, or successful extended action, which is directly opposed to the origin of the Beauty marks off one Hold box, but turnabout is fair play: every successful action which reinforces the ideals of the Blessed place clears one hold box, providing it was specifically marked by Symbolic Opposition.

## *Physical Destruction*

The power of a Blessed place is held in its physical form. It is in the ancient stonework of a university whose scholars have added to mankind as a whole. It is in the trees of a forest where generations have found peace and strength. Destroying such things can damage a Blessed place. Every time the physical form of a Blessed place undergoes massive changes, enough that it is no longer recognizable as the same place, roll its Beauty. The number of successes on that roll becomes the new Beauty rating, and the number of its Blessings.

## *The Mystery of the Queens*

One of the more difficult questions for any student of the Light is, quite simply, "What is a Queen?" and "How does one become (or create) a Queen?"

The reason this is such a difficult question is, in part, because none of the Queens are reliable on this, by their own admissions. Officially, the Radiant Queens died, and have spent millennia in the Dreamlands (and thus their memories are unreliable), the Queen of Tears really doesn't like talking about it (she doesn't want the competition, and she claims the memories are too painful, even for her), the Queen of Storms has just plain forgotten almost all the details, and the Queen of Mirrors claims to be barred from speaking about it (talking about whom or what is barring it is also forbidden, according to her). Unofficially, Mirrors has something strange going on with her memories anyway, Storms is basically a living natural disaster, and Tears is ancient beyond belief and probably at least half-mad from grief.

Some points are worth mentioning:

**There appears to be no systematic way of becoming a Queen.** Just as, other than certain trappings, there is no one way to become a Hopeful, there probably is no one way to become a Queen; the stories of the Radiant Queens' Second Blossomings all differ (Clubs' story, in particular, is notable in that she claims she didn't realize what she had become until it was pointed out to her by one of her followers). As mentioned above, none of the Twilight Queens discuss their Second Blossomings in any detail, but what details are known all differ from each other, and all of the Radiant Queens' stories.

**It is not entirely clear that all Queens are the same order of being.** This is important when comparing any of the Twilight Queens to each other or the Radiant Queens; even if they were once all like the Queen of Tears claims to be, humans with extraordinary power, they may well not be that order of being now.

**A Queen is tied into an Invocation.** This is the clearest piece of information known, as there exists only one Queen for each Invocation and one Invocation for each Queen, along with certain other evidence. But this leaves a large number of questions: is a Queen the embodiment of the Invocation, or is she the most powerful user of the Invocation, or "merely" the creator of a new Invocation? And those are just the obvious theories; the Court of Diamonds has at least a dozen others, some of them blends of the above.

**How powerful a Queen is is an open question.** Throughout history, there has been speculation on the strength of the Queens and what it might take to kill one. Much of it has been from young hotheaded Seraphim

who would have liked to have seen the head of the Queen of Tears on a stick, but the failure of anything to come of such enthusiastic braggartry sets at least a minimum boundary upon the difficulty of such things. Since the Release, such speculation has only intensified as the Radiant ponder upon how to remove the terrible threat of the Twilight Queens, but information is thin on the ground. The Radiant Queens do not respond well to questions about “So, how powerful are you really?” at best providing an answer so cryptic it might as well be useless, and rather more frequently taking it as a breach of protocol or - in the case of the Queen of Swords - an open challenge for some sparring on the training courts. If any have been so foolish as to ask that of the Queens of Tears or Storms, their bodies have never been found, and getting a straight answer out of Mirrors is about as likely as getting one out of the Cat.

**“A Queen lives her Invocation.”** A subtle, important bit of lore, found across both all available Radiant and Twilight sources. It means, in essence, that a Queen is constrained to act according to her Invocation; not doing so appears to weaken either the Invocation or the Queen.

**There might exist a possibility to take over the mantle of an existing Queenship.** This is mainly important to the Radiant, since one possible goal is to free their Queens from the Dreamlands using such a method.

There are, theoretically, two versions of this possibility; one version holds that it is possible to become one in some way with one of the Queens; the other (usually called the “Usurping Theory”) is that it is possible to replace a Queen. It should be noted that the Usurping Theory does not necessarily require the Hopeful in question to actually usurp the Throne (abdication is covered by it as well); it is only known as such due to the influence of Alhambra, who have a significant degree of scholarship on the idea, mainly in order to dismiss it.

This scholarship exists primarily because of a persistent dark rumor about the Queen of Tears: It is claimed by some of her detractors that once a century (or more), a powerful follower of the Queen vanishes without a trace after being invited to see the Queen; but afterward the Queen looks younger, and her words and gestures sometimes echo the vanished Noble. Needless to say, not only is this rumor Heresy in Alhambra, the people spreading it are making claims well in excess of any actual evidence, and there are several obvious logical problems inherent in the rumors (for one, how would anybody be around long enough to notice?). Even if it were true, the Queen of Tears might be using them for something else (a secret suicide mission, say) and the echoes are merely the Queen’s way of honoring the sacrifice.

Note that these possibilities are largely theoretical, as there exists no reliable evidence that anything of the sort has ever happened. The Radiant Queens in the Dreamlands have never entertained the idea of abdication, chiefly because during the Long Night no member of their courts ever rose to the point where they could plausibly succeed to royal honors. The Queen of Mirrors seeks an heir to the Kingdom’s crown, not to her own. There exists no proof that the rumors about Tears are anything other than just that. And the Seraphic General’s dedicated followers claim to hear the voices of their predecessors crying in the winds of her Storm, or booming in the thunders of her perpetual war; it’s a common belief among the Furies that if they die fighting the Darkness they join the Storm, become the Storm, live forever as the Storm. However, the Seraphic General is a living natural disaster, so any normal rules may not apply to her, and the extent to which she actually absorbs her followers, rather than just echoes of their sacrifices, is ambiguous.

## *Queens in Play*

So much for what a Princess could be expected to know about Queens in character; this section covers out-of-character considerations.

What does it *mean* to be a Queen? How powerful *is* a Queen? These are questions that keep Hopeful philosophers up at night, wondering about the War against the Darkness and if, perhaps, actually getting the Queens to be more than just advisors and figureheads would allow the Nobility to strike a telling blow against the Darkness and start the slow reclamation of this World of Darkness and turn it into a World of Light.

The problem is that getting the level of power of the Queens right is *hard*, as it needs to be able to fit in all campaigns, which means that we as authors cannot make them too powerful, as that would make players and Storytellers both wonder why they aren’t taking a more direct interest; but we can’t make them too weak either, as then the question becomes “why do we even follow them?” And on top of that, we want to make a Royal Coronation at least *plausible* as a worthy end goal of a campaign, which adds another level to the balancing act of making sure that an active Queen walking upon the Earth does not break the setting, but she should also not be less able to make a difference than a Princess.

As such, one should take what follows with a pinch of salt. Or a truckload.

## *Royal Lifespan*

Ah, the Queens, how great and powerful they are. However, given the rather long time between the Fall of the Kingdom and the Release, what, exactly, is the life expectancy of the Queens themselves? There are a few options.

1. Queens are Eternal, that is, after their Coronation they cannot die of natural causes and even severe or fatal injuries won't bother them long. At worst they need to reincarnate so that they can retake their throne after they Blossom.
2. Queens are Ageless, they can die, but it won't be of old age.
3. The Office and the Throne are Eternal, but the Queen is not, and as such all the Queens have been replaced, possibly multiple times throughout the years. Whether replacement happened after the death of the current Queen or she abdicated is left as an exercise for the ST to determine, as is how old a Queen can get.
4. Something really weird is going on in this Darkened World and however Queens are supposed to work under normal circumstances does not apply. This is the default assumption of the game, with a sidenote of "and it doesn't matter really."

Given that 5 of the current known Queens are Dreamland entities of some kind, Storms is a self aware storm system/thing, Tears has from all appearances been the same woman since the Fall of the Kingdom however long ago and not left her palace and *no one* has a clue as to what is up with the Queen of Mirrors, this point of view is easy enough to work with. Unless you want to have the Queens take center stage, but that is not really what the game is about; they are there to provide advice or act as mission control, not as fire support.

## *Royal Relations*

The Queens: Great, Powerful, Endless and Ageless. Makes you wonder how they remain *sane* and in touch with (their) humanity under such pressure with the Darkness ever further encroaching upon the world. Well, the answer is different for every Queen really, with the Radiant Queens often leaning upon the Nobility themselves even as the Nobility calls upon their knowledge, their wisdom and their experience in the fight against the Darkness. How the Twilight Queens do it is unknown, although the question is most likely merely academic with the Queen of Storms.

## *Crown Lands*

Alhambra, Danann, Wen-Mung, Andarta; all places strongly associated with the Queens, yet, what *defines* a Queen's lands, where is it that their authority reaches?

Well, one could say that a Queen is her Lands, certainly, and with the Queen of Storms this is very literal, while the Queen of Tears is very much part of the fabric of Alhambra, or at least Alhambran society. Likewise do the Radiant Queens hold great power over their own realms in the Dreamlands; but when the Queen of Diamonds gestures and a floating palace of clockwork ice rises above her lands, is that her Light-born magic, her mastery over the territory she controls, or the inherent tendency of the Dreamlands to adapt to its residents? Even she doesn't know for sure.

In the end, one might say that a Queen is her Nation, and that a Nation rises and grows more powerful as the Queen does, and grows more able to attend the Nation properly. In what way this feeds back into more, direct power for the Queen is unknown. Most likely, it's nothing at all. It just means that she has a lot of people to back her up in her quest to make a better tomorrow.

## *The Power of a Queen*

Well, that is all nicely put, but that still doesn't answer your question of "how powerful is a Queen?"

Honestly, that's deliberate. Giving direct stats of a Queen turns them from plot points into objectives. Of the "and then we killed the Queen of (\*)" kind, which we want to avoid. And yet people want to know how a Queen relates to her Invocation, and what powers she may call upon when defending herself and her subjects,

as it becomes kind of important if you want to end the game with one of the PCs having become a Queen, or not have the player of the new Queen have to make a new character as there is no way to play a Queen.

We're simply not going to give you more than a few guidelines. Even if you decide Queens can die, a Queen is *very* powerful, and anything short of a highly experienced Nakama is only going to make her laugh, rather than be a credible threat. A Queen's power is also strongly related to her Invocation, and building her powerset to fit the philosophy of the Invocation itself would be a good idea. The setting breaking powers shown in the back stories of some of the Queens are probably best handled as major pieces of the plot instead of Charms. After all, there is nothing that says that *all* Princess magic needs to be Charms-based, and the Nobility is very young besides, with much knowledge lost.

Finally, there are a few things that the Queens themselves are definitely unable to do. They cannot raise anyone long dead, they cannot reverse the Kingdom's fall (Tears and Mirrors would've done both if they could), and none of them can fight the Darkness on their own. If they want to fight the Darkness and win in a way that will stick, they have to work through others, chiefly their Princesses. Perhaps that's the greatest tragedy of the Queens, as none of them, not even the Queen of Tears, can any longer make a personal impact upon the world and mend its ills, inspire its people and defend it from that which would harm it.

# *Appendix A: Embassies*

There are many strange things in the World of Darkness that, as they are now, pose threats to the human race, and yet are not, by their own natures, tools of the Darkness. For the sake of peace, some of the Nobility constitute themselves as diplomats to one of these foreigners, bending their magic into a nonhuman form in hopes they will bend in turn. Those who do this have joined an Embassy.

Embassies are essentially efforts to humanize or redeem a concept, or at least make it less hostile to humanity. Some of them permit easy access to other realms, as with Death, Ephemera and Ocean; others make it easy to deal with unusual creatures as peers, as with Arcane and Machine. Then there are Embassies like Fortune, that open relations with a preternatural power ...

When a Princess first joins an Embassy, she becomes a Secretary. She must have an Inner Light of 2, and usually must also have a specific dice pool (Attribute + Skill) of 5 or more while transformed. A Secretary typically gains three powers:

- A personal power related to the Embassy's domain, that the Secretary can use at any time, even in mundane form;
- A change in her transformed state, or access to a new transformation, that permits interaction with the Embassy's domain;
- The ability to spend Wisps to give other people a part of the Secretary's freedom in the Embassy's domain.

Reaching Inner Light 4, and 7 in the Embassy's dice pool, qualifies a Secretary to advance to the rank of Consul. This usually grants two powers:

- A new, greater personal power related to the Embassy's domain, *or* a further change in the transformed state;
- An extension of the freedom the Consul could extend to others as a Secretary, or a second such freedom.

Finally, a Consul with Inner Light 6, and 9 in the Embassy's dice pool, rises to the rank of Ambassador. Becoming a full Ambassador invariably reshapes a Princess' magic in a significant way - a great change in her transformed state, the power to command the Embassy's domain, and a beneficial alteration to her Charms are all possible. However this is a fundamental change to her magic and always comes with some sort of drawback.

A Princess joins an Embassy by accepting a fragment of its domain into her magic. Every Embassy, therefore, marks its members' transformations in some way. For most Embassies, as already noted, the marks are linked to one of the powers the Embassy gives; but even when a link is absent, the Princess' transformed state will always reveal her status. (When designing a new Embassy, note how the transformations of a Secretary, Consul and Ambassador alter to reflect their offices and privileges.) An Embassy also marks its members' psyches, which are expressed in new habits, attitudes and tastes; attraction to the Embassy's domain, or a resemblance to examples of it, are typical.

## *Embassies in the Dreamlands*

One advantage to joining an Embassy is swift travel in the [Dreamlands](#). In all domains that have a strong connection to an Embassy, an actual embassy building appears. Fully staffed with Dreamlanders - though usually only a Chorus - who attend diplomatic conferences, socialize with high society and try to persuade political figures.

Any Princess who belongs to an Embassy is welcome at any of its embassy buildings. The staff treat her as appropriate for her position; only for the Chorus to forget her when she heads on her way. The staff will gladly provide her with information, office space and things of that nature. Depending on if she's a Secretary, Consul or an Ambassador they might give her orders or obey her orders. Most of this is quite pointless; the real benefit is that a Princess can look up the details of every embassy building run by her Embassy in the files, and can use a Crawlspace to travel to any of them as easily as she does to her Queen.

Princesses cannot go further than the public parts of an embassy building unless they are a member of that Embassy. The Dreamlanders will make an exception if a Princesses who is a member of the Embassy vouches

for her, however this is not without drawbacks. The embassy buildings are not just part of the Dreamlands; joining an Embassy is a change to a Princess' magic and something of this seeps into the structure of an embassy building. Upon entering an unrelated Embassy a Princess must roll Stamina + Resolve, on a failure she gets a headache that lasts for around an hour, and inflicts a -1 to all Mental actions. If Princess is a member of an Embassy with a particularly incompatible concept this rises to -2.

## *Protectorates*

The Queen of Tears claims absolute sovereignty over all but this is rather a big task for one woman, no matter how mighty. To facilitate her dominion she has divided her claim into numerous protectorates and appointed Regents and Governors to execute her will. All Protectorates are named after a mineral, not after the concept they govern.

Protectorates are the Alhambran equivalent of an Embassy, though the culture of a Protectorate is very different. The Privileges are either based around achieving dominion, or assume the Protector already has dominion. The three ranks – Secretary, Governor, Regent – are just that: ranks in the protectorate's chain of command. Culture aside the difference between a Protectorate and an Embassy is simple: there is no difference. Once you peel away the superficial cultural differences Protectorates and Embassies are entirely the same thing.

By policy each Protectorate forms one hierarchy per location where it is active. Each hierarchy has one supreme leader, either a Governor or a Regent, and only one member of that rank may be stationed within that region. In Alhambra the Queen serves as the de-facto Regent for all Protectorates, though there's usually at least one actual Regent around under a legal fiction that she's merely a Governor (with the appropriate position in the hierarchy) or spending most of her time on leave but "willing to lend a hand". Secretaries are forbidden to operate outside an established region though if their job is temporary they may be permitted to do so under the governance of another region, usually Alhambra itself.

The Court of Tears has a unique advantage in its Protectorates. In the many centuries Alhambra spent short of Enlightened manpower they developed a powerful Charm that can promote a Sworn to the rank of Secretary. The Sworn must meet all the usual requirements for the Protectorate except for Inner Light; instead they must possess three dots in Lacrima. Most Secretaries are Sworn, in fact it's rare for a Princess to be invited until she qualifies to become a Governor. Sworn spend a point of Willpower to unlock Secretary Privileges that normally apply to the Transformed state for a scene. In theory this Charm could be used by the Radiant, but it is rightly considered an invaluable strategic asset and the court of Tears goes to great lengths to protect their advantage from their foes. The Charm was intentionally created to require Lacrima. Even understanding of the Charm is strictly limited, instead each Protectorate typically has one Bequest capable of admitting Sworn to its ranks that is kept under the tightest security available.

# Embassy to the Arcane

**Alternative Titles:** The Sorcerer's Embassy, the Order of the Witch-Finders

**Informal Name:** Spooks, Sparkles, Magi (usually only by those who haven't met a real Mage)

*Do not meddle in the affairs of wizards, because they are subtle and quick to anger ... Of course, I'm very, very good at not being caught.*

The power of the Light, with its Charms and its Transformations, and the corrupting power of the Darkness which degrades all that it touches, are not the only unseen forces on the Earth. The arcane and the sorcerous are all around you, if only you know where, and, perhaps more importantly, *how* to look. A middle-aged housewife carries out small rituals on her kitchen table, her manipulations of luck allowing her children to get scholarships for the fancy private school down the street. A coven meets out in the woods round the back of town, and when they do so, pets from all around the place go missing. The gang round the back isn't harassing the locals anymore; no, someone new has taken them over, and they're being trained in service to the Army of the Dragon, militant sorcerers and sorceresses who believe that Existence is War. And in the high-rise skyscraper in the middle of town, rich, intelligent and prosperous men and women meet, and have a pleasant dinner together. Over coffee, they discuss the will of the immortal, once-human sorcerer-kings who they claim rule the world, and, through dreams and portents, make their will known to their servants upon the Earth.

Yes, magic is indeed everywhere.

But it isn't right, many Princesses say. It is far too easily used for control, for abuse of others, to subjugate another's will in pursuit of some distant goal, such as rebuilding an ancient tyrannical city which should best remain forgotten. And yet it has such potential. Much as they are loathe to admit it, there are things that sorcerers can do that the Hopeful cannot, though it varies for witch to witch, and many (perhaps the majority) are not capable of anything more than cantrips. And, among the things that haunt the shadows of the World of Darkness, the mages and witches are the most human, and the most akin to the Hopeful and the Sworn. They're all humans, able to touch forces that others cannot, after all. Some of the more optimistic among the Embassy predict that the Arcane shall be the first of the Embassies to complete its task and bring the sorcerers and ritualists into contact with the Light, redeeming them to their original purpose. Of course, pessimists might point out the worrying attrition rate among the Spooks, where more active members have a worryingly high "accident" rate, let alone the fact that Ambassadors have been used by witches before to gain access to the Dreamlands.

But that's one of the assets of the Embassy. If there's one thing that unites all the men and women and creatures that come under the auspices of the Arcane, it's that they know things. Often things that they shouldn't, true, but when the paucity of Princesses, pre-Release is taken into account, the fact that Ambassadors have managed to obtain information about the hidden world prior to the Release has aided the cause of the Light. And many mages have good intentions, even if they're flawed by their hubris. When an Ambassador truly succeeds in her job, and the sorcerer-folk join with the Hopeful to cleanse an area of the Darkness, or ward off the abominations of the Nothingness they call the Abyss, the results can be truly *glorious*.

## Marks and Requirements

It is very hard indeed to predict what the individual effects on a Princess' Regalia from her membership of the Embassy of the Arcane will be. Of all the Embassies, Spooks vary the most; perhaps natural, given how much their subject matter differs, from one witch to another. There are, however, themes. The Regalia shifts, to become more complex, and often more layered; where once there was a simple skirt, now a complex array of fabric obscures her legs. Veils often make a major component, obscuring the features of the Ambassador and wafting around them, making them appear as if surrounded by fog. Sometimes, on the higher-ranking Ambassadors, complex script appears on their clothes, in woven gold and silver and flowing mercury. This isn't the cheap symbolism of a party wizard's costume; it is rich, and elaborate, and (for the Ambassador) hovers right at the edge of understanding, like the script that covers the Wall in the Dreamlands.

Secret knowledge and deep understanding lead Princesses to the Arcane. The required Attribute for the Embassy is Intelligence, and the required Skill is Occult.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Sight of the Sorcerer*

The Secretary gains an Unseen Sense [CofD 60] that reacts to the use of Arcane magic, and to any being capable of using such magic. For these purposes, Arcane is defined as magic that is or may be activated by rituals, regardless of source. (E.g. vampiric blood sorceries, the Benedictions taught by the *Malleus Maleficarum*, thaumaturgy, most spells of Awakened mages.) It does not include powers which are normally activated in a single turn or less, and it responds only while the ritual is in progress. The sense manifests in a way unique to the Secretary (it may be cold shivers down her spine, or all the hair on her arms standing up.) She is sensitive to the proximity of Arcane magicians even if they don't cast a spell in her presence, and even if they aren't supernatural beings but gained their power through study alone.

As with the Merit, the Secretary can identify or locate the magician that triggered her Unseen Sense, as long as that magician is not currently under a form of supernatural concealment. She can do so either by accepting the Spooked Condition or by spending a Wisp. Unlike the Merit, she can pinpoint ritual magicians whenever she detects them, though she can't take Spooked if she already has it. Moreover, the first time the Secretary pinpoints a character as an Arcane magician in this way, she may roll Wits + Occult to get a general idea of the rituals the magician normally performs. If the roll succeeds, the Storyteller should supply information on the source of the magician's power, the price he pays to use it, or the effects he most often creates with it; and if the Secretary has met other magicians of the same tradition she identifies his tradition as the same as theirs.

### *Arcane Shield*

Those who inquire into secrets often find that they can bite, so a Secretary must be able to protect herself ... from anything. When she is transformed, the Secretary knows immediately when she is the target of an Arcane ritual, and all such rituals take a penalty to their dice pool equal to her Sensitivity. This penalty stacks with the penalty for resisted actions and with any other modifiers to the magician's roll.

### *Gift of Knowledge*

By spending a Wisp when transformed, the Secretary can give to another person an Unseen Sense identical to her own, lasting for the rest of the scene.

## *Consul Privileges*

### *Like Attracts Like*

The sorceries of the magi and the witches are not from the Light, but they can still be useful. The Consul's Unseen Sense now reacts to the lingering influence of Arcane rites; as long as the effects of an Arcane power persist, the Consul will know they exist, and can locate their source or extent. (Supernatural concealment is an exception; the Consul's Unseen Sense does not respond to such powers.)

This includes objects that have been magically empowered; moreover, once the Consul has found such an item, she may study it to divine the magic's intended function, and the method of activating it. She makes an extended Inner Light + Occult roll, using 30 minutes per roll and a threshold of 3 times the cost of the object in Merit dots (the ST sets a threshold for items without a known Merit rating.) On reaching the threshold, the Consul learns how to activate the object's power, and what it will do if she does so.

### *Arcane Bastion*

While she is transformed, the Consul may spend 1 Wisp to give another person whom she can touch the protection of her *Arcane Shield*. Any Arcane power aimed at that person takes a penalty to the dice pool equal to the Consul's Sensitivity, just as it would if aimed at her.



# *Ambassador Privilege*

## *The Magic Within Man*

The secrets and techniques of the sorcerers and magi are laid bare before the Ambassador to the Arcane, for there is magic within humanity beyond the Transformation, and it is now within the reach of the Ambassador. When she is a witness to an Arcane ritual, the Ambassador may learn to adapt that ritual into a form that she can use herself. Studying an Arcane effect for this purpose is an extended Intelligence + Occult action with a threshold equal to the one the ritualist must reach to successfully complete the rite. The Ambassador rolls once for each roll the ritualist makes while she watches a ritual in process, but learns nothing if the ritual fails. She must be personally present at a ritual to learn from watching it.

After successfully learning a ritual, the Ambassador can duplicate it herself at any time with an extended Inner Light roll with the same threshold as the original. She rolls once every 30 minutes (even if the original ritualist worked more quickly than that.) If the ritual called for specific equipment, sacrificial items, Willpower points or lost dots from the ritualist's traits, the Ambassador must use the same equipment and pay the same price. She may, however, substitute Wisps in equal numbers for a supernatural being's fuel points. The Ambassador may learn a number of rituals up to half her Inner Light, rounded down; if she has reached that limit and wishes to study another ritual, she must forget a ritual she learned before.

**Drawback:** Keeping the structure of an Arcane ritual in her head in enough detail to replicate it with her own powers impairs the Ambassador's ability to concentrate on other matters. For each ritual she has studied and can duplicate, the Ambassador takes a -1 penalty to her Intelligence and Wits dice pools. She may deliberately forget rituals and reduce this penalty at any time.

# *Embassy to Death*

**Informal Name:** Reapers

*Death is an end. But it is not the end.*

Long ago, the nature of death was different. Before the Cataclysm, death was merely another step on a greater journey. The grief of losing a loved one was leavened with the knowledge that they were in a good hands, safe hands. And when death took you suddenly, you could always linger for a little while to say goodbye. This is no longer the case. Death is common, sudden, and often painful. Death's old air of solemn, bittersweet tranquility has been replaced with bereaved grief and fury at an unjust or senseless death. Ghosthood, once a way for the departed to set their affairs and say goodbye, has become a torturous trap for wounded souls.

The Reapers try to ease the transition from life to death. Ambassadors to Death and the dead, they comfort both the dying and those who survive them. They both honor the souls of the departed and appease the ghosts that linger. When Death is wrongfully called down, denied, or shunted onto another, the Reapers approach to reconcile the imbalance. All Reapers hope that one day, humanity looks upon death not in fear or desperate denial, but with peaceful, solemn acceptance.

## *Marks and Requirements*

Reapers have a connection to death. Many of them have felt the pain of losing a friend or loved one, and even those who haven't lost anyone personally have suffered vicariously through the loss of a patient. They often seem old or unusually mature for their age. Reapers tend to be calm and tranquil types, often comforting others with a soft, quiet kindness. However, some are energetic and rambunctious, living life to the fullest while the Kindly Boatman waits in the background. Either way, the key Attribute for the Reapers is Resolve, and the key Skill is Empathy.

The Regalia of the Reapers often bears the trappings of death. Many dress in colors associated with death such as dark grey or black in the west, or white in the east. Many take on a mythical symbolism. Some appear as kindly reapers in long black robes, others resemble compassionate angels of death with grey-feathered wings. (Despite his inhuman nature, the kind, solemn manner of DEATH from the Discworld is a good example of how a Reaper might act.)

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Still Masque*

Few things ever seem to faze one who entreats beyond the mortal coil. In situations where she is being directly threatened with violence or death, or in any scene where a mortal dies, the Secretary gains a "phantom" dot of Composure. It counts as a normal dot for dice pools, resistance, and all derived Attributes, including Initiative and Willpower dots, though she does not gain a point of Willpower in these circumstances.

Further, she can draw strength from facing her own demise; if she takes at least 3 points of lethal damage in a single attack, that counts as having fulfilled her Vice. If she begins to bleed out from lethal damage, that counts as having fulfilled her Virtue. Note that the usual rules for how frequently Vices and Virtues can be fulfilled still apply.

### *Envoy to the Departed*

While transformed, a Secretary can see and speak with ghosts (even if they don't share a language), and interact with them as if they were solid. Being solid to ghosts allows the Secretary to attack or use Charms on them (and them to attack her;) all of her regalia, including weapons and armor, is as solid to ghosts as she is. She can also recognize Manifestation Conditions related to a ghost, a ghost's Anchor or an Avernian Gate [CofD 136].

The Secretary can also see, touch and manipulate objects made of ghostly ephemera and anything that was originally material that is changed to that state by a supernatural power. She cannot, however, see or touch other ephemeral beings currently in Twilight.

### *Clothing the Dead*

Once per scene, the Secretary can spill ectoplasm out of her nose and mouth. Ectoplasm is a white, somewhat sticky film in which ghosts can manifest easily, and it can be shaped into a glossy surface that reflects images of nearby ghosts in Twilight that anyone can see. She spends 1 Wisp and rolls Empathy + Inner Light. With 1 success she produces enough ectoplasm to form 1 handheld mirror; 5 successes is enough for a full-length mirror. Coating an object or structure in ectoplasm gives it the Open Condition for all ghosts [CofD 134], allowing them to manifest through it. The ectoplasm and the Open Condition last for 1 scene.

### *Consul Privileges*

#### *Avernian Key*

The Consul's bond with death allows her to walk into the Underworld freely. She can open an Avernian gateway [CofD 136] without using its key, creating the Underworld Gate Condition; she need only touch the gateway and spend 2 Wisps. The gateway remains open for minutes equal to her Belief, and anyone may pass through it ... in either direction.

#### *Euthanasia*

Pain is felt only by the living. By touching a person (herself or another) and spending 1 Wisp, a Consul can bring down a tiny touch of death onto that person, enough to utterly wipe away all pain; this gives the target the **Numbed** Tilt. While this power is often used to soothe the suffering of the dying, it is just as often used to allow an ally or oneself to ignore the pain of grievous wounds.

### *Ambassador Privilege*

#### *Flesh without Substance*

An Ambassador to Death may throw off the bounds of solidity that hold her body in the world of flesh, and walk, as immaterial as a shadow, in the grey world that exists just beyond the visible. As a reflexive action, the Ambassador may spend 2 Wisps, or 1 lethal damage (the damage manifests in a form appropriate to her Threshold, if *Geist: the Sin-Eaters* is being used), and enter the state of Twilight. To leave the state of Twilight, and return to the material, she performs the same reflexive action. To those who see this change in state happen, the Princess either falls apart in a shower of grave-dust and fog, or pulls herself together from the thin air, dust-motes building a new body from the air in a sudden blur of motion. While in the state of Twilight, the Ambassador counts as a ghost, for the purposes of magic which detect, harm, ward against, or permit interaction with ghosts, though explicitly not ones which would bind or summon them. She can also be abjured as ghosts are [CofD 140]; successful abjuration forces her to avoid the exorcist or materialize.

Note that, as the ability is reflexive, it may potentially be activated multiple times in a single turn, permitting the character to "phase in", attack, and return to Twilight, without giving an enemy a chance to attack.

**Drawback:** The Privilege drains the solidity and vitality of the Ambassador in a less concrete sense. Each time the ability is used, whether to enter or leave Twilight, the Ambassador suffers a cumulative -1 to all physical and social actions for the rest of the scene. Moreover, Twilight is often not a happy place; some might say that being solid to the denizens of that state of existence is flaw enough in its own right.

# Embassy to the Dreamlands

**Alternative Name:** The Lords and Ladies of Sleep

**Informal Names:** Daydreamers, Somninauts, Terriers,  
The Resistance (defunct), Heralds of the Rooster (defunct)

*We live two lives, in two worlds. Each is missing something we dearly need. Our task is to bring them together, to build something new, something whole and complete.*

For centuries the [Dreamlands](#) has kept the souls of the Kingdom imprisoned but not all souls touched by the Light were from the Kingdom. A rare few souls Blossomed without any help from a past life during the Long Night. Most were alone and without guidance but a rare few found a tradition left to them by their forebears: the Embassy to the Dreamlands. It was recorded in books Charmed to find their way into the hands of another Princess. Within was a simple mission: Learn about the Dreamlands, find a way to free the souls trapped within.

The efforts of the Embassy amounted to naught when the moon landing beat them to the Release but the story only begins. The Dreamlands remains a source of hope, power and danger to the Enlightened. New Princesses flock to the Banner of the Daydreamers, eager to explore the new world that waits for them in their dreams. Though the Release was not a silver bullet for all the world's ills the Daydreamers still see it as a chance to heal the world. To hear them say it, Earth has reality but is short on hope. The Dreamlands is full of hope but lacks reality. By becoming a bridge between dream and reality the Daydreamers hope to forge something shining and new, the best of both worlds.

## Marks and Requirements

The Embassy to the Dreamlands has one of the odder styles of Regalia. They are sleepers and dreamers but they are also explorers searching for new horizons in the Dreamlands. Their Regalia draws from both, adorning the Daydreamer in a clashing contrast of exploration gear and pyjamas. As though they were woken up in the middle of the night and told they had five minutes to grab what they needed for an expedition and get out. Thick hiking boots are worn below a nightdress. Torches and climbing gear hang from a dressing gown belt. A pith helmet and sturdy backpack are combined with flannel pyjamas. Even their bodies shift becoming rugged and built for tough outdoor conditions yet also soft and dreamy in movement with a faraway look in half closed or entirely shut eyes, no matter how awake and perceptive the Princess really is.

Most Somninauts are Seekers. Many follow the Queen of Diamonds. They seek to study and understand the Dreamlands itself or they believe that the Dreamlands offers a fresh perspective that can lead to new discoveries in other fields such as sociology or the history of the Enlightened. Followers of the Queen of Clubs are also well represented. The Wilds are often drawn to experience the world and no one – certainly not their Queen – said the world ends at the physical. Yet the most common court of all is the followers of the Queen of Mirrors. Before the release Onceborn Lightbringers often felt that freeing the Enlightened souls from the Dreamlands was a simple one step solution to fixing the world (and being crowned True Heir and savior of course). Even now that it has been proven that things are not that simple many Brats still find that they prefer life in the Dreamlands, where their greatness is fully appreciated and honored.

The Attribute and Skill of the Daydreamers are those used to navigate the Dreamlands: Wits and Empathy.

## Secretary Privileges

The long history of the Embassy has left records of several heroes and heroines. To pay tribute to their forebears' memories the Lords and Ladies of Sleep have named the Embassy's Privileges in their honor.

### Alice's Daydream

The Secretary can instantly find a Crawlspace entrance anywhere she wishes. She need only spend 1 Wisp to give herself a perfect impression for the [maneuver](#) to reach the Dreamlands. This doesn't remove the cost

to open the final gate. If some magical barrier blocks access to the Dreamlands by making the impression level worse, the Secretary's impression starts at perfect before the barrier's effect applies, and any Conditions which improve the impression level also take effect.

### *Coraline's Choice*

The Secretary has complete control over her sleep and circadian rhythms allowing for a verity of benefits. As an instant action she can fall asleep at any time, and trying to keep her awake with loud music, uncomfortable conditions or even physical pain is futile. Supernatural powers can force her to remain awake, but the Secretary's attempt to go to sleep triggers a [Clash of Wills](#), in which her dice pool is Resolve + Inner Light. The same benefits apply to waking up or staying awake: the Princess cannot be kept asleep against her will by drugs or other mundane methods and may enter a Clash of Wills against magical powers that force sleep. (Any other effects of mundane attempts to force the Secretary to wake or sleep still take effect - the Privilege does not protect the Secretary from Tilts like Drugged or Insensate.)

Before the Princess falls asleep she may choose exactly when she will wake up, be it after a certain amount of time has passed or when a certain condition is triggered. She can choose as many wake up calls as she wants and will wake up when the first condition is triggered. The usual things that would wake anyone up like an alarm clock, fire alarm or a little sister climbing into your bed and shaking you all work like normal with no benefit or hindrance from this Privilege unless the Secretary specifically chooses that they will or won't wake her up. If the Princess is in the Dreamlands then this ability manifests as a Crawlspace spontaneously appearing and her hearing the alarm clock, little sister or equivalent from within. If she ignores the wake up call any others that come later will have the same effect and as always she is entitled to a roll if a Dreamlander tries to trap her in the Dreamlands and prevent her from waking up.

The Secretary is also free from such crass limitations as a proper sleep cycle. She still needs the same amount of sleep as anyone else but may acquire it in whatever configuration she wishes. Midday is as good as midnight. Sixteen half hour naps are exactly equivalent to a full night's eight hours of sleep and she may use even odder choices, she could spend the entire weekend asleep and stay awake for the entire week. Providing she gets roughly the right amount of sleep (9 to 11 hours a day depending on her age and individual needs) she will suffer no penalties. Willpower is awarded the first time she gets a genuine rest in a day.

Finally falling asleep will not cause the Secretary to de-transform. She will however need to [roll to sustain](#) her transformed state when she wakes up.

### *Lucy's Wardrobe*

By touching another person and spending a Wisp, a Secretary can show them a Crawlspace entrance; it is up to the target if they wish to go through. The effect is the same as getting one success on a roll to guide the target to an entrance; one Door opens for him automatically, and his impression is the same as the Secretary's. The Secretary may use *Alice's Daydream* at the same time as *Lucy's Wardrobe* to give herself and the target a perfect impression, if she didn't have one already.

If a target chooses not to enter the Dreamlands they remain awake, so this Privilege cannot be used to send enemies to sleep in the middle of a fight.

The Privilege doesn't give the target any ability to find Crawlspaces without help, so unless the target naturally has that ability or finds a Princess in the Dreamlands willing to lead them back they could easily be trapped. Crawlspaces leading to the Dreamlands function as normal. Crawlspaces leading to Earth return the target to their sleeping body; when the target is a Dreamlander it will lead to the vicinity of the Secretary's sleeping body.

For people lacking the power to enter the Dreamlands, Crawlspaces created by *Lucy's Wardrobe* remain for the remainder of the scene. Those who have that power treat the Privilege's entrances as they do the entrances they find for themselves.

## *Consul Privileges*

### *Dorothy's Farmhouse*

As the Daydreamer's connection between both worlds grows. She can use her connection to her sleeping body and the walking world as an anchor to protect herself from being blown away by the Gales. The Gales' dice pool to mark her is penalized by her Resolve.

### *Calvin's Tiger*

With her growing connection to the Dreamlands a Consul can call nearly anything from beyond the wall of sleep, bring it to the real world and turn it into something real and tangible. When a Consul is transformed, needs a special tool and doesn't have it or anything like it, she may roll Inner Light + Wits. Success draws upon her connection to the raw stuff of the Dreamlands to create a piece of equipment well-suited for the task she currently faces. She may then hold or touch a real object of roughly the right size and shape, concentrate for a full turn (losing her Defense, if in combat), and spend 2 Wisps to transform the object into a useful tool. The transformed tool has an equipment bonus equal to her successes - 1 and must function identically to a piece of mundane equipment, though it may have an odd appearance or unusual operating principles. The transformation lasts for the rest of the scene, after which the object returns to its original shape. The Consul may use this Privilege a number of times per day up to her Intelligence.

Though the Daydreamer can bring Dreamlanders to Earth with *Lucy's Wardrobe* she still requires the Charm [Privy Counselor](#) to ease one into a new body. If she knows that Charm she can use *Calvin's Tiger* to aid their Invocation. If she activates the Privilege just before beginning the Charm, the threshold that the Charm requires drops to 2x the target's Inner Light; on an exceptional success with the Privilege, the threshold for the Charm becomes just the target's Inner Light.

## *Ambassador Privilege*

### *Wendy's Boys*

An Ambassador becomes a living bridge between both worlds pulling the impossible idealism of the Dreamlands and the hard reality of Earth into a happy medium. This Privilege has two different effects, depending on if the Ambassador is on Earth or in the Dreamlands; it activates while the Ambassador is transformed.

On Earth the Princess creates what the Embassy has termed a daydreaming zone. In this zone the world begins to take subtle cues from the fantastic aspect of the Dreamlands: colors seem brighter and livelier, sounds seem to spontaneously harmonize, the rustling of leaves seems to be hiding something you can't quite believe is an animal, but may just be. Mundane characters bask in the optimism of the Dreamlands; they gain a +1 bonus on all breaking point rolls. For Dreamlanders, a daydreaming zone has the Open Condition [CofD 134] and grants the Materialize Manifestation at a cost of 3 Wisps per activation.

In the Dreamlands the Princess bestows what the Embassy calls a lucid zone. The Dreamlands does not lose its fantastic nature but it seems more solid, more stable. In this place of sanctuary the Gales do not blow at all.

Both zones remain centered on the Princess at all times and extend Inner Light \* 10 yards from her person. Each zone lasts as long as the Ambassador remains transformed, and does not try to navigate Crawlspace.

**Drawback:** Using this Privilege almost seems to place the Princess between two worlds. Her senses are overwhelmed by flashes of whichever world she is not currently in inflicting a -3 penalty to Perception at all times. In addition no matter how aware and awake she actually is she always looks like she's lost in a daydream which inflicts a -2 penalty to Social rolls with anyone who thinks she's not paying attention.

# *Embassy to the Economy*

**Alternative Names:** The Accountant's Embassy, The Auditors, The Smith Institute

**Informal Names:** Suits (formally pejorative), Taxmen (pejorative), Lamars (pejorative)

*That is a common misunderstanding, the actual quote is "the love of money is the root of all evil."*

Go back to the beginning of modern economics; to Adam Smith himself and you will find very different ideas to some free market ideals endorsed today. Adam Smith wrote as much on the subject of morality as he did upon economics and he tied his two fields together. Writing at length upon the need for a moral dimension to economics. Even one governed by, well, the government.

According to the Suits there is nothing wrong with the theory of capitalism, some go so far as to say there is nothing wrong with our current implementation of capitalism. The problem they say is people twisting the system for their own greed. You can't defeat greed by adjusting the rules any more than you can defeat thieves with a stroke of the legislator's pen. No, the only solution is to call a policeman.

## *Marks and Requirements*

Hopeful who join the Auditors tend to be well above the average age for a Princess. Most have had significant experience working in the corporate world, or the financial sector specifically. Seekers are predominant among the members, fighting white collar crime calls for a keen intellect and a deductive mind, not a good right hook. Graces have also begun to show greater interest in membership, turning from the Embassy's traditional focus towards building sustainable ethical businesses. Diamonds are unsurprisingly the most common Queen but surprisingly Swords comes in at second place with a strong showing among financial lawyers but also turn-around consultants and corporate brokers who can fix or fund a good company with a sharp mind and a blazing presence that burns through red tape. A minority of corporate executives in stable companies follow the Queen of Hearts.

Members of the Smith Institute favor formal and mundane attire appropriate to the culture. In Europe and America this means suits, with ties for the Princes. Princes often favor executive style hair while the Princesses often possess power hair. Many members have slightly idiosyncratic tastes, one might prefer the finest hand tailored Italian suits while another dresses in the sharpest of 1950's suits, always with a matching hat.

Regardless of their job title, all members of the Accountant's Embassy are very good at economics. The required Attribute is Intelligence and the required skill is Academics.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Cutting the Red Tape*

In both her perfected and mundane state a Secretary to the Economy finds it very easy to understand finance. They can hold vast tables in their head and fit them together like jigsaw puzzles. By spending a Wisp the Secretary may add her Sensitivity to all rolls to understand a financial system, including: Academics, Investigation and even Subterfuge to see through the person sitting across the desk trying to trip you up with lots of meaningless numbers. If the Secretary spends a Wisp during an extended action she applies Sensitivity to every roll for that action.

### *Following the Money*

While transformed, the Secretary can divine basic facts about an organization, and clues to its recent activities, by following the flow of money through it. To use this Privilege the Secretary must have access to a portion of the organization's funds (actual cash, checking account numbers, credit card numbers). If no other opportunity offers the Secretary can establish a link by buying something from the organization, and using Follow the Money on her payment. The Secretary tags the money by spending a Wisp; over the next 24 hours the Wisp touches

all the organization's assets and sends data back to her subconscious. After a full day has passed, the Secretary rolls Intelligence + Investigation + the Availability level of the assets she tagged - the organization's Rank.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Secretary gets a radically false idea of the organization's nature, purpose or recent activities.

**Failure:** The data does not form a coherent picture; the Secretary learns nothing.

**Success:** The Secretary establishes, to her own satisfaction, one of the following sets of facts:

- The organization's Aspirations
- The organization's Virtue and Vice
- The organization's Morale
- The organization's current Credit and Willpower points
- One of the organization's Interests
- One of the organization's open Assets
- One of the organization's Benefits
- One of the Conditions currently on the organization (including [Secret](#))

**Exceptional Success:** The Secretary learns two of the sets of facts in the above list.

### *It's Not What you Know, It's Who You Know*

It doesn't matter what you know about finance, if you know a Secretary to the Economy you'll be fine. By spending a Willpower point the Secretary may lend another her dots in Academics, Investigation, Politics, Persuasion or Empathy for use in financial matters alone. The recipient may hold the dots for up to a day and activate them at any point, gaining the Secretary's dots for the rest of the scene. If their own Academics are greater they gain a +1 bonus. Lending another her dots does not deny a Secretary access to them.

### *Consul Privileges*

#### *Money Talks*

The Consul can trace the flow of money in fine detail. When she uses *Following the Money*, the Consul may ask for the answer to a specific question about the organization - one that can be answered "yes" or "no", or that has an answer from a small set of alternatives, as far as the Consul knows.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Consul is convinced of a false answer.

**Failure:** The Consul learns nothing.

**Success:** The Consul learns the true answer to her question among the choices she had considered. If the correct answer is not one the Consul considered when she framed the question, she can learn only that the truth is something she didn't think of.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition, the Consul gets an idea of the reason why the answer is true.

#### *King Midas Has Asses' Ears*

There's often a big gap between knowing something is true and being able to prove it; a Consul can, however, bridge that gap, if she's willing to take risks. Whenever the Consul has learned a fact about an organization by examining its finances (either mundanely or magically) she may, by spending 2 Wisps, discover clues to a course of action which will end in that fact becoming public knowledge.

When she activates the Privilege, the Storyteller rolls her Wits + Academics in secret; for each success, the Storyteller gives the player one clue to the location of relevant evidence, the means of obtaining it, or the best person to receive it. The Privilege does not consider the Consul's safety or social position - it gives the surest and quickest path to the fact's exposure, no matter how high the cost of following it might be. The Consul cannot use the Privilege more than once on any given fact.



# *Ambassador Privilege*

## *Shaking Hands with the Invisible Hand*

The Ambassador's understanding of money is so deep that she can predict what organizations will do, even before they know themselves. As with *Following the Money*, the Ambassador must tag a portion of an organization's funds with a Wisp and wait for a day while the Wisp finds the organization's assets.

The Ambassador then spends 1 Willpower and rolls Intelligence + Politics + the Availability level of the tagged assets - the organization's Rank, and asks a question about a future action of the organization. If the roll succeeds, the Ambassador knows the true answer to her question; for each success past the first, she learns the answer to one further question about the same action, expanding on the details.

**Drawback:** Submerging her mind into the flows of money removes the Ambassador from the normal human perspective, and hinders her ability to relate to people in other than financial terms. After activating this Privilege, for a number of days equal to her successes the Ambassador takes a -2 penalty to all her Empathy and Socialize rolls.

## *Edward Merchant / Matthew Sheppard*

*I've got this covered, just let me make a few calls.*

### *Background*

Edward was always plagued by crippling anxieties and a genius at numbers. He had long held ambitions to become an accountant out of a belief that nervous people were supposed to be accountants and hide safely away in the back office. To everyone else it was obvious that wasn't going to happen, Edward had to be homeschooled and even took distance learning classes instead of university. To his family's surprise when he graduated he did manage to attend interviews but failed to impress.

Returning to Plan A Edward's mother played her trump card, giving his name to several of her friends who had mentioned they could use help managing their finances at some point, from them his reputation spread. So began Edward's unremarkable career as a quiet accountant who specialised in managing the estate of old ladies who didn't know, or want to know, the first thing about accounting.

There things would have remained had one of his clients not been taken for everything she owned by the international conman Batroc L'Etranger. Strictly speaking, trying to recover what he could was Edward's job. It was also the only part of his job that required more than casual effort, roughly six hours of every day were dedicated to the task. Edward only realized what he had gotten into and how he had left the nice safe world of numbers when he got a threatening phone call, if he didn't back off Batroc threatened to use his skills to eviscerate Edward in the media, and the courts. After several days of sweating Edward forced himself not to back down, he Blossomed there and then. Batroc never saw him coming.

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### *It's The Law*

To legally be a financial auditor requires two dots of Status in a major accounting firm or government agency. Most investigators in this Embassy have the necessary Status. Matthew Sheppard does not. He is an illegal vigilante who relies on breaking and entering, social engineering and Allies in the police and media who'll look the other way when he turns over evidence.

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### *Appearance*

In his Mundane form Edward is a small diminutive man with a receding hairline and wispy moustache who seems rather easy to overlook. When he Transforms Matthew gains a foot and a bit of bulk. He wears smart modern suits and executive hair like he owns the room and everybody in it. Matthew has two pieces of Regalia,

a set of eight gemstones on rings that allow him to use magical blasts and a briefcase whose capacity far exceeds its size.

## *Storytelling Hints*

Among certain circles Matthew Sheppard is the legendary boogeyman. A ghost never seen until he's coming for his next target. You can't bribe him, you can't threaten him, no crooked accountant can beat him (although if they could, who'd know?), you can't even sue him since he legally does not exist. There are even rumors that he has magical powers and they're a little too consistent to dismiss entirely. In his time he's exposed CEOs, politicians and cracked open the economics of organized crime rings. Several hit men have all failed to track him down and some even became the next case he cracked open. His relationship with the police is strained, they appreciate his help yet face significant pressure from above about his legal non-existence. Not all the politicians he exposed lost their office.

Ever since he first heard there was a price on his head Matthew has made sure he can vanish on a moment's notice. His increasingly stuffed briefcase now contains: Another briefcase full of money (US Dollars, Euros, and British Sterling), some gold, a bag of gemstones, a brick of cocaine (for emergency bribes, he's not a user), emergency rations, a computer, a smart phone, a satellite dish, spare false IDs for both his selves, a large solar panel and a compact tent. It normally also contains papers from his latest case.

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**Calling:** Seeker

**Queen:** Diamonds

**Embassy:** Economy (Consul)

**Virtue:** Just

**Vice:** Arrogant

**Attributes:** Intelligence 4+1, Wits 2+1, Resolve 3, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 1+3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

**Skills:** Academics 4+1 (economics), Computer 1, Investigation 4+2 (finance), Politics 2, Science 2, Athletics 2, Drive 1, Firearms 1+1, Larceny 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 1+1, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 2+1, Subterfuge 2 (spotting lies)

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 6, Size 5, Defense 4+1, Initiative 5, Speed 10

**Merits:** Library 1 (Academics), Professional Training (Academics, Investigation) 2 (Contacts: accountants, police), Allies 4 (Treasury), Allies 2 (BBC), Allies 2 (Bloggers), Allies 1 (Interpol), Contacts 1 (personal secretaries), Fame 1 (British finance), Resources 3, Safe Place 1, Mandate 2, Onceborn 2, Palace 3, Royal Tongue 1, Veiling 2 - all Allies, Contacts and Fame are for transformed ID

**Inner Light:** 5

**Belief:** 6

**Wisps:** 14

**Invocations:** Acqua 4, Fuoco 2, Terra 1

**Charms:**

- **Appear:** [Twenty Faces](#) (Beautiful, Quality), [Wallflower](#) (Traceless)
- **Fight:** [Levinbolt](#) (Multiple, Burning), [You Might Hurt Yourself](#)
- **Learn:** [Keen Observation](#) (Specialized), [Scent Falsehood](#) (Collective, Unwitting), [Questing Mind](#) (Watchful), [Pierian Spring](#) (Personal), [No Man is an Island](#), [Moving Finger](#) (Significant), [Books in Running Brooks](#)
- **Shape:** [Bubble Shield](#), [Miss Poppins' Bottomless Bag](#) (Ordered, Enlarged x4)
- **Practical:** [Twenty Faces](#) (Quality), [Keen Observation](#), [Scent Falsehood](#) (Collective), [Pierian Spring](#)

**Persistent Condition:** [Embarrassing Phylactery](#) - Edward's Phylactery is a business card in the name of Matthew Sheppard and so it threatens his secret identity. Fortunately it's easy to keep a business card hidden.

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# Embassy to Ephemera

**Alternative Names:** The Animist's Embassy, Speakers to the World, Guardians of the Silent Hillside

**Informal Names:** Shamans, Jumpers, Wyrds (usually only used before they help you track down a magath with a fondness for Claiming)

*Listen, you idiot. I know you mean well, but you're creating fear-spirits like you wouldn't believe it with your anti-mugger campaign. We're going to have to find a better way to do this than just appearing and attacking anyone who looks suspect.*

There is a world beyond the one we know. And, frankly, it isn't very nice. As in, it's pretty nasty even compared to the real world. Oh, sure, an animistic universe may *sound* like a nice idea, and theoretically, the spirit world could be used to get Hope spirits to spread their emotion, and help the world; but once you've seen a spirit of Love steal the body of a person, then build an orgiastic cult around it with no limits and no safe words... well, the idea doesn't seem like such a nice one. Add that to the fact that, really, the Hopeful don't have much of a grasp on the spirit world (and so are prone to making rather nasty mistakes, as they misinterpret it in ways that are only prevented by hard experience and/or natural talent), and there's no wonder that many Princesses try their best to keep away from spirits, driving them away as best they can when they cause trouble, and not even noticing them the rest of the time.

Ah, but some among the Hopeful ... well, others might say that they can't leave well enough alone, but the Ambassadors to Ephemera argue that they will not turn a blind eye any longer. They hunt down spirits which steal the bodies of men and women (in a way different to the Amano-jaku; physically and much harder to get rid of), and force them out. They study the changes in the spirit world, and use it to locate problems in the real world; in one famous case, a Hopeful in Rome located a serial killer before anyone had even reported their victims missing, by following the upsurge in murder spirits in the locale. They talk to the werewolf-folk, who are natives to that strange place in a way that the Hopeful are not, and try to dissuade them from hurting people (the record there ... has not been good, compared to other tasks in the Embassy. It's like those things don't find hideous amounts of violence morally wrong.).

Because that's one of the things that the Ambassadors to Ephemera warn those interested in their duties. The spirit world isn't nice. It isn't safe. Unlike even the most degenerate bloodsucker or hubristic sorcerer, spirits were never human, and so don't think like people. And the hounds of the moon which claim domain over the spirit world don't appreciate anyone fleshy wandering around in that place. Some have strange rituals which can force a Princess back through the barrier between worlds. Others ... prefer a more terminal solution.

After all that risks, one might wonder why any Princess might take up the duties of an Ambassador to Ephemera. Why not just focus on that which isn't from a hellish spirit world which has more in common with Silent Hill than with the Dreamlands? The answer is, so they say, that the spirit is a reflection of the real world in a much more immediate and real sense than the Dreamlands. Destroy the spirit of an object, and the thing weakens and breaks down; smash the object, and the spirit dies. If the spirit world, the *hisil* is bad, then that's only because the world is bad. If you can change the real world, you can change the spirit. And, perhaps more interestingly, if you can change the *hisil*, you can change the real world. Moreover, spirits don't go away if you don't believe in them (though research from the [Embassy to Stories](#) seems to suggest that faeries don't, either). Yes, it's often unpleasant to deal with spirits, to be forced to kill a host to get the spirit of rape out of the world. But the Light doesn't need nice. It needs necessary.

## Marks and Requirements

The Regalia of the Shaman begins to take on the strange properties of the unseen world which she deals with constantly. Firstly, it begins to reflect the ambient Essence and Resonance, shifting and flowing to take on the nature of the surrounding. A sudden burst of anger in a bar across the street, and the colors deepen and become more vibrant, as the emotional intensity shifts the local Resonance. The bottom of her skirt might begin to drip blood at a murder scene, sometimes long after the death if the manner of it was especially violent. In the city, it greys and becomes regimented; in the country, it hugs close to her body and twines around her. Moreover, especially if the Princess spends a lot of time in the strangeness of the spirit world, the garments

become somewhat decoherent and... well, ephemeral, starting to resemble something more like a very thick fog (still patterned, just slightly... fuzzy) rather than fabric.

Personal force and persuasiveness are essential traits when dealing with inhabitants of the *hisil*. The required Attribute for a Shaman is Presence, and the required Skill is Persuasion.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Essential Feelings*

First comes a sense for the illusive, invisible, yet omnipresent patterns of Resonance that surround the world. The invisible world is laid bare to the Princess, and she can understand it when it talks to her. As an instant action, the Secretary can study an object or area, and roll Wits + Empathy. Success tells her the Resonant Conditions [CofD 135] that apply to the target, with one Condition being revealed per success, the most important first. Particularly strong resonances (like the hate on a murder weapon, hidden in the knife draw), grant a bonus to the roll.

The Secretary can also recognize when a person, object or place has been influenced by the spirits. Using *Essential Feelings* also reveals Manifestation Conditions, when these exist on the target and are related to a spirit.

As a side effect of this, the character also becomes fully fluent in the First Tongue when speaking to spirits and Shadow-linked shapeshifters. This ability cannot be used to communicate with other members of the Embassy, nor with any other character who may have learned it for some reason. It can only be used on natural denizens of the Shadow. Moreover, the Secretary automatically feels if they are in a Locus, Barren, Glade, or Verge, and can reflexively enter a [Clash of Wills](#) against any supernatural power that would obstruct this, with a dice pool of Wits + Inner Light.

### *See the Unseeable*

The invisible is laid bare to a Secretary to Ephemera. While transformed, she can see and speak with spirits in Twilight Form, and interact with them as if they were solid. Note that this does not give her any special ability to detect them; a spirit hiding behind the sofa is as hard to see as a person hiding behind the sofa. Being solid to spirits allows the Secretary to attack or use Charms on them (and them to attack her;) all of her regalia, including weapons and armor, is as solid to the spirits as she is. The Secretary also recognizes a locus [CofD 126] for what it is, if she sees it while transformed.

### *Open Wide the Doors*

To minister to the Ephemeral, one must be able to go to the Ephemeral. The Secretary has the ability to create the Shadow Gate Condition [CofD 136], although she must do so in a locus (which poses its own problems). The Secretary spends a Wisp, and rolls Resolve + Occult as an extended action, one roll per turn, to open the gateway. It stays open for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled, and then closes. The portal is of Size 6, so only one person may pass through it per turn. It is usually not best to linger around such places; not only do the lupine theriomorphs tend to object to people around the areas where you can open such gates, but *things* can come through the other way.

## *Consul Privileges*

### *Spiritual Harmonic*

A Consul to Ephemera may grant hospitality to the spirits, or banish a spirit that has overstayed its welcome. The Consul may spend 2 Wisps as an instant unrolled action to create a Resonant Condition. This Condition may be tailored to a specific spirit, or apply to any spirit with an appropriate Influence, as the Consul wishes; it remains for one day. The Consul can also suppress one of the Resonant Conditions that exist at her location, or on an object or person she can touch, for one day; the cost and action are the same. If a spirit has applied any Conditions that depend on a Resonant Condition, suppressing it starts a [Clash of Wills](#).

In addition, the abilities of *Essential Feelings* expand. The Consul may, as an instant action, roll Wits + Empathy while studying a target. Success reveals if they have spiritual Essence (Essence from the spirit world or loci; ghostly Essence, for example, does not count) in their bodies; this includes the Uratha, the Changing Breeds, Skinthieves, and the Claimed. It also gives a hint to the nature, in the form of Resonance traits equal to successes. (E.g. success against a Uratha won't tell you that they're a werewolf, but will tell you "Moon", "Wolf", "Rage", or an appropriate link to their tribe, for example). An exceptional success tells their nature, if the Consul has encountered and studied that type before.

### *The Sight Unveiled*

At this higher level of competency, the Consul may grant the effects of *See the Unseeable* to another person, by touching them on both eyelids and spending a Wisp. This gift lasts for a scene, and may be extended by reflexively spending a Wisp at the end of its duration.

In addition, as per *Essential Feelings*, anyone granted this ability also understands the First Tongue when spoken by spiritual entities.

### *Ambassador Privilege*

#### *Queen of the Spirit World*

So long has the character interacted with the unseen, that she has acquired status among them, as they accept her as one of their own. The character gains Honorary spirit Rank [CofD 128] of 3, rising to 4 at Inner Light 9. Spirits of lesser Rank will typically treat her with respect, while ones of equal Rank will not (barring them just disliking her) go out of their way to aggravate her. Even spirits of higher rank may at least grant a little courtesy, though the Princess remains vulnerable to their displeasure. Moreover, the character may spend a Wisp as an instant action, accompanied by a proud declaration of their self, to subtract their nominal Rank from any dicepool used by a spirit-based entity (including spirits, Claimed, and Uratha) which would affect them. This benefit lasts for a scene.

**Drawback:** Every time the character declares their Rank, a little of the spirit world seeps into them, changing their appearance. The body reasserts itself, but it is disconcerting to see the flames flickering in the pupils of a Princess who declared her Rank in the spirit world reflection of a burned-out tenement... especially when they spread to her tear-ducts. For the scene after the declaration of Rank, the character subtracts their nominal Rank from all Social rolls for dealing with people who are not spirits or spirit-based (the spirits find it perfectly normal).

### *Anabel Heartsford / Joyful Song*

*Look, I don't care if the disease spirits are just hanging around the pharmacy because that's where sick people go. I don't want them in my territory; they're not nice!*

### *Background*

Anabel Heartsford loved music ever since she was a child. While other kids balked at their piano lessons, she embraced them with enthusiasm. Growing up in a poorer and less safe neighborhood, she found art an excellent escape from her life's problems. Later on she started to express her feelings in her own music; crude at first, but by the time she was in high school she was writing original songs. Around the same time she managed to save up enough money to buy an electric keyboard and started playing in the local park. Unlike many musicians who were busking, she didn't ask for money but instead played for the sheer joy of it. She was rather good at it and lifted the spirits of those around her. Unfortunately she was a bit too good, and a local gang decided that a musician that talented must be raking in the money. One evening they cornered her and asked for her money. Refusing on the grounds that she didn't have any, she was going to be beaten or even killed when she offered to play a few songs for them instead. It was then that she Blossomed and played a song so moving that the gang couldn't bear to hurt her and let her go. They still come around to hear her, and have given up their criminal careers (most of them, anyway) because of her obvious disapproval.

It was later in her career that she learned about the spirits of the world, when she got involved in taking down a spirit of despair that was plaguing an area. After learning that changes in the material world caused changes in the spiritual world, she started wondering: does that mean changes in the spiritual side would affect the material world? It might be more effective to get rid of hate, cruelty, and other such things that generate Taint if their reflections were purged from an area and positive emotions cultivated. Well, it couldn't hurt to at least try right?

## *Appearance*

In her mundane form Anabel is somewhat lanky, with loose casual cloths typically consisting of a t-shirt, jeans, and a hoodie. She has brown hair and green eyes, and has one of those faces that just blends into a crowd. When she Transforms Joyful Song gains a foot and a cup size. Her outfit is a simple but high quality red silk evening gown with a somewhat low cut neck line. Her Regalia includes a decorative ruby comb that enhances her presence, and a keyboard made out of a rainbow of gems for the keys. This not only serves as a musical instrument, but also as her Levinbolt, firing off giant technicolor notes in combat.

## *Storytelling Hints*

Anabel is full of life, joy, and a surprising amount of wisdom. Her out of the box idea is a long term project that she's pinning a lot of her hopes and dreams on. While she tries her best to be independent to prove that her concept can work, she's not too stubborn to ask for help if she needs it. Since her plan not only calls for the removal of "negative spirits" but also the cultivation of "good spirits" she's actually quite knowledgeable about the immaterial world and a lot of other things on the supernatural side beyond what a Princess usually knows, as they usually focus on the Darkness.

Anabel is eclectic in nature, and is a bit flighty as well. As such she can do a lot of things well, but doesn't really excel in any one area. She is as a member of the Sword court very emotionally driven and may join other Nobles on a whim if she feels it's what she should do. She's very enthusiastic and tries her best to be helpful, but she'll often highjack a situation without realizing it, her natural charm and persuasion serving to make her a strong leading presence.

Finally, she spends a lot of time messing with the spiritual plane without regards to how it will resonate with the larger world. She doesn't have a proper understanding that not all "positive" spirits are actually good and can lead to problems. As such, she's just one blow up away not only from a potential crisis of conscience, but from an encounter with pissed off Uratha.

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**Calling:** Troubadour

**Queen:** Swords

**Embassy:** Ephemera (Secretary)

**Virtue:** Joyous - Anabel seeks to spread joy to those that lack it and feel despair.

**Vice:** Impulsive - She doesn't always think things through, and this can lead to problems.

**Attributes:** Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 2+1, Stamina 2, Presence 3+1, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

**Skills:** Academics 1, Computer 2, Investigation 3, Occult 2 (spirits), Athletics 2, Drive 1, Firearms 1+3, Larceny 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Empathy 3 (reading crowds), Expression 3+2 (keyboards), Persuasion 3+2, Streetwise 2 (gangs)

**Derived Traits:** Health 7, Willpower 5, Size 5, Defense 4+1, Initiative 5+1, Speed 9+1

**Merits:** Allies 2 (ex-gangers), Circle 3 (parents), Palace 3 (family home), Royal Tongue 1, Veiling 1

**Inner Light:** 3

**Belief:** 7

**Wisps:** 12

**Invocations:** Fuoco 3, Legno 1

**Charms:**

- **Fight:** [Levinbolt](#) (Multiple)

- **Govern:** [Forgotten Lore](#) (Spiritual), [Light Over All](#)
  - **Inspire:** [Hear Me, O Muse](#), [Fire on the Mountain](#) (Inspirational), [Peace on Earth](#) (Collective)
  - **Learn:** [Passion's Light](#) (Revealing)
  - **Practical:** Forgotten Lore, Hear Me, O Muse, Passion's Light
-

# Embassy to Fortune

**Alternative Names:** Embassy to the Cat, Those who Walk by Themselves

**Informal Names:** Dancers, Stalkers, the Cat's Girls (only used by the Cat himself)

*You should realize by now, Your Highness. A cat has no duty but to do exactly as he pleases.*

It is oft-times boasted or bemoaned by the Princesses that they are the luckiest or unluckiest people of all, for on a whim fortune chose for them among all the world's brightest to Blossom in this life or another. They were given power and a purpose in life, but also duty and a Sensitivity to the suffering of others. Lucky or Unlucky? Some of the Hopeful take this further. When an entire nation can stand or fall to a single roll of the dice, well lady luck is a fickle lover, if we want a fair and just world someone's going to have to load the dice. Some of the Embassy want to rig the game so the moral get the luck. Others are content if good and bad fortune would be spread a little more evenly or if the stakes were lowered. The Embassy may well change Fortune some day, but if they get what they hope for? Kiss the dice for luck.

The Embassy to Fortune is a rarity; its members have opened relations with a creature who claims to be the concept of Fortune incarnate, the opposite and foe of ineluctable destiny. He most often appears as a handsome ginger tom, with piercing green eyes and a perpetual grin that reminds most Hopeful of the Cheshire Cat (and to anyone who mentions the resemblance, he insists that Lewis Carroll based the Cheshire Cat on *him*); since he never names himself, the Embassy just calls him the Cat. He has appeared in many other forms - a white Persian queen-cat with a diamond collar, a tall thin lazy-eyed man in an elegant and expensive power suit, a gamine girl in a catsuit hanging off a building cornice - but even the ones who aren't cats have a feline character, and all of them have the brilliant green eyes and the slightly mocking smile.

Why this living representative of luck chose to work with the Hopeful (for the Embassy seems to have been his idea) is still a mystery. The Cat himself always answers to his girls, but rarely does he give the same answer twice. Sometimes he says the world's fate has grown so tangled and heavy that the world is doomed to sink under it and be destroyed; that it is his particular task to untangle the thick knotted ball of destiny (and maybe play with it, just a little), and the release of the Hopeful offers him the best opportunity he can remember to carry out his mission. (And when the Hopeful speak of restoring the Kingdom, the Cat nods and says "What has fallen should rise.") Sometimes he explains how a Blossoming is such a stroke of fortune for an entire community that it uses up everyone's luck; the good deeds a Princess' does is supposed to balance it out but with the Nobility trapped in the Dreamlands the whole system fell out of balance and now they're back he's got to fix things up. Sometimes he explains that the Fall itself was nothing more than a stroke of bad luck; since good and bad luck must always balance out the Radiant are owed so much good luck only his personal assistance can repay the debt. And sometimes he explains it's simply because the Embassy is full of so many beautiful women, for he is a tom cat; if he gets too amorous a plate of fish or a ball of yarn will make him forget all about you.

## Patronage

One of the nice things about being on speaking terms with your Patron is that you can ask him for favors. The Cat can do just about anything he wants with fortune or luck; and as he can indirectly affect other things through fortune his powers are essentially godlike. He can grant good luck to endeavors, and less intuitively break destinies and curses by throwing enough random chance at them. The inevitable drawback is that The Cat asks for something in return, the more you ask for the more you have to do. Sadly this means there's no easy path to restoring the Kingdom, becoming a Queen, or any other large scale accomplishment worth fighting for.

The most common request is to send the Princess on what seems like a simple quest, but a whole host of improbable events will soon turn it into a convoluted mess with the Princess bouncing from one highly embarrassing (for her or for those around her) situation for another. The pervading theory is that The Cat does this for the lulz. Smaller favors can be as cheap as a plate of fish, scratching behind the ears, or sleeping with him (which is not recommended, even in a human form he is a tom cat).

On the positive side, if the Princess does pay The Cat's price she doesn't seem to face luck turning sour, as she would after using her Privileges. Some of the debt was probably paid up front, as for the rest ... The Cat just dumps it where it won't do any harm.



## *Marks and Requirements*

The marks of the Embassy to Fortune are of two separate kinds. The Stalker invariably acquires a mask; it can be as small as a thin half-mask around her eyes, or as elaborate as a full helm that covers her hair and face completely. The rest of her Regalia shifts to clothing that combines elegant beauty with freedom to move; somehow, it suggests the Dancer would be equally at home in a formal ballroom or leaping between rooftops. In that they imitate their patron, who likes to quote from the Just-So Stories: "I am the Cat who walks by myself, and all places are alike to me." Accessories often come in the form of a small tasteful lucky charm or two, it's not that rare for these charms to be bribes for the Embassies' feline patron.

The Cat's Girls also imitate their patron bodily - their eyes become green even in mundane form, and when transformed many of them develop pointed ears, vertically slit pupils that gleam in low light, and teeth that all come to points. The lazy, mocking smile that the Cat always wears appears more and more often on the Stalkers' faces as they rise in their Embassy. The senior Ambassadors might easily pass for sisters of the Cat's most human forms - and there's even a tale of a new Secretary who met a woman she took for an Ambassador, and learned much later that she had really been the Cat herself.

The Cat looks for Princesses that already have a touch of the feline nature, in the form of social aplomb and physical grace. The prerequisite Attribute for his Embassy is Composure, and the prerequisite Skill is Athletics.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *It Might Be*

The world is full of unseen things, and one of the Cat's Girls wanders through it, the invisible bestowing fortune upon her. By spending a Wisp, and making a statement out loud like "This sucks. I never win at anything like this," the Secretary can enjoy a sudden bestowal of good fortune. These small manipulations are always within the realms of possibility (she finds a high value note lodged in a drain, the waiter knocks over the drink that her rival had spiked), but often come about in rather surprising ways. If used to generate wealth or obtain objects, any thing so obtained cannot have an Availability above 1, if she wants it to be permanent. It can be used to obtain an object of higher value, but fortune conspires to remove the object from her possession at the end of the scene. Nevertheless, lesser purchases can be multiplied up; the £50 found in a bin, if invested wisely, can become many times more, while the good one-night stand can, if bought breakfast in bed, possibly become a stable relationship.

**Drawback:** Luck always balances out, and for every use of *It Might Be* the Secretary suffers some small misfortune. For a small blessing this misfortune is nothing more than a minor inconvenience, but a Princess who asks for too much will surely lose whatever they gained when bad luck conspires against her at the end of the scene. If the Princess really over does it, such as trying to obtain things with Availability 4 or more, her reversal of fortune will come with negative consequences (such as the Secretary's face appearing on a wanted list, after the car she found to be fortunately unlocked turned out to have a boot full of crack cocaine).

### *Hunter's Eyes*

To find and seize the fleeting moments when destiny can be turned against itself, a Secretary to Fortune needs sharp eyes and ears, and swift reflexes. While she is transformed, the Secretary adds her Athletics to all her Perception rolls, including her rolls to avoid being surprised, and her eyes have the light-amplifying membranes of a cat's eyes; she can see shapes, though not colors, in any lighting conditions short of total darkness.

Moreover, she gains an occult sense for the flow of Fortune around her. It doesn't tell her what is about to happen, or even likely to happen; instead, the Secretary knows whether an improbable event is natural luck, or that luck has been magically tampered with. This is an Unseen Sense for powers that twist luck to someone's benefit (like the Charm [Touch of Fortune](#)) or which override it to force an outcome (such as imposing a geas) that registers at the moment the power influences someone's actions. When such a power first affects the Secretary herself, if her consent was not sought, she twists away from the undesired bond; she adds her Athletics to the relevant Attribute to resist or contest the power. She even resists powers which normally can't be resisted - for

these, she rolls Composure + Athletics - the attacker's Supernatural Tolerance. Success means that the power does not take effect; an exceptional success means that the target is unaware that she was not affected.

### *Bless the Child*

It doesn't matter how lucky you are, a little luck at just the right time is better than a lot of luck at the wrong time. A Secretary to Fortune has an instinctive knack for knowing when it's the right time. While transformed, she gains the ability, as a reflexive action, to spend a Wisp to grant a +2 bonus to an ally's action. The dice lands on lucky seven, a wild sweep of the blade blocks a bullet, the book falls open on the page with the answer. Such manipulations of luck can be felt with the Unseen Sense of *Hunter's Eyes* if the ally is also a Dancer, and will also trigger the senses of any other creature sensitive to manipulations of fortune. This ability may be invoked an number of times equal to the Secretary's Presence every turn, but may not be used on the same target twice in one scene.

**Drawback:** Characters who benefit from this tend to suffer minor misfortunes over the next week or so. It's never life threatening (inflicting at most 3 points of bashing, as they spill hot coffee over themselves), but the friends of a Secretary to Fortune might just have to get used to getting splashed by a car or panhandled by the smelliest tramp on the street.

### *Consul Privileges*

#### *Feline Grace*

The hand of the Cat rests upon the Consul to Fortune. Her teeth become long and pointed (yet elegant, in the same way as his are), and she now inflicts +1 lethal damage in a grapple if she chooses to bite. Perhaps more noteworthy, is that her reactions are now akin to those of... well, a cat on a hot tin roof. Her Initiative modifier is doubled from its base value (the doubling is applied before any other modifiers, and does not stack with other multipliers), and she always lands on her feet, meaning that she never takes lethal damage from falling. Finally, the Consul gains a social aplomb and charisma that attracts everyone who sees her. If she did not have Striking Looks already, she gains 1 dot of that Merit.

#### *It Will Be*

It's truly said that Fortune favors the brave. At the cost of 1 Wisp, a Consul can roll Inner Light + Composure. Successes on this roll become a dice pool which is attached to a target character within sight. The next time the target spends a Willpower point, these dice are liberated, and added to the +3 that the Willpower point grants. Only one such pool may be extant at once, but if the target succeeds on the boosted roll, the Consul who aided him regains 1 Willpower, as if she had fulfilled her Vice. If the roll is an exceptional success, in addition to the previous benefit, she also gains 2 Wisps.

This Privilege trips the Unseen Sense of *Hunter's Eyes* when the target spends the Willpower.

**Drawback:** After using their bonus dice the target suffers -1 to all rolls until they pay back their debt: a number of rolls equal to their bonus dice.

### *Ambassador Privilege*

#### *It Must Be*

The Ambassador to Fortune manipulates luck so cleverly, that she may ensure that her actions will succeed, no matter the obstacles. The character spends 2 Wisps, and, for the rest of the scene, all her actions, whether magical or non-magical, have the Rote quality.

This Privilege trips the Unseen Sense of *Hunter's Eyes* every time the Ambassador acts during the current scene.

**Drawback:** Destiny demands its price, even from an Ambassador to its foe. That which has fallen will rise, but that which has risen must also fall. Each roll the Ambassador makes which succeeds, but would have failed without the Rote quality, causes one action in a later scene, chosen by the ST before the action is rolled or any Wisps or Willpower spent, to fail automatically. This effect is cumulative; if the Ambassador succeeds three times where she should have failed, then three of her actions in the future will automatically fail, without rolling or expenditure of resources. Moreover, each exceptional success rolled while *It Must Be* is in effect, which would not be exceptional without the Rote quality, results in one action in a later scene, chosen by the ST, becoming an automatic dramatic failure. The Ambassador can protect herself from these automatic failures only by activating *It Must Be* again - the ST cannot force failures on her while the power is active. She can ward off an automatic failure reflexively by spending a Willpower point and activating the power.

# *Embassy to Machines*

**Informal Names:** Machinists, Techies

*Now that is a beautiful piece of work!*

We live in an ordered universe, one defined by coherent laws and systems. Since Newton's time, people have viewed the universe as the machine, a perfect and precise clockwork, predictable and orderly. Some people find this a cause for despair, feeling that they are doomed to be crushed beneath the gears of the universe.

The Ambassadors to the Machine know better. The universe is a beautiful and wondrous thing, awe-inspiring in its vastness and fascinating in its complexity. How can someone look up at the stars and not feel awe at the vastness of space? How can someone not look upon a rainbow and admire not just its beauty, but also the dance of light and water that brought it into being? How can someone look upon the incredible complexity of the miracle that is life and not be amazed? The universe is a wondrous place, and knowing how it works just makes it even more beautiful.

And that is perhaps the greatest miracle; the universe can be known. Mankind can comprehend the universe in all its subtleties, and with this knowledge they can work wonders that can improve the lives of millions. Of course, those same tools and machines can destroy cities as well as feed them, but the Hopeful have never been pessimists. The Techies know that the machines and tools are an extension of man's will, and strive to make sure those tools are used for noble ends. The Ambassadors to the Machine take a little bit of the universe into their souls and thus take upon them the mantle of machines; extensions of human will built upon the system of the universe.

## *Marks and Requirements*

One would assume that the Enlightened who join this Embassy are extreme technophiles, obsessed with the new, the sleek, and the shiny. One would mostly be right. The aesthetics of this Embassy have changed multiple times, even over the short time since the Release, and, typically, the best way to judge what they were was to look at the sci-fi at the time. The current dominant is very much the sleek, post-cyberpunk, white look which is probably best described as iPrincess. Regalia is tight without being gratuitous, rounded, and often hard, not deforming to the touch, like an outer carapace. Unusual eye colors are the norm for Machinists; greyish white, purple, and just-having-the-entire-eye-be-a-metal-globe are all common. Purple hair, too, is not uncommon. The skin itself is different from the untransformed form; it is slightly cool to the touch, and often has tattoo-like lights shining through the skin, usually in blue or green.

There is, however, another school, which has remained since the Release. These ones are less about the rampant technophilia of the more common ones, and more about machine as function. These self-described Wrench Wenches and Hammer Men take pride in their apron-like armor, oil-covered Regalia, and often bouncy demeanour.

Every Machinist is an excellent craftsman, and treats her tools with loving care. The required Attribute for the Embassy is Dexterity, and its required Skill is Crafts.

## *Secretary Privileges*

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The Privileges refer several times to the concept of a machine. For the purposes of this Embassy, a machine is a tool or object with multiple moving parts integral to their function, specifically designed to fulfill a purpose by human or otherwise sapient beings. Moreover, for any dice bonuses or special effects granted by these powers to apply, the primary function of such a machine must be derived from mundane, mechanical principles, or from the Light. An engine with parts made from a magically created frictionless material is acceptable; a device which spins to collect ambient heat and converts it into some unnatural source of energy is not.

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## *Calling, Calling*

The Secretary has a natural intuition for systems and technology. She never takes a penalty on unfamiliar applications of a skill when using, repairing, or analyzing a complex piece of technology (this includes electronics and any mechanical device that has more than one moving part). While an ordinary person may take a penalty for using Computer for both Linux and Windows, or have a hard time applying Drive to handling a motorcycle, driving a big rig, flying a helicopter, or landing a space shuttle the Princess does not. In addition, once per scene the Princess can add her Sensitivity (minimum bonus of +1) to any single roll involving repairing, building, or using a complex technological device.

An interesting side effect of this ability is that when a Secretary watches a machine in use, or tries to use it herself, she will instantly notice if the machine functions on something other than natural principles, such as a Werewolf's fetish or a Genius' Wonders. The blind spot in the Princess' intuitive understanding stands out like neon pink dreadlocks at a lawyer convention.

## *Rise and Falling*

The rise and fall of a piston as it converts heat and energy into productive work is something that is truly wonderful to watch. The Machinist can emulate this. When Transformed, and spending a point of Willpower to add to a dicepool involving machines, she can instead choose to convert it into a single automatic success. This counts before the dice are rolled; as a result, in an uncontested roll, she can always ensure that she succeeds. Such predictability comes at a cost, though. Dicepools where this ability are used don't count the automatic success towards the total needed for an exceptional success, as the spark of brilliance is directed towards not failing rather than exceeding.

## *Depths of Longing*

Machines long to be used, and, moreover, they long to be used *correctly*. The Machinist can aid in this. With the expenditure of a Willpower point, she can "lend" another individual her dots in Crafts, Computer, Science, Medicine or Drive. For the rest of the scene, when using a machine in a skill-check the person she lends to may use her skills, instead of their own; if their own are higher, they simply get a +1 bonus. The Princess does not lose access to the skills; one of the wonderful things about machinery is how it saves labor, and allows division of tasks, after all.

## *Consul Privileges*

### *Facing the Fire*

The Consul's intuitive grasp of technology lets her hone a tool to perfection. She spends a turn working on a machine (forgoing Defense, if in combat), then spends 1 Wisp and rolls Intelligence + Inner Light. If she succeeds, she adds her Sensitivity to the machine's equipment bonus for anyone who uses it, for the rest of the scene. On an exceptional success, the bonus remains for a full hour.

### *Watch in Awe*

With the expenditure of a Wisp, the Machinist can grant another person the power of *Rise and Falling* to ensure success with machines. For the rest of the scene, the beneficiary can choose to add 1 automatic success, instead of 3 dice, when spending Willpower on a roll involving machines. As with *Rise and Falling*, the automatic success does not count towards the total needed for an exceptional success.

# *Ambassador Privilege*

## *Aeria Gloris*

The most beautiful thing you can do with a machine is to build one, to encode your understanding of the world into a device that anyone can use to enhance their lives. An Ambassador can create machines that draw on the Light directly, without the touch of one illuminated. *Aeria Gloris* nearly duplicates the Charm [Living Image](#) with the upgrades Instructive, Bequeathed, and Duty-Bound. It differs in two respects: Firstly the dicepool becomes Dexterity + Crafts, Invocations may be applied as usual. Secondly, a Techie's creations can be used by anyone, even those who aren't Light-touched. They are undeniably magical Bequests powered by the Light, but their magic responds to anyone who presses the buttons.

The final form of these Bequests depends both on the Ambassador's personal style and the Charm within. A simple Charm might require nothing more than an on/off switch, but a complicated Charm might be covered in toggles or have a complicated computer interface and come with a thick user manual. As a general rule any Charm in which the user has options for how to invoke it (such as [Phantom](#) where the user may choose which image they wish to create) or is highly dependent on external factors (such as [Balm](#), which depends on which injuries one wishes to heal) will require a complicated interface. Anyone but other Techies (and other people with a power like *Calling, Calling* that allows the use of unfamiliar technology) suffers a -3 penalty to use Bequests with a complicated interface unless they have a specialty along the lines of "Ambassador Eriko's Medicine Engines".

**Drawback:** Aside from the activation cost of 1 Wisp/roll and a dot of Willpower, as normal for the creation of a Bequest, all the Ambassador's machines have an Intimate sympathetic connection to her in both her forms; such is the bond between the craftsman and her creations. The sympathetic connection is not vital to the functioning of the device, it's actually irrelevant, but it is exceptionally hard to remove. Most magic which dampens sympathetic connections will not make a dent, and anything powerful enough to remove the connection would probably destroy the Bequest and hurt the Ambassador.

# Embassy to Night

**Alternative Names:** Lords/Ladies of the Night, Moon Knights  
**Informal Name:** Night Witches

*How beautiful is night!  
A dewy freshness fills the silent air,  
No mist obscures, no little cloud  
Breaks the whole serene of heaven:  
In full-orbed glory the majestic moon  
Rolls thro the dark blue depths.  
Beneath her steady ray  
The desert circle spreads,  
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.  
How beautiful is night!*

—*Thalaba the Destroyer* by Robert Southey

The night is a time of peace and rest. It is a time of beauty, when the world is recast in grey and silver.

So why then, do people fear the night? Why do people hide from it behind closed doors and electric lights? It is because the night cloaks thieves and monsters in darkness, its beauty is hidden away behind walls of fear and danger. Walls that the Embassy has sworn to break down.

Champions fighting evil by moonlight still form the bulk of the Embassy to the Night, and while linguistic drift is inevitable most Princesses still consider the name “Night Witch” to refer exclusively to the Embassy’s Champions. After Champions, Seekers and Troubadours are drawn to the Embassy. Seekers use the cover of night to go where they shouldn’t and uncover the secrets therein while Troubadours express the beauty of the world after sunset.

Swords form the most common Court, because that Court has a large supply of Champions and because its rugged independence is well suited to action when the rest of the world is sleeping. The Court of Clubs is over-represented among the Embassy’s Troubadours for the Wilds are the Court most likely to appreciate natural beauty. The Graces in the Embassy are most likely to be Spades and hold court among urban nightlife.

## *Marks and Requirements*

A Night Witch’s regalia blends with the night. Dark colors predominate; black or brown, olive or teal, navy or purple. Ornaments and weapons sparkle from folds of cloth, which can close over and conceal them. Frequently the Witch is masked as well.

In addition the Night seeps into the Night Witch’s magic. Her Charms never create light as a secondary effect. (For example, if the Princess invokes *Towering Inferno* it will burn with the ethereal blues and silvers of the night sky and shed almost no light.) Charms that are intended to create light are unaffected, though their appearance may change appropriately.

The Embassy considers the night to be peaceful and secretive, and they embrace that within themselves. Its required Attribute is Composure, and its required Skill is Stealth.

## *Secretary Privileges*

The Embassy’s Privileges work only under the night sky. They have no effect between sunrise and sunset, or if the Night Witch is illuminated enough for a mundane character to act without a penalty, or if she cannot see the sky directly from her current location.

## *Wearing Midnight*

Under the cover of night the Princesses becomes exceptionally hard to find. By spending a Wisp the Secretary veils herself; for the rest of the scene, all attempts to locate or notice her through mundane or magical means take a penalty equal to her Composure.

## *Daughter of the Moon*

While she is transformed the Princess can see perfectly in the darkest nights. She takes no penalty to her dice pools from lack of light, unless cut off entirely from the sky. In addition she acquires vitamin D from moonlight and starlight as though she was out during daytime and never suffers adverse psychological effects such as Seasonal Affective Disorder from going too long without seeing sunlight.

## *Guide on the Moon's Roads*

By spending a Wisp the Secretary may grant the benefits of *Daughter of the Moon* to another person. The effect lasts until they next see sunlight; videos and remote viewing charms do not count though a telescope would.

## *Consul Privileges*

### *Left Eye of Horus*

As a guardian of the night the Consul's gaze sees all miscreants and misdeeds that hide within her domain. When rolling to penetrate or contest stealth or subterfuge (both the Skills and the concepts) the transformed Consul adds her Stealth dots to her dice pool. The Consul needs to be able to make a roll to benefit from this privilege.

### *Sister to the Sunset*

By spending a Wisp while transformed and touching another person, the transformed Consul may grant them the benefits of *Wearing Midnight* for the rest of the scene.

## *Ambassador Privilege*

### *Witchlight Dawn*

At the apex of the Embassy's power night and day are hers to command. By spending 3 Wisps and a point of Willpower the Ambassador sheds witchlight around herself for the rest of the scene (though it fails prematurely if she steps away from the night sky.) This light is invisible to mundane eyes - instead it turns magics of the day or night to her benefit.

Any supernatural being within the Ambassador's line of sight that is affected by daytime, nighttime, sunlight, moonlight or starlight (but not a more specific time like noon or the witching hour) and any supernatural ability affected by one of these conditions acts as though it were under whatever condition works to the Ambassador's best advantage, even if she is unaware of it. A changeling defending innocents may find his contracts with the Sun blazing to full power at midnight, while a vampire looking for food may discover that starlight burns like the sun.

**Drawback:** The Princess becomes a true creature of the night, and shuns the daystar. During daytime she takes a -1 penalty to Wits- and Composure-based dice pools, becoming cranky and slow as though she was sleep deprived. In the presence of direct sunlight this penalty increases to -3. Unsurprisingly most Night Witches sleep through the day in a darkened room.



# *Embassy to the Ocean*

**Alternative Names:** Explorers, Vanguarders of the Depths

**Informal Names:** Mermaids, Magellans, Divers

*Look down there. It goes for nearly a mile down here; much further in other places. Dark, cold; no air, and many creatures we don't fully understand yet.*

*But that doesn't mean we should fear it. It's a lovely place, really.*

Even in the modern world, mankind only touches on a small portion of existence. Even the larger part of the physical planet is located underwater, beyond our reach. The Ocean Embassy is comprised of explorers and trailblazers - those who seek to explore places not yet touched by the Light, and make them friends to the Princesses and mankind. The oceans themselves, being easily accessible, are an obvious place to start ... though many Explorers also display an interest in the Spirit World, outer space, and areas of the Dreamlands outside the Princesses' control. And more.

The Vanguarders of the Depths appear to many as a rather fearless lot, willing to dive head-on into the unknown, and able to make themselves feel at home in any environment. The Embassy, for its own part, holds that any place humans can thrive in was unknown and frightening before it was explored; the Ambassadors seek to shine the Light on the places where mankind will, one day, prosper.

## *Marks and Requirements*

When members of this Embassy transform, symbols of the sea tend to mingle with their forms: Seashells appear in their hair, while the latter seems to be blowing in a salty breeze; patterns reminiscent of designs in sand form on their skin, their eyes go deep green-blue, and if one listens, one may hear the sound of waves lapping on a far-off shore following them in their wake.

The prerequisite Attribute of the Embassy is Wits, and its prerequisite Skill is Survival.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Mermaid's Knowledge*

The Explorers cannot become lost, physically or socially. The Secretary gains the Direction Sense Merit [CofD 44] if she didn't have it already; she always knows which way is north, no matter how she's been spun around, and even when blindfolded or in total darkness. She can retrace any journey she's made once before, if she was conscious while travelling; falling asleep in a vehicle driven by someone else puts a break in her memory, but she will remember any motions the vehicle made while she was awake.

Socially, a Secretary can learn to converse with anyone she meets with amazing speed. While listening to someone speak in a language she isn't fluent in, and trying to speak to that person, the Secretary rolls her Inner Light + Intelligence as an extended action; each roll represents five minutes of attempted conversation. When the Secretary has accumulated 4 successes, she gains the benefits of the Multilingual Merit [CofD 46] for the language the other person is speaking. She may use the ability again to upgrade the benefits to the Language Merit [CofD 45] gaining the same fluency in the language as the other person. The new language fades after 1 hour; if the Secretary has the XP, though, she may spend it to acquire either Multilingual or Language instantly before the magic fades.

### *Mermaid's Form*

As a transformation action, the Secretary's legs can merge together into a tail, either delphine or fishlike, and her body adapts in other ways to the rigors of swimming in deep water. On land she suffers from the Crippled Condition [CofD 288] but she swims at her Speed in yards per turn (see [Athletic Feats](#).) She can breathe water as

easily as air, and never suffers from nitrogen narcosis. Finally, she gains a form of echolocation, which gives her a reflexive knowledge of all her surroundings like that from the Charm [Read the Wind](#), out to a range of Inner Light + Wits yards in the air and twice that under water. She can sense either in air or in water, but not both, depending on whether her head is submerged.

The Secretary can switch between the mermaid form and her original transformed state with a transformation action. She has all the benefits of her transformed state as a mermaid, and all Charms that alter her transformed state stack with the mermaid form.

### *Mermaid's Kiss*

While transformed as a mermaid, the Secretary can pass on part of her resilience to another. She kisses the other person on the lips and spends a Wisp. Until the next sunset, the target can breathe water as easily as air, exactly as the Secretary can, and is also immune to nitrogen narcosis.

### *Consul Privileges*

#### *Mermaid's Song*

The Consul's voice, like a siren's, becomes fascinating, turning the heads of those who hear it. The Consul spends a Wisp and rolls her Inner Light + the higher of Presence and Manipulation to charm another person; the target contests the roll with his Composure + Supernatural Tolerance. If the Consul wins the contest, the target is entranced; for the rest of the scene, he gains the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] for the Consul.

#### *Mermaid's Love*

When the Consul uses *Mermaid's Kiss*, she may spend an extra Wisp (2 total) to transform her target fully into a merman or mermaid like herself, with all the abilities and drawbacks of that form. The target may return to his human form at will at any time, and must do so at the next sunset.

### *Ambassador Privilege*

#### *Mermaid's Crown*

The Ambassador to the Ocean reads her surroundings constantly, and adapts to anything she meets. First, she gains the echolocation sense of the mermaid form at all times, even when untransformed. When she becomes a mermaid, the range of her echolocation triples, and she can create a focused pulse of sound that lets her read the hidden structure of solid objects. To use this, the Ambassador touches the object, and rolls Wits + Composure or Wits + an appropriate Skill as an instant action - Crafts works for inanimate objects, Medicine for living beings. Success on this roll tells her something of the object's density and composition, finding any holes, cracks or imbedded bits of different materials.

Second, the Ambassador can transform her body to deal with nearly any environment. Once a scene, while transformed (as either human or mermaid) she spends a Wisp and rolls Inner Light + Survival. Each success gives her 1 Merit dot, allocated among Hardy, Iron Stomach, Striking Looks, Sympathetic and Biokinesis. Successes may also be allocated to give her resistance to extreme environments [CofD 97]; one success allows her to reduce the effective level of one environment by 1. Merit dots gained this way last until the end of the scene.

**Drawback:** The Ambassador's mood varies with the tides. During the hour of low tide (30 minutes before to 30 minutes after the ebb) she suffers from the Broken Condition [CofD 288], and during the hour of high tide (30 minutes before to 30 minutes after the flood) she suffers from the [Manic](#) Condition.

# Embassy to Stories

**Alternative Names:** The Storytellers Embassy, The Authors

**Informal Names:** Godmothers/Godfathers, Bards, Editors

*I know how this story goes, and it doesn't end well. So I'll just have to write an amendment.*

It is a truth not commonly acknowledged that the world runs on stories. Reoccurring patterns and symbols are woven into the narrative of our lives. But nothing, claim the Storytellers Embassy, says that these stories must be tragedies. Pain might make for better art but happy ever after makes for better lives.

The Ambassadors to Stories make this their mission. They seek to unravel the great tapestry of stories and weave in their own amendments. They enter a tale and throw the narrative off it's tracks, hopefully to something better: Tragedy comes comedy, the hero defeats the villain, the lovers ride off into the sunset and yes the little dog lives till the end of the story. It's not easy, it's certainly not safe but you can do it.

## Marks and Requirements

If a Princess joined the Editors it's because she understood the power of stories, some studied literature while others simply read everything they could but books alone are not enough. She must also have seen how reoccurring patterns from the stories also reoccur in life, this requires a perceptive individual who has the detachment to look at her own life with a critical eye.

Upon joining the Embassy her regalia becomes as much a part of the story she is. It takes on aspects that foreshadow her role in the story and reflect her character traits. When rushing to save innocents from a Dark-spawn attack she is recognizable as The Hero. When teaching a younger Princesses a critical eye will notice marks of The Wise Mentor. The only constant are hints of the Storyteller, a thick leather bound book, a pair of reading glasses perched on the nose, an ink stained quill or some other mark.

Before changing a story a Godmother must first be able to tell a story. The required Attribute is Manipulation and the skill is Expression.

## Secretary Privileges

### *What's the Story?*

The first skill an Editor learns is to feel the flow of the narratives around her. She gains the Merit Unseen Sense (Wyrd) [CofD 60]. The Wyrd is omnipresent, it is the connection between all things and a Secretary soon learns to block out all but the largest manifestations of this power, including changelings, True Fae, Tokens, Hedge Gates and active effects of faerie magic such as Pledges or Contracts. Talecrafting is especially noticeable. The Secretary can even try to see through the Mask with a roll of Wits + Composure – 3 vs. Wyrd + Composure. Resistance is reflexive and automatic.

### *Entering the Tale*

The easiest way to change a story is to become a character within it. By entering another person's story the Secretary is in a privileged position to guide it the way she wishes to, or just make a complete pigs breakfast of the whole thing. To enter a story it must have one or more unfulfilled positions: If a sword can only be drawn from a stone by the rightful king, then the position of rightful king is open until someone successfully pulls the sword. Entering a story about corporate corruption would require an open position in the management hierarchy, or perhaps a well placed secretary job. To enter a story the Secretary rolls Inner Light + Manipulation + Subterfuge – Commonalty vs the highest Composure + Supernatural Advantage. The Storyteller will have to use his own judgement when measuring the dice pool of things like the Sword in the Stone; using Merlin's attributes would be appropriate as he was the person who put it there.

This power does not change the Secretary herself, nor does it force reality to conform to her new role. It merely makes characters in the story perceive her as appropriate. The sword perceives her as the rightful king

or the executives perceive her as ideal for the job. This limitation means that a badly chosen role can cause the Secretary no end of trouble. While the Privilege may make the Knights of the Round Table perceive her as a man (because the open position in the story was for a king, not a queen) people outside the story are unaffected and would certainly notice a female king or a sixteen year old corporate executive with no qualifications. Making Guinevere not notice the Secretary's sex is too much for the Privilege. A more modern telling of the long lost heir might include a paternity test. Because of this smart Godmothers carefully choose roles appropriate to themselves and to how they wish to twist the story. (In fact this is where the name Godmother came from. The drop-in mentor is lightly bound by the narrative and has a powerful influence over the main character making it an ideal position.)

One very fortunate effect of this power is that it helps the Secretary act according to her new role. She gets a bonus of half Inner Light when attempting to act appropriately for her character. She cannot use this bonus for entering her own or her Nakama's story. As a basic yardstick, if entering the story asks her to do what she'd be doing anyway she gets no bonus.

For the purposes of the Privilege opening a Hedge Gate is considered to be a very short story with two characters, the Hedge Gate and "the one who fulfills the Gate's Key". Using *Entering the Tale* tricks the Hedge Gate into thinking the Godmother has fulfilled its Key, just like *Entering the Tale* tricks everyone in a story into thinking the Godmother fills a particular role. Only Hedge Gates with a key can be opened in this fashion.

Leaving the story requires the Secretary to spend twenty four hours isolated from any of her fellow characters before spending a point of Willpower to break the connection. A Godmother automatically leaves the story at its natural conclusion.

**Drawback:** Just as she gets a bonus to acting in character the Secretary takes a penalty of half Inner Light when attempting to act outside the bounds of the narrative. If she takes the role of a corrupt executive she has a penalty to resist the temptation of greed. If she takes the role of King Arthur she takes a penalty to not throw away Excalibur's scabbard. If she takes a role who is supposed to die at the end of act two ... well she really shouldn't have done that.

Since the Editor is almost certainly entering a story to change it she's more likely to face penalties than she is to get a bonus.

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### *About That Frog*

When the Embassy of Stories is in play you might end up with one of those stories where only a princess or the kiss of a princess can break the curse, open the door, marry Prince Charming, or advance the plot. Are Princesses princesses?

The answer depends on the story and which body she is in at the time. Sometimes any public role called a Princess will do: Homecoming princess, Mardi Gras princess. Sometimes it's so loosely defined that "daddy's little princess" can break the curse. Other times, the definitions are stricter.

**A member of a noble caste by birthright:** Princesses usually qualify for this one, except Onceborn. The Nobility probably were the noble classes in the Kingdom, and they certainly are in the Dreamlands kingdom and Alhambra. Unless "birthright" is specifically defined by parentage, reincarnating ready to Blossom counts as a birthright.

**A son/daughter of royalty:** Surprisingly Princesses of Hearts actually do qualify. Princesses of Hearts are adopted by the Queen, a mere traditional formality left over from the days when Andarta was a confederation of hereditary feudal states; at least that's how they remember it. Other Princesses generally don't.

**The ruler of a principality:** This one varies, to qualify does the principality have to be a sovereign country or does "ruling" the school debating society and calling yourself a Princess count?

In general fate is complex and unpredictable; if a Princess sees a talking frog she might as well give kissing it a shot.

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### *Literary Criticism*

By spending a Wisp the Secretary can grant another all the benefits of *What's the Story?* for one scene.

**Drawback:** Because of the omnipresent nature of the Wyrd this Unseen Sense is distracting and imposes a -(4 – Composure) penalty to Perception rolls. Repeated use of [Literary Criticism](#) on the same person will allow them to acclimatize and removes this penalty.

## *Consul Privileges*

### *Becoming the Tale*

As a Consul the Editor isn't limited to assuming a role, she can become the role. When she Transforms the Consul creates a new self from threads of narrative to create a form appropriate to her role. While she still cannot create an appropriate history or documentation for her role she can fool DNA tests, looks appropriate for her position to people outside the story, gets a +Inner Light bonus on appropriate Subterfuge rolls and generally fits in much better.

Because this new form is built from scraps of narrative it triggers the Unseen Sense (Wyrd). Any role in a narrative that includes entering the Hedge (and since every Hedge journey is a story an Editor may use *Becoming the Tale* just for this purpose) has peculiar effects. So long as the Consul is in this form her Regalia armors her against the Thorns. Rather than losing Belief she loses Wisps as a Changeling would lose Glamour. Losing her last Wisp will cause her transformation to end, though being lost in the Thorns is definitely a good justification for regaining Wisps through Inner Strength. She can navigate the Hedge rolling Belief instead of Clarity. Finally she may be affected by goblin fruits in ways both positive and negative, however she cannot gain either Wisps or Glamour from them.

**Drawback:** Assuming a form built out of faerie magic is very dangerous to one's sense of reality. After using this power the Consul gains the Madness Condition [CofD 289]; fortunately the Condition expires (without resolving) after a full day spent without using any Privilege of the Embassy.

In addition a Consul's perceptions start to become warped by Stories. While she has assumed a form, when rolling Perception roll her Wits and Composure separately.

**Composure succeeds:** As per a normal Perception Success.

**Wits succeeds and Composure fails:** The Consul gets the full accurate information but sees it through a lens of the story. The player hears the result of a normal Perception success but the Consul is given a metaphor. A drug dealer might look like some sort of humanoid mosquito representing how he sucks the life out of people. If possible theme this hallucination on the Consul's current role.

**Both fail:** If under normal circumstances the Consul would simply not see something treat the results as normal, if however she would get distracted then she is likely to have been distracted by a hallucination.

### *A Story About You*

The Consul can now extend her power of *Entering the Tale* to other people. This requires an open role as always and she rolls Inner Light + Manipulation + Expression – Commonalty vs. the highest Composure + Supernatural Tolerance. In this case Commonalty only applies to the people in the narrative, not the person she's trying to add to it. The highest Composure + Supernatural Tolerance includes both the narrative and (unless he is willing) the character-to-be.

When a Godmother forces someone into a tale it's harder for them to leave. They must isolate themselves and spend a point of Willpower like a Godmother but they must also roll Composure + Supernatural Tolerance vs the Godmother's original dicepool. As an instant action the Godmother may spend a Wisp to let a person she forced into a story escape it; only the Godmother who pushed someone into a story may unpick their own magic in this way, but any Godmother can offer some assistance by serving as secondary Actors in the escape roll.

# Ambassador Privilege

## Weaving the Tale

The Ambassador can bend the power of stories to her will. Like a needle she dips in and out of the narrative tapestry bringing in elements to suit her purpose. Once per game session she can twist events and fortune as she wishes. A power as dangerous as it is useful.

The first step is The Pattern. Simply put she must identify, or create, the potential for a narrative pattern in her current situation. Lets say she and her Nakama are fighting a very powerful foe, ordinarily this foe would be able to take down the entire Nakama single handedly. However the Princesses of Hearts in the Nakama has just started making a speech about how their foe has no chance because the Nakama have friendship on their side. In the stories the power of friendship can defeat impossible odds, this is something a Godmother can use.

The second step is The Hook. Having seen a potential narrative thread an editor must weave it into the story. She pays two Wisps and rolls the lowest of her Inner Light, Manipulation and Expression as an Instant Action.

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only does the action fail the Editor also suffers a Cruel Twist of Fate.

**Failure:** The desired effect does not happen.

**Success:** The effect occurs, however the results come with a Cruel Twist of Fate.

**Exceptional Success:** The effect occurs with no Cruel Twist of Fate.

### Suggested Modifiers:

- +3 The outcome of The Hook helps confirm a story the Editor has become a part of through *Entering the Tale*
- +2 The outcome of The Hook helps confirm a story she has made another part of through *A Story About You*
- +1 The Editor is a Troubadour
- +1 The Editor follows the Queen of Spades
- +1 The Editor has any Charms in Connect
- +1 The Editor has a Belief of 4 to 7
- 1 The Editor has a Belief of 8 or more
- 1 The Editor has a Belief of 3 or less
- 1 The Editor has no dots in Academics
- 2 The Editor has a persistent Condition that ends when her Belief changes (e.g. Addicted, Broken, Fugue or Madness)
- 2 The Editor has the Amnesia or False Memory Conditions
- 2 The Editor is attempting to go against a story she has made another part of through *A Story About You*
- 3 The Editor is attempting to go against a story she has become a part of through *Entering the Tale*

So continuing our example thanks to the Godmother's nudge the fight is now going to play out according to the power of friendship. This of course does not mean they're untouchable; their foe might give them a huge battering before a last moment surge of team spirit. In short while they will win this power won't necessarily grant a perfect victory. At worst they might just drive their foe off for a short while, that's a "win". Still, it is better than getting soundly defeated by a stronger foe.

The final step is a Cruel Twist of Fate. Unless the Godmother scored an exceptional success the Storyteller should introduce a complication to the plot. The Wyrd does not like being tampered with. This Twist will never undo the effect of The Hook. The battle will be won, but maybe the Nakama only think they killed the villain and he's set to reappear when they least expect it. Their enemy might have some devious plan that required their victory, or the entire battle was a distraction.

**Drawback:** It's addictive. Bending the world to your whim is very very addictive. A Godmother may use *Weaving the Tale* once safely; every time after that she must roll Resolve + Composure with an cumulative -1 penalty, up to a maximum of -5. A failure means that she's addicted. The effects vary according to each individual but a common theme is being unable to see the world as anything but a collection of reoccurring narrative threads. "She's got a cruel stepmother and two ugly stepsisters. Of course she wants to marry the charming prince. What is a lesbian?"

Getting clean requires going cold turkey. She must spend a number of days equal to her Manipulation + Expression in an isolated place. Somewhere serene is best but in the end isolation is isolation. During this time

she may not use any Privilege of the Embassy, or any Charms that manipulate other people. It is best to avoid Charms entirely. Finally she spends one Willpower a day and rolls Resolve + Composure. Once she has successes equal to her Manipulation + Expression her system is clean and she can start again as though she had never used this power before. Careful Godmothers flush their system before getting addicted.

And yes, this power is Talecrafting (so are *Entering the Tale*, *A Story About You* and *Becoming the Tale* in a much more limited and safer fashion), more details along with plenty of example threads and Cruel Twists of Fate can be found in *Swords at Dawn* starting at page 60. Editors cannot Force the Pattern or inflict a Reversal of Fate, though they can certainly be targeted by one.

# Protectorate of Amethyst

**Alternative Names:** The Grave Tenders, The Keepers of the Necropolis, The Keepers of Memory

**Informal Names:** Funeral Priests, Corpse-Brides (derogatory)

**Attached to Order:** [Parrot](#)

They say all are equal before death, but the people of Alhambra know this is not true. Death is a transition, but something of the individual remains. Even when you're dead, life, as it were, goes on. The dead still owe loyalty to the Last Empress. They are still expected to serve for the survival of Alhambra if their Queen requests it. In turn the Last Empress has her royal duties to keep her dead subjects safe and protected.

The Protectorate of Amethyst represent the Queen in her role as Lady Protector of the Dead. In Alhambra they they are responsible for taking care of the ghosts and performing the funeral services. In the rebellious provinces they are sent to rule and safeguard the dead in the Queen's name. Though officially all forms of undead fall under the Protectorate's jurisdiction they have little experience with forms of the dead other than ghosts, and to a lesser extent dead Princesses.

## Marks and Requirements

Corpse-Brides don't have a connection to Death itself, they have a connection to the dead. Their role is closer to that of a caretaker than a psychopomp. They are expected to ensure that the honored dead are kept comfortable and provided for; much in the way that that a government employed caretaker might be responsible for providing aid to the elderly or the disabled. The bread and butter of ghosts, and thus of the Grave Tenders' trade is performing funeral services. The required Attribute is Presence and the required skill is Expression.

The Grave Tenders are expected to mostly cut ties with the living in favor of living as one of the dead. In doing so something of a ghost's unsubstantial nature sinks into their Transformed identity. Their skin becomes pale, but not unhealthy. Their regalia acquires funerary shrouds and turns snow white. Colours themselves seem muted and distant. The official hair style is long and swept back in white or silver.

## Secretary Privileges

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### *Is something missing?*

The Keepers of Memory are Alhambran through and through; their Privileges reflect the realities of ghosts in Alhambra and lack some obvious powers that would be useful when they travel beyond their borders, such as the ability to see ghosts in Twilight.

This doesn't stop them from carrying out their duties; it simply means that they use more Lacrima Charms than, say, the [Embassy to Death](#).

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## Sharing Life with Death

The Keepers of the Necropolis are expected to live in as though in death, and so bring the comforts of life to the death. No method they have is more direct than by inviting a ghost into their own body to share the comforts of the flesh themselves. In recent nights this Privilege is most commonly used to transport ghosts between Alhambra and various Enclaves in the rebellious provinces.

To invite a ghost into her body a Secretary must touch it and spend a Wisp. If the ghost wishes it may freely enter the Secretary's body; the effect of this is exactly as if it had used the Fetter Manifestation [CofD 131] on the Secretary (that is, the ghost is Fettered and the Secretary is Urged.) The possession lasts for one day, unless the Secretary and the ghost agree to break it earlier, or someone is impolite enough to exorcise the ghost. Moreover, by spending 1 Willpower the Secretary can temporarily release the ghost from her body, allowing it to use its powers freely; the effect of this is identical to the Unfetter Manifestation. The Privilege requires nothing from



the ghost but its agreement - it need not spend Essence or know either Manifestation. If a ghost does know Unfetter, it can use that Manifestation without ending the possession.

## *Honoring the Ancestors*

Ghosts gain Essence when remembered by the living, and the primary duty of the Protectorate of Amethyst is to provide them with Essence by leading funerals and rituals of remembrance. While Transformed, a Funeral Priestess may perform a special funerary ritual. The ritual takes half an hour of hymn-singing and slow dance, reassuring any ghosts who see and hear it that they are not forgotten. Normally the Priestess leads several assistants in the ritual, as having more people makes it more effective, but the rite *can* be performed alone.

At the end of the service the Secretary rolls Presence + Expression.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Secretary's ritual is so poorly done that she offends the local ghosts. She gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290] with respect to ghosts or the place she did the ritual.

**Failure:** The local ghosts are not impressed, and get no benefit.

**Success:** Every ghost in Twilight who watches the whole ritual regains 1 Essence per success. Each ghost may regain Essence this way once a day.

**Exceptional Success:** On top of the immediate regained Essence, the place the Secretary stands becomes an Anchor for all the affected ghosts. If a ghost already had it as an Anchor, it becomes Open as well. The Condition made by the ritual lasts for one day.

**Modifiers:** the Secretary does not know the ghosts she is performing for (-4), the Secretary has a ghost's Anchor (+1), the Secretary has no assistants (-2), the Secretary has at least three assistants (+1 for 3, multiply by 2 for another +1 - 6 gives +2, 12 gives +3, and so on), the Secretary has appropriate grave offerings for the targeted ghosts (+1 to +3)

## *Blessing the Union of Life and Death*

By touching both a person and a ghost while Transformed, a Secretary can ease them into a harmonious possession as per [Sharing Life with Death](#). She spends a Wisp and rolls Presence + Occult; the person may contest with Resolve + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance, and the ghost may contest with Resistance + Rank. If either the person or the ghost wins the contest the possession fails. While the possession lasts the person may spend Willpower to Unfetter the ghost, as the Secretary could if she were harboring it.

If a ghost knows Fetter, the Secretary may help it use the Manifestation. Again, she spends a Wisp and rolls Presence + Occult; her successes become bonus dice on the ghost's Manifestation roll.

## *Governor Privileges*

### *Hallowing the Necropolis*

Ghosts suffer; they suffer because they have unfinished business among the living and they suffer because their nature separates them from the living. In Alhambra the departed have no such restriction and the Keepers of the Necropolis can bring this peace to the provinces. To do this she spends 2 Wisps and begins an extended Presence + Expression roll to consecrate the ground; the threshold is the area's [Sanctuary](#).

When sufficient successes are accumulated the target area becomes a Necropolis. Ghosts within a Necropolis gain two benefits: First, the Necropolis is an Anchor for all of them, keeping them from the Underworld and saving them from Essence bleed even if their last personal Anchors are destroyed. Second, all of them can use the Image Manifestation whether or not they know it; a ghost that *does* know Image can use it without spending any Essence, while other ghosts spend 1 Essence to activate it.

Under ordinary circumstances a Necropolis lasts for Inner Light days. If cast upon Consecrated ground it will last as long as the Consecrated Condition does, though to benefit from Consecrated a Necropolis must be cast on all and only the Consecrated ground.

## *Bequeathing Funerary Gifts*

In Alhambra all are expected to do their part for the survival of the city, and the departed are no exception. Yet beyond Alhambra's borders most ghosts can do little but watch or spy. The Corpse-Brides are occasionally asked to help prepare a ghost for more involved tasks.

This Privilege allows a Governor to turn a Bequest into a ghost's Numen. This requires preparing the Bequest with an Extended Inner Light + Occult roll with a target of the Bequest's dots as a Merit. Once this is done the Governor hands the Bequest to the ghost, the physical objects rots and crumbles and the ghost has a new ability, spending Essence in place of Wisps where required. There is no way to recover the Bequest after it has been changed into a Numen, or for anyone but the ghost to use it.

If the ghost is given a Bequest that is able to create Wisps, such as Capitation, the ghost regains Essence by using it. If the ghost is given a Bequest that can transfer Wisps, such as Charge, the ghost can transfer Essence. The one absolute limit is that ghosts cannot benefit from the [Living Image](#) upgrades Duty-Bound and Empowered. If Bequeathing Funerary Gifts is used on a Bequest with either upgrade, the effects of that upgrade are lost in the transition.

## *Regent Privilege*

### *Bearing the Burdens of the Dead*

By touching the ghost of a Princess a Regent can draw the ghost's Shadows into her own soul, protecting the dead Princess from its greatest threat. Through this privilege the oldest ghost Princesses have been kept active for thousands of years. Using this Privilege requires touching the royal ghost and spending a Wisp as an instant action. The Regent peels off the darkness and decay from the ghost and hides it deep within herself. Each activation of this Privilege transfers one dot of Shadows, but the Regent may use it as many times as she wishes.

The player should track the number of ghost Shadows separately from her regular Shadows. This is because they have a second use. Emotions are somewhat more physical to ghosts, and so are their Shadows. As a reflexive action the Regent may expel angry wraiths from her body, removing one ghost Shadow per wraith. These wraiths are a form of Darkspawn, not ghosts, though they are immaterial and usually exist in Twilight. They are similar enough to the Darkspawn known as [Shadow-wraiths](#) that the Storyteller may use the traits for those creatures. If the Regent spends a Willpower point when releasing ghost Shadows she may roll Resolve + Composure. Success allows her to direct the released Darkspawn to attack targets of her choice, though they always put their own survival first.

It is a secret known only to the Regents of Amethyst that this Privilege can be used on the living, though at a greater cost. Alas, creatures of the Darkness are immune. Transferring a dot of Shadows from a living character costs 3 Wisps, and inflicts the [Haunted](#) Condition on the Regent; resolving the Condition removes the transferred dot. If the Regent is currently Haunted, she may use the Privilege only on ghosts. Shadows taken from the living can't be released as wraiths.

**Drawback:** Working with Shadows always has its downsides. Shadows taken from a ghost Princess have all the same disadvantages as regular Shadows. The Regent may remove them as per normal Shadows; the player decides what kind of Shadows to remove first.

Releasing ghost Shadows into the wild risks a compromise with a -3 penalty to the roll. Directing ghost Shadows to attack someone risks a compromise with a -5 penalty to the roll.

# Protectorate of Blue Topaz

**Alternative Names:** Respectful Guild of Actors and Writers, Curators of Inferior Rites (Parrot), Oneiromantic Research Council (Raccoon), Her Eminence's Messengers (Ghost Owl)

**Informal Names:** Playwrights, Ornithologic Conjurors, Mind Knights (respectful, among those authorized to know their true nature), Schemers (insulting), Heretics (very insulting), Alhambran Ministry of Love (Radiant followers only)

**Attached to Order:** Ambiguous - has charters from [Ghost Owl](#), [Parrot](#) and [Raccoon](#) under different names

*Surprised? You shouldn't be; for one, the third act's always the one with the big reveal. Second - you're the one who told me about this place.*

Alhambra is a city that despises frivolity - which is to say, they hate anything that reeks of taking too much joy in life, barring service to the Last Empress. The Queen of Tears has decreed that, until such time it is reborn, the Kingdom must be mourned. Whoever does not properly grieve, by Her decree, is not appreciating what was lost, and by extension is not appreciating the sacrifices that went into creating the City Within The Dark. Thus, Alhambrans have been trained to see anything that speaks of a purely artistic endeavour is wasting energy on a frankly blasphemous display, energy that could be better devoted to service of the city and its mistress. In principle, the Queen of Tears dissolved the Order of the Peacock because there is no art, apart from dramatized history and the bleak commentary of the Fools of the Summit, that respects the memory of her lost home.

In practice, expecting the inventor of Lacrima, of all Invocations, to not have more nuance in her principles than she publicly states is an idiot's theory. While she does not buy the theory that art is always political, she recognizes that much of it is, touching the soul in ways that go beyond thought, beyond consciousness. So while critical art is not something she wishes to muddy the minds of her people with thoughts of nonconformity and rebellion, propaganda is something entirely different. Thus, when representatives from the Raccoons, Tortoises, and Ghost Owls simultaneously approached her with the accidental discovery that the Rebellious Provinces could give dreams awareness and use those aware dreams to shape the minds of humans, she realized perhaps there was a purpose for the Blessed Merry-makers after all.

The Protectorate of Blue Topaz is one of the youngest, by Alhambran standards - barely past its thousandth year. By all rights, they should have long been made a public Protectorate by sheer accident, but the protection of the Queen combined with the well-practiced selective obliviousness Alhambrans have towards her own actions (by definition, if Her Everflowing Majesty is okay with it, that must mean it is within tradition, so they don't question it) means they have, if anything, developed an even better set of cover stories to ensure their anonymity in their hidden duty of ensuring Alhambra dreams the right things, and thinks the right thoughts. While all the Orders are aware the Protectorate exists, those who even bother just assume they are dumping grounds for the unacceptably independent and airheaded amongst them, not a proper royal commission at all.

The genius of this is that it's slightly true - the Respectful Guild actually does look for the people in the guild who have found joy in their work and have an urge to create something, but critically, their recruits are chosen from those who wish to create *for Alhambra*. Taxmen of the Vulture who puzzle out ways to banish the Taint they create and restore the fields even as they are drained, Ghost Owls who wish they were allowed to inspire as well as critique, Tortoises enthralled with the idea of a glorious past becoming a blueprint for the future, and genius Pelicans who have grown weary of the old techniques holding back their potential all find a ready friend in the hidden handlers of the Playwrights. For many, a friend is all they ever have, but for those with the proper balance of empathy and fanaticism to ignore their conscience, Her Eminence's Messengers quietly expose the prospect to new ideas from the Rebellious Provinces, artistic movements, translated novels, political treatises - and see if the prospect, rather than destroying the heretical creed or becoming corrupted by it, starts to wonder if there's any way to turn those ideas to Alhambra's betterment. Those who do are introduced to the true face of the Playwrights, and told of the glorious destiny they all share - to make of the entire world a stage, and upon it bring the production Alhambra's Victory Over All to a glorious conclusion. And more importantly, how to turn the world into method actors with the proper stimulus and response.

Frequently, followers of the Radiant Queens see the Mind Knights as a rebellion in the making - once outside of the watchful gaze of their neighbors, the Schemers let themselves reveal their *joi de vivre*, dressing in actual color and playing idle games with each other, easy with laughter and smiles. This is a mistake - the Playwrights are just as loyal as the rest of Alhambra, and in fact their lightness of heart comes from utter zealotry equal

to any one of the Stormwracked. The Schemers are completely assured of the rightness and inevitability of their cause, and part of what makes them so effective is not direct mind control or blackmail, although they can do both; rather, each and every one of them truly and earnestly believes their messages about the nobility of the Last Empress and the superiority of their way, and that passion drives everything they do; while most Alhambrans serve out of inertia, the ironically-nicknamed Heretics serve because they are patriots. The only real disagreement they have with Her Ever-Flowing Majesty is her traditionalism; the Protectorate of Blue Topaz is constantly trying to find new and better ways of serving the Queen of Tears, in particular dream manipulation and the shaping of new artistic movements that glorify the virtues of Alhambra: utter dedication to the group above all else, the willingness to do what is necessary without regret or hesitation, and contempt for all who do not accept the previous two precepts.

When it is finally time for Alhambra to return and reclaim its place as capital of the Earth, the Playwrights plan, there will be no true resistance, for the barbarians' hearts will already belong to the Last Empress. Until then, making their enemies the unknowing actors in the grand production - and sources of intel to ensure the script isn't changed - is a worthy objective.

## *Marks and Requirements*

The Protectorate of Blue Topaz deliberately selects for people who already have an inherent link to the Dreamlands - even besides the natural talent this gives them with their Irim (see below), most of those tend to be creative exiles from society already, especially stodgy, Trap-wary Alhambra. This includes the White Rabbits Merit, obviously, but a non-Hopeful with Dream Travel fits the bill. Her Eminence's Messengers need the capacity to make long-term plans and to understand people on at least academic level; their required Attribute is Intelligence and their required Skill is Empathy.

A Princess who joins the Conjurers finds that their core philosophy - that all human motivations can ultimately be reduced to a spectrum between Love and Fear - is now written large over her Transformation; Playwrights always have a trace of duality about their Regalia. One resembles Hel, the Norse goddess of the dead, with a vivacious girl covered with plant growth on one side and an immaculate corpse dressed in mournful black on the other. Another has an angelic halo and wings that are attached to a snarling beastwoman that looks uncomfortably akin to a well-groomed Darkspawn. One of the most subtle belongs to a male Seeker who appears to be dressed as a Renaissance nobleman with distinctly modern scientific instruments attached to a nylon belt. As fitting a clandestine and highly secretive Protectorate, this duality has no particular commonality among it, and seems to be almost deliberately unique for the sake of ensuing that nobody figures out a link. To show their true allegiance, the members summon their Irim familiars - while these are not altogether different from bird shikigami, the members are briefed on the secret signs that make disguising yourself as one nearly impossible, such as the fact that the Irim appear out of thin air (the minds of their masters, technically, but anyone observing Twilight can tell they weren't there a second ago).

## *Secretary Privileges*

A Secretary of Blue Topaz shapes dreamstuff and a bit of her soul into her personal Irim as part of her initiation to the Protectorate. The Irim takes the form of a bird that can perch on its mistress' shoulder or arm (Size 2 at most.) However, being immaterial an Irim has the traits of a Dreamlander - in fact, as a detached portion of the Secretary's soul, it has the same traits as her [Dream Form](#). Irim may use any non-supernatural Merits of their mistress that make sense for a bird, but cannot use any of her supernatural powers. However, an Irim can fly (equivalent to the Wings ••• Merit for shikigami) and its natural attacks do lethal damage. (All this becomes relevant when a Mind Knight's Privileges are active.)

If an Irim is "killed" its mistress instantly loses a point of Willpower and cannot use any of her Privileges until she has regained all her Willpower; the Irim returns to her soul and sleeps there while its dream-body heals.

## *A Little Bird Told Me*

The Secretary may send her ephemeral bird into the dreams of other people she has recently met, to glean information about their emotions and ambitions. Once per night, she may send her Irim to observe the dreams

of a person she encountered after the last time she slept. The Irim will return during her next sleep and show her a series of visions, which she rolls Wits + Empathy + White Rabbits to interpret. Each success rolled allows her to discover one of the following: the target's Virtue, his Vice, one Aspiration or Vocation, or one Condition affecting his mental state.

## *Aviary*

When she is transformed, the Secretary can spend one Wisp to pull her Irim out of Twilight and grant it material form. While materialized the Irim becomes an NPC that obeys its mistress' orders but acts independently of her; it also knows everything about her situation and intentions that the Secretary does. Lacking instructions, the Irim will usually pose, preen or fly about to inspect various objects. It dematerializes as the end of the scene, unless the Secretary recalls it before then.

The Secretary can also tell her Irim to examine a person's thoughts while it's materialized, if the person is present and capable of dreaming. The Irim must perch on, peck at, preen at or otherwise have physical contact with the target for an instant action, then return to its mistress; it will display visions to her on the surface of its spread wings. The Secretary interprets these visions with a roll of Wits + Empathy, learning the same information as she would from *A Little Bird Told Me*.

## *Nest Egg*

The Secretary can spend 1 Wisp while her Irim is materialized and in contact with her to make it lay a phantasmal egg, roughly an inch in length and with a polychromatic shell. The Irim's eggs have an Intimate sympathetic connection to the Secretary, last indefinitely until hatched, and can't be destroyed by any external force. The Secretary can make a number of eggs equal to the higher of her Intelligence and White Rabbits dots; once she has, she must wait until one hatches before making another.

Any character can pick up and carry an egg. A mundane or Light-touched character - but not the Secretary herself - can hatch an egg by holding it in his bare hands and concentrating for a full turn (losing his Defense if in combat); what comes out of the egg is a dream-bird, formed from the Secretary's dreams and the hatcher's. The dream-bird has the traits of its hatcher's Dream Form. It shares the Irim's ability to read dreams, giving the hatcher one use of *A Little Bird Told Me*. It dissolves when the hatcher next awakens from sleep; if he hasn't sent it to observe someone before he sleeps he loses his opportunity.

## *Governor Privileges*

### *Cuckoo's Egg*

Sometimes, an actor just isn't cooperating. A Governor of Blue Topaz can force the issue and give a certain amount of...incentive. The Governor can send her Irim to make a nest and lay one of its eggs within a person's dreams. The person must be a valid target for *A Little Bird Told Me*. The Governor spends 1 Wisp and makes a contested roll of Intelligence + Empathy against the target's Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance.

**Dramatic Failure:** The egg incubates in the Governor indefinitely, although the Governor believes that it is incubating in the target. When the Governor hatches the egg, the chosen Condition is inflicted on them towards the target.

**Failure:** The Irim fails to lay an egg. The Governor may try again if the target is still sleeping.

**Success:** The egg incubates in the target indefinitely. The Governor chooses Swooning [CofD 291] or **Fearful**, a person to be the chosen Condition's object, and a trigger (often a bird call, occasionally the call of the Irim themselves). When next exposed to the trigger, the egg hatches, inflicting the chosen Condition on the target.

**Exceptional Success:** The first time the chosen Condition's resolution occurs, the target gains a Beat but does not shed the Condition; it must be resolved a second time.

**Modifiers:** The target has eggs from the Privilege in his dreams (-1 per egg)

Only one egg can be hatched during a single scene; if multiple eggs are set to the same trigger, the egg that's been incubated the longest hatches. Eggs from *Cuckoo's Egg* count against the Governor's limit for *Nest Egg*.

## *Birds of a Feather*

By spending a second Wisp when using *Nest Egg*, the Governor can cause the bird hatched from the laid egg to emerge in material form. The dream-bird then has the same abilities as an Irim materialized by *Aviary* does. It dematerializes when the scene ends. The hatcher may still use *A Little Bird Told Me* after the dream-bird has dematerialized.

## *Regent Privilege*

### *Birdhouse in Your Soul*

If you want something done right, sometimes you have to do it yourself. The Regent's Irim can be empowered to take over another person for a short time and force him to act according to the Regent's script. The person to be possessed must be a valid target for *A Little Bird Told Me*. The Regent spends 3 Wisps and 1 Willpower, and makes a contested roll of Intelligence + Empathy against the target's Composure + Supernatural Tolerance.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Regent's Irim gets caught by the target's psychic defenses and is destroyed.

**Failure:** The Irim can't get a grip on its target.

**Success:** The Irim inflicts the Possessed Condition [CofD 134] on the target. Unlike most ephemeral entities, the Irim always uses its own Attributes and Skills, but it can roll its Finesse + Empathy - the target's Resolve to read the target's memories. The Condition expires when the scene ends, and the Irim may not possess the target again until he has regained Willpower from sleep.

**Exceptional Success:** The Irim has a +2 bonus when it tries to read the target's mind.

**Drawback:** Naturally, while the Irim is possessing someone it isn't available for other purposes, so the Regent can't use any other Privilege until *Birdhouse in Your Soul* expires. Also, possessing people inflicts a deep blow to their psyches, even if they don't remember it; each use of the Privilege is a compromise at a -3 penalty.

## *Lady Maria*

*Oh dear. 'Tis a shame you cannot lift this cloud of Dark over yonder cathedral, no matter how hard ye try. But oh, do not curse thy shadow - for mine own self is here to help thy friends. All I require of thou is a small oath, favor for favor.*

## *Background*

Alyssa Halliwell's first memory is her parents enacting the opening seen to *Macbeth*, her mother one of the witches and her father Banquo. She doesn't remember any nightmares from that time; as part of a troupe that specialized in Shakespeare's tragedies, her baseline for what was frightening and not was...a bit different. Her life, infancy to teenager-dom, was filled with the Bard. Post teenager-dom, it was filled with her duties as a Troubadour, too. Briefly, it was also filled with the All-Consuming Dark, a fight with her parents leading her to camp out under a Tainted stage that had been used to hide the body of a suicide for the sake of protecting an acting company's reputation too long, but her sense of ethics won out over both her corruption and her personal ambitions of becoming a Hollywood starlet, expelling her inner Shadows and Blossoming in one fell swoop.

It was really too bad the first Hopeful she met were Furies who even the other Seraphic Legion exiled for their fanaticism; to them, anything that had been touched by the Dark *at all* was irredeemably corrupt; to them, a Princess that had once been a Darkened was obviously a Cataphract of some kind, no matter how little the flames of Tempestra took. Many survived the fire. Mr. Halliwell and her younger brother were not among them.

This shaped her views on the Nobility forever - to her, the Light has always been an amoral thing, good in principle, but fundamentally used by a flawed species that must be guided with a firm hand - occasionally with barbed wire, if they are especially recalcitrant. She never was a good fit for the court of Hearts; she had the best of

intentions when it came to spinning politics to the benefit of all, but she quickly revealed a rather manipulative attitude towards “encouraging” people to follow her teachings. Eventually, it was discovered that her talent for Purifying Taint relied on blackmail and outright emotional manipulation, leading to a crack between her and her nakama.

That’s when the Protectorate of Blue Topaz, which had quietly been watching her dreams, approached her with sympathy.

One of the few Tears Troubadours who cleaves to her Calling’s normal purpose, the rechristened Lady Maria (named after the cunning maid in *Twelfth Night* who masterminds the utter humiliation of her prickly superior Malvolio) is emblematic of the Vultures among the Playwrights, one concerned less with the size of the harvest and more the sustainability. She specializes in removing the very Taint her fellows draining the Light causes, having discovered that (at least as it pertains to her Enclave) the foci so formed by draining Light is not so much random as an exacerbation of dormant evil; Taint, it seems, needs a form to define it, and so it draws on old and forgotten acts of evil to stabilize itself if called by a vacuum of Light. Besides an easy first stop in any plan to revitalize the fields, she’s long realized this is something she can use - her Irim, Macduff, is very skilled in scouring the Dreamlands for historical information, and the Taint’s memories are usually not so long ago that entering the Dreams of Sin becomes a necessity. Which, of course, means that her Governorship in the Protectorate makes her superbly skilled at both the research and application of Purification, as she can force the issue of finding recruits to negate the curses of an area (assuming she can’t pull it off herself - she’s one of the more talented Handmaidens living today).

In particular, she’s skilled at repairing (with extreme prejudice) the Taint caused by child abuse - but her pragmatism taints this as well, for many of the children she saves are either shipped off to Alhambra (willingly - she earnestly believes they will have a better life there if they’re unhappy enough to buy her sales pitch) or her personal Sworn; the Mooncalves, so called because the children who willingly turn on Earth and are fine with being her agents in draining hope and setting up her dramas are usually the ones who want the planet to *suffer* for what it did to them. They are, as far as the world is concerned, aborted fetuses, only fit for the trash heap - so like Caliban (who is also called that title) they’ve become angry little monsters who crave love, something Maria grants them (she is tacitly oblivious to the irony of naming them after a resentful slave).

And so, the Lady Maria has become quite the like the Wyrd Sisters herself, for what she offers to her Radiant counterparts is an easier way to purify, and to purify *safely*. All she needs is one little favor...

## *Appearance*

Maria would prefer not to be seen in her mundane state at all, minus her family, her Sworn, and her immediate co-workers; she remains Transformed when attending court in the belief it’s more polite, and she is almost pathologically afraid of anyone being able to connect her face to her former life or schemes. Thus, normally she is disguised via normal stagecraft or Charms, something ironically made easier by the fact that she’s actually quite beautiful. Much like a living Barbie, her auburn hair, slim build, and nearly flawless skin is almost built to be modified as she desires (she likes to say she was bred for the stage); a little layered powder with a hint of green, and she’s a sickly waif; hair pulled back and nose held up, she’s a young elite straight out of business school. She can even imitate a boy for a while if she cuts her hair short (actually why her alias is from *Twelfth Night*).

She’s a lot less shy in her Transformed state. She appears significantly less morbid than most other Handmaidens, appearing to be nothing more or less than a maidservant (though *not* a French maid - she is completely lacking in lace), the only oddity being that she’s dressed in blue and red. Nothing about her seems to reek of the paradox that defines most Playwrights - by sight alone. It’s impossible to not notice from touch that it seems to be made of the finest silks; on the occasions her cap slips, one can see a thin tiara of silver, and her phylactery is a royal scepter (her paranoia strikes again though; she makes sure to cover it in feathers when she has a chance in order to make damn sure people think she’s just the cleaning lady). When outside, Macduff completes the subtle contradiction between servant and master; the Irim is nothing less than a golden eagle, that radiates dignity and power - but it’s a cold dignity, the heartless charisma of tyrants.

## *Storytelling Hints*

Perhaps once, Alyssa had some degree of doubt, but no more; a combination of peer pressure and in truth, her own order practicing their own Cuckoo’s Eggs on her mind (willingly; she didn’t want any ounce of indeci-



sion to hold her back) has removed any mental barriers to she had to being one of the most manipulative and cold Ravens in a group of manipulative and cold Ravens. What obligation she felt to the planet of her birth is gone; her immediate family and friends, the only innocents she cares about, live in an Alhambran manor, and due to her having exposed herself to some of the darkest elements of humanity through the Mooncalves, her previous cynicism has deepened into outright misanthropy; the Rebellious Provinces are a kingdom of demons to her, fit only to have what little light remains stripped out for safekeeping and damn the rest. This is why she tries to recruit Princesses for Tears, however little success she's had yet; it's just the sensible option, according to her.

Not that she lets this show, of course. When met directly by Princesses she wants to manipulate, Lady Maria does everything in her power to come off as somewhat fanciful, even a bit ditzy. She speaks in Elizabethan English (though not perfectly; she sometimes screws up with "thee" and "thine", and she's not trying for accuracy anyway), acts like a fussy maid who hates any degree of uncleanness in her vicinity, and generally makes herself seem spaced and harmless, but highly competent within her purification schemes and very motherly towards the Mooncalves. Even when people figure out she's loyal to Tears, they still trust her - how can the sweet, possibly nutty woman who cares for orphans be a threat? But it's a mask - one she can't help but let slip sometimes, revealing the true depths of rage that drive her; she plays nakamas off against one another, quietly inserts doubt that the world is worth saving, and masks scathing criticism of the Nobility's ability and beliefs in flowery language and "caring" advice (she always did like playing Iago). Even her favorite way of referring to Radiants, "thou", is generally a way of referring to intimates or *social inferiors*. She's not heartless, not completely; she genuinely loves the Mooncalves, and they love her back, like an aunt or maybe an older sister. But it's a warped love, founded in mutual hate of everything that has ever hurt them; most of the children are downright codependent and possess an outright cultish devotion, and although she's not entirely aware of it, she loves them at least partially for being so slavishly loyal; she is capable of some truly cruel manipulation, and she has no idea she's doing it. This shows in her fighting style; she is primarily defensive, while the Mooncalves, Macduff and whatever ghosts she's requisitioned from her masters serve as a wolfpack, hiding behind her Bubble Shield between bouts of assaulting her enemies with their (usually rented) Bequests and Numina.

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**Calling:** Troubadour

**Queen:** Tears

**Protectorate:** Blue Topaz (Governor)

**Vocation:** Found a Nation based around Alhambran theater

**Aspirations:** Convince my superiors that an Alhambran orphanage is not a waste of resources; Erase what's left of my life on Earth; Shake my old colleagues in Hearts off my back

**Virtues:** Ambitious (Maria is a creature of many dreams, great and small - many of them are even selfless); Motherly (She just plain likes children, and likes protecting them.)

**Vice:** Spiteful (She disguises it well, but she's never truly forgiven the world that hurt her and took away half her family. She is a deeply angry person, and that anger manifests itself in cruel games, big and small.)

**Attributes:** Intelligence 3+1, Wits 2+1, Resolve 3, Strength 1, Dexterity 3+1, Stamina 2+2, Presence 4+1, Manipulation 3+1, Composure 3

**Skills:** Academics 3 (theater), Computer 1, Crafts 3 (stagecraft), Investigation 2+2 (child abuse), Occult 2 (Alhambra), Athletics 0+2, Larceny 2, Stealth 3+1 (beneath notice), Weaponry 2, Animal Ken 1 (therapy dogs), Empathy 3, Expression 4 (acting), Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2+2 (I'm so ridiculous I have to be harmless)

**Derived Traits:** Health 7+2, Willpower 6, Size 5, Defense 2+3, Initiative 6+1, Speed 9+1

**Merits:** Allies 4 (Mooncalves), Circle 2 (rescued children), Contacts 2 (child support agencies, theaters), Pusher, Resources 2, Status (Order of the Raccoon) 2, Striking Looks 2, Virtuous

**Inner Light:** 5

**Belief:** 3

**Wisps:** 14

**Invocations:** Lacrima 4, Terra 3

**Charms:**

- **Appear:** [Twenty Faces](#) (Masked), [Mantle of Authority](#), [Goccia Astrale](#), [Road Crew](#)



- **Inspire:** [All Together Now](#), [Hear Me, O Muse](#) (Cooperative), [Razzle Dazzle](#) (Bargaining), [Carry On, My Wayward Son](#) (Collective), [Queen's Sorrow](#), [Look Into the Future](#), [Jumping Jack Flash](#)
  - **Shape:** [Bubble Shield](#) (Adamant, Unbroken), [Painting Roses](#), [Darkling's Treasure](#) (Trapped)
  - **Practical:** [Twenty Faces](#) (Masked), [Hear Me, O Muse](#) (Cooperative), [Razzle Dazzle](#) (Bargaining), [Painting Roses](#)
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# *Protectorate of Fused Quartz*

**Alternative Names:** Heralds of the Ineluctable, The Students of Nappilu

**Informal Names:** Mannequins, Sibyls

**Attached to Order:** [Raccoon](#)

*No matter where you go, everyone is connected.*

The remit of the Order of the Raccoon is to face the threats to Alhambra that no one else foresees, and seize opportunities for Her Majesty that no one else anticipates, and that's a hard and thankless task in a realm that distrusts anything not of the fallen Kingdom. The Raccoons can, however, point to a long record of warnings given that (when heeded) saved an outpost from disaster, or (when ignored) consigned loyal subjects of the Empress to awful fates, whenever suspicion leads another Order to suggest they be disbanded. For over 4,000 years many of these warnings have been raised by the Protectorate of Fused Quartz, a small sect who watch with impassive faces as time and history pass, and divert its flow with the proper flick of a finger.

The Protectorate has a curious history. The man Nappilu, whose students they are, was not native to Alhambra, nor was he one of the Nobility; he came to an outpost of the City somewhere in Babylonia, offering his fealty in exchange for refuge. He demonstrated a number of strange powers, bending time and fate in ways no Alhambran understood, to prove his value, and so the Ever-Flowing took him in. He was willing both to use those powers for Alhambra and to teach a few Princesses to emulate them; but when asked how he had learned them, he said only that he had been one agent among many of a great and powerful god, who was far beyond the ability of mere mortals, or even its own agents, to understand. He had been outcast, and was pursued, for refusing a divine order, and he warned his students strictly against drawing attention from the god he had abandoned, for the least of its servants was greater than he, and had no concept of mercy.

Few members of the Protectorate are seen outside Alhambra today, but thanks to their Privileges they are maddeningly effective when they do take the field, constantly anticipating the plans of their opponents. They are most likely to be sent when an outpost reports encountering beings similar to Nappilu or the servants of the deity he described, but almost any confrontation with unusually subtle enemies might lead an Alhambran to call for a Sibyl's help.

## *Marks and Requirements*

The Protectorate does not mark its members by any change in their regalia - they wear the normal colors and styles of a Princess or Prince of Tears. They are distinguished, instead, by a change in manner. A Herald is, almost invariably, devoid of expression, and makes no motion that does not serve a conscious purpose. This is the source of their nickname "mannequins"; they can stand or sit, immobile as an idol, for so long that others forget they are alive until they speak. The required Attribute for the Protectorate is Composure, reflecting this impassivity. The Protectorate's required Skill is Occult, reflecting their role in Alhambra's defense; they are students of the esoteric like all Raccoons, with a special interest in temporal anomalies.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Stare Into Infinity*

A Secretary of Fused Quartz is prone to fall into a trance at any moment, in which she sees omens and signs warning her, in symbolic fashion, of dangers soon to come. Sometimes the trance comes unexpectedly; at others the Secretary may induce it in herself by self-hypnosis. Once per session, a Secretary can drop into trance voluntarily as an instant action, and try to interpret the signs that appear to her. She rolls Composure + Wits; for each success, her player may ask one yes/no question about any topic of importance to her, which the Storyteller must answer truthfully. However, after doing this the Secretary takes the Spooked Condition [CofD 291] related to the topics her player asked about.

The Secretary may drop into involuntary trances at any time, at the Storyteller's discretion, though not more often than once a session. When these occur the Storyteller describes the omens the Secretary is seeing or suggests a topic of inquiry; the Secretary's player may roll the same dice pool as above, with the same effects on success, or decline the chance to ask questions. In either case the Secretary takes the Stunned Tilt [CofD 286] at the moment the trance hits; she becomes Spooked only if she studies the omens. Voluntary and involuntary trances can both happen in the same session, but neither can occur while the Secretary keeps the Spooked Condition.

### *Butterfly's Wing*

When she is transformed, the Secretary can foresee highly improbable consequences of apparently ordinary actions. On uncommon occasions she may take advantage of this foresight. Once per scene, while the Secretary is transformed, her player may declare a task she will attempt and another task she hopes to accomplish. Both tasks must be things the Secretary could in theory complete with a mundane instant action at the moment she uses the Privilege, but they need not be related in any way. The Secretary rolls for the first task, but applies all the successes gained to the second instead - by some improbable chain of events, the normal result of her actual action fails to happen and is replaced by the result she desired.

### *Dread Omens*

The Protectorate of Fused Quartz has the power to lift the veils that hide their dooms from those who consult them - or, sometimes, who cause them annoyance. By spending 1 Wisp while transformed, a Secretary may inflict the trance of *Stare Into Infinity* on a person she touches. The target rolls his Composure + Wits, and the target's player asks one yes/no question for each success, which the Storyteller must answer truthfully. However, for those not of the Protectorate the signs and omens are much more disturbing; the target takes the Stunned Tilt for one turn, plus one turn per question his player asks, and after recovering from the Tilt he gains the Shaken Condition [CofD 290] related either to the Secretary or to the things he asked about. (A PC need not ask all the questions she is entitled to, and forgoing a question does shorten the duration of the Stunned Tilt.) Members of the Protectorate, including the Secretary herself, are immune to this Privilege, and no target may have it used on them more than once a session.

### *Governor Privileges*

#### *Accelerando*

A Governor of Fused Quartz learns how to deepen and lighten her trance state, so that the omens will guide her hands and speech to achieve her urgent need. Once per scene, the Governor may spend 2 Wisps when carrying out a mundane instant action. To her, the world suddenly slows down, the immediate future becomes clear, and what she must do to succeed in her present task is obvious. Her action becomes an advanced action - she rolls her pool twice and takes the better result.

The Governor may use *Accelerando* in either of her forms. When she is transformed, she may use both *Accelerando* and *Butterfly's Wing* on the same action.

#### *Forewarned is Forearmed*

When she is transformed, the Governor may rearrange her past to take advantage of an unexpected opportunity. Once a scene, the Governor may spend 1 Wisp to declare that she is carrying, or has previously cached in her current location, a single piece of equipment which will help her in her current activities. The equipment thus brought into play must be something the Governor might have taken at some time in the past 24 hours, placed where she now "finds" it, and let pass unnoticed by anyone else in the current scene - this is simplest with equipment small enough for the Governor to carry on her person. However, the Governor need not actually have taken and cached the equipment; all that's required is that, as far as anyone present can tell, she *might* have done so.

# *Regent Privilege*

## *So Let It Be Written*

A Regent of Fused Quartz may plant a seed of inevitable disaster in the soul of another; by activating this Privilege she finds a dire future and blocks the roads that avoid it. The Privilege is used on a single person whom the Regent touches; she spends 3 Wisps and 1 Willpower, and rolls Intelligence + Occult. The Privilege may not be used on any member of the Protectorate, or on anyone who has the Doomed Condition.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Regent inadvertently foresees a Doom for herself; she gains the Doomed Condition at a level equal to her Composure, and may not use the Privilege again until it is resolved. The Regent's Doom is never directly lethal to her, but the Storyteller is free to choose a fate worse than death.

**Failure:** The Regent foresees nothing.

**Success:** The Regent pronounces Doom for the target - a dire yet inevitable event. The precise nature of the Doom is chosen by the Regent's player, with the Storyteller's approval, though it must be something the target strongly desires not to experience. The target gains the **Doomed** Condition at a level equal to twice the activation successes.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's Doom is especially hard to avoid.

**Drawback:** Every Regent has foreseen her own destruction in the moment she rose to the position. The Regent has a Doom, as with the **Destiny** Merit's drawback. Unlike the Dooms she pronounces on others, a Regent's own Doom is inescapable by any magic of the Light. A Doomed Condition overrides the Regent's Doom until it resolves, but the original Doom returns at that time.

# *Protectorate of Malachite*

**Alternative Names:** Bearers of Mercy, Redemptionists

**Informal Names:** Hypnotists, Reallocators, Wardens (derogatory)

**Attached to Order:** [Pelican](#)

Life within Alhambra, as everyone who serves the Last Empress knows, is fraught with peril and stained by grief. Only the dedication of the citizenry to the end of restoring the true Kingdom on Earth allows them to carry on. To lose that dedication, to turn aside from the goal and pursue a personal desire, is dangerous to the City, and also to oneself. And so the Protectorate of Malachite was founded, to save those who would otherwise be lost to despair, fear or rebellion, and restore them to their true loyalties. They are counselors and confessors, doctors of the mind; their duty is to relieve the mentally distressed of emotions and memories that keep them from serving the Queen and the Orders as they are supposed to.

The Protectorate is truly ancient, having been founded only two generations after the Kingdom's fall, and broadly respected; its senior Regents have often served as Premiers in Craft. It's well known that the secrets of its Privileges were first unearthed by the Nobles of Tears who discovered the Dreamlands' existence, and who tried to comprehend the manner by which Light-touched souls were drawn into that grand illusion. While the plans to rescue Nobles from the Dreamlands to be properly reborn never bore fruit (the Release was as startling to the Redemptionists as anyone else) the techniques for releasing people from lesser illusions have sustained Alhambra through the Long Night, and the Last Empress has often expressed her gratitude for them.

In the modern day a Bearer of Mercy may be found in many Alhambran enclaves, serving multiple roles. First, of course, is keeping the staff from being tempted by the strange and novel experiences available on Earth, and ensuring that they stick to their assigned duties. Second is examining people who wish to join Alhambra, to establish both their capabilities and any conflicting loyalties which might lead to trouble later on. And third (the most likely to bring them into conflicts) is taking people who could be useful to an enclave, but choose not to contribute, and compelling them to do what Alhambra requires of them.

## *Marks and Requirements*

The outward sign of a Redemptionist is a glittering object, worn on the forehead, chest or hand, that invariably catches whatever light exists and draws attention from everyone who sees it. Unless the Hypnotist specifically conceals it, anyone who notices her will see and remember this gleaming badge, because it's designed to draw and hold the eye. Most members, in fact, use it with their Privileges as a tool.

The Embassy requires a forceful personality and the skill to influence people into a desired course; its favored Attribute is Presence, and its favored Skill is Persuasion.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Finding Faults*

A Secretary of Malachite can read the signs of psychic distress in someone's face and posture. Whenever a person in the Secretary's sight has a Condition gained by passing through a breaking point (or the analog for supernatural characters), or one imposed by supernatural powers that alter the mind, or a Galemark, the Secretary need only succeed on a Perception check to recognize that his mental state is not normal. Once per session, the Secretary may examine a person she has noticed in this way to identify which of those Conditions he has, the effects they are having on him, and the ways they might be resolved.

### *Confessional*

It is the duty of the Bearers of Mercy to relieve people of all cares that prevent them from being of service to Her Ever-Flowing Majesty. When she is transformed the Secretary gains an aura that makes people willing to

confide in her and accept advice from her. In a social maneuver the Secretary starts with a good first impression on any target she hasn't yet met.

However, if she has scrutinized her target with *Finding Faults*, and the target's mental Conditions haven't changed since then, the full power of the Privilege applies. The Secretary may begin a social maneuver on such a target with a perfect impression. Provided her goal doesn't force the target to a breaking point (if it would the Privilege fails), when he does as she asked the target sheds one temporary Condition that the Secretary identified, or is unaffected by one persistent Condition for at least one day afterward. The Secretary chooses which Condition is removed or suppressed, but must remove a temporary Condition if the target has one.

## *Weight of Censure*

So few in the Rebellious Provinces are aware of their obligations; sometimes those of Alhambra are forgetful, too. On due occasion a Warden has to bring people to a proper sense of shame at their failures. The Secretary may spend 1 Wisp while transformed when she is conversing with a person; she then rolls Manipulation + Persuasion - her target's Composure.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Secretary repels her target; in future social maneuvers her impression with him starts at hostile.

**Failure:** The target perceives nothing, and the conversation proceeds.

**Success:** The Secretary makes her target feel his shortcomings; he immediately acquires the Guilty Condition [CofD 289]. *Finding Faults* will spot the Condition, and the Secretary may use *Confessional* on him immediately.

**Exceptional Success:** The target cannot resolve or shed the Guilty Condition for a full day, without supernatural help.

## *Governor Privileges*

### *Free to Serve*

The Queen of Tears teaches that sometimes you must lie to make people realize the truth. That's especially true with people taken from the Rebellious Provinces who insist on placing some loyalty from their past above Alhambra's needs. In such cases the Reallocators are called on to free them from their past.

The Governor can spend 2 Wisps to displace a memory from her target's mind, replacing it with another more fit for the purpose the target ought to serve. The task is an extended action with a dice pool of Presence + Expression; the interval is one hour, and the threshold is the target's Willpower dots. The Governor and her target must be together and conscious throughout. If the Governor has scrutinized the target with *Finding Faults* she gains a +2 bonus to her dice pool. If she reaches the threshold, the Governor inflicts the [False Memory](#) Condition on the target, with a penalty equal to her Presence.

### *Proper Instruction*

Often in Alhambra's service it's necessary to learn a great mass of facts quickly, and it lies within the Hypnotists' skills to convey great masses of facts in very little time. A Governor of Malachite may spend 1 Wisp to place one person into a receptive trance, and allow another person touching the first to commune with him, speaking without words. After five minutes in trance the first person gains the Informed Condition [CofD 289] on one subject in which the second is an expert (the Storyteller judges if a character has the knowledge needed.) The Governor may be student, teacher or neither.

*Proper Instruction* may be combined with *Free to Serve* to let the false memories created by the latter to contain true information. If this is done, each False Memory Condition exchanges the ratings of two Skills within a single category; removing the Condition will switch the ratings back.

# *Regent Privilege*

## *Conversion*

The final mercy the Redemptionist can show is to bring the recalcitrant to realize that they want to serve, if only they let themselves see it. A Regent of Malachite can spend 3 Wisps and 1 Willpower to replace one of a person's Aspirations. The task is an extended action with a dice pool of Presence + Persuasion; the interval is one hour, and the threshold is the target's Willpower dots. The Regent and her target must be together and conscious throughout. If the Regent has scrutinized the target with *Finding Faults* she gains a +2 bonus to her dice pool. If the Regent reaches the threshold, the target must abandon one of his Aspirations and take a new one of the Regent's choice. The Privilege cannot replace a Vocation or supply one; only mundane Aspirations are vulnerable.

**Drawback:** The goals that the Regent most treasures turn to dust when she uses magic to convert another to her cause. Each time she uses the Privilege, the Regent must choose one of her own Aspirations. For days equal to her Presence, all attempts to work toward that Aspiration become automatic dramatic failures. No Aspiration can be cursed in this way twice, and if all the Regent's Aspirations have been so cursed she cannot use *Conversion*.

# *Protectorate of Novaculite*

**Alternative Names:** Her Majesty's Cadre, Instructors in War

**Informal Name:** Drafters

**Attached to Order:** [Spotted Hyena](#)

*It's a dirty job, but someone has to do it.*

The Spotted Hyenas are the Last Empress' good right hand; whenever some threat arises to the Wisp gathering outposts that sustain Alhambra against the Darkness, the Hyenas spend their sweat and blood to defeat it. However, it does the City little good when its subjects die in battle - far better to make the enemy die. Honor and glory are lovely in their way, but survival and victory are what matter in the end. To make sure they understand this, the Order places its new conscripts in the hands of its professional trainers, the Protectorate of Novaculite.

Naturally the Drafters spend much of their time teaching actual fighting skills. But the core of their teaching is Alhambra's idea of the military virtues: strict discipline, obedience to orders, and ruthless pursuit of victory by any means that lie to hand. War is terrible and monstrous, the Cadre say, but it cannot be evaded; the soldiers of Alhambra must fight everywhere they are stationed, against shadow-beasts in the City and insolent rebels beyond it. Often the only course to victory over the monsters is to become monstrous, and a proper soldier must take that course and sacrifice his conscience for the Queen. The Regents of Novaculite have sometimes spoken of War as a goddess who is most pleased by that sacrifice, and it isn't clear if they mean Her Majesty by that, or some other deity.

Instructors in War are frequent visitors to the Rebellious Provinces. Sometimes an outpost has hired mercenaries, in hopes that some or all would subject themselves to the Queen of Tears, or just to supply a shortage of trained soldiers, and in such cases a Drafter is usually sent to command them - a task for which their Privileges are suitable. In other times an outpost needs a crack squad to carry out a dangerous or unsavory mission, and when the squad is led by one of the Cadre, her powers will stiffen their spines and harden their hearts, ensuring their success.

## *Marks and Requirements*

To become a Drafter is to accept a duty to do terrible things if it will save the City. The Drafter's Regalia symbolizes this with stains and tatters. No matter what a Cadre member does, her clothes invariably bear some traces of dirt or sweat, visible from every angle. When they gain a few Shadows dots, the Drafter's Regalia grows dirtier and develops rips and tears; with many Shadows, her clothes become ragged, and her hands and face may be stained with dried blood. For some reason, this never impairs a Drafter socially - the stains and tatters give the impression of great endurance in the face of danger.

An Instructor in War must be expert in personal combat, and possess charisma for many reasons: to direct troops in battle, to train new recruits, and to convince foreigners to enlist. The Protectorate's required Attribute is Presence, and its required Skill is Weaponry.

## *Secretary Privileges*

### *Tools of Duty*

The Protectorate of Novaculite are responsible for preparing their recruits for their service to Alhambra, and this includes providing them with appropriate tools to perform their duties. Anyone [Sworn](#) to the same Queen as the Secretary gains one phantom dot of the [Circle](#) Merit, linked to her; after one hour of fighting drill with her, the Sworn may roll to gain a Wisp. The phantom Circle dot stacks with any real Circle Merit a Sworn may have. Moreover, if the Secretary is Sworn herself she becomes a valid target for the Circle Merits of other Sworn in her court.



## *Trail of Tears*

The service of Alhambra is fraught with perils and compromises, and it is the duty of the Drafters to help raw recruits come to terms with their obligations. While Transformed the Secretary may protect a mundane character in her presence from moral or mental stress. When a mundane character in her line of sight reaches a breaking point, the Secretary may reflexively spend 1 Wisp to turn the breaking point roll into a teamwork action: she rolls her normal dice pool for a breaking point, applying the same penalty her target faces, and the result of her roll affects his as a secondary actor's roll affects the primary actor's.

**Drawback:** Using the Privilege makes the Secretary complicit in her target's actions. If the target reached the breaking point by acting in a way that triggers [Sensitivity](#), the Secretary's Sensitivity check proceeds as if she had committed the tainting herself.

## *Drill Manual*

A Drafter may give her recruits the basic knowledge necessary for their service. While Transformed, she touches the forehead of her target and spends 1 Willpower. For one full day afterward, the target gains either one Skill dot in Brawl, Weaponry or Firearms, or gains the Language Merit [CofD 45] for the Secretary's native language or one she has the Language Merit for and the Encyclopedic Knowledge Merit [CofD 44] for an organization which has her loyalty. (Normally the latter option is used on foreign recruits, so the language is modern Alhambran and the organization is the Order of the Spotted Hyena or the City as a whole.) The Secretary cannot raise anyone's Skill to a level higher than her own.

## *Governor Privileges*

### *The Queen's Shilling*

The Governors of Novaculite can create Sworn with an amazing efficiency. The Privilege uses the same rules as the Charm [Accept Fealty](#), except that it must be used on a group of at least five people who are bound to each other or a common cause, sufficient for a [Commonalty](#) Charm to work on them all, and the Governor's dice pool takes the Commonalty modifier appropriate for the targeted group.

### *Binding Service*

The chosen of Alhambra must work together for the good of the Last City. The Governor may spend 1 Wisp while transformed to bolster the members of an organization and give them unity. She rolls Presence + Expression - the Commonalty modifier for the organization as an instant action.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Governor breaks the bonds among her targets. For a full day, none of the targets count as members of *any* organization if a supernatural power that exploits Commonalty is used on them.

**Failure:** The members' cohesion is not affected.

**Success:** Members of the organization who are present are drawn into a mystical unity. The Commonalty modifier for affecting them improves by one step, to a maximum of Dedicated. The increased Commonalty lasts for a full day.

**Exceptional Success:** The members take fire from the Governor's words; they gain the Inspired Condition [CofD 289].

## *Regent Privilege*

### *Favor of the Last Empress*

A Regent of Novaculite sends troops into battle with the favor of Her Everflowing Majesty to support them. Once per session, the Regent may pronounce a blessing in the name of her Queen on a group of people whose

Commonalty modifier is currently Dedicated (either naturally or with the benefit of *Binding Service*) as an instant action, and spends 3 Wisps and 1 Willpower. Everyone in the group immediately gains the [Blessed](#) Condition, related to a mission of the Regent's choice, with a pool of banked dice equal to the Regent's Weaponry dots. All the Conditions end without resolving when the session ends.

**Drawback:** The group's shared mission binds them all in shared responsibility. If anyone with the Destined Condition from the Privilege fails a breaking point roll, everyone else with the Condition also reaches a breaking point, taking the same penalty as the character who failed. Failing these rolls doesn't cause another round of breaking points; no character reaches a breaking point twice from the same event.

# Protectorate of Pyrite

**Alternative Names:** The Voices of the City, The Beacons Among Barbarians  
**Informal Names:** Attaché/e, Liaisons, Natives (derogatory), Cuckoos (derogatory)  
**Attached to Order:** Ghost Owl

*Hello. I'm from the Government, and I'm here to help you.*

The Jewel of the Kingdom, Alhambra, is always open to allow those from the barbaric Provinces to learn from its majesty, and Alhambran agents perform this duty as much as their obligations allow. The Protectorate of Pyrite was founded out of this desire to revolutionize the outside world - what better way to teach, it's been said, than to lead and show them?

The Voices of the City are its professional diplomats and negotiators, with the mission of persuading those living outside the city to serve the Last Empress' needs. The tasks of purchasing or renting the site of a new Enclave, of arranging for local food (and for power, in recent centuries) and of soothing any alarm the locals feel as the Enclave takes their hope away, almost always fall on a Liaison. The Liaisons are also by tradition responsible for finding those in the Provinces who are willing to abandon rebellion, and either come to Alhambra or support its Enclaves' work. The Protectorate is popular with "immigrant" Alhambrans, who have parents or grandparents born outside the city: by the very nature of their work members of the Pyrite have to spend lots of time away from their beloved city, entering places and organizations that lack the touch of Her Everflowing Majesty.

Alas, joining the Protectorate of Pyrite carries something of a stigma in Alhambra. To the ordinary citizens, why, its services are necessary as the connections they make greatly service the needs of the hope-gatherers, but no Pyrite is to be seen as too eager to perform their duties lest they appear as fancying those outsider barbarian ways. And while the Fools of the Summit watch the Liaisons carefully, and can usually be confident of the loyalties of them all, they know that this Protectorate, like all others, draws its powers from *something* outside humanity. Yet when asked, the Regents of Pyrite can give no other names for this thing than "unity" and "obligation" - and what is inhuman about those?

## Marks And Requirements

The Liaisons are effectively what Alhambra allows the world to see of its public face; as such, they must act with grace and dignity in their duty for they are the representative of the Kingdom's majesty. They are expected to deal with many different people in the Provinces, regardless of their feelings on the matter, and always appear at their best in their presence. The required attribute is Manipulation, and the required skill is Socialize.

Attachée Regalia show their nature as links between Alhambra and the Provinces. It always looks dignified and refined - or as close as what the Princess thinks qualifies - with multiple crests with stylized symbols appearing on it: one to show their belonging to Alhambra, one for their Order, and one for the place they are connected to.

## Secretary Privileges

### *Seek and You Shall Find*

Etiquette is a second nature to a Liaison, to be followed so as not allow any shame to befall Alhambra. And as everybody will tell you, asking for information is simply polite.

On becoming a Secretary, an Attaché gains a floating dot of Contacts, usable in either mundane or transformed state. Once per story, she may assign this dot to a field, as broad as what a dot in Contacts normally offers; people in that field will answer questions for her as if they were normal contacts, using the rules for the Merit. When the Secretary changes her floating Contact, anyone she asked questions of in the prior field becomes slightly confused, taking a -1 penalty to remember who they were speaking to. If the Secretary has the Contacts Merit, the floating dot stacks with the Merit for anyone trying to block her use of it.

## *Nowhere Unwelcome*

The Light of the Kingdom may be waning in the wretched Provinces, but the authority of the Last Empress still holds sway on this world. You need only present yourself in uniform, and all will defer to you.

The Secretary's transformed state gains an aura of inscrutable, yet unquestioned authority. Anyone within the field of her floating Contact from [Seek and You Shall Find](#) perceives her as one with influence in the field, who offers opportunity if pleased, and ill consequences if offended. In social maneuvering with these people, the Secretary determines her starting impression normally, then improves it by one step; in other social encounters, the Secretary gains a +2 bonus on the first Social roll to influence them in a scene.

Moreover, the Secretary's aura makes her anonymous. While people covered by the floating Contact recognize her in person if they have met her before, and will remember anything they agreed to do for her, if she spends a Wisp just after leaving them any attempt they make to describe her to others or identify her from photographs takes a penalty equal to her Socialize dots. (Their descriptions tend to sound like what they imagine the ideal person in the field to be.) This effect persists after the Secretary changes her floating Contact, and can be removed only by supernatural powers which enhance memory.

## *Come, Follow Me*

A Liaison seldom works alone, so she may extend a part of her authority to her staff. If the Secretary touches a person and spends a Wisp, as long as the target visibly acts under her direction attempts to describe or identify him take a penalty equal to the Secretary's Socialize dots. The protection works only against people who know that the target works for the Liaison - if she has told them so, or told him to do something while they watched, they cannot describe or identify him except as one of her people, but those who see him only when separated from her have no difficulty remembering his appearance. The illusion fades at the end of the current session, but as with *Nowhere Unwelcome* its effects on memories last indefinitely.

## *Governor Privileges*

### *Knock and It is Opened*

When a Liaison rises to Governor, her authority becomes weightier, and her requests are difficult to refuse. While the aura of *Nowhere Unwelcome* is active, the Governor may spend 2 Wisps for certain success in her negotiations when those susceptible to it. In social maneuvering with people covered by her floating Contact, this Privilege opens one Door without a roll, and may be used once during a maneuver after the Governor has opened at least one Door by other means. In other contexts, the Privilege converts a Social roll meant to persuade a person covered by her floating Contact to do something into a single success, and may be used once a scene.

### *Go Forth in My Name*

The Governor's command of etiquette is such that she may confer it to those who take direction from her. If she touches a person and spends a Wisp, the target has the benefits of *Seek and You Shall Find* with respect to her floating Contact for the rest of the session. The Privilege has no further effect on anyone who has benefitted from it in the current session (so one person cannot gather information from the floating Contact more often than the Merit would allow by having the Privilege used on him twice.) The Governor may use *Come, Follow Me* and *Go Forth in My Name* simultaneously on a single target.

## *Regent Privilege*

### *Ask And You Shall Receive*

The Regent of the Protectorate of Pyrite carries so much authority that the benighted living in the Rebelious Provinces will do whatever she requests ... within reason. When a Regent wants something done that

someone covered by her floating Contact can supply, she approaches her chosen target, spends 3 Wisps and 1 Willpower, and rolls Manipulation + Socialize - the target's Composure. Each success on this roll becomes a phantom Allies Merit dot, applying to the target. For the rest of the session, the Regent may call on the target for favors using the rules for the Allies Merit.

**Drawback:** Drawing too much on her magically created credit might push the target to repudiate the Regent forever. If the Regent must roll to get a favor from her new ally, and fails on the roll, the Privilege expires immediately, and she can never use any Privilege of the Protectorate on the target again. Furthermore, in social maneuvering the Regent's impression with the target now begins at hostile, and in other contexts she takes a -2 penalty on all Social rolls dealing with the target, for at least the rest of the current story.



# Appendix B: Conditions and Tilts

## Conditions

The following Conditions may easily appear in a campaign of *Princess: the Hopeful*. They are created by the Nobility, or by one of their enemies; or the Nobility are likely to experience them.

### *Abdicated*

The Princess has abandoned her duties to the Light. On any action related to her Calling, she takes a penalty equal to her Shadows. She must spend a point of Willpower each time she wants to attack a [creature of Darkness](#); she can apply her Defense, Dodge or run from the fight, but not take an aggressive action.

**Causes:** Choosing catharsis during a [Haunting](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess achieves an exceptional success on an action related to her Calling, or when attacking a creature of Darkness.

### *Bargain*

The character can find a piece of equipment or a service for a bargain price. He might have a coupon, or get a promotional discount, or just have an amazing stroke of luck. When he wants to make a purchase, he may resolve the Condition to reduce the Availability of the equipment or service he's buying by 1 dot.

**Causes:** The Charm [Small Providence](#).

**Resolution:** The character purchases something at a reduced price. The Condition does not grant a Beat when resolved.

### *Blackmailed (persistent)*

Someone who absolutely does not have the Noble's interests at heart has discovered her double life and intends to exploit his knowledge. Often this takes the form of extorting favors - only the least imaginative blackmailers demand money. A Noble's blackmailer is more likely to ask her to use her unique powers on his behalf. While his motives can range from the criminal to the altruistic, his demands will badly complicate her affairs.

**Causes:** Resolving the [Indiscreet](#) Condition.

**Resolution:** The blackmailer makes his knowledge public; the Noble finds a counter-threat against him; the blackmailer dies or is discredited.

**Beat:** The blackmailer's demand blocks the Noble from doing an important task, or complicates her situation.

### *Blessed*

The character has a mission, and at crucial moments he receives magical help to accomplish it. He has a bank of bonus dice which he can apply to any dice pool, so long as the action in question serves the mission. Each die applies to only 1 roll of a dice pool, but the character may apply any number of dice to a roll. Using up all the dice ends the Condition without resolving it.

**Causes:** The Charms [We Rely on You](#), [Love Conquers All](#) and [Jumping Jack Flash](#); a [Regent of Novaculite's](#) Privilege.

**Resolution:** None; the Condition ends when all the dice are used up.

## *Blighted*

The character's raw faculties and talents have been magically degraded; dots have been taken from one or more of his Attributes. Any traits derived from the reduced Attribute(s) are recalculated.

It is possible for a character to have two or more instances of the Blighted Condition, but different instances cannot reduce the same Attribute.

**Causes:** The Charm [Tendril of Nothing](#); dramatic failures with the [Charms of Enhancement](#).

**Resolution:** The expiration of the magic that created the Condition ends it, without granting a Beat.

## *Broken Circle (persistent)*

Someone important to the Noble's mundane life has discovered her secret life's existence, and reacted ... poorly. He may be worried or frightened by the threats the Noble faces; he may think the Noble is deluded, or covering up reprehensible deeds with lies; he may even want to help her, but in ways that put him in greater peril, and be offended that the Noble doesn't want his help. Whatever the reaction, it's strained their relationship. The Noble takes a -2 penalty on Social rolls related to the person in question, and social maneuvers with him start with an impression one step worse than normal.

**Causes:** Resolving the [Indiscreet](#) Condition.

**Resolution:** The Noble cuts her ties with the other person (losing any Merits connected to him), or reaches a better understanding with him.

**Beat:** The other person blocks the Noble from doing an important task, or complicates her situation, due to the coolness between them.

## *Cherishing*

The Princess holds the memory of another person as a precious treasure. She may use that memory as a sympathetic connection to the person, at a level set when she gained the Condition; doing so resolves the Condition. However, if the other person has a power that exploits sympathetic connections, he can use that power on the Princess through the connection, which also resolves the Condition.

A stronger version of the Condition weakens the level of Sympathy created by the memory by one step each time one of the parties uses it for magic. In this case the Condition resolves when the strength of the connection drops to the level the Princess naturally has for the other person.

**Causes:** The Charm [Cherish](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess or the other person breaks the link as described.

## *Cowed*

The character is convinced that another person is too dangerous to meddle with. He suffers a -2 penalty on any Physical and Social rolls to oppose the character who inflicted the Condition, if he does not spend Willpower.

**Causes:** Anyone with the Intimidation Skill can try to inflict Cowed on a target with a contested roll; dramatic failure with the Charm [Giggle at the Ghostie](#).

**Resolution:** The character successfully intimidates or injures the Condition's source; the character regains Willpower from his Virtue.

## *Cynical (persistent)*

The character loses belief in her guiding principle, and abandons herself to self-indulgent comforts. She actively avoids taking actions which reflect her Virtue, even when they don't involve personal risk; she may not



spend Willpower on such actions, and does not regain Willpower from them. If forced to act according to her Virtue, the character suffers a -2 penalty to her rolls.

**Causes:** Dramatic failure on a [compromise](#) roll.

**Resolution:** The character regains a dot of Integrity, loses another dot of Integrity, or achieves an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The character fails to fulfill an obligation she incurred because of her Virtue.

## *Darkened (persistent)*

Long exposure to [Tainted areas](#) has infected the character. He has become a [creature of the Darkness](#), with the abilities and drawbacks thereof, but hasn't lost his Integrity yet.

Remaining in touch with human emotions and morals can protect the character from banes of the Darkness for a while. The first time in a scene that jade touches him, he rolls his Integrity as a dice pool. If he fails this roll, jade damages him as stated for the rest of the scene; if he succeeds, his flesh just breaks out in a lurid rash where the jade touches it, and the itching inflammation gives him a -2 penalty on all Physical actions until the contact is withdrawn. (Many Darkened first realized something was badly wrong with them when their jewellery burned their fingers.)

**Causes:** Gaining too many instances of [Tainted](#).

**Resolution:** The character makes a great sacrifice, either as restitution for his sins, or to save someone from death or grave injury; the character raises his Integrity to 8 or more. (Just having Integrity above 7 won't resolve Darkened - the character must buy at least one dot in the trait.)

**Beat:** The character expands the Size or deepens the Severity of a Tainted area.

## *Demoralized (persistent)*

The Princess' morale has faltered in the face of the Darkness in the world. Spending Willpower adds only +2 to her dice pool, or +1 to a static value. In any confrontation with a [creature of Darkness](#), such as combat or a contested action, the Princess takes a penalty equal to her Shadows.

**Causes:** A [Haunting](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess defeats a creature of Darkness in a confrontation lasting for at least a scene.

**Beat:** The Princess concedes a conflict with a Dark creature and suffers serious loss by doing so.

## *Dethroned Follower (persistent)*

The character has fallen into the power of a Dethroned. He is compelled to help her reenact her fall from Nobility and humanity, either by taking the role of another person involved in the events, or by bringing other people to her Fortress to play the needed parts. If the character still has Integrity, refusing to participate in the Dethroned's personal tragedy is a breaking point at a -5 penalty, and if he fails the roll he must fall into line and play out his part. The Condition ends without resolving if the character leaves the Dethroned's presence and her Fortress for a number of days equal to her Inner Night.

**Causes:** The Chain [Companions in Misery \(Inner Night ••\)](#).

**Resolution:** The character takes serious harm (lethal damage exceeding his Stamina) while serving the Dethroned, or succeeds at a breaking point roll caused by the condition.

**Beat:** The character puts himself in harm's way to serve the Dethroned.

## *Doubting*

The character's higher calling or guiding principle has been put in question, and she is beset by doubts. While the character is affected by this Condition, she cannot spend Willpower on any action that reflects her Virtue.

**Causes:** Failing a [compromise](#) roll; dramatically failing with [Comfortably Numb](#).

**Resolution:** The character gains an exceptional success on an action that reflects her Virtue, or regains Willpower for performing such an action at personal risk.

## *Doomed (persistent)*

The character is almost certain to suffer a dire fate. The Storyteller has a pool of dice equal to the level of this Condition, which refills at the start of each session; he may apply those dice as a modifier to any roll made for the character, if that roll is relevant to the character's Doom. Actions which, if successful, would help to bring the Doom about may be given a positive modifier, while actions which would help prevent the Doom may be given a negative modifier.

**Causes:** A Regent of [Fused Quartz](#) uses her Privilege.

**Resolution:** The Doom comes to pass; or, the character does something which makes the Doom impossible.

**Beat:** The character succeeds in a task that contributes to his Doom - any roll that gained bonus dice from this Condition qualifies, and the Storyteller may give Beats for other rolls as well.

## *Drama Queen*

The character desperately wants attention - needs it - and doesn't much care how she gets it. In any scene where she isn't the center of attention, she's tempted to extreme behavior just to grab the spotlight.

**Causes:** Failing a [compromise](#) roll, especially when [Unbalanced](#); dramatically failing with [She's So Fine](#).

**Resolution:** The character embarrasses or humiliates herself while trying to make people notice her.

## *Dream-Hounded*

The character has dreams every night of being mercilessly hunted. The point of Willpower he would normally recover when he sleeps is taken from him by the person who set the Condition on him, and is wasted if that person's Willpower is fully refreshed.

**Causes:** The Caligo [Call the Black Dog](#).

**Resolution:** Immediately after waking, roll Resolve + Composure. When the character has made successful rolls equal to the Shadows of the person who gave him the dreams, resolve the Condition.

## *Enervated (persistent)*

The character is in the second stage of soul loss. Her instinctive efforts to shore up her Willpower by giving into her urges have failed, her Integrity has gone and her Willpower is now fading. In addition to the effects of Soulless, she can no longer regain Willpower through her Virtue, only her Vice. Indulging herself brings diminishing returns — whenever she does so, her permanent Willpower drops by one dot before she regains Willpower points to the new maximum.

**Causes:** Falling to Integrity 1 while Soulless [CofD 290]; falling to [Belief 0](#).

**Resolution:** Regaining a lost soul; returning to Belief 1.

**Beat:** Lose a dot of permanent Willpower.

## *Enhanced*

The character's raw faculties and talents have been magically improved; dots have been added to one or more of his Attributes. Any traits derived from the enhanced Attribute(s) are recalculated.

It is possible for a character to have two or more instances of the Enhanced Condition, but different instances cannot enhance the same Attribute.

**Causes:** The [Charms of Enhancement](#).

**Resolution:** The expiration of the magic that created the Condition ends it, without granting a Beat.

## *Enraged (persistent)*

The Princess is obsessed with punishing whoever is responsible for a tainting. Any roll not related to attacking him, finding him or compelling him to make restitution to his victim is penalized by her Shadows.

If the Princess is the one responsible, she is driven to self-hatred, which immediately disguises itself as an unshakable belief that her victim hates her and means her harm. She is obsessed with punishing the sufferer, as above.

**Causes:** A [Haunting](#).

**Resolution:** The object of the Princess' anger admits guilt and makes amends, or is incapacitated; or, the Princess achieves an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The Princess neglects another obligation to pursue the object of her anger.

## *False Memory (persistent)*

The character's memories have been magically altered. This may modify some Mental or Social dice pools, depending on what was changed. The magic that changed his memories imposed a barrier against recalling the truth; if the character is shown compelling evidence of the falsification he reaches a breaking point, at a penalty equal to the level of the Condition.

**Causes:** The Charm [Their Blood Cries Out](#); the Caligo [Everyone Dies Alone](#); a Governor of Malachite's [Free to Serve](#) Privilege.

**Resolution:** The character is confronted with proof that his memories are false, and succeeds on the resulting breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The character trusts someone or takes a risky action based on his false memories alone.

## *Fearful*

Something has inspired a nearly paralyzing fear in the character. He cannot willingly approach within his Speed in yards of the fear's source. All his interactions with the source of his fear take a -5 penalty.

**Causes:** The Charms [Gold Abhors Ebon](#), [Ofuda, I am Become Light](#); the Terrifying upgrade to [Valiant Mind](#); dramatic failure on the Charm [Rally Round the Flag](#); the Caligo [Bogeyman](#); the Reprisal [Taken Revelation](#); a Governor of Blue Topaz's [Cuckoo's Egg](#) Privilege.

**Resolution:** The character escapes from the source of his fear, and does not return during the current scene.

## *Flashbacks (persistent)*

The Noble went through terrible suffering once, and now associates some stimulus (regarded by others as innocuous) with that past pain, so strongly that experiencing it again can overwhelm her. Each time she encounters the stimulus, she must check her [Sensitivity](#), using her unmodified pool.

This Condition should be taken only for stimuli that have no obvious connection with suffering - for instance, a Noble grieving for her dead mother may flash back on smelling her mother's favorite perfume.

**Causes:** A horrible experience, such as (but not limited to) an especially severe Haunting.

**Resolution:** Time or therapy wears down the Noble's old trauma.

**Beat:** The Noble undergoes a Haunting because she encountered the stimulus.

## *Forgettable (persistent)*

The character's face and voice are bland and unmemorable; he doesn't stand out in a crowd or attract much notice when alone. All his Social rolls that would be influenced by his appearance take a -1 penalty. On the other hand, any rolls by others to spot, notice or remember the character take a -1 penalty.

**Causes:** The Charm [Enduring Beauty](#).

**Resolution:** The character gets plastic surgery, or some other treatment that alters his appearance.

**Beat:** The character is overlooked or ignored, when he doesn't want to be.

## *Gale-touched*

The character has been brushed lightly by the Dreamlands' [Gales](#), and memories of the land beyond the wall of sleep sustain her in the face of fear or horror. When the character reaches a breaking point, she may resolve this Condition to add +1 to her roll.

While a character has this Condition, small fragments of beauty that remind her of the Dreamlands appear as she goes about her daily life, in places she can't reach quickly, and vanish if she approaches them closely; they are not visible to anyone else. This has no mechanical effect but might be unsettling to the inexperienced.

**Causes:** Spending time in the Dreamlands.

**Resolution:** The character draws on memories of the Dreamlands to preserve herself from a breaking point.

## *Galemark (persistent)*

The Dreamlands' Gales have marked the character's mind, giving her an intermittent delusion that she is a Dreamlander. Each level in the Condition represents one [Galemark](#). Each Galemark is attached to one of the character's Willpower dots, starting with the leftmost and moving right. When the character spends a point of Willpower from a dot with a Galemark, she temporarily assumes the role the Dreamlands have given her, abandoning thoughts of the waking world as fictions of no importance. This delusion lasts for the rest of the current scene.

When the character is summoning Crawlspace to leave the Dreamlands, add one Door to the total for each Galemark she currently has.

**Causes:** Spending time in the Dreamlands.

**Resolution:** After the character has had one full night's sleep without entering the Dreamlands for each level of the Condition, she loses one level, recovering from its baneful effect on her mind. The effects of the lost Galemark on the character's Dreamlands appearance, and on the Dreamlands, may remain or fade away at the player's discretion - if they remain, the character can enact the role the Dreamlands wish her to play, and not become lost in it.

**Beat:** The character abandons an obligation to play her Galemark-created role, or an event or person linked to that role complicates the current situation. The character's player may invent such an event to claim the Beat.

## *Haunted*

Witnessing an example of human cruelty has hurt the Princess' connection to the Light. The Princess adds 1 dot to her Shadows when she gains the Condition; if she resolves it, she loses that dot. The Condition ends without resolving at the end of the current scene; the Princess does not take a Beat and doesn't remove the Shadows dot in that case.

**Causes:** A [Sensitivity](#) check.

**Resolution:** The Princess relieves the pain that inflicted this Condition, or punishes the one responsible for it.

## *Heartfire*

The character's affections for another person are being sustained by a magical fire. The flame created is candle-sized (base damage of 0) and dances on the tip of the Princess' finger; its color and Intensity depend on the nature and strength of the affection. The flame will last indefinitely if transferred to a flammable substance such as a candle wick. It will continue to burn without consuming its source until it is deliberately extinguished (which is as easy as snuffing out a non-supernatural flame of the same size) or the character dies. Extinguishing a flame manually (to let the Princess start a new flame, for example) ends the Condition without resolving it.

### *Heartfire Flames*

Nature	Color
Love for an "idea" of a person not intimately known	Translucent
Patience, loyalty, respect	Dark red/orange
Contentment, pride, deep concern	Blue
Dedication, purpose, joy	White
Obsession	Shifting, unnatural
"As you wish"	Rainbow

  

Strength	Intensity
Acquaintance	1st degree (+0)
Good friends	2nd degree (+1)
Lover, close family	3rd degree (+2)
Total devotion	White hot (+3)

Anyone can use the flame to set something else on fire. However, its proper use is to preserve the relationship that inspired it. If either the character or the subject of his affections concentrates on the flame, cupping it in their hands or staring into it, that person gains the Swooning Condition [CofD 291] for the other, and the Heartfire Condition resolves.

While the Condition lasts, the Princess who lit the fire has at least a Known sympathetic connection with the character, and an Acquainted connection with the person he feels affection for.

**Causes:** The Charm [Flame in the Heart](#).

**Resolution:** The flame is used to ignite something material; or someone uses the flame to gain the Swooning Condition. Either way, the flame extinguishes itself.

## *Hypersensitive (persistent)*

For the Hopeful, courage in the face of Darkness is basic to their powers; if it falters, so might their magic. All Princesses suffer from [Sensitivity](#), but a few are unnerved by displays of cruelty. The Princess' Shadows hamper nearly all of her magic; every roll she makes to activate a Charm, and every roll to which she applies an Invocation, takes a penalty equal to her current Shadows dots. Transformation actions and regaining Wisps are penalized too, as with normal Sensitivity. Charms which work without an activation roll, and Practical Magic, aren't penalized.

**Causes:** A [Haunting](#); dramatically failing with [Unweaving](#) or a Performative [Living Image](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess checks her Sensitivity, and the roll fails.

**Beat:** The Princess suffers serious inconvenience because her magic fails her.

## *Indiscreet*

The Noble has been careless; evidence of her secret identity exists, which she can't retrieve or deny, waiting for a savvy investigator to discover. Levels in this condition add to the Storyteller's dice pool when the Noble risks exposure, as explained in [The Need for Discretion](#). Removing the last level ends the Condition without resolving it.

**Causes:** The Noble risks exposing her secret identity, and loses or declines the contested roll.

**Resolution:** Someone puts the evidence together, and realizes what the Noble is. Replace Indiscreet with [Blackmailed](#), [Broken Circle](#), [Nemesis](#) or another persistent Condition approved by the Storyteller.

## *Insightful*

The character has picked up a key bit of knowledge that will unlock a problem for him, and make one of his tasks a great deal easier. He may resolve the Condition to reroll his dice pool for an action related to a single topic after seeing the results; he must accept the second roll. The roll affected may be any relevant Skill roll, except for combat actions.

**Causes:** The Charm [Sea-Foam's Touch](#).

**Resolution:** The character takes advantage of the information he gleaned, altering his roll as described above.

## *Legal Minor (persistent)*

The character is not considered to be a responsible adult, generally because she hasn't reached the age of majority. She has parents, other relatives or guardians who are responsible for her, pay her expenses, and hold her to a standard of behavior. In addition, there are a number of things adults may legally do which she may not - in most US jurisdictions, for instance, minors may not buy liquor, drive or sign contracts, and must attend school.

If you take this Condition for your character, you and the Storyteller should work out what your character's guardians expect from her before play begins. Parents will, as a rule, set rules designed to keep their children away from danger, and help them grow into responsible adults; but parents' judgments on what is dangerous, what constitutes responsibility, and how far their child has grown vary widely.

Storytellers should not allow characters to take this Condition if all the PCs are underage (as can easily happen in a Princess chronicle) as in such games the legal problems of minors are part of the campaign background. It's mainly appropriate when some characters are underage and others aren't. (Of course Storytellers are free to award Beats as if all the PCs have this Condition in a chronicle set in high school!)

**Causes:** Being born recently; being judged incompetent by a court.

**Resolution:** The character attains the age of legal adulthood.

**Beat:** The character does something prohibited to minors, or violates the standard laid down by her guardians, and her transgression becomes known to the relevant authority. (A breach the character gets away with doesn't give her a Beat; a Beat is awarded only if her guardians learn of it and respond, or the police do, when the action breaks the law.) Alternately, an adult stops the character from doing an important task because of her youth.

## *Loathing*

The character is filled with hatred for someone or something; he wants to see them destroyed or dead. Any Composure or Resolve rolls to resist the temptation to do the hated object harm take a -2 penalty. A hated person has a -2 penalty on any Social rolls against the character. Also, any rolls to induce the character to harm the hated object achieve an exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

**Causes:** The Charm [Freed By Burning Hate](#).

**Resolution:** The character reaches a breaking point because of an attempt to harm the object of his hatred.

## *Maddened*

Provoked by a tainting, the Princess falls into a berserk fury and thinks of nothing but the death of the one responsible. When facing that person, she must make all-out attacks each turn; to do otherwise she must spend a Willpower point. The Princess is also prone to lashing out when in danger or under stress; she must spend a Willpower point to take a nonviolent action in such situations.

**Causes:** Choosing catharsis during a [Haunting](#); the Terrifying upgrade to [Valiant Mind](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess reaches a breaking point because she resorted to violence; or she achieves an exceptional success against the object of her fury.

## *Magicless*

The Princess is so profoundly shocked by a tainting that she cannot reach the Light at all. She must return to mundane form when she first gains the Condition, and may not transform or spend Wisps until the Condition resolves.

**Causes:** Choosing catharsis during a [Haunting](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess gains a new Shadows dot from a Haunting.

## *Manic*

The character is awash with energy and cannot sit still. He takes a -2 penalty to all rolls to resist impulsive behavior or temptation; the penalty increases to -5 when the impulse aligns with his Vice. His attention to a task is easily diverted; in any extended action, his maximum number of rolls drops by two.

**Causes:** Failing a [compromise](#) roll while [Unbalanced](#); Ambassadors to the [Ocean](#) suffer from this Condition daily.

**Resolution:** The character suffers a significant drawback because he couldn't resist acting.

## *Misled*

The character has been persuaded to believe something that isn't actually true. When he is taking an action where the false belief could be relevant, you may choose to fail the roll and resolve this Condition. If the character discovers clear evidence that his belief is false, you may choose to shed the Condition without resolving it.

**Causes:** Dramatic failures on several [Learn](#) Charms.

**Resolution:** The character acts on his false belief and fails a roll as described.

## *Narcissist (persistent)*

The character is so strongly convinced of her superiority to her fellows that she regards them with scorn, or insists on being at the focus of every social event she participates in. As a result she creates unpleasant scenes everywhere she goes, or offends those she meets by unconscious arrogance. (Just how the social problems manifest is up to the player.) The Storyteller has a pool of dice equal to 10 – (character's Integrity). Once per chapter, the Storyteller can apply those dice as a negative modifier to any Social roll made for the character.

**Causes:** Dramatically failing a [compromise](#) roll, especially when [Unbalanced](#).

**Resolution:** The character regains a dot of Integrity, loses another dot of Integrity, or achieves an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The character fails a roll because of this Condition.



## *Nemesis (persistent)*

The Noble has a personal enemy - probably, though not necessarily, a creature of Darkness - who knows enough about her social connections to assault them. This doesn't mean the enemy knows who she is (though he may) but that he knows certain places or people are important for her, and if they suffer she will be weakened. Fortunately, he hasn't shared his knowledge with anyone else, wanting to keep the hunt to himself.

**Causes:** Resolving the [Indiscreet](#) Condition.

**Resolution:** The Noble brings down her nemesis, stripping him of any power to harm.

**Beat:** The nemesis finds and attacks the Noble; he mounts an attack on someone or something precious to her, and she acts to defend them.

## *Nervous*

Something is *watching* the character, something that does *not* approve of what he's up to ... or at least he thinks so. He has a hard time concentrating, and loses his cool with little provocation. He subtracts 1 die from Wits and Composure dice pools (but not from derived traits based on the Attributes) and when taking an extended action his maximum number of rolls is reduced by 1.

**Causes:** The Charm [Hallowed Hearth](#); dramatically failing with [Bejewelled Visage](#) or [Read the Wind](#).

**Resolution:** The character abandons the course of action that led to his gaining the Condition.

## *Overconfident*

The character rushes in where angels fear to tread. She has complete confidence in her ability to overcome any challenge fate puts in her way, and is ready to take on near-impossible tasks without the least hesitation.

**Causes:** Failing a [compromise](#) roll, especially when [Unbalanced](#); dramatically failing with [For the First Time](#).

**Resolution:** The character's blithe self-confidence leads her into a situation she can't deal with, and someone else has to rescue her or bail her out. The character must receive help from another person, who sacrifices significant time or resources to provide it, to resolve the Condition.

## *Reckless*

The Princess throws herself into danger with little regard for her safety. Her Defense is halved.

**Causes:** The Charm [Their Blood Cries Out](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess takes enough bashing damage to suffer wound penalties, lethal damage exceeding her Stamina, or any aggravated damage.

## *Shield of Innocence*

The character has an assurance that even the worst pains and terrors of the World of Darkness will pass; that good, not evil, is the first principle of the world. Therefore, when he confronts such pains or terrors, he is steadfast. While this Condition lasts the character adds a bonus to all breaking point rolls not caused by his own actions. In addition, if he has a Condition that resolves when he loses Integrity, the effects of that Condition are suppressed until this Condition ends.

If the character takes an action that is a breaking point for him, the Condition ends immediately without resolving.

**Causes:** The Charm [Don't Stop Believing](#).

**Resolution:** The character may resolve the Condition to get an automatic exceptional success on a breaking point roll, if the breaking point is not caused by his own actions.



## *Sight of the Pit*

The character has nearly been corrupted by a [Tainted area](#), but came through it with nothing more than a true perception of its evil.

**Causes:** Exposure to a [Tainted area](#).

**Resolution:** If the character is trying to purify the area where he gained the Condition, he may resolve it to improve his impression for the attempt by one step.

## *Soul Shocked*

The character has “died” while on a journey outside his physical body. On gaining this Condition, roll the character’s current Willpower *points* (not dots), unless he has none left; don’t apply 10-again to the roll. He keeps 1 Willpower per success and loses all the rest.

Until the Condition resolves, the character does not regain Willpower from Virtue, Vice, or equivalent traits. He still regains Willpower from rest, and any other sources of Willpower.

**Causes:** “Dying” while in the [Dreamlands](#).

**Resolution:** Regaining full Willpower.

## *Stolen Sight*

The character can see through the eyes of another person. As an instant action (which resolves the Condition) he closes one or both eyes, and through the closed eye(s) sees what the Condition’s target does at that moment, until he next opens his eye(s) or the end of the scene (whichever comes first.) The character gains the Blinded Tilt [CofD 281] while he looks through another’s eyes.

**Causes:** The Caligo [Such Pretty Eyes, I Think I’ll Keep Them](#).

**Resolution:** The character looks through the target’s eyes.

## *Stumbling (persistent)*

The character has lost confidence in his abilities and talents. Choose a Skill the character knows; all actions he takes based on that Skill take a -3 penalty. The Condition can be taken multiple times, once for each Skill.

**Causes:** The Caligo [Handful of Dust](#); dramatically failing with [Sea-Foam’s Touch](#), [Mercury’s Blessing](#) or [Living Index](#).

**Resolution:** When a supernatural power created the Condition, the power’s expiration resolves it. Otherwise, the character regains a dot of Integrity, loses another dot of Integrity, or achieves an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The character fails a roll because of this Condition.

## *Tainted (persistent)*

This Condition may be taken multiple times. The character has been partly corrupted by exposure to a Tainted area. Each instance of the Condition adds a +1 bonus to corruption checks against him. For each three days the character stays away from Tainted areas and does not regain Willpower from his Vice, one instance of the Condition ends without resolving. If the character ever has more instances in the Condition than his Integrity, all instances end without resolving and the character becomes one of the [Darkened](#).

The touch of jade is mildly irritating to the character. This has no mechanical effect, and the character may not even notice it consciously, but an attentive observer might take note of his aversion to handling the gemstone.

**Causes:** Exposure to a [Tainted area](#); the [Capitation Charm](#).

**Resolution:** A corruption check against the character is a dramatic failure.

**Beat:** A Tainted area makes a corruption check against the character.

## *Terrified*

The character is frightened by something to the point of losing rational thought. He must flee the source of his fear as quickly as possible when it is present, ignoring all other considerations (including the safety of their belongings, friends, and allies). If something blocks his way he must attempt to bypass it, even resorting to violence. If the source of the fear itself stands in his way he may not act against it, or approach in any way, collapsing in terror if cornered.

This Condition may be repressed for one turn by spending a point of Willpower.

**Causes:** The Charms [The Finest Hour](#), [the Last Hour](#), [Gold Abhors Ebon](#), [Ofuda](#), [I am Become Light](#); the Umbra [Scuttling Spider's Sense](#); the Caligo [Bogeyman](#); the Reprisal [Taken Revelation](#).

**Resolution:** The character escapes from the source of his fear, and does not return during the current scene.

## *Tranced (persistent)*

The character falls into a deep trance whenever exposed to a specific trigger event, in which anything said in his hearing that he can plausibly interpret as an order or a request becomes an overriding imperative. The character remains primed for orders for a number of turns equal to 10 - his Resolve; if he receives no orders in that time the trance ends, otherwise it continues as long as it takes for him to carry out the order. If obeying the order or request would be a breaking point for the character, he makes the roll; failing the roll means he carries out the order, while success breaks the trance. The character does not lose Integrity or suffer any other consequences from the breaking point. The character forgets his own actions after he has finished; only supernatural powers can restore his memory.

Each time the character enters a trance, he rolls Resolve + Composure - the Condition's level.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Condition's level increases by 1.

**Failure:** The Condition's level is unchanged.

**Success:** The Condition's level decreases by 1.

**Exceptional Success:** The Condition's level decreases by 2.

**Causes:** The Charm [No Choice, No Hope](#); the Caligo [Oblivion's Sign](#).

**Resolution:** The Condition's level reaches or passes 0.

**Beat:** The character hears and obeys an order while in a trance.

## *Unbalanced*

The Princess' psyche is in a fragile state, and the slightest stress placed on it may well break her. Her effective Belief is reduced by her dots in the Specchio Invocation (to a minimum of 1) for the purpose of modifying her breaking point rolls. The Conditions gained from compromises met in this state of mind are generally not the usual ones for the Hopeful - [Drama Queen](#), [Manic](#), [Overconfident](#) and [Narcissist](#) are more likely.

**Causes:** Applying the [Specchio](#) Invocation.

**Resolution:** The Princess loses or regains a dot of Belief, or achieves an exceptional success on a breaking point roll. If she gets a full night's rest, the Condition ends without resolving.

## *Vice-Ridden (persistent)*

The character is tempted to commit a new category of sins. He gains a second Vice, as if he had the Vice-Ridden Merit [CofD 46]. If the character does not lose Integrity before the next sunrise, the Condition expires then; however, if he *does* lose Integrity before then the Condition becomes permanent until resolved.

**Causes:** The Umbra [Tainted Allure of Vice](#); the Caligo [Drink Pain Like Wine](#).

**Resolution:** The character regains Willpower from his Virtue; this restores him to his true character. Alternately, the character loses or gains a dot of Integrity, or gets an exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

**Beat:** The character creates a problem for himself or his group by acting according to the Condition's Vice.

## *Waiting Charm*

The subject (a character or object) has a Charm on it, waiting to be activated. The suspended Charm takes effect when the Condition is resolved. If the Condition ends without resolving the suspended Charm dissipates. Resolving the Condition does *not* grant a Beat to the subject.

Until the Condition resolves, the subject's presence will trigger Unseen Sense (Light).

**Causes:** The Charms [Living Image](#) and [Questing Mind](#).

**Resolution:** The Princess using the Charms defines a situation in which the Condition resolves.

## *Walking Stain (persistent)*

The character's mystical abilities have been stained by exposure to the Darkness. All supernatural abilities she may exhibit, including Practical Magic, Echoes, Charms, Transformation, etc. as well as Disciplines, spells, Gifts and any non-Radiant powers, become disgusting parodies of themselves. The character suffers a penalty on Social rolls with anyone who witnesses or is affected by her powers equal to her Supernatural Tolerance, and during social maneuvers she sets her impression level with all such people to Hostile. This effect stacks with all reactions that the character's powers would normally create in witnesses.

**Causes:** The Caligo [One of Us](#).

**Resolution:** The character loses a dot in his trait equivalent to Integrity, or exhausts all his supernatural fuel (Wisps, Vitae, Essence, Mana, etc.) The Condition ends without resolving after a week has passed.

**Beat:** Someone with whom the character has an existing relationship suspects or turns on him due to his stained state.

## *Phylactery Conditions*

Some of the Nobility suffer from unusual limits on their transformations, presumably because of quirks in their Blossoming. All of the following Conditions are persistent and may be taken at character creation, with the Storyteller's agreement. Like other persistent Conditions, they are resolved only with specific, impressive effort.

### *Assertive Past (persistent)*

The Princess's character has been shaped by her previous life, during the Kingdom or Long Night, as much as or more than her experiences in the present - to the point where she sometimes forgets who she is *now*. She might be desperately seeking the reincarnations of people she knew in the past, driven to complete a task left unfinished at her death, or prone to claim a status she once held that she lacks in the present. Princesses with this Condition are normally precocious, gaining transformed dots and Charms at a fast clip, but detached from mundane society and obsessed with goals alien to the people she meets.

When she reaches a breaking point, regardless of its result, the Princess regresses mentally, forgetting the present and pursuing what her past self desires. Her mundane Aspirations (but not her Vocations) are suspended, replaced by goals related to her previous life. When one of her Aspirations from the past has been fulfilled, the Princess recalls her present life and Aspirations.

A Princess with the [Onceborn](#) Merit cannot have this Condition - she has no past life to regress to.

**Causes:** A Princess's previous life.

**Resolution:** The Princess reconciles her present and her past, attaining a stable personality.

**Beat:** The Princess alienates someone, faces serious hardship or neglects an obligation while pursuing an Aspiration from her previous life.

## *Blatant Transformation (persistent)*

The Princess creates a spectacle when she changes from her mundane form. Any other character within sight will notice the process of her transformation, even if she transforms reflexively; flashes of light, loud martial music, and swirls of clothing and jewelry materializing around her make it obvious to all around her that she is a magical being. Going from one transformed state to another, switching pieces of Regalia or returning to mundane form don't have this problem - only the shift from mundane to transformed does.

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess reshapes her phylactery to tone down her transformation sequence.

**Beat:** Her transformation alerts an enemy to the Princess's presence or true capabilities.

## *Body Dysmorphia (persistent)*

For whatever reason the Princess does not feel comfortable in her mundane identity. To the Princess transformation is an escape, her perfected self is naturally free from whatever flaws she feels in her mundane body. The price of this freedom is how her mundane form feels even worse by comparison. The Princess has some form of trigger; it could be hearing an insult about her appearance, being obliged to act in a gender appropriate manner or failing a roll with a Skill she has Transformed dots in. When she encounters it she immediately seeks to escape the situation and go to a safe place to transform, remaining transformed for the remainder of the scene. The Princess may spend a point of Willpower to control herself; if she physically cannot leave she must spend the point of Willpower.

Princesses with this Condition often have trouble keeping their two identities apart. Many try to transfer their friendships and obligations to their Transformed self. They are also known to take risks to enjoy any alone time in their Transformed identity.

**Causes:** Social causes are common, usually in the teenage years. Other Princesses are transgender or otherwise born in the wrong body. A few developed the Condition from feelings of inadequacy without their Transformed Attributes and Skills.

**Resolution:** The Princess makes peace with the flaws of her mundane form, has them altered by surgery, or swears fealty to the Queen of [Mirrors](#). Mirrors' Practical Magic doesn't *fix* the Condition, but it relieves the Princess of the need to endure her mundane form.

**Beat:** The Princess walks away from an obligation to transform herself.

## *Embarrassing Phylactery (persistent)*

The Princess has a Phylactery which has an uplifting, even moral meaning to her personally but if presented in public causes nothing but trouble. This may be because the Princess is from an oppressed minority group and her Phylactery is a symbol of her people. It could be because her Phylactery has a different meaning to different cultures or because her Phylactery isn't appropriate for her age, social standing or gender.

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess moves to a different cultural area where its troublesome meaning is unknown, or reshapes her Phylactery into something less embarrassing.

**Beat:** Misconceptions about her Phylactery or an attempt to conceal it cause the Princess a significant hardship.

## *Heartfelt Vow (persistent)*

The Princess' Belief and magic rest on a great vow, which demands that she follow a specific code of conduct while acting as a champion of the Light. Her Charms fail to activate, or give no help to mundane actions, if the

result of a success would break her vow. Moreover, if the Princess does break the vow, she must immediately return to her mundane form and cannot transform for the rest of the scene.

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess undergoes a moral crisis, resolves it by abandoning her vow, and reshapes her Phylactery to match her new perspective.

**Beat:** The Princess suffers a significant setback due to keeping her vow.

## *Slow Transformation (persistent)*

For whatever reason, the Princess needs time to transform, roughly about five minutes. Her Phylactery might be a small bag that somehow contains her entire regalia, which she must change into as with any other clothes. She may simply hover and sparkle for five minutes before the transformation is complete.

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess reshapes her Phylactery to make it transform her quickly.

**Beat:** The Princess' slower Transformation causes her a significant hardship.

## *Truly Mundane (persistent)*

The Princess's connection to the Light is hampered while untransformed; in her mundane form she is no more than an ordinary human. A Princess with this Condition has no Practical Charms, and while in her mundane form she has no [Echo](#); she cannot raise an Echo, call on Practical Magic, use her Inner Light as Supernatural Tolerance, or spend Wisps for any reason other than to transform reflexively. On the other hand, powers that distinguish mundane from supernatural beings treat her as mundane when she's in her mundane form - for instance, [Magical Eyes](#) will not mark her as supernatural.

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess reshapes her Phylactery to have a looser hold on her powers. When resolving the Condition, she immediately selects as many Practical Charms as she qualifies for based on her Inner Light.

**Beat:** The Princess risks discovery to use her powers, or falls prey to a hostile supernatural effect while in her mundane form.

## *Two Hearts, One Soul (persistent)*

There is nothing the Light cherishes more than a true bond between people, but sometimes the Light itself Blossoms through such a bond. In rare cases two Princesses are connected at the most fundamental level. They Blossom side by side and they share a bond closer than sisters, closer than lovers.

A Princess with this Condition needs another Princess to transform. She and her partner must invoke their transformations together while standing within a few feet of each other. She has no problem using other abilities, such as Practical Magic and Charms, without her partner; only transformations need the partner's presence. (In every known example of a Princess with this Condition, the partner has it as well, and the pair transform together.)

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess reshapes her Phylactery to weaken the bond it has with the other Princess.

**Beat:** The Princess is separated from her partner and needs to transform.

## *Unstable Transformation (persistent)*

The Princess doesn't have full control over her transformations. Meeting with a specific trigger while transformed makes her lose control, and she reverts to mundane form. The trigger must be an event not under the

Princess' control, though it shouldn't be frequent. (A few examples: being splashed with hot water, hearing a specific nonsense phrase.) After losing control the Princess can't transform again during the current scene.

**Causes:** A Princess's Blossoming.

**Resolution:** The Princess reshapes her Phylactery to make her transformations controllable.

**Beat:** The Princess gets into difficulties due to involuntarily returning to her mundane form.

## *Tilts and Environmental Conditions*

### *Broken Ground*

The ground in the area is cluttered with heavy or sharp objects (large rocks, empty crates, glass shards, etc.) that force anyone moving through it to take care where they step. Those in the area must move at half Speed or less; anyone going faster than that takes 1 point of bashing damage each turn from tripping over something, barking a shin, or similar misadventure.

**Causing the Tilt:** The [Earthquake](#) Charm creates the Tilt in its area of effect. So does a straightforward jumble of stuff scattered on the floor.

**Ending the Tilt:** Natural occurrences of the Tilt can be removed by cleaning up the mess.

### *Burning*

The character is on fire. He takes automatic damage each turn equal to the fire's Intensity + 1 [CofD 98] and also suffers the effects of the Blinded Tilt [CofD 280].

**Causing the Tilt:** Spending more than a turn unprotected in a blaze; being caught in an incendiary [explosive's](#) blast.

**Ending the Tilt:** Fires can be smothered by dousing oneself in water, using a fire extinguisher, rolling on the ground or beating with rugs; each turn smothering a fire reduces its Intensity by 1, and the fire is extinguished when its Intensity reaches 0.

### *Consecrated*

The subject of this Condition - normally a location - has been blessed by one of the Hopeful and dedicated to the Light. In itself this does nothing, but several Charms benefit from being tied to the Condition.

**Causing the Condition:** The [Consecrate](#) Charm creates this Condition on a location. Upgrades to that Charm change the Condition's effects; note which were applied.

**Ending the Condition:** When the Charm expires the Condition ends with it. This can happen naturally, because someone [Tainted](#) the location, or because the last symbol of the consecrator was removed.

### *Drowning*

The character's breath has run out while he's swimming, and his lungs are filling with water. He takes one point of bashing damage each turn as loss of oxygen takes its toll.

**Causing the Tilt:** Prolonged immersion in water, or being deprived of air in general.

**Ending the Tilt:** Reaching a source of air and removing any liquid present in the lungs.

### *Earworm*

A song is running through the character's head, driving him to distraction. He cannot take extended actions (if he is in progress with one, it automatically fails) and takes a -1 penalty to all actions that involve perception,

concentration and precision. This penalty rises by -1 for each turn the character attempts such an action, to a maximum of -5.

Once a character has reached the maximum penalty, failing an action that the Tilt penalizes replaces it with Insensate [CofD 285]; the character does nothing but hum the tune in his head.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Goosedown Lullaby](#) can impose this Tilt.

**Ending the Tilt:** If not replaced by Insensate, the Tilt wears off at the end of the scene, bringing the character back to alertness.

## *Enervating Hex*

The object with this Condition drains Willpower from those who approach it. A character unfortunate enough to remain within five yards of the object for 10 minutes rolls Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance vs. the Shadows of the person who prepared the Hex. If he loses the contest, the Hex steals a point of Willpower from him. The stolen Willpower is trapped within the Hex, and any character with [Enervation](#) (or another power that steals Willpower) may use that power on the Hexed object to remove the stolen points. The Hex can store Willpower points up to a level specified when the Condition was imposed; it goes dormant when filled, but re-activates if Willpower is removed.

Touching the object triggers Sensitivity in characters who have it.

**Causing the Condition:** The [Enervating Hex](#) Caligo creates the Hex on an object.

**Ending the Condition:** The object is destroyed, or touches a piece of jade. If the Hex is Fragile, resolving Fragile also removes the Hex.

## *Extreme Taint*

The area has been blighted by the life-draining quality of the Dark World. Normal characters can't heal bashing damage — the extreme temperature deals damage at the same rate they heal it. Supernatural beings and characters who heal faster than normal instead halve their normal healing rate. For every hour that a character is continuously affected by this Tilt, he accrues a -1 penalty to all rolls. When that penalty hits -5, he instead suffers a point of lethal damage per hour.

**Causing the Tilt:** The [Hope's Eclipse](#) Caligo; the whole [Dark World](#) has the Tilt, save for images of Tainted areas.

**Ending the Tilt:** Leaving the blighted area is the only way to escape the Tilt's effects.

## *Fog*

The area is filled with dense vapor - usually fog or smoke - that obscures vision. Unless the target of the action is within arm's reach, all rolls based on vision take a -3 penalty.

**Causing the Tilt:** Except for supernatural powers (such as [Mist's Protection](#)) the Tilt is a result of normal weather conditions.

**Ending the Tilt:** Without supernatural powers, characters cannot disperse a fog.

## *Fortunate, Greatly Fortunate, Perfected*

The subject of these Tilts (which may be a person or a piece of equipment) has been enchanted with a dollop of good fortune. A number of rolls made by the person, or the one using the equipment, gain a quality:

- Fortunate: 9-again
- Greatly Fortunate: 8-again
- Perfected: rote



No person or object can have two of these three Tilts at the same time.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Touch of Fortune](#) gives the Tilts to a person; [Friendly Gremlin](#) gives them to machinery.

**Ending the Tilt:** The Tilts fade at the end of the scene. Any chances to roll not used by then are lost. The Tilts also end if the full count of enhanced rolls have been made.

## *Jury-Rigged*

The piece of equipment with this Condition has been temporarily repaired by magic. It is fully functional and works without penalty for its intended purpose, but the repairs are held together by spit, tape and enchantment and that stuff won't last. When the Condition ends, the equipment returns to the state of disrepair it was in before the magic touched it.

**Causing the Condition:** [Jury Rigger](#) creates this Condition.

**Ending the Condition:** The repairs will last indefinitely until someone uses the equipment, or damages it again. Even one point of structural damage ends the Condition. One scene or one hour of using the equipment also ends the Condition.

## *Listless*

The character has been hit by a draining attack that leaves him clumsy and slow-witted. All his rolls in combat take a penalty equal to the Tilt's level, and his Speed and static Defense are reduced by half the level, rounding down.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Dark Thoughts Consume](#) and being hit by a [Shadowblade](#) or a [Voidblast](#) can impose this Tilt.

**Ending the Tilt:** The Tilt wears off at the end of the scene. The character may spend 1 point of Willpower to ignore the penalties for 1 turn.

## *Lullaby*

A song is running through the character's head, making him drowsy and ready to sleep. Each *turn* counts as a six-hour period for the purpose of [fatigue](#); the character must roll to stay awake and takes cumulative penalties as if he had been awake and active for six hours per turn under the Tilt, plus the time since he really slept.

The Tilt does not produce true sleep; instead characters who fail to stay awake replace it with Insensate [CofD 285], sitting or lying down with closed eyes.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Goosedown Lullaby](#) imposes this Tilt.

**Ending the Tilt:** If not replaced by Insensate, the Tilt wears off at the end of the scene, bringing the character back to alertness.

## *Numbed*

The character's ability to feel pain has been removed. While under this Tilt he ignores all wound penalties, and doesn't fall unconscious when all his boxes are filled with bashing damage. In addition, powers that function solely by causing pain automatically fail against the character, and any interrogation rolls that use torture not only lose the bonus that it would apply, but instead take a penalty equal to his Composure. (A person who blithely ignores physical torture is freaky enough to put even the best interrogator off balance).

However, the character is likely not to notice when he's injured, either by accident or in battle. If he takes bashing damage, he rolls the amount of damage done as a dice pool reflexively to notice the cause; if he takes lethal damage, he rolls double the amount of damage to notice its cause. Aggravated damage is serious enough that the character can't fail to notice it.

**Causing the Tilt:** The Charm [Only a Flesh Wound](#); a Consul to Death's [Euthanasia](#) Privilege.



**Ending the Tilt:** When supernaturally imposed, the Tilt wears off at the end of the scene.

## *Phantom Damage*

The character is suffering frightful pain from an illusionary wound. Each level in the Tilt fills one box in the character's Health track with an illusion of damage (we suggest marking it as a dot.) The character suffers wound penalties from this "damage" if it goes into the last three boxes, and must check their Stamina to remain conscious if it fills the last box.

However, when the Tilt ends all phantom damage "heals" instantly. Further, phantom damage does not upgrade any damage type, including itself, and if the character takes real damage when his track is full, that damage replaces phantom damage first.

**Causing the Tilt:** The Charms [Know My Pain](#), [Strike False](#) and [Goosedown Lullaby](#); dramatic failure with [Only a Flesh Wound](#).

**Ending the Tilt:** The Tilt wears off at the end of the scene. Phantom damage can also be healed magically, or mitigated as it's inflicted by targets who have that ability.

## *Poor Light*

Dim illumination, strobes, or flickering lights make it difficult to track movement and see clearly. Affected characters suffer a -2 penalty to vision-based Perception rolls, including ranged combat; this stacks with range penalties.

**Causing the Tilt:** The [Hope's Eclipse](#) Caligo; inadequate light sources.

**Ending the Tilt:** When natural, bringing better lights into the area. When supernaturally caused, the effect must expire.

## *Reflected*

The area under this Tilt confuses the sense of direction. People go left when they mean to go right; which way is "up" is skewed, inverted, or impossible to tell. Being here feels like standing within a painting by Escher. All characters in the affected area take a -2 penalty to Physical actions and to their Defense, due to the unexpected directions of their movements.

**Causing the Condition:** The [Reverse Ideology](#) Charm.

**Ending the Condition:** Expiration of the Charm that created the Tilt.

## *Salted Wound*

The character has been subjected to a curse that blocks healing magic. Any supernatural power that normally heals damage cannot do more for him than downgrade lethal or aggravated damage to bashing damage; any bashing damage he has must be healed naturally, by the passage of time and medical attention. For the purposes of this Tilt, any innate self-healing ability of a supernatural being (e.g. vampires burning Vitae, werewolf regeneration) counts as natural healing and is not blocked.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Salted Wounds](#) imposes the Tilt on its target.

**Ending the Tilt:** The Charm's effect is linked to one of the character's Health boxes. When that Health box is completely clear of damage, the Tilt expires.

## *Shadow-Worked*

Each level of this Condition gives one of the following benefits to an object.

- Remove the penalty for using the object as an improvised weapon (if it isn't designed as a weapon.)

- Add 1 to the object's Damage (maximum of the character's Shadows.)
- Decrease the object's Initiative penalty and the minimum Strength to wield it by 1, to a minimum of -0.
- Add 1 point of Armor Piercing to the object (maximum of 3.)
- Give attacks with the object the 9-again quality.
- Give the object the Concealed or Stun quality [CofD 269]
- Anyone damaged by the object gains the [Listless](#) Tilt, at a level equal to half the character's Shadows (rounding up.)

**Causing the Condition:** [Shadowblade](#) creates this Condition.

**Ending the Condition:** The object is destroyed, or touches a piece of jade. A weapon made of Taint and shadow dissolves when the Condition ends.

## *Silenced*

The character or object cannot speak or make any other sound; she can walk over ground littered with twigs and leaves or open a squeaky door without being heard. Things the character touches remain silent only while she is touching them, so she can still make noise indirectly. For example, if she bumps into a table with a vase on it, her impact makes no noise but the table's scrape against the floor might, and if the vase falls over it *will* make noise.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Voice-Eating Hunger](#) and the Quiet upgrade to [Unseen Traveller](#) impose this Tilt.

**Ending the Tilt:** The power that created the Tilt expires.

## *Strip-Mined*

Someone touched by the Darkness is stealing the virtue out of the area for his own profit. Each time the character who imposed this Condition causes the area to gain Taint - either by his own hands, or getting others to taint it for him - he acquires a valuable object that can be easily sold; the object is effectively cash [CofD 277] with an Availability rating equal to the area's Size. The Storyteller should connect the object in some way to the damage the character did: metal fittings ripped from an old house, toxic runoff from a secret industrial process, drug precursors in a tortured animal's organs, are all appropriate.

**Causing the Condition:** The Caligo [Blood Diamonds](#).

**Ending the Condition:** The character doesn't collect any valuables from the area for a full month.

## *Studied Fighting*

The Princess understands her current opponent's fighting style well enough to predict, and eventually influence, what he will do in the field. For each turn in which she attacks the character she has studied, or in which he attacks her, her attack gains a cumulative +1 bonus die - that is, +1 on the first turn, +2 on the second, +3 on the third, and so on. The bonus rises by at most +1 in one turn, and is unchanged if neither attacks the other. The Princess also adds the bonus to her Defense (or her Dodge pool after doubling) against attacks from the studied character.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Refutation in Arms](#) creates this Tilt.

**Ending the Tilt:** The Tilt ends when the Charm activation expires, at the scene's end or when the Princess activates it on another target.

## *Swarm*

Animals of Size 1 are generally best represented by swarms, flocks and other groupings of the animals. Swarms are measured by their radius in yards. A swarm inflicts one point of bashing damage to anyone within

its radius. A swarm can inflict more damage by condensing. Every time the swarm condenses to cover half of its full area, it inflicts one additional point of damage per turn. Therefore, a swarm of eight yards in radius inflicts two bashing damage per turn if it constricts down to a four-yard radius, three bashing if it halves that again to a two-yard radius, and four bashing damage per turn if it condensed itself down to a one-yard radius. Though condensing doesn't usually happen all that often in nature (save in the case of creatures such as killer bees), it is an easy enough thing for a being with supernatural powers to command them to do so.

Armor is effective against a swarm only if it covers one's full body, but even then it provides only half its rating. In addition, targets are distracted by the swarm, suffering – 2 dice on all rolls while they are within the radius, even if they're not specifically attacked.

**Causing the Tilt:** [Soothe the Savage Breast](#) can cause this Tilt with an upgrade, and [Spray of Embers](#) causes a variation of it. The Tilt can occur naturally if someone disturbs a nest of bees.

**Ending the Tilt:** The swarm cannot be attacked with fists, clubs, swords or guns. Only area-affect attacks such as a torch affect it. Each point of damage inflicted by a flame or other applicable attack halves the swarm's size. Once the swarm is reduced below a one-yard radius, either all insects are dead or the few remaining disperse.

## *Tangled*

The character has been caught in a net or tangle of strands that restricts his movements. While he can still move, his Speed and Defense are both halved, and he takes -2 on all Physical actions.

**Causing the Tilt:** Having limbs wrapped up (but not tied) with ropes will inflict this Tilt. The thicket created by [Hedge Magic](#) also inflicts it.

**Ending the Tilt:** Unwrapping or cutting the strands will remove the Tilt, though that takes an instant action.

## *Tax-Farmed*

A Princess (usually from the court of Tears) is levying a tax of Wisps on the area with this Condition. After spending a scene or hour in the area, the Noble who made the Condition may extract Wisps from it as an instant action. The dice pool for this action is Inner Light + Politics; if the area is [Tainted](#), subtract its Severity from the pool, and if it's [Blessed](#) add its Beauty to the pool. The Princess may do this at most once a session, or once a day, whichever is longer. The Princess can also force the area to yield a bounty of Wisps, getting an automatic exceptional success on the extraction roll; doing so ends the Condition.

**Dramatic Failure:** The Princess' extraction digs too deeply. She gains no Wisps and triggers her Sensitivity, adding +2 to the pool.

**Failure:** The Princess gets no Wisps out of the area.

**Success:** The Princess extracts a number of Wisps from the area equal to its rating as a Sanctuary, or enough to fill her pool, whichever is less.

**Exceptional Success:** The Princess extracts Wisps equal to the area's rating plus her Lacrima.

Taking the beauty and hope of an area away gives the Darkness a chance to claim it. The Storyteller rolls a dice pool equal to the Wisps extracted. Each success on this roll adds 1 point of Taint to the area; this can destroy Blessings, create new curses, or expand an existing Tainted area's Size, as the Storyteller sees fit. If this occurs the Princess reaches a breaking point with a penalty equal to the points of Taint she added to the area.

**Causing the Condition:** [Publican](#) imposes this Condition on an area.

**Ending the Condition:** The Princess who created the Condition forces an exceptional success when extracting Wisps.

## *Trusting*

The character feels a bond of fellowship with everybody; he accepts friendly overtures without suspicion. Anyone beginning a social maneuver on the character can accept a Condition to open two Doors without rolling,

as if they had the Sympathetic Merit [CofD 55]; a character who actually has that Merit also raises their impression by one step when using it.

**Causing the Tilt:** The Charm [Sweet Fragrance](#).

**Ending the Tilt:** The perfume from the Charm, and its influence, fade when the current scene ends.

# Appendix C: Additional Rules

The rules in this section are not specific to *Princess: the Hopeful*. They apply to mundane characters in situations the *Chronicles of Darkness* book doesn't cover. Certain powers of the Hopeful use, and modify, these rules, so we have collected them here for ease of reference.

## Athletic Feats

**Climbing:** Strength + Athletics. The character climbs 10 feet (3 meters) on success, or 20 feet on an exceptional success; on a dramatic failure he falls. Characters can climb carefully as an extended action, taking 1 minute/roll; the threshold is 1 success for each 10 feet of distance to climb.

**Jumping:** Strength + Athletics. The character jumps one foot upward or one yard horizontally for each success rolled. A running start gives an equipment bonus of +1 for each yard available. Characters can roll Wits + Athletics reflexively to measure the distance needed for a successful broad jump.

**Lifting/Pushing:** Characters can carry 25 pounds (~10 kg) per Strength dot without being encumbered; each increment of 25 pounds over that limit decreases Speed by 1 and imposes a penalty of -1 to Physical actions. A character can push twice the weight he can carry, or 10 times that when friction is minimal. To shift heavier weights, a character rolls Strength + Stamina; successes are added to his effective Strength.

**Swimming:** Dexterity + Athletics, for difficult maneuvers. Characters move at their Speed in feet, not yards, each turn when swimming (one-third their normal Speed) if they know how - anyone with Athletics • does. Going underwater requires holding one's breath, a reflexive Stamina + Composure roll; each success gives the character 1 turn during combat or 30 seconds elsewhere. After that the character takes the [Drowning](#) Tilt.

## Deprivation

A character can survive a number of days equal to his Stamina without water. At that point, and each day thereafter, he takes one point of bashing damage. A character can survive a number of days equal to his Stamina + Resolve without food. At that point, and each day thereafter, he takes one point of bashing damage. These effects stack. Damage from deprivation does not heal until the character has continuous access to the food or water he lacked.

## Explosives

Explosives inflict damage over an area. They are not normally used to attack a single person, but to destroy groups of people or large objects. Thus they have special traits.

**Blast Area:** The diameter of the main explosion. Explosives inflict damage in three bands: ground zero, the primary blast and the secondary blast. Ground zero is the explosive itself and anyone on top of it. The primary blast area is a circle with the listed diameter in yards. The secondary blast area is a circle with twice the listed diameter.

**Damage:** The basic amount of damage done. Everything caught in the explosion takes this amount of automatic damage, of the type appropriate for the band they're in: aggravated at ground zero, lethal in the primary blast, bashing in the secondary blast.

**Force:** Explosions inflict additional damage based on their Force. Roll Force as a dice pool; add the successes to the damage done to those caught in the blast. In addition, if any successes appear, add the Damage rating again to the damage done. (Yes, if the Force roll succeeds, the explosion's damage is at least doubled.)

All explosions inflict the Deafened Tilt [CofD 281] in both ears on characters caught in the blast. An incendiary explosion inflicts the [Burning](#) Tilt on characters or objects that take damage.

Mundane ballistic armor protects the wearer from explosions; it applies half its ballistic Armor rating, rounding down, to the damage, but none of its general rating. Supernatural armor applies in full. If a character

is in cover [CofD 92] the cover's Durability reduces the explosive damage as it does to damage from firearms. A character who is at least partially concealed or has dropped prone reduces the explosive damage by 1. Defense is useless against an explosion, and characters can't run for cover or drop prone to avoid one unless they can apply Defense against firearms.

## *Fatigue*

Characters can remain awake for up to 24 hours without too much trouble, but fatigue sets in past that point. At 24 hours, and each 6 hours after that, a character trying to stay awake must roll Stamina + Resolve. If he fails that roll he goes to sleep. If he succeeds, he stays awake, but he takes a cumulative -1 penalty to all his actions, including the roll to stay awake. Physically demanding actions can increase a fatigue penalty by -1 to -3. The longest anyone can go without sleep is a number of days equal to the lower of Stamina or Resolve.

## *Size Changes*

Characters of unusual size, or who can drastically alter their size, modify several other traits from the human baseline. Modified Attributes are never reduced below 1, but they may exceed the Attribute cap. All changes here apply on top of the recalculated values from derived traits - Health is always current Size + Stamina, and changes when Size changes.

Size	Strength	Other Modifiers
1	-3	+3 Dexterity, -3 Speed, +4 when hiding or avoiding notice, +2 when jumping or climbing
2	-2	+2 Dexterity, -2 Speed, +3 when hiding or avoiding notice, +2 when jumping or climbing
3	-1	+1 Dexterity, -1 Speed, +2 when hiding or avoiding notice, +2 when jumping or climbing
4	+0	+2 when hiding or avoiding notice
5	+0	none
6	+0	none
7	+1	Iron Skin ••
8-9	+2	Iron Skin ••
10-12	+3	Iron Skin ••, Armor +1/+1
13-16	+4	Iron Skin ••••, Armor +2/+2
17-21	+5	Iron Skin ••••, Armor +3/+3

In addition, a significantly smaller character can more easily evade larger foes, and place attacks on them. In a combat between characters of different Size, subtract the smaller Size from the larger, then divide the result by 3, rounding down (0-2 = 0, 3-5 = 1, etc.) The smaller character raises his Defense against the larger, and the larger character reduces his Defense against the smaller, by that amount. (E.g. a Size 5 character gains +1 Defense against a Size 8 character, while the Size 8 character takes -1 to Defense.)

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