

The Brotherhood of the Rose and Cross

By Khelek

“Please do not stand in our way, my Brothers and I seek to make the world a safer place for all of His children, those who stand against us stand against the Light, and will be banished back to the Dark.”

The Order of the Rose and Cross, also known as the Rosicrucians (among many other names as well), are an Order of scholars and philosophers that dates at least back to the middle ages, and perhaps much farther. The Brotherhood claims to be the True and First Order of the Rose and Cross, and the heart of the larger Order. The history of the Order is so shrouded in mystery, lies, and speculation it is impossible to know the truth about its origins, goals and current membership. There are a number of lodges, cabals, and fraternities that use the name Rosicrucians, which, if any, are the True Order is impossible to tell from the outside, and maybe from the inside as well. What is generally accepted about the Order is that it is of European origin, and was initially a fraternal order of scholars who sought enlightenment and knowledge about the occult.

The Brotherhood claims that it was a Magi of the Guardians of the Veil, inspired by the voice of the Creator, that began the Order, he (and he has been given many names) began the Order of the Rose and Cross to collect information, archive discoveries, and judge the content of those discoveries; in extreme cases he charged the fledging Order to take destroy that knowledge which would not be healthy for the world to have. HE founded the Brotherhood to be the core of the Order, they would guide its mortal brethren, and be the last defense of Man. As the Order grew, the Brotherhood at its heart withdrew; they hid themselves from the very Order they created.

Today though the Brotherhood remains hidden among the Order they are seek to remain true to their Founder’s Goals. Though they are part of the great society of Magi, they see themselves as an organization that is beset upon on all sides. Even when they are known to other Magi they keep their association with the Order unspoken, and they keep their eyes open. Normally, the cells within the Brotherhood will meet in secret to pass along secrets and receive orders from the Brotherhoods leaders.

The Brotherhood seeks to protect mortal Man from the influence of evil and those inhuman forces that prey on the children of God. Though nominally part of the Guardians of the Veil they have many ties to the Mysterium as well, with members coming from both Orders. Their detractors say that their belief in God, and the Messiah have clouded their judgment, they claim it allows them to judge, where the rest of the Awakened Orders lack a moral framework to make any judgment at all. Other detractors claim that the Brotherhood of the Rose and the Cross is one of the great victories of the Seers of the Throne; that the Brotherhood’s guiding Angels are the Exarchs, and their “protection” of Man is nothing more than the fulfillment of the Seer’s Agenda; these detractors often face the quiet and subtle wrath of the Order and Brotherhood.

Though the Brotherhood has members of both the Guardians and Mysterium within its

ranks they track Status (Merit) separately. They have adapted a number of Rotes from both of their parent Orders, and supposedly are caretakers of some of the world's greatest and most terrible treasures. The Brothers often work alone, or in pairs when they believe the risk for temptation or corruption is great. The Brothers are very proud of their ancient traditions, and working grudgingly with the Alantean Orders, whom they feel has little in the way of moral guidance or personal accountability.

Though the Rosicrucian Order is a well known secret of the occult underground, it has successfully survived many witch hunts by hiding their libraries and membership from prying eyes, sometimes those eyes include even themselves. Most Brothers know only a few others, a few compatriots and their teacher. Any given brother may have a number of mortal retainers and associated that are part of the greater Order of the Rose and Cross who they trust with a little knowledge about the nature of the Brotherhood, the rest of humanity is seen as either too weak or too innocent to be exposed to Magic. Thus the Brothers seek to keep all mortals (except for a very select few) from knowing anything regarding the darkness that hangs just out of sight, and destroying that which might harm Man.

Many magi of other Orders believed that the leaders of the Brotherhood are actually Seers of the Throne, and that the "missions" that the Brothers perform are part of the Seer's goals to stop other magi for Awakening, and denying humanity its rightful inheritance.

Parent Orders: Guardians of the Veil and the Mysterium

Nickname: Brothers (among themselves for both men and women), Cultist (for those that don't respect their goals)

Appearance: Most of the Brothers dress well, feeling that their position in the world demands they seem respectable. Though some keep up with current fashion, most seem to lag a few months behind the times. They normally dress conservatively as most seem themselves as unordained men (and women) of God.

Background: The Order does not accept applicants; they seek their own new Brothers, though they take note of both Magi and Mortals whom seek knowledge and a mentality and faith that they believe follows the rigorous guidelines of the Brotherhood. Life long scholars and even priests are sought out. Faith in God (the Christian one) is very important, though rumors abound of Jews, Buddhists, Taoists, Hindus, and even Muslims inducted into the Brotherhood. The Order is willing to induct young Magi as apprentices and prepare them for the day they are ready to join the Brotherhood and learn the secrets of the Legacy that lays at the heart of the Rose and Cross.

Organization: The Brotherhood is very organized, and a number of rites and ceremonies are part of entrance and advancement. They have a rigid pyramid structure, and most organize themselves into cells of three to five. The cell structure is a carry over from the previous centuries, and many reformers believe that it is outdate, but the Primates of the

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Order tell them that it is necessary to protect their secrets. Many Brothers receive missions to perform, normally an investigation of an occult occurrence, some times to recover, find or destroy an object or place. The Brothers do not limit themselves to Magi Imbued objects only, and have collected a number of other objects that they think they might be able to use, and a number of others that no one should be allowed to use.

Suggested Oblations: The Brothers either use prayerful meditation or study (reading, note taking, and/or experimentation) as Oblations. Normally these Oblations require a minimum of an hour participation to regain Mana.

Concepts: Gentleman occultist, Holy Explorer/Archeologist, Investigator, Demon/Ghost Hunter, Modern Alchemist

Attainments

The Attainments of the Brotherhood of the Rose and Cross are focused around their search for Occult knowledge, the ability to manipulate artifacts, and their ability to destroy threats to both themselves and mankind.

1st: Subtle Mantle

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3, Prime 2, Occult2, Subterfuge 1

This Attainment calls forth a shield of Mana that surrounds the Brother, this shield follows the rules for the Magic Shield Spell (page 222), the Shield has a potency of the mage's Gnosis Rating, and offers an Armor point per Prime dot he possesses. This shield costs no Mana to from, but costs one Mana per activation after the first. The Mantle is Subtle as other Magi (and other supernaturals) cannot detect it without gaining a number of successes equal to the Brother's Composure + Subterfuge.

Optional Arcanum: Matter 2

Hallow

This art allows the Brother to place one or more Mana points into an object (these Mana are not retrievable); the Mana scours the object of all auras and empathic connections. This object subtly affects Mortals; they see it as a holy and blessed object (what ever their definition of holy). This effect lasts for one day per Mana point spent, during this time it cannot absorb empathic traces, nor have its aura affected. This causes the object to be resistant to weathering, but after the effect wears off the object becomes very fragile (-1 endurance per total Mana infused). The owner/holder of this item gains a +1 tool bonus to rolls for Social rolls against people to are religious, superstitious, or easily awed.

2nd: Disconjunction

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5, Prime 3, Craft 3

Many other Magi hate Disconjunction; with it the Brothers of the Order of the Rose and Cross may strip an Imbued Object of its Enchantment. They make a Intelligence + Occult

+ Prime Roll, diff of the Object's Merit Dots (equivalent), a successful roll strips the object of all enchantment, a failed roll cause the Brother a number of Bashing (resistant) wounds equal to the number of successes the test failed by. If the Brother has a Hallowed object they may temporary transfer the Imbued spells or effects onto the Hallowed Objects, and set their own triggers. The Hallowed object only holds the spells or effects while it remains Hallowed. The Brother much be touching the object to use Disconjunction, and must be holding the Hallowed object to put the effects into it. Willpower may be spent on the Disconjunction roll as normal.

Disconjunction rolls gains the following Bonuses and Penalties:

-3 The Brother does not have at least one dot in all the Arcanum that are required to create the effect. (ST discretion if this is not a Mage object).

-1 The Brother does not know any triggers that would be required to use the object.

+1 The Brother has sufficient Arcanum that he could create the effect.

+3 The Brother created the object himself.

Optional Arcanum: Space 2

The Longest Road

This allows use of the Spell: Follow Through (page 234), with the following condition; by spending a Willpower point the doorway will remain open for one scene for anybody or anything that may wish to use it, multiple Willpower points do not keep the gate open any longer.

3rd: A Shadow of His Presence

Prerequisites: Gnosis 7, Prime 4, Occult 4

The Brother calls the attention of the One True Lord, who fills the presence of the Magi with holy light. This effect cause the Brother to shine like a beacon in the darkness, and a number of targets equal to their Wits are struck by Celestial Fire (page 224), which attacks their Pattern (Resisted by Stamina + Gnosis/Primal Urge/Potency) and does Lethal wounds equal to a Intelligence + Occult + Prime Roll and divided among the possible targets as the Brother wishes. The Celestial Fire may strike targets in Twilight, if the Brother can sense them. This attainment may be used only once per Scene and is an instant action.

Optional Arcanum: Mind 3

Witness for My Brothers

Sometimes the only witness to the dark things that haunt the world is a lone Brother far from home. They may call upon their ties to Mortal Man to cause themselves to become a Disbeliever. Disbelief is automatically caused to any enchantment (other than their own) that they can perceive. The Brother is also considered a Mortal Witness for any Vulgar magic that occurs in his presence. This effect lasts for a Scene, and effects the Spells and Rotes of the Brother as well as all others. He/She is always aware of their own magic.

THE DEFIANT

by DementedElf

"Yeah? You and what army?"

History:

This Legacy first reared its head more than a century ago, as the Nameless stood apart and stubbornly looked on the world with modern eyes. The older orders tried to stamp them out, to wipe them away as though they were a stain on history, but they resisted. Out of their refusal to bend, their bloody-minded recalcitrance, was born a new shape for the soul. The founder is unknown, due to the close-mouthed nature of the Legacy, but it is speculated to have been a Mastigos who first forged their soul in this fashion. What is known is that the Defiant were the rebels, the guerillas, the cutters of red tape and refuters of authority. Not warriors to match the Arrow, nor spies to match the Guardians of the Veil, but often they succeeded through unorthodoxy, unpredictability and sheer bloody-mindedness. When the Seers came to the Nameless with honeyed words and subtle proposals, there were but a dozen of the Defiant, and their vote was unanimous. They had not bowed to the Atlantean orders. They would not kneel to the Exarchs. In the hundred years since, their numbers have grown, with the blessing of the Free Council, and they are often heard to rage against the "herd mentality" that humanity suffers under today, making of themselves sandbars and submerged rocks in the mainstream.

Philosophy:

New waves of rebelliousness in that mainstream, spawned of those who were young in the past handful of decades, gave the Defiant hope for this new generation, but they were to be disappointed. Those who declared themselves to be anti-establishment, to be rebels against modern society's gilded cage failed to understand. To live by the rules is to let them define your life. To break away, and deliberately live your life in defiance of those rules, is still allowing them to dictate your behavior. True rebellion consists of discarding the rules, ignoring them, and looking with an unbiased eye. Breaking rules because it's cool, or to be a "rebel" is just dropping you neatly into another stereotype. True rebellion is to throw away stereotype, and tell society to go fuck itself, as you forge your own path. Be the geek with the muscles. Be the scumbag who writes delicate poetry. See things as they are, not the way you've always been told they are. Ultimately, rebel against your past, and remake yourself with every step you take, into what you choose to be.

Parent Path or Order: Mastigos or Free Council.

Nickname: Mules

Appearance: The Defiant refuse to conform to fashion. Odd tattoos and piercings alongside Paisley suits, and bizarre color clashes are not uncommon. Then again, counter-culture is susceptible to being made fashionable, and Mules learn to see non-conformity as a state of mind, and can dress so drably as not to be noticed.

Organization: The Defiant are distrustful of hierarchies, and by nature resistant to authority. Such organization as they have consists of Mentors proving their power and wisdom to prospective apprentices, while said apprentices must earn the right to ask for instruction. A Mule who is respected by his soul brethren has earned that respect the hard way.

Background: Many of the Defiant walk the Mastigos Path. That hard road that leads through hell and back instills a fierce self-reliance in many Warlocks, who may have been drawn to that dark Path by willful natures in the first place. To now be told that they must toe the line and truckle to mages of orders who have made a nice job of screwing with the world is a bit rich. The Defiant represent those who are sick of authority, and would walk only with those who go the same way, without barking orders. Those who have grown wise (and Wise) among the Legacy see that society must always have it's rebels, those who stand just outside the circle looking in, lest order stagnate in the absence of chaos.

Concepts: Perpetual revolutionary, anarchist, enlightened sociologist, guerilla fighter, Rage Against The Machine fan, punk philosopher.

Oblations: Disobeying orders, keeping a secret, deliberately doing something the hard way.

Attainments

1st: Personal Space

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3, Space 2

If you want to be stubborn about things, you're gonna need protection sooner or later. The mage raises Space Arcanum armor as an instant action, equal to his Space dots, with prolonged duration.

2nd: You Don't Know Me

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5, Space 3, Occultation 1

The Defiant will not be interfered with, and other people can't bother them if they can't find them. The mage creates a Space ward, with a Potency equal to his Space dots. The Ward lasts an hour, and while it is in effect, all sympathetic threads to the mage are moved one grade down on the chart.

Optional Arcanum: Mind 2

Grit Your Teeth

Some protect the body alone. Some make their minds unyielding as well, no matter the cost. As an addition to Personal Space, the mage performs an instant action to create a

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mental shield equal to his Mind dots. If any attempt to mentally influence or attack the mage succeeds anyway (ie. gets one or more successes, or wins the contested roll) the mage can choose to reduce those successes by suffering one point of resistant bashing damage per success negated.

3rd: Status Quo

Prerequisites:Gnosis 7, Space 4, Mind 3

The wearers of bad suits and bearers of authority rule from corridors of power. The Defiant reduce their authority on their own turf.

The mage shifts lines of perspective, changing an area in subtle ways, while fogging the very air with a sense of disorientation. Anyone who normally knows their way around the area so occluded must get more successes, on an Intelligence plus Composure roll, than the mage's Mind dots, or get hopelessly lost.

Optional Arcanum:Mind 4

Stiff Upper Lip, Stiffer Resolve

The mage may temporarily improve his ability to stand, unswayed by the words, threats, and subtler manipulations of others. As per the Supreme Augmentation spell, the mage may improve Social and Mental Attributes, but the ability is limited to Resolve and Composure. The boost is equal to the mage's Mind dots, divided between the attributes as equally as possible. If an equal improvement is not possible, the mage may choose one Attribute to favor. This ability lasts for one hour.

White-wolf.com Forum Poll Winner

Drona's Ill-Fated

by deaddude

" I am doomed, its true, but you are not my doom. So it seems I will be yours "

Fate is a fickle force, as any one can tell you. It is fate that decides your birth, and Fate that rules your death. Fate it would seem is two faced; Mother, and Murderer, Caretaker, and Bringer of Ruin, Heads and Tails. Few know the power of fate like those who serve her, fewer still than those who fight and die with her both as companion and enemy.

Long have there been stories of great warriors who knew of their fates before they came to pass. Hector knew that he would be killed by Achilles, who in turn knew that after he killed Hector he would die. Cuchulain knew when he went to his death in Ireland. Balder was fated to die, even though all things living and unloving had sworn never to harm him. All things except one. All of them railed against Fate and went on to face their destinies, and fate struck all of them down.

All of these warriors are tied too a curse, a curse of a Fate angry at being denied: The Curse of Drona. Drona was a Brahman, a man of knowledge and wisdom. Yet he was so poor that he could not afford to feed his son. To save his son from starvation, he used his most powerful magics to alter his destiny, making himself a warrior so fierce that he could not be killed until he put down his weapons and prepared for death. He soon became quite wealthy by fighting in tournaments and as a mercenary, and his son was saved from starving. Still a Brahman, Drona became a teacher of the arts of War, forging warriors from children. However it was against fate, Drona had been destined for a life of peace and had instead chosen war. For his affront to fate he was cursed: his life would be cut short in battle, when a man of truth told a lie.

Fate is a bitch indeed, for Drona's death did not satisfy her. Every so often a soul is marked with the Curse of Drona. Such a soul is destined to be a great warrior, the doom of his enemies, but he is also doomed to a terrible demise. Such souls almost always awaken to the realm of Fate, and are likewise drawn to other bearers of the curse. Drona's Fated are the collective of these souls. They fight with Fates blessing, even against Fate's curse.

As is the case for any set of cursed individuals, there is always the hope of escape. It is said that Drona wielded a weapon of immense power: the Passupatta. Whispered stories of its abilities defy belief, and perhaps most interestingly of all it is said that whoever possesses the weapon will have the power to best fate and overcome their doom. Perhaps it is a mere story told to give hope to the hopeless, and respite to the doomed. Or perhaps Drona's weapon still waits for the one who is fated to wield it in battle once more.

Parent Path: Acanthus

Nickname: Doomed

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Appearance: The Doomed either fit the archetype for warrior almost exactly, or they completely break with such preconceptions. They often appear haunted and solemn; occasionally mistaken for Moros rather than Acanthus.

Organization: None, other than the student teacher bond, though it is said that he who wields the Passupatta could unite the doomed under his banner.

Suggested Oblations: Practicing combat, meditating on their doom, teaching, fighting against their doom

Concepts: Mercenary, Martial Arts Instructor, Assassin, Reluctant Hero, fate marked child

Attainments: Development as one of the Ill-Fated grants one amazing abilities as a warrior, but it also tempers and strengthens ones doom.

1st: The Long Grass Bends

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3, Fate 2 (primary), Destiny 2

The Ill Fated is granted a modicum of fate protection; he permanently has Armor equal to his dots in fate, similar to the “Fortune Protection” spell.

Drawback: The characters bane as defined by the Destiny merit now becomes a potency two Doom as defined by the Fate 5 “Forge Doom” spell, his attainments do not protect the Ill Fated from his bane.

2nd: Skill Sharp as Swords

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5, Fate 3, Destiny 3

The Doomed has now attained preternatural affinity with his chosen weapon. The mage spends a point of mana and for the scene adds his dots in fate to any attack rolls made with that particular weapon. The weapon is chosen when this attainment is gained. The weapon is dedicated to the mage with etchings and runes.

Optional Arcanum: Death 3

As doomed warriors, the study of Death holds a strong appeal to the Ill Fated. They have a connection to endings and the hereafter that few would understand. They may draw strength from this connection whenever they bring an ending to pass. Whenever the mage kills with his dedicated weapon he may draw mana from the slain enemy. The mage gains mana equal to what he would receive for a “Devouring the Slain” spell with a potency equal to his dots in Death.

Drawback: The characters bane as defined by the Destiny merit now becomes a potency three Doom as defined by the Fate 5 “Forge Doom” spell, his attainments do not protect the Ill Fated from his bane.

3rd: The Long Grass Swords

Prerequisites: Gnosis 7, Fate 4 Destiny 4

The mage learns to focus all of his concentration on his target, reading his defense and striking at the perfect moment. This functions similarly to an advance version of the fate 1 “Quantum Flux” spell. The mage devotes turns of concentration to a single target, the mage removes penalties to attack the target at a rate of two per turn spent, to a maximum of 0. While concentrating the mage loses his defense to all attacks, except those made by his target.

Optional Arcanum: Death 4

Some have said that the Ill Fated are born dead, that they just don’t realize it until they meet their doom. They have always walked the line between life and death, blessed and cursed; this attainment lends the argument some credit. The mage may spend a point of mana and step into Twilight without the need of a gate. He remains in twilight for a scene and is then ejected, for his fate still ties him to this world, and he is not yet ready to enter into the next.

Drawback: The characters bane as defined by the Destiny merit now becomes a potency four Doom as defined by the Fate 5 “Forge Doom” spell, his attainments do not protect the Ill Fated from his bane. In addition any bashing damage done by his bane is upgraded to lethal.

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White Wolf Author's Choice

Heralds of the Divine Path

By Ophidimancer

"Farewell, and may the gods grant that our Paths cross again!"

The Awakening is a mysterious phenomenon that is unpredictable, even to the most learned of mages. Even the researchers of the Mysterium cannot predict what kind of person is more likely to Awaken, and it has come to young and old, the educated and the illiterate. One thing that mages have in common with each other is that the Awakening pushes them to the edges of society. Their insights into the invisible truths of reality makes mages uncanny neighbors at best and many end up shunned by their former friends and family. Some strive to regain their place in society and feel the warmth of closeness with Sleepers. Others found that they liked the new perspective they had from being estranged. Beyond the edge of the firelight, they found a wider world, a more exciting world.

The Heralds of the Divine Path are a brotherhood of mages that hail from those who feel a divine call to travel. Sailors, explorers, and vagabonds all feel this call and in all cultures gods of roads and journeys have arisen to explain this urge. Greco-roman cultures recognize Mercury, with his winged sandals, messenger of the gods and patron of thieves and merchants. In Africa Eshu, another messenger god, plagued travelers with obstacles in order to teach them valuable lessons. Hecate was worshipped as goddess of crossroads, the underworld, and magic, while in Japan, Dosojin presided over journeys, fertility, and childbirth.

To the Heralds, life is a journey, a Divine Path that, if traveled fully, teaches and purifies the soul of the traveler. Obstacles in one's journey are meant to flense away impurities and in an alchemical transformation lead the traveler to the end of all Paths in Ascension.

Parent Path or Order: Obrimos, though the Heralds are a sect of mages that are separate from any Order and can teach any mage that walks the Divine Path to be a Herald.

Nickname: Travelers, Capital "H" Heralds

Appearance: Heralds are almost always dressed for travel and often carry insignias of whatever Order they are working for at the time. Many carry emblems or religious paraphernalia denoting the god of travel they worship.

Background: Members almost always have had a wanderlust since before their Awakening. Traveling becomes a divine calling after Awakening, so even if they had been affluent before becoming mages they end up looking like road-weary travelers soon afterwards.

Organization: Little organization exists for the Heralds beyond the Master/Apprentice relationship. Powerful Fate magic leads a Herald to prospective members and their Paths intertwine long enough for the Master to teach the student and instill in them the ways of the Divine Path. All who travel in life must find their own Path. Meetings between Heralds are brief and perfunctory. Blessings are exchanged and then each Herald goes her own way, sure in her own Path and not willing to sully the honor of the other's Path by offering aid. All Orders commission Heralds for courier services because the oath of a Herald to deliver is only given if the Herald is willing to bind their Fates to the journey.

Suggested Oblations: Praying to patron god or goddess. Trailblazing. Beginning a new journey. Completing an Oath.

Attainments: Heralds of the Divine Path are travelers at heart. Traveling is both a testing and a catharsis for Heralds. Though it would make sense for a traveling legacy to have Space as their primary Arcanum, Heralds would never try to shorten their journeys in any manner such as teleportation. They believe that the troubles they face along the way are the whole point of a journey. Instead they rely on their ability to find their fated Divine Paths.

1st: Herald's Oath

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3, Fate 2 (Primary), Destiny 1

Divine Path Heralds are in high demand as transporters and messengers. Mages of all Orders and even the Seers of the Throne know that a Herald can be trusted to see their charges to their destinations. This ability has a lot to do with this reputation. At this level of Attainment, a Herald of the Divine Path has enough faith in his own path to be willing to stake his own destiny on it. A Swearing an Oath spell can be cast as an Instant action without a roll, binding a Herald to the task at hand. This Oath allows the Herald to regain Willpower when actively pursuing the goals assigned as if the Oath were a Vice as well as allowing a reflexive Resolve+Composure roll to resist anything that would stop him from completing his task. While under the effects of this Oath, each success on a Resolve+Occult+Fate roll grants the Herald the 9-again rule to one roll made to avoid obstacles that would prevent him from reaching his fated goals. This Oath is dissolved when the Herald completes his task. Herald's do not give their Oath lightly.

Optional Arcanum: Prime 2

A Herald versed in the Prime Arcanum can also use the strength of his Oath to shrug off spells that would hinder him in his task. The Herald can reflexively roll Resolve+Composure to resist spells that would block him from his destiny. Each success acts as a success in a Counterspell Prime effect.

2nd: Find the Path

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5, Fate 3, Space 1, Destiny 2

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The Herald can sense the path that he is fated to take and is guided by a wisdom that transcends conscious intelligence. The mage meditates on his purpose or prays to the gods and just starts off in the direction that feels right. Fate guides the Herald's Path and each success on a Wits+Composure+Fate roll lets the Herald set one condition to the path found. For example, three successes would let a Herald find a path that is quickest, safest, and avoids detection. Each success also grants the 8-again quality on rolls that actively help the Herald in pursuing his tasks.

Alternately, after casting an augury, each success on a Wits+Composure+Fate roll grants the Herald one cryptic clue about what lies in store on his or another's path.

3rd: Divine Gauntlet

Prerequisites: Gnosis 7, Fate 4, Destiny 3

It is true that Heralds have the reputation of being trustworthy in seeing messages and travelers delivered to their destinations, but they also have the reputation of making the lives of their charges interesting in wild and bizarre ways. To the Heralds, life is a journey that is meant to test and refine one's soul, an alchemical transformation that is meant to end in the perfection of Ascension. Experienced Heralds learn to accelerate this process, inducing tests of their mettle by drawing down their Destiny from the Supernal Realms. In an Instant action, a Herald with this Attainment makes an impassioned plea to the heavens, rolling Presence+Expression+Fate. Each success grants the Herald a point of the Destiny Merit and an opportunity to gain the rote quality on any roll while under the effects of this Attainment. The Herald's life from that moment takes on the quality of a partial Mystery Play, wherein every event has hidden meaning. Every point of experience gained during the Gauntlet gains an accompanying point of Arcane experience. Destiny twists and roils around a Herald on his Gauntlet and Fate or Time divinations meant to reveal the lesson of the Gauntlet fail automatically. The Storyteller is encouraged to make life very strange for the Herald and test him in ways meant to strike at his greatest flaws. The Divine Gauntlet is of indeterminate length, only ending when the Herald has learned an important lesson. The Bane that is gained from the increased Destiny should not be known and should haunt the Herald as part of the lesson. Heralds are not guaranteed survival of their Gauntlets and often lose things that are very dear to them. Fate does not spare loved ones.

Heralds on their Gauntlets know that people around them are at risk for the bizarre and wild turns of Fate that plague them, and consequently give discounts for their services for the duration. The end of a Gauntlet is heralded by an Astral Journey wherein the Herald meets with his Daimon in the form of his patron Deity, incarnation of his personal Divine Path.

Heralds have been known to invoke the Divine Gauntlet in dire emergencies just for the Destiny and rote quality benefits, but such an insult of Fate is not forgiven lightly. The Gauntlets of these Heralds tend to be . . . harrowing.

THE HUNTERS

by Cenn

"Civilization is only savagery silver-gilt."

The Hunters have been around seemingly forever. Since the earliest days, mankind has had to protect itself against terrors and evils, both monsters and human. Some humans took up spear and shield to defend themselves against the fearful world, but others walked forward and embraced the world, to better know where the dark stains of evil lay.

The Hunters take their knowledge from nature. The piercing gaze of the hawk, the soft step of the panther, the relentless pursuit of the wolf. It is said that the first Hunter was taught the ways of the greatest predator to walk both the earth and the shadow, and learnt to sniff out monsters and destroy them. These mages have been tasked to guard the human world, much like those the spirits whisper about that guard the gauntlet and shadow world.

Hunters seek out the greatest threats they can find. Dangerous criminals, legendary beasts, and dark spirits, all fall to the weapons of the Hunters. Hunters mainly walk in the wold places, where civilisation has broken down, or was never there to begin. The crumbling slums and sewers of great cities or the wild dark forests and mountains are both home to the Hunters. A true Hunter will never harm an innocent, or hunt for sport or glory. The true Hunters will do only what is needed to remove the threat to innocents.

Hunters never like to stay in one place for too long, and tend to drift from place to place, always following the trail of the next big hunt.

Parent Path or Order: Thyrsus

Nickname: Bloodhounds.

Appearance: Hunters are normally rugged and fit in appearance. They favour clothing which is practical and allows for free movement.

Background: Members have mostly been involved in hunting before awakening. But there are some that have come from law enforcement, or even those who worked closely with wild animals (zoo keepers, vets, etc)

Organization: There is very little official organisation, although Hunters that meet will share stories of their exploits, and often assist in particularly difficult situations. All hunters have close ties with the Spirits, who will often pass messages and news to the other hunters. Hunters rarely turn bad, as news of their betrayal is passed around quickly, making them the next prime target.

Suggested Oblations: Ritual hunting wild animal. Bringing a criminal to justice. Meditating on the remains of a past prey.

MAGE

THE AWAKENING

Attainments: The Hunters are supernatural predators. They excel at identifying, tracking and removing their target. They will usually have a single target at a time (although a gang or pack would count as a single target), and take time to study their habits to find the best way to remove them.

Primary Arcanum - Life, Spirit
Conjunctial Arcanum - Forces

1st: Scent of the Prey

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3, Life 2, Animal Ken/Medicine/Occult 2

Hunters are usually called in to examine the traces left by an unknown threat. Depending on the nature of the threat, the Hunter can identify it through its tracks (victims, claw marks, smells, foot prints etc)

An instant Intelligence+Animal Ken/Medicine/Occult+Life roll is made on examining an example of the target's activity. (Animal Ken if a creature, Medicine if "human", Occult for spirit/numia effects) Only one check can be made at each spot, and if checking for the wrong type no result will be received (which is a tip off that they are looking for the wrong thing) On a successful roll, the Hunter will know the details about the target (species, height, weight, age, etc) and increase the level of connection to the target. When the connection becomes "intimate" the target is fully identified, and any time the target is in sensory range the Hunter will know immediately.

A Wits+Animal Ken/Medicine/Occult+Space -(target's stealth/ability) will allow a Hunter to know in which direction the identified target is.

Optional: Forces 2
Hunter's senses

A Hunter will often have their reflexes and senses tuned to a degree beyond most humans. They may make a reflexive Wits+Forces roll, and any successes will cancel out negative modifiers in the actions that turn (bad weather, long range, darkness, etc)

2nd: Call of the Wild

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5, Life 3, Spirit 3

At this level of attainment, nature itself will aid the Hunter. Each success on an instant Presence+Animal Ken+Life roll the Hunter can make one command that the animal would normally be able to do. For example, he can make a tiger attack (1) and bring back (2) a target, but would be unable to tell the tiger to steal a gun as the tiger doesn't know what a gun is.

Animals treat the Hunter as one of their own, and will not be startled by his actions, and will not aggress the hunter.

He is also able to ask favours from the spirits, and each success on Presence+Occult+Spirit roll will give one action that can be treated as a 9+0 again roll as the spirits around the hunter give their aid to the Hunt. eg - If the Hunter scores 3 successes, then any 3 actions during the day can be declared 9+0 again so long as the action is directly tied to hunt of an identified target.

Optional: Forces 3
Hunter's movement

A well trained Hunter learns from the wild creatures an economy of motion and self control that will rival any opponent. In combination with their already impressive knowledge of the workings of the body (life 3) the Hunter is able to add his Forces dots to a physical attribute for one scene - with reflexes of a cat, or endurance of a wolf, or strength of a bear - the hunter directs and focuses the forces within his body to an amazing degree.

3rd: Shadow Hunter

Prerequisites: Gnosis 7, Life 4 Spirit 4

The Hunter is now able to conceal himself in the very fabric of the gauntlet. An instant Presence+Occult+Spirit roll will let the Hunter fade into the edges of the shadow world for up to the number of successes achieved in turns. While in this twilight form the Hunter is able to move at his base speed. The Hunter can make a reflexive action to return to normal physical form.

Optional: - Forces 4
Hunter's strike

A prepared hunter knows exactly how to attack his target for most effect. The turn after an instant composure + animal ken/medicine/occult roll+ forces, the hunter's attacks will be increased by 1 level (bashing -> lethal, lethal -> aggravated)

[Note on "identified target" - this is a target that has an intimate connection to the hunter, built up by use of the 1st attainment. Only one "target" can be identified at a time - that target can be a "pack" though, and the connection will count to any member of that pack. When a new "target" starts being identified, the old target loses the connection.]

MAGE

THE AWAKENING

STORM CHASERS

By MrSpontaneous

“Why do so many shun the storms and see only death and sadness? The storms themselves are more alive than any creature I have witness in my time and being with them is my greatest joy”

Many people of the world would have it be sunny, calm and uneventful all the time is they could, not the storm chasers. These people have found kinship with the energy and atmosphere that permeates this phenomenon. Such people often seek out areas were storms are common, or powerful. Others follow the weather, never settling down. Many of the orders are weary of the storm chasers, as they often signal unfavorable weather. Others believe they are a sign of metaphorical storms to come. Like other creatures that follow events, they are often blamed rather than excepting that the event was coming any way.

Although there is some truth to their worries as some chasers have been known to call the storms to them during dull drums, and in droughts they are prized for their “rain dances”.

Parent path: Obrimos

Nickname: Storm Crows

Appearance: Storm chasers tend towards a more laid back or disheveled look. Others have a natural beauty to them like the storms that they follow. All have a feeling of a flux of energy waiting to be released just below the surface.

Organization: mostly solitary, they do sometimes form loose groups in areas of interest to them that have attracted many of the Legacy.

Suggested oblations: meditating in places of high energy (i.e. Windy rainy or other stormy areas. Artificial places can meet this requirement too like a wind tunnel) Tracking storms in the area,

Attainments: The storm chases learn to understand and draw strength from the storms but gain little benefit if there is no such weather around.

1st: Storm shield

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3 Forces 2 (primary)

The mage begins to emulate the storms and at time seems to be the eye of some personal storm. The mage is subject to the unseen shield ability as outline on page 167 with some changes. First, during a storm the mages forces arcana counts as 2 higher than normal, so a mage with forces 2 would have a shield of strength 4 in a storm. How ever outside a storm the mages forces arcana counts as half, (so that same mage would have only a shield of strength 1 out side a storm).

2nd: Storm empathy

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5 Forces 3, prime 3

The mage gains a more intimate connection with storms. While in a storm the mage gains +2 dice to affect components of the storm (with spells) and may gain 1 mana per hour of time spent in a storm as the mage soaks up the energy of the storm.

Optional: space 2

The mage gains a known sympathy with an storms within Gnosis X 5 miles to affect storms with spells. If used to scry on the storm, the mage may only see from the center or eye of the storm. Storm chasers with this ability often use it to follow the storms with which they are so attuned.

3rd: Storm Call

Prerequisites: Gnosis 7 Forces 4

By spending a mana point and engaging in an hour long ritual (presence + science + forces), the mage may call a storm to himself. This spell does not create weather but any storms in a Gnosis X 10 radius are called to the mage. For each storm in the area beyond the first, the mage gets a -2 dice penalty. Regardless of distance the storms arrive in 24 – successes hours.

Failure means the storms don't answer the call.

Dramatic failure means the storms move away from the mage, repelled by his failure

optional: if the mage posses fate 2, he may elect to leave out certain storms rather than affect all of them or none of them.

THE TREMERE-HEALED

By DeuceTrick

"Forgotten me already, 'Master'? That's all right-- I haven't forgotten you."

Overview

The Tremere Liches are a society of victims. For every power-hungry old wizard who felt his clock ticking, there are at least two people who were suckered in by the allure of knowledge and immortality, paying the ultimate price for their foolishness and regretting every second thereafter. There isn't a single one of them who hasn't wondered how differently things might have gone if they hadn't given their souls away. It's a rare and lucky few who get this second chance, and their stories are ones of painful redemption and sacrifice.

It's said that anyone who wins their soul back and reverses the process of Lichdom can never join any Legacy ever again. But there is one path left for these individuals. It is a road of vengeance that few survivors have the conviction to walk, but some are just brave enough, or crazy enough, to take the first step. Their experience was more than mere victimization; it was the beginning of a higher calling.

Those who hunt the Tremere are generally outnumbered: a significant population of Liches won't have more than one or two in the shadows. Part of this is the sheer rarity of individuals who have successfully reclaimed their souls, but it also helps preserve the secret of the Tremere-Healed, who don't anticipate a warm welcome from any magical society. They are universally despised by soul eaters as traitors and turncoats, and a significant minority is often jealous to the point of burning hatred.

History

The Tremere-Healed have existed for as long as their enemies. When the wicked Tremere vampires were destroyed and the original Awakened cabal discovered what had become of their souls, a few mages fled in shame, disappearing to the far corners of the earth. One of these, a young magus whose true name has been lost to time, undertook a quest to reclaim what he had lost. Some stories say that he worked powerful magic to craft a new soul for himself, while darker tales claim that he used unspeakable sorcery to plunge into the heart of the Abyss and emerge whole. Whatever the truth of the story is, he returned to his erstwhile companions with the hope that they, too, would be able to heal themselves.

When he discovered that his former cabal had degenerated into a despicable breed of soul eaters, the mage was horrified. And when he saw what became of the victims, and worse, that other people were being lured by the trap of immortality, his rage was like a blazing inferno. He vowed to destroy the cabal at any cost, and his first action was to take the most promising of the second-generation liches under his wing. He did this by recovering her soul and mercilessly killing the one who had taken it, forever setting the tone for the fledgling Legacy. This woman, who was given the shadow name "Phoenix," was the first Tremere-Healed.

Nicknames Survivors, Phoenixes, Red Eyes

Parent Path or Order Without exception, all Tremere-Healed are former Tremere Liches. Thus, most phoenixes hail from the Path of Doom, though other Paths are not impossible to imagine. The tainted legacy of the soul eaters cuts across the entirety of Awakened society.

Organization

In many ways, the organization of the Tremere-Healed holds an uncomfortable resemblance to that of their enemies. Potential recruits are carefully watched by more experienced survivors, who keep an eye out for that special mixture of resentment and hatred that makes a fine new member. The window of time in which Lichdom can be reversed is very small, leading to the occasional rumor that the Tremere-Healed watch their recruits from the moment they Awaken, callously letting them fall into the hands of the enemy for the sake of the greater goal.

Once they are taken away from the Liches and inducted into the ranks, the young Tremere-Healed has to learn the art of secrecy and conspiracy, honing their arts toward the single goal of destroying the Tremere. First is the creation of a new Shadow Name, and the total destruction of one's former identity. The mission can't afford the luxuries of a mortal life, and so the student must turn away from everything they once were. Second is tutelage from a master, who more often than not is the only other Tremere-Healed that they ever see in their short, violent careers.

Appearance

Regardless of whatever fashion they choose to adopt, the Tremere-Healed have a pragmatic streak to their style, hardly ever choosing clothing that restricts movement or makes much noise. Some opt for dressing to look forgettable, so that they won't be given away until the very last moment. Others have a taste for long, dark coats, boots and gloves, partly befitting their status as self-appointed executioners but also to strike fear in some of the more inexperienced Liches.

Bigger surprises are in store for those who might chance upon a Tremere-Healed when she is undressed. The body is a pattern of burn scars, which are just as likely to be hideous as they are to be beautiful, in a primal sort of way. These marks are testament to long hours of training, failed oblations and wayward magic, which have all come together to make the phoenix as strong as she is.

Finally, and perhaps least obviously, the Tremere-Healed have a peculiar light in their eyes, as if there are red stars just behind the irises. Even those who possessed plain brown eyes in their former lives take on this quality, which rises and falls according to mood, and at times can even be seen in the dark. Most observers will chalk it up to an energetic spirit or trick of the light, but those in the know attribute this to the crimson-hot flame of vengeance that burns in the survivors' reclaimed souls.

MAGE

THE AWAKENING

Suggested Oblations: Fire-breathing. Dancing and leaping over a large bonfire. Meditating on a source of flame.

Attainments

1st: Candle's Shadow

Requirements: Gnosis 3, Prime 2, Occultation 3

Secrecy is key—with this Attainment, the phoenix can reflexively hide her aura, appearing as a Sleeper to even the most astute eyes.

Optional Arcanum: Spirit 1

Ember Light

Additionally, the mage can activate Mage Sight without needing to roll. For those who were once numbered among their ranks, spotting a soul eater is simply a matter of opening one's eyes. The fiery red glow in the Tremere-Healed eyes becomes especially noticeable when this Attainment is active.

2nd: Torch

Requirements: Gnosis 5, Prime 3 (Primary), Spirit 3

To use this Attainment, all the mage must do is lay one hand upon someone who has just lost their soul and spend a point of mana. The person's heart becomes a flickering white flame, visible only to those with Mage Sight. A "torch" is able to do all the things a normal person with a soul could do, and the degeneration is slowed to half speed. The victim will still die if their souls are not eventually restored, but the process gives the rescuers precious time.

3rd: Righteous Flame

Requirements: Gnosis 7, Prime 4

There is only one proper fate for the Tremere. With this Attainment, the phoenix can summon a powerful weapon sculpted of heatless white fire. The weapon costs one mana to activate, lasts for a number of turns equal to Resolve, and uses a dice pool of Strength+Weaponry+Prime. All blows struck by this weapon inflict lethal damage, as well as ignoring all non-magical armor ratings.

Optional Arcanum: Spirit 4

Burnt Tongues

The mage must touch a target and spends at least one point of mana to activate this Attainment. From then on, the person's soul is a trap: if a Tremere Lich attempts to consume it, they automatically suffer lethal damage up to the phoenix's Spirit, plus the total of extra mana points. If the target cannot naturally hold mana in his or her body (ie, a Sleeper), they will suffer one bashing damage for each point of mana beyond the first that is forced into their souls.

THE VANISHERS

By Noxes

"How can you find what is not there? How can you block the blow already at your throat?"

Conventional wisdom states that in order to stab someone you must thrust sword A into body B or shoot bullet Z into enemy Y, passing through all locations between those two points. Mastigos mages know better than most that this is not necessarily the truth. If all points are one, why can't the knife in your hand also be at the throat of your enemy? If you lie in the path of a bullet, do you not also lie out of it? Why can't you choose between those two options?

The Vanishers were created by a Mastigos warrior mage whose identity has been lost to time, even to the Mysterium. He created the Shadows in the wilds of the world, during the infancy of Atlantis, a world still plagued by vile beasts and monsters possessing many times the strength of a man. After a battle with a particularly devastating fox demon the mage set his heart on discovering a way to increase the survivability of the relatively frail and weak awakened militia.

The only way that the man could come up with to keep his allies safe was to keep them away from their enemy. Unfortunately this made their own weapons as useless as their enemies': it was a time before time, and bladed weapons were the most advanced available. Then he remembered: oh yeah, magic.

The Vanishers completed their training as quickly as they could, and got their first taste of action saving Atlantis from a great and terrible hydra. Using their signature shadow clones and their technique for instantaneous short range movement, they slew the foul beast with a shockingly low number of casualties.

Unfortunately, over time the Shadows have become marginalized in world dominated by ranged weapons and chemical composite armor. This leaves the legacy with an unfortunately stagnant pool of recruits, although it does attract any mage who appreciates the beauty of a finely crafted blade.

Parent Path: Mastigos

Nickname: Vanishers, Shadows, Ninjas

Appearance: Shadows generally like the element of surprise, opting to blend into the general public rather than call attention to themselves. Ironically "ninja" outfits are also quite popular among the Shadows.

Organization: The Vanishers like using the traditional student/teacher relationship, but also make use of dojos hidden deep in rural areas, unfrequented by modern sleepers.

MAGE

THE AWAKENING

Suggested Oblation: Watching a kung-fu flick, practicing kung-fu, practicing swordsmanship, restoring ancient swords.

Concepts: Ninja, Ass-Kicking Physics Teacher, Old School Samurai, Assassin, Escape Artist, Modern Gun Slinger.

Attainments: Development as a shadow gives a mage incredible powers of evasion and teleportation but gives the mage no advantage over opponents using ranged weapons unless they significantly sacrifice from their armor and defensive qualities.

1st: The True Warrior Knows His Surroundings

Prerequisites: Gnosis 3, Space 2 (Primary)

The Shadow gains the benefits of an Omnivision spell at all times. Note that without using the Mind arcanum the Shadow can still only concentrate on one thing within his field of vision, however large it might be.

Conditional: The shadow also gains +3 to his initiative modifier and on rolls to react to surprise as long as wears absolutely no mundane armor of any kind.

2nd: The True Warrior Strikes Quickly

Prerequisites: Gnosis 5, Space 3 (primary)

The shadow may reflexively co-locate to one and only one other location within three times his movement, with the condition that he do so only on his own turn. This means that he may run to an enemy, attack that enemy and then teleport to safety, for example.

If used to teleport into thin air, the Shadow only starts to fall at the beginning of his next turn. A Shadow must touch a grounded object such as a building or, well, the ground, or this ability fails automatically after 2 uses until he regains his footing, however violently. This prevents players from using this ability to fly. It should be noted that the wording is "touch" not "stand on" meaning that a Shadow can touch on to the side of a skyscraper and then continue to teleport freely, representing a wall walking or double jumping technique.

Conditional: The Vanisher gains his defense against all ranged weapons as long as he does not have any spells cast upon him that confer armor, as these spells almost always disrupt the Shadow's supernatural attunement to the space around him.

3rd: The True Warrior Brings Allies

Prerequisites: Gnosis 7, Space 4 (primary)

The Shadow can use co-location within his sensory range as an instantaneous action from a dice pool of (Gnosis + Space+ Athletics). This represents the Shadow existing in so many different locations so quickly that it leaves afterimages in the eyes of all beholders.

Each after image can act separately as if the Shadow had applied the Mind arcanum to the spell, but only the real one does combat damage.

Optional Arcanum: Life 4

The Vanishers find it very useful to boost their own reflexes and strength so that they can hit their hardest when they have an opportunity to attack their target. Whenever the Shadow attacks while the target is unaware of which afterimage actually contains the real body gains the Vanisher's Life dots plus one half of his space dots (rounding down) to his dice pool.

Example: A ninja has created several after images of himself around Bob The Guy. Bob does not know what is going on, or which one is really the ninja. The ninja attacks with a dice pool of... (Strength + Weaponry + Equipment + Life + 1/2 Space [rounding down])

The Wreckers

by *Xhavius*

The Wreckers have their origin in those who have been injured or clashed with the Seers of the Throne. As unnamed mages saw how the Sleeper governments began to mirror Seer organization, they realized that it all had to be destroyed, or at least reshaped. They dedicated themselves to tearing down governments who have become too orderly. A Wrecker is believed to have started and fueled the Great London Fire in an attempt to free the people from the restrictions they were supposedly in. Bureaucracies are their targets, often Seers of the Throne, but governments today could easily be construed as needing reconstruction. It is believed that members of the Wrecker legacy were anarchist instigators during the late 1800's, early 1900's. Some Wreckers are believed to be the guiding influence behind certain anti-government bands, and at least one band has degenerated into obscurity when they attempted to seize control of their fates.

Parent Path or Order: Acanthus or Free Council, but any who is willing to dedicate themselves to reforging the world is accepted.

Nicknames: Rats (as in, rats in the walls)

Appearance: Its not what they wear, its what they don't. A Wrecker wouldn't be caught dead in a business suit or anything they construe as symbols of bureaucracy.

Background: Wreckers are drawn from those who have been burdened with red tape their whole lives. Some were even government employees who saw how their every action was burdened by forms and requisitions. Anarchists or communists have also become Wreckers, as the ideal of communism is what some Wreckers strive for.

Organization: Their very natures are against large organizations, but most Wreckers are a mentor-pupil team or a small mage group who ideally try to keep everyone equal.

Suggested Oblations: Disrupting governments, spreading the ideas counterculture or anarchy, cutting through the red tape (in the most forceful way possible)

Attainments:

1st: Cut Through the Red Tape

Requirements: Gnosis 3, Fate 2, Matter 1, Persuasion 1

The Wreckers do not like to be stopped. They don't like people getting in their way, or trying to hinder their progress in destruction. This attainment causes all attempts to hinder the Wrecker to receive a -2. Be it attacking them, or attempting to verify a disguise, this allows them to bull through whatever is in their path at the Storyteller's discretion. It has the duration of a scene. Note: This does not apply. It does not apply if the Wrecker is the

one attacking, for example, or if they are searching for a certain file. It only hinders those who would slow the Wrecker down.

2nd: Rage Against the Machine

Requirements: Gnosis 5, Fate 3, Matter 2, Craft 1

This attainment was developed to do the maximum amount of disruption to "The Machine". When activated all mechanical and electric devices within 30 ft begin malfunctioning for a scene. These devices can be repaired, but at a -4 difficulty.

3rd: Bring Down the House

Requirements: Gnosis 7, Fate 5, Matter 3

This attainment was developed by the more destructive Wreckers who prefer a more direct approach. When activated it does Fate + Resolve dice of damage to all inanimate objects within a 30 ft radius.

Optional Arcanum: Fate 5, Life 3

Developed by a Wrecker particularly hateful of the human element of order, this attainment does Fate + Resolve dice of lethal damage to all living things in a 10 ft radius